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# The 2021 London Design Biennale Imagines A Better World

The design festival returns to London's Somerset House with a triumphant showcase that resonates with the time

by Pratyush Sarup



The 2021 London Design Biennale Imagines A Better World

**J**ust a few months short of becoming a triennial – the 3rd edition of the [London Design Biennale](#) was scheduled to take place in 2020 – the 2021 showcase responds to festival artistic director [Es Devlin](#)'s theme 'Resonance' with a broad range of concepts. From installations powered by tech and innovation, to others forged through tradition and emotion – what has unfolded at the Somerset House is a beautiful representation of human resilience and optimism.



evolved to be in dialogue with the most pressing issues of the time.

And therein lies the beauty of Devlin's genius theme for the London Design Biennale: it leaves room for change, for communication and evolution. Not only for the designers masterminding the pavilions, but also for those who experience them.

### The Global Goals Pavilion



At the heart of Es Devlin's '[Forest For Change](#)', there is a clearing – for people to come together, learn, reflect and implement positive change for a fairer world. This meditative space, with its vibrant panels arranged in a circle, takes visitors through a journey on which they discover the United Nations' ambitious plan to eradicate poverty, inequality and climate change by 2030.

### Monte Abierto, Argentina



Argentinan designer Cristian Mohaded explores the biennale's theme through a creative exchange with his long-term collaborator, the artisan Lorenzo Reyes. Together they have a decade long history of transforming Simbol, a plant that grows in the north of Argentina into functional objects through centuries-old weaving traditions. At the scene set for the London Design Biennale, the objects – and the installation – speak of what can be achieved through dialogue.

### **Amplify, Ghana**



Exploring the dynamics between Ghana and two of its former colonial rulers, Britain and Denmark, are textile designer Chrissa Amuah and architect Alice Asafu-Adjaye. Both of dual Ghanaian-British nationality, they are currently practicing in London and Accra respectively. 'Amplify' forces us to consider the creative, cultural and socio-economic impacts of colonisation, both historic and future. Featuring traditional Ghanaian metalwork, the site-specific installation becomes a monumental montage of experiences, lensed through ancient craft.

### **The Pavilion of the African Diaspora**



The debut initiative of the Archibong Heritage Foundation, the Pavilion of the African Diaspora aims to spotlight the voices and contributions of people of the African Diaspora on a global stage. Designed by [Ini Archibong](#), the pavilion is a 'gateway' that will serve as a multi-use educational and event facility, as a sanctuary to tell stories and create a reality where voices are recognised and respected for the diversity of their timbre.

### **Stream of Consciousness by Designers in the Middle**



Founded by Rona Meyuchas-Koblenz, [Designers in the Middle](#) is a non-political platform, striving for cultural development, diversity and greater understanding of the MENA region through the common languages of design and craft. Their installation, 'Stream of Consciousness', uses *Casbah* – the core of the old city – as its focal theme, transforming their cultural backgrounds into compelling visual narratives that speak of the region's uniqueness, as well as the camaraderie its people share with the global community.

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