This September, VinylPlus® celebrated the European Week of Sport (22 – 28 September) at the heart of the European institutions in Brussels. VinylPlus championed the sustainable use of PVC in sports, and its reuse and recyclability through its collaboration with the non-profit association Schuman Square.

The European Week of Sport was created in 2015 as a response to the worsening inactivity crisis. Bringing awareness to the importance of an active lifestyle is key, but achieving this lifestyle sustainably is fundamental in the current environmental context. Consequently, sports and sporting events are becoming increasingly innovative with sustainable solutions for materials, equipment and facilities. In this context, PVC is selected for use in sports facilities, stadiums, sports equipment and sport protections. From flooring to roofing, exterior screening, seats and canopies, PVC is used as it is strong, durable, requires a minimal amount of maintenance and can be reused and recycled.

In Brussels, the European Week of Sport was celebrated with an entire week of sporting events that took place on a 250m² high-performance PVC flooring, covered by a PVC canopy. The space was located right next to the European Commission. The PVC flooring, provided by VinylPlus, contains 32% recycled PVC, and will be reused at future events - as will the PVC canopy. This type of multi-purpose PVC flooring is used at international competitions of basketball, badminton and volleyball. During the week, people engaged in a variety of different sports including dance, Tai Chi, Martial Arts, traditional Scottish highland games, yoga and chess.

Another sustainable use of PVC in sport is the use of PVC in yoga mats, as they are durable and can be reused again and again. During the European Week of Sport, yoga classes were organised by VinylPlus and Brussels Yoga Day, for which high-quality PVC yoga mats were used for all the sessions. The yoga mats were then donated to hospitals in the local area to help with rehabilitation programmes.

This year’s European Week of Sport was the next step in VinylPlus’s commitment to the sporting community after their successful partnership with the International School Sport Federation (ISF) for the event She Runs Active Girls’ Lead 2019. Displaying the sustainable use of PVC to help other sectors to reduce their environmental footprint is profound.

To find out more about PVC in sports and VinylPlus, visit our website.
Air Mountain

Air-Mountain is a multi-purpose, inflatable PVC pavilion, installed for the October Phoenix Flower Carnival in 2019. During the event, the interior space of the inflatable building will serve as the venue for concerts, theatrical performances, forums and workshops. The external space surrounding the structure will be a public leisure space open to visitors, who will be free to climb, sit and lie on the inflatable, multidimensional surface.

The architectural design of Air-Mountain is based on two concepts: micro-ecological geometry and multidimensional relationships and phenomenons. Micro-ecological geometry is centered on the demand of the environment or event. The geometry of Air-Mountain is as follows: the structure and insulation is provided by the air interlayer; the top orifice forms a hot air diversion; and a lateral open hole helps with airflow.

Multidimensional relationships and phenomenons is a concept that regards architecture as an ecological phenomenon. The building’s practical functions are not the only aspect to consider. Is it possible for a static building to present a dynamic relationship with people and its environment?
La Musidora®, commissioned by the Denver Art Museum, was located on the esplanade opposite the museum (DAM). It is a colourful and interactive 90 foot long installation designed by Héctor Esrawe and Ignacio Cadena from ESRAWE + CADENA Studio.

The installation was made up of two chairs facing each other, designed for a couple to look at each other as they talk. The PVC rope that makes up these chairs allows people to explore the idea of swinging with two clear objectives: first, relaxation, and second, the possibility of an encounter between two people through movement. The linear piece of almost 30 meters long represents a “marimba” or xylophone. Each of the modules formed by pairs is equipped with a percussion mechanism that activates a system of bells that, when rocking, generates musical notes that go from high to low.

La Musidora was born from the fusion of two words: music and rocking chair. The 20 people who are able to experience the piece at the same time can produce sounds in their individuality and, in turn, belong to a collective melody. This reminds us that we are authentic beings that express in an individual way, but also that we belong to a diverse social system which moves in a communal way.
PVC rope

Picture credits: Ignacio Cadena, Denver Art Museum
Designers: Esrawe + Cadena Studio, Mexico City, Mexico
Location: Denver Art Museum, Denver, USA
PVC Barrisol membrane

Architects: Lukáš Krížek and Radek Bláha IO STUDIO, Prague, Czech Republic
Location: Prague, Czech Republic
Photo credit: Alexander Dobrovodský
The Vodafone Experience Center has won the Grand Prix of Czech Architects award. Its interior allows the company's clients to get a personalised and tailored tour which reflects their individual needs and provides them with a “know how” portfolio of the telecommunication technology and services. The show area has a familiar feel, yet boasts the most advanced technologies which introduce the customer to a wide variety of services and products.

The arrangement of the space firstly provides a relaxation zone, which then transitions into the entrance welcome zone. The central object, the Onenet, provides every visiting customer with a slow transition between the real world and the reality created by Vodafone. This central object has two openings that provide, once the clients are standing within the Onenet, an interesting view back out to the main space. It's a unique experience, verging on a cyberspace theme, which is continued in the design of atypical tail furniture. Although the pictures might not do it justice, the central dome is in fact close to the size of a large garden gazebo or small building.

Several interesting construction technologies were used for this central object. It was created on a complicated-shaped steel carrier construction. Steel tubes with a 60mm diameter were used for the peripheral shape, while the rest of the ribs were created with a steel jackel 25x25mm. Subsequently the shape was divided into segments that are covered by PVC foil on supporting aluminum sheets. The PVC’s red and white colours are to reflect Vodafone’s branding.
Visual Art

PVC sheet
Picture credits: Jen Stark
Artist: Jen Stark, Los Angeles, USA
Location: London, Great Britain
Jen Stark’s art is driven by her interest in conceptualizing visual systems to simulate plant growth, evolution, infinity, fractals, mimetic topographies, and sacred geometries. Using mainly PVC sheets and paper, Stark strives to make work that balances on a razor’s edge of optical seduction and perceptual engagement.

Using bright colors, often reminding people of kaleidoscope visions, she creates a variety of artwork from stand alone sculptures to wall pieces to painted installations and animation. The resulting works often resemble organic, molecular, cloud-like structures, and are imbued with kinetic, undulating effects that serve to dislocate the viewer from staid reality into an immersive ecosphere of echoing patterns and the implausible designs found in nature. Even her vivid colors are in direct conversation with the natural world; the attractant/repellent properties of flowers encouraging pollination or insects warning birds of their poisonous traits, and the luminous mystery of phosphorescent sea creatures are among Stark’s concerns.

Via these corporeal abstractions, spectators are led onto the astral plane; there’s a transcendence to Stark’s work where the vibrational phases become a sacrosanct and curative experience for the viewer. Traces of mandalas or nautili reveal themselves as sacred geometric forms in Stark’s spiritual reservoir.

Stark’s ability to create atmospheric, minimal, naturalist configurations that only reveal themselves after deep engagement align her with the artistic legacies of Yayoi Kusama, Sol Lewitt, Tara Donovan, Tom Friedman, Andy Goldsworthy, Ernst Haeckel, and the Finish Fetish artists of 1960s Los Angeles.
William Lim, founder of CL3, and Vincent Lim and Elaine Lu of Lim+Lu have created the Push/Pull portable furniture series for Cornell University in New York. The furniture line is made from powder coated stainless steel and PVC upholstery, and is sturdy and colorful.

The furniture came into being from the necessity to give the Cornell University studio’s multifunctional space an identity. The space is around 280m², and can serve as a reception, lounge, crit room or event space.

The aim of the project was to create modern portable furniture using pushcarts. The collection has 12 pieces that can be used in a variety of different ways. Easy to move, the pieces can be rearranged and brought to different spaces. With each new day, the furniture can be moved to accommodate for different tasks. Furniture pieces can be placed beside each other to create an elongated space used for various tasks, such as a wine bar.
The Brisbane City Hall was rededicated after a comprehensive restoration program to conserve its significant spaces and fabric, to rectify its structural, fire and life safety deficits and to re-equip it for its role as the focus for Brisbane’s civic, cultural, and social events.

One of the main features of the renovation is the LED backlight of the Barrisol ceiling in the Main Auditorium. The Main Auditorium is the largest single space in Brisbane City Hall and one of the most photographed and renowned parts of the building.

To achieve the desired result, the ceiling piece was custom made with a series of aluminium structures that match the curve of the domed ceiling of the auditorium. A series of removable frames hung with PVC canvases act not only as a device for steadying the LED backlight, but also to provide a way to remove the fittings if necessary.

In total the whole system consists of 3.2 km of aluminium and about 5 km of PVC and nearly 6,000 individual directional LEDs.

The success of this project owes much to the design team’s understanding of the original design intent and programme of the 1930s City Hall together with the potential of new technologies and materials. Its circular design with fluted pilasters around the perimeter is based on the Pantheon of Rome. The high ceiling, equipped with the latest lighting and audio-visual equipment, forms the background to the room’s focal point - a 23 metre high central lantern. The newly restored timber floor, large stage, semi-circular balcony and grand organ are surrounded by a decorative frieze by Australian artist, Daphne Mayo, featuring six medallions each containing a portrayal of a life sized classical nymph clashing cymbals or blowing a trumpet.
RedBall Project

Inflatable PVC membrane

Picture credits: RedBallProject
Designers: Kurt Perschke – St. Louis, USA
Location: various locations around the world
RedBall Project is a public travelling street art piece by US born artist and sculptor Kurt Perschke. Considered “the world’s longest-running street art work”, the project consists of a 15 feet PVC inflated red ball wedged in different city spaces in various cities around the world. Placed in a choreographed suite of installations within a city and usually lasting one or two weeks, each specific site lasts only one day.

RedBall Project has received strong international media and public attention and has been featured in several urban art books, art journals and media. RedBall has appeared in the USA in St. Louis, Portland, Arizona and Chicago and abroad in Barcelona, Spain and Sydney, Australia.

“Through the RedBall Project I utilize my opportunity as an artist to be a catalyst for new encounters within the everyday,” Perschke writes about the RedBall Project. “On the surface, the experience seems to be about the ball itself as an object, but the true power of the project is what it can create for those who experience it... The larger arc of the project is how each city responds to that invitation and, over time, what the developing story reveals about our individual and cultural imagination.”