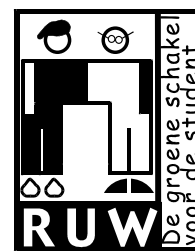


## **Cradle to Cradle – opening evening.**

*The evening of February 11<sup>th</sup> inaugurated period of series of events prepared by RUW on the subject of Cradle to Cradle. As had been expected a number of people keen on finding out more about C2C concept showed up. Main activity during the first C2C evening was documentary “Waste = Food”. The audience had the opportunity to watch it together with its maker Rob van Hattum.*



*By: Karolina Smiech*

Presentation of the documentary was preceded by a short interview with Rob van Hattum. Why has he decided to make a film like that? Well, the inspiration came from an article in New York Times where two guys - William McDonough and Michael Braungart introduced the concept of Cradle to Cradle. Rob, who makes documentaries on scientific and technological subjects, got interested and decided to introduce this new way of thinking, not known in the Netherlands at the time.

“Waste = Food” turned out to be a success beyond what had been expected. After the first broadcast in October 2006 Rob got an e-mail from the Dutch Ministry of Environment asking if they could use it inside the ministry. A few weeks later the film was successfully broadcasted in Belgium and was gaining popularity within the Netherlands as well.

So what is it all about? “Waste = Food” presents the concept of C2C in an interesting and inspiring way. It makes its audience realize that currently followed way of environmental protection is not going to solve problems. We ought to stop trying to make bad things less bad but start undertaking right actions instead. What seems to be a real problem is not the energy – this is abundant on Earth, coming from solar radiation. Scientists estimate that an area of the size of France is required to capture enough sun energy to meet current world demand. What should be regarded as a problem is matter. Contemporary technical paradigm is that products are designed “from cradle to grave”. After their “life” most of material ends up mixed at a landfill. At the same time natural resources are being depleted and their scarcity becomes more and more obvious.

Why not to start using what we already have in a really eco-effective way? Is waste not inherently stupid – producing something of no value? It is much better to follow the nature and realize that indeed waste may equal food. Here products and matter are divided into two groups: biological nutrients – everything that may go back to soil, feed it and contribute to re-creation of life, and technical nutrients – materials to be used again by industry.

The documentary presents several examples of already existing C2C products like textiles produced without using toxic dyes, easy-to-disassembly sport shoes and office chairs, eco-houses and biodegradable food packaging.

Screening of the film was followed by a shower of enthusiastic albeit often critical questions from the audience. What is the impact of C2C approach on the society? What about economic drivers – companies want to make money, can they earn more

applying C2C? What should be the way of getting used product into places where materials can be re-used and what kind of places should those be?

Many of these questions remain still unanswered leaving room for young and creative people to look for answers and solution. Anyway, the seed has been sown and happily seems to have fallen on a fertile ground. Let's hope that still more inspiration is to be drawn from the upcoming C2C events organized by RUW during next half a year.

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