
THE VISIONARIES



FOLK ART

In a world of contemporaries who almost fetishize the past and the purity of materials, Folkform – the joint label of Swedish Chandra Ahlsell (1978) and Anna Holmquist (1978) – has more of a fluid, present-tense approach to design. Unafraid to experiment with challenging combinations of natural and artificial elements – plastics, fake marble, masonite, faux and genuine leather – all are used to explore the hierarchy of values we impose on materials. Their conceptual, considered designs blur sculpture with everyday objects to create layers of meaning and references, a kind of modern geology: a lamp inspired by a Swedish skyline, handmade 'fossils' from flowers and masonite, and collaborations with some of the most significant names in heritage Swedish design, such as Örsjö, Skultuna, and the bookshop Rönnels in Stockholm.

Folkform.se



ONE IS THE LONELIEST NUMBER

Norwegian portraitist Anja Niemi's (1976) photos are often likened to David Lynch films due to their eerie subversion of normalcy. But she has something that even David Lynch does not have: herself. Photographer, stylist, and model, Anja Niemi always works alone, staging hyper-real, intricate snaps that resemble stills from a movie. This year, in addition to having her first solo show in the US, she premiered her new book and exhibition *Short Stories*, which documents her year shooting with a 1970s Polaroid. It is a big project, 500 images, which she designed to take the time to tell and be understood. With commentary on the performance of femininity and its manifestations, she confronts it, sometimes literally: two women, perfectly coiffed, halved into disparate versions of herself.

Short Stories at The Little Black Gallery, 24 May to 18 June
The Little Black Gallery, 13A Park Walk, London SW10 0AJ
Anjaniphotography.com



THE DESIGN ENVIRONMENTALIST

Design should be concerned with the life cycle and sustainability of its materials and use, says Swedish creative director and designer Emma Olbers (1972), whose efforts towards cleaner design had earned her a reputation shortly out of school. Some of her guiding interests are design's relationship to its environment and climate change, and to that end she uses recyclable and reusable components in her work and avoids metal and toxic substances in the process. Her ultimate dream is to make designs that can be composted at the end of their life. But there is also a social tilt to her work: a recent project *Talking Pieces* was a design conversation created in collaboration with Lisa Hilland and exhibited at Sidenväveri Museum in Stockholm this past winter. The items in *Talking Pieces* encourage people to talk to each other and explore the union of diverse materials and elements in design.
Emmaolbers.com

DANISH DELIGHT

Her alternative indie version of the Britney Spears hit *Toxic* gave her a name on the domestic scene, but the great breakthrough for Danish Katrine Ottosens (1981) a.k.a. Call Me Kat has been taking place beyond the borders of her native country with tours in both USA and Russia, and an attained status as international music press darling. Her collaboration with Finnish designer Paola Suhonen, the driving force behind fashion house Ivana Helsinki, has resulted in several films taking place where fashion, music, and art intersect, and her new ep *Mouth of Time* is eagerly awaited by fans of dreamy electro pop. Keep an eye out for this young Dane with the multitude of talents!

Thisiscallmekat.tumblr.com

DRAWING ON TRADITION

Emma von Brömssen's (1975) colourful and intricate wallpapers, prints, textiles, and journals are catching the eyes and hearts of design lovers the world over – and rightly so. Working with House of Rym, Eco Wallpapers, Svenskt Tenn, and many other influential Nordic brands, she creates richly detailed flora and fauna-inspired designs for the everyday objects inspired by the drawings of Finnish author and artist Tove Jansson, Dutch graphic artist M.C. Escher, and themes and motifs from East Asian cultures. All with the sensibility and discipline of a woman who knows her craft.

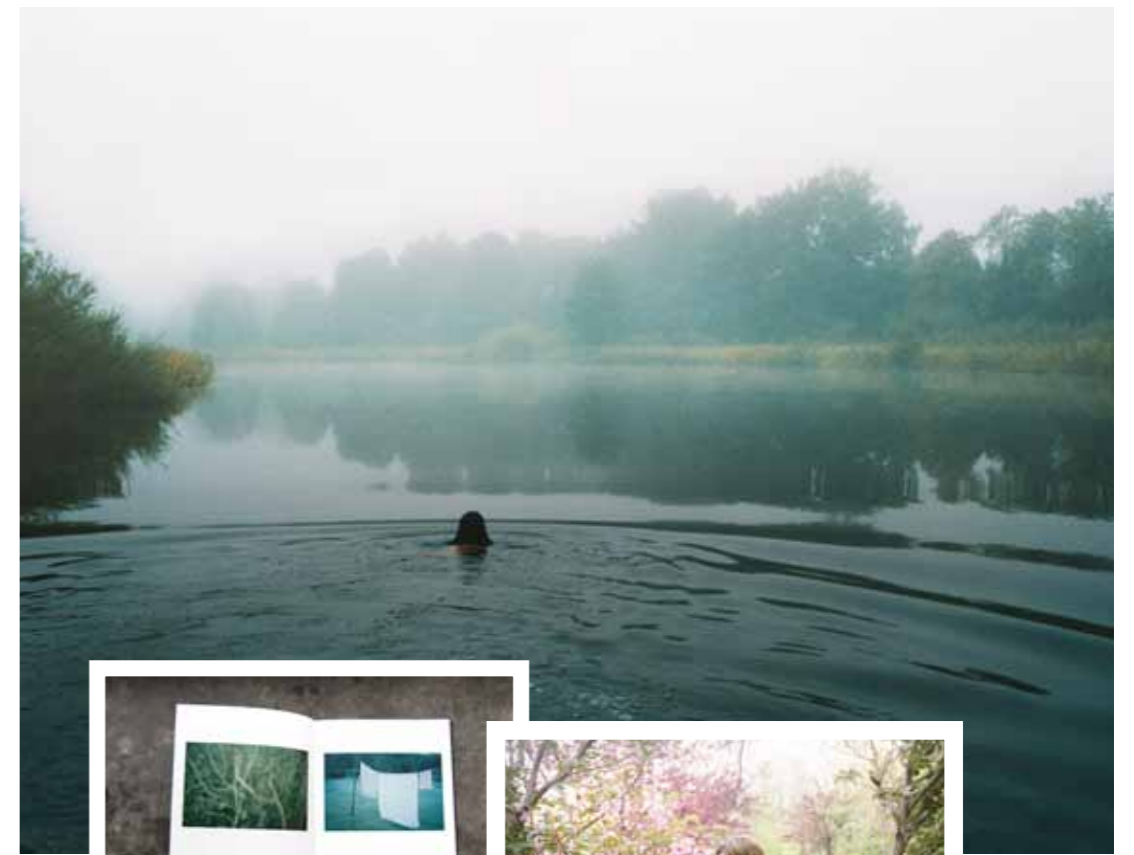
Emmavonbromssen.se



WATCHING THE RIVER FLOW

The new photo book *As the River Runs* by Swedish Agnes Thor (1986) is shot over eight years as a personal look at the artist's haunts and home growing up in rural Sweden. Places she was scared of and places where she felt safe are presented in stills, and the familiar elements of superstition, tenderness, and nostalgia appear again and again as a sort of meditation on her environment and adolescence. With each page it becomes increasingly impossible not to share the bittersweet truth of a gone youth. The moments she presents are universal, but her unselfconsciousness is not.

Agneskarin.se



NORTHERN LIGHT

After considering a career designing cars, Oslo's Halgeir Homstvedt (1977) changed direction and eventually launched his own studio, where he broke out with the sunny *Topp Lamp* and has been producing clever decorative objects for a growing list of reputable Nordic brands ever since. Objects of note include the magnetic *Balance* vase and tray set for Denmark's Muuto and his 2015 collaboration with his sister, graphic designer Hege Homstvedt, on a collection of bookends crafted from Nordic rock into native Norwegian animals. As Norway makes strides in catching up to its more prolific neighbours in the design world, Homstvedt's bright ideas continue to shine some light on the region.

Halgeirhomstvedt.com



IT'S A WOMANS WORLD

A bit of time has passed since Anna Teurnell (1967) took over as Finnish Marimekko's Creative Director and her visions for the historic brand have begun to crystalize. This spring she premieres her first collection for the Spring Summer 2016 season, and with it she shows that she is totally comfortable in the role. Her debut gives a bow to the classics (the famous *Räsymatto* circles appear, stunning and giant, on a dress), as well as some deeper cuts and silhouettes that capture the graphic, colourful essence of the brand. Her time as lead designer at Swedish & Other Stories, and growing up loving Marimekko, it almost seems that it was fated she would end up in this high-profile position. Of course Marimekko's history is owed to such powerful women (it was famously founded by Armi Ratia in 1951) whose position was always to resist chasing the market and designing for trends.

Marimekko.com

TEXT MARIE MONRAD GRAUNBOL, ATHENA WISOTSKY & JULIE VITTO PHOTOGRAPHY LINE THIT KLEIN, GALLERI BO BJERREGAARD, JONAS AARRE SOMMARSET

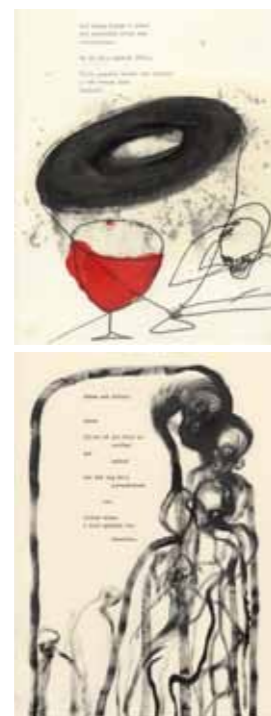


YOUR NEW FURRY FRIENDS

Wild colours, untraditional styles, and inspiration from pop culture, avant-garde art, and Arabian architecture are not normally what you think of if somebody mentions fur coat design, but it is nevertheless young Danish design duo Saks Potts' impressive claim to fame. Barbara Potts (1992) and Cathrine Saks (1991) became friends in kindergarten and have studied European ethnology and art history, respectively, but had had an idea for a mutual design project for years. That became reality with their first collection in 2014 – and since then things have been moving fast. They have for instance cooperated with auction house Copenhagen Fur and have attracted great international interest. Sakspotts.com

DRAWING A POEM

Swedish Jesper Waldersten (1969) is known as one of his country's most prominent illustrators, and his easily recognizable sketches have graced the pages of Dagens Nyheter, Sweden's leading morning newspaper, been exhibited in numerous galleries, and been part of a book companion to rock group Kent's tenth album, *Jag är inte rädd för mörkret* (I'm not afraid of the dark). His most recent creative endeavour is a collection of poetry, simply entitled *Poem* and containing 63 poems and illustrations that reveal that the man with the distinct lines also knows a thing or two about words. Waldersten.com



QUEEN OF SCISSORS

Since 2011 Swedish paper artist Agnes Fideli Siri Charlotte Sundqvist (1987) has been busy quite literally cutting out a niche for herself in the world of art and advertising. With a precise playfulness she has created images for a long list of clients including Louis Vuitton, Canon, and Björn Borg. A mind for math allows her to dream up and execute two and three-dimensional scenes that represent the people, places, and things around us. Bring her world into your space on a colourful poster print or pick up her book *I Love Paper* and be prepared to stare. Fidelisundqvist.com



EAT THIS

Magnus Nilsson (1983) does not mess around. He has all the ingredients required to be a leading voice among a new generation of chefs who find inspiration in preserving the past. The Swedish mastermind behind the highly successful restaurant Fäviken in Åre, Sweden, has been the subject of documentary series like *Mind of a Chef* and the Netflix original *Chef's Table*, and now he is adding the definitive guide to Nordic home cooking to his list of achievements. Call it a bible, a travelogue, a doorstep – Phaidon Press simply calls it *The Nordic Cookbook*. The book was inspired by Magnus Nilsson's travels through Scandinavia where he learned from locals, experts, historic cookbooks, and his own friends and family. Do not be intimidated by the book's size or weight. Inside you will find 650 simple and easy-to-follow recipes beautifully photographed and with narrative texts on Nordic culinary history, ingredients, and techniques. Faviken.com



SWEDEN'S CATCH OF THE DAY

After being crowned Swedish Chef of the Year and winning silver at the prestigious Bocuse d'Or world championships, popular TV chef Tommy Myllymäki (1978) may be done competing, but he is not packing up his knives any time soon. The talented gastronome runs a handful of restaurants, a food studio, and has written cookbooks on culinary basics every home cook should know, like how to prepare sauces and vegetables.

His newest cookbook offers 80 recipes focused entirely on seafood. Pescetarians rejoice! Tommymyllymaki.se

BIG IN JAPAN

Danish design studio OeO co-founders Thomas Lykke (1971) and Anne-Marie Buemann (1973) have a roster of remarkable projects under their belt, among them the interior of Michelin-starred Kadeau in Copenhagen and the flooring company Dinesen's showroom by the lakes in Copenhagen, which won a German Design Award this year. But out of reverence for Japanese culture and design, which shares the minimalist aesthetics and high-quality production methods of Scandinavia, the duo has long collaborated with Japanese artisans for whom tradition and craft are more than mere branding buzzwords. This is the background for their ongoing relationship with *Japan Handmade*, a collaboration between six craft companies that offer modern markets a piece of their time-honoured heritage. Through this, they recently launched *The Copenhagen Collection*, a line of bamboo utensils and boxes produced by Kohchosaï Kosuga. OeO has two offices in Japan, one in Tokyo and one in Kyoto, but their head office remains where the designers are rooted: in Copenhagen. Oeo.dk





A LIFE WELL CRAFTED

Architect Knud Holscher (1930) and furniture designer Einar Pedersen (1923) are among the grand old men of the Danish furniture business. But despite their relatively advanced age they are far from done with designing potential classics. Their latest collaboration is two prototypes for a conference chair, commissioned by gallerist Anders Pedersen on the occasion of an exhibition of Knud Holscher's works. In a humorous acknowledgement of the fact that they have numerous design projects still to complete, the chair was named *The Penultimate Chair*.

The two prototypes represent two themes that always have interested both furniture enthusiasts: the Nordic functionalist tradition and the Japanese minimalist and sensual style. That is why one chair is made as a light and Nordic archetype of soaped ash wood, while the frame of the other will be enamelled with Japanese red – both will have wicker seats.

Einarp.dk

Holscherdesign.com

ROCK'N'ROLL GLASSWARE

It is no surprise to learn that Ludvig Löfgren (1972) draws his inspiration from tattoo parlours, the animal kingdom, and as his collection *My Wide Life* suggests, everywhere in between. Stout gorillas sit next to climbing rose chalices and flower-topped skulls, crystal gleams in every colour. But his playful aesthetics do not preclude a reverence for the tradition of glassmaking. He designs for two heritage Swedish brands Kosta Boda (established in 1742) and Målerås Glassworks (established in 1890). Ludvig Löfgren's works are bright and unforgettable, but it is his desire to learn and experiment in the glass studio that have given him the technical skills and fluency that he applies to his graphic sculptures.

kostaboda-artgallery.com



MATERIAL BOY

Few rising stars in the world of Danish interior design are currently generating as much early buzz as Kasper Thorup (1987), a furniture designer barely out of the Royal Academy of Fine Art in Copenhagen. Thorup, whose love of marrying experimental designs with classic Scandinavian functionality dates back to a childhood spent fashioning inventions out of everything from Lego to washed-ashore beach treasures, earned his share of attention at January's *Northmoden* design fair in Copenhagen, thanks to his playfully elegant approach to transforming traditionally rough materials such as iron and concrete into unexpected one-of-a-kind pieces of furniture. And with the designer's collection of *Blackpowder* tables – whose processed iron tabletops display darkly beautiful fluid patterns – By Thorup is on the road to becoming a household name in the elusive borderland between art and design.

Bythorup.dk



NEW GIRL IN TOWN

Clever details and refined forms are the M.O. for Copenhagen-based furniture designer Theresa Arns (1982), who makes objects to store your most prized possessions. There is a focus on feminine touches: highlights include a jewellery box with a mirror lid and an elegant ash and steel desk (with room to store nearly anything), which doubles as a dressing table. Theresa Arns spent the last few years working at the design agency Space Copenhagen, the interior brand Frama, and the fashion house Bitte Kai Rand, and now she has several new designs available through Danish firm Menu. With so much success in such a limited time, she will surely be someone to watch in the coming years.

Theresaarns.com

