

# AT Awards

## Finalists revealed

Architecture  
Today  
Awards  
2022

Buildings  
that stand  
the test  
of time

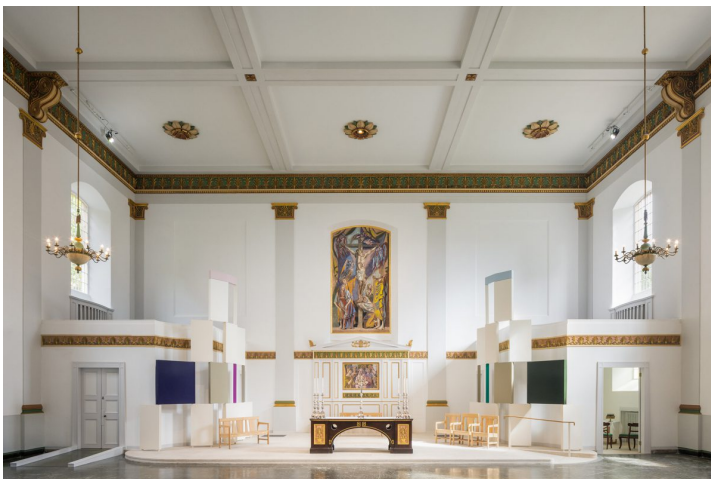


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## Born again: St John's Waterloo renovated by Eric Parry

Eric Parry Architects has given a new lease of life to the Grade II\* listed St John's church in Waterloo, which only just survived the Blitz.



### Trending



Finalists unveiled for  
[Architecture Today Awards 2022](#)

5 October 2022



Bricking it:  
Battersea power station primed to open to the public

7 October 2022



Still standing:  
Schindler House

14 September 2022

## Words

Jason Sayer

## Photos

Dirk Lindner

“Where’s the church?” questioned the King — King George VI that is — in 1950 when touring the construction site that was Waterloo and Southbank, soon to be home to the [Festival of Britain](#) that was due to wow the masses the very next year. The King’s question was unanswered. In a frenzy, festival organisers proffered St John’s Waterloo, a bombed-out church dating back to 1824 that looked worse for wear, and certainly not fit for a festival.

Nonetheless, after a remodelling by renowned ecclesiastical architect Thomas Ford, the church became the festival’s dedicated place for prayer. Today, those changes have started to show their age: walls and the ceiling now coloured “nicotine cream” — and the church, under the Vicarship of Canon Giles Goddard, has new ambitions to contribute to the community and be a local asset.

Eric Parry Architects’ £5.5 million restoration of St John’s seeks to enable this vision while also protecting the 19th century architecture of its original author, Francis Bedford, and the 20<sup>th</sup> century interventions from Ford.



London  
Zoo’s  
Snowdon

## Aviary reinvented as Monkey Valley

27 September 2022



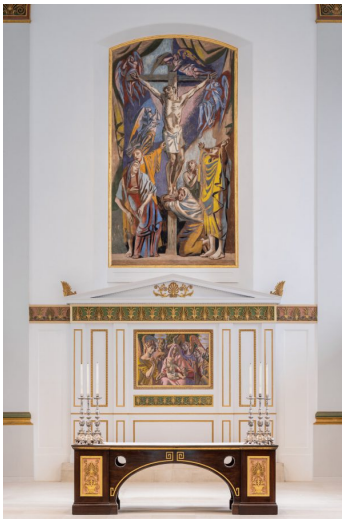
## University challenge

4 October 2022

# Architecture Today September- October 2022



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“It reminded me of walking into a ruin,” Parry told *Architecture Today* on a tour of the building. Romantics may despair that said ruinous notions have been eschewed, but this is in favour of an approach which tidies up the space and, in Parry’s words, “cools down the décor: from the friezes to the pilasters.”

The result of this is two-fold. Firstly, the church’s axiality has been altered to a focus on the nave, which in turn draws one’s eye to an incredibly striking altar painting by Hans Feibusch, a German-Jewish refugee and prolific mural painter who was commissioned by Ford. (The nave, incidentally, is now visible from the street, improving the church’s legibility).

Secondly, the church is now a venue fit for corporate and private events — a revenue stream which it will use to conduct charitable and community work in the area. A lowered ceiling, now made from plaster, has improved the space’s acoustics and is, in Goddard’s words, suited for either 10 or 500 people being inside, allowing it to build on its established pedigree as a concert venue.

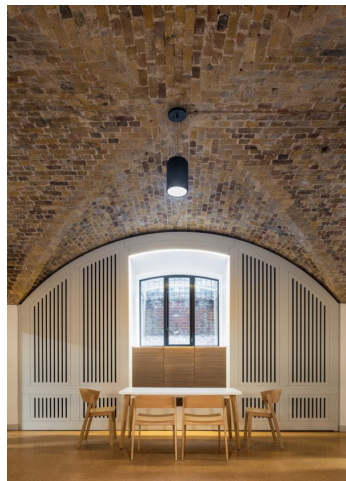
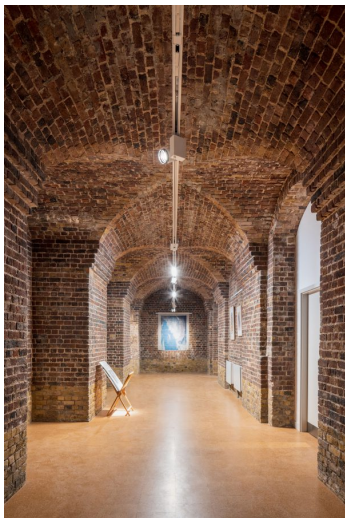


A new partition, located below the organ, enables activities within to not be disturbed by goings on outside, while the Feibusch work, having been restored, is rich with colour and depth and suitably takes centre stage. Altar screens deployed by Parry continue to guide visitor's (and worshipper's) eyes toward the altar and riff on the colours in the painting. The panels are also in sync with the all-white décor added to the 'boxes' — now places for storage, in turn also creating spaces adjacent for private worship and also working as a whole to give the space a theatrical feeling, fitting, as the church will host the Waterloo Community Theatre, Futures Theatre and the academy orchestra Southbank Sinfonia.

Below deck, a different tactic has been employed: brick used for what is known as the 'Old Crypt' is duly celebrated and restored, amplifying spatial drama of the long, vaulted chamber. The space will be used by The Bridge at Waterloo, a charity that helps those people affected by homelessness, and providing employment training for young people.

On the roof, the church has installed an array of photovoltaics, capable of providing 30kWh of power while work has been done to facilitate the installation of an air-source heat pump

in the future, part of the Church of England's commitment to be net-zero by 2030.



## Credits

### Client

St John's Church,  
Waterloo

### Architect

Eric Parry Architects

### Main Contractor

Buxton Building  
Contractor

### Services Engineer

OR Consulting

### Structural Engineer

Alan Baxter Ltd.

### Cost Consultant

Academy

### Heritage Consultant

Alan Baxter Ltd.

### Acoustic Consultant

Gillieron Scott  
Acoustics

### Theatre Consultant

CharcoalBlue

### Approved Inspectors

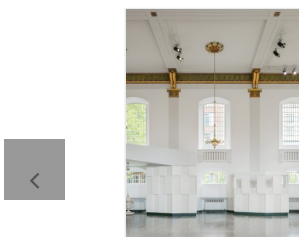
Assent Building  
Control

### Fire Consultant

The Fire Surgery

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