

Really and Kvadrat join forces

17th March 2017 - Really announces that Kvadrat has acquired 52% of its stakes. As a response to the urgent global issue of waste, Wickie Meier Engström, Klaus Samsøe and Ole Smedegaard founded Really in 2013. Really upcycles end-of-life textiles into the engineered material Solid Textile Board: a high-density material made from end-of-life cotton and wool from the fashion and textile industries, as well as households. Designed for furniture and interior design, the company aspires to challenge the architecture and design sector to rethink their use of resources. Really's debut collection of Solid Textile Board will be launched this April during Salone del Mobile, with projects by designers Max Lamb and Christien Meindertsma.

By entering into a formal partnership with Really, Kvadrat goes from being a good corporate citizen to taking a more aggressive, progressive approach to sustainability and thereby realising its ambition to market products that, at the end of their life-cycle, can be recycled as new raw materials.

Anders Byriel, CEO Kvadrat: "A pioneering mindset has been central to Kvadrat's ethos since the company's inception in 1968, having a clear aim to minimise the environmental impact throughout processes from design to production. We see Really as a first step on a circular journey that will help us fast track to a time when industrially manufactured products will be made – and remade – from old versions of themselves, to a time when, hopefully only years away, we look back at this as the moment when we finally realised we can't afford to waste waste."

According to the International Textile Institute, in 2008 humans consumed 67 million tonnes of textile fibres. At current rates of growth, this figure is expected to reach 110 million tonnes by 2020. The global non-profit Textile Exchange estimates that 95% of the textiles we use could probably be recycled. Only 25% actually are. Much of the remainder is burnt or consigned to landfill with all the problems this causes.

A problem becomes an idea

The idea for Really emerged in response to this urgent global issue: what could be done with all of this textile waste? Could it be transformed from worthless rubbish into a valuable resource?

In conventional recycling processes, materials degrade as they are reused; in the circular economy the aim is to upcycle so that materials can be endlessly remade while retaining their full value. Really takes a readily available waste stream – in this case end-of-life textile from the fashion and textile industries, laundries, households as well as Kvadrat's selvedge waste – and redefines its use, transforming it into a new raw material and inviting designers to turn it into something interesting.

The patented production process for Solid Textile Board took Really several years to develop. The non-woven process includes, among other things, milling used textiles into small fibers and mixing them with a special binder that does not degenerate through re-use. The manufacturing does not involve the use of dyes, water or toxic chemicals and generates only recyclable waste. The material can eventually be re-granulated and formed into new material iterations.

The composition of Solid Textile Board reflects the availability of textile waste streams. It can be an alternative to a variety of existing materials depending on the application. In designing the board material, focus has been on making a composite that, through its properties, can replace or even bring additions to existing material offerings and thereby be an honest alternative.

Its mechanical properties allow it to be used as substitute for wood and composites in furniture and architecture. Its tactility and unique aesthetics makes it a decorative alternative to a variety of

materials such as stone, wood, plasterboard and masonry. Solid Textile Board is made up of cotton and wool, as these textiles are typically downcycled in existing recycling processes. The core of Solid Textile Board is made of end-of-life white cotton sourced from industrial laundries. The outer layers of the material are available in four colours: Cotton White – Cotton Blue – Wool Slate – Wool Natural.

Wickie Meier Engström, Director and Partner Really: “Kvadrat is an innovative company with a strong CSR policy and a focus on sustainable design and production which brings credibility to the

Really offering. Our partnership is built on the same values: design, integrity, quality and innovation. We share a common vision and ambition to create lasting products that improve people’s lives. Given the synergies between our target markets, our collaboration with Kvadrat provides us a good commercial platform and gives Kvadrat the opportunity to kick-start its ambitions to create a circular production channel.”