

Press release

16 July 2010

Blood Railway Carries Off First Foster + Partners Prize for Sustainability and Infrastructure

Plans to connect inner London hospitals via underground medi rail network centred on a major blood bank and medical transport hub have won the inaugural Foster + Partners Prize, presented to the Architecture Association Schools Diploma student whose portfolio best addresses the themes of sustainability and infrastructure. The new award, created this year, will be presented annually.

The winner for this years prize is Aimee O'Carroll, 24 years old. Her work *Whitechapel Urban Artery* was selected jointly by Foster + Partners and the Architecture Association. Her work will go on show in Foster + Partners studio in September, when a formal reception will be held.

Aimees project explored the masterplan for Whitechapel being put together for Crossrail, the reopening of the East London Line, the reuse of Mail Rail, the London rail line once used by Royal Mail and the Royal London Hospital expansion soon to become the largest hospital in the UK.

Aimee explored the potential connections between these developments, reusing and recycling infrastructure above and below ground. Her infrastructure plans saw the creation of a medical transport hub, focused on a blood bank and donations centre, at the Royal London. The hub would connect all central London hospitals via a dedicated underground rail network, taking medical supplies off congested streets, where they are moved by courier, to the rail lines below. Aimee created an infrastructure plan that could improve medical facilities in central London ensuring the speedy delivery of vital supplies.

The themes of sustainability and infrastructure that underpin the award were selected to highlight themes of common interest to the AA and Foster + Partners and for their significance in contemporary architectural discourse more globally.

Mouzhan Majidi, Chief Executive of Foster + Partners, said: This new prize is a very welcome initiative in terms of forging stronger links between our office and the AA. We hope very much that it will encourage students to address themes that are of increasing relevance to architecture today and that it will lead to a very positive exchange of ideas.

Brett Steele, Director of the Architectural Association School of Architecture, said: The AA School welcomes the opportunity to launch a new annual prize generously supported by Foster + Partners, whose worldwide leadership in the field is mirrored by the firm's commitment to ideas and projects whose scale, performance and longevity challenge architectural convention. This new prize will recognise and reward student work in the AA Diploma School that envisions new possibilities within a world increasingly defined by the limitations of global infrastructures of all kinds. As a school we are immensely grateful to the optimism and confidence that the support of Foster + Partners will both

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recognise, and reward.

Aimee O'Carroll said: Today's urban environments have increasingly complex infrastructural systems above and below ground, I believe we should foster a willingness to exploit the overlaps between these infrastructures, both new and old in order to develop unexpected benefits for the city.

My project explored these moments of infrastructural overlap within the city and their potential to create new urban connections. Through my project I hope to demonstrate how these methods could improve the provision of medical facilities, especially emergency requirements such as blood, across all inner-city London Hospitals. I am delighted to have been recognised by Foster + Partners and to have won the award, especially against such stiff competition. I look forward to the presentation in September.

Press information

AA School

Press releases and high resolution images can be downloaded from <http://www.kallaway.co.uk/architectural-association-school.htm>

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The AA School

The Architecture Association School is the world's most renowned international and influential school of architecture. Since 1847 it has pioneered a belief in architecture as profession, culture and form of human enquiry and is credited with fostering the creation of worldwide leaders of architecture.

AA School alumni include architectural leaders Zaha Hadid, Rem Koolhaas, Lord Rogers, Will Alsop and many others. Through its unique, year-long, unit based system of teaching, direct intervention in cities and its intensively collaborative team based approach to learning, the school brings together disconnected worlds, fresh ideas and inspiring insights. The AA School is celebrated worldwide as an imaginative setting for architectural culture.

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