



Inside story on a **design** success

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Designers who bring colour to school meals

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Twenty years after qualifying as interior designers at Birmingham's University of Central England, the two-man team of DSD Design are still based in Birmingham and reaping more satisfaction from their job than ever before.

Based at Digbeth's Custard Factory, working in a cluttered office lined with racks of carpet, lighting and furniture catalogues, Stuart Rees and Tony Salmon dream up fresh interiors, transform their visions into technically accurate plans and see them created.

One of their most recent projects was also the most rewarding. This term, children at Burntwood School in Wandsworth have been eating in a multi-coloured dining room which was the culmination of a two-year process for DSD.

Stuart said: "We inherited an old run-down 60s building with a battered central courtyard and dilapidated, rotting window frames. Sodexho, the school's contract caterers, came to us to design a bright and interesting environment for the school's 600 pupils."

The pair cast their minds back to their own school days. "We tried to look at it from the kids' point of view. They want a lively visually impressive environment to escape the classroom feel for an hour or so."

They believe that their design is very unusual for a school environment. Design features work throughout the room, to increase efficiency in a scenario where a rapid turnaround is essential.

"They have to feed a lot of kids in 45 minutes," said Stuart. "We developed a colour-coded menu

system. There are three different menus, each of a different colour. The children choose a menu, then stand on the dot which is of the same colour. At the teacher's command they then head to the coloured counter which is the same colour as the menu and pay with a special card. We also punched holes in the walls so the teachers can keep an eye on all of the kids."

"We worked with the school to offer a design solution. It's not just the way it looks but also how it works."

Initial reaction from the pupils was encouraging.

"When we first opened up, a

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child asked the contracts manager 'did you do this?' A ripple of applause broke out from the children - they were obviously dead chuffed," said Stuart.

The project was also a success for DSD.

"We were able to keep the design intact, without it getting watered down and that is very important to us," said Stuart. "We even designed the furniture which was made for us by a Cradley Heath company called Topline."

The pair got to know the possible frustrations of their field shortly after going into partnership in 1987. The majority of their

work was for construction companies and it involved relatively little contact with the end user.

"We would do the front-end presentation materials, which the contractor would show to the clients before disappearing," said Stuart. "It was a constant battle to make sure that the design was not compromised as you're always up against budget restrictions."

Now on smaller projects they oversee their own contract work, offering a design and build service that brings together a team of architects and builders.

Like many small business owners, the extra responsibilities of running a firm with a turnover of £250,000 has led them into a situation where they are as much businessmen as practitioners of their chosen vocation.

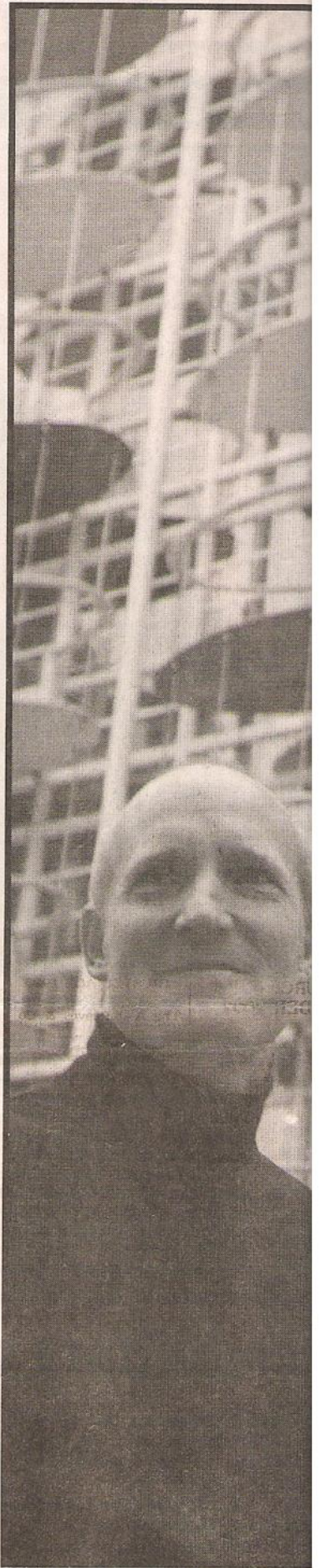
"Last year we tied everything up by becoming a limited company. It's better for tax and we wanted more liability protection now that we are running some of our own projects," said Tony.

From a business perspective the Birmingham location has proved to be an asset for the pair. Their design work takes them all over the country and their particular base is becoming increasingly recognised.

Stuart Rees "We've been working from the Custard Factory for four years. People down in London used to laugh when you first mentioned it, but they remember the name. It's certainly becoming known as an address for art and design. There is a good atmosphere with lots of creative people buzzing around. There is a lady upstairs who looks after fan-mail for *The Archers*."

With views over industrial Birmingham and the scattered tools of creativity littering the room, their studio has not yet received the special DSD touch.

"The studio has evolved rather than been designed," confirmed Stuart.



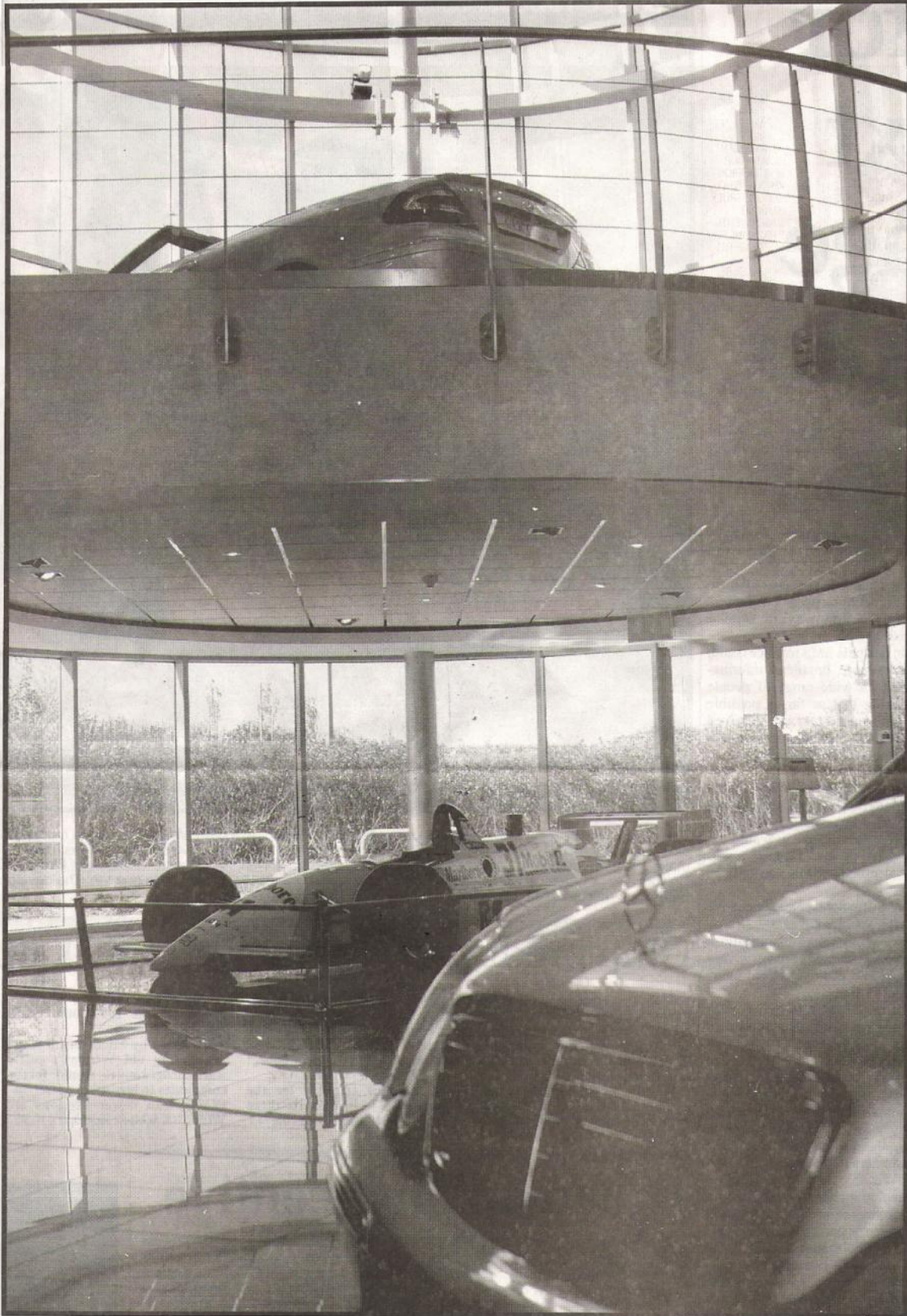
Tony Salmon and Stuart Rees, design



Making a new marque

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Auto show: Design firm produces new look for Mercedes



Birmingham-based DSD Design has created a new interior for a Mercedes-Benz dealership in Milton Keynes. Stuart Rees and Tony Salmon, directors of the Custard Factory-based firm, were called in by owners, the United Auto Group. The outcome was new flooring, graphics and special lighting. The building features a large glazed tower that acts as a showcase for the cars. DSD worked closely with the designers and builders of the new complex, West Bromwich-based Anglo Holt. DSD Design was established in 1987. Clients include Sun Microsystems, News International and Thomas Cook.

D.S.D. Design Ltd

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Creating bespoke corporate dining and business environments..

Scratch the surface of DSD Design and you will find a team of individuals who take great pride in getting things right. This dynamic young company specialises in creating stunning business environments for a select group of clients, mainly in the catering, leisure, retail and health industries.

Often working closely with Facilities Management companies, DSD 's solution-orientated approach and thorough understanding of clients' business objectives and needs has led to many high profile projects, ranging from small, bespoke design schemes to major interior architectural projects.

Regardless of the scale of the project or budget, DSD Design approaches each commission with enthusiasm and drives it forward from the initial concept stage through to a successful completion, while balancing time, cost and quality.

Commenting on the company's approach, Stuart Rees, director of DSD Design said: "One of our key strengths is the fact that we all come from design backgrounds. This gives us an edge over our competitors in that we can take a brief and translate it into a highly creative yet practical concept that reflects a client's corporate image and company ethos. By using in-house visualisation, we ensure that clients are always kept in the picture.

"But we don't just design a scheme and then hand it over. At DSD We have the resources, skills and experience to project manage the entire build process and see it right through to final completion."

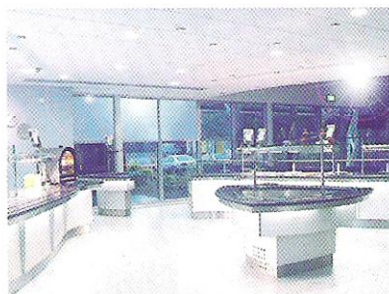
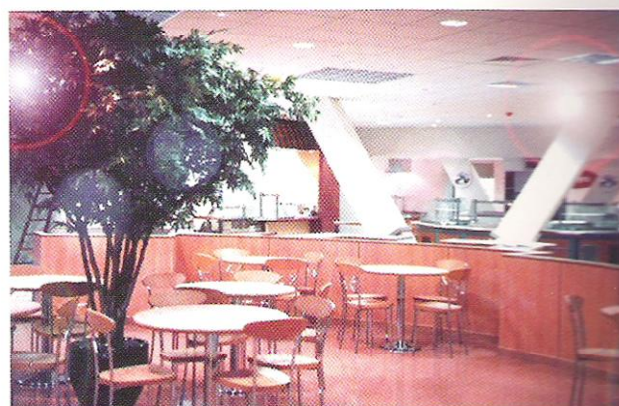
DSD Design's portfolio reflects the company's high quality standards and attention to detail, with name such as Sun Microsystems, News International, Thomas Cook and many others choosing to use the company's imaginative and creative resources.

"We try to anticipate trends, wherever possible, particularly in corporate dining which is becoming an increasingly important company asset in its own right

these days. A well designed facility can enhance a client's image, improve the morale and corporate lifestyle of employees and visitors" continued Stuart Rees.

Always forward thinking, always contributors, DSD listen. DSD understand, DSD deliver.

For further information please contact Stuart Rees or Tony Salmon at DSD Design on 0121 693 7447.



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Interior Design Graphics Events & Architecture



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**DSD Design - creating
stunning restaurant &
leisure environments**

DSD Design Consultants
have created a fresh
contemporary restaurant
and take away, with a
modern concept, serving

high quality Asian and
'World Foods'.

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