Portfolio

Future makers

Design & Crafts Council Ireland's annual Future Makers Awards recognise and support the next generation of Irish makers, designers and craftspeople. This year the Overall Emerging Maker Award went to **Paola Di Legge**, who practises biophilic design. Biophilia posits the theory that humans have an innate tendency to connect with nature. Di Legge's designs introduce natural elements into built environments and her pieces incorporate organic materials such as ferns, leaves, branches and dried mushrooms, preserved to enable them to stay green and vibrant for years. Acknowledging the award, she says, 'I'm particularly happy it's shedding light on a relatively new practice, giving it recognition and visibility.' Woodturner **Martin Ryan** won the Sustainable Design Award for a practice rooted in traditional techniques, with each piece containing anything from 100 to 1,000 segments. Furniture-maker **Diane Best**, winner of the Student and Recent Graduate Award, created a step stool that draws inspiration from 1940s stools manufactured from cheap materials with little consideration for aesthetics. Best used quality materials for her step stool, which was finished to a high standard. 1 PAOLA DI LEGGE

Willow and clay

Klaus Hartmann and **Heike Kahle** are showing in the annual MADE in Kilkenny Collective Christmas show. At their Baurnafea Studio in Co Kilkenny, Hartmann's hand-thrown ceramics are fired in a wood-fuelled kiln. 'I believe well-crafted functional objects can enhance our daily lives,' he says. 'The pots I make are designed with that in mind.' Basketmaker Kahle works with organically grown native willow, a strong, sustainable and long-lasting material, which she grows herself. Willow's wide range of bark colours enhances Kahle's traditional and contemporary baskets, garden structures and lampshades. 'The rhythmic and repetitive movement of weaving and the immediate connection to nature through the materials used anchor me in this world,' says Kahle. Both original members of MADE in Kilkenny, they acknowledge the benefits of being part of a network, as it includes exhibition opportunities, support and collaboration with other members. The exhibition at 76 John Street Lower, Kilkenny, runs from 2 to 24 December. 2 HEIKE KAHLE