

SUSTAINABILITY BY DESIGN: CRAFTS



Crafts are at the center of creation of the physical surroundings in our everyday lives. Joining together individual artistic expression and industrial mass manufacturing, craftspeople add an extra layer to design.

Danes are rich in experience and have a proud history of craft and design, creating added value through unique and beautiful products. However the great masters of the past such as Arne Jacobsen, Verner Panton and Poul Kjærholm have often overshadowed their young successors. This is no longer the case. In recent years Danish craft has experienced a breakthrough with a new pulse and a conceptual approach where storytelling, reflection and an attitude towards societal challenges have given crafts a new meaning and relevance.

New craftsmanship

The one-off pieces often associated with crafts mark an important contribution to the field of art, but the creative work with one-off pieces is also used for artistic experimentation as a basis for commercial products. Today's craftspeople are moving into new areas of development where century-old techniques are combined with new materials and processes, modern high-tech features and intriguing playful approaches, resulting in innovative, new products.

The present generation of Danish designers and craftspeople has inherited the joy of attending to detail, the pride of good craftsmanship and the fascination with shifting boundaries and reaching new goals. And today you find Danish craftspeople not only in their drafting rooms and workshops,

but also in the R&D departments of major companies in various industries addressing the challenge of sustainable development.

At the forefront of innovation

Craftspeople are seldom the ones putting new life-style defining products like the iPod on the market, but their work functions as fundamental research within industrial design and manufacturing. By using an approach rooted in tradition to give expression to new materials and technologies, craftspeople question our lifestyles, prototypes and visualise how our sustainable futures might look like and indicate ways to achieve it.

Thus the line from the old masters continues directly into the emerging future. Or as Danish designer Louise Campbell puts it: "We have one foot firmly planted in the values of our design history – and the other foot onboard an airplane."

For more information please contact DANISH CRAFTS – the national institution for promotion of contemporary Danish craft.

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FRONT PAGE PHOTO: THE POUL KJÆRHOLM PK24 CHAISE LONGUE. PHOTO: FRITZ HANSEN

CASE

SUNTILES & PAPCORN

SunTiles; Astrid Krogh, 2009
Designed in collaboration with Risø DTU,
Esbensens Consulting Engineers,
Kvadrat and Schmidt Hammer Lassen
Architects

SunTiles is a shining example of crafts and design joining forces with technology and manufacturing to explore new possibilities for sustainable product development. Based in a textile tradition, Astrid Krogh experiments with fibre optics, LEDs and solar cell plates. SunTiles is one of the results of her research; something as obvious as a curtain woven of solar cell plates.

SunTiles is an example of how the artistic potential of craft can be used to generate new products. Not only does the 'curtain' collect the energy from the sunlight. It also stores the heat from the sun and gives it away when needed. In that way the use of energy to lightning and indoor climate can be reduced.

PAPCoRN; Anne Bannick & Lene Vad Jensen, 2002

PAPCoRN is a simple yet powerful example of exploring new materials. Based on a Cradle to Cradle approach the materials used for the dinner set are compostable and can return to a biological cycle after use. This approach challenges the traditional approach of durability being a sustainability factor. PAPCoRN can be used 1, 10 or 101 times and then be composted and return to nature as a nutrient.

To achieve this, the designers have used the latest plastics, based on renewable resources such as wheat, maize and lactic acid and at the same time explored the possibilities for new shapes and surfaces within these.



Suntiles by Astrid Krogh in collaboration with Risø DTU, Esbensens Consulting Engineers, Kvadrat and Schmidt Hammer Lassen Architects 2009. Photo: Torben Eskerod



Made from compostable plastics Papcorn is truly made for your take out meal. Designed by Anne Bannick and Lene Vad Jensen. Photo: Danish Crafts