



O'DonnellBrown

PRESS ENQUIRIES

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PRESS RELEASE

CALTON HILL PLAY SHELTER

10/2021

Collective, the centre for contemporary art in Edinburgh, has unveiled a new addition to its facilities, an outdoor play shelter designed by Glasgow-based architects O'DonnellBrown.

The timber structure is located in the courtyard area of Collective, which sits on Calton Hill in Edinburgh and is part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site in the centre of the city. The site, which Collective opened in November 2018, includes a contemporary purpose-built exhibition space and the restored City Observatory (William Henry Playfair, built in 1818).

Established in 1984, Collective has long supported new work by artists who are at a pivotal stage in their career. Its programme of exhibitions, walks, and events presents contemporary art in all its diversity and provides contemporary artists with the opportunity to make new work, and audiences the chance to see it there first. By inspiring, engaging with, and learning from the people and groups around them, Collective aims to contribute to local, national, and international conversations.

The project has been commissioned to provide a fully accessible and sheltered outdoor space for Collective's learning programme – including 'loose parts' play and creative activities for local families – which complements the exhibition programme. Designed as a light modular timber structure with polycarbonate roof, it is naturally ventilated, providing an accessible outdoor space which is COVID-19 safe.

Designed to stay in place for a minimum of three years, the play shelter follows circular economy principles: it is built of timber components which are fully demountable and positioned on site with concealed steel footings. The existing flagstone courtyard has been removed and put back to ensure minimal disruption to the courtyard. A stone perimeter wall conceals the shelter from view from outside the site, and protects it from the elements on this exposed and windy site.

The design is an evolution of O'DonnellBrown's prototype Community Classroom, which was developed as a self-initiated project in partnership with RIAS and Saint-Gobain, and built with Barnardo's Works as a resource for schools and community organisations to facilitate inclusive learning and mental wellbeing. The Community Classroom CC20 is now being manufactured by Spaceoasis.

Like the Community Classroom, Collective's play shelter utilises a flexible modular timber system, employing a functional, rhythmic geometry and design, and a kit of parts which can be easily erected and demounted. The rhythm and proportion of the surrounding 19th century classical architecture determined the spacing of the columns and height of the roof so that the structure sits contextually within Collective's mix of historic and contemporary architecture. Its trabeated columned form enables easy access for a range of users.



Sam Brown, Director, O'DonnellBrown, said:

"The play shelter demonstrates the adaptability of the design principles employed in our Community Classroom project applied to a highly sensitive location. The client has been a joy to work with to knit it into the historic context, creating a harmonious built addition which also follows circular economy principles."

Siobhan Carroll, Interim Director/Head of Programme, Collective, said:

"We were inspired by O'DonnellBrown's Community Classroom and recognised that they had provided a design which delivers weatherproof and flexible outdoor learning space in Scotland. We are committed to providing creative learning, and this new community space enables us to continue delivering our programme of activities, such as Collective PLAY! to local children and families despite the restrictions of COVID-19."

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Address:	Collective, 38 Calton Hill, Edinburgh, EH7 5AA
Site area:	160m ² (courtyard area)
Gross internal area:	25m ²
Client:	Collective Edinburgh
Architect:	O'DonnellBrown
Project team:	Sam Brown, Dana Cherepkova, Ross Cameron
Structural engineer:	Design Engineering Workshop
Building contractor:	Bridgewater Building Solutions
Materials:	C24 grade timber and 18mm marine grade plywood, treated with OSMO natural oil woodstain, polycarbonate roof
Value:	£8,000
On site:	April – May 2021
Photos:	© Ross Campbell



O'DonnellBrown is a multiple award-winning Glasgow-based architecture practice with experience across a range of specialisms, and a keen interest in what it takes to make a positive contribution to our built environment. With work across the UK – currently concentrated in London and Glasgow – O'DonnellBrown is committed to bringing about confident change in the places they know and love.

Built works include: The Greenhouse, the studio's unique workspace in Pollokshields, and a new annexe building and outdoor learning space at Seven Mills Primary School in Tower Hamlets, London.

Other residential projects include The Foundry, a development of 206 homes on the site of a former foundry in Glasgow; and Overnewton Place, a development of four mews houses in the Kelvinhaugh district of Glasgow.

The practice is working on two community-led redevelopment projects: Millport Town Hall on the Isle of Cumbrae, and Maxwell Park Pavilion in Pollokshields, Glasgow.

Self-initiated projects include: a prototype modular timber outdoor classroom, The Community Classroom, which is currently being manufactured by Spaceoasis; and The Sitooterie, a flexible modular structure developed in consultation with local businesses in Glasgow to facilitate outdoor dining/trading spaces in a COVID-19 climate.

In addition to the Calton Hill outdoor pavilion, the practice has developed the Rainbow Pavilion, a new outdoor classroom for Strathclyde Country Park, which is also opening this month.

O'DonnellBrown was a finalist in The Architectural Review Emerging Architecture Awards 2019 and features in The Architecture Foundation's New Architects 4 (2021). The practice has also been included in the Architects' Journal's 40 under 40 – a showcase of architecture's brightest up-and-coming talent (December 2020).

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