

Northern Stars

After London's big design festival this month, the design spotlight will be looking a little further north in October

NOW in its fifth year, Design Event 09 is the North East's annual design festival celebrating product design, graphic design, illustration, fashion and architecture from the region.

It will be showcasing the best design talent from throughout the North East, with separate events taking place at various venues across three city regions – Middlesbrough, Sunderland and Newcastle upon Tyne – over ten days.

This year the theme of 'Politics and Play' link the diverse programme of events that cover all disciplines of design including exhibitions, installations, selling events and a number of design talks. Some of the highlights include:

- Tree: an interactive digital design by Simon Heijdens. Having exhibited at MoMA New York and Frieze in London, the renowned Dutch designer brings his work to the North East.
- Design Event Mart: A curated selling exhibition of work, being held at the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, by around 15 of the region's leading design talent. As well as established local designers, design graduates from the University final degree shows have been selected to exhibit.
- Democracy: Selecting what is worthy of display in an exhibition is normally the remit of expert individuals. Sumo Design want to challenge this with Democracy, an exhibition which will ask the public not only to submit work, but also to evaluate what should and shouldn't be displayed.
- The innovative British furniture designers Deadgood Ltd will be showing four new exclusive collections which will include an upholstered range of sofas, a laminated dining series, anodised aluminium breakout tables and screen printed artwork.
- London-based group [re]design who have worked with designers from the local region on a project titled 'Doing It For The Kids' - an exhibition of sustainable toy designs.
- 10°N/10°S Design Exchange: New international collaborative artwork made by four pairs of French and English designers. 10° designers from the North East include Nick James, furniture; Fiona Rutherford, tapestry; Joanne Mitchell, glass and Fiona Thompson, ceramics. They have been paired respectively with French designers Florian Mery, product; Philippe Moine, furniture; Sandra Villet, product and Fabienne Chassin/Rachel Canastra, printed textiles.
- Think Tank: Six Think Tanks will propose an idea encapsulating 2009. Each one will be partnered by a graphic designer, advertising agency



Above: ES Unit by Afid Design
Below: Mood Chair by Aether & Hemera





or illustrator to communicate the work. The exhibition will take the form of 6 rooms at the Northern Gallery for Contemporary Art, each communicating a separate message.

It will be an exhibition of collaborations between the UK's leading image-makers – designers, advertising agencies and illustrators – and its most influential political think tanks.

There will be a total of 17 exhibitions, tours and events over a ten day period across the North East celebrating design in all its forms. Design Event 09 will attempt to showcase the North East as a hotbed for design talent and a blossoming centre for creativity.

Design Event 09 runs from 16–25 October and a full listing for the exhibition and various events is available online.

Design Event '09
www.design-event.co.uk



Above: Chimney's by Laura Towers



Above: Coppervase by Edward Robinson
Below: Tri Stool by Dan Battaglia



Top: Spoon/bowl design called Home by Megan Randall
Above: Gills Bowl by Bettina Nissen

