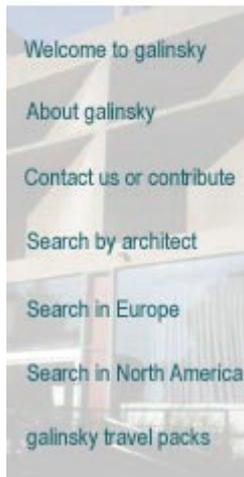




Peckham Library, London Alsop and Stormer 1999



by architect...

by region...



Peckham Library
122 Peckham Hill Street
London SE15 5JR
UK

Alsop & Stormer 1999

Peckham Library is a bold, imaginative, highly successful building; it is both a striking example of community architecture and a significant part of the recent regeneration program for the borough of Southwark. It won the Stirling Prize in 2000 and is the result of a client brief to re-define the role of the library within a modern community. Alsop & Stormer successfully met the brief with a building that combines strong form, vivid color and a sense of wit within a design that meets the serious purpose of providing a building that really enriches local community life.

Situated in its own plaza the building is essentially an upturned L shape resting on seven slender columns - this creates a covered area that extends the plaza below the building and announces the entrance to the library. The north face of the building is completely glazed with a grid of clear and vividly colored glass. This provides an excellent combination of natural light and colored tinted light within the library spaces.



All other external surfaces are covered with pre-patinated copper; steel mesh is used to re-inforce the external edges of the building. The distinctive green of the copper cladding contrasts with the orange tongue-shaped attachment protruding from above the front of the roof; this acts as a shade for the study center on the top floor. The building has no air-conditioning and this attachment is part of the design that combines shading, natural ventilation and passive cooling effects to produce considerable reductions in the operating costs of the building. The fourth floor houses the library itself and extends across the horizontal section.

Three enclosed 'pods' are located within the library space; they contain a meeting room, a children's activity center and an Afro-Caribbean study center. The 'pods' are elevated on columns and are an efficient use of space - they leave usable, accessible space below them while providing private areas for quiet study above the main library floor.



The word LIBRARY in large bold letters on the roof signals the function of this building but it is much more than a conventional library. The building has a striking physical presence and has provided a dynamic center for creative and learning activities within the local community.

John Perrin 2003 (updated 2007)

How to visit

The library is located on the plaza at the junction of Peckham Hill Street and Peckham High Street close to Peckham Rye rail station. For information please call +44 (0)20 7525 0200.

Opening hours:

Mon, Tue, Thu and Fri: 9:00hrs to 20:00hrs

Wed: 10:00hrs to 20:00hrs

Sat: 9:00hrs to 17:00hrs

Sun: 12:00hrs to 16:00hrs

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