The Public

Design  Alsop Architects (www.alsoparchitects.com), Flannery & de la Pole (www.flannerydelapole.co.uk)

Location  West Bromwich, UK

Function  Culture

Built Area  9,274 m²

Photograph  Roderick Coyne, Mark Enstone

Profile

Will Alsop is one of the best known architects in Britain, enjoying a major international reputation. Originally working with John Lyall, and then with Jan Sturmer, his practice became Alsop Architects until 2004.

Will follows a parallel path as an artist, feeling that it is a discipline inseparable from architecture. He was a tutor of sculpture at Central St. Martins College of Art & Design, London, for several years, has held many other academic posts, and actively promotes the artistic contribution to the built environment. His paintings and sketches have been exhibited alongside his architectural projects in dedicated exhibitions at Sir John Soane’s Museum, Milton Keynes Gallery, Cube Gallery, Manchester, the British Pavilion at Venice Biennale and is collected by the Canadian Center for Architecture, among many others.

Awards

2006 Benjamin Moore HUE Award Contract Exteriors for professional body of work including, Hotel du Department, Marseilles, Peckham Library and Fawwood Children’s Center London, OCAD and WESTside Sales Pavilion, Toronto

2005 Toronto Architecture and Urban Design Award, Award of Excellence, Building in Context, Best of Show, Ontario College of Art & Design, Toronto, Canada First Prize, Peckham Square, Liverpool, UK Short-listed, Edmonton Art Gallery Competition, Alberta, Canada

2004 D&I Design Effectiveness Award: OCAD, Toronto, Canada RIBA Worldwide Projects Award: OCAD, Toronto, Canada Short-listed, Vancouver Art Gallery Masterplan, British Columbia, Canada Short-listed, Banff Center for the Art, Banff, Alberta, Canada

His current practice, SMC Alsop, is based in Battersea, London and is part of the SMC Group. Also Alsop has over 110 staff worldwide, with its principal office in London together with offices in Beijing, Shanghai and Singapore and a presence in Toronto. The Company is committed to architecture of delight and enjoyment, reached through a process that involves the building users, the client and the local community. Community involvement is seen as a vital ingredient in the design process. In addition Alsop’s buildings are known for their bold and often dramatic incorporation of art. Close collaboration with artists is often reinforced by an innovative use of new materials and a bold use of color.
The building has been designed to accommodate an array of artistic, educational and community projects, as well as exhibitions, displays, facilities, events and commercial activities. The approach throughout has been to combine dramatic and intense experiences for visitors, fitness for purpose and the flexibility to continue to respond to changing needs and developing cultures.

Contained within a simple rectilinear form, The Public was conceived as a 'Box of Delights' offering a wide variety of spaces, forms, angles, curves, surfaces, vistas and atmospheres. A series of enclosed or semi-enclosed structures organically shaped and described in terms such as 'Pod', 'Rock', 'Pebble', 'Lily-pad' and 'Sock' exist within the building as discrete entities, their external walls fully defined and detached from the box that contains them. In places, these structures break through the external shell of the building.

It will include inspirational new learning environments for formal and informal learning across generations, focusing on the skills local people need to build confidence and transform lives culturally and economically.

This theme of commitment to the transformation of economic as well as cultural fortunes runs through everything we do. Across the building, a programme of incubation of creative businesses and ideas will foster new activity and help to attract and retain talented people in the Black Country. This will culminate in some of the most distinctive spaces the Lilypads at the top of the building in an environment where creativity and business will come together to bring new energy to the regeneration of the borough.
영국에 자라한 이 건물은 예술, 교육, 지역 공동체 프로젝트와 각종 전시회, 전람, 사설, 행사 등 다양한 상업적 활동을 개최할 수 있도록 설계되었다. 이에 이곳의 콘셉트는 방문객에게 드라마틱하고 강렬한 경험을 제공하면서 적합성, 필요성 그리고 방문하는 문화에 대응할 수 있는 유연함을 두루 갖춘 곳을 추구하고있다.

이곳은 단순히 작품 황제를 지닌 외형적 모습인데 반해, 내부에는 매우 다양한 공간, 형태, 각, 곡선, 표면, 경치, 그리고 분위기를 제공하는 ‘출겨울 가득한 상자(Box of Delights)’로 계획되었다. 부분적으로 완전히 돌려싸인 각종 구조들은 ‘꼬투리(Pod)’, ‘돌(Rock)’, ‘조각돌(Pebble)’, ‘수련일(Lily-pad)’, ‘양말(Sock)’과 같은 명칭으로 불리우며 유기적인 모양에게 공간의 재미를 더한다. 특히, 이 구조들은 각 요소에서 건물의 외벽 밖으로 뛰어나오기도 하고 분리되어 존재하기도 한다.

이 건물에는 세대를 초월한 정규 또는 비정규 교육을 위한 새로운 구조적인 공간이 들어설 것이며 특히 이곳에서 지역 주민들이 자신감을 얻고 문화적으로 경제적으로 생활을 변화시키는데 필요한 기술을 배우게 될 것이다.

이렇게 문화적인 면과 동시에 경제적인 측면까지 변화시키기 위한 노력이 담겨진 이곳은 건물 전체에 걸쳐 창의적 인 사업과 아이디어를 독특히 하는 프로그램이 적용되었다. 이에 따라, 이곳을 이용하는 이들에게 새로운 활동을 촉진시키고 소외지역 내의 재능 있는 사람들을 불러 모으는데 도움이 될 것이다. 또한 가장 독특 있는 몇몇 공간에서 창의력과 사업이 하나의 공동체가 되어 지역구의 재개발에 새로운 함을 넣어주는 공간이 될 것이다.