



delight

delight
in the
everyday
26 Sept — 28 Nov
Ruthin Craft Centre

please take a copy



Introduction

The Design Commission for Wales is pleased to collaborate with Ruthin Craft Centre on an exhibition which recognises quality in the everyday in Wales – the homes, public places, schools, work places, parks, shops and community buildings which we enjoy, and which form the background to everyday life. ‘Delight in the Everyday’ celebrates the simple pleasures found in the unassuming buildings and places which eschew louder ambition and are entirely appropriate and delightful in their simplicity.

The Commission has selected several designers working in the built environment in Wales to contribute exhibits which explore the theme of Delight in the Everyday. From the simple planting of wildflowers to brighten up a dull roadside, to a study of the search for thermal comfort in a courtyard house, the designers consider some of the infinite variety of ways in which good design contributes to our enjoyment of day to day life.

dcfw.org
ruthincraftcentre.org.uk

Making Everyday Space

Coombs Jones

Our exhibit for Delight in the Everyday combines our interests in place and making to explore what makes everyday public spaces delightful.

Our exhibit focuses on the host town of the exhibition. Typical of many small towns in Wales, Ruthin has a variety of urban public spaces: market squares, traditionally the hearts of small towns - places of trade, governance, event and spectacle; streets and lanes - transport arteries, walkways and social spaces; and courts and yards - places of making, industry and commerce.

We aim to reveal what makes these everyday spaces around the town special - is it their size, their shape, the sense of enclosure, their materials or their composition? We have studied three spaces of different sizes and uses. A figure ground print represents the plan of each location as found - its shape, volume, enclosure, edges and routes through. These spaces have then been recreated in paper models that reveal the features that give the space its character.

Our installation takes elements of the town to the Craft Centre and exhibits them as artworks. In a reciprocal move, alongside the exhibit are take-away maps illustrating a walking route around Ruthin that links together the spaces explored for Delight in the Everyday, allowing the visitor to explore these places in their own way.



Matthew Jones BSc BArch DipArch
Matthew is a qualified architect with interests in making places and communities. He is a partner at Coombs Jones architects and a Senior Lecturer in Architecture at the University of the West of England.

Matthew worked at Design Research Unit Wales (DRU-w), Allford Hall Monaghan Morris Architects in Bristol. He has worked on a wide range and scale of award winning projects across the UK.

Matthew is undertaking a PhD by Design at the Welsh School of Architecture exploring the role of design in market towns. As part of this design research, he led the development of an award-winning community-led town plan for Ruthin, North Wales. Alongside the Design Commission for Wales, Matthew co-authored 'Shape My Town' (www.shapemytown.org), a toolkit to help communities explore their place, consult on ideas and develop plans for the future. He has exhibited at the National Eisteddfod of Wales, the Cardiff Design Festival and Ruthin Craft Centre.

Steve Coombs BSc BArch RIBA
Steve graduated from the Welsh School of Architecture and joined the Design Research Unit Wales (DRU-w) in 2002. Within DRU-w Steve has been developing his interests in making as a means to inform design and deliver crafted architecture. He has worked closely with manufacturers and suppliers to develop new products, prototypes and designs. In collaboration with the Welsh timber industry, he has developed a low-tech, innovative Sitka Spruce construction system, 'Ty Unnos', aimed at affordable, rural housing. The system has led to the design of an exhibition pavilion for the Smithsonian Folklife Festival, an Environmental Resource Centre and a low energy demonstration house in Ebbw Vale. Steve has worked on a range of public and private architectural projects from one-off houses and social housing to environmental visitor centres and education buildings.

Steve is chair of the 2nd year of the BSc degree at the WSA and has previously run the Workshop studio in the MArch degree at the WSA. Steve makes bespoke experimental furniture and lamps as a means to explore ways of working with materials often charring timber to express the nature of the wood.

www.coombsjones.com



From 'As - Built' to 'As - Lived'

Chris Wilkins and Jordan Scarr

As we grow older and our mobility diminishes, the physical boundaries of our 'everyday' lives tighten. For this reason, the spaces we inhabit during our later years become increasingly important. In addition to providing the necessities of life, they also act as repositories of both our belongings and our memories - providing comfort, a sense of belonging and security, and contributing to our mental well-being.

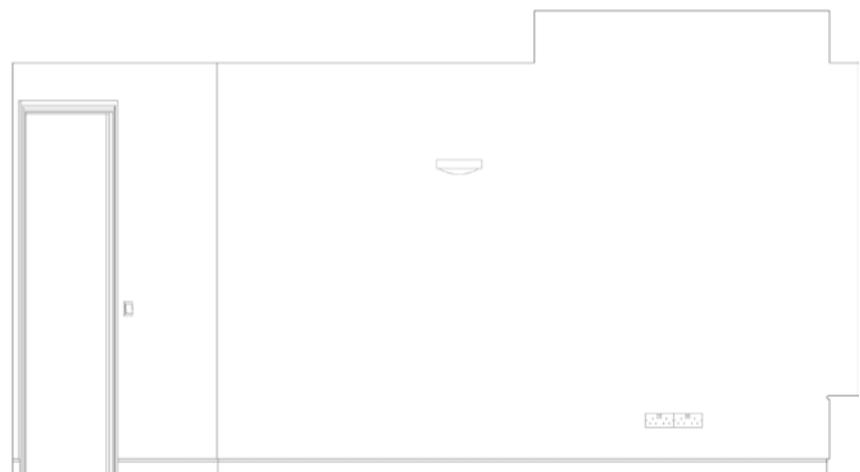
Our exhibit reflects on the work we have undertaken over the course of the last decade, providing a place to call home for older residents in 'extra-care' developments across Wales and beyond. All too often we, as architects and designers, fail to experience what happens to a building when it becomes lived in. It is the subsequent layering of histories, personalities, memories and everyday life which contributes so much richness to our built environment.

By presenting material gathered on return visits to our completed schemes, we present a far richer and more beautiful built environment than traditionally depicted in 'architectural' representation - embracing the net curtains, china ornaments and chintz fabrics that are delightfully everyday.

The material presented aims to capture the distillation of a lifetime of experiences that must occur when a resident leaves their family residence and makes a new home. A lifetime's worth of possessions are condensed in the new environment, reflecting the character and personality of the resident. While the homes tend to be repetitive in their layout and spatial qualities, our exhibit captures the very varied and delightful transformations that occur in moving from the 'as-built' to the 'as-lived in'.

Our typical 'architectural' drawings describe the uninhabited, 'as-built', condition, and are contrasted with drawings that reflect the 'as-lived' condition, as we found it on our return to the projects. The language of the drawings borrows from an archaeological framework, depicting the layers of habitation accrued by the architecture through inhabitation. The contrast between the relative bareness of the 'as-built' and the richness of the 'as-lived' is made legible by use of the same architectural drawing to depict both scenarios.

By focusing specifically on accommodation for older people, we hope to highlight the importance of providing places which people feel they can make their own - an aspect that becomes increasingly important as we age.



Chris Wilkins

Chris is an Architect at Pentan Architects, Cardiff. Chris joined Pentan in 2009 after graduating from the Welsh School of Architecture with a Masters in Architecture. As well as working on projects involving existing, listed buildings and working within conservation areas on residential, commercial, care and extra-care projects, Chris has been involved in a number of research projects. These have included authoring a report for English Heritage and Hexham Abbey considering how the Abbey buildings might be developed sustainably in the future; and community engagement projects, including working with Urban Splash, in Manchester, to provide temporary uses for derelict construction sites - a project secured through winning an open design competition. Chris has had success in national and international design competitions ranging from the future of primary school design in Wales, caring for the elderly and re-using water towers in Portugal and has had work exhibited as a part of the London Design Festival.

Chris combines work in practice with teaching roles at the Welsh School of Architecture in Cardiff where he is a visiting critic and at the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape, at Newcastle University, where he is a design tutor to the Masters in Architecture course.

Jordan Scarr

Jordan is an interior designer at Pentan Architects, Cardiff. Jordan joined Pentan in 2007 after graduating from University of Wales Institute, Cardiff with a degree in Interior Architecture.

During his time at Pentan Jordan has been responsible for the interior design of many of the practice's interiors and specifically of the care and extra care projects featured in this exhibition, where careful thought has been given to designing each individual interior space to best suit the needs of the intended occupants.

Jordan has gained valuable knowledge through attending courses at the University of Stirling and developing an expertise in designing for the older generation - particularly those with dementia. This has allowed Jordan to carefully curate spaces, select fixtures, fittings and finishes to aid the residents to live in stimulating, safe and rewarding environments.

www.pentan.co.uk

Thermal Delight in the Inner-Courtyard

Wayne Forster

Nearly 25 years ago I was awarded a senior Fellowship in the Welsh School of Architecture sponsored by British Gas. The main area of concern was to be the principles of passive design in low-energy architecture and it was here that I became interested in environmental delight as opposed to just 'comfort'.

Not long after, the family moved into a 1960's modernist house in Newport (yes, there are one or two), which whilst spatially interesting, suffered from all the environmental weaknesses of the modern movement - however it was the sense of light and space that attracted us to the house in the first place.

In spite of some judicious insulation and other fabric improvements the house has never offered the standard comfort zone conditions promised in 'Passivhaus' or other state of the art engineered places in which the aims are 'to achieve a thermal 'steady-state' across time and a thermal equilibrium across space.'

The steady-state approach to the thermal environment assumes that any degree of thermal stress is undesirable.

But nothing could be further from the truth as people (and cats and dogs) seem to enjoy a range of temperatures - often with thermal extremes spatially in close proximity and which seem to produce times of rare aesthetic as well as thermal delight.

As we became more familiar with our new home our patterns of space use adapted both seasonally and diurnally. Our migration patterns around the house (just as seen in photographs of the cat) have become more or less ritualized as we move in search of thermal delight.

This nomadic existence may seem like an inconvenience but the association of comfort with people and place are reinforced by the visualized use of place ...this special kind of use can do more than reinforce the affection for a place.

Through ritual a place becomes an essential element in the customs of a people - we call this home.

Wayne Forster

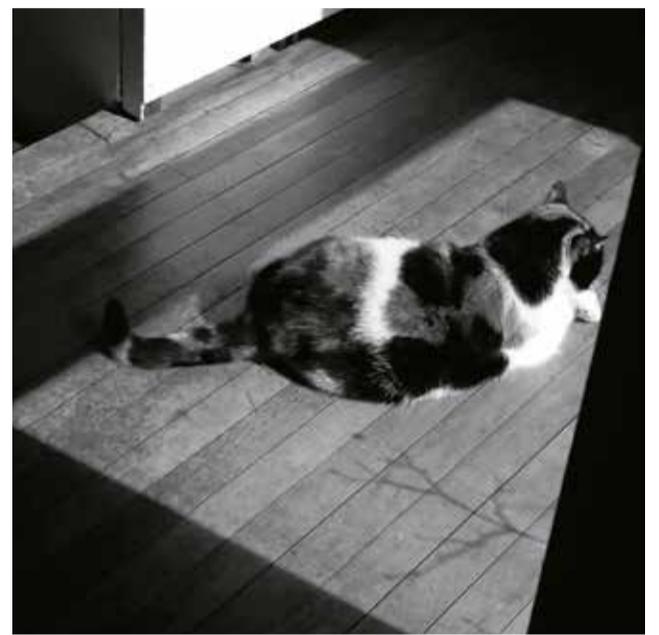
Wayne Forster has been deputy head of the Welsh School of Architecture since 2002. Wayne's role in the School centres on activities in academic leadership in design, teaching and learning and practice based research through the School's Design Research Unit (DRUw) which was set up to pursue collaborative research based design.

Wayne's approach to architecture centres on the geographical context of the building - on topography, climate, light and tectonic form added to intelligent use of resources. This has dominated much of his work over the past 25 years both in the design studio and in more orthodox research work - the use of local materials, building techniques based on tradition and innovation and especially the design of

the building envelope in response to an appreciation of the local climate are all constituent parts of critical enquiry and practice. This practice is based on ideas related to Pragmatism and based on the premise that 'Theory and practice are not separate spheres; rather, theories and distinctions are tools or maps for finding our way in the world'. As Joñ Dewey put it, there is no question of theory versus practice but 'rather of intelligent practice versus uninformed practice.' Since its foundation the Unit has received a number of awards including the Cardiff University Innovation prize for 2009 and the RIBA Regional Award for the the Baglan Eco-factory and the Margam Discovery Centre in 2010. In 2013, DRUw was also awarded an RIBA commendation for outstanding research conducted in a School of Architecture.

The Cat

The cat mainly concentrates on attaining a zen-like state of inner-peace. She has lived in modernist surroundings since arriving as a kitten. Early on, after encountering a nearby Edwardian Villa she returned visibly sickened by the interior gloom and lack of spatial continuity between inside and outside and had to be re-assured that life did not have to be like that. A close reading of the Californian Case Study Houses settled her and since then she has dedicated her life to the quest for visual acuity and contact with nature combined with thermal delight - and chicken - but not necessarily in that order.



Thresholds: From pavement to front door and beyond

Victoria Coombs

In an urban environment the semi-private space between the edge of the pavement and each of our front doors contributes a huge amount to the nature and character of our streetscape. These thresholds vary from single brick reveals butting up to the pavement edge to more substantial front gardens that may be walled or fenced; they may provide access to a lower storey or, in a flat scenario, an entrance used by multiple residents. The space between the pavement and the front door and the immediate space beyond, where we hang our coats, drop our keys and cross into our private space, holds a range of possibilities governed by the everyday. These include a response to: the weather, everyday rituals, how we inhabit this semi-private space and what - if anything - we want these spaces to say about us and our homes. The interaction with the public side of these spaces is often overlooked and so too are the demands they need to meet when we open our front doors. This exhibit explores these thresholds by capturing the textures, uses, shapes and sizes, namely the ingredients that define these spaces, and the variety of environments that can be created.



Victoria Coombs

Victoria studied Architecture at Cardiff University's Welsh School of Architecture and is an Architect at Loyn & Co Architects, Penarth, in the Vale of Glamorgan. At Loyn & Co Architects Victoria has undertaken a series of significant residential masterplanning projects involving a rural site in St Nicholas with proposals for courtyard housing and a prominent site in the Vale of Glamorgan for hillside housing. Most recently, she has been acting as Project Architect for proposals for the first phase of residential development at Porth Teigr in Roath Basin, and for a new development of eight mews houses recently started on site in Conway Road in Cardiff.

Victoria has a strong interest in how we use the spaces between buildings, and the layers within a residential development which ensure a balance between the usable private external spaces and the transitional spaces between. People use the spaces between their homes for meeting, exercise, play and event, and the wider vernacular of the 'home' has a strong role to play in our urban context.

Delici



What's your delight in the everyday?

Tell us how good design in the everyday – the homes, public places, schools, work places, parks, shops and community buildings which form the background to everyday life - brings delight to your everyday life.

Tweet us a picture or comment **@designcfw** using **#everydaydelight**, and we will add the best examples to a gallery on our website. Not on Twitter? Then email us connect@dcfw.org

'Delight' might be found in the careful composition of materials, attention to detail, pleasing scale and proportion, patterns of light and shade, the way a new intervention responds to the history and culture of a place, or a sense of belonging and community. These are some of the infinite variety of ways in which good design in our built environment contributes to our enjoyment of day to day life.



Listen Here

Ed Green, Ian Maslen and Boss Design Group

All too often today, too much emphasis is placed on momentous, occasional, ceremonial, and celebrity places – places that we may occasionally glimpse, but that have little real chance of influencing our quality of life. Listen Here creates a real place in a quiet corner of the exhibition - somewhere the visitor can directly experience delight in the everyday, through a momentary sensory respite from the representational. Our proposal brings together distinct but harmonious elements of home which combine new and old, craft and mass production, through the re-appropriation of three real, delightful elements...

The seat, provided by Boss Design, is an object of great quality, crafted to be enjoyed both physically and visually. The receiver belongs to an original 1930's Bakelite telephone. The handset is heavy in comparison to the mobile phones of today, but it sits comfortably in the hand. The delightful shape of the receiver, designed to be held rather than to fit in a pocket, helps with that, and stretches comfortably from mouth to ear. The recording utilises T.S.Eliot's reading of *Macavity: The Mystery Cat*. The crackly, charismatic recording of Eliot's most celebrated children's poems sits well with the historic handset.

Listen Here stimulates the senses other than sight. It is intended as a reminder that delight is about so much more than just seeing. It is about enjoyment, which requires the engagement of all senses.

Ed Green

Ed is an associate at Pentan Architects, Cardiff. He has recently won a number of national awards including Constructing Excellence Wales' Project of the Year (2012), the British Homes Award (2012) and Grand Designs' 'Self Build on a Shoestring' award (2013). Having trained at the Welsh School of Architecture, he continues to combine professional practice with teaching at the WSA, where he also completed an MPhil in urban design and a PhD in environmental design. Recent projects include, New Public Library, Bargoed; Llys Ton extra care for older people, Bridgend; Barnhaus – housing concept (pilots under development).

www.pentan.co.uk

Ian Maslen

Ian is a singer/songwriter and teacher. He completed his academic training in Cardiff before moving to Bristol, where he is currently based. Ian is an active member of numerous live bands and choir groups, in addition to his work as a recording artist. Recent projects include, 2014 National chorus championship, Silver medal winner; Royal Albert Hall, Great Western Chorus, November 2013; ADEW (A demo every week), January – March 2013.

Boss Design Group

The Kruze chair is designed and kindly supplied by Boss Design Group.

www.boss-design.co.uk



Verges of Colour

Richard Wood

Newport City Council (NCC) received approximately eighty recorded comments from the general public, congratulating them on the colourful swathes of flowers covering many miles of road verges and roundabouts throughout most of last year. Comments such as, 'On my way into work on the bus this morning, seeing the beautiful flowers brightened up my day', inspired NCC to sow flower seeds in even more locations, bringing delight to people's everyday journeys through the city.

NCC's Streetscene Department was responsible for creating this colourful project. The planting includes a mixture of hardy annuals and examples of wildflower meadow plants, such as poppies, birds foot trefoil, cornflowers, and red flax. Following last year's success, this year a specific native flower mix for pollinators was sown in the Riverside Park with the aim of encouraging rarer invertebrates such as the Shril Carder bee (one of Britain's rarest bee), to expand its population beyond its limited range of the Gwent Levels. Wild flowers and other domestic varieties were chosen to provide a range of bright colours. The costs saved by not mowing grass offset the cost of the seeds. The success of the scheme has prompted neighbouring Local Authorities to do the same.

The initiative sits well with NCC's corporate plan to encourage people to live in a greener and healthier city. The planting also improves the attractiveness of the city, promoting environmental sustainability and ensuring that Newport is a vibrant, welcoming place for both visitors and businesses.

Richard Wood

B.A., B.Sc., Dip. Arch., M.L.A. (Pennsylvania), CMLI, M.A. Urban Design
Originally from Worcester, Richard Wood, is the Landscape Architect for Newport City Council. He joined the Council in 2009 and has since played a fundamental role in delivering landscape/leisure initiatives, as well as inputting into major landscape schemes. To date his projects have included the prestigious Riverside Park which forms a walkway along the bank of the River Usk, a number of play areas within the City's parks and ensuring quality landscaping is submitted by developers as part of the planning process. Richard initiated the annual meadow flower planting and along with his other colleagues in StreetScene has transformed the edges of arterial roads and main routes through the City with summer colour and vibrancy.

www.newport.gov.uk

Photography by Alex Lloyd Jenkins

www.alexlloydjenkins.com



Maggie's South East Wales Dow Jones Architects

We have always been interested in how architecture forms the backdrop to human activity, and how it adapts to whatever strata of life is being enacted - from the festive or ritualized aspects of city life to dwelling in the everyday.

We are interested in the role that material plays in this drama, and how the careful manipulation of materials and light can elevate the apparent mundanity of the everyday into something more pleasurable and meaningful.

We are inspired by the vernacular and craft, but at the same time recognize the need for a transformational element. We enjoy the way that conceptual artists such as Donald Judd celebrated the ordinariness of plywood and elevated it to art through intent.

Our design for the Maggie's Centre in Cardiff seeks to operate between the familiarity of local material and types, but to assemble the building in a way that re-appraises the significance of both. The building is predominantly a single-storey stone enclosure, made from rust-stained Pennant Sandstone, capped with two crystalline glass rooflights. These rooflights are made of a copper-coloured glass that reflects both the form and colour of the local hills.

The building is configured around a garden space, which opens out through the stone perimeter to the existing woodland that surrounds it. The idea for the building is that it is like a stone sheep-fold or ancient walled garden, located within the woodland.

The simple single-storey stone wall is broken to form full-height windows and doors, and to allow the landscape to drift into the heart of the building. Once inside the building, the interior is organised as a series of cedar lined boxes that open towards the garden and the central courtyard. At the heart of the plan is a Pennant sandstone fireplace, behind which is the cwtch.

Dow Jones Architects

Dow Jones Architects is an award-winning RIBA Chartered practice with a reputation for producing well-crafted, conceptually clear architecture. Biba Dow and Alun Jones established Dow Jones Architects in 2000 and since then the practice has designed a celebrated and wide-ranging body of work. They are interested in an idea of context that seeks to understand the deeper cultural situation of a project, into which an appropriate response is woven. It is a way of working which grounds what they do in both the place and ideas. They enjoy the relationship between form and matter, and are interested in a way of building that is materially powerful. Their work is informed by history and memory whilst being contemporary and forward thinking.

Biba Dow MA Dip.Arch (Cantab) Arb

Biba Dow studied architecture at the University of Cambridge, graduating in 1993. She gained experience in a range of practices including Powell and Moya, and earlier at Caroe and Partners. Biba has lectured widely on the work of the practice. She has taught and been a visiting critic at various schools of architecture, and is a competition juror. She writes widely about architecture and culture.

Alun Jones

BSc MPhil Dip.Arch (Cantab) RIBA
Alun Jones was born in Caerphilly and studied architecture at the University of Bath, graduating in 1989 and taking an MPhil in 1990 investigating the work of Alberti. He studied for his diploma at the University of Cambridge. Between 1995 and 2000, he worked for Caruso St John Architects as project architect for the New Art Gallery, Walsall. He has taught widely in the UK and Ireland.

www.dowjonesarchitects.com



Jack's Lane

Chris Loyn

My son Jack found freedom in the rear lane behind our home in Penarth. He has Cerebral Palsy, limited intellect and is wheelchair bound. As a young boy my wife and I controversially allowed him to take himself out on a circuit of the immediate 'block' – along the road, down the lane and back home. Again and again, around and around he would repeat this. He loved this simple taste of independence, something most people can take for granted. He cannot go for a walk on the beach or in the wood or over the hills, but instead found beauty and happiness in the everyday of the rear lane. His joy was infectious and local passers-by were soon engaged in conversation, albeit limited by Jack's condition, but the barriers that so often surround disability were effectively and successfully eroded. In a way he taught people not just to look, but also to see. So please, allow yourself that valuable time to see beyond the surface and you too will realise that he is right.

The lane is in the process of being formally named 'Jack's Lane', something that has been driven by the community he bound, initiated by the parishioners of the local church that accesses onto the lane and driven by his Granny, who has sadly recently died. Local Societies, the Council and the Planning Authority have all supported the proposal. Jack's Lane represents a frequented journey of delight, joy and emotion bounded by community. Along these moments there is an interaction between nature, as the artist, and materials, as its canvas. Age and patination combine to create an everyday that speaks of time, light weather and colour. Jack's Lane is a series of places and events, a sequence creating a rich tapestry of surface textures. Planes of stone, metal, timber and glass interact in unique and varying ways that allow any traveller, with perception, to delight in the everyday.

“colours are the smiles of nature...”

Leigh Hunt

Chris Loyn

Chris is a chartered architect with over 30 years of experience. As the founder of Loyn & Co Architects, he first set up in practice in 1987. Together with the team, he works both locally and nationally, and projects have included numerous one-off residential commissions, multiple housing/apartment complexes, as well as arts, commercial and ecclesiastical schemes. Having established a strong reputation over the years for designing and creating quality architecture, the practice has built on its reputation to execute larger public projects and a selection of significant master planning proposals. The practice has a strong design philosophy providing bespoke projects that build on a consistency of language and techniques developed and tested over time.

Chris is a founder parent of Bobath Children's Therapy Centre Wales, a charity for children in Wales who have cerebral palsy. His youngest son, Jack, born in 1989, has cerebral palsy. As a result of this direct firsthand experience, many architectural projects have been undertaken, either adapting existing buildings or constructing new, to meet the needs of individuals, families or organisations involved with disability. He is passionate about providing the best possible quality of environment for his clients.

Chris is a visiting tutor at The Welsh School of Architecture and has also taught at other Universities in the UK. He is President of the Penarth Civic Society. He is also a well recognised artist, working primarily in watercolour, and exhibitions of his work have been held in South Wales and London, including at the Royal Institute of British Architects. He has made regular contributions on radio and television, and was a presenter on the BAFTA award winning series 'Hot Houses' which also featured many examples of the practice's work.

www.loyn.co.uk

The Design Commission for Wales

The Design Commission for Wales is a small, expert public body working throughout Wales to help make it a better place, by design. We are Wales' champion for good design in the built environment - in buildings, places and public realm. We connect the design disciplines of architecture, urban design and landscape design with decision makers who shape the countryside, cities, towns and villages of Wales.

One of the most important of the four strategic aims of the Design Commission for Wales, set out by Welsh Government, is to 'give due regard to promoting excellence in day to day developments...'

With this in mind, the Design Commission is pleased to collaborate with Ruthin Craft Centre on this exhibition which recognises designers with a passion for quality in the everyday in Wales.

dcfw.org
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delight
in the
everyday

