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THE PRODUCT ISSUE

The world's
first 3-D printed
metal chair
and other icons
of the maker
revolution

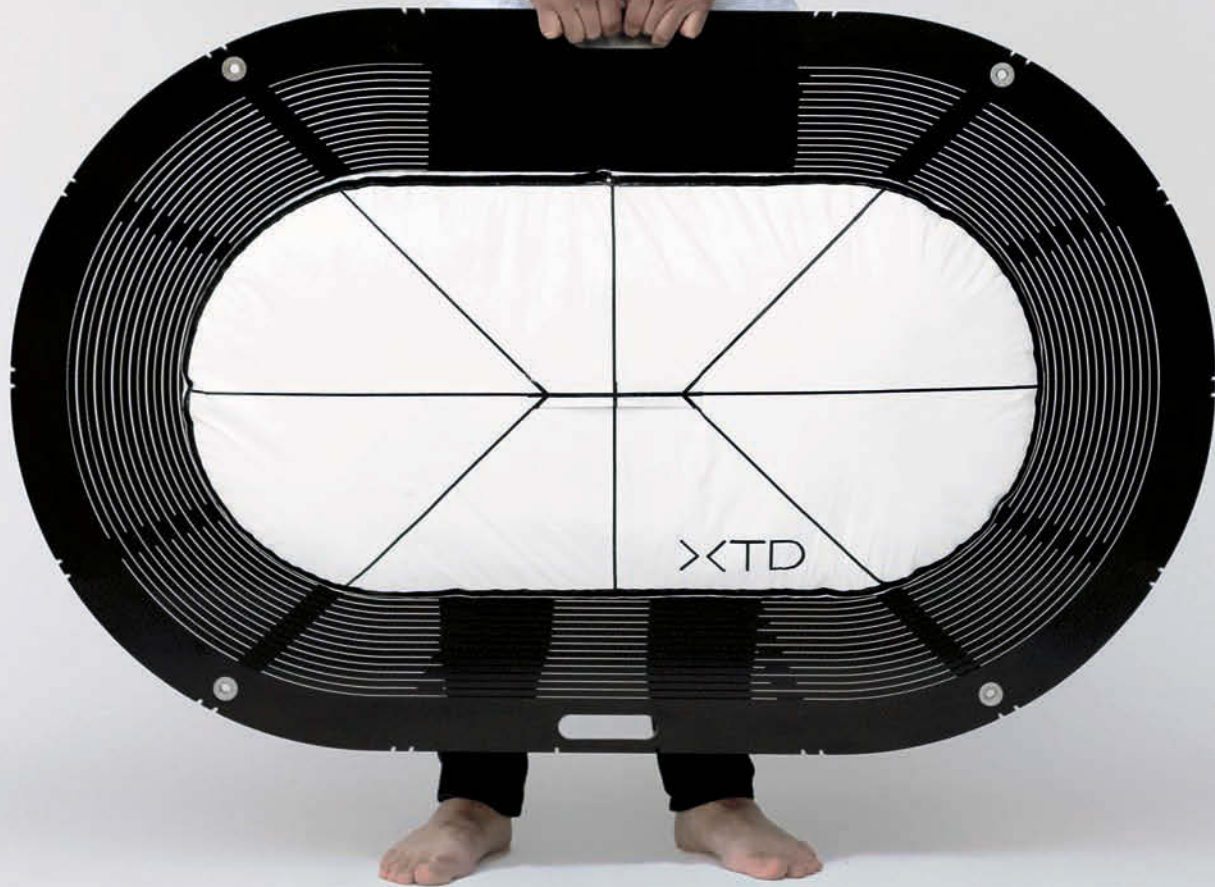
CAN/US \$8.95
MAY 2016
PM40048073 R09064
PRINTED IN CANADA



+ SHOW HIGHLIGHTS: OUR PICKS
FROM TORONTO AND COLOGNE

Tub to Go

The world's first carbon fibre foldaway soaker enters uncharted waters



SMALL-SCALE LIVING may be poised to reach brave new lengths with Xtend, a mid-size tub prototype that collapses into a seven-kilogram, 8.5-millimetre-thick plate. "The idea was to redefine the bathtub as we know it," says German designer Carina Deuschl, who exhibited the piece at IMM Cologne's Pure Talents Contest for emerging designers before taking it to Salone del Mobile in Milan, with an eye to serial production. "The material and the way it handles were all intended to fit the requirements of today's mobile world."

Xtend's construction is relatively simple: the rigid exoskeleton is made of carbon fibre cut with high-pressure water jets; this forms a pattern that can be elongated into a network of wavy lines, similar to expanded metal mesh. When extended, the framework encases a triple lining of Tyvek and water-impervious PrimaLoft insulation – a sandwich of material that, incidentally, is machine washable. The components push their materials to their limits, says Deuschl. Carbon fibre lends the bathtub formidable strength and lightness, while the fabric inlay is durable, yet soft enough to fold away into an ultra-thin case. When the tub is filled, the surface of the liner, which starts out looking crumpled after being packed away, expands under the water pressure and becomes smooth again.

It can be filled from any water source, then drained using a pump system before it tucks away for transport. This brings to mind endless possibilities, far beyond space-starved condos: off-grid living, camping – even disaster relief. *PM carina-deuschl.com*

