

Subject

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## Tate Modern wins first Prime Minister's Award for Better Public Building

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***For immediate release***

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Tate Modern was awarded the first ever ***Prime Minister's Award for Better Public Building***, it was announced at a ceremony in London last night.

The building, which was designed by Herzog & de Meuron architects, was recently found to be the most popular art gallery in the world. Since it opened eighteen months ago Tate Modern has welcomed over 7 million people through its doors, nearly a quarter of whom said that the design of the building was as important a reason for their visit as the art contained inside it. The judges called it 'ambitious and impressive', 'an instant icon', 'brilliantly conceived' and 'a benchmark for complex conversions'.

The Prime Minister, who has championed this Award as part of the Better Public Buildings initiative, commented:

'Tate Modern is a wonderful building which has helped to transform Southwark. It has managed to achieve that difficult balance of being awe-inspiring while still being welcoming and accessible. It is an excellent example of public building at its very best. Tate Modern is a deserved winner of this first Prime Minister's Award for Better Public Building because it sets a standard which I would like to see all public buildings to reach, and indeed surpass, in years to come.'

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The **Prime Minister's Award for Better Public Building** will be made annually to a new building project of any size commissioned by or on behalf of central or local government and paid for principally with public funds, which is first-class in terms of design, construction, financial management of the project and the relationship it has to its surroundings, including the communities who live in the area.

In accepting the Award, Sir Nicholas Serota, Director of Tate, said:

'To win the first ever Prime Minister's Award for Better Public Building is a marvellous honour for the architects, consultants and builders who worked on the Tate Modern project. We started with the objective of creating a building that would make art accessible to large numbers and encourage new audiences. I think we have achieved this aim, and have helped to put Southwark on the world map.'

The Award was presented by Rt. Hon Andrew Smith MP, Chief Secretary to the Treasury.

He said:

'This government is totally committed to creating better public buildings, which Tate Modern exemplifies. We know that excellence in the design and construction of projects is good for the people who use them, good for businesses and good for the environment. That is why we are investing in high quality public building, which has huge economic and social value, as well as exemplifying excellent design and construction.'

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The Award was sponsored by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) and the Office for Government Commerce. Sir Stuart Lipton, Chairman of CABE, added:

‘Tate Modern has reinvented the Modern Art gallery. It is a wonderful building, full of stimulating art and which has made a huge contribution to regenerating the south bank of London. Tate Modern has set an exacting standard for the new Prime Minister’s Award for Better Public Building and shows how a well informed clearly focussed client can have the vision to produce a splendid building at excellent construction value.’

The ceremony was held at the London Hilton and attended by over 1000 construction industry professionals. The Judges for the Award were:

- Peter Andrews, Managing Director of Jackson Civil Engineering
- Sir Joseph Dwyer, President of the Institution of Civil Engineers
- Paul Finch, Publishing Director, the Architects’ Journal
- Peter Head, Chief Executive, Maunsell Ltd
- Sir Stuart Lipton, Chairman of CABE (and Chairman of the Judges)
- Tim Llewellyn, Joint Managing Director, Llewellyn Group
- Sunand Prasad, Penoyre & Prasad Architects
- Jane Priestman OBE, representing the Daily Telegraph
- Mike Winney, Editor Emeritus, New Civil Engineer