

## KUNSTHØGSKOLEN I OSLO → AVDELING DESIGN

Interiørarkitektur og møbeldesign

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BA-project by Sam Hübner, "Frihet i rörelse", explores how objects and habits change when living space decreases, in a case-study of student housing in a transformed silo.



Spinning off from Connecting Wool-research project, an installation-work by KHIO alumni Lydia Hann and Amanda Vesthardt, "Hyrdens Bro", exhibited at the National Museum.



Academia-industry collaboration between MA students Kjetil Smedal and Lloyd Achim Winter and Vitra within Designers' Saturday framework. The project, "The Wheel Turns", is a reinterpretation honouring the original testing machine used in the Eames Office in the 1940s to develop their iconic chairs.

# KHIO 2023

Following the agenda set-up by Arne Korsmo nearly 100 years ago, KHIO's objective to educate holistically thinking professionals for the future society has continually developed and stayed strong. Our track record with well employed MA alumni in key roles within the field is an indisputable signal of this. Our transdisciplinary approach, our contemporary interpretation of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* and the "romkunst" has paved our pedagogic and research ambitions; The Norwegian concept where the spaces and objects, interiors and furniture, are part of an integrated discipline addressing our cultural needs and ambitions to inhabit our society tomorrow. The key focus is thus on the **social spaces**, the

places where we negotiate a better future for both human and beyond-human actors, whether related to future living, work or our cultural belonging in a broader sense. Furthermore, the **material practices** play an essential role how to address our built environments with responsible approaches considering our fragile planet in the age of increasing material scarcity.

It has become status quo in academia to pragmatically reflect and react to the rapidly changing world. If aftermaths of COVID-19 and the presence of wars in our close vicinities are part of the new normal, the direct and indirect impacts obviously hit the education and research at the academia. Some of the more prominent ramifications in the last year have been the

vast economic cuts within the institution that have direct consequences to the quality of the education and research. While the academic design faculty is robust, resilient and creative to navigate through such uncertainties and crises, one can only speculate on all the negative outcomes for the future of our students and eventually to the professional field. Another serious drawback in the last year is the political shift in the tuition fee guidelines, hindering international students entering our education. This has both short- and long-term predicaments. On first instance to develop a future-proof learning milieu depends on high prioritisation on diversity of participants, to be able to learn and respect the multiplicity in our working environments.



KHiO's school-exhibition at the Designers' Saturday focused on the material research, showcasing both works by Mari Koppanen and Connecting Wool.



One of the objects from Mohammad Ghasemi's MA-project, "Timelessness: A playful routine".



Among several international DS Talks, here professor Kauppila discusses with Alfredo Häberli on current issues in design world, about the status of the industry and the place of the academia.



The DS Talks have also expanded beyond the main event. Here KHiO hosted a heated panel-discussion on the status of Interior Architecture in Norway by the key actors around the title: "Good, Better, Best Interiors?".

Eventually the lack of cultural heterogeneity will directly weaken the competitive advantage to create better and more inclusive living environments for our society. Short-sighted decisions with the tuition fees will thus have a greater negative impact in the long run.

Never-the-less of the current obstacles, the issues constantly also force us to responsibly question our profession's *raison d'être* over and over again; what kind of a world are we building, how is our discipline responding to it and how do we educate professionals to be prepared for that? It is thus a privilege to be in the frontline with the resilient students and co-teachers to critically examine what are we supposed to learn and how this should take place

within Interior Architecture and Furniture Design pedagogies, when ambiguity and uncertainty are constant factors. Thus, the everyday pedagogy is often picking up on these current concerns as topics to be scrutinised together with the students within their projects and courses. Moreover, our responsible approach to constantly recalibrate and critically question our society, our discipline and our profession, as ways of being together on our toes to develop a better future for all is deeply embedded in our educational and research objectives, both on curriculum level and in the everyday practices.

Our main public promotion of the year 2023 was anchored around the Designers' Saturday event in September where

we played an active role in developing further our initiated academia-industry collaborations. These were manifested through an umbrella of activities bringing together all the Norwegian higher education institutions in design, young designers and the respective producers and actors from the field. Some highlights were the school exhibitions, where KHiO presented the recent material research outcomes, both by the PhD candidates and from the Connecting Wool-project. Also, students collaborated with selected companies, such as Vitra, to create bespoke installations. Several KHiO alumni and students got also shortlisted for the Best Talents award. Furthermore, DS Talks with international keynotes were another pinnacle of the





Experiment from **JP Lasco's** MA-project, "Water City: Looking at Oslo Through Its Reflections".



Prototype from **Ali Onat Turker's** MA-project "Corporeal Spectator", in testing.

event; a concept we have been developing and taking further as a forum to address important topics in the field. As a spin-off, later in the autumn KHiO hosted another DS Talks, this time focusing on the professional status of the Interior Architecture. A full house of audience witnessed a heated debate on the topic by the leading figures from the field.

Our focus on cross-disciplinary **material knowhow** and international affairs have stayed strong. KHiO hosted again our Japanese partners in Oslo within the ongoing Connecting Wool-project, including various activities and events, including exhibiting works at the National Museum, International Library of Fashion Research and within Designers' Saturday.

We also organised yet another international material symposium, this time titled; «**Talking Matters**», where international speakers debated on the language of the materials, and how we articulate the essence of tactility. Furthermore, our talented PhD candidates **Mari Koppanen** and **Ola Sendstad** continue their invaluable contribution into the material discourse through their terrific practice-led research works.

Our teaching and research faculty positions consists of the following members: Professor and Head of Programme **Toni Kauppila**, Professor **Sigurd Strøm**, Associate Professor **Vigdis Ruud**, Associate Professor **Pavlina Lucas**, Assistant Professor **Erlend Skjeseth**, Assistant



BA2/3 course Space and Performance collaborates with the opera, in this case with a piece "Giulio Cesare". Course is led by **Vigdis Ruud**.

Professor **Isak Wisløff**, Assistant Professor **Patrick Grung** and PhD candidates **Mari Koppanen** and **Ola Sendstad**.

Regarding the graduates for Master of Design in 2023, the students brought again forward a broad range of issues.

**Ali Onat Turker's** project "Corporeal Spectator" investigates our ambition for ultimate comfort in our current society, especially related to home and its furniture. He questions then what would that mean eventually for our bodies and how our designs are related to this evolution that is changing us.

**JP Lasco's** project "Water City: Looking



BA2 course on Structure concentrates on the earliest stages of building analysis at Folk museum. Course led by guest teacher **Amandine Kastler**.



MA1 course "social" collaborated with the Intercultural Museum in Oslo within an exhibition "Beyond Barcode", where future flooded Oslo was one scenario. Here **Kjetil Smedal's** project explores the future role of carpentry when wood as material is only reduced to scraps. Course led by **Toni Kauppila**.



MA1 course "context" looked into our primary Norwegian ecosystem, the woods, in a course titled "For the Forest, From the Forest". **Ana María Bermúdez's** project addresses scraps and leftovers from forestry industry, and how to reappropriate these wastes to novel applications. Course was run jointly by **Toni Kauppila** and **Ola Sendstad**.

at Oslo Through Its Reflections" poetically explores the materiality and immateriality of natural reflections as seen in the bodies of water in Oslo. Through examples from landscape paintings Lasco brings forward how the history of the city is mirrored back into itself, and how the spatiality of the city is expanded through Oslo's fjord-side and the rivers like Akerselva through reflective spaces.

In his project "Timelessness: A playful routine" **Mohammad Ghasemi** looks into the paradox of contemporary society favours fast-pace over the conditions of hesitation as slowing down. Ghasemi has produced playful and experimental products that tap into our daily lives by making subtle

alterations, as for new ways of interacting things and questioning our routines over time.

**Rita Chelagat Kinuthia's** project "Inside My Suitcase: Insights into Contemporary Nomadic Life" examines contemporary nomadism, especially from women perspective. The precedent cultures such Maasai are paralleled with today's human migrations of many kinds. The nomadic life alters one's conception of home and its interior; the nomadic life unfolds anywhere and everywhere, relying on the portability. Kinuthia uses suitcases both as "mobile objects" and as "interiors" telling the diverse narratives in transition.