

Mathilde Pellé

Press kit

Chemin creux
08.06 – 29.12.2024

Exhibition
Free Admission
16, Avenue Paul Firino Martell
16100 Cognac

Fondation
d'entreprise
Martell

Mathilde Pellé

Chemin creux (Hollow Path)
June 8 – December 29, 2024



Couteau MB-2, Maison soutraire, Mathilde Pellé, 2021

The Fondation d'Entreprise Martell launches its new exhibition-residency format and invites the designer Mathilde Pellé to share and develop her research approach called «Subtraction». By unfolding various aspects of the work carried out since 2016 – both experimental, critical, formal, and theoretical – the exhibition encourages a careful examination of objects proposed by our societies and the forms that can emerge through subtraction. Pellé continues the inexhaustible question that guides her creations, her thinking, and her relationship to design: «Why is there something rather than less?»

For the exhibition «Hollow Path», she experiments with the ruin of domestic environments by subtraction and imposes a protocol by which she removes material from everyday objects by scraping and stripping them, thus creating new objects from the void.

Drawing on aspects of her work, she shares her insights into a direction that is completely disregarded in favour of more, addition, and growth: that of less. Her approach leads her to study the barriers (political, social, psychological, etc.) that limit our ability to choose less and/or accept it. Why is adding more, in most cases, the predominant choice? What are the logics at work that lead us globally to choose more, how did they emerge, and why?

Since the limits linked to material production must be recognised and accepted globally in these times marked by ecological urgency, should we not at the same time open up a non-limiting exploration of less, of the little, of the smallest? If it is approached as a direction to be probed, the less allows us to reconsider our material environments and authorises a critique of the dominant models that are curiously both producers of exhaustion and saturation.

Why are the abilities of artists and designers to read and analyse the world of forms (surrounding and/or produced) essential to the reformulation of a common equilibrium? In what ways can these non-academic approaches be the vectors or supports of profound transformations? It is these «hollow paths», without certain answers, that Mathilde Pellé explores.

Biographies

Mathilde Pellé



Mathilde Pellé is a French designer. In parallel with the production of forms (objects, spaces, installations), since 2016 she has managed the “Soustraire” (Subtract) research project which poses the question “Why is there something rather than less?”. Through diverse means including experiments, workshops, texts, images, and studies, she questions material environments and lifestyles.

After graduating from the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs in 2012, she continued her studies at ENSADlab until 2015. In 2019, she worked with Deep Design Lab – the research center at Cité du Design Saint-Étienne. Her work has been showcased by Paris Design Week, D'days, Venice Design, Galerie du VIA, ToolsGalerie, Center for Innovation and Design in Grand-Hornu, and the X and XII editions of the Biennale Internationale Design Saint-Étienne. In 2023, she contributed to the manifesto exhibition of the Martell Foundation “*Almanach: Designers' Perspective on the Resources of the Charentes Region*”.

She has published her work in leading magazines such as *Décor* (ENSAD & Presses du Réel), *A°2021* (École Urbaine de Lyon) and led workshops for design school students.

Anne-Claire Duprat

Director of the Fondation d'entreprise Martell



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Anne-Claire Duprat is an art historian, specializing in cultural policies, with 15 years of experience in the field of contemporary art. She has worked within institutions such as the Palais de Tokyo, the Jeu de Paume, the Frac Ile-de-France, as well as in the cultural services of the French Embassy in the United States. She has expertise in cultural policy and diplomacy, as well as in the field of international cooperation and professional networking. She took over the direction of the Martell Foundation in April 2022 and gave it a new direction focused on regenerative design.

About the Fondation d'entreprise Martell

Fondation d'entreprise Martell

Established in 2017, the Fondation d'entreprise Martell embarked on a new chapter in 2023 by reaffirming its commitment to creators eager to contribute to the ecological transition, the challenge of the century.

A firm believer that design and art are essential levers of transformation within society—whether by creating new imaginaries or coming up with new uses, the Foundation aims to support a new generation of creators who are sensitive to ecological and social issues, and are keen to develop resilient thinking and design in connection with territories.

Both a research and experimentation platform for designers, artists, and researchers, and a place for raising awareness and learning among the general public, its program, resolutely focused on the future, prioritizes supporting the emergence of innovative projects that pay attention to the living world and its regeneration. It is also aimed at paving new ways towards a sustainable future.

The program of exhibitions, residencies, conferences, and workshops encourage the development of thinking centered around the ecological transition of territories and our ways of life. It invites us, without boundaries, to interact in new ways with local resources and stakeholders.

The Residencies and the Almanach Lab

Every year, Fondation d'entreprise Martell launches a new call for applications to welcome creators to take up residencies focused on research, experimentation, prototyping, and production at its workshops in Cognac. The call for applications is open to all nationalities. It demonstrates the Foundation's desire to contribute towards the renewal of critical and practical design approaches by encouraging a new generation of committed creators. The grants and support are aimed at designers, artists, and researchers looking to develop resilient thinking and design that are sensitive to ecological and social issues, in connection with territories.

To support its future residents, in 2023 the Foundation decided to set up a knowledge base, the Almanach Lab, providing permanent access to an initial inventory of local, natural, and industrial resources, both material and immaterial, within its living archive.

Both a theoretical framework and a technical tool for designers in residence, the Almanach Lab accompanies research creation projects: focused on the ecological transformation of regions and our lifestyles. It invites us to interact, without boundaries, in new ways with local resources and stakeholders.

The participative dimension of the residencies sits at the heart of the Foundation's project. The creators in residence are invited to explore production and interdependency processes in an open and transdisciplinary way, to more effectively leverage their work to support transition. Thinking on

both a macro and a micro scale, with a view to sharing best practices is of course encouraged.

The living archive – a participatory archiving and transmission tool – will be supplemented over time by the projects and contributions of the creators in residence. It will combine contacts, expertise, the history of techniques, materials, prototypes... Designed as a starting point for understanding the issues at stake in the region, its aim is to inspire new discussions and collaborations on a local scale and beyond. Each residency gives rise to encounters with the general public where the results of the research carried out at the Foundation are presented.

Partnership with the Agora du design

Since 2023, the Martell Foundation is a partner of the Agora du Design, French association. It supports the laureates of this biennial grant by hosting them in residencies within its workshops, where they benefit from the necessary resources to conceive and realize their projects. The Foundation also promotes their work during «Agora du Design» exhibitions, in emblematic venues of creation both in France and internationally. This initiative aims to provide a platform for visibility to young designers, thus facilitating the dissemination of their ideas and creations to a wider and more diverse audience.

History of the building

Established in 2017, Fondation d'entreprise Martell is located on the historic site of Maison Martell, in the Gâtébourse building, at the heart of Cognac in the Nouvelle Aquitaine region. Built in 1929, the 5,000 m² Bauhaus-style building was originally an industrial production site which housed the company's bottling lines until 2005. Marking the occasion of Maison Martell's 300th anniversary, the company wanted to give its new Foundation a cultural and social mission. The first spaces opened in 2018 and the building renovations were completed in 2020. Since 2024, the Foundation has been carrying out its activities in all the areas that it occupies: exhibitions on the ground floor and second floor, workshops on the first floor, the Almanach Lab and experimentation platform on the second floor.

All About the Exhibition & Related Events

Find the entire program on the Foundation's website:
fondationentreprisemartell.com/en

ORDINARY EXTRA !

Every year, the Foundation designs a playful and creative program aimed at young audiences to extend the visit of the exhibitions with their families during each school holiday, as well as initiation workshops throughout the year. Free upon online reservation.

Visits

The exhibitions are free and open to the public. The Foundation offers various guided tour formats, by reservation. The team of mediators is available in the space to answer questions and engage in dialogue about the artworks. A bilingual visitor guide, for adults and children, is available as a complement.

Meetings and Conferences

Throughout the year, the Foundation offers meetings echoing the exhibitions. Post residence events allow for direct exchanges with the artists, designers, and researchers who share their creative processes with the public.

Saturday, June 15 at 4:00pm: Guided tour of the exhibition «Chemin Creux» by the designer Mathilde Pellé.

Off-site Events

The Foundation occasionally organizes off-site events to promote its initiatives in France and internationally.

Monday, September 9 at 2:00pm: On the occasion of Paris Design Week the designer Mathilde Pellé will participate in a talk with the designers and researchers Ernesto Oroza and Arne Hendricks, each of whom is interested in the «less material» as a profound potential for transforming our societies.

School Visits

Every Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, the Foundation offers visits and workshops to all teachers, partners, or social field stakeholders who wish to come in groups. By promoting artistic discovery and exchange between participants and mediators, various formats and approaches are offered to meet the needs of teachers. The visit can therefore be tailored, upon request.

Students are accompanied by guided tours of the exhibitions by mediators, and primary schools/middle schools/high schools can benefit from visit-workshops upon request.

Initiation Workshops

The Foundation occasionally opens its wood, glass, and ceramic workshops to the public, enabling them to discover and be initiated to traditional or innovative craftsmanships under the guidance of local artisans.

The Boutique

The Foundation's boutique offers an extension of the visit by providing access to a selection of books and objects echoing the exhibitions and residencies of the year. It exclusively offers unique pieces and limited editions created by designers, artists, and collectives close to the Foundation. An exclusive and ethical selection, designed to showcase useful pieces, produced and distributed through short circuits, highlighting local and international creators.

Practical Information

Fondation d'entreprise Martell

16 avenue Paul Firino Martell
16100 Cognac, France

Exhibitions and Opening hours

June 8th - December 29th, 2024

Wednesday to Sunday 2pm - 7pm

Closed: Monday, Tuesday, and public holidays (July 14th and December 25th)

Information

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