

# London Design Festival 2012

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At Gallery Libby Sellers, "Hot Tools" includes "Mould in Motion" by Philipp Grundhöfer of the ECAL. *Nicolas Genta/ECAL*

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The **London Design Festival** (Sept. 14 to Sept. 23) is back, celebrating its 10th anniversary, and there is — no surprise — lots to see, with over 200 events planned.

Once again, the festival's hub is the **Victoria and Albert Museum**, a place that offers designers a seemingly inexhaustible supply of spaces in which to create site-specific installations, including some that are not usually open to the public: the Cupola, which houses Keiichi Matsuda's sculptural/digital "Prism," and the Henry Cole Wing Grand Staircase, which is the setting for Rolf Sachs's installation "Ink Drop." A much more public area of the V&A, the John Madejski Garden, is the backdrop for "Bench Years," a collaboration between the LDF and Established & Sons to celebrate the festival's anniversary. It features 10 benches by 10 design studios working with 10 different material sponsors. For example, Martino Gamper is working with the American Hardwood Export Council, while Sam Hecht and Kim Colin of Industrial Facility are teaming up with DuPont Corian. Among the other designers are Konstantin Grcic (Bisazza mosaic tile), Edward Barber and Jay Osgerby (Torart Carrara marble), Jasper Morrison (Lowinfo concrete), and Luca Nichetto (Nardo Vetro glass).

At the **Design Museum** (which is breaking ground next week on its new home, to be completed in 2015), "Digital Crystal: Swarovski at the Design Museum" features 15 designers who have produced new or updated works using crystal to explore the idea of memory in the digital age. The lineup includes Ron Arad (the public can text or tweet Arad's Lolita chandelier, which will display their messages on L.E.D.'s), Maarten Baas, Yves Behar, Troika, Fredrikson Stallard, Arik Levy, rAndom International, Philippe Malouin and Semiconductor, among others, in an installation designed by the London architects Carmody Groarke.

On the evolution front, the **Conran Shop** is introducing "RED," an exhibition that marks the store's 25 years at the Michelin Building. Over 50 designers are participating, including Nendo, Front Design, Thomas Heatherwick, Jonah Takagi and — surprise — Manolo Blahnik. The fashion overlap is perhaps no coincidence: at age 80, Terence Conran has passed the reins (and the chairmanship) of the Conran Shop to his son Jasper, an established fashion and tabletop designer, who has undertaken a repositioning and refreshing of the store and its merchandise. (Terence Conran will remain a director of the company and its chief product designer.)



Over at **Tom Dixon's** beehive of design activity, the Dock, the introductions include Eclectic, an accessories collection that includes copper, brass and cast-iron objects both practical (copper dishes and a champagne bucket) and whimsical (a cast-iron money box, a man's shoe or Dixon's Jack light reimagined as a doorstop or paperweight), as well as three scented candles.

**Gallery Libby Sellers** is showing "Hot Tools," an exhibition of glass pieces by eight Product Design Master students of the University of Art and Design Lausanne, or ECAL, as it's better known. The project, under the leadership of the designer Ronan Bouroullec and the glass blower Matteo Gonet, features works by eight students, who were asked to think of new ways to design tools and molds for glassmaking.

**Minimalux**, the maker of elegant home and desk accessories that are as elegant as their name implies, has produced an exhibition of its new and recent products, but you can only see it online (how modern). Among the new offerings is the clever Trio, a mirror-polished copper or sterling silver ring that triples as a napkin ring, egg cup or tea light holder.

At the **twentytwentyone** showroom, the design process is on display in a series of prints produced by the **Wrong Shop Editions**. Based on drawings by Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec and by Pierre Charpin, the prints are part of the designer and founder Sebastian Wrong's effort to allow leading designers to produce more experimental pieces.

And finally, after all those design objects, you might want to ponder a different kind of consumption. A pop-up cafe designed to explore the water footprint of food, produced by the nonprofit organization Wonderwater, will be in residence at Leila's Shop in Shoreditch. The **Wonderwater Café** tells you just how much water is used in the growing or making of what you're eating. One of the sobering points the installation makes is that food accounts for far more of the average British citizen's daily water consumption (4,645 liters, or about 1,227 gallons) than does domestic water usage (150 liters, or almost 40 gallons). Rest assured, however, that the cafe serves responsibly sourced food, and you can choose foods with a range of water footprints.