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International news in brief — December 2010

Bruce Munro light sculptures for Salisbury Cathedral, Istanbul to host international design biennale, and more

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Bruce Munro light sculptures for Salisbury Cathedral

Salisbury, Wiltshire. British artist Bruce Munro has installed the first of two works in Salisbury Cathedral. *Light Shower*, which was originally designed last year for a lodge in the Scottish Highlands, consists of 2,000 fibre optic teardrops suspended 45ft above the nave. Munro said he initially felt apprehensive about being invited to create work for the cathedral, but believes the installation complements the space. "It's not every day that you get the chance to hang your work in such beautiful medieval architecture," he said. "But the light [from the work] is very gentle and you get a sense of volume." The second work, *Water Towers*, which will be installed in between the cloisters in January 2011, is a maze of 69 towers built from 16,000 plastic bottles lit with LEDs. Sound-reactive projectors will respond to a soundtrack of the choir, which will be played to visitors as they walk through the multi-coloured installation, which Munro says will resemble stained glass. "Some people might think it's sacrilegious to use plastic bottles in such a space," said Munro. "But it's just about being creative with the world around you." C.R.

Istanbul to host international design biennale

Following its status as European Capital of Culture in 2010, Istanbul will host its first international design biennale in 2012. In keeping with recent reports that have forecast Turkey to become one of the fastest growing economies in 2011, the biennale will focus on design's contribution to industry, economic development, cultural interaction and quality of life. A symposium, "Why Design, Why Biennale?", featuring speakers including Deyan Sudjic, the director of London's Design Museum and Levent Çalikoglu, curator at the Istanbul Museum of Modern Art, will initiate proceedings for the biennale on 2-3 December. The theme will be announced in early 2011. A.S.

Gwangju Biennale gets half a million visitors

The eighth Gwangju Biennale, which closed on 7 November, attracted almost half a million visitors, up 25% from last year's event. Nearly 50,000 students attended and as of next year the biennale will be included in school and college art history syllabuses. "It was rewarding to see how many students turned up," said Massimiliano Gioni, the director of the biennale. "South Korea puts such emphasis on education." Conceived as a temporary museum exploring the ties between people and images over the past century, Gioni sees the human aspect of the biennale as part of its popularity. "Ultimately it was an exhibition about images and it's a topic we are all familiar with," he said. The Gwangju Design Biennale's decision to invite Ai Weiwei to co-direct next year's event is a marker of South Korea's appetite for culture, said Gioni. "It's great to see how forward thinking that institution is that they go for the most controversial Chinese artist of the moment to curate it," he said. A.S.

New Mediterranean culture organisation

A new foundation called the Euro-Mediterranean Knowledge Space has been created through the cooperation of the Institute for Foreign Cultural

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Relations (IFA) in Stuttgart, the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung and the Moroccan Cultural Institute (Centre Tariq Ibn Ziyad) in Rabat. It was initiated by IFA's secretary general Ronald Grätz and Bernd Thum, professor of intercultural German studies in Karlsruhe. The aim is to bring together university lecturers, people in the cultural sector and journalists from Germany, Europe and the Mediterranean. "The foundation aims to promote dialogue and joint projects with all the Mediterranean states," said Grätz, "and the Centre Tariq Ibn Ziyad in Morocco is one of our most important partner organisations." The Euro-Mediterranean Knowledge Space will hold its first annual conference in Stuttgart in September 2011. It is also planning conferences in Morocco and Tunis. R.P.

Pacific Design Center's new galleries

New galleries have opened in Los Angeles's Pacific Design Center as part of its Design Loves Art initiative. New York-based curator Helen Varola is director of the programme which invites artists, curators, and galleries to use project spaces at the centre. Varola told *The Art Newspaper* that she is constantly "looking for people who are on the pulse of what is happening in Los Angeles". After Patrick Painter left the centre, Varola invited Annie Wharton, formerly of The Company exhibition space to join. Artists' workshop and publisher Gemini GEL and curator Yann Perreau (the former French deputy cultural attaché to Southern California) have also taken up residence. According to Varola, Design Loves Art is working closely with MoCA Pacific Design Center (a satellite of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles) to coordinate events and film screenings and that the overall goal of the programme is to make the 14-acre campus a cultural centre for West Hollywood. Varola also expects more names to join the centre for its 29 January opening which will coincide with an all-day conference hosted in tandem with the Art Los Angeles Contemporary fair. K.A.

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