

Curatorial text  
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Sustainability and a responsible, environmentally friendly lifestyle are themes that are resonating more and more globally. It is necessary to start behaving in a considerate and ecologically-friendly way is no longer questioned by almost any reasonable authority. Yet, especially in the Czech Republic, the involvement of design in solving environmental problems is still in its infancy, and there are not many companies or individuals who would devote themselves to the issue on a long-term basis. However, design and its possibilities can be an ideal starting platform for setting new consumption habits. Well-thought-out product morphology, cleverly chosen materials and a conscious approach to production (including the incorporation of new technologies) are essential attributes that can offer new rules. Unfortunately, ecology and sustainability are being exploited for marketing and the classic greenwashing. How, then, do we distinguish between the pure motivation of companies that are aware of the need for change and those that are just cleverly jumping on the bandwagon? Hardly. The exhibition project of the Czech Centres does not have the ambition to lustrate companies and designers, and with a consistently critical look, the choice would perhaps be narrowed down even further. On the other hand, it wants to prove by the example of individual solutions and ideas that even seemingly partial realisations can represent a breakthrough in production and design in the future. For this reason, for the exhibition project, we sought out Czech companies and individuals who, with their specific ideas, show how design can be used skilfully for new consumption habits. In this context, we do not see design as an aesthetic effect in itself, but rather as a purely functional tool that offers a combination of practical and visually perfect qualities.

The exhibition project itself can be divided into three separate units. The first is real, concrete products that have been created under the banner of Czech companies and are commonly available on the market. These are products that may not represent the bulk of the companies' production, but their inclusion in the portfolio shows that even in the case of large furniture or glass manufacturers there is room for taking ecology and sustainability into account in production. The second level is represented by the product realisations of smaller studios or designers who are looking for their own ways to combine product design and sustainable aspects of creation. Most of the works on display are solitaires or small batch production whose main strength is the concept of upcycling, recycling and offering alternative material solutions. The third unit consists of new visions and ideologies created as part of school assignments in university studios and can be seen primarily as a thought-provoking premise of the potential of the future. By collaborating and merging all three units, there is a real chance that the Czech Republic will help set new rules and contribute to offering real solutions to the climate crisis. The individual products on display prove that we are moving in the right direction.