

**THE  
FINNISH  
INSTITUTE  
IN LONDON**

March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

The Finnish Institute in London has commissioned the 'Nest', a rooftop pergola, for its building in Eagle Street, Holborn. The final design results from an architectural competition with Finland's leading timber architecture studio, the Wood Program at the Aalto University's Department of Architecture.

**The 'Nest'**

A rooftop pergola for the Finnish Institute in London

[www.finnish-institute.org.uk](http://www.finnish-institute.org.uk)

The Finnish Institute has operated from 35-36 Eagle Street, Holborn since 1990, when the Finnish state bought the house. We work with artists, researchers, experts and policy makers in Finland and the United Kingdom to promote strong networks in the field of art, culture and social studies. During the last 19 years the building has housed concerts, seminars, language courses, a library and staff. The interior of the house reflects Finnish modernist design and is furnished with sofas, chairs, lamps and tableware by such classics as Alvar Aalto and Eero Aarnio alongside future design classics from the 1990s and beyond. The staff has used the building's rooftop since the start. However, the rooftop area has never been upgraded in the way the interior and the surrounding area have.

The objective of the 'Nest' is to create a space outdoors for the staff to enjoy whether it is for lunch, meetings or periods of work. The 'Nest' will provide a symbolic rooftop garden, an attractive space for tranquillity in the rushed urban environment. The 'Nest' is an excellent example of Finnish timber architecture and it will create a representative symbol for Finland in Holborn. It will demonstrate wood, a traditional Finnish material, in a modern, innovative and attractive way. The appropriation of the roof space will also increase the value of the building by using Finnish strengths: design and wood.

The lifespan of the structure is approximately three years, but we are quite flexible regarding the timeline. The 'Nest' is a sustainable structure and we will include information of the lifeline of the materials on the project's website when it opens in April 2010.

The Finnish Institute has made all efforts to meet Camden Council's planning guidelines and requirements to facilitate this project. To this end, we have had three pre-planning consultation meetings: 1) October 2009 to initially present the project and receive advice on the process within in the area; 2) March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2010 to receive additional advice on the plans and 3) March 8<sup>th</sup> 2010 final consultation with architect Pekka Heikkinen present, including presentation of final planning documents and drawings.

**London Festival of Architecture**

19 June – 4 July 2010

[www.lfa2010.org](http://www.lfa2010.org)

The 'Nest' will be launched in June 2010 during the London Festival of Architecture as part of the festival's International Architecture Showcase Programme (coordinated by the British Council and the Architecture Foundation). It is a showcase of Finnish contemporary innovation and knowhow

within wood architecture and also to network the students, staff and alumni of the Aalto University with colleagues and fellow students at the AA School of Architecture and the Royal College of Art.

The idea of the 'Nest' is to present Finnish architectural design and innovation, knowledge of wood construction and showcase the Aalto University. The Wood Studio's work will be presented to an international architectural community, and various events and talks will be organized in collaboration with British partners to discuss innovative wood architecture.

**The Wood Program at Aalto University**

<http://arkkitehtuuri.tkk.fi/engl/woodprog>

[www.aalto.fi/en](http://www.aalto.fi/en)

The commissioning of public buildings in Finland is based on openness and a long tradition of hosting architectural competitions. The 'Nest' has been commissioned through such a competition for studio members at the Wood Program at the Department of Architecture in Aalto University. The multi-disciplinary studio team of the international Wood Program designs and builds the wooden structure that will be situated on the rooftop of the Finnish Institute in London.

The Wood Program (please see attached book) is a one-year intensive program at the Aalto University with a focus on wood and wooden architecture. The programme, directed by leading wood architecture expert Professor Pekka Heikkinen, explores the ecological, technical and architectural properties of wood, providing a thorough and all-round view on the whole chain of wood construction, beginning with the tree in the forest and ending up with an experimental wooden building. In addition to the 'Nest' in London, the Wood Program team is currently working on one other major project for 2010, a zero-energy prototype house in Madrid, Spain, for the Solar Decathlon competition, for which the team was selected as a finalist.

**Context: World Design Capital Helsinki 2012**

**Open Helsinki: Embedding Design in Life**

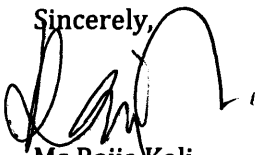
[www.wdc2012helsinki.fi/en](http://www.wdc2012helsinki.fi/en)

Helsinki was elected in October as World Design Capital for 2012. Design is a factor deep-rooted in the urban lifestyle of Helsinki. Design is manifest in the everyday lives of the people living in Helsinki in many ways, ranging from home furniture and items that represent old Finnish design traditions to modern urban solutions in the city and contemporary interior design. For the City of Helsinki, design has for decades been a pivotal enabler to building an open city. The concept of 'Embedded Design' has tied design to innovation and enabled desirable solutions that have addressed the needs of its inhabitants.

The 'Nest' is part of the Finnish Institute's large umbrella project for design - the Helsinki London Design Camp 2010-2012 - and thereby one of the first international satellite projects running up to the year 2012, when Helsinki will be World Design Capital.

I look forward to hearing your feedback.

Sincerely,



Ms Raija Koli

Director

The Finnish Institute in London