**CSAW adds a layer to island coconut industry**

White islanders from the Philippines to Fiji are busy harvesting coconut palm trees for their milk, oil and fiber. Associate Professor Greg Nolan from the UTAS Centre for Sustainable Agriculture (CSAW) is trying to find a way to “peel” the palm trees for use as a timber veneer.

Following on from research started by the Queensland Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation that explored the potential of sawn coconut timber for use as flooring, CSAW is developing a project to promote coconut development in Pacific Island countries, particularly Fiji, Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands, through the sustainable conversion of coconut shells into veneer and veneer-based products for export and for use in local economies.

The four-year project concentrates on processing coconut shells from the old and less productive palms. This provides an economic driver for plantation owners to replant old palms, which are usually coconut products are sold to Chinese and Japanese markets, and encourages the planting of vigorous young palms that will boost coconut production. According to Associate Professor Nolan, it will be important to work through the full chain of users and applications, such as what can be done with the same palm core and the coconut product finally cut to size and used for flooring or furniture. As with wood, the coconut palm is long-lived and can be harvested many times and the plant can be used as a soil conditioner. There is also the issue of what to do with the peels from the peeling process. Could it be mistaken for sawn timber or used as a base for growing mushrooms?

However, the biggest challenge for CSAW is developing a method of peeling the peels, the Removing peels and using the mesocotyl, coconut milk and coconut water is not a challenge, but the roughness of the plant and the way to peel the peels from the peels without damaging the plant. A challenge of the project is the separation of the peels from the coconut water, which will be used to make coconut water products. The project uses the peels to produce a new timber that can be used for flooring, furniture and other products.

This project is the recipient of a $1.3 million grant from the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research.

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**Inveresk Lecture Series 2012**

**ARTICLE BY HELEN NORRIE**

The Inveresk Design Forum is in full swing again this semester, with a broad range of talks from local, state and national guest speakers. Two of Australia’s largest architectural practices, Hassell and Lyons, have given presentations over the last month, discussing a broad range of very interesting, large-scale urban developments. Adam Davies and Toby Lodge from Hassell’s Brisbane office talked about two very impressive projects for the Coast Rapid Transit project and the Brisbane Inner City Rail system in their presentation of TRANSIT + URBANISM. Adrian Stanic, from Lyons Architecture in Melbourne, who is the project architect of the UTAS Menzies Research Centre in Hobart, talked about their practice’s diverse interests in urbanism, sustainability and digital tectonics. Later in the semester, award winning Sydney architect Angelo Candelapas will present a forum in association with the AIA, and internationally renowned designer Khai Liew will be presenting a workshop organised by Design Objects Tasmania, and giving a public lecture in the School. Other talks include local architects and designers, in particular, the two recent recipients of the Rode Spence Travelling Scholarship, Edwina Hughes and Joel Seadon. In Week 9, 17-21 September, the Design Forum will be taken over by Launceston Architecture Week, with a series of events throughout, including Pecha Kucha in which 8 speakers will be given 20 slides with 20 seconds for each slide to talk about their ideas and passions. Aaron Roberts from Room 11 will host Launceston’s first Archi Idol, with a series of local and national architects and designers competing in a design challenge with a live audience cheering them on. Following the success of last year’s entertaining ‘Not at the Dinner Table’ discussion, this event will be revised with a diverse range of artists, designers, architects and perhaps even a politician or two engaging in lively debate and discussion over dinner at Alchemy. More details on email, facebook and on our website.
Tomorrow’s Designers – Design Island

ARTICLE BY RICHARD BURNHAM & MARY MUGANAYI / PHOTOS BY RYAN TUBEY

The final year students in the Bachelor of Architecture degree at the School of Architecture & Design, University of Tasmania, designed, fabricated and assembled the Design Island stand in an ‘Advanced Design Research’ unit. This research theme explored through the design of the stand were ‘mass-customisation’ and ‘poke yoke’. Mass-customisation is the delivery of goods and services customised to satisfy a specific customer need, while ‘poke yoke’ is the process of mistake-proofing a production or assembly process. The design of the stand was also used as a vehicle for testing a Sketchup plug-in called ‘Superslob’, designed by students and staff at the School to automatically generate reliable and predictable slot and tab connections for sheet materials.

The brief for the stand required the design team to achieve a balance between the needs of the individual designers, whilst at the same time presenting the designed works as a coherent whole, portraying Tasmania as a designer state. The stand is conceived as ‘island’ with the major components as ‘island’ with the major components representing topographical characteristics, a sky ‘backdrop’ and a floating cloud. The stand was designed specifically for the site at DESIGN:MADE:TRADE, the students were also required to consider future installations where the required configuration and the product profiles might be very different.

Collaborative design introduced its own challenges, with the skills, priorities and creativity of all students needing to be acknowledged, respected and accommodated, alongside those of the client body. The students’ supervisor, Richard Burnham commented that there was passionate debate between group members and that, “the design process became a fascinating balancing act, weighing on the one hand the ‘humility’ required to prioritise the designed objects and on the other hand the strength required to present itself with a coherent identity.”

Live projects such as this play an important role in the education experience. One of the student team Richard Waterson said that, “it was a great experience to meet the challenges of a real project. It gave us insights into client relationships and project management and we had to meet a real deadline – we weren’t going to just lose 5% on an assessment, we were going to disappoint 20 designers!”

In keeping with the School of Architecture & Design’s emphasis on ‘learning by making’, the design process was based around modelling, progressing from handcrafted card through to rapid prototyping using the digital precision of Superslob. Digitally based prototyping had its pros and cons; while the scale model is an accurate representation of the full-size object, there is a potentially dangerous flip-side where the sketch design can, because of the ‘perfection of the cut’, be read as resolved. However, the act of making engages design thinking in a fundamental way and communicates intent effectively within a group setting.

The stand also had to meet several practical requirements: to look attractive from all sides as it’s designed to go in a central location; to occupy 50 square metres but be flexible enough to use in a smaller space; to be quick, easy and light to assemble and disassemble; to pack down to be readily transported by truck to the Royal Exhibition Building in Melbourne.

Each student brought different skills to the project and moulded these to balance two primary objectives: the research goals driven by the School’s interest in digital fabrication systems and creative arrangements that achieved the best outcome for the featured designers. Central to the project was pushing the limits of Superslob. The intention behind Superslob is that objects such as this exhibition stand (and other projects including the Castle) can be assembled by anyone, like a large piece of flatpack furniture.

The components were subsequently cut on the School’s CNC router, sanded and dry-fit assembled for the Tasmanian Design Centre launch. Some students travelled with the stand to DESIGN:MADE:TRADE to assemble it, seeing the project successfully through to its culmination.

Working on projects such as the Design Island exhibition stand brings a new dimension to their studies and introduces tomorrow’s designers to new opportunities and new audiences.


ARCHIBALL SEMESTER 1, 2012

ARTICLE BY LEWIS KINGSTON & ERICA PROUD / MONTAGE BY DUNCAN JACOBS

Any people on York Street on the night of the semester 1 Archiball would have been shocked by the number of villains and criminals rushing to pack Hotel New York for what was truly a ‘badass’ night. Cruella de Vil, Dennis Rodman, Mike Tyson, Hades, Snooki, The Joker, Indiana Jones, Lady Gaga and The Queen of Hearts. What do all these people have in common? That’s right, they’re all BADASSES!

These are just a handful of some of the adventurous costumes seen at the BADASS’ Semester One 2012 Archiball, which was held in Week 9. It wasn’t long until the entire venue was crowded with a variety of very badass characters. Over 260 Architecture students came out in ‘badass’ themed attire and it was fantastic to see both staff and a range of students from all year levels participating in the festivities. We would like to once again thank DJ Tom Dunsford for spinning some tunes to get the party started and the drinks crew for all their efforts in making the much anticipated night happen.

The Semester 2 Archiball is lurking around the corner and is going to be held on the 27th of September in week 10. Keep tuned for more information.

Reading room update

ARTICLE BY BENJAMIN CRIPPS

We have just been given a large number of magazines thanks to the RAIA Hobart Chapter, which means we now have a full collection of AA magazines from now dating back to early 1998. We also have the full set of UME magazines and more Architecture Review Australia magazines than you could poke a stick at. The collection of Artchive and Landscape magazines has also increased with up-to-date copies available. Trade literature resources have also increased with some very useful up-to-date information available including product samples and technical manuals.

All items must stay in the library and cannot be borrowed. The Resource Library is located on the first floor just across from the Sky Lounge. Open 8.00am till 5.00pm.
DHAB - David Houbaer and Alec Balcombe, recent graduates from the UTAS Architecture and Design school, have started up their own studio in Hobart designing furniture, lighting and interiors. Recently they entered a competition based in Melbourne called ‘Launch Pad’ and were lucky enough to get through to the top twelve finalists. The Exhibition will run as part of ‘Saturday in Design’ 17 – 18 August 2012 in Melbourne.

For more information on DHAB see: http://dhabstudios.com/

DHAB past students

ARTICLE BY NICOLE DOBBER / PHOTO SUPPLIED BY DHAB STUDIO

CAPITheticAL

BIG IDEAS. BIG FUTURE.

A design ideas competition for a hypothetical Australian capital city

Congratulations to Helen Norrie, Liz Walsh and Jenna Rowe who have been shortlisted in the prestigious national competition CAPITheticAL. From more than 1200 registrations, Helen, Jenna and Liz’s entry has been selected as one of only 20 to progress to the next stage for submission in November. Their entry integrates many of the ideas that they have been pursuing in various research projects over the past few years.

Well done on behalf of the School and good luck with the next stage!

The Castle

Located on the ground floor. Speak with staff and students and take part in a number of assisted hands-on design activities, running continuously throughout the day such as: Urban Garden, Interior Spaces, Furniture design techniques, SKETCH-CHAIR!, The Castle, Super Tute.

For more information on Open Day 2012 visit: http://www.utas.edu.au/open-day/
Also keep up to date with the School of Architecture & Design on our facebook page: http://www.facebook.com/utas.architecture.design