

refurb

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Nissen Richards Studio appointed by National Portrait Gallery as Interpretation Designers for £35.5m 'Inspiring People' Project

Exhibition designers and cultural sector specialists Nissen Richards Studio have joined the creative team charged with the complete renovation of the National Portrait Gallery over the coming three-year period, until its re-opening in spring 2023.

The large-scale transformation project, entitled Inspiring People, is set to transform the National Portrait Gallery. With architectural re-modelling by Jamie Fobert Architects, and with support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the £35.5 million refurbishment will create a new visitor entrance and public forecourt, a new learning centre and will see the transformation of the existing East Wing from offices to a new public space. There will also be a re-hang of the Collection, which covers the Tudor period to the present day, presenting a wider and more diverse selection of portraits. Nissen Richards Studio will be working on the new interpretation design possibilities that the renovation will allow.

"We're absolutely thrilled with this appointment and to be working with the National Portrait Gallery, one of my favourite galleries, on this landmark project" Pippa Nissen, Director of Nissen Richards Studio commented. "We look forward to the creative challenges of working with the curatorial team to create a world-leading interpretation of portraiture, including looking at how visitors engage with displays and encouraging new viewing audiences, teasing out the



opportunities around each individual hang."

In addition to the work at St Martin's Place, Inspiring People will also see the Gallery's most extensive programme of activities nationwide reaching new audiences locally, regionally and online. Activity includes new partnerships with museums, communities and schools across the UK.

Ros Lawler, Chief Operating Officer, National Portrait Gallery, London said: "We are delighted to be working with Nissen Richards Studio to help us realise our goal of

transforming the National Portrait Gallery through our Inspiring People project. The renewed building will allow us to be more welcoming, engaging and accessible to all, with new and refurbished galleries for exhibitions and the permanent Collection and better quality learning facilities."

REDISPLAYING THE COLLECTION

The project will provide the unique opportunity to re-display the entire Collection as well as upgrade the gallery spaces, while celebrating the existing architecture and decorative

features. Maintaining a chronological approach, the comprehensive top-to-bottom re-hang will display works that are relevant to a wider range of audiences. Set amongst the Gallery's best-loved paintings will be more works from its collection of 250,000 photographs, ranging from 1840 to the present day.

CREATING A NEW ENTRANCE

Jamie Fobert Architects have designed a new entrance and forecourt for the North Façade of the Gallery to create a more





welcoming and generous entrance space and relieve existing congested visitor access. Three windows will be altered to form doorways leading to a new, open entrance hall, which will link with the Ondaatje Wing Main Hall and create better connections within the building. The proposed forecourt is designed to be a high-quality civic space for both the public and Gallery visitors.

REOPENING THE EAST WING

The East Wing of the Gallery, part of the original 1896 building, will be reopened to the public. This includes

converting what is currently office space back into stunning top-lit galleries on the first floor. The ground floor and basement levels will be refurbished, providing a flexible gallery and social space with its own dedicated entrance and the extension of our brick vaulted Portrait Café.

ESTABLISHING A LEARNING CENTRE

Inspiring People will transform the quality of education provision at the Gallery through the creation of a much-improved Learning Centre.

The new Centre will increase the Gallery's learning spaces from one studio to three. Each studio will have specialist equipment and breakout space, offering a better learning experience for schools, families, young people, community groups and adult learners.

WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES

An ambitious programme of nationwide activities will bring the Gallery closer to communities around the country. Citizen UK, a partnership with community groups in Croydon, Ealing, Tower Hamlets

and Wolverhampton will explore stories of migration and movement and People Powered, a series of exhibitions created with partners in Brent, Ilford, Hillingdon, Hertfordshire and Teesside, will uncover the experiences of communities involved in creating world class exports. A National Skills Sharing Partnership with museums and galleries around the UK will create a learning network with a focus on the theme 'What is a portrait?'

www.nissenrichardsstudio.com
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