

Food is Fiction

30 June - 28 October 2018

A design exhibition about our food



Food seduces with beautiful images and stories. In the divide between production and consumption, the role of designers is becoming increasingly important. Their attractive designs and seductive stories atone the consumer with the origins of our food.

The exhibition *Food is fiction* draws on a wealth of designs to provide insight into the role of design for the food industry. It shows the importance of presentation and narrative: from the oldest commercials, iconic packaging for Droste and the first exotic products to culinary science fiction in *Star Trek*, hand-crafted imitation food from Japan, and the art of the food blog.

The first small-scale canneries of the nineteenth century have expanded to become the multinationals of today. In the last century and a half, the food branch has developed to become a global industry. Often we are unaware of the source of our food. At the same time we demand genuine, healthy and sustainable products.

Designers operate in the force field of mutual dependence between consumers and producers, cut-throat competition, and clashing interests and ideologies. As mediators, they look for strategies to bridge that gulf and to make alienation tolerable. Designers are society's antennae. With an optimistic vision of the future or a nostalgic view of an idealised past, they create illusions and fantasies and package food in familiar or new narratives.

The exhibition *Food: design and fiction* is grouped around five themes to show how over the years designers have promised us a better world:

- The use of seduction to tempt us into buying a particular product. From the first commercial for Van Houten's cacao to slick marketing strategies, seduction and food have always been close bedfellows.
- Imitation. Fake food shows the ideal of the maker. Fake is often more beautiful than the real thing. In Japan the imitation of food is a true art form.
- Amusement. Eating food on your own or in company is a form of entertainment, as today's restaurateurs know better than anyone else. What are we to make of the way that restaurants try every trick in the book to give their guests an unforgettable experience?
- Symbolism. Our experience of food is loaded with actions, images and implications referring to hidden meanings.

Food is fiction presents a large variety of historical and contemporary design, photography and film fragments. The exhibition is accompanied by a programme of workshops, lectures and events that tell the stories of our food.

A book accompanying the exhibition by author and guest curator Linda Roodenburg will be published by nai010 publishers in June 2018.

The exhibition *Food is fiction* is part of the programme:

BRABANT CELEBRATES **FOOD**

On June 1st Stedelijk Museum 's-Hertogenbosch changes its name to:
Design Museum Den Bosch

On 1 June the Stedelijk Museum 's-Hertogenbosch will change its name to become the Design Museum Den Bosch. Since 2016, the museum programme has been concentrated exclusively on design and applied arts. The change of name is the next step in the direction that has been charted. It communicates more clearly with the public and contributes to the further positioning of the museum.

Note to the editor

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