

# Attenborough Centre for the Creative Arts

**Client:** The University of Sussex

**Size:** 1900m<sup>2</sup>

**Value:** £7.2m

**Status:** completed 2015

rhp have worked closely with the University of Sussex on a number of their campus projects. This iconic Grade II\* listed building – formerly known as the Gardner Arts Centre - was designed by renowned architect Sir Basil Spence in the early 1960s and opened for use by the University in 1969. Following the deterioration of the building fabric and function it subsequently closed in 2007 and was being used as a storage space.

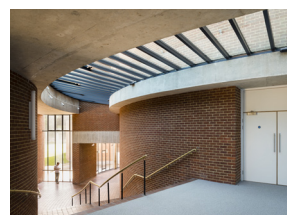
Following detailed discussions between English Heritage and Brighton and Hove City Council's conservation team, we were asked by the University to investigate a sensitive regeneration of the theatre, allowing it to remain flexible, experimental and innovative, whilst also being practical and functional.

Our design solutions address the building's previous shortcomings for contemporary use. The design promotes the flexibility of the auditorium with end-stage, in-the-round and thrust arrangement seating for performance and conference events.

The dramatic space is capable of hosting flat floor events, promenade performances, interactive installations, experimental and ambisonic music. Acoustically and technically, the building is able to accommodate professional productions.

Outside of the main drum of the auditorium, the towers offer provision of first class teaching and learning facilities and the original Spence designed public spaces have been restored offering a café, bar and exhibition spaces.

The revitalised facility is at the centre of practice based arts programmes on campus and also available to the wider community. The building has been re-named the Attenborough Centre for the Creative Arts (ACCA) in commemoration of the University's former Chancellor, the late actor, director and producer, Sir Richard Attenborough.



*Civic Trust Regional Finalist 2015*

*WAN Awards 2015: Longlisted in the 'Best Adaptive Reuse' category*

*BD Architect of the Year 2016: Shortlisted in the Education category*

*Brick Awards 2016: Shortlisted in the 'Best Refurbishment Project' category*

**r h partnership** architects