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Punters backing O'Donnell + Tuomey to win RIBA Stirling Prize

14 October, 2014 | By [Richard Waite](#)

Bookmaker William Hill has revealed that O'Donnell + Tuomey Architects' student centre at the LSE has been the most heavily backed to win this year's RIBA Stirling Prize

According to new figures released to the AJ, almost a third of punters believe the Saw Swee Hock building will give the Dublin-based practice its first Stirling Prize victory. [William Hill](#) reported that 30 per cent of the bets it had received had been wagered on the 'surprising and striking' brick clad building in central London.

[Originally given a 4/1 of scooping the award](#), odds on the LSE to win the prize are just 11/8.

The firm, which is headed by recently crowned [2015 RIBA Gold Medallists Sheila O'Donnell and John Tuomey](#), has been shortlisted five times for the prestigious accolade.

Meanwhile Renzo Piano's London Bridge Tower (The Shard), the bookmaker's early favourite, has also been popular with gamblers - 21 per cent of the money wagered going on the 'omnipresent' skyscraper.

However only 5 per cent of punters thought the Manchester School of Art building by Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios had any chance of a victory.

Where the money went - ranked by % of overall bets

30% London School of Economics

21% London Bridge Tower

18% Everyman Theatre

14% London Aquatics Centre

12% Library of Birmingham

5% Manchester School of Art

The six finalists were chosen from the 44 RIBA Award winners and the 12 EU Award winners.

The winner will be announced this Thursday (16 October) at the RIBA headquarters, Portland Place in London.

London School of Economics – Saw Swee Hock Student Centre by O'Donnell + Tuomey Architects

Judge's citation

'This is an object lesson in creating a surprising and striking building on a difficult urban site. Formed as a continuous spiral rising upwards, the outer brick walls slope and twist, gouged with cuts and cracks that give light and form. The floors take up complex shapes, yet all the spaces feel natural and functional. This is a building showing a high degree of craftsmanship.'

Latest odds: 11/8



[See drawings and photographs of O'Donnell & Tuomey's London School of Economics - Saw Swee Hock Student Centre in the AJ Buildings Library](#)

London Bridge Tower (The Shard) by Renzo Piano Building Workshop

Judge's citation

'1.2 million square feet of accommodation has been built on a small parcel of land directly next to one of London's major transport hubs. To make a tower on such a tight site a thing of great beauty is a rare achievement. Six uses occupy multiple floors: health clinic, offices, restaurants, hotel, residential apartments and public viewing gallery; to create a 'vertical village'. The building is omnipresent in London and has added immeasurably to the city.'

Latest odds: 7/2

London Aquatics Centre by Zaha Hadid Architects

Judge's citation

'This world-class building was a fitting backdrop for the 2012 Olympic Games. Inspired by the fluid geometry of water in motion, the undulating roof sweeps up from the ground like a wave to fold over the building and define two separate pools.'

'It is very beautiful; sensual with a generosity of space. The pure and powerful form is conceptually flawless; it will be a favourite venue for Londoners for generations to come.'

Latest odds: 7/2

[See drawings and photographs of Zaha Hadid Architects' Aquatics Centre in the AJ Buildings Library](#)



[The Shard by Renzo Piano Building Workshop - Click on the image to read the AJ Specification feature on the building](#)



Everyman Theatre, Liverpool by Haworth Tompkins

Judge's citation

'After nine years gestation, Liverpool has a brand new purpose-built theatre of outstanding quality. The selection and use of materials has created an exceptionally tactile building. This is a building that will age gracefully, continually enriched by the patina of daily use. It will both reassure and delight its loyal audience and those discovering this gem for the first time.'

Latest odds: 9/2

[See drawings and photographs of Haworth Tompkins' Everyman Theatre in the AJ Buildings Library](#)

Library of Birmingham by Mecanoo

Judge's citation

'Three stacked boxes adorned with a glittering filigree screen are the signature of this landmark, which makes a bold and transformative addition to the city. With formal and informal spaces for reading, relaxing, playing and participating in the library's programme of events, it has shaken the traditional

[London Aquatics Centre by Zaha Hadid Architects - Click on the image to read Felix Mara's feature on the building](#)



Everyman Theatre by Haworth Tompkins - Click on the image to read Jay Merrick's feature on the building

perception of a library to one where families and readers can spend a whole day learning and engaging.'

Latest odds: 10/1

See drawings and photographs of Mecanoo's Library of Birmingham in the AJ Buildings Library

Manchester School of Art by Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios

Judge's citation

The major refurbishment of a 1960s tower and new extension with open studios and workshops has been executed with great skill and innovation. Design excellence has been coupled with a visionary brief calling for staff and students to break traditional course divisions and work across disciplines. This is a building where the exploration of design and creativity will flourish.

Latest odds: 10/1

Readers' comments (2)



chris Dyson | 14-Oct-2014 8:41 am

If I were a betting man then I would agree with the odds on favourite, but who knows the machinations of the jury...they are quite simply brilliant and talented architects at the peak of their powers displaying a warm intelligence, humour, bravery, artistic endeavour and humanity, all qualities identifiable in Jim Stirling.

That adage quoted occasionally by the critic; Robert Maxwell really does apply to this duo

“ We see here an Architecture that values the past without erecting it into an ideology, that can work with the past while correcting its idiosyncrasies. It is Architecture at the same time modern and perennial: it combines ancient wisdom and modern know-how.”

David Berridge | 14-Oct-2014 9:00 am

I took the trouble to visit the LSE building and I find it over-contrived, ill-resolved (look at how the rain running down the facades is dealt with), and offering little empathy to the surroundings other than a reasonable match of brick colour. I'm sure the judges will be persuaded by the hype and vote it to win.

Notable the votes at the BBC are evens Shard and Birmingham Library - LSE scraping a 1% better than Manchester to avoid being bottom.



Manchester School of Art, Manchester by Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios - Click on the image to read Felix Mara's feature on the building