

Telegraph magazine

18 September 2010

PEOPLE'S PATROL

The village vigilantes tackling antisocial behaviour

WHAT THE BUTLER SAW

On the stately home set of Julian Fellowes' new television drama

FORM GUIDE

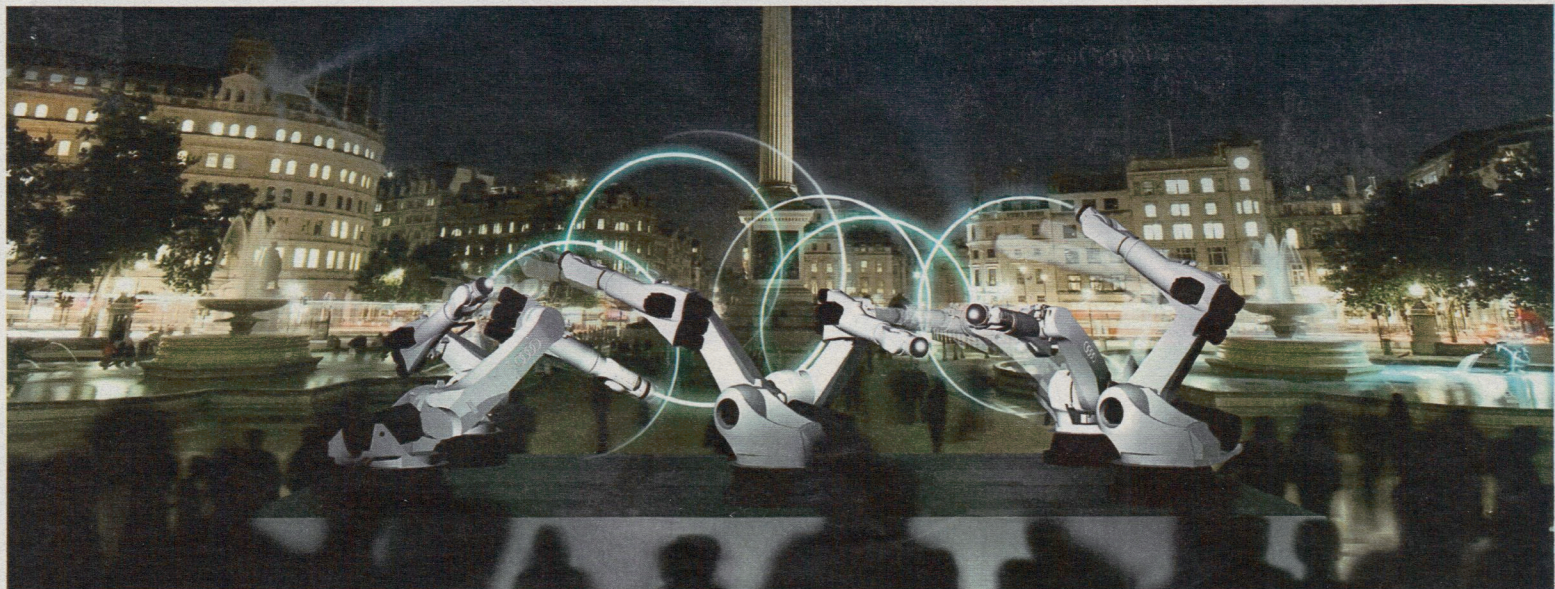
Runners and riders at the London Design Festival

Breeds apart

A celebration of extraordinary dogs



Future proof Developments in digital design, by Nicole Swengley



Technology is playing an increasingly important role in design, and the London Design Festival is hosting several new digital design studios. Trafalgar Square will be transformed by **Outrace** (above), an interactive installation by the award-winning duo Clemens Weisshaar and Reed Kram. The pair have created software that will allow visitors to send SMS text messages to the mechanical tentacles of six industrial robotic arms borrowed from the production line of the car-maker (and installation sponsor) Audi. The synchronised robots will then write the messages in light traces that will be recorded

using specialist high-definition video equipment and published online. Until September 26.

At the V&A until October 10, Room 94 will house a 'virtual tapestry' developed by **KikiT VisuoSonic**. Close-up images of people, animals and floral patterns from the museum's tapestries will be woven into a digital tapestry to be projected on to a screen. Its virtual form will change as it reacts to ambient sounds such as footsteps and conversations.

In the East End, **Tent Digital** will build on last year's debut, which landed some exhibitors with subsequent commissions from the Science Museum

and Sony. Creatives were chosen via a competition to show their digital installations in this year's greatly increased space. Tent London, September 23-26 (0844-545 0062; tentlondon.co.uk).

In nearby Liverpool Street, at the entrance to the Andaz hotel's 1901 wine bar, Gallery Libby Sellers will feature **Branches** by the Dutch designer Simon Heijdens – a projected forest 'canopy' which, via bespoke software and sensors, grows and matures in response to externally monitored data such as human movement and weather conditions. September 21-26 (020-7961 1234; andaz.com; libbysellers.com).

Rebirth of craft by Grant Gibson, the editor of Crafts magazine

Craft has long had a torturous relationship with its richer, more fashionable, and, damn it, plain sexier siblings, fine art and design. And to many the C-word still contains conservative – and quite possibly negative – connotations of a bygone Britain. But it is time for them to think again, because craft is going through something of a renaissance. The reasons for this are manifold. Recession and the increasingly abstract nature of our economy have made consumers think about the value and provenance of the stuff they buy. At the same time books such as *The Craftsman* by Richard Sennett and *The Case for Working with your Hands* by Matthew Crawford have given the sector an intellectual boost – broadening its meaning and setting craft firmly in the present.

This renewed interest in making has filtered into the design world. Over the past couple of years, the Milan Furniture Fair – still the most important date on the international design calendar – has been awash with craft-based products and installations. In 2009, for example, Craft Punk was its most talked about installation. This year, at the Fendi HQ in Milan, a handful of hot young designers were asked to create

new products from offcuts of the Fendi process.

The journey of the high-profile craft exhibition **Origin** mirrors the renaissance of the industry. Founded 23 years ago as the Chelsea Crafts Fair, in 2006 it rebranded as Origin and moved to the more central Somerset House. This week completes its rebirth as it pulls its date forward by one month to coincide with the London Design Festival. It is also moving to the rather more gritty environs of Old Spitalfields Market, as part of the newly extended Tent London, which is presenting Origin for the Crafts Council. The show promises to have a genuinely



international flavour with makers coming from Ireland, Scandinavia, Canada and South Korea, as well as Britain. The new location and date has brought with it a slew of first-time exhibitors – including the likes of the paper artist Rebecca Coles and Debbie Smyth, who draws with thread – sitting alongside more established makers such as the experimental textile designer Makeba Lewis and the ceramicist Clare Loder (whose work is pictured).

On the other side of the city, the Crafts Council has collaborated with Priscilla Carluccio's concept store Few and Far on **Tables & Chairs**, an exhibition of contemporary furniture by 12 new and established makers. The idea is that each piece, by names including Pottinger & Cole, Rosemary Anrude and Jeremy Price, is built to challenge our ideas and preconceptions of what furniture archetypes look like – and how they are made. 'Increasingly craft is becoming a sexy word,' Tent London's co-director Jimmy McDonald says. Who would have thought it? Origin, September 23 to 29 at Old Spitalfields Market, E1. Entry £10 (020-7739 5561; originuk.org). Tables & Chairs, until September 26 at Few and Far, 242 Brompton Road, SW3 (020-7225 7070).