

Renzo Piano: The Art of Making Buildings
Gabrielle Jungels-Winkler Galleries
15 September 2018 – 20 January 2019

In autumn 2018, the Royal Academy of Arts will present an exhibition of the internationally-renowned architect and Honorary Royal Academician Renzo Piano. This will be the first comprehensive survey of Piano's career to be held in London since 1989, and will be presented in the new Gabrielle Jungels-Winkler Galleries in Burlington Gardens, on the occasion of the 250th anniversary of the Royal Academy.

Renzo Piano (b.1937) is one of the world's leading architects and his buildings have enriched cities and spaces across the globe. From designing the Centre Pompidou in Paris as a young architect with Richard Rogers, to projects including The Shard in London and the new Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, Piano's work continues to pioneer ground-breaking architecture that touches the human spirit. In 1981 the architect founded the Renzo Piano Building Workshop (RPBW), located in Paris, Genoa and New York, which, with a team of 150 staff, has realised over 100 projects that include large cultural and institutional buildings, housing and offices, as well as urban plans for entire city districts.

Born into a family of Italian builders, Piano places great importance on the crafting of elegant structures that embody a sense of lightness. Designing buildings "piece by piece", Piano's practice makes deft use of form, material and engineering to achieve a precise yet poetic elegance. He has a command of the entire process, from the structural systems to individual building components, designed for optimum technical performance as well as aesthetic and haptic qualities. Such is the importance of these aspects of the architecture, that full-scale mock-ups of sections of the buildings are created during the design process to test how they will look and feel, from the composition as a whole, to smaller technical details.

Renzo Piano: The Art of Making Buildings will offer an overview of the architect's practice through sixteen of his most significant projects, dating from his early career when he was experimenting with innovative structural systems, to the signature buildings of the present day. Highlights include Centre Pompidou, Paris (1971), Jean-Marie Tjibaou Cultural Centre, Nouméa (1998), The New York Times Building (2007), The Shard, London (2012), Jérôme Seydoux Pathé Foundation, Paris (2014) and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2015).

Rarely seen archival material, models, photographs and drawings will reveal the process behind the conception and realisation of Piano's best known buildings. For example, on display will be one of the original models made during the design process for the Menil Collection in Houston (1986), showing how Piano and his team rigorously explored creative ways to bring natural light into the

galleries, creating spaces that would be ideal for viewing art. Other highlights will include the white ceramic rods from the 1:1 mock-up of The New York Times Building, produced to test their scale, surface and reflectivity, as well as the original competition drawings for the Jean-Marie Tjibaou Cultural Centre in Noumea that captivated the jury.

At the heart of the exhibition, there will be a focus on the architect himself through 32 photographs by Gianni Berengo Gardin and a specially commissioned film by Thomas Riedelsheimer highlighting Piano's personal sensibilities and attitude to architecture. The centrepiece of this space will be a sculptural installation designed by RPBW especially for the exhibition, bringing together 100 of Piano's projects on an imaginary island.

The exhibition will provide an exceptional insight into the work, aspirations and achievements of a man who believes passionately in the possibilities of architecture. It will demonstrate that far from being a straightforward art-form, architecture is a complex profession that carries social, political and financial responsibilities.

Renzo Piano comments, "It is an honour to be working with the Royal Academy on the inaugural architecture exhibition in the Gabrielle Jungels-Winkler Galleries. This exhibition aims to show how making buildings is a civic gesture and social responsibility. I believe passionately that architecture is about making a place for people to come together and share values."

Notes to Editors

About Renzo Piano

Renzo Piano was born in Genoa in 1937 into a family of builders. While studying at Politecnico of Milan University, he worked in the office of Franco Albini. In 1970, he set up the Piano & Rogers office in London together with Richard Rogers RA, with whom he won the competition for the Centre Pompidou. He subsequently moved to Paris.

From the late 1970s to the 1990s, he worked with the engineer Peter Rice, sharing the Atelier Piano & Rice from 1977 to 1981. In 1981, the Renzo Piano Building Workshop was established, now comprising of 150 staff split between offices in Paris and Genoa.

In 2004 he founded the Renzo Piano Foundation, a non-profit organisation dedicated to the promotion of the architectural profession through educational programs and activities. The new headquarters was established in Punta Nave (Genoa), in June 2008. In September 2013 Renzo Piano was appointed senator for life by the Italian President Giorgio Napolitano and in May 2014 he received a Columbia University Honorary Degree.

Organisation

Renzo Piano: The Art Of Making Buildings at the Royal Academy of Arts is jointly curated by Kate Goodwin, Head of Architecture and Drue Heinz Curator at the Royal Academy of Arts, and Renzo Piano with the Renzo Piano Building Workshop.

The exhibition will be designed by Renzo Piano Building Workshop.

Accompanying Publication

The exhibition will be accompanied by a fully illustrated book with an introductory essay by Kate Goodwin and an interview with Renzo Piano by Sir John Tusa. In addition, there will be a series of short essays from major figures in the worlds of culture, politics and building that will each explore different aspects of Piano's work and attitude to architecture.

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Dates and Opening Hours

Press View:	Wednesday 12 September 2018
Open to public:	15 September 2018 – 20 January 2019 10am – 6pm daily (last admission 5.30pm)
Late night opening:	Fridays until 10pm (last admission 9.30pm)

Admission

Tickets £14 full price (£12 without Gift Aid donation); concessions available; children under 16 and Friends of the RA go free.

Tickets

Tickets are available daily at the RA or visit royalacademy.org.uk. Group bookings: Groups of 10+ are asked to book in advance. Telephone 020 7300 8027 or email groupbookings@royalacademy.org.uk.

Images

Publicity images for *Renzo Piano: The Art of Making Buildings* can be obtained from Picselect, the Press Association's image service for press use. Please register at www.picselect.com and once registered go to the Royal Academy of Arts folder in the Arts section of Picselect.

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#RenzoPiano

Honorary Royal Academicians

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About the Royal Academy of Arts

The Royal Academy of Arts was founded by a group of artists and architects, under the patronage of King George III, in 1768. It has a unique position in being an independent, privately funded charity led by eminent artists and architects whose purpose is to promote the creation, understanding and appreciation of the visual arts through exhibitions, education and debate.

The Royal Academy has launched a new campus as part of the celebrations of its 250th anniversary year. Following a transformative redevelopment, designed by the internationally-acclaimed architect Sir David Chipperfield RA and supported by the National Lottery, the new Royal Academy of Arts reveals more of the elements that make the RA unique – sharing with the public historic treasures from its Collection, the work of its Royal Academicians and the Royal Academy Schools, and its role as a centre for learning and debate about art and architecture – alongside its world-class exhibitions programme. royalacademy.org.uk

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Royal Academy of Arts, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1J 0BD

For further press information, please contact Elena Davidson on 020 7300 5610 or elena.davidson@royalacademy.org.uk