



MUSÉE DE DESIGN  
ET D'ARTS APPLIQUÉS  
CONTEMPORAINS **mudac**

Science Culture Société



# TOUCH\_The world at your fingertips

July – October 2012  
Lausanne, Switzerland

*Masayo Ave, Haptic touch panel – The Sound of Materials*

**The *Musée de la main / Fondation Claude Verdan* [museum of the hand] and the *mudac / Museum of contemporary design and applied arts* have decided to collaborate for an exhibition about the sense of touch, exploring all sorts of objects related to it, from luxury goods to virtual worlds activated by a wave of a hand, from ergonomic tools to haptic design.**

The intense development of information and communications technology (ICT) may have given us the illusion that it would be possible to do without the human body and that the latter would be pushed out from a future virtual world run only by computers.

In reality, present technologies still require certain actions of the human body and even develop specific gestures, either in industry or in our daily handling of highly technological objects such as smartphones.

In parallel, and maybe as a consequence of our overwhelming fascination for technology, a trend in the sensuality of touching has been developing over the last years. Materials or textiles reacting to touch or with very finely differentiated textures have been invented and objects enhancing the sensual pleasure of their user have even been designed. This is called *haptic design*.

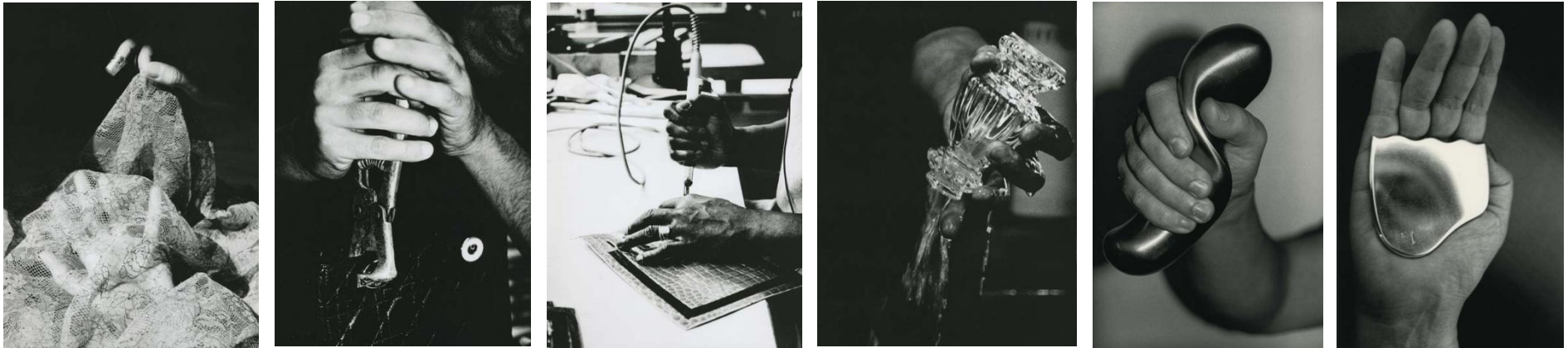
Another reaction to the all-technological world is that of the luxury industry, which gives more value to all goods implying an elaborate handwork.

Starting from these observations, *mudac* and *Musée de la main* decided to join their knowledge and experience to present an exhibition about touch and the essential role played by the hand in our everyday life, but also in more specific contexts.

Our project is divided into four thematic sections, namely:

- **Hand vs. Machine: From Arts and Crafts to Industry**
- **Form, Function, Body: Design and Ergonomics**
- **The Pleasure of Touching : Haptic Design**
- **The Bodily Interface: Touch and Interaction**

## I. Hand vs. Machine: From Arts and Crafts to Industry



Anne de Vandière, *H/and series 1 and 2*, 2004-2008. These photographs show the hands of craftsmen and designers active in the luxury industry.

Handcrafted goods are part of our daily life, but how do we consider them? The commercial value of luxury goods increases when labelled “handmade”, bringing to light a precious traditional expertise. The hand is also part of the making process of many common objects, simply because some of its actions cannot be replaced. Moreover, hands do inspire the creators of industrial machines, showing their incomparable efficiency for handling and making things. Haute couture and watch making masterpieces will be confronted with everyday clothes and objects, both made by hand. But whereas luxury companies use the labour of the hand as a marketing argument, other more ordinary makes hide their employment of poorly paid “cheap hands”. Finally, this chapter will also present machines and robots mimicking the movements of the hand.

## II. Form, Function, Body: Design and Ergonomics



Julia Leihener, *Thups*, Jochen Holz, 2004  
Martino D'Esposito, *Drink Tray*, Ligne Roset, 2004.  
Ergonomi Design Gruppen, *Adjustable Spoons*, 1986  
*Handshoe Mouse*

How does an object adapt to the body of its user? Professional tools, gamepads, table spoons: all the objects exhibited in this section have to fit the hands or the body of their users, even when these have specific needs, such as left-handed or disabled people. Ergonomic design encompasses a very large field of objects from very trivial ones such as comfort shoes or remote controls, to incredibly original and clever ones, such as Martino d'Esposito's *Drink Tray*, which shows how ergonomics have triggered the imagination of designers. We will also explore the medical aspects of ergonomics, looking at prostheses and devices made for invalid people, and how ergonomics can include minorities.

### III. The Pleasure of Touch: Haptic Design



**Jenny Tillotson, *Intelligent Second Skin Dress*, 2003.** This dress offers wellness and health through multi-sensory experience

**Carmel McElroy and Donna Wilson, *Hands On*, 2003.** The wool fingers of this carpet caress the feet of the visitors.

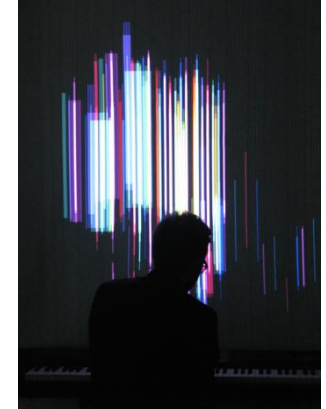
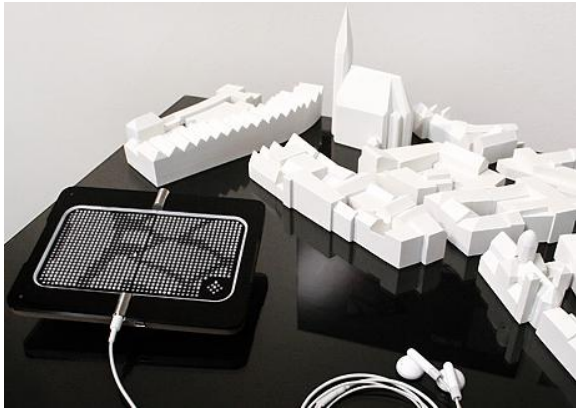
**Tokuji Yoshioka, *Honey-Pop Chair*, 2001.** A paper chair with honeycomb structure. It memorises the shape of the body of the first person who seats in it.

**Marielle Richards, *Braille Furniture*.** Several objects are part of Braille Design

Innovations in textile and materials technologies have given birth to a great number of surfaces sensitive to touch, or with finely differentiated textures. Visitors will be able to explore through their whole body the smoothness or coarseness of many objects, and to see how some of them react to their touching. We will include some Braille design in this section, to show how things designed to be touched not only gather pleasure, but also information. As a complement, we will have some texts or videos relating blind people's personal experience of touch.



## IV. The Bodily Interface: Touch and Interaction



Robert Richter *ORIKO, Plan b*, 2008. Digital citymap for the blind.

Collective work / ECAL, *Clouds*, 2011. Spectators touch virtual clouds

Frédéric Kaplan - OZWE, Martino d'Esposito, *QB1*. With simple gestures and no joystick, visitors play virtual tennis with this computer.

Jonas Heuer, *Clavilux 2000*. For each note played on a keyboard, a visual element appears on a screen.

As mentioned, the human hand and body are still very present in innovative technologies. There is yet more to be said: they are becoming the best ways for exploring and interacting with these new virtual worlds. The applications on iPhones and iPads show the countless ways of using our sense of touch, and the development of augmented reality is a proof that the body is now part of the future scientific inventions. The visitors will be invited to participate in these universes through original and amusing installations.



On the lookout for new trends, the mudac – Musée de design et d'arts appliqués contemporains – wishes to be a place for exchanges and encounters between the various fields of design, the applied arts and contemporary art. The successor to Lausanne's Musée des arts décoratifs, it opened its doors in June 2000.

A rhythm of around six temporary exhibitions per year has emerged naturally since the museum's opening, with, among others, the series of "carte blanche to a designer" exhibitions. As for the permanent collections, new installations are offered regularly in order to permit visitors to see the entire collections progressively.

In parallel, the museum opens its doors to performing arts: dancers, producers, performers and musicians. The mudac thus profiles itself as a platform for free exchange between diverse forms of artistic expression, both Swiss and international.

**Website :** [www.mudac.ch](http://www.mudac.ch)



Science Culture Société

Since its opening in 1997, the *Musée de la main / Fondation Claude Verdan* [museum of the hand] has been promoting scientific and medical culture, as well as knowledge about the hand to a broad audience. It has proposed twenty-eight thematic exhibitions since its opening, most of them original creations.

It contributes in a dynamic and inventive way to the comprehension of scientific and medical innovations and triggers citizen debate. The selected themes are always situated at the intersection of sciences, medicine, biotechnologies, history, arts and society: “Flesh – Inner Voyages” (2003-2004), dedicated to the transformations of the human body, from our daily life to contemporary biomedicines; “Spirit are you there?” (2004-2005), on the contemporary evolutions of neurosciences and mind sciences; “From Kiss to Kid” (2006-2007) on sexuality and procreation today; and “SKIN” (2011–2012) on the most extended organ of our body.

In addition to the exhibitions, an intensive programme of activities, encounters and debates on current scientific and cultural themes is planned on a regular basis. These are addressed to the younger audience and schools (free entrance) as well as adults.

The *Musée de la main* is regularly working in partnership with the Hospital CHUV (University Hospital of Canton Vaud, Lausanne), the University of Lausanne, the EPFL (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Lausanne) and the Longeraie Clinic (hand surgery specialists). Many other institutions support the Museum, depending on the themes selected in the exhibitions and activities. A great number of museums and lenders of works of art also trust the *Musée de la main*. The museum welcomes more than 20'000 guests each year.

**Website:** [www.verdan.ch](http://www.verdan.ch)