

## Laudation Louisa Hutton for Tom Heatherwick

Tom Heatherwick has been fascinated since his youth about how objects can be manufactured - regardless of the type. For this reason, he initially studied 3D design with a focus on materials science. During his studies, he built habitable human-sized objects, and his interest in architecture grew. Sixteen years later, with a workshop in his studio and a staff including architects, painters, sculptors, photographers, stage designers, and psychologists, Heatherwick constantly experiments with handicrafts and technology in order to create remarkable support structures and inventive buildings.

One of his most recent projects was the British pavilion at the Expo in Shanghai 2010. This "seed cathedral", a compact structure of 20 meters in height made from 60,000 transparent fibre-optic cables, each with a length of 7.50 meters, exhibits the research of the Botanical Garden in Kew in a poetic manner. Its shimmering and slightly mystical appearance and its extraordinary interior, which presents the seed collection in fibre-optic cables, makes the pavilion an impressive work at many levels. Heatherwick also built the main subsidiary for Longchamp, a seafood restaurant on the southern coast of England, some imaginative newspaper stands, a roll-up bridge and the new entrance to the Guy's Hospital – the latter all being in London.

Heatherwick's access to architecture is unusual: on the one hand it emphasises the handcrafted processing of materials, while valuing prototypes and manufacturing processes on the other hand. In addition to this, he is obviously gifted in the art of creating enthusiasm in people and successfully using the various talents of his many employees in order to – in his own words – "allow things to develop".