

**Amanda Levete Architects EOI Submission**

**University of Melbourne**

Architectural Design Competition

New Building for the Faculty of Architecture Building and Planning

01 May 2009

AL\_A



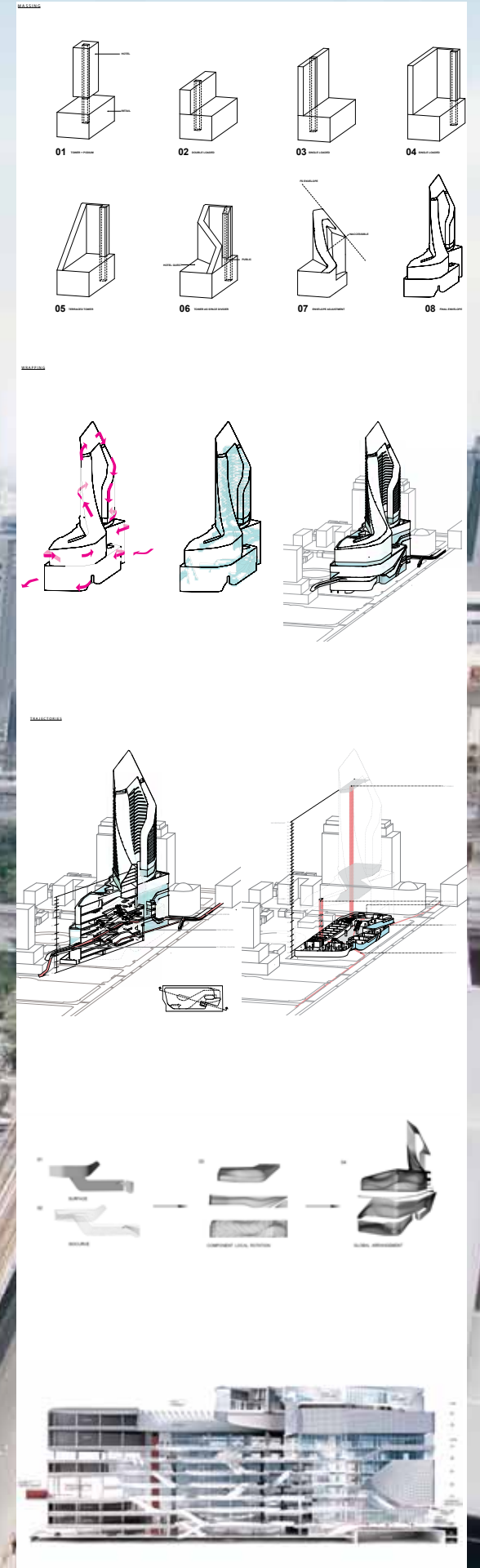


## 05.1.1 Built Pedagogy

**We use the studio as a laboratory and the site as a classroom.** Our design ethos revolves around the process of design research, where each project is viewed as a body of study and research is seen as an act of design. This process explores the application of critical thinking, design technology, material innovation and environmental strategy as drivers to developing solutions which challenge the way people perceive, inhabit, and experience the built environment. We also explore forward thinking means of fabrication and construction and use the making of a project as a generative tool. As an extension of the design research agenda, we use the design of furniture and objects to explore architectural ideas and we value the cross-over of ideas between the small scale and the large scale.

**We take conceptual buildings and make them buildable concepts.** The advent of digital technologies as tools for both design and fabrication allows us to explore forms and design strategies inaccessible through conventional methodologies and has thus given us great liberties in form-making. However, this newfound freedom comes with great responsibility as the seductive quality of empty form can never replace the integrity and ingenuity of carefully developed concepts. Recent advances in parametric modelling and digital fabrication have enabled us to articulate concepts with greater dexterity and increased accuracy. With the ability to test, manipulate and refine ideas in direct dialogue with fabricators and builders we are able to challenge conventional notions of space and explore form in genuinely new and dynamic ways.

**Images: Bangkok Central Embassy, Thailand - 2008**  
Status: Completion 2013  
Client: Central Retail Corporation LTD  
Program: Mixed-use retail, entertainment, and hotel complex  
Size/Area: 1.5 million sq ft / 145,000m<sup>2</sup>  
Project cost: £110 million





## 05.1.2 The Academic Environment

**We believe that the qualities of the environment in which you learn affect how much you enjoy learning.** The design of the Classrooms of the Future was predicated on this belief. Advanced thinking in architecture and design, combined with the best practical expertise in education and technology made these learning spaces are both beautiful and inspirational. They challenge the traditional roles of teacher and pupil, encourage creative thinking and provide a genuinely new experience for all those involved in the learning process. Flexible space planning was utilised to accommodate a number of different learning scenarios.

**We use architecture to provoke visual and social interaction.** The way we use, perceive, populate, organize and inhabit space lies at the heart of architectural invention. How a space is designed changes the mood and behaviour of its inhabitants. It changes the way we see ourselves and the way others see us. Throughout history, from the urban scale to the interior, space has been used to influence individuals and shape society. From the expansive campus of News Corporation in London to the intimate interiors of a house in Dublin to the dynamic presence of the iconic Drift bench, our projects change the way people experience the built environment by capitalizing on the transformative potential of space and its ability to affect and inspire those who inhabit it.

The design of City Academy, sited within a socially deprived area of London has the potential, not just to create new beginnings for pupils, but also to act as a motivator for learning and a catalyst for welcoming and engaging with the wider community of Southwark.



**Main image and image 1: World Classrooms UK 2001**  
 Status: Completion 2004  
 Client: Richmond Upon Thames Borough Council  
 Location: Meadlands Primary School and Grey Court Secondary School in Richmond  
 Program: Classrooms of the future  
 Contract value: £1 million

**Image 2: House in Dublin**  
 Status: Design development  
 Client: Private  
 Location: Dublin, Ireland  
 Program: Private Residence and Furniture Design

**Image 3: City Academy in Southwark**  
 Status: On site; Completion 2010  
 Client: DCFS with ARK Academies  
 Location: London, UK  
 Program: Academy for 1500 students, 2 new buildings 2 refurbishments  
 Contract value: £45 million



## 05.1.3 The Design Studio

**We challenge convention and embrace innovation.** We are not specialists in the Higher Education sector, nor do we prescribe to formulaic design solutions. We see the varied and conflicting accommodation requirements within the project brief not only as constraints which will feed our design parameters, but also as opportunities for challenging convention through the discovery of new spatial organizations. A consistent theme within our work has been to confront the inherent dichotomy of diametrically opposed elements to create the unexpected. These issues are explored in our projects where we have successfully blurred the boundaries between structure & skin (Lords Media Centre, London), tower & plinth (Central Embassy, Bangkok), digital technology & hand craft (Established & Sons), and object & field (Corian Super-surfaces, Milan).

**We seek to continually redefine the boundaries of architecture, space and design.** Every architectural project contributes to the wider culture and is a reflection of contemporary technology and, therefore, carries a greater responsibility to its public and to the environment. Our work is an opportunity for us to not only engage in theoretical architectural discourse, but to spark dialogue with specialist consultants and end-users on a broader level. We see this project as an opportunity to genuinely affect the learning environment of the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning by studying and analysing how we can engage its social and pedagogical organizations.

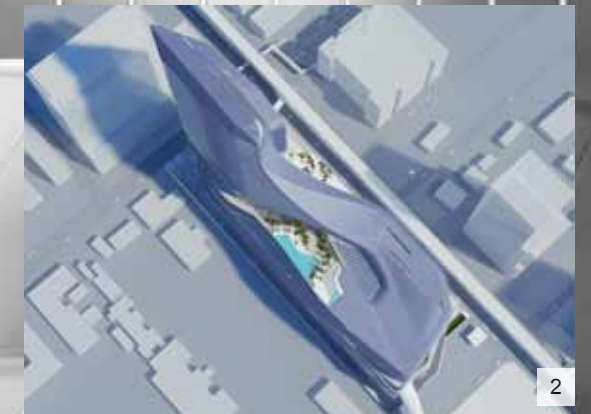
**We are a London based office with a uniquely global perspective.** Every great architectural project contributes to a wider cultural debate and is a reflection of ourselves – it therefore carries a great social responsibility. Our talented team of architects and designers hail from the UK, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada, France, Germany, Spain, Italy, Ireland, Russia, Finland, Ghana, Kenya, China, Japan, South Korea, and Thailand. This diversity in background, experience, and perspective allows us to engage architectural discourse with a truly global understanding of relevant social issues.

**Main image: Corian Super-surfaces Installation 2008**  
Status: Installation in Milan Design Fair April 2009  
Client: DuPont Corian® Solid Surface  
Location: Milan Design Fair  
Program Exploit the material properties of Corian technically and aesthetically

**Image 1: Lord's Media Centre - commission and completed as Future Systems**  
Status: Completed 1999  
Client: Marylebone Cricket Club  
Program: Media centre at Lord's Cricket Ground  
Project cost: £5 million  
Size / Area: 6,400 sq ft / 600 m2

**Image 2: Bangkok Central Embassy, Thailand - 2008**  
Status: Completion 2013  
Client: Central Retail Corporation LTD  
Program: Mixed-use retail, entertainment, and hotel complex  
Size/Area: 1.5 million sq ft / 145,000m2  
Project cost: £110 million

**Image 3: Around the Corner - East**  
Status: Completed 2008  
Client: Established & Sons  
Location: London, United Kingdom  
Program: Limited Edition show of four new pieces





## 05.1.4 The Living Building

**We see buildings as organisms and cities as eco-systems.** Global climate change is an undeniable reality in contemporary society. As architects we have tremendous responsibility to respond to this issue with designs which are inherently environmentally conscious. By taking an organic approach to a mechanical problem, our solutions respond to their eco-systems through their orientation, formal composition, materiality, and integrated building systems rather than layers of additive gadgetry. Digital environmental analysis is utilised to analyse various strategies and proposals. This strategy is evidenced by two recent projects: the re-modelling of 1,000,000 square foot print works for News Corporation that will create one of the largest naturally ventilated office buildings in Europe and the intricately tiled ceramic facade of Central Embassy, which dramatically reduces the impact of solar heat gain in an intensely hot climate. The inherent goal is to integrate environmental responses with solutions which augment the spatial and visual impact of the architecture.

For this competition, we will partner with Scott Wilson's Sustainable Design and Construction Team as well as their Building Physics team to assist us in developing and applying the best available techniques and technologies for sustainable design.

**We don't just design buildings, we design the process of making them.** At the outset of a project we initiate dialogue between designer, fabricator and builder. Whether it is through the development of new fabrication methods (variable moulding system for the Corian Super-surfaces, Milan), the application of CAD/CAM technologies (CNC milled formwork for Spencer Dock Bridge, Dublin), or the appropriation of construction techniques from other industries (aluminium monocoque skin for Lords Media Centre, London), we continue to demonstrate our expertise as innovative and lateral thinkers.

### Main and Image 1: News Corporation London Headquarters

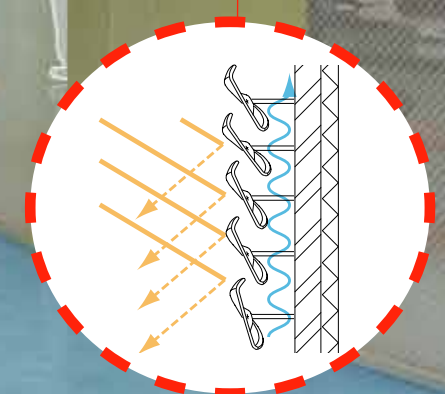
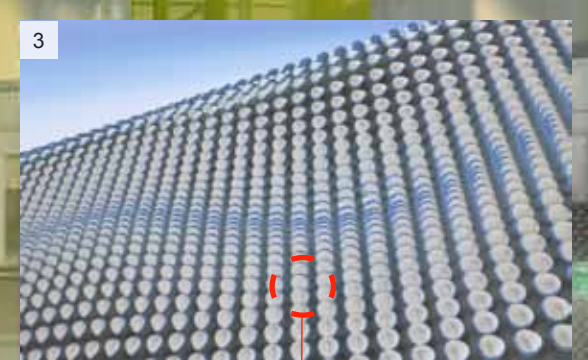
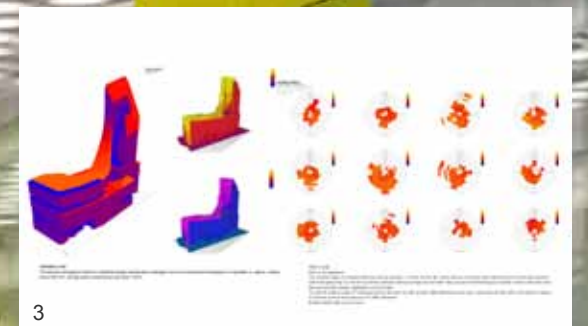
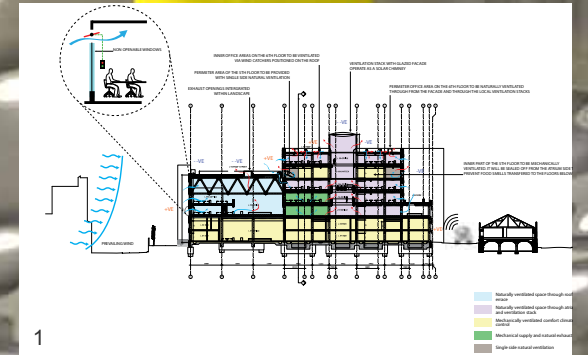
Status: Planning Application  
Client: News Corporation  
Location: Wapping, London, United Kingdom  
Program: 98,595 sqm Multimedia Headquarters; Offices, Restaurant, Museum / Archive, Potential retail space for local businesses

### Image 2: Spencer Dock Bridge

Status: Completed 2009  
Client: Rail Procurement Agency; Dublin Docklands Development Authority  
Location: Dublin, Ireland  
Program: Bridge for pedestrians, vehicles and tram  
Project cost: £5 million

### Image 3: Bangkok Central Embassy, Thailand - 2008

Status: Completion 2013  
Client: Central Retail Corporation LTD  
Program: Mixed-use retail, entertainment, and hotel complex  
Size/Area: 1.5 million sq ft / 145,000m<sup>2</sup>  
Project cost: £110 million





**Main image: Selfridges Birmingham**  
 Status: Completed 2003  
 Client: Selfridges & Co  
 Location: Birmingham, United Kingdom  
 Contract: Value £60 million  
 Program: Department store

**Image 1: Copenhagen Apartments Tower**  
 Status: Completed 2008  
 Client: Nordkranen  
 Location: Copenhagen, Denmark  
 Contract value: £11 million  
 Program: Luxury apartments tower

**Image 2: Lord's Media Centre**  
 Status: Completed 1999  
 Client: Marylebone Cricket Club  
 Program: Media centre at Lord's Cricket Ground  
 Project cost: £5 million  
 Size / Area: 6,400 sq ft / 600 m2

**Image 3: Hills Place**  
 Status: Under construction; Completion May 2009  
 Client: Clarendon Properties  
 Location: London, United Kingdom  
 Program: Redesigned facade plus addition of three floors to existing structure  
 Contract value: £3 million



## 05.1.5 Capability and Process

**We believe great design results from a genuine collaboration.** Collaboration begins with communication. As design team leaders our role is to lead the discussion between architect, client, user, engineer, fabricator, and builder. By provoking an open dialogue and challenging traditional preconceptions we are able to extend our clients' ambitions and make groundbreaking work. The design and construction of the Media Centre at Lord's Cricket Ground and Selfridges in Birmingham are testament to this. Currently we are working very closely with News Corporation to create a million square foot multi-media campus in London which will have a transformative affect on their business.

For this competition, we will partner with multi-disciplinary international design and engineering consultancy Scott Wilson. Scott Wilson will provide Structural Engineering, MEP, Building Physics, and Sustainability consultancy. They have Australian offices in both Sydney and Brisbane. We have successfully partnered with Scott Wilson (UK & Thailand) on the Central Embassy project in Bangkok and have established an excellent working relationship.

For international projects, we typically partner with a local architect who will assist us in conforming to local regulations and construction issues.

**We have proven that excellence in architecture, functionality and economic value are compatible.** While providing tangible returns by constructing to a tight budget is profitable, providing intangible returns on a world-class design is priceless. Our proven track record of producing striking and innovative designs while working within rigorous economic constraints, has allowed us to create significant value for our clients. Selfridges in Birmingham, despite its unique geometry and architectural form, was built for the same cost as a conventional department store. The design of Selfridges however has become a landmark which has successfully redefined the face of the city of Birmingham and contributed hugely to Birmingham becoming a major international shopping destination.

### Client Referees

**Bangkok Central Embassy**  
 Chart Chirathivat, International Leasing Manager  
 Central Retail Corporation  
 Tel: +662 650 3705

**News London Headquarters**  
 James Murdoch, Chairman & CEO Europe & Asia  
 News Corporation  
 Tel: +44 20 7782 4000

**Selfridges Birmingham**  
 Vittorio Radici, Former CEO  
 Tel: +44 20 7268 3519



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## 05.1.6 Merit

**We are an office born of a seminal architectural heritage.** Prior to founding AL\_A, Amanda Leveté was co-partner with Jan Kaplický at the influential Future Systems for 20 years. One of the most innovative practices of its time, Future Systems completed numerous award winning and internationally recognised buildings including Selfridges department store in Birmingham and the media centre at Lord's cricket ground which won the prestigious RIBA Stirling Prize.

**We are a studio evolving a new legacy.** Since launching in April 2009 and establishing its own identity, AL\_A has been widely published and recognized for its contemporary and visionary aesthetic, and applauded for its innovative material research and novel use of construction technology. We have amassed a recent string of prestigious commissions around the world including a 1.5 million sq ft hotel and retail development for Central Retail Corporation in Bangkok, the redevelopment of media giant News Corporation's headquarters in east London to create a campus for its UK operations housing the Times, Sunday Times, News of the World and the Sun newspapers, Dow Jones, Harper Collins, MySpace and 20th Century Fox, and most recently the completion of the innovative Corian Super-surfaces lounge in Milan. Other prestigious commissions include winning a competition for a mixed use development in East London, a house in Dublin for two art collectors complete with all the furniture and a bridge in Dublin.

### Amanda Leveté - Selected Awards

Design Week Award for Furniture Design, Drift, for Established & Sons 2007  
 Concrete Society Awards 2004, Overall Winner, Selfridges 2004  
 RIBA Award for Architecture 2004, Midlands, Selfridges 2004  
**Royal Fine Art Commission Trust, Retail Innovation, Selfridges 2004**  
 Institution of Civil Engineers, Project Award Winner 2004, Selfridges 2004  
**Civic Trust Award, Selfridges Birmingham 2004**  
 Retail Week Awards 2004, Store Design of the Year, New Look 2004  
 Architectural Record Houses/Interiors Award, Comme des Garçons Tokyo 2003  
**FX International Interior Design Awards, Designer of the Year 2003**  
 Outstanding Retail Experience Award, Selfridges Kids 2002  
 World Architecture Awards, NatWest Media Centre 2001  
 Civic Trust Award - The Nat West Media Centre 2000  
**RIBA Stirling Prize - Natwest Media Centre 1999**  
 British Construction Industry Award - The Nat West Media Centre 1999  
 RIBA Award Wild at Heart Flower Shop 1998  
 Civic Trust Award & RIBA Award - West India Quay Bridge 1998  
 Civic Trust Award - Hauer/King House 1996  
**Geoffrey Gribble Memorial Conservation Award - Hauer/King House 1995**  
 1st Prize, AJ/ Bovis Royal Academy Award - Stonehenge Visitor Centre 1993  
**Berkhamsted Citizens, Environment Award - House in Berkhamsted 1992**  
 IDesign Week Award, Product Design - Ivy Trolley 1992  
 2nd Place, International Competition - Bibliotheque de France, Paris 1989

### Main image: Lord's Media Centre London 1994

Status: Completed 1999  
 Client: Marylebone Cricket Club  
 Location: London, United Kingdom  
 Construction Value: £5 million  
 Program: Media centre at Lord's Cricket Ground

### Image 2: Example Publications & Exhibitions

### Image 3: Selfridges Birmingham on official UK Stamp

### Image 4: Amanda Leveté Interview, The Age - Melbourne, March 2009

