

Feature

EXHIBITIONISTS

Exhibition design, both for temporary touring shows and more permanent gallery fit-outs, has long been an important part of architectural practice. It is seen as a chance to experiment in space-making, fabrication and materials as well as to collaborate creatively with fabricators and lighting designers. It often provides a platform for younger practices to quite literally showcase their design work. But increasingly, too, given the temporary and traditionally wasteful nature of exhibition fit-outs and installations, it's also a fertile ground for experimentation in sustainable, reusable and low-carbon builds and materials. *Rob Wilson* asked a range of practitioners about their experience of working in exhibition and gallery design and how they look to prioritise sustainability in their work.



GARETH GARDNER



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Project data

Project Being Jersey – Stories of our Island exhibition
Location The Jersey Museum and Art Gallery, St Helier, Jersey, Channel Islands
Client Jersey Heritage
Start on site November 2023
Completion September 2024
Budget £1.7 million

PIPPA NISSEN, DIRECTOR AND CO-FOUNDER, NISSEN RICHARDS STUDIO

Describe a key recent project

A new permanent exhibition Being Jersey – Stories of our Island at The Jersey Museum and Art Gallery covers Jersey's history from the Ice Age to the present day. The 485m² space features six thematic 'narrative islands', highlighting key objects. The design, inspired by Jersey's landscape, incorporates earthy tones and textures reflecting the island's archaeology and natural environment and balances thematic and chronological storytelling. We also handled the exhibition's graphic design, creating a cohesive visual and informational structure.

How do you look to ensure sustainability in designing exhibitions/gallery fit-outs?

We prioritise low-impact, recyclable or recycled materials. Repurposing materials from previous projects is also key. Our exhibitions are often modular, allowing for

reconfiguration and reuse, with designs that ensure materials can easily be separated and recycled. We use energy-efficient and smart technologies to optimise energy use.

Who are the key collaborators and consultants you work with regularly?

We have worked with lighting designers Studio ZNA for over 25 years. I first met Zerlina Hughes, director of Studio ZNA, when working in theatre. We work with a trusted network of fabricators such as MER, which constructed the Jersey exhibition. Our regular graphics contractor, Displayways, is a wonderfully creative partner.

What other art/cultural projects are you working on or looking forward to?

Notable temporary exhibitions that are set to open include a display running through Chatsworth House and exhibitions at the

Imperial War Museum, Courtauld Gallery, Petworth House, Munch at the National Museum in Oslo and several exhibitions in Delhi. We're also involved in several new permanent galleries and museums: a new industrial heritage museum in Sarawak, Malaysia; two national park visitor centres in Iceland; Rylands Library, in collaboration with Donald Insall Associates; and the Shoemakers Museum, a new cultural space in Somerset created with Purcell. We're also working on a new permanent gallery in Canada.

How does exhibition or gallery work feed into your wider practice?

Arts and cultural projects generally are a core part of our practice, ranging in scale from conservation architecture to landscape design, interpretation, wayfinding, graphic design, branding and visitor experience – alongside exhibition and gallery design.