

## Architecture in London

### The London Eye - a design by talented architects of London

The Skyline of London consists of a lot of modern constructions like glass facades of banks and insurance companies as well as historical buildings like the St. Pauls Cathedral , the Tower of London, the London Bridge, the Palace of Westminster with his towers and of course the Ferris wheel „London Eye“ .



The London Eye is the tallest Ferris wheel in Europe, and the most popular tourist attraction in the United Kingdom. There are over 3.5 million visitors per year.

This hi-tech Ferris wheel is one of London's greatest tourist attractions offering a panoramic view of the city centre.

The weight is 1,625 tonnes and the whole construction is 137m high. The rim of the Eye is supported by tie rods and looks like a bicycle wheel.

The lighting for the London Eye is LED lighting from Color Kinetics in December 2006 to allow digital control of the lights.



The architects are David Marks and Julia Barfield, a gifted pair, which makes the attraction so balanced.



Julia Barfield and David Marks met in 1974. They were architectural students at the Architecture Association in London and interested in geometry, and in the way nature 'designs', for example they shared an interest how the nature is created.

Furthermore they were influenced by the American inventor Richard Buckminster Fuller and his ideas about the social and environmental responsibility of architects.

In 1975 they travelled as a pair to South America, working first in Ecuador, and then in Peru where they designed low-cost and self-built community centres and houses in Villa El Salvador.

Afterwards they came back to the UK and worked for Richard Rogers and Norman Foster where they acquired the ability to blend technology and modern art in architecture.

In 1990 they designed a „Bridgebuilding“ that spanned Regent's Canal at King's Cross. They designed an „Information Age Centre“ in the Thames Valley and won prizes in European competitions.

In Liverpool they had to build a Watersports Centre in Queen's Dock. Once again they won prizes for architecture and engineering.

When the Sunday Times and the Architecture Foundation held an open competition in 1993 to design something for the millennium, Marks and Barfield wanted to do more for the millennium, something that would fascinate the public and the world. Then they were inspired by such celebratory structures as Paxton's Crystal Palace, Eiffel's Tower, Bartholdi's Statue of Liberty, and Sarinen's St Louis Arch.

Moreover they wanted it to be affordable to everyone, and reachable for the disabled

Each of the 32 ovoidal air-conditioned passenger capsules weighs 10 tonnes and can carry 25 people.

Each capsule represents one of the London Boroughs. The administrative area of Greater London contains thirty-two London boroughs:



It rotates at 26 cm per second so one revolution takes about 30 minutes. The wheel does not usually stop to take on passengers, so they have to walk on and off the moving capsules at ground level.

This is the interior of the capsule. Everybody can walk freely through it or sit.



The *modernism* of this structure is a direct contrast with *Barry & Pugin's Palace of Westminster*.



This is Westminster Abbey.

Finally one can say that for the both architects architecture and engineering are as capable of lifting the spirit and nourishing the soul as any other art form and the people can see it through their work.

In my opinion the Skyline of London is very impressive and the modern skyscrapers are in accord with the historical buildings.

By Julia Furchert, 12c