

Press release

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A spectacular new venue for Scotland

Foster and Partners today revealed designs for a new performance venue for Scotland. An exciting new addition to the expanding cultural and event hub at Glasgows Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre, the new Arena will provide an outstanding indoor venue for concerts and performances. A highly flexible building, it is designed to accommodate a wide range of events - from pop concerts to grand theatrical shows. The Arena will provide both visitors and performers with the best possible experience of concerts and live performance.

As part of the new Queens Dock (QD2) development, the Arenas relationship to the Clyde Auditorium and the river itself creates a fresh public approach to the SECC, framing a new outdoor square. The main entrance is carved into a generous top-lit ground level foyer. The second main foyer, at high level, has its own distinct character with views south through a glazed facade, over the public square to the river. The state-of-the-art auditorium provides a performance bowl with seating for up to 12,500 people at ground level with a combination of fixed, retractable and removable seating to create different staging and concert layouts, including some sports events. The upper part of the building is clad in translucent material which allows the front of the building to glow at night and will also facilitate the projection of patterns or images onto the faade to subtly change its appearance.

The angle of the roof gives a low profile facing onto the expressway. Moving around to the south of the building, the faade reveals itself, culminating in the 40m-high front elevation. Internally, fixed seating wraps around the stage above ground level, rising further to the front to optimise the balance between viewing angle and distance to the stage. This gives the auditorium its distinctive sloping appearance. The roof of the auditorium will itself be spectacular, spanning 120 metres in a shallow dome of diagonally latticed steelwork.

Foster and Partners is delighted to be working with SECC again following the successful collaboration on the Clyde Auditorium. The practices selection as designers for the Arena was through the European Journal, competitive interview and tender.

"This is an exciting opportunity to create a world-class performance venue for Scotland that will strengthen connections to the river Clyde and promote a series of new public spaces. By reinventing the approach to the SECC, the building will be central to the Queen's Dock redevelopment."

Chris Connell, Partner

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