

TEACHER EXHIBITION NOTES

BEAZLEY DESIGNS OF THE YEAR

24 NOVEMBER 2016 – 19 FEBRUARY 2017



Image: Harbin opera house

INTRODUCTION

The ninth annual **Beazley Designs of the Year** exhibition celebrates design that promotes or delivers change, enables access, extends design practice or captures the spirit of the year. The exhibition showcases projects from the last year across six categories: Architecture, Digital, Fashion, Product, Graphics, and Transport.

Exhibits are nominated by designers, academics and experts from across the world. A specially selected jury will choose a winner for each category and one overall winner.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE EXHIBITION

ARCHITECTURE

Harbin Opera House - Designed by MAD Architects, led by Ma Yansong, Dang Qun and Yosuke Hayano, for Harbin Songbei Investment and Development Group

Nominated by Aric Chen

The Harbin Opera House helps resuscitate the notion that form bears substance, at a time when so much reliance on form for form's sake has chipped away at the idea. Emulating the mountains around Harbin – a northern Chinese city renowned for its formidable winters – the building's billowing, snowdrift silhouettes are wrapped judiciously around its 1,600-seat and 400-seat theatres, while sinuous Manchurian ash-clad interiors seem to melt beneath a crystalline glass atrium. Within the theatres, the acoustics are reportedly excellent. – Aric Chen

Project summary: A fluid, cornerless opera house that uses flowing lines rather than hard edges to give an almost nature inspired beauty.

DIGITAL

This War of Mine - Designed by Przemyslaw Marszał and Michał Drozdowski from 11 Bit Studios

Nominated by Paola Antonelli

This War of Mine is a video game developed by 11 Bit Studios and inspired by the 1992–1996 Siege of Sarajevo during the Bosnian



Image: Richard Malone S/S 2016



Image: David Bowie's Blackstar

War. Myriad video games exist that engage with tropes of battle, violence and making decisions under pressure. This War of Mine stands out in a crowded field for its thoughtful historical research into wartime memoir, survival and suffering, and for the spare and evocative design of its interface. Players are thrust into a wartime siege as a civilian and tasked with gathering supplies, caring for survivors and simply staying alive. They confront the often unacknowledged damage inflicted on those living in war zones, and must consider stark ethical and moral choices. Kill or be killed? Take food for yourself or share? Take a risk or remain temporarily safe? The game demonstrates the ability of design to shape attitudes to and perceptions of the toll war takes on civilians. – Paola Antonelli

Project Summary: A computer game that challenges the player to think about the real impact of war on the lives of those directly affected by it.

FASHION

Richard Malone S/S 2016 - Designed and manufactured by Richard Malone

Nominated by Alex Milton

Graduating from Central Saint Martins in 2014, Malone is rapidly establishing himself as one of the most vital young designers working today. Based in London, his collections are sustainably sourced and made in-house in limited quantities.

Mining a childhood in Wexford, his observations of working-class Irish life and the role of Irish stereotypes provide the inspirational framework for playful structural forms. This collection features woven striped dresses that giddily twist and turn in combination with skirts and dresses in coral nylons, hand-embroidered T-shirts and knee-high socks. Malone builds a jamboree of layers to create surprising, directional silhouettes with an eclectic blend of historical details. This is, in essence, fashion as a statement of diversity, individualism and everyday life. This joyfully defiant message is enforced by his street-casting, styling and the washable – and therefore eminently wearable – nature of his garments. Real is rare in fashion: Malone is just that. – Alex Milton



Image: adidas x Parley 117 running shoe

Project Summary: Limited runs of sustainably sourced clothes inspired by the designer's working class Irish roots.

GRAPHICS

★ - Designed by Jonathan Barnbrook at Barnbrook for David Bowie/Sony Entertainment Inc.

Nominated by Shane Walter



Image: BeeLine

David Bowie's career has been defined by changes as much in his visual image as his music, so it is testament to Barnbrook's talent that he has worked on projects for him since 2002. The pinnacle is the artwork and graphic visual design he produced for Bowie's final album Blackstar.

Bowie was a star who burnt very bright in his lifetime. It's poignant and powerful, therefore, to have a dark star represent someone whose legacy will never fade. As Barnbrook says, 'The symbol, rather than writing "Blackstar", has as a sort of finality, a darkness, a simplicity, which is a representation of the music.' It is remarkable and restrained, stripped back yet an almighty work of compelling graphic art. It is a clear counterpoint to the visual clutter that litters our daily view. It was created with deep trust and mutual respect: iconic design, worthy of an icon. – Shane Walter

Project Summary: An album design for an musical artist synonymous with style. Mourning the death of one of the most influential artist of the 20th and 21st Century.

PRODUCT

adidas x Parley 117 running shoe - Designed by adidas sustainability and design teams, Alexander Taylor, Parley for the Oceans and Sea Shepherd

Nominated by Max Fraser



Image: • LEGO® City Fun in the Park

The complex problems arising from plastic waste in the oceans are widely recognised. While clean-up initiatives are being pioneered (not least Digital category winner from 2015, the Ocean Cleanup project), the question of what to do with the retrieved plastic is another issue.

Embracing the challenge, adidas created this trainer with an upper woven from fibres made from recycled fishing nets. The 3D-printed midsole is made out of waste plastic filtered from the oceans and builds on the brand's

Futurecraft technology, which allows midsoles to be customised to the exact contours of the wearer's feet.

adidas is a partner with Parley for the Oceans, an initiative that encourages creatives to repurpose sea waste and raise awareness

of the growing issue. This project, only a drop in the ocean, signals an appetite and willingness from large corporations to confront and embrace some of the environmental challenges of our age.

—Max Fraser



Image: This War of Mine

Project Summary: A shoe that reuses fishing nets to create a new product. This product brings social awareness of waste products whilst tackling the problem.

TRANSPORT

BeeLine – smart navigation 155 for bikes - Designed by Mark Jenner and Tom Putnam, with Map Project Office

Nominated by Sebastian Conran

Simplicity of use seems to be the guiding principle for the BeeLine navigator, a handlebar-mounted device that helps you find your way around on two wheels without having to consult a difficult-to-read map display. Fitting on most handlebars and controlled by using the GPS of your smartphone, BeeLine is intuitive and affordable.

It reduces navigation outputs to the bare basics by providing a general indicator of direction of travel rather than prescriptive commands; it's a bit like a compass, but one where you can choose the location of your North Pole.

So BeeLine just points you in the right direction. In fact, that is all that's required to keep you homing in on your destination, leaving you to decide which turns to make. The opportunity is there to discover fresh routes and explore your wider surroundings or even new places in your own city.

—Sebastian Conran

Project Summary: A user friendly navigation system for your cycle.

PREVIOUS WINNING DESIGNS OF THE YEAR:

2015 Ocean Cleanup by Boyan Slat

2014 Heydar Aliyev Center by Zaha Hadid Architects

2013 GOV.UK – UK Government website by GDS

2012 London 2012 Olympic Torch by Edward Barber and Jay Osgerby

2011 Plumen 001 by Samuel Wilkinson and Hulger

2010 Folding Plug by Min-Kyu Choi

2009 Barack Obama Poster by Shepard Fairey

2008 One Laptop Per Child by Yves Béhar

Further details can be seen here:

<http://designmuseum.org/design/designs-of-the-year>

ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

There are many different aspects of the exhibition that can be explored - if students are studying a particular design discipline, they may find it enjoyable to identify their favourite projects relating to their studies.

The use of sketchbooks and pencils is welcomed in the gallery, and will support all of the suggested activities listed below. Students are also encouraged to take photographs (without flash) to record their visit.

The following activities are starting points for school and sixth form groups visiting the exhibition:

Nominate

Invite each student to explore the exhibition and choose their own favourite Design of the Year. Encourage students to record and annotate their chosen exhibit by sketching it. What factors make it a winning design? Hold a class vote to decide your group's over all design of the year. You might want to compare your class's vote to the public vote in the exhibition (which can be seen on a score board in the back left hand corner of the gallery).

Design your own

Invite students to explore the exhibition and then create a winning design of their own in one of the six award categories: Architecture, Digital, Fashion, Graphics, Product or Transport. How will the design make an impact? How could it address a problem or meet a particular need? What materials and technologies would be used?

Research and Discussion

Notable Designs of the Year in the past have been more powerful as ideas than as functioning products. They have introduced new ways of thinking, making and designing even if the product itself never made it to mass-manufacture. Select three designs that are in the early stages of their development and discuss what important idea the design represents:

Here are some suggested designs to review:

- **The Smog Free Project** – A concept to provide clean air bubbles in public spaces so that people can experience clean air in built up cities.
- **Moth Generator** – A programme that generates variations on thematic patterns to ape the variations in species.
- **WITT Ltd – Harvesting Energy from Motion** – Using a pendulum to convert kinetic into electrical energy the WITT Ltd turns the rocking motion of something like a boat into power that can be used in an electrical item.

Make a difference

Good design has the power to improve quality of life by making a positive impact on individuals, society or the wider environment. Choose a design explore what problem it solves.

Some suggested designs to review include:

- **Post/Biotics-** The idea of 'citizen science' is taken a step further by providing a hand held lab for people to work on science projects to create new types of vaccines and medicines.
- **LEGO® City Fun in the Park – City People Pack-** LEGO's response to the 'toy like me' campaign that sought to include toys of all abilities in toy lines.
- **Drinkable Book** – A book with educational advice on safe water usage. The book's pages can be torn out and added to water to purify it, killing 99% of the bacteria making clean drinking water.
- **The BBC micro:bit** – A microcomputer given out for free to all school age children in the UK to promote coding and home programming projects. The BBC micro:bit aims to empower children to learn computer programming language.

Discover Design

A generic free downloadable gallery activity worksheet for students, can be downloaded from the museum's online resource:

Discover.designmuseum.org

EXHIBITION GUIDANCE

Objects in the exhibition are on open display rather than in cases. Care should be taken when moving around the exhibition and most objects should not be touched. Any objects that can be touched will be clearly signed. We would be grateful if you could brief your students accordingly.

Depending on your group and your itinerary for the visit, we would recommend that you set aside approximately 40 minutes to explore this exhibition.

Photography is permitted without flash; however filming is strictly prohibited in the exhibition.

Please ensure that you read our school visit Terms and Conditions document before making your visit.

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