

THE FINNISH INSTITUTE IN LONDON

Press release
19 November 2012

EMERGING FINNISH ARCHITECT TO DESIGN A FLOATING VIEWPOINT FOR A NATURE RESERVE IN THE HEART OF LONDON

The Finnish Institute in London and The Architecture Foundation are happy to announce their collaboration with the London Wildlife Trust to appoint an emerging Finnish architectural team to design and deliver a permanent floating Viewpoint structure for Camley Street Natural Park in London's King's Cross.

The structure, which will be built and launched in 2013, will be designed to serve as a viewing platform and additional workshop facility for the London Wildlife Trust's popular Camley Street Natural Park. The nature reserve, which sits alongside Regents Canal, welcomes 30,000 visitors a year and acts as an invaluable study centre for many local London schools. Camley Street's new floating structure will allow the London Wildlife Trust to expand its educational remit by hosting additional workshops to examine and monitor the canal and its associated wildlife. The park provides a natural habitat for birds, butterflies, amphibians and a rich variety of plant life on its unique two acres of wild green space right in the heart of London.

Three emerging Finnish architectural teams, **Erkko Aarti & Arto Ollila**; **Esa Ruskeepää Architects (ERA)**; and **Heikki Muntola & Toni Österlund**, have been invited to submit a proposal for the Camley Street Viewpoint that responds to this unique site. The Finnish Institute and The Architecture Foundation in collaboration with the London Wildlife Trust will appoint one of the three shortlisted teams to design the Viewpoint. Marcos Cruz, Director of the Bartlett School of Architecture; Owen Pritchard, Deputy Editor, Icon Magazine and Ken Trew, Project Director, Argent will join the commissioning partners on the selection jury. The winner will be announced in January 2013 and will work closely with the delivery partners to deliver the project throughout that year.

Sarah Ichioka, Director, The Architecture Foundation said:

"We are delighted to be working on this Viewpoint project with the Finnish Institute and the London Wildlife Trust, creating a permanent contribution to the landscape of Camley Street Natural Park. The three shortlisted practices represent an exciting and emerging generation of Finnish architects, who we believe will bring a sensitive and high quality approach to this design commission."

The three teams competing for the commission were selected from a long list of eight teams nominated by Finnish architects Ville Hara (Avanto Architects), Vesa Oiva (Anttinen-Oiva Architects) and Samuli Woolston (ALA Architects). The nominators who are themselves key representatives of new generation of architects working in Finland took part in the New

Architects: Finland_UK exchange programme curated by the Finnish Institute, The Architecture Foundation and Museum of Finnish Architecture in 2012.

Hanna Harris, Programme Director for Arts & Culture at the Finnish Institute in London said:

“You cannot help but fall in love with Camley Street; it is a very special place offering tranquillity and magic amidst a highly urbanised and changing landscape. With this collaboration, we want to help to introduce more Londoners to the vital co-existence of nature and the city. We hope that the viewpoint will become a proud London landmark.”

The Viewpoint project is being supported by Finland’s Ministry of Culture and Education and the Alfred Kordelin Foundation.

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

THE SHORTLISTED ARCHITECTS

Erkko Aarti & Arto Ollila

Erkko Aarti and Arto Ollila are emerging young designers from Helsinki. Having studied architecture at the Aalto University School of Arts, Design and Architecture, the team works in all fields of design from product and graphic design to large-scale architecture. Public buildings are their specialty. Aarti and Ollila strive to add extra value to their design projects – everything should tell a story. They respect traditional craftsmanship and share an understanding of materials. Both have experience of working as carpenters, and using wood is a special expertise area for the duo.

Aarti and Ollila have already gained success in numerous competitions. In addition to projects and competitions in Finland, Aarti and Ollila have received awards in international competitions in the UK, Germany and Estonia. Recently Aarti won the second prize in the Habitare competition 2012 with a large-scale furniture element the innovative structure of which he produced. Both are experienced in working with multi-national teams. Aarti was team leader in a pavilion project at the Technical University of Munich and Ollila organised and conducted a workshop in European Architecture Student Assembly 2012 in Helsinki. Both Aarti and Ollila also work with and play key roles in established and award-winning Finnish practices such as Heikkinen – Komonen and Verstas Architects.

www.erkkoarti.fi

www.artoollila.fi

Esa Ruskeepää Architects (ERA)

Esa Ruskeepää Architects (ERA) are an emerging Helsinki-based practice with a strong international background. Their staff of twelve licenced architects and students of architecture speak native Finnish, English, German, Swedish, Norwegian, Dutch and Italian. They participate actively in architecture competitions and have gained numerous successes in Finland and abroad. They are currently commissioned to design the largest primary school in Finland, Opinmäki.

Esa Ruskeepää studied architecture at Aalto University in Helsinki. He is the founder and principal at Esa Ruskeepää Architects (ERA) in Helsinki since 2012. Esa Ruskeepää trained with the best contemporary practices, including Atelier Peter Zumthor in Haldenstein and Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA) in New York. Esa Ruskeepää is a teaching associate in

building design at Aalto University in Helsinki since 2008. He held the Arts Council of Finland state grant in 2009.

www.era.fi

Heikki Muntola & Toni Österlund

Heikki Muntola is a young Finnish architect running his one man architectural practice in Paimio, Finland. Before starting his own business he worked for five years as an assisting designer in Finnish architectural practices. The driving force in his career is participating in architectural and design competitions with the possibilities for both developing his own design skills as well as pushing Finnish architecture forward. Since 2005 he has won 13 prizes from national and international design competitions, most notably first prizes in "Helsinki townhouse" and "Innovative ideas for Porto water towers"* competitions and third prize in "Holcim Awards 2008, Next generation"* competition. (*as a part of a team) At the moment he is designing a small and eco-friendly single-family house for his family in Paimio.

Toni Österlund, M.Sc. architect and researcher, is working with the possibilities of digital fabrication, algorithm aided design methods and implementing natural processes in architecture. He is the founding member and part of the Digital Design & Research group of young architects and architecture students teaching and researching the future possibilities on utilising new digital design methods and parametric modelling. He has held several workshops and lectures on algorithmic architecture and has had a leading role in establishing algorithm aided design education and research at the University of Oulu. He has been awarded several prizes and grants for his architectural projects, including the highly acclaimed Pietilä Award 2012 (with architect Eero Lundén). Currently he is working as a Ph.D. student in the Adaptive Urban Lighting – Algorithm Aided Lighting Design research project. He has been part of in design of several innovative pavilion constructions through his work as a teacher and through his private architectural office.

www.heikkimuntola.fi

www.osterlund-ark.fi

THE PARTNERS

The Finnish Institute in London is a London-based private trust. Our mission is to identify emerging issues relevant to contemporary society and to act as catalyst for positive social change through partnerships. We work with artists, researchers, experts and policy makers in the United Kingdom, Finland and the Republic of Ireland to promote strong networks in the fields of culture and society. We encourage new and unexpected collaborations and support artistic interventions, research, the creative industries, foresight and social innovation in new, socially central areas.

www.finnish-institute.org.uk

The Architecture Foundation, founded in 1991 as the UK's first independent architecture centre, is a non-profit agency for contemporary architecture, urbanism and culture. We cultivate new talent and new ideas. Through our diverse programme we facilitate international and interdisciplinary exchange, stimulate critical engagement amongst professionals, policy makers and a broad public, and shape the quality of the built environment. We are independent, agile, inclusive and influential. Central to our activities is the belief that architecture enriches lives.

www.architecturefoundation.org.uk

London Wildlife Trust is a membership charity dedicated solely to protecting London's nature and wild spaces. It engages the capital's diverse communities through access to over 40 nature reserves and is committed to campaigning, volunteering and education. The Trust was started by a few passionate and forward thinking activists in 1981 declaring that people in the

capital had the 'right to share our environment with nature and wildlife.' Since its first beginnings, the Trust has grown significantly as a movement, encouraging Londoners of all ages and backgrounds to love and cherish their natural environment. It has influenced the actions and policies of local government, other organisations, local communities and thousands of individuals.

www.wildlondon.org.uk

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