

# Exhibiting Design at Ellowes Hall

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Since the introduction of a design faculty five years ago one tradition which we have tried to develop has been an annual exhibition of fifth and sixth form work. This year's 'show' also saw a new development — a students exhibition committee which played a major part in the planning and stewarding of the event. It could be fairly said that 'organised chaos' was a noticeable feature of the faculty at this time!

It has become our custom to open the exhibition with a wine and cheese reception and a guest speaker from the world of education. (It helps get the media interested!) This year we were pleased to welcome John Eggleston. The exhibition was open for one week, during the day and in the evenings, and attracted considerable interest from professional colleagues from our LEA and from further afield, with over fifty teachers attending during the week.

At an early stage in the planning we decided to focus on the National Curriculum in Design and Technology and to try to set our work in the context of the Interim Report. Coincidental to this and to the timing of the exhibition was the final stage of our movement towards a single examination at sixteen plus for the whole faculty. For some years the majority of subject areas had been working to the MEG Design syllabus and it was felt that the National Curriculum was going to make this final development, in terms of GCSE, a logical step to take. We are using MEG Design because we have been involved in its development since its introduction a few years ago and have faith in its basic philosophy. It has also had an important influence on the development of our work with younger pupils. We are convinced that the examination is well placed to deliver key stage four and we are used to working in this way. We began to feel that perhaps we might have something to share with others; we also hoped for critical comment on what we intended to show.

It is, perhaps, right that in recording the success of our venture I should mention



*Above and below: General views of the exhibition. We aimed at visual integration of all the exhibits since separation into 'subjects' would be at variance with our view of design in general education*







one major disappointment. Though the support of the Chairman of our Governors and staff over fifty major firms were invited to the reception and opening. Of these, seven found the time to reply to the invitation, and two actually came. I am told that they went away rather excited about what they saw! One firm has since become involved with the school's work experience programme and the other is considering other ways of helping. We didn't actually set out to beg for help, rather we wanted to show industry what happens in lots of schools and to invite their comment. I can't honestly say they showed much interest.

However there were plenty of redeeming 'happenings' during the week, which

*Left: Double-bass case constructed from articulated plywood using 'Mirror Dinghy' techniques. It's a lot lighter than it looks!*

*Right: This wedding dress is intended to become a family heirloom. Because of this it is designed to accomodate several body dimensions and to be easily alterable to reflect changes in fashion.*

*Below: Ceramic forms based on observation of natural form. From observation, either drawn or photographed the students extracted basic ideas to develop further.*





coincided with the second week of our school 'Activities Fortnight', including large-scale jig-saw building, microwave cookery etc, and a mid-week visit from a party of American educationalists led by Prof. Edith W King of Denver University. (Yes, they do love English pub food, and, no, they didn't like our litter.) One big 'plus' to come out of the visit has been an invitation to one of our students to spend a year at the Denver University School of Robotics. He hopes to take this up after his 'A' levels.

This, then, is the background to the remainder of this article which, I hope will give at least a flavour of what was an exciting week for all concerned. I must again thank John Eggleston for his interest and support, and, in particular, for the advert in the summer issue of 'Studies in Design Education, Craft and Technology. Perhaps you saw it? I should also like to pay tribute to the staff and pupils involved. They are a great 'bunch' to work with.

*Above left: Our entry to the Young Engineer of the Year. This pupil has been invited to America. (University of Denver).*

*Centre Left: Board Game ('Film Producer') and a 4th year design study behind. Computer generated graphics is used in this project.*

*Bottom left: Bedroom work desk from scrap material; a pallet, re-claimed tube and clamps, etc. The object is a provocative solution to the problem of working in a bedroom.*

