Make:Believe
UK Design for Performance 2011–2014
The Society of British Theatre Designers’ New National Exhibition in collaboration with The Victoria and Albert Museum and Nottingham Trent University
The SBTD’s new national exhibition will open in the newly redesigned Newton atrium exhibition space at Nottingham Trent University from 14 - 30 January 2015. Selected work will be shown at the next PQ in Prague from 17 - 28 June 2015, at the V&A Museum in London from 9 months from early July 2015 and at a further 3/4 galleries throughout the UK from March 2016.

The exhibition title, Make:Believe, indicates the vision, skills and commitment found in the diversity of performance design today. It will feature a body of work that defines the edges of this artform-in-industry - in music festivals, large scale events such as the Olympics, Paralympics, community opera, found space and promenade performance, in digital, landscape, heritage and media contexts, as well as the intimate and highly valued work that designers are currently doing in education, health and various community settings.

We intend to celebrate the high quality of designs for a variety of theatre spaces, the traditional and pan-cinema design, the ravishing visuals that transform many children’s books into stage spectaculars as well as the dance and opera designs by UK designers that are notable around the world.

Make:Believe also acknowledges and promotes the development of new performance spaces, the re-envisioning of old and existing buildings and the increasing commitment to sustainable design and practices in both production and performance environments.

Accompanying the exhibition will be a full colour catalogue that includes designers’ commentaries on their work, as well as drawings and photographs of designs, productions and spaces. Previous SBTD catalogues have continued to sell and to be valued nationally and internationally for the insight they give into the thinking and processes of contemporary designers and their collaborators, as well as a quite unique chronology of many designers’ careers and bodies of work.

Performance design lives on in memorable images for those who have seen or been a part of those productions and events. Exhibitions of this artform enable many more children, students, industry professionals and interested public to enjoy and engage with the imagination and skills of designers - and importantly the huge number of technical and crafts practitioners who develop and realise the designs. We aim to extend this engagement by making a workshop / performance space central to the exhibition, to develop a programme of events in each gallery for both professional and student participation and to incrementally add recorded interviews both within the exhibition digital displays and on the SBTD website. At each UK venue some new work from designers and companies in the region will be invited to refresh the core exhibition and to increase local connections.

Make:Believe will also include a research project into the training / education, employment and careers of performance designers in the 21st century. The SBTD is ideally placed, as the professional UK organisation for performance designers, to offer the only national scale exhibition and publication opportunity to all UK professional designers and artists in performance. Bringing them together with their work to share experiences, discuss important issues of employment, training, continuing education and the widening contexts and practices of their work. With Make:Believe, we will interview and document in order to build on the information archive to date of recordings, artwork and data for further research and analysis.

The SBTD at NTU

Collaborators, the 2007 national exhibition of the SBTD was held at NTU in the 1903 Waverley art school building. A selection from it was shown at PQ2007 and was the first exhibition of contemporary design for performance to be shown at the V&A Museum, from November 2007 to August 2008. (Two previous exhibitions had been shown at the Theatre Museum, Covent Garden, having won the major awards at PQ 1995 (Gold Medal) and 2003 (Golden Triga + 2 Gold Medals).

In March 2013 a small selection from the SBTD’s 2011 national exhibition Transformation & Revelation (held at RWCMD in Cardiff) was shown in NTU’s Bonnington Gallery in April 2013 following PQ2011. A 6 month residency at the V&A Museum as part of their Olympic celebration of British Design and a residency at Summerhall in Edinburgh.

Invitation to exhibit

The SBTD invites professional designers working and based in the UK to show work made since January 2011.

The title identifies and celebrates:

- Designers and artists in the 21C engaged in creating performance through design of set, objects, costumes, lighting, sound, digital media, spaces and places.
- The processes of design and realisation, displayed in sketchbooks, storyboards, models, as well as the realised costumes, props, installations that result from them.
- The varied contexts in which designers work and the skills and commitment they bring to them.
- Collaboration in the creating and sharing of - ‘the moment’, the collective experience, different worlds and characters.
- ‘Make:believe’ as an age old way of sharing imagination and experiences and creating new ones. Recognising the diversity of our society and contexts, we look forward to stories and themes from the wide range of cultures in the UK today and worldwide.
- Fantastical characters and situations that show the range of design and making opportunities today in the wider fields of gaming, immersive and multi-modal performance.
- New, redeveloped and re-envisioned spaces for performance.
- Time-based design – lighting, sound, projection and screen based media

Make:Believe

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How to Take Part - Entry Requirements

Eligible entries must have been created by professional designers and artists in performance.

All work submitted must have been created and realised between 2011-2014 for public performance and may NOT be work made as part of undergraduate or postgraduate studies.

All work submitted must have been created by designers and artists who are UK based, between January 2011 and December 2014.

All entrants must be a paid-up member of the SBTD in order to exhibit.

Don’t worry if you are not, or have lapsed, you can become a member by joining on the SBTD website (www.theatredesign.org.uk) or contacting Kay Denyer at admin@theatredesign.org.uk.

Stage One

Online submission & payment

From April 1st you will be able to complete an Intent to Exhibit form, which will be available through the SBTD website: www.theatredesign.org.uk

Please note there are limited exhibition spaces available so please do register as early as possible. We ask that you provide as much information as possible as to what and how you would like to exhibit and be involved.

Exhibition Fee

You will be asked to provide the first half of the exhibition fee at stage one of the application process - £50 of a total £100. Following registration you will receive a receipt and an exhibitor’s pack with information and formats for catalogue and exhibition submissions as well as regular updates on fit-up and events. You will pay the remaining fee at stage two of the process.

Exhibition Selection & Catalogue Entry

You may submit up to 3 productions. We guarantee that at least one production per application will be included in the catalogue and exhibition at NTU for all entrants, providing they meet the entry requirements.

The selection for PQ2015, the V&A and the touring exhibition will be chosen by the curatorial committee during the exhibition’s residency at NTU.

We aim to show all entrants work digitally at the V&A and touring galleries.

All entrants will be included in the National Exhibition catalogue which will be available for the opening of the National Exhibition in January 2015.

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EXHIBITION TEAM

Members of the SBTD and ACTD (Association of Courses in Theatre Design):

Kate Burnett
MakeBelieve Director, Reader in theatre Design at NTU

Peter Farley
Senior Lecturer, Theatre Design, Wimbledon College of Arts. Curator and Designer of Transformation & Revelation

Fiona Watt
Freelance Designer, Lecturer, Workshop leader and UK Performance Design Commissioner OISTAT

Patricia Grasham
Freelance Designer and Lecturer

Patrick Connellan
Course Leader, Theatre Design, NTU

Donatella Barbieri
London College of Fashion / V&A Research Fellow in Design for Performance

Kate Bailey
Curator, Theatre Collections, V&A Museum

Steering Group – SBTD Committee
Treasurer: Peter Ruthven Hall
Theatre Consultant, Charcoal Blue
Chair: Sean Crowley
Director of Drama, RWCMD, Project Leader of World Stage Design 2013 (WSD2013)
Administrator: Kay Denyer

General Enquiries
exhibition@theatredesign.org.uk

Important Dates & Deadlines

April 1st
Stage One - Online Registration Opens

May 15th
Deadline for Stage One - intent to exhibit & first payment

June 30th
Deadline for Stage Two - catalogue entries (images & text) & final payment

July 2014 - exact dates TBC
Deadline for Stage Three - detailed information re exhibits

14 - 30 January 2015
National exhibition opens in Nottingham

17 - 28 June 2015
Prague Quadrennial 2015

July 2015 - March 2016
Exhibition at the V&A, exact dates TBC