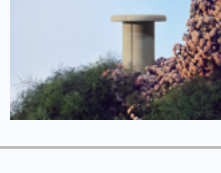


This week's most-viewed **FRAME Awards** submissions showcase inspiring Asian design

Mark your calendars with **15 events at 3DaysofDesign** in Copenhagen next week



BOOKMARK ARTICLE

07 JUN 2024 • EDITOR'S DESK

EDITOR'S DESK: PLANETARY BOUNDARIES, INDEPENDENT FOOD CITIES AND CIRCULAR SYSTEMS



In this week's Editor's Desk, our editor in chief Floor Kuitert reports on her recent visit to **Southern Sweden Design Days** in Malmö, Sweden: a refreshingly local and community-centric festival with a non-commercial atmosphere that addressed some of the most pressing climate-related issues of today, something she felt was alarmingly absent in Milan earlier this year.

ADVOCATING EARTH-CENTRIC ARCHITECTURE

'Climate change is not an eventuality; it is already here' is the message of one of the exhibitions presented at Malmö's **Form/Design Center**. The show – titled Planetary Boundaries: Rethinking Architecture and Design – is offering more than just this warning. It's showcasing innovative design solutions to decrease carbon emissions in construction projects, refurbish and restore existing buildings, and ultimately develop enduring designs with smaller planetary footprints. There's a project looking at the potential of mycelium-based composites within a built environment context and research into lowering the level of embedded energy and minimizing the use of virgin materials, to name just a few. All are the result of R&D projects conducted at and by the Royal Danish Academy. The focus is on materiality, and the exhibited innovations are promising. Yet I can't help but think about the many 'theory-versus-reality' discussions we've had with designers addressing the hurdles on the potential use side. Head of the HfG Karlsruhe Bio Design Lab, Julia Ihls talked to us about access being a big challenge when it comes to biomaterials, for example. 'Designers can visit a store and buy wood, stone or whatever, but they can't yet easily do the same for algae colour or a length of bioplastic or mycelium leather,' she said. 'They typically have to make their own material from scratch, which creates a work-intensive phase before they can even begin the design phase. The challenges continue once the material is made, as biomaterials, especially living ones, have a very different agency than that of traditional materials.'



PHOTO: DANIEL ENGVALL, FORM/DESIGN CENTER

Presented at Form/Design Center, which also organizes Southern Sweden Design Days, is the project Better Building Blocks, researching the brick industry and ways to arrive at more circular and healthy building practices.

As we wrote in FRAME 152, 'designers, impelled by the exciting possibilities of new materials and their potentially revolutionary properties, will not only be called on to develop scalable material solutions, but may need to lead the charge. "The transition to biofabricated materials . . . hinges on designers who mediate between the demands of production, industry and the market, bringing their user-centred approach to material innovation," writes FRAME's contributing sustainability editor Karianne Fogelberg. "They can turn circular materials into desirable commodities and, with their imagination and capacity for storytelling, contribute to informing a new cultural understanding with the public."

GROWING THE SUBSISTENCE CITY

Another of my highlights was on show at Southern Sweden Design Days' main location – the old railway workshops in the Kirseberg district. Or actually two highlights, but addressing the same topic: food resiliency. Platform Stad, an innovation platform for future urban food systems funded by Vinnova, presented The Independent Food City, which advocates for urban areas to do their share in arriving at more resilient food systems. And for cities to become more self-sufficient. And it goes further, as the curators write. 'The need to increase our urban food production extend beyond pure necessity. Local food systems also improve urban environments by making them greener, more beautiful, healthier, and more resilient. It's not just about growing food, it's about growing people and relationships.' On the exhibition's menu were, for example, a bun made from perennial and heritage grains grown on the city's outskirts and ground in the city mill, as well as shrooms cultivated in unused basement spaces and bioreactors in Nyhamnen.



Platform Stad, an innovation platform for future urban food systems funded by Vinnova, presented The Independent Food City, which advocates for urban areas to do their share in arriving at more resilient food systems.

Lund University, in its turn, presented outcomes of project courses from its Industrial Design course. One of the courses, for example, focused on 'product development based on local cyclic resource flows'. Nicole Steiner showed a cooling tray inspired by traditional zeer pot refrigerators. It provides a sustainable solution for cafés and bars to cool cakes and sandwiches without electricity – the sand and porous clay pots only requiring dry air and water to operate. Fellow student Astrid Gutzeit Nystrom, in collaboration with Bagaren & Bonden, offers a linen alternative to the plastic freezer back, to encourage the freezing of bread – one of the foods with the greatest wastage due to overproduction and the fact that it moulds easily – in a more sustainable way.

CIRCULAR SYSTEMS

Reducing the need for virgin materials is another reoccurring topic at the Swedish festival. Back in the city, M.U.S (Malmö Upcycling Service) took over the windows of retail destination APLACE. The studio, headed by industrial designer Anna Gudmundsdottir, is on a mission to identify and collect local, industrial waste streams and rescue materials from going into landfill. For this show, airbags are the material at hand. Extremely hard to recycle but also impossible to reuse, this car industry waste is transformed into fashion pieces by various creatives, revealing the material's unique qualities. Industry waste is also the material of choice in a collaboration between Superlab, Circular Link and Swedese. Wood waste from construction sides is turned into a table. The design allows for ease of assembly, replacement of parts and can be transported as a flat pack. The series is a concrete example of how companies can integrate circular principles into their product development to reduce environmental impact and create value from leftover materials.

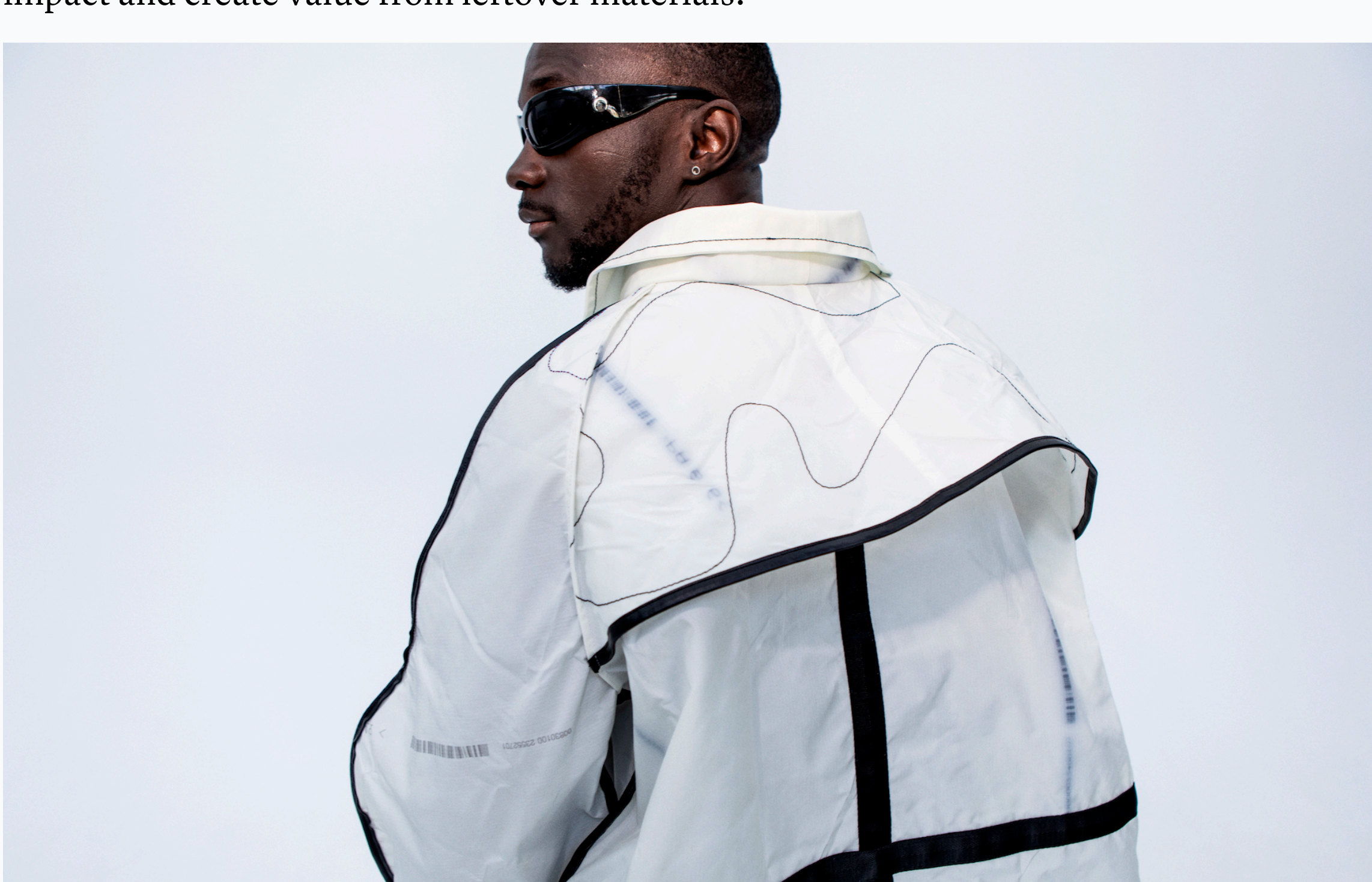


PHOTO: ANDERS AHLGREN

M.U.S invited local fashion creators and textile artists to work with waste airbags from the local car industry. The works of Studio Soriano (cover image) and Purple Rinse (above), amongst others, were presented at retail destination Aplace.

Let's hope that the upcoming EU regulations that require precise traceability of all product materials, necessitating digital product passports, will urge more companies to review their material portfolios – and processes alike.

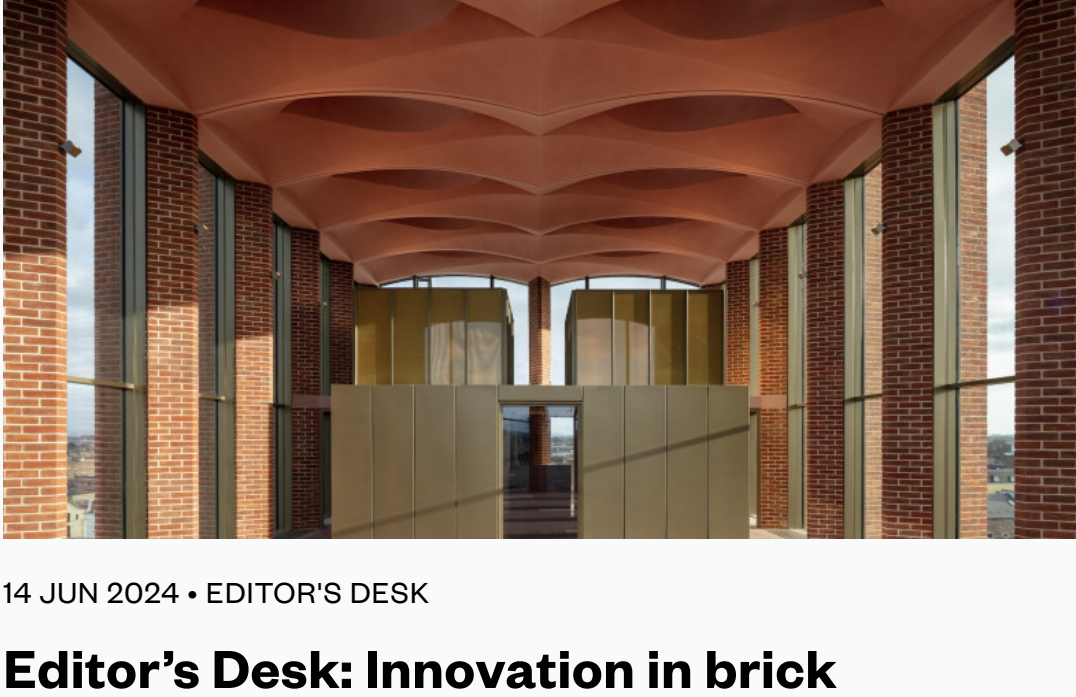
WORDS FLOOR KUITERT



- INSIGHTS
- SUSTAINABILITY
- EDITOR'S DESK
- SOUTHERN SWEDEN DESIGN DAYS
- ROYAL DANISH ACADEMY
- CIRCULAR LINK
- SWEDESE
- BAGAREN & BONDEN
- VINNOVA
- PLATFORM STAD
- APLACE
- SUPERLAB
- ASTRID GUTZEIT NYSTROM
- NICOLE STEINER

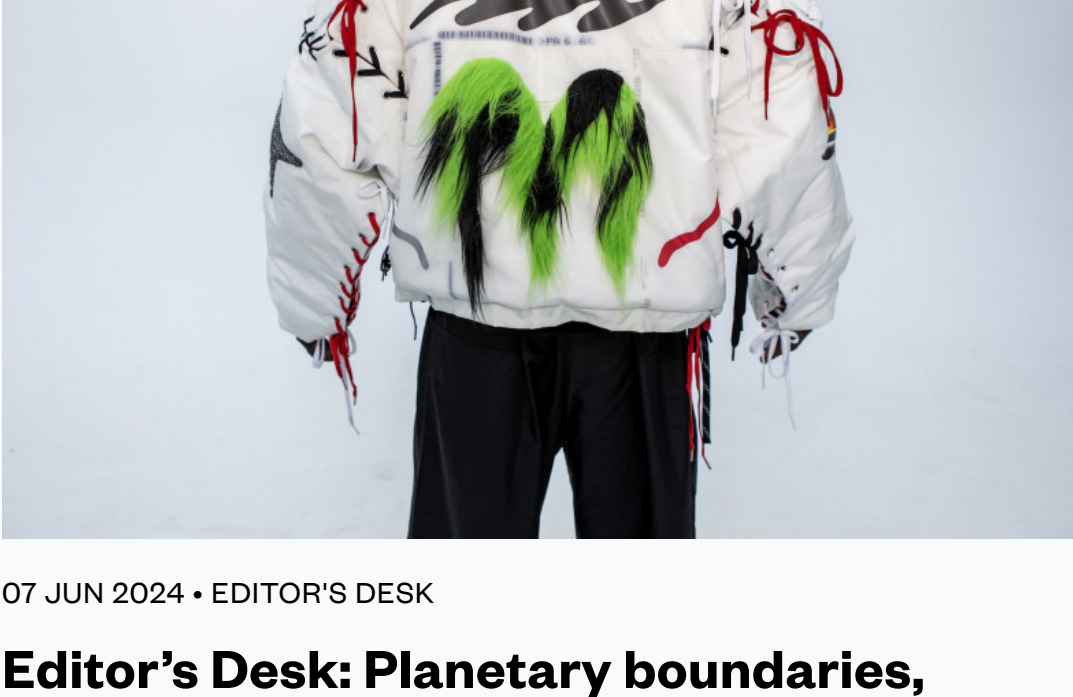
RELATED ARTICLES

MORE EDITOR'S DESK



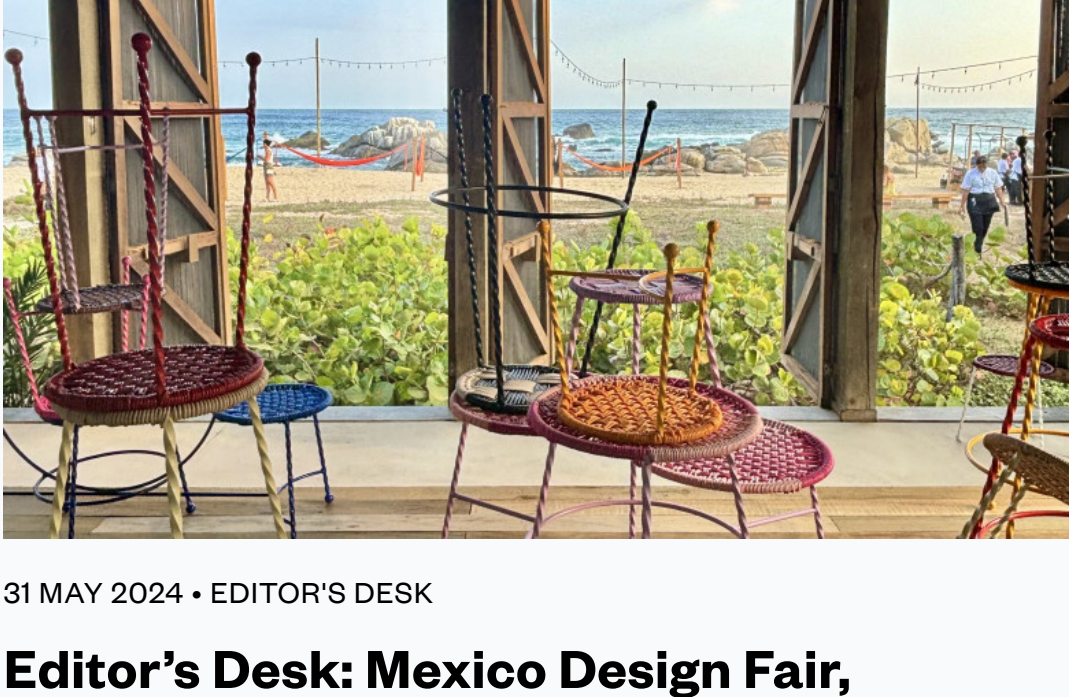
14 JUN 2024 • EDITOR'S DESK

Editor's Desk: Innovation in brick architecture, Vienna's social housing and car retail reimaged



07 JUN 2024 • EDITOR'S DESK

Editor's Desk: Planetary boundaries, independent food cities and circular systems



31 MAY 2024 • EDITOR'S DESK

Editor's Desk: Mexico Design Fair, harvesting creative systems and humanizing AI