

Press release

2 August 2013

LONDON DESIGN FESTIVAL TALKS TO PREVIEW VIEWPOINT - AN URBAN ISLAND
HIDEAWAY FOR CAMLEY STREET NATURAL PARK

The Finnish Institute in London and The Architecture Foundation announce talks during The London Design Festival to preview their exciting new project Viewpoint.

Commissioned by The Finnish Institute in London and The Architecture Foundation for London Wildlife Trust, Viewpoint is a unique urban island hideaway set to bring nature and architecture together on London's Regent's Canal at Camley Street Natural Park.

With the structure due for completion in autumn 2013, this special series of talks at September's London Design Festival allow emerging Finnish architects Erkkö Aarti, Arto Ollila and Mikki Ristola to preview Viewpoint to a wide international audience.

As a small man-made islet on the canal, Viewpoint will act as an additional viewing platform and an invaluable new learning facility for Camley Street Natural Park. The canal and the park form a natural habitat in the centre of King 's Cross, one of the most rapidly growing metropolitan areas of London. In this unique site Viewpoint beautifully embodies the sensitive relationship between the man-made and natural.

"We are very excited to be part of LDF and introduce our forthcoming Viewpoint project. Viewpoint experiments with old and traditional materials and shows they can be used in new and innovative ways. Design and material solutions root Viewpoint to its challenging location, the borderline of the built and unbuilt London. We are proud to be part of a project that brings new uncommercial spaces to Londoners." Arto Ollila says.

To start off the series of talks on 15 September the architects Erkkö Aarti, Arto Ollila and Mikki Ristola will be giving an intimate preview of Viewpoint and the ideas and ethos behind the project as part of The Architecture Foundation's day long programme of events aboard the newly commissioned Floating Cinema that will be moored at City Road Basin, Islington. The conversation is chaired by the Director of The Finnish Institute in London, Susanna Pettersson.

17 September, Aarti, Ollila and Ristola will head the public talk Materials Moulded by the Environment at the Victoria and Albert Museum. The architects will discuss the material choices of Viewpoint and the synergy between materials, nature and the surrounding community.

The third and final talk, Cities and Water is taking place on the 20 September. Design writer and curator Jane Withers takes part in this discussion about the urban environment and water, a key element in Finnish urban life and design culture.

The Viewpoint commission is the result of the New Architects: Finland_UK Exchange Programme, which brought together new architectural talent from Finland and the UK to explore cities' ever-changing relationship with water. This programme was delivered by The Architecture Foundation with the Finnish Institute and the Museum of Finnish Architecture in Helsinki.

The Viewpoint project is supported by King's Cross Central Partnership, Argent, Ministry of Education & Culture, Finland, Alfred Kordelin Foundation, Metsämiesten Säätiö Foundation, Graphic Concrete.

Viewpoint Website: viewpointlondon.fi

VIEWPOINT TALKS' SCHEDULE:

In Conversation with the Viewpoint Architects

15 September (2pm-6.30pm), The Architecture Foundation Stowaway on the Floating Cinema, City Road Basin, Free (booking essential: www.architecturefoundation.org.uk)

Viewpoint: Materials Moulded by the Environment

17 September (4pm - 5pm), Victoria & Albert Museum, Free

Viewpoint: Cities and Water

20 September (4pm - 5pm), Victoria & Albert Museum, Free

ENDS

For more information on the talks and the Viewpoint project please contact Purple PR

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Erkko Aarti, Arto Ollila & Mikki Ristola

Erkko Aarti, Arto Ollila and Mikki Ristola are emerging young designers from Helsinki. Studying architecture at the Aalto University School of Arts, Design and Architecture, the team works in all fields of design from product and graphic design to large-scale architecture. Public buildings are their specialty. Aarti, Ollila & Ristola strive to add extra value to their design projects – everything should tell a story. They respect traditional craftsmanship and share an understanding of materials. They have experience of working as carpenters, and using wood is a special expertise area for the team.

Aarti, Ollila & Ristola have already gained success in numerous competitions. In addition to projects and competitions in Finland, they have received awards in international competitions in the UK, Germany and Estonia. Aarti won the second prize in the Habitare competition 2012 with a large-scale furniture element the innovative structure of which he produced. Ristola recently won a Finnish design competition focused on future design solutions for rented accommodation. They are experienced in working with multi-national teams. Aarti was team leader in a pavilion project at the Technical University of Munich and Ollila organised and conducted a workshop in European Architecture Student Assembly 2012 in Helsinki.

Both Aarti and Ollila also work with and play key roles in established and award-winning Finnish practices such as Heikkinen – Komonen and Verstas Architects. Ristola worked and gained experience in designing public spaces at the Artto Palo Rossi Tikka architectural practice in Finland.

<http://www.erkkoarti.fi>

www.artoollila.fi/

The Finnish Institute in London

The Finnish Institute in London is a London-based private trust. Our mission is to identify emerging issues relevant to contemporary society and to act as catalyst for positive social change through partnerships. We work with artists, researchers, experts and policy makers in the United Kingdom, Finland and the Republic of Ireland to promote strong networks in the fields of culture and society. We encourage new and unexpected collaborations and support artistic interventions, research, the creative industries, foresight and social innovation in new, socially central areas.

www.finnish-institute.org.uk

The Architecture Foundation

Established in 1991 as the UK's first independent architecture centre, The Architecture Foundation has organised hundreds of design initiatives, events, exhibitions and education programmes in public venues across Britain and internationally. The Architecture Foundation is a non-profit agency that advances architecture and urbanism to enrich life now and in future. We are independent, agile and influential. We bring together the public and professionals to cultivate new ideas and talent, stimulate discussion, and improve the quality of the built environment.

<http://www.architecturefoundation.org.uk>

London Wildlife Trust

London Wildlife Trust is a membership charity dedicated solely to protecting London's nature and wild spaces. It engages the capital's diverse communities through access to over 40 nature reserves and is committed to campaigning, volunteering and education. The Trust was started by a few passionate and forward thinking activists in 1981 declaring that people in the capital had the 'right to share our environment with nature and wildlife.' Since its first beginnings, the Trust has grown significantly as a movement, encouraging Londoners of all ages and backgrounds to love and cherish their natural environment. It has influenced the actions and policies of local government, other organisations, local communities and thousands of individual.

Camley Street Natural Park opened in 1985 and is now designated a Site of Metropolitan Importance and a Local Nature Reserve. This freely accessible wildlife haven in the heart of King's Cross was created from a derelict coal wharf on the edge of the Regent's Canal. The Trust and local activists campaigned to save the site for wildlife and people when it was identified as an ideal spot for a new coach station in 1981.

www.wildlondon.org.uk