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The (almost) perfect world is made of cork!

Portuguese artist Pedro Cabrita Reis says that he is convinced “that this won’t be the last time that I will use this material in my work”. Former NASA astronaut Scott Kelly argues that “the fact that cork is renewable and absorbs carbon makes it the perfect product for people with ecological concerns”. The President of the Mediterranean Forests Union, António Gonçalves Ferreira, says that “in Portugal we have the great example of the forest [of the future], it is called the ‘*montado*’ (cork oak forest)”. Rolls-Royce uses composite cork in the world’s fastest all-electric plane. The world’s leading maker of wood toys has teamed up with Corticeira Amorim to produce cork toys. The (almost) perfect world is made of cork!



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I am delighted to have the opportunity to write this editorial for Amorim News, and present the strategy of Amorim Cork Flooring, that is aligned with the Amorim Group's overall corporate plan.

«Go 100% Green» is the motto of the strategy and path that the company is pursuing to become plastic free. Innovative technologies, incorporation of bio-materials, elimination of plastics, design, creativity and daring will enable us to align our offer with our customers' needs: quality, efficiency, durability and well-being; and comply with the present-day requirement to achieve a negative carbon balance.

It should be noted that virtually all products in the Amorim Wise range now have life cycle assessments that attest to their negative carbon balance, when including the CO2 sequestration of cork oak forests.

I would also like to highlight the stunning new cork promotion campaign, "Walk on Amazing", which features former NASA astronaut, Scott Kelly, walking on the surface of Mars. More precisely on a cork floor that, with the aid of our digital printing capabilities, reproduces 600 m2 of the real surface of Mars. It offers an incredible view of the Red Planet! The campaign includes other initiatives, in particular "Dream on Amazing", which challenges young people from schools from 12 different countries to create the sustainable classroom of the future, using cork and its unique properties. A jury was chosen to assess the results, including representatives from 13 international architecture firms, which dedicate their professional activity to sustainable construction.

Sustainability lies at the heart of our entire activity, which, through various partnerships, also extends to our network of influence. A prime example is our partnership with the NH hotel chain: the cork stoppers we collect there are crushed and integrated into the production of the flooring solutions to be applied in the hotels. This is a circular economy process that extends the life of cork and, consequently, the associated carbon retention.

Our strategy allows us to explore the properties of cork and place it at the service of a society that highlights the importance of nature, sustainability, aesthetics, functionality and the well-being provided by our products.

I am very proud to be part of this great Amorim Team, which is completely aligned with sustainability principles and whose action makes an effective and relevant contribution to fulfilment of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

I am, of course, a great fan of cork!

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Amorim invites former NASA astronaut to walk on Mars



Amorim Cork Flooring promoted the advertising campaign “Walk on Amazing”, that is present on the Internet, points of sale and involves various brand activation initiatives, to demonstrate the benefits associated with a cork-based flooring solution, a material that has also naturally evolved over time. On that basis, and using satellite images, or images captured by the Perseverance Mars Rover, the company minutely replicated an area of about 600 m² of the surface of Mars, made out of cork, on a scale of 1:1. It then invited the former NASA astronaut Scott Kelly to walk for the first time on the red

planet. Inspired by the creativity of Stream and Tough Guy, the advertising initiative had an impact on millions of people in 17 different countries, including Portugal, the United States of America, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Sweden and Finland. The “Walk on Amazing” campaign added the Mars visual to Amorim Cork Flooring’s extensive flooring range. This involved intense work, combining disciplines such as digital printing, video mapping, or film, 56 hours of rendering for a single image and an incalculable amount of data, derived from intensive research. As a veteran of four space missions, Scott

Kelly was the main protagonist of the “Walk on Amazing” advertising campaign. The former NASA astronaut joined the “One Year Mission” in 2015/16, that involved 340 consecutive days on board the International Space Station. The objective of the “One Year Mission” was to assess the human body’s reactions to spending a long period of time in space and thereby prepare for future missions to Mars. Although he has spent a total of 500 days in space over the course of his career, Scott Kelly has never walked on an extra-terrestrial surface - until he “donned his spacesuit” for the “Walk on Amazing” mission.

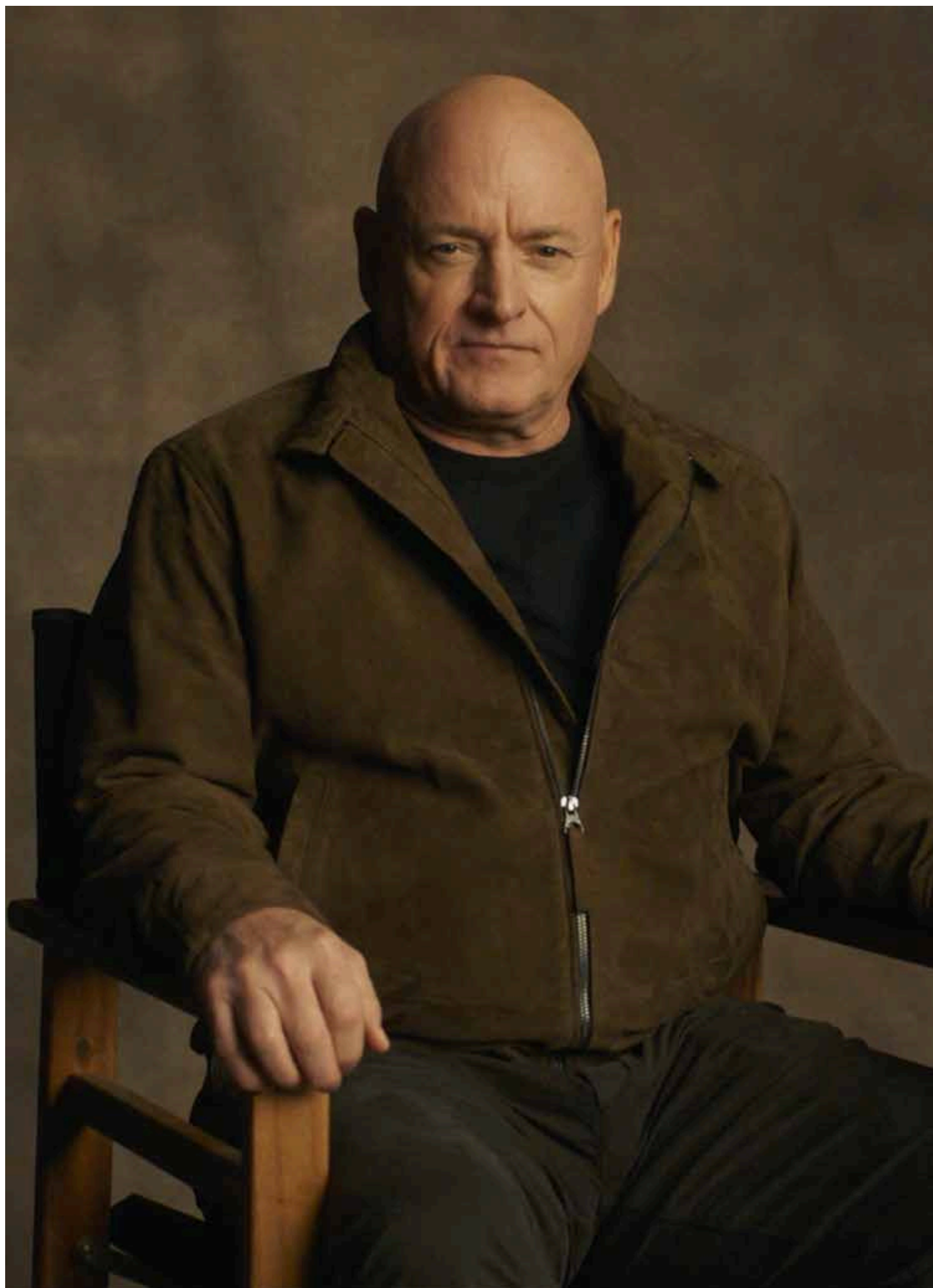
“Dream on Amazing”: model classrooms are sustainable

Leberecorkies (Lebermatt Gymnasium of Switzerland), Green Gators (Havergal College of Canada) and Corkease (Sweden Vattenfall Gymnasiet) were the winners of “Dream on Amazing” – a global competition that aims to promote awareness about the theme of sustainability among young students. The three teams received a Mars visual floor (covering a total of 100 m²) to equip their “Dream on Amazing Classroom”. The floor offered to the schools was the same one that was specially produced for the “Walk on Amazing” advertising campaign, that enabled former astronaut Scott Kelly to walk on Mars for the first time. Promoted by Amorim Cork Flooring, “Dream on Amazing” involved teams from 12 countries that were challenged to design the classroom of the future, based on sustainable materials, which of course included the use of cork. The teams were comprised by four students, aged between 14 and 17 years old,

supervised by an architecture student with strong environmental concerns. They tried to respond to some of the many challenges that are currently posed to future architects. The “Dream on Amazing” pilot competition, whose jury was comprised by 13 representatives of architecture firms who focus on sustainable construction, and two representatives of entities linked to space exploration (Samara University and Kosmica Institute), offered participants the opportunity to develop a classroom with a negative carbon balance, based on a real experience. A new paradigm was based on a sustainable construction environment “in which cork would play a fundamental role”, explains Gonçalo Marques. “We wanted to present the young students with a vision of how to share their dreams with the world. Inspired by the “Walk on Amazing” campaign, we designed the “Dream on Amazing” initiative that allowed us to learn how the generation that now has the chance to step

on Mars imagines a perfectly sustainable environment. This task was supported by architecture students, and with the final evaluation by renowned architecture studios. The group of experts led the participants in this competition to think about model classrooms, in which cork, due to its unique properties, provides multiple solutions”, concludes Amorim Cork Flooring’s Marketing and Sales Director.





“When human beings work together in an environment of peace and cooperation, they can do amazing things”

When mankind first saw the “Blue Marble”, drifting in the immense expanse of space, we finally gained awareness of the planet’s finite existence. For Scott Kelly, a veteran astronaut from four space missions, who has had the privilege of living this experience first-hand, it was also the beginning of an ecological awareness - of the need to take care of our planet and all those who inhabit it. In the “Walk on Amazing” campaign, Amorim Cork Flooring produced a cork floor, based on satellite images, that aimed to recreate the surface of Mars. Kelly was thereby able to fulfil a lifetime dream — to be the first man to “walk on Mars” —, coupled with the opportunity to help promote one of the world’s most innovative and sustainable materials. We had a brief conversation with the American astronaut and engineer about what it meant to be involved in this project, and the role that cork can play in the mission to save the “pale blue dot” that we call “home”.

“There are many products that are harmful to the environment, which could be replaced with cork.”

Since the beginning of space exploration, Corticeira Amorim has been a core technology partner for the aerospace industry, providing insulation solutions to NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) and the ESA (European Space Agency). As an astronaut, did you know that cork, a 100% natural material, was also on the mission?

When I was an astronaut, I was aware that cork was used as insulating material, but I wasn't sure exactly where it was located. I think that I remember hearing that it was incorporated in the space shuttle's solid rocket boosters.

What did you already know about cork before participating in “Walk on Amazing”? What was your first impression and experience with cork?

I didn't know much more than most people, i.e. that cork is used to make wine stoppers, corkboards and flooring. I knew it was a good insulator thanks to my experience as an astronaut, but I did not know, for example, that it retains carbon that is absorbed into the atmosphere, offering a major advantage over other building materials. I was also unaware of its hypoallergenic properties. My first impression was that it looks like the surface of planet Mars, and is also a flooring solution with a very interesting appearance.

What made you accept this challenge and embrace this special mission with Amorim Cork Flooring?

The company's values coincide with my own — use of renewable materials, environmental protection and sound corporate governance.

“Cork is nature's foam” is a famous quote from a NASA astronaut. Now that you have first hand experience of cork, what impresses you most about this material? What do you think is its greatest potential?

The fact that it is renewable and absorbs carbon makes it the perfect product for people who have ecological concerns.

The integration of cork, a 100% natural material, in thermal protection and launch systems, literally means the application of Nature in the aerospace industry through technological innovation. How do you imagine this symbiosis of nature and technology in the future of space exploration?

It is preferable to use natural materials whenever possible, since they have a lower environmental impact

When we ask children what they want to be when they grow up, many of them say they want to become an “astronaut”.

Did you always want to be an astronaut?

No. I was interested in space, but I was such a bad student that it didn't seem feasible. It was only when I found inspiration in Tom Wolfe's book “The Right Stuff”. I thought maybe — just maybe —, if I tried to be a better student, one day I might be able to become an astronaut.

In 2015/2016, as a member of the “One Year Mission”, you spent 340 days in space, non-stop, on board the International Space Station. However, in your career as an astronaut you have never stepped on an extra-terrestrial surface. That is, until you participated in the “Walk on Amazing” mission. How would you describe the feeling of walking on this cork floor?

It gave me a little idea of what the first astronauts to step on Mars will one day feel. It made me want to put on my spacesuit again and try to take part in this historic mission.

Certainly, the challenge of climate change is the biggest and most concerning challenge that humanity now faces. What do you think could be cork's biggest contribution to mitigating/solving the climate emergency? How can we live more sustainably?

There are many products that are harmful to the environment, which could be replaced with cork.

Throughout your career as an astronaut, you have spent a total of 500 days in space. What was the biggest lesson you learned from this experience?

That humans can achieve amazing things, when they dedicate themselves to something and work together, in an environment of peace and cooperation.

You had the opportunity to see the planet Earth from space. What is your greatest wish for humanity?

My wish is that we can see the planet Earth as a gift, which we have to take care of, and also take care of each other, because we are all together in this adventure that we call humanity

Rolls-Royce's 100% electric plane uses cork from Amorim

The “Spirit of Innovation” – the world’s fastest all-electric plane – uses composite cork in the insulation lining of its batteries. The ‘Spirit of Innovation’ officially became the world’s fastest all-electric vehicle in January 2022, when speeds of 387.4mph reached during test flights in November 2021 were officially verified by the Federation Aeronautique Internationale – breaking three separate world speed records. It was the result of a long-term partnership between Rolls-Royce, the English automobile builder, YASA, the company that manufactures electric motors, and Electroflight, a British aviation energy storage specialist and Amorim’s customer on this project. Electroflight worked in close collaboration with Amorim Cork Composites to develop

a fireproof composite cork solution inside the battery lining. The unique invention, now patented, delivers the added benefit of being made from sustainable natural materials. This is a vital component considering the general objective of the government project from the United Kingdom called ACCEL: accelerate the decarbonisation of aviation. Douglas Campbell, technical director of Electroflight, explains: “The battery case was an extremely challenging piece of engineering, as the entire powertrain is connected to the front of the aircraft. The battery case is therefore doing an extremely important job, not just providing containment in the case of a battery fire, but also keeping the front of the aircraft connected to the fuselage structure. On top of that, we had to keep weight to an

absolute minimum, and ensure that the product used for the battery case was highly fire-resistant. Electroflight’s Technical Director concludes: “This was an extremely successful project and we were honoured to work with Corticeira Amorim to bring innovations to the market. Electroflight hopes to work again with Corticeira Amorim to develop new technologies to support electrification and decarbonise aviation”.



Cabrita Reis' "The Three Graces" on display in Paris are made of cork

Cork from Corticeira Amorim was chosen by the artist, Pedro Cabrita Reis, to create his most recent international project: "The Three Graces", a tribute to the remarkable work of classical antiquity, now on display in the Tuileries Garden, in Paris.

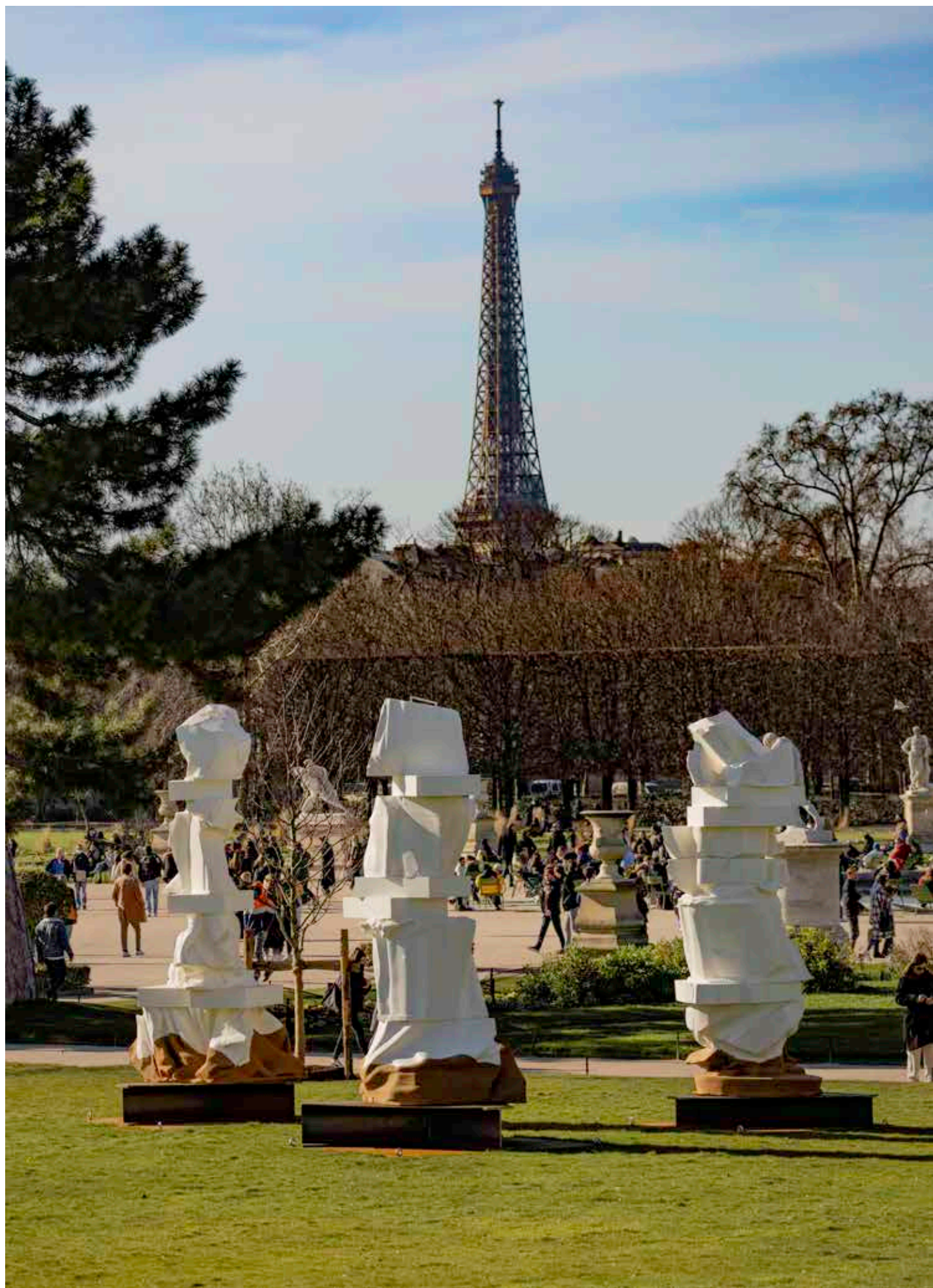
Integrated within the 2022 France-Portugal Season, the multifaceted Portuguese artist was invited by Laurence des Cars, President of the Louvre Museum. His original work consists of three monumental autonomous elements, entirely made of cork, using a new reference specially designed for this purpose by Amorim Cork Composites - Corticeira Amorim's Composite Cork Business Unit. Each sculpture, which was painted in a delicate shade of ivory white at the end of the creative process, weighs approximately 500 kilos, is about 4.50 meters high and is supported on an iron base, weighing 400 kilos. The total implantation has a 9-metre diameter.

The three anthropomorphic figures, which evoke deconstructed human forms, were concluded in Corticeira Amorim's premises, which were transformed into Pedro Cabrita Reis' studio for a few weeks. The work began many months ago, based on multiple notes, a countless number of drawings and models based on religious statues purchased in souvenir shops. Once the models conceived by the artist were found, the objects were then scanned, transformed into a computer drawing and a robotic arm began to carve the cork blocks in a segmented manner. The sculptural triad finally took shape with the assistance of cutting-edge technology from a startup based in the University of Porto's business incubator. Pedro Cabrita Reis marked the plane cuts in each volume and used the same cork blocks in their raw state to reinforce the disarticulation of each body-

"Amorim was available and absolutely enthusiastic"

Speaking about his use of this genuinely Portuguese raw material in this first creative adventure in the world's most important museum, the Portuguese artist commented: "I really enjoyed making these works in cork, and I'm absolutely sure that this isn't the last time that I will be using this material in my work". He added: "Cork is a natural and sustainable product". In relation to Corticeira Amorim's involvement in the process, Pedro Cabrita Reis stated that "Amorim immediately demonstrated absolute availability and enthusiasm. For this new project they built a set of circumstances, of material logistics, of discussion about the structure. Amorim was an open, active and committed partner. Corticeira Amorim's Chairman and CEO, António Rios de Amorim explains that the company has embraced its association with the project "The Three Graces": "One of the best formulae for positioning cork as a raw material of excellence is its permanent connection to the creative, artistic and cultural universe. We're talking about architecture, design, sculpture, drawing, decoration or any other paradigm of imaginative composition. This is reinforced when we add to this certainty the possibility of combining our efforts with artists such as Pedro Cabrita Reis, since our project's success is thereby immediately guaranteed".

"I really enjoyed making these works in cork, and I'm absolutely sure that this isn't the last time that I will be using this material in my work".



Amorim Cork: a century of future



On March 11, 1922, the first Amorim cork factory was inaugurated, in Santa Maria de Lamas, and Amorim & Irmãos, Lda., now known as Amorim Cork, was officially born. A century later, the cork stopper business unit continues to pursue its goal to unite tradition and innovation, based on a unique legacy that allows it to go even further. Between its expertise and cutting-edge outlook, incorporating state-of-the-art technologies that enhance the perfection of Nature contained in a cork stopper, this is the oldest cork stopper factory still in operation. And it is still going strong!

There was an incredible journey between the first cork stopper and the first factory. In 1870, António Alves de Amorim installed a warehouse for cork planks and a small cork stopper workshop along the banks of the Douro River, in Vila Nova de Gaia. Corticeira Amorim is now the world's largest cork company. It has over 150 years of history – inseparable from the history of a family of entrepreneurs and fighters, dreamers and doers – including the hundred staff members who were involved in the inauguration of the factory on March 11, 1922 in Santa Maria de Lamas, set up by the nine children of the founders, who on that date created Amorim & Irmãos, Lda. This factory is now the oldest industrial cork stopper production unit in continuous operation, that is integrated in the business unit now called Amorim Cork. The history of this unit includes more than 100 years of ambition and vision, and enormous resilience - including achievements and setbacks, which aren't for everyone. Perhaps, this was all made possible because the inspiration for this adventure, its *raison d'être*, is a material that is as noble and extraordinary as cork.

Tradition and innovation

When we think about cork, probably the first image that comes to mind is the cork stopper. Despite the wide array of possible applications of cork, the versatility of this raw material and all the possibilities it presents, developed over the decades within the Amorim Group, the stopper continues to be the best-known icon of cork. Originating in Nature, cork is inseparable from the world's finest wines. It is both incredibly simple and extremely sophisticated. At Amorim Cork, this happens because, starting from a unique legacy, from a history and unparalleled expertise, there has been a major investment in innovation and Research & Development over the years,, always with the objective to enhance what the cork stopper already intrinsically contains. The development of NDtech technology,

and more recently the launch of the technologies Naturity and Xpür are clear examples of the way that Amorim Cork integrates state-of-the-art technologies and a cutting-edge spirit in its business culture and practice, developing solutions that exceed the expectations of even the most daring.

Branches from the same trunk

The future can't be made without the past. This stage in Corticeira Amorim's history began to take form in the early decades of the 20th century, when nine of the eleven children of Antonio Alves de Amorim and Ana Pinto Alves founded Amorim & Irmãos, Lda.

The "magnificent nine" were José, Manuel, Henrique, Américo, Ana, Rosa, António, Joaquim and Bernardina (unfortunately João and Maria died young) - the family's second generation, who following the path opened up by their parents, united in diversity, as "branches of the same trunk". Each of them gave their own individual contribution to a common company that the parents had built from nothing, and

rebuilt it, undaunted by the adversities that they had to overcome. "On that date [the 1920's], we began construction of the factory that exists today, which was completed in 1922 [Amorim & Irmãos, Lda., incorporated officially on March 11 with a share capital of 90,000 escudos], which resulted in us being left with a debt of 800,000 escudos", recalled Henrique Alves de Amorim for posterity.





Inside the factory

In the roaring twenties, the activity within the factory followed the frenetic pace of the world at that time, in an orderly dynamic, governed by the vision of building a prosperous future. A time when workers - who often included many members of the same family - worked manually, very close to the raw material, working in a chain with the help of machines that were developed and perfecting, from the jointing plane that was perfected in the 19th century, to the present day. Back then, many of the functions that are now automated were performed by people who transmitted their experience and knowledge to the next generation. The production process was divided into several stages that corresponded, as today, to different functions: the picker of cork planks, tracer, cork cutter, stopper maker, edger, quality control, etc. Today, most of these functions are now

automated, but they essentially remain the same. Several steps are necessary to produce a flawless object as singular as a cork stopper. And that will never change. To make a stopper has always required a great deal of dexterity, skill and wisdom, something that curiously, one hundred years later, and despite technical advances, continues to remain at the heart of Amorim Cork. This is because, notwithstanding all the innovation and research that has been conducted, there are certain processes that no technology can completely supplant. The interaction between man and machine is vital, today just as it was a century ago. But there is nothing stronger than the bond between people and this amazing raw material, cork. And that is why, even today, a natural cork stopper, made from a single piece of cork, is the premium product of the cork stopper industry, and cannot exist without human intervention.

Unique projects, products of excellence, and cutting edge solutions are born from this unique interaction and balance between the best of nature, human beings and technology. Therefore, at Amorim Cork, a hundred years of history is actually a century of future.

Korko - ecological, safe and natural toys

Corticeira Amorim, the world's biggest cork processing group, and Hape, the world's leading producer of wooden toys, have decided to join forces to explore the global market for cork-based toys. The result is the birth of Korko, a joint venture that has emerged as a way to respond to the growing demand for safe, ecological and natural toys. The first collection of these new toys is entitled "Building Blocks", based on the concept developed by the German educator, Friedrich Froebel who affirmed that such blocks allow children to experience and feel, to act and represent, to think and recognise.

The "Building Blocks" collection also responds to the major environmental concerns of parents, educators and

guardians who want to make children aware of the use of Earth-friendly materials from an early age. Toys made from natural raw materials such as cork are also more durable and resistant and promote children's creative development, playful learning and skill training.

As a 100% natural, ecological, renewable, recyclable and reusable raw material, "cork delivers extraordinary benefits to the toy market", suggests António Rios de Amorim, Corticeira Amorim's Chairman and CEO who recalls that "cork is a light material, odourless and soft to the touch, and such characteristics foster play as a learning resource. We believe that Korko will bring happiness to the children's universe, also contributing to a more sustainable world.

For the sake of everyone's future".

Conceived at the i.cork factory, Amorim Cork Composites' innovation factory, the "Building Blocks" collection has led to the installation of new technologies, development of new formulae and implementation of new industrial processes to respond to the specific needs of this market.



“In Portugal we have the great example of the forest [of the future], it’s called the *montado*” (cork oak forest)

The forest, and in particular the *montado* (cork oak forest), has been a constant, and striking, presence in António Gonçalves Ferreira’s life. The agricultural engineer, forestry and agricultural producer, is the current president of the Mediterranean Forest Union (UNAC), an organisation that encompasses six forest producer organisations and represents more than 1200 associates in various parts of Portugal. Its main mission is to defend the interests of Mediterranean forest producers. This mission “is always incomplete. It by-passes technical, political and communicational domains, has internal and external objectives, and largely results from the good relations that we have established with partners in the industry, with national and international research institutions, the local authorities and civil society”, explains Gonçalves Ferreira.

The fact that UNAC's mission is a work in progress, that is inherently inexhaustible, seems to act as a stimulus for someone who has always been very close to the cork oak tree and cork: "My connection to the countryside and to the Ribatejo heathland, and as a result to the cork oak tree and cork, accompanied me as I grew up and has always been part of my family reality, at both a personal and professional level", says Gonçalves Ferreira. "I was consolidating my knowledge and my close relationships in its various aspects, and I was learning to understand its unique characteristics and its complete value, for us agroforestry producers, for the environment and the territory, and also for society and for Portugal as a whole", he concludes, once again emphasising the value of this unique forest - the *montado*. The cork oak tree stands at the heart of this forest, as the core element of the Mediterranean agroforestry model that UNAC protects and promotes. "Agroforestry systems based on the cork oak tree, commonly known as the *montado*, are the main ecosystem that we find in the universe of forestry estate associated with the members of UNAC's forest producing organisations. Our associates are committed to extensive management, which within a framework of economic feasibility ensures adequate environmental performance, protection and conservation, thereby contributing to biodiversity goals, and for the climate goals to which Portugal is committed", explains Gonçalves Ferreira. Founded in 1989, UNAC brings together forest producers to respond to the challenges facing the sector. As Gonçalves Ferreira explains, "UNAC is the technical "umbrella" organisation, with a regional base and experience, which develops aggregating initiatives, in a coordinated and integrated manner. One of the main vectors of UNAC's activity is to make investments in research. Expanding our knowledge of the cork oak tree is another vital point of contact that brings the forestry sector closer to the cork industry. "We lack a lot of basic information about the cork oak tree", the engineer says. "UNAC has made major investments since 2015 in order to improve this situation. In this context the Cork Oak and Cork Skills Centre was of utmost importance and UNAC and APCOR took the joint decision that the sector's research agenda should be developed within the framework of Filcork - from the production and logistics component until the factory gate"



The importance of the agroforestry of the cork oak tree

In partnership with forestry producers, academia and the national and international scientific community and local authorities, Corticeira Amorim has developed the Forestry Intervention Project (PIF) since 2013, whose main objective is to increase the forest area in Portugal by 7% over the next ten years. How is this investment in research perceived within the sector? "The growth and reinforcement of the importance of the agroforestry of the cork oak tree should be a goal embraced by everyone, investing in new areas, complemented by an equally important commitment to improve the vitality of current areas of cork oak forest. Corticeira Amorim's position on this matter could be the missing element needed to ensure a consistent and unbroken posture on research, the demonstration and adoption of new techniques and more innovative management models", suggests Gonçalves Ferreira, who is aware of the project's potential for the sector. Standing at the forefront of this process, the forest producers are perhaps those who best know the reality of the *montado*, and the opportunities and challenges of this forest. If it's true that there's a lot of talk about the role of this forest in the mitigation

of climate change, it is also important to realise that the crisis climate may have on the sector if nothing is done. The president of UNAC therefore warns of "the impact of climate change on cork production, pointing to a potential scenario of lower productivity in the near future and as such of the lower profitability of the cork oak forests. If the price of cork and/or other revenue from the *montado* fails to compensate for this situation, the consequences will necessarily be very negative, because without profitability the investment will be called into question and without investment we will effectively be mortgaging the future".

The treasure we hold in our hands

There are many challenges. But the most important is this treasure that we hold in our hands. When asked about how he imagines the forest of the future, Gonçalves Ferreira invites us to open our eyes to the current situation: "A real forest, with economic and social value, that contributes to and promotes environmental gains and that contributes to the equation of climate action. In Portugal we have a great example of this forest, it is called the *montado* (cork oak forest) and the basis of this economic sector is a tree and a product that we are all proud of: the cork oak tree and cork."

Environmentally friendly solutions

The Go4cork Nature by Amorim underlay, produced by Amorim Cork Composites, makes a decisive contribution to the performance of flooring, in terms of acoustic insulation, thermal comfort and improved air quality. Go4cork Nature by Amorim is made from cork - a 100% natural, recyclable and renewable raw material. It offers high performance, impact resistance and walking comfort and also protects the floor, offering greater durability. According to a recent analytic study conducted by the consultancy firm, EY, Go4cork Nature by Amorim has a negative carbon balance of -12.4kg CO₂ eq/m². The associated carbon sequestration promoted by the cork oak forest exceeds the CO₂ emissions from production. Go4cork Nature by Amorim is an excellent

option for customers looking to achieve a balance between performance and environmental sustainability. Lightness, elasticity and adhesion to the flooring are other properties conferred by this cork-based underlay.

By using cork in the composition of the Go4cork Nature by Amorim underlay, Amorim Cork Composites is able to reduce possible environmental impacts, especially when compared to underlays that solely use synthetic raw materials, such as polyurethane and/or polyethylene foams).

One of the most sustainable raw materials on the face of the earth

These attributes make cork “**one of the most sustainable raw materials on Earth**”, states António Rios de Amorim, Corticeira

Amorim’s Chairman and CEO. “Cork plays a fundamental role in the key issues faced by humanity today: the fight against climate change, promotion of a greener planet and defence of sustainability values. Corticeira Amorim will pursue its best efforts in the fields of science, study, research, technology, knowledge, research & development and innovation, to continue to offer the world the finest products, applications and solutions in response to the challenges that arise in our daily lives.



“We Rehabilitate Houses, We Rebuild Lives”

Corticeira Amorim is a partner of Just a Change, a non-profit association that rebuilds homes for underprivileged people in Portugal. Under the motto “We Rehabilitate Homes, We Rebuild Lives”, Just a Change has attracted dozens of partners, rebuilt hundreds of homes and mobilised thousands of volunteers. It has thereby provided better living conditions for people, helping impact or reduce poverty, insecurity and crime, and increase health, well-being and self-esteem. Based on the common goal of promoting a sustainable impact, Corticeira Amorim’s support for Just a Change is achieved through the availability of cork-based products for housing reconstruction projects. Whether providing cork floors from the panoply of Amorim Cork Flooring’s product

range, or the provision of composite cork products resulting from circular economy practices implemented by Amorim Cork Composites. This partnership places both organisations in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, that sets global priorities for 2030, aiming to build a world that is fairer, more dignified and more inclusive, striking the desired balance between People, Planet, Peace, Partnerships and Prosperity. Corticeira Amorim’s social responsibility “is also achieved by solving problems that are shared by everyone”, explains Cristina Rios Amorim. “When we add to this objective the goal to build a society that is more cohesive, conscious and prepared, we know that we are on the right side of the equation”, explains the company director

in charge of the company’s sustainability policy. “Full compliance with our mission is complemented by the urgent need to foster decarbonisation through the use of green, renewable, recyclable and reusable products, and those with a negative carbon balance”, concludes Cristina Rios Amorim. Just a Change’s plans for 2022 encompass 65 interventions in 16 municipalities in Portugal, mobilising more than 800 volunteers and with an impact on more than 200 direct beneficiaries’.



New blood at Amorim

The Corticeira Amorim Revelation Awards distinguish young professionals who have stood out over the course of the year, due to their talent and performance. There were four nominees this year: Álvaro Batista, Catarina Espada, Marília Medeiros and Rafael Jesus. With very different profiles, and collaborating in four units of different businesses, this new generation naturally defends the goal to promote sustainability, and represents an innovative approach across the entire Group. With humility, combined with ambition, they share a new way of thinking, a fresh look at the business, and huge confidence in this raw material that unites us: cork.



Álvaro Batista

Álvaro Batista returned to Corticeira Amorim in 2018. His career has been as dynamic as the trajectory of a rocket, which, as we know, also includes cork in its structure. Now 32 years old, he is in charge of the i.cork factory, Amorim Cork Composites's pilot factory which develops some of the world's most innovative and technologically advanced projects made using cork. Fast, but "extremely mature", he is praised for his "autonomy and knowledge of raw materials and technologies associated to ACC's business activity. His relationship with Amorim dates back to 2014, when, after completing his studies in Advanced Chemistry and Industrial Processes in the University of Coimbra, he worked with ACC for the first time. But he had a strong desire to get closer to home. He returned to Coimbra, and began a job closer to his home, but he never lost touch with the team, in particular with Eduardo Soares, who called him when a new opportunity arose. In the newly created i.cork factory, Álvaro embraced the daily challenge of embracing new projects with an incredible dynamic, and has no regrets. Álvaro has a different perspective on the balance between tradition and innovation, that is inevitable in a company with the history of Amorim: "ACC's overriding dynamic has always been to adapt in order to succeed. It makes use of all the cork that isn't used by the other business units. At ACC, I don't feel the weight of tradition so much. Our focus is always to look for things that are new, out-of-the-box ideas that can add value." He confesses that his nomination for the Revelation Awards "was a surprise". Álvaro was pleased for himself, and also for the pilot factory project. "There is a lot of talent, I think it was very much the project that was distinguished, and the overall support I receive from my team".



Catarina Espada

It began with a summer internship, in 2017, when she was still in university studying Mechanical Engineering. It was love at first sight. “I fell in love with the product, the industry, and I also liked the factory environment”, explains Catarina Espada, 26 years old, who is now head of production at Equipar, in Coruche, one of Amorim Cork’s industrial units. She concluded her master’s degree in the company, completed her professional internship, and was quickly hired. “I wanted to join a sustainable, environmentally friendly industry. The product is very Portuguese, which also captivated me”, she adds. The fact of being a large group, but family-run, “non-anonymous”, was a further incentive for Catarina. But that’s not her only motivation. “What I feel here is that they give young people a great opportunity to progress, and they invest in us from an early age”. Catarina was one of the winners of the 2021 edition of the Revelation Awards. She thanks the company for recognising “her effort and work”. She says that she is very proud to receive the award. She considers herself an empathetic person, who easily relates to others, and believes that this may have made the difference, and as a result many people helped her, gave her tips on how to improve product quality, and shared “all this expertise from those who have been involved in production for years”. Decisive, dynamic and proactive, Catarina is convinced that “it is those who work here every day who manages to improve the company”. Her mission is to get the best out of people for the common good, “because everyone wins”. For the future, she leaves a message filled with conviction: “As we know, cork is a finite element. We have to be intelligent and know how to manage our factories effectively so as not to waste cork”.



Marília Medeiros

Born in the Azores, Marília Medeiros joined the Group in 2015, as a *controller* at Amorim Cork Composites (ACC). Today, aged 33, she is closer to the point of origin of the raw material. She keeps her eyes on the future, as a full member of the team of Amorim Florestal (AF). Since 2017, she has been in charge of managing digital transformation projects. She studied economics in Porto, and after completing her BA degree she decided to apply to Corticeira Amorim which gave her the opportunity to work in a leading company, working alongside “excellent professionals, because we can only learn from them”. At Amorim Florestal, she began by working in the field of systematisation and automated reporting: “My work has consisted in developing a series of reports that are sent to factories on a daily basis, in order to help them in decision-making”, she explains. Marília’s perspective considers that it’s a great privilege to work for a company that has over 150 years of history: “Because this legacy is being transmitted to us, this trust is being passed on to people. It is fundamental that there is no problem in passing on knowledge, and giving people the space to grow. Working in an environment such as this is very important for us, because it helps us go further in our careers”. Perfectly aligned with the Group’s culture, Marília says that she considers it is very important to “remain humble and always be willing to help”. Her peers highlight her dedication and ability to relate to others, as well as her great willingness to learn and grasp new challenges. “Our generation has the ability to bring a new way of thinking. And it must have this commitment, to improve processes and make them more efficient.”



Rafael Jesus

Rafael Jesus, 26 years old, is production supervisor at Amorim Cork Flooring. He exudes the tranquillity and confidence that is expected from a team manager with many years of experience. In our brief interview with him, the word he repeated most often was “team”. And if his duties require him to be a natural motivator, it is clear that it is this tranquillity which motivates the people working under his supervision. Upon joining the Group, he was aware that he was going to work with a well-known company. Not knowing much about cork, he was soon amazed by its characteristics and possibilities. “All this fascinated me, when I realised that there isn’t just one direct application of cork into the product itself, but that more or less 90% of cork is reused and reintroduced into the process.” His trump cards are his close relationship with his team and his ability to inspire, by example. “I believe that we reap what we sow. If sometimes I stay longer at work, because I feel I have to keep up with my team, be on the ground, speak the same language as my colleagues, become directly involved like them. I believe this is key to what I have achieved. I think that our generation has a way of thinking a little differently, more flexibly. This is reciprocal, and all this is important, from a perspective of knowing that people have a long-term involvement with the project”. Not afraid to roll up his sleeves and dive into the dynamics of his team, Rafael Jesus was one of the winners of the Revelation Awards 2021, and it is with this team that he shares it: “The result of the award is basically the result of our teamwork. They are the ones who make a contribution practically 24 hours a day. I’m here for eight hours.” Looking towards the future, he aims to reach the best possible level, and “continue to do my best, to continue to achieve the results that we are striving to attain”.

Antonio Freitas: The art of negotiation

The 2021 Career Award was delivered to António Freitas, cork buyer at Amorim Florestal, in recognition for his 50 years of work, dedication and passion to Corticeira Amorim. Over five decades of service to the company, António Freitas has done a little bit of everything before he moved south, where the cork oak tree dominates the rolling plains. He started loading cork at Amorim & Irmãos in 1972. He was only 13 years old. His mother was already working there. As was the custom at that time, she asked them to give her son a job as soon as he finished school. “Everybody joked with me: ‘Look at this little sparrow! You won’t be able to stand it here...’”. I started to collect cork that came from the factory in Abrantes, and transported it on my head. I marked thousands of planks, painted, and dispatched them until 1 a.m. in the morning”. A minor accident at work, which resulted in a cracked wrist, made him leave the “planks” unit (where the cork planks are unloaded) and he began working in the offices of Corticeira Amorim. He was a temporary employee, for one month. “I was never told anything. So, I’ve been working as a temp for fifty years”, he jokes. At the time, he was a “mail clerk” and helped in the archive. Later, from 1978 onwards, he worked at Corticeira Amorim’s factory, at Ipocork and again at Amorim & Irmãos. He served coffee, cleaned the floor and even worked for one month as a switchboard operator. “I got electric shocks from those phone lines... It was a month to forget. But I gained a lot of experience. So much so that I memorised all the phone numbers, precisely because I gained this practice of making the phone connections”. Until the opportunity arose to move to Montijo, where they needed a cork buyer. Again, this was a question of experience. But it only took 15 days to be approved by colleagues and by José Amorim - with whom he would form a close professional relationship. He began accompanying the older buyers and absorbed their empirical knowledge. “I used to go with my colleagues and [the purchase] was more



or less based on “eyeballing” the planks. It was a question of experience. That has changed now. Today, cork purchasing is much more sophisticated. Now, I enjoy the technology that the new employees bring and I try to give them my experience with cork, the land, the families from the Alentejo (which still relies heavily on family and friendships)”, he explains. He became an excellent negotiator. He worked under important bosses, such as José Amorim, but without his own humility, work and perseverance, he would never have been able to master the secrets of the cork market or the art of negotiation. Along with his in-depth knowledge of the cork oak forest and preparation of the raw material, António Freitas combines business acumen forged by experience. These characteristics have made him one of the best buyers at Amorim Florestal. Despite how much he has achieved on his own merit, António Freitas does not conceal his gratitude to the Amorim family. “The experience

that I obtained here [in the Group] is something that money can’t buy. When I was working in the North, the furthest south I had ever travelled was Fatima. Today, I am familiar with my entire country because of my work. If it wasn’t for Amorim, I wouldn’t be anyone. I had never been to a restaurant. I didn’t even know how to sit down at a table, or anything like that... so I have a great deal to thank the Amorim family for.”

Our People



AMORIM

Sustainable by nature