Kingston University Town House
Kingston University

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Imagine a place where reading, dance, performance, lectures, exhibitions, research and learning happily co-exist under one roof, and the door is open to everyone. This is Kingston University's Town House. The juxtaposition of contemplative and active performative activities offers an imaginative approach to education as a process of engagement and discovery. Colonnades form welcoming meeting spaces at edges. Interlocking volumes move vertically connecting the building from ground to top. Activities are revealed to the passer-by. There are no barriers.

Town House is an open-ended spatial framework offering both generosity and flexibility in allowing the culture of this building to grow and change. In order to achieve this, passive strategies are prioritized to ensure a comfortable thermal, visual and acoustic environment, where possible. Active/ mechanical servicing is employed only where spatial, architectural and contextual constraints demand. The building achieves a rating of BREEAM Excellent.

The educational vision and ethos of this building is uniquely rich and progressive. The library facility is twinned with dance studios, performance and event spaces. The building is a democratic open infrastructure, a labyrinth of interlocking volumes, maintaining the feeling of being in one unified environment where these opposites can happily co-exist.

Location: London, UK
Scope: New build
Brief: Predominantly library, also containing dance studios, studio theatre, 2 cafes, covered courtyard assembly space and a reception.

Floor area (GIA): 9056 sq m
Sustainability: BREEAM Excellent
Completion date: January 2020

Project Team
Architect: Grafton Architects
Structural Engineer: AKT II
M&E Engineer: Chapman BDSP
QS: Turner & Townsend
PM: Turner & Townsend
Contractor: Willmott Dixon

"Town House has provided us with an exceptional facility for our students. Its flexibility has allowed us to continue to provide safe support during the pandemic to harmonise with online services and collections for remote use."

Sandra Leitch, Head of Library and Learning Services at Kingston University

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