

# WHAT DESIGN CAN DO

## PRESS RELEASE

### What Design Can Do Live promises action and optimism in dark times

*Hundreds of creatives to explore design's role in this critical decade during the festival in Amsterdam on 3 June 2022*

Amsterdam, 12 May 2022 — **Signed, sealed, and delivered: What Design Can Do (WDCD) has unveiled a dynamic programme of talks, workshops and exhibitions for the tenth edition of its flagship festival, which explores the convergence of design, climate action and social justice. At the Internationaal Theater Amsterdam, we'll use the combined creative power of 12+ leaders in design, a selection of innovative Dutch start-ups and a daring crowd of changemakers to pave the way to a brighter future. A range of interactive labs and networking sessions will allow participants to dive deeper into some of the greatest environmental and social issues of our time, as well as the threads that connect them. Wrapping up the day is the much-anticipated afterparty, which will be hosted in collaboration with ADCN (the Dutch Club for Creativity) and BNO (the Association of Dutch Designers).**

#### **A hub for visionary designers**

Since the first edition in 2011, WDCD Live Amsterdam has become a hub for visionary designers who transform the world with their work. This year's programme is no different, bringing together a star-studded cast of speakers who will share insights on the value of design in this critical decade. But festival-goers can expect to do much more than sit and listen. Between talks by luminary figures like **Julia Watson** (US) and **Adebayo Oke-Lawal** (NG) the crowd will be treated to performances by **The Marmoucha Orchestra**, a vibrant group inspired by the sonic traditions of South-West Asia and North Africa. Long-time WDCD collaborator **Mark the Machine** will also make a musical appearance that's sure to bring the crowd to their feet.

#### **A place where ideas can cross-pollinate**

Away from the main stage, creatives will have the opportunity to roll up their sleeves and get to work on building a better tomorrow. "WDCD Live Amsterdam 2022 is about meeting urgency with optimism," says WDCD co-founder and creative director Richard van der Laken. "Dark times require illuminating visions. And design and creativity can help us find our way back to a positive and desirable future. That's why this year's edition offers plenty of room for worlds to meet and ideas to cross-pollinate."

Speaker Marwa al-Sabouni agreed: "I'm excited to experience my first WDCD Live festival. I see it as a great opportunity to learn and be inspired by all those taking part—and I can't wait for those chance encounters." The award-winning architect shared her thoughts about the event in a [recent interview on Instagram Live](#). During her talk on 3 June, al-Sabouni will discuss 'the role that design plays in conflicts, and also in bringing peace and building hope.' The conversation is part of a new series WDCD is hosting as a way to preview some of the highlights in the programme.

#### **Breakout sessions for innovators & activists**

After a morning of plenary talks, visitors will get the chance to attend one of six different breakout sessions. These sessions are designed to facilitate exchange and allow participants to dive deeper into the various themes of the festival, in the way that suits them best. Entrepreneurs and start-ups, for example, can test their ideas at the **Circular Design Jam**, or connect with potential investors at the **Pitch Podium**. In the panel discussion **The Impact of Creativity**, innovators can learn from industry experts on how to track, boost—and even redefine—their organisation's bottom line. Guest panellists for these sessions include designer **Ineke Hans** (NL), brand specialist **Eddie Opara** (US), and Circle Economy lead **Martijn Lopes Cardozo** (NL).

Other workshops in the programme offer a slightly different focus. Rather than exploring the possibilities of design, these sessions will take the time to unpack its responsibilities. In **Manifesto for Changemakers**, participants will learn how to align their personal principles with their professional practices, under the guidance of world-renowned designer **Bruce Mau** (CA). There are also two roundtables, titled **Gender, Design & Power** and **Decolonising Design**, which will see creative activists from around the world engage in conversation about how design can be used as a tool for liberation.

# WHAT DESIGN CAN DO

Guest panellists for these sessions include **Adebayo Oke-Lawal** (NG) and Pussypedia founders **Maria Conejo** (MX) and **Zoe Mendelson** (US).

## **Exhibitions celebrating the best of creativity**

WDCD Live Amsterdam 2022 will also present two specially curated exhibitions of design in action. In the common spaces of the Internationaal Theater, visitors will be able to interact with **Posters Can Help**, an installation exploring the links between graphic design, war and peace. Organised in collaboration with **Slanted**, Posters Can Help will showcase a selection of artwork donated by creators around the world in response to the Russian war in Ukraine.

At the same time, visitors can catch a glimpse of the future at the **No Waste Challenge Exhibition**, which features the sixteen winning projects of the global No Waste Challenge. Viewed together, these imaginative solutions reflect some of the most exciting talents and emerging ideas shaping the field of regenerative design.

## **An afterparty to remember**

To end the festival in style, all visitors are invited to join an afterparty at the Internationaal Theater Amsterdam. This year, WDCD is joining forces with industry heavyweights ADCN and BNO to present an unforgettable evening filled with music, good conversation and even better company.

Interested parties can follow WDCD on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter for the latest news as well as any additional programming in the run-up to the event. For more practical information about WDCD Live Amsterdam 2022, including accessibility and safety policies, visit: [www.whatdesigncando.com/events/wdcd-live-amsterdam-2022/practical-details](https://www.whatdesigncando.com/events/wdcd-live-amsterdam-2022/practical-details).

---

## **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.

## **ABOUT WDCD LIVE AMSTERDAM 2022**

On 3 June 2022, WDCD Live returns to Amsterdam for the tenth edition of its festival on the impact of design. At the heart of this year's programme is a series of urgent talks, exhibitions and workshops on the intersection of design, climate action and social justice. The conversation will be led by a star-studded line-up of creative changemakers, including fashion designer Adebayo Oke-Lawal (NG); architect Marwa Al-Sabouni (SY); Indigenous technologies expert Julia Watson (US); legendary designer Bruce Mau (CA); environmental policy advisor Yvo de Boer (NL); and Pentagram partner Eddie Opara (UK).

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