

cube gallery manchester

category Cultural
client The Trustees of CUBE
value £500,000
date 1998
awards + RIBA Award 1999
+ Civic Trust Award 2000

CUBE is essentially an architecture centre, part of a network throughout the UK. It represents an important public forum for the display and debate of architecture. Located in a Grade II Listed former cotton warehouse, the refurbishment and conservation of the two floors which make up the gallery seeks to add a further contemporary layer to the historic framework.

The entrance to the two ground floor galleries and former RIBA Bookshop is via a new foyer which presents an anonymous front to both CUBE and the offices within the remainder of the building. The galleries are quite simple with a subtle interplay of new screens and diffuse side glazing

set against the conserved enclosure. Serviced nodes articulate the spaces and a new oak floor gives coherence to the whole.

Two new staircases of folded steel descend to the basement gallery and lecture room. The treatment of these spaces is very much as the ground floor with natural light permeating from rooflights above.

"Architects Hodder Associates manipulate form, surface and texture to form a counterpoint to the flexible serviced box required for changing displays... Here one feels that the sense of space was rooted early on. The clarity of the plan, the ease with which one can navigate through the galleries enjoying both the spatial experience and the exhibition is fundamental to the project... Throughout the galleries the changes in surface and volume, the quality of light and the legibility of the circulation combine to create a sophisticated ambience."

Ian Beaumont,
Architecture Today,
June 1999

