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To support members of the profession in achieving excellence in their practice of architecture and engineering in the interest of the community

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2008 RIBA ROYAL GOLD MEDAL FOR OCTOBER ARCHITECTURE NIGHTS DEBATE

The third edition of Architecture Nights for 2008, being organised once again by the Kamra tal-Periti, will reach its climax in the fourth debate this October, with the participation of none other than this year's **RIBA Gold Medal for Architecture, the British architect Edward Cullinan**. The series has in the past months seen the participation of Architect John Bushell, London Director of world-renowned leading international architectural firm Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates, Agnes Couvelas, Greece's most prominent and respected female architect and Francesco Veenstra, partner at Dutch giant firm Mecanoo architecten.



Edward Cullinan CBE, RA, RIBA, HonFRIAS is an inquisitive, inventive and passionate composer and maker of buildings. He is without shadow of doubt one of the greatest contemporary living architects and truly one of the most respected architects of his generation. A brief look at his achievements and international recognition is clear proof of this. He has taught and examined extensively in the UK and abroad, being awarded five Professorships: Banister Fletcher Professor at the Bartlett School of Architecture, University College London (1978-79), Graham Willis Visiting Professor at Sheffield (1985-87), George Simpson Visiting Professor at Edinburgh (1987-90) & Visiting Professor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston (1985).

Edward Cullinan is currently a visiting Professor at the University of Nottingham. He has also been awarded Honorary Doctorates at the Universities of Lincolnshire and Humberside (1996), East London (2000) and Sheffield (2001). In addition, he was awarded a Commander of the British Empire in 1987 for Services to Architecture, elected a Royal Academician in 1989 and elected an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland in 1995. In 2005 he was awarded a Special Commendation at the Prince Philip Designers Prize, for his outstanding lifetime achievement in design. He has been an active trustee of Sir John Soane's Museum, the Construction Industry for Youth Trust, the Building Experiences Trust and the Koestler Award Trust for art in prisons.

Edward Cullinan has also had a number of interesting publications to date, most notably 'Edward Cullinan Architects', published by RIBA in 1984, 'Edward Cullinan Architects' with Kenneth Powell, published by Academy Editions in 1995 and 'Ends, Middles, Beginnings', by Jonathan Hale, published by Black Dog Publishing in 2005.

On the 9th of October 2007, the President of the RIBA announced that they had decided to honour Edward Cullinan, his work, his contribution to architecture and his teaching by awarding him the 2008 Royal Gold Medal for Architecture. Architect Cullinan reacted to this announcement by saying, 'I've been practicing Architecture for fifty-five years; now you're going to give me the real (gold) thing. Thank you fellow architects for appreciating the value of a general practitioner.' He received the 2008 Royal Gold Medal last February.

Given in recognition of a lifetime's work, the Royal Gold Medal is approved personally by Her Majesty the Queen and is awarded annually to a person or group of people whose influence on architecture has had a truly international effect. The award is for a body of work, rather than for one building or for an architect who is currently fashionable. Previous winners include other giants in the architecture world – Le Corbusier (1953), Sir Giles Gilbert Scott (1925), Frank Gehry (2000), Archigram (2002), Frei Otto (2005), Toyo Ito (2006) and Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron (2007).



Since its foundation in 1965, **Edward Cullinan Architects (ECA)** have been designing carefully composed, award winning, innovative buildings. The firm is committed to the idea that a successful building is one that responds thoughtfully and gracefully to clients' needs and to its local context; and which is built on time and within cost. ECA are particularly skilled at working with clients to identify their future needs, and then developing the brief and the design together. The firm has adopted a strong interest in changing patterns of use, satisfying the needs of the users, responding to the context, whether urban or rural, and conserving energy. For over 40 years the firm has been involved in a multitude of projects, working with many different clients, and producing very different solutions within commercial, cultural, housing, health, primary and secondary education sectors, in the University sector and in urban regeneration and master planning.

The protection of the environment is at the heart of the firm's approach to architectural design. ECA has always sought an architecture in which the environmental design forms a vital part of a holistic approach to building production. The firm is registered to carry out EcoHomes and Code for Sustainable Homes Assessments on all projects, and collaborates with the best environmental engineers to maintain its commitment to sustainable design. But this is a firm that practices what it preaches – the best example of this commitment is in fact the re-development of the firm's own office in Islington, which will exceed the London Mayor's new target of 20% of energy from renewable sources. Among the green measures are five roof-mounted turbines. A single, three metre, horizontal axis turbine will provide 30% of the annual energy consumption for the office and four, two metre vertical axis turbines will provide enough electricity to power all the spaces.

Some of the major projects to date by ECA include: the New Music Centre, Purcell School of Music in Hertfordshire (2007); the Singapore Management University at Bras Basah, Singapore (completed 2006), after being selected in an international competition to be the master planners of the 239,000 sq m University, and design five of the six buildings located therein; the celebrated Centre For Mathematical Sciences at Cambridge University (completed 2003), described by Jonathan Glancey (The Guardian) as "a delightful resolution of an equation made up of squares and straight lines, curves and circles, civil architecture and wilful suburbia. It has a feet-on-the-ground, head-in-the-clouds quality that matches and mirrors the exact yet ever questing world of mathematics itself"; the innovative and award-winning Downland Gridshell, located at the Weald & Downland Museum in Sussex (completed 2002 in collaboration with engineers Buro Happold and Green Oak Carpentry Company); the award-winning University of East London's Docklands Campus (completed 1999), described by Professor Patrick Hodgkinson as "a beautifully humanised dream which, following the way of most Cullinan buildings, cannot fail to attract those who come to know it" (The Times, 2000) and the RMC International Headquarters in Egham, Surrey (1990), among others. Current projects include Clink Street, a mixed-use development in Southwark, London (commenced 2000); Stonebridge Hillside Hub, a mixed-use building in North-West London (commenced 2005); a new herbarium and library wing at the Royal Botanic Kew Gardens, which has already achieved a BREEAM Excellent design rating (due for completion early 2009); a low-energy site-responsive office block with ground floor retail at the Masshouse, Birmingham (completion 2009); and the Warwick Digital Laboratory at the University of Warwick (commenced 2006).

This exciting lecture delivered by a living legend in architecture (particularly sustainable and low-energy architecture), and which is certainly not to be missed, will be held at the Robert Sammut Hall in Floriana, on Saturday 11th October at 7.30pm. Entrance to this debate is free. A high turnout is being expected for this event and seating will be available on a strictly 'first come first served' basis. Architecture Nights 08 is sponsored by HSBC and Steel Structures, together with the KTP's Corporate Sponsors AirMalta, and is being organised under the patronage of the British High Commission in Malta.