

The RIBA Journal

December 2020

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MAD's Beijing kindergarten

Thinking aloud: The President's Medals

True grit: Anna Heringer profiled

2020 Rising Stars





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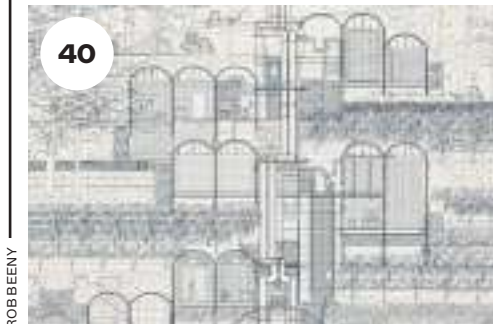
Children rule the roof in MAD Architects' Beijing project

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Kindergarten in Beijing by
MAD Architects, photographed
by Hufton + Crow

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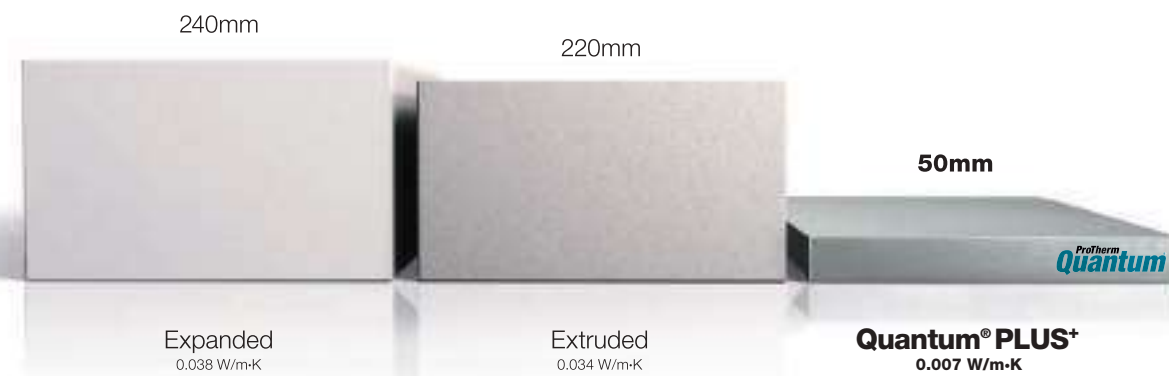
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Waterborne worship
— religious building
08

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— cathedral
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07

1: Buildings

In architecture every period takes issue with its past. The 1960s took vengeance on the Victorian and Edwardian. Appreciation of the 1960s only truly started in the past 15 years. And now the 1980s and 1990s are getting the wrath – even if in certain young architectural circles pop bubblegum clashing colours are finding their way into paint specifications. It seems the age range for buildings to be at their bleakest is between 30 and 40 years post completion – not old enough to be looked upon wistfully and so old they appear clumsy and prohibitive to contemporary usage. Richmond House in Whitehall springs to mind.

Architects critiquing the architecture and decisions of the recent past is a theme that runs through nearly all this month's building section projects – usually by way of demolition. Ma Yansong at the YueCheng Courtyard Kindergarten in Beijing couldn't stomach the recent

'fake' buildings he found on site at his first visit. Mae's Sands End Arts and Community Centre in Parsons Green, London, rebuilds on an earlier site that was perhaps wrongfully swept away in the 1980s, although at Carlisle Cathedral Fraternity Feilden Fowles takes away the 19th century porch designed by GE Street.

We like to think what we do now is sensitive and with good reason, and perhaps you'll agree with the writers that these examples are. Yet another building also springs to mind – Make's oversized Atlas Building tower in Old Street, London, which replaced a solidly built 1980s office adding 302 luxury apartments, a decision that made some sense two years ago but doesn't look so appropriate now. Who knows what this pandemic might do to shorten that magic 30-40 year tiredness factor. Studio Bua's house and cultural retreat shows another way. ●

Studio Bua's cultural retreat
in Iceland, page 12.

ONLY ON RIBAJ.COM

From the loggia you can gaze across the rooftops to 22 Bishopsgate and the rest of the central cluster's architectural zoo. You are only eight floors up, but it feels like plenty

Hugh Pearman enjoys a humanly-scaled city building: ribaj.com/colemanstreet



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The RIBA Journal December 2020

Welcome aboard

Denizen Works’ floating church is more than a place of worship

Words: Kate Jordan Photographs: Gilbert McCarragher

Genesis, the Diocese of London’s new floating church, is a building that shines, literally and figuratively, out of the turbo-developed territory controlled by the London Legacy Development Corporation. It’s a small miracle that Genesis came into being at all, given that the LLDC does not permit single-faith places of worship within its boundaries. There is a visible absence of community-led facilities within the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and its environs; something that this floating church aims to address through its radiant appearance and welcoming spirit.

The unusual project, which was designed by Denizen Works with Turks Shipyard and naval architect Tony Tucker, was commissioned by the Diocese to serve the parishes of St Paul Old Ford and St Mary of Eton, as well as reaching out to new communities. Though it isn’t the Diocese’s first foray onto

water (it has another boat further down the Lee Navigation, where Genesis is currently moored) the mission of this one is to establish itself as a visual beacon of modern Anglicanism – the brief was to create a ‘conspicuous presence’. It has achieved this to great effect, although there’s little to alert the casual observer to the fact that it’s a place of worship. Indeed, what’s striking about Genesis is that it’s much more than a church. In addition to formal services, the promotional literature suggests that it might accommodate such activities as ‘parent and toddler groups, lunch and supper clubs, Pilates classes, support workshops and counselling’. In this respect it follows the growing trend towards mixed-use spaces in contemporary church design. Under the guidance of Reverend Dave Pilkington, however, Genesis goes further than most, welcoming people of all faiths (and

none) to pray, meditate or just congregate for discussion – although this might be in part to get around the LLDC’s injunction against mono-faith buildings. This is predominantly a Christian space nonetheless and it’s in that spirit that one of its objectives is to bring people together to eat. To this end, the boat has a relatively large, high specification kitchen to deliver expanded versions of communion.

On winning the design competition, Denizen Works’ Murray Kerr immediately thought of the floating church in Peter Carey’s novel Oscar and Lucinda. His ambition for a great glass church sailing through London was thwarted, however, by the realisation that it would have to tackle bridges. This led to practice co-director Andrew Ingham’s idea for a ‘kinetic’ roof that could be raised and lit internally to generate a lantern effect. The roof has the dual benefits of allowing the

Genesis is currently moored outside Here East in Stratford, east London.



The mission of Genesis is to establish itself as a beacon of modern Anglicanism

towards a traditional church, without any clumsy references. The window seats give a sense of side aisles and bays, while the central section is reminiscent of a nave, culminating in something like a sanctuary. This effect is amplified when the roof is raised, drawing the eye towards the compact, flat-pack altar. This is a confident, authentic space that defines itself on its own terms.

Murray Kerr is right when he describes the floating church as a ‘first step in our thinking about how communities can continue to be served as they grow and move away from traditional locations and building types’. Genesis illustrates how the Church might adapt to transient communities who have new ideas about what it means to be spiritual. ●

To read a longer version of this article visit ribaj.com/genesis



boat to navigate London’s waterways and creating a striking impression when moored. Organ bellows were Ingham’s inspiration for the concertinaed roof, which is made from translucent sailcloth and lined with LED lights. He describes it as a poetic version of a camper van roof but that doesn’t do it justice. When it is up, it does its job remarkably well – on a rainy afternoon, the lantern can be seen from quite a distance and one can imagine it attracting curious visitors.

Inside, Genesis is simple, pleasing and surprisingly spacious – it can accommodate up to 60 passengers when stationary. The boat is entered midship with an office, kitchen and toilet to one side and a large ‘assembly space’ to the other. The latter gestures

Above View of the altar with the seating arranged as ‘pews’ flanking a central aisle. The raised roof features a large halo-like oculus.

Right V-shaped motif on the internal window covering.

IN NUMBERS

£650,000
construction cost

45m²
GIA (excl decks)

£14,444
cost per m²

Credits
Architect Denizen Works
Client Diocese of London
Naval architect Tucker Designs
Lighting consultant Arup
Boatbuilder Turks Shipyard
Sailmaker Jeckells the Sailmakers
Interior fitout ANR Developments
Stools and tables Plyco



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Buildings Photograph

House R128, Stuttgart

Photograph Zooey Braun

Words: Jan-Carlos Kucharek

Designed in 1999 and built in 2000, Werner Sobek's House R128 in Stuttgart is a case study house that embodies the sustainable philosophy of its architect. Home to Sobek and his partner, the 'R' of 'R128' stands for Römerstrasse, the long road that winds up from the basin that the city sits in. The '128' denotes its position at the top of the hillside, commanding a dramatic view over Stuttgart; the Teutonic equivalent of Pierre Koenig's 1960 Stahl House.

House R128 is as uncompromising now as Koenig's Case Study House 22 was then.

Built on a steep plot of land, the four storey, cubic, highly insulated, glazed modular home was designed as fully recyclable, with zero heat energy and zero emissions in operation. With its plug-in or screw connections, it was assembled in weeks and can be disassembled as quickly. Temperature shifts are balanced by a thermal energy store and its electricity is generated by solar cells, with every item in the house computer controlled.

It would have been a simple journey for photographer Zooey Braun to have made it up to the bucolic site; living as he does at the 'downtown', city end of the same street. On the day of the shoot, the weather wasn't perfect, in fact it looked like rain; and Braun, disheartened at the dull of the day, was con-

sidering calling the whole thing off. But at the building's foot, below the machined access bridge ushering you to the upper reception level, something caught his eye.

Even in the shadowless light, the nearby bank of fronds and ivy, damp and glistening, was looking particularly verdant and beautiful and the lower level glazing, more reflective than transparent, served to dissolve the building altogether.

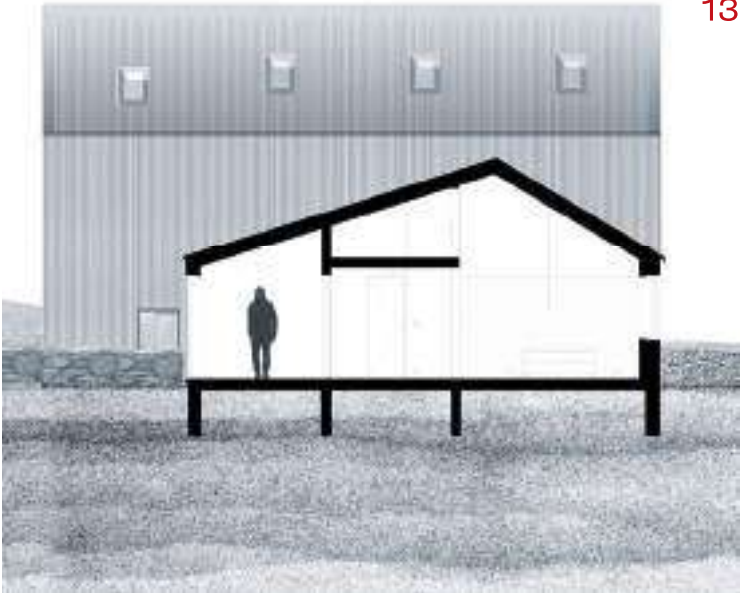
'It doesn't explain how the house looks,' he tells me of the picture, 'but it does show its nature, exposed on all sides to the beautiful greenery.' 'Wouldn't you want to live there?' I ask, exposing my own green-eyed monster. But he says no without hesitation. 'I think I prefer my 1930s flat.' ●



The sound of silence

Deeply peaceful but not mute: every detail of Studio Bua’s Icelandic cultural retreat has a story to tell

Words: Guja Dögg Hauksdóttir Photographs: Giovanni de Roia



IN NUMBERS

380m²
total internal area

£160,000
cost of extension and
conversion of former
sheep shed

£80,000
farmhouse refurbish-
ment cost over period of
10 years

£1,616
cost per m²

I open my eyes after a deep sleep and meet the sharp gaze of a small bird positioned on a rough wooden rafter that sticks out of the exposed, softly swept concrete wall. After a moment I realise the life-size bird is not real, it is cut out of wood and painted in its natural colours, white and grey and black. I cannot see the feet due to the bird’s position high up, just below the ceiling.

I arrived at Nýp cultural retreat on the Skarðsströnd coast in west Iceland late last night after a long drive from Reykjavík. I was tired and it was too dark to sense much more than the comfortable scale of the room. It is light now and wonderfully silent, as blissfully quiet as the neatly cut wooden bird that continues to stare at me. The silence is by no means mute, as I eventually notice when I look around. The room is unusually rich in narratives, delivered through non-auditory elements, which appeals to my curiosity and imagination. The colours are natural, the same as the bird’s. Materials and texture, form and proportions are teasingly just a bit off the ordinary. This ignites a search for the stories that lie all around.

These lie in the smallest detail as well as the bigger picture. Nýp consists of a little group of small-scale buildings, tucked together under a hazardously steep slope, with a vigorous mountain river flanking the site. The buildings gaze towards the breathtaking view over Breiðafjörður bay nature reserve, with the tides that speak of sea birds and seals, purple glossy seaweed from the ocean forest and silvery dry driftwood from Russian forests, repeatedly emerging and disappearing.

The architecture at Nýp mediates between old and new narratives, linking invisible but palpable traces from the Middle

Left Nýp cultural retreat sits on the Skarðsströnd coast in west Iceland.

Above Section through the guest bedroom wing.

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Ages with a respectful restoration and contemporary design by young Oslo/London based practice Studio Bua. According to the 700-year-old Skarðsbók law manuscript, Nýp was a sheep farm built in the traditional multi-gabled form of local rock and turf. In the late 1930s it was replaced by a two-storey concrete structure, built using local rock and sand this time, that combined a home and a barn with an adjacent sheep shed. When the current owners took over the place in 2001, it was close to ruin. The couple, a graphic artist and an academic historian, had a long-term dream of creating a place for artistic and cultural events, drawing on the innate values of the surrounding nature and the local community, which despite the extraordinary area's nomination as a UNESCO World Heritage Site has been rapidly depopulating.

Here I am. Waking up far from and yet close to everything, I slowly start to sense the various parts of the building as I sneak through the interlinked spaces from the new guesthouse wing, which is built on the remains of the sheep shed. I move through the central hall up the simple stairs to the big parlour – both common spaces for exhibitions,



Above The project combines a bundle of buildings in various states of use and repair.

Below The parlour upstairs for exhibitions and events.

Below left The 1930s house with its modernist elements has been retained.

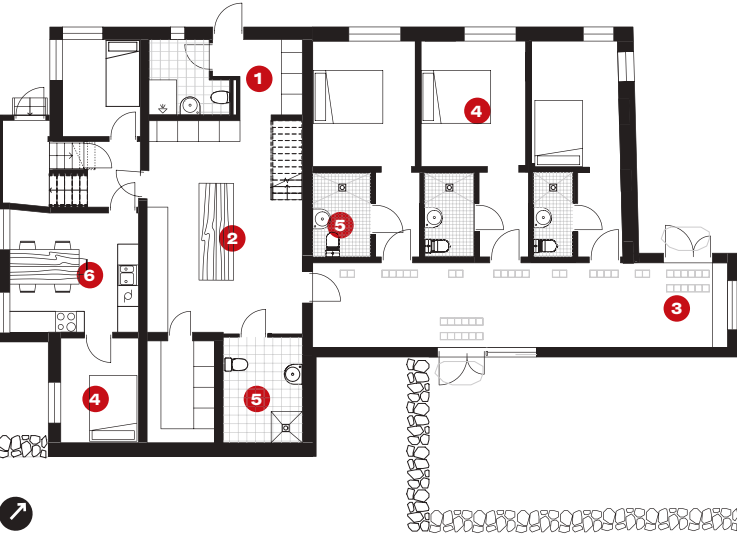
Credits
Architect Studio Bua
Client Þóra Sigurðardóttir and Sumarliði Ragnar Ísleifsson
Engineer GÁG ehf
Contractor Eiríkur Kristjánsson
Handmade ceramic tiles Bjarnheiður Jóhannsdóttir

concerts, literature readings and workshops, occupying the site of the old barn. The former sheep farmer family apartment is now used for dining and additional guest rooms. Rich stories are presented in the tactile surfaces, old concrete and new concrete and sweeping light from new window openings. The architect's overall approach has been to renovate without breaking the history of the house, simultaneously honing the form, proportion and spatial character of the new. It has done this by combining minimalistic shaping with a keen attention to detail, texture and scholarly references to the built heritage.

Wherever possible, reclaimed building materials have been used, not so much for the sake of the modest budget but to emphasise the sustainable approach and the right atmosphere. The former barn, now part of the main house, has been split into two levels with a new floor using local driftwood. The ground floor with the workshop is kept rustic, with exposed concrete surfaces, visible plumbing and iron details. The new wooden staircase has a simple rail fastened directly to the wall, a black-lacquered iron bar and handrails derived from an old fish oil factory. Vintage armchairs, a pair of binoculars and old charts of the bay with its countless isles and skerries are installed on a platform by a big new window on the front facade. Two steps further up a large space is



Ground floor plan



Above Guest bedroom with the little bird above the bed.

furnished with a long table for entertaining that can quickly be removed to make space for a concert, lecture or poetry reading. The room has wooden floorboards rescued from a desolate farm nearby. Ceramic tiles made from clay sourced from the next valley are arranged by a reused iron fireplace. Hidden inside the concrete walls of the hay tower is a small kitchen. On the rear gable a horizontal window has been cut out towards the massive mountain slope and a rhythmical series of generous skylights have been placed in the roof above.

Meanwhile, the former residential part of the site has been gently restored with new insulation and windows resembling those of the 1930s. Parts of the original panel-clad walls have been replaced with exposed concrete, echoing the contemporary design features of the building. This adds to the various narratives of the old house, with its clashing elements of modernist corner windows and cottage style built-in cupboards and cosy nooks. This intimate and personal atmosphere is enhanced by vintage furniture and contemporary artwork such as etchings, drawings, paintings and small sculptures together with a compilation of round stones and shells from the seashore.

To the east of the farm, a greenhouse has been erected over old concrete foundations. The polycarbonate clad steel structure is bolted down to withstand the wind that intensifies in strength down the valley. An organic kitchen garden is sheltered within

The approach has been to renovate without breaking the history of the house



the void of the open foundation structure. The architect has also laid out new woodland, emphasising the sustainable ethos of the place.

Lastly, there is the adjoining new guest wing where I woke up to a staring bird. Parts of the old sheep shed walls have found a new voice in the rebuilt and redesigned structure, with a combination of sensitivity and disciplined boldness. The guest shed has a separate entrance from the back of the building, reached by a traditional turf-topped low stone wall. The glazed, double-width entrance doors invite you into a long, naturally lit gallery space for changing exhibitions. From here is access to three en-suite guest rooms facing the wide view of the bay. All internal doors are reclaimed and restored from 19th century houses. A handful of handmade local clay ceramic tiles add a warm touch to the smooth concrete floor.

Nýp cultural retreat, with its tactile materiality and restrained spatial expression, has led me to contemplate the dialectics of silence and sounds in telling stories. The place embraces you quietly. Regardless of the weather, temperature, wind or tide, you feel slowed down, silenced, in a good way, and opened up to the effortless conversation of past and present. ●

Left The restored sheep shed is now the guest wing.

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Divine light

In creating an airy café, Feilden Fowles has modernised the Medieval and let the sun into Carlisle Cathedral's Fraternity

Words: Eleanor Young Photographs: Peter Cook

Carlisle Cathedral lost its monastery to dissolution under Henry VIII, and stones from its nave were seized during the English Civil War to shore up the outsize Carlisle Castle. In the 19th century its Fraternity hall had a makeover, first from Robert Smirke then by GE Street – who added a porch and lowered the door turning it back to front. The 20th century contributed extensive tarmacking around the cathedral precinct, among the standing ruins of the monastery cloister.

Cathedral visitors in the 21st century could marvel at the off centre gothic nave

and the historic arches that have settled on soft ground into gravity-defying mishapes. But getting a cup of tea, that essential visitor experience, meant descending awkwardly into the crypt of the Fraternity.

This was the problem that Feilden Fowles' competition winning scheme had to solve, along with creating a space for education and reinvigorating the hall of the Fraternity, once the monks' refectory. The practice proposed a new, stripped-back modern pavilion, connected to the Fraternity by a glazed link replacing Street's porch, and with the historic

Below A hospitable interruption in the route between cathedral and monastic remains.

doorway raised 1.7m to the level of the hall, to allow another entrance accessing the crypt to be punched into the wall below.

Making the case for removing the porch on this grade 1 listed building wasn't too difficult – entry had previously taken people past the loos and kitchens; a new entrance was undeniably needed. But it was the local campaign on the style of the pavilion that nudged the practice into developing it beyond the rectilinear precast concrete colonnade. The rounded dropped arch of the cathedral's west window provided a model.



IN NUMBERS

£2.4m

total contract cost

£2982

GIFA cost per m²: new build, refurbishment and conservation

650m²

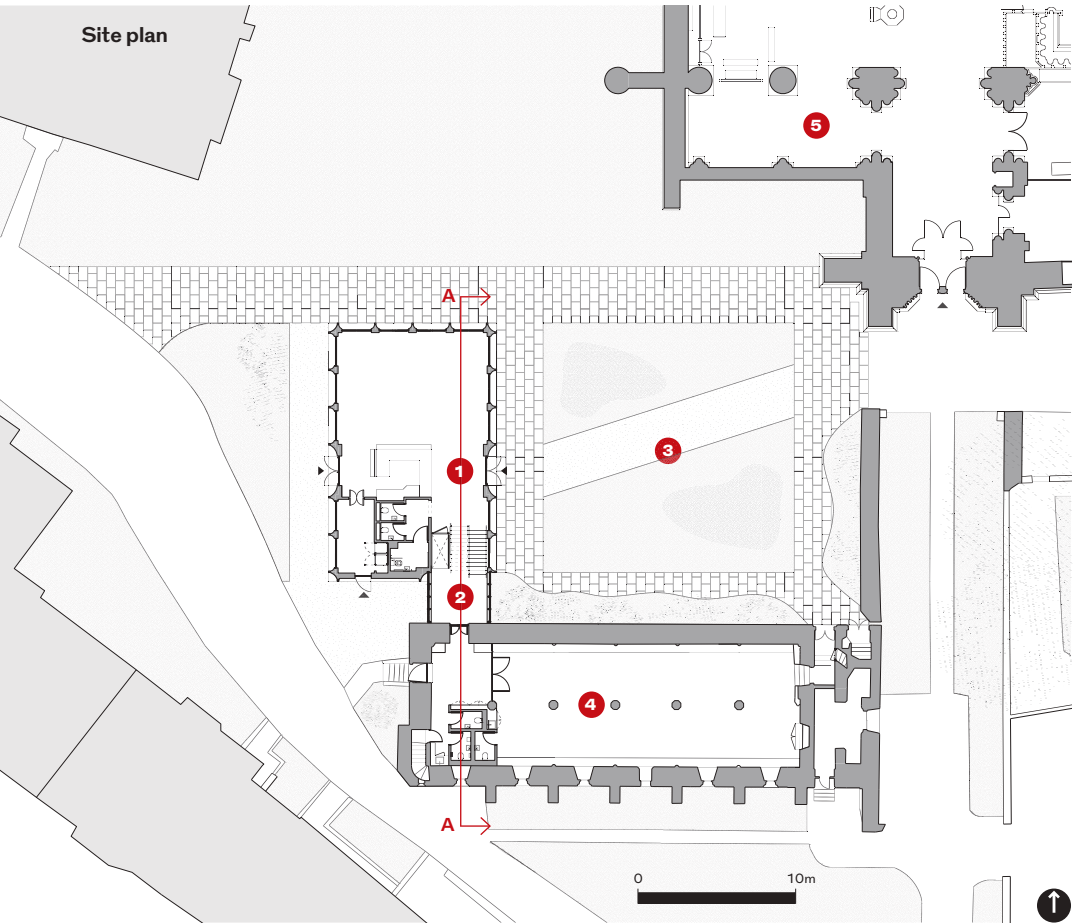
area (existing)

185m²

area (new)



Left The taller link building unlocks the Fraternity's two levels while the pavilion spreads generously into the cathedral precinct.



We wanted to bring spaces back to their original grandeur

- 1 Pavilion
- 2 Link
- 3 Courtyard
- 4 Fraternity hall and undercroft
- 5 Cathedral

The purity of precise lines of the CNC-cut red Loccharbrigs sandstone and the elegance and lightness of these arches make this pavilion, giving it a quality that throws the rounded sandstone of the ruins into gentle relief. If you want to – and I do – you can also read into it a certain PoMo sense of fun, taking historic references and playing with them. So the keystone is done away with (as on the Smirke door), and the coping stones deliberately misaligned so drips don't automatically head for joints; solid stone is shaved to slender as it meets large panes of glass. Each arch is displayed in a rectilinear frame. The scalloped corners do a spirited little curve into themselves that suggests a religious niche, though the coping continues on into the corner with the straight lines of modernity.

For the cathedral dean Mark Boyling it was important that the new building was welcoming, as the very solid walls of the Fraternity could never be. The pavilion touches the ground lightly with plenty of views in. Its stone arches are self-supporting but the building's openness comes down to the steel frames that also keep the café column free. The steel beams are tapered to give a thin leading edge – their depth hidden in the cleanly detailed zinc roof. The new link intensifies the rhythm on the fenestration and is crowned by a diagrid ceiling. As you mount the steps to the Fraternity hall, this diagrid draws up your gaze from the hard-working connecting space with its scissor lift, stairs and a chunk of boxed-in concrete to stabilise the base of the Fraternity's mediaeval rubble wall (mitigating against the unknown effects of a Roman drain).

Left Cleared out and cleaned up, the hall of the Fraternity.

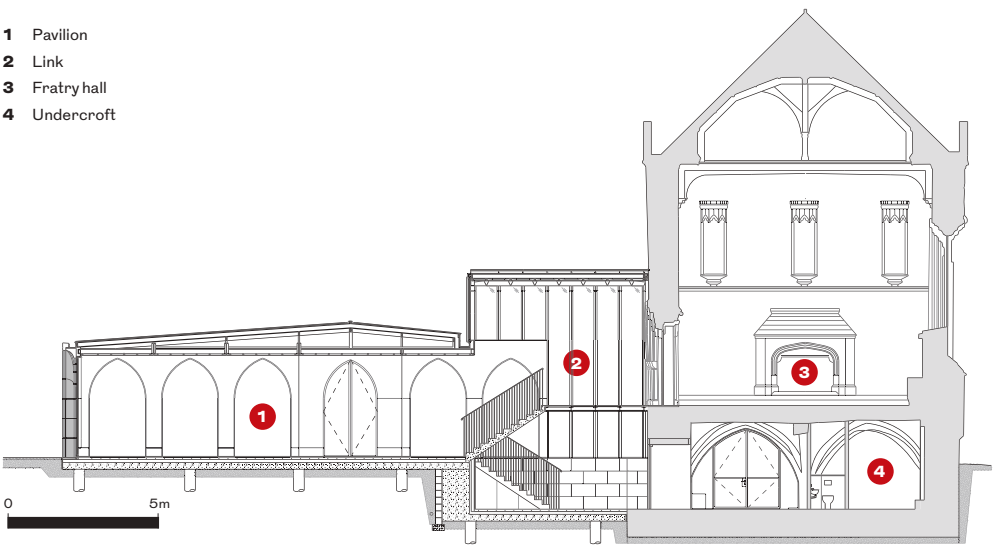


It is easy to concentrate on the new building but the Fraternity itself has seen significant change. The hall was cold, dark and broken up says Boyling. Tall bookshelves designed by Smirke had been moved to one end to create a draught lobby and the windows were shrouded with curtains to protect the 1600s book collection from sunlight. It seems hard to believe, with light flooding in to the beautiful simple interior, its timber floor warm with new varnish. Adding a UV film to the glass doors of the bookcases allowed the windows to be uncovered, the shelves now range along one wall and, with heating and audiovisual, it's a great place for the city. The dean is relieved it hasn't succumbed to the conferencing that plagues so many venues with ugly stacking chairs. 'We wanted to bring back the spaces to their original grandeur,' says project architect Ingrid Petit. It is part of the success of the project that it feels like this is how they are meant to be seen.

In the newly accessible space beneath the crypt, crumbling foundation stones have been hidden behind built-in benches running along the wall over the new concrete floor, while a cupboard and sink allow it to operate as an education room – although over the summer it also became an extra café space. Throughout there is a demonstration of clear pragmatic thinking about operation

Section AA

- 1 Pavilion
- 2 Link
- 3 Fraternity hall
- 4 Undercroft



Left The arches of the undercroft set off by a concrete floor with walls lined by benches.

Right In the link the visible diagrid structure above prepares you for the grand space of the Fraternity.



- Suppliers
- Windows, doors and curtain walling (pavilion and link) Janisol and Viss Hi, Schuco
 - Bronze link structure Victoria John of London
 - Standing seam zinc roofing (pavilion and link) Rheinzink / Hempstock (installer)
 - Lift (link) Premier Lifts
 - Floors (undercroft, link and pavilion) HTC
 - Superfloor, Set in Stone
 - Flooring
 - Acoustic ceiling (pavilion) Autex Cube
 - Savoye
 - Lime plaster (pavilion walls), Regency lime plaster Red Umber Milke Wye

You can read into it a certain PoMo sense of fun, taking historic references and playing with them

ranged against the limits of history and the cathedral precinct, and translated into simple, beautifully executed moves. With a café that bakes its own cakes the kitchen area could have taken a large slice of the pavilion but instead it is more of a servery – with baking and more complex preparation elsewhere in the cathedral precinct – leaving plenty of space for tables, even set at Covid regulation distance. Loos are at a premium so there are more at different levels. The team benefited from the experience of lay canon Bryan Gray who is behind welcoming service stations such as Gloucester Services, designed by Glenn Howells, and could closely advise on catering and loo capacity as well as provide a expert client hand at tricky moments.

This is Feilden Fowles’ first heritage project and it shows the same dedication and calm inventiveness that the practice has applied to its studio and Oasis Farm Waterloo, and to the Stirling shortlisted Weston at Yorkshire Sculpture Park. In the cathedral precinct, the reinvigorated Fraternity extends its gentle influence beyond its walls with a café courtyard and new planting. It makes for a breathing space from the shops and arcades of the city, and a chance for the cathedral to extend its welcome in a very accessible and elegant way. It bodes well for the next chapter of the cathedral’s life in the city. ●



Credits
Architect Feilden Fowles
Client Carlisle Cathedral
Structural engineer Structure workshop
M&E consultant BCA
Quantity surveyor, project manager, CDM co-ordinator, FWP Approved building inspector Carlisle City Council
Main contractor Cubby Construction
CAD software used Powerdraft
Surveyor of the fabric Buttress Architect
Concept landscape architect Petherick, Urquhart and Hunt
Conservation structural engineer Stand Engineers
Archaeology Cumbria Archaeology

Right The textures of lime plaster and terrazzo soften the clean lines of the pavilion.

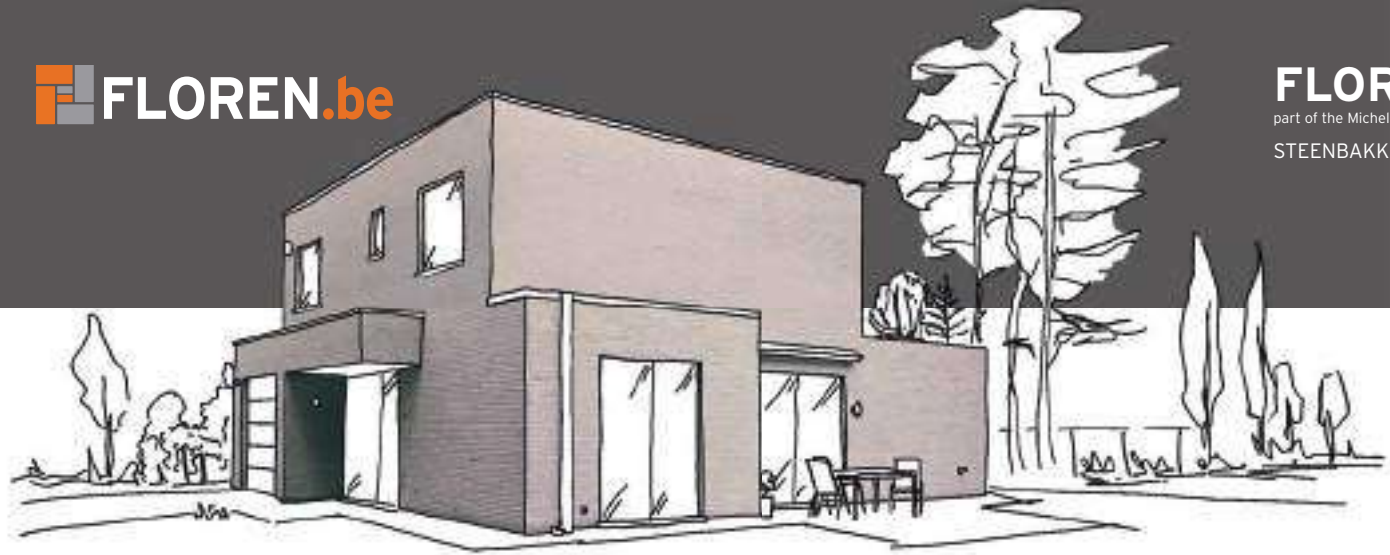
Below The café opened when lockdown eased in summer and the courtyard was in full use.

Bottom left The servery has been kept small.



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Nurture in nature

At Mae Architects' Sands End Arts and Community Centre, on the site of what was once part of Europe's largest plant nursery, people now grow and flourish

Words: Jan-Carlos Kucharek Photographs: Rory Gardiner

With South Park's gates open, the outer courtyard leads users into and through the building to bring them out to the park side courtyard and art gallery beyond.

Right The north elevation pops out from behind South Park's perimeter planting.

It's a mark of the influence and affluence of 19th century horticulturalist James Veitch, that his nursery empire stretched from the King's Road all the way to philanthropist Charlotte Sullivan's Broom House estate in the Fulham Vestry, just east of the newly-founded Hurlingham Club. Established in 1840, the nursery employed plant collectors including noted botanist brothers William and Thomas Lobb, and dispatched them all over the world to bring back plant samples to sell to London's horticultural elite. At its peak, Veitch & Sons ran the largest family-run plant nursery in Europe, introducing 1281 varieties into the domestic market, from the Monkey Puzzle tree to exotic orchids. The RHS Veitch Memorial Medal, inaugurated then and still presented annually, pins the dynasty in time – but by 1910 the business had folded and the lean-to greenhouses that lay at the north end of the 21 acres of land donated by Sullivan in 1903 to the Borough of Fulham for the benefit of the local community, quietly rotted away unseen next to the gatekeeper's lodge behind South Park's imposing brick and terracotta wall, before finally being swept away in a 1980s-style clear out.

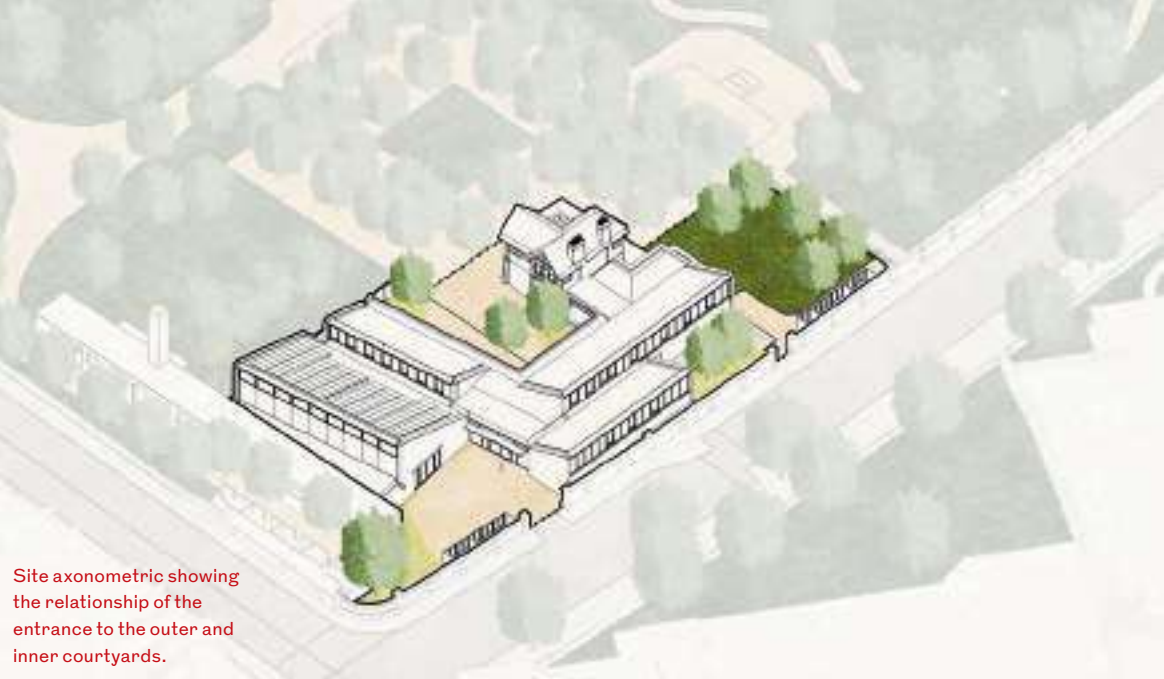
Sands End Arts and Community Centre, designed by Mae Architects, seems, like the medal, to be an invocation of the Veitch legacy; referencing as it does the simplicity of those old lean-to glasshouses – but here writ large to look over the wall that had always hid them. The centre is also a homage that's clearly channelled through Stirling and Gowan's 1962 Brunswick Park Primary School in Camberwell, explains project architect Michael Dillon. Its dramatic, compass-set, strut-propped monopitches are echoed here, if to a lesser degree, but the principle's the same. Brunswick Park's barrow-like mound



has here been supplanted by South Park’s defensive brick wall; their end glazing allowing both to act like a periscope, drawing in high-level light from an open sky above rather than a congested urban realm without. But here they serve an auxiliary intent, surmounting the boundary wall to create a statement entry to the park. This achieved, it slopes back away from the roads to deferentially reveal the locally-listed mock Tudor gatekeeper’s lodge; which, now being converted into an art gallery for the park, acts as the historical focus of the new centre.

Its formal homogeneity is testament to the conviction of the architect to develop the design despite the lack of a clear brief from the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham. With the former Broughton Rd community centre displaced to make way for luxury homes, Dillon explains that the borough was keen to create a new centre that made use of a redundant site at the park’s north west corner, addressing users from Parsons Green and placing it next to the borough’s biggest housing estate, Sullivan Court. Funding for the £2.75 million centre was secured from Chelsea FC and Thames Tideway super-sewer development levies, but the reality was while the council wanted something for the whole community, it wasn’t quite sure what. As things stand, the borough is in the process of setting up a charitable trust that will run its new hall, meeting room and arts space, but Dillon spells out what this is: ‘What we’ve done here is a shell building. Our brief was about developing a series of flexible spaces [that could] change function and be let separately; we also wanted something as overtly public as possible.’

Given the size of the main hall, proposed café space, meeting room, pre-school nursery and ancillary spaces, its curious how, despite its large clerestory glazing which reaches up to 4.5m in height, the building creeps up on you as you approach the corner of Clancarty and Peterborough Roads. And instead of a reinforced corner, the structure shies away at its end, creating a brick-paver courtyard within the boundary wall, seen beyond a steel gate that opens to the street while the centre is open. It also reveals the monopitch section of the four blocks, intersecting as pairs on an L-shaped plan. At this corner, the entrance doubles as the conjunction of the outer ‘street’ and inner ‘park’ courtyards – a critical aspect of the firm’s planning strategy.



Site axonometric showing the relationship of the entrance to the outer and inner courtyards.



The inner, park-facing courtyard, its third side defined by the old gatekeeper's lodge.

MICHAEL DILLON

Buildings
Community centre

The centre’s park-facing east elevation, with Sullivan Court housing estate behind.



It might have been down to the budget, but the simple, robust material choices made throughout are manifested from the minute you enter through the park gates. The huge spruce CLT fins that modulate the yawning north and west glazed elevations reveal the structure within, while giving lovely internal views out to the canopies of the mature trees on the site’s perimeter. They will also lift the eye above the traffic line of the busy Peterborough Road: ‘We wanted the building to connect with the park setting and high level windows also meant that we weren’t overlooking local residents, so it worked on several levels,’ explains Dillon.

What works too is his choice of warm, ‘Nougat’ facing brick from Dutch firm Stone-Cycling, using 70% recycled material and 30% clay, complementing the Edwardian wall’s buttery terracotta dressings. By way of working into the material, main elevations were specified, at added cost, as sawn-faced rather than the natural finish of flank elevations, creating a subtle hierarchy all of its own. Cheaper than reconstituted stone, it was clearly more expensive than brick; evidenced in the way that Mae cut costs and saved £27,000 on the contract sum by cleverly laying the bricks on their side, to generate a façade module that is familiar yet uncanny the same time.

The brick theme occurs in plan too, where dark pavers give the ‘outer’ courtyard a Low Countries feel that expands borderlessly all the way through the reception area, café and meeting room and out beyond the glazing line across the ‘inner’ courtyard. Defined on two sides by the new blocks and on one by the gatekeeper’s lodge, this leaves one side open to the walnut grove and park beyond. On the day I visited, autumnal leaves blew through

Credits
Architect Mæ
Client LB Hammersmith & Fulham
Structural/civil engineer Elliot Wood
QS Bailie Knowles
Landscape architect J & L Gibbons
M&E Max Fordham
CDM PFB
Acoustics Mach Acoustics
Planning consultant CMA

IN NUMBERS
£2.75m
total cost
35%
recycled matter on site
525m²
community space
143m²
day nursery

Below Main hall looking east. The simple structure benefits from service runs being considered from the start.



and gathered against the inner court glazing as if to race from roadside to park; and that, says Dillon, was the aim – to dissolve the distinction between outside and in. But someone’s nerve broke, with interior bricks coated in sealant by the contractor to protect them from wear and tear, and which are now enthusiastically efflorescing beneath it.

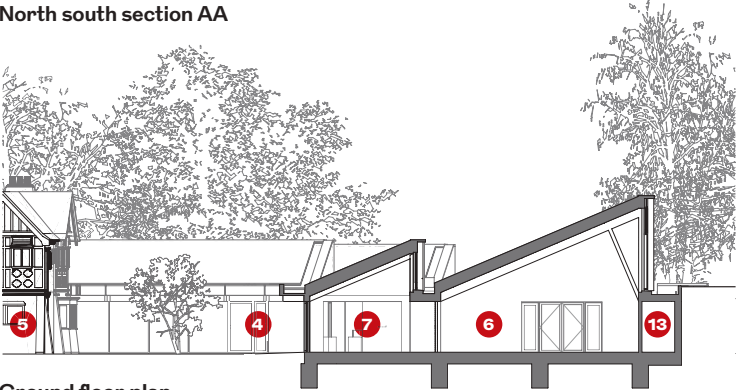
Internal spaces are refreshingly simple and reconfigurable to allow spaces to be closed off or opened out. CLT timber walls are painted a deep, transparent green and respond well to sun moving across them; with tree-dappled west sunlight in the nursery – even in the centre’s mundane toilet corridor

– surprising and delightful. Daylight streams in from the park courtyard side, the projecting CLT trusses forming a simple cloister offering shelter when glazed doors are open. With budget in mind, visual proximity, as shown here, influenced material choices – such as the use of pre-patinated copper on the cloister roof contrasting with the more distant specification of the monopitches, clad in corrugated roof sheeting. But crisply junctioned at the ridge line and flank wall parapets, fixing bolt positions aligned, it’s the details that make this decision a well-mannered and reasoned one.

With the charitable entity yet to be set up, Sands End is still waiting for the people who will bring its hall, meeting room, nursery café and arts space alive; so it is hard to make a call on how the space will be occupied, but I’m sure South Park founder Charlotte Sullivan would find the new centre most agreeable, and so will today’s users. And while it makes



North south section AA



- 1 Park gates
- 2 Outer courtyard
- 3 Reception area
- 4 Park courtyard
- 5 Gatekeeper's lodge
- 6 Main hall
- 7 Cafe and kitchen area
- 8 Meeting room
- 9 Corridors to WC and plant areas
- 10 Pre-school nursery
- 11 Nursery garden
- 12 Nursery entrance
- 13 Storage

Ground floor plan



complete sense in plan to have created a single, controlled interior space as an entrance to the park, I’m left wondering if two blocks separating outer and inner courtyards, linked by a covered, exterior passage might have better served to create a true, open and welcoming entrance to a park so defined by its enclosing wall. To breach its mass in plan as well as elevation, let the leaves blow freely through and cleansing rain rinse away those pavers’ chalky bloom. ●

Above The café looking west to main reception, with main hall to the right. Partitions and sliding doors make the space flexible.

Below Approaching from Parson’s Green, the centre makes more of a statement.



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Interplay time

This image Now it isn't just the naughty kids who can climb all over the roof.

The floating roof of MAD Architects' Beijing kindergarten weaves together past and present and encourages the children to explore

Words: John van der Water

MAD Architects' YueCheng Courtyard Kindergarten is in east Beijing, in a neighbourhood that has been transformed over the past few decades. Here, as in many areas of the city, the traditional 'hutongs' – residential districts characterised by narrow alleys and single storey courtyard houses called 'siheyuans' – have made way for wider roads and modern multistorey blocks.

The new kindergarten, however, weaves around its urban environment, including one of the last siheyuans in its district, between ancient trees and next to a 1990s building. Catering for around 400 children aged from two to five years, the kindergarten is right in the middle of it all. It's an historic setting – the oldest parts of the siheyuans date from 1725 – but also a rapidly developing one.

MAD founder and director Ma Yansong's design features a colourful floating roof that seamlessly integrates and protects the existing buildings and trees. The roof is envisioned as an escape for children, symbolic of freedom and imagination. Little artificial hills and a slide create a playful landscape. Below the roof, the interior spaces unfurl with an open, free-flowing layout that also is designed to encourage exploration, creativity and inclusivity. Here teaching space merges with the library, amphitheatre and gymnasium. Three new courtyards centred around three ancient trees punch up through the roofscape, flooding the interior with daylight and opening up to the ancient hutong buildings to create a compelling dialogue between old and new. In a city that is changing at rapid pace it shows it's possible to move forward without forgetting the past. From the moment the building opened at the start of the last school year, it received praise and recognition from the Chinese architectural profession for its alternating views of old and new and the way they stimulate understanding of place and history.

Below A landscape of its own among the treetops and older buildings in Beijing.



ARCH-EXIST PHOTOGRAPHY (2)

As a naughty kid I wanted to climb on the roof. Here I've provided the opportunity

Although the building is open for children at the moment, visitors are prohibited because of the pandemic so I talk to Ma Yansong on Zoom as he quarantines in Xiamen having recently returned to China from the United States.

John van de Water Thinking about Covid and its impact, isn't this pandemic a perpetuation of your design philosophy of 'Shanshui-City'? That is, a quest for a more inclusive and balanced relationship between urban life and nature?

Ma Yansong Yes. And I've been talking about this long before Covid. It is increasingly important to include more nature and space in our cities as it will create more opportunities for sustainable life and beauty. But of course, I recognise the tension with the existing conditions and density of many Chinese megacities. Still, for the future of Chinese urbanisation, I foresee less dense, smaller cities, well connected and of a far more manageable scale.

JVDW A challenging future ahead — and considering its scale, MAD has a very diverse portfolio of numerous large projects. What's the significance of a much smaller project like the YueCheng Courtyard Kindergarten in your work and thinking?

MA For me, a project like this is probably more important than for any other architect in our office. It compensates for the daily pressure of working on large urban projects and complex cultural contexts. Working on a kindergarten seems more cherishing, more tangible than large scale projects.

JVDW Are kindergarten projects therapeutic?

MA Yes, kindergarten projects are about healing myself...

JVDW How come?

MA When designing kindergartens, I imagine myself being a child again. Growing up in Beijing, going to a courtyard school myself, I enjoyed my childhood so much. I remember that we, naughty kids, always wanted to climb on the courtyard building's roof. I guess now, that was to escape the spatial constraints of the courtyard building and to cross boundaries to discover new worlds. And the brilliant thing about the YueCheng Courtyard Kindergarten was that I could provide opportunities for a new young generation to climb on the roof!

JVDW As you grew up in Beijing, how close to your heart is this project, if you put it into the context of the



This image The roof loops around trees to create courtyards that bring daylight into the spaces beneath.

Below The restored siheyuan house in the middle.



HUFTON + CROW

ARCH-EXIST PHOTOGRAPHY



IN NUMBERS

9,725m²
site area

10,778m²
floor area

3,500m²
roof play space

21.1m
building height

Left Ground floor and roof axonometric. Ground floor spaces flow into each other, abandoning the idea of traditional classrooms.

Below Old and new up close, a place for children to explore and play freely.

urban transformation the city has experienced over the last decades?

MA It's a showcase project to me, allowing me to present my attitude to Beijing's urban issues in one single scheme. You know, in China people tend to think 'new is better' and as a result many old buildings have been demolished. Or vice versa, when traditional buildings are considered valuable, they are newly built, often lacking true identity. We can't only have two options, demolishing the old or having nothing new. I think there's a third way to create new things.

JVDW And for this 'third way' to create, I guess you were lucky to find an old courtyard building on the site? Even though the extension of the old courtyard house was a poorly designed – fake – addition?

MA Very lucky! At the initial site visit, I was very clear about two aspects. First, history was key. In China, one of the bigger challenges in the education system is finding 'the real'. Why have so many fake old buildings been constructed? I believe this 'new-old' is confusing to people. This issue is important for children too. So I decided to demolish the 'new-fake' part of the old courtyard building and add a really new building next to it to make 'the real' very obvious.



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JVDW What about the second very clear aspect?
MA In China we often talk about our cultural past, about our over 6,000-year-long history. But how does this relate to me personally? This positioning is a significant topic for me, as is finding out its relationship with contemporary design. The second aspect was, how I could bring inspiring moments, thoughts, even philosophies from the old into a new space for this kindergarten.

JVDW How did these aspects translate into your design?

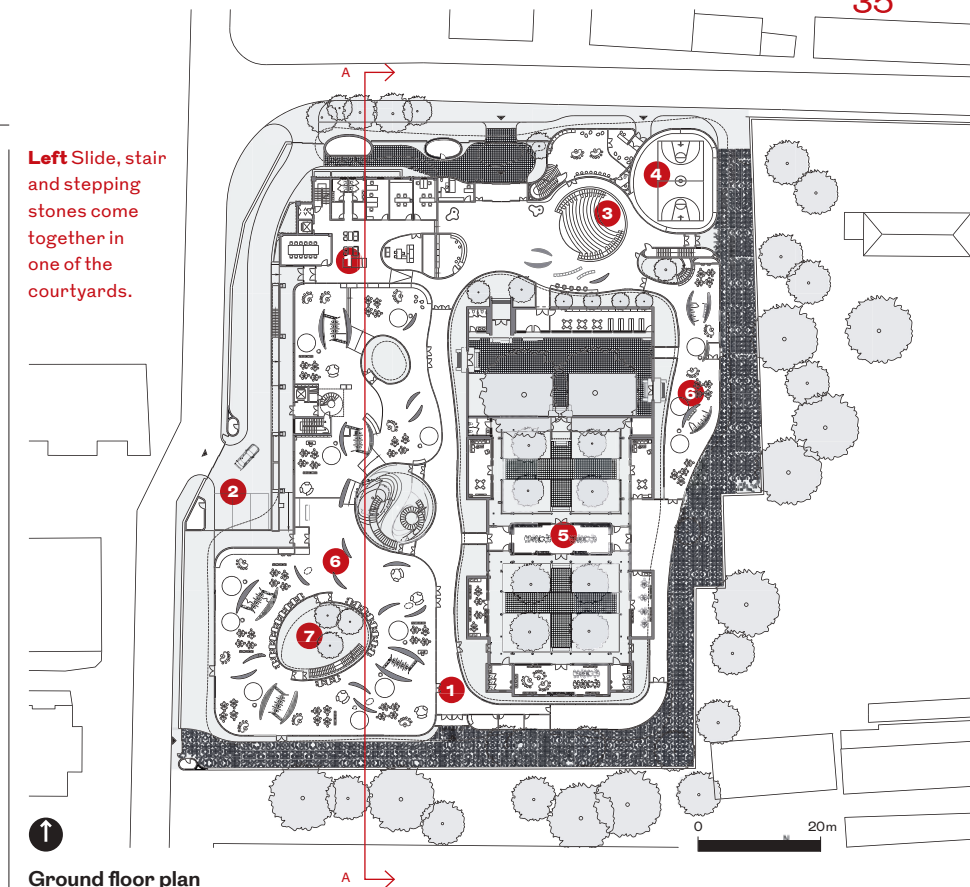
MA I imagined children growing up in an environment that would contribute to their idea of 'real' – in a kindergarten developed on the spatial qualities of a Beijing courtyard house: its core emptiness, its trees, an abundance of open space and air. That, combined with an accessible roof that allows for imagination... In essence, an environment for children to discover how to see history and to define their own relationship with history.

JVDW In Europe many kindergartens can be understood as 'spatial translations' of the educational philosophy they accommodate. To what degree was the school's philosophy leading in your design, in addition to what you just described?

MA Our client has built many schools in China. But given the context of the existing buildings on the site, they were open to something special and different. I believe children are often controlled too much. We chose to combine the existing ordered, organised nature of the courtyard with a new building that has a large degree of freedom. Freedom on the roof for children to run around and play. Freedom under the roof, in an interior without classrooms.

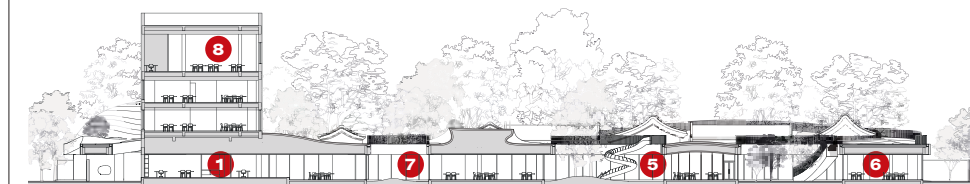
JVDW It intrigues me how the design blurs boundaries and has many 'dialogues' between interior and exterior, old and new, ground and sky and formal and informal spaces, but was freedom as a concept difficult to convince a client about?

Left Slide, stair
and stepping
stones come
together in
one of the
courtyards.



Ground floor plan

- 1 Entrance
- 2 Car entrance and parking
- 3 Auditorium
- 4 Gymnasium
- 5 Siheyuan
- 6 Open plan informal teaching space
- 7 Courtyard
- 8 Teaching spaces



Section A-A



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MA Well, the open floor plan became a recurring discussion. Our client had never realised this before. We had to address practical issues like noise control and how to avoid creating too much distraction for children so that they would not lose their concentration. But eventually, we were able to convince our client with this free open environment and natural atmosphere.

JVDW You mentioned nature before. Can you elaborate on this idea, does it include topics like nature inclusiveness, circular building and, for example, sustainable design?

MA For me, nature is more of a philosophical construct. I consider nature being the ‘soul’ of a space. In this design, the ‘soul’ is derived from the spatial qualities of the existing courtyard building. The new addition adds to these qualities with its circular courtyards and trees. The essence of the design is about the relation between people, open space and nature. I believe this is more relevant than just applying new materials or high technology.

JVDW Arguably the most important question: do have any idea how the children experience your design?

MA They never told me but they seem to enjoy it! And I’ve met several parents who told me their children are very happy there. Some parents even told me they’d wish to have attended a kindergarten like this. That’s a big compliment! Me too, I would have loved to attend this kindergarten myself! ●

John van de Water is founder of NEXT architects and author of You Can’t Change China, China Changes You. He has lived and worked in China for more than 15 years.

Credits
Architect MAD Architects
Client YueCheng Group
Executive architect China Academy of Building Research
Structural and mechanical engineer China Academy of Building Research
Facade construction Beijing Jangho Curtain Wall System Engineering Co
Interior designer MAD Architects and Supercloud Studio
Landscape architect ECOLAND Planning and Design Corporation

Right The auditorium punches above the roofline behind the siheyuan.
Below The open plan layout where reception merges into teaching and play spaces.



ARCHI-EXIST PHOTOGRAPHY



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Nvidia Quadro P1000 cost of \$339.00 on Amazon.com viewed on 14 April 2020. AMD SEP of \$199.00. All pricing in USD and may vary regionally. AMD SEP pricing correct as of 01 August 2020.

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2: Intelligence



Conservation
& heritage

Roger Watts

HAN LEE DE BOER/HAWORTH TOMPKINS



It's panto time and Russian architect Vladimir Somov's nutty but run-down 1987 Dostoevsky Drama Theatre in Veliky Novgorod is in line for a revamp. The competition for the job is being curated by Haworth Tompkins director Roger Watts. RIBA asks him what's behind it

How did Haworth Tompkins end up being involved with this crazy Russian project?

Tell us something about Somov. He said he designed it so you could drive a tank from the street to the stage...

With moveable auditorium configurations, it sounds like it was an innovative design?

And what are the main challenges?

And how did you get to the shortlist of Archiproba Studios, FORM bureau and Rhizome group?

Somov was an eccentric architect and this was a fantastic, sculptural, futuristic building in an otherwise ancient city. The competition is for emerging architects and so my 'curator' role was set up to help with both selection and in mentoring through the design process. Competition organiser Strelka KB asked us to join in a consultation role. It's an unusual and exotic building and it feels right to hand it over to the next generation of thinkers who will approach its challenges in a fresh way.

He was a Russian radical and abstract painter too, which was politically brave at the time. He saw his design as a form of 'total theatre', so both building and its sculpted landscape were part of a wider imaginative experience, away from reality – a primer for the theatrical event within. It's a mix of brutalism and fantasy.

Seeing it in the wider context of flexible performance spaces it isn't that innovative. What's unusual about it is the abstraction of the whole design; it's super-saturated with curious forms both in and around it. The auditorium's fairly conventional but as a whole it's got incredible energy and power.

It really is quite special; full of exposed concrete carved with sumptuous and alien decoration, quite the opposite from the rationality of Lasdun's National Theatre! The big challenge for the eventual designer is that they'll need to work harder to make it more open to the public, be open all day, have cafés and events to embed it in the city's life. It has clear accessibility and sustainability issues at the moment so it will need work to overcome these and realise its potential. Hopefully young firms will approach it with a new bravery.

There was a longlist earlier this year which got whittled down to three. We were looking for a sensitivity to the building and its issues and to see if they could handle its hard-headed practical problems and precious, surreal nature. They had to provide examples where they displayed both these aspects. The competition has very specific requirements but it is also open to blue sky thinking. We are having three rounds of workshops with each of the firms and there will be a final presentation and judging this month.

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The £18 million proposal was supported by high-profile patrons Ed Sheeran and Dermot O'Leary

Jan-Carlos Kucharek's round up of planning permissions is back: ribaj.com/planningconsentsnov20



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

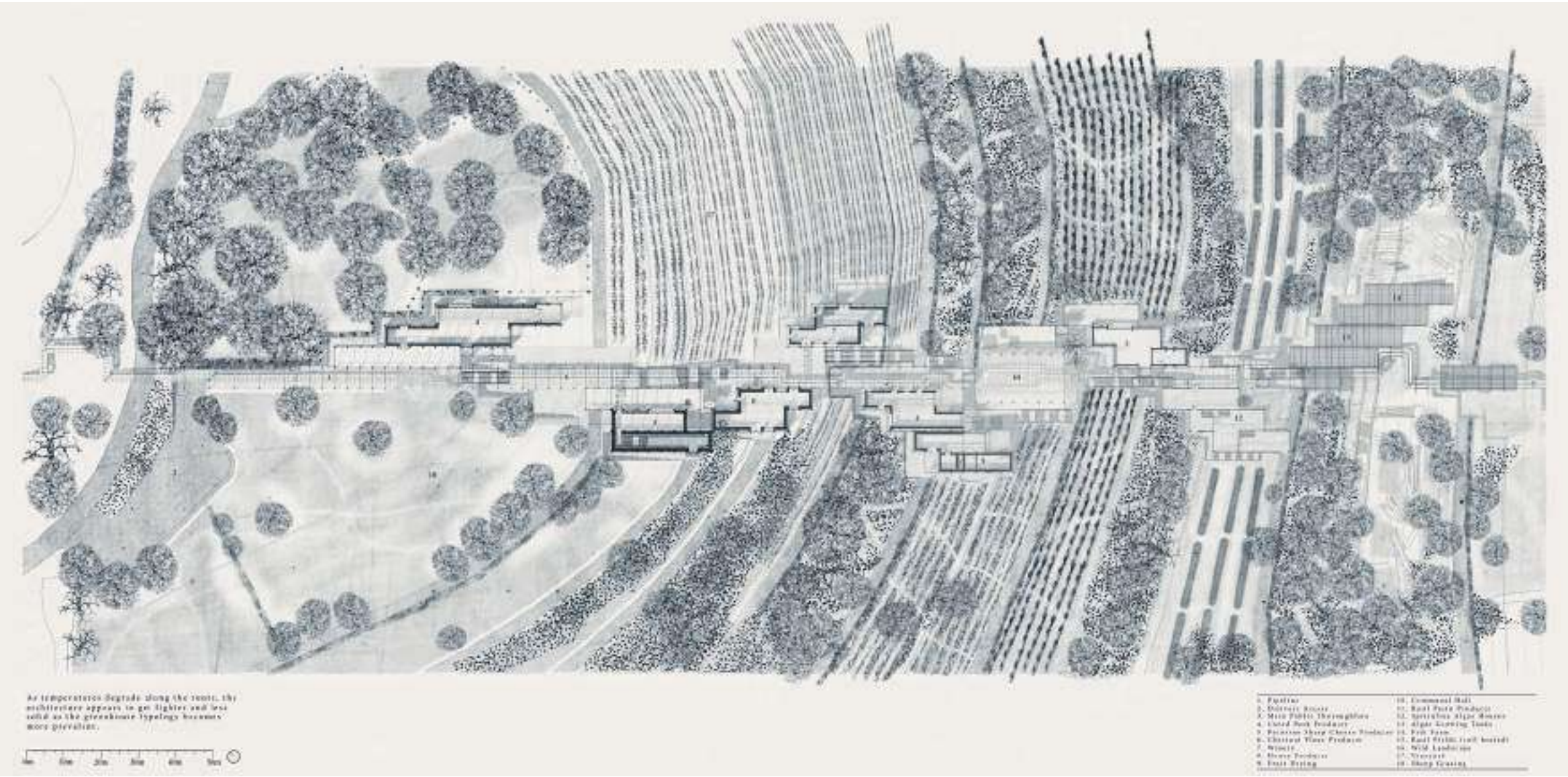
President's Medals 2020

Sustainability and renewal mark both the Silver and Bronze President's Medal winners this year, with a proposal for a co-operative geothermal energy plant and a system to make much fuller use of the whole tree in timber buildings. And in the Dissertation award, a visceral description of a 1980s gay bar sparks an investigation into queer vernaculars

Interviews: Pamela Buxton

Below Masterplan for using geothermal power as a community asset.

Right Buildings for local businesses cascade down the hill, steel frames infilled by their artisan users.



Rob Beeny
Devil's Valley Geothermal Co-operative
University of Westminster
Tutors: Anthony Boulanger, Callum Perry, Stuart Piercy

A study trip to Tuscany sparked the idea for Devil's Valley Geothermal Co-operative, a re-imagining of a rural power station as a community asset. Briefed to explore changes within the countryside, Rob Beeny was drawn to the dramatic infrastructure of geothermal energy visible in the Devil's Valley. 'There are amazing concrete cooling towers with all this pipe and ductwork that dances across the countryside,' he says.

Discovering that the withdrawal of government green subsidies was threatening local residents and businesses that benefited from the cheap renewable energy, he designed a masterplan for the scenario of a decommissioned power plant. This is imagined as being used by a new local co-operative which drills a new well and uses the renewable power to support a thriving artisan community.

The architecture of the development is a series of linear structures cascading down the hillside. Businesses including fish farms and those making honey, wine, cheese and malt beer are positioned along the pipeline according to the amount of heat they require. Their facilities get lighter and less solid as the temperatures generated by the power source decreases, culminating in greenhouse-like structures. Steel-framed on concrete piloti, they are infilled with local materials; in the spirit of the shared endeavour, Beeny envisages the artisan community constructing the buildings themselves. The development also includes a large communal hall/barn for use by co-operative members and the public.

A public thoroughfare runs through the development, with the geothermal pipe on display as it runs down the hillside. The deliberately high visibility of the renewable power source is important, says Beeny: 'It's about celebrating the fact they own this amazing infrastructure and are looking after it.'

Terraces formed on either side from displaced land are cultivated so the power station 'blurs' into its surrounding landscape.

The resulting development enables a rural co-operative to regain control of its socio-economic future by controlling its own geothermal well and pipeline. ●

SILVER COMMENDATIONS
Lisa Edwards
Reclaiming the Sento
University of Kent
Tutors: Ben Corrie, Yorgas Loizos, Matthew Woodthorpe
Yip Wing Siu
Designing with Bata: New Doggerlands, a dynamic masterplan for enabling the East Tilbury Commons
Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL
Tutors: Sabine Storp, Patrick Weber
Daniel Tihanyi
Preservation and enhancement: Vision for a Yemeni mountain settlement
University of Strathclyde
Tutors: Piotr Leniak, Gordon Murray

RIBA PRIZE FOR SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AT PART 2
Aisling Mulligan
A methodology for reuse: Embracing a circular economy in a carbon-conscious construction sector
University College Dublin
Tutors: Pierre Long, Orla Murphy, Emmett Scanlon

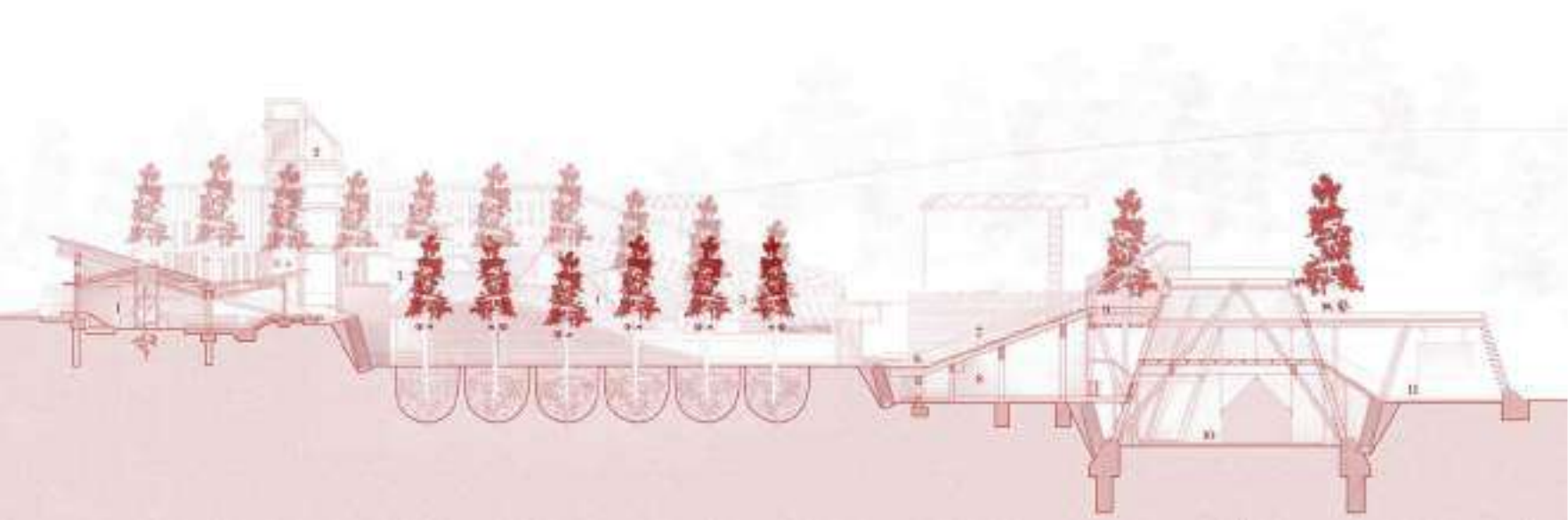
SERJEANT AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN DRAWING IN PART 2
Aine Walker
Project: Anamnesis: Connective (re)collections
University College Cork
Tutors: Lorenzo Cammoranesi, Kieran Cremin, Jason O'Shaughnessy

SILVER MEDAL JUDGES
Chair: Professor David Gloster
RIBA director of education
Lily Jencks
Co-founder of landart practice JencksSquared and architectural and landscape design practice Lily Jencks Studio
Arthur Mamou-Mani
Director of Mamou-Mani Architects and lecturer at the University of Westminster
Mauricio Pezo
Founder of the Chilean studio Pezo von Ellrichshausen and associate professor of practice at AAP Cornell University
Ola Uduku
Research professor in architecture at the Manchester School of Architecture
Nicky Watson
Chair of the RIBA Education Committee, RIBA board trustee, RIBA Council representative for the North East and director of JDDK Architects

RIBA President's Medals is supported by Arper

LIST OF SPACES

- 1: Scots Pine Nursery
2: Viewing Deck
3: Micro Pulp Mill
4: Paper Casting Zone
5: Timber Kiln
6: Treated Timber Stock
- 7: Outdoor Auditorium
8: Seminar Room
9: Library Archive
10: Fabrication Workshop
11: Component Hangar



Tengku Sharil Bin Tengku Abdul Kadir
One Tree Manual
Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL
Tutors: Julia Backhaus; Ben Hayes

One Tree Manual explores a more circular approach to timber construction, resulting in an architecture for a timber institute derived from the properties, materiality and growth cycles of a Scots pine tree.

Briefed to explore the symbiotic coexistence between buildings and ecologies in the Anthropocene, Tengku Sharil Bin Tengku Abdul Kadir aimed to rethink construction in respect to where building materials are derived from, and how this resource is used.

‘How we think about that is sometimes overlooked because we are constantly talking about the design itself,’ he says.

Sharil’s starting point was the realisation that 81.6% of a tree is typically wasted in the conversion of a tree to timber. His aspiration was to get this down to zero in his proposal for a timber institute in suburban Stockholm. The site is a field alongside a forested area with no urban logging restrictions. The institute is proposed as an experiential learning centre for timber production within a new, live plantation.

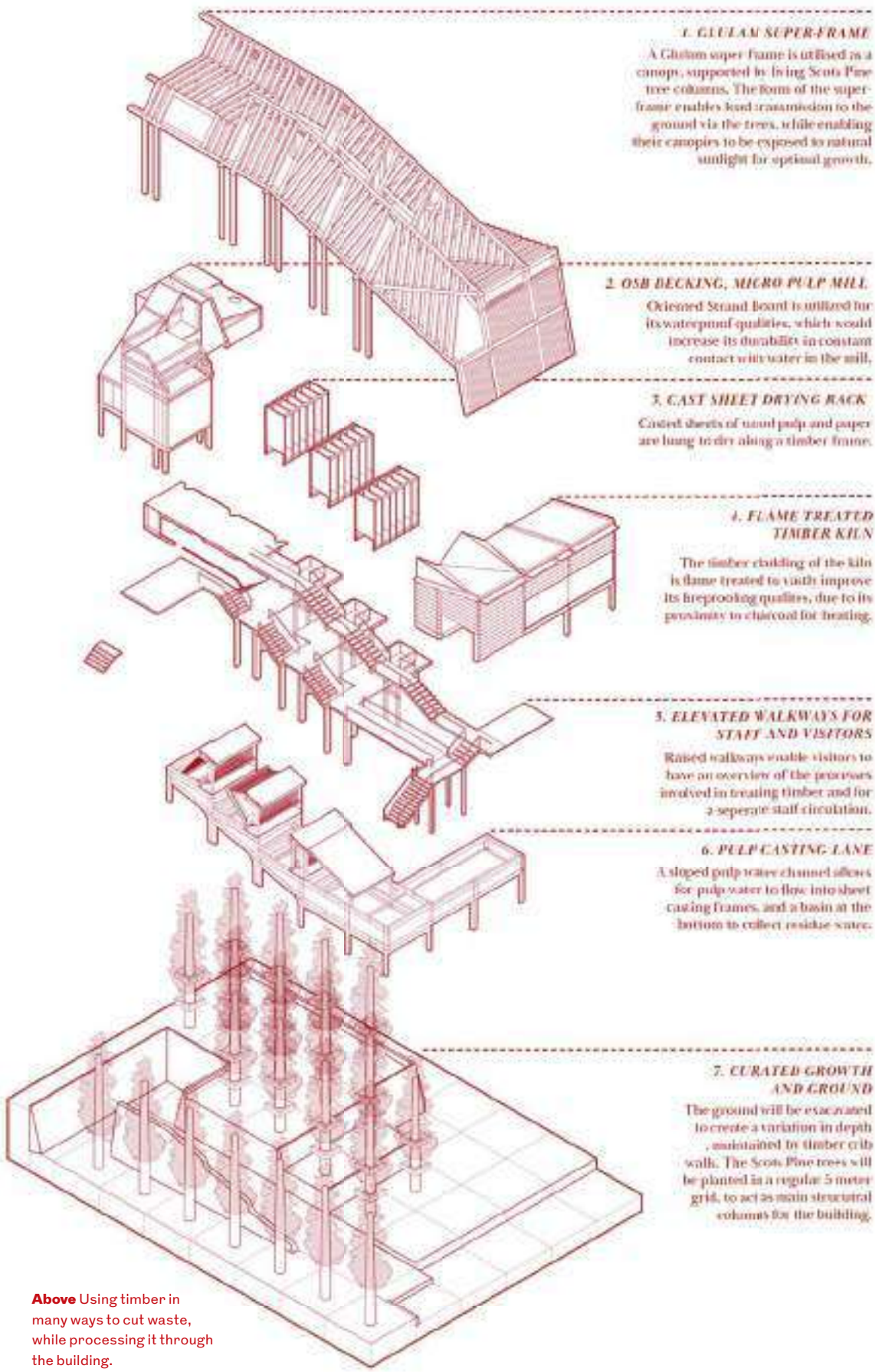
Above Timber Institute, Stockholm – an experiential learning centre for timber production.

Pine resin is turned into an amber, light-filtering material for use as the library wall

He first investigated the different timber products derived from conventional timber production, looking at where in the tree’s life these came from, and analysed where the waste occurred in the process. He then proposed an alternative, more circular production process that maximised the tree’s potential as a resource, including producing cast paper from pulped timber offcuts for use as timber screens and roots as biomass. Pine resin is turned into an amber, light-filtering material for use as the wall of the institute library. Sharil estimates this strategy would reduce tree wastage to around 20-10%.

The architecture of the institute is generated by the requirements of the timber production, with visitors experiencing the life-cycle of the pine tree as they journey through the building, passing through the canopies of the trees along a raised walkway. The trees are incorporated within the timber structural system of the building, with pines planted in a regular 5m grid as the main structural columns, and a rubber-lined, expandable joint enabling the structure to incorporate tree growth.

The resulting institute is a built ‘timber atlas’, encompassing growing, manufacture, learning and making. ●



Above Using timber in many ways to cut waste, while processing it through the building.

BRONZE COMMENDATIONS

Kate Buurman
The Mothers of Gingerbread
Newcastle University
Tutors: Kieran Connolly; Luke Rigg
Nabil Haque
Mono No Aware
University of Cambridge
Tutors: Rod Heyes; Prisca Thielmann
Heba Mohsen
Florida Peak
Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL
Tutors: Pascal Bronner; Thomas Hillier

SERJEANT AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE
IN DRAWING IN PART 1

Edwin Davis Maliakkal
The Fifth Orchestration
University of Nottingham
Tutor: Mani Lall

RIBA AWARD FOR SUSTAINABLE
DESIGN AT PART 1

Sonakshi Pandit
Urban Ca[r]talyser
Edinburgh School of Architecture and
Landscape Architecture
Tutor: Moa Carlsson; Simone Ferracina

BRONZE MEDAL JUDGES

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Architecture, Planning and Landscape at
Newcastle University
Oliver Froome-Lewis
Programme director of the BSc in
Architecture at the University of Reading
Tara Gbolade
Co-founder of Gbolade Design Studio and
co-developer of the Architects App
Sara Shafiei
Director of the MSci Architecture
Programme at the Bartlett School of
Architecture, UCL
Nicky Watson
Chair of the RIBA Education Committee,
RIBA Board trustee, RIBA Council
representative for the North East and
director of JDDK Architects

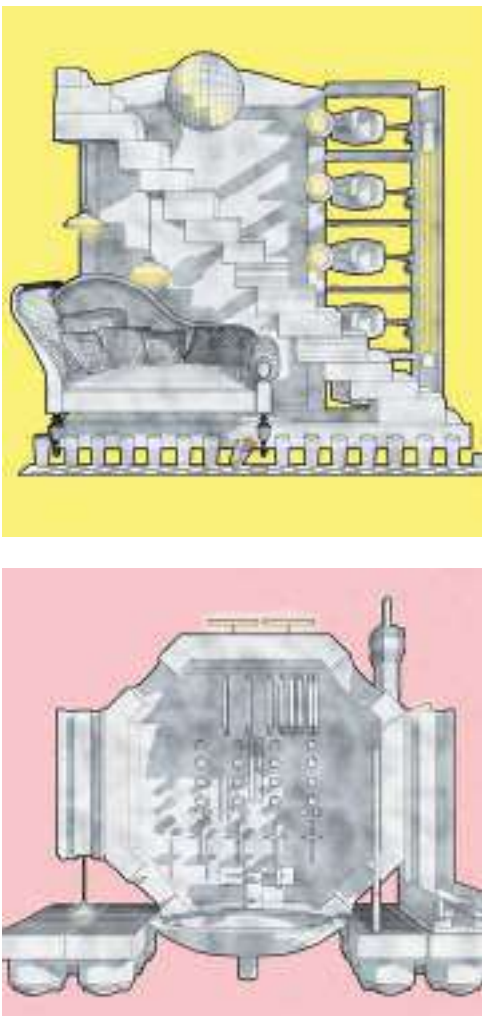
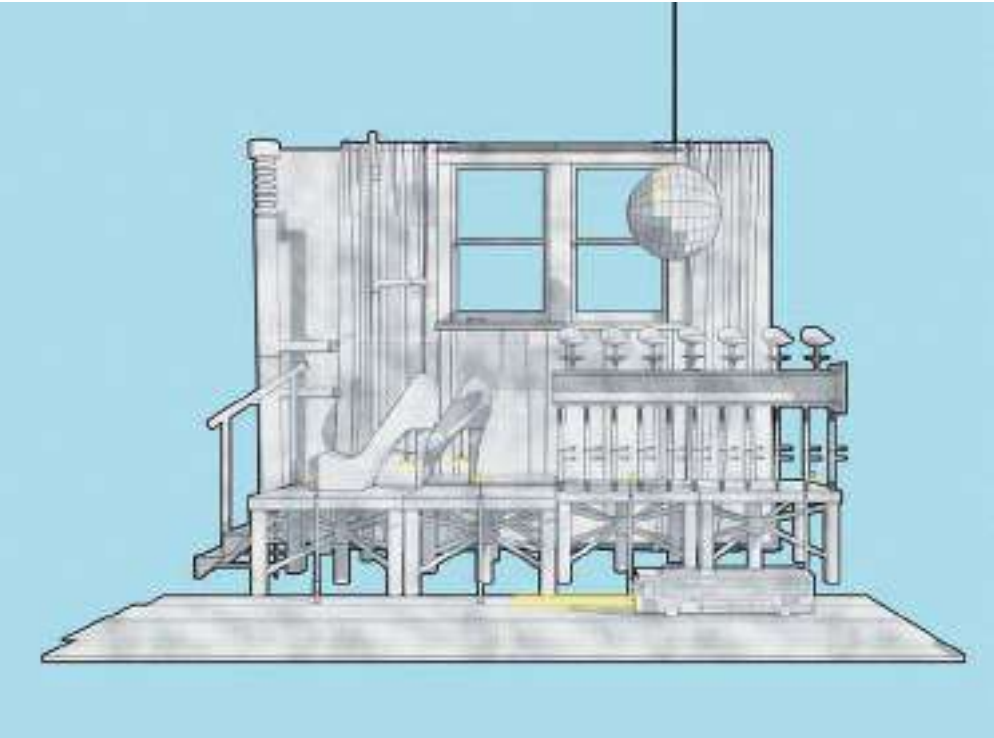
Lizzie Osborne
Cesspits of Filth: Queer Vernaculars in West Yorkshire 1975-1985
University of Huddersfield
Tutor: Nic Clear

When Lizzie Osborne found a newspaper reference to a 1980s gay bar in Huddersfield described as a ‘cesspit of filth’, their interest was piqued.

‘I was curious to see what makes somewhere eligible to be given such a visceral description. I wanted to understand the space and figure out how to describe queer history through architectural thought and drawing,’ they said.

The result is the Medal-winning dissertation *Cesspits of Filth: Queer Vernaculars in West Yorkshire 1975-1985*, presented in a distinctive fanzine-style that conveys a vivid flavour of time and place. This extends right down to sections named after tracks on playlists at The Gemini Club, the venue on the outskirts of Huddersfield town centre that provides the focus of the dissertation.

Kept under police surveillance and repeatedly raided, the club received the backing of London’s Pride event, which made a one-off relocation to Huddersfield in 1981 in support. Gemini closed in 1981, but reopened under new ownership until shutting again in 1983.



Left Sketches of the Gemini club experience. Objects include urinal cubicles and pint glasses (top); sink and industrial fans (middle); stiletto heels and ring road (bottom).

Osborne’s dissertation investigates the history of the club in the social context of the time, piecing together the spatial and emotional experience of those who went there through archive research at the Bishopsgate Institute and the West Yorkshire Queer Stories project in particular. This use of first person accounts gave a social and emotional dimension to site analysis that Osborne feels should be more widely used in architecture.

‘A small gay bar on the edge of a ring road in Huddersfield had the emotional weight of a palace for those who used it,’ they said. ‘When you go to your first gay club, the quality of that space and your experience of it never really leaves you.’

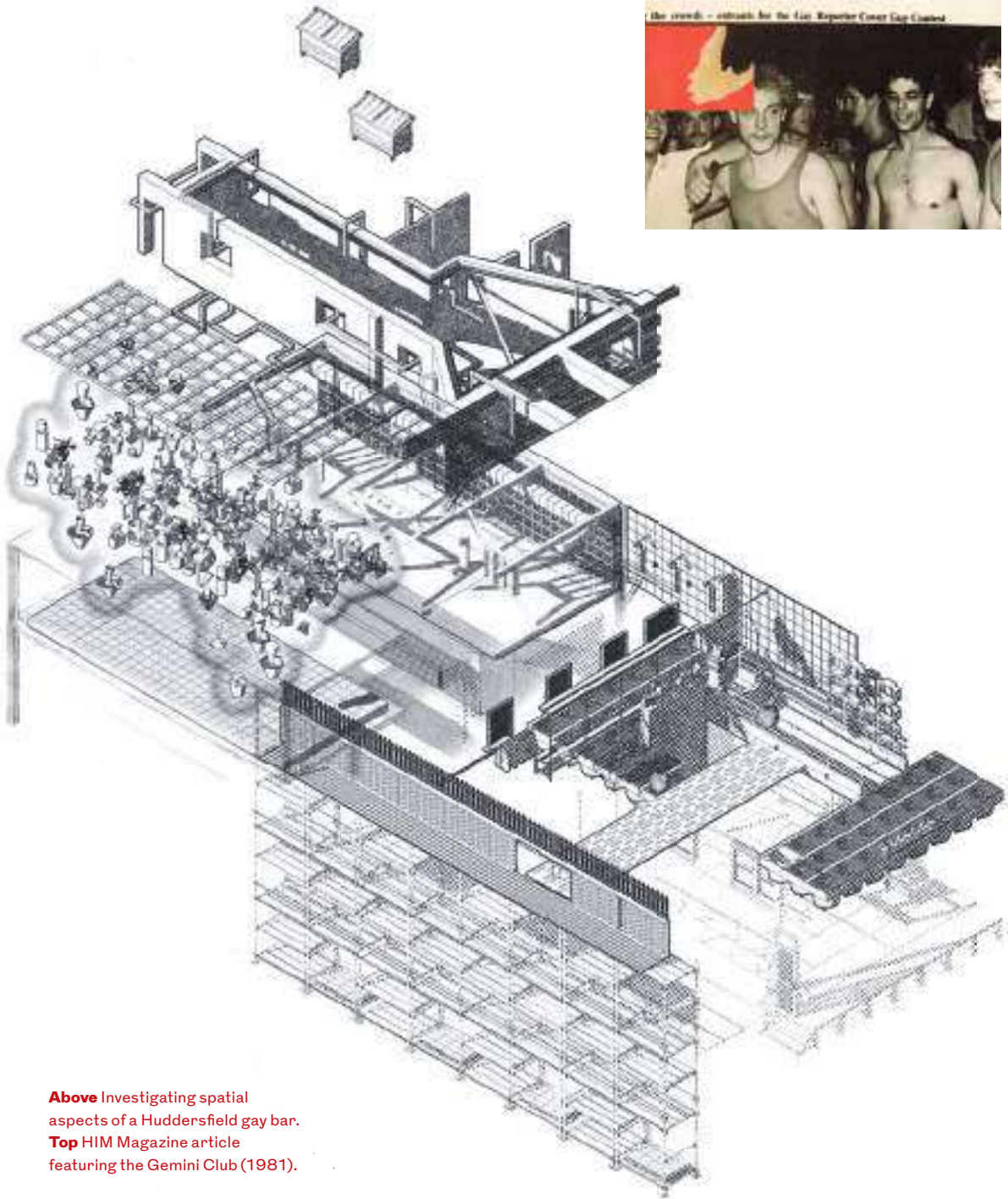
The dissertation seeks to challenge the idea of what is thought deserving of study, and what constitutes the vernacular. It argues that such a space can be seen as a distinctive form of vernacular architecture for queer culture in that region at that time.

‘At the centre of the idea of the vernacular is survival and the use of local materials. This is particularly the case with marginalised groups who have had to adapt and move around as they’re displaced,’ they said, pointing to the way that gay venues often appropriate the ‘unwanted voids’ that are left behind by the city. In doing so, such venues are particularly vulnerable to the pressures of gentrification and regeneration.

Rather than attempt to design a new gay club, Osborne decided to ‘test’ the information they had found on the Gemini by creating a series of immersive tactile spaces based on the fabric of the club. This architectural study was informed by both functional planning drawings and Osborne’s research into the user experience, and included objects with camp qualities to them or objects that can be subverted in a camp way.

‘For me, as part of a separate generation of the queer community, I was trying to understand a piece of history that was very much hidden and obscured,’ they concluded. ●

It challenges the idea of what is thought deserving of study, and what constitutes the vernacular



Above Investigating spatial aspects of a Huddersfield gay bar. **Top** HIM Magazine article featuring the Gemini Club (1981).



DISSERTATION COMMENDATIONS
Amy Bettinson
A Laboratory for contextualism
University of Westminster
Tutor: Harry Charrington
Joanna Leigh-Bedford
Peace in the Pipelines: Hydro-social infrastructure development in Bosnia’s urban borderland
University of Cambridge
Tutors: Ingrid Schröder; Hanna Baumann; Christopher Hamill
Jordan Whitewood-Neal
The Floor is Lava: An autoethnographic study of non-normative embodiment and the entangled ontologies of body, tool and landscape
University of Brighton
Tutor: Katy Beinart

RIBA DISSERTATION MEDALS JUDGES
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Dean of the Pratt School of Architecture in Brooklyn, New York
Ben Campkin
Professor of history and theory of architecture and urbanism at The Bartlett School of Architecture (UCL) and Co-Director of the UCL Urban Laboratory
Samia Henni
Assistant professor of history and theory of architecture and urbanism at Cornell University, USA, and director of the Society of Architectural Historians
Mia Roth-Cerina
Practising architect and associate professor at the Faculty of Architecture, University of Zagreb
Dorian Wiszniewski
Practising architect and a senior academic at the Edinburgh School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture

Resilient profession hangs on

Although by May 2020 seven years of revenue growth had ended, practices have held up well against multiple challenges. The full impact of coronavirus, however, will not show until next year

Adrian Malleson

Each year, RIBA chartered practices provide detailed information about their business performance through the RIBA Business Benchmarking Survey. For a detailed understanding of the practice and business of architecture, it's unique.

In the 2020 report, the seven-year run of growth in revenue came to an end.

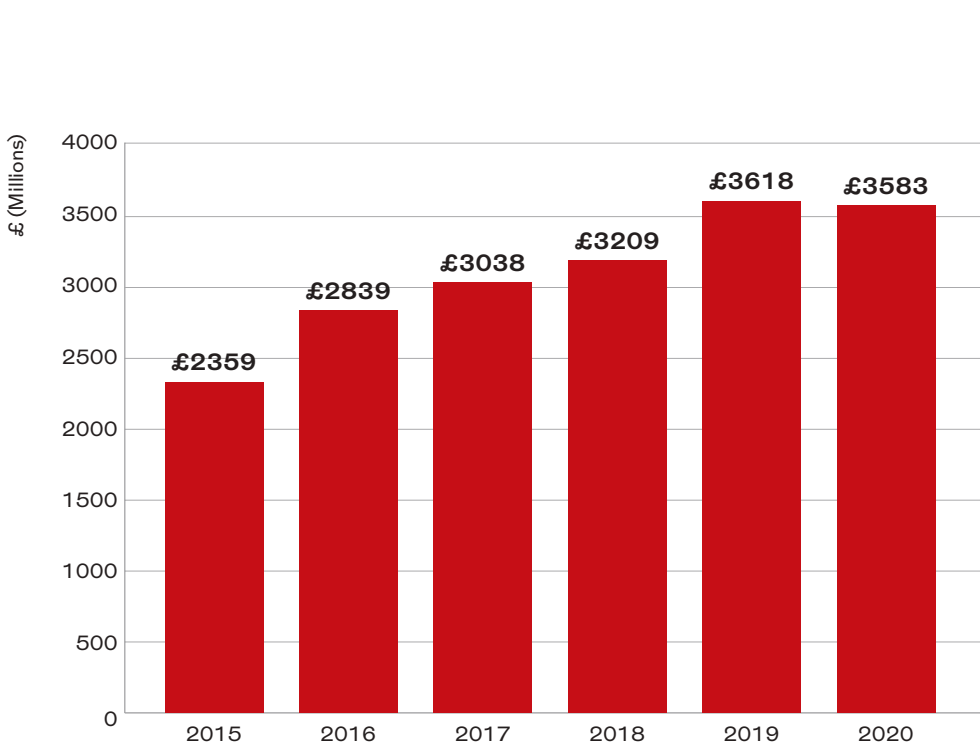
The 2020 report describes practices' financial information up to May 2020, so captures only the very early effects of Covid-19. Assuming the pandemic is over by May 2021 (an assumption based mainly on hope) we will see its full effect next year.

Context

The period of rapid revenue growth has come to an end, but practice revenue and profitability are holding up.

Last year, when looking at the 2019 results of the survey, there was 'a weak economic environment, political uncertainty, and the reticence of investors'. Things looked uncertain then – but as the benchmarking surveys were being completed we faced the sudden rise of Covid-19, a lockdown, the ever-looming threat of a no-deal Brexit, the biggest post-war UK economic slump and the insuf-

Chartered practice revenue



ficiently mitigated climate emergency. And yet a constant finding of the benchmarking survey has been just how resilient practices are. We can see it again. In the face of growing uncertainty in 2019 and early 2020, the business of architecture has held steady.

Revenue and profits

In 2020 RIBA chartered practices together brought in revenue of over £3.5 billion. However, although their number has increased, this is less than in 2019. A small fall of 1% on last year marks the end of seven years of growth, during which year-on-year revenue rose by, on average, 12%. For these seven years, practices' revenue growth has been three times the average rate of the construction industry, and four times that of the overall UK economy. That remarkable performance paused this year, and architectural revenue will continue to be under significant pressure during the pandemic and our recovery from it.

Geography of revenue

One constant over the last few years has been the increasing importance of London to UK architecture. While we've seen regional hot-spots, most notably in the North West, the capital continues to dominate the UK profes-

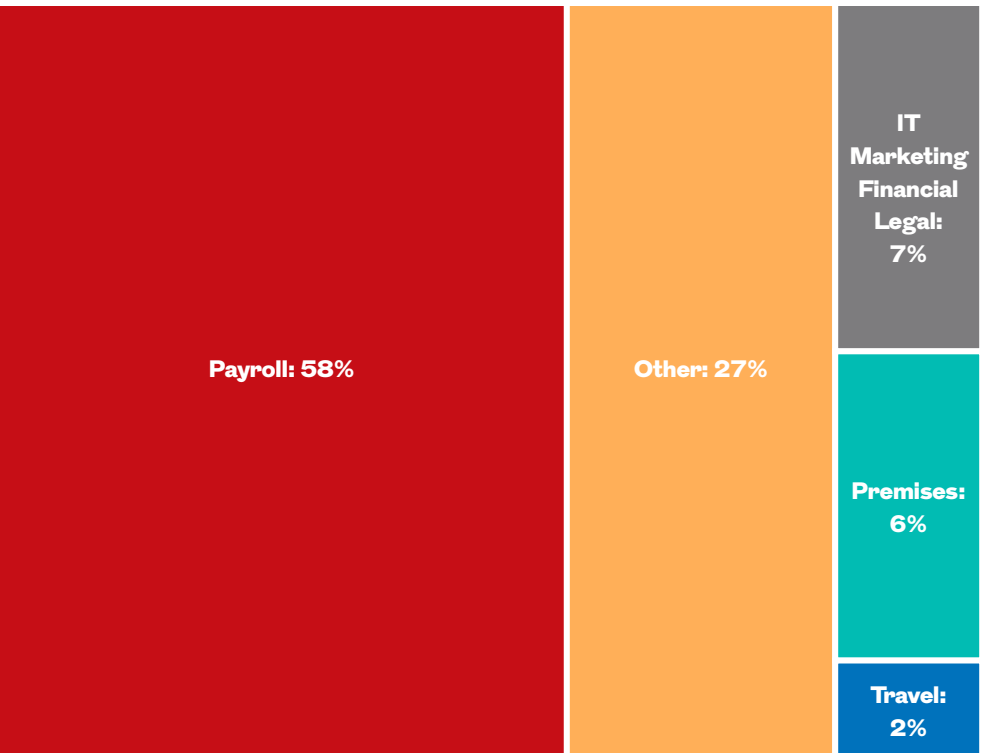
sion. And London's pre-eminence continues to expand. For the first time, in 2020, London generated over two-thirds of all chartered practice revenue, having increased its share of the architecture market by over 10% in just five years. The importance of London, as both the leading region and a global hub for architecture, make it particularly sensitive to the current twin threats of a no-deal Brexit and the potential pandemic-driven shift away from city centres.

International

In the last set of available data, architecture contributed more than £450 million to the UK trade balance, exporting 12 times more architectural services, by value, than it imports. RIBA chartered practices play a very significant part in this. The value of international work has more than doubled since 2013. In 2019 we saw the value of international work jump by over 20%, from £513 million to £625 million; that growth has been consolidated in 2020, although not built upon. In 2020, chartered practices carried out work on overseas projects to a value of £624 million. Overseas work accounts for 17% of all chartered practice revenue.

Practices with more than 100 staff carry out 88% of international work, and more

Chartered practice expenditure



than half of these very large practices have at least one office outside the UK.

While the value of international working remains constant, there has been a shift in where this work has come from. Significant growth in work in the Middle East stands out: from £104 million in 2018 to £178 million in 2020. For the profession, this is a rise from 20% of all international work to 38%. The value of Middle East work is back to the kind of levels that we last saw in 2015 and 2016.

Inauspiciously, after successive years of growth, the value of work from the EU has fallen this year, by over a fifth, although there is still more work from the EU than there was three years ago. Trading in Europe is likely to become more challenging, and it is the region in which practices with fewer than 100 employees are most likely to work.

As an aside, for the first time, the RIBA Benchmarking Survey asked about the value of work in the Arctic or Antarctic. It's pleasingly to see that RIBA practices are creating buildings in all parts of the world, even if polar work accounts for less than 1% of all overseas work.

Flattening expenditure

Turning to expenditure, for the first time since 2012, expenditure has flattened.

By quite some way, staff are the largest cost category for practices. In 2020, 58% of total expenditure was for staff. From 2012 to 2019 total staff costs had been increasing each year but this too came to an end in 2020. Total staff costs are have fallen and the average payroll cost, across all practice sizes, has decreased by around 7%. The number of people has decreased too; there are just under 5% fewer staff than there were last year, with 42,000 employed now compared to 44,000 in 2019.

There have also been falls in other areas of expenditure. Premises (6% of costs) and travel (2%) are reduced and look set for a downward trend throughout most of 2021. However, the broad basket of 'other' costs has pretty much eaten up the savings made in other areas. Notably, although accounting for a relatively small (just under 2%) portion of overall costs, the average expenditure on professional indemnity insurance has risen by 8%.

Dipping revenue

And so to profits. In 2019 growing revenue and expenditure saw profits flatlining. 2020 shows a slight dip in revenue and flat expenditure, so a small dip in profits. Total profit among chartered practices was

Inauspiciously, after successive years of growth, the value of work from the EU has fallen this year by over a fifth

£518 million in 2020, down a little from £528 million in 2019. In increasingly tough times, so far at least, profits have been holding up fairly well, and chartered practices are again proving their resilience. There is some unevenness here, however; the largest practices have increased their profits while medium and smaller practices have seen them fall back slightly. Overall, profits are around 13% of revenue. Remember though, benchmarking data takes us to May 2020. We're likely to witness intense pressure on profits through 2020 and into 2021.

The results mark the end of a sustained period of growth. Revenue has been holding up, but the challenges that chartered practices face already and over the coming months and years will be testing. The monthly RIBA Future Trends report will continue to give a snapshot of how architects feel about future work. For now, after a dramatic fall and recovery in confidence, architects remain positive. Next year's benchmarking survey will give us the full picture of the damage Covid-19 has inflicted.●

Thanks to those who spent the time completing the survey this year and to the Fees Bureau and MRM, our research partners.

RIBA chartered practices can access the full findings at www.ribabenchmark.com



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Glorious mud
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3: Culture

Speeding change

After Covid, we must use the crisis to build a better world



Hugh Pearman Editor

Wars stimulate technological advance, we all know that logical if uncomfortable fact. The airline industry was born after the First World War because those years of slaughter had accelerated the development of large bombers, many of which were then directly converted for passenger use. And I exist because one young woman, dangerously ill in disease-ridden Hamburg as the RAF set up bases in Germany at the end of World War II, was saved by the new antibiotic Penicillin. The rapid introduction and mass production of that was part of the war effort: it had to be ready for D-Day, and was. So she survived, and later became my mother.

The language of war is often wrongly used in the context of coping with disease but you can see why: in the war context, Penicillin was as much of an alternative secret weapon as radar. Wartime governments abandon fiscal caution and spend, spend, spend on technology, in order to gain an advantage. The parallel with the course of the pandemic is clear enough: not only the war-footing curtailment of normal life and activities for

citizens, but the extraordinary time and effort devoted to finding a workable vaccine that will allow a return to 'normal life'.

Here, of course, is the rub. The quest for the vaccine – or rather, a collection of several vaccines working in different ways – is looking promising at the time of writing. Let's assume one or more of them can be found to work effectively, reliably and safely enough to make the necessary big difference. Then we shall be into the equivalent of the post-war period. There is one thing that marked out both such periods in the 20th century: a strong push for a different, better society. Better housing, better jobs, better environment, better and healthier lives.

And it is clear that the pandemic has accelerated social trends that were happening anyway, ranging from the ways we work to the ways we shop and take our leisure. This was apparent in the RIBA 'Rethink' competition earlier this year: to my mind there was little in the outcome that was truly novel, rather it showcased existing thinking much increased in ambition and scale. Tentative moves are now being made. Long-nurtured plans to change the priority of our residential street life away from motor vehicles are being implemented with added urgency – with some mistakes and some controversy. We have been stimulated by the quiet, walkable streets of the first lockdown. How to make those permanent without making things worse for others?

Seize the hour, then. What kind of normality do we want? Everything exactly the same as before, in all its environmentally and socially destructive ways? Commuting to work five days a week? Rampant consumerism of goods produced the on other side of the world and rapidly discarded? Driving everywhere? Design and construction of buildings little different from the 1950s except in their shoddiness? Surely not. 'Building back better' should mean just that. The arts – or creative industries – are intrinsic to this. ●

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I'd have liked to have started off with £10 million. It's a profession that favours the rich

Terry Farrell reveals what he's learnt in 50 years as an architect: ribaj.com/ eminentfarrell

I'd never before considered the shower as the 'general suppression of the feminine in its mechanistic efficiency and phallic verticality'.

Pamela Buxton reviews the illuminating Architecture of Bathing: ribaj.com/ bathingreview

One thing marked out both post-war periods in the 20th century: a strong push for a different, better society

HOLLY EXLEY

ribaj.com

The RIBA Journal December 2020

Bye, 2020

The year that changed everything... but did it?



Verity-Jane Keefe

Such high hopes. Such a well-rounded even number. 2020. Big energy. Time to blow the dust off the last decade of nonsense and the horror of the 2019 election. YES. This was going to be the year when things changed. When people started to do what they said, rather than performing what they do. Dear 2020, I couldn't have been more wrong. You have challenged and squeezed our perceptions of what a bad year can be, draining the optimism and throwing us zinger after zinger.

We'll call this a pre-emptive review of the year. A listicle, a top ten, round-up, a romp through – the spaces of which are usually filled with natty and wry observations of what the year has served up. At the time of writing, there are 64 days left of this foul beast of a year. I will hold on to a glimmer of optimism that by the time this is published, the outlook might be a little better. So let's go back.

January. Begins with a small residency in Scotland – staring out over nuclear submarine circling waters. Walking. Writing. Taking solitude. I find an abandoned botanical gardens and house and fall in love and am heartbroken by the story behind it. An adventurous son died on a specimen collecting trip, an aged father dying soon after. What will happen to this beautiful encyclopaedia of plants and care? I walk on to February – workshops, engagement, planning, making work, preparing for a Stage 3 deadline for a project in Thamesmead reopening a former social club. Early starts, late nights, boozy celebrations to mark a successful funding application.

March. A strike across universities that

brought hope and togetherness alongside disappointment and frustration – solidarity cut short on the last days of action thanks to Covid-19. We sat with students and staff alike, assessing the wake of austerity and the neoliberal university. Asking what education is, could be and should be and how we can collectively navigate this territory together. We looked ahead to what we could do within architecture, within the institution and the profession(s), coming back to precarity again and again. We were on strike for ourselves, our colleagues, the future of education, for our students, outsourced cleaning and catering staff and the future of the creative arts and architecture. Onwards we said, establish support structures and continue the discussion.

And then lockdown. If this was a review of the year I'd give those moments on the picket four stars. The last time I was in a full place. The last time we populated busy public spaces inside and outside together. The last time I hugged people goodbye with abandon.

We know what has happened over the rest of the year, I don't need to synopsis. (Time – peppered with clapping, sloganeering, zooms, bewilderment, planning, replanning, panic, George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, decolonising curriculums, holding the mirror of lack of diversity square in the face to practice, Paradise burning, art worker redundancies, £20 temporary extra Universal Credit, Rashford for PM etc. Don't bother visiting 2020, it doesn't live up to its early hype). I struggle to break it up in to 'Things That I have Done' as what really makes April different to June beyond changes to rules, new slogans, more confusion and a change in temperature? We have adapted practice and behaviours, adopted new language, and only time will tell what the future will bring – what the world will look like. Everything is different, and much is the same. Being in a supermarket is different, a gallery, a museum, the workplace. Experiences have changed. The clocks have changed.

Dear 2021, I REALLY hope all those promises everyone made this year have been kept, that privilege is acknowledged, those books have been read, we still support our communities, we still give to food banks, Trump still isn't president, Universal Credit gets extended, that hope creeps out for everyone.

The mansion and Botanical Gardens in Scotland is now listed for sale. Someone buy it please and let's all move there. ●

Verity-Jane Keefe is a visual artist

What really makes April different to June beyond changes to rules, new slogans, more confusion and a change in temperature?

BACK TO YOU, BOJO

It is impossible to articulate the time, challenges, space and pace of the year. I am not speaking for everyone. For a refreshing and brilliant take on 2020, told via a cross-country poo- and rainbow-illustrated masterclass in holding power to account, head to the Foundling Museum to see the Covid Letters, on until January. An exhibition by Jonny Banger and hundreds of young artists offering humour, swear words and hope across this fantastic museum. Boris Johnson is a pickle.

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**Culture
President**

Renew must be a design watchword

Is it time to redefine design towards renew, reuse and repurpose?



Alan Jones

Recently I needed an additional shelf in my home office, and instead of my mind running to bespoke folded brushed stainless steel with countersunk socket head screws, or to opening a catalogue, I gave myself a local 'scrap yard challenge'. Finding a length of extruded aluminium purlin, previously part of a building, with steel brackets conveniently still fitted, I washed, cut, sealed and fixed it to my study wall. It resonated with the rough concrete wall behind; reusing and repurposing the structural leftover was low cost and the next step in evolving in the space I currently spend most of my time working. This small intervention was an engagement with, and improvement of the existing building.

However even in traditional contracts and appointments, architects have finite engagement with the client, users and even the long-term success of the building – how it is occupied, how it performs and evolves over time. Contemporary procurement fractures that engagement even more. Further, the widespread culture of architecture awards does not wait for the making good of defects nor submission of post occupancy evaluations – which in themselves are valuable feedback and reasons for architects to engage long-term with building owners and users. Collectively, such evaluations produce an industry wide data set, of evidence of success and potential improvement.



Above Shelves from scrap, small steps to renewal.

ALAN JONES

Other professions and industries engage with long-term client care and ongoing maintenance, repair and renew. A significant part of the renewal of our profession is likely to be the redefining of architects' appointments, awards, education and how we consider success, towards the longer-term use of buildings and spaces, and carefully considering the balance of 'how it performs' and 'how it is used' with 'what it is'. Awards focusing on longevity also seems necessary.

The French government will introduce a reparability index for consumer goods in January 2021 and I wonder how such a system might be applied to the practice of architects and the projects we become involved with. Already the cry of 'the most sustainable building is one that already exists' connects existing building owners and users with material, energy and performance. There is an increasing appreciation of need for whole-sale adoption of post-occupancy evaluation and building performance management from inception to completion project, be it new build or refurb, which will create a new engagement with the consumer, client and user – their needs, evidence, standards and outcomes.

France will bring in a reparability index for consumer goods this January – how might such a system be applied to architects' practice?

In his book *The Good Ancestor*, Roman Krznaric explains how everyone ought to be considering the impact of their actions – decades, centuries, and millennia from now. As architects and future architects, we have a greater chance than many to leave a positive legacy. Focusing on evidence and benefit, social and environmental performance, we can positively affect the future; future users and future generations as they use spaces and places, new and renewed. What will be our legacy and how shall we be remembered? ●

@AlanJonesFRIBA

DISCIPLINARY SANCTION: EXPULSION

Following a hearing of the Professional Conduct Committee on 28 September 2020, Anthony Pettorino was deemed to have breached RIBA Code of Professional Conduct in relation to Principle 1 in that he acted dishonestly and/or without integrity by using client monies for his own benefit and he failed to avoid a conflict of interest or declare it to the affected parties.

He further breached Principle 2 in that he did not have adequate and/or appropriate insurance in place to meet a claim, did not provide an effective service and/or work to fit the brief in a timely manner and did not adequately manage the project in that he did not manage the purchase of materials effectively, nor did he maintain and/or provide adequate records of costs.

He breached Principle 2.3 in that he failed to ensure that the terms of appointment, the scope of the work and/or the essential project requirements were clear and recorded in writing.

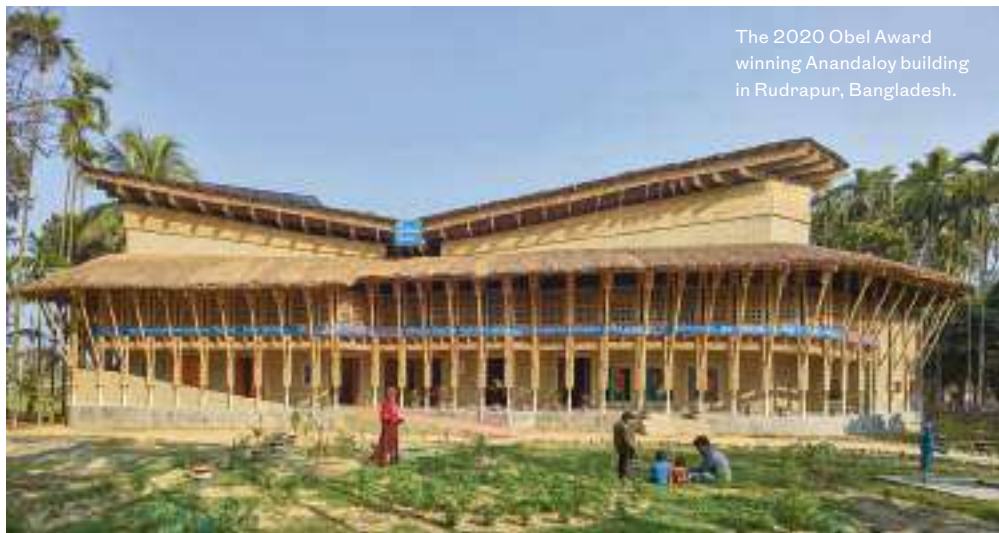
Lastly, he breached Principle 3.5 in that he failed to meaningfully, if at all, respond to the complainants' letter before action or their chase-up correspondence.

In accordance with Schedule 2 of the Disciplinary Procedures made under Byelaw 4.3 (Appendix L to the Regulations), the committee issued an Expulsion from RIBA membership.

Anna Heringer loves mud, and has won some big prizes for her rammed earth designs. For her, architecture is not just a building but a route to human development

Words: Jan-Carlos Kucharek Portrait: Peter Untermaierhofer

Earthy power



The 2020 Obel Award winning Anandaloy building in Rudrapur, Bangladesh.

As I sift through Anna Heringer's mass of on-line content – be it the latest TED Talk, or a Harvard GSD Loeb Scholar lecture or a filmed Venice Biennale panel discussion – I'm more distracted by her clothing than by what she's saying. I mean, the Loeb lecture was in 2012, the AR Emerging Architecture piece in 2016 and Alejandro Aravena's Biennale in 2018, so four years divide the three events; but in all of them the German architect seems to be wearing the same, simply fashioned top. Talking to her recently on her winning the 2020 Obel Award, the question of whether it is or not precedes my congratulations.

That €100,000 prize could buy a lot of clothes nowadays. 'It probably was the same top – or at least one of three versions,' Heringer replies enthusiastically, quite unabashed at being asked. It turns out she has a temperate one, 'and a summer version and a winter one. Thinking about how we consume spurred me to create a clothing label in Bangladesh – clothing is a kind of body architecture; because when you start to understand globalism through what you wear, you begin to alter your relationship to it.' Her Dipdii Textiles co-op is a small ethical step in a country where over 80% of its cheap labour force turns out clothes for markets in the West, generating over US\$30 billion in exports. So for her the enterprise is as spatial a reading of Bangladesh's economic reality as any of her buildings: 'Settlement patterns there have never been governed by architects or city planners, but by the hegemony of the garment industry'.

Heringer, affable and relaxed, talks to me on Zoom from the pretty Bavarian village of Laufen near Salzburg, where she was born in 1977. Her 15th century home and office, once a beer hall, with white-painted groin



Anna Heringer, who is also professor of the UNESCO Chair of Earthen Architecture, in her 15th century home and office in Laufen

vaults sat atop great hand-carved stone columns, is lofty and of monastic sobriety. That mood is mitigated by large, colourful wall hangings handmade by a Bangladeshi community 6000km away, whose fortunes have been inextricably bound with Heringer's ever since she first ventured out there, aged 17, to do voluntary work via a German NGO.

The Obel Award, launched in 2019 by Danish businessman Henrik Frode Obel, and first awarded to Junya Ishigami, was presented last month to Heringer for her disability education and community workspace Anandaloy in the village of Rudrapur, Bangladesh. Given the base-line, subsistence-level nature of this project, there would at first glance seem little to connect it to Ishigami's Art Biotop Water Garden – a surreal, Zen-like, conceptual landscape beside Japan's Nasu Mountains. But both share a core commonality – mud and its considered placement. Anandaloy, a two-storey structure of bamboo and rammed earth with an access ramp running round it built by and for the village Heringer knows as a second home, isn't only an expression of architectural intent but a whole way of living.

It's an outlook she developed from an early age. An only child, Heringer's father was an ecologist and a scout and holidays of her youth were spent with her scout group foraging in the woods for both food and shelter and had an enduring effect: 'Making a tent, kitchen, toilet, furniture; the idea of creating a small village in a couple of weeks and leaving no trace at the end of it was something that shaped me. It was my first urbanism.' The NGO year-out work in Bangladesh that was to prove so formative was followed by architecture studies at the University of the Arts in Linz. Heringer laughs now at her dalliances with Deconstruction, especially given that she couldn't ever imagine herself in a normal office. But as she tried to reconcile her passions for social justice and the environment, it was a rammed earth workshop with ceramic artist and designer Martin Rauch that proved her Road to Damascus conversion.

'I just put my hands in the mud and that was it,' she recalls. 'It's a material that's free, ecological, low-energy and its working is the biggest part of its budget so the money stays with the people who craft it.' The realisation defined everything that she has done since, adding: 'You can use it, repair it and recycle it without loss of quality, return it to the earth

and plant your garden over it at the end. No other modern construction material has its scope or possibility.' Heringer is nothing less than evangelical; for her 'it's the missing link that leads to social justice'.

And armed with that, she set to work. Her 2006 METI building, the first project in Rudrapur with ongoing collaborator Martin Rauch, was her Linz diploma study made flesh after she returned to Bangladesh to convince local social enterprise Dipshikha that, despite a stated desire for a brick school, they in fact wanted a rammed earth and bamboo one. Materials and skills were procured locally, and rammed earth techniques developed by the villagers, who went on to build the school themselves. They all learned from the process. Buffalo, it turns out, are better at treading mud than cows as the latter are more intelligent and step in their own hoof prints. But once it was finished, it was so much more than the sum of its parts. At 29, Heringer appeared on the same stage as Norman Foster at the 2007 Aga Khan Award to collect her US\$55,000 prize that she shared equitably with METI's builders. And 12 years on, she says proudly, those same villagers would be passing on their skills to a new generation in the construction of the Anandaloy building.

But this isn't just a vanity project and Anandaloy is more than a carbon neutral building. Disabilities school aside, Dipdii Textiles, housed below it, is skilling up

NORBERT RAU



Above The new altar at Worms Cathedral was built by both priests and parishioners.

Below and below right The St Michael School student dormitory and Forum building in Traunstein.

women in hand sewing, creating quality garments sold in the West that allow the village to invest its profits into a five year plan with Dipshikha. That means access to doctors, women's health services and other community needs, even livestock. But there are less tangible benefits too. 'Women are freed from the trap of home, with a clean, bright workplace that empowers them,' says Heringer. It's even about shifting perceptions of 'untouchable' widows; where at the last Durga Puja Hindu festival, Heringer dragged them up on the stage to dance. Being from outside the community has helped her break boundaries within it.

I ask Heringer if she hasn't since created a cosy place for herself as not only a Great White Hope but plumping enviable teaching roles at the likes of Harvard GSD and ETH Zurich that play off a trendily niche expertise, but she rejects the assertion. It's about the survival of her dream too and the Obel cash was a surprising and welcome boon for a small office of four doing very few projects, relying on teaching work and where every penny counts. 'It's a question I get a lot from my students about how I manage to do 'ethical architecture' and make a living when there's no guarantee about your future. Do you just compromise because that's where the money is?' she asks, before answering with a challenging trinity: 'Spend a third of your time on your passion, a third ethically paying the bills and the last third simplifying your life.'

So in Covid times they muddle through, but there's finally real hope on the domestic horizon. While the firm has done small projects in Germany responding to the community-based nature of making, such as its altar at St Peter's Cathedral in Worms and



Spend a third of your time on your passion, a third ethically paying the bills and the last third simplifying your life

Taddelakt birthing space in Vorarlberg, Austria, it's at the historic Saint Michael's boarding school in nearby Traunstein where the architect will finally be able to build on (and obviously with) home ground. Here at the alma mater of erstwhile Pope Benedict XVI, Heringer has, with the help of executive architects, been charged with the construction of a load-bearing timber student dormitory and rammed earth forum building. The result of a 2015 speculative workshop with the school, the campus buildings will break ground next year. Heringer sees it as something of a coup as she insisted on the same ethical stance – 'no difference whether it's Bangladesh or Bavaria' – meaning the rammed earth came in significantly more pricey than concrete. Both seminarians and students will, at some point, help construct its walls, becoming earth disciples in the process.

While she rues that her visionary, kasbah-like Morocco Sustainability Centre in Marrakech bit the dust, the Tatale Education Campus on Ghana's border with Togo for the Salesians of Don Bosco is still on track for construction, while the La Donaira 'El Cortijo' eco-retreat and equestrian centre set in the hills near Ronda in Andalucía is at planning stage. For the last three in hotter climes, the technology is a shoo-in: 'Concrete is a shitty material for hot countries,' she tells me. 'It can't cure properly and cannot balance interior humidity, which rammed earth walls can.'

But performance aside, Heringer's ultimate objective is the egalitarian world that can be dragged from the mud, and the establishment of Bangladesh as a nation proves the point. The construction of a post independence legislature for the region, the National Parliament House in Dhaka, involved high



Above At Anandaloy, teaching rooms are connected via tunnels to mud-lined 'sensory spaces'.

Below El Cortijo eco retreat and equestrian centre outside Ronda in Spain, a collaboration with Martin Rauch, is still in planning.



grade, high priced concrete sourced from Pakistan. Rammed earth would have been a cheaper option that could have used and developed local skills. Heringer likes to think of it like Anandaloy – in an alternative reality where the nascent state used nothing but its own resources and skills.

'Louis Kahn's masterpiece, even now, is an icon for the nation,' she mulls, 'but how much greater it would have been built from rammed earth – out of the very ground they would later fight for?' It's far more than a challenge to history but an open question that binds the notion of social justice to the physical land itself, born of her own experience: 'Rammed earth is perfect because what you need is time and dirt and water, and Bangladesh has plenty of all three.' ●

KURT HOERBST

The right type

On the M1, the rail network, roadworks, even the government website – Margaret Calvert’s work is familiar to everyone via her transport signage

Pamela Buxton

The graphic designer Margaret Calvert is not a household name, yet we all know her work. Directional road signs all over the land are designed by her (with Jock Kinneir), as well as all those memorable road sign pictograms such as the ones for road works and children crossing. Not to mention many of the nation’s rail, airport, ferry and hospital signs of the last half century. Ever looked at the government website recently, perhaps to check the latest Covid restrictions? That’s her typeface too (designed with Henrik Kubel, also designer of the RIBA Journal typefaces).

Now in her 80s, she’s still going strong, designing the new Rail Alphabet 2 typeface for National Rail, again with Kubel. She richly deserves her own show, Margaret Calvert:



Woman at Work, which has just opened at the Design Museum.

While it’s a modest display, wrapping around the atrium at first floor level, the exhibition is an enjoyable insight into a designer who, says curator Rachel Hajek, is responsible for much of Britain’s graphic identity. Yet this is not showy design but the everyday, background sort that eases legibility and movement, whether around transport systems, complex buildings or websites, without being remarkable in itself. That so much of her work seems invisible, is, adds Hajek, its genius.

Calvert was talent-spotted young by Kinneir, her tutor at Chelsea College of Art, who took her on as an assistant initially to work on signs for Gatwick Airport. She went on to become a partner in his firm (renamed Kinneir Calvert Associates) and taught for nearly 40 years at the Royal College of Art.

To appreciate the significance of the road sign project, the exhibition conveys the road network’s previous mish-mash of signage. Kinneir and Calvert’s work from 1958-65 was the first to formalise a nationwide sign system for roads, first with motorways and then all-purpose roads. It was a huge endeavour at a time when graphic design wasn’t really recognised as a discipline. Kinneir and Calvert were rigorous, considering size, font, word shape, arrangement, reflectivity and colour, informed by extensive tests carried out for visibility at different distances. The new font, named Transport, was used in upper and lower case within clearly designed signs, with colour-coded backgrounds to denote different road types. Calvert also worked on the pictogram signs. For the children crossing sign she wanted the image to appear caring, so made the girl the older figure holding the younger boy’s hand. More than half a century later, the longevity of these signs is testimony to their success, and it was this Transport font that was much later customised as New Transport for the gov.uk website.

Kinneir and Calvert’s designs for the rail system also had a huge impact, with the Rail Alphabet typeface implemented within

Top right Paddington Station featuring Rail Alphabet.

Left Margaret Calvert - Woman at Work exhibition at the Design Museum.

Margaret Calvert: Woman at Work, until 10 January 2021, Design Museum, 224-238 Kensington High Street, London W8 6AG



design guidelines across 2000 stations, 45 ships, 4000 locomotives and 230,000 passenger carriages, until privatisation ushered in a variety of corporate identities. Decades later, Calvert and Kubel have recently adapted this as Rail Alphabet 2 launched at this exhibition as part of a new graphic identity for Network Rail stations and digital text.

Calvert chose a slab serif design for Newcastle’s Metro system because she felt it suited Newcastle’s distinctive architecture. Now known as Calvert, this lettering has proved long-lasting and after 40 years, is still in use on the Metro and many buses and ferries in the north east. It is also the Royal College of Art identity. The exhibition tells how this design was derived from a proposal for a new town in France, which was rejected for looking too English. The show also includes earlier work for P&O, in which Kinneir and Calvert created a label system for passengers’ luggage that didn’t rely on language but used colour and pattern to convey international regions and different ports within them.

To this day, Calvert prefers to work by hand because she finds the pace it dictates allows her to think through her designs. In the show, there’s a photo of her desk full of pens, pencils, paints and design work. Above the desk is her self-portrait, a customisation of the familiar road works pictogram with the male figure replaced by a woman. It’s a pleasing reworking, and good to see a large version of that sign in the exhibition too. A recent photo of her holding a handbag incorporating the original road works sign suggests that, unlike pop stars who don’t want to play their old hits, she still embraces her early work. And with hits like these, why not? ●





ABOVE & BEYOND

When we were considering back in April whether to go ahead with our fifth annual Rising Stars Awards in the midst of a global pandemic, we thought we would receive either a mass of entries or hardly any. There was a risk.

Fortunately, it has been the former and in fact this year we have had our highest number of submissions, which makes the 2020 cohort and shortlisted candidates even more impressive than ever. Every person who was presented to the judges on the longlist was remarkable in their own way. The process of whittling down the submissions to that list was difficult and contested enough. This year's winners are more various in their skills, achievements, goals and ambition.

We have seen entries from architects with fire safety specialisms, dedicated to accessibility in the refurbishment of public buildings, and winning projects on behalf of a big practice in eastern Europe and Russia. Much of the work we received is collaborative, interdisciplinary and carried out in addition to a built environment professional's ordinary work. The winning cohort includes an architect turned planner, another bringing experiences of growing up in East Africa to confront design norms in housing here and a team of six taking on the problem of construction waste by applying circular economy principles.

'The range and breadth of interest and areas that people are reaching into is really exciting,' says Jo Dimitri, one of this year's judges. 'It shows the multidimensional character of the profession. They are going above and beyond.'

'This is critical,' adds fellow judge Shahed Saleem, 'as machines do more and more things in future.'

In all, another successful year with a cohort to keep your eyes on.

Isabelle Priest, assistant editor, RIBA Journal

Origin is thrilled, once again, to be championing the RIBA Journal's Rising Stars.

One of the main reasons for our involvement is because the initiative resonated with us. Like the entrants, Origin is essentially in its infancy in its overall journey and potential. Since establishing in 2001, we've certainly made our mark in the fenestration industry by rewriting the norms with our fresh thinking, innovative product developments, unparalleled lead times and unmatched support for our customers.

The standard of this year's entrants has been hugely impressive. There's definitely a bright future in front of every one of them. We've loved working with the Rising Stars, as they have all demonstrated a strong sense of collaboration, confidence, enthusiasm and passion, which has been fantastic to see and be a part of.

Ben Brocklesby, sales and marketing director, Origin

Above Skipton Road housing scheme in Harrogate, part of Ivana Stanislav's longlisted entry.

THE 2020 JUDGES



Mary Arnold-Forster
Mary Arnold-Forster Architects



Joanna Asia Grzybowska
Rising Star 2019, Powell Tuck Associates and Mycelium Studio



Klaus Bode
Urban Systems Design



Jo Dimitri
National Trust



Alex Ely
Mae Architects



Shahed Saleem
Makespace Architects and University of Westminster



Eleanor Young
RIBA Journal (chair)



RAHEELA KHAN-FITZGERALD

Hands-on designer and developer of award-winning emissions reduction tool



Architectural assistant, Hawkins\Brown
Part 1: 2015 Part 2: 2018

For someone who has always enjoyed making things by hand and as a printmaker in her spare time, Raheela Khan-Fitzgerald's achievements in architecture are surprisingly high tech. She grew up in Kenya and did her A levels in Britain before studying at Glasgow School of Art, which she chose because Charles Rennie and Margaret Mackintosh are among her architectural heroes for how they designed every part of their buildings down to the cutlery. For her, architecture is 'all encompassing' and she combined academic study with practical experiences, like volunteering with Rural Design to design and build a stage using salvaged wood.

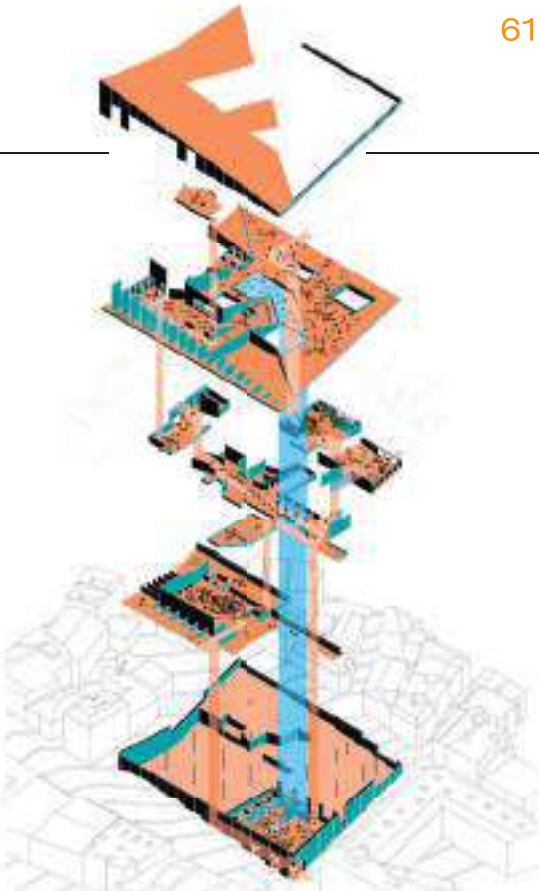
Khan-Fitzgerald's interest in sustainability has been constant. After Part 1, she went to work for Thread Architects in Sheffield, a new firm with its main focus on self-build. There, as well as designing, she became involved in hands-on straw bale construction. She completed her Part 2, again at the Mack, because she really believed in its course and for the opportunities its sustainable research group MEARU offered, and then went straight to Hawkins\Brown in London where her interest in the practical expanded again. She had become more aware of the practice from cycling past its Park Hill project on the way to work during her year out. She liked the sustainability credentials of the scheme in its reuse of the concrete structure and aim to minimise embodied energy.

Perhaps expecting to work on individual building projects with a similar ethos, she was instead thrown straight into the Hawkins\Brown Emission Reduction Tool (H\B:ERT). Referee Louisa Bowles, head of sustainability at the practice, says Khan-Fitzgerald was instrumental in developing it into a downloadable plug-in for Revit and helped it to launch. The tool compiles information about whole life carbon emissions for materials in projects, based on a background database that includes extraction, manufacture, waste, maintenance and end of life, presenting numerics visually so that designers can make informed, carbon-literate decisions. The hope



Right 'Fiestadromo', Khan-Fitzgerald's final year project set in Madrid which was awarded the Glasgow City Council Charlie Cochrane Medal in 2018.

Bottom left H\B:ERT is a plug-in that helps users understand the embodied carbon of a project.



is that it will enable architects to have early conversations about the issue with clients and that it will lead to projects with lower embodied energy. In 2019 Khan-Fitzgerald was given Hawkins\Brown's research bursary develop it further, work which won the practice the AJ100 Best Use of Technology Award and 'demonstrates an expertise beyond her years of experience' says Bowles. It is partly Khan-Fitzgerald's ability to adapt, take on new challenges and be so diverse in her skills that made her stand out to this year's judges.

She has also volunteered personal and professional time to the London Energy Transformation Initiative (LETI), co-authoring the chapter 'Rules of thumb' of the Embodied Carbon Primer. This fed into the Climate Emergency Climate Design Guide, published in January, which has already been downloaded 30,000 times from 120 countries. 'Winning an award for Hawkins\Brown is quite an achievement,' says judge Asia Grzybowska.

Fellow judge Klaus Bode says: 'She is doing a lot collaboratively to address climate change, including the communication of it as a key design driver. If more architects did this kind of work, it would put me out of my job.'

How would you most like to improve society through architecture?

I would like to improve the way we live and interact with our environment through architecture, which will in turn benefit society at large. This could be through better daylighting; using passive systems such as capturing the sun's heat through controlled solar gain; or venting a space through stack ventilation. I would love to encourage the protection of wild space and species through more use of natural materials and beautifully designed details that highlight a snippet of nature even within built-up cities.

SCOTT MCAULAY

Sustainability warrior and ‘significant influencer’

Coordinator, Anthropocene Architecture School
Part 1: 2017 Part 2: 2019



‘He is getting the message out there in a fresh and different way.’ This is how judge Jo Dimitri describes Scott McAulay’s ‘innovative’ self-driven teaching about sustainability.

McAulay was galvanised by the 2018 IPCC Report detailing the catastrophic impact of global warming and the need for urgent action. He was shocked by the lack of change in architectural education. He writes: ‘In the face of a climate and ecological emergency, architecture schools should

Below McAulay’s Crisis Studio brought together practitioners and students on sustainable design projects.



be recognising and teaching that every line drawn has an impact upon both people and planet... and that architecture can – and should – have a positive ecological impact.’

He surveyed fellow students to identify gaps in their knowledge and came up with the idea of the Anthropocene Architecture School. It started its public life as an event at Scotland’s Architecture Fringe as he finished his Part 2 at the University of Strathclyde in 2019. Then with Extinction Rebellion he led a session for the public, NGOs, activists and architects to look at what was holding back their cities’ emergency response. Next came his Crisis Studios which paired industry tutors with students to design sustainably. Offers of sponsorship in cash and venues gave it a life of its own with McAulay going on to offer sessions in climate literacy in CPD slots at practices and public sessions. He was asked to set the tone on climate at the RIAS’ annual convention last autumn.

These activities were juggled with freelancing, and looked like they would all disappear in the coronavirus lockdown. But digital sessions have allowed him to reach a huge number of people – more than 2,000 over 71 events since July 2019. They include working with architecture schools in Scotland and Birmingham and at the Architectural Association. He has run sessions with Trada and the Landscape Institute. An Instagram library of climate emergency reads and regular research keeps his teaching visible and powerful. Though he is keen to get back into practice this is now giving him a living. He also coordinates the Architecture Climate Action Network’s group on Climate Literacy.

His referee, Sandy Halliday FRIBA, director of the Gaia Group, describes him as ‘significant influencer’. She says: ‘Scott is an exceptionally proactive, engaging, articulate spokesperson for the modern architectural profession. He has an extraordinary ability to get things done.’



Above McAulay co-edited Activism in Architecture, an edition of the RIAS Quarterly.

How would you most like to improve society through architecture?

I want to empower society: democratising architecture and its knowledge, removing barriers to access and participation – particularly on the built environment’s potential to be a climate solution. If we are to decarbonise society, the public must understand the impact of buildings and their operations upon climate change. This means creating educational opportunities from school age upwards, sharing our knowledge outside of architectural institutions in new ways in public spaces, and urging fellow architectural practitioners to champion a Green New Deal.

What existing building or place would you most like to tackle?

I would love to tackle the deep-green retrofit of 66 Portland Place to turn it into a live classroom, aiming to be the first Living Building Challenge certified retrofit in Europe – creating a 2030 Challenge exemplar.

ANNABEL KOECK

Leader of complex projects and mentor of the next generation

Associate, Grimshaw Architects
Parts 1: 2008 Part 2: 2011



Annabel Koeck’s significant contribution to Grimshaw’s comes both from her ability to lead complex projects and her contribution to office culture, says her referee Angela Dapper, principal at Grimshaw Architects.

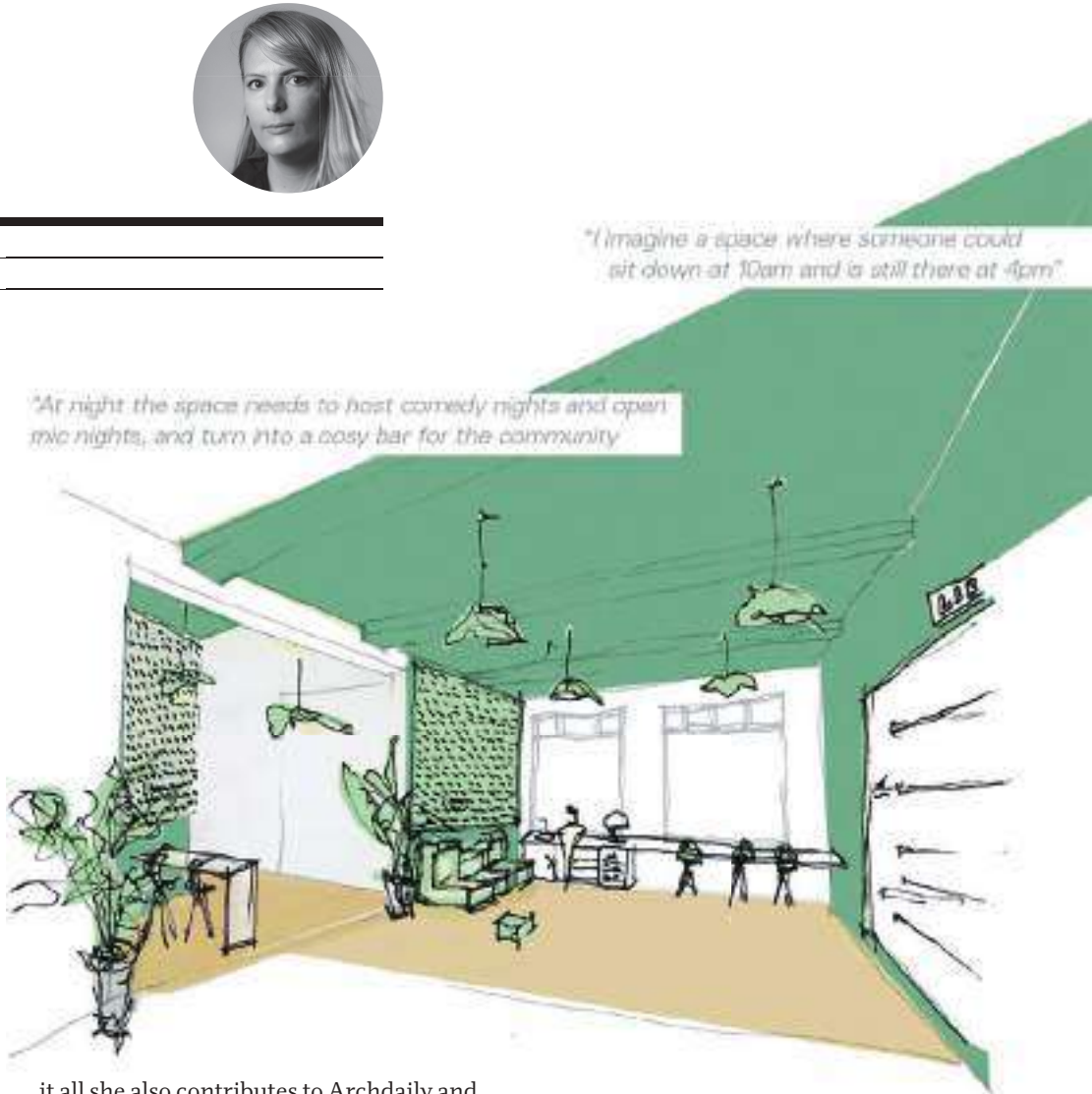
These complex projects include leading Grimshaw’s winning bid for the masterplan at Euston Station and leading the £1.2bn North London Heat and Power project.

What most impressed the judges however was that Koeck was doing that in tandem with looking beyond to the next generation.

Within the practice she leads London’s Community Engagement Team which has had tangible results with the refurbishment of the Upper Norwood Library Hub’s community centre and money raised for a initiative among Islington’s community centres involving climate change and addressing food poverty. She is proud of how these projects also empower the young architects driving them.

With the BCO Koeck has invited start-up founders to talk to the next generation and she is also co-founder of ScaleRule.org which encourages diversity in architecture, engineering and construction. Through this she has been mentoring and supporting school students, this year digitally. On top of

Below Working on the Scale Rule pavilion at Broadgate. Koeck co-founded Scale Rule to promote diversity in and engagement with construction.



it all she also contributes to Archdaily and the Australian Design Review.

Judge Alex Ely says: ‘Looking at an influence beyond Grimshaw with Scale Rule and the BCO was really interesting.’

It is clear Koeck is using her leadership drive to effect positive change.

Above Design for refurbished community centre for Upper Norwood Library Hub.

How would you most like to improve society through architecture?

First, architects can enable circular operations: we can lobby against the use of virgin materials which are unnecessary in creating resilient, functional and attractive buildings. We can advocate the dismantling of embedded systems that restrict material reuse, from taxation to warranties. Second, the design industry has a responsibility to empower local communities. This pandemic has highlighted the importance of localism. We are uniquely placed to support community projects, from inception and stakeholder engagement to communication, spatial requirements, and tangible outputs.

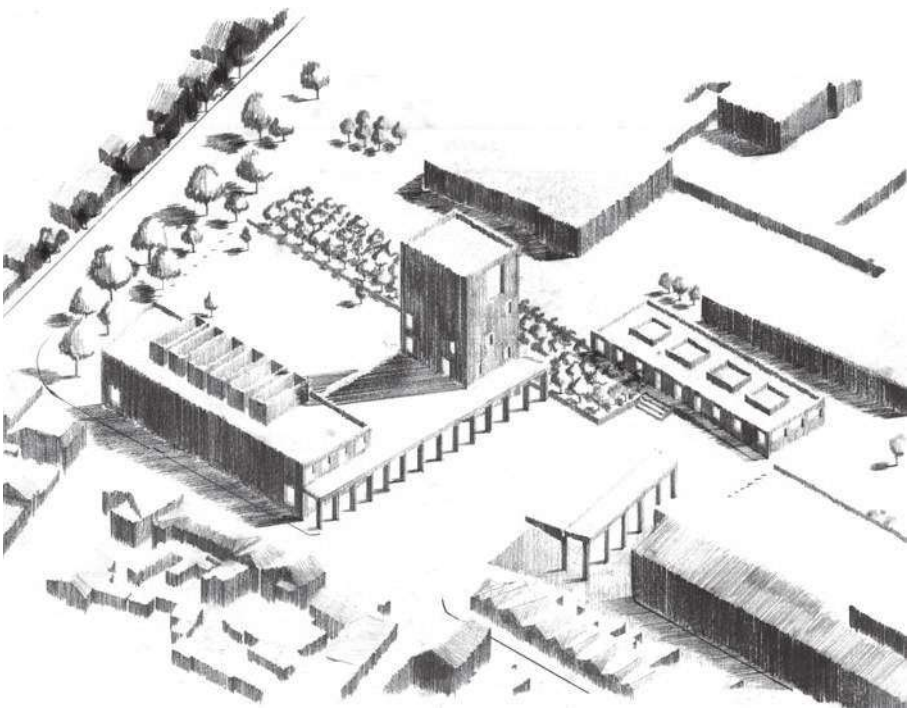
What existing building or place would you most like to tackle?

The modernisation of the post-war housing estate with community-led regeneration, to enhance community life.

BUSHRA MOHAMED

Champion of multigenerational living with a human-centric approach

Architect, David Kohn Architects
Part 1: 2011 Part 2: 2015



Bushra Mohamed is another member of this year’s cohort who spent her early life in Kenya. She came to the UK aged 12, moving to Letchworth Garden City. As a place which demonstrates strong ideas and ideals about housing and public space, it fostered a strand of thinking that runs through Mohamed’s work and impressed the 2020 judges.

In 2018, with Nana Biamah-Ofosu, Mohamed set up the interdisciplinary research, design and architecture partnership Studio Nyali. It emerged out of her teaching at Kingston School of Architecture. ‘Student demographics are changing,’ Mohamed explains, ‘and experiences aren’t homogeneous.’ The idea was to close the disconnect between her experience of architecture and the study of it, linking memory and understanding. The studio is dedicated

Right Mohamed’s RIBA Silver Medal nominated thesis project (2015), a civic square in Portugal.
Below Mohamed teaching at the Architectural Drawing Summer School at Hauser & Wirth, 2017.
Bottom The winning Birmingham market scheme, by David Kohn Architects.



to including other narratives and ‘non-traditional’ perspectives to better serve a pluralist society.

Its work has a particular focus on housing, including the Compound House, a type of multigenerational living well-documented in West Africa. This research has been discussed as part of the Architecture Foundation’s 100-day studio and will be published in the forthcoming instalment of the AA Files.

Studio Nyali has subsequently collaborated with Mary Vaughan Johnson, Michael Badu and Matthew Blunderfield within the teaching studio at Kingston and is currently working with ArchiAfrika on its contribution to the European Cultural Centre’s exhibition at the Biennale Architettura 2021.

‘Bushra has the ability to be in two places at once and manage that well. What I like about her work is that she plays these two different roles and has a human-centric approach,’ explains Klaus Bode.

‘She has also conveyed that in the most simple and constrained way in her drawings,’ says Mary Arnold Forster. ‘I like to see drawing.’

In addition to this Mohamed has wide professional experience. After her undergraduate degree at Nottingham Trent University, she spent two years working at RGP Architecture where she says she ‘really started to find a voice when discovering



What existing building or place would you most like to tackle?

High density housing in urban areas. For example, within London, a multi-cultural and ethnically diverse place, we still only use British or European housing types and standards to design housing for the future, thereby excluding modes of living that are relevant to our society.

There is a necessity to understand the spatial and cultural needs of the city’s demographic beyond light, air and square metre standards. The compound is a multigenerational dwelling with a courtyard and veranda for communal activities and access. Its attributes create a layered range of public, semi-public, semi-private and private space.

places walking and cycling around London’ – like the way the facade is pushed back at the Museum of Childhood in Bethnal Green to allude to a public square in front.

Since then she has spent varying amounts of time across a number of practices – Assemble, Adam Khan Architects (on social housing) and DRDH Architects, as well as a year at Monadnock in Rotterdam, where she worked on many housing competitions for Dutch cities and appreciated the practice’s proficiency in giving high density projects a civic quality.

For the past two and a half years Mohamed has been working at David Kohn Architects where she leads a number of arts, cultural and residential projects. She is part of the crossdisciplinary team that won the £60m market project in Birmingham which is due to begin next year.

With David Kohn she is also co-leading a diploma unit at the Architectural Association, focusing on the crucial role markets play in supporting the performative aspects of civic life.

Her referee Cathy Hawley, architect, Muf Art/Architecture and Mohamed’s MArch tutor, says: ‘Bushra is collegiate and generous by nature with a gift for retaining close ties and collaborations. She has a strong spatial and material sensibility and an impressive work ethic.’



FABRIZIO MATILLANA

A true balancing act between quality design, community and planning needs

Principal urban designer, Enfield Council
Part 1: 2008 Part 2: 2010



Above A selection of projects Matillana worked on while in private practice.

Fabrizio Matillana stood out for this year’s judges as a qualified architect and planner who is aligning the two disciplines by bringing design thinking to planning issues. After 10 years working for Farshid Moussavi and other large firms, he recently joined Enfield Council’s strategic planning and design department as principal urban designer. Previously he had helped empower communities and collaborated with the Community Action Group for Holloway and Old Oak Neighbourhood Forum, advising residents how their preferred brief could be delivered via an alternative scheme.

At Enfield Council, he has applied his knowledge to promote clear and proactive planning advice – an aspect judge Alex Ely felt uses his skills to strengthen the planning system. He is now leading the urban design advice for Meridian Water Phase 1 and large projects at Edmonton Green

Shopping Centre and Southall Gas Holders. He advocates dual aspect homes, clarity in tall building heights, meaningful communal spaces for housing and for carbon issues to be considered early.

‘One of Fabrizio’s many strengths,’ explains referee Tom Rumble, urban design lead at Enfield Council, ‘is his hunger for knowledge, showing initiative in researching topics for the local plan, making connections across subjects and interrogating the status quo. This is complemented by a rare and genuinely collaborative approach to make the most impactful recommendations that satisfy both private and public sector goals. He quickly gained our confidence, thereafter leading negotiations on some of Enfield’s largest and most complex proposals.’

‘Matillana shows a true balancing act between quality design, community and planning needs,’ says Klaus Bode.

How would you most like to improve society through architecture?

How planning policies are worded has an impact on architecture. Communities benefit when policy is attuned to improving quality of life. There is a looseness of language in key statutory documents like the National Design Guide and London Housing SPG. I would like to move discourse away from ‘high quality’ or ‘beauty’, favouring clearer definition, supported by evidence and promoted by a broad professional base that link design quality with environmental footprint.

INGRID PETIT

Diligent, patient natural leader who delivers intricate projects beautifully

Associate, Feilden Fowles Architects
Part 1: 2010 Part 2: 2013

The obvious dedication of Ingrid Petit to ‘doing her job really well’ as judge Mary Arnold-Forster puts it, impressed all the panel. That might be on a precious and complicated heritage project or back in the office leading winning bids or bringing in new systems. While some Rising Stars have had to go outside their practice for their challenges Petit arrived at Feilden Fowles with a hunger for site experience, which she got.

On the Fraternity building at Carlisle Cathedral she was involved from the first client meeting and held onto her role in this important heritage project, despite her lack of experience at the time. She did everything from the diagram to images to details, took on client presentations, met planners and answered Heritage Lottery Fund queries, helped investigate issues of movement of the historic structure and delved into drainage. ‘I know everything inside out,’ she says.

The project combines high-tech (CNC-cut stone, 3D modelling) with low-tech (specialist hand-carving) to make a beautifully simple accessible entrance to the grade I listed building. Her client, the Dean, praised Petit for her calm and pragmatism that made even dealing with problems on this medieval abbey site enjoyable. Collaboration and a remarkable attention to detail work with a wider vision of the Fraternity and the café which spills out to animate the cathedral precinct. Her referee, practice director Fergus Feilden, writes: ‘She has delivered an exceedingly intricate, demanding scheme beautifully.’

As the Fraternity went on site so did the faster track £2.5m Pinewood School learning centre, so Petit was regularly commuting from London to Wiltshire as well as Carlisle. The school had different challenges: Petit was contract administrator working with a contractor on an underpriced tender, with the inevitable difficult discussions. The building opened during the pandemic and is a valuable resource as its generous, flexible

How would you most like to improve society through architecture?

From designing and building learning environments, I appreciate how important many factors are in nurturing wellbeing and growth, particularly in young people. Having led many school/community engagement exercises, and through my tutoring focused on educational design, I appreciate the importance of material selection, forging links to the outdoors and fostering inclusive spaces. This empowers students to engage with spaces beyond traditional classrooms, which is crucial in encouraging curiosity and positive learning. I aspire to contribute to future education design guidance so that better facilities and learning environments are incorporated into best practice policy, to shape positive futures for all students.



Above The Fraternity at Carlisle Cathedral.
Bottom Ingrid Petit on site at the Fraternity, Carlisle Cathedral.

plan enables a safe teaching environment. There has been a dialogue between this and the design unit she teaches at London Met on innovative education buildings.

At the same time as running the two projects Petit has been leading on bids, including the shortlisted Finsbury Circus landscape and pavilion and the winning £16.5 million scheme for the Central Hall at the National Railway Museum, York. She continues to lead on this, always asking herself what her design decisions will actually mean on site.

As an early member of a growing practice Petit was pivotal in bringing in new systems including resourcing software CMAP, and leading on the culture change this required. Having this data meant quick decisions could be made as the pandemic kicked in and projects were put on hold, allowing agile management of the ‘slack list’ of under-employed staff and furloughing. Her leadership and communication skills helped make the messages about the challenges in sustaining the practice more palatable. Feilden again: ‘Her determination, diligence, patience and talent make her stand out as a leader.’

‘I liked her engagement with the historical project and teaching,’ says judge Klaus Bode. ‘And she is covering a wide territory with financial planning and communication... She is good across all fields.’



RE-FABRICATE



Committee of architects and architectural assistants

Paul Daramola, Sophie Zara James, Tiziana Di Ronco, Guiseppe Ferrigno, Kate Ridgway, Roseanne Scott (clockwise from top left)
Part 1: 2012-2013 Part 2: 2017-2020

This collective of architectural professionals is unified by the ambition to eradicate waste from the construction industry. In 2019 the committee founded Re-Fabricate, a project inspired by the circular economy which asked participants to collaboratively develop products that reuse waste for construction.

Launching at the RIBA Sustainability Festival, the team recruited members, negotiated funding, generated an online presence, and organised and hosted a series of events and workshops for participants, mentors and the public. Between February and June 2020, six multi-skilled teams developed products and business proposals that enable reuse of an assigned waste material. The results ranged from WoWood, a biodegradable acoustic panel produced out of timber waste, to UPlastic, an incentivised plastic recycling app, and Glass-Pass, a glass-based passport system that records the material’s ‘DNA’ to ensure it can be sorted and reused effectively.

The success of Re-Fabricate has resulted in several commissioned talks and a feature in the RIBA Journal (September 2020). On top of this, the above projects are all being taken forward and are looking for funding to become commercially available. The committee is now developing Re-Fabricate 2021 and looking to maximise its



What existing building or place would you most like to tackle?

Environmental practice does not apply to one specific typology. We need to transform design and construction methods for all buildings. Existing ones should be seen as ‘material banks’ to be carefully dismantled and reused once they reach the end of their functional lifespan. By structuring our industry around disassembly rather than demolition we can end the environmental exploitation of construction. Although we appreciate this raises many questions in relation to funding and procurement, it is a necessity if we are to combat the disastrous effect climate change is having on our planet. Our research is looking at developing a database of ‘waste materials’ available for reuse in construction.




Above The aggregates group devised a product using coffee grounds as an alternative to sand for making concrete.

impact through education, wider industry collaboration and engaging regions outside London.

Judge Jo Dimitri comments: ‘This is something fresh, innovative and new, tackling the issue of climate change. The group has taken a lead in the field that is original. Doing this as one person wouldn’t work. The method of creating sub teams was important in making it happen.’

‘I like that the team is pushing the boundaries of architectural practice using their skills,’ says Alex Ely. Klaus Bode, meanwhile, thinks the focus on materials is particularly strong as we move towards zero-carbon production.

ZOË
CAVE



Resilient ‘force of nature’ who helped reinvent Open City in the face of the pandemic

Deputy editor and development manager, Open City
Undergraduate degree: 2014 Master’s: 2019



Zoë Cave started working at Open City just weeks before the Covid-19 pandemic hit the UK. However, the way she helped adapt and transform the organisation’s activities in response to the crisis impressed all this year’s judges. Described as a ‘force of nature’ by Open City director Phineas Harper, Cave played a crucial part in finding inventive ways to keep a spirit of openness in London going when many other organisations were going into hibernation – furloughing staff, shutting down programmes, hoping to sit out the pandemic. Instead, Open House created an entirely new programme from scratch, a process Cave was integral to. This included a 30-part film series, a collection of model buildings to make at home (above) and over 60 architecture-led free children’s activities.

She also helped create the Open City Podcast about the past, present and future of London. The first episode featured an interview with one of the Cable Street Mural artists while touching on social history and the theme of memorials in public space. Cave also used her previous experience in sales to develop the Open House Friends scheme that has secured a steady stream of crucial donations these past six months. Harper says: ‘Nothing that Open City or Open House have achieved this year would have been possible without Zoë.’ Judge Alex Ely said: ‘She has shown resilience, maintaining in difficult circumstances a programme that would otherwise have disappeared.’

What existing building or place would you most like to tackle?

Kate Macintosh’s [grade II listed] 269 Leigham Court Road is an exemplary social approach to sheltered housing. The council has updated features of the estate, including a covered walkway. Not only is it now incongruous, water collects beneath it, freezing in the winter and becoming hazardous. I would like to tackle the walkway because consideration of the more mundane bits of architecture would protect the bigger ambitions of the design.



Above Adams speaking at a New Architecture Writers event.

Bottom Design work, Plinths and Tapestry.



How would you most like to improve society through architecture?

As a tool to get the voices of those often neglected heard. I would like to improve society through architecture by giving everyone an equal stake in moulding the built environment. I intend to challenge how we view the environment and the interaction between people and ecology to argue for architecture in which humans and other organisms live in unison.

What existing building or place would you most like to tackle?

I would like to address the space of opportunity. Creating opportunities for working class, BAME, and misrepresented students. For those who dream of studying architecture but think they can’t as they don’t see anyone that looks or speaks like them. I want to help tackle pressing global and societal issues such as the climate crisis, racial injustices and gender inequalities. In terms of geographic place, I want to start in London and expand to the UK, Europe and then eventually the world.

SHAWN
ADAMS



Talented designer, architectural writer and pathfinder for aspiring architects

Part 2 graduate
Part 1: 2015 Part 2: 2020

Adams only finished his masters this year, during the pandemic, but he had already started using his talents to make change. He co-founded the Power Out of Restriction Collective (or POoR), which aims to help and inspire the younger generation, and joined the Architecture Foundation’s New Architectural Writers (NAW) scheme, a free programme for BAME design critics, while also working periodically.

Referees and RCA tutors Daniel Fernández Pascual and Alon Schwabe know Adams’ designs and the wider impact he is making. ‘Shawn is an extremely talented architectural designer paving the way for a new generation of BAME architecture practitioners while enhancing the voice of under-represented communities in London and beyond,’ they say. ‘He is already leaving his profound mark on the profession and the urban fabric.’

His most recent project, Plinths and Tapestry, has been published in the Financial Times, Architects’ Journal and the RIBA Journal and was exhibited at the Betts Project gallery, while his writing with NAW has taken him into magazines such as Vice and Icon. He is using his talents and seeing which direction they take him. But when asked where he is heading he reframes the question to ‘What am I trying to do?’ He writes: ‘To me, architecture is a unique discipline that allows us to create meaningful and impactful spaces... it has the power to positively transform lives.’

Like many people, Adams hadn’t seen anyone like him forge this path into architecture. Or into leaving London to study elsewhere in the UK, as he did at Portsmouth. Or to spend an Erasmus year in practice in Spain, as he did. Or teach at Central

St Martins as he now does. ‘I don’t know anyone who has been a lecturer,’ he says. Equally he never thought he would be a pioneer, as he has proved to be. Since 2015 he has done educational outreach with the Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust, of which he is an alumni, for the City of London and in schools.

‘There are others out there who have not seen someone of the same race and working class background as me, so I push at each area,’ he says. He likes the idea that those that follow can just message him for a word of encouragement.

What he did have was youth clubs and volunteers just a little older who organised sports, music and creative activities and gave him the confidence to stand and speak. As those very youth clubs are closing down he and a group of likeminded friends got together to found POoR. How could they offer the same hope, encouragement and voice? ‘We took our passions and made them more tangible,’ he explains. In Wandsworth, London, POoR is leading co-design at a Carney’s Community boxing gym, giving gym goers a real say in change. ‘We can relate to these people, we also played pool and table tennis and went to the tuck shop... We couldn’t really make it otherwise.’ Working with MAKE Architects POoR has also helped launch The People’s Pavilion for young people to design a structure in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

‘His interest in the next generation when he is just a graduate is commendable,’ said judge Alex Ely. Klaus Bode pointed out that while Adams wanted things to change he wasn’t waiting for the older generation to do it. In the meantime what is next for him is a job with a housing practice.

THE 2020 SHORTLIST

Alex Ball, Richard Markland Architects
Applying virtual reality to concrete pours

Geethica Gunarajah, IF_DO
Proving herself with design flare and mentoring

Catalina Ionita, Coda Studios
Engaging on ethics and sustainability

Farran Keenan, Wolff Architects
Shaking up processes for sustainability

Carla Novak and Adam Hiles, Novak Hiles Architects
Establishing creative design practice

Ben Porter, Hawkins\Brown
Coding for efficiency

Pati Santos, The Good Thing
Practice for wellbeing

Kike Sanyaolu, Galliford Try
Problem solving and working for BAME women in construction

Oliver Thomas, BIG
Aspiring archi-preneur and design technologist

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Anthony Paul Rossi

1932 – 2020

Expert in conservation and heritage, particularly known for his work with church buildings for which he was awarded a Papal Knighthood



Renowned Norfolk and Derbyshire architect Anthony Rossi has died aged 88. Awarded a CBE in 2008 for services to heritage and conservation, he worked for more than 35 years to preserve and enhance built heritage, mainly in East Anglia and Derbyshire. Although born in Birmingham in 1932, Rossi came from a family of Norwich silversmiths, who originated from Como. Rossi's parents moved back to Norfolk in 1938 and he was educated at Norwich School. He was then articulated to the highly respected Norwich architectural practice of Cecil Upcher & James Fletcher Watson. After two years at the Polytechnic School of Architecture in London, followed by his National Service, he worked with several Norwich practices, including Wearing, Hastings and Rossi (1968-1972), before taking the newly established post graduate diploma in conservation at the University of York. He married Claire Statham in 1963 and they had four children. He moved to Derbyshire in 1974 to join the newly revitalised Derbyshire County Council conservation team as its historic buildings advisor. His willingness to freely share his knowledge and experience was exemplary, enabling his young colleagues to develop their professional skills by observing his – notably his meticulous examination of historic evidence, attention to detail, ability to communicate his ideas by means of freehand sketches and his impartial and erudite advice, always offered in a calm and measured fashion. In 1978 he was headhunted to become Conservation Group leader with Norwich City Council, but returned to Derbyshire in 1980 to work with former colleague Derek Latham when he formed his new practice. At Latham's, Anthony's skills were used to great effect by clients with historic buildings, whether for meticulous repair,

self-effacing extensions or empathetic new buildings within their curtilage. The key example is his rescue of the 17th century Hopkinson's House on Greenhill, Wirksworth, the most significant derelict building in town. The roof and floors had fallen in, but carefully sifting the rubble he was able to resurrect many original features in the process of repair and re-use. Using trades under his direct control rather than a building contractor he painstakingly pieced the property back together on an extremely limited budget for the Derbyshire Historic Buildings Trust. This was a turning point for the Wirksworth project, established by the Civic Trust and Monument Trust to revitalise and regenerate this Derbyshire town. Elsewhere, his work to stabilise and make accessible the ruins of Hardwick Old Hall was ground-breaking and exemplary. In March 1987, with a high reputation, he returned to Norfolk to establish his own practice. Projects of note included the repair of the near derelict Thorpe Hall in Norwich and the historic barns at Waxham and Paston. He tended Blickling Hall and Flatford for the National Trust as well as working for several preservation trusts, local authorities and historic churches, frequently in co-operation with English Heritage. A devout Roman Catholic, he undertook work for the Roman Catholic Diocese of East Anglia and the National Shrine at Walsingham and acted as architect to the Roman Catholic Cathedral of St John the Baptist in Norwich for 11 years. He designed the new Roman Catholic church in Little Walsingham in 2006 as a carbon neutral design using 90m ground probes to provide under floor heating and 138 photovoltaic cells on the roof for all additional energy need. He was awarded a Papal Knighthood in 1998 for his outstanding contribution to the Church. He generously gave his time to other denominations too. Softly spoken and modest, Rossi adopted a low-key, ascetic way of life with the air of a slightly eccentric Oxford don, and a bone dry, subversive sense of humour. He will be sorely missed by his wife, children and 12 grandchildren. ●

IN MEMORIAM

David Wyn Thomas
ELECTED 1956, GWYNEDD

Allen Cunningham
ELECTED 1961, EYMET, FRANCE

Trevor John Holmes
ELECTED 1968, LINCOLNSHIRE

James Cooke
ELECTED 1980, GLASGOW

Robin Michael Briscoe
ELECTED 1984, NORFOLK

David Charles Ramsay
ELECTED 1985, WILTSHIRE

Maria Alice Plunkett, Lady Dunsany
ELECTED 1993, COUNTY MEATH, IRELAND

To inform the RIBA of the death of a member, please email membership.services@riba.org with details of next of kin

Exchange

Perhaps, Minister

To the housing minister, Christopher Pincher: Sir, you write in the RIBA Journal (Minister lays out larger role for architects in new planning system, ribaj.com, 29 October) that ‘architects will be on the cutting edge of our national mission to reach net zero emissions’, yet less than 50% of planning applications are submitted by architects. The reason is that, unlike the vast majority of countries worldwide, the UK peculiarly refuses to make architects’ appointment to building projects mandatory. For example in France, an architect must be appointed to any project of more than 70m² of construction area. Not only does this pusillanimous British attitude deprive countless architects of bread, particularly young ones struggling while repaying their extortionate university fees, but also undermines all well meaning platitudes for good design in the UK. Now you ask architects to participate in planning reviews, saying ‘We want to see architects playing a bigger, more influential role in a reformed planning system, with beauty, quality and the environment at its core’ – where more than half of the designs under scrutiny are submitted by those undercutting architects’ role. This is an odious impudence to the profession whose help you now seek. If you were genuinely concerned to secure good design across the UK and meet net zero ambitions, you would legislate tomorrow to ensure architects’ appointment is mandatory. Name and address withheld

Cost of fresh air
Engineer Shaun Fitzgerald of CIBSE and the SAGE Environmental Modelling Group spoke in July’s RIBA Journal (Intelligence, p33) about virus mechanics and how to adapt our indoor environments, especially air handling. But I need a plain English



We welcome letters but retain the right to edit them: letters.ribaj@riba.org RIBA J, RIBA Publishing, 66 Portland Place, London W1B 1AD

translation of the last paragraph, where he talks about ‘get plenty of fresh air in’ and ‘getting used to room temperatures that are more like those outside in the height of summer’. Since our outdoor temperature high this summer was 41°C, that cannot become a designed indoor comfort level. Also implied, but not said, in the piece is a forecast of high levels of air conditioning plant for domestic use, so raising carbon profiles when CoP 26 aims to reduce them. With further proposed higher than standard air change rates for both healthy rooms and comfort, stacking up plant rooms in the attic or on the roof, where are the references for these assertions please? And what are the CIBSE approaches to reducing or increasing built environment carbon profiling? Colin D Brooking, Limehouse, London

Photo mystery
Could the RIBA J be guilty of airbrushing buildings rather than models? I’m sure they have feelings too. In your study of new canalside homes (RIBA J, October 2020 p8) your Buildings introduction page 7 shows them with aerials and the third house in the row is seemingly lacking its skylight and top roof. Page 9 shows almost the same shot lacking the same roof portion – but also the aerials. Are you testing us for observation and attention to detail? Do I pass? In the same issue I read the gender article by Rosa Turner Wood (Takeover: Deconstructing gender, p64) with great interest but after 38 years as a qualified but not continued engineer and a marketing professional in the building sector (sadly not an architect) I’d like to see solutions and examples of addressing the issue. Jane Harrad-Roberts, Brock Carmichael, Liverpool

The editor replies: You do indeed pass! We’ve checked with the photographer who confirms that on one of the photos the aerials (not placed there by the architects) were digitally removed, but not on the other, so there was an inconsistency we’d not spotted ourselves. However there’s no roof-removal going on: there’s a terrace up there at that point.

Tweetback
Reaction to the announcement of Hugh Pearman’s retirement from RIBA Journal

Ben Derbyshire @ben_derbyshire
I hear that @hughpearman is retiring as editor @RIBA J. As president @RIBA I appreciated his work as the very best among architectural journalism, and Hugh as a witty, perceptive, hugely knowledgeable editor – fun to be with, and a very hard act to follow!

Gurmeet Sian @OfficeSianArch
Good luck Hugh, and congrats on your amazing work on @RIBA J, and especially for championing new (+quieter?) voices.

Gayle Appleyard @gayleappleyard
You’ll be missed Hugh – especially your calm, supportive voice & championing of small practice.

Atelier Adam Nathaniel Furman @Furmadamadam
Congrats on the incredible work you’ve done at the RIBA J, and how brilliant you’ve been at supporting new voices all the way along.

More on Hugh’s legacy in the January issue

Something to get off your chest? Write to us: letters.ribaj@riba.org

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Palazzo del Lavoro
Turin, 1961

The Palazzo del Lavoro in Turin, one of the most remarkable achievements of the great Italian engineer Pier Luigi Nervi, was designed in collaboration with the architect Gio Ponti for the Expo 61, which celebrated the centenary of Italy's unification. The vast roof of this exhibition space was supported by 16 independent 'umbrellas', each made of steel beams fixed to a central concrete column and separated by strip skylights; Nervi's solution not only reveals but emphasises the role of the structure in creating architectural space. The exterior of the building was glazed all around.

This photograph, taken by the then Architectural Design editor Monica Pidgeon, shows one of Nervi's columns in the background of Ponti's exhibition display. This, as in many previous expos, celebrates technological progress – specifically, in this case, its role in the future of the Italian economy. The expo also aimed to leave a legacy of reusable infrastructures to the city of Turin. The building stopped being used in the 1970s and, in spite of a series of proposals for its adaptation, is now in a grave state of neglect. ●
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