

PRESS RELEASE 11 July 2011

Sustainability Through Social Innovation *Re-Action!, an exhibition of REcentre at NAIM/Bureau Europa (17 July 2011 – 2 October 2011)*

Three years after the start of its programme, REcentre, platform for sustainable design in the Euregion Meuse-Rhine, makes the balance. REcentre presents national and international best practices and mirrors them to eight projects from Maastricht and its surroundings. The industry not always plays the part of initiator, but individuals and communities are the reason for a sustainable change. The origin of sustainability is not only the producer, but lies in an innovative and social role of the consumer too. For REcentre, platform for sustainable design in the Meuse-Rhine Euregion, this led to the choice of emphasising the importance of social innovation as an agent for sustainability in 'Re-Action!'.

Sustainability is the magic word these days, but there is no sustainable revolution. Sustainable innovation seems still to be a synonym for complexity. Sustainable action requires large investments -both in time and money- from manufacturers and an innovation and flexibility orientated relation with a consumer. But in times of crisis most manufacturers cannot take such risks.

That is why opportunities nowadays lay in bottom-up initiatives. Those initiatives, with their organic structure and low-scale approach are more flexible and manageable than an industry that is focused on large scale. The growth of social media has given an enormous scope to these civil initiatives and not only are they rooted in society from the start, but are in constant mutual contact, which enables an exchange of knowledge and experience. The Re-Action! project associates the sustainability theme to a social agenda and like-minded people are brought together, which enables exchange of knowledge. A social agenda in which the quality of life of a region and the participation of a community are at the forefront most importantly provides a social impulse.

REcentre signals a confident consumer and sees him/her as a prerequisite for bottom-up initiatives. The consumer not only demands transparency from authorities and manufacturers, but simultaneously takes control in relation to various social problems. From new food cooperatives

and *Community Supported Agriculture* to an autonomous parallel economy with 'time' as a currency. A new vision on the public domain is growing, which no longer considers it as the exclusive responsibility of the authorities.

Besides the relation between consumer and producer, the relation between the city and the countryside changes too. In big cities in particular, a new appreciation for the surrounding landscape and local agriculture is growing, which literally are imported in the city in the shape of *community gardens*, *city farms* and *aquaculture*. Initiatives such as the plan for the Country estate zones around Maastricht stimulate new relations between city and countryside which not only blurs classic borders but traditional roles and values change too.

At the same time the population is shrinking both in urban and rural areas and therefore also the existing infrastructure. Local authorities, but also private parties as project developers are faced with the challenge of finding new destinations for unoccupied buildings and 'intermediate areas'. Bottom-up initiatives prove their value here through temporary and re-destination projects. Through the combination of a future-orientated vision with a flexible, informal organisation these initiatives seem to be very skillful in the re-destination of the urban landscape.

The exhibition is open from Sunday 17 July 2011 through Sunday 2 October 2011. A parallel programme will be organised in September.

The festive midissage takes place on Sunday 18 September 2011 at 3 pm.

REcentre

REcentre is a knowledge and promotion centre for sustainable design in the Euregion Meuse-Rhine. That is why REcentre makes its network and know-how available to enterprises, designers and schools. On the other hand the organisation organises projects with a social agenda itself to highlight sustainable design. REcentre aims to expand the Meuse-Rhine Euregion to become a reference region on the interface between ecology and economy.

REcentre is an Interreg IVa project, supported by Wallonie Design (Liège, BE), Z33/Design Platform Limburg (Hasselt, BE) and NAIM / Bureau Europa (Maastricht, NL)

www.recentre.org

NAiM / Bureau Europa

Since 1 April 2009 the NAI Maastricht operates independently and manages the organisation for architecture and design under the name NAIM / Bureau Europa. The vision of this new initiative is first and foremost focused on Europa and the Euregion with the associated social agenda. NAIM / Bureau Europa proposes exhibitions and other activities at architecture and design level from a social angle as a presentation and network organisation.

The NAIM / Bureau Europa is also made possible by the main sponsor Vesteda, partners 3W real estate and RO Group. NAIM / Bureau Europa is structurally subsidised by the Province of Limburg and municipality Maastricht.

www.bureau-europa.nl

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Re-Action takes place:

From Sunday 17 July 2011 to Sunday 2 October 2011 included (open from Tuesday to Sunday from 11 am to 5 pm at NAIM / Bureau Europa, Avenue Céramique, 226 – 6221 KX Maastricht, the Netherlands)

Opening party:

The midissage of the exhibition 'Re-Action!' takes place on Sunday 18 September 2011 at 3 pm.

Websites organisations:

REcentre – www.recentre.org

NAiM/Bureau Europa – <http://www.bureau-europa.nl/>

END PRESS RELEASE

More info and footage:

www.recentre.org/press

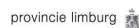
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Press contact:

Veerle Verbakel / In charge of Press & Communication / veerle.verbakel@recentre.org / +32(0)479469431



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