



Michál Cohen

B Arch, RIBA

Michál is a director and co-founder of Walters & Cohen Architects.

Born and educated in South Africa, she met Cindy Walters at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and together they set up Walters & Cohen in London in 1994. The practice has gone from strength to strength, with a portfolio of award-winning and much loved projects.

Michál believes in the value of meaningful stakeholder engagement to inform the brief, challenge clients positively in the way they think about their project, and involve communities in the design process. She remains hands-on throughout all the projects she leads.

Michál is well known for her passion for research, which has shaped the practice's success in the education sector. This started in 2003 with the exemplar primary school as part of a Department for Education initiative. Many innovative schools have been built by Walters & Cohen that draw on the design principles of the exemplar school, and Michál continues to research international best practice and apply that research in creative ways. She is regarded as an authority on the subject of good design in learning environments and speaks at conferences all over the world.

Key Public Engagements

- 2020 + Honorary Professor of Architecture at the University of Nottingham
- 2012 + Design Council Expert: Associate
- 2008 + Architectural trustee for the Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust

Selected Projects

- 2022 Masterplan for Pembroke College, Oxford
- 2020 9,000m² general teaching building for St Paul's Boys' School, London
- 2019 Somerset College ESTEAM Centre
- 2015 Lairdsland Primary School, Glasgow
- 2015 The refurbishment of Boathouse 4, Portsmouth Historic Dockyard
- 2004 Exemplar Primary School Design for the DfE's Schools for the Future initiative
- 2003 A health and wellness centre in the Bank of England
- 1996 A community art gallery in Durban

Design Review Panels and Awards Judging

- 2022 Judge for BD's Architect of the Year Awards
- 2021 + London Borough of Newham Design Review Panel
- 2019 + St Albans Design Review Panel
- 2018 - 2019 Judge for AJ/AR Women in Architecture Awards
- 2017 Judge for British Construction Industry Awards
- 2017 Judge for World Architecture Festival
- 2016 - 2020 Camden Design Review Panel
- 2016 + London Legacy Development Corporation Quality Review Panel
- 2016 + Waltham Forest Design Review Panel
- 2015 + Design South East DRP and Chair of the Brighton & Hove DesignPLACE Panel
- 2007 Judge for RIBA and Urban Splash competition for park facilities, Manchester
- 2005 Advisory board for Reading University's research 'Achieving Design Quality in Schools'



St Paul's School



Sandringham Primary School

'If you believe your surroundings affect your state of mind (as all architects should) then this project should contribute very positively to the education of many children for decades to come.'
 RIBA Awards Jury Report, Sandringham School

Academic Engagements and Publications

2019	Planning Learning Spaces: contributor to book on education design
2017 +	University of Westminster: Part 3 examiner
2017 +	London School of Architecture: guest design critic
2017 +	RIBA: examiner for Part 3
2014 +	University of Nottingham: external examiner for Part 1 and guest crit and lecturer
2006 - 2011	University of Plymouth: tutor and guest lecturer
Continuous	Lectures at universities and professional institutions in the UK, South Africa, Australia
Continuous	Articles and comment pieces for architectural press and education magazines

Selected Awards

2022	Civic Trust Awards: St Paul's School (regional finalist)
2021	AIA UK Awards: Somerset College ESTEAM Centre (special commendation)
2020	AIA UK Awards: St Paul's School
2020	RIBA London Awards: St Paul's School (shortlisted)
2020	Civic Trust Awards: Sandringham Primary School (highly commended)
2018	RIBA London Award: Sandringham Primary School
2017	Civic Trust Awards: Boathouse 4 (regional finalist)
2016	RIAS Award: Lairdsland Primary School
2016	Scottish Design Award: Lairdsland Primary School
2016	RIBA South Award: Boathouse 4 (shortlisted)
2016	WAF Awards, Old and New category: Boathouse 4 (shortlisted)
2015	Glasgow Institute of Architects Award: Lairdsland Primary School
2014	RIBA London Award: Lady Eleanor Holles School
2012	AJ Woman Architect of the Year with Cindy Walters
2012	BCSE Designing Britain Award - The 'Jonathan Ibikunle' School Architect of the Year
2011	BCSE Awards: Towers Junior School
2007	RIBA Award: Redbrook Hayes School