
2015 **Design for life**
99 projects for the real world



First temporary exhibition at
the Museu del Disseny de
Barcelona
19.02 - 17.05.15

Design for life

99 projects for the real world

The Museu del Disseny opens its first temporary exhibition

Designs that improve people's lives, the world around us and the society

An orange and blue IV stand with two smiling eyes that looks like a toy, a shopping cart with a built-in motor to give weary arms and legs a rest, or a drone fitted with special fire-fighting equipment to keep pilots and firemen out of harm's way. These three objects are obviously not comparable in size or complexity, but they have one fundamental thing in common: they were all designed to make people's lives easier. **Design for life** is the first temporary exhibition to be organised by the Museu del Disseny and seeks to be contemporary, reaching an international audience. Curated by Òscar Guayabero, it combines ninety nine objects created explicitly to provide day-to-day solutions and to improve society and the world around us. It offers a creative, innovative and socially engaged design that is sometimes so integrated into our lives that it goes unnoticed. Fifty per cent of the works are by Catalan and Spanish designers and the other fifty per cent by foreigners, offering an overview of a change that has occurred all over the world.



Flyox, unmanned seaplane.



Hovding. Airbag for cyclists.

It has been two months since the Museu del Disseny opened to the public with the four semi-permanent exhibitions devoted to object art, graphic design, product design and clothing, taking a heritage slant: showing the collections that the city has brought together over time and present a discourse with many different interconnections that enables visitors to discover authors, periods and styles. In addition to this ambitious heritage-centred activity, the new museum led by Pilar Vélez has decided to pursue a second, parallel path, enriching its discourse and striving to become a permanent centre for critical reflection on the concept and role of design and object art in today's world, as well as a space that welcomes new ideas born of analysis, research and innovation in a wide variety of fields and locations. Thus, the inaugural project of the Museu del Disseny includes **Design for life**. 99 projects for the real world, a large exhibition (around 3.000 m²) that offers visitors an insight into design that is different from that more commonly seen since the eighties, which usually focused on signature design.

Design for life, however, shows design as an act of mediation between different groups. The designer observes and speaks to the people, detects a problem and seeks a solution. There is interaction with users that leads to collective improvement. Beyond design as an added value and differentiating factor, as a precious object and museum piece, the exhibition reflects the process leading to the creation of objects, systems and applications and invites visitors to ask themselves what role does design play in today's world?

The example of Gual 120

A paradigmatic example of this approach is Gual 120, developed by the Urban Elements Department at Barcelona City Council in the nineties. It involves a set of granite pieces with a maximum 12% gradient in the centre that makes it easier to step from the pavement to the road. Initially designed during refurbishment work on the Rambla de Catalunya to make it wheelchair-accessible, it has offered improvement to families pushing prams, the elderly and, in general, to all of the city's pedestrians. It has spread from Barcelona to other cities around the world. It is an unnoticeable, inexpensive design that does not need great investment or sophisticated technology. The impact is very significant and helps make people's lives easier, improving the environment and benefitting society as a whole.



Gual 120. Pedestrian crossing system adapted to functional diversity

Design without ghettos

The idea of the curator Òscar Guayabero and the director of the Museu del Disseny, Pilar Vélez, involved fleeing from labels such as social design or design for the developing world, breaking down geographic, cultural and economic barriers and focusing on the work process and creation of the design, on its meaning and usefulness. From this point of view, there are not many differences between designs made for extremely fragile environments, in countries with few resources, and others that provide subtle solutions for more or less well-off environments or for our nearby outskirts, in neglected areas and neighbourhoods. The pieces speak, the methods merge, the same spirit emerges in different objects and systems. The names of the designers and companies take second stage to the conclusiveness of the reasoning and ideas, of the work process that requires the participation of users.

The case of the GiraDora pedal-powered washing machine

One of the sources of inspiration for the discourse of **Design for life** is Víctor Papanek, author of the book *Design for the Real World* (1971), who describes three ways of tackling a project. From a design studio in any western city: New York, London or Berlin. Working for a period in the developing world. Or –the third possibility—connecting the reality of the two countries, studying the needs of people in the field and ensuring, once the designer returns to his city, that the project progresses and the objects may be built using the material and human resources available. This was the case with GiraDora, a pedal-powered washer and spin-dryer that requires no electricity. Alex Cabunoc and Ji A You, students at the Art Center College of Design in Los Angeles, took part in a water-saving project in Peru. They saw the difficulties present and designed a cheap, portable appliance that is especially suitable for underdeveloped areas where water is scarce, as is the time that the women - dedicated to getting by with great difficulties on the domestic budget - spent on doing the laundry. In turn, it avoids the health problems arising from hours and hours of washing by hand. Simple materials were used (the drum is a plastic bucket like those used to carry liquids) and the unit price is 40 dollars.



GiraDora. Pedal-Powered Washing Machine

Are we changing the world with design? Yes, but with no great proclamations

Through this and other projects, the exhibition connects projects of today with the spirit of the Modern Movement from the early decades of the 20th century: design can change the world. It does so discretely, with no great proclamations or discourses. "As a mediator, design must abandon the belief that ideas come from strokes of genius –says Òscar Guayabero--. Users can provide extremely valuable information. Lasting solutions can come from contact and cooperation. Teams multiply the possibilities of success, especially if they are multi-disciplinary. At the end of the day, we must learn that design is just a part of a solution-seeking process and that it is the users who generate the answers." Mediation and empathy, distribution and participation are key words in this new design paradigm. An excellent example is the Silennis S020 project: a 4.8-metre long electric boat developed by a company from Gipuzkoa. Boats are generally full of obstacles that make wheelchair access impossible. The creators of this adapted boat have provided a waterline aft and have left the deck clear. One of the first buyers was a Swiss woman who loved sailing on Lake Geneva but who had been unable to sail for the past ten years. The Silennis S020 enabled her to recover her passion. Empathy: when she met the creators of the boat she wanted to hug them. But this accessible, clean and extremely elegant design is not just for people in wheelchairs.



Silennis S020. Electric and accessible boat

The lifeline: from the prenatal stage to the funeral urn

Design for life. 99 projects for the real world is also the result of group work involving the Museu del Disseny team and different professionals. Working alongside Òscar Guayabero, para-designer and creator of discourses involving design, were Daniel Julià (multimedia designer and expert in networks and data management), Petz Scholtus (expert in eco-design and founder of Pöko Design), Beppe Benenti (industrial designer, expert and historian in design for all) and Mar Llinés (designer at Fulfor, Design and Consulting). The exhibition is structured around six areas: **Design to connect** (transfer of information, digital environments, remote technologies), **Design to educate** (education, transmission of habits), **Design to heal** (health, prevention, diagnosis, treatments), **accessible Design** (design for all, facilitate difficult tasks), **sustainable Design** (alternative energies, recycling) and **Design to protect** (solutions for emergency situations, safety, risk prevention), on the understanding that in today's world any project must be sustainable and accessible. These six paths cross each other. The pieces are exhibited on low tables and can easily be seen from a wheelchair. Simple audiovisuals explain the context in which the object and the concept have been developed and the problem encountered at the start of the design process. The exhibition is structured around a lifeline, from the prenatal stage to the funeral urn.

Improvement, improvement

The starting point of most of these innovations involves day-to-day problems: crossing a street, taking the right dose of medicine or seeing clearly. Some are aimed at city-dwellers (an electric taxi, an urban bee-keeping system), while others cater for those living outside the city (a wind turbine for an easy energy supply). Some only make sense in the developed world (an accessible boat or a scanner simulator), while others represent significant improvements for people living in developing countries (affordable wheelchairs or portable Wi-Fi and charging docks). Behind these innovations is research based on the imaginative efforts of individuals to come up with new applications for objects that already exist (such as the motorised wheelchair), some of which seem to be the stuff of science fiction (plants that help detect mines, for one).

A debate forum

An auditorium has been prepared inside the exhibition where a programme of parallel activities takes place: from conferences to presentations of the objects and projects that can be seen in **Design for life**. The aim is for the exhibition to become a debate forum for professionals, students and anyone interested in design. At the end of the visit, there's a test area where visitors can try some of the objects exhibited and applications they have seen as a demo. This is a participative, open space that encourages touching and experimentation. One piece of data to start the debate: signature design makes up only 1% of all objects in the world and, despite this low percentage, most students would like to work in this area.

From an endoscopic pill to a hydroplane

One of the attractions of the exhibition is the wide variety of objects on show. One of the most spectacular (and largest) pieces is a hydroplane that is operated remotely, a drone, especially adapted to put out mountain fires. There are also a couple of emergency shelters that update the idea of the Cold War shelter, which are designed for natural catastrophes. An electric motorbike in a very attractive design to bring sustainable design to a sector (that of youngsters who screech around everywhere on their motorbikes) that had been left out until now. Sometimes it is a change in concept that improves performance, such as the vertical-bladed wind turbine (instead of horizontal as is usually the case), which is able to pick up wind in any direction. Other times it is a case of optimising resources, such as the new street lights being installed along the refurbished Paral·lel in Barcelona that are fitted with Wi-Fi, traffic control and even an ornamental lighting system that saves on Christmas light expenditure. From a pill for performing endoscopies to a hydroplane measuring over eleven metres in length, the nature and size of the object are less important than the idea, the work process and the benefits provided. Another case: Kigali Chair, a project created by Josep Mora and Clara Romani, which is merely a chair. Kigali Chair is designed as a series of activities in workshops and hospitals where different ways of making wheelchairs are shown, depending on the resources available, using a simple construction system that is adapted to the different user requirements in order to improve their mobility. It is especially designed for countries that suffer the consequences of anti-personnel mines, illnesses and amputations. All of the pieces in the exhibition have a slogan with a little bit of humour, which helps place its contribution. In the case of the Kigali project: "1 chair=1 wheelchair". The exhibition system, designed by Xavier Torrent, does not use screws and is designed so that all MDF wood can be reused. This invites visitors to ask themselves what happens to the exhibitions once they have ended. The graphic image of David Lorente is simple and clear and includes QR codes to expand on information.



Volta BCN. Electric motorbikes



Kigali Chair. System that modifies any chair into a wheelchair by zones

Parallel activities

During the exhibition, workshops and activities will take place.
For further information: www.museudeldisseny.cat



3D highly efficient sling Osteid Smart Brace

Deniz Karasahin
(TR), 2014



Low consumption lamp with a communication system incorporated

Columna Paral·lel-BCN

Montserrat Periel, Carles Villasur, Francesc Germà, Sara Ferrer, Philiphs.
Àrea Metropolitana de Barcelona per a Hàbitat Urbà de l'Ajuntament de
Barcelona
(CAT), 2013



Incubator for premature newborns

Embrace

Embrace Global
(USA), 2012



Electric and accessible boat

Silennis S020

Igor Esnal, Mikel Esnal, Jose Alegría - Silennis Boats SL
(ES), 2010



Assembly for wheelchair

Batec

Batec Mobility - Pau Bach, Lluís Bach, David Mora
(CAT), 2011



System that modifies any chair into a wheelchair

Kigali Chair Project

Josep Mora, Clara Romani
(CAT), 2012



Pedestrian crossing system adapted to functional diversity

Gual 120

Montserrat Periel, Màrius Quintana - Servei d'elements Urbans de
l'Ajuntament de Barcelona
(CAT), 1991



Electric motorbikes

Volta BCN

Diego Quiroga, Guillem Galiano, Oliver Pecharromán - Ànima Barcelona (CAT), 2013



Pedal-Powered Washing Machine

GiraDora

Alex Cabunoc, Ji A You, Kim Chow, Jonathan Beckhardt, Mariana Prieto (USA), 2011



Airbag for cyclists

Hövding

Anna Haupt, Terese Alstin - Hövding (SW), 2005



Drone, unmanned seaplane

Flyox I

Luis Carrillo - Singular Aircraft SL (CAT), 2012



Mine detonator

Mine Kafon

Massoud Hassani, Mahmud Hassari - Hassani Design (NL), 2011



Device that transforms any bike into an electrical bike

The Copenhagen Wheel

SENSeable City Lab, MIT - Superpedestrian Inc. (USA), 2009



Solar plug

Windows Socket

Kyuho Song & Boah Oh (KR), 2013

Useful information

Exhibition calendar

Inauguration: Wednesday 18th February at 19:30h
From February 19th to May 17th 2015

Opening times

Tuesday to Sunday, from 10 am to 8 pm
Closed: January 1, May 1, June 24 and December 25, and Mondays (except holidays)

Prices

Temporary exhibition **Design for life**: general, admission 4,4€; reduced admission, 3€

Permanent exhibitions: general admission, € 5; reduced admission, € 3
Combined permanent + temporary exhibition: general admission, € 7,5; reduced admission, €4,5

Admission free: Sunday afternoons, from 3 to 8 pm, and the first Sunday of each month
Prices of museum activities: please check the agenda

Free admission (with the appropriate accreditation): minors under 16 years; holders of the free Targeta Rosa "Pink Card" for senior citizens; members of ICOM (International Council of Museums); members of the Association of Museologists of Catalonia; professional tourist guides exercising their profession; formal education teachers accredited by school management; formal education teachers when accompanying groups of students; holders of the metropolitan pass for carers of people with disabilities; journalists, duly accredited; holders of the Barcelona Card.

Reduced admission prices (with the appropriate accreditation): unemployed people; holders of the reduced Targeta Rosa "Pink Card" for senior citizens; families, with a maximum of two accompanying adults, on condition that one is the father, the mother or the legal guardian (there must be at least one member under the age of 16 years); holders of Família Nombrosa large family cards; holders of Família Monoparental single-parent family cards; people aged from 16 to 29 years; people aged 65 years or more; holders of the Biblioteques de Barcelona

How to get there

Disseny Hub Barcelona Building
Plaça de les Glòries Catalanes, 37-38
08018 Barcelona

Metro: Line 1 (Glòries)

Bus: Lines 7, 92, 192, H12

Tram: Trambesòs T5, T6 - La Farinera

Bicing: Av. Meridiana - Metro Glòries Bicing station

Parking: Ona Glòries (C/ Ciutat de Granada, 173-175), Centre Comercial Glòries (Av. Diagonal, 208)

Contact

Communication

Xavier Roig
Tel. +34 932 566 800
xroig@bcn.cat

Press

MAHALA Comunicació
Víctor Palacio
Tel. +34 934 127 878 / +34 664 103 020
victor@mahala.es
