

7 NOVEMBER 2018 - 24 MARCH 2019

### TEACHER NOTES

These teacher notes are extracted from the exhibition text. The introduction, section headers and captions are as found in Home Futures. Two or three exhibits from each category have been selected to enable you to guide your students' journey around the exhibition and point of some exhibits of interest as you go. If you would like a more in-depth look around the exhibition, then you may be a free preliminary visit once you have made your group booking. We do not run tours of our galleries but our visitor experience assistants who are based in the galleries are knowledgeable on much of the content.

Photography and cinematography is permitted in the gallery without the use of a flash apart from on Villa Arpel in the 'Living Smart' section which is not to be photographed. Dry sketching is allowed. No food or drink is allowed in the gallery. Please do not touch any objects unless instructed to do so in gallery signage.

### INTRODUCTION

Throughout the twentieth century, the home has been a place of social and technological change. It has also been a testing ground, where architects, designers and manufacturers imagined new ways we might live. Many of these visions anticipated how we live today, even if the way in which they were depicted might appear fantastical to us.

The 1950s dream of the fully automated home is now with us, as 'smart' devices control more and more domestic functions. Although the 1960s obsession with living in plastic bubbles turned out to be a fantasy, the underlying thinking – that we would be increasingly nomadic in a technology-filled future – proved prescient. Today, the traditional notion of 'home' endures, but we lead increasingly mobile lifestyles powered by Wi-Fi, smartphones and apps.

Home Futures draws on the history of radical domestic visions and suggests parallels with today's reality. Many of these dreams persist, as the same themes recur again and again: living with technology, living on the move, living in ever shrinking spaces or living self-sufficiently. This exhibition questions whether technology has radically changed the way in which we live today.

### 1. LIVING WITH OTHERS

*'Technology is the campfire around which we tell our stories' – Laurie Anderson*

We think of our home as an inherently private place, where we retreat from the gaze of others. Yet the twentieth century produced numerous visions of technology opening up this

closed shell: beaming the world in, and beaming the home out. In George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the sinister 'telescreen' was both a television and a security camera – a metaphor for surveillance by totalitarian regimes.

Various designers have explored how mass media might transform the way we behave. Ugo La Pietra's *Telematic House* anticipated the proliferation of screens in today's homes, although he imagined them incorporated into the furniture. Others imagined TV helmets and 'environment transformers' that promised an escape beyond the home's walls.

Today, the domestic interior is less of a closed world. The spread of connected devices has transformed our homes into hubs of the emerging data economy. Smart speakers are always 'listening' in order to do their job, and our homes are full of cameras and smart devices that collect data. The implications for the private realm may be profound. If privacy is fundamental to the idea of home, then do new technologies that constantly watch and listen to us undermine the home as we know it?

### ***Telematic House***

**Ugo La Pietra**

**1983**

**Courtesy of Ugo La Pietra Studio**



Shown at the Milan Furniture Fair in 1983, the Telematic House was an exploration of the potential impact of communication technologies on domestic space. La Pietra's playful proposal to integrate TV screens into every piece of furniture anticipated the current importance of screens in our lives. In his vision, most domestic behaviour was to be mediated through screens and cameras. The dining room, for instance, had chairs positioned facing the TV, but the armchairs in the living room had screens incorporated into the seat backs, so they were arranged not facing each other but one behind the other, like in an aeroplane.

*Two films viewable from the bed section;*



### ***Uninvited Guests***

**Superflux**

**2015**

**Video, 4' 43"**

**Film by Superflux**

**Commissioned by ThingTank**

**Courtesy of Superflux**

Superflux's film introduces Thomas, aged 70, who lives on his own after his wife died last year. His children send him smart devices to monitor his diet, health and sleep from a distance. But Thomas has always been fiercely independent, happy to live in an organised mess. He struggles with the order and rules imposed on him by the objects that are meant to make his life easier. In this speculative film exploring a near future populated by smart devices, Superflux ask how we can learn to live with these 'uninvited guests'.

### ***ONE SHARED HOUSE 2030***

**SPACE10 and Anton & Irene**

**2017**

**Video 2' 22"**

**Courtesy of SPACE10 and Anton & Irene**

*'Welcome to the year 2030. There are 1.2 billion more people on the planet. Seventy per cent of us are living in cities now. To house 1.2 billion more people, we are sharing more household goods and services than ever before.'*

The animated film *ONE SHARED HOUSE 2030* is the outcome of a playful research project by anton & irene and SPACE10 that gives an insight into the future of co-living and what we are prepared to share in our homes through a collaborative survey.

The iPads, placed in the bed, include an interactive survey that extends this project for the duration of the exhibition. The information collected is open source, free for anyone to use and completely anonymous. This project is a sequel to the interactive documentary *ONE SHARED HOUSE*.

## LIVING ON THE MOVE

*'A home is not a house' – Reyner Banham*

In the 1960s and 1970s, numerous designers reimagined the home as a more nomadic space. Some, like Archigram and Hans Hollein, imagined people inhabiting 'walking cities' and inflatable bubbles. Others, like Ettore Sottsass, designed modular environments that combined architecture with furniture for more flexible living patterns. Perhaps the epitome of such thinking was Superstudio's collages of the Supersurface, which wrapped the planet in a mysterious grid – a powerful network that would allow people to roam free and unencumbered.

Today, the internet and our connected devices have made such notions of nomadic living possible. We live and work while moving seamlessly from one place to another, as long as we have Wi-Fi and the right power cables. Meanwhile, digital culture and the 'sharing economy' are gradually removing the need to own many objects.

So-called 'digital nomads' – usually young and tech-savvy – have embraced life on the move, but are we any closer to not needing the comforts of a traditional home? And is our concept of home less bound to a physical place?

### **Axonometry of the 'House Environment'**

**Ettore Sottsass**

**1971-1972**

**Pencil and collage on paper & mixed media**

**Courtesy of CSAC, Università di Parma**



Italian designer Ettore Sottsass' 'House Environment' proposed a modular system that merged furniture with infrastructure to liberate the home from consumer goods. By using simple forms, muted colours and cheap materials, he framed furniture as a tool rather than a possession. Presented as a full-scale prototype at the exhibition *Italy: The New Domestic Landscape* at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in 1972, these functional units could be easily moved around and reconfigured as the resident desired. In his detailed drawings, Sottsass illustrated the potential use of his units, which contained a mobile kitchen, shower, toilet, bookshelves, a jukebox and other elements of the home.

**Instant City Bournemouth**  
**Archigram**  
**1968-71/1994**  
**Mixed media model**  
**Courtesy of M+, Hong Kong**



A fictional project by Archigram, Instant City imagined an airship that contained all the cultural resources of a metropolis. Moving from site to site, and not restricted by architecture, it redefined the city as a temporary event, much like a festival, rather than a location fixed in space.

## **LIVING SMART**

*'A house is a machine for living in' – Le Corbusier*

Push-button fantasies were common to the 1950s 'home of the future'. The modernist vision of efficiency produced streamlined consumer goods that promised to make housewives' lives easier. The RCA Whirlpool Miracle Kitchen, for instance, envisioned a home controlled through a central computer. A prototype for a radio-controlled vacuum cleaner, the precursor of today's Roomba robot, suggested that domestic work could soon be outsourced to the machines. Such tendencies were ridiculed in Jacques Tati's film *Mon Oncle*, whose Villa Arpel took the idea of mechanical optimisation to humorous extremes.

In the twenty-first century, this vision has evolved into the 'smart home'. Here, the principles of labour-saving remain central but, with the Internet of Things, they are achieved by connected devices that use our data to predict our habits and preferences. While we may have abandoned the futuristic aesthetics of the 1950s, the gender roles have remained unchanged – for example, most smart speakers opt for a female voice.

Can 'smart' devices really transform our home from a place of chores into one of ease and leisure? Some studies suggest that domestic labour still takes just as much time as it did fifty years ago.

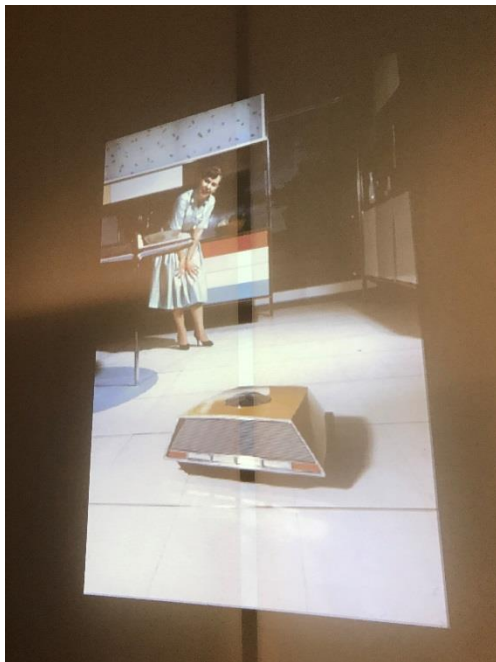
## **RCA Whirlpool Miracle Kitchen**

**1959**

**Reproduction**

**Photograph by Robert Lerner**

**Courtesy of Robert Lerner and Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division**



Exhibited at the *American National Exhibition* in Moscow in 1959, the RCA Whirlpool Miracle Kitchen showcased a post-war American version of the future. Features included an autonomous radio-controlled vacuum cleaner, adjustable sinks and a dishwasher that moved around the kitchen on an electric track. While these absurd inventions were only a fantasy at the time, some of them have appeared in our homes today– such as the Roomba robot vacuum cleaner or smart home speakers that allow for centralised voice-control of all connected devices.

Watch this excerpt before your visit; <https://youtu.be/Vui2CSEwOxQ?t=705>

## **Villa Arpel**

**5B Réalisations, after original by Jacques Lagrange**

**1958/2002**

**Mixed media**

**Courtesy of Cité de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine – Musée des monuments français**

Jacques Tati's film *Mon Oncle* satirises industrial modernisation and the emerging French consumer society of the 1950s. His Villa Arpel is an ultra-modern, machine-like house. The geometric forms and shiny, clinical surfaces provide an impersonal and uncomfortable setting for its inhabitants. The gadgets that populate the house showcase an ideal of modern living, but, when turned on, the noise they generate makes it difficult for the inhabitants to communicate. Domestic appliances in the Villa Arpel are meant to make life easier – instead they make it more complicated.



## LIVING WITH LESS

*Less is enough – Pier Vittorio Aureli*

With the growth of urban populations, the question of space has become a major preoccupation. From the 1920s, the optimisation of domestic life became a matter of scientific study based on measuring the body and its movements – all of which went hand in hand with modernism's functional approach to the home. Less space in urban centres resulted in the emergence of hybrid furniture, such as the sofa-bed, folding tables and integrated storage. In 1972, Joe Colombo compressed all of the home's functions into a single piece of furniture that he called the Total Furnishing Unit. Minimising the space required and maximising functionality, it imagined a world in which the home could be reduced to a single industrial product.

Similar thinking prevails in today's micro-apartments driven by the growing pressures on city living. The creation of smaller units has made space a luxury commodity. In big cities, as the value of a square foot increases, so do the solutions that make it possible to inhabit smaller spaces. Gary Chang's Transformer Apartment in Hong Kong allows for 24 different layouts in a 344-square-foot space. Such micro-living takes the modernist dream of the rationalist home to its extreme.

What is the absolute minimum to which our living space can be reduced? Does squeezing more functionality out of less space respond to our human needs?

### **Loveless: The Architecture of Minimum Dwelling**

**Dogma: Pier Vittorio Aureli, Martino Tattara with Marson Korbi, Barbara Mazza, Ezio Melchiorre, Marie Oudon, Antonio Paolillo, and Laura Bruder**

**2018**

**Mixed media**

**Courtesy of Dogma**



In 1932, Czech critic Karel Teige proposed a concept of minimum dwelling in which every person would have a private room, but all the other domestic functions would be communal. Taking Teige's idea of minimum dwelling as a starting point, Dogma revisited 48 examples of

minimum dwelling, from the medieval monk's cell to the nineteenth-century American residential hotel, and from the Soviet Dom-Kommuna (communal apartments) to contemporary collective developments.

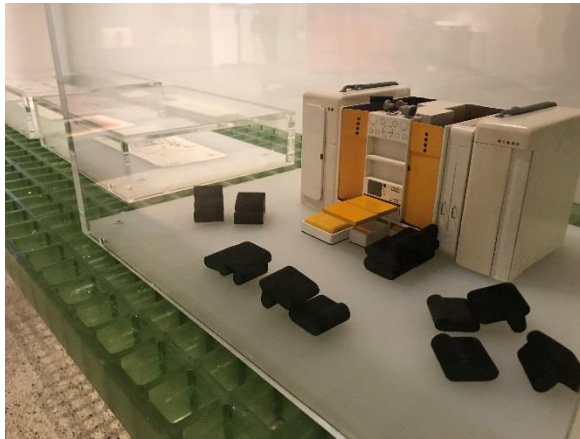
### **Total Furnishing Unit**

**Joe Colombo**

**1971**

**Mixed media**

**Courtesy of Studio Joe Colombo**



To maximise the potential of small spaces, Joe Colombo's Total Furnishing Unit blurred the boundaries between furniture and architecture. It proposed an inhabitable unit that would flexibly transform and accommodate all the various functions of the home, all within twenty-eight square metres. The design included four unit-blocks: 'Kitchen', 'Cupboard', 'Bed and Privacy', and 'Bathroom'. The 'Cupboard' could be used as a space-divider, while the 'Bed and Privacy' unit accommodated sleeping, eating and entertaining.

## **LIVING AUTONOMOUSLY**

*'The age of autonomy is going to be the age of do it yourself' – Marshall McLuhan*

Visions of a good life in the 1970s often involved some form of self-sufficiency, whether making your own furniture or growing your own food. To challenge consumerism and help people become more self-reliant, several designers developed systems that would enable anyone to shape and customise their homes. Enzo Mari's 1974 Autoprogettazione manual demonstrated how to make your own furniture with just some wooden planks and nails, and it remains a classic of 'open-source' design today.

The Internet has made it possible for such systems to reach millions of people. And with the environmental effects of consumerism more evident than ever, there is a renewed desire to find less wasteful ways to make, use and reuse domestic objects. As a response to mass-produced furniture, Belgian design studio OpenStructures proposes an open-source system that allows anyone to make furniture and basic household appliances – and then to reuse the parts to make something else. This approach not only democratises the design process, but reduces waste and saves valuable parts and materials.



## ***How to Build your own Living Structures***

**Ken Isaacs**

**1974**

**Manual**



Ken Isaacs designed modular furniture and housing systems that anyone could build. He published his instructions for how to create a more sustainable, flexible and multi-functional home in the manual *How to Build your own Living Structures*. Isaacs argued that, in the modern world, the process of building is made to seem more complicated than it is. His manuals illustrated how to return to simple construction methods.

## **OpenStructures family of objects**

**OpenStructures, Labt, Normal Studio, Studio Minale-Maeda, DDFP, DSMVV**

**2018**

**Mixed media**

**Courtesy of OS\_Studio**



OpenStructures (OS) explores the possibility of making furniture in a modular way, through a collaborative design process in which everybody can contribute parts, components and structures. The Family of Objects features four different commissions of OS-compatible products for the home by four different designers and producers. The resulting objects illustrate the variety of authors, styles and production methods within one modular system; from prototype to marketable product, from unique piece to limited edition, or from hand-crafted to digital fabrication.

Displayed here are the initial furniture prototypes that resulted from the four collaborations. They are accompanied by 'object hacks' which combine parts from the different originals and recompose them into new functions.

Showcasing original designs by Atelier Ternier for Labt, Gent; Disarming Design From Palestine; Normal Studio, Paris; Studio Minale Maeda, Rotterdam; and object hacks by Raw Color, Eindhoven; and OS Studio, Brussels.

## **GARDEN**

A chance to sit down, read a book and charge your phone.

## **SELLING DREAMS**

Sit on a cushion and watch this film about modern living.

## **DOMESTIC ARCADIA**

*'Form does not follow function. Function follows vision.'* – Frederick Kiesler

The notion of the 'home of the future' as a machine for living was an attempt to modernise domestic life, but it ignored the human need for ritual. Counter to modernist visions of progress, some designers sought to emphasise that our homes are also places of irrational and emotional needs. Opposing functionalism, alternative ideas of the domestic realm playfully evoked nature. These dream-like, surreal interiors conjured idyllic landscapes, bringing natural forms into the home.

Frederick Kiesler's Endless House questioned modern architecture's ability to create suitably human habitats. The Endless House project imitated a 'living organism', inspired by biomorphic forms such as eggs and wombs. In the 1970s, designers working with the Italian furniture producer Gufram used polyurethane to produce natural forms, such as a lounge seat shaped like a giant clump of grass and a coat-hanger cactus. These landscape elements, by turns provocative or poetic, suggest a more primitive, unspoiled existence.

Can the dream of efficiency ever respond to our basic human need for comfort, leisure and recreation? What other ways are there to make our homes better and more fulfilling places to live?

**Lake Sofa**

**Ronan & Erwan Bouroullec**

**2018**

**Medium**

**Courtesy of Vitra Production and Ronan & Erwan Bouroullec**

**TV Vase**

**Ronan & Erwan Bouroullec**

**2001**

**Mixed media**

**Courtesy of Conran Foundation Collection**

**Algues**

**Ronan & Erwan Bouroullec**

**2004**

**Plastic**

**Courtesy of Vitra Production and Ronan & Erwan Bouroullec**

**Twigs and Algues**

**Ronan & Erwan Bouroullec**

**2014**

**Video, 15' 37''**

**Video by ÉricandMarie**

**Courtesy of Ronan & Erwan Bouroullec**



This series of designs by the Bouroullec brothers takes inspiration from the natural world. A sofa shaped like a lake offers to turn the man-made interior into a landscape, while the TV Vase questions the dominance of technology in our homes. Algues, a modular system of seaweed-like components, can be connected in an infinite number of combinations to produce a screen, a room divider or a canopy. Easy to assemble and take apart again, Algues have an organic form that is suited to mobile and flexible lifestyles in urban centres.

Frame 03  
SO – IL  
2017  
Mixed media  
Courtesy of Friedman Benda Gallery



SO – IL's Frame furniture does not reveal its function at first sight, thereby leaving its use open to the imagination. It seats more than one, if you dare to try. Sitting on Frame 03 affects the tightness of the mesh, which changes the experience for anyone else who is sat on it.

#### **EXHIBITION GUIDANCE**

Objects in the exhibition are on open display rather than in cases. Care should be taken when moving around the exhibition and most objects should not be touched. Any objects that can be touched will be clearly signed. Please ask staff if you are unsure. We would be grateful if you could brief your students accordingly.

Depending on your group and your itinerary for the visit, we would recommend that you set aside approximately 40 minutes to explore this exhibition.

Photography and cinematography is permitted in the gallery without the use of a flash apart from on Villa Arpel in the 'Living Smart' section which is not to be photographed.

**This exhibition contains prominent nudity in the form of a piece from the 1976 "Untitled" collection by the artist "Linder", with nudity also briefly seen in the film "Public Interventions in the City of Milan" (1979), as played on a small CRT monitor.**

For reference ahead of your visit, the "Untitled" work by Linder can be seen on the Tate's website via <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/linder-untitled-t12501>

Please ensure that you read our school visit Terms and Conditions document before making your visit.

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