



Lime Studios designed the main bar in association with Levantina for the London Design Show in 2008...



Creating a Capital.

As international industry stakeholders are recognising that a city communicating creative quality is a place with freedom to blossom, a world-wide race is raging forward. Cities of all types and sizes are engaging to show to the world in the most innovative way that they are the most creative and therefore the most dynamic, inspirational, exciting and valuable to be involved with. Nottingham has publicised its intention to be there in the front running through announcing its application for World Design Capital in 2012.

FHP looks into the prospect and asks... is it really possible?

For those not yet in the loop, World Design Capital is 'a biennial global competition which culminates in a year long celebration of the role of design in improving the social, cultural and economic life of cities'. It is relatively new, having piloted successfully in 2008 and strives to recognise the cities that 'have most effectively and, more importantly, creatively, used design as a tool for progress'.

Basically - the competition is not only open to the cities we know are historically rich in design as one would assume, but also those who are using it currently to grasp opportunity, which surely needs to happen

in the first place anyway? With the banks collapsing, the global market heading for crisis and the newspapers carrying stories of doom to weaken the bravest, we are in a time where the wheat is sorted from the chaff, and therefore must pool our strengths, to ensure we are - and show we are - the best we can be.

Torino

Torino, World Capital of Design 2008, not long ago an industrial one-company town has adopted an aggressive transformation strategy aimed at renovating the city to become described as 'a shining example of what can be accomplished harnessing the full power of design'... 'a vibrant cosmopolitan city, host of the 06 Winter Olympics, seat for the aeronautical industry and one of the world's hubs for fine foods and drink'

Though the title would be a fantastic accolade, it is the effective and innovative activity leading to it which would really make the difference to Nottingham.

The World Design Capital Web-site states...

'The title will be conferred on cities that have demonstrated exceptional progress using the varied tools design offers. They must prove that government, industry, educational institutions, designers and, in fact, the very population of the city, are working individually and in concert to realise the full potential of design. We are looking for sustainable and visible results that enhance the experience of the city and improve the quality of life for its citizens.'



Torino: Picture: Elena Lai



When Dezzi McCausland took on the project of creating the second Kingly Club in London, he chose Philip Watts from Nottingham to work with again, on a project with such attention to detail that even the 2000 colour co-ordinated lemon tang and clownfish for the tanks had to be flown in on a private jet from Barbados!



Torino: Picture: Elena Lai

Nottingham Talent

Nottingham already has a recognised array of talent exploding from its centre, its lace-making past having offered a foundation of rich history and strong architecture (in places) to the wealth of present creatives - large and small - who are making a place for themselves within the local, national and international market. Already named fourth most creative city in the UK with the essential complimentary mix of science city, core city and of course shopping city, internationally renowned, dynamic universities and with a centre referred to by the Department of the Environment as "the most vibrant and vital in the U.K", Nottingham is obviously not a city to be sniffed at easily.

But – as they say – it's not what you have – it's what you do with it that counts...

Creating cohesion between diverse city stakeholders - though widely understood as the way each element can work to its best - is habitually a world-wide, age-old problem, as differing systems and viewpoints can lead to communication barriers and often deadlock. How often have we heard, 'it would have happened... but...?' The evolution of Creative Industry through working together is arguably most difficult, as its development is by nature creative, and therefore can often be strangled or stopped when coming across solid inflexible processes or viewpoints.

Already the decision of the Nottingham City Council to announce its commitment to World Design Capital shows that there is a willing to embrace design and to look at how to achieve the best potential for the city, and creative industry practitioners are already stepping to the forefront with a want and a need to project themselves through an enhanced and exciting platform. Though the concept of 'all working together to be the best we can be' could be seen as a utopian idea – naïve – or improbable, we are fortunate to have design as a focus – which can, if used wisely, be utilised to achieve what could not have been achieved before and deliver completely new avenues.

The chance is there to be a creative capital should we choose to design it as such ... Is it possible? Only if we make it so...

This Rocking Piano by Davenport, currently playing its way to one of our country's finest jazz musicians was designed as part of the Unleashed initiative to promote the creative talent of Nottingham.

