





Pringle Richards Sharratt won the competition to refurbish and extend the existing gallery and museum in 2001. Its design turned the back of the building into a new front, facing towards the Cathedral and University Square, the city's principal tourist attraction, creating a route connecting it to the existing main entrance.

The new building closes the south easterly corner of the square with a positive urban statement, in the form of a two storey high glazed route flanked by new galleries and a history centre. This replaces a 1960s Brutalist concrete and glass addition and improves the relationship with Bayley Lane and the historic buildings opposite, mediating between the Herbert and the historic street pattern through landscape interventions.

The roof over this new arcade and History Centre is a dramatic exposed Glulam gridshell, inspired by Ove Arup's roof structure of Sir Basil Spence's Cathedral of St. Michael opposite, and cross-laminated timber panels. Raked timber columns support this structure on curved beams above the History Centre along the western edge, while the new two storey pre-

fabricated, white concrete gallery extension offers support along the east.

The roof is clad in a powder coated aluminium curtain walling system with terne coated stainless steel panels and double glazed roof lights. The roof is completely solid abutting the existing building at the entrance to the galleries but it gradually becomes fully transparent, increasing light levels toward the northern end, above the main entrance.

Outside, a new Peace Garden flanks the History Centre along Bayley Lane, much of which was razed during the World War II Blitz in 1940. The sculptures highlight the destruction and the role of Coventry - twinned with Hiroshima and Dresden – city promoting peace throughout the world.

Cor Ten Steel walls, 3m high, are placed in accordance with historic party walls to re-instate the medieval proportion of the lane. Engraved on the walls are the names of people who lived in these houses throughout the centuries; while a 'destroyed' edge to the walls commemorates the Blitz.



View of the Herbert from the mediaeval streets surrounding the Cathedral



New main entrance to the Herbert facing University Square and the Cathedral

History Centre interior





Peace Garden outside the History Centre



Basil Spence exhibition in the temporary exhibition galleries

"Pringle Richard Sharratt's extension to the Herbert Art Gallery & Museum in Coventry creates a new entrance to the 1960 museum on the elevation facing the city's cathedral and university square — and also improves the building's accessibility and legibility.

The structure replaces an earlier extension and provides new gallery space and a covered double-height glazed arcade at the entrance boasting exposed engineered timber construction, a glulam gridshell and cross-laminated timber panels, with the roof supported on raked timber columns.

The roof was inspired by Basil Spence's Cathedral of St Michael, which was built next to the ruined medieval Cathedral Church of St Michael after it was partly destroyed in the second world war"

Building Design



History Centre with the
Covered Court beyond



Landscape fronting onto
University Square

Coventry City Council
£13.2 million
6,600m²
2002 - 2008