

MK Gallery

News Release

Construction begins on MK Gallery's much anticipated expansion



MK Gallery expansion visualisation. Image courtesy of 6a architects.

This autumn, major construction commences on MK Gallery's ambitious expansion. This will see the current building double in size and the creation of new cultural facilities in Milton Keynes. Reopening in 2019, the Gallery and its programmes will be transformed through doubled exhibition spaces for historical as well as contemporary art, a multi-purpose auditorium for film, music, dance and other activities overlooking the city's green spaces, a dedicated learning and community space, excellent access facilities and a welcoming new café bar and shop.

Working on an exciting design by 6a architects, the expansion is being delivered by main contractor, Bowmer & Kirkland with project management and contract administration by Jackson Coles. Through extensive consultation with local residents and stakeholders, the design has been refined in partnership with MK Gallery, Milton Keynes Council, and Arts Council England.

Award winning 6a architects has garnered a reputation for its sensitive and engaging buildings. The design for MK Gallery includes references to the original development of Milton Keynes in the 1960s and 70s telling the story of the city's visionary heyday, in collaboration with artists Gareth Jones and Nils Norman.

MK Gallery Director Anthony Spira said: *'It is a source of immense pride to be bringing what will be a world-class venue to Milton Keynes. The new building will be fully accessible so that we can provide the very best arts experiences for wide audiences and extend our work with families, community groups and those impacted by health, financial and social concerns. The arts are an incredible resource for creating cohesion between diverse individuals, nurturing wellbeing and ultimately creating stronger communities.'*

Bowmer & Kirkland, is of the UK's most successful privately-owned construction, engineering and development groups.

Main Board Director, Jack Kirkland, said: *"We at Bowmer & Kirkland are tremendously excited to be working on this project. We are very proud of the work that we have done and are doing in Milton Keynes and we hope that this expansion will be an outstanding contribution to the cityscape. Speaking personally I have enjoyed many great shows at MK Gallery and I look forward to seeing what Anthony and his team will do with the new space."*

Speaking about the expansion Councillor Liz Gifford, Milton Keynes Council Cabinet member responsible for Place, said: *'Milton Keynes was founded on an understanding of the value of arts and culture as the foundation for strong, lively and fulfilled communities. This is a legacy that continues today. What more potent demonstration can there be of Milton Keynes' belief in the value of culture than for the MK Gallery expansion to be commencing in the year when we celebrate the city's 50th anniversary and as it prepares its bid to become European Capital of Culture in 2023.'*

The expansion of MK Gallery has been made possible with the generous backing of Arts Council England, Milton Keynes Council, SEMLEP and many other generous trusts, individuals and businesses. The funders recognised MK Gallery's track record in delivering excellent and innovative local and international arts programmes, particularly praising its partnership working and success in bringing new audiences to the arts.

Hilary Chipping, Deputy Chief Executive of SEMLEP said: *"MK Gallery's expansion secures its position as an excellent cultural asset for the South East Midlands. SEMLEP's Local Growth Fund investment in MK Gallery reflects our commitment to supporting the high-quality cultural arts offer across the area. This contributes to the quality of life for residents, supports our strong visitor economy and strengthens our cultural and creative sector."*

Throughout construction, MK Gallery is delivering City Club, a programme of new art, performances, family activities, happenings and talks inspired by the original cultural plans for Milton Keynes. Further details can be found at www.mkgallery.org.

Notes to Editors

MK Gallery

MK Gallery presents free, changing exhibitions of world class art. Renowned for its exhibitions of international contemporary art, the gallery's programme is diversifying to include historical shows alongside the contemporary.

MK Gallery was founded in Central Milton Keynes in 1999 as part of a major theatre and gallery complex. While the theatre has become one of the most successful outside of London, the gallery opened with a solo show by Gilbert & George and has presented a very broad range of exhibitions, from Archigram to Gilberto Zorio via Michael Craig-Martin, Nasreen Mohamedi, Piranesi and Andy Warhol. The gallery frequently tours its exhibitions to international partners across the world, is a regular publisher, and producer of a dynamic and diverse public programme, working closely with local schools and community groups.

MK Gallery is part of the Arts Council's National Portfolio and a member of the Plus Tate network.

MK Gallery, 900 Midsummer Boulevard, Central Milton Keynes, MK9 3QA. www.mkgallery.org

MK Gallery Supporters

MK Gallery receives core funding from Milton Keynes Council and Arts Council England.



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MK Gallery Expansion Funders

Arts Council England, The Anson Charitable Trust, The Bernard Sunley Charitable Foundation, The Carrington Charitable Trust, Charles Wolfson Charitable Trust, David Lock Associates, Derek Walker Fund supporters, The Finnis Scott Foundation, Garfield Weston Foundation, The Headley Trust, J Paul Getty Jnr Charitable Trust, Milton Keynes Council, MK Community Foundation, Reuben Foundation, The Sackler Trust, Sir Siegmund Warburg's Voluntary Settlement, South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP), Sylvia Waddilove Foundation UK, The Wolfson Foundation, those that wish to remain anonymous, and with the kind support of Milton Keynes Development Partnership.

6a architects

6a architects was founded by Tom Emerson and Stephanie Macdonald in 2001. They are best known for their contemporary art galleries, educational buildings, artists' studios and residential projects, often in sensitive historic environments.

The 40-strong practice recently completed a new 68-room hall of residence for Churchill College, Cambridge (2016), which was awarded a RIBA Regional East Award in 2017. A new studio complex for photographer Juergen Teller (2016) was winner of both a RIBA Regional London award and RIBA London Building of the Year in 2017. Recent arts projects include a collaboration with artist Gabriel Orozco on his new sculpture garden at South London Gallery (2016), a new contemporary art gallery for Sadie Coles HQ in Mayfair (2015), a cast iron shop front for fashion designer Paul Smith (2014) and refurbishment of the textile and fashion galleries at the Victoria & Albert Museum (V&A) in 2013.

6a architects rose to prominence with the completion of two critically acclaimed public art galleries, Raven Row (2009), which won a RIBA Award in 2011, and the expanded South London Gallery (2010). The practice is currently working on significant arts, education and residential projects around the world and has won major national and international competitions and been recognized with several prestigious awards, including consecutive nominations for the European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture – Mies Van der Rohe Award (2011, 2013 & 2015). In 2012, it was awarded the Schelling Medal for Architecture. <http://www.6a.co.uk>

Bowmer & Kirkland

Established in 1923, Bowmer & Kirkland (B&K) has grown to become one of the UK's most successful privately-owned construction, engineering and development groups.

With headquarters in Derbyshire and regional offices in Manchester, London, Sunderland and Glasgow – they offer a nationwide service with a regional focus. There are 25 companies within the Group specialising in construction, construction related activities.

B&K is a private company, with family values and has a simple philosophy – to provide clients with the highest levels of client satisfaction possible. Turnover last year was £935 million and Bowmer & Kirkland featured at number 62 on the Top Track 100 of Britain's private companies.

They directly employ 1400 people and thousands more indirectly and gained Investors in People accreditation in 2001, re-accredited in 2004, 2007 and 2011 and 2014 demonstrating a commitment to staff and clients.

Jackson Coles

Established in 1982 with offices in Milton Keynes and London, Jackson Coles have experience of a wide range of commercial and industrial projects with a particular emphasis on galleries including the RIBA Stirling Prize winning Newport Street Gallery.

Press Information

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