

You won't escape design! The largest Central European design and fashion show, the Designblok festival, introduces the visual for the 25th year of the event and a new general partner – PPF Group.

The jubilee year of Designblok, Prague's international design festival, will run from 4 to 8 October 2023 in two spectacular exhibition shrines. It will be held for the first time in the Trade Fair Palace, the largest exhibition space at the National Gallery in Prague, and for the third time in the Museum of Decorative Arts in Prague. The festival will this year celebrate its 25th anniversary by returning to the image of a hare and the caption "You won't escape design!", with the unifying theme of the JOURNEY, and with a special travelling exhibition entitled Designblok Cosmos. PPF Group is the new general partner to the festival, and Designblok plans to put the Group's help to good use to strategically grow and strengthen the publicity and promotion of Czech design in the Czech Republic and abroad.

Czech society and original design have come a long way in the last quarter of a century. From questions of what design actually is and what purpose it actually serves, through the initiation of cooperation between designers and industry, we have reached the situation in which quality design is not merely a significant competitive advantage, but a desirable way of dealing with everyday situations and more complex social and environmental issues. What was originally an event for enthusiasts has become one of the main cultural events of the season, the festival now traditionally bringing together leading artists, curators, collectors, and journalists from all round the world in their quest for fresh inspiration and contacts, and of course business opportunities. This autumn, the jubilee Designblok will bring together two prominent temples of Czech fine arts and design – the Trade Fair Palace, for the first time, and the Museum of Decorative Arts in Prague, for the third time.

The Trade Fair Palace will exhibit innovations in Czech and international design using the traditional formats of a **Superstudio** that presents companies and **brands** and an Openstudio intended for designers, studios, students, and freelance creators. Partnership with Respekt weekly magazine will bring the **RESPEKT Stage to the Velké dvorany** exhibition space, with educational talks, interdisciplinary discussions, and other parts of the accompanying programme on each day of the festival. The tenth year of the **international Diploma Selection competition**, intended for graduates of product and fashion design, will be staged in cooperation with the **EUNIC Cluster Czech Republic** network.

At the Museum of Decorative Arts, meanwhile, an exhibition of family firms and manufacturers entitled **Family Silver**, organised in cooperation with **Forbes magazine**, is set to build on the success of last year's event. The Openstudio at the Museum of Decorative Arts will this year launch the premiere of the **High Craft** exhibition project, organised in cooperation with **Vogue CS** magazine. The idea here is to introduce a selection of leading Czech designers and studios

that skilfully combine traditional crafts, innovative approaches, and the highest aesthetic standards.

To mark its great jubilee, the Designblok festival, supported by of the PPF Foundation, is preparing a special exhibition entitled **Designblok Cosmos**, also giving birth to a deeper, strategic partnership with the PPF Group as a whole. *“We started talking to Director of the PPF Foundation Jana Sedláčková about possible cooperation two years ago. From the very beginning, Designblok has been helping in the development of the Czech design scene, working with top designers, supporting young creators, connecting designers and industry, spreading awareness among the general public, and representing Czech design abroad. When it came down to the values that the PPF Foundation holds dear – courage, crossing the boundaries, inspiration, and responsibility – a picture emerged of an entirely new project that we could nurture together. This all led to Designblok Cosmos – a travelling exhibition, a showcase of contemporary Czech design, and an embodiment of shared values. A mobile gallery containing ten original works of glass from dozens of top designers will premiere at this year's Designblok, its first stop abroad being Milano Design Week in April 2024,”* said Festival Director **Jana Zielinski**, adding: *“It was also during our work with the PPF Foundation, which initiated this project, that we agreed on a general partnership with the PPF Group. We have big plans together, particularly in terms of internationalising Designblok and strengthening the festival's illustrious position in Central and Eastern Europe.”*

“Designblok has become one of the most visible design shows in Europe over the past quarter of a century and is one of the mainstays of the Czech and European cultural and professional calendar. It has introduced many Czech brands and artists from several generations to the international scene, and for talented young designers and manufacturers it is one of the main gateways to the international arena, and to the general public. The Designblok team and the atmosphere at all events always radiate the same contagious verve, enthusiasm, and high professional standards. As a result, Designblok discovers new names and talents every year and transmits ideas and topics that inspire the whole of the Czech scene and move it forward. This is an approach that we at PPF understand. Our support is mainly directed at those Designblok activities which support Czech design on its journey abroad and that, on the contrary, bring inspiration and further opportunities for Czech design from abroad. We are looking forward to the joint projects and original concepts with which Designblok will help the world,” added **Jana Tomas Sedláčková**, Head of Non-Profit Projects PPF.

With the symbolic theme of the JOURNEY and a quarter of a century under its belt, Designblok is returning to the visual of a **hare** that accompanied the festival in the festival logo for many years. The portrait was created by photographer Salim Issa, the graphic expression was added by Martina Černá from Imagery Studio. *“Salim's photographs and Martina Černá's graphic design are an integral part of Designblok's long history. Apart from the first three years, the duo has been responsible for a bold visual presentation of the festival that does not merely*

mimic the field of design, but instead opens it up to new themes, lightness, warmth, exaggeration, and play. Like Designblok itself, it presents visitors with objects that stem from the creative passion of the artists and from wider contexts far beyond the boundaries of design,” said **Jiří Macek**, Creative Director of Designblok.

The 25th year of Designblok will run from 4 to 8 October 2023 at the Trade Fair Palace and the Museum of Decorative Arts in Prague, and at other locations around Prague. Designers, manufacturers, and other companies can apply to become a part of the festival using the registration form at the designblok.cz website until 31 May 2023.

VISUAL: https://bit.ly/DB23_visual

PRESS CENTRE: https://bit.ly/Designblok2023_PRESS

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If you are interested in an interview with organisers and partners, please don't hesitate to contact me.