



The European Confederation of Flax and Hemp – CELC – is proud to support *Fashioned from Nature* at the V&A

I LOVE



LINEN

“Linen is the fabric of our lives – we sleep in it, eat on it and wrap ourselves in it. Flax the plant and linen the fabric are beneficial to the body and kind to the planet. The V&A’s Fashioned from Nature exhibition explores this versatile European textile in historic and modern forms, as interpreted by designers including John Malkovich; linen even covers the benches where visitors sit while absorbing the displays. An image of the beautiful blue-flowered flax plant is present on the staircase as you make your way up to the mezzanine floor – an inspirational plant on many levels. Supporting this rich and fascinating show has been a pleasure and a privilege for the CELC team and its members – farmers, scutchers, spinners and fabric producers. We are all delighted to share our passion for flax and linen with the visitors of Fashioned from Nature.”

Marie-Emmanuelle Belzung, director, I Love Linen by CELC.

I LOVE LINEN is a unique celebration of linen taking place across the UK during Spring/Summer 2018. Linen is the answer to one of the main questions raised by *Fashioned from Nature*: ‘How can we design a more sustainable fashion industry?’ Linen is comfortable and fashionable, locally-sourced and sustainable, linen’s journey from field to fabric involves zero irrigation, zero GMOs and zero waste. In a world of fast consumption, linen is a fabric of substance.

As the V&A opens the doors on *Fashioned from Nature*, 200 stores across the UK unveil special windows to champion the wonders of linen. In nearby Sloane Square, the Peter Jones department store features a 15-metre window facing the King’s Road, which displays flax from the field alongside the latest fashion and interiors. At Chelsea College of Arts fashion students have been immersed on a linen innovation project: the parade ground is hosting a flax field from April 19th to May 3rd, 2018, cultivated with love by young farmers in France.

Linen derives from the flax plant, which is grown less than 120 miles from the V&A: in Normandy, northern France, Belgium and the Netherlands. These fields, visible from the Eurostar, are the source of 80% of the world’s flax/linen; a perfect climate plus local expertise ensure premium quality. Like the V&A, linen has a strong presence in fashion and in history. In the 21st century, innovations such as knit and washed treatments have given the fabric a new bounce and versatility; wrinkles are optional.

The European Confederation of Flax and Hemp (CELC) is the principal sponsor of the V&A’s *Fashioned from Nature* exhibition. Responsible for promoting linen internationally, CELC has created the I LOVE LINEN campaign, jointly financed by the EU, as the final stage of a three year consumer-facing initiative, following itineraries in France and Italy. More information can be found at ilovelinen.uk

NOTES TO EDITORS

Natural and versatile, flax/linen is present throughout the V&A's *Fashioned from Nature* exhibition, which runs from April 21, 2018 to January 27, 2019: on display as the fabric of a men's suit designed by actor John Malkovich and in the textiles that cover benches for visitors to sit on while enjoying the displays, including a special flax fibre installation.

To clarify terminology, flax is used for the plant, fibre and yarn, while linen refers to textiles aka fabrics. Europe is the number one producer of flax worldwide: 80% of all flax is grown in Normandy and the north of France, Belgium and the Netherlands [Europe, 2017: 107 000 hectares = 143 820 tonnes of long fibres]. Due to ideal climate and soil conditions, plus agricultural expertise passed down through generations of families, European flax involves no irrigation because of sufficient rainfall, no GMO's to create an eco-friendly crop and no waste because the entire biodegradable plant is put to use. Once processed, 60% goes to fashion, 30% to home furnishings and 10% to technical fabrications such as high-performance composites.

ABOUT CELC

The European Confederation of Flax and Hemp (CELC) is the European agro-industrial organisation uniting all stages of production and transformation of flax and hemp. Founded in 1951, CELC represents 10,000 European enterprises across 14 countries, and oversees fibre development from plant to finished product. As the linen authority, CELC invites dialogue with national and European public organisations. As a think tank and centre for market analysis and strategic orientation, CELC presides over an industry of excellence with a global reach. Moreover, CELC promotes flax/linen to industries as diverse as fashion, sports and automotive, and encourages innovation – from new knitting and washing techniques that revolutionise linen's feel and wearability, to new composites that blend flax with polymers in products including bicycle helmets and car dashboards.

www.vam.ac.uk
#FashionedfromNature

Exhibition from 21st April 2018
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I LOVE

LINEN



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