

Tate expansion by Herzog & de Meuron secures \$100m from British state

Swiss duo stake claim to be the art world's favourite architects

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With the announcement yesterday that the British government has earmarked an unprecedented £50m (\$100m) to allow Tate Modern to construct a major \$400m extension, have Herzog & de Meuron become the art world's favourite architects?

The Swiss duo have just released the preliminary designs for the Miami Art Museum's new waterfront building as well as an expansion for Art Basel's Swiss headquarters, Messe Schweiz, earlier this year. They have already completed a number of museums including the Schaulager in Basel (2003), the De Young Museum in San Francisco (2005) and the Walker Art Center expansion in Minneapolis (2005), and are hard at work on more projects, such as the Parrish Art Museum on Long Island (2009).

Speaking from London, Tate director Nicholas Serota told The Art Newspaper: "What is remarkable about them is the way their work has continued to evolve in the past ten years, and that evolution comes in part because of their very close involvement with art and artists. They've collaborated with artists on a number of occasions. They care passionately about museums and in providing the right kind of space in which artists can show their work to good effect. They try very hard to make spaces that work for art, and are very sympathetic to the needs of artists and the demands

that works of art place on spaces.”

“They are one of the most prolific and sought after architecture firms in the world,” says Terence Riley, director of the Miami Art Museum. “It’s rare that you find architects so personally committed to contemporary art. They attend art fairs and museum exhibitions (they curated a show at MoMA last year), they design studios and galleries and homes for collectors. They really get art,” he says, “and it makes it a delight to work with them. You don’t have to go through the learning curve with regards to current museum issues.” Mr Riley also stresses that “they are one of few firms you can call avant-garde that have a strong system for managing projects.”

Jacques Herzog has just arrived in Miami and will take part in a conversation with Mr Riley and artist Doug Aitken on Friday 6 December at 8.30 pm at the Colony Theater, 1040 Lincoln Road, Miami Beach.

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