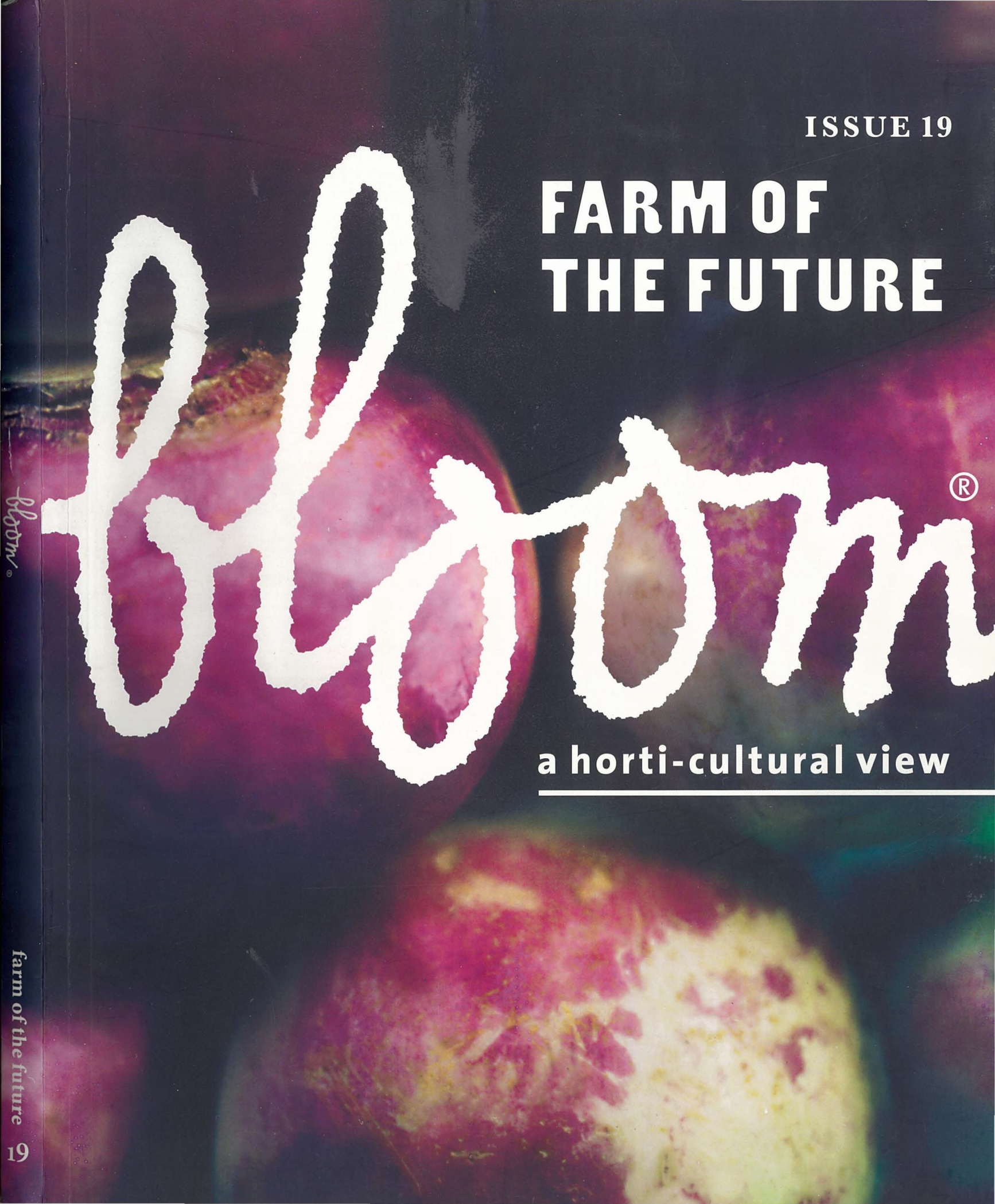
ISSUE 19
FARM OF THE FUTURE
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a horti-cultural view
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farm of the future 19

a new romantic yet also realistic view of living in the country has emerged

The current financial crisis and our concerns about ecology have contributed to the rethinking of our existence in the challenging and stressful city, while advances in information technology have participated in setting humans free from a fixed location within the urban environment.

Man can now live wherever he wants and however he wants at any given moment. We therefore can live like nomads and gather like shepherds: news, knowledge, music, images, objects and food. The slow food movement has shifted our focus from the exotic and exclusive to a need for the local and the seasonal. Forgotten vegetables are venerated in ceramics, regional recipes are rediscovered and reinvented.

Materials originate directly from the land and the animals, and will be treated with respect; they will carry the honest identity of the fibre and the flock, and transform the designer into an aesthetic shepherd or a conceptual farmer. Several internationally-renowned designers like Maarten Baas and Tord Boontje already chose to live on farms today. Their work reflects their origins, and is grounded and bucolic at the same time.

Flowers are taken from the fields and buckets replace the vase. Sunflower, narcissus and mimosa yellow are the new basic colours for men. Yellow will become the new pink.
Fashions are eclectic, romantic and basic at the same time, inviting us to dress-up like scarecrows in a make-do manner.

FARM OF THE FUTURE

Cooking becomes a design-driven discipline and is searching for the authentic and the original. This movement will spread to other domains within our lives as "slowing down" becomes a general and accepted idea.

Everything seems to indicate that rural realities are influencing urban life, and artists and architects are reflecting upon this exchange of ideas with self-sufficienthousing and projects for farming within city centres. Even virtual farming has taken society by storm.

The rural influence on the city and the urbanization of the country will ultimately lead to the blurring of borders between these two domains. Designers are researching their pastoral past and seek the essence of the farm in new materials and imagery. The land and earth are mapped and studied, used to formulate nostalgic and generic tabletop products made from a colourcard of clay from the polder. The wheelbarrow and the rocking chair are reinvented. The tile stove and box-bed are back.

Vegetable gardening is becoming one of the most important trends in recent years, with Mobama as a prime example and leader of the movement. Inner city gardens will grow to be global markets with a cultural exchange of food.

The life of man and animal will be strongly integrated, and the production of food will take place within the city limits. In a search for autarchy, a more mature and autonomous position is sought concerning the chain of food production. New ideas will be born toseed, upgrade and harvest within the city.

In a first sketch to understand and map this move-ment, Bloom has set out to explore a new lifestyle where humans are seen as an integral part of the ecological cycle, embedded in the process. Placing themselves on equal ground with agriculture and animal. Humans with respect for life.

Li Edelkoort

Are you inspired by the history of food?

I'm not a history buff, but when it comes to food, the stories become so personal that I can't help but be inspired. Food has provoked wars, helped make peace and played a central role in every religious faith. It has been there throughout history, because people have always had to eat.

Where do your ingredients come from?

I use a lot of regional Dutch products. So many farmers in Holland make beautiful products, and, of course, there is the question of sustainability. My cooks go to farms to pick up interesting regional products and we work closely with an organization called De Groene Hoed, or the Green Hat, which distributes regional products from around Amsterdam.

Your aesthetic is sober, rustic, crude. Why?

I think it's because I just want to show the products in their simplest and most crude state to capture the pure story behind them. Food is very beautiful by itself; it doesn't need to be embellished.

If you could be any food, what would it be?

Some kind of weed that grows fast in your garden, and you think, 'Oh no, it can't be stopped.' Lots of wild herbs and weeds, like stinging nettles, are edible, and I think that's really interesting.

You often pose with chickens. Whatdo they signify for you, creatively?

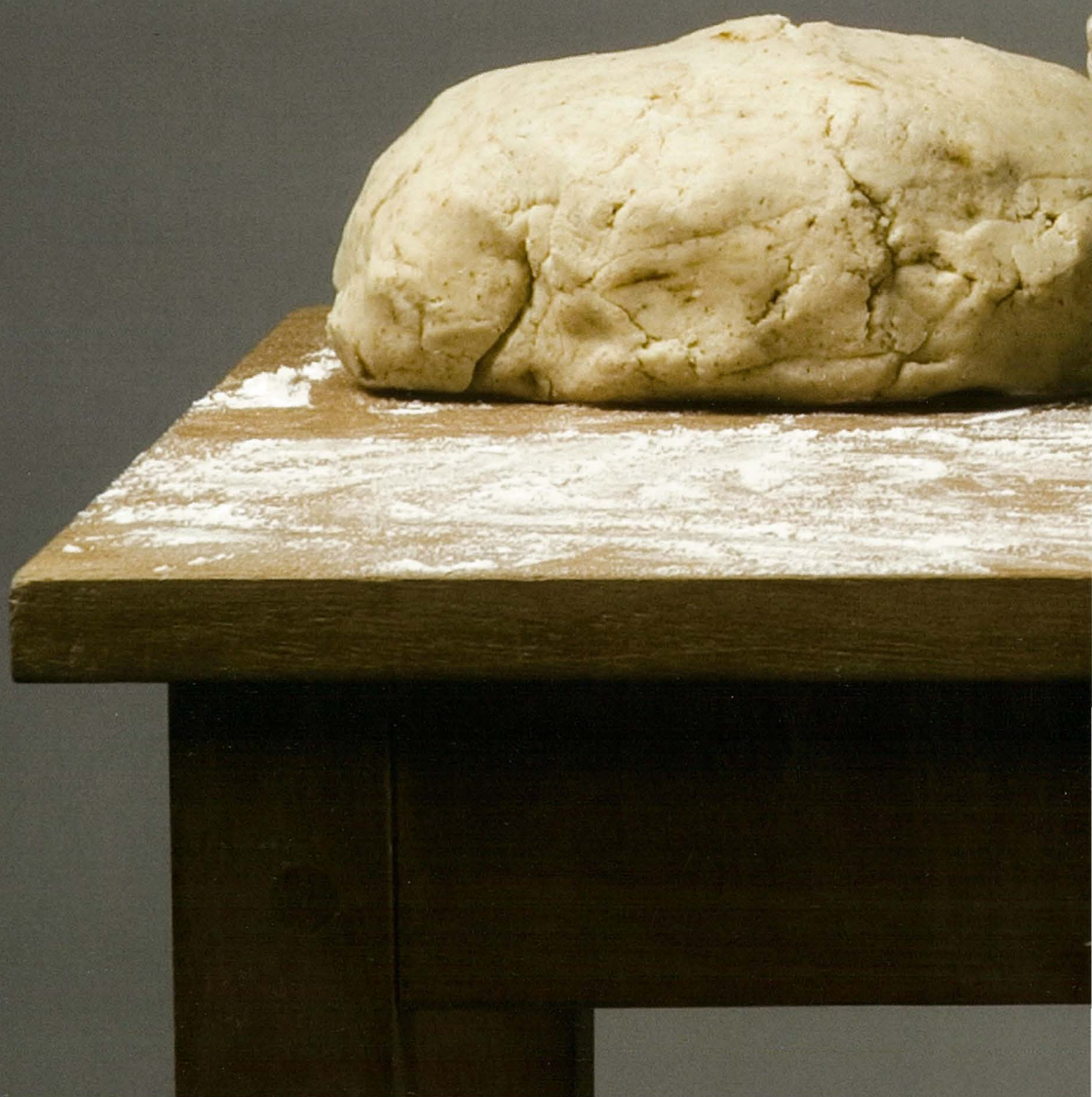
In terms of my work, which is a crossover between cooking and design, I see the seeds as the design world and the eggs as the culinary world. Many times, when I pose for photographers, I put my chickens on my shoulders or head, and then I say that my head is the egg, meaning that the chicken is laying the eggs of my ideas.

Where would your fantasy farm be? And what would you grow there?

It would be in the city, because that is where the future will happen. People would be able to go there and sleep there, and interact with animals that are not their pets. It wouldn't be an attraction, like at Disneyland, but a logical part of their habitat. It would be a bio-diverse farm full of lots of little different things.

20 BAKED

Much of what we think about in design and artisan work these days has to do with the necessary interplay between things that last and things that disintegrate, between tradition and innovation. In line with those movements is a new project from the group Formafantasma, an uncommon pair of Italian-born designers who hold the particularly innovative honour of having been the first team to apply to the Design Academy Eindhoven as a unit—and the first to graduate receiving a single diploma.



Now, continuing their groundbreaking ways, the pair have sparked a bright approach in conceiving how to apply impermanence and reminiscence to vessels designed to contain food. Because, indeed, what better way to honour the things held in and partaken of from such containers than to echo their organic components? The Bread series does just that. Formafantasma's angle of attack in producing this collection was to incorporate the organic and the edible into the dishware meant to serve it.

Inspired by traditions from Sicily involving structures made from flour, the vessels produced by Formafantasma draw on such unorthodox tableware design materials as spinach, coffee, and cocoa—along with that bready staple, flour—and, crafted into canny pieces that are rendered slightly more permanent by extra-culinary touches like shellac, a new form of design-beyond-edible emerges. To take it one step away from the unreflective repetition of those Sicilian folk crafts, though, a modern touch is added by way of elastic straps, which create a contrast between the material and the reality of the containers' functionality.

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IN PRAISE OF FIBRE

The textiles we surround ourselves with reveal our unconscious relationship to the outside world. In times of crisis, we seek out simple, unadulterated materials and processes to bolster self-confidence and self-sufficiency. In our yearning for surfaces that protect and caress, we eschew fibres that have been altered by science or manipulated by machines.

Of all of the textiles worn today, hand-knits are the most noble for their pure authenticity. Throughout history, families have sustained harsh winters with little more than a few skeins of untainted yarn, a couple of needles and hours of swift, determined strokes. Transforming these ancestral techniques into expressive knits that border on art, Dutch textile designer Nanna Van Blaaderen blends integrity and innovation. She seeks out natural materials that are as gentle on the skin as they are on the environment, and chaste colours, recognizable textures, and organic shapes are the corner-stones of her soft, sculptural collections. Her untreated, all-natural colours proudly display their humble roots. Off-whites, greys, browns, camels and beiges are raw and real, providing clues to the beasts that once bore them on their backs. To add an extra, wild dimension to her silhouettes, hairy hides of horse and sheep are shorn and blended with cashmere and wool. 'Fashion is so much more than a piece of fabric and a silhouette,' says the designer. 'Hard, soft, furry, smooth, rough, fine, open, closed, warm or cold, even the finest layer of textile can change the human figure from being naked and vulnerable into being protected, strong or seductive.'

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EDELKOORT EDITIONS
A division of Trend Union S.A.
30 Boulevard Saint Jacques
75014 Paris, France
T+33(0)1 44 08 68 80
F +33(0)1 43 31 77 91
www.bloom-magazine.eu
info@bloom-magazine.com

CONCEPTION AND ART DIRECTION
Lidewij Edelkoort

ART DIRECTION GRAPHIC DESIGN
Anthon Beeke

CREATIVE DIRECTION AND STYLING
Estelle Gaubert, Graham Hollick,
Sergio Machado, Shane Powers,
Nelson Sepulveda, Marcel van Doorn
Vanessa Batut, Camille Hammerer

ARTISTS AND DESIGNERS
Alabama Chanin, Maarten Baas, Jurgen Bey,
Tord Boontje, Formafantasma, Maarten Kolk,
Mathieu Lehanneur, Jurgen Lehl,
Mike Meiré, Maaike Roozenburg, Nadine Sterk,
Studio Job, Tjep., Danielle van Ark,
Nanna van Blaaderen,
Dick van Hoff, Lonny van Ryswyck

PHOTOGRAPHERS
Michael Baumgarten, Catherine De Chabaneix,
William de Lange, Beth Evans,
Jeremy Fenske, Lisa Klappe, Gina Kranendonk,
Romain Lienhardt, David Liittschwager,
Hartmut Nägele, Suzie Rashkis, Eric Sander,
Marijn Scheeres, Elaine Skinner,
Thomas Straub, Sally Summerson, Marie Taillefer,
Joost Vandebrug, Marije Vogelzang

EDITOR
Zeva Bellel

WRITERS AND JOURNALISTS
Michelle Anderson-Binczak
Marie Noelle Bauer, Ashlee Beard,
Zeva Bellel, Sharon Bowman,
Philip Fimmano, Karl Treacy

GRAPHIC DESIGN
Omar Saiid assisted by Mareike Bremer
Studio Anthon Beeke, Amsterdam
Fred Causse, Edelkoort Editions, Paris

LITHOGRAPHY
Colorset bv, Amsterdam

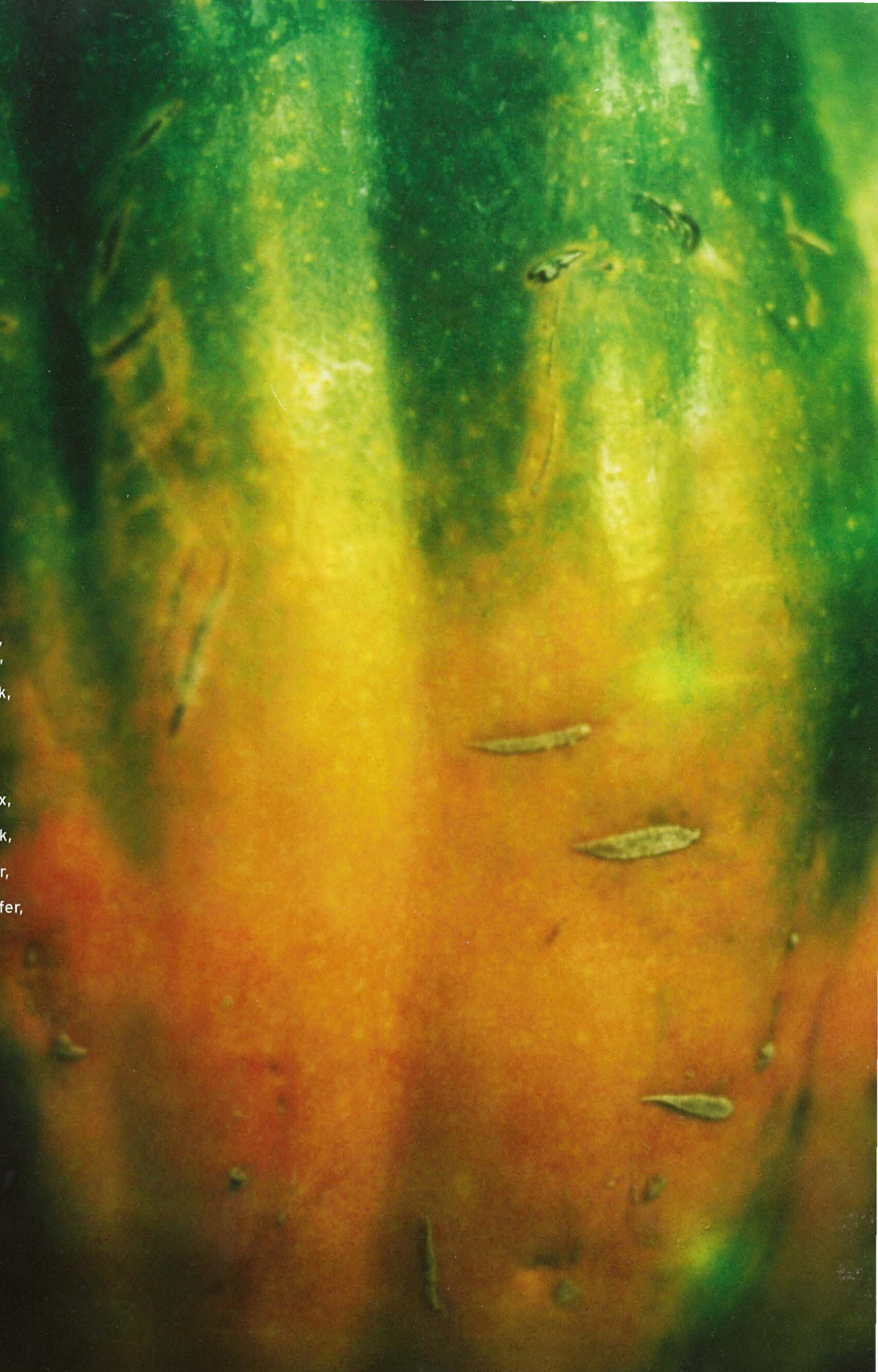
PRINTING
Lecturis bv, Eindhoven

FINANCE
Thierry Guillemot

DISTRIBUTION MANAGEMENT
Madge Berard, Sophie Carlier

DIRECTION AND PRODUCTION
Vanessa Batut, Fred Causse, Camille Hammerer

FRONT & BACK COVER PHOTO
Marie Taillefer



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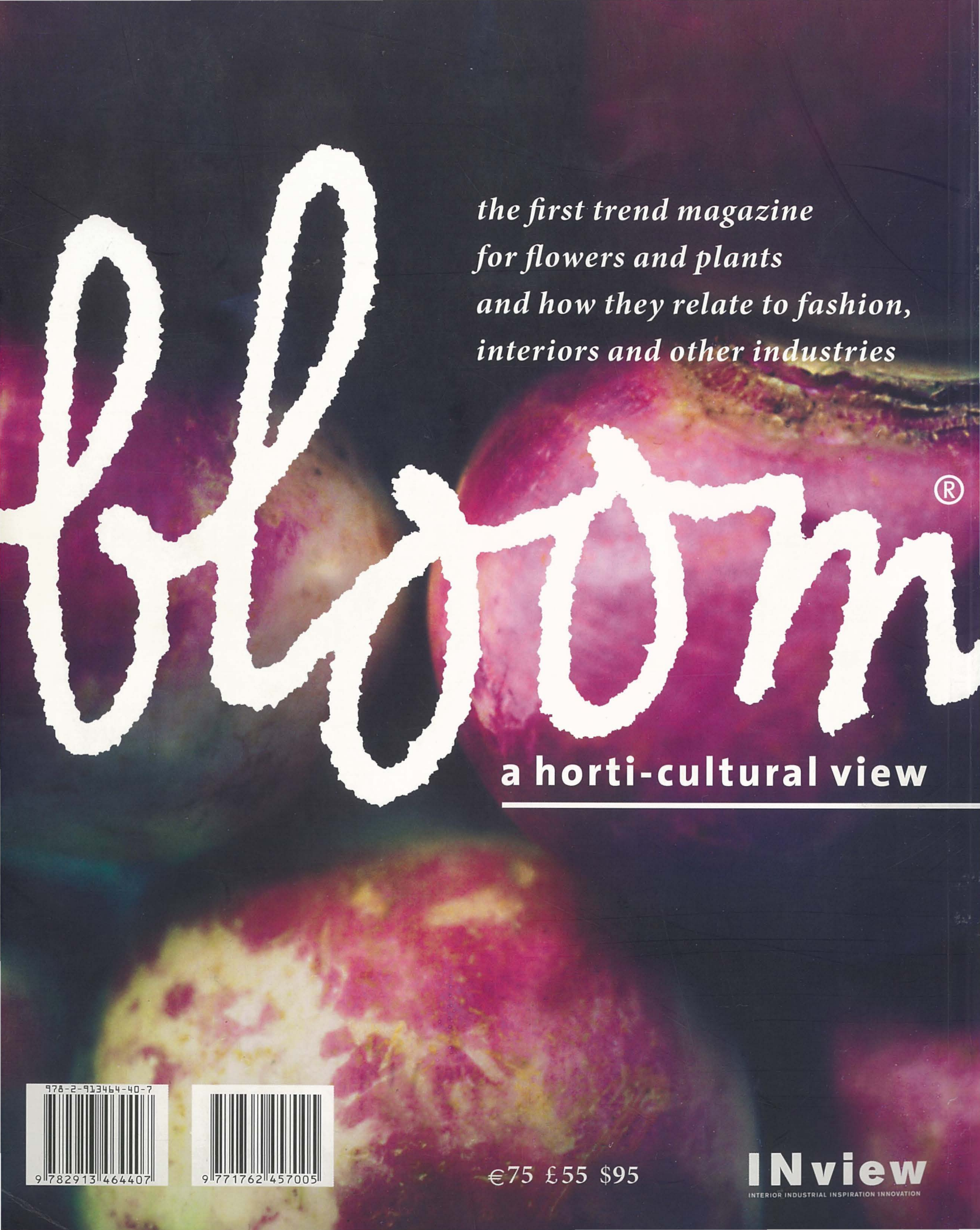
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