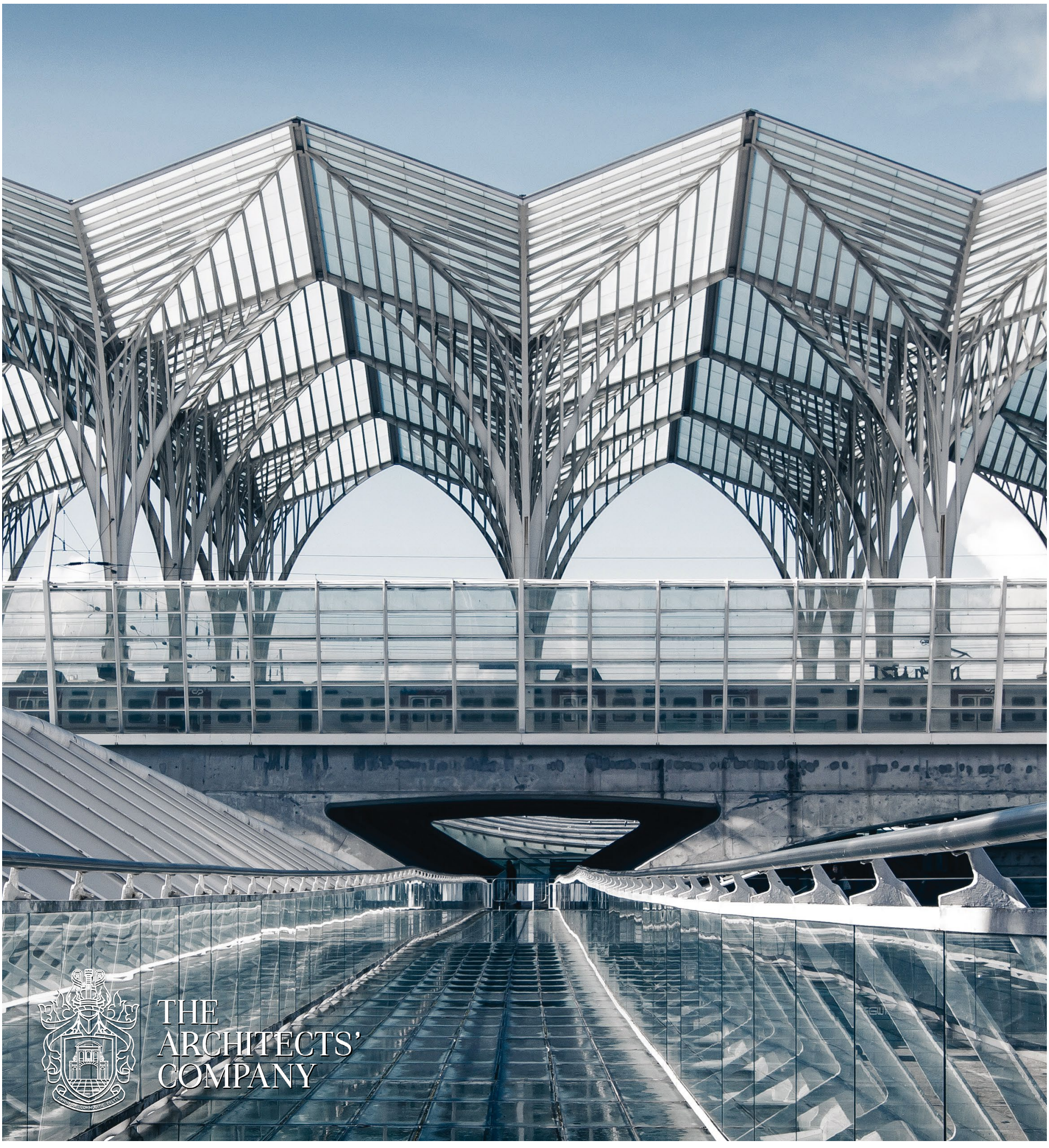
ARCHITECTS' COMPANY
CHRONICLE

NOVEMBER 2024



Annual Review of 2023/24

Chris Williamson looks back at an eventful year

I was asked to choose a reading for my inauguration at St Lawrence Jewry in September last year. I chose Daniel Chapter 6 not because I thought I was heading into the Lions Den but to remind me of the advice Past Master Jonathan Ball had given to me in Genoa a year previously. Jonathan's wise words were to approach the year being true to myself and not to be unduly influenced by others. I found this reassuring but daunting, as there is a weight of expectations generated by many years of tradition not just the Company of Architects but also the long history of the Livery Companies. Running an architectural practice for 40 years is quite different from the responsibility of representing the Company of Architects and to me the Livery Companies are more relevant now than ever. Because of the high cost of education, students need all the help they can get and we are well placed to help. They were formed to set high standards for their products or services and also to help apprentices to reach those standards – to continually improve. In a rapidly changing world it is important that we constantly adapt and develop our learning and one of the best ways is to learn from each other.

Tony Benn also chose Daniel as a reference in his memoirs. "Dare to be a Daniel, Dare to stand alone. Dare to have a purpose. Dare to make it known". My purpose this year was on extending, improving and promoting our educational activities, learning from our peers and to grow the Membership with a greater emphasis on youth and diversity – concentrating on outreach.

I was fortunate in my year to have Michael Mainelli as Lord Mayor. Michael (also a member of the Company of Architects) during his time at Mansion House promoted the diversity of London throughout the world, not just financial services but science, education, the creative arts – including architecture – and all aspects of our wonderful city. Michael also asked that the Livery Companies spend more time outward facing and less time talking amongst each other. So in this review of the year I've omitted a lot of the wonderful meals in glamorous settings with exceptional people to concentrate on the outward facing aspects of my year. Michael was guest of honour at our Annual Banquet at Haberdashers' in January. Thanks to Spence Refit for sponsoring the event that allows us to subsidise places for our apprentices. I was pleased to take part in the Lord Mayor's "Knowledge Miles" series of online broadcasts (https://www.greshamsociety.org/webinar/11628/). Michael also kindly wrote the foreword to our publication "London: the Global Hub for Architecture" which is summarised here on page 12. It is an important account of those working in Architecture and the built environment and their contribution to the success of London's economy and influence.

We have attracted 64 new members during the year; they represent all aspects of the profession and a broad range of specialism and interest. The highlights for me have been the new influx of young and vibrant Freemen and Liverymen, the promise and enthusiasm of the students and Apprentices. Throughout my career I've had as much enjoyment mentoring young people in their career as I have from the fantastic projects in amazing cities throughout the world, which I have been fortunate to work on.

As well as learning a lot from Past Masters I've learned from our Apprentices too. Stella Forde recommended Toastmasters to improve my public speaking (and my jokes) and their events have been fun whilst informative and educational. It was wonderful to have my mentee Shania on our trip to Lisbon. Shania has since completed her MA in Urban Design at Westminster. My mentee Ellisse moved jobs to gain more hands on experience in a firm with exciting projects and the opportunity of on site involvement. And in a rare coincidence both my mentees were married this year. A memorable year for all.

Our Practice Visits have been very well attended. These are a rare opportunity to visit the studios of innovative Architects and Engineers. Court Assistant Luke Tozer does a fantastic job organising these and has kindly written a summary on page 10. Temple Bar also has been the venue for informative lectures, debates and film nights hosted by Court Assistant Lucy Bullivant and Past Master Peter Murray. Special thanks are also due to Grant Smith who curates the Temple Bar activities with such enthusiasm and expertise.

This is the second year of the WCCA Book Awards run in conjunction with the World Architecture Festival. There were over 70 entries in seven different categories and the Awards will be announced in November and presented at our Annual Banquet in January. These Awards have the potential to grow into a high profile event for the Company and the profession. There are plans to incorporate a book fair with events in Temple Bar and Paternoster Square, which was once a major centre for printing and publications. An account of some of this years entries is on page 21.

The City Building of the Year Award is always a highlight. The Corporation of London provides the Company with a shortlist of buildings that have discharged all the planning conditions and are eligible for the Award. This year the programme of visits was organised by Immediate Past Master Chris Dyson. It was a great day looking at some of the City's innovative new architecture and also be entertained throughout the day by the jury's Chairman Paul Finch and his in-depth knowledge of the architectural profession and its personalities. Paul's report is on page 20.

Back in 2021 I listen to Professor Stuart Russell give the BBC Reith Lecture on Artificial Intelligence. It was a wonderful informative insight into what seemed at the time to be a distant future. But within a few months AI was suddenly everywhere and will continue to be so. I wrote to Stuart immediately after his 2021 lecture to invite him to talk more specifically about AI in Architecture and share the stage with Neil Leach to give examples of AI in practice. It was an incredible evening. On pages 4 and 5 Cormac Deavy of Arup's has written an account of the event and Neil has kindly contributed his own views on pages 6-7.

The Annual Lecture was inspirational in showing a glimpse of future possibilities. It is important however to present an alternative view and we are fortunate to have Liveryman Jonathan Louth to do this. I ran a Design Think Tank with Jonathan at the London School of Architecture looking at the benefits of a more locally based handcrafted approach to construction in contrast with the generally trends of the industry. Jonathan has written an account of this work on page 8.

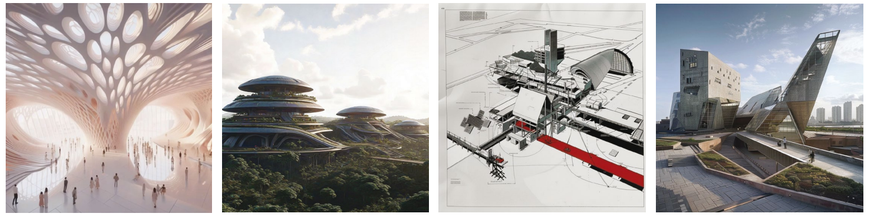
We were sad to see Cheryl Reid step down as Clerk. Cheryl has been wonderful to work with and we hope to see her again in the future. Typical of Cheryl she organised a seamless transition to Lyndon Jones, our former assistant clerk who also has great experience of other Livery Companies. Mike Stiff and Ian Head stepped down from the court, as did Jonathan Ball whose account is published on page 28. A huge thank you to all. I would also like to propose thanks to Almoner Stuart Le Sage for his contact and communication with all our members.

Stuart sadly reported the death of Rosemary Curry in September. Rosemary was a dedicated Liveryman, always willing to help and contribute to the organistation of all events and committees. She will be much missed.

As I watched Giles at the lectern in St Lawrence Jewry a few weeks ago, I really couldn't believe how quickly the year had flown by. I've enjoyed it immensely. Thank you so much for this fantastic opportunity.

AI: What If We Succeed?

A review of the Milo Lecture on June 19th by Cormac Deavy and Michael Beaven



The Milo Lecture 2024 Review
The Worshipful Company of Chartered Architects Annual Milo Lecture 2024 featured the thought-provoking title "AI: What If We Succeed?".
The Milo Lecture is an annual event in honour of the sword bearer and first WCCA Clerk, Lt. Col. Peter Milo

We were fortunate to have two very different leaders in the field share their complementary views. Neil Leach from Florida International University, a practicing architect, encouraged us to consider that AI is here and now, and has a bright future in design, with applied examples of AI in architectural practice. Professor Stuart Russell is Professor of Computer Science at the University of California, Berkeley brought a broad perspective on the journey of AI. He argued that while Alan Turing predicted artificial general intelligence (AGI) would result in machines taking control, he was right to express concern but wrong to think that doom is inevitable. Instead, Professor Russell emphasized the need to develop a new kind of AI that is provably beneficial to humans. Nevertheless, he believes we are currently heading in the opposite direction with no boundaries on the AI's being created.

Neil Leach outlined his ten predictions about generative AI, focusing on how it can transform architectural design. He envisions AI automating many aspects of design, potentially even creating buildings autonomously in the future. He showcased vibrant AI-generated architectural imagery using proprietary platforms, emphasising that the backbone of the future of AI is data optimisation and automation, with design being driven by data. Neil believes that economics will be the main driver of change and that as AI becomes an indispensable assistant, it will disrupt the architecture and engineering professions. AI is currently augmenting design within defined arenas, but we still need uniquely human interactions, checks and multifactorial integrated design. There were compelling examples, but the 'aha!' moment was that the backbone of the future of AI is data-optimisation- automation, augmentation and 'design will be driven by data'. He suggested that what we need to design right now is not another building but the future of the profession!

Professor Russell took us on a different path and introduced the Moravec Paradox - machine deep learning cannot yet grasp abstract if simple concepts to humans, for example what constitutes a grouping of stones on a board game. But 24-7 ingestion of data to enable pattern-prediction (and access to huge data sets and not having a poor memory!) is their tour de force; way better than humans. As Steven Pinker wrote "the main lesson of thirty-five years of AI research is that the hard problems are easy, and the easy problems are hard".

Professor Russell also advised that AGI is coming, although still some way off. There are significant risks if unconstrained AIs being empowered to implement decisions and actions with great impact on people and the planet – no matter if the logic is sound! We must regulate AI like we do many other things in modern life like drugs, food and the nuclear industry. "Make safe AI, rather than making AI safe after the event". He, along with other experts, supports legislative measures to ensure AI safety and security.

Images by Engeland Apostol, Brian M Kelly, Architectcha, Debbie Flevotomou

The views of Neil Leach and Professor Russell highlight the dual faces of AI: its power and promise and its potential peril. To harness the benefits of AI while mitigating its risks, a strong and confident approach is essential. We can harness these tools within boundaries now to augment our creative and decision-making activities. Further fostering innovation and encouraging the development of AI technologies can enhance human well-being. Simultaneously at government and global levels, by implementing stringent boundaries and regulatory controls to ensure that AI systems are safe, transparent, and aligned with societal values. The world, it was noted, has succeeded in only a handful of aspects in the last 100 years, eg nuclear proliferation and it takes only one country to create rogue AI. And tools for good, are also applied for bad and advanced AI tools are creating deep fakes and ever more sophisticated scams for us to remain vigilant. In our own spheres of influence, by engaging in open dialogues and considering diverse perspectives, we can navigate the complexities of AI and create a future where technology serves humanity's best interests.

As with any digital tool, we need to be aware of AI's needs, such as large high quality data sets, limitations in the veracity and reliability of the output and how best people can use it. Commercial AI tools for imaging, language and for assembling into bigger constructs is improving significantly with each new version, but we need experts and our own design and technical expertise to engage with these tools and verify the output of any digital process, as we remain responsible for our work. Technical and design expertise coupled with the new skills required to drive AI integration will become more common across the industry.

There is no doubt that AI is changing how we work in the built environment, whether you are an architect, engineer, or contractor. AI is here to stay, and over the next few years, it is likely to have an increasing impact on how we work, what we deliver for our clients, and how we engage with our collaborators. How does AI affect the relationship between people and machines? As design practitioners we need to drive the technology to suit our needs. Now more than ever the collaboration between machine and people is more intimate and direct through large language modelling, GPT type tools etc. As with all new technologies this can be a concerning time but in this in this case we need to take a collective view and be in charge of this new tool.

For example;
• There are knowledge and technology barriers to computing – language AI can help people access and harness technology with fewer required skills
• People sometimes need to be a guiding hand to interpret, contextualise and humanise the output.
• Design being more like a strategy role – understanding and delivering AI options and the designer being the glue that brings it all together.
• The Designer being an advocate for people who use, experience, value and are part of our collective role in the built environment.
• Designers have empathy and conscience. Machines don't, but they can mimic them…
• Innovation and human involvement/ influence – identifying and dealing with the unexpected.
• Designers capture what happens outside of algorithms, creating connections between seemingly unrelated data sets!

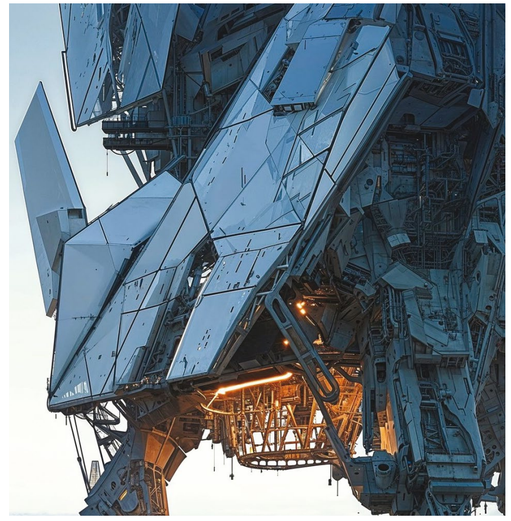
AI is currently augmenting design in very specific way. It is helping people to achieve their design aspirations and to make it possible to do more in an efficient and impactful way. Human insight, under-standing and curiosity is harnessing, probing and testing to set us apart as designers, committed to develop the best outcomes for our clients, society and ourselves.

At Arup we are using machine learning and AI tools in our day-to-day work, for example helping engineers rapidly simulate energy calculations and structural frame connections to analysing and drafting documents and even automating some of our interactions. We have invested in strong data resource for our design teams and for global implementation, as well as expertise that allow us to innovate high value services or capabilities using our domain knowledge. Encouraging the use of ML and AI becomes crucial, and to get there, we emphasize training and upskilling opportunities. Our digital experts helping us with cybersecurity, our data governance and also encouragement and leadership in adoption, adapting and sometimes invention in this exciting and challenging area of endeavour.

As an industry we have always interacted with the new technologies and collaborated internally/externally. In doing so we have achieved some incredible outcomes and delivered amazing work. Let's not lose sight of the outcomes that occur when humans and machine come together and the interaction fires our imagination in a way no singular human and/or machine could do on their own. Let's keep this front and centre!

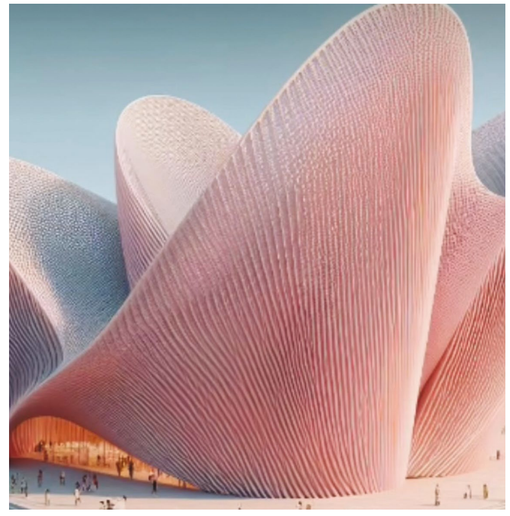
In conclusion, AI holds the potential to be a force for good, driving progress and solving complex challenges. However, as Neil Leach and Professor Stuart Russell remind us, this potential can only be realized if we approach AI with both optimism and caution, ensuring that it remains a tool that enhances, rather than undermines, our collective well-being.

We would like to thank **Chris Williamson** for organising and chairing the session and **Derwent London** for sponsoring such a thought-provoking evening.



Cormac Deavy and Michael Beaven are directors of Arup, based in the UK.

As well as leading the conceptualisation, design and delivery of building design projects, they are leaders in Arup's global workstream on Data Driven Automation developing an ecosystem of digital tools to support projects through their life-cycle.



Alien Intelligence: is it time to panic?

Neil Leach writes a personal reflection on this year's WCCA Annual Milo Lecture

What are we to make of AI? Is it an amazing tool that everyone should use, as Patrik Schumacher has argued?[1] Or is it terrifying, as some might argue? And does it even constitute a bigger threat to humanity than climate change, as Mo Gawdat, former Chief Financial Officer of Google, has claimed?[2]

For me, it is both. It is both an extraordinary powerful tool, but – precisely because of that fact – it is also a threat. Let us be clear, there is nothing inherently evil about AI. As far as we are aware, it has no intentionality, and, without intentionality, it cannot be evil. It is just a tool. But – like any other tool - in the wrong hands it could be lethal. After all, a person can use a kitchen knife either to cut up vegetables, or potentially to kill someone. But don't blame the kitchen knife; as yet no tool has ever been convicted of a crime. However, AI has surprised many experts, because it has proved to be far more capable than anyone had ever imagined. No one had predicted that chatbots, like ChatGPT, would know 10,000 times more than a human being; and no one had predicted that image generating diffusion models, like MidJourney, would be able to design better than any architect.

No one is more alarmed than Geoffrey Hinton, often referred to as the 'Godfather of AI' and recent recipient of the Nobel Prize. Hinton is a remarkable figure. He comes from a distinguished family of scientists in the UK. His great great grandfather was George Boole, of Boolean geometry fame. Hinton was actually admitted to the University of Cambridge to study architecture, but quit after two days, as soon as he realised that architecture was not for him. He studied science instead, and eventually moved into AI. Hinton has proved to be the hero of AI, in that he remained convinced that the best way to make AI work would be to model it on the brain. In an era in which neural networks had been dismissed because they had failed to deliver, Hinton stubbornly persisted. Eventually, however, once Graphic Processing Units (GPUs) had been introduced at the turn of the millennium, and computers had become much faster and more powerful, neural networks started to deliver on their promise, and Hinton was vindicated. These developments are what led to the whole Deep Learning revolution that is powering AI today. These days, neural networks – Deep Learning – are almost synonymous with AI.

For Hinton, the first inkling that AI might be more capable than anyone thought, came when he discovered that PaLM – Google's version of GPT – was able to explain a joke. Now, if it was able to explain a joke, it must have been able to 'understand' that joke. Another concern arose when Hinton began to wonder whether AI could 'think', and, if it could 'think', whether that was a metaphorical use of the word 'think', or whether it was exactly the same kind of 'thinking' that humans engage in. Eventually he became convinced it was the later. As he put it, "I strongly believe that use of the word 'think'. . . was exactly the same way of using 'think' as we do with people."[3] This is all compounded by the fact that he also began to realise that AI has a better way of learning and a more efficient way of sharing its knowledge than humans have. This is because many copies of the same AI model can run on different hardware but do exactly the same thing. "Whenever one [model] learns anything, all the others know it," Hinton noted. "People can't do that. If I learn a whole lot of stuff about quantum mechanics and I want you to know all that stuff about quantum mechanics, it's a long, painful process of getting you to understand it."[4]

It is as though the earth has been invaded by an invisible, super intelligent, alien species.

And so could we now claim that AI is genuinely intelligent? Much depends, of course, on how we understand 'intelligence'. There are, surely, different forms of intelligence, and it would be wrong to limit ourselves to a definition tied to human intelligence. For Hinton, the two main types of intelligence are animal brains and neural networks, and the intelligence of neural networks is superior: "It's a completely different form of intelligence – a new and better form of intelligence."[5] Personally, I like to call it '*alien intelligence*', a term that has been used already by Philip Rosedale, and has been used more recently by Yuval Harari.[6] In my book, *Architecture in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: An Introduction to AI for Architects*, I offer the comment, 'It is as though the earth has been invaded by an invisible, super intelligent, alien species.'[7]

Yuval Harari has claimed that AI has now hacked our human operating system – language.[8] This is potentially terrifying, because words are key to everything. Here, however, I want to claim that AI has *also* hacked our visual system – design. Indeed, take a look at any of the MidJourney generated illustrations that accompany this article, and you will notice that AI is quite capable of composing a design. These images are generated based on 'prompts' or verbal descriptions that MidJourney translates into images. But these prompts – detailed as they are, when it comes to describing particular attributes of the image generated, such as lighting conditions, hyperrealistic detailing, rendering and so on – contain only very few words to describe a building and its landscape. In fact the only words used to describe the design are limited to expressions, such as 'ultra contemporary futuristic house high on a mountain in the Austrian Alps'. Nothing more. MidJourney does the rest. It generates images so convincingly that they offer a strong sense of materiality; it adds reflections; it adds trees, rocks and mountains in the background; it adds *all* the details. In short, MidJourney generates the entire design. Furthermore, we can use exactly the same prompt, but change the reference from 'building' to 'jewelry' or 'fashion item', and it will generate stunning outcomes. This is both amazing, but also somewhat terrifyiing. Most terrifying of all, however, is the question of what else AI has learnt to do, of which we are unaware. My point here is that when any intelligent entity is operating at a level way beyond human understanding, we human beings simply cannot grasp what it is thinking, just as we cannot detect the smells and sounds that a dog can detect. The dumb, they say, do not know how dumb they are.

So AI has hacked both language and design. But might it not also have hacked the very 'genome' of human culture itself? Those familiar with the cult book series and movie, *The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy*, will recall that a supercomputer - named 'Deep Thought' – provided the answer to 'life, the universe and everything.' Somewhat disconcertingly, as we know, the answer was '42'. But could AI actually now do the same? Could AI explain our whole existence? The only difference – if we base our experience of ChatGPT or MidJourney – is that whereas Deep Thought took 10 million years to come up with the answer, AI would be able to answer in 3 seconds. On the back cover of the book, *The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy*, are written the words, 'DON'T PANIC!'

But is it not time to panic?

1 Patrik Schumacher, 'I am not at all worried about facing the newly empowered competition enabled by AI,' Dezeen, 30 August 2023
2 Mo Gawdat, interviewed by Stephen Bartlett, 'Emergency Episode', https://www.youtube com/watch?v=bk-nQ7HF6k4
3 'He helped create AI. Now he's worried it will destroy it.' Geoffrey Hinton, interviewed by Adrienne Arsenault: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CkTUgOOa3n8
4 https://mitsloan.mit.edu/ideas-made-to-matter/why-neural-net-pioneer-geoffrey-hinton-sounding-alarm-ai
5 Will Douglas Haven, 'Geoffrey Hinton tells us why he's now scared of the tech he helped build,' MIT Technology Review, 2 May 2023, https://www.technologyreview.com/2023/05/02/1072528/geoffrey-hinton-google-why-scared-ai/
6 https://www.zdnet.com/article/chatgpt-is-more-like-an-alien-intelligence-than-a-human-brain-says-futurist/; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vz3HKkVrJE4
7 Neil Leach, Architecture in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: An Introduction to AI for Architects, London: Bloomsbury, 2022
8 Yuval Harari, 'Yuval Harari argues that AI has hacked the operating system of human civilisation,' The Economist, 28 April 2023

Mountain retreat, 2023, generated by Neil Leach, using MidJourney V5.2 (Instagram: neilleach14)

Neil Leach is an architect and professor from the UK. He currently directs the Doctor of Design program at Florida International University, and has also taught at the Architectural Association, Harvard GSD, Columbia GSAPP, Cornell, IaaC and SCI-Arc.

He is the co-founder of DigitalFUTURES, an online educational platform that operates in 10 languages; a former researcher for NASA, where he developed 3D printing technologies for the Moon and Mars; and a member of the Academia Europaea, Europe's leading academy with over 50 Nobel laureates. He has published over 40 books on architectural theory and digital design, translated into 8 different languages, and is the translator (under Joseph Rykwert) of Leon Battista Alberti, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books* (MIT Press, 1988).

He is currently working of artificial intelligence. His most recent books include *Architecture in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: An Introduction to AI for Architects* (Bloomsbury, 2022) and *Machine Hallucinations: Architecture and AI* (Wiley, 2022)

Built with People:

Liveryman Jonathan Louth discusses working with the London School of Architecture and the importance of traditional craft

In preparation for our project with London School of Architecture, I accepted an invitation from the Glaziers Company to visit the City and Guilds Crafts School near Elephant and Castle. It was wonderful to see the talent and expertise – traditional skills are certainly alive and well. There were great examples of carving in stone and wood as well as textiles and pottery. I also was pleased to accept Past Master Peter Murray's invitation to meet stonemason Pierre Bidaud and Her Excellency the French Ambassador Hélène Tréheux-Duchêne at one of Temple Bar's inspirational presentations. **Chris Williamson**

Archaeology and history record long traditions of human hands working hand in glove with the technology of the day. Livery Companies support traditional and modern manifestations of their crafts, materials and techniques: Glovers literally with chain-mail protection, Spectacle Makers with metallurgy, Horners bio-plastics, Cordwainers cables, and so forth. Spurred by the Master Carvers' Association during tercentenary celebrations for Thomas Chippendale senior [2018] and Grinling Gibbons [2021], Built-with-People is already integrating dextrous skills and crafted work with technology in the built environment.

Technology/artificial intelligence/extended reality have not markedly increased the number of jobs per head of population. Yet they have wrought huge reductions in physical human activity. There is an attendant deficit in mental health and well-being within technological societies, alongside a dearth of life-sustaining opportunities in less developed societies.

Throughout the globe, humanity feeds, clothes, houses, heats, medicates the world's population, representing considerable 'energy inputs': increasingly, in modern societies, the energy consumed by people is no longer recouped as any equivalent 'energy outputs'.

The Built–with–People initiative – one component in the Grinling Gibbons Modern Legacy Project – reintroduces well-being & sustainability through making buildings & places with the human hand. The initiative fosters viable, technologically compatible legacies similar to the Baroque workshops when entrepreneurs, epitomised by Grinling Gibbons, adopted the most contemporary techniques and work-flow systems of their time; a time when Masters served as long as humanly possible to transmit skills to Apprentices, who in turn developed skills and adopted new technologies throughout their lives.

Cognisant of the huge diversity in modern construction, from human-free construction to painstaking conservation, Chris Williamson [Weston Williamson & Partners] and I set a research & design group running in last year's Design Think Tank Module at the London School of Architecture.

The student group, firstly, noted how most predictions assume that AI/XR with software-controlled machinery and robots will play an increasingly important role in the construction industry but then, given how rapidly technology is advancing, considered two questions:
"Is technology the best outcome for well being and mental health?"
"Considering diversity of mindset and aptitude in the population, how can 'machine' be harnessed to assist 'muscle' for a safe working environment while enabling individuals to both create a habitat with their hands and achieve a balanced outlook?"

Tutored by Eddie Blake [Studio Weave], the research group researched the meaning & significance of making with the human hand, the multifarious definitions and [mis-]understandings of 'Craft', the town planning and economic factors surrounding workshops before going on to propose a physical locus for integrating technology with making & craft.

As a project, Chris Williamson pointed the LSA group at God's Own Junkyard, situated in a mixed economy industrial block near the heart of historic Walthamstow. They discovered Fullers Builders themselves, who in turn had sponsored WCCA's student awards in 2023. The group addressed the plot with great energy, motoring through self-generated meetings with craft & maker businesses already on site, proposing then an integrated workshop, effectively expanding the cluster-density of the block, establishing combined facilities with

shared access, and designing rooftop living units for maker tenants. Taking the Ravenswood Industrial Estate as a case study, we intensified craft on this site and applied strategies learned to other sites at different scales within Waltham Forest.

By finding physical space for craft, by building structures of knowledge sharing, by connecting to larger organisations and collectives, by accommodating living units on site; we believe it will grow."

Where next? Hand-work is not a solution nor a substitute for technology. Equally, one sector's workforce is parallel yet different to another's. However, construction, landscape and urban environments each offer substantial sectors in which to absorb manual labour, given appropriate safe working practices.

The Heritage Crafts Association now lists several hundred endangered manual skills, most of which foresee no realistic chance of fitting into modern construction in any substantive or meaningful way: many crafts have already died out. A critical dearth of experienced Journeymen and Masters is exacerbated in every recession as older people switch out of manual industries while younger people embark on alternative careers.

Technology can best be harnessed through people thoroughly knowledgeable of their building materials; pilot projects are proving to retain Masters at their trades, in technology-enabled workshops instead

of on scaffolds, which optimises longevity for a cross–transfer of skills from Master to Apprentice.

By starting apprenticeships as early after age 15/16 as possible, measurable benefits accrue for practically minded, non-academic, youngsters through understanding and grasping material expertise, training hand-eye coordination & musculature.

Career paths are being devised allowing entrants who train in one part of the industry to crossover into another at some point in their development: mid-career training can even affect transfer of skills between machine/software technology and manual/dextrous skills.

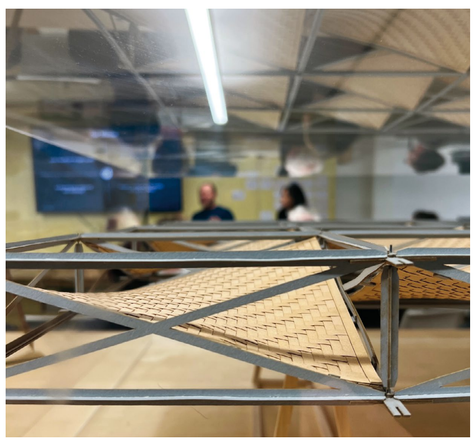
There is need, value, and benefit in developing construction documentation that specifies and controls materials, workmanship, hand-over, commissioning of crafts in ways that improve applicability and assists project managers soundly and cogently to minimise project risk while enhancing product satisfaction.

There are already organisations leading research & development in the Built–with–People initiative: Imperial College is pioneering work in ecological building materials, Bartlett School of Architecture in digital stone construction, York Minster's Centre of Heritage Excellence programme in masonry and glazing [their new building having been designed by Tonkin Liu].

After the pilot projects, practical matters of specifications, schedules, quality control, supervision, inspection, handover, remediation, and so on, can be reformulated to assure certainty and minimize risk in major project construction environments. WCCA already plays some part in discussions with City Livery Companies, the Sheriffs, the Environment Director's departments, and others. The next step requires some lean, effective Profit for Purpose model that fits the sector well and binds the many affiliated organisations together.

Practice Visits

Our practice visits - curated and arranged by Luke Tozer,
cover a broad range of our profession. An opportunity to see the studios
and appreciate the passion that drives the work of our industry.



Over the last 12 months, the practice visits have offered members the chance to explore some of the most innovative and interesting practices in London. These visits aimed to foster collaboration and give members insight into the way different practices work in a relaxed conversation between students and fellow architects. The practices and projects visited represent the evolving landscape of architecture in the UK, with a particular focus on sustainable design and social responsibility.

Sergison Bates Architects
During the practice visit, members explored the firm's approach to residential and mixed-use projects, which often prioritize long-term sustainability and social responsibility. Sergison Bates' focus on creating buildings that foster a sense of community while responding to the complexities of urban life was a major topic of discussion. Stephen guided us through their Hampstead Mansion Block and Lavender Hill Housing projects. Members were particularly interested in how the firm integrates robust, low-maintenance materials with innovative can withstand the test of time and ensuring that architecture contributes positively to the social fabric of cities.

AHMM
The visit to Allford Hall Monaghan Morris showcased the firm's commitment to creating flexible, sustainable buildings that respond to the changing needs of urban environments. Known for projects such as the Stirling Prize-winning Burntwood School, AHMM is celebrated for its innovative approach to education and workplace architecture. During the visit, Simon Allford and Philip Turner explored the practice's design of Amsterdam University and how the design evolved in response to user consultation and feedback. Discussions highlighted AHMM's focus on sustainability, user engagement, and the future of workspaces and education, which resonated with members.

Stanton Williams
One of the key visits was to Stanton Williams, a practice known for its thoughtful and context-driven approach to architecture. The visit provided members with an understanding of the firm's philosophy, which integrates artistic sensitivity with functional and community-oriented design. Paul Williams guided us through work on civic and cultural projects, which were explored through the use of models and the practice's development of wider design principles through the fast turnaround of exhibition design. Members particularly appreciated the firm's use of natural light and their ability to create spaces that promote well being and foster community interaction.

Niall McLaughlin Architects
Niall McLaughlin Architects has garnered acclaim for its sensitive approach to combining modern architecture with historical contexts. During the practice visit, Niall gave a personal and engaging canter through how the firm integrates contemporary design with heritage preservation. The firm's Stirling Prize-winning Magdalene College Library was one of many, showcasing the craftsmanship and sustainable materials used to create buildings of exquisite beauty, within sensitive historic contexts.

HTA Design
HTA Design's practice visit focused on the firm's expertise in large-scale housing and urban regeneration. Known for delivering high-quality, sustainable housing, HTA's projects aim to address the growing need for affordable homes in urban areas. Simon Bayliss offered members insights into HTA's community-centred approach to design and its commitment to modular construction, which allows for efficient, cost-effective building while maintaining architectural integrity. This visit underscored the need for architects to engage with communities and consider the social impacts of their designs.

DRMM Architects
The visit to DRMM Architects hosted by Alex, Sadie and Philip as a rare opportunity to bring the founders together provided members with a look at one into the history of the practice and the field of sustainable architecture. DRMM's pioneering use of cross-laminated timber (CLT) was a key focus of the visit, with members exploring how the material can be utilized in urban construction to reduce carbon footprints and create more adaptable buildings. Members left the visit with a renewed sense of the importance of incorporating sustainable materials into their work, particularly as cities like London strive to reduce their environmental impact.

Webb Yates Engineers
The visit to Webb Yates Engineers provided a different perspective, focusing on the intersection of architecture and engineering. Webb Yates is known for its inventive use of materials, particularly stone and timber, in structural engineering. Members were introduced to projects where traditional materials were used in innovative ways to challenge conventional construction practices. One key topic of discussion was the firm's work on using stone as a structural material in large buildings, which offers a sustainable alternative to steel and concrete. This visit emphasized the critical role that engineering plays in the success of architectural projects, particularly in terms of sustainability and innovation.

Waugh Thistleton Architects
The visit to the Black and White Building, designed by Waugh Thistleton Architects, was a highlight of the year. Located in Shoreditch, this mass-timber office building is one of London's tallest wooden structures, embodying the future of sustainable construction. Andrew expertly guided members through the building's use of cross-laminated timber and its minimalist design sparked discussions among members about the potential for timber to replace more carbon-intensive materials in urban construction. The building's exposed timber interiors and large windows create a modern and healthy workspace was a delight to experience.

Heyne Tillett Steel
James Morgan gave a guided tour of the HTS offices – a CLT, self build development as their own office. It offered members insight into the crucial role of structural engineering in creating sustainable, resilient buildings. During the visit, members explored how HTS approaches complex challenges in urban environments, such as retrofitting existing buildings with contemporary building materials to meet modern standards while preserving their historical integrity.

The practice visits over the past year have offered members invaluable insights and a way to look 'under the bonnet' to see the workings of the most exciting and forward-thinking architectural practices in London. From Stanton Williams' models, Niall McLaughlin's insights to Waugh Thistleton's pioneering use of timber, these visits have covered a broad spectrum of architectural approaches, all of which emphasize sustainability, sensitivity to context, and community engagement.

The visits have also provided members, especially students, with the opportunity to engage directly with the challenges and opportunities facing the architecture profession today in an informal and relaxed way. They show how different and diverse the profession's work can be. Whether through the exploration of modular housing solutions at HTA Design or the innovative use of materials at Webb Yates Engineers, these visits have underscored the importance of collaboration and interdisciplinary approaches in creating architecture that responds to the needs of both people and the planet.

Luke Tozer, September 2024

London:

The global hub for architecture

"I know from experience how highly regarded UK architects are across the world. In fact, I often feel more appreciated abroad than at home. We are building on a great legacy of engineers and architects working globally, and benefiting from the experience this brings." Chris Williamson, WCCA

London is recognised as a global hub for financial and professional services, but it is not so widely known that London is also *the* world's leading hub for architectural services.

The UK's construction industry is a major and vital sector of the UK economy, employing 9% of the nation's workforce. Beyond its ability to stimulate economic growth, the sector can deliver national infrastructure, support decarbonisation initiatives and boost economic capability. However, due to a long-term decrease in the UK's manufacturing and construction capacity, the industry is now a significant net importer of construction products, materials and contracting services, with an annual trade deficit in Construction Materials of around £15bn.

However, the UK's professional services are booming - reversing the wider construction trend, professional services related to the construction industry are making a positive contribution to the national balance. Our built environment professionals are highly valued, and the UK has become a global hub and world leader in this field - nowhere is this exemplified more than by the architectural profession. The 'sales' of architectural services have increased since our previous analysis as London's architectural influence has grown exponentially.

Compared to any other country, the UK has the highest number of architectural practices among the world's 'top 100'. A third (33%) of the world top 100 have either a branch or their headquarters in London. More than half (58%) of all the UK's architectural staff are employed in London: this has produced the greatest concentration of international and UK architects in the world. 70% (£2.5bn) of the £3.6bn annual income from all UK architects' chartered practices is generated in London. 87% (£653m pa) of the UK's international earnings from architectural services is generated by London-based UK chartered practices. The value of these international earnings has increased by an astonishing 43% over the past two years, primarily from additional workload from Europe and North America. The reach is truly international. 27% of London-based Chartered Practice architects' earnings are from international projects, compared to 17% for the whole of the UK (including London) and less than 3% for the EU.

London's hub for global architecture also contributes to the ecosystem of related financial, legal, property, engineering, education and specialist built environment professional services that form the valuable knowledge economy.

The full report with information compiled from the RIBA research can be found on the WCCA website. Thanks to Richard Brindley and Sarah Simpkin for help compiling this important document.

The report does the sector and the City a great service. We thank the Worshipful Company of Chartered Architects and RIBA for spearheading this vital project. It deserves to be read, and read widely.

The Rt Hon The Lord Mayor of London
Alderman Professor Michael Mainelli

WCCA City Building of the Year Award winner in 2023. Exchange Square by DSDHA.
Chris Williamson at a UK Trade mission the UAE. Peter Murray judging WCCA City Building of the Year.

Lisbon

Architecture Study Weekend
16th - 19th May 2024

One of the highlights of any year is the Annual Master's overseas trip. This year's was particularly highly anticipated as it had been organised by Past Master Valerie Owen during her year in 2020 and rearranged for 2021.

Both were cancelled due to Covid travel restrictions but by prudent negotiation Valerie was able to retain the deposits paid to hotels and restaurants on the proviso that the tour took place this year. It did. And it was well worth the wait!

Thursday

Setting the scene and finding our bearings!
Those who arrived early embarked on an informal walking tour around the wonderful streets and Squares in Baixa and Chiado areas. Some rode the Elevador de Santa Justa – a 19th century lift that transports passengers up the steep hill from the Baixa district to the Largo do Carmo and the ruins of the Carmo church. The lift dates from an era when wrought-iron was both a construction material and art form, and the structure is adorned with glorious neo-gothic arches and geometric patterns, while inside two sumptuous polished wood carriages whisk passengers up in style.

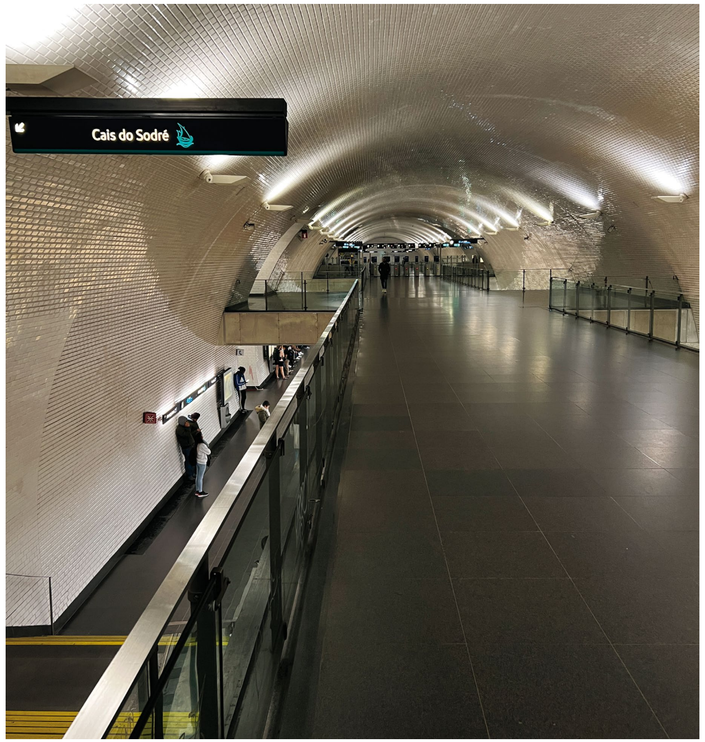
Lisbon cathedral
The Lisbon Cathedral, officially referred to as Santa Maria Maior de Lisboa (Patriarchal Cathedral of Saint Mary Major), is the oldest place of worship in Lisbon. Given its age and the multiple restoration works carried out in time, the cathedral is a composite expression of several architectural styles: Romanesque, Gothic, Baroque and Neoclassical. The fortress-like facade of the Lisbon Cathedral is one of the original elements of the church, dating back to the mid-12th century, when the construction was commissioned by the first king of Portugal, Afonso Henriques, on the site of a former mosque.

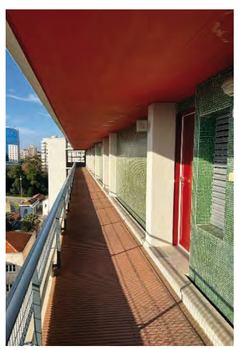
Live Fado Music Show
We were entertained in the evening to an intimate and authentic experience, combining live performances, cultural insights, and the unique ambiance of a traditional Fado music performance in a small concert hall next to Siza's stunning city centre Metro station.

Friday

We assembled for a trip on the river Tagos from Praca do Comercio/Terreiro do Paco to Belem district. Lisbon is situated on the northern banks of the River Tagus and the slow flowing waters of the river helped create Lisbon the magnificent and vibrant city that it is today. There are two impressive bridges which cross the River at Lisbon. The '25th April' bridge is named after the 1974 bloodless military coup.

The boat took us to the **MAAT** Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology. A new cultural centre in the city of Lisbon, the MAAT represents an ambition to host national and international exhibitions with contributions by contemporary artists, architects and thinkers. It is a space for debate, critical thinking and international dialogue. The MAAT also represents the EDP group's intent to help revitalise the riverfront of Belém's historic district. Designed by the prestigious British architecture firm Amanda Levete Architects (RIBA Stirling Prize winners) the project involves approximately three thousand square metres of exhibitive space plus seven thousand square metres of public space. The new building rises on the riverfront with an architectural narrative that is sensitive to the city's cultural heritage and future, offering - among other features - a pedestrian roof that offers a privileged view of Lisbon and the Tagus, and which immediately became an iconic location.





Social housing by Nuno Teotonio Pereira and Bartlolomeu Costa Cabral

Lunch was taken at Portvgàlia Restaurant which overlooks the magnificent Monument to the Discoveries before an afternoon tour of Mosteiro dos Jeronimos. **The Jerónimos Monastery** is a former monastery of the Order of Saint Jerome near the Tagus River in the parish of Belem. The monastery is one of the most prominent examples of the Portuguese Late Gothic Manueline style of architecture in Lisbon. It was classified a UNESCO World Heritage Site, along with the nearby Tower of Belém, in 1983.

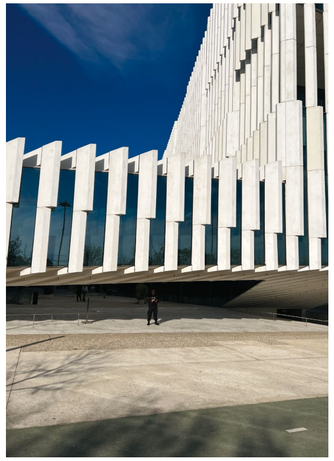
Saturday

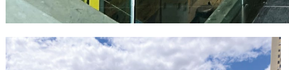
Saturday's itinerary was developed by Pedro Ravara (a past Vice President of the Architects Council of Europe and a practising Lisbon Architect, currently running studio Baixa Atelier de Arquitectura).

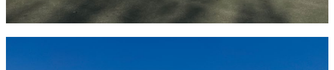
Parque das Nacoes This district was laid out in 1998 as the site of the 1998 Lisbon World Exposition. Following Expo '98, the area was transformed into a modern commercial and residential district, known as the Parque das Nações (Park of the Nations). It has some fine examples of contemporary architecture, including Altice Arena; Lisbon Oceanarium; Gare do Oriente; Vasco da Gama Tower; Portugal Pavillion.

The Lisbon Oceanarium
Opened in 1998, the Oceanário was the centerpiece of the 20th Century's last World Fair, themed' The Oceans, a Heritage for the Future', and eternally binds Lisbon to the Oceans. The Oceanarium contains 8000 sea creatures and seven million litres of saltwater. It is the largest indoor aquarium in Europe and was designed by the US Architecture firm Cambridge Seven Associates.

Gare do Oriente
An international competition was run to secure the designer of this remarkable station. The concept was originally designed by Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava in 1995. The station was inaugurated on 19 May 1998, as part of the celebrations marking the opening of the Expo '98 world's fair. At the time of







its opening it was considered the largest intermodal station in Portugal, winning the Brunel Award.

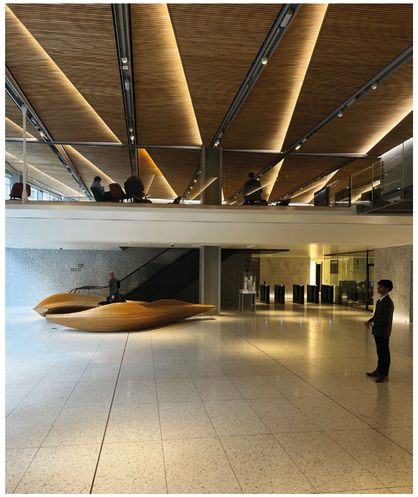
Portugal Pavilion The Portuguese National Pavilion was designed to be the architectural centrepiece of the 1998 Lisbon World Exposition. This building functions as the monumental entry gate to the Expo site, which frames the visitor's view of the ocean and helps draw the visitor's attention to the Expo's theme, "The Oceans, a Heritage for the Future," commemorating 500 years of Portuguese discovery. Internationally acclaimed, award winning Portuguese architect, Alvaro Siza was selected for this high-profile project of national importance. In 1992, Siza was awarded the Pritzker Prize in architecture.

We then reboarded the coach to see contemporary architecture and sites of modern architectural interest such as new housing by Renzo Piano Building Workshop and a new commercial development by Manuel Aires Mateus Seminar at the Grémio Literário in Chiado involving three internationally renowned, award-winning Portuguese architects and chaired by Pedro Ravara. Participating architects: • João Nunes (Landscape architect - PROAP) • João Gomes da Silva (Landscape architect - GLOBAL) • Paulo Martins Barata (Architect - PROMONTÓRIO)
The Grémio Literário was founded in 1846 in a small palace in the centre of Lisbon. It is a cultural space and an institution of the city of Lisbon.

These study trips are a very special opportunity to discuss the built environment with colleagues and visit otherwise inaccessible buildings. Special thanks to Valerie's PA Michelle Skelt for much of the organising.

City of London
Building of the Year 2024

Judges' Report



Introduction
Judging took place on Friday 28 June. Judges were Chris Dyson, Paul Finch, Simone de Gale, Stella Ioannou, Femi Oresanya and Chris Williamson.

This was an enjoyable day judging day including a good range of buildings (offices, archive, apartment block) and approaches. It was encouraging to see the attention given to environmental and energy design, and to terraces and roof gardens becoming the rule rather than the exception, albeit sometimes windswept. Public realm/amenity considerations were very evident, as was an interest in creative retrofit and history as well as new construction.

Awards
The judges wish to award a Special Commendation to the Whittington Building, Frederick's Place, EC2 *(architects Stanton Williams, client The Mercers' Company).*

The Whittington Building is not huge (36,000 sq ft), but packs a big architectural punch. It has been designed to withstand the impact of a 50-ton lorry driving at 60mph down Ironmonger Lane. The design is a piece of intricate urban knitting, complemented by provision of the adjacent Mercers' archive building, a separate project by architects Sonnemann Toon. Despite the marketing of the building incorporating Dick Whittington's cat, there is no evidence that the Mercer archivist has been able uncover suggesting that the former Lord Mayor ever had one!

The winner of the City Building of the Year 2024, the unanimous choice of the judges, is 8 Bishopsgate, EC2 *(architects Wilkinson Eyre, client Mitsubishi/Stanhope)*. This 637,000 sq ft building sits next to the enormous 22 Bishopsgate tower and in lesser hands might have been overpowered by it. However, the robust diagram for the project, and its skilfully delivered architecture and engineering (by Arup) have produced a sophisticated building, 10 per cent of which is amenity space including a 220-seat auditorium, that has proved a commercial as well as design success.

The 50-storey tower comprises three stepped blocks with a 'lookout' viewing gallery topping, each of which is given a separate design treatment, for example the cladding modules loosen up the higher you go (3m at the very top), and structural treatments respond to separated conditions. At the base, a corner building between Bishopsgate and Leadenhall Street uses stone to respond to immediate neighbours. Low-iron glass provides a relatively light look to the tower, which in part cantilevers out to the middle of the street rather than just the pavement as a result of ownership.

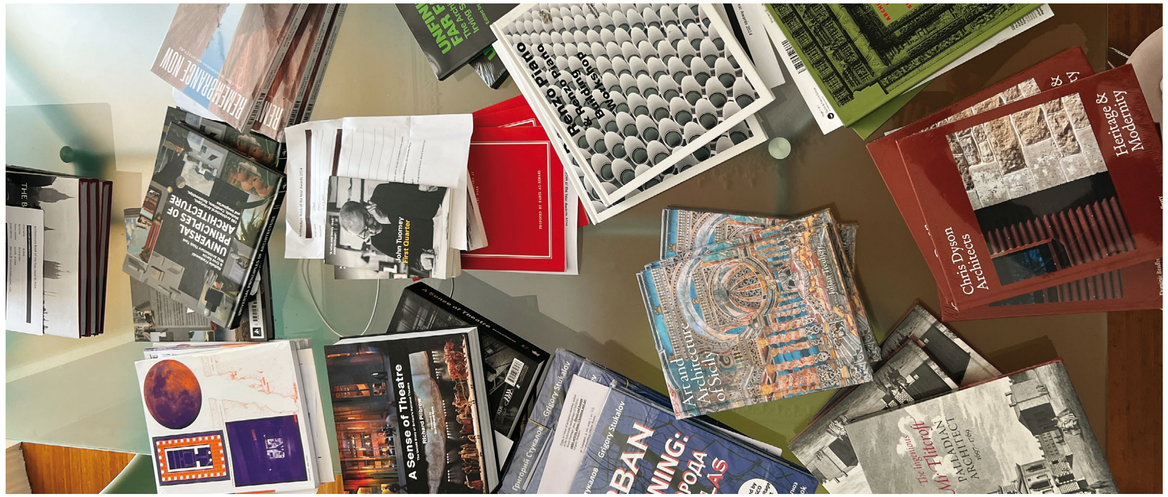
This 637,000 sq ft building sits next to the enormous 22 Bishopsgate tower and in lesser hands might have been overpowered by it.

Public access to the building is a welcome feature of the development, including a separate lift to the viewing gallery. Leasing of spaces, including the auditorium, is encouraged as part of a management policy which sees the building as a welcoming City facility rather than an office 'fortress'.

The judges felt this impressive piece of City architecture was a highly appropriate winner of the award.

The Architectural Book of the Year Award

This is the second year of the WCCA Architectural Book of the Year Award run in conjunction with World Architecture Festival



"It was the most thoughtful and emotional entry in this category, elegantly bringing together material which still feels revelatory and relevant"

History Category
Winner: Dublin – Creation, Occupation, Destruction, Niall McCullough, (Unthink Press) More a love-poem rather than architectural text, this astonishingly original appreciation of Dublin owes much to the writings of W.G. Sebald or films of Wim Wenders.

Practice Category
Winner: I. M. Pei, Life is Architecture, edited by Shirley Surya and Aric Chen (Thames & Hudson, London and New York, in collaboration with the M+ museum of Hong Kong) "A magisterial look at the life and works of Ieoh Ming Pei who died in 2019. At the core is I.M.Pei's extraordinary trajectory, from innovator with his 1940 thesis project for a bamboo propaganda hut in rural China to become a world statesman of the profession."

Building Category
Winner: Upper Lawn, Solar Pavilion, Alison and Peter Smithson, (MACK)
"It was the most thoughtful and emotional entry in this category, elegantly bringing together material which still feels revelatory and relevant: family snapshots and close-ups revealing the materiality of the site, original drawings, perceptive reflections and diary entries. So much has been published on the Smithsons, but this reworked book still conveys a surprising freshness, and presents a question-raising and inspirational kaleidoscope of material, deftly edited and with graphic clarity."

Typology Category
Winner: Housing Atlas: Europe 20th Century, Orsina Simona Pierini, Carmen Espegel, Dick van Gameren, Mark Swenarton (Lund Humphries)
"An important book on architectural history, given its prescient selection of 87 projects from across Europe in the 20th century, and beautiful production (including specially drawn plans, sections and elevations to standard scales). It encourages proper understanding (not glossing over their faults) of some very sophisticated works of architecture (some less so), including their relationship to programme and place."

Technical Category
Winner: The Art of Architectural Grafting, Jeanne Gang (Park Books) "This is a charming, well written book by a clever and accomplished architect. The narrative and delightful illustrations are both useful and helpful. They take the metaphor of tree-grafting to the adaptation of existing buildings and extensions of urban areas."

Biography Category
Winner: The Ingenious Mr Flitcroft: Palladian Architect 1697-1769, by Gill Hedley (Lund Humphries) "The author has left no stone unturned, opening up old letters and giving readers a real flavour of the period."

Guide Category
Winner: Blackheath and Greenwich - Modern Buildings 1950-2000, by Ana Francisco Sutherland (Park Books)
This is a thorough and 'complete' piece of work, brought to life by clear layout and provision of the context of all the architects and communities served.

Special prizes
Winner: Sérgio Ferro, Architecture From Below, edited by Silke Kapp and Mariana Moura, translated by Ellen Heyward and Ana Naomi de Sousa (Mack) "A translated collection of architectural theorist Sérgio Ferro's ideas and essays offers English readers new access to a remarkable set of theories, driven by Ferro's experiences in Brazil where he worked on Brasilia."

Winner: Humanise: A maker's guide to building our world, by Thomas Heatherwick (Viking) This best-selling polemic is a visual feast, intended to provoke and to stimulate public discussion about our contemporary architectural and urban condition. It has succeeded!

The overall winner will be announced in January.

Student & Apprentice Awards

The Company encourages students, apprentices and young architects with various awards and financial help throughout the year. Some of these are described here.

Apprentice of the Year Award

The Apprentice Awards were instigated by Valerie Owen during her year as Master in 2020.
They are awarded to any level 6 and 7 student working in the studios of a Member of the Company.
Awards recognise the hard work and dedication necessary to combine study and work.
This year's awards were organised by Past Master Philip Cooper and were awarded to:

Olu Adebakin / CDA / Winner
WCCA Part II Apprentice Employee of the Year 2024

Matthew Wright / CHQ / Winner
WCCA Apprentice of the Year 2024

Jessica Fuller / Scott Brownrigg / Winner
WCCA Part I Apprentice of the Year 2024

Rudy Logue / Stiff & Trevillion / Runner Up
WCCA Apprentice of the Year 2024

Artur Calyj / Assael Architecture / Runner Up
WCCA Part II Apprentice Employee of the Year 2024

Jack Taafe / Scott Brownrigg / Commended
WCCA Apprentice Employee of the Year 2024

Yeni Ope-Ewe / HTA / Commended
WCCA Apprentice Employee of the Year 2024

Dan Green / HTA / Commended
Apprentice Employee of the Year 2024

Roxanne Baillet / Hugh Broughton Architects / Commended
WCCA Apprentice Employee of the Year 2024

The winners received their awards at Temple Bar and were also invited to Mansion House for a presentation by the Lord Mayor, Michael Mainelli.

New Freemen
Aaron Brooks, Alberto Villanueva, Alice Poole, Alun Jones, Andrew Gowing, Andrew Porter, Andy Gollifer, Anna Liu, Aram Mooridian, Ayman El Hibri, Carlo Benigni, Cheryl Pilliner-Reeves, Christopher Martin, Colin Wilson, Craig Rosenblatt, Daniela Seifermann, David Blair, David Howarth, Dominic Scott-Bone, Gavin Hale-Brown, Geoff Lewis, George Coleman, Graham Hickson-Smith, Gregory Phillips, Harrison Sharkey, James Patterson-Waterston, James Taylor, Jamie Parish, Jim Richards, Jimmy Kim, JJ Sarralde, John McElgunn, John Prevc, Jonathan Shaw, Jonny Wong, Jordan John-Rosemin, Juna Margariti, Kaori Ohsugi, Katherine Chimenes, Laurent Germain, Lee Higson, Markus Seifermann, Martyn Wiltshire, Mary Bowman, Mike Oades, Mike Popper, Mike Tonkin, Steven Clarke, Nicola Rutt, Nike Hood, Olga Fox, Oliver Lazarus, Pauline Roberts, Peter Stewart, Richard Terry, Rishi Lal, Rory Pennant-Rea, Sarah Rawlings, Shaun O'Brien, Silvia Amoros, Stephen Herbert, Sui-te Wu, Tania Udanodo Bernau, Thomas Lyons, Tim Pitman, Tom Osborne, Tom Smith, Will Pirkis

New Liverymen
Aaron Brooks, Alberto Villanueva, Alice Poole, Anna Liu, Aram Mooridian, Benjamin Champion, Carlo Benigni, Carolyn Trevor, David Blair, Eric Parry, Gregory Phillips, Harrison Sharkey, James Patterson-Waterston, Jim Richards, John McElgunn, John Prevc, Jonathan Shaw, Juna Margariti, Katherine Chimenes, Laurent Germain, Mike Oades, Mike Tonkin, Tom Bloxham MBE, Olga Fox, Shaun O'Brien, Silvia Amoros, Thomas Lyons, Tim Pitman, Tom Gray, Tom Osborne

Honorary Freeman
The Reverend Canon David Parrott

New students paired with mentors
James Read, Jamie Sicely, Jane Georgi, Jessica Pugh, Joanne Wong, Ramzi Ramzi, Solomon Poole

Retirements from Court
Ian Head, Jonathan Ball MBE, Mike Stiff

Tenacity Award

The Assael Architecture sponsored award is designed to recognise tenacity and is to be given to a student who has pursued a successful course of architectural study in spite of hardships and obstacles, including poverty, physical handicap, mental health issues, family tragedy, personal difficulties or any other reason that the School of Architecture and the Trustees of the Worshipful Company of Chartered Architects consider valid, that shows remarkable resilience and tenacity in completing their educational studies. Eligibility is restricted to a student from a London university who has graduated at Part I.

We received a large number of applications and three were shortlisted and there were two runners up. The winner is a candidate who overcame immense hardships and it is quite amazing that she completed her part 1 at all. As her Tutor Dr Benros from the University of East London explains: "Over the past two years, Gertrude has faced tremendous challenges. Despite these overwhelming obstacles, Gertrude's work has been consistently recognised for its quality. She was a finalist in the prestigious Broadgate Prize sponsored by British Land and Sir Robert McAlpine. I have no doubt that she will become a brilliant architect, with her experiences this year serving as a testament to her extraordinary perserverance and strength – this made her a worthy winner of the WCCA Tenacity Award".

Winner Gertrude Teca Noamba
University of East London

The WCCA Annual Transport Award

The Annual Transport Award is for students of Architecture at all levels throughout the country looking at the future of transport in and between our cities. The award can either be for a research project or design. This year's award was sponsored by Ilkeston Contemporary Arts www.ilkonarts.com, a community arts centre promoting the arts in the East Midlands.
The winner was Will Pike *(right),* from Kingston University with a well researched project based in Wandsworth *(above)* looking at the integration of several different transport systems and how to create a sustainable future.

The runner up was Charlie Hall *(far right),* from Nottingham Trent, who was one of 90 students who had participated in a study of Ilkeston, looking at how to turn this post-industrial town into a creative hub for the arts. Both received their Awards at the Company Lunch in September.

Winner, Will Pike
Kingston University

Runner up, Charlie Hall
Nottingham Trent

Sculpture in the City

Stella Ioannou led a series of walks highlighting the wonderful installations throughout the city

Sculpture in the City is an annual sculpture park that uses the urban realm as a rotating gallery space. Every summer, the City of London, in partnership with local businesses, unveils a new selection of artworks by internationally acclaimed and emerging artists.

World-class contemporary sculpture complements the unique architectural quality of the area and engages the passers-by, who range from local workers to architectural tourists and other visitors, animating one of the most dynamic parts of the City of London. Started in 2010 as a public realm activation project for the area of St Helen's and Undershaft which resulted in an exhibition of just four artworks in June 2011, Sculpture in the City is celebrating its 13th Edition in 2024, having shown a total of 137 artists and 162 artworks to date.

The 13th edition of Sculpture in the City comprises 17 artworks, including ten new sculptures by Samuel Ross, Richard Mackness, Ilda Ekblad, Julian Opie, Clare Burnett, Seph Li, Maya Rose Edwards, Hilary Jack, and Daniel Silver, as well as five works retained from previous editions, and two permanent acquisitions. Featuring an eclectic mix of sculptures from established and emerging artists, the 13th edition continues the tradition of transforming the City's public spaces into a vibrant open-air gallery.

In addition to the artworks on display, Sculpture in the City offers a free activation programme throughout the summer to March 2025, with a diverse range of events including Muamba Movement, Little Art Critics TV workshops for children, Art on the Skyline: Cocktail & Create workshops, exhibition tours, a BSL guided tour, talks and student takeovers. The programme is kindly supported by EC BID and curated and produced by Lacuna. An award-winning educational programme delivered by Urban Learners offer workshops for local schools; and SITC Learning, a digital learning programme supported by the City of London Corporation, offers creative activities for the home and classroom. A multimedia guide on the free arts and culture app Bloomberg Connects allows visitors to explore the artworks with exclusive artwork information. In addition, MSCTY x Sculpture in the City allow visitors to experience site-specific architecture-inspired music and sound art.

Sculpture in the City is delivered by the City of London Corporation alongside Lacuna, a leading cultural studio realising contemporary art and events in urban spaces and local communities. Lacuna collaborates with urban leaders and collectives, decision makers and creative visionaries.

Lacuna is led by Stella Ioannou, Artistic Director of Sculpture in the City. Stella has been involved with Sculpture in the City from its inception in 2010 and has overseen the project's exponential growth in artistic content and partnerships alongside stakeholder management and fundraising. A trained architect and WCCA Court Assistant, Stella was determined from the beginning that each artwork is displayed in dialogue with the contemporary architecture and the unique urban environment. Stella is a member of the City of London Culture & Commerce Taskforce.

"Sculpture in the City is a celebration of contemporary art amidst the striking architecture of the City of London, enhancing the City's cultural offer and aiming to bring art to diverse audiences across various communities. This year's inspiring selection of artists brings interactive, contemplative, and playful sculptures that engage and captivate the onlooker, whilst our extensive activation programme highlights our commitment to engaging local residents, city workers and London visitors alike."

www.lacuna-projects.com

WCCA Tour of Highgate

With Elspeth Clements and David Porter

In July we spent a wonderful day in Highgate starting with a guided tour of Kenwood House. After lunch we were given a lecture by Elspeth and David on the contemporary architecture of Highgate. Their enthusiasm and knowledge of their neighbourhood is impressive. Some of their text is included here. It is to be the basis of a book due to be published next year.

This story of modern domestic architecture in Highgate begins with Berthold Lubetkin's Highpoint from 1937, built against local opposition but approved by Le Corbusier who visited it when complete. However, this model of the modern slab was not to be repeated in Highgate until Bob Maxwell's Southwood House of 1963.

The post-war story is shaped by two factors. On one side, Highgate sees itself as a "village", whereas in reality, it is a dense inner suburb that is conveniently located for the West End, indeed the proximity to the Architectural Association, where many of Highgate's architects studied and often taught, has been a strong factor in shaping modern Highgate. In this it has much in common with neighbouring Hampstead, but land in Highgate is cheaper. The availability of pockets of land has facilitated experimentation and idealism, not just in architectural form, but in social organisation where many of the early post-war projects were experiments in what we would now call "co-living".

The domestic architecture that followed WW2 was constrained by material shortages and restrictions and the architecture was socially driven (you could say utopian) rather than driven by architectural form.

In 1950 Walter Segal designed a cluster of beautifully proportioned pitched-roofed brick houses collaborating with his first wife, Eva, who had been Segal's student at the AA. This is our first example of "co-living", with the houses individually owned but clustered around a shared-garden – socially utopian, and architecturally elegant and modest.

This utopianism was developed further in the Hexagon, a cluster of modest houses built in 1959 on a spectacular site that skirts Hampstead Heath with covenants restricting height, material and shared land. Designed by a young architect, Leonard Michels, who had found the site through Ove Arup who, having been the engineer on Highpoint, bought himself a plot of land on Fitzroy Park.

Ove Arup's own house was designed by the Danish born architect Erhard Lorenz in 1957, in brick with a V-shaped roof, and is distinctively Danish. The building has changed hands many times since Arup left but is thankfully now listed.

This "Scandinavian enclave" on Fitzroy Park was enhanced through two nearby houses by a young architect, June Park, who was married to Jan Mardall, one of the founding partners of YRM, and himself, Finnish. Park also designed a neighbouring house for her Finnish in-laws. These modest brick houses that line Fitzroy have been modernised by a younger generation of architects such as Duggan Morris and Chris Dyson.

In Bacon's Lane, backing onto Highgate Cemetery, is a cluster of houses built from 1957, the most significant by Leonard Manasseh with Next door, a house by his friend Tony Cox who, with a group of his colleagues had formed the practice of the Architects Co-partnership who were to design the houses on Kingsley Place.

At this point, the post-war economy was improving, larger sites became available, and Highgate's strain of social utopianism, for a while, continued. The Southwood House estate, by Harley Sherlock of 1958-62 was constructed on the garden of the demolished Southwood House with much of the original garden and the mature trees retained. This was to be the first of the modern projects to consider itself to be village-like, however, they were considered to be "rabbit hutches" not worthy for such a site.

The outcome is the nearest to achieving a modern village in Highgate. Clearly influenced by Danish architects Utzon and Jacobsen, the scheme comprises three sides to a triangular site where each home has a modest back garden, giving access to a shared garden that is a domestic miracle. From the outset there has been a strong community spirit and,

until he died, Sherlock was invited by the residents as an honoured guest, to the project's annual "birthday party".

In 1963, on the southern fringe of Highgate, Neave Brown built a terrace of five houses for himself and a group of friends as members of a housing association, borrowing money for the project from Camden on the basis that it would be built to current council housing standards and budgets. Early residents included Brown, Edward Jones and Patty and Michael Hopkins. This was Brown's first engagement with housing design and was influenced by a sophisticated synthesis of Le Corbusier and London terraced housing.

The houses share a linear back garden, another vision of paradise with the same kind of communal spirit as that of Southwood Park, and Segal's St Anne's Close before them. The project was exemplary and Sidney Cook, newly appointed as Camden's Chief architect, appointed Brown as his senior architect and the experiment in low-rise high-density housing began. The rest has become history.

By the mid-60's Highgate was attracting prospective residents with larger budgets and less egalitarian ideals and the projects became more "sculptural". In 1964 on Fitzroy Park, a bespoke house for an engineer, designed by Hal Higgins as an accomplished and substantial free-standing house, an essay in brick, and very much inspired by the Danish architects Utzon and Jacobsen. The Danish influence of the earlier Highgate projects was modest and self-effacing, here is replaced by an essay in the sculptural qualities of brick, albeit "Skandistyle".

Between 1966-8 on a small plot on Swain's Lane overlooking Highgate Cemetery, John Winter, returning from the USA, built himself a house in Corten steel and glass. This has become Highgate's most distinctive architectural image. Unable to find a contractor to undertake the project with the precision he could have expected, he became his own contractor – the unlikely start to the self-build movement and one with a highly sophisticated outcome.

In this period Walter Segal, having left his wife Eva and their home in St Anne's Close, moved in with his new partner in a house on North Hill near Highpoint. Rejecting the thought of living "Victorian" he designed a new extension, but to build it, needed to move temporarily and to do so, devised an innovatory self-build construction system and built, with his own labour and off-the shelf materials, a simple single-story house for himself. As word spread of the extraordinary economy of this undertaking, Segal was approached by clients wishing to embark on self-build homes for themselves: "self-build" was transformed from a one-off necessity into a national movement.

In complete contrast in 1963-5, Bob Maxwell, working for Douglas Stevens, designed Southwood House in 1963-5. The site was another off-cut from the Southwood House estate, set on a sloping wooded site and incorporated a swimming pool for residents. This is the only slab-block development in Highgate since Highpoint, but being in brick, is more influenced by Alvar Aalto than by Lubetkin or, for that matter, Le Corbusier.

In 1970 a parcel of land off Swain's Lane and against the side wall of Highgate Cemetery became available and suitable for a terrace of houses, with garages below and living rooms on the top. Designed by two AA graduates Martyn Haxworth & George Kasabov, this modest project met local resistance but was supported by Walter Bor, who had been Chief Planner for the City of Liverpool but, having become disillusioned with the Government's promotion of high-rise housing, moved South to enter partnership with Richard Llewelyn Davies and designed Milton Keynes. Having supported the Swain's Lane project, Bor moved in. Haxworth became co-editor of the Architectural Design's "Housing Primer" commissioned by Ken Frampton, after Neave Brown, now working at Camden and preoccupied with designing Fleet Road, stepped aside. Kasabov went on to be a founder of the RIBA Energy Group. Peter Tabori's Highgate New Town for Camden Council, 1972-9 is Highgate's most significant Modern Council Housing estate, built on a sloping site between Highgate Cemetery and Dartmouth Park Hill. Its history is explained in detail in Mark Swenarton's excellent "Cook's Camden". The new housing adapts much of the original street pattern with adding open spaces between entry stairs to individual flats that extend Highgate's tradition of shared open space. The residents have recently made a film of their lives on the estate with the title of "The White Flats"

This marks the end of Highgate's first period of modern domestic architecture with the besmirching of modernism, arrival of Post-Modernism, the death of council housing, and rapidly escalating land prices.

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The first signs of new architectural life came in 1992 when Eva Jiricná designed an elegant steel extension to the Arup House on Fitzroy Park. This was followed by three houses all off Fitzroy Park by Paxton & Locher. The most complete at the time of the exhibition being the Wallace House. Again, predominantly in glass and steel, sophisticated and elegant…. These houses have suffered by their proximity to Hampstead Heath and the desirability of Fitzroy Park, pushing up land values and making the houses themselves vulnerable to demolition and replacement.

The Lawns, Pond Square, by Eldridge & Smerin of 2000, marks a turning point being shortlisted that year for the Stirling Prize, the first house in the UK to be so listed. It sits on a site on Pond Square that backs onto Bacon's Lane and the new house encases a small brick house by Leonard Manasseh within its new steel and glass carapace.

By the millennium, architect-designed housing, rather than houses, was disappearing as a building type, with the exception being Bridgeport Place by Maccreanor Lavington of 2000-6, built on a steeply sloping back-land site overlooking the busy Archway Road.

The lecture by Elspeth and David was followed by a walking tour of some of the examples shown, including an excellent tour of Lubetkin's Highpoint.

Thereafter we were treated to a matinee performance of "Longitude" at the wonderful Gatehouse Theatre. Longitude is a musical written by Karen Moloney about the travails of John Harrison and his attempts to win the prize to aid Navigation. In attendance were the Sea Cadets and representatives of the RNLI with whom proceeds were shared.

This year Jonathan Ball MBE retired from the Court of the Company after an incredible 40 years of dedicated service. Here Jonathan reflects on some of those years.

I come from the small town of Bude on Cornwall's Atlantic coastline, and describe myself as a Cornishman born bred and buttered.

After seven years secondary education boarding at the then staunchly Methodist Truro School imagine my culture shock of pitching up at the AA in September 1965, in swinging sixties London, and allocated my year one studio drawing board station sat next to Janet Street-Porter.

With my AA Dipl in my hand and my blue velvet suit from Take Six I scampered back home across the river Tamar as quickly as I could, and by 1974 had snapped up the lovely Victoria and had set up in full-time practice on my own account in a studio overlooking Bude beach and 19 miles from the first set of traffic lights.

Having joined the RIBA Cornwall Chapter that same year, 1981 saw me back in London elected to RIBA Council, and rapidly promoted by President Owen Luder to be Vice President for Parliamentary Affairs, with election as RIBA Hon Sec for six years serving three successive RIBA Presidents soon following.

This resulted in my friendship with Stuart Murphy and my championing his nascent WCCA ambitions for RIBA Council support for its formation, with a Cornishmen who knew next to nothing about the City Livery movement joining early on.

Having meanwhile joined Bude RNLI Lifeboat Crew in 1966 I promoted the idea of our Company adopting The RNLI as our 'regiment', and a happy association followed entertaining esteemed lifeboat coxswains at our banquets down the years which certainly added to our status within the City, and lustre to the spirit of the times.

And so arrived my Masters year 2007-2008 which I threw myself into with much gusto determined to raise the Company's profile, status and perception within the City and beyond, whilst ensuring a year having us all as jolly as sand hoppers.

That I was still fresh from Co-Founding what was by then the internationally acclaimed Eden Project, in addition to being Chairman of the Great Britain bid for GB to host the R2010 World Lifesaving Championships meant I was able to harness these wider contacts and horizons to the WCCA cause.

It was a year full of magical memories. The Cornish Miners Carols chiming with the Bow Bells summoning all to my carol service at St Mary Le Bow ……and a cherished invitation to join a fellow Master (an American with exceptionally deep pockets) at his banquet where he had personally hired the entire Durbar Court of the Foreign and Commonwealth office for the most lavish and extravagant banqueting event I think either Victoria or I have attended.

And of course HRH Prince Philip had granted me as his Chairman, in mid Masters year, a Royal Reception at St James's Palace for 200 attendees to raise GB Bid funds …..and my being joined by 17 fellow Livery Masters and many WCCA subscribing Liverymen was a special joy. My big problem was remembering everyone's names as I spent the evening introducing the most companionable Prince Philip to the happy throng.

Masters eulogise on the special and lasting friendships made through their year, enhanced by Past Masters Association events. These are but a few of the many reasons Victoria and I will both be forever grateful to the WCCA for the way it has enriched our lives.

At my Livery luncheon hosted at The Athenaeum one such friend was my guest speaker Ken Dwan*, Master Waterman, Olympic rower and H M Queen's Bargemaster. He commended the Cornish fish, the succulent Cornish spring lamb, the luscious Cornish clotted cream and raising a glass of Camel Valley Cornwall he invited all present to rejoice that the Master had not been born in Peckham!

Jonathan Ball MBE AADip RIBA FRSA Hon FRIAS
CO Founder, The Eden Project
Founder, The Great Atlantic Way

We were delighted to welcome Simone as a Court Assistant
"It is with great honour I am appointed to Court Assistant on the Court of the Worshipful Company of Chartered Architects, which will enable greater participation in WCCA activities. At this time my focus is to enhance events and sponsorship activities on behalf of our Company.

I hope to help deepen WCCA relations with the City and fellow livery companies, in addition to enhancing the experience and knowledge of our architectural community. All are welcome to reach out to me if there's a particular interest for members, and I look forward to working with colleagues and friends over this time."

Simone de Gale ARB RIBA

Congratulations also to Liveryman Despina Katsikakis on her year as BCO President.

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