

# WHAT DESIGN CAN DO

## PRESS RELEASE

### What Design Can Do announces electric line-up at new design festival on 3 June 2022

***At the Internationaal Theater Amsterdam, 1000+ creatives will unite around design, climate action and social justice***

Amsterdam, 29 March 2022 – **Third time's the charm! After two years of delays, What Design Can Do (WDCD) is finally returning to Amsterdam with a new edition of its festival on the impact of design. On 3 June 2022, a dynamic crowd of 1000+ creatives, activists, policymakers and start-ups will meet at the stunning Internationaal Theater Amsterdam. At the heart of the one-day festival is a packed programme of urgent talks, exhibitions and workshops on the intersection of design, climate action and social justice. Together, we'll discover how design can help us imagine a better world, and empower those who dare to build it.**

Leading the conversation is a line-up of creative visionaries: revolutionary fashion designer **Adebayo Oke-Lawal** (NG); award-winning architect **Marwa Al-Sabouni** (SY); triple-threat designer—activist—academic **Julia Watson** (US); Pussypedia founders **Zoe Mendelson** (UK) & **María Conejo** (MX); acclaimed photojournalist **Kadir van Lohuizen** (NL); innovative digital fashion designer **Amber Jae Slooten** (NL); legendary designer **Bruce Mau** (CA); expert environmental policy advisor **Yvo de Boer** (NL); Emmy-winning film director **Josh Fox** (US); multi-faceted designer and Pentagram partner **Eddie Opara** (UK); and more to be announced soon.

#### **A CALL FOR URGENCY AND OPTIMISM**

With each passing year, it becomes clearer that all of humanity's most pressing problems are deeply interconnected. Fortunately, the same holds true for the best of our solutions. "At WDCD Live 2022, we're bringing changemakers from radically diverse disciplines together, to unravel the knot from every direction," explains WDCD co-founder and creative director Richard van der Laken. "From designers and diplomats, to activists and architects—we're going to have the skills and thinking-power needed for lasting change, all in one room. There's real power in that."

To explore the full range of creatives' capabilities, the festival will dive into some of the greatest ecological and social issues of our time, as well as the threads that connect them:

- **THE CLIMATE FOR CHANGE IS HERE** — There is growing consensus among climate activists that we need to move beyond the linear economy, and fast. The pandemic has brought into sharp focus the realisation that to secure a healthy future for both people and planet, we need to break away from 'business as usual'. But where do we go from here? Can design redefine its own relationship with consumerism, waste and value? And how can we make a circular future not just accessible—but enticing—for people from all walks of life?
- **GENDER, DESIGN AND POWER** — What does it mean to have a 'seat at the table'? At WDCD Live 2022, we'll shift the focus from what it takes to pull up a chair, to how we, as an industry, can rebuild the table from scratch. Together we'll dive into why the gender gap remains so widespread, asking: what are the biases and injustices that the system is built on? And how can we use design as a tool to advocate for the rights of women, non-binary, trans and queer communities?
- **NO CLIMATE ACTION WITHOUT SOCIAL JUSTICE** — The richest 1% of the world's population are responsible for twice as much carbon dioxide as the poorest 50%, and yet they do not equally share the burden of its consequences. Now, more than ever, we must champion climate action that also centres and uplifts the world's most vulnerable people. Using a decolonial lens, the festival's programme will evaluate the links between design and climate justice and invite participants to transform their creative skills into activism.

# WHAT DESIGN CAN DO

## A DAY DESIGNED FOR MAXIMUM IMPACT

In a nutshell, here are the main components of this year's edition of WDCD Live in Amsterdam:

- A main stage programme featuring **illuminating talks** by 10+ thought-leaders in the creative industries, plus a string of **musical performances** to bring the crowd to their feet.
- A parallel programme that invites visitors to dive deeper; featuring **exhibitions** and **panel discussions** on themes like gender equality, the circular economy and design in times of Covid-19.
- The chance to collaborate and grow your own impact in a range of interactive **workshops, classes** and **networking sessions** – including a pitch event featuring 11+ leading, innovative start-ups.
- An afterparty for visitors to **raise a glass together** and close the festivities in style.

We'll be announcing more details about this year's programme over the next few weeks. As we near the date of the festival, we'll also be updating our health and safety policies to follow the latest recommended Covid-19 guidelines. To stay in the know—and to catch any previews in the run-up to the event—interested parties can follow What Design Can Do on Instagram, Twitter or Facebook.

## FOR THE EDITORS

For photos and additional materials on the programme and speakers, view our [press kit](#). More information about What Design Can Do is available at our [press webpage](#).

With press enquiries, please contact our Communications Manager Alison Pasquariello at [alison@whatdesigncando.com](mailto:alison@whatdesigncando.com).

## ABOUT WHAT DESIGN CAN DO

What Design Can Do (WDCD) is an international platform that advocates for design as a tool for social change. Since 2011, WDCD has undertaken numerous activities to promote the role of designers in addressing the world's most pressing societal and environmental issues. To date, WDCD has hosted 14 successful conferences in Amsterdam, São Paulo, and México City. In 2016 WDCD launched an ambitious design challenge programme that engages the creative community with urgent societal issues such as the wellbeing of refugees and climate change.

For more information, visit [www.whatdesigncando.com](http://www.whatdesigncando.com)