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Friday, 30 September 2011

## London Design Festival postscript - part 1111

This is the final post in a week of looking back at some of the stand-out moments of the London Design Festival, 2011 (stand-out for me, at least – and I hope, of course, that you like them too). Right then, feast



### Americana

Well hello again. So I'm finally back from a pretty epic holiday in the States: a road trip from Nashville via Memphis, down to Clarksda...



### DIY tidy ideas

So the August break was

great. So great that I totally forgot to post up these pictures last night... as promised in today's column in t...



### The Friday Edit #7: a mad bad

bathroom, Snoop's Air BnB crib and how to eat like Martin Parr

A look back at some of the week's best design (well, design-ish) links... Chinoiserie: not a look I've ever thought of dabbling ...

- Neisha Crosland's vinyl floor tiles

Vinyl flooring has been getting better and more

your eyes on this lovely, and – today – slightly random collection of gorgeousness...





interesting in recent years – and is a brilliantly affordable way to get yourself a stylish ...



Homes:  
Porn for

modernist architecture  
geeks

A while back I posted some photos of my kitchen, in which you could just see a little of my worktop... And it inspired Adam Jacobs-Dean...



A

beginner's guide to  
revamping antique  
wooden furniture

I'm a big fan of Out of the Dark – an excellent social enterprise that trains young people at risk of slipping off the rails to restore...

- Shopping: Guest ed  
Abi's picks  
Today another guest



### 1. Tiny universes

At Origin, the east London craft fair, I was struck by the quirkiness of [Lisa Swerling](#)'s unusual artworks. Her "Glass Cathedrals" (top two images in main collage, and inset, left "[How Much is That Doggy](#)") are, in short, glass-fronted boxes containing miniature figures – up to all sorts of crazy stuff. Here, in "[Faith in Superglue](#)" (top), we have a chap marvelling at the suspension of gravity

underneath a double decker bus, while (below) in "[Cleanliness is Next to Godliness](#)", a woman furiously scrubs a vast checked floor.



post  
from  
guest  
editor,  
Abi . I  
thought

I'd ease myself back  
into blogging here by  
sharing some good  
things I...



Spotlight on... a good  
smell

Ever since I  
interviewed Abigail  
Ahern a couple of  
years ago, and she told  
me about her secret to  
a good smelling house,  
I've been meani...



Object  
of the  
Day:

Japanese Kihara  
Komon porcelain  
I stumbled across  
these Japanese plates  
a few weeks ago and  
can't for the life of me  
remember how or  
where. But I  
bookmarked them  
because...

- Object of the Day:  
Dutch StoryTiles part II  
I was excited, last year,

I like Swerling's own explanation of her work: "There's something about the scale of these mini universes that makes their pursuits by turns heroic, tragic, humorous, wistful," she writes on her website. "The ideas behind the Glass Cathedrals are based on the sorts of thoughts I've been having since I was six: *Why do I have to tidy my room? Help, I'm going to die one day. I don't want to jump in the pool, but I will anyway. Yay, glitter!* etc. Like a lot of people, I have these moments of inspiration about what it is to be a funny little human traveling around this big planet. What to do with these thoughts? I started putting mine in boxes..."

Prices for these brilliantly weird and thought-provoking miniature universes are not – pardon the pun – small, but you're investing in a unique piece of art: small boxes start at £330.



## 2. Vibrant African fabrics

I live in Brixton, south London, a very African/Caribbean neighbourhood, and so am lucky enough to have several stalls and shops in and around the market selling piles and piles of eye-poppingly bright, joyfully graphic African fabric – like those pictured at the bottom, above, by [La Petite Congolaise](#), which was part of the [African & African-Caribbean Design Diaspora event](#). I could stand in those shops for hours and have stacks of fabric I've bought on a whim because I couldn't resist it, waiting to be turned into cushions or curtains (though one piece, a gorgeous Yves Klein blue backing with a repeated bird

graphic in black, was kindly transformed into bench cushions for my kitchen by my clever friend, Camilla).

The great thing about La Petite Congolaise, aka Laurence Kanza – British-born, but of Congolese descent, hence the name – is not only that she sells cushions already made up, but also that her website is bursting with [advice for colour and pattern novices](#), on how to mix or match her fabrics. [Cushions](#) (with brilliant names such as "Margot", pink inset picture, "Jeanne" or "Fernande") start at £55.

## 3. Colourful cupboards



to

discover StoryTiles, a collection of hand-made tiles, some based on traditional Dutch 16th century designs give...

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I don't know much about Bristol-based cabinet maker Charlie Crowther, whose beautifully-hued, simply designed furniture (like "Green Storage", left) was part of 100% Design, but you can find out more on [his website](#).

The Fifties gelato coloured cupboard, above, in main collage, is called "Two Halves Cabinet" and was designed in partnership with [Christian Taylor](#), usually found designing cool t-shirts under the banner of [Uno One Print & Design](#).



No comments:

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