



ROOTED DESIGN FOR ROUTED LIVING.

Introduction

Rooted Design for Routed Living. Alternative Design Strategies is a practical research project where Norwegian and Polish designers (the project group) are looking into the possibilities of creating an ideal artist-in-residency interior.

The Nordic Artists' Centre in Norway (NKD) and the A-I-R Laboratory at the Centre for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle in Warsaw have initiated the project, and will host the events. Both institutions are working with artist-in-residency programs, but in very different conditions—the NKD is situated in a rural area on the west coast of Norway, while the a-i-r laboratory at the Ujazdowski Castle is located in a European metropolis.

Many contemporary artists spend a lot of time travelling between exhibitions and commissions of different kind. During the last decade, it has become common to travel from residency to residency. The life of these artists can be considered rootless, in a way, and frequently, the same can be said of the places of their stay, in terms of the design of interior: it is often characterized as being too pragmatic. The similarities in the programs of the centres and the differences in several other dimensions created a space for a common interest in establishing an exchange. The idea was that each centre should use the other as a resource to gain new knowledge about the possibilities or impossibilities of making the interiors more relevant in relation to local circumstances. Since both institutions have programs on the borderland of art/design, and architecture where space related works play an important role, it was necessary to focus on our own facilities.

Hopefully, the project can help improve the living and working conditions for visiting artists. Rooted Design for Routed Living is formulated as a project where groups of Norwegian and Polish designers go to work on foreign ground.

The aim of the project is to present prototype furniture, designed specifically for the spaces of each centre. The furniture will, hopefully, offer a design with a clear relation to local history, aesthetics and heritage. Nowadays, design has become a very vague concept with perhaps too much impact, and it seems important to try to turn it around. As we see it, this means more focus on concepts, to avoid the pitfalls of laboured expressions of contemporary design as pure appearance. Concepts that last over time usually have a relation to some kind of specificity, such as something local or personal. This is the impulse that leads to the idea of working with customization. Rooted Design for Routed Living is a project that has its point of departure in contextual purpose.

The project will be completed at the end of 2010, and will be presented through exhibitions organized at the CCA Ujazdowski Castle in Warsaw and at NKD in Dale. All the research materials, texts, images and documentation of the work with the prototypes will be presented in a book that will conclude the project.

MEETINGS PLAN ON 20.03.2009:

- 14.00 Oscar Narud & Tomek Rygalik: Usable, not reusable / Project Kick Off
- 14.25 Martin Kaltwasser: Neither Ikea nor Vitra but D.I.Y. The city as a resource for the art of bricolage of Köbberling & Kaltwasser
- 15.30 Luis Eslava: Daily life objects, its design and its language
- 16.20 coffee break
- 16.40 Peter Marigold / OKAY studio: Decay and Design
- 17.45 Roberto Feo / El Ultimo Grito: Abandon/ed Architectures: 'A Chicken In Every Pot and a Car in Every Garage'
- 18.50 Oscar Narud & Tomek Rygalik: Sum up
- 19.10 Open discussion

Participation is free of charge! Obligatory reservations at: open@design-in-residence.org; please write Reservation in the title and include your name and surname.

Rooted Design for Routed Living. Alternative Design Strategies.
www.design-in-residence.org

Realized by:
Centre for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle
02-467 Warszawa, ul. Jazdów 2
tel.: +48 22 628 12 71/3, fax: +48 22 628 95 50
www.csw.art.pl

artists-in-residence laboratory
tel.: +48 22 628 12 71/3 ext.131
www.csw.art.pl/a-i-r

Curators: Marianna Dobkowska, Ika Sienkiewicz-Nowacka
Curator at nk: Markus Degerman
Coordinator: Ula Siemion
Collaboration: Anna Ptak
Fundraising: Agnieszka Sosnowska
Professional Guidance: Oscar Narud, Tomek Rygalik

Public Relations:
Piotr Partyka

Organizers:



Patron of a-i-r laboratory:



Partners:



Media partners:



Project's Partner:
nordic artists' centre
N-6963 Dale NORWAY
tel.: +47 5773 7220
www.nkdale.no

Director: Markus Degerman
Coordinator: Jasmina Bosnjak

Supported by a grant from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA Financial Mechanism and the Norwegian Financial Mechanism.



Oscar Narud, Tomek Rygalik

Longevity - built to last

Usable, not re-usable!
Design, not re-design!
Invention, not re-invention!

Many products are effectively discarded long before their time has come. Alternatively, they break down and are no longer useful, in which case they are thrown away without having served their purpose for as long as they could have: hence, they are wasteful. How can we make things last longer? How can we prolong the lifespan of a product?

There are obviously some obvious answers to this question, and already industry has approached them, but I think that in our 'throw away' society, the challenge will lie in managing to sustain a product's value over time.

Things we have for a lifetime are things that are useful, well made and quite possibly less governed by trend or fashion than by function. A personal example of mine is a hammer that used to be my grandfather's and now is mine. It still serves its purpose, and does exactly what I require a hammer to do, and so I'm not thinking about replacing it. In many ways, it also has a sentimental value to me which, for me, adds another layer of attachment to this product. It is enduring on all levels.

'Design is mostly a one shot deal, meant to present an identity and to immediately convince observers of an idea, or to seduce them to buy, or both. This immediacy is starting to be a nuisance.' (Ed van Hinte, *Eternally Yours. Time in Design: Product, Value, Sustenance*, Rotterdam: 010 Publishers; 2004, p. 75.)

Of course anticipating the future should be part of any new design work, but it should be less governed by trend and fashion, which ultimately will become the product's downfall, and more tailored for longevity – longevity in terms of aesthetics, function and its physical construction. Maybe instead of this 'immediacy' Ed van Hinte mentions above, longevity could become a new selling point, a new point of seduction? A point to notice in our throw-away society is that we as consumers are very

much detached from the process of making the things we use, and therefore we are confused about their quality. We also don't see the value in using things longer. Years ago we would normally know the shoemaker working on our well crafted shoes, or even have seen the cow which would provide the leather. That is why we cherished the shoes, took care of them, and owned them for many years. The shoes would serve us well, age with us, and age beautifully.

Especially in these times of economic recession, one has to spend one's money wiser, become more creative and ultimately more caring about what one possesses. The theme of longevity revolves round how things are made, their function and aesthetics, but ultimately, the challenge lies in how to sustain value over the course of time. What makes the object unique?

A possible route to pursue would be diversity, something not led by fashion or trend but rooted e.g. in the particulars of a place, influenced by local culture, nature and know how. All of us have a sense of belonging, a heritage and a viewpoint on the past. These are factors that most people can relate to, memories that go deeper than the immediate, and thus are not scrutinized as readily.

It is important that such a project, or topic, should not only exist in a romantic and nostalgic context, but actually offer something new by drawing from tradition, using modern technology and building for tomorrow's demands. So although the initial impression may well be modern, it can still be deeply rooted in historical aspect that make us understand its origin and appreciate it.

This can, of course, take shape in a number of ways; it could be expressed through graphics or colours; it could be based on the use of certain materials and means of construction, on the methods in which we make use of these materials today, in light of new knowledge and technology; ideas could originate purely from the perspective of usage. Apart from the obvious, it may well be a step in the 'right' direction: towards the theme of longevity.

Questions:
Is the topic linked with memories? Short term memory and long term memory. Short term is what we pick up on 'dezeen' and from current design magazines, it's immediate; long term memory is more 'selective', more emotional, and records e.g. toys and objects from childhood. Is there a link to be drawn here somewhere in terms of immediacy and longevity?

When we say longevity, what does that mean, how long is long enough and how does this vary from object to object?

Take the paper or Styrofoam coffee cup. It is used for a brief few minutes and goes to recycling or ends up in the landfill, unlike the metal cups or porcelain sets of our ancestors, passed down from generation to generation. Unfortunately, the same goes for furniture. Things don't last long. They fall apart or fall out of fashion very quickly, leaving place for new ones. It is sad, but landfills will be the main evidence of our contemporary culture.

14.00

Usable, not reusable

This title is by no means a critique of DIY or recycling. In fact, in many ways, it could be considered as something of a homage. One could argue that the DIY approach exists due to the ‘failure’ of the original object, and the limits of the industry that created it. The title aims to provoke thought, and outline a different approach at the stage of conceiving a new product.

Instead of thinking of ways to reuse and recycle what is old and discarded, we could eradicate the problem to a large extent by re-evaluating our approach to new objects altogether. The subject of longevity is closely knit with physical structure, function, emotion, adaptability, and the challenge to sustain a product’s value over time, more so than with what seems to govern the mainstream industry today: immediacy, trend and fashion.

In many ways it appears we are at the moment being dictated to by the industry, as opposed to the opposite; and whilst industry

Oscar Narud (b. 1978) grew up in Oslo, Norway where much of his time was spent drawing cross sections of pirate boats on millimetre paper loaded with canons, ammunitions and a vast array of treasures. Following a move to London, a BA (Hons) degree from Central St.Martins and an MA from the Royal College of Art this keen sense of illustration is something he still uses as a ‘tool’ directly to inform his three dimensional work.

How to marry the two elements of drawing and a physical outcome is very much a process of discovering what works and what doesn’t. There is no conclusive point but more an evolving series of projects. In a more physical sense his work centres around our daily domestic rituals and habits, with attention to usable yet original solutions, often drawing inspiration from the more temporary or ‘home-made’ possibilities of our everyday product landscape.

Alongside developing products Oscar also does interiors, most recently finishing a bar refurbishment at the ‘Queen of Hoxton’ in London. Oscars Product related work has been exhibited in amongst others various locations in the UK (in London at Aram Gallery, the

Design Museum, Great Eastern Hotel, Olympia National Hall), Spain (‘Instituto Europeo di Design and Hotel Puerta de America in Madrid, LaBoral, Gijon), numerous galleries in Milan including InterNos and Zeus gallery, Germany and most recently in Norway (Design fra Nord). Alongside exhibitions and built work he has been featured in numerous articles in leading design publications including ‘ID Magazine’, ‘Wallpaper’ and ‘ICON’. He has also worked free lance for amongst others, El Ultimo Grito and Architect Nigel Coates.

Tomek Rygalik was born in Łódź, in 1976. As a child, he used to watch his father put together everyday objects such as a desk lamp or a lawnmower by himself; in those days, they were rare commodities. This was his first brush with design.

He has studied Architecture and City Planning at the Technical University of Łódź, as well as Industrial Design at the New York Pratt Institute (BA/Hons). After spending several years working for US design companies, he enrolled in a Master’s course at the Royal College of Art in London,

Oscar Narud, Tomek Rygalik

makes us all the same, this is in fact not the case. Is there room for uniqueness and diversity within mass production?

The talk will loosely introduce the subject of longevity within a world of products and interiors to kick-start the workshop, asking questions rather than attempting to answer them. Another function of the talk will be to outline the program of activity for the participants and attempt to set the tone for the group.

where he began work as a member of the academic staff soon after his graduation.

Today, he can boast numerous prizes and implemented designs. Companies with which he works regularly include Moroso, Artek, Iker, Noti, Vox, Heal’s, ABR, and Ideal Standard. He teaches design at the Faculty of Industrial Design of Warsaw’s Academy of Fine Arts.

Tomek Rygalik’s projects are characterised by resourcefulness, which he calls an important feature of Polish design acquired through the necessities of harder times; the student projects he supervises also display this trait.

His projects have been featured at many exhibitions worldwide, including Berlin, London, Milan, Munich, New York, Tokyo, and Valencia.

He has published extensively in such titles as ‘Blueprint’, ‘Experimenta’, ‘ICON’, ‘Interni’, ‘Wallpaper’, as well as the ‘New York Times’ and the ‘Financial Times’.

16.40

Decay and Design

Decay represents the loosening of our control over the material world: an active process that reverses the intentions of the living. Whereas the architect wants to build a house, decay wants to tear it back down. It is both a physical and psychological force and is a constant reminder of the fragility of our existence.

Using a broad range of images including personal travel documentation, collected objects and the work of both designers and common people, the lecture looks at several ways that humans have responded to decay: fighting with it, designing around it, and designing with it. Peter Marigold will introduce his work in relation to these themes and focus on how experiments in the studio that have responded to this can be translated into concepts for mass producible designs.

Born in London in 1974, **Peter Marigold** followed a path from sculpture at Central Saint Martins into theatrical and event scenography. In 2005 he joined the Design Products (Platform 10) course at the RCA under Ron Arad and since graduation has focused almost solely on furniture design. In 2007 he was awarded an Esmee Fairbairn bursary for his exhibition at the Design Museum in London and his subsequent show with the British Council as one of the ‘Great Brits’ at the Milan Furniture Fair was followed by an invitation to create the ground floor installation for Paul Smith in Milan. Working with both galleries and manufacturers his work continues to be exhibited in both the UK and abroad including the Milan Furniture

fair, Design Miami, Stavanger 2008 (Norway), and MoMA New York.

»As a child I was obsessed by the things I found in the street, small bits of plastic and metal, strange pieces of wood, springs, screws and light bulbs. I developed a strange posture, always looking down at the floor in case I missed something as I walked. I was driven by the idea of discovering something fundamentally unique in the environment, something secret that illuminated the basic nature of the material world – almost like looking at atoms through a lens. I hoarded these little objects in boxes, sometimes building models and toys out of them, and this way of working has stayed with me ever since: at

Peter Marigold

As a born and bred Londoner, the designer will also look at the nature of how decay has affected this sprawling city during his life and how this in turn affects the creative responses of those working there. As an example he will introduce the work of the London based Okay Studio collective – of which he is part.

first through the use of found objects, and now by investigating the primitive building blocks of geometric forms that make up the world around us. I consider this process something like an ‘archaeology of ideas’: a process in which by digging (physically) inside a form or material, discoveries are made that throw new light on the object.»

14.25

Martin Kaltwasser

Neither IKEA nor VITRA but D.I.Y. The city as a resource for the art of bricolage* of Köbberling & Kaltwasser

The lecture *Neither IKEA nor VITRA but D.I.Y.* documents the artists’ works and the possibilities for reinvention and reposition it showcases. It also presents the metamorphosis of cost-free resources from waste found on the streets and elsewhere into materials used in their projects. Their artistic activities thus show that one can realize notable and very effective works with the help of well-conceived logistics and a minimum of financial means.

Martin Kaltwasser and Folke Köbberling are convinced that the real question is not whether households should contain the cheap slave-works of IKEA or the luxury products of VITRA. The question should ask if there exists an alternative to the hegemonic dogma of consumerism, passivity, exploitation, and destruction, which constitute the existing ideology of our daily urban life. The artists are giving examples of alternative strategies, products and techniques that could lead to more sustainability, creativity, communication, and pluralism; they could also encourage a greater level of identification with products, the urban public sphere, and with social life.

The Berlin based artists **Martin Kaltwasser** (b. 1965) and **Folke Köbberling** (b. 1969) have been working on projects concerning the use of (cost-free) resources in urban space since 1998. Their work is present in houses, installations, exhibitions, objects, and concrete interventions, and encompasses topics pertaining to the public sphere, control, self-organization and informal use. Through these channels, the artists critically question the conditions of city life in the context of rationalization and privatization. They treat urban space as a field of experimentation that can

be practically transformed by simple methods and participative activities. Martin Kaltwasser studied Art at the Nuremberg Academy of Plastic Arts and Architecture at the Berlin Technical University. Since 1995, he has worked in inter-disciplinary and participatory projects with architectural and town-planning themes, addressing also fields such as public space, self-organisation, informal architecture, and economy. Recent projects and exhibitions (with Folke Köbberling): ‘Model House’ in frames of the project ‘Urban Realities: Focus Istanbul’ at the Martin Gropius Bau,

The lecture will show examples of the artists’ artworks in a slide show. It will give a view into the theory behind their work, and feature movies of their housing projects as well as the research of free city resources. The audience will be offered very practical information on ways in which everybody can immediately turn his/her city into a living place.

*) bricolage (Fr.): to tinker; to do handicrafts
» There still exists among ourselves an activity which (...) we prefer to call ‘prior’ rather than ‘primitive.’ This is what is commonly called ‘bricolage’ in French. In its old sense the verb ‘bricoler’ applied to ball games and billiards, to hunting, shooting and riding. It was however always used with reference to some extraneous movement: a ball rebounding, a dog straying or a horse swerving from its direct course to avoid an obstacle. And in our own time the ‘bricoleur’ is still someone who works with his hands and uses devious means compared to those of a craftsman.» (Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind*, University of Chicago Press, 1966, pp. 16–17).

Berlin; House building_05-1, International Week of Informal Construction, Berlin-Gropiusstadt; Plan05, Forum of New Architecture, Cologne; ‘Total Advertising’, Alexanderplatz Underground station, Berlin, 2004; ‘Crash site Airbus A 380’ Bremen Centre for Building Culture, 2004; ‘Flexi-space – saving up space’ at the Wolfsburg Society of Art, 2004; ‘Telescope’ on the Warsaw Bridge, Berlin, 2005. In 2003 he co-organised the exhibition ‘Learning from*’ in the New Society for the Plastic Arts in Berlin and at the Kunsthalbe Exnergasse in Vienna.

Luis Eslava

15.30

Daily Life Objects, its Design and its Language

We cannot remove objects from our existence: we live surrounded by objects, objects that belongs to our lives. Some are horrible, some are beautiful, some are essential, some are superfluous. They have a definite influence on our culture, our way of life, our perception; their function and form shape our lives. They are the most significant elements for the visual communication that occurs between objects and us. In the same way, scenes from the daily life of humans have become, as civilizations, integral parts of history, testimonies of our day-to-day existence.

Everyday objects allow us to recognize our environment. They can inspire all kind of contradictory feelings in us, and there can be no doubt that we frequently have affairs with certain objects. We relate to them with love, friendship, or hate; we

give them a symbolic character related to somebody who came before us, their origin, any kind of sentimental association. Memory is key factor in creating these affective links.

From materials to forms, from design to economy, objects are, little by little, leaving the stage of simplicity. Every day, they determine our social class, culture, personality, who and how we are. Objects become vital to us. We are adding aspects and touches in an attempt to generate a wider communication between objects and humans; these are essential for the designer and the user of these objects.

‘To be original is to return to the origin’ (Ignacio Perez-Arnal)

Achievements: Delta de Plata award in 2007, from Spain’s Industrial Design Association. INJUVE Young designer award from the Spanish ministry of Work and Social Issues, 2006.

‘I find the identity of the materials important, and I try to take them outside of their natural context. Coconut fibre, for example, is a material that is frequently used on the inside of insoles or mattresses, and usually hidden from view. Meanwhile, we strive to highlight its natural beauty, texture, and properties. Making use of a material’s characteristic traits to reduce manufacturing processes can functional,

symbolic, humorous, and graphically expressive at the same time. This approach is based on experimenting with new materials and constructing new typologies of objects – trying to take humour a little more seriously.’

17.45

Roberto Feo

Abandon/ed Architectures: ‘A Chicken In Every Pot and a Car in Every Garage’

‘A Chicken In Every Pot and a Car in Every Garage’ was Herbert Hoover’s 1928 slogan for his US Presidential campaign, and it outlined a vision of prosperity for the USA – one which, in a way, has become globally accepted. When reading out the same quote today, we can easily interpret it almost in the opposite way, as a vision of a society that questions its over-consumption and the impact it has on our world (real food and only ONE car in every garage). What does it mean a sustainable world? Is it only about how we do? Shouldn’t it rather be about what we are doing? Do we need new ways of relating to our world? Going further – do we perhaps need new worlds to relate to? And why not do so!

Abandon/ed Architectures is the centre of an ongoing project by El Ultimo Grito. Considering systems (architectures) as sets of rules that mediate our engagement with and response to our own environments, the members of their group use their work as designers and curators to investigate three different interpretations of its title: “Abandon/ed Architectures” as architectures (systems) that are either physically abandoned or left in the public arena, where they are reinterpreted by subsequent users; architectures which have been left behind, and eventually disappeared, because

Roberto Feo is a designer, curator and academic. He was born in London in 1964, but grew up in Madrid, Spain. He completed a course in Sociology at the Complutense University in Madrid before moving to London in 1990. He has studied Furniture Design at the London College of Furniture, and obtained his MA in Furniture Design at the Royal College of Art in 1997. Since 1997, he has been co-directing El Ultimo Grito with his partner Rosario Hurtado, and, under its umbrella, he has undertaken a great variety of work, ranging from commercial design for clients such as Magis,

British Airways, Marks & Spencer, Lavazza, to installations, research, critical writing, and curating for museums and galleries.

El Ultimo Grito’s work continuously researches our relationships with objects and culture, exploring them across disciplines in a wide variety of projects. Their work is part of the permanent collections of museums such as the MoMA in New York, the V&A Museum in London, or the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam.

Since 1999, Feo has been Principal Lecturer at the Design Products Department of the Royal

College of Art in London, where he co-directs Platform 10 study group with Daniel Charny. From 2006, he has enjoyed the position of Senior Research Fellow at the Design Research Department at Kingston University.

Workshops

Closed workshops in which participants will address the various aspects of artists’ lives and work and strive to find spatial solutions for artists’ workspaces will take place on March 21-22, 2009. The participants’ work will be available for viewing from 19:00 on Sunday, March 22, in the laboratory room of the Centre for Contemporary Art.

Leaders of the project groups and workshops authors: Oscar Narud, Tomek Rygalik

project group:
Oystein Austad
Maja Ganszyniec
Amy Hunting
Pawel Jasiewicz
Ola Mirecka
Trond Nicholas Perry
Jonas Ravlo Stokke
Jakub Szczesny

workshops team:
Kuba Bąkowski
Sławomir Budaj
Grzegorz Cholewiak
Magda Czapiewska
Cecilia Dreyfert
Monika Elikowska-Opala
Anders Jakobsen
Lotte Karlsen
Gosia Lipińska
Franziska Muller
Karol Murlak
Joar Nango
Dorota Pakula vel Rutka
Robert Pludra
Silje Figenschou Thoresen
Kim Thome
Marta Wycech
Lukasz Wysoczyński