

Grimshaw Reveals the Poly Centre at 210 George Street, Sydney Australia

Press Release



Photography by Peter Bennetts

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Grimshaw's new 27-storey workplace, the Poly Centre, is a vital new component of the emerging Alfred, Pitt, Daley and George Streets (APDG) precinct, adjacent to Circular Quay.

The design is sculptural in form, and manifests as a tripartite composition: east-facing core, a 27-storey central tower facing westward, and an 11-storey tower formed by a series of cantilevered arches creating a sheltered public realm in dialogue with the street and this historically significant precinct.

The expressed vertical blades on the western façades shift in orientation to enable transparency to the street at the same time as shading occupants at different times of day. Internally, Poly is conceived as a series of vertical villages created by expansive double-height volumes that allow tenants to work and

recreate with the highest level of amenity but also a heightened sense of community. The interior utilizes daylight in a way that enhances the community spaces within, a workplace with people at the heart of the design.

Along George Street, a generous extension of the public realm is revealed beneath the podium cantilever. An elongated glazed canopy is delicately hung from the arching columns, an architecture of the soffit is reformed. Street fronting retail and hospitality is situated in double height volumes with each tenancy presented within individualised shopfront assemblies.

The Lobby formed by a curvilinear wall, laminated in folding brass, contracts the marble lift fronts, and enjoys a gentle illumination by a seamless fabric ceiling. Janet Laurence's evocation of indigenous landscapes suspend in glass panes above the corner atria.



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Andrew Cortese, Managing Partner at Grimshaw's Sydney studio says:

"Grimshaw's Poly Centre is designed to maximise daylight, enable greater connectivity within and enhance enjoyment of public realm beyond. We devised a system of elegantly elongated concrete arcs that are expressed at street level and repeated across each double-height floor plate to create mezzanines throughout the 27-storey build. On the top floor 'city room' the arcs reappear as expressed steel. For all this formal modelling, the tower has a sensuous feeling to it, materials vary in texture and tonality; light falls across its curves beautifully, soon to illuminate the village-like movement within."

The Poly Centre tower allows its tenants a heightened sense of being in the city: a place connecting Sydney's history and its future. The view from the Level 2 balcony shows mid-afternoon light bouncing off the building's glass façade onto (from left to right): the original retail Johnson's Building (1912), the former Sydney Gazette offices and the Brooklyn Hotel (1912) which still trades as a hospitality venue to this day—all designed in the Edwardian era in what became known as Federation Free Style, notable for its vertical

thrust and narrow pilasters in combinations of red brick and worked Sydney sandstone. Next to this heritage pocket, the elliptical granite crescents of Harry Seidler's majestic Grosvenor Place (1988) leads the eye to the on-ramp to the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

The building's sustainability features include high performance, curved glazing, rainwater harvesting and recycling, and monitoring of energy which minimise the Poly Centre's environmental impacts and allows greater control of the internal atmosphere. The building has also targeted a 5-star Green Star As-Built rating and a 5-star NABERS Energy rating.

Today, Sydney is uniquely placed to attract and retain 21st century talent, but its transformation into a truly global capital can only be realised with the creation of workplaces that imbue the city with life and vitality.

Client: Poly Australia

Area: 19,500 GFA

Completion: 2022

Construction value: AUD 100m

Contractor: Watpac Besix

Structural Engineer: WSP

Services Engineer: Waterman

Hydraulic Engineer: Arup

Façade Engineer: Arup

Vertical Transport Engineer: Arup

Planning Consultant: Urbis

Art Consultant: UAP

Public Art: Janet Laurence

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Press Images available here: <https://we.tl/t-CacfHsdIMM>

Architectural Drawings available here: <https://we.tl/t-tPMpDrOzAZ>

About Grimshaw

Grimshaw was founded by Sir Nicholas Grimshaw in 1980. The practice operates worldwide, across all major sectors, with offices in London, Paris, New York, Los Angeles, Dubai, Melbourne and Sydney, employing over 650 staff.

Grimshaw has been honoured with over 200 awards for its commitment to excellence and innovation, including 'Practice of the Year' and 'Building of the Year' at the AJ100 Awards. In 2019, founder Sir Nicholas Grimshaw was awarded the Royal Gold Medal for Architecture by the Royal Institute of British Architects.

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