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## HKDI Gallery Explores The Role of Design In The Environmental Crisis With 'Waste Age: What Can Design Do?' Exhibition



**(Hong Kong, 7 February 2022)** Hong Kong Design Institute (HKDI) and its affiliate HKDI Gallery, present *Waste Age: What Can Design Do?*, a touring exhibition from The Design Museum, London, which opened on 3 February 2023. The exhibition focuses on what design can do to tackle the critical problem of waste and its environmental consequences across the globe.

The 'Waste Age: What Can Design Do?' exhibition exposes society's 'take, make and waste' linear economy, which has created an environmental crisis, and explores what design can do to rethink the way we produce and consume goods. It reveals the visionary designers who are transforming waste into valuable resources and developing new materials and systems to reduce waste and its impact on our planet. By promoting new – and old – ways of living with nature, design can help steer us to a cleaner and more sustainable future. Featured designers include Formafantasma, Stella McCartney, Fernando Laposse, Bethany Williams, and Phoebe English.

In addition to these international efforts, numerous regional designers have been striving to ease the problem of waste. The 'Waste Age: What Can Design Do?' exhibition at d-mart also presents a range of examples from Asia, that cover a wide range of topics. These include the successful case of "The

Billies System”, a textile recycling process that closes the loop of waste from the fashion industry, the “BioChar Cement and Mortar”, an innovative construction material and solution to combat the carbon dioxide emissions that wood waste produces in local landfill sites, and the “Skeleton Series-02”, a sculpture by local artist Vincent Lee that highlights the link between human behaviour and the pollution of oceanic ecosystems. Designer Kevin Cheung’s “BoomBottles” provide a playful example of the transformation of waste, turning an everyday item discarded daily in Hong Kong into a trendy portable outdoor speaker. Last but not least, the “ACACIA SOFA BENCH” by Roy Ng uses traditional woodworking techniques to incorporate waste timber in the design of a piece of furniture that is both beautiful and functional.

“I am very pleased to present an exhibition on one of the most impactful issues of our time at HKDI Gallery this year together with Design Museum, London,” says Dr Lay Lian ONG, Principal of HKDI & IVE (Lee Wai Lee). “The ‘Waste Age: What Can Design Do?’ exhibition presents the current crisis on waste and design’s role in addressing the problem. This is one good example of our endeavour to stimulate thoughts, foster collaborations, and generate discussions among students, staff and the general public; and in this case, to explore how design can transform our waste into valuable resources, thereby promoting new ways of living with the earth.”

The ‘Waste Age: What Can Design Do?’ exhibition reiterates the commitment of HKDI & IVE (Lee Wai Lee) to promote design education and reinforce the cultural and environmental links between international institutions and to facilitate knowledge exchange through partnerships with international museums and design schools. The ‘Waste Age: What Can Design Do?’ exhibition will run until 7 May 2023 at d-mart, HKDI.

“I am delighted that Waste Age has come to the Hong Kong Design Institute,” says Mr. Justin MCGUIRK, Chief Curator at the Design Museum. “This is an exhibition about one of the great challenges we face as a society – the sheer scale of our waste – and the way designers are trying to conceive of a post-waste future. If we embraced waste as an issue, instead of shying away from it, we would have to rethink so much of modern life. In that sense, it’s a potentially revolutionary topic.”

## **PEAK WASTE**

The first section of the exhibition, ‘Peak Waste’, features a timeline showcasing the history of waste in Hong Kong and globally. It begins in the 1700s, when waste processing was an unknown concept, and continues up to today, when rising levels of waste continue to be fuelled by humanity’s increasing and careless consumption. ‘Peak Waste’ confronts viewers with the epic scale of waste, through a birds-eye view of landfills in Hong Kong, installations such as a bottle-top chain made from more than 6,600 bottle tops collected from the beaches of Cornwall, England over a single winter, and even a large-scale waste tracker that allows visitors to follow their rubbish across the globe – making the case for urgent change.



*"Bottle-top chain" made from more than 6,600 bottle tops collected from the beaches of Cornwall, England.*

### **PRECIOUS WASTE**

Following on from the first section, the rest of the exhibition focuses on solutions and new ways of thinking about waste. In 'Precious Waste', visitors will learn more about the raw materials used in everyday products through Studio Drift's deconstructed objects and Sophie Thomas's library of materials in different states of recovery.

This section of the exhibition invites new dialogues about the use of the Earth's resources, highlighting the variety of uses and finishes of recycled materials, and drawing attention to designers who are leading the way in recycling waste into new resources. These include sustainable materials in fashion by Stella McCartney, Adidas and Bethany Williams; construction materials such as the building construction material made of biochar by Carbon Lite System, and wooden pallets, and new lives for post-consumer textile waste like The Billie System, creating recycled fibres from worn clothes.



*Sustainable materials in fashion by Stella McCartney, Adidas and Bethany Williams.*

## POST WASTE

'Post Waste' explores how designers are redefining fashion, construction, food, electronics, packaging and more through new circular methods of production. Visitors will discover examples of experimental designs being used in real-world applications such as furniture and even entire houses that are both designed to last and to be disassembled after use, as well as clothing, products and packaging made from natural materials such as coconut, algae, and corn husks. Furthermore, it shows that design sits prominently at the heart of the circular economy which can help achieve the goal of sustainable development.



*Examples of experimental sustainable designs being used in real-world applications.*

In line with social distancing measures, the exhibition will adopt a session-based policy with limitations to the number of visitors within the gallery. Visitors will be required to book their preferred timeslots in advance at [https://hkdigallery\\_exhibition2223\\_admission.eventbrite.com](https://hkdigallery_exhibition2223_admission.eventbrite.com) for timed visits. For the latest arrangements of the exhibition and its hygienic preventive measures, please refer to HKDI Gallery's website.

<b>"Waste Age: What Can Design Do?" – A Touring Exhibition from the Design Museum, London</b>	
Exhibition Period:	3 February 2023 until 7 May 2023
Opening Hours:	10:00 – 20:00
Venue:	d-mart, HKDI
Website:	<a href="https://www.hkdi.edu.hk/en/hkdi_gallery/exhibition/wasteage">https://www.hkdi.edu.hk/en/hkdi_gallery/exhibition/wasteage</a>
FB & IG:	hkdi.gallery
Enquiries:	3928 2566   <a href="mailto:hkdi-gallery@vtc.edu.hk">hkdi-gallery@vtc.edu.hk</a>
To download high-resolution images of the exhibition, please access <a href="#">this link</a> .	

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This press release is distributed by CatchOn, A Finn Partners Company, on behalf of Hong Kong Design Institute (HKDI).

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### **About Hong Kong Design Institute (HKDI)**

Hong Kong Design Institute (HKDI) is a member of VTC Group. HKDI was established in 2007 with the mission to be a leading provider of design education and lifelong learning, including architecture, interior and product design, communication design, digital media, and fashion and image design. With a view to providing professional designers for the creative industries, it promotes the “think and do” approach and encourages interdisciplinary synergy in its broad range of design programmes that cultivates students’ cultural sensitivities and sense of sustainability. HKDI maintains a strong network with industry and provides its students with essential practical experience. Overseas exchanges are actively arranged for students to broaden their international perspective.

Website: [www.hkdi.edu.hk](http://www.hkdi.edu.hk)

### **About HKDI Gallery**

HKDI Gallery is a dynamic exhibition arm of HKDI, which is dedicated to present the exposition of cutting edge, top-notch international exhibitions and contemporary issues on design. In addition, HKDI Gallery also aims to support HKDI as one of the centres of design education in the region and promote design culture in Hong Kong.

HKDI Gallery engages with parties at home and abroad, including internationally acclaimed museums, designers and curators. With contemporary design as the cornerstone, it presents a series of top-notch exhibitions every year ranging from; graphic design, architecture, fashion, product design, multimedia and so on. This has included the following; exhibition for Zaha Hadid Architects, the retrospective for the Pritzker Prize-winning Spanish architect Rafael Moneo, the solo exhibition for the renowned Japanese designer Dai Fujiwara, the solo exhibition for the Oscar-winning artist Tim Yip, the retrospective for Hong Kong design legacy Kan Tai-Keung, the Asian debut largest solo exhibition for one of the most influential German industrial designer Konstantin Grcic and the exhibition of Japanese posters in 20th century, etc.

Through international exhibitions, HKDI Gallery turns itself into an education venue where design students, design community and general public can learn from the masters’ works. It also actively engages with institute’s students and external students with tailor-made tours, talk and panel discussions.

Website: [www.hkdi.edu.hk/hkdi\\_gallery](http://www.hkdi.edu.hk/hkdi_gallery)

### **About The Design Museum:**

The Design Museum is the world's leading museum devoted to contemporary architecture and design. Its work encompasses all elements of design, including fashion, product and graphic design. Since it opened its doors in 1989 the museum has displayed everything from an AK-47 to high heels designed by Christian Louboutin. It has staged over 100 exhibitions, welcomed over seven million visitors and showcased the work of some of the world's most celebrated designers and architects including Paul Smith, Zaha Hadid, Jonathan Ive, Frank Gehry, Eileen Gray and Dieter Rams. On 24 November 2016, The Design Museum relocated to Kensington, west London. John Pawson has converted the interior of a 1960s modernist building to create a new home for the Design Museum giving it three times more space in which to show a wider range of exhibitions and significantly extend its learning programme. In April 2021, the Design Museum was awarded £5 million through the Government's Culture Recovery Fund: Repayable Finance programme.

Website: [designmuseum.org](http://designmuseum.org)