



ROYAL OPERA HOUSE

3 AUGUST 2012

STATEMENT FROM THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE: OPEN UP

The Royal Opera House (ROH) is running an invited architectural competition to ‘open up’ its public spaces to become more welcoming to visitors, provide an easily accessible insight into the work that goes on here and to improve the levels of comfort.

The aim is to make the physical entrances and street level public areas to the building more open and tantalising, and to find ways of developing existing space to assist making the work of the **Royal Opera House** and the associated creative processes more visible to the general public. In turn this will enhance the appeal of the Covent Garden building as a destination in itself. The **Royal Opera House** will be looking to reduce its use of energy and resources throughout the project as part of an ongoing strategy embedding ‘green thinking’ into all areas of ROH operations.

Tony Hall, Chief Executive of the **Royal Opera House** said “We are hugely excited about the ideas and inspiration the competition will generate. The **Royal Opera House** is looking for the team who, if we can raise the funds needed to fulfil our shared ambitions, will create the next evolution of our building. We are keen to investigate the possibilities of opening up the building even more to ensure that we have the very best facilities to welcome our loyal and existing audiences and to reach out to new ones.”

This feasibility study comes twelve years after Dixon Jones’ redevelopment of the **Royal Opera House** which dramatically improved backstage and technical

facilities, front of house entertaining areas and included additional performance spaces. During this time, the building has become used more than ever both as a performance venue and for other activities, with more than 650,000 people coming into our building last year and a further 30,000 people coming into the building during the daytime as casual visitors.

The competition process will allow us to select an architect to carry out a feasibility study for the work. The competition will run from July to November 2012 and we will announce the selected architect in December 2012. This process is being funded completely by private supporters of the **Royal Opera House**.

On completion of the feasibility study, the funds necessary to move to the next phase of the project will also need to be entirely raised from private sources.

The **Royal Opera House** has been advised on the project by **Ricky Burdett** of the **London School of Economics**. **Dixon Jones** are advising on the competition and feasibility process and **Sir Jeremy Dixon** will sit on the final jury. The seven invited firms are: **Amanda Levet Architects**, **Caruso St John Architects**, **Diller Scofidio** and **Renfro**, **Heatherwick Studio**, **Jamie Fobert Architects**, **Stanton Williams Architects**, **Wetherford Watson Mann Architects**.

PRESS OFFICE CONTACTS

Christopher Millard

Director of Press and Communications

Tel: 020 7212 9458

Mob: 07545 502 226

christopher.millard@roh.org.uk