

# RIBA

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# J December 2014



My art belongs to Dada

Gehry channels Duchamp in Paris

12

Deep thought

Way for words

Precious medals

Not Bard

Say it with wood

AOC's inviting Wellcome reading room

Carr Cotter Naessens' Lexicon library speaks volumes

Silver, bronze and dissertation successes at the President's Medals

Maria Smith brings Shakespeare to the office

Ditchling and other Wood Award winners unwrapped

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Louis Vuitton Foundation, Paris, by Frank Gehry  
Photograph  
Iwan Baan



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# 1: Buildings

'He who has water and peat on his own farm has the world his own way.' After a crippling recession it's good to see, in the form of a dignified Dun Laoghaire library, the green shoots of recovery for Ireland's public realm. It's interesting that while firmly grounded in its coastal landscape, it rises to 13m; the architect using the well-proven tactic of height to give 'the Lexicon' more urban gravitas. Conversely, at London's Wellcome Institute, AOC was employed to generate a decided-

ly domestic feel to its library's institutional reading room. Cosy as it is, it's still well above the hubbub of the ground floor gallery levels; so whether the public actually uses it hinges more on Wilkinson Eyre's yet-to-be-built connecting spiral staircase than it does on the quality of bean in its beanbags. Still, it's good to see Wellcome making efforts in public engagement that are not evident in its completing Francis Crick Institute up the road, built on land that had historically been

set aside for future expansion of the British Library. A concessionary rooftop public space there might have been preferable to the current curved cowl hiding its plant area. Wellcome could have followed Viñoly's lead, who by bunging both plants and public at the top of his Walkie Talkie, managed to justify the 680,000ft<sup>2</sup> of commercial space below it. In that proverb there's a salutary lesson for us all: if you want the world your own way, make sure you keep hold of the farm. ●

Done good in Dun Laoghaire: Carr Cotter and Naessens' Lexicon library, page 08.



DENNIS GILBERT

**Reading Room at the Wellcome Collection  
AOC**

Words and photographs Hugh Pearman

This is a very pleasing 'what-if' space, part of the expansion of the popular Wellcome Collection on London's Euston Road. Architect and designer AOC, working within a £17.5m plan by Wilkinson Eyre for this museum of medical history, has devised a space that is part exhibition, part library, part lounge, part research archive. It will be open to the public from February: although it is near-complete in itself, it awaits completion of a new spiral stair to connect it to the rest of the building.

In fact, the Wellcome Collection as a client seems remarkably curious and relaxed about just what the public use of this new facility will be, how many will find their way there, and what uses will be found for it: performance being one possibility. 'The nature of its use will be left unprescribed,' they say. AOC has an idea, though, having conducted a series of public workshops using items from the museum's collection. AOC director Geoff Shearcroft remarks that his practice was inspired by early photos of the space as a hall of statuary collected by the obsessive pharmaceuticals pioneer Henry Wellcome: some-

thing of the quirkiness of Wellcome comes through in this rethought space, not least his facial profile, used for timber mouldings. His patent pills are present, too, as bronze feet for the specially-designed reference tables.

In one corner you will find a reproduction of Freud's couch, near a coatstand of strait-jackets. There is a fearsome 1920 dentist's station, an early scanning X-ray machine, a set of the children's game 'Operation', contemporary art interventions and – in this room of 100 objects and 1,000 books – just one large interactive screen, on which you can dissect bodies, mummies and suchlike with a swipe of your finger. Different areas – Alchemy, Travel, Body, Breath, Face, Pain, Mind, Lives, Faith – are given subtly different design treatments and furniture. Upholstery fabric uses a 1951 Festival of Britain wallpaper design based on the Insulin cell: in fact there's something of a 1950s semi-domestic feel to the whole place.

It's rare for a cultural institution to come up with such an open brief: the result is both playful and learned. If the Ercol furniture is too formal, you can lounge on big cushions on the red-carpeted stairs: no longer a route to the library above, instead they become a kind of amphitheatre •

**Meanwhile in Warsaw...**

ribaj.com also has coverage of the Museum of the History of Polish Jews: <http://bit.ly/11nWxAN>









**Lexicon library, Dun Laoghaire, Dublin**  
**Carr Cotter and Naessens**Words **Hugh Pearman**Photograph **Dennis Gilbert**

It's good to see Ireland produce a fine civic building again, after its years of economic retrenchment. The new Lexicon public library and cultural centre in Dun Laoghaire, south of Dublin, is by Cork-based Carr Cotter & Naessens.

This winner of an international com-

petition is set on a narrow plot, rising and narrowing to face the sea. Of concrete construction and clad one side in granite and the other (facing housing terraces) in brick, its roofline distinguished by a series of nine ventilation cowl, it is oriented around what the architects describe as a central 'living room' looking out over the harbour. On the top floor, spanned by precast concrete V-beams incorporating air handling, it rises from a 4.5m ceiling height at its lower end to 13m where its glazed prow looks out across

Dublin Bay. As well as a library, the building contains an auditorium, art gallery, café, and history department – all cultural draws to boost its 60,000-plus membership.

Officially named the Lexicon and largely naturally ventilated, the €36.6m building is set in a new civic landscape designed to exploit the 6m slope of the rocky site, previously a run-down park that had once been a quarry: an upper pool in the form of a series of spiralling weirs, and a tree-sheltered green public space. The civic spaces are intended to

**Below** Drawing shows the relationship of the new library and cultural centre to the civic landmarks and harbour of Dun Laoghaire.

**Right** A window on Dublin Bay – at the prow of the Lexicon library.









revive this previously neglected area of town.

Inevitably such a project was politically controversial at a time of cutbacks. The competition took place in 2007, just as economic depression was looming. 'It wasn't a linear progression, at times it was touch and go – we were never really sure it would happen until near the end,' says partner Louise Cotter. 'It was huge leap of faith by the council.'

But the notion of civic pride is far from dead. Here the idea of aligning the build-

ing to point out to sea, with its long flanks defining sheltered public spaces, is the key architectural move on what is a commanding site. This is also quite a calling card for this small practice, founded in 2001 after its three partners – Seamus Carr and David Naessens being the others – had cut their teeth in a variety of influential practices including Dixon Jones, Colquhoun & Miller, Rick Mather, Branson Coates and Grafton Architects. This looks like a breakout project for them. ●

Aligning the building to point out to sea, with its long flanks defining sheltered public spaces, is the key architectural move

**Below** A library with quite some view, the space rising towards the prow.



**Below** Set in what was once a quarry for the harbour quays, with a series of cascading pools behind, the Lexicon centre points out to sea.



#### Open book

More libraries at [ribaj.com](http://ribaj.com)

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#### Birmingham

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#### Philip Larkin's view

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An aerial photograph of the London skyline at sunset or sunrise, featuring the River Thames, the London Eye, and several prominent skyscrapers including the Walkie Talkie and the Gherkin. The Radmat logo is overlaid in the bottom right corner.

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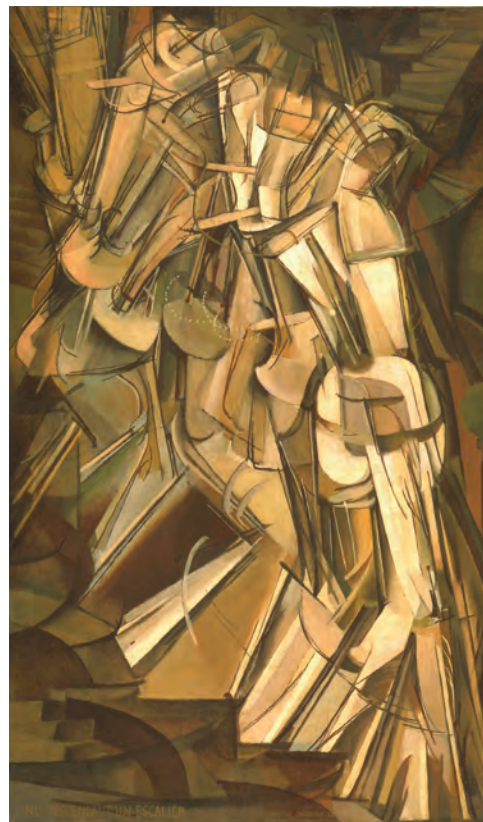
# The large glass

Frank Gehry's Paris gallery, though apparently broken, is complete, but its dramatic facade is just an elaborate cloak

Words: Jan-Carlos Kucharek Photographs: Iwan Baan

I've been six hours in the Pompidou at the Frank Gehry and Marcel Duchamp shows, and I've hit the point where it's hard to tell which is which. It seems there's a lot the two have in common – not least their production levels. There's something too of Duchamp's 'ready made' in Gehry's early work; the use of 'poor', generic materials like steel fencing as symbolic elements in his home, massive binoculars appropriated as the entrance to the 1991 Chiat/Day building or an aeroplane pinned delicately like a butterfly on the side of his 1984 California Aerospace Museum. Gehry's 2007 turd of a proposal for Andorra's National Art Museum is as visually shocking as Duchamp's 1971 urinal 'Fountain' – which turned him into modern art's enfant terrible and set the precedent for what the idea of 'art' might be – a role that some might say the 85 year old Gehry parallels in architecture today.

Analogies apart, there are also visual similarities. I'm doubly aware of this later, standing in front of Paris' Fondation Louis Vuitton at the city's Jardin d'Acclimatation, which, with its fractured carapace of huge





**Below left** *Nude  
Descending a Staircase*,  
Marcel Duchamp, 1912.

**Main image** Gehry's  
Fondation Louis Vuitton.  
Duchamp's *Nude*, but  
collapsed at the foot of  
the staircase?





glazed curves rising from the foot of a grand stepped water feature, bears an uncanny resemblance to Duchamp's Futurist 'Nude Descending a Staircase' (1913) – except here she's fallen down and is lying at its foot. Even so, it's an enviable position. The Jardin, strolled by Proust and once the site for a human ethnographic 'zoo', has the faded feel of Coney Island or Battersea Park; but technically it's in the Bois de Boulogne – Paris' huge naturalistic green space set out in 1852 by Napoleon III. Gehry's reported €100m vanity project for LVMH's Bernard Arnault, replacing the 'asbestos-riddled' Bowling de Paris, aims to bring cultural clout to the Bois' poor cousin, and is part of a wider regeneration of the 20ha gardens for Paris, which will inherit the building after 55 years.

Gehry's pioneering Digital Project software, exemplified by the mind-

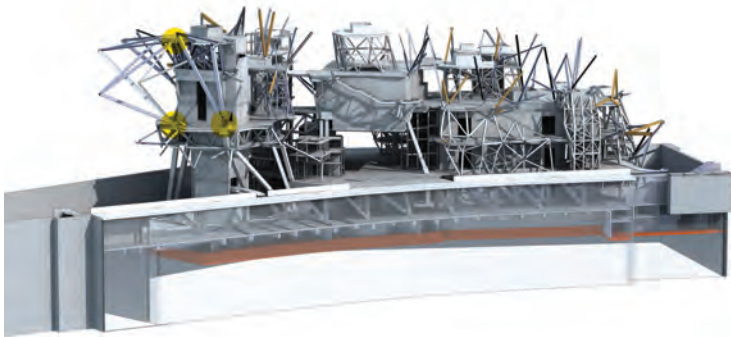
bogglingly contorted projects on display in the Pompidou retrospective, is as evident at Louis Vuitton as in any of his later work; but in its display of sheer possibility, it also highlights Duchamp's problem with the art of his time. From one angle, the show's huge model of the Bilbao Guggenheim even resembles the splayed thighs of Gustave Courbet's torso in 'The Origin of the World' (1866), the eye drawn to the thin slit of atrium glazing as unavoidably as it is to Courbet's disarmingly anatomical delineation of the female sex. The painting provoked Duchamp to vehemently object to the idea of appealing to the viewer on a purely visual level – what he termed 'retinal art' – so much so that in his own work, he vowed to 'put painting once again at the service of mind'.

Yet there are signs of a retinal approach at Louis Vuitton. Gehry works very much

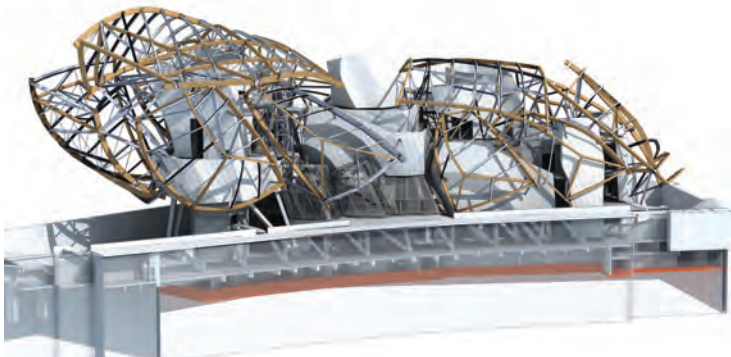
on a 'take it or leave it' basis; his recent 'showing the finger' to a journalist who asked what he thought of people dismissing his buildings as 'spectacle' is the kind of response we've come to expect of our greatest proponents of the art. After all, the Digital Project has allowed him to create what he wants exactly how he wants it. On the ground floor of Louis Vuitton, one of the 11 gallery spaces he's created is devoted to tracking, in models, the thinking Gehry went through to reach the final building form; certain things clearly informing the design from the start. Planning constraints dictated the 11,000m<sup>2</sup> area and 'one storey' height of the new building (both, apparently, to be no greater than the demolished bowling alley), and Gehry has clearly used ingenuity to surmount them. First, he sank the building into a three-sided box

**Below** Louis Vuitton construction sequence showing structural hierarchies.

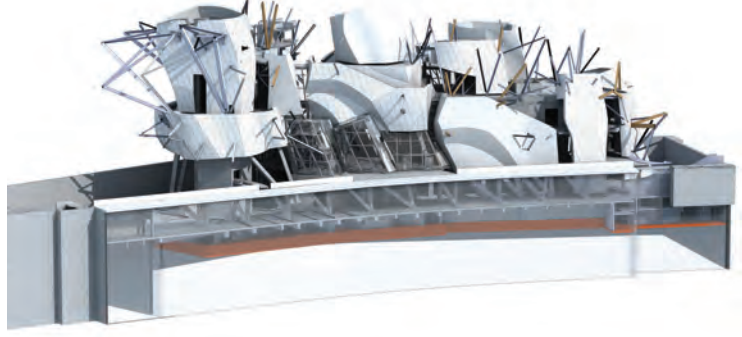
Concrete and gallery structure and steel circulation



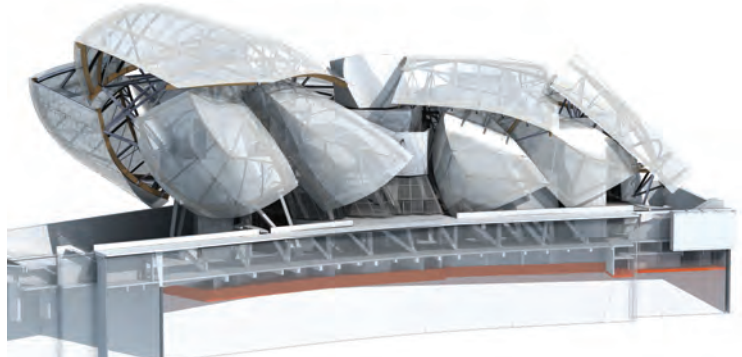
Timber framework attached to steels



Ductal cladding and steel 'skin' structure



Glass skin attached to timber framework





of retaining walls – the fourth side the stepped waterfall – then he applied some creative readings of mezzanine planning guidance to squeeze a sizeable 43m high, technically one-storey gallery on the site. But with a relatively simple programme of orthogonal galleries jostled together, an auditorium at the waterfall's foot, restaurant and circulation, the models suggest that volumetrically, the building was actually there at an early stage. All the time and effort, it seems, was expended on the development of its 'second skin'; the look it might have, how it might inform the gallery volume and how much it might be free of it.

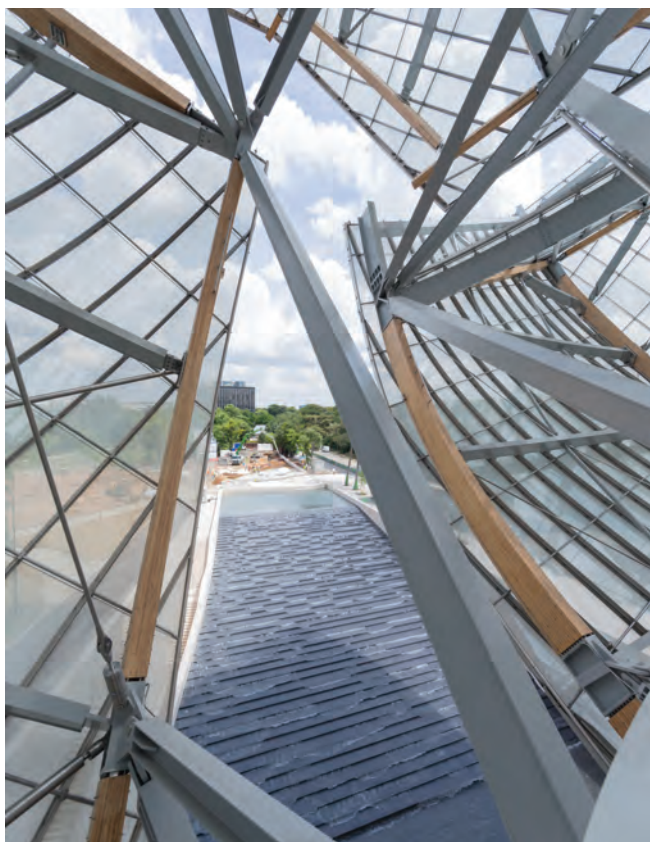
The structure itself is a hybrid one. Lower levels and gallery spaces are of reinforced concrete, but over 1,400 tonnes of steel is appended to this, to create Gehry's circulatory twists and turns, either clad in

Ductal or glass, to create the final elevations. Steels holding very chunky curved LVL timbers in place frame the Foundation's 12 glass 'wings', of 3,600 unique curved fritted panels. Inside, Gehry chooses to make light of this complexity; in fact internal entrance and circulation areas seem lacklustre, prosaic even where you'd expect them to be most playful, but externally it's a riot of steel, timber and glass. LVHM's project manager talks of 'structural hierarchy', but if there are rules, Gehry, like Duchamp in his '3 Standard Stoppages', is playing games with them – details like bolted heavy steel beam end plates fixed to the cladding face rather than the concrete behind, fragile and unsettling in equal measure. At the beams' other end, the curved translucent glass facets, while defining the external form of the building, have a strange relationship

with the many external, stepped viewing terraces, offering controlled views out, or closing them down altogether. From below you see this thick skin as a grand gestural indulgence, shading but wholly separate from the building, alluding symbolically to icebergs, clouds or the boats of which Gehry is apparently so fond; they're impressive, engineered, and functionally redundant.

But Gehry's right – you can take it or leave it. Bilbao looks like Duchamp's 1912 King and Queen Surrounded by Swift Nudes, and The Fondation like Nude Descending a Staircase. Small difference, one might argue, but it doesn't explain why one works for me and the other doesn't. So perhaps it's that Gehry's best projects arise from a keen analysis of context – be that physical or cultural. Ones that resonate stem from the intimacy of his own home, a play

**Below** View from the external terraces through the glazing looking east over the stepped waterfall running down to the lower level auditorium.



**Below** The south east corner of the auditorium, whose interiors were decorated with Ellsworth Kelly paintings.





on the West Coast’s postmodern emptiness or the considered stitching together of space with titanium tendrils within a declined industrial city as at Bilbao. New York’s Beekman Tower, a Chrysler building caught in the Fannie Mae meltdown, stands as a 21st century testament, if any were needed, of our ultimate vulnerability. The Fondation Louis Vuitton however proves rather more elusive as an idea, a rarefied ark for art cast adrift from the city on the edge of the Bois de Boulogne, and sailing high above the trees; feeling as remote from their verdant canopies as it is from the centre. Given that condition, its destiny is to be a self-referential piece, only negotiating its relationship to itself and how it should ‘look’ – evidenced by its many iterations in model form: the wilful tectonic shifting of huge glass plates from here to there and back

again as a purely formal, retinal diversion. In 1923, Duchamp, bored by years working on his ‘Bride Stripped Bare By Her Bachelors, Even’ (The Large Glass), declared it ‘definitively unfinished’; ironically only considering it complete when its two huge painted panes were shattered in transit back from a New York show. Duchamp would spend 10 years piecing together the fragments; aware as he was that this image of an impossible machine, set within its metal border, was changing the framework in which the world understood the concept of art. On the face of it, the cracked shell of smoothly curved glass, the Fondation Louis Vuitton seems as shocking, decadent and outrageous. But beyond its skin it’s quite bourgeois; and critically, it’s not shattering our preconceptions but reflecting them. ●  
[See more images at ribaj.com](#)

Credits  
**Architect** Frank Gehry  
**Design team** Gehry Partners  
**Consultant** Gehry Technologies  
**Executive architect** Studios Architecture  
**MEP engineer** Setec Batiment  
**Lighting** L’Observatoire International / Ingelux  
**Civil engineer** Setec Bâtiment  
**Building facade consultant** RFR/TESS  
**Acoustical engineer** Lamoureux (Base Building)  
**Sound designer (auditorium)** Nagata Acoustics  
**Landscape** Atelier Lieux Et Paysages  
**Theatre/AV** Ducks Sceno  
**Sustainable building consultant** S’Pace / Terao  
**Building maintenance** TAW  
**General contractor** Vinci Construction

**Below** Unlike Bilbao, the original gallery spaces bear no relationship to the skin that covers them.



**Below** A Bilbao dead ringer? King and Queen Surrounded by Swift Nudes, Marcel Duchamp, 1912.







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# Tall order

Vertical cities and sustainable towers have been possible for some time. Now we just need to make the economics add up

Words: Hugh Pearman



**Left** Tough new BREEAM standards are met by the impending Scalpel tower in the City of London's Lime Street by architect KPF and engineer Arup.

**Right** SOM's super-tall, super-efficient Pertamina Energy Tower in Jakarta, Indonesia, will use geothermal energy.

For a quarter of a century now, architects and engineers have known that it is practically possible to build a self-contained vertical city – or to be less grand just a skyscraper – that is broadly carbon-neutral in use. As for the embodied energy of manufacture and construction – consider the vast amounts of energy needed to make and transport steel and glass, for instance – that is a tougher problem, but it can be addressed in various ways, not least the use of green energy, recycled materials and the longevity of the structure. In use, however, the aim is that over the course of a year, say, the building should consume no more energy than it generates, and beyond that become energy-plus, feeding its surplus back into the grid. As a corollary it should be able to collect and/or recycle its own water, and process and reuse its waste – for instance through waste-powered generators. If cruise ships can have these, why not towers?

If all this seems very obvious, that's because we've had a long time to think about it. It is 25 years since Foster + Partners' 1989 research project for the Obayashi Corporation, the 840m Millennium Tower. That was conceived as a vertical city of 60,000 in Tokyo Bay, that would be 'self-sustaining and virtually self-sufficient'. Its exoskeletal tapering needle was also designed to cope with both high winds and earthquakes. The tower's sustainability credentials were enhanced by its mission to concentrate rapidly-expanding populations into a small footprint, rather than letting them sprawl over valuable food-producing land. Others have proposed vertical farms to address the same problem.

Practically possible, perhaps, but easier



## SOM's Pearl River Tower in Guangzhou is nearly 60% more efficient than a conventional tower of the same size

to propose than to achieve. However, in the years since Foster flung down that gauntlet, steady progress has been made towards that goal. The steps along the way are significant: on a lesser but still large scale, the designs for the new 'Scalpel' tower by KPF on Lime Street in the City of London, close to Foster's Gherkin and Rogers' Cheese Grater, has achieved an interim BREEAM 'Excellent' certificate, the first to be awarded under the new, stringent, 2014 sustainability standard. For a 400,000 ft<sup>2</sup> glass-clad office building rising to 35 floors and 190m above ground, that's impressive. For the tower's engineer, Arup, Mel Allwood says the certification 'demonstrates that energy efficiency can be combined with exemplary indoor environmental quality.' Including new public space and oriented to reduce southern exposure, the design scored highly in the BREEAM transport, land use and ecology, water, waste and management categories.

Higher-profile in international terms is SOM's Pearl River Tower in Guangzhou, China, completed in 2013. At 310m and 71 storeys high, and with a gross area of 214,000m<sup>2</sup>, this slender tower deploys a range of low-energy initiatives from an aerodynamic double-skin facade incorporating wind turbines to solar panels, a chilled ceiling system, underfloor fresh-air ventilation and good use of daylight through orientation and a relatively narrow plan. However, it is not carbon-neutral – the main reported stumbling block being the state's reluctance to accept surplus power generated in this way. But it is still nearly 60% more efficient than a conventional tower of the same size,





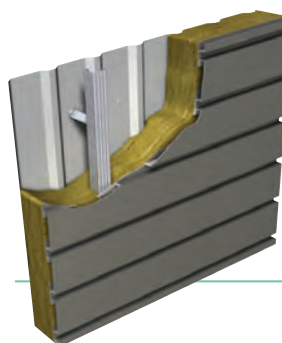


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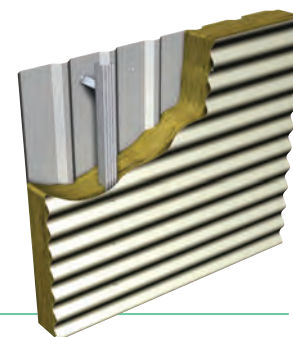
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its extra construction cost should be recouped in five years, and it was the springboard for SOM partner Adrian Smith and associate partner Gordon Gill to set up their own eponymous practice. Their FKI Tower in Seoul, South Korea, confirms their commitment to sustainability: its horizontal sawtooth facade uses photovoltaic cells in spandrel panels, angled 30° towards the sun, which double as solar shading to the interior. Generating 780MW a year, the facade thus becomes integral to the energy strategy. Combined with geothermal power, natural ventilation and good daylighting it is the Korean equivalent of LEED Gold standard.

SOM has meanwhile continued its architectural and engineering research into this area. It deploys various technologies – such as the bank of fuel cells designed to generate 4.8MW of combined heat and power for its latest completion, the 1 World Trade

Center tower, along with the planned use of electricity generated from Canadian hydro power. There's been an acknowledged setback: Hurricane Sandy, when it ripped through New York in 2012 with its accompanying floods, destroyed the fuel cells and the building opened without them in operation. But 1 World Trade Center, though massively more efficient than the 1960s Twin Towers it replaces, was never designed with carbon neutrality as a goal, unlike other SOM projects – its research project into a composite timber/concrete skyscraper being a shining example. As SOM New York partner Kenneth Lewis puts it, 'so much is site-specific'. To cover the possibility of on-site generators failing, he explains, cities like New York need equivalent back-up from the grid – which means that external power generation is not reduced commensurately.

'Net zero as a goal structure can work,

but the economics of it are still in progress,' says SOM New York's technical architecture director Nick Holt, pointing out that in 10 states of the USA there is parity in energy costs between solar and fossil fuels – but that this depends at the moment on tax incentives. As for a building generating its own power, rather than relying on green-energy sources from outside – that again comes down very much to location, some having many more natural advantages in terms of solar exposure and prevailing winds, for instance, than others.

Other energy sources are available, if you're lucky. In Jakarta, Indonesia, SOM is now getting very close to the Holy Grail with the 500m Pertamina Energy Tower, an exemplar project for the state electricity generating company. 'This one could be net energy positive,' says Holt. 'There's a full-blown geothermal system that actually produces



**Far left** The building envelope for SOM's Pearl River Tower in Guangzhou is shaped to funnel wind past vertical-axis turbines.

**Above** Smith + Gill's FKI Tower, Seoul, Korea: a facade that is a source of both power generation and solar shading.

**Left** SOM's research into a composite timber and concrete skyscraper holds the key to reducing embodied energy.



## Net zero as a goal structure can work, but the economics of it are still in progress

more energy than the site requires – a super-tall skyscraper and two other buildings. But that's unique – it's a volcanic archipelago that it's being built on. We have superheated ground a couple of hundred feet down that we can take advantage of – that normally wouldn't be available to you.'

Size matters – not just in terms of buildings but in the practices producing them. SOM is famously a multi-disciplinary global powerhouse of design, with enviable and very necessary research capability. Kenneth Lewis concludes: 'We're a global practice and we're looking at this issue very carefully – both as a practice and as our commitment to the 2030 Challenge.'

The 2030 Challenge, an independent initiative adopted by the American Institute of Architects, is tough: to get to Net Zero in building design by 2030, with a sliding scale of energy efficiency operating in the intervening years. It's ambitious – there's 15 years to go. Achievable? 2030 will bring us to the 40th anniversary of Foster's Millennium Tower project which arguably set the ball rolling. The RIBA is meanwhile pressing the UK government to accelerate its phasing-in of carbon neutrality in buildings, and condemns backsliding. We know it can and must be done. The only question is – by when? ●



### ELEVATORS GIVE CARBON REDUCTION A LIFT

Skyscraper typology has always relied on developing lift technology to progress, so it's no surprise to learn that the latest super tall buildings are pushing the envelope for lift design – or the cables at least. 'Once you go above 300m, cable weight alone exceeds that of the lift and its occupants,' says Arup director Julian Olley. 'Steel's capacity to support its own weight diminishes too. At 1km, the cable can support nothing more than its own weight and lifts of 600-800m need multiple heavy cables.' This has driven carbon fibre technology, with firm KONE launching its own carbon fibre 'ultrarope' last year, pushing for it here on KPF's Scalpel tower at London's Lime St. 'For tall buildings it has real advantages – it's much stronger and lighter, creating energy efficiencies.' And it doesn't cost much more to specify either; as Olley points out, the main outlay at these heights is not the mechanisms, but their installation.

The jury's out, it seems, on the other lift technologies that might, on

the face of it, yield carbon savings.

This is because the need to save energy has to be offset against convenience for the user. Thus double decker cars are great for people movement, but not for energy reasons, as you might be moving 20 tonnes of equipment to get a 65kg human from one floor to another. Likewise, there's a big debate raging on the efficiencies of 'destination control'. 'The emphasis here is on minimum stops, so you could end up with four different people getting four different lifts, which doesn't optimise energy use' says Olley. Twin cab shafts, where two cars share the same shaft, can increase movement efficiencies and so save energy. Regenerative drives, generating energy from the braking mechanisms of high speed lifts, are now standard practice in Europe but are yet to gain widespread adoption state side.

In fact, Olley explains, the biggest savings are generally to be realised in the simplest ways. 'Lifts do nothing for a considerable part of the day, so closing down banks of lifts, switching off lights and conditioning systems

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**Left** RPBW's KT Building in Seoul, South Korea, adopting foot traffic as well as high speed lifts as part of its vertical circulation strategy.

can have a real impact on energy consumption,' he explains. There's also using your feet, says Olley. 'We have conducted anecdotal research which suggests that if a stair is placed in an obvious, accessible position between floors, 90% of people will use it rather than the lift to travel a single floor,' which should influence multi-floor office fit-outs. As a result, he concludes, Arup, for example, is looking at the KT Building in Seoul for RPBW, which has lifts that stop every other floor, asking users (apart from the mobility challenged with an override) to take a flight down if necessary, to get to their destination. This reduces the number of lifts and energy consumed.

Of course, if energy saving energy is not your bag, then the sky's the limit. Mitsubishi is now building the fastest lifts in the world, travelling at 18m/s for the 121-storey Shanghai Tower opening next year. And 2016 will see the 530m tall Guangzhou CTF Finance Centre opening with lifts travelling at 20m/s. The issue then becomes the performance of the brakes to stop them. CK





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# 2: Intelligence



Designing &  
building It

## Florian Beigel



As Florian Beigel of London Metropolitan University wins the RIBA's Annie Spink Award, Eleanor Young spoke to him about a life educating architects

### Do you consider yourself an educator or academic?

I am an architect. I teach from that position. I like to build. I was very lucky to be asked to design the school here. Its spaces are a city within a building. We created a street or boulevard, and onto it the front of each studio has a family of windows; each is like a little facade.

### Who has influenced you?

Philip Cristou and I understand each other – working together teaching and at the Architecture Research Unit since 1985 when we did the Half Moon theatre. There is Alvaro Siza who sketches so beautifully and Frei Otto who I worked with on the Munich Olympics.

### Where do students learn most?

In their units, teaching with 20 per unit. We ask and encourage them to work in the studio – it is their house.

### Where to do you like to take students?

We just took our unit to Évora to see Siza's Malaguiera courtyard houses with their beautiful streets that are embedded in the landscape. The old Roman city had aqueducts: Siza was fascinated by them and their silhouette, so above the map of houses he put his services, justifying them as more accessible but always interested in the sculptural value. That is very special.

### How do you help them?

We teach students to love architecture. If they are asked to design it is very daunting. We think how to give them a head start with precedent studies. We say design a good house ... and show them houses that do more than just say here is a bedroom, here is a living room. Function comes later, first is the idea of space. You design a room with good proportions and then test it with a specific function and adjust.

### What is architecture about for you?

Fundamental things are the origin of good architecture. The artificial and natural, the ornate and simple – you must be selective and use good material but very little of it. I like students to have a good awareness of scales – it gives a good chance of making inspiring architecture.

### Have certain themes carried through your career?

In-betweenness is an abiding concern... It is all about space, space, space. We are not interested in objects. The painter Giorgio Morandi put out vases every day like a little city, looking at the spaces between. It is not about oneness, but twoness – you can use money for privateness also for publicness, and make a present for the city. Public realm is a must, even if it is only a bit of pavement. That is what we are here for as architects.

### FLORIAN BEIGEL

Florian Beigel is professor of architecture at the Sir John Cass Faculty of Art, Architecture and Design, London Metropolitan University, where he has taught in the Diploma Architecture Course since the early 1990s. He is director of the Architecture Research Unit (ARU), a design research studio at The CASS, and has projects in South Korea as well as The CASS itself at Aldgate East.

The RIBA presents the Annie Spink Award biennially in recognition of an outstanding contribution to architectural education.



Intelligence is officially approved RIBA CPD. Look out for icons throughout the section indicating core curriculum areas.



Designing &  
building it

# President's Medals 2014

Flights of fancy and engagement with the world of the imagination characterise this year's RIBA President's Medals, here described by the winners

## Silver Medal

### PoohTown

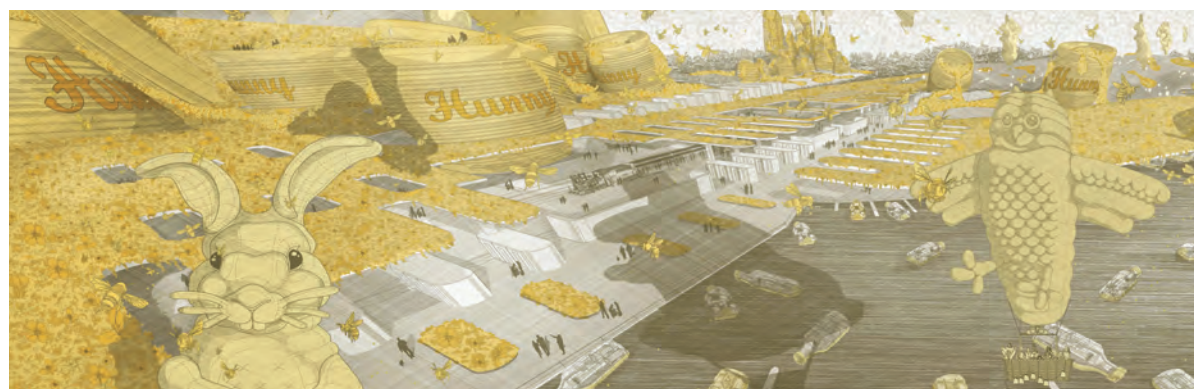
Nick Elias

Bartlett School of  
Architecture, UCL

Tutors: CJ Lim/Bernd  
Felsinger

In AA Milne's 'Winnie the Pooh' a happy world is constructed fictitiously from an unhappy, real, Christopher Robin. It was published in the 1920s, a time when industry took off in Slough which quickly became a place of unhappiness and social exclusion. For the project, 1920s Slough is revisited to capitalise on the economy of 'happiness' as an alternative industry using Winnie the Pooh as a metaphorical protagonist.

Like many towns, Slough aches to be peaceful, happy and socially inclusive. It has long since been perceived as home to much deprivation. PoohTown aims to re-evaluate covert responses to socio-political exclusion by proposing 'happy' architectures where residents can live, work and play in a sustainable economic network. It also philosophises over the potential of today's cities to prescribe policies of happiness alongside familiar amenities; a concept worryingly absent in today's city planning. Empirical research

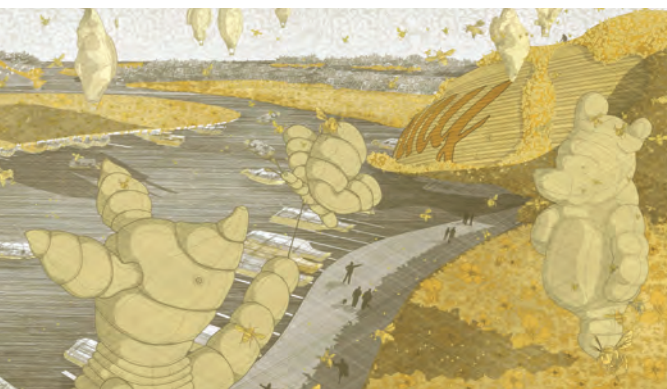




showed that most people are happiest playing an idealised, fictional, representation of themselves – from wearing make-up to proving their organic credentials at the farmers' market. Guests to PoohTown indulge in this tendency and become the fictional, happy, Christopher Robin by visiting Pooh and friends (each representatives of a specific 'happiness') on a proposed pilgrimage.

This speculative proposal is a device to explore the potential of a happy-ever-after.

PoohTown has taught me to design by applying knowledge rather than relying on transient technical knowhow. It has exposed transferable methods and reasoning, allowing me to work from a more personal, anthropological and emotional viewpoint. It questions what humans want and made it possible to test the purpose of architecture in a changing world. It is a more sustainable to design infrastructure for an emotional state; if it make us content, we may ask less from the Earth. ●



## Silver High Commendation

### An Ark for Endangered Atmospheres

Justin Cawley

University of Sydney

Tutor: François Blanciak



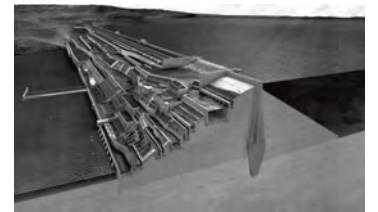
## Silver Commendations

### THE LIVING DAM

LOUIS SULLIVAN

Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL

Tutors: Jonathan Hill / Matthew Butcher / Elizabeth Dow

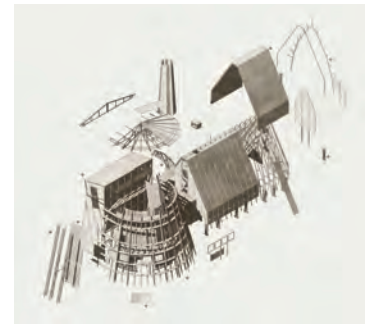


### BROOKLYN CO-OPERATIVE

YANNIS HALKIOPOULOS

University of Westminster

Tutors: Anthony Boulanger/Guan Lee/Stuart Piercy





## Bronze Medal

## Flow 1944

Simon Dean

Kingston University

Tutors: Jane Houghton/

Stephen Baty

A bathhouse emerges from a quarry, carved from the flow spewed by the volcano's last eruption. A trail through deserted lands and timid orchards, a shunned landscape turned to wasteland, tracing the river of lava up to its source; the volcano rests below, its breath heating rock and water.

The case for *Thermae Vesuviane* cannot be constructed on premises of rational thought; a monumental quarry carved into the rock from which the 1944 eruption gushed millions of cubic feet of lava, erasing entire towns as they met its path. The sheer amount of labour required to remove such quantities of rock – without the aid of blasting, which would disrupt local fauna

and unsettle loose formations – would seem preposterous considering the maximum potential lifespan of this complex is estimated at 30 years. Yet the Neapolitans' general disregard for such perils, outweighed by issues of social and economic nature, overshadow this thesis in the field of illogical reasoning.

The bathhouse lives in the long shadow of Mt Vesuvius, a transient existence; yet after the tremors, the exodus of the bathkeeper, its embalming in the lava of the succeeding geological strata, it re-emerges, cut from the vestiges of its predecessors; a slow aggregation of quarries and undercuts and caves, a cyclical artefact for the civilisations at the volcano's feet. ●



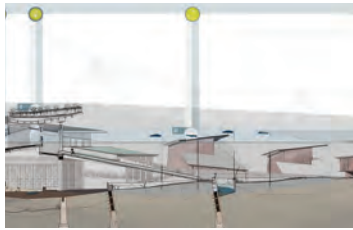
**Bronze Commendations**

**RONG KHAN SAFEHOUSE**

EMILY PRIEST

Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL

Tutor: Sabine Storp



**CITY FRAME THE REAPPROPRIATION OF MAPLE HOUSE**

SAMUEL LITTLE

London Metropolitan University

Tutors: Alex Bank/Sam Casswell/Florian Beigel/Philip Christou

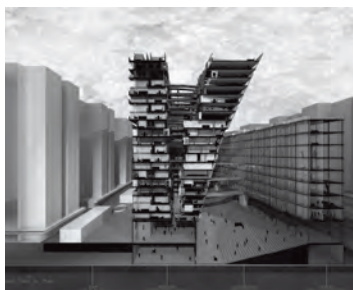


**URBAN LIVING TRANSITION: VANISHING HERITAGE OF HONG KONG RESIDENCE**

HO YEUNG (HOWELL) TSANG

University of Hong Kong

Tutor: Dylan Baker-Rice



**Silver Serjeant**

**The Restored Commonwealth Club**

Adam Bell

University of Greenwich

Tutors, Simon Herron/  
Susanne Isa/Nicholas Szczepaniak/Jonathan Hagos



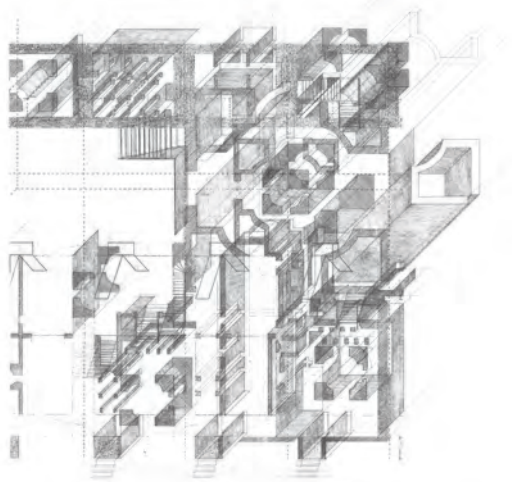
**Bronze Serjeant**

**The Institute of Concrete Poetry**

Oliver Riviere

University of Brighton

Tutors: Ben Sweeting/  
Alex Arestis





## Dissertation Medal

## Made Ground: A spatial history of Sydney Park

Jasper Ludewig  
University of Sydney  
Tutor: Ross Anderson

Focussed on a park in Sydney, Australia, this is a case study with which to introduce the discipline of 'spatial history': a method of historical inquiry developed by the Australian geographer, historian and architectural theorist, Professor Paul Carter.

Each of Made Ground's six essays discusses a series of practices, beliefs and tools in the historical production of Australia's physical and social space: the landscape painting, the map, the journal, the expedi-

tion, the natural environment, the figurative construct of the 'Native', inherited British beliefs and values of Australia's colonists, and the various place-bound or topological patterns of Australia's settlement. These investigations focus on the creative, postcolonial capacity of interpreting the texts and records of the past as a way of destabilising our assumptions about the places of the present. Philosophical Hermeneutics, propagated by philosophers such as Hans-Georg Gadamer, Jürgen Habermas and Paul Ricoeur, are demonstrated to proffer a further framework within which to establish the nature of interpretation and research, as well as broadening the theoretical scope of Carter's 'Spatial History'. Ultimately, Made Ground: A Spatial History of Sydney Park seeks to develop a way of engaging with, and understanding, the fraught and contested narratives of Australia's multivalent places in which spatial practitioners such as architects, planners, urban designers and artists intervene. ●

**Below left and right** Exploring the historical production of space, in its many forms.



## Dissertation High Commendation

## TOWARDS A COMMON GROUND FOR PLAY: EXAMINING THE HISTORY OF PLAY AND PLAYGROUNDS IN DUBLIN'S LIBERTIES

EKATERINA TIKHONIOUK

University College Dublin

Tutor: Miriam Fitzpatrick



## Dissertation Commendation

## EXILIC LANDSCAPES: SYNAGOGUES AND JEWISH ARCHITECTURAL IDENTITY IN 1870S BRITAIN

LEON FENSTER

Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL

Tutor: Murray Fraser

## SOM Foundation Fellowship Part 1

KENT GIN

CULTURAL PERFORATION OF MADRID, DISRUPTION OF THE DEFINED  
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Designing &  
building it

# Imagination and precision

Tom Emerson of 6A on why Florian Beigel of London Metropolitan University deserves the RIBA's Annie Spink Award for outstanding teaching



IVAN JONES

Short pencil dashes gently formed a grid across the page as precisely as a human hand will allow. The graphite dragged by the drawing hand became a glowing background surface for short meticulous strokes. This is how space begins, said Florian Beigel.

Beigel opened an evening lecture in Cambridge with a long meditation on a drawing by Agnes Martin. Martin's graphite landscapes were followed by deeply personal photographs of nature, in which micro ecologies growing in the cracks of asphalt became spaces for inhabitation and examination. We sat transfixed as Beigel's abstractions merged with a fragile reality. Combining building completed by his research practice ARU with student projects from his design unit at London Metropolitan (then University of North London) Beigel showed how architecture is led from the imagination to the world in drawing. Surfaces, lines and even mis-en-page held their own latent architecture, spaces of ideas and experience.

I was not taught by Florian Beigel but that lecture in 1996 was one of the most memorable events of my education. Since then, like many others, I have been a vicarious pupil through lectures, publications, drawings and working alongside former colleagues and students. Since the 1970s Beigel has tirelessly researched and shared with his students a radical architectural position in which theory does not legitimise action, but makes human experience and practice the foundations of a humane and progressive architecture. As fantastically speedy and widespread media triumph and flatten architecture into a single, homogenous surface, Beigel gives depth to surface, specificity to the apparently generic.

For Beigel, there is only one environment. There are no hierarchies between large and small or between history and the avant-garde; for Beigel an entire landscape can be conceived as a room while a room or an object can be invested with the potential of landscape. Spatial metaphors and analogies are deployed with critical precision to bring new images of the world into architecture. Architecture, landscape, drawing,

painting, abstraction and quotation form one nature, one human culture. Perhaps with an echo of Aldo Rossi, for Beigel architecture stands only for architecture but in his hands that has few limits. He has returned the subject to itself. Beigel's teaching and practice are a guiding light for several generations of architects, who have sought an alternative to the rhetoric of modernism or the excesses of post modernism. His is a holistic and poetic vision of architecture, within nature rather than separate from it. He has often expressed a paradoxical radical modesty. Not because future architecture should be background but, on the contrary, because we need it so much more now that we have damaged our planet so deeply. But it is needed with subtlety, humility, beauty and care.

Beigel's influence has been at the heart of 6a and my teaching. Drawing is central to fusing landscape and history in his pedagogical and architectural project. And many roots of our current work are in the architectural culture and community he founded and still leads at the CASS, London Met.

Beigel's poetic imagination is matched by a precision that has revealed the mysteries of architecture to hundreds of students. Beigel's tireless commitment to the 'art of architecture' brings to mind the final words of Italo Calvino when reflecting on the future of literature: 'To my mind exactitude means three things above all: a well-defined and well-calculated plan for the work in question; an evocation of clear, incisive, memorable visual images; and a language as precise as possible both in choice of words [form] and in expression of the subtleties of thought and imagination.'

Florian Beigel's influence on architectural discourse is immeasurable through the work he has made and the people he has taught. He is a constant inspiration to any students and architects who care about the future and past of our environment.

I cannot think of a more deserving recipient of the Annie Spink Award. ●

Tom Emerson is director of 6a architects and professor of architecture at ETH Zurich



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# It's all about knowledge

A shift in government attitude to school design has fundamentally affected the architect's role. A RIBA round table took stock

## Matt Thompson

The cancellation of the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme and the launch of the Priority School Building Programme (PSBP) have significantly impacted the role of architects in school design today. In a sector where the need is so great and the consequences of getting buildings wrong is so high, the RIBA convened a round table discussion with clients to assess how architects are perceived today and what lessons can be learnt.

According to the Local Government Association, two thirds of local authorities predict they will have more pupils than places by the beginning of the 2016 academic year. On top of that, the entire schools estate is beginning to crumble. All this was foreseen back in 2003 when Building Schools for the Future was launched to rebuild all secondary schools by 2020, heralding a golden age for architects in a sector that inspired high ideals. However, the programme was cancelled in 2010 following the James Review, which, among other things, concluded that 'there is very little evidence that a school building that goes beyond being fit-for-purpose has the potential to drive educational transformation'.

The BSF was replaced by the leaner, meaner Priority School Building Programme (PSBP), with capital funding rationalised into



*'We need to educate architects regarding budget, and they need to understand more clearly what clients want'*

Ayo Allu, senior design manager,  
Kier Construction

one central controlling quango – the Education Funding Agency (EFA). Concentrating on schools in most need, it will benefit 261 in the first wave of funding until 2017, while a second wave worth £2bn is due to run until 2021. A new set of standardised architectural design templates was produced, to be applied regardless of topography or context.

The legacy of the BSF still casts a long shadow on school building policy. Mairi Johnson, global head of education at Aecom and former deputy director of design at the EFA, explains how this has affected client expectations: 'Schools clients know we are in an era of austerity and have had very poor buildings historically so they will accept a new building that is simple and low cost'.

While clients accept that belts have to be tightened, it need not be at the cost of quality. The Vale of Glamorgan Council, for example, retains targets for both hard and soft outcomes, and still believes in consulting teachers and pupils. As Jane Wade, its operational manager, says: 'We need to create inspirational spaces – how children feel when they walk into the space is the biggest measure.'

There is a fine line between quality and cost, though. Lyndsay Smith, director of education at Morgan Sindall, sums it up: 'Architects need to understand which bits make a difference to the educational outcomes. Inspiring spaces make a difference; tiny details around a doorframe do not.'

Paul Morrell, the government's former chief construction adviser, thinks that inefficiency should be driven out before contractors and clients start chipping away at design qualities thought to be beneficial. 'We have no idea how little we can build quality for until we get waste out of the process,' he says.

While waste is understood, what co-founder of the Education Foundation Ty Goddard calls the 'design dividend' is not. 'If all we can offer teachers and pupils are typical boxes, we've failed. School environments matter.' For him, however, this is not about grand aesthetic architecture but functional efficiency: 'I want my daughter to be able to hear and see what the teacher is doing.'

Understanding what works is crucial for the calculation of value for money and, by extension, the value of architects. Morrell again: 'The industry doesn't know the value of its own products. We need to fix the absence of a feedback route.' Donald Farquharson, head of capital programme delivery for



'We need to create inspirational spaces – how children feel when they walk into the space is the biggest measure'

Jane Wade, operational manager,  
Vale of Glamorgan Council

Kent County Council, agrees, advocating enhanced post-occupancy evaluations (POEs) that measure against A Level results, for example. For Geoff Haslam, director of Local Agenda, POEs are the only way to separate the wheat from the chaff: 'We need a quality loop like you have in the automotive industry where they pull cars apart to see where they went wrong.'

Predictably, clients and other stakeholders have a guarded opinion of architects. Karl Limbert, head of property at the London Borough of Kingston, for example, thinks architects who add real value are those who can tackle all problems 'rather than just focusing on architecture'. Consequently, clients are careful in their appointments. For Ayo Allu, senior design manager for Kier Construction, the right architect is one in tune with his needs: 'We need to educate architects regarding budget, and they need to understand more clearly what clients want.' Farquharson thinks that 'working together is not a concept architects enjoy', an impression shared by Goddard: 'Architects forget to have a discussion with the client. They need to communicate solutions.'

It seems that careful listening, problem-solving, and especially reacting creatively to cost constraints are the foundation of architects' appeal to clients. Simon Trew of architect Stride Treglown describes tight budgets as 'the grit in the oyster'. And Michael Buchanan, education director at Galliford Try, agrees, seeing it pushing architects. However, Haslam points out that extracting value in this way is a collective responsibility: 'the briefing and the parameters within



which you ask an architect to work are key'.

Harry Scarff, property director for Cornerstone, thinks the architect's offer must include 'an innovative way of delivering those spaces that influence educational standards'. Lean working, standardisation and BIM are all part of the formula. Equally, client-side innovation is needed, especially in linking operational to capital expenditure. As Wade puts it: 'Maintenance is at operational level, not strategic, which has caused us problems.' Farquharson adds: 'LAs are too reactive, and never have enough money to think ahead. We need to move to a BIM profile and FM policy.'

With more contractor-clients, the position of architects in the supply chain has shifted. At Morgan Sindall and Kier Construction, for example, cost-effective energy strategies are prioritised and drive the architecture, with the result that engineers and M&E consultants are more prominent. That said, Allu identifies an opportunity for architects to take back the design manager role, although Andrew Barraclough, group design director at Wates, argues that the leadership role has gone: 'Give up trying to be the leader, but be proactive, and keep the creativity flowing.'

The biggest challenge for architects, though, is to share knowledge. Described by Simon Foxell of the Architects Practice as a 'professional duty', the industry fights shy of sharing for fear of losing competitive edge. It need not be so, though, says Morrell: 'We're not asking people to share input data, but more outputs and outcomes.' And this, says Goddard, 'will better serve our clients'. ●

See the rest of the series at [ribaj.com](http://ribaj.com)

## TOP TIPS FOR THE SCHOOLS MARKET

1. **Learn** from past experience and share knowledge for the benefit of clients and the future of educational outcomes.
2. **Remove** waste to protect design quality.
3. **Accept** cost constraints – treat them as the grit in the oyster.
4. **Listen** to clients' needs, solve problems, and communicate solutions openly.
5. **Work** collaboratively in the design team.
6. **Apply** innovative practices such as standardisation, lean principles, and BIM for improved outcomes.

## RIBA CLIENT ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME

The RIBA's Client Liaison Group is running a series of round table discussions to listen to and understand external perceptions of the architectural profession and the value architects bring to the project team, and ultimately to identify the tools needed to promote architectural services in these sectors successfully. The feedback from interviews with public sector clients is included here; and 60 second clips of the one-to-one interviews are available on [architecture.com](http://architecture.com).





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# Faults of omission

Omission clauses don't always let you take works out of a contract

Angus Dawson

Client variations are a common feature of construction projects. Clients frequently change their minds about design and often instruct further works under their building contracts. What happens however where a client wishes to take work away from its contractor? Are there any limitations on the nature and scope of omissions the client can instruct under its building contract?

There is no right under common law for a client to vary the scope of works under a contract (whether by addition, variation or omission) without the contractor's consent. The contract must therefore include an express right for the client to omit works if it wishes to do so without the contractor's consent.

Most building contracts (including the JCT suite) expressly entitle the client to instruct variations to the works, including omissions. The extent to which the courts will permit a client to omit works will however depend on the precise wording of the contract and the particular facts of the case.

The general approach of the courts has

been that, once appointed, a contractor should be entitled to complete the works in their entirety and that it will take clear words to displace this presumption. While the cases are drafting and fact specific, the courts are wary of clients looking to use omissions clauses to take away from the contractor the whole or a substantial part of the works.

## Bargain hunting forbidden

In the leading case of *Abbey Developments v PP Brickwork*, the judge held that: '...the basic bargain struck between the employer and the contractor has to be honoured and an employer who finds that it has entered into what he might regard as a bad bargain is not allowed to escape from it by the use of the omissions clause so as to enable it then to try and get a better bargain by having the work done by somebody else'.

However, the judge went on to say that if the wording of the contract is sufficiently clear, an omission may not amount to a breach of contract. The answer will depend on the breadth of the drafting of the omissions clause and whether the omission is consistent with the intention of the clause.

Where a client omits works in breach of its contractual rights, the courts are likely to hold the client liable for loss of profit on the works which have been unlawfully omitted under the contract. If the unlawful omission is significant enough, this may amount to a repudiatory breach of contract (see in plain English section).

The messages to take home are that, first, if the client wishes to omit works under its contract, it will need an express right to do so in its contract; secondly that the client must not abuse the purpose of the omission clause; thirdly that if the client wishes to reserve the right to omit works and award these to a third party contractor, it must have a clear right to do so under the contract; and lastly that if the client does not want to be liable for loss of profit on omitted elements, this also needs to be clearly stated.

The greater the scale of the proposed omission though, the greater the risk of this being challenged by the contractor on the basis that the omission defeats the basic bargain between the client and the contractor. In short, take care when looking to omit works and always be sure to check the terms of the building contract. ●

Angus Dawson is a partner at Macfarlanes

The courts are wary of clients looking to use omissions clauses to take away from the contractor the whole or a substantial part of the works

## IN PLAIN ENGLISH – REPUDIATION

A party to a contract is deemed to be in repudiatory breach if it shows its intention no longer to be bound by the terms of the contract. A party may be held to be in repudiatory breach, for example, if it abandons or walks away from the contract. In the context of omission of works, if the client unlawfully omits some or all of the works from the contract, the contractor may be able to argue that the client is showing an intention no longer to be bound by the terms of the contract as it is essentially taking the works away from the contractor.

The occurrence of the repudiatory breach does not itself terminate the contract, the innocent party has to accept the repudiation. If a repudiatory breach is accepted, both parties are discharged from any further obligations under the contract and the innocent party can claim damages, including loss of profit.



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External  
management

## Dry sorrow drinks blood

Maria Smith bites her thumb  
at Shakespearean office antics



Maria Smith

In the 'Verona' meeting room, where we lay our scene, a post-tender negotiation has been under way for some time. However, unable to agree on a sum, the participants have become aggressive and the design manager (DM) has threatened to punch the project manager (PM) in the throat. The client has now issued a warning that anyone seen to prevent an amicable outcome will be fired.

The design manager apologises, citing the refusal of another architect to issue drawings in CAD format as the source of his vexations.

After the meeting, the landscape architect suggests to the despondent design manager that instead of wallowing around at home listening to Jeff Buckley, he come out to a party. Overhearing their conversation, the contractor invites himself along too. The project manager rolls her eyes at the contractor's presumptuousness and the wise but perfunctory QS counsels the PM to also attend and befriend the contractor. 'If looking liking move,' the PM inexplicably mumbles.

At the party, the design manager and project manager find themselves having a shockingly fulfilling conversation. The PM sets out her hopes and dreams and the DM responds with extraordinary insight. The hot-headed contractor witnesses their interaction and fearing a collusion that would cost him his profits, makes toward them pugnaciously.

Seeing his approach and expecting a crude misunderstanding, the lovers sneak away to smell each other under a London Plane before lamenting parting's sweet sorrow.

Next morning, the design manager heads to the architect's studio to brainstorm how best to fix the tender price, and fast, so that he can be free to love the project manager. The architect – who is also keen to see negotiations concluded, as they're not covered in his fees – agrees to present some irresistible value engineering options at the next meeting. He keeps his word and as he holds everyone's attention, the DM and PM make hot lusty eyes at each other over the meeting table. The contractor – still mistakenly riled – fails to see the benefits of the architect's proposals and moronically challenges the design manager to an arm wrestle. The DM refuses but the vain structural engineer (SE) takes the bait. The contractor beats the SE and gloats so annoyingly that the DM concedes and smashes the contractor's hand into the table so hard that everyone's favourite mug is broken.

On hearing of these calamities, the client takes the DM off the job and banishes him to the site office of an eco-community in rural Spain. The QS emails the news to the PM. The PM texts the DM and they arrange a night together before he leaves. They go to an old pub and drink whisky then feel each other up in an alleyway. They kiss goodbye in an unusually successful bit of public realm with a genuine sense of place then go their separate ways.

The PM, unable to reveal the true reasons behind her foul mood, pretends to be apoplectic with rage with the marketing team for refusing to pay for professional visualisations. In an attempt to sooth her, the QS persuades the client to reveal that they have an inordinately large contingency that could allow substantial redesigns. The PM, however, can't bear the idea of protracting negotiations any further, so begs the architect for help. The architect, who has also become so tired of the project that he'd rather see it go design and build, gladly obliges. He offers to issue the PM drawings with incorrect revision numbers to allow her to create the illusion of incompetent document control. Furthermore, he promises to email her beloved design manager and propose that he requests the PM's presence in Spain. The architect assures the PM that the client will surely banish her also: her punishment being her salvation.

According to plan, the PM logs on to the

The contractor gloats  
so annoyingly that  
the DM smashes the  
contractor's hand into  
the table so hard that  
everyone's favourite  
mug is broken

central FTP server and overwrites the correct drawings with the fiddled revisions. Soon after, the QS opens the folder and sees the carnage. She alerts the client and the PM is fired immediately. Realising the plan has gone awry, the PM falls to the meeting room floor and drops into a deep catatonic depression.

Unfortunately, the design manager's mailbox is full so the architect's message doesn't reach him. But he hears that the project manager has been fired and, distraught at her career troubles, quits his job and returns to London. On reaching the PM's offices, he climbs some scaffolding on the opposite building to assess the situation. From this vantage he sees her lifeless body, prone on the meeting room floor. Overcome with grief, he jumps off the scaffolding to his death.

The project manager's grim reverie is broken by a bang. She looks up to see her beloved design manager impaled on a carelessly located acro-prop. Unable to contemplate life without him, she unhesitatingly launches herself through the window and is sliced to death by the unlaminated glass.

Just at that moment, the client, architect and contractor arrive for a meeting and see the grotesque corpses. The three quickly agree that the construction of two gold statues of Romeo and Juliet is not worth all this trouble and cancel the project. ●

Maria Smith is a director at Studio Weave

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# 3: Culture

## The test of time

Like clothes, even the greatest building eventually suffers style fatigue



Hugh Pearman Editor

Architecture will forever be hung up on style, we know that. Anyone who describes his or her work – or someone else's – as 'timeless' is living in a fool's paradise. Nothing is timeless, nothing is immune from changing fashion, and this is as true of buildings and public space as it is of clothes or magazine design. Architecture works to a longer timescale than clothes fashion, it's true – architects don't yet have to produce two or four collections a year – but how is it that, once you've acquired the knack, it's so easy to date a building, at least to within a decade? Fashion, my friends, that's why. This is not just a modernist or avant-garde thing: if you look at the traditionalist architecture of the 1950s, say, it's noticeably different from today's equiva-

Did Ronchamp ever go out of fashion, or the Sydney Opera House?

lent, just as men's conservative suits are.

Sometimes architects are caught out by this. Some buildings just take so long to come to fruition that by the time they are finally built, even relatively slow-moving architectural fashion has passed them by. Consider all the pre-war building designs – especially various civic centres – that finally got built in the 1950s, like living fossils. Or more recently Sandy Wilson's British Library, Stirling Wilford's Number One Poultry, Michael Hopkins' Portcullis House. More usually designs have a shelf (and planning) life, beyond which clients just draw a line and start again. Why? Partly perhaps because the brief has changed, but mostly because they've simply lost their freshness.

Perhaps the best architects work to longer fashion cycles than the following pack. If it's originality you're after, a trend-starter gets a longer run than a bandwagon-jumper. And some buildings come close to being unique: did Ronchamp ever go out of fashion, or the Sydney Opera House? There aren't many like that, though, and even Ronchamp, up close, betrays its Fifties-ness. Impossible to imagine Lloyd's of London being built today, just as Rogers Stirk Harbour's Leadenhall tower would have been impossible back then.

Everyone also knows that fashion eats itself, forever returning to earlier styles for refreshment. 1930s hardline modernism was big again in the early 1980s while – following the Postmodern interlude – the softer Scandi-modern variety took over. These are huge generalisations but my point is this: what are we going to make of Frank Gehry in years to come? If we can date his Bilbao Guggenheim as a 1990s moment when technology first allowed his imagination full rein, what will his remarkable Louis Vuitton Foundation in Paris (page 12) tell us? Perhaps no more than that all movements in art and architecture have their decadent phase, and require very wealthy patrons to indulge them. At least that's something that never changes. ●

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Originally we learned from the countryside and applied it to the cities. Now we will fit what we learned back to the countryside

Wang Shu  
p45

His successes as president included navigating around the tricky matter of Anthony Blunt's honorary Fellowship of the RIBA at the time of the latter's unmasking as a Soviet spy

Bryan Jefferson  
p55



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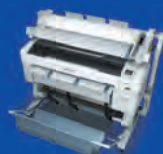
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# Village people

Oliver Wainwright goes in search of the new rural China



Oliver Wainwright

Beijing greeted my arrival with one of the smoggiest days of the year. OMA's hard-to-miss CCTV building was almost invisible from across the street, shrouded behind a thick grey cloak, while by night the skies throbbed with an eerie neon glow, like a toxic version of the northern lights. So the temptation was to get out: the countryside beckoned.

Two hours' flight and five hours' drive to the south, I arrived in the tiny village of Bishan in rural Anhui province, a jumble of white-rendered houses nestling in the rice fields below a mountain. With streets patrolled by clucking chickens, it is the unlikely home of an anarchist music promoter and underground publisher, turned architectural curator and now rural hermit – Ou Ning.

Sitting in the timber panelled courtyard of his magnificent old merchant's house, which had lain derelict before he moved here from Beijing two years ago, he explained his plan to create a 'practical utopia'.

'Chinese cities have become insufferable,' he said, 'There is an urgent need to re-empower these rural villages.' In a relentless governmental land-grab, farmers across the country have lost their fields to the insatiable march of steamrollers (which means China now imports much of its rice), while the tide of urban migration has sapped the countryside of its young labour force and lifeblood.

Drawing on China's Rural Reconstruction movement of the 1940s, when politi-

Wang Shu's farmers' houses will stand in sharp contrast to the bleak uniformity of recent government housing, and the farmers' own attempts to copy suburban villas: bloated bungalows clad with a frenzy of bathroom tiles

cised intellectuals flocked to the regions to improve agricultural techniques, Ou is one of a number of people trying to reignite cultural life in the countryside. He has established a bookstore and café in Bishan, where elderly villagers now rub shoulders with urbanite weekenders, and he has plans to start a school and even introduce an alternative local currency, like the Bristol pound.

While he enjoys the support of the village officials – who rub their hands with glee at the prospect of artist-led gentrification – the provincial authorities are naturally suspicious. Last year, his planned international photography festival was mysteriously shut down with less than a day's notice. 'They think these activities are dangerous,' he said, 'because it's how the Communist party began – organising the farmers for revolution.'

Four hours' drive to the east I met Wang Shu, the first Chinese architect to win the Pritzker Prize, at his Art Academy campus in Hangzhou, a picturesque ensemble of buildings in his trademark style of recycled bricks and swooping tiled rooftops, sited around a willow-fringed lake. Based here for the last 17 years, he too is now turning attention to the countryside. He is completing a development of 30 farmers' houses in the nearby village of Wencun, a high-density group of courtyard houses to be built of rammed earth and local stone, designed to grow out of the local grain. They will stand in sharp contrast to the bleak uniformity of recent government housing, and the farmers' own aspirational attempts to copy suburban villas: bloated bungalows clad with a frenzy of bathroom tiles.

'Originally we learned many things from the countryside and applied it to the cities,' said Wang, explaining the approach of his practice, whose self-effacing name, Amateur Architecture Studio, says it all. 'But now we will fit what we learned back to the countryside.' He plans to move his entire office to the village and set up an architecture school, bringing students to work on live projects with villagers, a practice unheard-of in conventional Chinese architectural education.

'In China we have too many big things, and an obsession with growing our cities,' he said. 'It is time for architects to focus on the small things.' ●

Oliver Wainwright is architecture critic at The Guardian. Read him here every other month

RIBA has more than you see in our pages. Read more thought-provoking columnists at [ribaj.com](http://ribaj.com)

## GROUNDING

Just a few weeks before I visited China, president Xi Jinping declared a ban on weird buildings, stating that architecture should 'inspire minds, warm hearts and cultivate taste'. 'It's the end of Zaha in China,' said one Beijing consultant. 'Xi is the most powerful leader since Mao, so developers will think twice before commissioning any more of her spaceships.'



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# Desert wrap

Palm leaf is being used once again in Abu Dhabi's desert

Sandra Piesik

I was driving from Dubai to Liwa Oasis through Al Dafra road. In two hours I completed a journey that would take Bedouins on foot over two weeks. The landscape transforms from uninhabited flat plains to small dunes and eventually 200m high sand hills, creating a gateway to one of the most beautiful deserts in the world – The Rub Al Khali (or Empty Quarter). The tyres stuck to the asphalt while warm air blurred the horizon; my infrared thermometer read 68°C on the glass screen in my car. How in the past did the Bedouins survive here, living 200km from habitation in palm leaf houses from date gardens? In a way it was a form of self-sufficient sustainable community. Yet my destination, Liwa Hotel, welcomed me with a rendering of a glass box: some architects believe that placing a glazed, unshaded structure in the desert is a good idea. I learnt later that glass in a desert climate can reach over 90°C, which validated my quest for material that reflects the sun – such as a date palm leaf, or Arish.

Since that first journey to Liwa in 2007 and our collaboration with TCA Al Ain Historic Environment Department, we have tried to demonstrate that Arish still has a use. We want to continue a cultural authenticity that has existed for 7,000 years in the region. It means we had to change the aesthetics and stylistic form of traditional architecture, to re-connect to today's very different and dynamic society. In the absence of any data or tests it has taken six years of research and development to find a new language that can be built. Advocating re-introduction of date palm leaf has taken me far beyond materials science into the realms of environmental, economic, social and cultural benefits.

Dry palm leaf is an agricultural waste, expelled by the forces of globalisation from the mainstream construction industry. Its traditional use has been fostered in building conservation, but there is a scope for wider application. There is also an economy of scale: date palms are cultivated in over 40

countries. The ancient model of exploring economic connections between agriculture and culture is still valid and needs re-contextualising in a different setting with different needs. This has been recognised by The UN Commission to Combat Desertification.

This year we were thrilled to be offered land by TCA Al Ain Historic Environment Department on the Unesco World Heritage site near Al Ain Oasis, to construct a sustainable building from agricultural waste and offer this ancient material a new function and aesthetics. Its proximity to the oasis suggests the possibility of connecting existing agricultural infrastructure with buildings nearby, while reducing transport costs. Its initial function is as a study for a food shelter as, for example, 40% of food in India is wasted due to lack of adequate storage. The UAE building will be a market for local farmers or host functions associated with Al Ain National Museum; it will be given an Arabic name: The Sabla (a place to sit in the shade in the oasis).

This was the first time we were able to construct Arish timber grid structures in the context of the oasis and the city. This innovation would not have been possible without collaboration between TCA Al Ain Historic Environment Department, craftsmen, an architect and BuroHappold Engineering. In this way we are proving not only a new concept for stylistic change but also saying that the circular economy of re-use and recycle can be achieved in practice. With the global resources shortage, climate change, economic instability and increased poverty this concept may offer solutions for those most in need. ●

Sandra Piesik is director of 3 ideas. [3ideasme.com](http://3ideasme.com)

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palm

**4-6m**  
length of leaves

**7-10 years**  
commercial lifespan of  
date palm



## Hot Stuff

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# Lancashire hot spot

Architects are spearheading a revival of Blackburn's lost liveliness

Ian Banks

How do you build momentum in a dubbed 'Crap Town' like Blackburn where shops shut at 5pm, and there are no hotels or discernible nightlife? It's tough, but Lancashire lad Wayne Hemingway reminisces of an 80s that regularly welcomed musicians like David Bowie and The Sex Pistols.

Hemingway was here to introduce Blackburn is Open, a manifesto to revitalise the town, while also welcoming guests to the pilot of a trailblazing Urban Room linked to the non-partisan Farrell Review. These, he said, could empower a new can-do spirit in a population where 25% work in manufacturing – a ratio reportedly double the national average. His role here was as a creative director to help drive a growing 'maker movement' in the borough, and which recently commissioned local taxidermist Nicola Hebson to set up her pop-up curiosity shop here, with sell-out 'anthropomorphic taxidermy beginners' classes'.

Add to this the recurring creative programming 'First Thursday' and the launch of the town's new FabLab and Making Rooms, and the ambition for Blackburn to extend its reach with a first Festival of Making in 2015 is ultimately realisable – 'but we need help' urged Wayne. Success had already been achieved on a shoestring. Now, with added resourcing and priority, Blackburn had the potential to become a true Capital of Making.

The opportunity Hemingway saw was in empowering its people to take more creative risks. It was time, he said, to grow a collective sense of 'generosity' in the town's heart. Alluding to some illustrated examples, he longed for a more open mind reset that might one day allow 24-7 unmanned libraries – or wild swimming in the Leeds-Liverpool Canal. While he dreamed of this out loud, graphic recorder Chris Shipton doodled his



visionary mind-map for posterity (left).

For the next part of the evening, 50 invited guests and locals had gathered in the old Chapel of Ease while little gems tempted further exploration on its fringes. Side shows included a Sheffield School of Architecture (SSoA) vision called '[re]create Blackburn'; a photography showcase of 'Hidden Blackburn'; and a pop-up recreation of an earlier film festival showing Jacques Tati's modernist masterpiece, Playtime.

Chair for the night, Darwen-born architect Philip Thornton, then introduced three speakers to draw synergies from a Blackburn looking both back and forward: Otto Saumarez-Smith delivered a lecture on the deemed 'visual panache' of the town's Corbusian-like shopping centre, designed in the 60s by BDP; Carolyn Butterworth talked passionately of the school of architecture's community focus; and Sara Hilton extolled the Heritage Lottery Fund's 'New Ideas for Old Buildings'.

The parallels helped inform a concluding debate in this, the UK's first-ever community 'place-space'. In recognition, one of the Farrell Review's key authors Max Farrell had come to Blackburn to set out its key recommendations, and to encourage (or drag kicking and screaming?) politician, professional and public out of the silos to talk more.

In terms of Blackburn is Open, the town's urban future looks optimistic under the unconventional creative eye of Wayne Hemingway. With both its chief executive and head of regeneration present throughout the entire event, the council is clearly following this new Urban Room with interest, and that should be applauded. That this was the first in the country, and conceived by its own Arts Services team, was a real coup for the town.

Blackburn's development of a 7ha cathedral quarter is already addressing many of the centre's shortcomings, as was first described by Hemingway, and this work will likely feature in the next Urban Room. However, more help is needed now if Blackburn is Open's growing Maker Movement is to fully contribute. Simply put, it now needs strategic recognition and support to add energy to a new civic spirit of 'pay-it-forward' – or as Wayne so nicely put it: it was time 'to place Blackburn at the centre of this generosity'. ●

Architect and public art consultant Ian Banks of Atoll is acting as arts advisor to Blackburn with Darwen borough council. [blackburnisopen.co.uk](http://blackburnisopen.co.uk)

It was time, said Hemingway, to grow a collective sense of 'generosity' in the town's heart

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The Boots D10 Building, Nottingham. Architect: Sir Owen Williams

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# Working together with extra BIM

Architects know all about collaboration on projects, and BIM can only help that



Stephen Hodder

Collaboration has been essential to all the buildings my practice has delivered. The project team for one of our recent projects, Great Marlborough Street in Manchester, for example, a 37 storey student residential tower adjacent to Oxford Road Station, was delivered on time in 100 weeks, before the academic year began. This could only have happened with no 'them and us' attitude, but a design team considering buildability issues, a contractor understanding the rationale behind the design concept, project risks clearly articulated, and the harnessing of design skills of specialist subcontractors.

Collaboration is central to architects' work. I recently addressed the CIBSE Building Performance Conference on 'Delivering future construction through collaboration and BIM': speaking to the industry beyond architecture made me reflect on how we as a profession, and the RIBA itself, are invested in this way of working.

Driving reform in the construction industry has been a priority for our largest client, the government, with a major programme of work aimed at achieving greater efficiencies, cutting carbon, and creating a more integrated, collaborative sector.

If they are to be met, a co-ordinated and collaborative approach from the professions is essential. At present, the construction

*If government plans to reform the industry are to be met, a co-ordinated and collaborative approach from the professions is essential*

industry continues to serve clients through building and then dismantling project teams. Two decades ago, the Latham Report advocated keeping the teams together so as to benefit from learning made on each project.

Through effective team working and collaboration, we understand how both individuals and practices work, their strengths and weaknesses; skills and experiences. Teams adapt to play to these strengths to improve the output for the client. When things go wrong, the effective team pulls together to resolve the issue and minimise the damage.

Clients expect teams to work together to deliver a design that achieves their operational and financial objectives. Effective collaboration improves delivery time, cost and certainty, as well as the experience and profit for those delivering the project.

The RIBA's activity to support this way of working includes backing the adoption of BIM and collaborative processes in the UK industry. Effective BIM implementation can help design quality evaluation, resource management, team integration and innovation in off-site manufacture. The RIBA is investing heavily in BIM tools. For example, the NBS national BIM report provides an annual snapshot of industry progress on the pathway to level 3 BIM, the national BIM library is facilitating delivery of BIM product data, and the NBS BIM object standard is essential to inter-operability and collaboration.

One of the most recent projects is NBS' development of the national BIM tool in partnership with the Department for Business Innovation & Skills, with private sector stakeholders including BDP, Laing O'Rourke and Microsoft, and input from seven major professional institutes. It will tackle some remaining barriers to BIM progression, including classification systems and levels of definition.

And of course the RIBA Plan of Work 2013 is BIM ready. It facilitates collaboration between the whole project team.

Significant challenges remain if we are to see the full benefit of the digital economy. In a long recession, with tight margins, it is a financial challenge for architects, given that 75% of our chartered practices employ 10 architects or fewer. We have a shortage of architects with BIM skills. We need more work to unify cross-disciplinary standards. And we need to see greater investment, not just internally, but from client organisations too. ●

@hodderPRIBA

## GOVERNMENT AGREES TO SPACE STANDARDS

The RIBA submitted its views to the government last month on introducing a new single space standard in England – something it has only considered because of the determined campaigning of the RIBA and many partners across the industry. Thank you to all those who contributed to the HomeWise campaign.



# Broken dreams

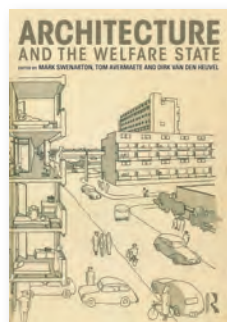
An illuminating assessment of the golden years of the Welfare State helps explain today's trials of public housing

Kate Macintosh

Thirty golden years of the Welfare State (1945-1975) and 30 years of socio-political objectives and policies expressed in the built form, principally housing, are covered here. This is the first study to look so closely at these and the extent of the power and influence wielded by architects in this process. This is of particular interest when the centrality of the architect in the provision of buildings, particularly in UK, has largely been eroded to that of the pre-contract designer.

The study covers Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, the UK and some former colonial territories in the form of 15 discrete essays, each from a scholar in architecture and planning, edited by three of these authors.

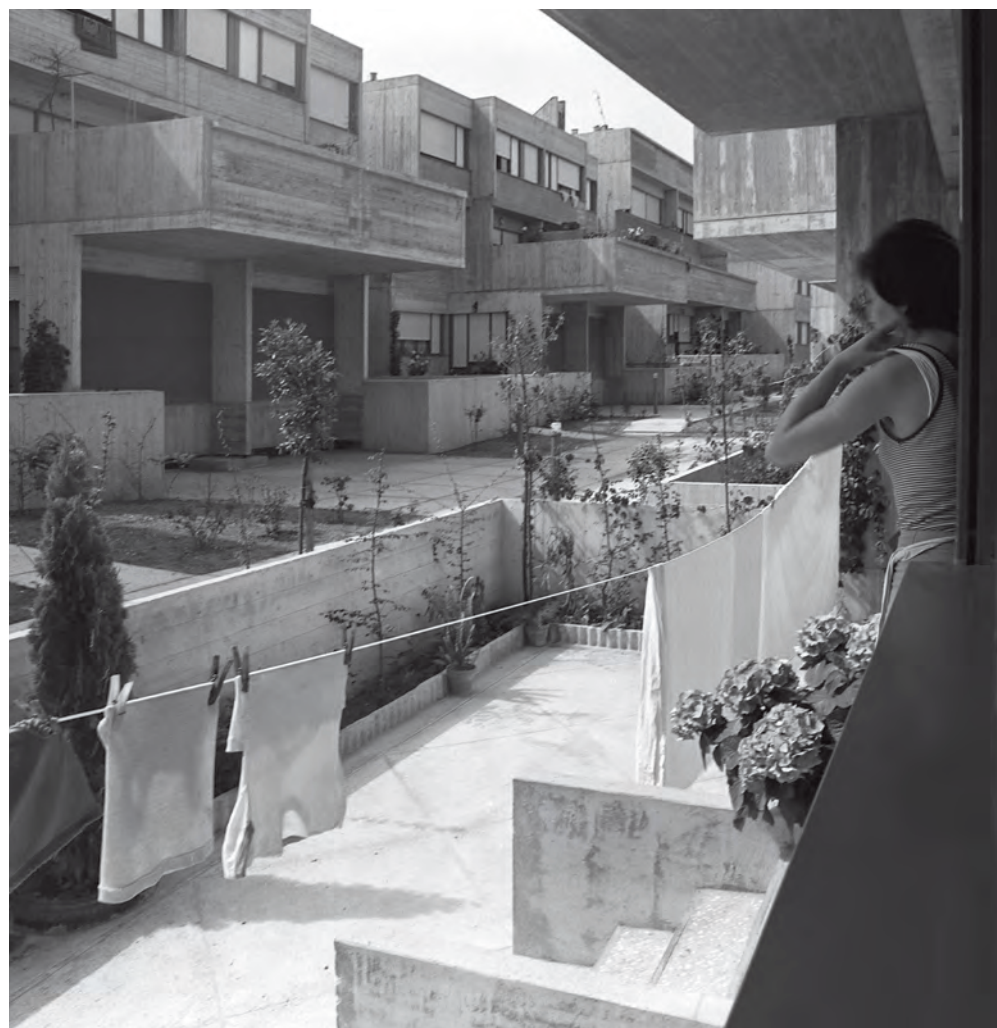
There was a back-history to the welfare state, located in Austria. Vienna had special status post 1918, as a federal state in its own right where one third of the Austrian population resided. It could levy its own taxes and was seen by its socialist mayor as a model for a future democratic, socialist state in Austria. Financed by a housing construction tax on the rich, rents were set at 3.5% of the income of the semi-skilled and intended only to cover maintenance. Over an 11 year period 10% of Vienna's population, 200,000 people, were rehoused in city's traditional site-pe-



rimeter blocks, with the difference that the large central courtyards were open to the public. These 400 buildings (the best known being Karl Marx Hof) were dispersed across the city, integrated within the bourgeois city-fabric. The Austro-Fascist putsch of 1934 put an end to the programme.

The Greater London housing story, post WW2, is traced, with the rise and rise of the high-rise block, partly driven by the need to release land in densely packed areas of terraced housing, some bombed and some slum dwellings. In particular this narrative of unintended consequences is illustrated through the extremes of the Borough of Newham (home of Ronan Point) where the combining of two older boroughs, East Ham (relatively affluent) with West Ham (beset by massive industrial pollution and with mean terraced-housing built by small landlords, outside the control of the London Building Act, battered in the blitz) left them struggling to deal with insatiable de-

**Below** Overlooking the pedestrian route at Villaggio Matteotti, Terni Italy by Giancarlo De Carlo.



MIMMO JODICE

mand. Adding to this strain the boom in the nearby City office building in the mid 1950s sucked out all the skilled labour. These combined pressures led to the point block solution, which from 1964 saw plans for 3,200 flats in standard 22 storey Lars-Nielson system-built towers. The council's building programme was for 70% flats, though their unsuitability for families had been articulated by Elizabeth Denby in 1938, when she addressed the RIBA under the title 'Rehousing from the Slum-Dwellers' Perspective'.

The book postulates that the machinery of the welfare state was unable to adapt to the rapid changes transforming this area of London. Common themes run through its heterogeneous narratives. One is the drive to create the 'open democratic city', with as much land as possible returned to the public realm. Schemes that interpreted this in nuanced hierarchies of spaces, with thresholds and transitional spaces to encourage social interchange, have survived better than less subtle examples – from the withdrawal of the welfare state and the drive towards privatisation, as community structures had evolved which could fill the gap in maintenance and control. The UK has made a considerable contribution to the debate on how to balance competing needs for privacy and conviviality.

Another theme is that architects trying to influence key decisions of welfare provision, in particular via Team 10, could fall victim to their own aggrandising propaganda when the built result proved unpopular.

A third strand is the emergence of public disillusion with paternalistic top-down planning and the demand for meaningful engagement with end users. This highlighted the impossible conundrum presented to the architects of the welfare state (identified 1962 by Aldo van Eyck) of relating to a client who had disappeared within a bureaucracy.

One of the more poignant papers covers the mould-breaking endeavours in public engagement by Giancarlo De Carlo to try and resolve the conundrum of mass housing in a democracy. Trained in the urban culture of CIAM and influenced by the debate on British new towns, he embarked on a very thorough public consultation with the 3,000 people to be housed at Matteotti village for steel giant Terni. The whole process took over a year, involving the production of numerous design models and concluding with over 40 variations of housing type. But only 25% of



HUGO HINSLEY

The council's 1964 building programme was for 70% flats, though their unsuitability for families had been articulated by Elizabeth Denby in 1938

the planned settlement was built, and that without communal amenities. This was the result of opposition from residents of the old, 1930s, village, who wanted land rights and were backed by the catholic church.

One conclusion of this diverse history must be that factional dissent on the political left led to the disintegration of the consensus that supported it, and ultimately to the fall from grace of the welfare state itself. Mäkitches Viertel, outside Berlin, vividly illustrates this. Built between 1963-1973 it was planned for 50,000 residents. In 1968, student-led dissenters complained that it was a series of monotonous prison-like barracks. The radicals later changed their minds, as the landscape and communal facilities were completed, but by then it had become a cause célèbre of the political right. Building was halted when the population reached 30,000. A survey in 1986 showed resident satisfaction at 69%.

Poverty and deprivation are discussed less today than in the 70s, although the wealth gap is greater and housing for the poor is worse. This book is an essential aid to understanding the international discourse between architects during the 30 golden years and the way it was shaped, enabled and constrained by socio-political and economic frameworks. ● Kate Macintosh designed Dawsons Heights, Dulwich, at London Borough of Southwark and worked in various county architects offices

**Above Newham**  
London's point-block towers, early 1970s.

#### Architecture and the Welfare State

Mark Swenarton, Tom Avermaete and Dirk van den Heuvel  
Routledge, £34.99, 306pp





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# Bryan Jefferson 1928 – 2014

Modest, erudite and charming but with inner steel: an RIBA president, government advisor, yachtsman and consummate architect



JEFFERSON SHEARD

Bryan Jefferson, who was president of the RIBA from 1979-81, was the kind of architect that is virtually unknown now. A fine private practitioner from his Sheffield base Jefferson Sheard, he later became a considerable public servant. Jefferson was the government's chief architect at the now-defunct Property

Services Agency from 1988 to 1993, and then architectural advisor to the Department of National Heritage from 1993 until he retired in 2001. The tall, softly-spoken Jefferson had the ear of government in a way that – with the exception of Richard Rogers through the Urban Taskforce in the Blair years – no architect has had since.

His advice was solidly founded on experience gained in the crucible of practice at a time when architecture sought to evaluate its impact on society and to contribute to, if not lead, its progress to a better future. But the purely architectural skills employed in his designs of keynote buildings are overdue proper appreciation and assessment.

Jefferson was born in Sheffield in 1928 and on graduation from the University of Sheffield he joined the new Derby practice of architect Major Sam Morrison before being sent back home to open the firm's Sheffield office. The Sheffield venture metamorphosed via Morrison Partners and Jefferson into Jefferson and Partners and, by 1957, with the arrival of Jefferson's friend and fellow alumnus Gerald (Gerry) Sheard, into Jefferson Sheard and Partners.

Early commissions included private houses in the Huddersfield area, but Jefferson's bigger opportunities arose in Sheffield, where post-war reconstruction and a radical remodelling of the city was gathering momentum.

Perhaps the most enduring – certainly most talked-about – of Jefferson's major buildings was one of his first, the immaculately detailed Brutalist behemoth of a sub-station commissioned by the Central Electricity Generating Board in the early 60s. Listed grade II in 2013, this is one of Sheffield's best-known landmarks, floodlit by the Council in 2010 and greatly loved or reviled despite many citizens having no idea what goes on within.

Following the equally starkly dramatic Olive Grove

depot for the city council, the practice embarked on a series of less muscular but still elegantly nonsense-free developments such as a cinema and entertainment complex on Pond Street (known to subsequent generations of Sheffielders as the 'Fiesta', 'Roxy' or 'O2') and offices for the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers (now the AEU), Eagle Star and the Probation Service. A smaller project was the Derbyshire and Lancashire Gliding Club HQ at Great Hucklow in the Peak District. Jefferson developed a life-long love of gliding at 16 and competed sufficiently successfully to make the English Gliding Team.

Jefferson's growing influence within the profession saw him elected President of the Royal Institute of British Architects between 1979 and 1981. A natural diplomat, his many successes as president included navigating, as skilfully as if he were at the tiller of his yacht Calliope, around the tricky matter of Anthony Blunt's honorary Fellowship of the RIBA at the time of the latter's unmasking as a Soviet spy (Blunt took the proffered hint and resigned.) Jefferson acted as an adviser to the BBC as it sought the right architect to redevelop Portland Place.

His erudition, charm and sheer skill saw him become director general of design services at the Property Services Agency. Characteristically modest, he thought he was being consulted about likely candidates before realising the thrust of the questions and asking, 'Who? Me?'

The post required Jefferson to act as architectural advisor to the secretary of state for the environment. Further positions as chairman of PSA Projects and architectural adviser to the Department of National Heritage (now the Department for Culture, Media and Sport) followed before retirement from public office after 17 years and at the age of 73. He was not replaced: by playing his part in the establishment of the briefly powerful Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (Cabe), Jefferson made himself redundant – the last of his public offices.

Almost exactly coincident with Jefferson's retirement came a diagnosis of leukaemia. His practice's buildings continue to serve their purpose, but the part that he played in persuading those in power of the importance and benefits of architecture in our society will remain an act that is hard to follow. He leaves his wife and soul-mate, Jean, sons Peter and David and their families. ●

Tom Rhys Jones and Hugh Pearman

Read the extended obituary at [ribaj.com](http://ribaj.com)

## In Memoriam

**PAUL JAMES MOSCARDINI**  
ELECTED 1987, LIVERPOOL,  
T ANGLESEY

**AMARJIT KALSI**  
ELECTED 1997, LONDON

**DEREK ELLMORE**  
ELECTED 1989, BARNSTAPLE,  
DEVON

**DANUTA KORNAUS-WEJCHERT**  
ELECTED 2000, IRELAND

**COLIN MACHIN**  
ELECTED 1989, ALLOA,  
CLACKMANNANSHIRE

**BERYL BROWNSWORD**  
ELECTED 1941, LONDON

**ANTHONY ALFRED CARO**  
LONDON

**ROBERT TREFOR JAMISON  
CHAMBERS**  
ELECTED 1956, NEWTOWNABBEY,  
COUNTY ANTRIM

**H L KNIGHT**  
ELECTED 1952, LONDON

**SYDNEY BROOKES CHAPMAN**  
ELECTED 1960, LONDON

**WILLIAM FERRIE WOOD**  
ELECTED 1968, EDINBURGH

**RICHARD WHITCOMBE FLOWITT**  
ELECTED 1969, SCARBOROUGH  
NORTH YORKSHIRE

**STEPHEN BUTTLER**  
ELECTED 1993, CARLISLE, CUMBRIA

**TAY TAN LAM**  
ELECTED 1987

**BRIAN JEFFERSON**  
ELECTED 1987, GATESHEAD, TYNE  
AND WEAR

**MARY CONSTANCE TINDALL**  
ELECTED 1948, PATHHEAD,  
MIDLOTHIAN

**MICHAEL GEORGE RUDINGE LYELL**  
LONDON

**ALLAN FRASER BELL**  
ELECTED 1955, DUNDEE, SCOTLAND

To inform the RIBA of the death of a member, please email [membership.services@riba.org](mailto:membership.services@riba.org) with details of next of kin



# Exchange

## Norton St Phoney

When Hugh Pearman gave the RIBA Journal a new lease of life, like most readers I was delighted to have a revitalised publication illustrating the best of current architecture. To attempt to justify, and praise, an example of (quote) 'Olde England with Range Rovers attached' (RIBA J, November 2014) is an insult to the intelligence and an aberration of the progressive values I associate with the Journal.

In a way the skill of Robert Adam is convincingly devious and therefore makes the place all the more spooky. It reminds me of the film 'The Truman Show' where you find out at the end that the guy has been in a film set from birth. Perhaps living in Norton St Phoney will drive the residents mad.

At least Clough Williams-Ellis' Portmeirion is overtly 'whimsical bricolage' and can be judged and enjoyed as such.

So many tell-tale details: the £1m 'market hall' that is 'really just a large retail unit'; the 'civic' buildings which are not civic buildings; the £1.6m house 'which acts aesthetically as a village inn' – what happens if visitors call in, in all innocence, for a pint?

Welcome to the mad house.

**Carl Thompson, Saint-Tropez**

## From the other place

Hugh Pearman seems to have failed to ask any locals down here in Somerset what they thought of Robert Adam's attempt to recreate the past at Norton St Philip. Had he done so he might have gained less than enthusiastic feedback. I have lived in the village for four years, and I have not heard one word of praise for his efforts.

Building houses on a brown field site in a small village like ours without encouraging new enterprise takes away the only opportunity to encourage local employment and arrest a decline into the dormitory



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village to which Pearman rightly refers.

However, the architectural conceit here is the ill-conceived scale and vocabulary of the buildings at the entrance to the site, in particular the pompous 'town hall', the supermarket and the four-storey house looming over the village from the highest part of the site, all serving to dilute the real architectural heart of the village at The George. No doric or ionic columns there, thankfully; and as for drawing the line at half-timbering – we might as well thank Adam for not robbing a bank!

**Neil Pollard, Norton St Philip, Somerset**

**Robert Adam replies:** I am sorry Mr Pollard doesn't like our village extension. As he's only lived there for four years he probably didn't know about the chicken packing factory that used to be on the site. He probably wasn't at all the parish meetings where the scheme was explained in great detail and supported. As for employment, of course the chicken packing factory supplied lots of that as well as heavy vehicles and a huge shed. We did provide employment uses but these found no tenants.

Like all architects, I have to accept that some people won't like what you do. As a traditional architect, I must also accept that most architects won't like what I do. But sometimes you need to give the scheme a few years to bed in and then ask again.

## Font of knowledge

I am intrigued by the strange 'squiggle' which now appears over the T (and adjacent letters) in your sub-headings. Can you let me know what this is, and its origin?

**Brian Loudon, London**

This is a ligature which produces a more traditional version of a typeface within the same font family – *Ed*

## CoRE role

In the November issue of RIBA Journal, the article Shaping up for Retrofit stated incorrectly that BRE had identified the need for a 'retrofit co-ordinator'. This brand is owned by centre of Refurbishment Excellence (CoRE) and its fellowship. The BRE is a partner in CoRE but was not involved in developing the concept of the role or the associated training programme.

## Tweetback

We featured Franco's megalomaniac Basilica de la Santa Cruz on ribaj.com...

**FORMarchitecture**

@form\_architect

A revolting place, heavy with the misery of the people who were forced to build it.

And we praised the smart washrooms in Rogers Stirk Harbour's Leadenhall Building...

**Neil Barker**

@neilatembarck

But much too far to walk with dripping hands to the (invisible) dryer!

Ordinary Architecture's regular online column is attracting admirers, not least for their homage to the good old pub....

**Cartwright Pickard @**

**CartPickArch**

This splendid paean to the pub is making us thirsty for a lunchtime pint @RIBA J.

And we reviewed 'Women Fashion Power' at the Design Museum....

**Morwenna Wilson**

@MorwennaWilson

Great article about #womenfashionpower. Am proud to promote 'construction chic' alongside Zaha.

Find these and other online-only articles at ribaj.com, and follow us on Twitter @ribaj



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# Wood Awards

2014





# Welcome

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Judges and sponsors

It's more than an annual pleasure, the Wood Awards. It's the encouraging sense that a project is succeeding in its aims. This is a material that is now close to the heart of one particular profession – architecture – while remaining central to the art, craft and science of furniture making.

In other words, the story here celebrates the use of a material that is handled increasingly instinctively by designers of all persuasions. That's not to say that everybody is equally proficient: of course not, there is much learning to be done, and the purpose of the Wood Awards, supported by our valued sponsors, is always to lead by example by showing the best. I'd say that industry expert (and now chairman of judges again) Michael Buckley's excellent idea of 12 years ago is paying dividends.

What comes through particularly strongly this year is the variety of projects that now use wood in all its aspects. Even among the examples that didn't make it through a very strong field, it was notable that architects in particular are delighting in exploiting the material for its structural, aesthetic and of course sustainable characteristics – in places such as tough retail environments, say, when in the past you wouldn't have expected to see it. It's always good to see designers being enthused by the appropriate use of their material, and their growing skill in handling it.

The Arnold Laver Gold Award this year sums everything up, really. It is an exemplary little low-budget rural museum by an architect to note for the future. A mix of new-build and restoration, of ancient techniques co-existing happily with the high technology of today, it adroitly uses a mixed palette of materials that suits its context admirably – and is designed in such a way as to waste practically nothing. Wood is the original building material. Using it is like meeting an old friend.

**Hugh Pearman**

Editor, The RIBA Journal



## Cover image

Display cabinet at  
Ditchling Museum,  
Sussex. Image:  
Brotherton Lock

# Wood Awards – Buildings



The Wood Awards go from strength to strength. Last year my predecessor reported that there was a high standard of entries but no obvious winner in any category. This year was different as there were several possible category winners from the outset – but the final debate among the judges in September was no easier. That is part of the strength of these awards, whereby the panel of judges, who in all spent 116 judge-days during the summer personally inspecting the shortlist, ensured the entries were assessed by a range of different experts in the fields of architecture, design and craft. In the initial, individual, anonymous task of trawling through a huge entry, 87 of the projects secured at least one vote. That said a great deal about the ever increasing standard of projects entered and moved us to issue a ‘longlist’ for the first time. My thanks to all the judges for their time and dedication (see page 92).

As the awards have matured, they have also gained strength both from long-term sponsors, and welcome new ones. These sponsors represent many facets of the international and domestic wood industries, all of which are seriously committed to the sustainable use of responsibly and legally harvested wood in buildings and furniture.

Since the Wood Awards were launched 12 years ago, built on the original Carpenters’ Award from 1971, we have seen a magnificent array of building projects – from enormous concert halls to little bridges and every kind of house, office, church, school, museum, retail store and swimming pool. This year was no exception and they came from all over Britain – from the Isle of Tiree off mainland Scotland to deepest Sussex under the South Downs. Some years ago now, the first cross-laminated timber (CLT) project was submitted for the awards, whereas this year there were many, showing the importance of innovation and technology in wood as a modern building material.

It has been a joy to re-join the awards and to see the progress of the awards themselves; witnessing at first hand the growing acceptance of wood as a sustainable material with the lowest impact on the environment that we have for buildings, interiors and fit-out. So, thank you Michael Morrison, immediate past Chair of Judges, for your guidance in the last few years and I hope all will be satisfied with the choice of winners we made from what was a very strong entry in 2014.

**Michael Buckley**

Chair of Judges, Wood Awards – Buildings



# Winner

## Ditchling Museum of Art + Craft, East Sussex

**The museum** at Ditchling is a small one, built to a limited budget – but with a great degree of complexity. It has been realised in a near-perfect manner, with Adam Richards Architects giving intense attention to the design of both the museum itself and fit out of the exhibition spaces, which display the unique collection of work by Eric Gill and his followers.

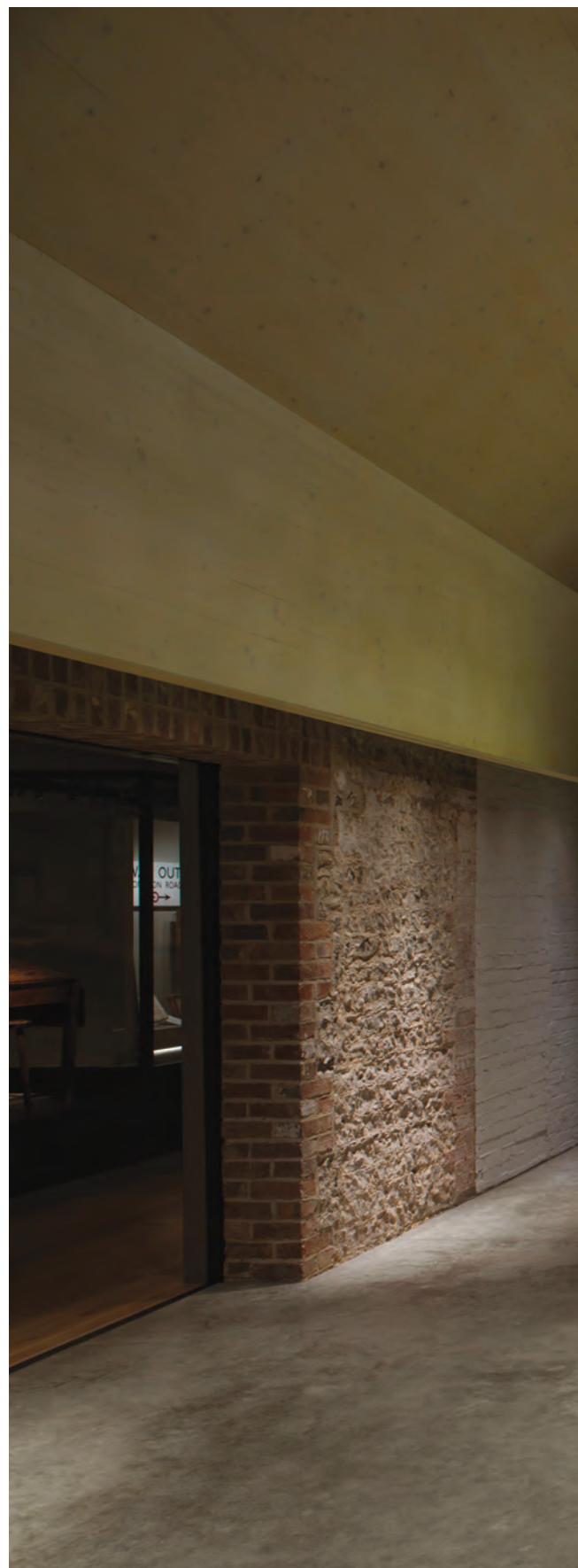
Set at the heart of the almost ridiculously pretty village of Ditchling in Sussex, the building re-uses an old barn and a former school building, the new additions forming

**Below** The refurbished cart lodge, seen at the front, serves as the entrance to the museum.

**Right** A modern day interpretation of a cabinet of curiosities.



IMAGES: BROTHERTON LOCK









not one building but a linked family of buildings. The restored 18th century oak structure of the cart lodge is re-cast as the museum's 'first exhibit', and on arrival its atmosphere sets the tone for visitors' encounter with craft, place and the idea of the past in the spaces to come. Elements of this structure are numbered, as if in a technical drawing, placing visitors inside the exhibit.

The new zinc and tile clad buildings are constructed from cross-laminated timber (CLT) panels sitting on a base of glazed black brick. These are exposed internally and have a special white dye treatment. Every opening through the CLT reveals its thickness, while hand-chamfered edges delineate each panel.

CLT panels have also been used to create a contemporary version of a 'cabinet of curiosities', acting as an introduction to the collection, the village and its history. A large panel, acting as a stair balustrade, sits like an exhibit itself on top of a black brick plinth, helping tell the story of the building. In the cart lodge the ticket desk, café bar and even shop display units are made from CLT off-cuts.

All the timber and timber products on this project were FSC certified. The project succeeded in meeting its tight budget.

The judges said: 'This project is immaculate. Although it is complex, every space is very simple. It is an extraordinary achievement on a minimal budget.' ●

**Client:** Ditchling Museum of Art + Craft

**Architect:** Adam Richards Architects

**Main contractor/builder:** Westridge Construction

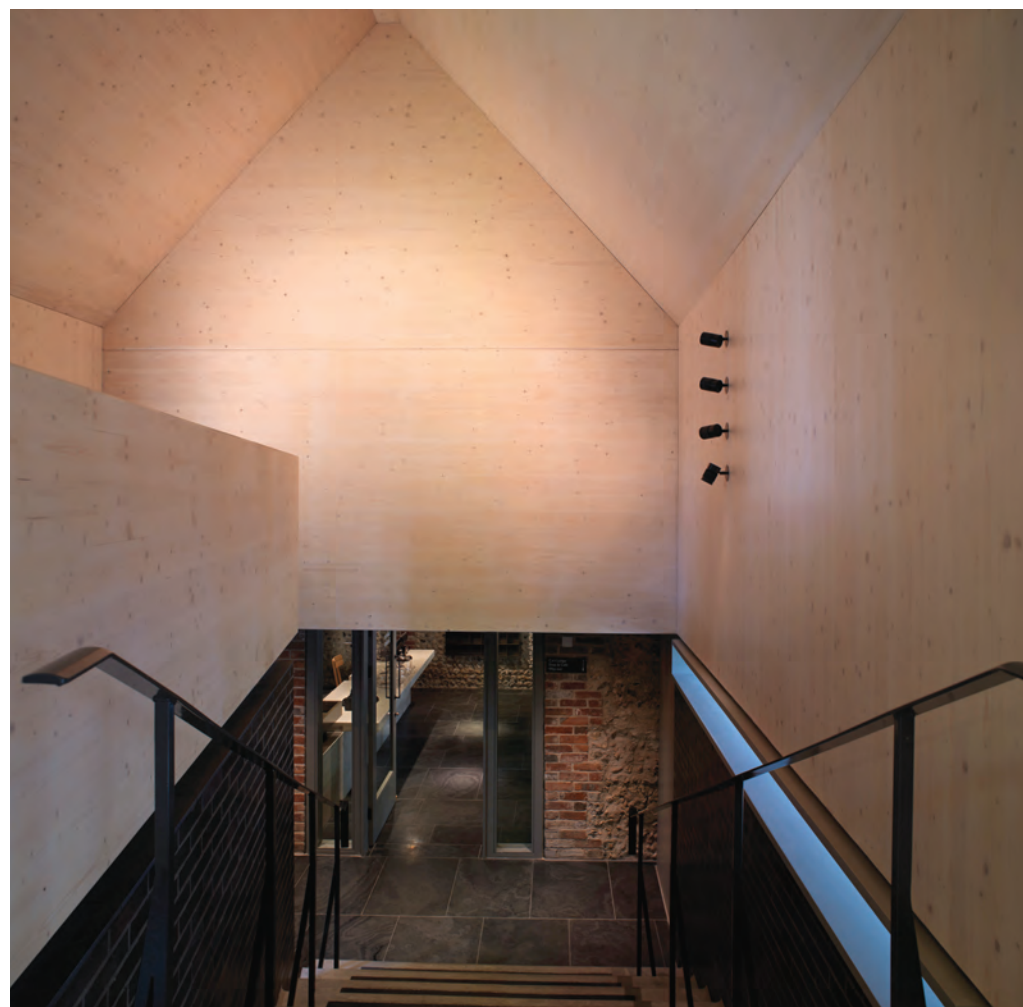
**M&E engineer:** Bailey Gomm

**Quantity surveyor:** Synergy Construction and Property

**Project manager:** Jackson Coles

**CLT manufacturer:** KLH UK

**Timber:** Spruce cross-laminated timber; English and reclaimed oak



Every opening through the CLT reveals its thickness, while hand-chamfered edges delineate each panel

**Top** CLT is exposed on the interior of the building.

**Right** All finishes are immaculate.

# Highly commended St George's Chapel, Great Yarmouth

**Occupying** the most important historic square in Great Yarmouth, St George's Chapel forms a significant piece of Georgian town planning.

The grade I listed building was built in 1714: a loadbearing brick shell with a timber structure roof and interior. It had suffered unsympathetic additions and neglect. Working to a tight budget, Hopkins Architects carefully restored and rejuvenated the chapel as a versatile space for the performing arts and placed alongside it a new café/box office.

The judges said: 'We were particularly impressed by the work at the gallery level.' ●

**Client:** Great Yarmouth Borough Council  
**Architect:** Hopkins Architects  
**Joinery:** Bullen Joinery  
**Main contractor/builder:** RG Carter  
**Theatre consultant:** Charcoalblue  
**Acoustics:** Ramboll  
**Structural engineer, pavilion:** Jane Wernick Associates.  
**Timber:** European oak



## Shortlisted

**Architecture Archive**  
Somerset  
Hugh Strange Architects



### Company profile American Softwoods

## All you need to know about American Softwoods

**American Softwoods** has published a new brochure to provide importers, architects and specifiers with information on the range and diversity of American softwood species, and which are best suited to a wide variety of different applications.

*A Guide to American Softwood Species* presents details of the botanical names, properties and uses of the commercially important American softwood species. Physical and mechanical properties are described and



each species is given a durability rating according to BS EN 350-1 (European Durability Classes).

Architects and structural engineers can also refer to tables which list and compare mechanical properties, such as the specific gravity, modulus of rupture, modulus of elasticity and compressive strength of American softwood species with the properties of European species such as Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*), Whitewood (*Picea abies*) and Sitka spruce (*Picea sitchensis*). Southern yellow pine and Douglas fir perform particularly well on these measures.

As well as better-known species, the new guide to American softwood species also lists and describes less common species such as Engelmann spruce, California redwood, Alaska cedar and incense cedar.

Renowned for their strength and beauty, American softwoods are harvested from sustainably managed forests. Every year 1.6 billion seedlings are planted in the US – the equivalent of 4.4 million trees every day of the year. As a result, America's forests produce over 80 million cubic metres of sawn timber a year, but the success of its forest management and conservation has ensured that forested land is

even greater than it was 75 years ago, and is increasing year on year.

The carbon sequestration during each tree's growth more than offsets the total combined emissions from harvesting, processing and even transportation to the EU. American softwoods also offer a sustainable, fast growing and, when pressure treated, durable alternative to more expensive tropical hardwoods, which can take three times as long to mature. ●



*A Guide to American Softwood Species* can be downloaded from [www.americansoftwoods.com](http://www.americansoftwoods.com)







IMAGES: BROTHERTON LOCK

# How they did it

## Original and new timber technology unite in Ditchling Museum of Art + Craft

**In the years** before the First World War the typographer and sculptor Eric Gill and graphic designer Edward Johnston, (best known for his sans serif typeface for London Underground) moved to Ditchling, a rural village on the Sussex Downs above Brighton. Influenced by the teachings of William Morris, they formed a loose community with other artists and craftspeople, including printer and poet Hilary Pepler, poet and artist David Jones, hand weaver Ethel Mairet and silversmith Dunstan Pruden. The community eventually dwindled but the tradition of creativity remained and in 1985 a small museum, celebrating the work of its famous artistic residents, was set up in Ditchling's Victorian former village school.

By 2010 the museum had deteriorated: obscure and unseen, it was hidden from the village green by a rickety fence and could be reached only by a path through the cemetery. The village green itself had been a farmyard until the 1950s and two agricultural buildings still stood on it; one had been converted into the village hall and the other – a listed 18th century cart lodge – was neglected and deteriorating.

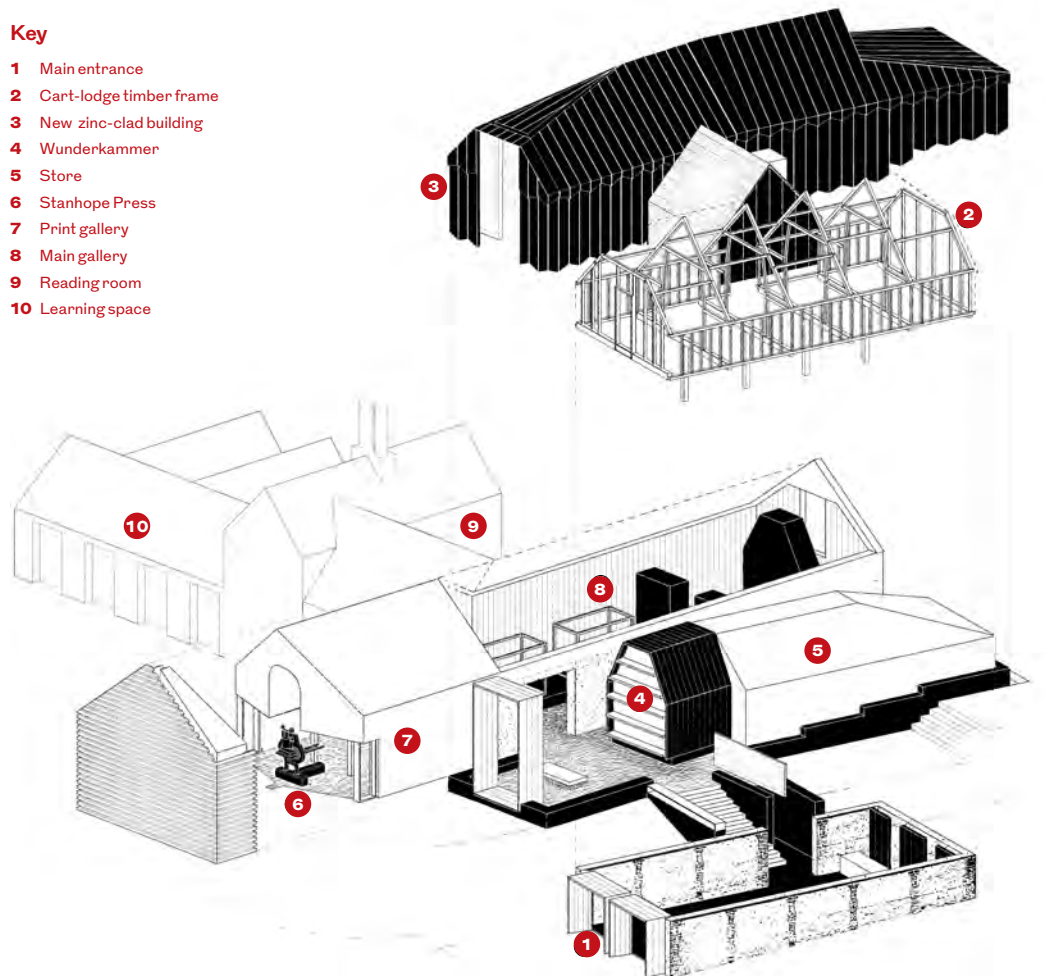
Today the museum has been updated and revitalised by Adam Richards Architects. One of the keys to its success is the incorporation into the new plan of the cart lodge, which has been converted into a new entrance to allow the museum to open directly onto the village green and is linked to the original museum, now refurbished, by two new buildings. The architect's brief expanded to include exhibition design, so that the collection and buildings could be integrated and exhibits related to the places where they were made. As the architect explains: 'We worked with the museum's disparate range of existing buildings to find thoughtful,

**Left** A visitor considers the Wunderkammer in the new zinc-clad building.



### Key

- 1 Main entrance
- 2 Cart-lodge timber frame
- 3 New zinc-clad building
- 4 Wunderkammer
- 5 Store
- 6 Stanhope Press
- 7 Print gallery
- 8 Main gallery
- 9 Reading room
- 10 Learning space





innovative solutions to upgrading their fabric and functions while highlighting their original aesthetics. We also explored the poetic possibilities opened up by designing new buildings that not only complement the old, but also enhance our understanding of existing buildings by reflecting the principles of their construction using contemporary technology'. Timber played a central role in the restoration of the original buildings and the new structure. Original oak trusses were repaired and exposed, the galleries floored with oak boards and the walls of the restored schoolroom were lined with vertical matchboarding, to reflect the original cladding.

Cross-laminated timber (CLT) is used in the new buildings, chosen for its economy, ability to provide unobstructed large volumes and its structural 'honesty'. The thickness and size of the panels are celebrated and detailed to express the structural forces.

#### **The cart lodge and new buildings**

Though in poor condition, the cart lodge – oak trusses, brick/flint walls and an earth floor – has been restored to house a café, shop, and a new entrance, protected by a pair of timber portals resembling a pair of open barn doors.

The roof was taken off and a plywood box placed over the oak stick frame structure to stabilise it. The oak frame was retained as far as possible, with reclaimed or new seasoned oak members used where necessary.

Walls were insulated and horizontally clad with oak (feather-edge) weatherboarding to retain the original exterior of the building. Breathable technology was used, including wall and roof membranes and a new Limecrete slab floor. Internal fittings – ticket desk, café bar and shop display units – are all made from off-cuts of CLT; their setting, beneath an exposed oak canopy, is an example of old and new timber technology encountered side-by-side.

A new building links the cart lodge, which is set at village green level, to the higher main museum, following the slope of the bank and containing both stairs and a lift. From the stairs visitors enter another new building, the Introductory Room. A meditative space, this has a 4m high window overlooking the village green and pond to one side, while on the other a contemporary version of a cabinet of curiosities acts as an introduction to the collection, the village and its history. The cabinet and its shelves are all made of CLT. The rest of the building contains a new state-of-the-art collection store and WCs.

Both the Link and Introductory Rooms are constructed of CLT panels clad with hand-made tiles and black zinc sheet, supported on a base of glazed black brick. This concept – a timber structure on a masonry base – is a contemporary re-interpretation of the cart lodge structure. CLT panels are exposed internally and treated with a white dye; this, combined with the black bricks and black zinc, alludes to the black and white print collections of the museum. Every opening in the CLT reveals its thickness, while hand-chamfered edges delineate each panel.

#### **Main galleries**

From the Introductory Room, the entrance to the main galleries – former classrooms of the village school – is clear; the engineered timber walls peel back like a proscenium arch to reveal the flint outer walls of the old school building, which have been given a light lime wash. The matchboard-lined character of the former classrooms has been retained, while high levels of environmental control have been introduced. Specially designed display cases of works by Eric Gill dominate the centre of the main galleries. Other displays use the stories of different makers and artists to build up a picture of the individuals and their work. The culmination of the museum is a new gallery which houses the Stanhope Press and associated printed works on paper.

Strengthened floors of the galleries were covered with new solid oak boards; walls and ceilings were stripped back before being insulated and re-lined with ply and matchboarding to conceal services. Beyond the galleries, a warren of small rooms within the old school has been opened up to create a new multi-functional learning space, offices, WCs and kitchenette. The former headmaster's house has been transformed into a double-height reading room.

#### **Cross-laminated timber**

The grain direction, jointing and finish of the CLT panels, manufactured by KLH UK, were particularly carefully considered as the structure is exposed internally. CLT planks were made of kiln-dried finger-jointed spruce, manufactured and cut to size in Austria. The timber comes from sustainably managed forests and the adhesive used between panels is solvent and formaldehyde free. All timber on the project came with an FSC Chain of Custody Certificate. ●

**Extracted from TRADA's latest case study.**  
**Read in full at [www.trada.co.uk/casestudies/](http://www.trada.co.uk/casestudies/)**



**Above** Restored original timbers in the café.

#### **AWARDS**

Art Fund Prize, shortlist 2014  
 World Architecture News, Global Adaptive Re-Use Award, 2013  
 RIBA South East, Building Of The Year 2014  
 RIBA South East, Regional Award 2014  
 RIBA National Award 2014  
 RIBA Stirling Prize midlist 2014  
 Sussex Heritage Trust Awards  
 The Public & Community Award 2014  
 South Downs Society special commendation 2014  
 Wood Awards winner 2014  
 AI Retrofit Cultural Building winner



NIALL McLAUGHLIN



RICHARD BRYANT

Above: **Rothschild Foundation, Buckinghamshire, by Stephen Marshall Architects – Gold Award Winner 2011.**  
Left: **Bishop Edward King Chapel, Oxfordshire, by Niall McLaughlin Architects – Gold Award Winner 2013.**

# Backing the winners

**Combining heritage and innovation, Arnold Laver is sponsor of the prestigious Gold Award**

**Selected by** the judges from the winners of each Wood Awards category, previous recipients of the national Wood Awards Arnold Laver Gold Award as the annual ‘winner of winners’ include: Norwich Cathedral Visitors Centre (Hopkins Architects), The Hurlingham Club Outdoor Pool (David Morley Architects), the Rothschild Foundation (Stephen Marshall Architects) and Bishop Edward King Chapel (Niall McLaughlin Architects). For 2014, this accolade goes to the hugely deserving Ditchling Museum of Art + Craft by Adam Richards Architects.

As one of the UK’s leading independent timber and material providers, Arnold Laver is built on almost 100 years of heritage

and experience, expertise and trust. Innovation is a cornerstone of the company’s philosophy, making it one of the forerunners embracing new technologies and product developments in solid and decorative surfaces and adding value to the service it provides.

Managing director Andrew Laver said: ‘What designers and architects are doing with wood is fantastic. The Wood Awards, and the Gold Award in particular, are the pinnacle of design in wood in Britain and the Awards itself is a stunning showcase of what is possible – creatively, aesthetically, structurally, sustainably and innovatively – with wood in the modern construction environment.’ ●



PAUL TYAGI

Above: **Norwich Cathedral Visitor Centre by Hopkins Architects – Gold Award winner 2004.**  
Above right: **The Hurlingham Club outdoor pool, London by David Morley Architects – Gold Award winner 2012.**



DAVID MORLEY ARCHITECTS



[www.laver.co.uk](http://www.laver.co.uk)



# Winner

## Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, Globe Theatre, London

**A unique mixture** of historical research, craftsmanship and pragmatic decision-making informed the creation of this indoor theatre. It is built within a shell that was created when the Globe Theatre was erected: it was always part of Sam Wanamaker's vision for the Globe complex but funding was not then available.

Drawings from the 17th century for an indoor theatre – discovered at Worcester College, Oxford – inspired the design, which is based on scholarly research and study of surviving Jacobean interiors and details.

Inside, the new playhouse is constructed almost entirely from wood. Much of the

timber has been left natural with hand tooled finishes and untreated, although certain surfaces are painted and particular details highlighted with gilding. The variation in surfaces contributes to the overall dramatic effect that is enhanced further by candlelight used during performances.

Following historic practice, oak used for larger dimensioned members of the timber frame was left unseasoned, while elements such as handrails and brackets are of air dried oak. Jointing of the structural frame is largely pegged mortise and tenon, and the finishes have been hand planed with chamfers and stops applied where appropriate.

Arcade brackets and turned columns with their doric and ionic capitals are based on examples from 1608 found in the grand staircase at Chilham Castle. There is a very subtle hint of the turners' gouge on the shaft of the columns while the carvers' tool marks can be seen in the carved ionic capitals.

Joinery received the same level of attention. The judges said: 'This is a tour de force of joinery and is also to be applauded for satisfying fire regulations with a timber structure that is lit by candlelight.' ●

**Client:** The Shakespeare Globe Trust

**Architect:** Allies and Morrison

**Main contractor/builder:** Virtus Contracts

**Specialist timber:** McCurdy and Co

**Turned columns and balusters:** Spindlewood

**Carved capitals:** Hugh Harrison Conservation

**Wood supplier:** Tyler Hardwoods

**Reconstruction architect:** Barron and Smith

**Co-ordination of scholars, building consultants and research for the design:** Globe Architectural Research Group

**Specialist fire consultant:** The Fire Surgery

**Historic lighting consultant:** Bristol University

**Wood suppliers:** Whippitree, EE Olley & Sons, SH Somerscales

**Structural engineer:** Momentum Engineering

**Timber:** English and European oak, European redwood, German spruce



**Far left** Details were derived from historic studies.

**Left** Larger elements of oak were unseasoned.

**Above** Making the elements in McCurdy's workshop.

**Opposite** The decoration and candlelight create a magical atmosphere.





IMAGE: NICK GUTTRIDGE



# Highly commended Living Planet Centre, Woking, Surrey

**Located on** a prominent and challenging brownfield site above an existing car park at the edge of Woking town centre, the Living Planet Centre is WWF-UK's ultra-green administrative building. Timber has been chosen for its aesthetic, structural and sustainable properties and features prominently throughout the interior and exterior. The striking curved roof is composed of a structurally-efficient curving grid shell. Horizontal larch louvres provide protection against solar gain at the building's glazed ends and help enhance its appearance from the outside. The judges said, 'We were impressed by the effort that was put into the sourcing of materials to take sustainability another step forward.' ●



**Client:** WWF UK  
**Architect:** Hopkins Architects  
**Joinery:** NH Etheridge  
**Main contractor/builder:** Wilmott Dixon  
**Services engineer:** Atelier Ten  
**Diagrid joinery:** Constructional

**Timber**  
**Glulam supplier:** Timbmet Group  
**Structural engineer:** Expedition Engineering  
**Wood supplier:** Mayr Meinhof Kaufmann

## Shortlist

**The Moor Market**  
 Sheffield  
 Leslie Jones Architecture /  
 B&K Structures



**Tesco St James**  
 Corby  
 Woods Hardwick



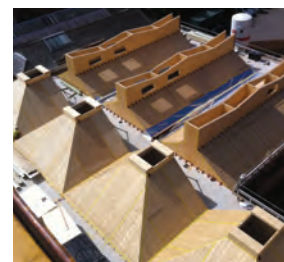
**Milton Court**  
 Guildhall School of Music,  
 London  
 RHWL Architects



**Our Lady of Lourdes Church**  
 Hungerford  
 Beard



**Clocktower Court, Radley College**  
 Design Engine Architects



# BUILDING CRAFTS COLLEGE

Situated in stunning buildings in the centre of Stratford, East London, the Building Crafts College offers a range of specialist courses for students and professionals.

- Fine Woodwork
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- Wood Carving
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- Building Maintenance
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- Construction Operations
- Formwork



The College was founded and is governed and supported by the Worshipful Company of Carpenters.

Courses are taught by expert teachers and eminent visiting lecturers.



# Winner

## House No 7, Tiree

**This is a** special house in a special place, referencing not only traditional Scottish 'black houses' but also the more recent Nissen huts of World War Two. A ruined, grade B listed black house forms the basis of the project which comprises a 'living' house and a guest house, linked by a utility wing. The effect is of a traditional cottage surrounded by agricultural buildings, with the metal-clad tunnel shaped roofs echoing the Nissen huts which found new uses by farmers.

Traditional timber frame techniques were used to build the guesthouse, while the roofs of the utility block and the living house have CNC-cut spruce glulam frames. The forms were determined in part by the need to ship the elements to Tiree on a Cal-Mac ferry. Roof portions were split along the apex for ease of transport and connection on site. This allowed the contractors to erect the frame quickly and safely in the inclement weather.

Internally, the building uses pine in a number of different ways, referencing the pine tongue-and-groove boards that are prevalent throughout the highlands and islands but with an imaginative feel. So there is a pitch-pine worktop, and pine skirting boards are used to clad the ceilings of two of the main spaces and the sculptural stairs to the hall. These stairs were laid like Jenga blocks on site after being milled to size from reclaimed Victorian pitch pine beams.

The result is an assembly of buildings which sit comfortably in their environment and make the most of the views. Despite traditional references, the buildings are clearly creations of today. The judges said: 'This pair of houses seems to work on every level. There is a surprising amount of accommodation. It has all been put together beautifully by local craftsmen living on the island.' ●

**Client:** Private  
**Architect:** Denizen Works  
**Main contractor/builder:** John MacKinnon Builders  
**Structural engineer:** CRA  
**Wood supplier:** James Donaldson & Sons  
**Timber:** Scottish spruce glulam, Scottish larch and reclaimed pitch pine



**Right** The glazed passage joining the two parts of the dwelling.

**Far right** The living house has a tunnel-shaped ceiling.









# Highly commended WoodBlock House, London

**The brief was** to create a studio, home and office for UK artist Richards Woods and his family, the result – constructed in cross-laminated timber – was a simple, large workshop and printing studio space on the ground floor, with separate living accommodation above, all characterised by the qualities of timber, good spaces and daylight. The home section of the building is south-facing and sits on top of the north-facing studio. The former is horizontally clad in painted plywood using a printing technique for which the artist-client is internationally renowned; by contrast the studio is clad in unpainted larch. The judges said: 'This is an original looking house that fits the client's needs. We particularly liked the light-filled study on the top floor.' ●



**Left** Unpainted larch clads the studio, topped by the living section wrapped in horizontal painted plywood.  
**Below** Internal living space is exposed CLT.



**Client:** Richard Woods Studio  
**Architect:** dRMM  
**Main contractor/ builder:** Cape Construction  
**M & E consultant:** Michael Popper Associates  
**CDM consultant:** North Laine Design  
**Structural engineer:** Timber First  
**Wood supplier:** Merk Timber  
**Timber:** British larch and CLT

## Shortlist

**Bourne Lane**  
Tonbridge, Kent  
Nash Architects



**Limpley Stoke**  
**Eco-house,**  
Bath  
Hewitt Architects







## Time for timber

**David Hopkins, executive director of Wood for Good, celebrates timber's popularity – and looks for more**

With next year's general election looming on the horizon, all parties are looking for solutions to a variety of policy problems. But there are two issues that transcend political boundaries: housing (or lack thereof) and climate change.

There's no silver bullet. Both require a complex mix of policy and innovation to solve them. But many of the answers are already

in front of us, and timber is part of the solution.

Trees absorb carbon dioxide naturally and store it in wood. If we built 200,000 houses each year in timber, it would sequester and store nearly 4 million tonnes of carbon dioxide per year. Safely, visibly, structurally.

Wood for Good is proud to support the national Wood Awards as it encourages and

rewards a greater use of timber in construction and promotes the range of advantages and benefits this brings to the economy, the environment and to society.

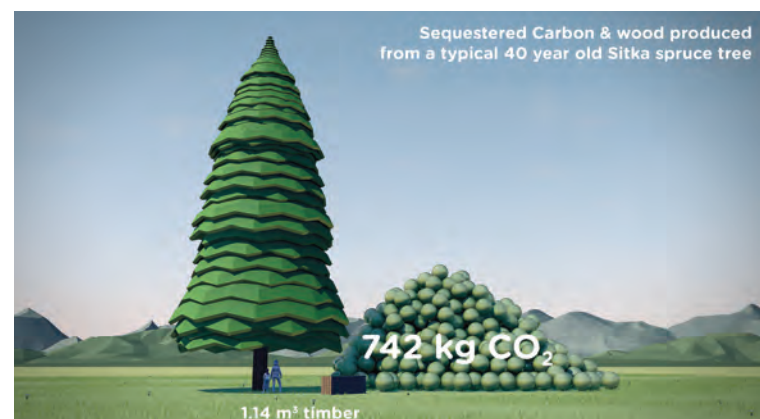
The timber industry is a fast-growing, naturally low-carbon supply chain valued at over £8.5 billion in the UK. It provides employment across a wide range of skills and sectors and is attracting huge levels

of investment from home and abroad.

Timber is changing the face of high streets, schools and homes, inspiring innovation in design and manufacturing and fast becoming the material of choice for sustainable urban modernism. This is an exciting time for timber in the UK. The range of entries in the 2014 Wood Awards reflects this.



For more information, visit [www.woodforgood.com](http://www.woodforgood.com) or email David on [info@woodforgood.com](mailto:info@woodforgood.com)  
Wood for Good works across the supply chain as the promotional vehicle for the timber industry



**Wood for Good**  
Challenge your perceptions.







# Winner

## Studio, Oxford

**This studio** in a garden is made special by the degree of thought that has gone into it, in terms of both appearance and function, and by the effort to create a locally sourced building, every part of which was made in England.

Set in a suburban context, the property occupies a narrow site alongside the boundary wall between two large houses. Replacing a previous outbuilding, it looks out over a communal garden and pool.

Supporting a 'heat mirror' glass roof, the timber frame structure of the extension is of sweet chestnut, whose inherent beauty was an important factor in the choice of an exposed structure. To maintain a consistent appearance, the joinery (windows, doors and panelling) was supplied by the same specialist timber frame company. Hemp and lime insulation was used not only to insulate the masonry and offer additional thermal mass, but also to provide a breathable form of construction that helps to regulate internal humidity levels. The timber was rough sawn, creating a simple aesthetic that referenced the original outbuilding and sat comfortably with the other materials used: raw concrete and stock engineering bricks.

The sweet chestnut was grown in West Sussex and the hemp harvested in Norfolk.

A screen of revolving triple-glazed windows ventilates the studio naturally. A large freestanding double-sided wood burning stove, clad in CorTen weathering steel, punctuates the otherwise open plan design.

The judges said: 'This is a delightful studio in which every element has been carefully considered, with love and attention given to the detailing.' ●



**Top** The structure is of sweet chestnut.  
**Above** The simple material palette references the original outbuilding.

**Architect:** James Wyman  
Architects

**Joinery company and wood**

**supplier:** Inwood Developments

**Lighting:** Davey Lighting

**Metalwork:** Hot Metal Engineering

**Insulation:** Lime Technology

**Timber:** English sweet chestnut



# Highly commended Ravenswood, London

**This sensitive** expansion of a modest end-of-terrace house on a modernist estate in North London is designed to relate to the estate as a whole – and not just to the individual house.

Reflecting the rhythm of the original building, the extension is made recognisably different by its apparently simple timber structure and infill. It is glazed on two sides and the subtly adjusted proportions of windows and spandrels also identify it as a later addition. Larch spandrels and bespoke Douglas fir window frames are pre-weathered or treated with semi-opaque stains. The judges said: 'This is a subtle piece of work, showing great respect to the existing architecture from a period that is often under-appreciated.' ●

**Architect:** Maccreanor Lavington  
**Services engineer:** Freeman Beesley  
**Quantity surveyor:** P T Projects  
**Structural engineer:** Greig-Ling Consulting Engineers  
**Wood supplier:** Brooks Bros (UK)  
**Timber:** Siberian larch and Douglas fir



## Shortlist

**The Middle Drawbridge, Tower of London**  
GMT Timber Frames



### Company profile BRE

## Here's to the future: limitless design options

**BRE** is delighted to support the Wood Awards again, which get better and better every year. As the UK's largest independent integrated research, testing and certification business in the built environment we see innovative structures and construction products daily. But we never tire of the creativity and clever use of materials that go into brilliant buildings. We work with partners to help ideas mature and develop to grow the sector – wood has a really bright future. Britain is fantastic at achieving in this field and the entries and shortlist of the Wood Awards are testimony to that.

This year we have seen the emergence of Grown in Britain – the movement to create demand for British wood products, to create a

fund to enable more woodland management, and to strengthen our country's wood culture. Grown in Britain has really captured the imagination, uniting under one umbrella our largest sawmills and our greenwood workers, mountain bikers and ramblers, our charcoal producers and our major contractors, our wildlife trusts and those concerned with the nation's health and wellbeing. It is rebuilding the economic engine of our forests. We are well poised to realise even greater social, economic and environmental benefits from our own woodlands and forests and also to build our wood culture which is good for all wood products. We look forward to next year's Awards and hope to see Grown in Britain featuring strongly in the shortlist. ●



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# The Wish List

## High profile architects advocate American hardwoods

**It has been** a remarkable few months for the American Hardwood Export Council. The Wish List is a collaboration with Benchmark Furniture and 10 leading designers and architects who, this summer, commissioned their 'wish' – an object for the home that they had always wanted but never found. Each commissioner paired up with a younger designer, and together they worked on realising the design in what proved to be a learning experience for both parties. In a week-long residency at Benchmark in July, the young designers built their pieces with the help of the workshop's master craftsmen, some of whom had up to 40 years' experience to draw on.

The result is 10 beautiful objects in a variety of American hardwoods including red oak, white oak, walnut, hard maple, ash, tulipwood and cherry. The pieces show the amazing versatility that can be achieved with a single material. The project culminated in a compelling installation at the Victoria and Albert Museum as part of the London Design Festival.

Terence Conran commissioned a cocooned workspace in red oak and cherry from Sebastian Cox; Norie Matsumoto created the perfect set of tulipwood pencil sharpeners for Norman Foster; Win Assakul designed and made an extendable 3m long walnut serving dish for Amanda Levete. Gwendolyn and Guillane

Kerschbaumer, the sisters who form Studio Areti, designed a suite of interior architectural elements for John Pawson: a set of walnut shelves, a tapered white oak door and a walnut light switch, hooks and pegs, all for his new house. Felix de Pass designed simple but strikingly elegant cherry kitchen stools for architect Alison Brooks; Gareth Neal made two extraordinary sculptural vessels of white oak for Zaha Hadid; Nathalie de Leval designed and built a personalised garden shed for Paul Smith in thermally modified ash; Rob Barnby and Lewis Day of Barnby & Day created a dramatic circular dining table for Alex de Rijke using cross-laminated tulipwood. Richard







**Clockwise from top left**  
**Paul's Shed** – Nathalie de Leval and Paul Smith.

**Getting away from it all**  
 – Sebastian Cox and Terence Conran (with Sean Sutcliffe on the left).

**Sculptural vessels** – Gareth Neal and Zaha Hadid.

**6 x 500** – Win Assakul and Amanda Levete.

**A stool for the kitchen** – Felix de Pass and Alison Brooks.



Rogers, with his son Ab, requested a red oak ladder that they could sit and work on from Xenia Moseley; and Lola Lely interpreted a very unusual design concept for a reclining seat from artist Allen Jones constructed using maple and walnut veneer. Sean Sutcliffe, co-founder of Benchmark, said: 'At Benchmark we like to push the boundaries of what it is possible to do in wood. The diversity of the pieces in The Wish List, and making them in one intense week, tested all involved. We had great successes, a few tears, some tantrums, but I think everybody learned a lot about craftsmanship and making. This project is a terrific platform for learning, enriched by the interaction of so much design and making talent.'

While enabling AHEC to celebrate imaginative design with American hardwoods, this project also has an important environmental legacy. Using data from its Life Cycle Assessment

(LCA) research project, AHEC was able to produce a full, ISO conformant, environmental profile for the projects. This information will be taken to the wider industry as an indicator of just what can be achieved with relatively simple modelling, when accurate LCA data exists for the primary raw material. David Venables, European director of the American Hardwood Export Council, said: 'The vast temperate hardwood forests of the eastern US provide abundant and diverse timber species. Given current furniture fashion you may be forgiven for thinking our forests are all white oak and walnut. It has been a joy to see that the teams in The Wish List have embraced a greater selection of species including ash, maple, red oak, tulipwood and cherry which together account for over 50% of the resource. Establishing a balance between market demand and the dynamic

of the forest is essential to achieve true sustainability.' The biggest achievement for AHEC is the learning experience this exercise has given the 10 teams, opening their eyes to timber species and environmental issues that they had perhaps not considered before. It creates a legacy for AHEC to provide inspiration to architects and designers across the globe for years to come. A consignment of American white oak, walnut, tulipwood and cherry was kindly donated by timber and panel products distributor James Latham for this project. Morgan Timber and AHEC member Northland Forest Products kindly donated thermally modified American ash for Paul Smith's shed. ● **AHEC has launched a special publication written by Ruth Slavid to celebrate the project. The book is free to order or download at [www.americanhardwood.org](http://www.americanhardwood.org)**



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# Winner

## Alfriston School Swimming Pool, Beaconsfield

**Designed for** a secondary day and boarding school that caters for girls with a range of special educational needs and disabilities, this pool building is simple on plan. Its complex and beautiful timber roof gives enormous visual excitement and the pleasure both from the outside and to those using it.

The pool enclosure extends into the landscape on a sloping site, looking out onto playing fields with unobstructed views.

Intended to be a contemporary expression of the local pitched-roof vernacular, the design is articulated by three duplicated pitched and tapered segments, adopting similar proportions to the main school building. This rippling sculptural form also serves as an acoustic baffle, reducing sound reverberation, which was a crucial aspect of the brief. A 1m-high low-level glass strip

circumnavigates the pool roof, making the roof appear to float.

Cowley Timber manufactured the prefabricated timber structure off site in 12 triangulated truss modules, the largest being 12m long by 6m high. These components were made from cross laminated European Scandinavian whitewood forming the main beams, columns and rafters, with a laminated ply external skin. The interior face is factory finished in a breathable light white wash, while component connections are bespoke invisible steel plates with plugged bolts. Slim circular posts to raise the structure off the concrete deck sit at each cranked position, terminating at the steel connector plates.

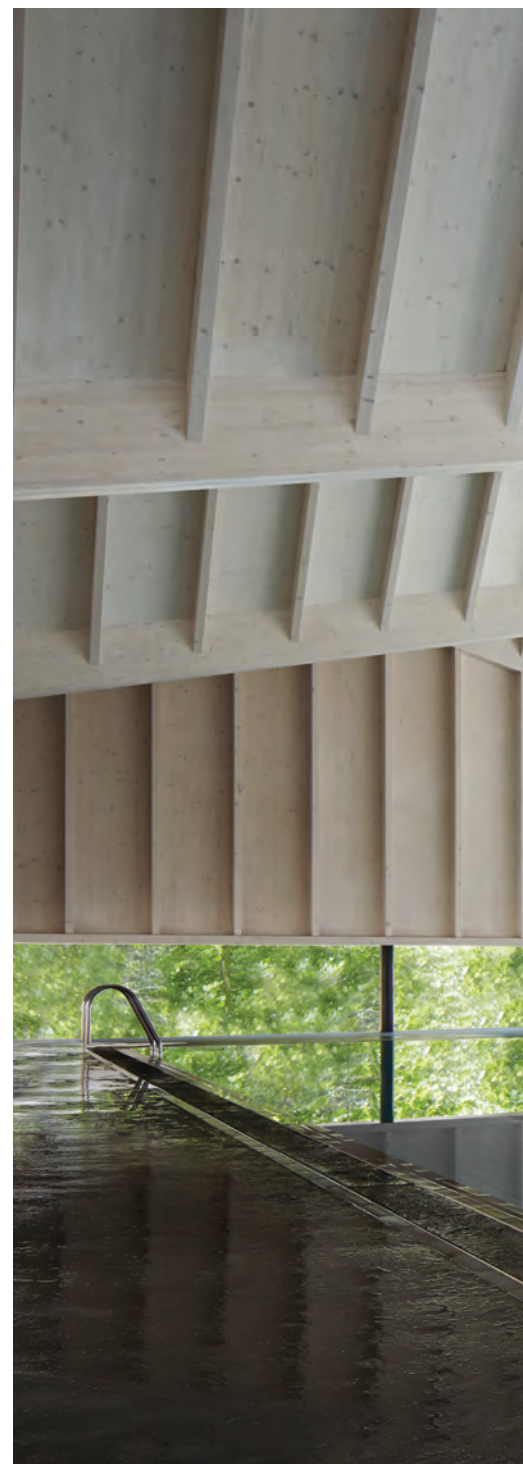
An eight week on-site assembly period offered precise, high quality finishing with no requirement for temporary scaffolding as well as cost and programme benefits – the project came in on budget.

A standing-seam roof system with integrated cladding clips supports the Plato timber roof, so that the entire pool roof and all perimeter walls could be clad in the same material, with precise spacing and alignment. Rainwater pipes are external but hidden behind the timber rainscreen.

The judges said: 'This building consists of structure and architecture united. It has an innovative structural system and the execution is very good.' ●



**Right** The geometry of the roof is fascinating.  
**Far right** The roof appears to float above the pool.





**Client:** Alfriston School

**Architect:** Duggan Morris Architects

**Joinery:** Cowley Timberworks

**Main contractor/builder:** Feltham Construction

**Approved building control inspector:** Butler & Young

**Cost consultant/CDM co-ordinator:** Appleyard & Trew

**Environmental engineer:** Skelly and Couch

**Structural engineer:** Elliott Wood Partnership

**Timber:** Scandinavian whitewood – glulam and CLT



# Highly commended Farnham Place, London

**Farnham Place** completes the group of buildings that forms Allies and Morrison's studios in Southwark, London. It includes a new timber building with a cross-laminated timber structure clad in a stained Siberian larch rain-screen. The structural system was selected partly for speed: substantially fewer components were used which reduced site fixing and the newbuild superstructure was completed in just six weeks.

Timber panelling also helped to limit overall costs, allowing the architect to dispense with some internal linings. The lightweight construction also provided savings in foundation design.

The judges said: 'CLT works very hard

here above the open-plan ground floor. There is a great understanding shown of the material.' •

**Client/architect:** Allies and Morrison

**Joinery:** Raphael Contracting

**Main contractor/builder:** Balfour Beatty Construction Scottish and Southern

**Structural timber:** Houston Cox

**Timber cladding contractor:** NDM (Metal Roofing and Cladding)

**Structural engineer:** Davies Maguire + Whitby

**Structural laminated timber:** KLH UK



## Shortlist

**Timber Seasoning Shelter**

Beaminster, Dorset

Architectural Association



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# Wood Awards – Furniture



This has been another fascinating year in which to judge the furniture category of the Wood Awards. We, the judges, are delighted with the winners we have selected in the furniture category, and there is a lot of variety in the furniture we shortlisted. Congratulations to our winners, who are utterly deserving of their recognition.

One particularly interesting aspect of judging these awards is to look at the understanding developing between bespoke furniture and design for manufacture – to see how exactly designers are growing to understand the simplification of process that is needed for manufacture and how that can be coupled with quality of design, detailing and materials. On the other hand, there is enormous pleasure when one encounters the creativity, aesthetic understanding, craftsmanship and, often, restraint, that goes into the best bespoke pieces.

There is a wealth of furniture-making talent in this country, particularly among small independent makers. While the judges are delighted by the quality of the winning pieces, we would like to see even more makers submitting work. This is a wonderful opportunity to showcase skills, both here and at the 100% Design exhibition in September, where all shortlisted entries appear on the Wood Awards stand in front of one of the most design-savvy audiences in the UK. If you are a furniture maker who did not enter this year, please try to do so next year, for your own benefit as well as that of the awards. And if you know of a talented furniture maker, please encourage them to enter. Then next year's awards may be even better.

One of the things that makes judging the awards so pleasurable is the quality of my fellow judges, all of whom are themselves designer makers. I would like to thank them, as always, for their time and also for the fascinating conversations about furniture that stemmed from our appraisal of the entries. And, of course, I want to thank all those who entered the awards and made them possible.

**Sean Sutcliffe**

Chair of Judges, Wood Awards – Furniture



# Winner

## Oak furniture for the Dickson Poon Centre, Oxford

**The desk** submitted was part of a range of five pieces designed and made for the new-build Dickson Poon China Studies Centre at St Hugh's College Oxford. High-quality pieces in solid European oak were specified in the brief, made within tight budgetary constraints.

Makers' Eye created a family of products with a clear design signature to complement the subtle Oriental influence of the architecture. In total there were 177 pieces.

The highest quality timber was essential: attractive in colour and grain, durable and appropriate to its designed environment. It also had to be exceptionally clean; of good and consistent colour; humidity-regulated for stability in immediate use; quarter sawn wherever necessary, again for stability reasons; and square edged to reduce handling and machining time – and all these qualities were needed in a large quantities. Having found a good supplier, Makers' Eye and the small makers who work for it could deliver high-quality furniture on time and to budget.

The judges said, 'Makers' Eye has put together a collaborative team of workshops to enable them to tackle a project that comprises nearly 200 pieces and has been supplied to the sort of quality that tends to come from smaller and bespoke makers.' ●

**Client:** St Hugh's College, Oxford  
**Furniture company:** Makers' Eye  
**Furniture maker:** Simon Thomas Pirie  
**Maker of library shelving units:** Waywood  
**Manufacturer of lino surfaced desks:** Matthew Burt  
**Timber:** European oak

**Top** The desk shows a subtle oriental influence.  
**Right** Shelving is another element of the collection.



## Highly commended Scorched oak rocking chair

**Comfortable dining** chair design is the basis for this rocking chair, scaled up to provide the roomy proportions the designer felt appropriate. It appears to be formed organically, with a cross-section that changes from circular to oval and a profile that tapers and curves. Scorching the oak made it possible to achieve a homogeneous appearance, with none of the variations in grain and colour one might see otherwise. The judges said: 'This is a piece of outstanding and quite extraordinary craftsmanship. There are some really difficult details in the totally controlled surface.' ●

**Furniture maker:** Barnsley Workshop

**Wood supplier:** Tyler Hardwoods

**Timber:** European oak



## Shortlist

### Harrison table

Shawstephens

**Timber:** Solid English walnut, English walnut burr veneer



### Folded chair

NMHK Co

**Timber:** American white ash / American black walnut







**Above** The rack has a distinctive character.  
**Right** It is sold as single units which can be combined to make a large decorative piece.

## Winner Hat Tree

**The brief** was to design an affordable domestic wall-fixed coat rack distinct from products currently available. Inspired by clothes hung on twigs protruding from a hedge, the Hat Tree is made from 2mm constructional European steamed beech veneers. The piece is versatile and can be placed in domestic and contract interiors. It requires no specialist skills/tools to fix to the wall.

The judges said: 'We admired this because it offers a softwood solution where often another material would be used. The designer has had a creative idea and adapted it to the rigours of the production process. This is a true production piece, available to buy in the shops.' ●

**Client:** Marque Furniture

**Furniture designer:** Fowler and Co

**Furniture maker:** Karlamin

**Timber:** Steamed laminated European beech



## Shortlist



### Series Three

Another Country

**Timber:** European beech or oak



### Ten Species Tallboy

Sebastian Cox Furniture

**Timber:** English Hardwoods: oak, ash, elm, chestnut, London plane, sycamore, cherry, walnut, brown oak, beech and hazel



### Fosse Collection

Namon Gaston

**Timber:** European oak

The sponsors of the Wood Awards would like to congratulate all the winning and highly commended entrants.

To read more about the Wood Awards and for future details about entering next year, go to

<http://www.woodawards.com/> Twitter @woodawards

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# Endless Stair

**Designed for** the American Hardwood Export Council and exhibited outside Tate Modern in London at the 2013 London Design Festival, Endless Stair pioneered the use of hardwood CLT, using American tulipwood to create an Escher-like stair with a viewing platform at the top. The stair was subsequently reassembled in a different form in Milan for the Fiera, demonstrating the versatility that was an essential part of the design.

The judges said, 'The Endless Stair was a real one-off, a project that combined being an exciting and accessible piece of public art with research into new ways of using a material. Having decided to work with tulipwood CLT, the designers had to study its properties, in particular rolling shear, adding to the sum of knowledge as well as providing delight.' ●

**Client:** London Design Festival

**Architect:** dRMM

**Joinery company:** Nüssli (Switzerland)

**CLT manufacturer:** Imola Legno

**Lighting design:** Seam Design

**Structural engineer:** Arup

**Timber:** American tulipwood



## Hand-carved Gothic doors

**These two** ornate pairs of Gothic oak doors are set into an original stone door surround. They have hand-carved tracery on both sides, constructed using traditional techniques and using 100% oak for the construction, with no glues or screws or modern fixings. Jack Badger worked with its apprentices on the project, giving them a chance to learn new skills which are in rapid decline and also giving them a sense of personal pride and achievement.

The judges said, 'This is a really brilliant piece of work on which the craftsmen have developed a double dovetail joint. Everything has been purpose-made for the doors. The tracery work is straight off the chisel. It is the only project shortlisted for the awards with such a large amount of hand work.' ●

**Maker:** Jack Badger

**Blacksmith — metalwork:** Robert Garlick

**Wood supplier:** John Boddy Timber

**Timber:** European oak



Judges for the Building Awards



**Michael Buckley**  
World Hardwoods  
(chair)



**Jim Greaves**  
Hopkins



**Adam Khan**  
Adam Khan  
Architects



**Andrew Lawrence**  
Arup



**David Morley**  
David Morley  
Architects



**Hugh Pearman**  
Editor, RIBA Journal



**Ruth Slavid**  
Architectural writer



**Nathan Wheatley**  
Engenuiti



**John Wilkie**  
Craft specialist

Judges for the Furniture Awards



**Sean Sutcliffe**  
Benchmark Furniture  
(chair)



**John Makepeace**  
Furniture designer  
and maker



**Rod Wales**  
Wales & Wales



**Katie Walker**  
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# Longlist

There were a further 65 projects that achieved at least one vote from the judges, effectively giving the national Wood Awards its first ever longlist. They are shown here. See full details of the projects, listed by the numbers on this page, at [www.woodawards.com/longlist-2014](http://www.woodawards.com/longlist-2014)







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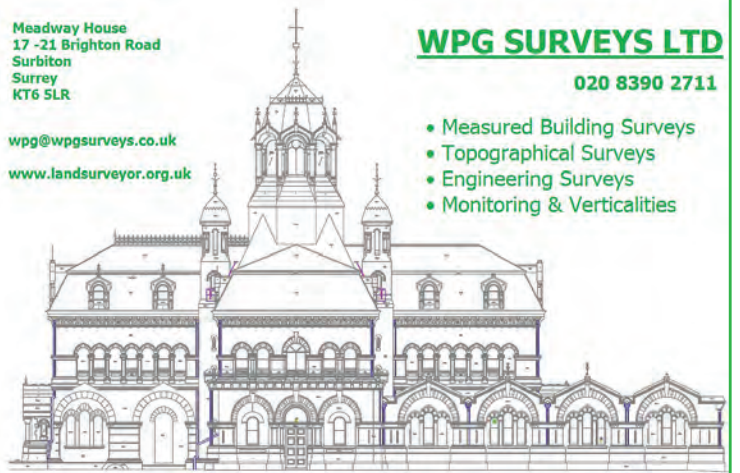
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### Carea in a class of its own at College Merthyr Tydfil

Cladding manufacturer Carea has supplied over 3,000m<sup>2</sup> of its Acantha cladding to The College Merthyr Tydfil – a £33m state-of-the-art building which marks the beginning of a new chapter in the educational history of South Wales. For the new building, a cladding system was required that would complement the project's contemporary architecture. The structure was encased in Carea Acantha stone designed for ventilated facades with insulation and non-ventilated facades without insulation.

w: [www.carea.uk.com](http://www.carea.uk.com)



### Radmat returns Guy's Tower roof to full health

Guy's Tower has undergone a huge refurbishment with the ageing 143m building upgraded to current performance, environmental and aesthetic standards. Overcoming a series of unique on-site challenges – including working at height in a live hospital environment – Radmat Building Products Approved Contractor Richardson Roofing installed more than 1,000m<sup>2</sup> of high performance roofing membranes to help bring the landmark building back to its best.

w: [www.radmat.com](http://www.radmat.com)



### A New Tradition

Redland's Rosemary Clay Craftsman roof tiles have been specified by housing developer Kirkby Homes in the development of six luxury homes in the historic town of Haslemere. The Craftsman tile was specified because of its ability to blend in with the traditional houses in the surrounding area whilst being hardwearing and long lasting. The Craftsman tile is the latest addition to the Rosemary clay range which has become "go to tile" if you want to maintain the heritage look often found in small towns.

w: [www.monier.co.uk](http://www.monier.co.uk)



### The smart green roof of Gloucester

The strength and versatility of SmartPly OSB3 has been used to create the curved green roof of Britain's latest motorway landmark. The M5 service station at Brookthorpe in Gloucester is designed to sit within its Cotswold landscape, with an undulating green roof constructed over a SmartPly OSB3 structural roof deck. SmartPly OSB was used for the roof decking as it offers a FSC certified alternative to many uncertified plywoods and carries the CE mark in accordance with the Construction Products Regulation.

w: [www.smartply.com](http://www.smartply.com)



### The best panoramic views just got better from Reynaers at Home

Leading provider of aluminium architectural glazing systems Reynaers at Home has introduced new variants of its Hi-Finity sliding patio doors in response to increased demand for the innovative product.

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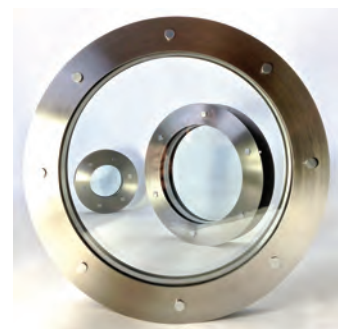
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### New bone marrow transplant ward at the Niño Jesús Hospital, Madrid

In a hospital, the environment, organisation and working system strongly influences patients and their families and can cause stress. Architect Elisa Valero wanted to create a space that reduces the sense of isolation. The design aims to meet functional necessities through eliminating or transforming what are perceived as hospital elements. Valero decided to use HI-MACS® in the design which required a thermoforming material with an elegant, simple design that eliminated joints between various structures.

w: [www.himacs.eu](http://www.himacs.eu)



### Porthole vision panels for doors and walls.

Philip Watts Design offer a wide range of porthole vision panel kits in a variety of shapes sizes and materials. From simple single glazed aluminium circles, to high specification 1 hour fire rated DDA compliant double glazed stainless steel lozenges. Manufactured in the UK, bespoke shapes, sizes and finishes are easily accommodated. Call now or visit the web site for more details.

t: 44 (0) 115 926 9756

w: [www.philipwattsdesign.com](http://www.philipwattsdesign.com)



### Stone cladding, a natural complement to traditional brick

Morris Homes chose Taylor Maxwell's Stonepanel™ natural stone cladding to put the finishing touches to the 80 homes in the rural phase of the Vista development. The site off London Road in Peterborough is the country's largest zero carbon housing development and was voted the winner of the Best Low or Zero Carbon Initiative at the 2013 Housebuilder Awards.

w: [www.taylormaxwell.co.uk/](http://www.taylormaxwell.co.uk/)

stonecladding-morrishomes

e: [cladding@taylor.maxwell.co.uk](mailto:cladding@taylor.maxwell.co.uk)





### Enhancing thermal performance with Reflectashield TF 0.81.

A. Proctor Group has been supplied high performance breather membrane for affordable housing at Ilex Close, Colchester. The Reflectashield TF 0.81 is specifically designed to enhance the thermal performance of timber and steel frame structures. This non-woven polypropylene film laminate provides protection to the building during construction. Installed on the external face of the timber frame, similar to a traditional breather membrane but with added thermal benefits

w: [www.proctorgroup.com](http://www.proctorgroup.com)



### Only the best for David Lloyd Leisure

The International flooring specialists Gerflor were the ideal choice when David Lloyd Leisure (DLL) needed to specify flooring for four very distinctive areas throughout their collection of UK-wide leisure facilities. The challenge was met head-on by Gerflor, supplying Taralay Impression for the new DLL kid's areas, Taraflex for the group exercise facilities, Insight LVT for the Cafés and Recreation 45 for the Gym areas.

w: [www.gerflor.co.uk](http://www.gerflor.co.uk)  
e: [contractuk@gerflor.com](mailto:contractuk@gerflor.com)  
t: 01926 622600



### Contemporary Wood Panelling

The emerging trend of using wood not only on floors but on walls and other vertical surfaces as well has been used in several Waitrose branches, where Junckers Walnut planks add a lively, natural element to the shop interior.

Waitrose's in-house store design team incorporated Junckers' Walnut and Beech planks on the bakery and juice bar counters to stunning effect.

w: [www.junckers.co.uk](http://www.junckers.co.uk)  
t: 01376 534 700



### Chris Wood completes company buyout

Chris Wood, managing director of Lomax + Wood Limited, has acquired controlling interest in the company following a buyout of his three partners to become sole shareholder. After joining Lomax + Wood in June 2013 the company has experienced major changes including the rebranding of Ambass-A-Door Limited to Lomax + Wood Limited. This has been delivered hand-in-hand with the development of a new website and the introduction of a technical IT system.

t: 01277 353857



### State-of-the-art university new build is safe and secure thanks to Schlüter

An array of innovative Schlüter-Systems products have been used in the building of a state-of-the-art academic facility at Bath Spa University. Playing an essential role in the visually stunning facility at the University's Newton Park campus, Schlüter's maintenance free movement joints Schlüter®-DILEX-AKWS and Schlüter®-DILEX-BWB were specified for the build, as well as its distinctive orange waterproofing membrane, Schlüter®-DITRA.

The world-class development, built by contractors Skanska, will provide students with brand new teaching facilities; technology enabled study and social learning spaces, and a new digital space which boasts the best resources for teaching digital media-related courses in the south-west. The development, which is part of a wider £70m investment in the University's future, was designed in consultation with English Heritage and Natural England and meets the highest environmental standards. Schlüter's products were installed throughout the new academic building named 'Commons', both in the atrium and in the facility's washrooms. Schlüter-DILEX offers the ultimate in flooring protection and is ideal for use with floors that are exposed to pedestrian traffic as the stainless steel movement joints ensure that tiles won't bulge, dent or crack. Whilst Schlüter-DITRA acts as a universal substrate for tile coverings offering a proven solution for uncoupling and bonded waterproofing.

w: [www.schluter.co.uk](http://www.schluter.co.uk)



### Comar

Comar Architectural Aluminium Systems have recently completed a new build hotel for the Holiday Inn Express chain in Windsor. Comar 5P.i top hung and top swing windows were specified with Comar 7P.i CD auto sliding and swing doors for the main entrances. The Doors were fitted with Anti-Finger Trap stiles, hung directly from the Comar 6 curtain walling. Polyamide Insulated (P.i) window and door systems provide exceptional thermal performance in a market where energy efficiency is paramount.

w: [www.comar-alu.co.uk](http://www.comar-alu.co.uk)



### Sika Comfortfloor is a winner at leisure centre

The seamless, durable and easy to maintain Sika Comfortfloor has found a new home at a £26 million Leisure Centre in Streatham. Combining noise suppression and durability with a flawless finish, Sika ComfortFloor proved to be the ideal solution – meeting the client's aesthetic requirements, whilst delivering a hard-wearing system that guarantees outstanding long term performance. For further information on Sika's range of products visit

w: [www.sika.co.uk](http://www.sika.co.uk)



### Strong response to new room data software

eRDS Solutions and Software Ltd has received a great response from interior designers and architects regarding some exciting new features to their electronic room data sheet software released earlier this year. The software is designed to revolutionise the distribution and management of electronic room data sheets and to integrate them with BIM and COBie. The new features include assigning images, specification sheets and manuals to items within the project library.

e: [info@erds.co.uk](mailto:info@erds.co.uk) w: [www.erds.co.uk](http://www.erds.co.uk)



### Levolux catches the eye

The Former Royal Eye Hospital in Manchester, known as the 'Citylabs' development, has been given an ultra-modern extension with a bright red perforated screening and solar shading solution, courtesy of Levolux. Perforated, extruded aluminium screening panels are set against integrated walkways, all secured back to the curtain walling system using Levolux's Trinité Bracket.

t: 020 8863 9111  
e: [info@levolux.com](mailto:info@levolux.com)  
w: [www.levolux.com](http://www.levolux.com)





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### Ski Hotel Borgafjäll, South Lapland, 1950

2014 marks the centenary of the birth of Ralph Erskine, the architect best known for two projects completed in the 1980s: the Byker redevelopment in Newcastle upon Tyne and The Ark in London – an office building which, at the time, was at the forefront of sustainable design. Erskine, born and educated in the UK, moved to Sweden in 1939, attracted by the promise of a more egalitarian society that was embracing modern architecture. Here he received his first, mainly residential, commissions. The Ski Hotel at Borgafjäll, South Lapland, was built between

1948 and 1950 and is generally acknowledged as one of his most original projects. The design was influenced by local climatic conditions and featured long sloped roofs which, covered in snow, became part of the surrounding mountain landscape. One was initially used as a nursery ski slope. The interior, articulated around different levels, featured imaginative use of space – highlighted in the main public area shown in the photograph by the slanted structural elements and free-standing stove. ●

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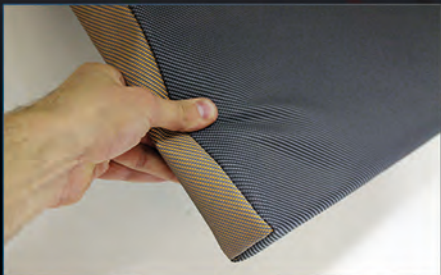
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[www.oscar-acoustics.co.uk](http://www.oscar-acoustics.co.uk)

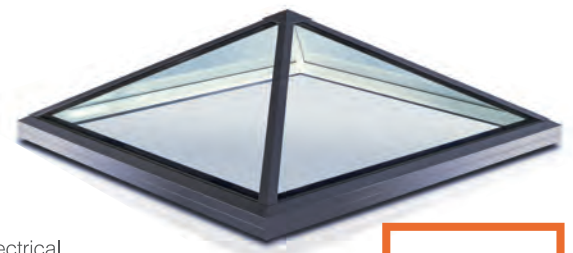
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