

## Press Conference

### The Renewal of St Martin-in-the-Fields, London

Eric Parry, Principal at Eric Parry Architects, will hold a press conference in New York to highlight his vision for the ongoing redevelopment of one of London's most iconic churches. St Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square, designed by James Gibbs in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, was the original blueprint for many North American churches; St Paul's Chapel, part of Trinity Parish in New York is considered to be one of the closest replicas of Gibbs' original design.

**The press conference will take place in the nave of St Paul's Chapel, New York at 2.00 pm on Wednesday 2 May 2007.**

The vital connection between the activities of the two churches continues to this day. In 2001, St Paul's served as a place of rest and refuge for the recovery workers at the World Trade Centre site, mirroring the refuge provided by St Martin's to soldiers returning from the First World War. St Martin's continues to play a central role within the local community, providing regular services and pastoral care for its extended community as well as shelter for the homeless, alongside its celebrated status as a world-famous concert venue.

The site of St Martin-in-the-Fields is highly significant - a complex mix of buildings including the church and underground crypts, social care facilities for homeless people and the local Chinese community, and residential apartments on a site that occupies an area just over half the size of Gramercy Park, Manhattan. The church itself is undergoing extensive conservation work to return the interior to its 18<sup>th</sup> century glory, while the adjacent churchyard is being reconfigured to create enhanced public space. Most significant of all is the extensive work below ground. The \$70 million Renewal Project creates a striking new entrance pavilion at street level, which takes visitors down to a new foyer leading to a reconstructed and extended crypt below the church, greatly improving the facilities available to both visitors and the local community.

### **Campaign for the Renewal of St Martin-in-the-Fields**

Over \$58 million has already been raised in the UK, USA and Hong Kong, including a grant of \$29.8 million from the UK's Heritage lottery Fund. Fundraising continues, with the project scheduled for completion in early 2008. If you would like to learn more about the Renewal of St Martin-in-the-Fields and how you can help to secure the future of this historic site, please visit [www.smitf.org/campaign](http://www.smitf.org/campaign). Or, for more information about the US fund-raising campaign, please contact Peter M. Kellogg, President and CEO, The Kellogg Organization, Inc. on 0800-621-7110.

#### **Notes to Editors:**

##### **Eric Parry Architects**

Eric Parry Architects is an established and award-winning practice with a growing portfolio of notable work. Current projects include Selfridges & Co. Department Store and Hotel and The Holburne Museum of Art in Bath, as well as two major office developments in the City of London – 5 Aldermanbury Square, adjacent to London Wall, and 60 Threadneedle Street,

The practice undertakes an unusual range of work, varied in scope and scale. It has won numerous awards, including an RIBA Award and the AIA Design Excellence Award for the design of its office building at 30 Finsbury Square, London, an FX International Interior Design Award for the Spa at the Mandarin Oriental, Hyde Park, and an RIBA Regional Award for Foundress Court at Pembroke College, Cambridge University. Founded in 1983, the practice now employs 54 staff. A second office in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, has generated a number of residential schemes.

<http://www.ericparryarchitects.co.uk/>

##### **St Paul's Chapel**

When St. Paul's Chapel was completed in 1766, it stood in a field some distance from the growing port city to the south. It was built as a "chapel-of-ease" for parishioners who lived far from the primary, or "Mother," church – Trinity church. Today, St. Paul's Chapel is Manhattan's oldest public building in continuous use, and its remaining colonial church. The architect of St Paul's was Andrew Gautier, a master craftsman who designed a building in the Georgian Classic-Revival style which closely resembled London's St. Martin-in-the-Fields.

George Washington worshiped here on Inauguration Day, April 30, 1789, and attended services at St. Paul's during the two years New York City was the country's capital. Above his pew is an 18th-century oil painting of the Great Seal of the United States, which was adopted in 1782. Among other notable historical figures who worshiped at St. Paul's were Prince William, later King William IV of England; Lord Cornwallis, who is most famous in this country for surrendering at the Battle of Yorktown in 1781; Lord Howe, who commanded the British forces in New York, and Presidents Grover Cleveland, Benjamin Harrison, and George H. W. Bush.

<http://www.saintpaulschapel.org>

### **St Martin-in-the-Fields**

Occupying the eastern corner of Trafalgar Square, St Martin-in-the-Fields is one of the most famous parish churches in the world. At the heart of London, St Martin's is the most visited and most photographed church in Britain, with 700,000 people coming through its doors each year.

As part of the current Renewal Project archaeologists found a Roman sarcophagus and other Anglo-Saxon burials giving this sacred site a more ancient history than was previously known. The finds will be displayed in the Museum of London from 24<sup>th</sup> May 2007.

The first reference to a church on the site stems from 1222 when, stood 'in the fields' between the cities of London and Westminster, it served as a chapel for monks from Westminster Abbey. The present church was completed in 1726 by James Gibbs and the early 19th century witnessed John Nash's completion of the underground spaces and surrounding buildings, as this part of London was remodelled and Trafalgar Square laid out.

Following the terrorism of September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001, the BBC came to St Martin's for Sunday worship, recognising it as a place where Christians, Jews and Muslims could pray together. More recently, St Martin's hosted similar multi-faith services in response to the anniversary of 9/11, the Bali bombings and the London attacks. St Martin-in-the-Fields is also home to an active and growing Chinese-speaking congregation who attend Sunday services held in Mandarin and Cantonese. In addition to this St Martin's is used for a considerable number of memorial and other special services.

<http://www2.stmartin-in-the-fields.org/page/home/home.html>

**For further information about this press conference and for any information on Eric Parry Architects, please contact:**



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