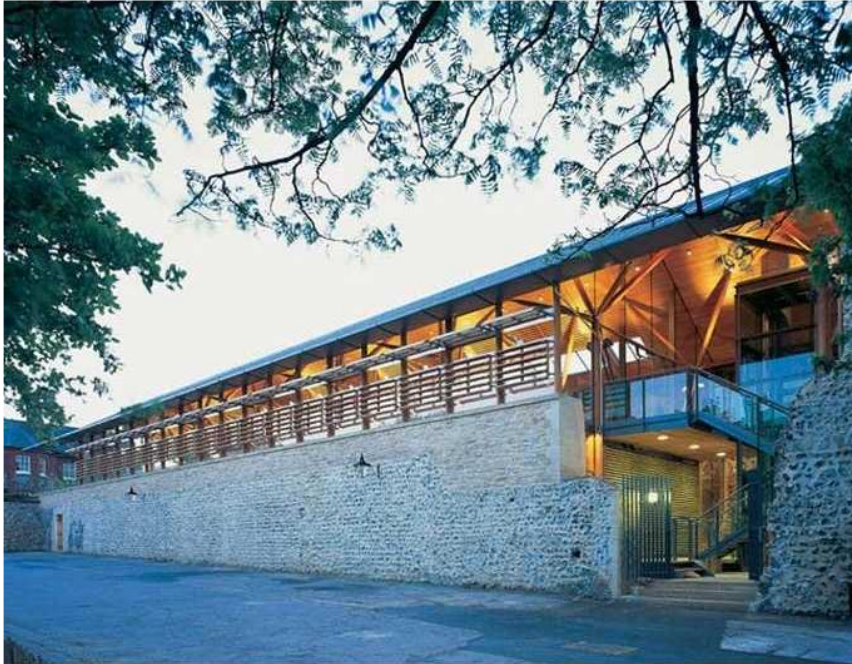


Norwich Cathedral Refectory



Sir Michael Hopkins is a British architect born May 5th 1935 in Poole Dorset. He started by studying at the architectural association know as the AA school of Architecture and is still one of the leading schools of architecture. After graduation he then later on started to work for Frederick Gibberd which after led him to have a partnership with Norman Foster. He set up his own practise in 1976 known as Hopkins Architects. Michael and his wife Patricia received the royal institute of British architects royal gold medal in 1994. He is also a Royal Academician and a past President of the Architectural Association. Also in 1992 he was elected to the royal academy and awarded the CBE and knighted for services to architecture. Hopkins designed many masterpieces and was a keen supporter of Hi-Tech design; his buildings were famous for their industrial strength and firmness and for a particularly clean and satisfying use of factory components. Overall Hopkins buildings have proven to be a success towards clients and provide a welcome contemporary solution for the uninteresting British traditionalism in architecture. In the mid Eighties Hopkins changed his design style onto what he called the 'updating of the traditional materials'. This enabled him to influence the second generation of his projects, the Jubilee Campus at University of Nottingham and above all Portcullis House.

The masterpiece I have chosen to study is the Norwich Cathedral Refectory which was built in 2004 cost £3.15million to build. The reason I chose this particular building is because I believe since the David Mellor factory which was built in 1989 his projects seemed lifeless for example the Trust Gibbs building. I think this building has something special about it. Its simple context stone base pointed floating roof finished off with an eye catching lantern effect, the oak ceiling and with its wooden flooring and furniture finish off the elegant design. The reason why I also like this building and choose it over other Hopkins projects is wood as an architectural material is one of the most diverse in the history of construction. It is also the only organic architectural material this means that it is recyclable, endlessly restock able and does not disturb the ecological balance of the environment and fulfils the requirements many with the environmental concerns to achieve in construction.

The use of timber gives the Refectory a dominant feel and the structure is expressed in a stylish way. This iconic column and beam structure builds upon a traditional diagram with modern features and materiality. Above ground level the structural system is a timber frame which planning module carries over to control all attachment features of this stylish building. The isolated structure conceals all services such as the kitchen and toilet. The roof structure is supported by nine pairs of oak columns divided into a set of structural bays which are then connected to the roof using timber connectors which allow increasing the load carrying capacity of bolts and also allows the wood to adjust for shrinkage and expansion. The glass windows are also helping the columns help support the roof and also able to help support the hidden gutter. From a certain angle the building seems to be a large floating lantern that is wrapped with frame columns with built in windows.

