

Clerkenwell Design Week 2025 opens with artist Alex Chinneck's surreal building sculpture



Above: *A Week At The Knees* by Alex Chinneck in Charterhouse Square (Left photo: Charles Emerson; Right photo: Sam Frost)

[Tuesday, 20 May 2025] [Clerkenwell Design Week](#) (CDW), the leading global design festival, opened today for its 14th and most ambitious edition to date. Returning to EC1, the festival features a packed programme, including [over 210 showroom partners](#) across more than 170 local design showrooms, along with [over 250 exhibitors](#) from around the world, spread across [15+ exhibition venues](#). Register now for your [free festival passes](#).

Running until 22 May 2025, CDW offers architects, specifiers, interior designers and the public the opportunity to explore everything from furniture and lighting to kitchen and bathroom designs, materials, decorative accessories and more. Visitors can also experience immersive installations and attend [talks and workshops](#) throughout the festival.

Headlining this year's event is [A Week At The Knees](#), a new 'rippling building' sculpture by British artist **Alex Chinneck**. Specially commissioned for the festival and located in Charterhouse Square, the public artwork revisits Chinneck's signature bending brickwork and sculptural language by reconfiguring a four-storey Georgian-style brick façade. Standing 5.5m tall and stretching 13.5m long, the installation incorporates 7,000 bricks and weighs 11.5 tonnes – yet the freestanding façade is just 15cm deep, giving it an elegant, almost weightless quality.

Constructed using 320 metres of repurposed steel and featuring bespoke bending windows, bricks, stone detailing, pipework and a door, the project was created in collaboration with Chiltern GRC, Cleveland Steel, Crittall Windows, FabSpeed and Michelmersh Brick Holdings PLC. The sculpture remains on display until early July.



Above (from left): *Brick From A Stone: Arch Revival* by Albion Stone and Hutton Stone on Clerkenwell Green (Photo: Will Pryce); *Harmonic Tides* by Arthur Mamou-Mani, as part of Dezeen competition sponsored by Villeroy & Boch and Ideal Standard, at St John's Gate of the Order of St John (Photo: Sam Frost)

Elsewhere, **Albion Stone** and **Hutton Stone** return to Clerkenwell Green with a new pavilion designed by **Hawkins\Brown** and engineered by **Webb Yates**. [*Brick From A Stone: Arch Revival*](#) features two 4m-high freestanding vaulted arches, made from 5.2 tonnes of stone bricks. One arch is constructed from multi-hued sandstone bricks from Hutton Stone's quarries; the other is built from Heritage Portland Stone bricks from Albion Stone's Dorset mine. Each arch is crafted from a single layer of 702 bricks, just 102mm thick. The design highlights the material's versatility as a load-bearing architectural product. By using these stone bricks instead of clay-fired ones, CO₂ emissions are reduced by 66%.

CDW 2025 also marks the launch of **Dezeen's** [*Shaping Water competition*](#), supported by **Villeroy & Boch** and **Ideal Standard** – two iconic brands participating at the festival under the Villeroy & Boch Group for the first time. The challenge was to create a feature for St John's Gate of the Order of St John that draws on the functional and aesthetic qualities of water, recognising its dynamic nature and the transformative effect it can have on wellbeing.

The winning architect, **Arthur Mamou-Mani**, responded with *Harmonic Tides* – an installation of two undulating 3D-printed walls evoking waves and inspired by natural hydrodynamic forms. Made from sugar-based polylactic acid (PLA) – an industrially compostable bioplastic derived from renewable resources – and fabricated in the architect's London studio, the modules were reused from previous projects and reconfigured for the site, reflecting circular design principles and minimising material and energy use.

Additional installation highlights include a [*magnetic art experience*](#) by local studio **Pixel Artworks** at the Victorian vaults of House of Detention (Light); [*stone vending machines*](#) by **Italgraniti** in collaboration with architect Simon Astridge; and a [*pop-up tea and biscuit bar*](#) by Sons of Beasley at **Hawkins\Brown's** headquarters on Clerkenwell Road.



Above (from left): *Feel The Pull* by Pixel Artworks at Light; new venue Church of Design at St Bartholomew the Great (Photo: Sam Frost)

This year's festival also introduces three new [exhibition venues](#): the historic medieval and Tudor buildings of **The Charterhouse**; London's oldest parish church, **St Bartholomew the Great (Church of Design)**; and **Studio Smithfield**, a Grade II* listed building above the iconic Smithfield Market. These new locations join other venues, including six International Collections (British, Italian, Spanish, German, Danish and Austrian).

The festival's official talks series, [Conversations at Clerkenwell](#), returns with a stellar line-up of speakers, including **Sabine Marcelis**, **Tom Dixon**, **Benjamin Hubert**, **PearsonLloyd** and **Note Design Studio**. Held in a colourful, **Kapitza**-designed auditorium at The Charterhouse, the series features over 15 sessions, curated by brand consultant Katie Richardson. Discussions explore topics ranging from colour and interior trends to heritage renewal, commercial space design and AI in design. View the [full programme](#) and book your ticket.



Above (from left): Sabine Marcelis speaking as part of *Conversations at Clerkenwell* at The Charterhouse; *Design Dialogues* talks series by Sandow at Church of Design (Left photo: Sam Frost; Right photo: Ashley Bingham)



Above (from left): Visitors at new venue The Charterhouse; *Mix Morning Sessions* at Studio Smithfield
(Left photo: Sam Frost; Right photo: Ashley Bingham)

New to the festival this year is [Design Dialogues](#), curated by Sandow – the US-based publisher behind *Design Milk*, *Interior Design* and *Metropolis*. Hosted daily at Church of Design, these sessions will tackle inclusive design, leveraging technology for wellness and the future of sustainable, circular materials. Other talks programmes to check out include [Mix Morning Sessions](#) (also new for 2025) at Studio Smithfield curated by *Mix Interiors*; [Darc Thoughts](#) at Light; and [Design Meets](#) at Spa Fields.

Clerkenwell Design Week 2025 takes place across EC1, London, until 22 May. For more information, please visit and register for free pass at clerkenwelldesignweek.com.

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PRESS CONTACT

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Clerkenwell Design Week, until 22 May 2025

Website: clerkenwelldesignweek.com | Instagram: [@clerkenwelldesignweek](https://www.instagram.com/clerkenwelldesignweek)

X: [@cdwfestival](https://twitter.com/cdwfestival) | Facebook: [@clerkenwell.design.week](https://www.facebook.com/clerkenwell.design.week) | Hashtag: #CDW2025

VISITING INFORMATION

- Visitors can register for their [FREE festival passes](#) now.
- All visitors require a visitor badge to access the exhibition venues and showroom events.
- Exhibition venues are open **10:00 – 18:00** on **Tuesday**, **10:00 – 21:00** on **Wednesday**, and **10:00 – 17:00** on Thursday. Showroom opening hours vary.
- Closest underground stations: Farringdon and Barbican
- Bus routes: 19, 341, 38, N19, N38, N41, 55, 48