

Special Mention

Learning Pavilion

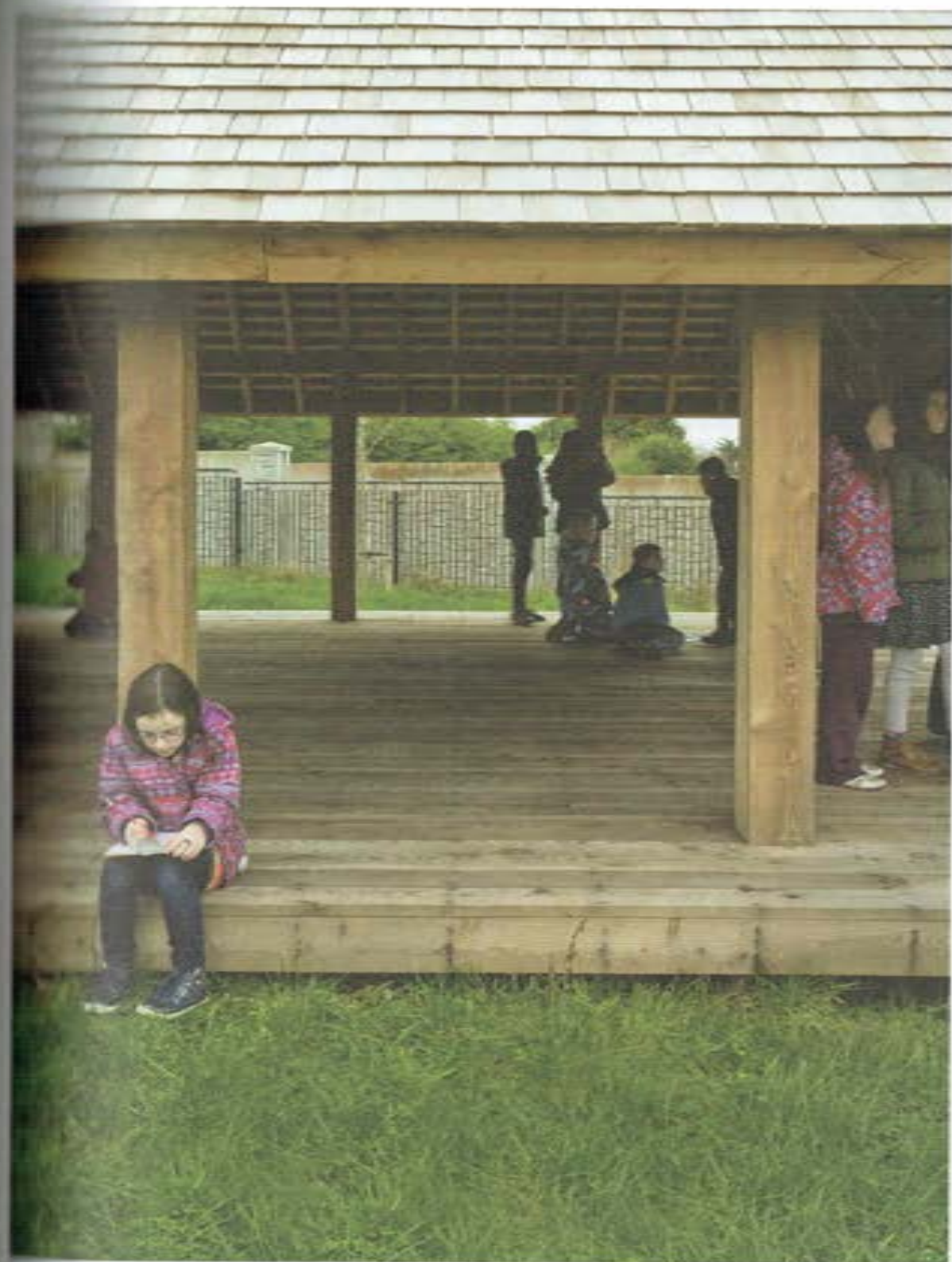
Architect: Robert Bourke Architects
Location: Skerries, Co. Dublin
Client: Skerries Educate Together National School
Floor Area: 70m²
Photography: Ste Murray

Architects' Description

Robert Bourke Architects was awarded first prize in an open competition to design and construct an outdoor classroom and learning landscape for a primary school in North County Dublin. The concept was to design a natural landscape of hills, dips and clearings into which a simple timber classroom could be inserted.

The structure is built from native Irish Douglas fir and Larch on a lightweight timber substructure. The eaves of the roof are low to suit the scale of the children and to strike a balance between openness to the surroundings and protective enclosure.

Two grassy mounds were created to contain an outdoor amphitheater for play and performances. Other landscape features will be added gradually, including a pond, willow maze, orchard, and horticulture garden.





Comments

SH I like the expression on this child's face, I think that really makes it. I mean, what a brilliant place for kids.

IN What a great opportunity, to make this free-floating room in a school, and yet, I feel it lacks imagination. I do like the height. But there's no variation within the space. When you're small, it's fun to have places to hide, and to have nooks and variation.

SH Maybe that's not part of the concept here though. Spatially it's actually quite clever. I don't understand the form of it really, nor do I find the making of it particularly stimulating, but I like the idea of it.

MWH It's simple.

IN That's true.

EM The competition scheme is quite different.

SH Oh, is it? In the original version it's open-ended. That's a major change, isn't it?

IN I think this looks good because there's children in the picture.

MF You can't get angry about it.

SH You just want to sook!

MWH It's a learning pavilion, not something more, no?

IN If it was in the grounds of a hotel for people to hang out and drink cocktails in, would you look at it and think "this is architecturally interesting"?



SH No, you wouldn't. But it's the scale, the height of it that's significant.

IN The scale is nice for kids.

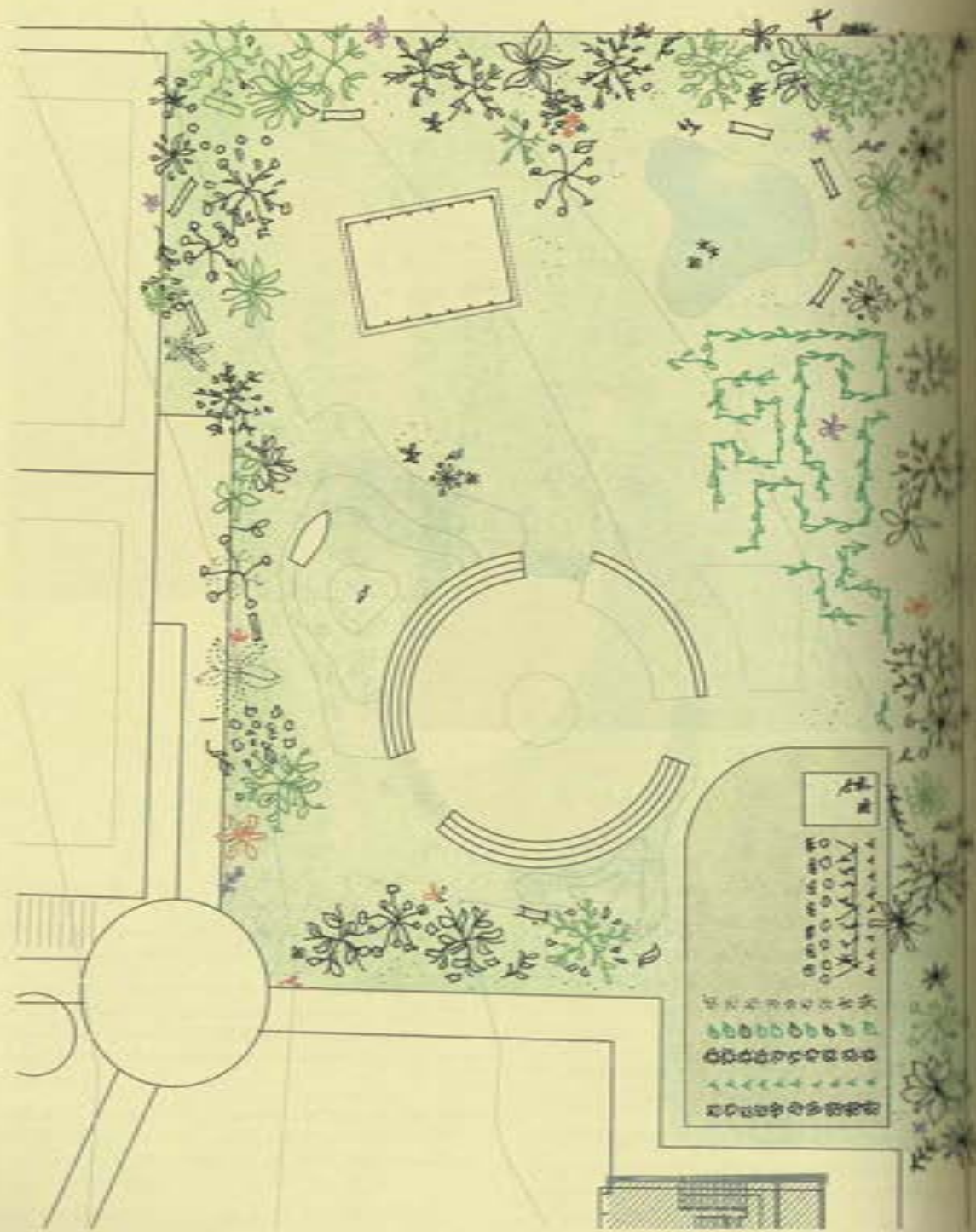
MF There are even small details like this: here is a good seat on the grass, so you can sit around.

IN It's thoughtful.

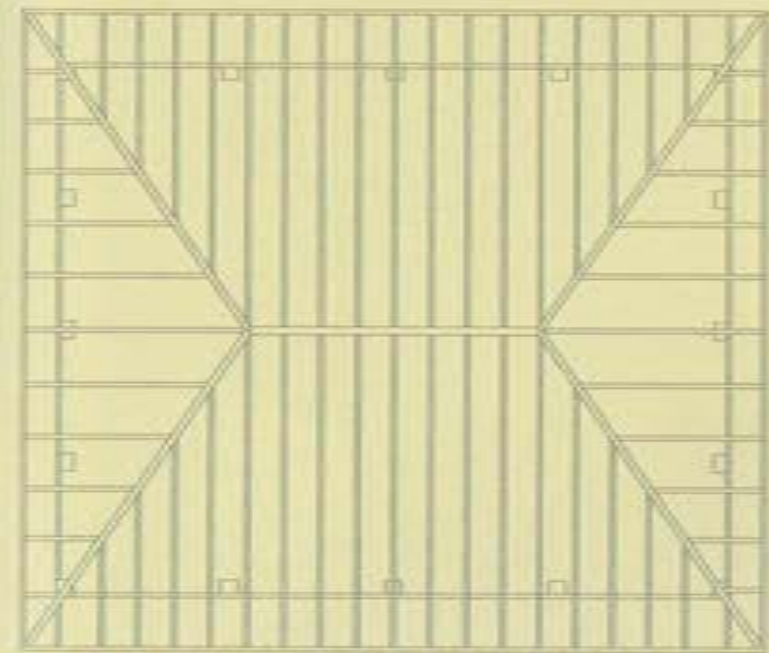
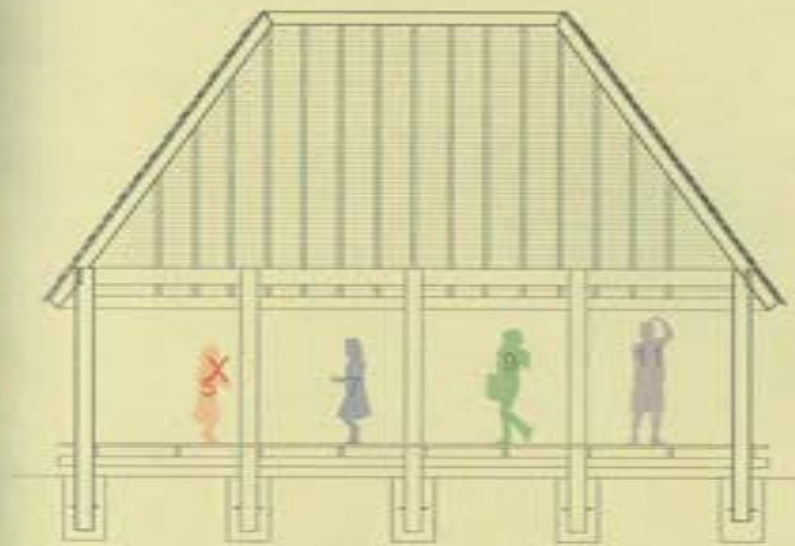
SH It's like that small café under the arches we saw earlier.

MF A bit small, no nonsense, just what you need.

Site Plan



Section and Plan



The Jury

Ellis Woodman

Ellis Woodman trained as an architect at the London Metropolitan University, University of Cambridge, and University College London. He is currently Director of the Architecture Foundation and critic-at-large for the *Architectural Review* and *Architect's Journal*. He has served as architecture critic for the *Daily Telegraph* since 2007. He has previously served as editor for *Building Design* from 2010 until 2014. Ellis curated the British Pavilion at the Venice architecture Biennale in 2008, *Home/Away: 5 British Architects Build Housing in Europe* at the British Pavilion of the Venice Biennale. He has written a monograph on the work of architect James Gowan, *The Architecture of James Gowan: Modernity and Reinvention*, besides writings on the Architecture Research Unit, Stephen Taylor, David Chipperfield, Peter Märki, Blj and Office KGDVS.

Marie-José Van Hee

Belgian architect Marie-José Van Hee studied architecture at Sint-Lucas Hoger Instituut voor Architectuur in Ghent, where she was Professor until 2015. She lectures throughout Europe and was Visiting Professor at the ETH Zürich in 2016. Although known primarily for her domestic buildings, her public projects also shape a humanistic vision of architecture, the city and public space as a meeting place, typified by the Market Hall in Ghent (1996-2012), which she worked on with Robbrecht en Daem.

Marie-José was nominated twice for the European Prize for Contemporary Architecture (1999/2013) and participated twice in the Venice Biennale (1991/2012), the latter at the invitation of David Chipperfield. She was awarded the Provincial Prize for Architecture in 1993, 2003 and 2013 and her work on the centre of the cities of Deinze and Ghent (in conjunction with Robbrecht en Daem) received the Prize Bouwmeester in 2013. Since 2008 she has been a member of the Royal Academy for Sciences and Art (Brussels) and in 2017 she became a RIBA Honorary Fellow.

Michelle Fagan

Michelle Fagan graduated from DIT in 1990 and worked in Dublin, Frankfurt and Berlin before setting up practice in Dublin with Paul Kelly and Gary Lysaght in 1998. FKL have lectured and exhibited nationally and internationally. The practice has received a number of national awards and have been nominated for the Mies Van der Rohe European Architecture Award. FKL curated, conceived and designed the Irish entry for the Venice Biennale 2006, *SubUrban to SuperRural*, comprising theoretical projects by nine architects on the issue of sprawl. FKL were part of the inaugural Lisbon Architecture Triennale with *d-void*, in 2007. In 2009, FKL initiated the *Shadowland* project, examining how architects can look at solutions to ghost estates. Michelle was President of the RIAI from 2012-2013.

Simon Walker

Simon Walker is an architect in Dublin, engaged in a variety of projects from private houses and apartment schemes to public buildings and urban renewal projects. His work and writing about architecture has been published internationally, including *San Rocco*, *σ+u*, *The RIBA Journal*, and *Vogue*, among others. He was selected to participate in the Venice Biennale in 2008, his furniture was shown at Designers' Block in London, 2003, and he was shortlisted for the Kevin Kieran Award in 2010.

He is a studio tutor at the School of Architecture, University of Limerick and at the School of Architecture, University College Dublin. He is currently Chair of the Irish chapter of DoCoMoMo International, an organisation dedicated to the conservation of buildings and sites of the Modern Movement. In 2015 he received the Arts Council Reel Art Award, to make the film *Talking to My Father*, about the life and career of his father Robin, which has been widely shown internationally.

Isabel Nolan

A Dublin-based artist, Isabel Nolan's work encompasses sculpture, textiles, paintings and works on paper and writing. Recent exhibitions/commissions include solos at Mercer Union, Toronto (2016); Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver (2016); Galerie Krinzinger, Vienna (2016); Launchpad Art, New York (2015); Kerlin Gallery, Dublin (2015); Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin (2014); Sean Kelly Gallery, New York (2014); and Musée d'art moderne de Saint-Etienne (2012). Nolan represented Ireland at the 2005 Venice Biennale in a group exhibition. Her work has also featured in Launchpad Art, London; LIAF biennial (Lofoten International Art Festival), Norway; Artspace, Sydney; Palais de Tokyo, Paris; Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art; Beijing Art Museum; De Appel, Amsterdam; The Yugoslav Biennial for Young Artists, Serbia-Montenegro; and Glasgow International. Nolan is represented by Kerlin Gallery, Dublin, and Galerie Krinzinger, Vienna.