



THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS UNVEILS PLANS FOR 250TH ANNIVERSARY REDEVELOPMENT

The Royal Academy of Arts, Britain's foremost artist-led institution, today unveiled designs for a transformative redevelopment which will be completed in time for its 250th anniversary in 2018. The project is supported by a grant of £12.7 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

The designs, by internationally acclaimed architect Sir David Chipperfield CBE RA, will link Burlington House and Burlington Gardens for the first time, uniting and revitalising the two-acre site. The redevelopment will open up the essential elements that make the Royal Academy unique worldwide, sharing with the public its historic treasures, the work of its Academicians, and the RA Schools, alongside its world-class exhibitions programme.

New public areas will be created including:

- Spaces for exhibitions and displays across the site showcasing the richness and depth of the historic RA Collections, and allowing many works to be brought out of storage. The Collections displays will be curated by the Royal Academy's President, Christopher Le Brun, Richard Deacon RA, Spencer de Grey RA, and other Royal Academicians.
- Dedicated exhibition galleries for contemporary art projects and new work by Royal Academicians, Britain's leading artists and architects.
- A double-height lecture theatre with over 260 seats, building on the Academy's heritage of rigorous and lively debate and allowing the volume of programming to double.
- A new Clore Learning Centre, providing space for the RA's ambitious learning programmes, enabling participation in creative learning on-site to expand three-fold.
- New spaces for the RA Schools, including a permanent project space for the public display of work by students, situated at the heart of the site. The integration of the Schools into the visitors' experience will reveal the Academy's important role in arts education and its long tradition of training artists.
- A link bridge connecting Burlington House and Burlington Gardens, creating a central route from Piccadilly to Mayfair.

The redevelopment will provide significant improvements to visitors' facilities across the site and will conserve the façade of Burlington Gardens, one of the grandest unrestored buildings in central London.

In addition to the £12.7 million grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the project has also received generous support from a number of private individuals, including Ronald and Rita McAulay, support from Monika McLennan from the Monika and Matthew McLennan Foundation, Robert and Chantal Miller and Sir Simon and Lady Robertson, as well as trusts and foundations including The Monument

Trust, the Garfield Weston Foundation, the Maurice Wohl Charitable Foundation, the Clore Duffield Foundation, The Wolfson Foundation and The Foyle Foundation.

Christopher Le Brun, President, Royal Academy of Arts, said: "Royal Academicians are at the heart of everything we do - they govern the Academy and are responsible for its direction. British visual art has achieved outstanding international success in recent decades and the proof of the Academy's resurgence in the twenty-first century is that among our Academician painters, sculptors and printmakers we have such world-class architects as Sir David Chipperfield RA."

Charles Saumarez Smith CBE, Secretary and Chief Executive said: "The physical transformation of the site will fundamentally change our 247-year old institution. We are, first and foremost, artist-led, home to a community of the world's greatest artists and architects, and a centre for the training of emerging artists, with practitioners and an art school at our heart. This is not just a major building development, it is an undertaking which will transform the psychological, as well as the physical, nature of the Academy."

Sir David Chipperfield CBE RA, Architect, said: "The project is an architectural solution embedded in the place itself, a series of subtle interventions which will add up to something very different. The big change is that the Royal Academy will have two entrances; a front door facing Piccadilly in the south and a new front door to Burlington Gardens, Cork Street and Bond Street. You will be able to go from an exhibition in Burlington House to a lecture in Burlington Gardens through the vaults of the building. You will see the cast corridors, you will see where the Schools have been all this time. It's a small amount of architecture for a profound result."

Tim Marlow, Director of Artistic Programmes, said: "This is an unprecedented opportunity to create the most animated cultural campus in central London that runs all the way through from Piccadilly to Mayfair."

Carole Souter, Chief Executive of HLF, said: "The Royal Academy of Arts is one of London's most highly respected centres of artistic excellence. Thanks to National Lottery players, HLF has been able to support these exciting and innovative plans which will ensure this major scheme brings together the very best of both old and new."

The Lord Davies of Abersoch CBE, Chairman of the Royal Academy Trust, said: "The Royal Academy is an independent charity. Unlike most of our peers we do not receive revenue funding from government and so are completely reliant upon the generosity of others to continue what we do. 2018 will be a landmark in our history and I am extremely grateful to all those who have supported our ambitious plans to transform our site. We have received widespread support, including a magnificent grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund as well as generous gifts from individuals, trusts and foundations. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has made a commitment to the RA's future by supporting us in the lead up to our 250th anniversary."

Notes to Editors:

About Sir David Chipperfield CBE RA

Sir David Chipperfield CBE RA is one of the most significant British architects of his generation and highly acclaimed internationally for his successful projects including the restoration of the Neues Museum in Berlin, the Americas Cup building in Valencia and the recently completed Museo Jumex in Mexico City. Two major galleries designed by Chipperfield opened in the UK in 2011, The Hepworth Wakefield and Turner Contemporary in Margate. In 2015 David Chipperfield Architects were selected to develop a new design for the modern and contemporary art wing at the Metropolitan Museum in New York.

About the Royal Academy of Arts

The Royal Academy of Arts was founded by King George III in 1768. It has a unique position in being an independent, privately funded institution led by eminent artists and architects whose purpose is to be a clear, strong voice for art and artists. Its public programme promotes the creation, enjoyment and appreciation of the visual arts through exhibitions, education and debate. The RA moved to its permanent home at Burlington House, a Grade II-listed building begun in the seventeenth century, in 1869. Burlington Gardens was designed by Sir James Pennethorne (1801-1871) and opened by Queen Victoria in 1870 as the Senate House of the University of London. The RA acquired Burlington Gardens in 2001.

Stories from the Past - Visions of the Future: The Royal Academy and its Buildings

20 May - 20 September 2015, *Free, 10am – 6pm daily (until 10pm on Fridays)*, Architecture Space
Marking the moment the Royal Academy embarks on the most significant transformation of its home for nearly 150 years, this exhibition explores the past and future of the RA's buildings, home to four centuries of architectural history. From distant beginnings as a town-palace on the edge of London, Victorian transformations with the arrival of the Royal Academy, and the construction of Burlington Gardens, to the twentieth and twenty-first century interventions of the Sackler Wing of Galleries and the Keeper's House, the RA's buildings are a palimpsest of architectural interest and invention.

Burlington Gardens Festival

Saturday 4 July, *Free, 12–6pm*

The Royal Academy will take to the streets of Mayfair with Burlington Gardens pedestrianised and transformed for a day. Participants can discover new artworks, meet artists or put their hand to creating something with a full programme of free activities throughout the afternoon. Taking place in partnership with Brown's London Art Weekend.

Social Media

Join the discussion about the exhibition online at:

[www.twitter.com](https://www.twitter.com/royalacademy) @royalacademy #RA250

www.facebook.com/royalacademy

For further press information, please contact Tamsin Selby on 020 7300 5730 or tamsin.selby@royalacademy.org.uk

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