

The O2 Brand Experience

JPDA refines a new design vocabulary in its recent Architectural Branding projects for European mobile giant O2.

In May of 2005, O2 announced an exciting new venture in partnership with Anschutz Entertainment Group (AEG), to transform the former Millennium Dome into Europe's premier music, sport and entertainment destination.

The world's largest domed structure would soon shelter a sprawling complex including: a 23,000 seat music arena; a music club; an eleven screen cinema; an ice rink; an indoor beach; exhibition space; and an entertainment district, complete with bars, clubs, restaurants, and retail shops.

A sophisticated "total design" vision was required to unify the elements, and create an architectural brand identity that would be distinctly "O2."



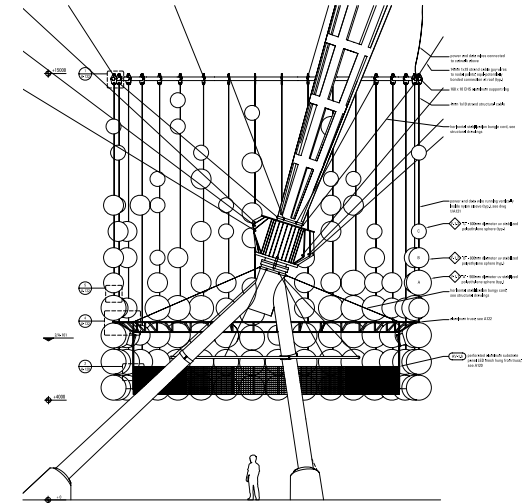
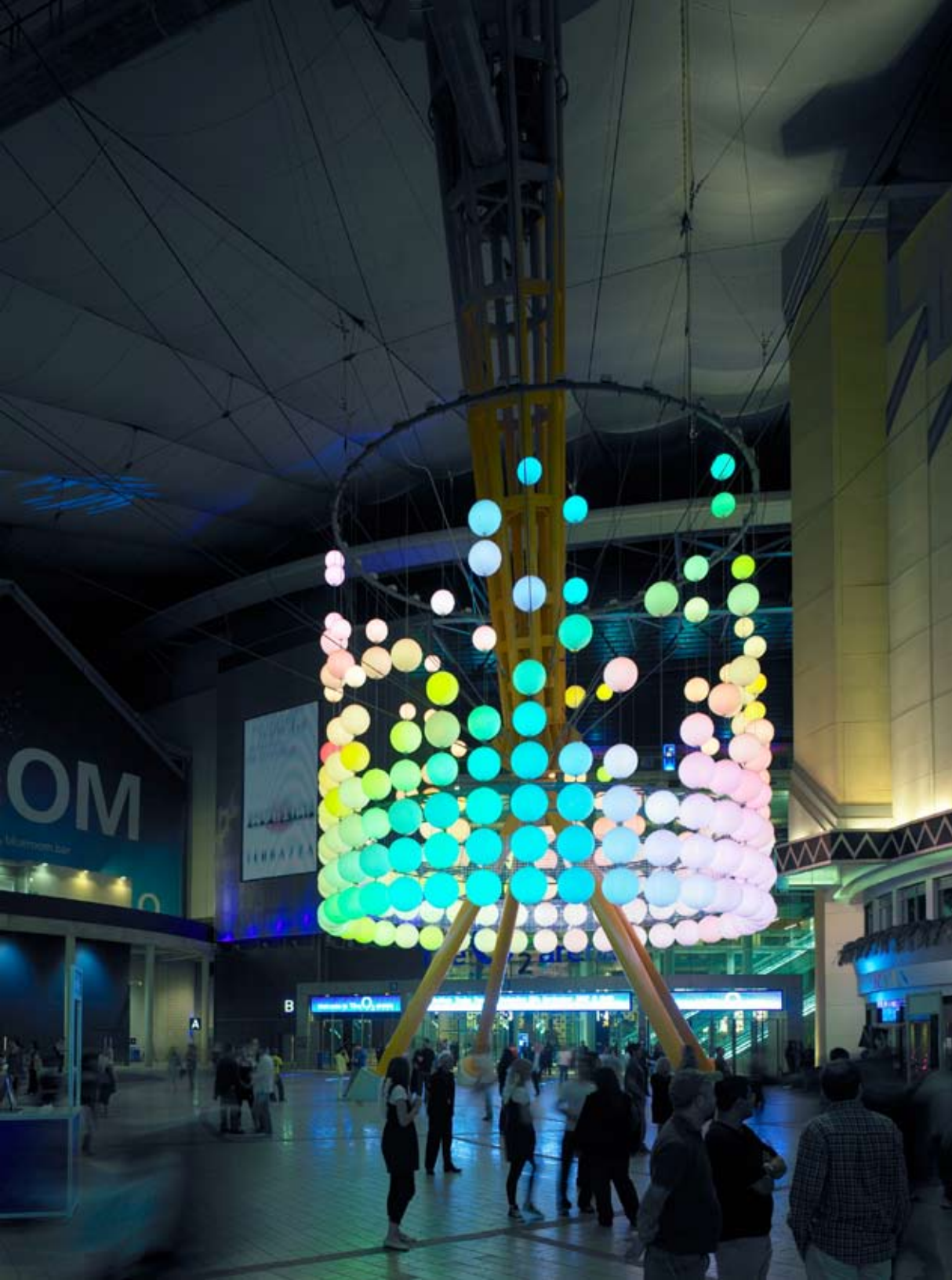
Concierge

Your introduction to the world of O2.

Greeting you at the front door, the effervescent, color-shifting Concierge heralds your arrival at The O2 and helps you orient yourself for your visit. It is a meeting place, an information source, and an iconic reminder of the O2 brand presence.

Completely surrounding one of the original roof support pylons, the dynamic light sculpture is located at the intersection of the entry plaza and the entertainment district urban street.

Below the twenty meter high structure, O2 Angels gather to serve as the personal face of O2, answering questions, providing directions to venues, and handing out "treats" (VIP invitations, free drink coupons, etc...)



In order to realize the floating bubbly form, a steel ring was suspended via cables from node points built into the original fabric roof.

The polyethylene “bubbles” were then hung from the ring on strands of cable, and fed with power and data to control the bespoke LED lighting arrays within.

The illumination is infinitely variable via wireless data link, and is programmed to run various “shows” over the course of the day and for different events.

An additional LED message “ticker” is suspended around the inside rim, displaying greetings, schedule information, special offers, and calls to action.





Create

An organic, sculptural performance space.

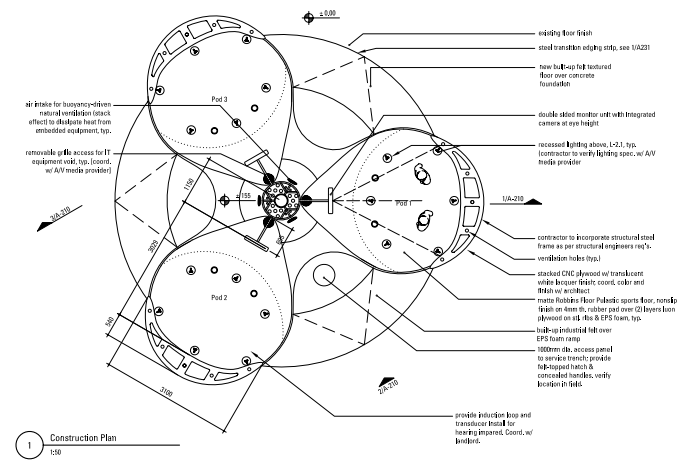
Peeking out above the tops of the Cinema Plaza's palm trees, the video screens embedded in the petals of Create serve as a testament to the promise of 30 seconds of fame for every visitor to The O2.

Under the palms, people are singing and dancing to music, and laughing at seeing themselves placed into video clips with famous performers.

A tall blossoming form composed of hundreds of precisely cut and stacked plywood sheets, Create is finished in a translucent white wax that allows the wood end grain to glow and shimmer under the spotlights.

Within each of the three pods that unfurls from its base is a bright aqua video stage, complete with director's seat, monitor, lights and camera.





The performers are composited into the music video in real time, and the finished product is displayed on the two-sided director's monitors located on each stage, as well as on the large video screens set in the "petals" above for the whole plaza to watch.

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Chill

Relax in an multi-sensory interactive environment.

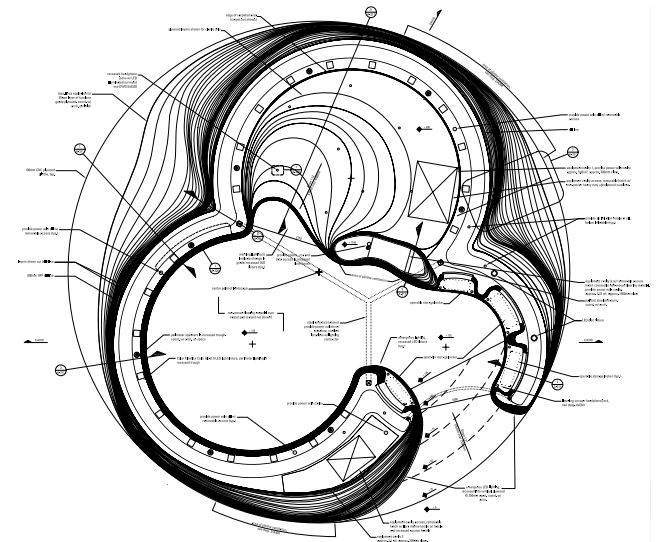


Anchoring the open plaza midway through the Entertainment District is Chill, a color changing inflated fabric lounge structure perched atop a sensuous landscape of upholstered felt and stacked plywood.

The hybrid structure was designed as a meshing of three “bubbles,” with each zone given over to a different sensory experience.

A continuous exterior form is created by using small amounts of pressurised air to float a diaphanous canopy over chambered interior fabric bubbles.

The color-changing skin is lit by LED lighting both sewn into the air-filled chambers and also integrated into the wooden landscape structure below.



The Entry Bubble contains a ring of Listening Cocoons - cozy upholstered niches where visitors can sit in pairs and plug headphones into multiple available audio streams.

If you're interested in knowing more about what you've just heard, a playlist is available for review and purchase at the O2 Concept Store.

The Performance Bubble is adjacent to the Cocoons and houses a stage/dance floor equipped with lights, DJ table, PA system, and multichannel wireless audio loops to cater to "Silent Discos." Perimeter lighting responds to sound waves with changes in color and intensity.

The Audio Landscape is a terraced felt hillside, dotted with glowing headphone jacks. Each jack allows visitors to plug into different music streams using provided headphones.





The O2 Concept Store

Where visitors are encouraged to “See what you can do.”

The O2 Concept Store was conceived as a physical embodiment of the O2 brand sensibility and a showcase for the company's core services.

The space is organized around the practical integration of O2 into the daily activities of the visitor, emphasizing the accessibility and creative lifestyle exclusively available through O2.

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The core of the store experience consists of the four interactive worktables - Photo, Video, Music, and Games - which are focused on specific creative activities enabled by O2 products and services.

Each table is clearly identified by both a neon lamp above, and a unique base created from stacked iconic paraphernalia and accessories related to the activities.



The store is staffed by enthusiastic, creative people hired not primarily for their sales experience but rather for their interests and accomplishments in the various experiences offered at the worktables.

The staff show visitors how to take and print photos, browse and download music, compose and upload ringtones and create and edit video.

O2 Angels and Gurus are available to help the visitor with questions, and to guide the creative process with directed tutorials and artistic suggestions.



At the rear of the store is the lounge, where customers can sign up for services in a comfortable low-pressure environment.

A patterned light gives the impression of sunlight filtering through leaves above, and silver birch trees that were scheduled to be felled by the local council, have been rescued and set in the floor to grow audio speakers instead of leaves.

The furniture is a quirky mix of modern takes on minimal, classical, and baroque themes, and is arranged on artificial grass rugs.

The bar is formed from stacked wooden railroad ties, with integrated phone recharge lockers and cash tills, and serves as a central point for all customer service and purchasing activities.

Behind the bar is installed a massive graphic wall that sets the O2 world against a serene forested backdrop.





The Concept Store immerses the visitor in a unique environment, which is both dynamic and tactile, combining creative high tech play with natural elemental materials and textures.

The emphasis is on creative exploration, and visitors are encouraged to touch and experiment with the kit while being wowed by the dramatic surroundings.

Credits

JPDA DESIGN TEAM:

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Structural Engineer – Abigail Matthews, Momentum Engineering
Mechanical Engineer – Peter Roberts, OR Consulting Engineers

CONTRACTORS:

Concierge:

Primary Contractor: ESS
Bubbles + Rigging: Stage One
A/V: Production Science
LED Ticker: Element Labs

Create:

Primary Contractor: ESS
Stacked Plywood Form: Stage One
Interactive: MIG
A/V: IMC Productions

Chill:

Primary Contractor: Sledge
Inflatable: Bacon-Inflate
Stacked Plywood Landscape: Scenex
Lighting: Blinding Light
Audio: Online AV

Concept Store:

Primary Contractor: Bedford and Havenhand
Inflatable Wall + Lighting: Chris Rowell, Architen Landrell
Worktables, Speaker Pots, Recycling, Trees: Meticulous

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