

# **THEM INDOORS**

## **An Installation by Carl Clerkin, Gitta Gschwendtner and William Warren**

**Thursday 23 September 2004 – Sunday 16 January 2005**

*Them Indoors* will feature the individual responses of three cutting-edge, London-based designers to the domestic environment, addressing the pivotal question of what turns a building, or a space, into a home.

Carl, Gitta and William will explore the idea that a house only becomes a home when material value is transcended and the space becomes a more abstract realm where objects, and the interplay between objects, are imbued with meaning. For *Them Indoors*, the most compelling domestic environments are created by care, love, personality, pride, history and the accidents of everyday living. Each designer will work within a translucent room in which they will amass and arrange a personal selection of objects whose importance is based on their hidden meanings, associations and memories and aesthetic qualities rather than on cost or commercial value.

These three designers refuse to be categorised or pigeon-holed; each possesses a range of skills and works in many materials and disciplines, including product, furniture and exhibition design. Carl is intrigued by the utilitarian, process-related aesthetic of everyday objects. He humorously combines designed and non-designed components to create domestic objects which are fresh and charming. Gitta trained as a furniture designer but is also known for her deceptively simple, frequently surprising lighting and domestic products: as Gitta reflects, 'the generic shape of my pieces is often subverted by storytelling'. Will's work falls between design, art and craft. His design company, *ww.modcons*, features an ever-growing range of practical pieces distinguished by their wry sense of humour.

Together, Carl, Gitta and Will form a powerhouse of fresh ideas about domestic space and everyday objects. All three are quirky and individualistic but share a creative language which combines a grounded respect for the requirements of daily life with a strong desire to inject the routine with the unexpected. 'The starting point for all our work is observation of the day-to-day' says Carl and indeed, the quality of amused but serious watchfulness characterizes the work of all three designers. As individuals, and as a collective, these three are genuine in their desire to re-imagine the mundane and the necessary: domestic objects morph into delightful and intriguing objects, while still retaining their usefulness. Their designs are imaginative and witty but always down to earth, technically accomplished and ultimately usable. Although often fanciful and slightly fantastic, their work is never gratuitously tricky or clever in a mannered way.


The design for *Them Indoors* at the Geffrye will encourage a journey through the installation, allowing the visitor to become immersed in these visions of the domestic environment. The space will be divided into three areas, or rooms, one for each designer. Each will contain a mixture of new work created in response to the exhibition brief, and a relevant selection of existing work and sourced objects, bought or occasionally borrowed from friends. All of the objects included in the installation will have a personal resonance for one or all of the designers.

**ENDS**

**Notes to Editors/...**

## NOTES TO EDITORS

1. For further information or images, please contact Nancy Loader on 020 7739 9893 or [nloader@geffrye-museum.org.uk](mailto:nloader@geffrye-museum.org.uk).

2. *Them Indoors* is supported by Mazorca Projects  and Government Office for London (ERDF Programme). The exhibition coincides with the *London Design Festival*, two weeks of design-related events and activities in September celebrating the creative excellence of London. As part of the festival, the Geffrye will host an **Open Evening** on **Thursday 23 September, from 6.00 – 8.30pm**, which will give visitors a sneak preview of *Them Indoors* and *Hidden Art Revealed* (see below). Free admission, cash bar.

3. ***Them Indoors* will be complemented by *Hidden Art Revealed*, a small exhibition of selected pieces which highlight the range and creative force behind *Hidden Art*, the influential and ground-breaking East London Open Studios initiative. Carl, Gitta and William were selected from *Hidden Art's* membership of 1,800+, built up over ten years.**

*Hidden Art* began in 1994 with 49 designer-makers in Hackney showing their work over two weekends. Last year the event involved 150 design-makers across a large part of East London, attracting some 20,000 visits and generating around £160,000 in sales.

East London has one of the highest concentrations of designer-makers anywhere in Europe. Together they are a powerful sector of the economy and a key to urban regeneration. *Hidden Art*, which is run by Mazorca, a non-profit making company, is a unique means of providing targeted support, business development advice and promotion for designer-makers in East London.

The *Hidden Art* website, [www.hiddenart.com](http://www.hiddenart.com), gives details of over 400 designer-makers, alongside news, information and events listings. In the last few years, Mazorca has organised exhibition stands for selected designer-makers at international shows including 100% Design and the Milan Furniture Fair. New initiatives include the establishment of a Bureau which puts manufacturers, retailers and those who want to commission work directly in touch with suitable designers.

As a model for supporting and developing small creative businesses, *Hidden Art* is an extraordinary achievement, highly regarded across Europe. Now, through a series of franchises, the model is about to be launched to other UK regions and abroad.

4. The Geffrye Museum's specialist area of research is middle-class domestic interiors and gardens. The museum presents the quintessential style of English urban middle-class interiors from 1600 to the present day through a chronological sequence of period rooms. These are complemented by a series of garden rooms.

5. Admission: FREE  
Address: 136 Kingsland Road, Shoreditch, London E2 8EA  
Tel No: 020 7739 9893 / Recorded Info: 020 7739 8543  
Web Address: [www.geffrye-museum.org.uk](http://www.geffrye-museum.org.uk) Email: [info@geffrye-museum.org.uk](mailto:info@geffrye-museum.org.uk)  
Opening Hours: Tue - Sat 10am - 5pm, Sun and Bank Holiday Mons 12 - 5pm  
Travel: Buses: 149, 242, 243, 67 or 394  
Tube: Liverpool St, then bus 149 or 242/Old St (exit 2), then bus 243

9 June 2004

# Brief Biographies of Exhibitors

## Carl Clerkin Furniture and Product Designer

**Born** 7 December 1973

### Education

1996-1998 MA, Furniture Design, Royal College of Art, London  
1993-1996 BA (hons), Furniture Design, Middlesex University  
1992-1993 Foundation course, Art and Design, Central Saint Martins, London

### Design Practice

2002 'School Furniture for the Future' commissioned by Design Council & DFES (collaboration with William Warren)  
2002 'Digital Door Number' (collaboration with William Warren)  
2001 'Another Brilliant Light' and 'Archive Box', product development, Glass Design  
2001 'Tool Box Cabinet', product development, Talco (collaboration with William Warren)  
2000 'Tool Stool' and 'Hidden Storage', product development, Habitat  
'Beach Bum' outdoor furniture, product development, Habitat  
'Trowel' coat hook, product development, Details  
1999 'Paper Dart' shelving bracket, product development, Aero  
'Bucket Seat' stool, product development, Details  
'Fag Pac' ashtray, product development, Worldwide Co.  
1998 Concept and execution of an exhibition car for the launch of the Peugeot 206

### Public Works/Commissions

2002 'School Furniture for the Future', Design Council and DFES  
Design and Technology classroom furniture  
(collaboration with William Warren)  
2002 'Long Crawly Thing', Painting Gallery seating for The Bowes Museum

### Awards

2000 Finalist, Peugeot Design Awards  
1999 Recipient, 'Setting Up Grant', Crafts Council  
1998 Winner, Kokuyo design award  
1998 Winner, Jack Davis prize for Cabinet Making  
1998 Winner, Sainsbury's scholarship  
1997 Winner, Edward Marshall prize

### Selected Exhibitions

2003 'Cupboard Love', Applied Arts Agency, London  
2002 'The Uncanny Room', Pitshanger Manor, London  
2002 'Designers' Block', London  
2001 '100% Design', Earls Court, London  
2001 'An Industry of One', Crafts Council, London  
2000 'About Time', Pure Living Gallery, London  
2000 'Woody', C.A.A., London  
2000 'Peugeot Design Award Exhibition', OXO Tower, London  
2000 'Alterpoint', Milan Furniture Fair, Milan  
2000 'Young British Design', Passagen, Cologne Furniture Fair

**Design Tutor** Middlesex University  
Bucks University

Carl shares a studio in East London, and has collaborated, with Gitta and has recently also collaborated with Will Warren on a furniture design project.

# Gitta Gschwendtner

## Furniture, Product and Exhibition Designer

**Born** 15 February 1972

### Education

1996-1998 MA, Furniture Design, Royal College of Art, London  
1993-1996 BA (hons) first class, Furniture and Product Design, Kingston University  
1992-1993 Foundation course, Art and Design, Central Saint Martins, London

### Design Practice

#### Product Development

2003 'Cascade', 'nostalgia' and 'ghost' light ranges, CTO (UK)  
2003 'Between' bedside drawers, prototype  
2002 'Uncanny Lamps', Innermost (UK)  
2002 Design proposal for Gloster outdoor furniture (UK)  
2002 'Target Clock', Purves & Purves (UK)  
2001 'N4' Floor Lamp, Mathmos (UK)  
2001 'Alone Ashtray', Purves & Purves (UK)  
2000 'Beach Bum' folding furniture, Habitat (UK)  
2000 'Between the Line' chest and coffee table, own production  
2000 'Lab Light' table lamp, Twentytwentyone (UK)  
2000 'Tool Stool' and 'Hidden Storage', Habitat (UK)  
2000 'Knick Table', prototype  
1998 'Strangled Light' pendant light, Artificial (Germany)  
1998 'Lloyd Loom chair and armchair', W. Lusty and Sons (UK)

#### Exhibition Design

Exhibition design for British Council, Crafts Council, Science Museum, Victoria and Albert Museum, 100% Design, OXO Tower, Purves & Purves and Alan Higgs Centre.

### Awards

1999 finalist, Peugeot design award  
1999 recipient, Crafts Council setting up grant  
1998 winner, Sainsbury's scholarship  
1998 winner, Kokuyo design prize  
1998 winner, RCA artbar design competition  
1998 winner, Lloyd Loom furniture competition

### Selected Exhibitions

2004 'Import Export', British Council travelling exhibition  
2004 'Brilliant', Victoria & Albert Museum, London  
2003 '100% Design', Earls Court, London  
2003 'England v Germany', SCP, London  
2003 'Cupboard Love', Applied Arts Agency, London  
2002 'Pining for It', Purves & Purves, London  
2002 'Tweeter', Designers Block, Barge House, London  
2002 'Uncanny Room' PM Gallery & House, London  
2001 'Ironic Iconics', Mid Pennine Arts, Burnley  
2001 'Radical Plastics', Geffrye Museum, London  
2001 'Minor Works', Design Museum, London  
2001 'An Industry of One', Crafts Council, London  
2000 'About Time', Pure Living, London  
2000 'Count Down Design', Spazio Concole, Milan  
2000 'Young British Design', Cologne Furniture Fair, Cologne  
1999 'Peugeot Design Awards', OXO Tower, London  
1998 'Unfinished', Viaduct, London (solo show)

### Teaching

1999-2004 Part-time tutor, BA (hons) Contemporary Furniture, Buckingham University  
2000-2003 Part-time tutor, BA (hons), Product and Furniture, Kingston University  
2002 Lecturer, Design Product Course, Royal College of Art, London  
1999-2002 Part-time tutor, Interior Design Portfolio Course, Central St Martins, London

Gitta shares a studio in East London with Carl Clerkin; they have collaborated on design projects.

## **William Warren**

### **Furniture, Product and Exhibition Designer**

**Born** 3 July 1973

#### **Education**

1992-1995 BA (hons) first class, Design, Liverpool Institute of Higher Education  
1995-1997 MA, Design and Silversmithing, Royal College of Art, London

#### **Design Practice**

ww.modcons, launched May 1999.  
School workbench and stools, Emmerich, Berlon (with Carl Clerkin)  
Freelance cutlery design, Habitat  
Freelance domestic seating, Lloyd Loom  
Clock and furniture, Purves and Purves  
Bathroom cabinet, Asia Materials  
Kitchen range in production, Bliss, England  
Contract seating, Grape, England  
House number in production, Details, Germany  
Range in production, Trico International, Japan  
School desk and stools in production, Emir, England  
Public seating commission, Clerkenwell  
School lockers, Sorrell Foundation project  
Fold cutlery, Negatives Range, ww.modcons

#### **Awards**

2002 'Furniture for the Future', Design Council  
2002 Shortlisted, 'Peugeot Design Awards'  
2001 'Young European Furniture Designer of the Year', 'Talente', Munich  
1999 Shortlisted, 'Gift of the Year'  
1998 Recipient, 'Setting Up Grant', Crafts Council  
1997 'Pyramid Award for Business', Bankers Trust  
1996 Winner, Product Range competition, Jaguar Cars  
1995 'Special Achievement Award', Royal Liver Assurance

#### **Selected Exhibitions**

2003 Applied Art Agency, London  
2002 'Hardcore', RIBA, London  
2002 'Cutting Edge', Geffrye Museum, London  
2001 Solo show, Trico Gallery, Tokyo  
2001 'Designers' Block', London  
2001 '100% Design', Earls Court, London  
2001 'Talente', Munich, Germany  
2001 'Home Sweet Home', Sweden-Australia (touring)  
2001 'An Industry of One', Crafts Council, London  
2000 'Cologne Furniture Fair', Germany  
2000 'Paris Furniture Fair', France  
1999 'A Grand Design', Victoria & Albert Museum, London  
1999 'Mode, The Contemporary Home Show', BDC, London

#### **Publications**

*New British Design* by Peta Levi, published by Mitchell Beazley  
*The Art and Evolution* by Chris Walton, published by Goldsmiths Hall  
*Silver and Tea* by Chris Walton, published by Goldsmiths Hall  
*Design UK* by Max Fraiser, published by Conran Octopus  
*Hard Core* by Sarah Gaventa  
*The Eco Design Handbook* by Alastair Fuad-Luke, published by Thames and Hudson

Will has recently collaborated with Carl Clerkin on a furniture design project.