BACK TO SCHOOL

Under the umbrella ‘Light School’ a range of new light-oriented events is to make its debut at the Surface Design Show, at the Business Design Centre in London this month. Jill Entwistle reports

Given that without a surface to bounce off light is invisible and that without sufficient light the surface is invisible, it would seem a bit of a no-brainer to involve lighting in a show about surfaces. Be that as it may, this year’s will be the first Surface Design Show to have illumination as an integral element.

Taking the form of Light School, organised by Mason Stammers and Martin Lupton of Light Collective, it will include talks and interactive demonstrations featuring 15 top UK lighting designers. They will present master classes for architects and interior designers with the aim of changing the way they think about light.

A problem frequently discussed in the lighting profession is its tendency to talk to its own rather than reaching out to fellow design professionals for whom lighting should be a priority. "Light and surface are inseparable partners in the built environment so this show presents a perfect platform for introducing light and lighting design," says Stammers. "We will allow us to disseminate our commercial love of light and inspire the architects and interior design communities to work more closely with lighting professionals and manufacturers."

SURFACE DESIGN AWARDS

Light and Exterior Surface Realities
- Glass Lens, London (L), by Luke Lutten and James Carperson
- Glass (O) by Cat Martin

Light and Interior Surface Realities
- Laminate Surfaces (O), London, by Alexander Trettin
- Textiles: House 2 - Lava Stone (O), London, by Paul McCartney
- Back Wood Walls (O), at National Cancer Institute, USA, by HOK/MCLA

The programme will enable designers and architects to explore topics such as colour, technology, design and media surfaces. There will also be a showcase of innovative technology selected by Light Collective. Manufacturers taking part will each have a stand.

"We have a School Room for lectures, a School Newspaper and a Product School that allows supporters of Light School to each have a space to demonstrate how their products use light to transform spaces and express materials," says Stammers.

The other important step this year is that for the first time the Surface Design Awards have incorporated a lighting category. In addition to retail, commercial, housing, public building and temporary structure categories, lighting makes its debut with both an interior and exterior award, dedicated to the innovative use of light and the way it is seamlessly linked to surfaces.

Will Athop from ALL Design chaired the exterior surfaces section, and was joined by Andy MacCabe of Scott Birning and Martin Smith from Studio Weave. Various entries from the Society of British and International Design (SBID) chartered the interiors section. Her fellow judges were Renee Masuci of Kitchen Bedoom Bathroom National Training Group and Lucy Spencer of Interior ROI. Light Collective gave expert guidance.

Giventhat it was a first outing there were a substantial number of entries encompassing a variety of spheres, including lighting design, products and architecture. Judges were apparently impressed by the new lighting section and the way that many of the stand-out projects had introduced light and colour in a joined-up way.

Small things that lighting designers assume are common knowledge suddenly made an impact on the group, such as with the right lighting you don’t have to paint the walls to change the colour," says Stammers.

"It was satisfying to find that when it comes to defining good lighting, we all agreed and the chosen winners in both categories represent beautiful and good quality design," says Masuci of the SBID National Training Group agreed. "We need to inspire to educate, and the finalists are without doubt inspiring," she says.

The overall winners will be named on the final day of the Surface Design Show, being held 4-6 February at the Business Design Centre, London.

PROGRAMME

6 February 6.30-9pm
Light School
10.30 Introduction (Light Collective)
11.40 Sustainable Product Design - Light: Culture - Spirit: Culture (Mark Ridler, BTR Lighting)
10.45 Inspired by Light (Sally Stoney, Lighting Design International)
20.00 Film: Light Show

5 February 11am-9pm
Tech School
11.15 Light and Surfaces (Douglas James, Mitsubishi)
12.15 John Yuan (HFE Lighting, Sharp + Ayla)
12.35 A practical LED workshop (Joe Wise, Make Some Lights)

Design School
16.15 Design Process: developing a curriculum: Mike Grube, Mike Grube Design
16.15 Creative Research (Inc): How to do more with less (Paul Trupin, Light Bureau)
16.30 Lighting and the Healthy and Wellbeing of Older People (Car Grands, CGS Lighting Consultancy)
17.15 Light: The Supernatural (Paul North, Paul North Lighting Design)
18.15 Well I don't have to use LEDs (Jan Norwan, Norwan Designs)
18.30-20.30 Pecha Kucha

6 February 11am-5pm
Media School
11.15 Market trends and Digest: Light with a hidden meaning? (Davide Hedges, Jason Drury Studio Lighting)
12.15 Media and Light (Jeff Shaw, Area Lighting)
13.00-14.00 Surface Design Awards

Colours School
14.15 Light, Colour and Texture (Chairman: Rodgers, Philips + Marlow)
15.15 Richard Walker, Nexus Workshop