Blanchard has just released her latest collection of upholstery fabric in collaboration with HBF Textiles. Launched at Neocon 2017, the Raw Materials collection received the Metropolis Likes, HIP, and Best of Neocon Contract Silver awards. Raw Materials includes timeless textures and hand-drawn organic patterns. ‘Incorporating my own artwork into this collection really gave Raw Materials a new meaning,’ explains Blanchard. ‘My desire to bring an energised series of textiles to the corporate environment was something I’d been inspired to do for a long time. Seeing this vision actually come to life, interwoven into the collection, brings the entire aesthetic full circle.’ HBF Textiles has partnered with Blanchard to create a collection of textiles that translate the intrinsic beauty of nature through pattern and texture. Inspired by Russel Wright’s organic modern architecture, the designs celebrate the extraordinary elements of the natural world, from the softness of clouds to the intricate detail of a butterfly wing. Blanchard says she was, ‘Deeply struck by Wright’s unusual use of natural materials, and my own desire to create a working environment with soul. I strived to recreate this feeling of being in an untouched forest, bringing to life texture, pattern, and the essence of nature in a subtle way.’
WICKIE MEIER ENGSTRÖM
Director and partner of Really

During Milan Design Week 2017, a new company co-owned by Kvadrat and focused on designing materials for circularity, was presented. Really was initially founded in 2013 by Wickie Meier Engström, Klaus Samsøe and Ole Smedegaard. Responding to the urgent global issue of waste, Really upcycles end-of-life textiles to create materials that challenge the design and architecture industries to rethink their use of resources, and to design with a circular economy in mind. The manufacturing does not involve the use of dyes, water or toxic chemicals, and generates only recyclable waste (the material used can eventually be regranulated and formed into new boards). Really’s debut collection of Solid Textile Board was launched with projects by British designer Max Lamb and Dutch designer Christien Meindertsma, curated by Jane Withers and Njusja de Gier.

A high-quality engineered material for furniture and interior design, it is made from end-of-life cotton and wool from the textiles industries, industrial laundries, households, and Kvadrat’s selvedge waste. ‘Currently 95% of the textiles we use could probably be recycled. Only 25% actually are. The rest is consigned to landfill or burnt. The first Really project is as much about asking questions as presenting material answers. The two commissions by Christien Meindertsma and Max Lamb, are designed not simply to showcase the properties of a new material made from a familiar old one, but also to start a dialogue about the shift in perception, processes and logistics, which is needed as we grapple with upcycling waste,’ says Wickie Meier Engström. ‘At the heart of Really’s mission is the desire to transform mindsets. We hope to empower a shift to a no-waste paradigm and challenge designers and manufacturers to take a new approach to materials on an industrial scale.’

HELLA JONGERIUS

The Pinakothek der Moderne has invited Hella Jongerius and Louise Schouwenberg to develop a site-specific installation in the Paternoster Hall of its museum in Munich. They decided to follow up on the questions that they posed in their 2015 manifesto Beyond the New. In the exhibition, the idea of the new is transposed onto the museum and its collection, and design is analysed on a philosophical level. Can cultural innovation be found in a museum? Among the contents, there is also a hypothetical conversation between Jongerius and Schouwenberg with a few glorious design greats like Walter Gropius and Anni Albers.

A new generation of products is gaining ground and taking the lead of the future production rules. Conscious of our environmentally harmed world and seeing no alternatives to a sustainable future, designers and companies use the smartest research and the best practices to produce the highest ethical possible pieces. By distancing ourselves from the world of ‘yearly trends’ and irresponsible material choices, these products create awareness and an ethical critical mass.