

Pure Gold
Upcycled! Upgraded!

Heritage Space, Hanoi

Opening 20.04.2019

Dates 21.04.-26.05.2019

Dear Nguyen Anh-Tuan (*Director of Heritage Space*)

Dear Mr. Wilfried Eckstein, (*Director of GI Hanoi*)

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

As curator of this exhibition and representing ifa (the Institute of Foreign Cultural Affairs), I am delighted to welcome you here at Heritage Space to our design project *Pure Gold. Upcycled! Upgraded!*

ifa initiates, promotes and conducts international exchange in the fields of art and culture, providing spaces for exploration and encounters in exhibitions and events, for a general and a specialist audience. The spectrum of exhibitions organised together with renowned curators is very broad. At present, ifa is presenting around thirty both monographic and thematic exhibitions around the world on architecture, the visual arts, design, photography and film from Germany in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Pure Gold is following a new concept of these exhibitions: put together from a global perspective, at every venue the exhibition is extended with a local perspective. Today, the second exhibition after the international première of this project is now taking place in here in Hanoi, and we are looking forward to an audience interested in this global theme.

Pure Gold! – a promising title! Who would not be tempted? Who would not like to have some pure gold? But the gold meant here is based on quite different materials – paper, glass, car tyres, cork, denim, plastic, wood, wool, scrap steel, and much more. It is bulky trash, cheap materials, waste products. Global industrialisation and rampant consumerism are making new approaches to these materials urgently necessary, and we require upcycling even more than highly technical recycling methods. We also need a new mindset concerning the life cycles of materials. With *Pure Gold*, we are participating in this international debate.

We look at this theme in terms of ethics, responsibility, internationalisation and co-creation, and we want to invite discussion of added value in different contexts. Here, Europe is not the centre from which the periphery is defined. Rather, we identify a number of centres, differences and common ground, for upcycling is not a specifically European phenomenon. We therefore invited seven curators from seven regions to recommend works for the exhibition. With seventy-six different exhibits by fifty-three designers and design teams from the regions, of which we are showing a special selection here in Hanoi, the exhibition explores how real upgrading of products and production methods can be achieved, often using traditional

handicrafts knowhow. Also the exhibition architecture follows principles of upcycling: The transportation boxes, optically unified using covers, serve as plinths and room dividers in the exhibition, so that there is no need for an additional exhibition design (and therefore even more boxes).

For the exhibition, the aim is to place the artworks on show within the local context of each partner, and to reflect on this new setting. This is why *Pure Gold* has three complementary components – the tangible exhibition, the virtual platform, which serves as discussion space and a knowledge store, and workshops as the third element.

In Hanoi, for the first time during the tour, local designers were asked to apply within an open call, for both the local contributions and the workshop participation. Their objects are integrated in the exhibition next to the exhibits from designers from all over the world.

The workshop took place at the beginning of April at Heritage Space. Here, 10 local upcycling artists were invited to share their upcycling creations and to contribute these to the exhibition. In addition to the exhibits, there are making-of-videos of the objects from the workshop in Hanoi and former workshops, which took place during the touring exhibition. These so called INSTRUCTABLE VIDEO CLIPS will also be on view in the exhibition and on the Pure Gold platform.

Today I would particularly like to thank Mr. Eggarat Wongcharit from Bangkok Thailand, and the other curators of five more regions: Adélia Borges, São Paulo (Latin America), Tapiwa Matsinde, London (Sub-Saharan Africa), Divia Patel, London (South Asia), Bahia Shehab, Cairo (North Africa / The Middle East) and Zhang Jie, Beijing (East Asia). I myself curated the European region. I would also like to warmly thank all local designers (Zhang Han & Sui Hao & Li Hua, Vũ Quang Hùng, Lê Ngọc Hà Thu, Hoàng Văn Sơn, Trần Thảo Miên, Trần Thảo Miên, Nguyễn Thị Thu Hương, Nguyễn Hồng Minh, Nguyễn Hồng Nhung and VJUN art), whose works are presented in this exhibition.

Further I would like to thank Axel Kufus, Anja Lapatsch und Annika Unger who, are responsible for the exhibition platform and the workshops.

And I would especially like to thank Heritage Space director, Mr. Nguyen Anh-Tuan and his project coordinator Quam Ut Quyen and his whole team for their professional work and the great engagement with the exhibition!

My thank goes also to Mr. Wilfried Eckstein from the Goethe-Institut for the great cooperation and for selecting the Heritage Space as exhibition venue and cooperation partner. And lastly, to everyone involved in making this exhibition possible.

Finally, I would like to wish you a great exhibition and lots of inspiring ideas in your own exploration of this very special kind of pure gold!

Thank you.