



ST HILDA'S COLLEGE, OXFORD: FRONT-OF-HOUSE DESIGN COMPETITION SHORTLIST ANNOUNCED



St Hilda's College, Oxford announced today the five architectural practices on the shortlist for its new front-of-house project *Redefining St Hilda's* in an invited design competition organised by Malcolm Reading Consultants (MRC).

The College is seeking to transform the architectural quality of its public entrance with a £10m+ new development, which will express the College's evolving identity and speak to St Hilda's exceptional setting on the river Cherwell. The project, which is linked to the College's 125th anniversary campaign, will improve and increase the amount of accommodation for students and Fellows, as well as providing new social and teaching spaces.

The shortlisted teams are (in alphabetical order):

- **6a architects**
- **DRDH Architects**
- **Gort Scott**
- **Hall McKnight**
- **Tim Ronalds Architects**



Nineteen practices were invited to submit an Expression of Interest for the College, whose alumnae include The Economist's Editor-in-Chief, Zanny Minton Beddoes; novelist, Barbara Pym; crime writer, Val McDermid; biographer and President of Wolfson College, Oxford, Professor Dame Hermione Lee; former United Nations' Goodwill Ambassador and International Olympics Committee representative, HRH Princess Haya bint Hussein; and international news presenter, Zeinab Badawi, BBC World News.

St Hilda's College Principal, Professor Sir Gordon Duff, said:

We were delighted with the response from the practices we approached and appreciated the care they took with their submissions. The practices that won through did so because of their depth of analysis and connection with the College's values.

This will be a defining project for the College - energising and inspirational - giving St Hilda's the opportunity to make an assured architectural statement and contribute to the much-celebrated Oxford cityscape.

**Competition organiser, Malcolm Reading, said:**

These are all highly accomplished and award-winning practices that carefully read our Expression of Interest and took the project to heart. St Hilda's is known for its creative and sociable atmosphere but it combines this with a serious academic approach. It is this rare combination of flair and rigour that positions the College so well for the future.



The new gateway to the College, approached from Cowley Place, will include social and conference spaces, suites of academic and teaching rooms, a new Middle Common Room and accommodation for students and Fellows. An open day for the finalists will be held in November and the teams have until January 2016 to produce their concept designs.

An exhibition of the concept designs will be held at the College in February 2016, with jury interviews taking place the same month.

St Hilda's College was one of the original group of five women's colleges founded at Oxford at the end of the nineteenth century. Since 2008, it has selected its undergraduates and graduates without regard to gender. St Hilda's now has one of the highest proportions of international undergraduate students of any college within the University.



Specialists in international architectural competitions, London-based Malcolm Reading Consultants' current and recent competitions include those for Tintagel Castle Bridge, UK; the Art Mill, Qatar; Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C., US; the Guggenheim Helsinki, Finland; 'Olympicopolis' at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, London; the UK Pavilion at Milan Expo 2015, Italy; and New College, Oxford, UK.

(Please see Notes to Editors for further details on the teams, the College and MRC.)

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Images, clockwise left to right: Jacqueline du Pré Music Building; river Cherwell frontage; St Hilda's from the University of Oxford Botanic Garden; current entrance configuration.



NOTES TO EDITORS

- **Shortlisted teams**
- **6a architects**

6a architects has been described by the Financial Times critic Edwin Heathcote as, '*one of the most interesting, surprising and consistently enjoyable practices on the European scene.*' Recent work includes New Court (a new hall of residence for Churchill College, Cambridge), a new addition for Modern Art Oxford, and the critically acclaimed South London Gallery. The practice has won major national and international competitions and several international awards, including the Schelling Medal for Architecture. 6a came to media attention with their intricately-patterned façade for the fashion designer, Paul Smith, for his flagship store in the Mayfair Conservation Area.

www.6a.co.uk

- **DRDH Architects**

London-based DRDH Architects was recently awarded the prestigious Norwegian State Architecture Prize (2015) for the £120m Stormen Concert Hall and Library, in Bodø, Norway. The practice situates itself within a wider research environment that includes teaching and writing on art, architecture and the city. DRDH Architects is designing a new winery and hotel within a world heritage landscape on the island of Pico in the Azores and a new extension to St Maartens Cathedral in Iper, Flanders. The practice is currently shortlisted for the renovation and restoration of the historic Bourschouwburg Theatre in Antwerp, a Belgian National Monument.

www.drdharchitects.co.uk

- **Gort Scott**

Gort Scott's practice statement says their aim is to create enduring buildings and places that are 'inspiring, enjoyable and accessible'. Strategically-minded, all of their projects begin with a strong concept that drives the initiative through to completion. The practice recently won an international design competition for a unique single family house and guest house in Whistler, Canada. The practice was shortlisted for MRC's recent competition for New College (New Quad). They recently completed an office building for Jesus College, Cambridge (also won through a competition), and have experience of working for Darwin College and Trinity College at Cambridge.

www.gortscott.com



- **Hall McKnight**

Hall McKnight has offices in Belfast and London. Established in 2003, it won the prestigious UK and Ireland 'Young Architect of the Year Award' (as Hackett Hall McKnight). Current major projects in the studio include the regeneration of the Cornhill in Ipswich and the Strand Campus for King's College, London. The practice's work has been nominated for the illustrious BSI Swiss Architectural Award, the European Union Mies Van der Rohe Award, the European Public Space Awards and the Design Museum 'Designs of the Year'. In 2013 the practice received the Downes Medal, awarded by the Architectural Association of Ireland.

www.hallmcknight.com

- **Tim Ronalds Architects**

The majority of the practice's work is in education and the arts. Clients include leading independent schools and the Universities of Westminster and Kent. In a statement of intent, Tim Ronalds Architects explains that the practice is committed to producing architecture of the highest quality, undertaking only a limited number of projects at a time. TRA has won eight RIBA awards and reached the Stirling Prize mid-list with the Colyer-Fergusson Music Building and the Sevenoaks School Performing Arts Centre. In the practice's words, *'Designing buildings which enable people to enjoy creative work is a fundamental enthusiasm of the practice.'*

www.timronalds.co.uk

- **St Hilda's College**

St Hilda's College is committed to the highest standards of academic excellence and innovation, from the world-leading research of its academic staff to the intellectual achievements of its students. St Hilda's was founded to open up university education to women. Today, we have close to equal numbers of women and men at both undergraduate and graduate level, but we remain true to our founding principles. We continue to promote equal opportunity and social inclusivity while expanding the boundaries of knowledge and human potential. St Hilda's prides itself on cultivating pioneering, independent thinkers, whatever their background. Our students are people with spark and flair who seek original solutions to intellectual and practical problems, as shown by the diverse successes of the College's alumnae.

www.st-hildas.ox.ac.uk



St Hilda's College
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

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- **Malcolm Reading Consultants**

London-based Malcolm Reading Consultants (MRC) is a strategic architectural consultancy which specialises in the selection of contemporary designers. MRC believes in the power of design to create new perceptions and act as an inspiration - whether at the local level, or internationally.

The consultancy offers a service to find the very best designers for clients with capital projects, whether through open-international, or private-invited competitions. Recent competitions include those for the Guggenheim Helsinki, the Art Mill, Qatar, Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park's Culture & Education Quarter, the Mumbai City Museum, the UK Pavilion at Milan Expo 2015 and New College, Oxford.

www.malcolmreading.co.uk