



Welcome

Welcome from the Chair

Welcome to the September issue of VM Spotlight.

As we come out of the pandemic and retail starts to get back on its feet, this issue of VM Spotlight is dedicated to independent retailers.

Whilst in the past we have showcased some of the great department stores around the world, this time we are giving the centre stage to our High Streets and independent retailers.

Independent shops are helping to rejuvenate high streets, a new study has found. With small high street businesses and shoppers alike increasingly optimistic about the future of their local high street. Independent retailers are continuing to open despite a fall in physical footfall.

Many of us enjoy a leisurely walk down to our local High Street on a Saturday morning and enjoy a coffee/breakfast or brunch before browsing and shopping in a Home, Gift or Fashion boutique. Independent retailers are the backbone of our High Streets. They are a community hub.

Another reason consumers choose to, and will always, shop with independent retailers is for their knowledge. Consumers prefer to shop with these retailers for their expertise, customer service and trustworthiness. This is exactly what sets them apart from commercial chains, and exactly why the high street is evolving in a way that holds independent retailers in high esteem.

Iain Kimmins FBDS
Chair



Newsletter Editor

Elaine Fisher
Please contact Elaine Fisher for details regarding articles and advertisements for future issues
Email: admin@britishdisplaysociety.co.uk

Chairman

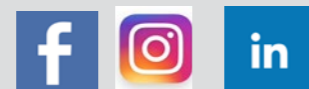
Iain Kimmins
Email:
iain.kimmins@britishdisplaysociety.co.uk

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BDS Membership

Membership to The British Display Society connects you with others in the VM industry.

Our VM Spotlight Magazine provides a regular forum and updates for members. Membership is a great way to advertise/showcase your work or maybe you would like to write an article.

We are pleased to announce members who have been awarded membership of the BDS due to their enthusiasm and commitment towards the industry;

Associate

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Ange'lique Alvarado ABDS

Licentiate

Pedro Brolo LBDS
Derek Kennedy LBDS

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Do you work in the Visual Merchandising industry?

Or maybe you are a VM student, VM Professional or a Freelancer?

Why not join The British Display Society?

It is a great way to network with others in the industry and a great way to advertise/showcase your work in our VM Spotlight E- magazine which is on view to 1.9m people!

If you are a VM student, then membership is just £20 a year.

If you are a VM professional or a Freelancer, then Associate Membership is just £40 a year.

www.britishdisplaysociety.co.uk

Focus on Petts Wood

Petts Wood is a suburb of south-east London, within the London Borough of Bromley and the historic county of Kent. It is popular with commuters to London with Victoria being 30 mins by train. The area is full of great independent retailers: Gift Shops, Coffee Shops, Restaurants, Fashion Shops and Food & Wine Shops.

Edit – home.life.love

Edit welcomes you to browse our personally curated collection of ethical and responsibly sourced gifts for the home, life or the ones you love.

When you visit our store, you're greeted by our lovingly presented windows, before being welcomed into the store by the gorgeous scent of hand-poured candles and an inviting display of over 2500 gift ideas for all occasions.

We believe in making the most of life's simple pleasures – such as the smiles we make when a customer finds that perfect gift. It's with these in mind that we create collections designed to become an integral part of our everyday lives. Lily and her team are always on hand to help you find exactly what you are looking for, even if you don't quite know what that is yet.

Whether you are looking for the perfect gift for a loved one, inspiration for your home, or something special for yourself, our hand-picked collections aim to give you the best possible shopping experience.

We know consumer behaviour is changing and small businesses like ours are working hard to win over the hearts of customers who keep us going. COVID continues to be the single biggest threat to our high streets and our mission at Edit is to enable our customers to shop the Edit experience where and when they need us. That is why we have been working hard to develop a unique online shopping experience to compliment our beautiful store. We are launching the Edit online destination on the 10th September, where you can shop the Edit collection from the comfort of your home. Register at www.edit-uk.com to receive your exclusive launch offer. We look forward to welcoming you to Edit.

But it's not all about shopping. Here at Edit we believe that products are only part of the whole. We are interested in what our products represent in the wider scheme. We want to inspire your mind and body too, so on our blog you'll find articles we hope will educate and inspire.



10 reasons to shop locally

keeping those important independents retailers trading

Wherever you live in the UK, there will always be local businesses on your High Street. This could be a Coffee Shop, Home & Gift Shop, Florist, Bakers or even a Fashion Boutique. Shopping locally instead of with the major Chain Stores has so many advantages for both the local economy and giving the customer that all important memorable shopping experience, which will make the customer return in the future.

The need to improve your local economy

Local businesses are the backbone of the High Street. They improve the local economy and have done so for many years. Shopping on your High Street is much better for the economy of your community. It brings a local neighbourhood together and shopping on a Saturday afternoon in your local High Street can be stressful than hitting the Chain stores in a city.

The need to create jobs for local people

Shopping and using a local businesses means they can employ local people which has a positive effect on the health of local jobs and the community. By helping to grow the number of jobs in your area makes for a better place to live.

It creates a warm character and personality

The advantage of dealing with independent businesses is that they are run by people who live in the local area. Shoppers will find that the business/shops add character to the community with a warm and welcoming personality.

That all important memorable shopping experience

While many chain stores do have good customer service, it's memorable to have that personal touch of a local owner who takes an interest in you and the community. The relationship between customer and the local business is improved and goes further than just the purchase. Local shops quite often stock something that cannot be found in major chains. Independents are thinking about their own customer's choices rather than national fashion trends.

Your health and the environment

There is definitely a positive impact on the environment by shopping locally. If you can walk to your High Street rather than drive, then this reduces the dilemma and stress of finding a parking space. Naturally walking has more health benefits and will certainly reduce traffic and air pollution.



It creates originality and individuality

In a world that is becoming increasingly dominated by chain stores, and on-line, independent businesses bring much-needed originality. It is so vital that local shops to have good window displays and in-store presentation. It is just as important to keep that "wow" factor to attract the passing customer. They can be a real breath of fresh air ensuring that the shop is refreshed regularly with its window display and even the merchandise. By employing a professionally trained visual merchandiser, the shop owner can then focus on sourcing new and exciting merchandise.

Help to create the identity

Some local businesses will help shape the identity of the area. A high street filled with unique, vibrant, and colourful shops will attract more footfall and help to make the community a more popular and financially healthier area in which to live and work. Is On-Line the future of retailing?

While many people shopped on-line during the pandemic, this is the time now to revisit those independent retailers and shop in-store. It is paramount to keep these independents on our High Streets, so now is the time to support them and get your High Street buzzing again.

Those budding entrepreneurs

There are so many independent shops that have started from scratch. For some of these owners, this is a complete career change, so choosing to shop locally encourages them with their business and they are more than happy to deal with your shopping requirements. By supporting your local businesses, you are helping to support local entrepreneurs who grow their business. Examples are The Langport Stores, Langport, Somerset, Edit Lifestyle in Petts Wood, Kent and Aida in Shoreditch, London.



Craft Coop

Creative Download was recently approached by Craft Coop to give a talk/presentation about the importance of Visual Merchandising.

As a social enterprise business, Craft Coop gives over 200 local craftspeople the opportunity to trade in a High Street location. It provides business and social support working with various charities and other organisations both in the shop and offsite, and helps bring vitality to town centres.

Craft Coop have retail shops in Maidenhead, Camberley, High Wycombe and Windsor which opened in April 2021.

The day started in Windsor with a talk/presentation to various members of staff/craftspeople across the four sites. This was held in the Rex Bakery in Windsor with superb coffee, cakes and pastries. The presentation showcased the work of Creative Download, my work with The British Display Society together with some basic advice and tips to ensure a great looking store in terms of Visual Merchandising. Afterwards we walked over the Windsor store where I gave some guidance/hands on training to the craftspeople and gave them the opportunity to work on their own areas within the shop with the tips and advice given in the talk.

The day was a huge success and this gave the craftspeople more confidence in not only selling their products but the way the products are showcased to their potential customer.



CREATIVE DOWNLOAD
VISUAL MERCHANDISING CONSULTANCY

Petter Pharmacy Crouch End

Who would have thought that pharmacy stores can be such interesting places to shop?

Petter Pharmacy in Crouch End, London is a well-established independent pharmacy store, which has been in the High Street for many years. The business also operates several other pharmacy stores in north London as well as Acorn Pharmacy in Berkhamsted, Herts. Over the years, they have built up a great customer base with those customers who prefer to shop in an independent store rather than well known pharmacy/ beauty stores.

When it comes to pharmacy stores, it is not all about drugs, prescriptions and old people! Pharmacy stores have moved into other areas including stocking toiletry brands such as Clarins, Neal's Yard, Clarins, Avene, L'Occitane and Elemis.

Creative Download has been working with this client for several years. "It is a pleasure to work with the owners of this chain of pharmacy stores" says Iain of Creative Download. "They are constantly forward thinking with regards to their windows and store presentation and the extensive range of merchandise they carry. The windows are changed every 5 weeks which keeps the store frontage looking fresh and clean"

Myself and my VM team always receive good feedback and comments while changing over the windows. Given the volume of passing customers both on foot and while driving, it is good to know that the windows are being noticed. With most of our clients, we work 4-6 months in advance, so while the Christmas concept has been designed, ready for installation at the end of October, we are now planning Valentines and Spring 2022.



Petter Pharmacy

At the beginning of August Creative Download installed a new window concept entitled "Hello Summer" into Petter Pharmacy, independently owned pharmacy store in Crouch End.

This followed the earlier very successful, in terms of sales, English beach concept. These two concepts Hello Summer and English Beach Concepts were important to promote Sun Creams, Lotions etc, despite the majority of people having staycations due to the pandemic.

Featuring brands such as Neals Yard, Vichy, Avene, Caudalie and L'Occitane this was a fun concept to design and install. Inspiration came from the bright colourful graphics using props such as cocktail glasses, sun hats, ice cream cones and real beach sand, all props from our display studio. The various floor panels, columns and shelf panels were covered in a rich orange cotton fabric.

Following the installation of these two 5m windows, the feedback has been good with superb customer feedback and increasing sales. It just shows that despite being an independent retailer, first impressions are paramount and Petter Pharmacy know the importance of good store windows and the commercial benefits it brings to the business.



CREATIVE DOWNLOAD
VISUAL MERCHANDISING CONSULTANCY

www.creative-download.co.uk

The Langport Stores

The Langport stores is a business that's been going for almost 115 years, located in Langport Somerset which is the heart of the Somerset levels. The store has had many different guises over the years, everything from a mini department store to a general store and these days a specialist food and health store. John and Jason Rice-Lewis have been at the helm for the past eight years, having moved from London for a new more relaxed life in lovely Somerset.

Over this time they have transformed the store from a health food shop into a specialist food shop concentrating on a plastic free offering and environmentally friendly products and locally sourced food.

They have worked tirelessly to promote the business through a strong online presence and all social media platforms. In 2016 they won the best deli and small food shop in Somerset in the Muddy Stiletto Awards and even had a full page spread in the Daily Telegraph weekend supplement.

"It's certainly been a labour of love" says Jason Rice-Lewis "and it's fair to say that the pandemic while not without its challenges, has been a success story for us as a local independent business" Langport is full of one of kind businesses and has a real buzz to it, so we are very much looking forward to a bumper Christmas in Store.



Joyful Living

joyful
LIVING
by jo griffiths

Joyful Living established in 2016 is located at Drove Orchards, an expanding retail site Living established in 2016 is located at Drove Orchards, an expanding retail site on the rural north Norfolk coast road.

Originally operating from the site in 2009, owner Jo Griffiths rented an old mushroom packing shed selling predominantly vintage homewares combined with some carefully chosen new items.

"It was the height of the Cath Kidston / Shabby Chic revolution, a superb time to be dealing in vintage decorative items. I was able to respond quickly to my customer's needs, spending hours travelling and sourcing items which sold quickly, I realised I was good at it and started to make money very quickly. I traded from the little shed for 6 years until it quite literally was falling around me.

My Landlord Andrew Jamieson, a huge supporter of small business development in such rural areas offered to build me a much larger, brand-new building which I moved into in 2015. With the move, it was time for a rebrand as the previous vintage offering was becoming increasingly less available and more expensive. I decided not just to rebrand, but to embrace my personal style which had evolved away from Shabby interiors to a more neutral, textural palette and opened in early Spring as Joyful Living.

Any rural business is challenging, the most important thing that has ensured continued success has been keeping an eye on the changing market. Like all coastal areas in the U.K. increased visitors and housing development means that we had to become faster with our purchasing as turnover increased. Staying on top of the market and being able to respond quickly has made an enormous change to our business model.

As we approached the Pandemic, we launched our online offering. We were nowhere near ready but launched regardless with just PayPal as a method of payment, it was the best thing we could have done. Once we were live, Worldpay we happy to open a new account and within 2 weeks we were fully functional. I worked 3 full days a week just picking and packing all through both lockdowns, the online business saved our business as I didn't need to use any reserve money to survive.

As I write we are in high summer, and we are trading at an all-time high. We have planned and purchased our Autumn/Winter offering and are really looking forward to the future. I truly believe that an owner operated business that can adapt and change quickly can survive. As a shopkeeper I need remain adaptable, ensure we offer amazing service and stay positive. So many customers mid pandemic were fed up and quite negative about the future, we remain steadfast in our positivity and optimism and that will always be the message we project.

Jo Griffiths
Joyful Living
The New Barn, Drove Orchards, Thornham, Norfolk.
PE36 6LS
Tel. 01485 525714



Yujia Huang

Lecturer in Design Enterprise

VM SPOTLIGHT would like to introduce Yujia Huang, a Lecturer in Design Enterprise at University of Dundee who will be, over a series of articles, sharing her PhD research on design for retail

Yujia Huang is a lecturer in Design Enterprise at DJCAD (Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art & Design) at the University of Dundee. Her professional strength is on transforming design methodology into practicable business innovation strategies. Yujia has worked extensively in the retail industry as operations manager in a Chinese chain of shopping centres before embarking on her academic journey.

Yujia's PhD research focus was to investigate how design thinking could enable city-based retailers to discover new business opportunities and use design strategically to achieve their business mission.

The approach to her study was through understanding transferable consumer behaviour patterns and the social roles that retail stores played in different levels of social interactions. Over hundreds of retail stores both in the east and west were visited and investigated. As the foundation of this study, it categorised four aspects that demonstrated the values of design for retailers:

1. Design for product innovation
2. Design for in-store atmosphere creation and services
3. Design for enhance multidimensional interactions
4. Design for add social and emotional values.

There is much discussion about E-commerce taking over physical retailer's function of selling and buying and on fulfilling the needs of physio pleasure and to some extent socio pleasure. However, to achieve the higher level in socio, psycho, and ideological pleasures, there needs to be multiple channels working together simulating consumers' full senses, which include sight, sound, touch, smell, taste and feel. This is where the physical store is at an advantage.

Design has and is continuing to play, an increasingly important role in delivering business propositions. The holistic application of design addresses all attributes of a product or service offering it physically or virtually or both; what is important though, is that this activity has to be intelligently and carefully orchestrated at both strategic and operational levels of implementation.

In essence, it could be argued that design and design thinking is the manifestation of strategic intent making the intangible values of the organisation visible to a wide variety of both internal and external audiences. The BDS is very interested in the study of the design of retail, VM being part of this. In her upcoming columns, in future editions of the VM Spotlight, Yujia will introduce each of her four design aspects with a case study.



BARBARA CHAPMAN

Visual Merchandising & Styling Consultancy

<https://freelancevisualcreativeconsultant.co.uk>

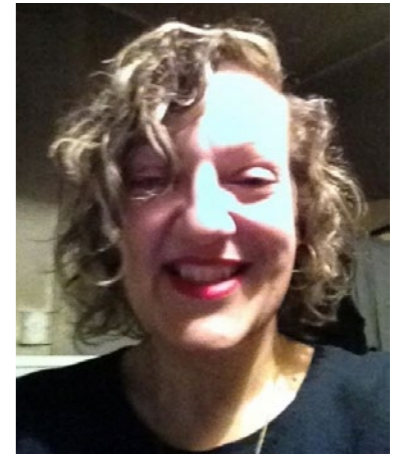
With so many retail businesses struggling during this current pandemic, it's now more important than ever to focus on your brand's visual identity both on and off-line (even though stores are closed, windows can still send a brand message to passing footfall!). This message can also then be re-iterated on-line through cohesive story telling, creative content and styling.

We can help your business to focus on getting your windows, In-store visual merchandising and online profile back to looking their very best after lockdown comes to an end. We can visit you in stores (once allowed) or we also hold on-line training sessions if that currently works best for you and your business.

These can also benefit students missing out on lessons due to the current situation. Or maybe just if extra tutoring and support is required?

We also deliver bespoke training sessions or informative webinars to meet your individual business needs.

We are flexible, pro-active and can work within your budgets when helping to support your business. Now that hopefully there is an end in sight, we are gradually moving to stores re-opening, and customers WILL want to come back into them and enjoy the shopping experience once again. It is up to us to plan how we can do this best and to create the most exciting and inspirational retail and e-tail experiences which they will undoubtedly crave. Retail is not dead, merely evolving. We just have to adapt, so let us help.



Just get in touch to discuss further and call us on 07718334337
or email barbara.chapman@freelancevisualcreativeconsultant.co.uk



Insta @babscreates

Kat MacLennan

VM Consultant



The major advantage that independent retailers have is that they are fast moving and adaptable, testing ideas and making changes that effect sales and customer engagement at once.

Often there are budget restrictions with smaller retailers but this challenge leads to lots of creative thinking, exciting solutions and new ways of working.

I worked with the lovely team at Glassworks London, an independent retailer with three stores in London, a fantastic online presence and lots of big ideas. Together we planned their new store on Shoreditch High Street.

I worked with them to design the space, plan fixture placement and test visual merchandising principles, which would then be rolled out to the other stores in London.

We completed everything in seven weeks from initial planning through to final implementation. A bright exciting store, great product, and a fantastic store team all working together to create an exciting customer experience.



An Independent's Tale of Our Times

London is renowned for its independent retailers. Working for big brands, we would go around to these trendy little shops and get inspiration. They are an important part of the retail ecosystem that often receives little coverage or acknowledgment.

Returning from Shanghai with a niche esoteric range of indigo textiles and accessories, I started selling from a local home shop, Rouge owned by Lei Yang, in Stoke Newington's East London. It was an eclectic boutique with vintage Chinese furniture but was known as a gift shop with too much unprofitable tatt mixed in that lowered the perception of other great product.

Times had changed on the High Street. There was a shift to online shopping. The opening of other gift orientated retailers in the area, that was becoming trendier, was pressuring Rouge to reinvent itself.

Being a Visual Merchandiser, I couldn't resist helping Lei reorganise the product zoning, merchandising and help with the windows. It started to make a visible change to the business and to customers' experience of the store. But the business model was outdated, and Lei was about to move the whole business online with a showroom for the furniture in a basement. That was until the lockdowns of 2020.

It would have been expected that this would be the final push to become an e-commerce only business, but something happened during lock down. Lei had time to think about what she wanted to do for herself and for the community she had been part of for over 15 years. Rouge, instead, did move forward and kept the physical store. Renovating, refocusing the product assortment, and adding an element of community orientated events brought her business back to life. The new store design is a flexible concept that is less static. Overnight the shop can be transformed for an event or product zones added and moved around. Keeping retail dynamic is important for a local retailer with repeat customers so the shop always looks fresh. A whole new kind of customer now comes in - some newcomers that have moved in or visiting this trendy area, and others that have lived there for a long time but 'never noticed the shop' (a nice way of saying, had no desire to go in).

The new look is also communicated on the website. Products are shot instore with the shelving as the background to give the ecommerce photos the same character with a more harmonious and consistent look and feel between on and offline.

The windows are a big draw and help tell the refreshed Rouge story, which is a personal journey of Lei's that she shares with customers through an eclectic lifestyle full of character, authenticity and contemporary, yet timeless, style.

And that is what VM is all about ... story telling.

John Abbate FBDS



Save the High Street

As this issue of VM Spotlight is devoted to the UK High Streets and independents, we wanted to feature a concept that was installed by Creative Download in January 2020 just before the first Covid lockdown in the UK.

This campaign was urging people to shop locally from their High Street and support independent retailers in their neighbourhood.

"This was a simple, and cost-effective campaign" says Iain of Creative Download. "The owners of this independent pharmacy chained wanted to keep their popularity with the local community of Crouch End in North London"

Using hard hitting slogans, news of this window concept spread around North London. It attracted a news reporter from the local newspaper to come and see for himself. In addition to this a newspaper cartoonist came out to create a superb sketch of the shop and the pharmacist's speech bubble just sums it up "It's a prescription to save the High Street"

Despite this concept being installed early in 2020, we feel it was relevant to showcase the importance of valuing local independent retailers and the vital part that High Streets play in many local communities.



Trader's campaign to urge customers to snub online and support local shops

A historic Crouch End pharmacy has launched a shop window campaign to promote independent businesses on the high street as it battles the rise of online shopping.

Petter Pharmacy in The Broadway, which has served the Crouch End community for more than 50 years, has adorned its windows with messages encouraging high street shopping, such as: "Shop local, spend local, enjoy local". The campaign, which will run until Mother's Day on March 22, was kick-started to reach out to Crouch End shoppers and show the value of face-to-face retail, where customers can step foot in a store, interact with staff and, most importantly, buy what they need.

MICHAEL BONIFACE
Michael.Boniface@archant.co.uk

"We decided that this is a nice way of ensuring the high street can survive," said Petter Pharmacy manager Nishal Patel, 32. "We have had brilliant feedback. We were not sure how people were going to react and whether, being in the busy world of London, they would take the time to stop and read the messages, but the amount of feedback we have had is tremendous."

"A lot of people have taken pictures and a lot of people say what a brilliant campaign it is. "We have been amazed by how well the community has taken it on."



Petter Pharmacy's shop window campaign is encouraging Crouch End shoppers to stay local. Picture: PETTER PHARMACY

"It's a reminder to shoppers that we are here and we will continue to serve the local community," he added. Messages on Petter's windows read: "Save the high street"; "See it here, buy it here, keep us here"; "Think out of the box, shop local"; "Great gifts, great service, shop here"; "Grow our community,

shop local". Despite this positive, upbeat messaging, Nishal warns of the huge challenge that online shopping poses to the future vitality and independence of the high street. He said: "In the local area we will have six or seven delivery vans every day so there is massive

competition. "A lot of people ask us to price match, which we always try and do where it's possible, but every year that passes is a tougher year for businesses on the high street. "So this campaign is a nice reminder of how we, as a local business that cares about people, can help."



Christmas in July, at Pret

To keep abreast with what the various London stores are doing in terms of Visual Merchandising, I always ensure that I have regular walks around the main shopping areas of London: Oxford Street, Regent Street, Piccadilly, Knightsbridge, Sloane Square, and the Kings Road.

I was quite staggered when I exited Oxford Street tube station one Saturday afternoon to find fully dressed Christmas garlands around the doorways to every Pret a Manger.

Its ever-popular Christmas sandwich was back in store for to hail this marketing campaign in July, even though the festive season was several months away. It was felt that people had missed them last December due to the Covid Pandemic and the subsequent UK lockdown.

"Every year customers ask us for the Christmas sandwich to return earlier and earlier, and after many customers missed out on having one last year, we've decided to stand by our mission of spreading joy through our food and coffee and bring our iconic Christmas sandwich back early for a limited time this summer," said Clare Clough, the chain's UK managing director.

Pret has also said that 50p from the sale of each Christmas sandwich would be donated to its charitable foundation, which works to combat poverty, hunger, and homelessness.

The hearty club – which contains turkey with a port and orange cranberry sauce, plus herby pork stuffing, baby spinach, mayo, and crispy onion – is available until early August.



There were definitely mixed opinions about this Marketing campaign. Customers had slammed Pret as disrespectful and unprofessional by releasing their range of Christmas sandwiches during the summer, while some customers were threatening to boycott the Brand.

As I write this article in mid-August, there will be mixture of comments from the public as regards Christmas Shops being launched at several of the major stores in London later this month. There is always a bit of rivalry between Harrods and Selfridges to see who can launch their Christmas Shop first. Both stores always launch a 'soft Christmas' to tempt and educate the customer with full Christmas shops opening in late September/early October. At Selfridges the Christmas shop is usually sited on the 4th Floor while at Harrods, their 'soft launch Christmas' is located in The Harrods Shop on the Lower Ground Floor.

From the various key stakeholders in retail that I have spoken to, everyone feels that business will be brisk with the run up to Christmas. Many families in the UK could not spend Christmas together in 2020 due to the covid pandemic so it is felt that this Christmas will be 'bumper Christmas' for retail. The general consensus is that retail will vastly improve in Spring 2022.

So, while Christmas concepts have been designed, ready for installation at the end of October/ early November, many retailers will now planning Valentines and Spring. It will soon be time to visit Christmas World in Frankfurt to gather ideas and source new inspiration for Christmas 2022.

Iain Kimmins FBDS



Marmelo Kitchen

Christmas 2020

In these strange and challenging times within retail, businesses have had to look at things in a very different way, and think out of the box. Marmelo Kitchen in Francis Rd in Leyton is one of those businesses. With the restaurant being quite a small space it would have been difficult to open up after lockdown with social distancing restrictions in place and still exist as a working restaurant. Therefore they have made amazing and forward-thinking changes and thereby still maintaining their close links with feeding the local community. The shop was fitted out with new shelves and racking and the most glorious range of food bought in. Their mouth watering Christmas offer was varied and luxurious and I wanted to reflect that by displaying a cornucopia of their Christmas gift food on a large table in the middle of store. Piling up traditional authentic wicker 'Marmelo' stamped hampers in the middle of the table, with gift food ideas tumbling out and forming neat rows of product radiating from this focal point. We used a huge real pine garland adorned with pea lights in this central display and I worked with a local sign-writer Mia Warner to get her to re-create this garland on the store windows. She beautifully illustrated them in white adding items of gift food available within the store such as mince pies, bottles of wine and fresh bread.



Barbara Chapman FBDS
 Visual Creative Consultant & Stylist
 Associate VM lecturer at LCCA
 07718334337
www.freelancevisualcreativeconsultant.co.uk

British Display Society
Industry
Expert
Interview

Barbara Chapman FBDS

talking to Creative Director **Phill Welch**



Phill Welch

Often my students ask me about the many different paths you can take forward from the visual merchandising industry. Phill is a prime example of how this can be done. With his roots primarily based in visual merchandising, Phill has grown and adapted and become multi skilled in the design, production, art direction and installation of TV & Film sets and Events, and is now running his own very successful East London design agency. So I think it's safe to say that he has certainly made that transition and then some!

I'm interested in how this transition occurred and the path he took to where he is today. I think you'll agree it's an interesting read. So Phill, tell us....

Q1.

Can you give us a brief overview of your career path so far and the brands that you have worked alongside.

A.

I started out waaaay back in 1995 I think. I worked for many different brands...Selfridges, David Jones, Topshop/Topman, Liberty, Urban Outfitters, Jaeger and Aquascutum

And then as a freelancer and now running my own business I've been fortunate enough to work with....

Ascential Brands, Avalon Bars & Events, Badwolf TV, BBC, BFI, Bulgari, Cath Kidston, Chameleon Visual, Channel 4, D & D London, Dreamland Margate, Diamond Creative, Facebook, Google, Gant, James Purdy & Sons, John Lewis, Louise Kennedy, Marcus Watches, Roland Mouret, Schuh London, Skandinavisk, The Italian Embassy, Tiffany & Co and YouTube.

Q2.

What qualities do you feel you have learnt from each of the roles on your career path



Dreamland Margate

journey and how do each of these qualities contribute to the successful business man that we meet today?

A.

I guess its all a massive learning experience for each position. You get to work with some incredibly creative people over the years & each of these brings a quality that down the line helps with ideas, decision making and day to day work practice. For me, its been invaluable.

Q3.

You've worked for many exciting and inspirational brands along the way. Can you tell us which is your favourite project that you've worked on and why?

A.

Ooh, that's a tough one as my work is so varied these days. Be it designing windows, production, film & tv builds & events. Recently I got the opportunity to work with the team at Liberty on a shoot for all new season wallpapers. Working with a store that I had such an amazing experience working for earlier in my career was some what of an emotional experience.



Liberty



Set design for YouTube London

Q4.

What skills and experience did you pick up as a VM which transplanted and contributed to your current work with TV set design and production?

A.
I have always had the idea that I wanted to progress in to what we do now but as VM you're involved in a huge range of creative processes. More problem solving, speed and delivery of build and mostly, how to make it possible with the budget you have.

Q5.

Are there any areas of design and production that you would still like to explore and haven't worked on yet?

A. Film really....This year we're venturing into it and as I'm writing this we're in full-on pre build for our second. Bizarre times but great!

Q6.

How did your VM experiences in Sydney differ from those in the London stores that you had worked for here? Do you feel there were different processes and parameters which equipped you with better skills going forward in your career?

A.
I left Selfridges after being there for six years and at that time the UK market was way ahead of Sydney. It was another fantastic learning experience & great to have the opportunity as a backpacker to work at such a prodigious store was definitely a highlight!

Q7.

How did your transition work between VM and set design & production.

A.
After I went freelance, I began to work more on press show set ups and was eventually handed my first design, production and install for John Lewis. They wanted to build a factory themed show based at an event space in soho. Great fun!

Q8.

What changes do you see to your industry since Covid and do these have implications for it going forward? Whether these be positive or negative?

A.
All of my work stopped overnight back in Feb 2020...Retail, events & tv...It was one of those 'will i ever work again' moments. I missed out on government help due to being the sole director of my business, so it was an anxious time. Thankfully tv commercials started up again in July which threw us a lifeline and we haven't looked back since.

Q9.

I think we are all positively effected by really good tutors in the early part of our lives. They can effect our path in life and make such a massive difference. Do you feel you had this, who were they and in what way did those tutors help you?

A.
Massively! ...Carrolyn Eastman & Denise Anderson at Ware College had a belief in me for some reason but it worked and i'm forever grateful for their patience & guidance all those years ago.



In store prop for Gorrillaz/ Fred Perry launch

Q.10

What does the future hold for the Phill Creates Studio?

A.

We're on our second film of the year as I mentioned above. We have designed and produced a VIP area at All Points East happening next weekend and as the events industry has started up again, we'll be busy with our clients on these. Obviously Xmas projects are coming up too, as they are in the design stage as this goes to print. It's looking good!

I just want to thank Phill for taking time out of his busy schedule to talk to us about his career. I think you'll agree that is an interesting career journey that he's been on. We look forward to seeing more Film & TV sets designed by himself on the big screen!

Phill Welch

<http://www.phillcreatesstudio.co.uk/>

Article by Barbara Chapman FBDS Visual Creative Consultant & Stylist & Associate VM lecturer

07718 334337

Atkins Pharmacy

Christmas 2020

Throughout this pandemic I guess pharmacies are one of those rare businesses that are still doing very well. Bustling busy places where people come in search of help or advice about their health from the pharmacist. To reflect this, the brief I was given by Atkins Pharmacy was that whatever I designed for their store Christmas was to be 'warm and traditional and welcoming'. I decided on a traditional theme of 'Let it snow'. We would use traditional snow-tipped natural looking pine garlands adorned with apples, berries and bright white pea lights for both the windows and in-store. The windows would showcase star-topped Christmas trees and a snowdrift recreated in white vinyl, through which you could still peer through to view the Christmas gift boxes displayed in the window showcases. In-store I thought I would also tie in this snow theme and add some seasonal humour by designing 'floor talkers' to place throughout the store depicting footprints in the snow. These floor talkers had a dual purpose, as not only did they give some personality to the in-store but they were also a great way of ensuring customers followed the Covid- safe one-way system of entering and exiting the store.

Barbara Chapman FBDS
Visual Creative Consultant & Stylist
Associate VM lecturer at LCCA
07718334337
www.freelancevisualcreativeconsultant.co.uk



The future of retail Store layout

NORTHBANKS

In a world where e-commerce is the predominant method for Transactional shopping, the physical Store becomes the focus for the Relational - it's the hub for brands and brand followers to meet.

With a few examples already scattered around the globe today, a huge shift that consumers should expect is the physical Store becoming more of a marketing experience, where customers can learn more about the brand and buy exclusive merchandise usually unavailable online.

With budgets shifting focus from IRL to an ever-growing digital, Stores must be able to become 'content houses.' To house such vast expectations, the open-plan layout we've all become accustomed to must be scrapped in favour of a curiosity-inducing multi-room design with elements such as hubs, meeting spaces, events, digital marketing, filming and photography more intrinsic to the store layout. Having already started implementing these fundamental differences, Northbanks' clients are future-proofing their retail spaces and ensuring the greatest ROI.

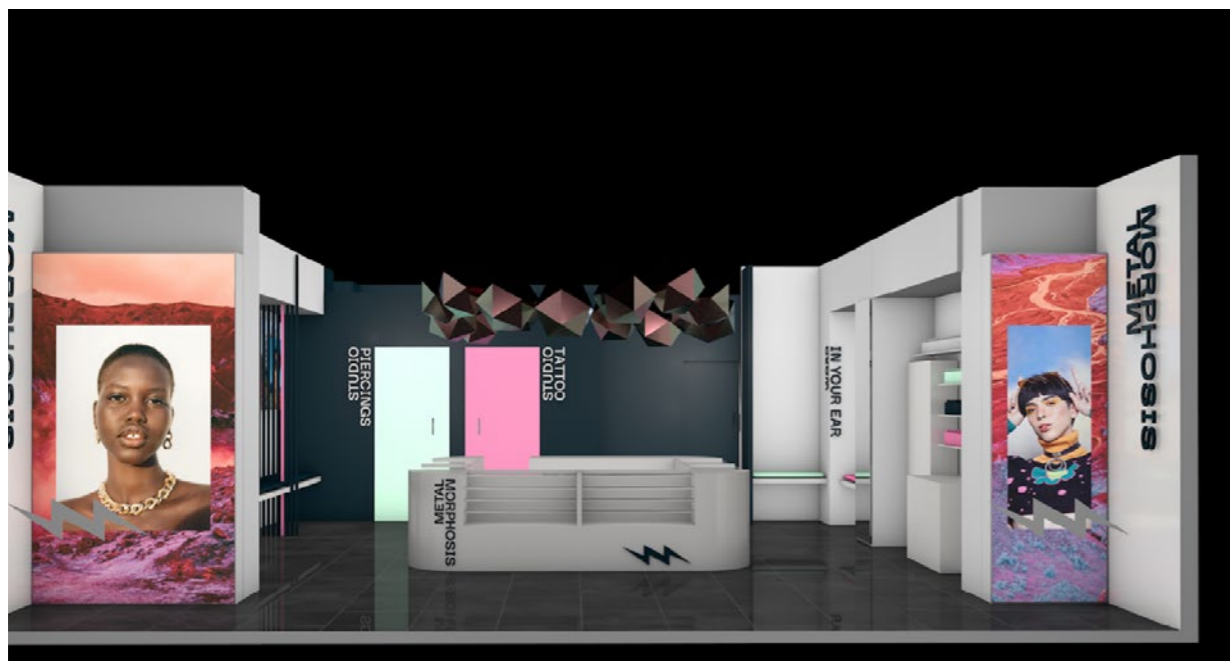
Customers need exploration and curiosity to be truly immersed. The recent Anya Hinmarch multi-store takeover in Chelsea, London is a prime example of a brand understanding the evolving purpose of physical retail. The theatre of these recent pop-ups have not only increased sales, but created content and press coverage that spans much further than the fashionable streets of Chelsea. That same excitement, curiosity (and PR) could not have been achieved through a shopping centre style layout.

With huge investments being made to make online shopping more immersive, it stands to reason that IRL stores must make the same change. The future of retail is certainly this and to stay relevant brands must not be scared, but invest and adopt these changes.

www.northbanks.co.uk

+44(0)2079 938066

hello@northbanks.co.uk



From Diversity to Fantasy

HOL Group re imagine their collections for Autumn 21

After what felt like an eternity of lockdowns, restrictions and general gloom, our newly discovered freedoms make a welcome return as we aim to get back to some sort of normality. The need to hit the refresh button within many areas of retail is tangible if businesses want to stay relevant, and so it's no surprise many other areas within the industry feel the same. HOL Group are no exception. Taking the opportunity to re-engage with its customers once more, and hot on the heels of Farringdon Youth, launched back in the Spring, HOL have turned their attention to re-imagining two of its main mannequin ranges as part of its 25th year anniversary celebrations - and ready for the new season ahead. The Groups popular Farringdon mannequin collection were first to get an updated treatment. Entitled 'Farringdon Realistic' mannequins are presented in a variety of sizes and ethnicities.

"We wanted to show just how versatile this collection can be," said Anthony Rendall-Davis, Creative Director. "Representation and body positivity have always been important to me within our industry. You hear so often about representing plus size however, many times this actually falls short. Having the opportunity to develop this range from the usual size 8 to a size 20 was crucial for me" Perfectly positioned to reflect the trend for 'realism' within mannequin displays Farringdon Realistic demonstrates what can be achieved. Rendall goes on to say "We intentionally used the same female face for three of the poses as we wanted to demonstrate just how different these can look with different skin tones, wigs and make up" The move was a hit, with several major retailers taking inspiration from the shoot - expect to see elements of Farringdon Realistic in stores across the UK later this year.



Next in line was Piccadilly - originally launched in late 2019, the dynamic collection of mannequins has drama at its core. "It felt like we only just presented Piccadilly to the world and then we all went into the pandemic" said Rendall Davis. "The opportunity to re-invent them in a highly stylised way was perfect for setting a new optimistic mood post lockdown" He goes on to say, "I didn't want the mannequins to be too literal, the shoot needed to be more conceptual than that." HOL worked closely with Peluca Studios for the wigs and make up in what has culminated as a perfect collaboration. The result - sees Piccadilly as a remarkable blend of coquettish kitsch with serious attitude - a fusion of Japan's Kyoto Geisha and rebellious punk. Both mannequin ranges are available to view by appointment at HOL's Kings Cross showroom, whilst a newly designated mannequin site hol-mannequins.com will go live in September showcasing the brands entire mannequin portfolio to include bespoke and sustainable options.

H.O.L

group



It's clear to see that as 2021 unfolds, HOL's Silver anniversary year is shaping up to be golden one.

Improving the customer experience

Here are two examples of before and after work by Zaida de Las Heras. in Santander, in the North of Spain. We changed the height of some walls to improve visibility and exterior light. Some decorative items were replaced making the whole area more interesting. We created new zones with the corridors wide and free of obstacles and tried to create an atmosphere in each space, making it feel comfortable.. In short, we improved the customer experience.



Liza Amlani

The Merchant Life



For retailers and retail enthusiasts wanting the insider perspective of all things retail.

Now let's talk shop.

What is the purpose of the physical store? If we can buy everything we need online, why do retailers really need a brick and mortar space?

Finding the perfect location, hiring the right staff, getting inventory levels right, finding the right store fixtures, enabling visual merchandising, and so on.

It's a lot of work.

So, we pose the question:

What is the point of having a physical store?

If retailers think we are on our way back to pre-pandemic retailing, they are very wrong.

E-commerce sales continue to rise and digital shopping is clearly not going anywhere.

E-com is here to stay. There is no doubt about that.

It will also take a lot more to get a customer into the physical store than ever before. Online stores are open 24/7 and product comes right to your door. Your bedroom is your fitting room and you don't have to worry about anyone judging your clothing choices.

You don't have to drive to the mall, look for parking, dodge other shoppers, and sift through racks of clothes with COVID-19 protocols still intact.

Such a nightmare.

So why have a physical store?

The store gives retailers and brands a space to connect with the customer in a way that digital can't.

It is the heart of a brand.

And it's your money maker.

So let's pause for a minute and shift back to the rise of e-commerce. Are we saying that if you are a digitally native brand with no physical stores that you won't make a profit?

Not at all.

In fact, as e-com has surged, customers are still expected to make most of their purchases in-store.

The caveat?

Many purchases are digital driven in-store purchases.

Even digital native brands are taking the leap offline and there is a reason for it.



The physical store are where you drive delight. With the right investment and training in brand ambassadors that take customers through their entire shopping journey, from online to offline and across channel seamlessly.

Stores are a crucial piece in the retail puzzle.

And we need great people in the stores.

Thinking of the customer at the center of the retail end-to-end will get teams more involved with each other working towards the same goal:

- Serving the customer with the best product and service.
- Creating and designing product with the customer in mind along every step of the way.
- Collaborating with them.
- Talking to them...invest in them as they invest in you.

All stores have a purpose if they serve the customer with what they want, at the right time and in the right place.

The only way to do this is to be customer obsessed.

Store Spotlight

Cheerfully Made, located in Almonte, Ontario, had to change the way they managed the customer experience offline to online through the pandemic, store closures, and an increased emphasis on digital. Creating a seamless customer journey across channel with the very best service is what kept the sunny store afloat.

"We actively respond to comments and messages and make a concerted effort to engage with our digital audience so they can get that small shop experience however they are interacting with our brand. These efforts not only make these people we've never met in person feel invested in our company, but they also make our job feel so much more rewarding."

Emily Arbour, Leader of Cheer
www.cheerfullymade.com



You can find Liza on all social platforms under the @theMerchantLife and follow her on LinkedIn or RetailWire for her POV on all things retail from a retail insider.

Newsletter Link: www.themerchantlife.com

Website: www.retailstrategygroup.com

YouTube: www.youtube.com/c/TheMerchantLife

Pairings Wine Bar in York



We have a great selection of wonderful independent businesses here in York, many of which I've worked with over the years. Pairings wine bar is just one of them, and they approached us one year to ask for some Christmas sparkle.

However, I wasn't going to add our 'usual' Christmas garlands as this bar is quite contemporary and needed something different - I wanted to include something more bespoke and relevant to their business. So, taking my lead from their branding and customer base, I bought vine garlands and, of course fairy lights to add that Christmas cheer.

This was such a success I was asked to make it a permanent feature by adding to it. Trying to steer away from the typical 'Wine Bar of the 80's look', we added a rustic trellis, tree branches and a load more garlands - changing the vines from rustic to green as the seasons progressed. We really wanted to add the WOW factor and break up the rather plain, cold-feeling ceiling which these vines succeeded in doing, giving the whole wine bar a really, cosy, welcoming feel.

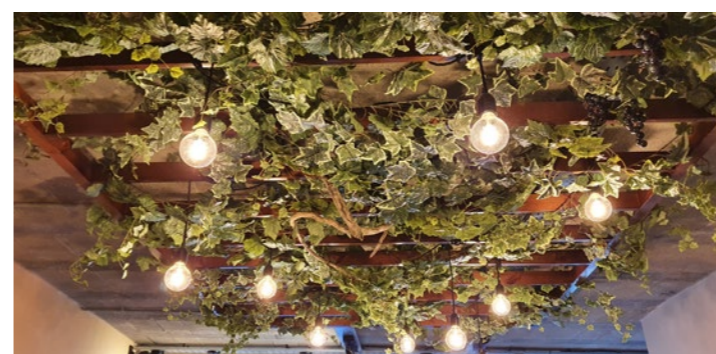
During the second lockdown Pairings had a refurbishment as the décor needed refreshing and the service area needed updating too. Part of the redesign included new stylised grids crafted by joiners for an even more contemporary look - still with the vines and a few grapes but with the pendant lights too.

You'll see from the photographs how designs evolve over time - just one of the things I help you through in my new online course.

"Thank you so much, we're really pleased with it! The trellis gives such a warm cosy feel!"

"When I walked in and felt 'Wow!' this place is so welcoming, warming and cosy!"

Helen Goodwin FBDS
BDS Vice Chair
Made You Look!



Paul Brooks is a Great ROI



ROI, we think of that as Return On Investment. Paul Brooks, a retail consultant who has started a series of webinars and Masterclasses with Jane Rome named, Retail Outside In, shares his and the experience of his podcast guests in retail. The BDS had the opportunity to chat with Paul lately about his views of retail and ROI

We're at the start of a huge retail renaissance, but people are mistakenly assuming legacy stores closing are a sign that retail as we know it is over. What makes it different this time is the speed and scale of the disruption. The truth is, retail is being led kicking and screaming into the digital age. Everything seems to be pointing towards an imminent retail apocalypse. High street stores are closing in their droves even before the pandemic hit, and the resulting freefall is causing widespread despair.

What we're seeing is a retail renaissance – a transition period from old retail to new. Retailers cannot afford to be complacent and just assume the old model of thousands of people streaming into a store will still stand. Even after other areas start to return to normal. It's time to rethink, rejig and repurpose. Physical retail has been around for three thousand years and is clearly not going anywhere just yet. It's merely shedding its skin and taking on a new role. This is the perfect once in a generation opportunity to have a complete rethink. The next retail revolution is here.

For Jane and I having both worked in the retail industry for many years and loved every second of it, we know how important it is to have mentors and like-minded people around you who you can turn to for help and support. This has never been more important than it is now with the pace of change we are seeing. I have been an entrepreneur in the retail space while Jane Rome my co-founder has worked with Blue Chip Plcs as well as owner led smaller businesses. Between

us, we have gathered a wealth of knowledge and experience that we with the help of a unique network of retail suppliers, service providers and exclusive band of "insiders" would like to pass onto the next generation of retailers and that is the premise of ROI.

ROI is an online subscription service for retailers, offering access to retail experts, support from a like-minded community and the opportunity to upskill, prepare for, and be part of, The Retail Revolution. ROI encourages networking and relationship-building amongst its members, to build a community which supports, educates, collaborates, and guides retailers at all stages of their careers.

How will the changing role of the store change the role of design?

The store is still the most important touch point between consumer and product. The right interaction could create a lifetime of loyalty.

To survive and stand out, vendors and retailers must understand the multichannel nature of today's consumers which will allow retailers to then redefine the purpose of the store or fleet of stores. The modern store doesn't just exist to facilitate transactions but to allow customers to engage with products, develop loyalty, spread brand awareness, and offer memorable experiences, as well as serve pragmatic functions such as online distribution and fulfilment capabilities.

Here are 4 functions and strategies to consider

1) The store as a service touchpoint

In the multichannel experience the store is one of a handful of points of interaction, which could also include social media and e-commerce.

The store is by far the most important touch point, – one that grants the retailer all the control. It's an opportunity for brands to showcase not

only their products but also their values and sense of aesthetic.

While brands and retailers can draw in web-savvy customers through a well-run e-commerce site, it's usually brick and mortar stores that make the most lasting impressions – and can make someone a lifetime customer.

Exceptional customer service can even further heighten a customer's positive sentiments for the brand. How a customer feels when they shop is almost more important than what they are shopping for.

2) The store as a brand billboard or media

A store that is well located with good visibility – becomes an acquisition tool and advertising medium. The brand is able to cut down on online acquisition spend because the billboard effect of stores is able to complement Instagram or Twitter ads in the minds of consumers.

This is especially crucial a crucial value proposition considering the rising cost of digital ads.

As the store outgrows its function, it is merely just a point of distribution. Metrics like sales per square foot or foot for fail to capture other types of returns on investment and physical retail, such as customer acquisition and even customer impressions, a term used in digital marketing to describe the number of times and that is encountered by use.

The physical store of the future is a non-stop, running advertisement for what makes a brand unique.

The store is there to reinforce brand perception to introduce an induction to customers to the brand. Some cases even act as a broadcast site for the brand and create media experiences within the store.

The store could also be a travelling billboard in the form of pop-ups, allowing the brand to reach new customers without committing to a lease or risk of being a fad in today's fast-moving ecosystem of fashion and culture.

3) The store as a community hub

The store can be a hub for a retailer's multifaceted outreach to customers.

It can create an emotional bond between the customer. Community is an important tactic that can bring shoppers together into a store.

Promoting events from cooking and crafting to wine clubs and book clubs helps garner a loyal base of consumers for whom the store itself and the social activities are held and become a primary draw. Many savvy retailers for instance design their stores with their respective local communities in mind.

4) The store as immersive entertainment

It's true that consumers today need ever-compelling reasons to go out and shop when everything is available online at home.

The goal is to surprise and delight, but this can be difficult when every store opens a café or an immersive relaxation room. The key is to make the customer feel special.

Other ways to create an experience include food and beverage options or exhibit-type spaces that offer customers a break from shopping.

Constant changes the key we have to learn how to hit refresh.

but brands and retailers should be wary of prioritising entertainment over service. Ultimately, the most important experience is still customer service.

You can have all the entertainment you want to none of it matters if the basics on their customer service are not covered.

www.retailoutsidein.com
paul@retailoutsidein.com

Yarnton Home & Garden, Oxford

Established and run as an independent family run business some 50 plus years previously, the brief for the new VM team at Yarnton Home & Garden was to create a new look destination centre which would increase its appeal to a wider customer base, ideally to attract a younger family demographic whilst retaining the all-important current loyal customers and garden-based business. Tall order!

With a huge Blue Diamond Garden Centre – (the second largest garden centre group in the UK and Channel Islands) 15 minutes up the road in Bicester, and several high-end Garden centres in the Cotswolds, which all do what they do very successfully, we knew as a small independent, we had to establish ourselves with a progressive new USP.

Having inherited a very masculine grey and black urban inspired retail space, myself and my VM team took the opportunity to embrace change, taking inspiration for the 'look and feel' for the refurbishment from our brand- new state of the art Play Barn – the 'Magic Garden'

By using the more usual 'natural' rural rustic look as a theme with appropriate placement rather than the overall scheme, we developed a lighter contemporary feel for the store based on our more urban location closer to Oxford, rather than the open farmland of the Cotswolds, and this gave us our point of difference.

Story Telling is Key:

One of the most challenging and enjoyable aspects of our work is to re-invent what fixtures we have: – particularly at a time when the world is looking to repurpose and recycle.

Addressing environmental concerns and sourcing new sustainable products is a core message for the business.

Our visual presentation had to clearly reflect the changes too, and it has been particularly interesting to see, and monitor, the reaction to a more contemporary style of VM, working with both traditional garden centre products along with the more design-led products we were starting to introduce.

Nearly three years on, we have just about completed the daunting task of re-inventing the shop floor (on two levels), undertaking a major refit of the 250+ cover café and restaurant, refurbishing a busy Plant area, building a new 'Garden Room' for outdoor living, and now with the demise in February of the last of the concession based fashion businesses, have recently introduced a brand new 5000 sq.ft Home & Lifestyle section. This has not only really helped us to establish our mixed product offer for the centre, but also our own 'eclectic', colourful and contemporary style of VM, which we aim to keep consistent throughout the store.

This award- winning Centre is now gaining recognition in the industry and the VM Team, Jo Simonds and Jason Brown have recently been elected as Associate Members of the British Display Society and Celia Leeson-Cox, in recognition of her years of experience becomes a Fellow.

Celia Leeson-Cox
VM Manager

Yarnton Home & Garden, Sandy Lane, Yarnton, Kidlington, Oxon.
OX5 1PA

Tel: 01865 372124 www.yarntonhomegarden.co.uk



Willow & Stone - Falmouth

At Willow & Stone we specialise in selling quality Period Ironmongery to people taking on extraordinary projects restoring their beloved homes as well as designers and architects furnishing hotels and projects around the globe.

I set up Willow & Stone in 2005 after leaving the Architectural salvage trade in London. I wanted to follow a dream of living by the sea back in Falmouth, Cornwall where I'd studied a few years earlier that an early online presence facilitated.

We first set up the e-commerce website and a year later, after plenty of set-backs, we opened our first shop in a pretty corner off Falmouth's harbour, 3 years later a second shop followed as we embraced unusual stationery, cards and prints. We quickly outgrew these premises and in 2012 moved to our current location up the road, a large double fronted store with everything housed under one roof.

Eventually our website moved into offices directly over the road and finally we have some space to grow and be creative on a street and within a community that we love and feel very much a part of. Our window displays attract interest far and wide and I am very fortunate that my wonderful team includes many ex Falmouth University creatives who are only too happy to let their imaginations run wild!

Visit our Falmouth store to view our eclectic mix of homeware products which include everything from ironmongery to lighting, books to stationery and plant pots to puzzles. Our collections are unique and carefully considered with classic styling and long lasting quality at their core.

Sarah Willshaw
Willow & Stone

www.willowandstone.co.uk

Willow & Stone, 18 Arwenack Street
Falmouth, Cornwall. TR11 3JD



CREATING NEW CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES THROUGH INTERIOR DESIGN

Claire White, Specification Consultant, Antalis considers how the clever use of substrates can revitalise a retail environment.

It's an exciting time in retail! Due to recent events, physical stores need to re-ignite their individuality, and in turn, their connection to their customers. Moving forward, precautionary measures and customer reassurance will need to continue, but adding brand identity and style back into stores is a breath of fresh air, which highlights their existence on the high street and provides a chance to show off something completely new and exciting for customers to experience.



Retailers have been given the opportunity to reflect and reconsider what their new future should incorporate. The overall 'look and feel' of physical stores will need to be reconsidered, together with integrated and contactless technology, but it is now a much wider opportunity to demonstrate an overall instore experience that provides a reason for customers to keep coming back.

Consumers want to connect with brands, their views and what they stand for, so it's now more important than ever to provide stores that reflect exactly that. Allowing opportunities to incorporate events, demonstrations, additional services and wider ranges are all fantastic ways to encourage a physical experience that online purchasing simply can't provide.

Of course, that's not to say online is no longer important, it is! But, brands need to demonstrate the value of both online shopping and a physical need for stores in a seamless way, working together to offer a true brand experience. This has been demonstrated in the number of online retailers who are now opening brick and mortar stores to offer a 'try before you buy' culture for large household items and cosmetics.

One of the most important new considerations for retail is around brand transparency of ethical issues. In the physical store this can be done creatively through their instore fit out, tone of voice and by demonstrating a complete and joined-up approach to everything they do.

Comfort and sustainability in retail design

Creating a comfortable and welcoming in-store environment goes without saying, but over and above, customers want to shop in an environment that can recreate an extension of home. There are lots of ways to implement this in-store - updating your interior decor frequently is one of the easiest options, as customers want to see regular change whilst still feeling a connection with their 'home'.

Incorporating coffee shops, hairdressers, beauty services or even bars, in which to relax and enjoy spending time with family and friends, helps to build brand loyalty and offers an additional reason for people to come out onto our high streets. Real living spaces will become increasingly popular in retail environments, including more seating to allow customers to savour their time spent in store.

This trend needs to be balanced with the biggest movement of the decade – sustainability. For several years, eyes have been on retail with an expectation for them to lead the way in how the function and are perceived by their customers in terms of sustainability. The trend on the high street is to keep things very natural and there will be a greater demand to see raw, unfinished textures such as concrete, stone, brick, cork and wood incorporated alongside earthy colours and key messaging that supports sustainability.



Selecting the right substrates

The use of the right substrate, is therefore important, whilst also incorporating the need for change, is absolutely key. However, all of this change is needed at a time many businesses are also looking at ways to save on costs. One of the best and most cost-effective ways to achieve a change is via the use of printable interior

decoration, which is easy to apply and update. Antalis has a growing range of substrates covering everything from display to interior design, including interior films, wallpapers, floor and window graphics, textiles and sheet materials.

Used imaginatively, the Antalis interior decoration range can help to create experimental, easily changeable and inspirational new spaces for consumers to interact, experience and enjoy, and at a relatively low cost. The possibilities to incorporate printable materials are endless!

Papers - Packaging - Visual Communication

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SUSTAINABILITY THE TRUTH



There are many claims to sustainability - we have ours independently tested. Our solutions balance unit cost whilst incorporating high eco credentials.



CREATIVE CHOICE WITHOUT THE COST



We see no reason that either Made to Measure or Ready to Wear mannequins should mean compromising the creative flair of your brand.



REFRESH YOUR BRANDS VISION



Now is the time to reinvigorate your retail displays. Our team ensures a complete all-round service before during and after your purchase.



DISCOVER THE FUTURE

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ADD+

Brand Awareness@POS

ADD+ has recently launched a new product looking to fill the gaps between large multi-national retailers and those smaller stores, both of which we have worked with and have experience in.

Featuring ease of access and readily available content ADD+ is looking to give smaller and independent retailers an edge which will help their store space compete with larger name brands in a retail climate which is heavily influenced by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, in a retail climate where cost is everything, and ease of access to our mainstay products and services seem to be out of reach for your average mom-and-pop corner store.

YOU as a VM Service provider can make use of these services too, to cater to smaller independent retailers! we handle the design on a monthly basis - you handle the production and sell to your end user, simple! Let us handle the nitty gritty so you can focus on your bigger clients!

Simply scan the QR code below and get tap on the "GET HUGE VALUE" button to get started



Alternatively, Visit:
linktr.ee/ADDPlusZA

WWW.ADDPLUS.CO.ZA @ SHAWN@ADDPLUS.CO.ZA @ADDPLUS_ZA

With over 20 years worth of experience in the field of retail window displays and visual merchandising, ADD+ has the experience and know-how YOU need to drive your services to the next level.

With a track record boasting some of the largest names in the retail industry such as Nike, Adidas, Mont Blanc and MANY more, right down to helping local corner stores owned by family businesses with small capital drive sales, we have got the edge which will drive you forward!

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WHAT IT MORE

Looking for a career in Visual Merchandising?

A successful career in visual merchandising and display design starts with a certificate of achievement awarded by the British Display Society

BDS Certificate in Display & Visual Merchandising



The marketplace for qualified display design practitioners is an expanding one. Retail, showrooms and museums are the obvious places in which to practice your skills. Your expertise will be needed for so many sectors - Retail, showrooms, museums, online retail, pop ups, social media, styling, events, press days, product launches, exhibitions, hotels, duty-free shops at airports and seaports, theme parks, visitor attractions, and prop-making for video, films, TV and the theatre!

The skills of a British Display Society trained and qualified practitioner are transferable to anywhere in the world, online or offline!

Visual merchandising can often be misjudged as just a way of 'making product pretty' but by the end of this course you will fully understand what an integral part VM has in a brands visual presence, its identity and relationship with its customer and ultimately its commercial success!



BDS Certificate in Display & Visual Merchandising

Distance learning

The course is delivered online via our dedicated website and consists of 10 modules and corresponding assignments. There is no pressure to complete each module at certain dates, but the full course must be completed within two years from your date of enrolment, which is more than adequate time, with the average completion time being 6 months.

No fixed start date

The course can be progressed in your own time and at your own pace with a tutor assigned to you for support, when required. There are no term dates for this course, each student starts as soon as payment is received, whether payment is made in full or by standing order.

Flexible payment options

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- 10 payments of £55 per month = £550 total

Course includes;

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- Brand Identity
- Designing
- Visual merchandising - roles and techniques
- Visual merchandising in detail
- Window Display
- Mannequins
- Signage and graphics



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DISPLAY PROPS · STORE LIGHTING

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By becoming a Corporate member you will receive unlimited FREE advertising on our Social Media sites along with advertising in our VM Spotlight E-magazine which has a worldwide distribution of 1.9m people in the Retail and VM industry. It's a great way to network with others in the business, advertise and showcase your goods and services, which in turn will help the BDS promote and support VM.

The BDS is also a registered charity with the aim of promoting standards in education. We would welcome your contribution to support and maintain standards in VM and related professions.

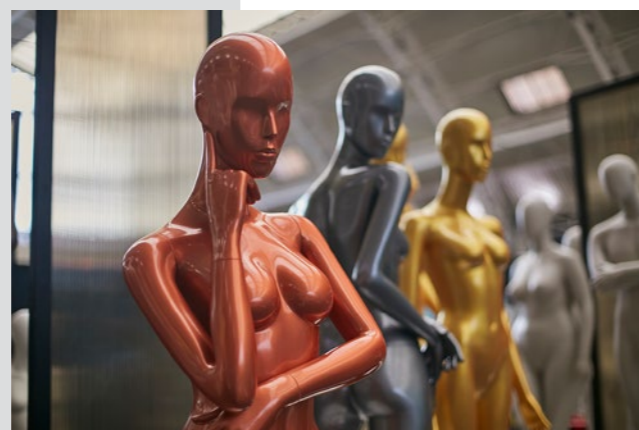
Let's keep retail and visual merchandising alive!

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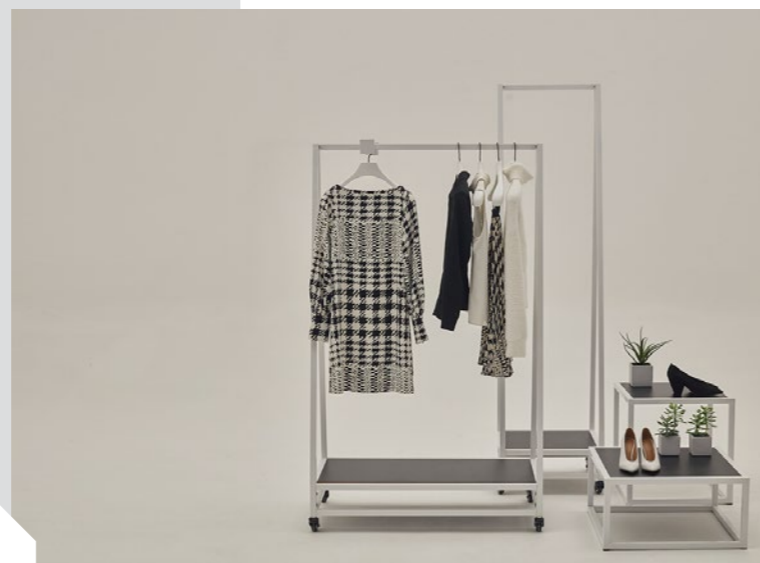
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BY: HOL GROUP
Piccadilly female mannequin range shown at
the VM & Display Show 2019



BY: HOL GROUP
Westminster furniture range which is
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**Are you working
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Is it time to push your
Visual Merchandising Career?**

Membership has the following benefits:

- The opportunity to network with other VM Members
- Your details will be added onto the BDS database if you are seeking freelance work
- A right to attend and vote at the BDS Annual General Meeting
- The opportunity to join the BDS National Council
- The opportunity to have your work published in the VM Spotlight magazine
- The opportunity to have your work published on our Facebook page
- Enhance your professional standing with letters after your name!
- Use of the BDS Logo on your CV and in your Portfolio

So why not join The British Display Society TODAY!

Annual fee: £20 for Student membership

Annual fee: £40 if you are working in the VM industry or related professions



CREATIVE DOWNLOAD

VISUAL MERCHANDISING CONSULTANCY

PRESS RELEASE

Helping retailers take full advantage of successful Visual Merchandising



Given these unprecedented and challenging times, retailers must ensure their shops/stores are visually spectacular with great window displays, store layout with superb visual merchandising to create retail theatre for your customers.

Customers want to feel that shopping in your store is a pleasurable experience. They want to be excited by the range of merchandise on offer. The merchandise needs to be presented in a way that brings quality and style. The merchandise needs to represent the 'must have' purchase.

Our experience is based on a commitment to the highest standards, delivering the ultimate retail theatre for your customers through a hands-on approach, together with a team of trained visual professionals. Visual Merchandising is more than being creative. It is a commercial driver for your business.

The Creative Download VM team create exciting shops/stores driving sales through Visual Merchandising, Store Layout, Fixtures, Product Categories/Product Adjacencies, Signage & Ticketing and Retail Theatre.



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Alison Blatcher ABDS

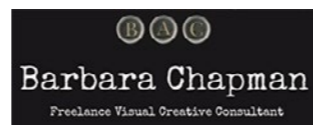
alisonblatcher@hotmail.com



Verve Arvola ABDS

A Visual merchandiser entrepreneur, who feels passionate about retail and sees visual merchandising as a form of art.

www.skissi.com



Barbara Chapman FBDS
VM Consultant

Highly experienced in the creative, project management, installation and styling of Windows, In-store VM, Press days, Photoshoots, Product launches, Pop ups and New store openings. Coaching, Training & Lecturing.

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MDN Display and Design Ltd
Michelle De Neys FBDS
Visual Merchandising, Window Design & Install, Events, Exhibitions, Creative Consultancy, Graphic Design & Viny

www.mdn-vm.co.uk



Mags McAlpin FBDS

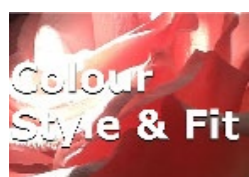
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Iain Kimmins FBDS

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Silvia Chialli FBDS

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Liz Johnston FBDS

My 40yrs experience covers styling windows, interiors and venues Kent, Surrey, Sussex and Greater London

E-mail: liz@strictlyvisualdisplay.co.uk



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Kat MacLennan FBDS

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www.madeyoulookmadeyoustare.co.uk



I am a Retail Merchandiser for an opportunistic buying platform grocery company in the USA.

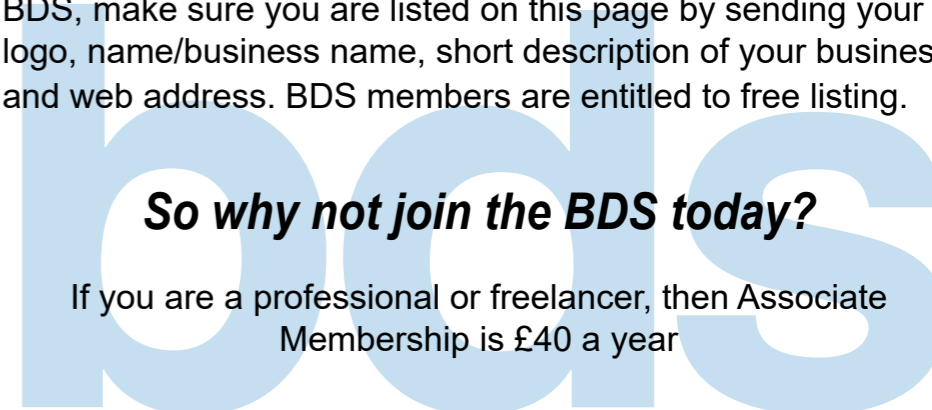
groceryoutlet.com

Are you a member and not listed here?

If you are a VM Consultant / Freelancer and a member of the BDS, make sure you are listed on this page by sending your logo, name/business name, short description of your business and web address. BDS members are entitled to free listing.

So why not join the BDS today?

If you are a professional or freelancer, then Associate Membership is £40 a year





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Addplus is a world class visual interpreter of ideas into retail, with 20 years of experience in creating knock-out campaigns through window displays and in-store VM solutions. If you can think it - we can create it!

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Jane Le Bon FBDS

We provide all aspects of VM from concept design to installation worldwide.

Services: VM, Windows, Events, Photographic styling, Press shows.

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From shop fronts to window displays to interior visual merchandising, product layout and focal points around the store, Creative Download will ensure that creativity is balanced with the commercial requirements of your business.

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Luga Baruga specialises in the manufacture and installation of ideas in the physical world. Our DNA make up boasts many years of experience in visual merchandising, brand communication, props and retail installations.

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Retail Design Agency
12 Melcombe Place, London .
Postcode - NW1 6JJ.
Tel: 020 3598 3138

www.themadpeople.com



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<http://hol-group.com>



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Liz Johnston FBDS
Kent, Surrey, Sussex and Greater London

My 40yrs experience covers styling windows, interiors and venues

Mobile: +44 (0) 7775 725435
E-mail: liz@strictlyvisualdisplay.co.uk



VM and Events

Specialising in the skills of visual merchandising and events offering services to assist in presenting and promoting of products by combining environment and space into stimulating displays to encourage the sale of product.
The Old Coach House, Garden Lane, Chester CH1 4en

www.vmandeventsltd.co.uk

bds



Our top tips for Visual Merchandising

A simple way to create an interesting and captivating window display is to choose a theme. For example, seasonal themes, whether it be Halloween, Christmas, Winter, Spring or even by tying it into a local event, can be a simple way to create attention-grabbing and popular displays. This will allow you to tell a story that takes your customers on a journey, tuning into their emotions and converting them into meaningful experiences and ultimately sales. Whatever theme you decide to pick, be bold, as you want your display to be eye-catching, even from a distance!

Another top tip is to ensure your window display is balanced. For example, if there are light and dark items, then start the display at the bottom with the darker items, getting gradually lighter with height, to ensure the display is not top heavy. When you feel happy that you have created the ideal window display, try to then approach it as a customer would. Ask yourself, does the theme follow through? Is there a story? Is it bold? Is it creative? Is it balanced?

Once you are satisfied your criteria's are met, it is time to test your display and begin to collect observational customer data. Through trial and error you will be able to conduct ongoing research into various display factors whilst analysing your data, allowing you to find out which themes, stories, colours and layouts were most successful and therefore should continue to be used.

Successful visuals will be cemented in your audience's minds and will convert to increased footfall and sales, demonstrating what an effective marketing tool visual merchandising is.

If you would like to discuss how we can help you to create a seamless customer experience and maximise your sales and potential of your retail space through Visual Merchandising, please get in touch via our website: www.vmandeventsltd.co.uk.

To stay up-to-date with all our latest projects and exciting content, follow us on our social channels at Facebook, Instagram and Twitter!



Meet The BDS Team

INFORMATION

The BDS Management Team comprises of experienced Visual Merchandising professionals and experts in the industry, who also volunteer their time to manage the BDS. It is their passion and enthusiasm for VM and Store Presentation that drives the industry to maintain standards and ensure Visual Merchandising is not a dying art.



Director & Chair: Iain Kimmins FBDS

Current: Visual Merchandising Consultant
Skills: VM Consultant/Stylist, Retail Design, Set Dressing/Product Launches, Project Work, International Work, Store Set-up/Opening.
Based in: London, with international travel available
Website: www.creative-download.co.uk
Email: hello@creative-download.co.uk
See BDS website for full biography. www.britishdisplaysociety.co.uk/about



Director & Vice Chair: Helen Goodwin FBDS

Current: Visual Stylist, Creative, and Trainer
Skills: Window & Interior displays and make-overs, Styling, Teaching basic display guidelines to students and retailers
Based in: York, UK
Website: madeyoulookmadeyoustare.co.uk
Email: helen@madeyoulookmadeyoustare.co.uk
See BDS website for full biography. www.britishdisplaysociety.co.uk/about



Director: Liz Johnston FBDS

Current: VM Stylist
Skills: VM styling and display design
Based in: London UK
Email: liz@strictlyvisualdisplay.co.uk
<http://www.facebook.com/strictlyvisualdisplay>
See BDS website for full biography. www.britishdisplaysociety.co.uk/about



BDS Tutor: John Abbate FBDS

Current: VM & Store Design Consultant and Coach
Skills: Retail store / VM: strategy, concept and design consulting and coaching
Based in: London, UK
Website: www.northbanks.co.uk
Email: john@northbanks.co.uk
See BDS website for full biography. www.britishdisplaysociety.co.uk/about



Janet Billings FBDS

Current: Visual Stylist, Designer & Consultant
Skills: Home, Gift, Textile Stylist; Exhibition/Store Planning; Bespoke Prop Designer/ Fabrication; Consultant / Trainer in Visual Styling & Merchandising
Based in: SE London / Kent
See BDS website for full biography. www.britishdisplaysociety.co.uk/about



BDS Tutor: Barbara Chapman FBDS

Current: Creative VM Consultant & Stylist & Lecturer.
Skills: Creative window design. Visual merchandising. Styling. Lecturing. Specialist: Window design and cross-channel visual identity.
Based in: London. UK
Website: <https://freelancevisualcreativeconsultant.co.uk>
Email: barbarachapman2001@yahoo.co.uk
See BDS website for full biography. www.britishdisplaysociety.co.uk/about



Assistant Treasurer: Nigel Fisher FBDS

Current: Freelance IT Consultant and Professional Railway Modeller
Skills: Business I.T. Scale modelling of landscapes, locos and rolling stock
Based in: Derbyshire
Website: www.fisherlayouts.co.uk
Email: nigel.fisher@comfi.co.uk
See BDS website for full biography. www.britishdisplaysociety.co.uk/about



Edward Stammers MA, PG Cert

Current: Programme Director - Fashion Marketing, Branding
Skills: Fashion Marketing, Branding & Visual Merchandising
Based in: London
Website: <https://www.arts.ac.uk/colleges/london-college-of-fashion>
Email: e.stammers@fashion.arts.ac.uk
See BDS website for full biography. www.britishdisplaysociety.co.uk/about



Pablo Roteta FBDS

Current: Owner-Puchero: London VM and Design Trends Agency in Spanish
Skills: Set Designer, Digital Creator, Design Consultant
Based in: London
Website: <https://www.pucheroenlondres.com>
Email: hello@pucheroenlondres.com
See BDS website for full biography. www.britishdisplaysociety.co.uk/about



Kat MacLennan FBDS

Current: Visual Merchandising Consultant
Skills: VM strategy, window design, VM training, implementation
Based in: London
Website: www.dottodot.work
Email: Kat@dottodot.work
See BDS website for full biography. www.britishdisplaysociety.co.uk/about



High Street Regeneration

Working with BIDs, Town Centre Managers & Place-makers to help you!

Made You Look! has been running workshops and training courses for small independent businesses for many years - since 2008 in fact. First approached by East Riding Council & also Betty's of Harrogate, we were encouraged to start the training side of the business having been Visual Stylists since 1980. Yes...that long!

Fashions come and go in the world of both retail and display, but there are some basic rules and guidelines which never change, and, in fact, most displays are based upon whatever your business, merchandise or great idea may be. Most of our customers are Small Independent Businesses or Start-Ups just wanting to know *where* to start in creating displays whether for a shop window, pop-up, wedding fair or market stall...networking event even or just their Instagram shoots. Service industries too. So, with our workshops we've been able to help them, and seen some fabulous improvements afterwards too!

During the pandemic I've been busy transposing our Taster Day Course into an online Starter Course in Display. This can, of course, be done at your own pace, but it also means we can reach those further away without the travel inconvenience or fuel wastage. The course is currently being branded for the British Display Society and is perfect for VM students too with the BDS Distance Learning Course to take progression further.



Visual Display Training

Helen Goodwin - Vice Chair & Director BDS & Owner Made You Look!

www.madeyoulookmadeyoustare.co.uk



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