

# BLUEPRINT 337

ARCHITECTURE | DESIGN | ART

## MVRDV'S MARKTHAL ROTTERDAM

THOMAS HEATHERWICK | RICHARD SERRA | CHARLES JENCKS | GILLIAN WEARING





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**Taking up a sizeable chunk of this issue is our full report on the first-ever Blueprint Awards.** We had a fantastic response to the call for entries – in fact, a project from every continent in the world. Then we asked you, the Blueprint community, to nominate three awards and vote for them – you did so in your droves. So, a big thank you to everyone. The event itself at Village Underground in Shoreditch was a roaring success and nine awards were given out on the night. I won't tell you anymore about that here – for all the details have a look at the feature starting on page 147.

Back to the now, and in this issue we're announcing a very exciting architecture-meets-art competition for a £40,000 installation at the BALTIC in Gateshead. We are on the hunt for an emerging architect to take up the challenge (for which there's also a £2500 prize) which is being organised by Ryder Architecture and the BALTIC with us as media partner. The BALTIC will be providing the art partner and, once you have submitted your entries to us at Blueprint, myself, Paul Buchan, senior partner at Ryder, and BALTIC curator, Laurence Sillars, will choose the architect for this collaboration, which has its own specific site in the gallery. All the details are on page 41.

Elsewhere in the magazine this month, we have a wide range of fascinating projects from the likes of Thomas Heatherwick with his new gin palace for Bombay Sapphire, to our cover feature on the market hall-cum-residential block (a new typology?) in Rotterdam by MVRDV. If you were up late in the capital last month you may have seen some huge lorries with police escorts heading towards King's Cross. They were delivering the work of one of my favourite sculptors, Richard Serra, to the Gagosian Gallery. The gallery was actually built with the work of Serra in mind – let's face it, he's not a rawl-plug-in-the-wall and bit-of-picture-wire kind of artist. Roofs opened up, walls came out and cranes were involved, and on page 134 you can read and see more. There is, however, only one true way to see Serra's work and that is, of course, in person.

We also take a look back at the myriad Maggie's Centres and talk with instigator, Charles Jencks. And we pay two visits to RSHP's Cheese grater: one to look at the completed building (page 116) and the other to catch up with London Design Festival medal winners, the Bouroullecs (page 90) who we photographed there. Finally, our nine-page review of LDF can be found on page 214 ■

**Johnny Tucker**, editor



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## Event — London Design Festival

We pick our favourite events from this year's extravaganza, while two design journalists visiting from Mexico and the USA provide a global perspective

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## Event — Belgrade Design Week

Herbert Wright visits the 10th edition of the festival and finds an event that is stronger than ever

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## Exhibition — Designing the 20th Century: Life and Work of Abram Games

A retrospective of the British graphic designer's work, at London's Jewish Museum, shows that it is possible to be both prolific and principled, finds Shumi Bose

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## Exhibition — Constructing Worlds: Photography and Architecture in the Modern Age

The Barbican's latest exhibition highlights how architecture takes on an informal life of its own, says photographer Gareth Gardner

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## Exhibition — Alvar Aalto: Second Nature

Cate St Hill discovers another side to the work of Finnish architect Alvar Aalto, on show at the Vitra Design Museum in Weil am Rhein

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## Book — Douglas Coupland: Everywhere is Anywhere is Anything is Everything

Design Curial editor Jamie Mitchell reviews the author and pop-artist's latest offering and finds someone who really has something to say about our culture

## ELEMENTS OF ARCHITECTURE FOCUS

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## Feature: The Miles Stair, Somerset House by Eva Jiricna Architects

We look in detail at one of the shortlisted projects from the Blueprint Awards: a high-performance concrete staircase shoehorned into the neoclassical Somerset House

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## Archive

We revisit the second-ever Blueprint, in which we find 'the pope of Post Modernism' Charles Jencks at his newly completed home in London, as well as *the* restaurants to eat and be seen in the Eighties





**London Design Festival**  
**Johnny Tucker** looks  
back at his personal  
favourites, *Cate St Hill*  
compares two shows  
in Shoreditch, and  
two design journalists  
visiting from Mexico  
and the USA put the  
event into a global  
perspective

Common currency among tired-looking professional visitors to the London Design Festival was that 'it's becoming like Milan — there's no way you can do it all.' LDF has undoubtedly become huge now and shows no signs of slowing its growth in the near future.

Design is bigish business. But for all that, what kind of show is LDF? Yes there are companies, particularly furniture ones, out there selling at some of the more business-orientated venues like 100%, designjunction and Super Brands, plus a handful of showrooms, but for me, LDF is still all about expressions of creativity — from the big 'wow' moments, often now choreographed by LDF director Ben Evans and his team, through the smaller, exciting installations and events to the myriad

designer-makers all looking to add value to the world through creative design. This is still primarily London as a showcase of creativity and design talent. To get more of a broader view of LDF, we asked journalists from the USA and Mexico to give us their opinion of the show and its highlights, which you can see on page 222.

So let's start at the top with the wow moments of which there were a couple for me, including the Barber & Osgerby installation Double Space in the V&A Raphael Gallery. For those who didn't see it, the vaulted arch was filled with two silver, wing-like constructions curved to follow the vault on one side, flat on the other. These rotated in unison and also in separate patterns. The beauty for me lay in such massive structures turning elegantly, and almost silently, while providing new and continuously changing views of the gallery.

My worry is that this seems like an awfully large amount of money, time and effort to pour into something that's only there fleetingly. There is a chance that it will travel to other venues though. Whether it would be quite as effective in a different site is another matter, but as it was it worked beautifully. ►

- 1 - **Out of the Cage**, Gala Fernandez  
2 - **Los Enmascarados**, Ana Jiménez Palomar  
3 - **Randall**, tractor trailer-daybed, Miltonpriest  
4 - **Double Space**, Barber & Osgerby

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The second 'wow' came at the top of four flights of stairs in a former court building in Clerkenwell that was being inhabited for the festival by Designersblock.

Rising through the decaying grandeur, you entered an empty room, empty that is except for a pretty sizeable oak tree hung with Plumen lamps. There was something definitely beguiling and quite magical (and for our older readers with perhaps a little Singing Ringing Tree weirdness) about this installation-cum-visual-merchandising. It was definitely worth the walk up, and in fact, Designersblock in itself was also well worth the visit, with some strong content this year, continuing in that quietly insistent way that this event, now in its 17th year, always does.

And speaking of Plumen, its co-designer, Nicolas Roope, picked up the LDF entrepreneur award at the festival's official dinner, this year held in the heady heights of the Leadenhall Building — the Cheesegrater (see page 116). Also picking up awards was the most famous of the three co-founders of the building's architects — Richard Rogers of Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners. He received the lifetime achievement award and gave a speech that was as heartfelt as the Bouroullecs', who received the main LDF Medal. Ronan in particular has that self-effacing nature that makes him want to deflect the spotlight whenever it shines too brightly on him, which he does with his innate sense of fun/anarchy (see Profile page 90).

Back at ground level there were

plenty of other moments. The 'Whoa!-Hang-on-a sec' moment was perhaps Trafalgar Square's Airbnb-sponsored A Place Called Home — essentially some curated sheds. OK, yes, Jasper Morrison's pigeon fancier's hide had a typically nice, light touch, but the rest of it was like a rather rushed 'central feature' from some second-rate trade show at the NEC. If you missed it, your life is all the richer.

At the opposite end of the scale, my little-gem moment was an exhibition of Gala Fernandez's work, *Out of the Cage*, at the Cervantes Institute in Eaton Square, presented by Marion Friedmann Gallery. Among the hand-blown glass delights were pieces for which Fernandez had used old birdcages as moulds, the glass gently bulging out through the bars trying to escape or perhaps enjoying being fully contained — either way, beautiful and memorable objects from Mexico City.

In the east, Tent put in quality-showing with some great content from the likes of 100% Norway and Tokyo Designers Week in London, stereotypically understated and high-tech respectively. It was possibly one of Tent's strongest years and the buzz in the venue was as strong as it was at designjunction, which oozed confidence from its exhibitors, though the lighting in the basement was lost. Designjunction's building now has a new developer on board, so its days as a venue may unfortunately be numbered. And that whirlwind roundup is just the very tip of the iceberg that was LDF 2014 — huge now but still very cool.

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- 5 - Plumen installation at Designersblock
- 6 - Footbowl and basketbowl, Alex Garnett
- 7 - Paul Smith's Shed, Nathalie de Leval
- 8 - Lost at Sea, Jake Phipps



## London Design Festival

### Johnny Tucker chooses two of his favourite installations during the festival

#### Jeremy Maxwell Wintrebert **Human Nature**

The Paris-based, American designer, Jeremy Maxwell Wintrebert, created this installation of windows in the V&A. Never meant to leave the factory in this form, these tubes are in fact hand-blown glass windows, which are blown in the traditional way, trimmed into cylinders, then sliced open lengthways, while still malleable to create flat window panes.

Wintrebert was deeply inspired by the process and the cylinders when he visited the Gläshutte Lamberts' facility in Waldesbade, Germany, one of the few places in the world still making windows in this traditional way.

#### Cecil Balmond **H\_Edge**

Subtle, and with a wonderful engineering inventiveness to it, Cecil Balmond's H\_Edge in Spitalfields was essentially a sculpted-out cube form. The lightness of the structure, which looked as though it should be hanging from the ceiling, came from it being formed purely from light, stainless-steel chains, rectilinearly tensioned by curved, aluminium x-profiles.

Balmond was at pains to point out that he arrived at this from a purely conceptual artistic point of view. The engineering, which comes naturally to him, came later.









**London Design Festival**  
**Cate St Hill compares**  
**two shows from the**  
**Shoreditch Design**  
**Triangle, now in its**  
**sixth consecutive year**

**Super Stimuli**  
Ace Hotel, London  
*and*  
**Simplified Beauty**  
SCP, London

Just around the corner from one another in Shoreditch, the Ace Hotel and design shop SCP presented two exhibitions that couldn't have been further from each other in concept. While Super Stimuli at Ace presented a series of bold and colourful installations, Simplified Beauty at SCP was based on humble, handcrafted, mainly Japanese-made products. While one shouted, the other whispered.

First off, new design magazine Modern Design Review charged four London-based designers — Fabien Cappello, Martino Gamper, Michael Marriott and Bethan Laura Wood — with reinterpreting a public area in the ground floor of the Ace Hotel. As you walked around these spaces,

from the busy lobby to the restaurant Hoi Polloi and verdant That Flower Shop, you encountered a sequence of playful interventions that responded to the existing functions of the hotel.

Bethan Laura Wood for example investigated temple displays, altarpieces and harvest festivals to create a floral and ceramic arrangement in the flower shop and adjacent restaurant. She sandwiched together an ad-hoc but carefully curated display of new vessels from herself and fellow designers, including her former tutor Martino Gamper's Duotone vases and the specially commissioned Milkshake vases by Silo Studio. The result was a sweet-smelling, rough-around-the-edges shrine to colour and pattern. Wood also marked the entrance to the hotel with a riot of colourful plastic buckets and baskets, collected from the local shops in Whitechapel.

Meanwhile, Martino Gamper reconsidered the bentwood cafe chair for the hotel's coffee shop and produced Recto Verso. It is a functional, modernised version of the ubiquitous chair — with a sweeping curved back and indented seat. 'It says a bit about my fascination with the bentwood chair and a bit about my frustration with the furniture industry that I wanted to manufacture a chair myself. It is strong and easy

to use; it stacks,' he says.

Fabien Cappello and Michael Marriott each produced a piece of furniture for the lobby, with varying degrees of success. Cappello was asked to contemplate comfort and softness, taking away the existing 'hard' furniture and replacing it with a colourful mound of beanbags, while Marriott created a more utilitarian space with shelving for magazines and a wooden trestle table and bench.

Yet, during the opening, people sidestepped the beanbags, politely avoiding slumping down in them. I only hope that for the rest of the festival, others were able to overcome their shyness and shake off the unspoken manners expected in a hotel lobby.

Super Stimuli sought to rework or rethink what is already there with bigger and bolder responses. Each was a stimulating and joyful take on traditional hotel environments, bringing colour and texture to the dull but trendy, grey surroundings. There was even a mix-tape playing throughout the exhibition, another sensory stimulus of music chosen by the likes of Tom Dixon, Faye Toogood and Tord Boontje, ranging from heavy metal to disco.

SCP's Simplified Beauty took a more holistic approach, putting

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forward the idea that an object can be beautiful even if it lacks a bit of personality. In comparison to Super Stimuli, the objects on show may seem inconsequential, domestic in scale and anonymous, but their hook lies in their manufacture and craftsmanship. SCP chose three companies to showcase this approach: Ishinomaki Laboratory, a community workshop set up following the 2011 Tohoku tsunami; Shotoku Glass Company, renowned for its precise, handcrafted drinking glasses; and Mashiko Potteries, which dates back to the mid-19th century.

At the beginning, Ishinomaki Laboratory, headed by ex-sushi chef Takahiro Chiba and architect Keiji Ashizawa, was simply a utility area where locals could come in and repair things with communal tools, materials and technical assistance provided by volunteers from Tokyo. A Good Design Award (2012) later and it has developed a range of specially commissioned products with designers and architects including Torafu Architects, Tomoko Azumi and London-based Tomas Alonso.

'Ishinomaki Laboratory is one of those companies that seems to have grown organically. Its furniture is made simply — there are no years of apprenticeship — but it is well designed and executed with skill. Chance meetings in the extraordinary circumstances of the tsunami have produced a special energy and DIY spirit which permeates the work,' says co-curator Reiko Kaneko. The Ishinomaki Bench, for example, is a simple, cheaply produced bench for local activities (including an open-air cinema) while the Ishinomaki Stool, designed at a workshop for primary-

- 11 - **Shelving and table**, Michael Marriott
- 12 - **Rainbow Collection**, Bethan Laura Wood
- 13 - **Recto Verso chair**, Martino Gamper
- 14 - **Soft Play**, Fabien Cappello
- 15 - **Mashiko ceramics**, Mashiko Potteries
- 16 - **Shotoku glasses**, Jasper Morrison
- 17 - **Ishinomaki Stool**, Keiji Ashizawa



school children in collaboration with Herman Miller, is for evacuees living in temporary accommodation.

In contrast, Mashiko Potteries, set up by potter Shoji Hamada in the Twenties, produces modest plates and bowls by craftsmen who don't usually sign their pots. Says Kaneko: 'The Mashiko potteries continues the idea of the unknown craftsman. As Tomoo Hamada, Shoji's grandson, told us on a drizzly day deep in the Japanese countryside, "The pot is no better off having your name on it. It's like signing your face. Why would you do that?"' The beauty of these



products lies in their everyday use and how they age. Indeed, Jasper Morrison who has created a new drinking glass for Shotoku, in the exhibition, has developed the concept of Super Normal with industrial designer Naoto Fukasawa, in which a product is only complete when it is used.

Super Stimuli and Simplified Beauty took two extremes: super obvious and 'super normal'. Neither approach is right nor wrong, there are always going to be those that shout louder than others; rather both exhibitions showed the diversity of this year's Shoreditch Design Triangle.





## London Design Festival

# The UK's main design festival as viewed through the eyes of two foreign design journalists, one from Mexico, the other from the United States



### It's all about choices

#### Lucía Burbano

I tend to face design weeks like London's as if I were in front of a huge hotel buffet: you either end up with a serious overdose provoked by greediness or you carefully handpick your choices to satisfy your appetite.

It is not an easy task. Invitations fill your inbox and tempt you to go

beyond what is humanly possible to cover in a city of such an enormous scale as London. Trying to keep up with a busy agenda might mean that you end up commuting more than you hoped, so, doing your research and planning ahead is definitely the way to go.

Maybe it is the English personality or the UK's geographical location, but I find London more inclined towards analysis and contextualisation than, for example, Milan. In London they do not just present the latest collections of such and such, but they go a step beyond with a repertoire of famous names and industry professionals who meet in forums and talks to offer a glimpse of their egos to a devoted audience.

Listening to the exhilarating Philippe Starck was a highlight. He is someone who knows how to entertain an audience with an intelligent display of humorous anecdotes about his attitude towards concept design and life in general. Starck is a great headline generator. 'Designing is a disease,' he confessed, as if a rush of creativity was as

dangerous as boredom. Again, it is all about balance. Pace yourselves, ladies and gentlemen.

I must admit that looking at thousands of pieces of pretty and innovative furniture, lighting fixtures, objects and accessories filled me up pretty quickly after day one. For this reason, I was happy to devote my time to more interactive activities like some of the installations shown at the V&A, where more substance is added to your plate. Edward Barber and Jay Osgerby's Double Space for BMW: Precision and Poetry in Motion added some lyrical engineering to the way we view art. Their choreography of suspended silver elements works because they did not interfere with the paintings in the Raphael Gallery but offered a different perspective of the artworks

**Listening to the exhilarating Philippe Starck was a highlight. 'Designing is a disease,' he confessed, as if a rush of creativity was as dangerous as boredom. It's all about balance...**

and of ourselves as viewers.

Yes, sponsors take the opportunity to make themselves visible — this is a business after all — like San Francisco's Airbnb with the A Place Called Home installation: four diverse proposals from very different designers in a very public place like Trafalgar Square. Would I live in that location? Definitely not. Of the four, my personal favourites were Patternity's geometrical kaleidoscope reflecting an ever-changing environment and Raw Edges' partition, a spot-on reflection of how squeezed urban living has become.

Now it's all over I have a mixture of withdrawal symptoms and relief. One thing becomes clear as the days go by and I am able to think retrospectively: London Design Festival, like the city itself, has a room for everyone, no matter if you like it big or small. It is just a matter of choices.

*Lucía Burbano is a freelance journalist. She covered London Design Festival for Ointeriores, a quarterly interior design magazine from Mexico, and its sister website obrasweb.mx*



### LDF – it's personal

#### Dan Rubenstein

One of my most memorable moments from this year's London Design Festival happened during the press preview of Double Space for BMW: Precision & Poetry in Motion, the mammoth installation by Barber & Osgerby inside the Raphael Gallery at the V&A Museum (see page 215). Technicians were fiddling with the lighting; the designers, I'd heard, wanted the lights turned low, while the press and publicity corps wanted them cranked up to make the work more photogenic.

Comprising two huge aluminum wings that rotated on an axis high above our heads, the completed installation was a surreal viewing experience. I used the new mobile app, Hyperlapse, to make a video showing how the wings churned overhead. Just as I was remarking on the impressive engineering feat to a fellow journalist, I heard a sharp snap. Was the contraption — reportedly more than 10 tonnes — about to fall on our heads? Better to visit some of the more sedate works instead, I thought. Nearby was a series of wooden furniture pieces and objets sponsored by the American Hardwood Export Council. Surely a few curvaceous bowls made for Amanda Levete would leave me unscathed?

I don't mention this incident

because I disliked Double Space. While the installation was controversial among the international design press, I admired not just its form and intent, but also its bravery. Back home in New York, our own design week — now called NYCxDesign — has never seen such an impressive spectacle. While NYCxDesign is still in its infancy, I hope we will soon approach the level of creative audacity which the London Design Festival achieves each year with its installations.

So what makes the London Design Festival so successful? In fact, is it successful? LDF is the anti-Salone. People don't come to LDF to buy three dozen chairs or spec the latest ceramic tiles. LDF is more cultural and more personal. When I return from Milan, I sift through dozens of USB sticks, DVDs and oversized broadsheet brochures. But when I return from London, my bags are filled with business cards from people I've met for coffee, visited in their studios, or bumped into at a pub after an opening.

Now that products are deemed old news immediately after being Instagrammed, personal connections become all the more important. And, as a visitor and a tourist, what I admire most about LDF isn't the furniture but the creative ecosystem

**LDF is the anti-Salone. People don't come to LDF to buy three dozen chairs or spec the latest ceramic tiles. LDF is more cultural and more personal**

cultivated around it. I'd do anything to get the support and respect of sponsors for design in New York that's on display in London.

Unfortunately, the general consensus is that Americans at large don't care, or at least they don't care enough. That's silly, near-sighted and wrong. Last summer's mega-hit art installation, A Subtlety, or the Marvellous Sugar Baby, by Kara Walker is proof of that. Even though the massive sculpture was located in an inconvenient (at least by Manhattanite standards) spot in Brooklyn, it drew more than 130,000 visitors in just two months. And it didn't even spin.

Towards the end of LDF, I mentioned the incident of the snapping sound to someone in-the-know at the V&A. Apparently an extra bolt was left inside one of the polished aluminum wings during construction. When the wing tumbled, the bolt dropped, making the sound. I have to admit, I wanted the cause to be more dire. Maybe it's my inner tabloid journalist talking, but sometimes too much sombre ultra-perfection can be off-putting. There's a lesson here: danger and risk make design better, more alive, more appealing, and more memorable. Next time someone asks me what New York should do to improve its design culture, I'll respond with the original motto of one of American's most successful brands, Facebook: 'Move fast and break things'.

A couple more of my show choices to end: London is filled not only with young designers, but also

young entrepreneurs. The multilevel gallery 19 Greek Street, run by interior designer Marc Peridis, exhibited a collection of new objects from talents around the world in a pop-up cafe that allowed visitors to interact with vibrant, challenging and sculptural works. It was innovative — but more importantly, it was fun.

While design can be overly precious or serious, sometimes it's just fabulous. Lee Broom's work falls into the latter category, combining a contemporary eye with glamour and fun. He transformed his Shoreditch store into a sultry, club-like gallery for his Nouveau Rebel collection of tabletop and lighting objects that have now become the basis for Broom's design of a new bar, Old Tom & English in Soho, London.

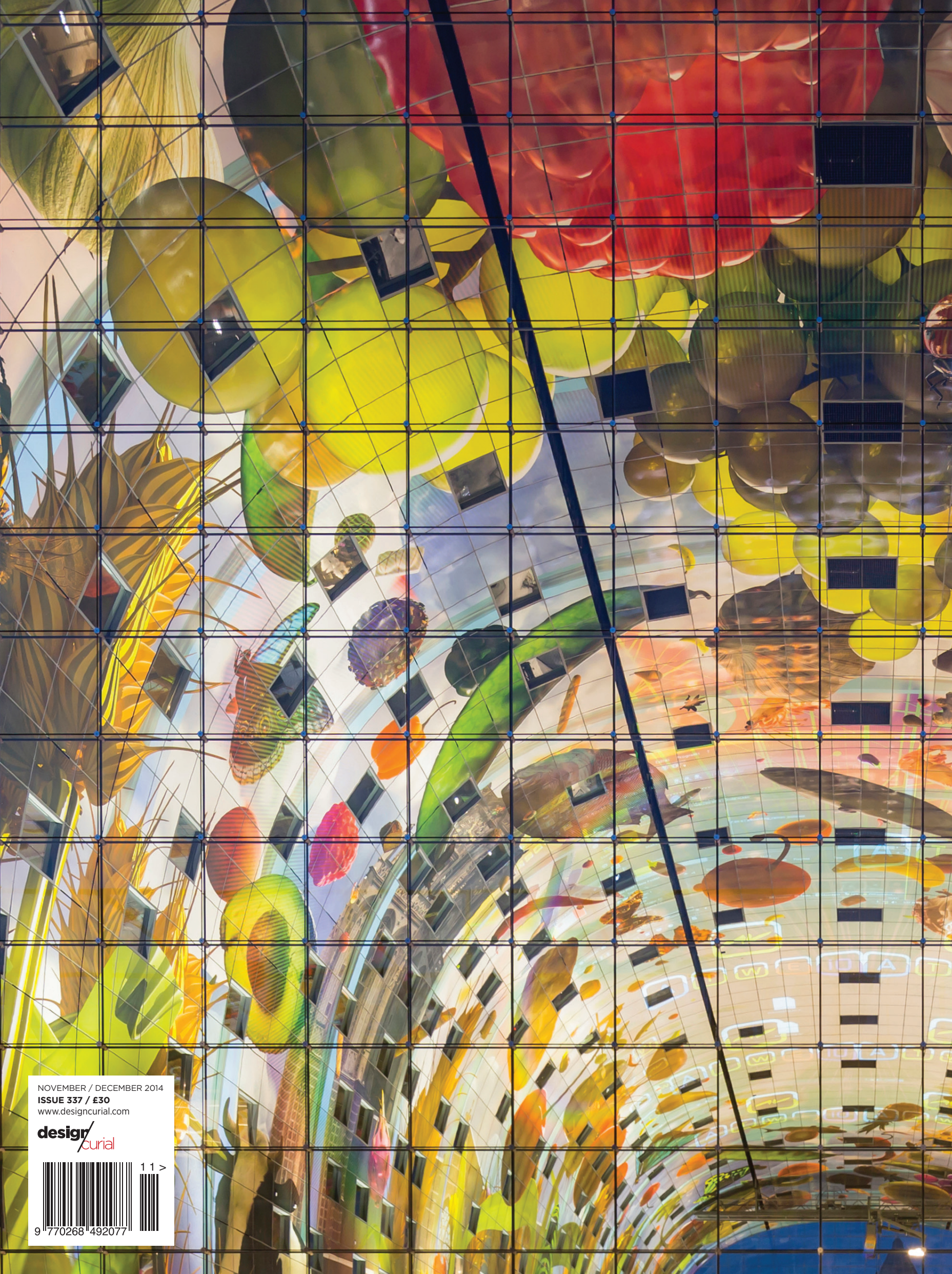
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18 - Old Tom & English bar, Lee Broom





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