

GRAND DESIGNS

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'We revisit some truly remarkable Grand Designs'



September 2011 £3.75

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DIARY DATE

This month, as part of Open House London, hundreds of the capital's buildings are opening their doors, so you can look around and get ideas for projects. Admission is free, but entry to some of the properties needs to be booked in advance; see online programme. (17–18 September; londonopenhouse.org)



MDF MAGIC

When you think of interior wallcoverings, you probably imagine paint, paper, maybe a spot of panelling. Interior designer Mancini Enterprises (+91 044 2461 4000; mancini-design.com) has gone one step further, and covered the walls of this café in Chennai, India, with Lego-like building blocks. The team wanted to make an intense and colourful space, inspired by the modernist aesthetic of punchy interiors. The blocks, made of MDF, were constructed on site by carpenters, with lighting concealed within the wall-mounted rectangles.

Pick of the month

This Suffolk home by Hudson Architects (01603 766 220; hudsonarchitects.co.uk) is a showcase of architecture nesting into its surroundings; we liked it so much it was shortlisted for this year's Grand Designs Awards. It succeeds thanks to its materials that were chosen because of the way they weather; the frame is made of engineered timber, with black zinc and iroko timber cladding. Although it's a modern design, the structure's also sensitive to its locality, inspired by the barn-style buildings and beach huts typical of the area.



Words: Sarah Baldwin

WOODEN WONDER

Here's a no-holds-barred project that's proof of the potential of wood. Designed by London-based practice Paul McAnery (020 7240 0500; paulmcenery.com), it's been shortlisted for the Wood Awards, and no wonder. Besides the oak flooring and sandblasted oak beams and columns, the large loft

space is divided up by a series of boxes made out of sandblasted oak (which house the bedrooms), plus there's a suspended oak mezzanine floor and cantilevered oak stairs. And it doesn't end there; 200-year-old Rhodesian teak has been imported to produce the over-sized front door and dining table.



James Brittain