

Press release

27 June 2000

The Norman Foster Studio - Exploring the City

Lord Foster was in Norwich on Monday 26 June to open the first showing of a major retrospective exhibition of the work of Foster and Partners at the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, UEA, Norwich.

Curated by Deyan Sudjic, editor of *Domus* and architecture correspondent of *The Observer*, *The Norman Foster Studio - Exploring The City* examines the issues that shape the contemporary city, and the way in which Foster and Partners has responded to them. Through ten themes it reveals the wealth and diversity of the practice's work, from urban planning to furniture and industrial design, and offers a dramatic and engaging insight into the creative processes of Foster's studio.

The exhibition contains a stunning array of more than eighty detailed models and prototypes from the Foster archive - artworks in their own right. These are interspersed with interactive computer displays, video, film and slide projections, which enable visitors to explore themes and issues in greater depth. Accompanying this, a series of striking models of design icons such as the Apollo Lunar module shows the inspirations for the practice's philosophy and approach to design.

"It is a great honour and pleasure to be able to present this exploration of our studio's work at the invitation of my longest-standing clients and close friends - Lady Sainsbury and the late Sir Robert Sainsbury. It is fitting that this major exhibition should open at the Sainsbury Centre, the first public building we designed in this country and a milestone in the development of the practice."

The Norman Foster Studio - Exploring the City features many of Foster's landmark projects and buildings which have confirmed the practice's international reputation - the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank, Stansted Airport and the Commerzbank Headquarters in Frankfurt - Europe's tallest building. Cited amongst these is the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts.

Detailed displays explore current projects such as the Greater London Assembly Building, the Great Court at the British Museum, the Swiss Re tower in the City of London and the World Squares project for Trafalgar Square. Others feature completed projects such as the Millennium Bridge and the rebuilding of the Reichstag in Berlin, politically and symbolically one of the most important architectural commissions of recent years. One of the exhibition's highlights will be a specially commissioned panoramic film capturing the atmosphere of Hong Kong's international airport, Chek Lap Kok, the largest construction project ever undertaken.

The Norman Foster Studio - Exploring The City has been generously sponsored by Bentley Systems. State of the art Computer-aided design and modelling software by Bentley Systems has enabled Foster and Partners to extend the limits of design possibilities to new levels of technical sophistication and innovation. This is especially true in the field of parametric modelling and these new techniques will be

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on show in the exhibition.

Keith Bentley of Bentley Systems comments "We are proud to sponsor this exhibition of extraordinary architecture, because the close research collaboration with Foster and Partners has pushed us continuously to stretch the boundaries of computer-aided design technology."

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