Will Alsop of SMC Alsop designed the The Public, a multipurpose arts facility that recently opened in West Bromwich, United Kingdom. Architects Flannery & de la Pole completed the project. Photo: Roderick Coyne

Brooklyn · 2008.0813

The renovation and expansion of the Brooklyn Children's Museum in the Crown Heights neighborhood of Brooklyn, New York City, has reached substantial completion. New York City-based Rafael Viñoly Architects designed the colorful L-shaped addition, which doubles the museum's space to 102,000 square feet (9,500 square meters). It is expected to achieve LEED Silver certification.

Over eight million yellow ceramic tiles cover the building envelope. Two stories of new construction add a lobby, exhibition galleries, classrooms, a library, a cafe, a gift shop, and administrative space. The expansion is integrated with the existing structure, improving circulation and providing clear access to the existing rooftop terrace and outdoor theater.

Specially designed features, such as low-mounted wooden handrails, ensure accessibility to children. Porthole windows punctuate the building envelope.
at a variety of heights and angles.

Sustainable features include geothermal wells for heating and cooling, photovoltaic cells on exterior walls, sensor-controlled lighting and ventilation, and recycled-rubber flooring. The reopening is scheduled for September 20.

West Windsor Township - 2008.0811
Ground has been broken for the inaugural building in the 103-acre (42-hectare) Carnegie Center West development in West Windsor Township, New Jersey. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania-based KlingStubbins provided complete architecture, engineering, and interior design services for the 120,000-square-foot (11,000-square-meter) office building, which will be occupied by Princeton University starting in fall 2009. LEED Silver certification is targeted.

San Diego - 2008.0808
Construction is underway on a $22 million expansion project at Francis Parker School, a K-12 day school in San Diego, California. Lake/Flato Architects, Inc. of San Antonio designed the 53,000-square-foot (5,000-square-meter) project, which comprises facilities for arts, music, administration, lectures, and maintenance. The five new buildings are tilt-up structures that feature panel construction with inlaid ornamental glass strips. The facades include Brazilian redwood paneling.

HR Weatherford of San Diego is the construction manager, and the San Diego office of Rudolph and Sletten, Inc. is serving as general contractor.

Shanghai - 2008.0807
The Shanghai Corporation Business Headquarters Park was recently completed in Shanghai, China. The Shanghai office of Bellevue, Washington-based MulvannyG2 Architecture designed the project. A large ecological garden forms the focal point of the park. Eight building clusters run from north to south and radiate outwards from the central garden. The master plan calls for the connection of existing rivers and streams, reminiscent of water-locked villages typical of southern Yangtze region. MulvannyG2 senior partner Ming Zhang served as design director for the project.

Arlington - 2008.0805
Architecture and engineering firm DMJM Design has named Philip J. Antis, Sr., PE, SE, principal of structural engineering in the firm's Arlington, Virginia, office. Antis will also retain his position as structural engineering department head. His 35 years practicing structural engineering have included extensive experience with large and complex projects, including office buildings, laboratories, medical facilities, and judicial facilities.
West Bromwich · 2008.0801

The Public (pictured above), a multipurpose arts facility in West Bromwich, United Kingdom, recently opened. Will Alsop of London-based SMC Alsop designed the building. Architects Flannery & de la Pole of West Bromwich completed the interior fit-out.

Contained within a simple rectilinear form, The Public was conceived of as a box of delights, with a wide variety of spaces, forms, angles, curves, surfaces, views, and atmospheres. The envelope is punctured by a scattering of jelly-bean-shaped windows that pierce the sides of the aluminum cladding. At ground level, the building opens up via large sliding pink doors.

Inside the building, rugged, multifaceted, and curved forms appear to balloon into the space at random, sitting on or suspended from a table structure: a large-scale ramp that links the spaces. These forms are containers for the many different functions in the building. There are pods for displaying art, a huge "sock" containing two large galleries, a ramp that contains a many of the displays, an events space "rock," and a restroom "pebble." Suspended from the roof, a series of lily-pad-shaped spaces with brightly colored interiors house workspaces for lease.

Thirteen pairs of concrete-filled steel columns run through the center of the building. These angled, tapering columns support the main arrival floor, which is Level 3. Steel members cantilever out to support the roof.

The Public includes 3,500 square meters (37,700 square feet) of cultural space, plus 2,250 square meters (24,200 square feet) for enterprise and business tenancies and incubation. It is the first major initiative for Destination West Bromwich, an ongoing regeneration project.

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