

PREAMBLE

This research project – which takes the form of an exhibition, residencies, encounters, and a living archive laboratory – stems from Fondation d'entreprise Martell's determination to strengthen its commitment to creators and to its region, through the prism of the ecological transition.

This experimental initiative emerged from a reflection on how a foundation located in a context that is rural yet industrial, prosperous yet remote, can establish itself as an agent for local dynamism and activate new potential for collective transformation.

What steps are needed to make this happen?

When researching the best place to start this endeavor, the notions of need, necessity, collectivity, and collaboration acted as a guide for the approach outlined here. It soon became clear that the first step, before taking any action, would require the compilation of an inventory of the region's resources and issues. Get to know, meet, map, and analyze then interact, collaborate, and compose.

The exhibition "Almanach – Designers' Perspective on the Resources of the Charentes Region" summarizes this investigative process and presents a subjective overview developed by the team of designers – Olivier Peyricot, Lola Carrel, Valentin Patis, and Mathilde Pellé. Commissioned to identify significant resources specific to this context, their research has resulted in a methodological foundation and opened up specific avenues for reflection in the years ahead. This multi-faceted and contributory project explores the processes of production and interdependence in order to better position itself as a tool and catalyst for transition, enabling the development of unique creative practices that bring about change. This prospective and collective intelligence approach aims at charting new ways for building a resilient and equitable future.

Since its inception five years ago, Fondation d'entreprise Martell is now evolving into a research and experimentation platform for art and design, as well as a space for raising awareness and learning – with a focus on living things.

Convinced that art and design are fundamental catalysts for evolution within society – whether through creating new imaginaries or devising new uses – the Foundation supports the emergence of creative projects with a regenerative dimension. Whether to reflect on the use of resources, to rethink the relationship between humans and their ecosystem, or to mobilize vernacular expertise and design new materials.

Anne-Claire Duprat Director of the Fondation d'entreprise Martell

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INTRODUCTION

ALMANACH

In this context, the term almanac (almanach in French) refers to the way in which a place – the Cognac region and the two "Charentes" departments of Charente-Maritime and Charente – is observed and paid attention to.

The Almanach is a tribute to a <u>long period of time</u>, presented from various angles.

As an object, it functions as a tool for organizing multiple pieces of information, a kind of *Wikipedia* ahead of its time, offering a popular approach to information by amassing various perspectives, anecdotes, and correlations. By arranging <u>natural rhythms and</u> <u>techniques</u>, it becomes an ever-expanding compendium of information, welcoming many different disciplines (astronomy, weather, history, diary, drawings, tips, designs, forecasting tables, shared advice, resources, and so on). Through its grid concept, the Almanach^[fig.1] does away with the notions of scale or hierarchy between its composing elements. Just like this <u>exhibition</u> workshop, it is an unfinished object, to be supplemented through our experiences, helping us to shape how we use the region.

RESOURCES

What we refer to as *resources* can be interpreted in many different ways. At first glance, they are perceived as profitable, useful, and often material, or even industrial and/or artisanal. Resources can also be immaterial when it comes to expertise or stories that are passed on. They may sometimes take the form of events, presences, encounters, immense natural ensembles such as a river or a climate, or even a collection of neglected materials. In short, the notion of what constitutes a resource depends primarily on the value attributed to it.

Influenced by current debates on ecology,¹ this exhibition presents the <u>individual perspectives of desi-</u> <u>gners on resources</u>. Perspectives that are guided by encounters, narratives, and interrelations... By providing a local observation of materials, objects, and interactions with the local region, and by adding a broad and systemic vision of ecological transition and design in a broader sense, the designers offer a perspective on resources in order to identify <u>deposits that can be</u> <u>made use of</u>, in the context of ecological transition. Objective: collect and analyze, then transform.

ECOLOGIES AND THE REGION

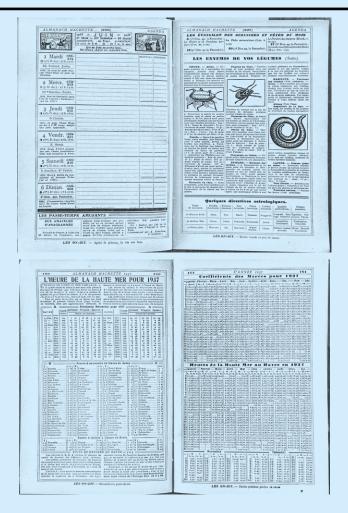
Addressing issues relating to the region from an ecological perspective not only enables us to focus on morphological, geographical, and historical aspects, but also on social, human, sensitive, durable, and shared forms. The region is a palimpsest composed of activities, influences, and movements that have formed and layered over time, resulting in the accumulation of local knowledge and expertise. The region and land are shaped by major ecologies, from the sun to the clay-li-

I The sharing of resources is a fundamental matter for humankind. With the revival of ecological philosophy in the 20th century, resources were considered as common, or shared, in an attempt to give rise to common management rather than the division – even if equal – of resources (see the notions of ecophilosophy, deep ecology, ecofeminism etc.). mestone soils, or the nourishing river: p<u>orosities</u> are uncovered as the investigative work reveals histories and techniques, products of these ecologies, which intertwine with each other to create features that are unique to the region. The selection of resources presented in the Almanach exhibition brings together many different elements that are representative of the region of Cognac and the two Charentes departments. However, it is also the designers' interpretation of the blend of p<u>owerful imaginaries</u>, inspirations for new ways of working and transforming the world around us.

ORGANIZATION

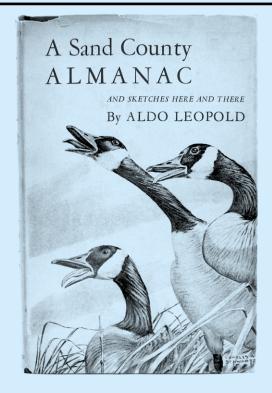
The Almanach enables the juxtaposing of all-encompassing considerations of the region, the accumulation of data, as well as the proposal of a <u>methodology for</u> <u>understanding the environment</u>. To paraphrase Ettore Sottsass,² design is conducive to debate. This approach for observing the region and, more broadly, the environment, gives rise to a certain land ethics. ^[fig. 2] This design almanac is the result of a determination to organize, reorganize, and rethink our relationship with the world and its resources.

^{2 &}quot;Designing is not about shaping a more or less stupid product for a more or less luxurious industry. For me, design is a way of debating life" (Ettore Sottsass, around 1981).



[fig. 1] Reproduction of several pages from an almanac by Hachette dating from 1937. The Hachette Almanac was published continuously from 1894 to 1971. This *small, popular encyclopedia of practical life* offers a wealth of information that is abundantly illustrated: daily life, popular articles on the arts, literature, history and geography, science, geopolitical events, fashion, advertisements, etc. "Everyone today aspires to share in universal knowledge. The science of the great scholars is being popularized. Through the most popular form of the book, we wanted to take part in this widespread distribution of useful knowledge. ... Our almanac is not a book designed to be read without pause. In a format that can be carried around, it is a warehouse of information, and we hope that every reader will find the solution to as many challenging problems as possible."

Almanach Hachette, 1895, foreword.



[fig. 2] Cover of the book *A Sand County Almanac* and Sketches Here and There, Aldo Leopold, 1949. This book describes the land and the landscapes around Aldo Leopold's home in Sauk County, Wisconsin, USA. It illustrates the idea of land ethics, in other words, a responsible relationship between humans and the land they inhabit.

METHOD

Faced with the immense challenge of ecological transition, the team of designers believes in investigation and debate before taking any action. This process serves as a method, and this exhibition is one possible interpretation of it.

CRITERIA

The first step involves a <u>geographical survey and the</u> <u>collection of materials</u> enabling exploration of the region through all its dimensions: material, social, environmental, productive, imaginary, etc.

The mapping exercise first determines a perimeter and boundaries that define both the area covered and the elements represented. Starting from a <u>radius of</u> <u>influence</u>, ^[fig. 1] an initial hierarchy of resources is then considered. Through an approach with low environmental impact, a resource is defined for us based on its <u>proximity</u> (accessible within a day), the size of the deposit, and its rarity. The investigation is organized on the basis of these three criteria.

COLLECTING, CLASSIFYING

The collection stage allows resources to be gathered together to make them known and available. It takes the shape of a <u>material library</u> in which the resources form the physical elements of the project. Collecting also involves extracting fragments from their context to offer them a new one that is inevitably significant and shaped by the classification. This framework that brings together and connects both creates categories and dissolves them. It enables exploration of the interactions between the elements as well as the elements themselves.

CITING, CONNECTING, COMMENTING While material resources initially highlight a <u>deposit</u>, they are also <u>significant</u> as they reflect know-how, technical evolution, aspects of society, and more broadly, the economic, social, structural, and productive system in which they are embedded. The collection of resources is also a collection of readings and points of view.

The material obtained from the collection phase is put into a narrative for the public, and the conditions for debate are organized based on the sensitive, documentary, and material information that is presented.

ARRANGING, COMPOSING, PROPOSING The resource, filtered through the eyes of the designers, gradually transforms into a project. Composing allows for arranging and the formation of groups and <u>new</u> <u>interpretations</u> (residences, etc.). Creation becomes a way of <u>opening up the debate</u> on the resource, with new methods for devising new paths of mutation and transition.



[fig. 1] Diagram illustrating the principle of exploring resources in concentric circles, commencing in Cognac: first circle, all types of resources; second circle, unique resources, strong identities; third circle, rare, exceptional resources. Axes: capitals of the region with exceptional resources (e.g. porcelain from Limoges, leather from Felletin, etc.).

PART I

The first part of the exhibition unveils our preliminary observations and intuitions based on a methodical and sensitive exploration of this region. It paints a composite landscape, depicting diverse information and discoveries along the way...

1

The sediments of the river Charente have contributed to the environmental, social, and economic competencies of human communities in the region.

Historically, the connection between the different ecologies in the Charente region has shaped its current appearance. The history of the river, through its use for food, energy, and navigation, represents an important starting point for understanding this region. Connecting the land to the ocean, the river Charente is composed of remarkable biodiversity and geological features (geological formation in the Upper Cretaceous period, climate, sedimentation, etc.). The region is also shaped by human and industrial activities that depend on the characteristics of these environments, forming a unique socio-technical environment.

It is evident that these activities form a technical layer that relies on a shared world.

With each encounter and exploration, we are reminded of the long period of time it takes to build a region.

In this respect, the geological dimension of time extends to issues of production and industry. The notion

²

of a <u>long period of time</u> takes on a different dimension for each of the local ecologies. On the one hand it relates to the time of primordial sedimentation, but also the time spent working the land as well as the growth of materials and living organisms. It also refers to the time required to craft and age cognac...

Ecologies relating to the long period of time are <u>essential</u>: the risks we pose on the time that living organisms need to regenerate (through their natural renewal capacities) call for careful thought before taking action.

3

Engaging in collective reflection is paramount for tackling environmental issues such as the climate crisis and the loss of biodiversity.

This exhibition is an invitation for discussion leaning towards a <u>technical democracy</u>.¹ The space is designed as a meeting point for establishing the conditions for dialog and debate on the subject of the resource itself. The resource is present with us in this <u>critical</u> <u>zone</u>² from which we never re-emerge: a narrow living space surrounded by death.

I Technical democracy "is a proposal for revealing the conditions in which democratic societies will be capable of tackling the challenges of science and technology, by redefining a public space, bringing together not only disembodied individuals but also men and women involved in unique histories".

Acting in an Uncertain World. An Essay on Technical Democracy, Yannick Barthe, Michel Callon, Pierre Lascoumes, 2001.

2 The critical zone is described as "the heterogeneous, near surface environment in which complex interactions involving rock, soil, water, air and living organisms regulate the natural habitat and determine availability of life sustaining resources" (National Research Council, 2001). It is the zone of our resources and the zone of our life. From the very start of the exhibition, visitors are invited to discuss the study of the resource as a <u>common</u> <u>asset</u>,³ its limits, its future, its usage, and the need for collective thought and action.

3 "Common assets, or simply commons, are resources that are managed collectively by a community which establishes rules and governance with the aim of conserving and sustaining this resource. From free software to shared gardens, from cartography to renewable energy, from open knowledge and science to associations for the preservation of smallholdings (AMAP) and co-op grocery stores, these 'commons' are everywhere.

In other words, we can define commons as a resource (common asset) plus the social interactions (economic, cultural, and political) within the community that is taking care of this resource. Common assets can also be defined as a community's endeavors to resolve a problem, by acting in the interest of all its members. It is important to note that the definition of commons is a work in progress, as is their diversity."

Extract from https://lescommuns.org/.



Materials

| – Block of earth, Domaine de Galienne |
|-----------------------------------------------|
| – Broken Limoges porcelain, Royal Limoges |
| – Hive |
| – Residues, forest sampling elements, Oleron |
| – Residues, river sampling, Cognac |
| – Agrozouk model, Atelier Paysan, 3D printing |
| - Sampling tools: dowel shaft |
| saw bar and chain |
| resin pot |
| dismantle |
| vine pruner |
| spruce |
| bird trap |
| fish foëne |
| eel foëne |
| forestry compass |
| bumper for tractor |
| pickaxe |
| bow |
| – Turiasaurus femur |
| – Loubier |
| – Ceramics, La Chapelle-des-Pots |
| |

Artists

- Studio DOTS
- Suzanne Husky Alexandre Joly
- Dominique Marchais
- Mathias Mareschal
- Simon Rayssac Eric Tabuchi et Nelly Monnier
- Raphaël Zarka
- Collectif L.Carrel, V.Patis, M.Pellé, O.Peyricot

PART II

This second part of the exhibition takes a minimalistic approach to presenting an inventory of materials accumulated through a subjective and sometimes random exploration of the region. This orderly presentation of the resource, reminiscent of stock stored on pallets in a warehouse, acts as an initial archive of our encounters.

EXTRACTING AND ORGANIZING

Selecting and presenting a material or a form of expertise directs the eye and guides the interpretation. By collecting a significant sample, the designer's approach itself influences the way in which it <u>awakens the senses</u>: what you see here is therefore subjective.

- The inventory and the archive: conserving, classifying, and organizing the resources of our region is a challenge for the Foundation, which has taken on a new direction by welcoming designers in residence to work on contemporary environmental issues. The collection work presented here aims to establish a non-exhaustive inventory of collectible resources. It is shared with the aim of creating a <u>collection that is</u> <u>accessible</u> for future residents and visitors to the Foundation.
- Why document it? Towards the end of the visit, the specially constructed library of archived documents represents a <u>new knowledge mechanism that can be</u> <u>enriched</u>, remaining open to future encounters and collaborations. The aim is not to lose track of our technical histories and know-how, but to pass them on to future generations. It is also aimed at identifying, in

concrete terms, deposits that can potentially be incorporated and natural elements that need to be preserved.

 Documentation is an indispensable tool for <u>technical</u> <u>democracy</u>. Taking part in the technical and social choices of the future world involves a phase of understanding and building arguments based on solid foundations facilitated by good documentation.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

This inventory of materials, forms, and know-how is an opening, a clear correlation between design and industry, design and craftsmanship, design and resources. The history of design demonstrates this through various schools of thought. Theorists such as Pevsner'describe industry as the origin of numerous forms and uses of materials, while others like Rudofsky² compile a history with its roots in domestic work and uses. Influenced by anthropology and the archaeology of technical systems, theorists like Benjamin Bratton³ demonstrate impacts associated with stacking different kinds of resources. These different approaches describe a range of resources that are not limited to materials, but also include necessities and everyday needs, and can be applied to thought structures, processes or even attitudes...

Nikolaus Pevsner, *Pioneers of the Modern Movement*, 1936.

2 Bernard Rudofsky, Architecture Without Architects: A Short Introduction to Non-pedigreed Architecture, 1964.

3 Benjamin H. Bratton, *The Stack: On Software and Sovereignty*, 2015.

Materials

- Ovive, Oyster shells
- Jacques Cocollos, Oyster Pockets
- Museum of the saltworks of the lle d'Oléron, Cooperative of the salt workers
- of the lle de Ré, Salt
- Chalvignac Group, Cuverie
- Leroi Cooperage, Cooperage
- Douence Distillery, Revico, Wine-growing waste
- Corderie Palus, Knot head, Ropes
- Emmaüs Cognac, selection of objects
- Garandeau, Gypsum
- Spirulina from Haute Saintonge, Spirulina

- La Noyeraie des Borderies, Walnut shells, residues of pressed walnut kernels

- Placo factory, plasterboard
- Verallia, broken glass, bottles, industrial glassware molds
- Monier, Artgila, tiles, broken tiles, clay
- Royal Limoges, ENSA Limoges, polluted porcelain disc, broken porcelain, crushed porcelain, porcelain mold
- Tanneries de Chamont, skins with defects, production offcuts
- Gauthier Charente, cut stone

Know-how

| – Musée d'art et d'histoire de | e la ville de Cognac, traditional objects |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| – Sulpie, table soccer | |
| – Wool clogs, Laine et compo | ignie, composition of a wool mattress, wool roll, raw fleece |
| – Pascal Raffier, UPCB, har | dwood furniture |
| - Village of Saint Sauvant: | Benoit Lacoste, saddler |
| | Mano Liska, cutler |
| | Elodie Proust, cabinetmaker |
| | Christophe Morin, landscaper |
| – Domaine de Boisbuchet, re | esult of The Man and the Tree workshop by Andreas |
| Engesvik at Domaine de B | oisbuchet in 2015. |

PART III

This third and final part of the Almanach exhibition is a research workshop. Designed as a permanent space, it is home to a living archive and welcomes designers and artists through projects, residences, and artistic interventions that bring this archive to life – all centered around the region's resources.

RESIDENCY INVITATIONS

The exhibition sets the stage for the future residency program – initially through the residency invitations as part of this exhibition and later through calls for applications in the years to come. Several designers will join the Almanach exhibition workshop over the coming months to build upon the preliminary work that has been carried out and to <u>develop practical experiments</u> based on the resources identified. They will contribute their own discoveries to this growing collection.

Their participation, in the short, medium, and long term, will enable us to open up new avenues of work, create a narrative for the materials, histories, and knowhow, and initiate innovative collaborations.

MAKING IT A REALITY

This "<u>regenerative</u>" approach to design is a way of inaugurating projects that enhance ecosystems and the communities in which they are developed. Sometimes by drawing inspiration from and imitating nature (biomimicry, geomaterials), or taking an interest in the social organizations involved in local production (e.g. ecosocial design), tracing the product from its source to its disposal (ecodesign).

The primary objectives of the Almanach exhibition workshop include the encouragement of encounters and the formation of relationships with players from production and local organizations. These research and experimentation projects, which will continue through to the end of December, also invite visitors to regularly follow and discover their progress. Their success is measured by the encounters and commitments they give rise to.

CONTINUING THE DEBATE

The mechanism is designed to enable understanding of the research processes and to allow additional contributions over the next few months. The proposed arrangements are not just classifications; they enable design to go beyond problem-solving and engage in a <u>participatory process</u>. The intention is not to deal with the elements of the debate, but rather with the debate itself.

To take the metaphor of the almanac further, the aim is to offer information at different levels, ranging from observation to encounter, from anecdotal to dominant discourse, from local to general, while sharing the revelation of imaginaries, the production of strategies, and tools for contemplating our living space. The fundamental question is whether the seeds will germinate and whether what has been planted here will continue to grow.

Artists

| – Léon Bernard |
|----------------------------------------------------|
| – Robin Bourgeois |
| – Collectif L.Carrel, V.Patis, M.Pellé, O.Peyricot |
| – Nina Durel |
| – Didier Faustino |
| – Oscar Lhermitte |
| – Serge Lhermitte |
| – Mathilde Pellé |
| – Ludwig Van Sckell |

Residents

| - | - Manon Alves |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| - | - Robin Bourgeois |
| - | - Lola Carrel |
| - | - Jean-Baptiste Clavé (DTER) |
| - | - Studio d-o-t-s (Laura Drouet & Olivier Lacrouts) |
| - | - Ludovic Duhem |
| - | - Thomas Ferrand |
| | - Suzanne Husky |
| | - Marine Lerazavet & Clémence Germain |
| | - Jules Levasseur |
| - | - Emmie Massias |
| - | - Ernesto Oroza |
| | - Valentin Patis |
| - | - Pjörkkala (Žan Girandon, Pia Groleger |
| | - Luka Pleskovič) |
| | - Arthur Pocheron |
| | - Raccogliere (Sigrid Schmeisser, Daniel Garber, Amalia Magril) |
| - | - Natsuko Uchino et l'école TALM Le Mans |
| - | - Nicolas Verschaeve et les designers de l'ENSAD Design des mondes ruraux (Nontro |
| - | - Lucile Viaud |
| | - Florence Wuillai |
| | - Raphaël Zarka |

CURATORIAL AND SCENOGRAPHY

Project management

Olivier Peyricot, designer-researcher Designer-researcher team

Lola Carrel, Valentin Patis, Mathilde Pellé Graphic design

Kiösk (Elsa Aupetit & Martin Plagnol) Artists and designers

Manon Alves, Léon Bernard, Robin Bourgeois, Lola Carrel, Jean-Baptiste Clavé (DTER).Studio d-o-t-s (Laura Drouet & Olivier Lacrouts), Ludovic Duhem, Nina Durel, Didier Faustino, Thomas Ferrand, Suzanne Husky, Marine Lerazavet & Clémence Germain, Alexandre Joly, Oscar Lhermitte, Jules Levasseur, Emmie Massias, Dominique Marchais, Mathias Mareschal, Nelly Monnier & Éric Tabuchi, Ernesto Oroza, Valentin Patis, Piörkkala (Žan Girandon, Pia Groleger, Luka Pleskovič), Arthur Pocheron, Raccogliere (Sigrid Schmeisser, Daniel Garber, Amalia Magril), Simon Rayssac, Natsuko Uchino and ESAD TALM-Le Mans, Nicolas Verschaeve and the designers of I'ENSAD Design des mondes ruraux, Lucile Viaud, Florence Wuillai, Raphaël Zarka...

PRODUCTION

Scenography, exhibition management, transportation

Cobble

Jonas Anglade, Hugo Baranger, Kévin Barois, Victor Dérudet, Loris Estival, Cyril Faure, Capucine Garcia, Augustin Gaud, Maxime Oriol, Julien Paraveau, Mathilde Vaveau Translator Heather Cook Glass artisans Laetitia Andrighetto and Jean-Charles Miot Printer Studio Ludo Press relations

L'art en plus

PARTNERS

The Fondation d'entreprise Martell and the team of designers would like to express their aratitude to all the partners and lenders of the ALMANACH exhibition for their involvement and invaluable contribution to the realization of this project: Stéphane Assolari (Corderie Palus), Bernadette Baudet (Artaila), Matthieu Baudin (Médiathèque d'Angoulême), Jean-Pierre Bernadet and Lola Larman (Bernadet), Calixte Blanchard (CCI Charente), BNIC, Jacques Brejoux (Moulin Duverger), Vincent Bretagnolle (Ville de Cognac), Antoine Breton (Avel), Ariane Brioist (ENSAD), Christian Chamoulaud and Frédéric Cherif (Hervé-Thermique), Frédéric Charpentier (CCI Charente). Juliette Chauvière (Garandeau), Jacaues Cocollos (Cocollos), Samantha Cunha (Monier), Jean-Jacques Delages (Maison des gabarriers), Julien Descoubes (Espace Jeunes Cognac), Les distillateurs culturels, Dimitry Douence (Distilleries Douence). Christophe Dumont and Barbara Bonnefov (Valadié), Marie Duverger (Musée du Port des Salines). Emmaüs Cognac, Olivier Flamand (Chalvignac), Karl Forestier, Francis Laurent and Sophie Quelen (Placo), Franck Fougère, François Gauthier et Fabien Vigier (Gauthier Charente), Jean de Giacinto, Fatima Guerry (Grand Coanac), Galerie Alain Gutharc, Florent Gaillard and David Garandeau (Musée

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And to all those who accompanied us on this exploration of the Charentes region.

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Free entry from 30.06.2023 Wednesday - Sunday : 2pm-7pm Saturday: 10am-12am and 2pm-8pm

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