

# ECO Solidarity

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**ECO Solidarity Editorial 2024 - Part of the International Contemporary Furniture Fair (ICFF)**

**Panel Discussion and Sustainable Design Presentations**

**Tuesday, May 21, 2024 @ 1:30 -2:30 PM**

**During ICFF Design Fair: May 19-21, 2024**

**Javits Center, The Oasis Lounge, 429 11th Ave, New York, NY 10001**

To attend the panel register for the ICFF fair [HERE](#)

[ECO Solidarity Editorial 2024 | Ethics in Materiality: Restoring Sustainable Balance](#)

April 24, 2024 New York, NY - Launched four years ago in partnership with WantedDesign, ECO Solidarity returns this year to the International Contemporary Furniture Fair (ICFF), with a panel presentation on sustainable materials, to be held on Tuesday, May 21, 2024 @ 1:30 PM at the Fair's Oasis Stage.

**Participating E.U. designers and studios:**

Dagmar Zvonickova | [Novavita Design](#) (Czech Republic)

Paulina Grabowska | [NASDRA Conscious Design](#) and Mood.farm (Poland)

Vlasta Kubušová and Miroslav Král | [cp!s Crafting Plastics](#) (Slovakia)

Angel Mombiedro | [Armombiedro Studio](#) (Spain)

**Moderator:** [Jonsara Ruth](#) | Co-founder and Design Director of [Healthy Materials Lab](#)  
[Parsons School of Design](#)

Founded in 2020, ECO Solidarity, is an award winning collaborative initiative bringing together leading visionary European design studios during NYCxDESIGN week at ICFF design fair (May 19-21), in collaboration with European Union National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC), fueled by EUNIC Cluster Fund Award.

For this year's ECO Solidarity Editorial 2024, we bring back design studios and invite new participants to present and discuss new recuperative solutions, to tackle the ethical use of materiality in design and architecture, and restore sustainable balance in urban habitats with empathy for natural environment and human health.

Creation of an aesthetically alluring functional design form made with sustainable methods of production, healthy materials, local resources, and with consideration of end of use is a challenging mission. The design process must be approached holistically from concept research, material sourcing, methods of production, to final product circulation, consumption, and recycling. ECO Solidarity continues to investigate how design directly affects human wellbeing, to demonstrate that sustainability is not just a branding term, or a trend but a practical recuperative solution in response to the world's most pressing conditions, from global environmental challenges to humanitarian crises.

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**Paulina Grabowska** returns with [NASDRA Conscious Design](#) studio based in Warsaw, Poland to share her latest sustainable and regenerative design advancements for ECO Solidarity Editorial 2024. Specializing in urban farming and health-promoting solutions, her work is based on carefully conducted field research, to skillfully integrate functional science with aesthetic precision and enhance urban and interior environments.

Mood.farm, a brand under NASDRA, is dedicated to fostering well-being through biophilic design and sustainable technologies, significantly improving the quality of life in workspaces and homes.

Mood.farm products such as the therapeutic lamp "Sun for Interiors", crafted to replicate the natural spectrum of sunlight. This innovative lamp regulates circadian rhythm, sharpens focus, and elevates mood with scientifically calibrated light settings.

"Mood-Garden," is a modular sanctuary blending therapeutic light and lush greenery for a tranquil retreat that rejuvenates the mind and body in just 20 minutes daily.

"Micro Garden" is a compact, automated farm that simplifies the cultivation of nutrient-rich microgreens, making healthy eating as easy as making coffee, bringing superfood benefits to your kitchen or office space.

Paulina's designs demonstrate a deep commitment to sustainable development, transforming spaces into efficient, healthy environments. Her internationally acclaimed work merges advanced biodesign with practical applications, enhancing commercial and residential settings.

## **Paulina Grabowska Biography:**

Paulina Grabowska, a forward-thinking designer, specializes in sustainable and regenerative development. In 2016, she established NASDRA, a top European company that innovates in precision urban farms for smart cities, enhancing food systems and integrating resource circularity with climate change mitigation technologies. In 2020, she launched Moodfarm, crafting healthy and regenerative work environments for multinational companies. Her solutions in office spaces helped secure first place in FRAME and PLGBC's prestigious design competitions.

In 2021-22, she represented the Polish Cultural Institute in New York's ECO Solidarity initiative featured under WANTED at ICFF. Her works, recognized internationally, have been exhibited in New York, Warsaw, and Chongqing.

At SWPS University, she is an expert in the "Food Trails" project and Warsaw's Food LAB, funded by the EU Horizon 2020 Programme. She also imparts her expertise in Biodesign as a lecturer at the SWPS Faculty of Design in Warsaw.

[Novavita Design](#), an award-winning design laboratory representing the Czech Republic, was founded by Dagmar Zvonickova Fredholm and Ivana Linder, joined by its creative director, Martina Zachrlova. Novavita Design begins with a statement that there is no such thing as waste and believes in material reincarnation. Focusing on research, development, and manufacturing different types of sustainable materials, the founding designers work predominantly from waste and recycled ingredients. Recycled materials have usually been associated with very bold textures and colors, which may not have always achieved the desired feel of balance and harmony. Therefore, all Novavita materials are inspired by nature and aim to mimic different types of natural stones.

Novavita Design follows the idea of a reversed design process. It always starts with the waste, which comes first, and based on its character and properties it is re-envisioned and re-invented. Novavita creates material that tells a story, that becomes personal, because of the belief that unless an object is loved, it is destined to be eventually forgotten or discarded. To maximize the emotional attachment between

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materials and the end user, Novavita incorporates waste that is directly linked to their customers. The sensory appeal is the key for the founding designers, who source all ingredients locally to arrive at unique one of its kind designs.

[cp!s crafting plastics!](#) studio is an award-winning design and research studio based in Bratislava, Slovakia, founded by Vlasta Kubušová and Miroslav Král. The company has been exploring sustainable, transparent production processes in response to the ongoing issues of climate crises driven by mass consumption and the steep use of renewable resources. In the past year's the studio has focused its expertise on the cross-disciplinary research, development and implementation of new generations of better ecological biocomposites into our current and future day-to-day lives on various scales. By combining science and design, cp!s revolutionizes properties, aesthetics, and values of perishable material - natural bioplastics, and offers solutions for closed-loop systems in various fields. Their pursuit is to transform perishable materials into value-added products, by employing high and low technology. They define the entire material's cycle, from unrefined matter to final product until its decomposition in natural CO<sub>2</sub>, water and nutrients.

In 2018, cp!s co-founded NUATAN, a material brand for bioplastic solutions for value-added products using 100% biobased blends suitable for various consumer goods. NUATAN is an ecological alternative to synthetic plastic. It is an entirely biobased material solution polymerized from starch and metabolized by microorganisms from sugar.

The studio's projects have been presented at some of the most renowned institutions, including Victoria and Albert Museum London, London Design Museum, Salon del Mobile, Rossana Orlandi Milan, Schloss Hollenegg for Design, MAK Vienna, ICFF + Wanted Design and many more. Cp!s won several international prizes, including Slovak National Design Award, the Special Award German Design Award (2021), and Green Product Award (2022). In 2019, the studio was nominated for Beazley Designs of the Years (London Design Museum, 2019) and was recognized as one of the best-emerging studios in the world by the Dezeen Award (2019). In 2018, Vlasta was appointed a Slovak Forbes' 30under30 member. In 2022, Vlasta received the prestigious Fulbright for research at the University of Pennsylvania (Dumolab) and MIT GSF MISTI funding to collaborate with scientists at the MIT Media Lab. on Senseable biomaterials.

**Angel Mombiedro**, founder of [Armombiedro Studio](#) representing Spain, is an award-winning designer based in Brooklyn and whose pieces have been exhibited in Spain, France, and the United States. Mombiedro describes his artistic approach as being playful, architectural and engineer-oriented. Continuously following classical beauty and its proportions, Mombiedro seeks balance in his design creations. This balance is extended to the ethics in his approach to creative work and collaboration. His designs are featured in leading publications such as Architectural Digest Spain, Dwell Magazine, InStyle Magazine, etc.

For his participation at the ECO Solidarity pavilion in 2023, Mombiedro created a puzzle made of repurposed granite and limestone panels generated from the debris from renovation of a building on Fifth Avenue in Manhattan. An artifact between game, construction, reuse, and collaboration. A critical approach to this rampant society that forgot to play and discards material that took millennia to be formed after being used for a few decades.

In parallel to this piece, and in the context of the war in Ukraine, Mombiedro presented a project in collaboration with the Ukrainian association [CO-HATY](#), which works on reconstructing spaces to

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accommodate war-displaced people, creating comfortable and dignified homes. The project is led by the NGO "Metalab" in collaboration with the NGO "[Urban Curators](#)". Mombiedro allocated his funding from the fair to boost the reconstruction of a shelter for war refugees in Kamianets-Podilskyi, Ukraine. These funds were used to cover the shipment and installation of thirty-five doors that were rescued from the demolition of a hotel in Switzerland. This collaboration is in progress and can be followed and supported on [armombiedro.com](#).

The panel moderator, [Jonsara Ruth](#), is a designer and co-founder and Design Director of Healthy Materials Lab (HML) at Parsons School of Design, where she is an Associate Professor and Founding Director of the MFA Interior Design program. At HML, Jonsara co-leads a team of dedicated researchers transforming material practices in design, production, and construction with the goal of improving the health of underserved communities by creating healthier, sustainable built environments. Drawing from over a decade of leading design teams in the furniture industry, Jonsara brings an understanding of manufacturing, supply chains, labor practices, and a penchant for democratic design to her roles at HML and Parsons. Jonsara founded Salty Labs, a design collective, to experiment and implement designs that embody circularity with healthy, low-carbon materials and strategies, working closely with local artisans to create interiors, furniture, and experiences.

She is the recipient of multiple awards, including the 2022 Women in Architecture Innovation Award from Architectural Record with Alison Mears and, together, they co-edited the publication "Material Health: Design Frontiers", released in 2023.

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Since its founding in 2020, **ECO Solidarity** is co-curated by Odile Hainaut, brand director of ICFF and co-founder of WANTED, and Izabela Gola, Visual Arts and Design Curator at the Polish Cultural Institute NY, in collaboration with [European Union National Institutes for Culture \(EUNIC\)](#) to address the imperative need for human-centered design in response to humanitarian and public health crises by focusing on ecology, the climate emergency, public health, wellbeing in public spaces. This year's EUNIC partners include: [Czech Center New York](#), [Polish Cultural Institute New York](#), with generous support of [Consulate General of Portugal New York](#), and promotional support of the [Spanish Consulate General of New York](#). ECO Solidarity has been sustained for two consecutive years (2022-2023) with the EUNIC Cluster Fund Award granted by [EUNIC Global](#).

**ECO Solidarity 2023** was awarded with ICFF Editors' Award for the Best Booth in 2022 and in 2023 the exhibit was recommended as one of the "[12 Things to See and Do](#)" during Design Week in May 2023 by trendsetting, Dezeen and Sixty-Six Magazine included ECO S in their "Best of NYCxDesign".

The name of this initiative was inspired by the Solidarity (Polish: Solidarność) social and political movement which led to the collapse of the Soviet Union, setting the nations on a course toward democracy. The year 2020 marked the 40th anniversary of its formation.

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**The International Contemporary Furniture Fair (ICFF)** is North America's leading global platform for contemporary furnishing design. With its emphasis on original and sustainable design, ICFF brings

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together over 450 established and emerging brands from more than 35 countries; together, they exhibit their products to an audience of architects, interior designers, retailers, distributors, developers, and press. Offerings include lighting, seating, wallcoverings, materials, carpet and flooring, indoor and outdoor furniture, and kitchen and bath. The Fair also has areas dedicated to bespoke craftsmanship and student design. ICFF is owned by Emerald.

**WANTED** is a feature of ICFF dedicated to supporting emerging design. **WANTED (previously under WantedDesign Manhattan)** was created in 2011 by Odile Hainaut and Claire Pijoulat and has quickly become the platform for discovering new talent around the world and the place to engage with a diverse professional network and initiate new collaborations.

WantedDesign Manhattan (now WANTED) takes place in conjunction with the International Contemporary Furniture Fair (ICFF).

Each year thousands gather to visit the exhibitions and programs featured at WANTED to see what's new, fresh and upcoming in design. The WANTED programs are the Schools Showcase and Workshop, Launch Pad and Look Book.

[icff.com](http://icff.com)

**Healthy Materials Lab**, a design research lab at **Parsons School of Design**, is dedicated to centering people's health in all design decisions. We are committed to raising awareness about toxic chemicals in building products, to the impacts of materials throughout their life cycle, and to creating resources for the next generation of designers and architects to make healthier places for all people to live.

[healthymaterialslab.org](http://healthymaterialslab.org).

**European Union National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC)** is the European network of organizations engaging in cultural relations. Together with our partners, we bring to life European cultural collaboration in more than 100 countries worldwide with a network of 133 clusters, drawing on the broad experience of our members from all EU Member States and associate countries. EUNIC advocates a prominent role of culture in international relations and is a strategic partner of the EU, actively involved in the further definition of European cultural policy. EUNIC is a platform for knowledge sharing and for capacity building amongst its members and partners. [eunicglobal.eu](http://eunicglobal.eu)

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More information:

ECO Solidarity Editorial Panel featured story on ICFF:

<https://icff.com/stories/eco-solidarity-returns-to-icff/>

ECO Solidarity talk short announcement on ICFF:

<https://icff.com/icff-talks-sessions/#eco-solidarity-2024-restoring-sustainable-balance-through-design>

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Registration:

<https://icff.com/fair/>