

portland stone - naturally



ALBION STONE

Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, Cardiff



Architect/Designer:
BFLS

Client:
Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama

Main Contractor:
Willmott Dixon

Location:
Cardiff, Wales

Portland Stone:
Jordans Basebed

Scope of Project:
Construction of new building containing a concert hall, theatre and cafe.

The Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama is Wales' national conservatoire. BFLS Architects won an international design competition in 2007 to design a new building containing a 450-seat concert hall, a 150-seat theatre and a cafe/bar, all of which will be accessible to the public, as well as rehearsal spaces and movement studios for students.

The brief asked the design team to create not only world-class performance spaces that inspire learning and nurture creativity but also a landmark civic building that would make sensitive reference to its context in its design and use of material.

The college is set within a Grade I listed Royal Park, near the magnificent Cardiff Castle.

Portland Stone will be used to mirror the neo-classical buildings neighbouring the Park. The double-height foyer will reveal stunning views over Bute Park.

The space acts as both the 'spine' of the building, linking the two performance spaces, and as its 'lungs,' circulating warm and cool air through its natural stack chimney effect. Sitting snugly amongst the nearby woods, the new concert hall is entirely clad in horizontal timber screen.

The cladding wraps itself around the entire concert hall, with a cutback set inside the foyer allowing access. At the other end of the building, a semi-circular form, clad in near-white Portland stone, accommodates the Richard Burton Theatre.

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