PLASTIC RIVERS

A rug manifesto woven with craftsmanship and recycled materials

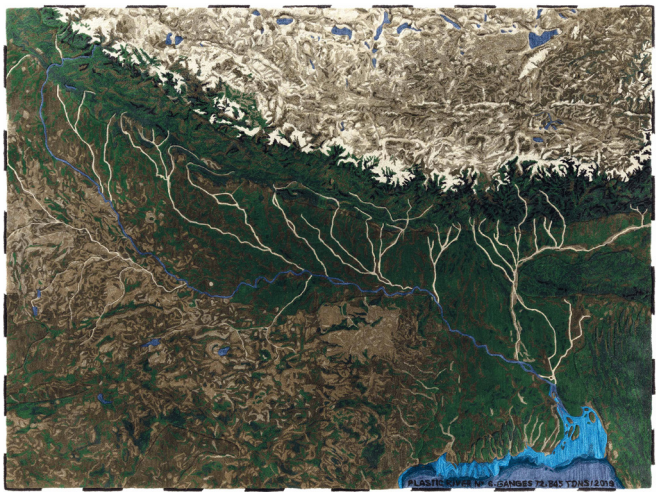
A design by Álvaro Catalán de Ocón for GAN



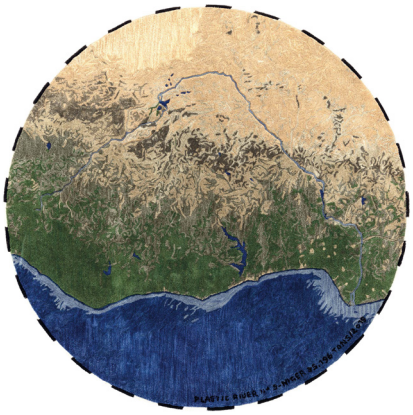
PLASTIC RIVERS is the first collaboration of Álvaro Catalán de Ocón with GAN. The origin of this alliance goes back to a round table in which the designer and Mapi Millet, past creative director of GAN, discussed designs for a better world. Thus, this collection of four rugs is the result of their concern to raise awareness and fight, through craftsmanship, one of the great global problems of the industrial era: plastic waste.

YANGTZE, INDUS and NIGER join GANGES, unveiled during Milan Design Week 2021, to complete a collection of handmade rugs made with recycled plastic fibers (100% recycled PET). These are faithful and scale representations of four of the most polluted and polluting rivers on the planet, manufactured by artisans in India using the hand-tufted technique. This method allows the craftsmen to generate elevation by cutting the threads at different heights, creating the effect of three-dimensional topography typical of the land crossed by each of the rivers.

PLASTIC RIVERS
Álvaro Catalán de Ocón



GANGES



NIGER

In the manual production of PLASTIC RIVERS, the yarn obtained from the recycling of plastic waste takes on a new meaning and shows the paradoxical beauty of its origins: rivers, wonders of nature, that have been turned into landfills and, as a result, are now highways that drag thousands of tons of plastic from the continents into the oceans.

Using the designer's words: "PLASTIC RIVERS reflects the reality of the material with which each design is made and seeks to start a conversation about a worrying problem of our planet: both the plastic pollution in our rivers and the origin of those plastics, which largely comes from the commercialization of waste between rich and poor countries. Rich countries keep their rivers clean at the cost of dirtying the rivers in less-privileged nations." All of this is explained in a label on the back of each version of PLASTIC RIVERS, "as a metaphor for that uncomfortable truth that we decided to hide under the rug."



YANGTZE



INDUS





However, GANGES (300 x 400 cm / 9’10” x 13’2”), YANGTZE (100 x 400 cm / 3’4” x 13’2”), INDUS (200 x 300 cm / 6’7” x 9’10”) and NIGER (Ø250 cm / Ø 8’2”) are much more than manifesto rugs for environmental responsibility. These pieces are also examples of social design, handmade by artisans, stitch by stitch -pixel by pixel-, to recreate the aerial views of each of the rivers. Every detail treasures the irreplaceable human component of manual labor.

Despite their imposing proportions and aesthetics, the rugs are able to integrate into any space. Recycled PET also offers a fluffy and soft touch, similar to wool, and it provides a high level of strength and durability. Spectacular basins elevations, mountain ranges, plains and river mouths in shades of green, brown and blue stand out in each of the PLASTIC RIVERS rugs, which are also completely recyclable at the end of their long life.





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GANGES was awarded the 2021 RoPLASTIC PRIZE in the Urban Public Furniture Design category in September 2021, at the Leonardo da Vinci National Science and Technology Museum in Milan. These awards, organised by Rossana Orlandi and her daughter Nicoletta Orlandi Brugnoni within the framework of the RoGUILTLESSPLASTIC project, represent an important recognition of the work of Catalan de Ocón and GAN in promoting environmental awareness and the reutilisation of plastic waste in their designs. Its message of commitment to design culture and sustainability has also led GANGES to be part of the RoCOLLECTIBLEDESIGN 2021 exhibition.

PLASTIC RIVERS is a natural evolution of the link between ACdO and the sustainable treatment of PET fibres in handcrafted designs. In fact, one of the most acclaimed creations of the career of Álvaro Catalán de Ocón is the PET Lamp, handmade reusing plastic bottles. This project emerged a decade ago as a pioneering design for its social and environmental commitment and was in a way the origin of PLASTIC RIVERS, which today brings a new perspective by placing the focus on recycling.

Álvaro Catalán de Ocón, 2022
Manufacturing technique: Hand Tufted
Fibre composition: 100% recycled PET
Dimensions
GANGES: 300x400cm / 9’10”x13’2”
INDUS: 200x300cm / 6’7”x9’10”
YANGTZE: 100x400cm / 3’4”x13’2”
NIGER: Ø250cm / Ø8’2”
Models: Ganges / Indus / Yangtze / Niger

About Álvaro Catalán de Ocón

Álvaro Catalán de Ocón, born in 1975, trained in business management and industrial design in Madrid, his hometown, Milan and London. He began his solo professional career working more than fifteen years ago, during which time he has been committed to self-production. Multiculturalism, craftsmanship and sustainability are constants in the creations of this designer, who is attributed with a pragmatic and reductionist vision of the profession. Founder of the design editor ACdO, he enjoys a great international recognition and has toured the world with his acclaimed recycled 'PET lamps'. His work is part of the design collections of international galleries worldwide, including Rossana Orlandi's gallery in Milan.



About GAN

GAN is a brand of Gandia Blasco Group, a company with textile roots founded in 1941. GAN is dedicated to the creation of handmade rugs, poufs, and accessories, all of which are made in India by skilled artisans who use a variety of traditional and innovative techniques and natural or recycled materials.

GAN celebrates the intersection of design and tradition. The brand collaborates with renowned and emerging designers from around the globe, who constantly experiment with new methods and materials to create rugs that are both innovative and beautiful. Thanks to the quality of its designs and the use of artisan techniques in new ways, GAN is today a reference brand with an international presence.

About Gandia Blasco Group

Gandia Blasco Group is a Valencian family company pioneer in the design and manufacture of outdoor furniture and spaces, alongside the creation and handmade production of designer rugs through its three brands: GANDIABLASCO, GAN and DIABLA. Founded in 1941 by José Gandía Blasco, its journey has been marked by constant reinvention and the promotion of design culture. The company is chaired by José A. Gandía-Blasco Canales, a member of the second generation of the family and artistic director of GANDIABLASCO.

Headquartered in Ontinyent (Valencia, Spain) and present in 75 countries, the company is in the process of expansion and carries out continuous experimentation and innovation in collaboration with renowned designers. Within the framework of its strategy of social responsibility and environmental sustainability, Gandia Blasco Group is committed to the durability and circularity of its designs based on the use of recyclable and recycled materials and, through the GAN Women Unit social initiative, emphasizes in the preservation and updating of artisan techniques and in promoting the economic independence of the craftswomen communities of rural India with which the brand collaborates.

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