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**It's time to leave
the capsule, if
you dare**

September 2016

**London Design Biennale
Utopia**

The Swiss embassy and the Swiss cultural foundation „Pro Helvetia“ invited my studio to take part in the London Design Biennale this year. The Swiss exhibition at the Biennale was curated by Giovanna Lisignoli. The leitmotif of the exhibition, which takes place at Somerset House in London, is „Utopia“. We collaborated with the Freiburg-based technology company Bcomp for our contribution to the exhibition, which takes place from 7 to 27 September 2016.

The term utopia is derived from the title of a novel by the English statesman Thomas Morus, published in 1516: „De optimo rei publicae deque nova insula Utopia“ (On the Best State of a Republic and on the New Island of Utopia). A utopia is the vision of a fictional social order that is unconstrained by contemporary cultural and historical parameters. The novel is the description of a distant „ideal“ society.

In the area of design I understand utopia to be something that is not constrained by the usual parameters involved in the design process. I have been thinking for quite some time about objects that will not leave behind any superfluous materials after they have been used. Waste is an outdated

principle, and it would be great if we could transcend it some day. I was interested in this project mostly because I was able to determine the parameters myself. In commercial projects all kinds of parameters need to be considered. They are usually subject to commercial considerations which must be followed unconditionally. An experimental collaboration, however, disregards the conventional rules and pursues other objectives. That is exciting because the guiding parameters change over time. It is highly probable in the future that we will need to re-consider and re-formulate many of the conditions that apply today.





Woven textile mats made from flax and natural resins as raw materials are combined with the technology of LEDs. Flax is a renewable resource. Its cultivation has a very long tradition in the northern areas of central Europe. LEDs reduce the consumption of energy to a minimum. They are electronic elements. The production of light shifts from the world of objects to the invisible world of electronics. LEDs are mostly formless. The aim is to reduce the size of the object while simultaneously increasing their performance.

In this project flax forms the reflector, providing a light diffuser to soften the glare from the small light source, providing comfort and ease for the eyes. Using a minimum of materials, flax becomes the carrier of the electronics. And light takes on form.









