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Haworth Tompkins selected to design American Repertory Theater at Harvard University project

June 21, 2019 - Construction Design & Engineering

Allston, MA American Repertory Theater (A.R.T.) at Harvard University has selected architects Haworth Tompkins to design the A.R.T.'s future home on Harvard's Allston campus. The forthcoming center for research and performance will be the first US building designed by the UK-based firm, winner of the Royal Institute of British Architects 2014 Stirling Prize for its design of Everyman Theatre in Liverpool, England. Haworth Tompkins leads a team that also includes theatrical consultancy firm Charcoalblue and ARC/ Architectural Resources Cambridge.

"Haworth Tompkins' reputation precedes it as one of the great architectural studios of our time," said Paulus. "Their work—including the Young Vic in London and the recent transformation of the Battersea Arts Center—reflects the dynamic, transformational energy that is at the core of any theatrical event. Drawing on its experience in sustainable design and urban development, Haworth Tompkins also profoundly understands the role that theaters can play within our cities and communities. It is committed to the values that animate our work at A.R.T., and I look forward to working with HT director Steve Tompkins and the team to create a building that exemplifies our shared vision of the theater as a town hall for the 21st century."

Founded in 1991 by Graham Haworth and Steve Tompkins, Haworth Tompkins is recognized for creating intelligent, purposeful, and sustainable designs, and has received over 150 awards for projects across the sectors of culture, urban residential, heritage, and higher education. It is responsible for more than a dozen of the UK's most highly regarded new and renovated theater buildings, beginning in 2000 with a reworking of London's Royal Court Theatre.

Signature projects include:

- Young Vic (2006): HT rebuilt a space originally designed to be temporary that had evolved into the home of a world-famous theatrical powerhouse. Updates included an upgraded auditorium for greater theatrical flexibility and a multi-functional bar/foyer space at the building's heart that serves as a natural extension of the public street, connecting all three auditoria and serving as a public living room for the local community. Each individual component of the reimagined building was expressed as an individual element to create a more informal presence amongst the mixed scales of the surrounding streetscape. RIBA Stirling Prize shortlist, RIBA London Building of the Year award, and the Civic Trust Award.
- Liverpool Everyman (2013): Charged with replacing and re-presenting an iconic Liverpool

institution at the center of the city's cultural and political life, Haworth Tompkins encapsulated the original building's classless, democratic values. Key features include a façade of more than 100 life-sized portrait shutters representing ordinary residents, an auditorium constructed of reclaimed bricks from the former building, and an adaptable thrust stage. The first theater to be recognized with the RIBA Stirling Prize, and the winner of the Chicago Athenaeum Architecture Award, and The Stage Theatre Building of the Year Award.

- National Theatre (2015): Charged with the revitalization of one of the world's most important producing theaters, Haworth Tompkins designed a new production building and an updated auditorium, transforming the NT's engagement with the adjacent river walk and surrounding neighborhood, regenerating its main entrance and foyers, and activating the surrounding public spaces. Winner of a RIBA National Award, RICS National Award, Civic Trust Award, and The Stage Theatre Building of the Year Award.

- Bridge Theatre (2017): The first wholly new large theater to be added to London's commercial theater sector in 80 years, the building features a 900-seat adaptable auditorium. Winner of a RIBA London Award and The Stage Theatre Building of the Year Award.

- Battersea Arts Centre (2018): Haworth Tompkins has been working alongside the Battersea Arts Centre team, the local community, and theater artists for over a decade on a series of ongoing projects that are gradually transforming the 1893 civic building into a center of creative communal activity and an explicit record of the building's vivid history. Winner of The Stage Theatre Building of the Year Award and a RIBA regional award.

- Haworth Tompkins director Steve Tompkins said, "We are delighted to be joining the A.R.T. and Harvard University in imagining the new center for theater research and performance at Allston. Our shared vision for the project is multi-faceted: we will aim to create an inspiring environment for making and experiencing theater; an enduring cultural asset for the University; a positive contributor to the richness and diversity of Allston; an exemplar of environmentally responsible design; and a welcoming place of entertainment, reflection, and debate for the whole community."

In January 2019, Tompkins was named the most influential person in British theater by the UK's The Stage, topping a list of 100 producers, artists, and others. Calling him a modern-day successor to Frank Matcham, the renowned Victorian designer responsible for many of London's most recognizable theaters, it wrote, "Unlike Matcham, whose theaters divided audiences by class, Tompkins' approach is all about democratizing theatergoing...he is literally and physically transforming British theater, and his legacy will be experienced by millions of theatergoers for years to come."

Harvard University said in February that a transformative gift from David '93 and Stacey Goel would make it possible to begin planning for A.R.T.'s new home, which will anchor the university's arts presence on its developing Allston campus.

The A.R.T., representatives from Harvard University, and a peer architect review panel unanimously

selected Haworth Tompkins for this project after reviewing proposals from firms based in the US and UK. A site for the new building has yet to be announced. Design work on the new building is in the early stages, and the A.R.T. will continue to produce work at the Loeb Drama Center for several years while plans develop.

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