



...STUDENT WOOD AWARDS ... WOOD FOR ALL SEASONS SEMINAR ...SITKA SPRUCE IN VENICE ...

## NI students take two wood awards while design prize goes west

Once again, Northern Ireland colleges dominated the student wood awards. University of Ulster (UU) and Queen's University Belfast (QU) won the top architecture and engineering prizes while the award for best design project went west, to Letterfrack College.

Fergal Rainey, UU won the architecture award for his project entitled 'Making Space, Werburgh Street'. He designed a house and workshop for a guitar maker and his family in Werburgh Street, Dublin. The key to the project was the student's response to the existing buildings and his sensitive selection of building materials. He chose Dublin calp limestone and Irish grown spruce to ensure that the building is compatible with the existing streetscape. Duncan Stewart praised Fergal for his innovative use of Irish softwood, which he said, was a positive statement on the sustainable application of building material.

The QU project presented by Connor O'Higgins involved the construction of a flexible dome, which has commercial potential. The Queen's team researched and designed a new method of timber dome construction based on the principles used in the 'FlexiArch' system, which allows quick construction of a fully formed dome from flat pack units, with potential for outdoor shows, exhibitions and concerts.



*At the Student Wood Awards, presented by Shane McEntee Minister of State with responsibility for forestry: Duncan Stewart, architect and chairman of judging panel: Paul Harvey, chairman, Wood Marketing Federation (WMF); Donal Magner, WMF; Richard Lowe, Coillte; Simon O'Driscoll, O'Driscoll Furniture; Craig Cox, Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology, winner of the Design Award; Fergal Rainey, University of Ulster, architecture, award winner; Connor O'Higgins, represented the Queen's University team who won the engineering award; Maurice Brooks, Director Wood-ni; Minister McEntee; and Tara Ryan, Coillte and awards co-ordinator.*

The winning design student, Craig Cox of Letterfrack, Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology, produced a video booth for "recording special moments at weddings and parties". He redesigned this for Diaryroom, a company that rents out video booths. "The original booth was not performing as desired, as it was too cumbersome, so through research, testing and model making, we produced a new innovative quickly erected booth," said the GMIT student.

## Wide participation in 2012 third level wood awards

The following universities and institutes of technology took part in the 2012 3<sup>rd</sup> Level Student Wood Awards.

- Queen's University Belfast
- University College Dublin
- NUI Galway
- University of Ulster
- Limerick IT
- Cork IT
- National College of Art and Design
- Galway-Mayo IT
- Dublin IT
- Waterford IT

Judging took place in June in NUI Galway and Queen's University Belfast after the colleges chose their own winners in the following three categories:

- Architecture
- Engineering in construction
- Innovative use of timber in design

The awards are organised by the Wood Marketing Federation, in association with Wood-ni. The objective is to encourage and reward architectural, engineering and design students who use wood as an inherent element in their projects. The awards are a partnership between the organisers and Coillte – the main sponsors – COFORD who continue to support the project along with the Society of Irish Foresters.



*Model of the winning architectural project by Fergal Rainey, University of Ulster. Materials include home-grown spruce and Dublin calp limestone.*

## Commendations to Cork and Dublin colleges



The awards were judged over a two-day intensive adjudication period in Queen's University Belfast and NUI Galway (above). The judges are top professionals in the fields of architecture, engineering, design and marketing. The adjudicating panel comprised Duncan Stewart, television producer and architect, Des O'Toole, engineer with Coillte, Simon O'Driscoll, O'Driscoll Furniture and Maurice Brooks, Director Wood-ni.



In addition to the award winners, three projects were commended by the judges. Aidan Philpott and Kieran Coakley (above) of Cork Institute of Technology were commended for their project *Hardwood lined structural softwood beams using Irish timber*. Commendation certificates were presented to Eimear Arthur, University College Dublin for the project *Cultivating continuity* (top right) and Eoin McCooney (right) of the Dublin Institute of Technology for his project *A hygrothermal comparison of cross-laminated timber construction types*.



### Future architects, engineers and designers need to be familiar with wood products and their properties

– Minister McEntee

The awards were presented by Shane McEntee, Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. “My Department’s involvement in supporting this work stems from the need to grow the use of wood products in home and export markets,” he said. “As Irish forests grow and mature, the level of wood production is set to double over the coming two decades, so in this light it is important that our future architects, engineers and designers are familiar with wood products and their properties.”

Paul Harvey, chairman WMF, thanked the main sponsor Coillte and Tara Ryan who acted as project co-ordinator. He also thanked the Minister and COFORD, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine along with the Society of Irish Foresters. “Our aim is to encourage and reward architectural, engineering and design students who use wood as an inherent element in their projects,” he said.

Minister McEntee congratulated the organisers who have built on the event since it was established in 1996. “The wider efforts of the Wood Marketing Federation and Wood-ni are contributing to the development of a green and sustainable construction sector into the future,” he said.

### Stewart issues challenge

DUNCAN STEWART praised the students who participated in the wood awards in his Farnleigh address. However he said that timber was treated as a marginal medium by colleges who should place it at the heart of architecture, engineering and design courses. “I throw out a challenge to third level colleges to make timber mainstream in their courses, which is not happening at the moment,” he told the audience. “In my role as chairman of the judging panel I have been impressed by the work carried out by the students, but they need greater support from their colleges.”

He stressed the importance of wood in Irish construction. “We need to get away from being a high carbon dependent society by turning to sustainable building materials especially wood,” he said. “Timber is now being used in large-scale projects including multi-storey timber frame buildings in other countries but Ireland is lagging well behind these in sustainable construction.”



## THE SAVILL GARDEN VISITOR CENTRE

This is regarded as one of the finest examples of sustainable construction and featured as a case study in Glenn Howells' presentation at the Farmleigh seminar *Wood for All Seasons*



## Wood for All Seasons seminar in Farmleigh

The Wood Marketing Federation organised a major seminar *Wood for all Seasons* seminar in Farmleigh on May 11. Shane McEntee, Minister of State, acknowledging the link between the forest and the end user provided the opening address while seven experts made presentations on the importance of wood as a sustainable material for construction and other applications.

The keynote speaker was Glen Howells, Glenn Howells Architects the Birmingham based practice. Howells who is Visiting Professor at Nottingham Trent University has led the practice to win numerous major design competitions and awards for a diverse range of building types including the Savill Garden Visitor Centre, Windsor: Newman University College, Birmingham; and the Market Place Theatre and Arts Centre, Armagh. His talk featured a number of case studies including the Savill buildings. It is regarded as one of the finest examples of sustainability, practicality and architectural elegance in one building where oak and larch are used throughout.



Some of the speakers at the Farmleigh seminar: Pat Glennon, Glennon Brothers, Gordon Knaggs, G Knaggs & Associates, Ciaran O'Connor, OPW and Richard Lowe, Coillte and seminar chairman.

Ciaran O'Connor the Irish award-winning architect discussed the Green Public Procurement Document for Construction while Gordon Knaggs presented a paper on plywood and panel board products. He was critical of some plywood imports from China, which were of extremely poor quality.

Pat Glennon discussed innovative ways to capture markets with homegrown timber. Papers on timber treatment including preservation and coatings were presented by Colin Molloy, Pat McCarthy and Paul Harvey. The seminar was chaired by Richard Lowe, Coillte.



Patrick Murray at the Murray Timber Group stand at the Farmleigh seminar. Speakers from top: Colin Molloy, Protim-Osmose, Paul Harvey, Lonza Wood Protection. Pat McCarthy, Akzo Nobel Sikkens and Glen Howells, Glenn Howells Architects.



# Wood Marketing Federation and Irish forest industry support major exhibition in Sitka spruce at Venice

**T**HE WOOD MARKETING FEDERATION (WMF) recognises the enormous challenges facing the forest industry especially in its drive to increase export market share for home-grown timber. We promote the sector to key decision makers and stakeholders as a vibrant sustainable industry with major economic, environmental and social benefits.

A project we have identified for our 2012-13 programme is *Vessel* by the award winning architects O'Donnell + Tuomey. This is a major international project, which will promote Irish design and culture at the Venice Biennale. It also has huge potential in promoting Sitka spruce, a species at the centre of our forestry and forest products industry.

The Venice Biennale, begins in August, is regarded as the world's greatest architectural exhibition. It is visited by the most influential international architects, designers, urban planners, developers and critics.

O'DONNELL + TUOMEY ARCHITECTS exhibited at the Biennale in 2004. This year David Chipperfield, artistic director, Biennale, has invited them to prepare a special installation *Vessel*. This has so impressed the Biennale that O'Donnell + Tuomey have been allotted one of the most prominent locations at the Biennale. Their likely companions are Kazuo Sejima, co-designer of the Rolex Learning Centre, Lausanne and the New Museum New York, Luigi Snozzi, the highly influential Swiss based architect and Vittorio Lampugnani, the former editor of *Domus*, the widest circulation design magazine in the world.

In this central location, O'Donnell + Tuomey Architects will build a nine-metre high installation in Sitka spruce planked timber. *Vessel*, which is a contemplative space, connects to an exhibition featuring Irish creative works. When the exhibition is over, the work will return to Ireland where it will be installed in a prominent public space in 2013.

AS PART OF THE COLLABORATIVE PROCESS, the architects have enlisted the support of growers and processors as well as representatives of the literary and craft communities including: Joseph Walsh, furniture maker; Tim Robinson, writer and cartographer; Seamus Heaney, poet and Nobel Laureate; and Martin Hayes, musician and composer.

O'Donnell + Tuomey Architects have sought support from the Irish forestry and forest products industry including the timber processing sector, preservative companies, State agencies and other stakeholders either individually or through the Wood Marketing Federation.

THE PROJECT has been extremely well received as WMF members believe that it will promote Irish timber and the wood processing industry internationally, which is extremely important at a time when the sector is almost totally dependent on exports. Already five organisations have committed sponsorship but we are seeking wider engagement from the industry.

Since the downturn in the economy and the collapse of the construction market, the Irish forestry and forest products sector has had to rethink its marketing and promotional strategy. As a result Irish wood processors have turned the Irish spruce based forest sector around from being highly dependent on the domestic market to an outward looking export driven industry.

This project pushes the boundaries of creative marketing and promotion, and is compatible with the WMF mission to *promote wood as a renewable, sustainable and versatile natural material*. It is an opportunity for the sector to support a truly international project, which is why we commend it to our members and supporters.

Glennon Brothers has committed to sponsor all the timber required. Coillte is providing generous sponsorship while COFORD, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine is supporting the project. Lonza Timber Protection, The Murray Timber Group and the Society of Irish Foresters are also providing sponsorship. Members who wish to support this project should contact the WMF Secretary (details below) by the end of July.



*Vessel – model of 9-m high installation in Sitka spruce by O'Donnell + Tuomey Architects proposed for the 2012 Venice Biennale.*

*Vessel is a contemplative space; a funnel of light, illuminating a structure that represents all that is best in Irish creative expression. Built in layers of planked home-grown FSC certified spruce, the temporary structure will contrast with the existing permanent brick structure of the Corderie at the heart of the Biennale.*

