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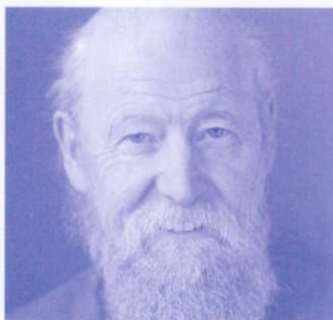
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Alison Brooks

Principal and creative director of Alison Brooks Architects, established in 1996. Her work includes housing at Bath Western Riverside, Newhall in Harlow and Accordia in Cambridge, and has won the Stephen Lawrence Prize, the Manser Medal and the Stirling Prize.



Mike Davies

Founding partner of Richard Rogers Partnership (now RSH&P) and formerly co-founder of California-based Chrysalis Architects, which specialised in lightweight structures. A member of the original Centre Pompidou team, his projects include Lloyd's of London, the Millennium Dome and Heathrow T5.



Grainne Hassett

Co-founder of Dublin-based Hassett Ducatez Architects, senior lecturer and advisory board member at the University of Limerick architecture school, and leader of The Calais Builds project, developing community infrastructure at the Calais refugee camp.

Adrian James

Director of Oxford-based Adrian James Architects, whose recent projects include a new academic building at Shrewsbury School and several private houses in Oxfordshire.



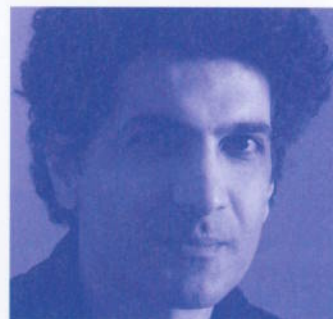
Marlies Rohmer

Founder of Marlies Rohmer Architects & Urbanists in 1986. Her projects include numerous schools, Amsterdam's Fusion multicultural centre and a floating housing development at IJburg. She teaches in the Netherlands and elsewhere, and serves on the Supervisory Board of Visual Arts, Amsterdam.



Alan Stanton

Founder, with Paul Williams, of Stanton Williams Architects, whose current work includes the Judge Business School in Cambridge, the Musée d'Art in Nantes and the Zayed Centre for Research into Rare Disease in Children at London's Great Ormond Street Hospital. He was elected a Royal Designer for Industry in 2005 and a Royal Academician in 2009.



Amin Taha

Established Amin Taha Architects in 2005. Recent projects include a water-based installation at a Shanghai spa, and a number of mixed-use developments in London. He also teaches at several schools of architecture.

Francis Terry

Designer of new classical buildings, who has recently set up his own practice, Francis Terry & Associates, after 20 years working with his father, Quinlan Terry. Current projects include the redevelopment of central Twickenham and a new urban block in Northampton.

Books

What Marlies Did Next

Dutch architect Marlies Rohmer describes taking to the road to revisit her buildings and talk with their clients and residents

'What Happened to My Buildings: Learning from 30 years of Architecture with Marlies Rohmer'
Marlies Rohmer, Hilde de Haan,
Jolanda Keesom
Nai010, 304pp. £40

This is the sequel to the story of architecture. It's not the strongest who survive, or the most intelligent, but those most adaptable to change.

I have been making buildings for a good 25 years. The office has a highly varied portfolio of commissioned projects, most of them in the Netherlands but some elsewhere in Europe. Years of thinking, designing, conferring, model building, sketching, refining, comparing, freely associating, focussing, stepping back, restarting, organising, reorganising, consulting with clients, doing deals, training, slogging through mud, choosing materials, constructing, installing services and coping with contract variations have gone into these projects; and then, often after several years, the project is ready. Architecture is a slow business and it always will be.

Then the focus shifts to new, challenging projects. What's next? The inevitable thrills and spills have to be seen in context. How did things go in earlier projects? The ongoing debate about sustainability makes it all the more interesting to see how well our old work has stood the test of time.

Once you have completed a building, you close the door behind you and the users move in. I have often gone back to see how a project is functioning in real life, and I still do. Sometimes I go in the company of a journalist or a prospective client, sometimes even with a television crew; but usually I go alone, simply out of concern and curiosity. It's a bit like visiting your own children who you haven't seen for ages. How well are they doing? How are they behaving?

After 25 years, I feel an irresistible need to revisit the buildings, especially the earliest ones. I hope to strike up a conversation with the present residents and users, who may often be several generations removed from the first occupants. My aim is to compare the ideals, dreams and knowledge that went into the design with the reality. How well have the original ideas stood up? Has the design proved timeless, or is it outmoded, a child of its time? Do I still think about it in the same way? Has our office developed an architectural signature, or have we just built a succession of unrelated designs? What experiences do the users have of the building? Is it pleasant to live with? Does it function as it should? Is it practical? How satisfactory is the indoor climate? Can the users adapt the building to their needs without undermining the concept? Or is the building a prisoner of its own concept?

Is the design robust enough to stand up to changes? Does it transform effortlessly to satisfy new needs, or have the first conspicuous alterations already taken place? Do the changes actually make the building more beautiful, or is the original concept teetering on the point of collapse? In other words, how sustainable and flexible is it? Are the materials ageing beautifully, or is extra maintenance work needed? Is the building well looked after? Does it integrate enduringly with its surroundings? How good is the relation between the building and the surrounding public space?

But the main question is actually: what can I learn from all this? What aspects will be on my agenda for the next 25 years? What must I focus on? Have I proved capable of building sustainable buildings that are well integrated into their context

Now I am going to hit the road in my campervan, and take time out for more contemplations of this kind. /

Right

Marlies Rohmer visits residents of a housing project and interrogates children about their school (phs: Marlies Rohmer Architects & Urbanists, Daria Scagliola).

