Branch out: it's time to celebrate the

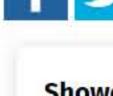
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wonders of wood - a natural, sustainable and easy-to-use building material Warm, wonderful wood adds a mellow, sustainable edge to our city buildings. The annual Wood Awards celebrate its glories.

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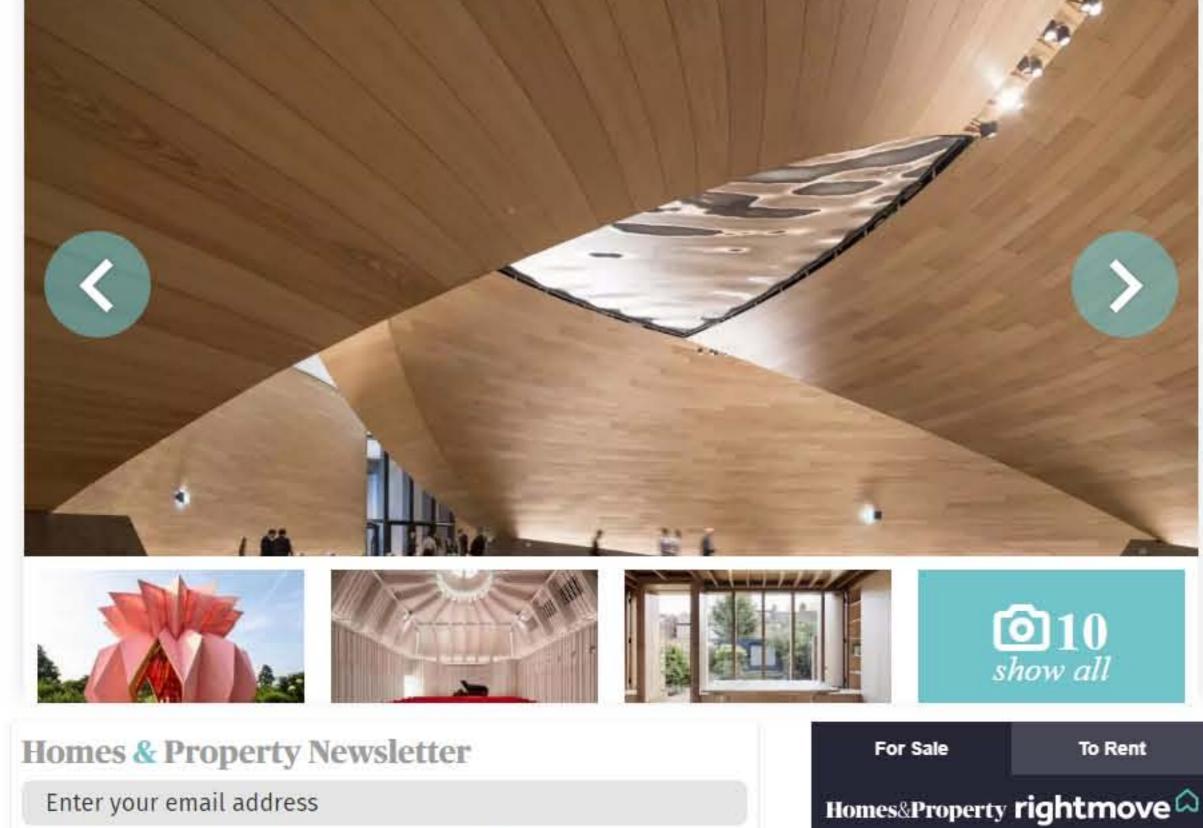
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Showcase: top designs from the Wood Awards 2018



excitement around the glories of wood. In London next week the Wood Awards will celebrate building with all these wonderful different types of wood, adding a mellow, sustainable edge to our city. Another advantage is how fast timber buildings go up: a huge, sixlane competition swimming pool on the shortlist took just a year from sketch to completion.

Oak, ash, beech, cherry wood and more: there is growing

slap in the middle of the City – to a school swimming pool, interior fitouts and entire house frames. Whether painstakingly handcrafted, or using the latest cross-laminated timber (CLT) technology for strength, durability and speed, 20 shortlisted buildings are fighting to win next week's Wood Awards, on Tuesday, November 20. Now nearing their 50th year, the awards showcase the growing excitement around wood, and the shortlist

includes some spectacular buildings countrywide. Billed as the only

truly sustainable building material, wood is branching out.

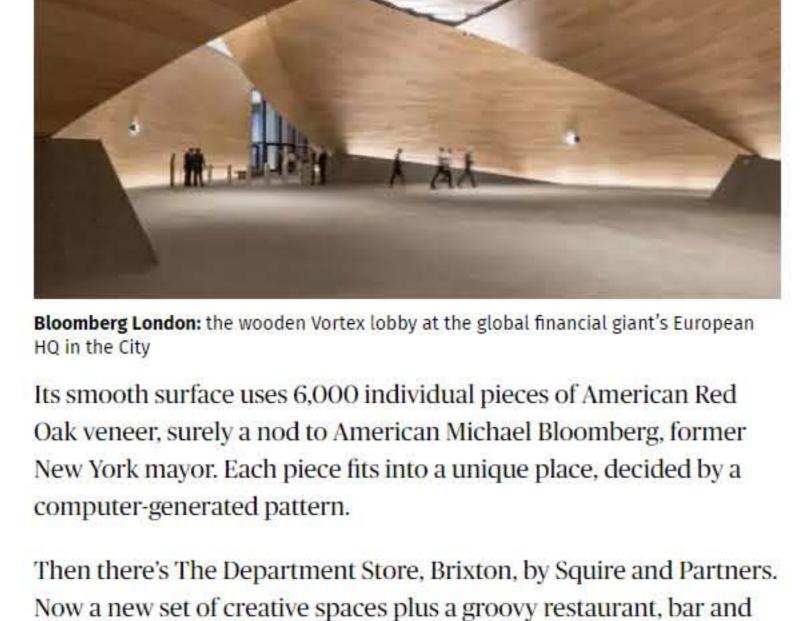
NATIONAL PRIDE

Wood's versatility means that structures deploying it can range from

London building's wooden Vortex atrium – an engineering triumph

the swooping curves of the Stirling Prize-winning Bloomberg

In some of the timbers chosen, national pride is evident. Take the Bloomberg European HQ by Foster + Partners. The stunning Vortex lobby, looping up through the enormous stone building, is made of three curving wooden shells, each double-skinned.



million miles from svelte glassy boxes. With an almost barn-like feel, albeit a glamorous one, it's built from French oak, honouring the Bon Marché. SPEED AND SOUND The City of London Freemen's School swimming pool by Hawkins\Brown is a joyful, striking structure of massive Austrian

progressively skewed inside a CLT frame. Designed to replace a pool

burned down in 2014, the new one went up in just three weeks.

spruce portal frames in glulam (glue-laminated timber), set

lounge with a rooftop terrace, it started life in 1906 as an annexe to

the Bon Marché department store, the earliest in London. Its big,

bold timber roof with exposed joists and huge glazed top light is a

The City of London's Freemen's School swimming pool: a structure of Austrian spruce

Schools are in the mix, too, including Streatham & Clapham High, by

Cottrell and Vermeulen. Great curved and crossed timber supports,

spaces including a sixth-form centre with a roof pavilion, plus a new

dining hall. Airy and natural, by using CLT these were built superfast.

And there's a concert hall: a cute 100-seater recital hall in The Royal

Academy of Music by Ian Ritchie Architects, elegantly pale in lime-

washed oak. Because of wood's amazing acoustic properties,

and a deep-joisted exposed roof in Austrian spruce, create new

portal frames, was built in just three weeks (Jack Hobhouse)

intimate recitals here will sound incredible.

ON THE HOME FRONT Domestic interiors are increasingly using a timber focus. The ongoing trend for plywood continues, displayed in the curiously named 61amr house by Widger architects, which has practically

lined this little Walthamstow loft in birch ply for a fresh, smooth,

The idea of a box within a box continues in a Barbican triplex flat,

been inserted into the top floor by architects Francisco Sutherland,

where an ingenious, huge piece of oak-and-birch "furniture" has

modern feel and look, almost like a house within a house.

creating a mezzanine, shower room and wardrobes.

ply.

The idea of insertion also appears in Marie's Wardrobe, a wholehouse revamp in Stoke Newington by Tsuruta Architects, named after a dressing-room at the top of the house. The big USP is a striking timber staircase with slatted treads. This highly complex structure was built on site with numbered pieces of Latvian birch

replaced with an open sunny space, using the oak in visually dramatic vertical window dividers, echoed by exposed joists across the ceiling. It all harmonises with a solid ash table. It's a controlled, small-scale use of wood.

Dewsbury Road by O'Sullivan Skoufoglou is a notable small project

that's big on oak. A dark Seventies extension in Dollis Hill was

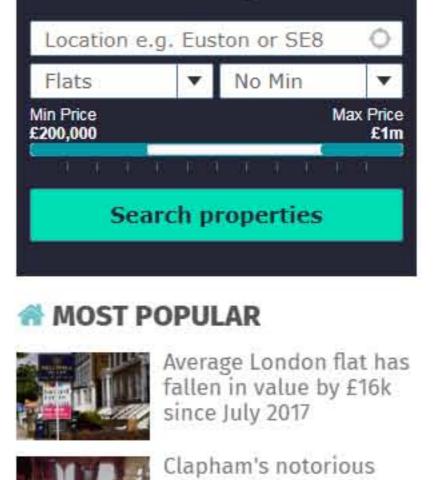


House, using lots of different oak, with stone, too, for a low-lying, contemporary home. It's stunning, subtle and sustainable.

· Visit woodawards.com for more

A MODERN FOLLY

Wood can be fun, flirty and temporary - like the pavilion resembling a geometrically folded filo pastry parcel in an 18th-century garden at Berrington Hall near Leominster, Herefordshire. By Studio Morison, this enchanting yet practical modern folly is a frame of computercut plywood with fabric stretched over. What more could anyone want in the garden?

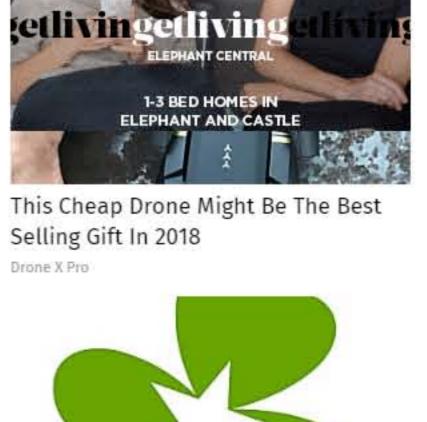




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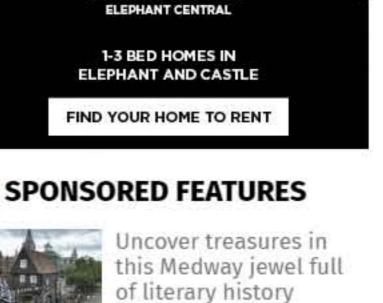
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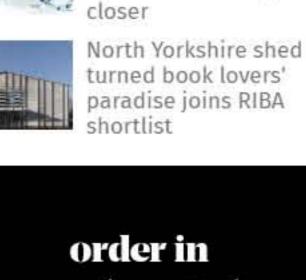
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The big, bold timber roof with exposed joists and huge glazed top light is a million miles from svelte glassy boxes. With an almost barnlike feel, albeit a glamorous one, it's built from French oak, honouring the Bon Marché history of the building.

