

# Press Release

**For Immediate Release:**

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## **Eric Parry Architects chosen to design new recital hall for UK's leading music school**

Eric Parry Architects has been appointed by Wells Cathedral School to design a new facility for the teaching, learning and performance of music in the heart of Wells City, Somerset.

Known as Cedars Hall, the new £3.5million design will contain a technically-excellent recital hall and inter-connected flexible spaces for teaching, rehearsing, performing and recording. The warm timber finished recital hall is recessed into the surrounding garden, which is visible from the hall through large windows. Natural light fills the space during the day and the building becomes a lantern in the landscape during the evenings. The stage, seating and acoustic wall panels within the hall can be adapted for various layouts with differing acoustic qualities suitable for a range of music styles and audience configurations. Exposed structural beams in the roof further enhance the acoustic performance of the space.

Sited in The Cedars, the Georgian heart of the school, Cedars Hall lies on the historically significant axis with Wells Cathedral's Chapter House, and both share the function of gathering spaces for the local and regional community. The new building will maintain important views from the landmark Cedar Tree to Wells Cathedral and stunning views across the garden and grounds. Level access will be provided across the site through the buildings foyer, which follows the existing listed garden wall and also serves as an informal rehearsal and performance space.

The design incorporates local stone used on the listed garden wall within the site, low reflective glazing and matte, warm finished steel on the exterior facades. The recital hall interior is finished in timber and can accommodate an audience of over 400. A green roof system is used throughout.

Commenting on the appointment, Elizabeth Cairncross, Head of Wells Cathedral School, said: "Cedars Hall is a significant project not just for the school but for the whole community of Wells, and from a group of outstandingly talented architects and design teams it's been a privilege to appoint Eric Parry Architects, whose vision and sensitive design places music at the heart of what we do."

The project for Wells Cathedral School builds on Eric Parry Architects' success with the £6.5 million award-winning Foundress Court at Pembroke College, Cambridge. In recent years the practice has also been involved in a number of educational projects including the Bedford School Library, which opened in 2003, New Studio Accommodation at the Wimbledon School of Art, and the new Music School at Bedford School which won an RIBA Award earlier this year.

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**Notes to Editors:**

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Eric Parry Architects is an established and award-winning practice with a growing portfolio of notable work.

Current projects include Aldermanbury Square in the City of London and the most significant renewal project currently being undertaken in London, the restoration and redevelopment of the historic St Martin-in-the-Fields Church in Trafalgar Square.

The practice undertakes an broad range of work, varied in scope and scale. It has won numerous awards, including an RIBA Award and an AIA Design Excellence Award in 2003 for the design of the office building at 30 Finsbury Square, London, which was also shortlisted for the prestigious Stirling Prize in the same year. The Spa at the Mandarin Oriental, Hyde Park was awarded Best Leisure Design at the FX International Interior Design Awards in 2001 and Foundress Court at Pembroke College, Cambridge University, won an RIBA Award in 1998.

The practice is based in Finsbury, London, and employs over 50 staff. EPA also has an office in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where the practice has designed a number of residential schemes.

Eric Parry has a key involvement in all projects, particularly in their design development stages. He is keenly interested in the bridges between theory, practice, space and society.

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

**Credits:**

Architects	Eric Parry Architects
Structural Engineers	Momentum Engineering
M&E Engineers	Buro Happold
Acoustic Consultant	Paul Gillieron Acoustic Design

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