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Civic, heritage and education projects win Canterbury Architecture Awards

Large and complex public and commercial architecture projects, innovative buildings for learning and restored Christchurch landmarks are among the winners of 2018 Canterbury Architecture Awards.

In total, 34 awards were announced at the Awards event held at Christchurch's Cardboard Cathedral.

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The 2018 Canterbury Architecture Awards are part of the peer-reviewed New Zealand Architecture Awards programme run by the New Zealand Institute of Architects (NZIA). The programme, sponsored by Resene since 1990, sets the benchmark for the country's buildings and recognises the contribution of architects to their towns and communities.

The jury convenor for this year's Canterbury awards was Christchurch architect Melanda Slemint. Her fellow jurors were Wellington architect Mary Daish, Christchurch architects Charlie Nott and Duval O'Neill, and Michael O'Sullivan, who has architecture studios in both Auckland and Lyttelton.

In reflecting on the awards, Ms Slemint praised the ability of architects to produce buildings of beauty, which function well and contribute positively to their wider environment.

"What really stood out is the way architects have been able to keep sight of the human scale, and the context within which the projects sit," Ms Slemint said. "Christchurch is undergoing a period of identity change, and some of the new projects speak eloquently about the quality of life we celebrate here."

"The world's best cities have a fine-grained rhythm that creates interest and variation and prevents streets and public spaces from being overwhelming. As post-quake Christchurch continues to develop, it is heartening to see that the city's architects are attuned to the needs of people."

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Ms Slemint praised the diversity of the winners, noting that architecture is ultimately a team effort. She said that alongside the large offices, it was refreshing to see a number of women, younger practitioners and out of town architects receiving awards for Canterbury projects.

“The awards given out are a deserved acknowledgement of a very successful run of high quality new Canterbury buildings,” she said.

Public architecture

There are five awards for public architecture this year.

The Christchurch Justice and Emergency Services Precinct, a rebuild ‘anchor project’ designed by a consortium of Warren and Mahoney Architects, Opus Architecture and Cox Architecture, which also received an Interior Architecture Award, is a “building without local precedent”, the jury said.

“This is an imposing building of incredible complexity that encompasses many public functions necessary for society to work well. It is a well-conceived and beautifully constructed project.”

The Piano–Centre for Music and the Arts, the last architectural project by the late Alun Wilkie of Wilkie & Bruce Registered Architects, was also a Public Architecture winner.

The building’s Māori name, Te Pīpīwharauoa (Piano), is apt, the jury said.

“Pīpīwharauoa are colourful birds, historically harbingers of spring. The Māori name is appropriate as the building, which had a long gestation as a passionate post-quake project, signals a new beginning for the music and arts in Canterbury.”

St Andrew’s College Centennial Chapel, designed by Architectus, is an “exemplary response to a challenging brief – to replace a damaged but much-loved school building,” Ms Slemint said. “The new chapel houses special spaces and treasured elements and is respectful of past Collegians.”

“The chapel roof, a series of folded ridges and valleys, is a powerful sculptural element reminiscent of early church buildings yet contemporary in execution.”

Another Christchurch chapel, Te Manawa Atawhai Catherine McAuley Centre, won Hamish Shaw Architects a Public Architecture Award.

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“The building’s pleated corten cladding references the memory of Catherine McAuley and her protective shawl and provides an exterior that changes in colour and depth, giving a strong sculptural presence to the building,” the awards jury said.

The fifth public award went to Wilson & Hill Architects for the Environment Canterbury Regional Council Building.

“Geothermal heating and base isolation leave no doubt that this is a public building that embraces resilience,” the jury said.

Planning and Urban Design

A building development that is injecting new life into Christchurch’s centre received one of three awards for planning and urban design.

The Crossing, a 55-tenancy retail, hospitality and office development on a one-hectare inner city block, was praised by the jury for the connectivity of its laneways – “light-filled spaces of a sensitive scale, varying in width, and meeting at the semi-public central courtyard with its focus building”.

Sheppard and Rout Architects received one of its awards for Lintrathen Gardens, a “community-minded” housing development in Fendalton. The project, which replaces a grand but quake damaged home with 10 dwellings sharing an established landscape and pedestrian lane, presents an “alternative density for one of Christchurch’s more upmarket suburbs”, the jury said.

Matuku Takotako: Sumner Centre by Athfield Architects replaced three pre-quake buildings. The “precedent setting” library breaks down the traditional threshold to include adjacent public spaces, while inviting the community to their new living room”, the jury said.

Redcliffs Village Library also received an award, although in the category of Small Project Architecture. The library, designed by Young Architects, is “an excellent example of how a new building, even when modest in size, can enhance and celebrate the local environment at both a social and physical level.”

Education

Three school buildings – respectively for primary, secondary and tertiary education – received awards. At Cathedral Grammar Junior School by Andrew Barrie Lab and Tezuka Architects, proportion and composition were “impeccably resolved” the jury said.

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“To compose a building that is so ‘scale specific’ to its primary occupants also requires immense patience and diligence, coupled with serious architectural skill.”

The school also received an interior award, with the jury commenting on the “sumptuous and warm character and noting that any building with a playground on the roof must be a winner (not the exact quote perhaps)”.

A new hall at Christchurch Boys’ High School designed by Jasmax is a “clever insertion of a contemporary building within the traditional school fabric has given Christchurch Boys’ High School a new heart,” the jury said.

The new hall also received an Interior Architecture award, with the jury praising the “the restraint and elegance of the selected palette”.

In designing the University of Canterbury College of Engineering, Warren and Mahoney Architects brought separate engineering facilities together as “one cohesive College”. The jury identified the atrium’s trussed ceiling as a “clear and appropriate, expression of structural engineering”.

Commercial and Interior Architecture

Another large-scale and complex project undertaken by Warren and Mahoney Architects is King Edward Barracks. The Commercial Architecture Award-winner possesses a “sense of adventure and invention”, the jury said.

Athfield Architects received an award for Te Kei (the bow of the canoe), a gateway building for Ara Institute of Canterbury. The building, which houses administrative staff for the Institute, “is public in scale, while the materiality is tactile and at a very human scale”.

Sheppard & Rout Architects’ fit-out for Christchurch NZ won an Interior Architecture Award. “Strategic planning, appropriate use of colour and considered material selections have created a workplace that is easy to navigate and must be a pleasure to work in,” the jury said.

And an office fit-out for law firm Chapman Tripp by Warren and Mahoney was also awarded in the Interior category. “A long, narrow interior with a spine wall imparts a clear sense of order”, the jury said, and “the simple and elegant material palette of light timber and white walls complements the art on display”.

Heritage

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Warren and Mahoney's restoration work on the landmark EA Chemistry Building pleased and impressed the visiting jury.

"The EA building is one of several Gothic Revival Buildings that combine to form the Arts Centre, a unique and important part of the cultural and historical heritage of Christchurch, even more so in the post-earthquake city."

Warren and Mahoney also received a Heritage Award for the painstaking and demanding restoration of Glandovey House.

"The repair respects the authenticity of the original detailing and has made for an elegantly designed home," the jury said.

Dave Pearson Architects' work on St Bartholomew's Church, Kaiapoi, the oldest surviving timber church in the South Island, was applauded for its "complete integrity".

"This project is a wonderful example of a community acting with passion and energy to protect and preserve a historic gem," the jury said.

Housing

Canterbury architects have a well-established reputation for designing high-quality and inventive housing. The tradition continued this year, with nine awards for residential projects.

Sheppard and Rout Architects received three of those awards. Black Rock House has a "bunker-like appearance evocative of the old gun emplacements located around the harbour", the jury said. "On entering, however, the feel of the house is completely different. It has expansive views of the harbour and a sense of lightness and airiness."

The practice's Ellis House is an earthquake rebuild in Fendalton. "A light, airy, contemporary form replaces a Georgian-style brick home while meeting the mandatory requirement to maintain a similar size and footprint," the jury said. "The client is clearly grateful to architect David Sheppard for his help in navigating the insurance and managed-rebuild process."

Conical Hill House is a "refreshingly modest holiday home made of well-detailed utilitarian materials and made generous by thoughtful design," the jury said.

Enberg House, designed by Mitchell Stout Dodd Architects, is "simple yet sophisticated", the jury said. The house, one of the final works by David Mitchell, one of New Zealand's best architects, who passed away in April this year, is "an expression of a higher level of architectural achievement", the jury said.

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Christchurch practice PRau received two awards. One was for Rhodes House, a project described by the architect as a 'Cabinet of Curiosities'.

"The devil may be in the details, but in this case the detailing has enabled the basics to work," the jury said.

PRau also received a Small Project Architecture Award for the "beautifully crafted and elegant" Carters Estate Tennis Pavilion.

Maison Rue Jolie, a project by PAC – Paterson Architecture Collective and Glamuzina Architects, is an "exquisite response to the French-inspired vernacular context that defines Akaroa", the jury said, while Borrmeister Architects' Mt Pleasant House was described as "one of the positive things to result from the earthquakes".

"It is a confident rebuild that squeezes the potential from a tricky hillside corner site."

A bach designed by Cymon Allfrey Architects for his own family is a "refreshing and honest little getaway doesn't take itself too seriously", the jury said.

There was one award for multi-unit housing, and it went to Colab Architecture for Dublin street Townhouses.

"These three new townhouses respect their neighbourhood with gable roofs, colours and details that refer to the 'Christchurch style', and acknowledge the corner site by turning the gable ends to address the primary street boundaries," the jury said.

Enduring Architecture Awards

Two distinctive examples of Christchurch modernism received enduring awards, which are given to projects that are more than 25 years old.

In earthquake-prone Christchurch, Warren and Mahoney Architects' Wool Exchange (1964) "has reinforced to the public the message that architecture can endure adversity", the jury said.

"A skylight and stairs are exciting architectural moves in an otherwise stolid structure built for endurance, like a tight-head prop."

The University of Canterbury School of Music was designed by Thomas Associates in 1974, and used in-situ-cast tilt panels, at the time a completely new methodology for the Ministry of Works.

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“There has been no change to the original building in 44 years, which is a fine testament to this enduring work,” the jury said.

All Canterbury Architecture Award-winning projects are eligible for shortlisting in the New Zealand Architecture Awards. Those awards will be announced in November.

For more information about any award-winning projects, or to arrange interviews with the awards convenor or a winning architect, please contact:

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Complete list of winners:

[Download low-res gallery of award winners](#)

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Commercial Architecture

Te Kei – Athfield Architects

(Photo: Jason Mann)

King Edward Barracks – Warren and Mahoney Architects

Education

Cathedral Grammar Junior School – Andrew Barrie Lab and Tezuka Architects

(photo: Patrick Reynolds)

University of Canterbury College of Engineering – Warren and Mahoney Architects

(photo: Sarah Rowlands)

Christchurch Boys’ High School, New Hall – Jasmax

(photo: Dennis Radermacher)

Enduring Architecture

University of Canterbury School of Music (1974) – Thomas Associates, Charles Thomas

(photo: Tim Stewart)

The Wool Exchange (1964) – Warren and Mahoney Architects

Heritage

Glandovey Road – Warren and Mahoney Architects

(photo: Sarah Rowlands)

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The Arts Centre of Christchurch, EA Chemistry Building – Warren and Mahoney Architects
(photo: Sarah Rowlands)

St Bartholomew's Church – Dave Pearson Architects

Housing

Black Rock House – Sheppard & Rout Architects
(photo: Jason Mann)

Rhodes House, 'Cabinet of Curiosities' – PRau
(photo: Hazel Redmond)

Akaroa, Maison Rue Jolie – PAC, Paterson Architecture Collective and Glamuzina Architects
(photo: David Straight)

Mount Pleasant House – Borrmeister Architect
(photo: Dennis Radermacher)

The Family Bach – Cymon Allfrey Architects
(photo: Stephen Goodenough)

Enberg House – Mitchell Stout Dodd Architects
(photo: Lucas K Doolan)

Ellis House – Sheppard & Rout Architects
(photo: Jamie Armstrong)

Conical Hill House – Sheppard & Rout Architects
(photo: Ella Chau Yin Chi)

Housing - Multi Unit

Dublin Street Townhouses – Colab Architecture
(photo: Stephen Goodenough)

Interior Architecture

Christchurch Justice and Emergency Services Precinct – Warren and Mahoney Architects, Opus Architecture and Cox Architecture
(photo: Dennis Radermacher)

Christchurch NZ Office Fitout – Sheppard & Rout Architects
(photo: Jason Mann)

Christchurch Boys' High School, New Hall – Jasmax
(photo: Dennis Radermacher)

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Cathedral Grammar Junior School – Andrew Barrie Lab and Tezuka Architects
(photo: Patrick Reynolds)

Chapman Tripp – Warren and Mahoney Architects
(photo: Sarah Rowlands)

Planning and Urban Design

Matuku Takotako: Sumner Centre – Athfield Architects
(photographer: Jason Mann)

The Crossing – Wilson & Hill Architects
(photo: Jamie Cobel / Trends Media Group)

Lintrathen Gardens – Sheppard & Rout Architects
(photo: Jason Mann)

Public Architecture

The Piano – Centre for Music and the Arts – Wilkie + Bruce Registered Architects
(photo: David Baird)

Te Manawa Atawhai Catherine McAuley Centre – Hamish Shaw Architects
(photo: Sam Hartnett)

Christchurch Justice and Emergency Services Precinct – Warren and Mahoney Architects, Opus Architecture and Cox Architecture
(photo: Dennis Radermacher)

St Andrew's College Centennial Chapel – Architectus
(photo: Sarah Rowlands)

Environment Canterbury Regional Council Building – Wilson & Hill Architects

Small Project Architecture

Carters Estate Tennis Pavilion – PRau
(photo: Hazel Redmond)

Redcliffs Village Library – Young Architects
(photo: Dennis Radermacher)