

**B**-*col  
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## Meet People | Discover objects | Enjoy Brussels

*Platform for Belgian creatives. Bringing their fascinating work to be seen. The focus is on unique items and limited series. The monumental form and aesthetics are given priority over functionality. Experiments with materials and techniques lead to objects that surprises and moves. We are happy sharing these upcoming talents who are proud to be Belgian...*

We are thrilled to announce the upcoming fifth edition of the design initiative B-collective. Last edition B-collective started with a focus on circularity in design. We all know it's currently top priority to reduce any possible impact on the environment. It makes me happy to see that Brussels became a forerunner on that topic. It's essential to assess our progress and inspire customers to make conscious and responsible choices. But are we making enough progress?

The fifth edition aims to explore this principle further and deeper. We start from a desire to sharpen our ambitions, to take a critical look at what has already been done and consciously take steps in the right direction. In any case, B-collective wants to highlight the work of young talent, of strong up-and-coming designers. For this edition, more than ever, we want to involve our future as a full-fledged player on top of aesthetics. What makes that a design consciously or unconsciously moves the future forward and trigger our attention?

At the Venice Architecture Biennale with 'The Laboratory of the Future' as the main theme, curator Lesley Lokko looks at how architecture can respond to the social and climatic challenges of today and tomorrow. She commented: "Architects have a unique opportunity to put forward ambitious and creative ideas that help us imagine a more equitable and optimistic future in common".

In the Belgian pavilion, the architects of the Brussels office Bento i.c.w. BC materials are unpacking 'In Vivo', an installation on regenerative architecture.

Their installation experiments widely with natural and living materials, including raw earth and mycelium. So inspiring! B-collective is obviously very honoured to include Bento architecture and their object 'stool 17' made out of mycelium as one of our participants.

Visiting Anthony Leenders in his studio in Ghent, I was impressed at the layering of his work. For sure his work expresses an ecological awareness and consists of recycled materials. But above that he reuses materials with deep respect and lets the material guide him. He tries to generate an awareness that is putting us back in contact with nature and 'the self within the whole'.

By playing with time, balance, light and diverse natural materials and growth processes he evokes a meditative experience. By looking at his work you enter a mysterious world, a world where silence has a place.

Talking with designers about their passion, their way of thinking and working... helps us to understand what it's all about. There is nothing that brings us more directly to a creator's thinking than their working environment.

During my visit to the beautiful studio of Laure Kasiers I had the opportunity to understand her highly artisanal work. She took the time to explain the whole manufacturing process. The pieces are all handmade using an impressive alternative technique that she developed herself, which involves using recycled fibres from old factory stocks. She uses ribbons upright, on edge, and it's this manipulation that shapes the design. There's no weaving, knitting or tufting. Wow! The beautiful organic patterns emerge naturally from the gesture. The shapes seem to come straight out of nature, your imagination takes over: the scope of a microscope, an aerial view of the earth...

Later that week I met up with Marijke in a coffee bar, we were in the middle of a heatwave so we ordered a glass of water instead of a coffee :-). I was immediately impressed by her passion for bio-based. Her in-depth research in organic waste streams comes first for her. She regards her sculptural objects as degradable, for her it's not necessary they should stand the test of time. With her collection Kaffa, she explores the potential of coffee grounds as a raw material for bio design. The dark-coloured material exudes a warm atmosphere, very inviting. She hopes to connect with her objects, just as a cup of coffee brings people together. Fantastic after all!

With Robin I made an appointment in his studio in the centre of Brussels. I didn't expect to find an artist's studio in an office district. Arriving at an old post office with no name on the bell, I thought I was mistaken, but Robin was suddenly standing in the doorway and before I knew, I was at the very back of the building in his wonderful world of sculptures. Robin breathes new life into old tree stumps. The transformation from a tree to an object resembles a conversation, a journey, looking for the right way to use time and tools. Although no two sculptures are the same, together, they form a harmonious family.

Just days before the Vomo's exhibition in Mechelen, I met up with Dries. The students were all busy building up their final expo. Among all the dismantled pieces and vacuums, there was 1 beautifully lined-up final object, waiting especially for me: the stool kurk-kruk. All Dries Truyers' designs emphasise sustainability. To make the stool, Dries himself grinds bottle corks into small pellets. He then binds these with organic glue. Dries gets the wood from companies active in the veneer industry. It is the core of a tree trunk left over when making peeling veneer. So the circle is round and has no end except that the stool is blissfully soft!

People who visited previous editions know my weakness for ceramics. Liesbet's beautifully balanced tableware has been a beloved feature of previous editions. This year, she combines her 2 strong talents into a magical combination: ceramics and graphics. She combines beautiful patterns on pared-down strong shapes. Breath taking... In contrast, Jessie Booth's work is playful, organic and above all surprising. Her work is promising and we are going to hear a lot more from her, pay attention...

Arthur and Charlotte both take old pieces and, according to their own style, create beautiful new compositions out of them. Arthur grew up in his father's garage. Fascinated by seeing his father busy with metal, he reworks old pieces of metal into quirky utilitarian objects. The obvious and traditional connections play an essential role. Inversions and bends are neither hidden nor obscured.

Charlotte's work starts from collecting existing jewellery at flea market's that she uses as material and as inspiration. They are everyday jewellery of inferior quality, mostly out of fashion. She selects jewels that become interesting just because of their flaws. From her collection of trinkets, she creates new jewellery using subtle transformations and assemblages with a twist and a touch of imperfection.

Human beings will always surround themselves with objects, but perhaps the more they make a more conscious choice. Are they open to biodegradable objects or perhaps reusable in other ways?

What is not new but is increasingly important is the materials from which objects are made. Do they not harm our living environment? Perhaps they help reduce existing mountains of waste?

I can't wait to discover it together with all of you!

I feel honoured to exhibit the work of these designers in an unforced environment. And there is an excess of young talent who wants to meet up with others and share inspiring stories. Background and language doesn't matter, a fascinating mixture brings interesting dialogue about beautiful objects. Talking to the designers brought me into all kind of interesting stories and maybe it will carry you away. Stories about materials, techniques, about contemplation, about re-assembling, about international experiences, about beauty ... And of course, about the passion for making!

B-collective is a Brussels-based design initiative by Sophie Laenen, architect since a while. It is located in the Rue du Midi & the Rue Rouppe in the center of Brussels on walking distance of the Grande Place and the Sablon. This year on two locations!

#### **POP-UP\_B-Collective:**

From 14 September 2023 till 20 October 2023:

Friday and Saturday free entrance from 01pm till 06pm.

Thursday's by appointment.

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