



A House for Essex

Launch of Grayson Perry and FAT Architecture's A House For Essex



Living Architecture's latest project, A House for Essex – a daring and provocative collaboration between FAT Architecture and Grayson Perry – is launched today. The house, which is situated in Wrabness close to the Essex coast, is an extraordinary work of architecture and art, which provides a setting for a number of specially-commissioned works by Grayson Perry exploring the unique qualities of Essex.

A House For Essex has been conceived as a landmark in the tradition of wayside and pilgrimage chapels. Like a pilgrimage chapel, the house is dedicated to a saint – in this case a secular one by the name of Julie Cope – and gives architectural expression to her life.

The design relates to a number of influences including Stave churches, arts and crafts houses and English baroque architecture. Charles Holland

of FAT Architecture has described the building as "a radical statement about architecture and its capacity for narrative and communication. The design embraces decoration, ornament and symbolism in order to tell a rich and complex story. Formally, it is like a Russian doll, a series of archetypal house shapes that step up in scale as the building descends the hill".

The interior features a number of Grayson Perry's handmade ceramic pots and tapestries depicting the fictional life of Julie, described by the artist as an 'Essex Everywoman'. Visitors to the house pass through a series of unfolding spaces before entering the chapel, concealed behind two 'hidden' doors. The chapel itself is organised around a striking decorative object – part medieval rood screen, part baroque façade – that frames a





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ceramic statue of Julie herself. Upstairs the two bedrooms – with views to east and west – have walk-through cupboards that lead to internal balconies overlooking the chapel space.

The exterior, clad in more than 1900 green and white ceramic tiles, are cast from originals made by Perry, depicting Julie as mother and icon, along with symbols associated with her life. She appears again, on the roof in the manner of a giant weather vane in addition to a beautifully cast ceramic chimney pot, wheel sculpture and beacon.

Grayson Perry said:

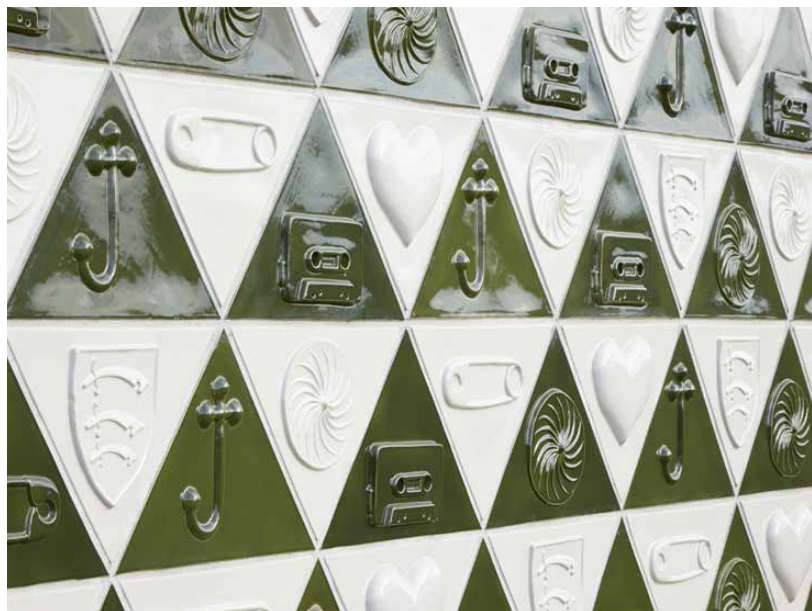
"When Living Architecture offered me the opportunity to collaborate with FAT it was a golden chance to realise a long held ambition to build a secular chapel. Charles Holland and I batted ideas back and forth until a bonkers yet dignified design emerged glistening.

The resulting building is a total art work, a fiction in which you can live, a digital age shrine and a homage to Charles' and my home county.

I hope the people who stay in the House for Essex find it playful yet monumental, cosy and maybe slightly disturbing. It is a three dimensional musing on religion, local history, feminism, happiness and death."

Charles Holland, FAT, said:

"The house is a striking object in its setting, but one that also has formal resonance. It is like a richly encrusted and highly decorated barn, with a healthy dose of Essex bling thrown in. Ultimately, it is a built story with something of the qualities of a fairy tale and you come across it as an unlikely, somewhat fantastic surprise. Like Grayson, I was born and brought up in Essex so the house is both fiction and autobiography."



A House for Essex will be available to rent on a short-term holiday basis, and can sleep up to four people in two bedrooms. Slots will be allocated by public ballot which will open to entrants on 15 May.

Living Architecture launch
A House For Essex with Grayson Perry
and FAT Architecture
www.living-architecture.co.uk

For downloadable images please see:
www.living-architecture.co.uk/press

Living Architecture

Holidays in modern architecture

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NOTES TO EDITORS

ABOUT LIVING ARCHITECTURE

Living Architecture is an organisation that aims to shift perceptions of modern architecture by allowing people to experience what it is like to live, eat and sleep in a space designed by an outstanding architectural practice. Founded by Alain de Botton, Living Architecture is dedicated to using world-class architects to build houses for holiday rental around the UK.

Other Living Architecture houses include:

The Balancing Barn, Suffolk
by MVRDV
(Manser Medal 2011 shortlisted)

The Shingle House, Kent
by NORD Architecture
(RIBA Award winner)

The Dune House, Suffolk
by Jarmund / Vignæs Architects
(Manser Medal 2012 shortlisted)

The Long House, Norfolk
by Hopkins Architects

A Room for London,
by David Kohn Architects
with artist Fiona Banner

ABOUT GRAYSON PERRY

Grayson Perry was born in Chelmsford and grew up in the villages of Broomfield, Bicknacre and Great Bradfield. He is one of the UK's leading contemporary artists. He won the Turner Prize in 2003 and has gone on to achieve enormous critical and popular acclaim. As well as making ceramic pots, tapestries and sculptures, Perry has curated a number of high profile exhibitions. The Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, presents a major retrospective of Perry's work from December 2015 to May 2016; this will follow a solo show at Turner Contemporary, Margate, which runs from May to September 2015. The Arts Council Collection and

British Council-led UK and international tour of The Vanity of Small Differences, Perry's monumental suite of tapestries, is currently on display at the Pera Museum, Istanbul; the making of these works was chronicled in his BAFTA winning Channel 4 series In the Best Possible Taste. The artist has received a second BAFTA for a subsequent Channel 4 series broadcast in October 2014, Grayson Perry: Who Are You?, which was accompanied by a solo presentation of works on the theme of portraiture and British identity at the National Portrait Gallery, London.

ABOUT FAT ARCHITECTURE

FAT have been one of the most provocative and challenging voices in UK architecture for the past twenty years. Their previous projects include the BBC's new production village in Cardiff, a civic centre and park in Hoogvliet, Holland and Islington Square housing in Manchester. FAT's designs have embraced decoration, ornament and explicit communication to create popular and enjoyable buildings. They have won numerous awards and their work has been exhibited and published worldwide. In December 2013 the practice, led by Sean Griffiths, Charles Holland and Sam Jacob, announced they were disbanding with their final two projects being the British Pavilion at the 2014 Venice Architecture Biennale and A House For Essex. Following this, the Project continued to be overseen by Charles.

www.fashionarchitecturetaste.com

ABOUT THE PROJECT TEAM

ROSE BUILDERS LTD. are a traditional family run firm of builders and contractors, established circa 1896. Based locally in Manningtree, Essex, they are one of the leading construction companies in East Anglia, with a reputation for quality building.

www.rosebuilders.co.uk

MILLIMETRE LTD.

Based in Brighton, Millimetre constructed and installed the bespoke interior furniture and specialist joinery elements, and facilitated the installation of the artworks throughout the house.

www.millimetre.uk.net

SZERELMEY have procured, managed and installed the external cladding of ceramic tiles

www.szerelmey.com

SHAWS OF DARWEN have produced the ceramic tiles for the external cladding, cast from the originals produced by Grayson Perry

