

Climate warriors

Stockings of discarded fishing nets, wooden tables planed by hand, a streetwear brand that hires Syrian refugees and designer furniture that still feels modern after more than 60 years in production. Those are just a few examples of design that makes a difference on the climate. On the following pages, you will meet eight designers who have all been appointed flag-bearers by the Swedish Design Movement.

Interviews:

Carolina Söderholm

In the work towards a more sustainable future, designers, architects and fashion designers play an increasingly vital role. The project Swedish Design Movement brings together players who in various ways push the development forward, from sole proprietors to big design companies.

The state-funded project is run by the Swedish Institute in partnership with Svensk Form, Architects Sweden, the Swedish Fashion Association and the Swedish Federation of Wood and Furniture Industry, representatives from the cities of Gothenburg, Malmö, Stockholm and Umeå, as well as the region of Western Sweden, Business Sweden and Visit Sweden.

One purpose of the project is to highlight Sweden as a pioneer in sustainable design, and thereby inspire others. For the government, it is also a matter of strengthening Swedish export of sustainable products and services.



ClaessonKoivistoRune.

In order to reach out with their message nationally and internationally, they have appointed a number of flag-bearers – companies and individuals who have demonstrated outstanding sustainability efforts. No room for greenwashing here, all participants are driven by a genuine commitment to making the world a better place.

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On the following pages, you will meet eight of them: Stefan Sjöberg from the architect firm Kjellander Sjöberg, Tilda Lagerqvist from Lammhults, designer Emma Olbers, Ola Rune from architect and design firm ClaessonKoivistoRune, Linn Frisinger from stocking company Swedish Stockings, Angelo da Silveira from the streetwear brand Diemonde, Sonnie Byrling from Swedese and Dag Duberg from Tarkett. ■



Swedish Stockings.

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Manifesto

Design plays a key role in the transition to a sustainable society. Design can turn information into action, and so of course, idea into business. Design can entice people to make wise, long-term decisions. Design can close the circle.

Influencing how we live our lives is nothing new in Swedish design. Driven by society's evolution, Swedish designers have shaped profound social reforms and fast-footed unicorns alike. Innovations that have forever changed our daily life.

And now, it's time again. The world must transition, and rapidly so, in order to meet the global challenges. Some argue that it's already too late, but humanity has done it before: found solutions that no one thought were possible. Encouraged by the next generation and supported by politicians, academics and the industry, the creative sectors are taking the leading role in achieving the goals of Agenda 2030.

Architects, fashion designers, researchers and designers! Craftsmen, engineers and developers in Sweden and all around the world! Under a common flag, we can push the development in the right direction.

From the glassworks to the lab, from the forest to the drawing table, from north to south, locally and globally - let us do what we can to hasten the transition through groundbreaking design.

A new era for our design nation of Sweden starts now.

/ Swedish Design Movement

At the architecture firm Kjellander Sjöberg, shipyard ruins are converted into modern office spaces and London's derelict industrial areas into waterfront neighbourhoods with social ambitions. One of the founders is Stefan Sjöberg, who designs tomorrow's rooms and cities with demolition metal, a ruler and dreams.

What does sustainability mean to you in your position as an architect and in your company?

– It gives our work direction, meaning and content. We work a lot with architecture and plans that create structures and opportunities for people to live sustainably and meaningfully. Our most fundamental perspective is how much resources and materials we consume when we build. The second is how daily life will work when it comes to transportation, energy, the environment and everyday movement around the neighbourhood. To create a mix of housing, offices and commerce, social contexts and green areas.

Why did you choose this path?

– Architecture touches so many people. I'm spurred on by working creatively in complex processes that are also driven by technical and financial aspects. Drawing a summerhouse is fun. But it's even more so dreaming about how a city will function in 20–30 years. I'm more and more interested in entire urban environments, how cities work and feel. As architects, we work with measurable aspects, how big a park we can fit, how many homes. And also what buildings and neighbourhoods will do for people, which opportunities they provide for health, equality, education, recreation and business. Through sketches and models, we test different scenarios and visualise how the future can take shape.

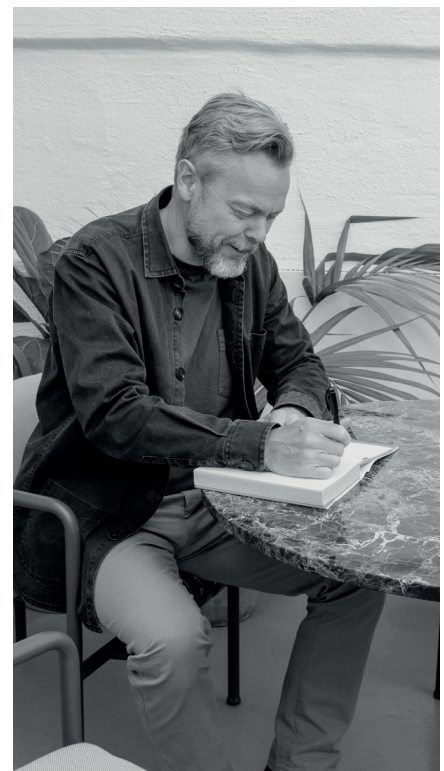
Which of your projects that represent sustainability and design are you most proud of?

– We're converting a foundry in the old Kockums area of Varvsstaden in Malmö into a modern workplace for 300 people.

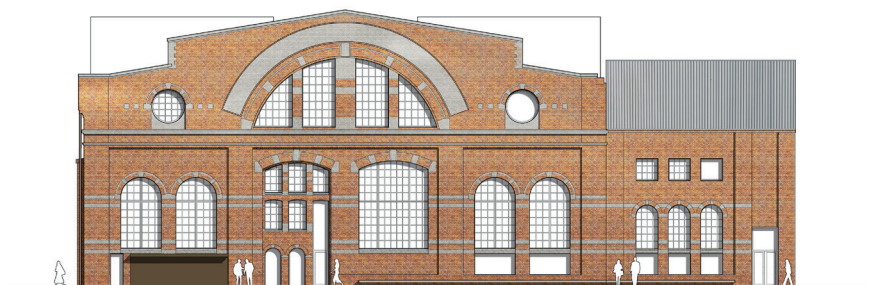
Recycling architecture

Stefan Sjöberg from Kjellander Sjöberg

An industrial ruin meets the future of work with a creative hub, a cafe and businesses opening up to the city life. We work a lot with sustainable materials and use bricks and metal from demolished buildings around the area. The "Meridian Water" is of a different scale. On commission by a North London council, we're developing 10,000 homes and 6,000 workspaces in an area defined by social problems, unemployment and wetlands. We want to create a neighbourhood with a lot of council housing where all residents have water and green spaces just around the corner. Our vision is a 15-minute neighbourhood that's close



Stefan Sjöberg.



Planned facade, Gjuteriet, Malmö. Developers: Varvsstaden AB with owners Peab and Balder.



Gjuteriet, Malmö.

to everything, to parks, schools, shops, small business and the corner cafe. Which do you see as the biggest obstacles today for using design as a tool for societal transformation?

– We need more national and international regulations and directives that promote sustainable alternatives. One frequent obstacle is bio-economy, which means that the customer chooses a concrete frame over a more sustainable wooden one, even though the price difference is very small. We must take the leap to where society and authorities clearly show the way, anything else would be unethical for future generations.

How has the pandemic affected your work? Will you walk away with any new experience and which challenges will you face moving forward?

– We've been forced to use digital tools that have been available for a long time, and we've discovered that we can actually sketch together with different participants for projects in other places. That has broadened our network and the democracy of our meetings has improved. That certainly says something about evolution, if we must solve something, there's a way.

Which other countries do you think have come a long way with regards to sustainability and design? From where do you draw inspiration internationally?

– In Scandinavia, we have a common set of values around the open society and a view of sustainability in which we inspire each other. I think British



Apartment interior in Jackproppen, Hjørtshagen. Architects: MIR and Wingårdhs.

architects are very professional, driven and often get far with their projects. Within Japanese contemporary architecture is an unconditionality that's very intriguing. It reinvents itself every day, and is rooted in its own culture and mentality.

Are there times when you have to compromise your ideas and visions versus limitations that may arise when it comes to sustainable strategies? Or contrarily, can the restrictions serve as a creative engine?

– Without restrictions, we would work in a vacuum where there are only possibilities, and that sounds worrying. We always try to read and understand a place, and then create a vision that



Wooden architecture, Rosendal, Uppsala. Photo: Johan Fowelin.

is greater than the limitations. In architecture, those are mostly due to finances, there's an ideal of what a building should cost and what should be prioritised. We never compromise, but instead turn the challenge into a strength in the story we believe in. ■

Dressing up

Tilda Lagerqvist from Lammhults



For Lammhults, quality and environmental requirements go hand in hand. In their production, brightly coloured interiors meet curvy tubular steel chairs made to give character and comfort to public spaces. Sustainability director Tilda Lagerqvist has many questions on her desk. From the qualities of recycled plastics to extending the life of our durable favourites from the past decades.

What does sustainability mean to you in your position as sustainability director and to your company?

– We believe it stands for timeless design, quality and smart material choices, as well as a good working environment for our employees. We've long worked with eco-labelling like the Nordic Swan and Möbelfakta. They place strict demands on our environmental, qualitative and social responsibility, which ensures that we know our materials well.

Why did you choose this path?

– My passion for design has always been strong. I studied at the School of Textiles, I come from the textile and fashion industry although I grew up in Småland, and I've always looked up to Lammhults. They intertwine design and sustainability, and I get to follow

products as they are created by our designers. The fact that we have production in Lammhult makes it a lot easier. I can go straight out to the factory, feel the materials and have discussions with the product developers. Which of your projects that represent sustainability and design are you most proud of?

– It's of course wonderful to see a demand for restoring old Lammhults furniture that people already own, and



that we can help extend the life of them. One job that reflects this came from Lund University, who wanted 150 chairs repainted and reupholstered. They were twenty-five years old and will likely last for another twenty-five. It was the 91:an chair, designed by Börge Lindau and Bo Lindekrantz in the 1990s. The university has asked for another 1,500 chairs of the same model so there is great potential. In general, we are seeing a lot of demand for restoring furniture that people already own rather than throwing it away and buying new. Which do you see as the biggest obstacles today for using design as a tool for societal transformation?

– While we want to contribute to pushing sustainable development forward, there are many aspects to consider. The furniture industry consists of several parts. Apart from wood, there is an industry of steel, plastic and textiles. We must place reasonable demands on our subcontractors, while at the same time



Tilda Lagerqvist, sustainability director at Lammhults.



Spektri Business Park.

ensuring our quality. Let's say we want to use recycled plastics from consumers. Then there are some challenges where environmental requirements state that we must know which chemicals they contain. If we mould a chair out of the plastic, it may be harder to ensure an even colour, and then we have to discuss whether that's acceptable.

How has the pandemic affected your work? Will you walk away with any new experience and which challenges will you face moving forward?

– The industry and society in general have long talked about reuse. Now we're seeing that demand for circular and sustainable solutions has really increased during the pandemic. Crises, both personal and global, give reason for reflection. And out of reflection comes change.

Which other countries do you think have come a long way with regards to sustainability and design? From where do you draw inspiration internationally?

– It feels like from an international perspective, there is trust in Scandinavian efforts in this field. I'm proud and humbled by that. I've also noticed that different countries focus diffe-

Reupholstered "Spira" chairs.
Photo: Lasse Olsson.

"Corso" armchair. Design: Peter Andersson.

rently on where they want to make the greatest change. Like recycled plastic, carbon emissions or traceable wood, which we work a lot with.

Are there times when you have to compromise your ideas and visions versus limitations that may arise when it comes to sustainable strategies? Or contrarily, can the restrictions serve as a creative engine?

– There are always a lot of trade-offs.

We've gone from a time when we preferred everything to be invisible, with concealed screws and foam. Today we want a product to be easily disassemblable, as well as beautiful and with a clear construction. We don't mix materials, so that parts can be easily changed in the future. It gives us great added value to present a product that you can enter into a circular furniture flow ■



"Landa" bench for Tre sekel.

For furniture designer Emma Olbers, climate goals and knowledge form the basis for credible sustainability efforts. The desire to influence is translated through design jobs and activism, from well-considered material choices to Fridays for Future demonstrations. She speaks objectively about the need to tax carbon emissions and how designers do best in thinking backwards.

Emma Olbers from Emma Olbers Design

A treehugging activist

What does sustainability mean to you in your position as a designer and in your company?

– The sustainability issue is huge and it's important that we adhere to the Planetary Boundaries, a concept developed by researchers that addresses aspects like biological diversity and water. I've chosen to focus on the climate and especially the increasing temperatures. In order to lower the temperature, greenhouse gas emissions are of most

significance, which is measured in carbon dioxide equivalents, CO₂e. In furniture production, the actual material accounts for about 50 per cent of emissions. That's why I'm very keen to use materials with low CO₂e. We may be talking recycled materials, the amount of material and that the product can be recycled and maintained. That's where I as a designer can make the biggest difference.

Why did you choose this path?

– I grew up in the fifth generation of farmers outside Gothenburg. Resource management was clear, it's like we only have the farm on loan from our children. I learnt early on things like it takes time for a pine tree to grow. I studied at Nyckelviksskolan and Beckmans in the 1990s, and there wasn't much talk about lifecycle analysis. My desire to work with those issues grew stronger after I had children and continued my studies in sustainable design. One of my first projects was Stockholm Wood 2007 where I made furniture out of wood that had grown in various places around town. Apart from low CO₂e emissions, I was also interested in whether we take better care of our furniture emotionally if we know which trees they're made of. I certainly believe we do. In the interior that I'm currently doing for the new Ersta Hospital, I'm using material from the trees that stood on the site before.

Which of your projects that represent sustainability and design are you most proud of?

– Different products are good for different things. For the tufted carpet



Emma Olbers. Photo: Andy Liffner.



The old library, Nationalmuseum. Photo: Andy Liffner.

I made together with Asplund for the library at the newly renovated Nationalmuseum, we used a mix of wool and a new material called Tencel. It's made of fast-growing woods and produced in a closed, environmentally friendly system. It makes less greenhouse gases than a lot of other textile alternatives.

Which do you see as the biggest obstacles today for using design as a tool for societal transformation?

– That people's awareness is too slow. Design is a good tool and a good problem solver, but time is against us. In a purely political sense, it would be good to put a price on carbon dioxide, so that products that are meant to protect our future are cheaper than products that destroy it. We only have

elections every four years, and demonstrating to spark public opinion is a powerful way of influencing political decisions.

How has the pandemic affected your work? Will you walk away with any new experience and which challenges will you face moving forward?

– What's amazed me the most is how we've listened to science and changed our behaviour so fast. That gives me hope, because it would be catastrophic if we just went back to the old normal. I hope that climate research will be higher on the agenda and that support for the big restart is done properly, like trains getting more subsidies than airlines. I also hope that that we've gained a new approach to concepts like



time and money. That we don't rush off and start consuming, only to have ten umbrellas by the door that we can't find. Which other countries do you think have come a long way with regards to sustainability and design? From where do you draw inspiration internationally?

– France and Paris are interesting at the moment. They're working on a fifteen-minute rule, and aiming to design a new city without cars. Wherever you live, you shouldn't have more than fifteen minutes to walk or cycle to school, shops or work. I personally like to listen to climate researcher Johan Rockström.

Are there times when you have to compromise your ideas and visions versus limitations that may arise when it comes to sustainable strategies? Or contrarily, can the restrictions serve as a creative engine?

– It's sometimes hard to find recycled materials and they may be a lot more expensive. It can also be difficult to convince companies to produce in countries that use renewable energy and where steel is made in an environmentally friendly manner. But for designers, challenges can be fun. It's sometimes said that 80 per cent of the sustainability part of a project happens at the drawing table. Choosing recycled materials makes an enormous difference. As designers, we must think backwards, and start planning for how a product is to be maintained and recycled long before it's even made ■

Ola Rune from ClaessonKoivistoRune

Sustainable friendship

Japanese cabinetwork and architecture made to last for generations. Ola Rune likes projects that challenge both industry and craftsmen. He is one of the founders of the architectural firm ClaessonKoivistoRune, which began in 1995 as an interesting friendship, where friction whets creativity.

What does sustainability mean to you in your position as a designer and in your company?

- For us as Scandinavians, sustainability is something completely natural, it's been a part of our crafts and design for a long time. One of the reasons that our industry is so slow and not driven by trends. Design and architecture is always a partnership. We've been lucky that we've been able to choose clients who also base their ideals on sustainability. And we also have an advantage in Sweden with many environmentally conscious producers who still have their production here in the country.

Why did you choose this path?

- I was working with closely related topics like fashion and photography. But I felt there was a longer lifespan and greater variation for me in three-dimensional design. I met Eero Koivisto and Mårten Claesson at Konstfack University of Arts, Crafts & Design. We connected on a very personal level, and with time it became clear that we were meant to work together. I'm very happy to have had the chance to work with this. A creative profession may not always be financially sustainable, but it's emotionally sustainable every day of the week.

Which of your projects that represent sustainability and design are you most proud of?



ClaessonKoivistoRune. Photo: Knut Koivisto.

- Tokyo Craft Room in Tokyo invited designers to do the interior of their showroom in partnership with selected Japanese craftsmen. Their project "Hand" was intended to make something that isn't possible through mass production. We designed all table and bench surfaces with curvature. There isn't a flat surface anywhere. In the final stages, carpenter Yuji Takahashi planed each surface by hand. That made it not only aesthetically pleasing but also very lovely to sit at. When you put your arms on the table, they just melt into the tabletop. It's absolutely magnificent. Being part of a project that is

intended to remain there for generations is a beautiful feeling.

Which do you see as the biggest obstacles today for using design as a tool for societal transformation?

- There are always people who simplify and copy out of greed. I think it's necessary for a new chair to add something that makes it relevant. If that innovation or visual novelty is then immediately copied by others, we're on a dangerous path. We may lose what is truly innovative, while few are





The "Hand" series was first shown at Tokyo Craft Room, Hamacho Hotel, during DesignArt Tokyo 2019.

willing to front the initial investment cost. Another obstacle is that those who buy the furniture don't understand differences in quality. If something is to last for generations, it needs materials and techniques that may be more expensive. Consumers must therefore understand why one chair costs so much more than others.

How has the pandemic affected your work? Will you walk away with any new experience and which challenges will you face moving forward?

- We noticed early on that teleworking was not for us. Creativity to us is very interactive, and developing an idea or a prototype is done through discussion. That's difficult in a digital meeting. We lose an important part of working together. But we've also learnt to manage projects on the other side of the world from home. The three of us haven't worked so closely together

for such a long period since we started the company. In one way, that feels safe, but the calm mustn't last too long. It's when we creak and clash and question each other that things get very creative.

Which other countries do you think have come a long way with regards to sustainability and design? From where do you draw inspiration internationally?

- Scandinavia has been at the forefront for a long time. Japan has always been close to us. They have a different way of relating to time when a project isn't seen as a temporary solution. There is

no set date for when something should expire. If something becomes unusable, they fix it or perhaps make a duplicate to keep for reference of material and technique.

Are there times when you have to compromise your ideas and visions versus limitations that may arise when it comes to sustainable strategies? Or contrarily, can the restrictions serve as a creative engine?

- My actual job as designer is to solve problems, aesthetically and functionally, and that always entails compromise, it's a given from the start ■

Swedish Stockings are a pioneer company who want to be mimicked in their sustainable production. Their materials in their shiny stockings include old fishing nets and plastic bottles. While her daughter Elsa-Li is fast asleep in the pram during our walk, founder Linn Frisinger tells me about her goal of changing the entire industry. Seven years after starting the company, she has come along well.

What does sustainability mean to you in your position as a designer and in your company?

– We try to think cyclically from A to Z and to close the circle. We use waste material from other nylon manufacturers and work with recycled materials in an Italian factory that runs on solar energy. Every aspect is important, from dyeing and water purification to packaging and transport. Few people know that nylon stockings are a petroleum product. We have a recycling programme where we reuse the material. The most important thing when it comes to tights is that they need to last longer, so we can buy them less often and thus reduce our consumption.

Why did you choose this path?

– I actually have an MBA and I grew up surrounded by entrepreneurs in my family. The idea came after I watched the documentary *Glödlampskonspirationen*. It's about goods and products having a planned lifespan and that they're made to break down after a certain amount of time. One example was stockings, and I saw an opportunity. Other areas of the fashion industry have come further in terms of sustainability, but boring necessities like stockings had been forgotten.

Which of your projects that represent sustainability and design are you most proud of?

– Innovations by Swedish Stockings is a project that we run to push ourselves. Our aim from the start has been to change and influence the entire industry. We want others to produce stockings in the same way as we do, and we're



Resource-savvy footwork

Linn Frisinger from Swedish Stockings

completely open with what we do. It's therefore important to us that we drive the evolution forward. Under the Innovations umbrella, we've launched stockings made of biological material, a flowering bean plant! We've also made tables of discarded stockings that are sent to us from all over the world through our recycling programme. The stockings

are ground down and mixed with recycled fibreglass. The result is a marbled material whose appearance changes depending on the colour of the stockings. Which do you see as the biggest obstacles today for using design as a tool for societal transformation?

– One obstacle is that many consumers are still in a disposable mindset. All



Linn Frisinger.

companies must also see sustainability as a hygiene factor in production. That's where transparency comes in, that we as producers share what we know. How has the pandemic affected your work? Will you walk away with any new experience and which challenges will you face moving forward?

- It's been a hard blow for the entire fashion industry. The number of occasions for wearing stockings has decreased radically. But if we're to call ourselves an innovative company, then we must be truly innovative when problems arise. We've developed new materials and ideas that we may not have come up with otherwise. Which other countries do you think have come a long way with regards to sustainability and design? From where do you draw inspiration internationally?

- Europe is generally ahead of the US and Asia. Sweden certainly belongs to the top when it comes to innovation. We look a lot at those who dare to think outside the box and do things you wouldn't expect. We like to talk about responsibility rather than sustainability. There's so much more to that word than just the environment. Our goal is to invite other companies and collaborate between industries. It's

about daring to break new ground.

Are there times when you have to compromise your ideas and visions versus limitations that may arise when it comes to sustainable strategies? Or contrarily, can the restrictions serve as a creative engine?

- For a long time, we didn't make thin stockings as it was impossible to make them according to our values. It may have been too technically sophisticated or too expensive for the end consumer. But it's a balancing act. If you want

to make change in the greater perspective, you must be commercial and reach out to the masses. Today we make thin stockings out of worn fishing nets. It can take some time to find sustainable solutions, but then you just have to let it. For the moment, limitations can be frustrating, but it's basically what drives us. We want to be a pain in the neck for the industry. We're also noticing that more companies have been inspired to make their own collections of sustainable stockings ■



Cecilia tights.



Angelo da Silveira.

"Made in Sweden" is written in many of Diemondé's garments. Angelo da Silveira mixes global street culture with Scandinavian minimalism when he designs clothes for a new generation of Swedes. He gained his passion for fashion growing up in Örebro, to where he came as a political refugee from the West African country of Togo. Through his own factory Fugeetex, he fuses ecological, social and economic sustainability, employing the sewing skills of newly arrived refugees.

What does sustainability mean to you in your position as designer and in your company?

– From Diemondé's perspective, sustainability means taking responsibility in everything we express through our brand. Responsibility towards the consumer is where our values must apply in every stage of the production chain. We want to use fashion to create positive social change and transform the fashion industry at large.

Why did you choose this path?

– I want to change the industry from

Angelo da Silveira from Diemondé

A new perspective on street fashion

within, through an outside perspective. I didn't study at fashion school but I came from a different position. Swedish fashion is fantastic but I want to enrich it with expressions from other cultures from all around the world, which I missed growing up. Through Diemondé, we wanted to create something that appeals to more people in an intercultural society where people feel a sense of belonging to several cultures. Which of your projects that represent sustainability and design are you most proud of?

– The first thing we did when we started Fugeetex in an old upholstery factory in Laxå. Through the Swedish Public Employment Service, we got in touch with seamstresses among the refugees from countries like Syria and Afghanistan. It was incredible to watch them grow, develop their language and profes-

sional skills. At the same time, we had access to their enormous craftsmanship knowledge and got more resource efficient with on-demand production. Now we can offer our customers quality and transparency in all stages of production. The textile that we use is made by an environmentally conscious manufacturer in the UK. It was a big day when we saw the first collection hanging at Åhléns City in Stockholm in the spring of 2019, to invite the seamstresses to the launch and see visitors and customers appreciate not only what we had made, but also how it was made. Knowing that we've helped create financial independence among new immigrants was my proudest moment.

Which do you see as the biggest obstacles today for using design as a tool for societal transformation?

– We need to open up the industry and make it more inclusive in order to find



Diamond x Converse.

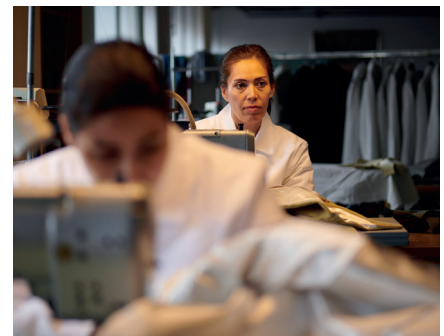
solutions from new perspectives for the new fashion world we're facing. Today we know in black and white how the situation looks in low-wage factories. More and more consumers not only demand change, they expect it. Big companies are starting to invest enormous resources to transform, but it mustn't only be a matter of PR. It's important to not just blindly meet the environmental perspective, but to also consider social and economic sustainability. How has the pandemic affected your work?

Will you walk away with any new experience and which challenges will you face moving forward?

- We're a small company in the growing phase and we've invested huge amounts of our own means to build up our own production. During all of 2020, we struggled to keep our heads above water. For Fugeetex, several opportunities have opened up with people contacting us about collaborations. Covid-19 has shown us the advantages of having production nearby.

Which other countries do you think have come a long way with regards to sustainability and design? From where do you draw inspiration internationally?

- Sweden is definitely at the forefront, even though there is still a lot to do when it comes to social sustainability. I read a lot of industry news and reports to follow the development in general, and saw there how big companies



Seamstresses at Fugeetex in Laxå.

were beginning to think locally and act globally. I realised then that there's an industrial revolution happening.

Are there times when you have to compromise your ideas and visions versus limitations that may arise when it comes to sustainable strategies? Or contrarily, can the restrictions serve as a creative engine?

- From an early stage, I needed to compromise with my artistic and creative desires, which has shaped me during my journey. Diemond is a brand that designs expressions for my generation, expressions that can change the image of how the average Swede looks. If that is to become relevant to those people I want to reach, it needs to come from more perspectives and not just mine. Had I not been forced to deal with the limitations that come with my background, my business and sustainability, I would not have been where I am today ■

The art of sitting sustainably

Sonnie Byrling
from Swedese



Using moulded plywood, Swedese have not only created sleek design classics but also a manufacturing method that is resource-efficient from the start. Since 1945, their furniture has been produced in the Smålandian forest, and today in partnership with some twenty Swedish and international designers. From the factory in Vaggeryd, CEO Sonnie Byrling calls for more knowledge and regulations that force more companies to make long-term sustainable decisions.

What does sustainability mean to you in your job and in your company?

- To me, sustainability is both a foundation and a strategy for driving Swedese forward. Our production is built around sustainable ways of moulding wood. We have a vision where we see ourselves as pioneers of the good life, and living with our planet's limited resources is a part of that. I'm from Småland myself, so it's in my nature to do things with small means and housekeeping.

Why did you choose this path?

- I love working with creative people in both design and the business aspect, and I've always been interested in the energy that spatiality and architecture gives off. Wood and Småland also make me happy and I spend a lot of time in the forest and the outdoors. It's fascinating to see the uses of this amazing raw material all the way to a finished piece of furniture.

Which of your projects that represent sustainability and design are you most proud of?

- We've just launched a table called "Savoa" designed by the Finnish designer Sakari Hartikainen, whose design and



Sonnie Byrling.

wood construction is sustainable throughout. I'm incredibly proud that we're still selling loads of "Lamino". The chair was designed by Yngve Ekström in 1956 and is the one product that the company rests on. It lasts for generations, it has a circular lifecycle and easy to care for and reupholster. Much due to this sustainability aspect, we recently earned a two million euro contract with the UN in Geneva. Their department that handles human rights will be sitting in Swedese's furniture, we're very proud of that.

Which do you see as the biggest obstacles today for using design as a tool for societal transformation?

- We're finding that many consumers, especially younger ones, are very know-



"Savoa" table by Sakari Hartikainen.

ledgeable. For them, the decision to buy a certain piece of furniture marks a personal standpoint. There's a lot of talk about sustainability in the business sector but at the end of the day, it's budgets and money that decide. Our levels of knowledge need to be raised, more people need to understand the value of making long-term decisions. We often hear that our furniture is expensive, but if you use a Lamino for

three generations, the cost per use is low. Sustainability today is very much based on freedom. I think it needs to be more organised through more regulations and requirements, for example, in public procurements.

How has the pandemic affected your work? Will you walk away with any new experience and which challenges will you face moving forward?

- To be or not to be at the office has turned upside down. I think that working from home will continue to be seen as natural. That means that companies must take responsibility and ensure employees have a good working environment in their homes as well. In many parts of the corporate world, there have been breakdowns in the supply chain when it comes to material and production. We're fortunate to hold the entire chain ourselves, from the purchase of sheepskin and wood veneer to the final production in our factories in Äng and Vaggeryd.

Which other countries do you think have come a long way with regards to sustainability and design? From where do you draw inspiration internationally?

- I'm especially inspired by international collaborations and networks like the Paris Agreement and the efforts of the UN, this isn't a national issue.

Are there times when you have to compromise your ideas and visions versus limitations that may arise when it comes to sustainable strategies? Or contrarily, can the restrictions serve as a creative engine?

- I have a concrete example. Hospitals want to spray their surfaces with antibacterial solution, which isn't very good for water-based paints. There are other environmentally friendly alternatives with hard wax oil, but they require a different type of maintenance that may be difficult in a healthcare facility. We want to see ourselves as a creative company so it's wonderful that there are always problems to solve. For us, sustainability is a very stimulating challenge ■

Tarkett has made flooring in Sweden since the late 19th century, and the now international company is equally historic in France. Innovative design collaborations go hand in hand with the development of recycled and bio-based materials, and anything from scrapyards to sewage treatment plans form unexpected partnerships. Sustainability director Dag Duberg knows how to transform waste into raw material and make the flooring of the future out of materials that hold a past.

What does sustainability mean to you in your position as sustainability director and in your company?

– When we set our environmental goals, we set global goals, we want to push the entire boat forward. Our Swedish division serves to inspire, push and set requirements for Tarkett's sustainability efforts. On a personal level, I'm very keen to walk the talk. Each decision must be doable and implemented from start to finish.

Why did you choose this path?

– I've been at Tarkett for twenty years and in the flooring industry even longer. Flooring is fundamental for all indoor business. If you've had babies, got married, been a politician, it's all taken place on a floor. It's a form of societal construction, what we do. Floors must be easy to care for and keep clean, they must contribute to good acoustics, health and educational environments, they must be beautiful and functional. Flooring touches everything from the craftsmanship of the floor layer to economics, the environment and politics. From an engineering, rational and scientific basis, I am passionate about flooring and sustainability.

Which of your projects that represent sustainability and design are you most proud of?

– Our project "Natural Bond" at the Stockholm Fair last year featured all our products as well as the stand made



The wooden flooring Noble Oak.

Sweepings to floor

Dag Duberg from Tarkett

of either recycled or recyclable materials. Recycling is especially important when it comes to fairs. We want to do our part to move away from fossil oils that we make plastics from, and eventually replace them with bio-based oils. That we can now make recyclable flooring is thanks to the fact that we've developed a machine that can wash glue and

putty off from old materials. The actual exhibition was designed in collaboration with the design studio Note, as a forum for discussions on sustainability. Form and content, design and technical advancements go hand in hand.

Which do you see as the biggest obstacles today for using design as a tool for societal transformation?



Dag Duberg.

– One major challenge is how to make the existing systems work. When new floors are laid, 10 per cent often goes to waste. There's a joint project in the industry where floor layers from all around the country send their scraps for us to make new flooring out of. Last year we received 550 tonnes worth. But in four out of five cases, scrap pieces still end up at the tip or incinerator, even though the system is free and has been available for twenty years. We want to see greater political backing with a clear plan of action for a circular economy. For public procurements, there must be regulations to recycle installation spillage, or to recycle a certain amount of material in anything from building projects to cars and printers. That will force producers to develop techniques and methods for it.

How has the pandemic affected your work? Will you walk away with any new experience and which challenges will you face moving forward?

– It has shown us that dramatic and global changes of behaviour are possible, which are necessary to solve the climate issue. We've been forced to come up with creative digital solu-

tions for things that were previously considered impossible, such as product launches and fairs. I'm convinced much of it will remain in the future.

Which other countries do you think have come a long way with regards to sustainability and design? From where do you draw inspiration internationally?

– The Netherlands were early with their circular strategies, and initiatives like Dutch Design Week show a strong, forward-looking and sustainable design agenda. Tarkett consists of several companies that have joined forces, among them a Dutch textile company that worked early on with sustainability and currently produces yarn for flooring made of 100 per cent recycled nylon.

Are there times when you have to compromise your ideas and visions versus

limitations that may arise when it comes to sustainable strategies? Or contrarily, can the restrictions serve as a creative engine?

– Sustainability and good design are connected, we don't need to choose. If we want a good acoustic area in a floor, that may entail a material that is harder to recycle. In that case, we have to solve it. For the textile carpet, we've designed a backside made of recycled limestone from a nearby treatment plant. Being on the lookout for smart raw materials and recycling techniques opens up for interesting collaborations between industries you would've never imagined ■



From the exhibition "Natural Bond" in collaboration with Note.