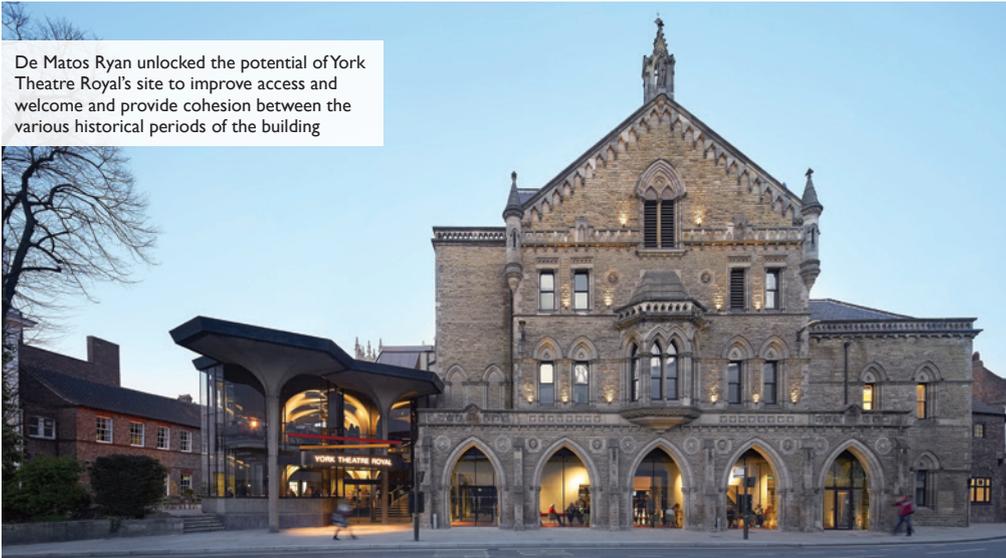




Architect in Profile

Angus Morrogh-Ryan found his passion for architecture as a young boy. Today, as the Director of De Matos Ryan, his firm has completed a wide range of projects that demonstrate its expertise and enthusiasm for design. Here, he talks to Future Constructor & Architect about his passion.

De Matos Ryan unlocked the potential of York Theatre Royal's site to improve access and welcome and provide cohesion between the various historical periods of the building



Cultural organisations, for instance, need to be commercial if they want to survive. This means that we need to look more closely at buildings and how people behave in them to find new ways that enable more people to interact.

What is your favourite building and why?

It's a golden oldie, but my favourite is Le Corbusier's La Tourette. I visited it for the first time as a student and still think about it all the time. Its sense of place, fundamental relationship with the landscape and its ability to modulate daylight has had a profound effect on me.

What do you think is the greatest challenge for architecture students at the moment?

It's important that students find a balance between being taught and finding things out for themselves. I remember feeling like I had all the time in the world, but now realise that the years spent as a student are very precious to experiment and challenge oneself. We are unlikely to have such an opportunity again in life.

What can we expect to see from De Matos Ryan over the next year?

Our HLF-funded refurbishment of York Mansion House as a renewed visitor attraction, that is also the ceremonial home of the Mayor, is currently onsite for completion this year. We are entering the detailed design phase of the HLF-funded refurbishment of the theatre and foyer at St George's Hall, Bradford, and we are also due to create a new member's club and conference facilities at the British Library later this summer.



Angus Morrogh-Ryan is the Director of De Matos Ryan

Please tell us a bit about your career background

I studied at Cambridge in the early 90s and was also fortunate enough to go on an exchange scholarship at Harvard's Graduate School of Design. I worked for Tim Ronalds before setting up De Matos Ryan with José Esteves de Matos in 1999.

Who has been your greatest influence and source of inspiration?

The 'penny dropped' in my third year at Cambridge when I was taught by Peter Carl, David Bass and Carolyn Steel. There was a sudden realisation about how important architecture could be at a deeper level, culturally and socially. The ability to affect cities and the way we live is a significant responsibility and a privilege.

What has been your most notable project to date?

Without a doubt, our recent refurbishment of York Theatre Royal. They are one of the most creative regional producers of theatre in the country and

yet the buildings that they occupied, after 270 years of incremental development, were holding them back. We unlocked the potential of their site to improve access and welcome, provide cohesion between the various historical periods of the building, create the conditions for a wider artistic programme as well as create a more commercial front of house.

How do you approach your projects?

Every project is different by virtue of the specific characteristics of the client; their brief, the site and context. However, common to all of them is an approach that starts with listening carefully in order to create a strong narrative structure for how a project will evolve.

What do you think is the greatest challenge for designing in sustainability?

People tend to focus on energy use when discussing sustainability, but often overlook that financial resilience is also required.