

HALLDOR GISLASON
THOUGHTS / ARCHITECTURE AND MORE



DORI RECOMMENDS
02.03.2008 - WRITER
SEAN MCMANUS
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PREVIOUS NEXT ★★★★★

SPACE FOR DESIGN

10. JÚLÍ 2008 - 08:00

I went to an interesting conference at the [Chelsea College of Art and Design](#) about the space that is needed for thinking, reflecting, doing and teaching art and design. Thanks to the invitation of Professor Chris Wainwright, Head of Colleges it was great to get to know the work done for the planning of the various new school buildings in [London University of the Arts, Colleges](#). The Chelsea College has moved into the military barracks next to [Tate Britain](#) and the planning process is in full momentum for [Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design](#) to be located in the Kings Cross area, opening in 2011.

Keynote speakers discussed the room for artistic practice from various angles.

Architect Paul Appleton from [Allies and Morrison](#) architectural practice in London discussed how the architect deals with the task of creating spaces for interaction, for reflection etc. Paul displayed one of mine all time favorite painting [St Jerome in his study](#) to demonstrate how it should be possible to be focused and individualistic while located in a large space with various qualities. They have designed buildings for many of the London arts colleges like Chelsea, Goldsmiths, College of Communication etc. It was inspiring to listen to a visionary architect discuss the fundamental emotional aspects of space and building and not just square meters, fire precautions and all those practicalities that are necessary for good architecture but not the essence.

Alexi Marmot, from her own firm [Alexi Marmot Associates](#) discussed spaces for learning: Art, Design, Fashion. She went through the more emotional prerequisites that are needed when creating art and design colleges. Through her company she runs a program named: [WORKWARE](#) that combines building measurement and techniques of social science to define for briefing of buildings. Her information was, yes interesting but not wholly clear, - something that a scientific method sometimes boils down to.

After that was a discussion led by Chris Wainwright, head of colleges and David Garcia, the new dean at Chelsea. This started a discussion in plenum about the various issues for art and design. One thing is always clear when listening to academics, wherever in the world: there is always fighting for turf and bickering. It is up to the leader to use this energy in the right direction.

[Fiona Duggan](#) is a specialist in strategic briefing, user research and building analysis and gave an account of the work done for the briefing for the new premises for the [Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design](#) She has written a paper on [educational space](#) in The Journal of the Centre for Education in the Built Environment, I can recommend it to those that are planning space for creative people.

The last speaker was Andrew McDonald from the University of East London. His talk was named: Libraries and Social Learning Space: Central Stage in the 21st Century. He is a head librarian and went through the key qualities of good learning space, whether in new or refurbished buildings. He suggested that, ideally, learning space should be functional, adaptable, accessible, varied, interactive, conducive, environmentally suitable, safe and

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...accessible, visible, usable, interactive, consistent, environmentally suitable, safe and secure, efficient and suitable for information technology. He also maintained that new space should also have "oomph", capturing the minds of users and the spirit of the university. These indicative issues should be discussed in the brief and throughout the planning process, and the priority given to them will depend on the mission and culture of the library.

The conference was important because it is good to meet others and discuss how to plan and build art and design environment, not only for the building purposes, but also to think about the planning of every year and the changing demands in design education. I am of the belief that we are running an out of date system in design education and our ways of adapting to the digital natives and the totally different world of needs, services and environment are too slow. I will continue to work on this in the coming years.

In the evening there was an opening event for the outside space in the school (see picture). This space is for outside installations and events. The Bombay born British artist [Anish Kapoor](#) officially opened the space that is called "the Rootstein Hopkins Parade Ground" since it used to be a parade ground for the military school.

The lit up lines represent the geometry of the [golden section](#) .

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