



Empress Sculpture

Client: Land Securities Properties Year of Completion: 2005
Architect/Designer: Wilkinson Eyre Main Contractor/Customer: Bovis Lend Lease

In a courtyard in central Earsl Court, sculptural artist Diana Edmunds has installed a shocking red steel and fabric sculpture. Manufactured and installed by Architen Landrell, the installation was designed to juxtapose with the grey and formal environment of central London.

Edmunds work, realised in collaboration with tensile structure specialists Architen Landrell, Wilkinson Eyre and Anthony Hunt Associates, consists of two overlapping 16m-long leaf forms pierced by a series of inclined columns.

The sculpture is designed to achieve maximum contrast with the aluminium louvered facade of the thirty storey tower that forms its backdrop. A red tensile fabric skin is stretched over curved steel ribs that branch out from rigid tubular spines. The complex form derives from Edmunds intention that the leaf elements and columns would appear to have been delicately assembled and positioned as if caught in the process of falling.

The dimensions of the structure were tailored to enable the offsite assembly of the wings at their maximum transportable size. Architen's construction sequence required the lower half of the masts to be fixed to the ground at prescribed angles and grid locations with absolute accuracy. The wings were then craned into position and once rigidly connected, the upper masts were fixed to create the illusion of columns randomly piercing the fabric skin. Cast resin light fittings were incorporated into the chamfered mast heads to provide glowing tips.

The resulting sculpture provides the key focal point of the new piazza in front of the tower, and also functions as an external canopy.

Location:
London, UK

Category:
Exterior
Special Projects

Market Sector:
Arts

Scope Of Works:
Engineering
Manufacture
Project Management
Install
Steelwork

Fabric Type:
PVC - Fabric

Function:
Sculptural/Decorative