



## Institute of Art & Design

Client: Surrey Institute of Art and Design Year of Completion: 1998  
Architect/Designer: Snell Associates Main Contractor/Customer: Mansell

The transparent glass pavilion at the Institute of Art & Design in Surrey provides the home for one of Architen Landrell's stunning fabric structures. The novel, compact fabric roof, cleverly designed to be erected despite height restrictions, combined with the sharp structural glazing, slender steelwork and subtle lighting, creates an enticing and welcoming entrance to the new Foyer Gallery.

While primarily being a blank canvas in which to display works of art, the Surrey Institute of Art & Design is a masterpiece itself. Simple yet striking, modern but unusual, the structure aims to create an open and airy space that combines the inside and outside in a homogeneous way. In the day, only a single pane of glass keeps the warmth inside. At night, the interior illuminates the surrounding landscape making a beacon of light in the darkness.

Originally, the clients specified a formal entrance to the building, but designers at Snell Associates presented two options: firstly meeting the brief of the client by suggesting ways to create a new entrance space, and secondly, proposing a far larger scheme showing what the institute could do to make the most of its entire site. With the help of some lottery funding, the second more elaborate scheme was chosen and Snell Associates set about transforming the out of date site.

The tension fabric roof was an obvious choice to create a light and airy space, and Snell Associates were no strangers to the expertise of Architen Landrell, having worked with them on the peaked walkway canopy at Glyndebourne Opera House several years before. Robin Snell commented that the choice of fabric within the scheme was essential in merging the inside with the outside. Fabric allows light to diffuse through it, remaining even and controlled, and gives you the impression of being outside.

A lack of space to construct the roof meant that the two principle methods of erecting tensile fabric roofs were impossible. However, experts at Architen Landrell, combined with the engineering knowledge of those at Buro Happold, managed to overcome the problem, creating a system much like an umbrella where the fabric could be installed in situ. The result is a beautifully curved roof structure, cleverly juxtaposed with the harsh lines of the glazed walls ...see <http://www.architen.com> for more information.

**Location:**  
Roehampton, Surrey

**Category:**  
Exterior

**Market Sector:**  
Arts

**Scope Of Works:**  
Design  
Engineering  
Manufacture  
Project Management  
Install  
Maintenance  
Steelwork

**Fabric Type:**  
PVC - Fabric

**Design Style:**  
Barrel Vault

**Function:**  
Sculptural/Decorative  
Roof  
Atria