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SUSTAINABLE DESIGNS WIN NATIONAL RSA AWARD

Friday May 8th

Five innovative designs aimed at encouraging people to live sustainable and environmentally friendly lifestyles have scooped a top Design Directions award from the RSA.

The winners include Joe Harrison from Bournemouth, who created 'Digital Growth' a dynamically changing digital plant that grows in homes and develops uniquely in relation to the occupier's energy consumption, and Matthew Jarvis who submitted 'Flick my Switch' - a new idea for light switches that encourages people to turn their lights off. [Full list of winners below]

Design Directions is the RSA's annual design awards in which students are challenged to address intractable social problems through innovative new design.

This year's awards included the briefs 'A changing world' - in which students were asked to imagine a world in 2025 and the products and services we will be using in our every day lives, and 'Design for elegant frugality' - in which they were asked to focus on the creation and production of an original, persuasive and behaviour changing strategy.

Announcing the winners, the RSA's Head of Design Emily Campbell said:

"The RSA is proud to give these awards to Harrison, Morris, Bell, Brenkley, Rodde, Jarvis and Spurr as part of our long history of encouraging young designers to take on big issues. These are breakthrough designs that combine practicality with creative leaps, and make you look forward to the future in spite of - or even because of - its frugality."

Jonathon Porritt, founder director of sustainable development organisation Forum for the Future, who helped judge the competition, said:

"Design and innovation have a vital role to play in creating a low-carbon future. We need designers who can imagine how our world will change and create sustainable products and services which bring environmental and social benefits, so it was great to see the bold ideas the students produced in response to our challenge."

The five winning submissions for 'A changing world' and 'Design for elegant frugality' are:

A changing world

Joe Harrison, The Arts Institute at Bournemouth, The Wally Olins Opportunity Award of £1,000. 'Digital Growth', a surface covering concept for 2025, combines nature and technology to create a dynamically changing digital plant that grows in homes and develops uniquely in relation to the occupier's energy consumption. The plant changes shape and colour depending on the efficiency of the appliances around the home. 'Digital Growth' works

by taking data from different appliances via nanotechnology and wireless capabilities and converting it into a visual format on a section of electronic wallpaper, integrated into each home. Water and electricity usage and the efficiency of particular appliances affect how the plant will look. Brown and drooping leaves indicate low efficiency, and the user can find out what is causing this using touch screen technology in areas of the digital plant to see detailed pop up information.



Laura Morris, Northumbria University, The Wally Olins Opportunity Award of £2,500.

Laura's personal care proposal was 'Locally Pure' which she envisaged as a new Unilever brand consisting of a solid shampoo packaged in an abrasive foaming mitt, together with a service provided for rural towns and villages in a 'Patchwork World'. Local communities are shown how to make the shampoo by a representative from Unilever. They can then sign up online for a starter kit and access recipes, further base ingredients and optional equipment. 'Locally Pure' is made communally, and a local twist can be added (such as honey). The shampoo is sold locally and also traded between rural towns.



Design for elegant frugality

Joanna Bell, Sarah Brenkley, Hannah Rodde, Kingston University, Waitrose Internship Value £2,500. This team's research showed that one of the biggest problems within the construction industry is over-ordering, which leads to surplus new materials being thrown away because it is cheaper to buy in bulk than it is to order specific amounts. 'Surplus' is a service for large construction companies which makes their unused or reusable materials available to small sites, single builders or the general public. These materials are collected directly from the site, meaning that the construction company does not have to pay landfill charges.

Our Solution

1 2 3 4

Surplus is a service that large construction companies join to make their unused or reusable materials available to smaller sites, single builders or the general public. These materials are collected directly from the site, meaning that the construction company does not have to pay landfill charges. There is no charge for the materials, encouraging the use of the service.



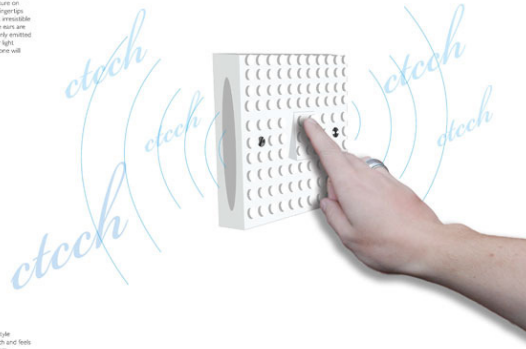
SURPLUS

Matthew Jarvis, University for the Creative Arts, Epsom, Springetts Brand Consultants Internship Value £2,500. 'Flick my switch' is a light switch that actively engages the user and embraces their sense of touch. A texture on the switch plate offers a tactile reward and a satisfying sound is emitted only when the light is turned off. The switch plates would be available in a range of textures to suit different customers, such as wobbly ribbed rubber, sponge pyramids, metal ball bearings that roll with your finger tips and bristles that tickle finger tips. The sounds emitted when the switch is turned off will mimic pleasant, therapeutic or addictive sounds such as the 'pop' when a tight jam jar lid comes off, water plopping into a puddle, the pssschh of a drinks can opening, and the pop of a balloon bursting or champagne cork coming out of the bottle. This product, designed to make a small but significant contribution to changing behaviours, would contribute to CO₂ emission reduction and contribute to small acts such as turning off lights, to become, over time, an instinctive behaviour like putting on a seat belt in a car.

Flick my switch energy saving satisfaction

Touch is our most neglected sense. Many of our ordinary interactions with the world occur through our sense of touch, providing low tactile rewards. With this new playful design of light touch it subtly engages us and reminds our sense of touch. There is a focus on the light touch that arises and takes the finger tips giving the user a tactile reward and making it irresistible to touch. As well as satisfying the fingers the user is satisfied with a delightfully addictive sound only emitted when switched off. This design will make our light switches more attractive with a twist and no one will forget to turn them off again.

"we're always touching things, but not being touched in return"



The feature featured in this image use top side shaped raised circles that are harder to touch and feel irresistible when finger tips are run down them.

Chris Spurr, De Montfort University, A Fellows' Award of £1,500

Chris' proposal was a design for a frugal refrigerator system, which features the manufacturer playing a more active role in the product life cycle, offering services to the customer that alter the product and give it a longer life. The unit comes as a flat pack modular system featuring three main components – a base unit housing the compressor; a back unit accommodating the condenser; and the main cavity for storage of goods, which is built up from flat sealed panels to form separate compartments. Individual doors on the units decrease the amount of cold air loss compared to opening one large door on a traditional refrigerator, improving operating efficiency. He envisaged the manufacturer offering a service that included technology upgrades, and the opportunity to change aesthetics and expand the system as the customer's circumstances change, thus reducing waste.

REDUCE.RECYCLE.RE-USE

Suggested individual areas allow consumers to store fresh food effectively and efficiently, with colder temperatures at the bottom

- Drinks
- Salads & Vegetables
- Dairy Products
- Meat & Poultry

Modular freezer compartments can be added to the system as needs change, expanding the system.

Replaceable panels allow the consumer to change the aesthetics to suit their style as their kitchen changes.

The image shows a modular refrigerator system. It consists of a base unit, a back unit, and a main cavity. The main cavity is divided into several compartments, each with a different color and design. The compartments are labeled: 'Drinks' (blue), 'Salads & Vegetables' (green), 'Dairy Products' (orange), and 'Meat & Poultry' (red). There are also modular freezer compartments shown. The system is shown in a kitchen setting and as individual components. The text 'REDUCE.RECYCLE.RE-USE' is written vertically on the left side of the image.

Notes to Editors

- 1. For more information contact Luke Robinson, RSA Head of Media on 020 7451 6893 or luke.robinson@rsa.org.uk**
- 2. A full list of the Design Directions award winners can be found at www.rsadesigndirections.org**
- 3. The RSA developed these projects with support from Forum for the Future and Wolff Olins (A Changing World), and Waitrose and Springetts Brand Consultants (Design for Elegant Frugality)**
4. Forum for the Future - the not-for-profit sustainable development organisation - works in partnership with more than 120 leading companies and public sector bodies, helping them devise more sustainable strategies and deliver these in the form of new products and services. www.forumforthefuture.org
5. Design Directions is the RSA's annual design awards in which students are challenged to address intractable social problems through innovative new design.
6. Design Directions is the UK's leading competition for 'socially responsible' design. The RSA established its first awards scheme for students in 1924 and today this unique scheme identifies, supports and rewards the most promising and creative students.
7. Worth over £60,000 in prize monies, comprising cash and work placements, the awards provide financial and practical assistance to student designers starting out in their careers.
8. This year Design Directions received 800+ entrants. There were 30 winners. There was a choice of 11 briefs to which students could respond, proposing solutions to ways in which design could make useful and meaningful interventions in a variety of situations.
9. The RSA is grateful to the following organisations who supported Design Directions in 2008/09: Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation; Garfield Weston Foundation; Kalyx; GlaxoSmithKline; Royal Mail; Home Office; Design Council; Forum for the Future; The Worshipful Company of Tin Plate Workers; Engine Service Design; CIM Charitable Trust; Aircraft Medical; Design against crime research centre; Springetts; Waitrose; NCR; Wolff Olins
- 10. Joe Harris and Laura Morris will have the opportunity to workshop their winning proposals with Unilever, Dulux and Forum for the Future.**
- 11. Joanna Bell and Matthew Jarvis will each take up a work placement with the graphic design team at Waitrose and Springetts brand consultancy respectively.**