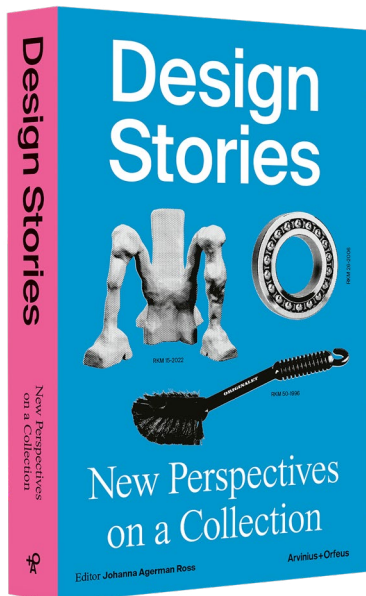


New title

Design Stories

New Perspectives on a Collection



Conversation: Meaningful consumption

Madelaine Levy, journalist, moderator
and specialist in editorial development.
Svenska Dagbladet



Sculpture, Hegde, 2020, Åsa Jungnelius,
RKM 20-2120

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Selam Fessahaye is an award-winning Swedish fashion designer and stylist, with roots in Eritrea. She has worked with musicians and institutions such as the Royal Swedish Opera. Fessahaye has showcased her collections at fashion weeks in Stockholm and Lagos, Nigeria. Her designs have been worn by Beyoncé, Tracee Ellis Ross and Victoria, Crown Princess of Sweden. She operates outside the conventional sphere of fashion, moving beyond mass production and frequent seasonal collections.

Åsa Jungnelius has made a significant impact on Swedish design history with well-known works such as *Stuppen* and the *Make Up* series. Although one of Sweden's leading glass artists, she also uses other materials, such as stone, to investigate themes including spatiality, materiality, femininity and motherhood. Jungnelius is driven by a passionate ambition to influence society, both in public spaces and in more intimate aspects of everyday life. She creates artworks, public installations and functional objects.

We live in a time of visual and material abundance. This is something that Selam Fessahaye (SF) and Åsa Jungnelius (ÅJ) are attracted to and reflect over within their respective disciplines. In this conversation, they talk about how their practices relate to issues such as gender equality, identity, representation, consumption and desire.

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What is design and what difference can it make in our lives? The traditional perspective of the Global North is that design shapes things to make them more attractive to consumers, easier to manufacture and use, and to generate market value. However, it is just as much a matter of creation linked to change – a way to protest against injustices, or to comment on the current social order. How design is understood, practised and consumed affects the possibility of challenging dominant power structures, which over time have themselves determined what design is, could be and should be.

Design Stories – New Perspectives on a Collection is published in connection with the Röhsska Museum's new permanent exhibition. Through essays, conversations and visual essays, a range of designcritical issues are discussed, reflecting on the roles of both design and the museum in society.

Contributors include prominent curators, academics, designers and journalists, all of whom have been active figures in Sweden and the Nordic region, including: Anton Alvarez, Hanna Nova Beatrice, Michael S. Bekele, Thomas Cubbin, Selam Fessahaye, Marcia Harvey Isaksson, Dan Hill, Onkar Kular, Madelaine Levy and Christina Zetterlund.

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Conversation: Creating space

Lia Forslund, design journalist and consultant



Anton Alvarez often designs his own systems and tools to create sculptural objects and architectural details using materials and techniques such as thread wrapping and extruded ceramics. This highlights the way in which an artist can be both a craftsman and an engineer, as well as the tension between these two roles.


Agneta Linton is the Head of Department for Education in the Fine Arts Program at the Royal Institute of Art in Stockholm. She also works as a curator and is a trained craftsman specialising in ceramics and glass.

In the early 2000s, Gustavsbergs Konsthall was an important place for many of the craft and design practitioners represented in the collection of Röhsska. Agneta Linton (AL) was one of its founders when the Gustavsbergs Konsthall started in 2007. The artist Anton Alvarez (AA) was one of the practitioners invited to exhibit there. In this conversation, Linton and Alvarez talk about the importance of a place for practice, experimentation and conversation about the various expressions of craft.

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Essay: How to acquire disobedient objects

Olivia Berkowicz, curator of exhibitions, Röhsska Museum



'If these applied arts are necessary, as I believe they are, to prevent mankind from being a mere ugly and degraded blotch on the surface of the earth, which without him would certainly be beautiful, their other function of giving pleasure to labour is at least as necessary, and, if the two functions can be separated, even more beneficent and indispensable.'

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'I believe it's human nature to be drawn to things that are shiny and glossy, that sparkle, as a primitive reaction. When combined with the strong desire for ownership in a consumer society, glass objects can create a sort of excess of desire, something that's hard to resist.'

— Asa Jungnelius



Photos from *Ellis & Eskild* with a copyright by Asa Jungnelius, 2007

relate to each other. I want my clothes to provoke thoughts and feelings, challenge our perceptions of body and identity, and offer new layers of human complexity.

A.R: In my latest exhibition, there are actually no barriers at all. It is entirely about desire. I think that today I might have reached a point where I can show desire better in this way. It is more abstract, yet it gets closer to the core, which is the complexity of desire. Previously, it was the restricted objects that became desirable because they were inaccessible. Now, it's a more complex formula that never really ends.

ML: Asa, you also work a lot with glass. But interestingly, the glass in your work is often not transparent.

A.R: No... but glass is desirable in itself. It's like having a bag of sweets right under your nose.

ML: What makes glass so desirable?

A.R: I believe it's human nature to be drawn to things that are shiny and glossy, that sparkle, as a primitive reaction. When combined with the strong desire for ownership in a consumer society, glass objects can create a sort of excess of desire, something that's hard to resist.

ML: In the early stages of your career, you worked with external attributes that create desire, like high heels and lipstick. Would you say that you have increasingly turned towards the physical, the body, but still with a focus on things that evoke desire?

A.R: In my graduation exhibition [*Hår för din älskade* / Hair for Your Hair is Lovely], Konstfack, Stockholm, 2004], there was also *Swigpan*. The term 'swigpa' [from bottom] wasn't in the dictionary back then. There was no word for desexualised female genitalia. People were fumbling with terms like vagina and vulva, but nothing quite fit. It might sound silly today, but creating *Swigpan* was a hardcore political act at the time. The feminist context was different then; discussing female genitalia beyond the sexual was something entirely new. However, you could say that my artistic practice follows my own life experience. I grew up in the 1980s. As women, we were crushed. We had no right to things or to speak out, so discussing female attributes was crucial. But I wasn't ready to talk about anything else at that time. Now, I work more inwardly, addressing human needs that make us all alike. ■

Meaningful consumption 46 47

'Biotech remains inaccessible because it's not yet competitive with materials derived from fossil fuels. How do you compete with trillion-dollar subsidies without policy change?'

Natalie Audrey Chiezo, founder Faber Futures

Other return 80 81

