



Cleopatra's Kiosk

Author: Bianchini e Lusiardi associati architects

Type: Retail structure

Completion date: 2007

Place: London, United Kingdom

Client: Samuel Alexander Ltd - London

Competition organizer: RIBA

Awards: First prize



Project description

The new kiosk has been conceived primarily to establish strong visual relationships with the surrounding space, formed by the Victoria Embankment, the Golden Jubilee Bridge, the Charing Cross bridge and the river Thames.

To achieve such an effect, two points have been carefully considered: the shape of the kiosk and its materials. The shape of the kiosk is based on two main large curves: the first connotes the plan of the new structure and is intended to visually "embrace" the old railway bridge pillar, the second curve denotes the roof of the kiosk and gives the kiosk shape a sort of movement, a spiral deformation which increases the sense of dynamism of the whole building.

The cladding materials were chosen to emphasize the ability of the building to subtly reflect the environment, the sky, the road, the people approaching it and to have its appearance changing slightly in colours and reflections during the daytime and from season to season; so the whole building, including its roof, is clad in micro-textured stainless steel with a satin effect and the large curved doors are mostly made of satin glass.

Functionally, the whole building works like a "variable geometry" object capable to dynamically transform itself so to maximise the space available for customers, for staff and for merchandise storage.

The building has been conceived to reduce its impact on the environment: the 90 % of its materials are completely recyclable, an "easy disassembling" strategy has been studied, the heating is provided by an high-efficiency heat pump and a full thermal insulation has been adopted.