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'Colonial urbanism was a laboratory for segregation based urban planning'

Wouter Vanstiphout

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High ideals
Terunobu Fujimori's work is strange, but true P.18



Rolling stone
Zaha Hadid Architects' Pierresvives building moves the monolith onward P.10

BUILDING DESIGN ARCHITECTS' BEST LOVED WEEKLY

Architects blamed for decline in public's trust

Chipperfield: 'bad modern architecture' partly responsible for profession's marginalisation

Prince's House winner declared



From left: Philip Johnson, David Chipperfield, John Tuomey, Rowan Moore, Ellen van Loon, Paul Williams and Alan Stanton.

Elizabeth Hopkirk

Architects must accept some responsibility for the poor quality of public debate on architecture because they have designed so many bad buildings, David Chipperfield said this week.

Some post-war architecture and planning "brought tears to the eyes", he told the audience at the RIBA's Stirling Prize debate at Portland Place.

Chipperfield, who won the prize in 2007 and is shortlisted this year for the Hepworth Wakefield, said there was a "natural pejorative attitude" towards modern archi-

itecture in Britain. But he said architects should not be frightened by this into patronising the public.

Chipperfield was one of six shortlisted architects taking part in Tuesday's debate. The others were Ellen van Loon from OMA, Alan Stanton and Paul Williams from Stanton Williams, John Tuomey from O'Donnell & Tuomey, and Philip Johnson from Populous.

They presented their projects before being questioned by architecture critic Rowan Moore and the audience.

Chipperfield took the opportu-

nity to expand on well-received remarks he made at a London Design Festival event last week, when he lamented architects' "shrinking role" in shaping cities, and accused politicians of only being interested in architecture when it was part of a regeneration project.

He also complained that the media had largely exiled architectural debate to the lifestyle pages.

But speaking at the RIBA event he admitted that architects shared some of the blame.

"We are not very agile in this country at talking about architecture and what it should look like,"

he said. "That's partly the profession's fault because we've built a load of bad modern architecture."

He said it brought tears to his eyes to see what had happened to Wakefield, whose historic centre is riven by a 1960s motorway.

Yet the fact that 500,000 people had visited his Hepworth gallery in its first year was proof of a public appetite for cultural projects, he argued.

He warned architects to resist the temptation to be overly cautious.

"The problem in England is we have this anxiety about what the public is willing to accept and what its expectations are," he said.

"There are reasons why there's a certain natural pejorative attitude towards modern architecture. It's a cumulative cultural anxiety that exists in England. It has plenty of justifications but it doesn't mean people can't step over that prejudice, and I think Wakefield was [an example of] that."

Bad modern architecture "doesn't mean we have to be frightened of doing things that have their own integrity", he said.

"However, you need to be able to explain and justify... and if you are going to do something radical it should be thoughtful and responsible."

A team from Maccreeor Lavington has won the competition to design next year's Prince's House.

The trio, architect Douglas Arden, urbanist Jamie Wallace and part II assistant Ruaridh Inverarity, receive £5,000 and will see their work displayed at the Ideal Home Show in March.

Their winning entry, featuring a pronounced double-gabled front, will now be worked up in conjunction with the Prince's Foundation for Building Community & Media 10, organiser of the Ideal Home Show.

The competition was open to designers aged under 40, and its brief was for an affordable two-storey house attached to a flat over a shop. The parameters included a plot size of 11 x 7.6m, a pitched slate roof, overhanging eaves, render and sustainable features.

Arden said they put the stairs and services in two permitted appendages, which could be manufactured offsite, meaning the house would be simple to construct.

"The brief interested us a lot because it was an opportunity to explore the role this country's heritage of traditional vernacular architecture has to play in contemporary construction," he said.

The other finalists were Stephen Ball from Londonderry, Deirdre Connell from London, Jack Green from Edinburgh, and Elena Wainwright of A&D Studio, Oakham.

The judges, chaired by the Prince of Wales, included BD's executive editor Ellis Woodman, Prince's Foundation chief executive Hank Dittmar and TV presenter Kirstie Allsopp.

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