Serpentine Pavilions 2000 – 2017

Each summer, the Serpentine invites an internationally renowned architect to create their first built structure in England. The immediacy of the process – a maximum of six months from invitation to completion – provides a unique model for commissioning architecture. The selection of the architects, chosen for consistently extending the boundaries of architecture practice, is guided by the Serpentine's commitment to offer innovative ways for all ages to engage with modern and contemporary art, architecture and design. The brief is to design a 300 square metre Pavilion that is used as a café by day and a forum for learning, debate and entertainment at night. There is no budget for the project: it is realised through sponsorship, in-kind support and the sale of the Pavilion.

Find out more about past Pavilions and the architects who designed them:
www.serpentinegalleries.org/explore/pavilion

If you're aged 8-16, get creative and build your own Pavilion, then share it on our interactive gallery:
buildyourownpavilion.serpentinegalleries.org

Serpentine Pavilion 2017
Designed by Francis Kéré

Inspired by the tree that serves as a central meeting point for life in his home town of Gando, Burkina Faso, award-winning architect Francis Kéré designed a responsive Pavilion seeking to connect visitors to nature and each other. An expansive roof, supported by a central steel framework, mimics a tree's canopy, allowing air to circulate freely while offering shelter against London rain and summer heat.

Serpentine Pavilion 2016
Designed by Bjarke Ingels Group (BIG)

Danish 'starchitect' Bjarke Ingels created an 'unzipped wall' for his Pavilion – his concept transformed straight line into three-dimensional space, creating a cave-like canyon lit through the stacked, open fiberglass frames.

*The Serpentine also commissioned four summer houses in 2016 – find out more here.*

Serpentine Pavilion 2015
Designed by selgascano

Award-winning Spanish architects selgascano designed an amorphous, polygonal structure consisting of panels of a translucent, multi-coloured polymer (ETFE) woven through and wrapped like webbing. Visitors could enter and exit at a number of different points, or pass through a 'secret corridor' between the outer and inner layer of the structure and into a brilliant, stained glass-effect interior.

Serpentine Pavilion 2014
Designed by Smiljan Radić

Chilean architect Smiljan Radić designed the fourteenth Serpentine Pavilion, a semi-translucent, cylindrical structure that resembled a shell. It was inspired by the follies that were popular between the late sixteenth and early nineteenth century.
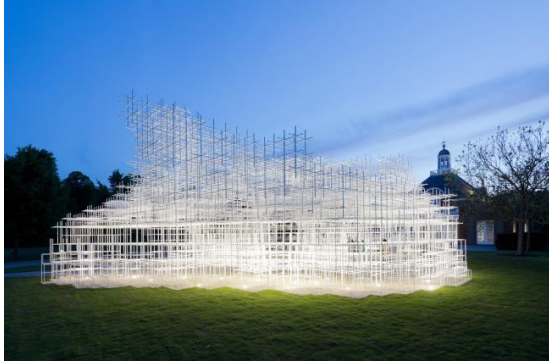
Serpentine Gallery Pavilion 2013
Designed by Sou Fujimoto

Sou Fujimoto's white steel pole Pavilion in an intricate latticework pattern seemed to rise up out of the ground like a shimmering matrix. The Pavilion was intended as a free-flowing social space that Fujimoto described as "a transparent terrain". Visitors called it 'The Cloud'.
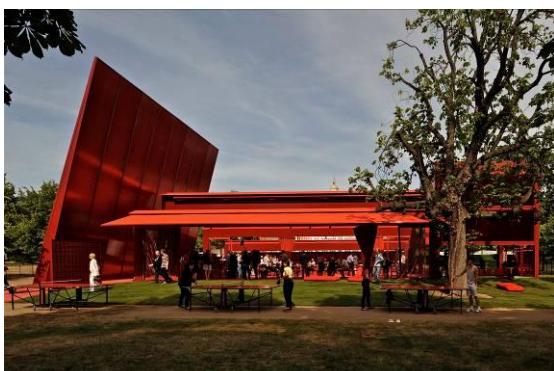

Serpentine Gallery Pavilion 2012
Designed by Herzog & de Meuron and Ai Weiwei

The twelfth Pavilion took visitors beneath the lawn to explore the hidden history of its previous Pavilions. Eleven columns characterising each past Pavilion and a twelfth column representing the current structure supported a floating platform roof.

Serpentine Gallery Pavilion 2011
Designed by Peter Zumthor

At the heart of Peter Zumthor's Pavilion was a garden he hoped would inspire visitors to become observers. Zumthor said his design aimed, "to help its audience take the time to relax, to observe and then, perhaps, start to talk again."

Serpentine Gallery Pavilion 2010
Designed by Jean Nouvel

Jean Nouvel's Pavilion design was a vivid red – reminiscent of a London double decker bus – that contrasted with the green of the park. It was made from bold geometric forms, large retractable awnings and a sloped freestanding wall.

**Serpentine Gallery Pavilion 2009
Designed by Kazuyo Sejima and
Ryue Nishizawa of SANAA**

*Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa's stunning
Pavilion saw a reflective metal roof sitting atop a
series of delicate columns. They said of it, "The
Pavilion is floating aluminium, drifting freely
between the trees like smoke."*

**Serpentine Gallery Pavilion 2008
Designed by Frank Gehry**

*Frank Gehry took inspiration from Leonardo de
Vinci for his Pavilion. The structure was composed
of large timber planks and a complex network of
overlapping glass planes that created a dramatic,
multi-dimensional space designed for
performances.*

**Serpentine Gallery Pavilion 2007
Designed by Olafur Eliasson and Kjetil Thorsen**

*Serpentine Gallery's 2007 Pavilion resembled a
spinning top. A wide spiraling ramp made two
complete turns, rising from the gallery's lawn to the
seating area and continued upwards, to reach the
highest point in a view across Kensington Gardens.*

**Serpentine Gallery Pavilion 2006
Rem Koolhaas with Cecil Balmond
– Arup**

*The centrepiece of Rem Koolhaas and Cecil
Balmond's design was a spectacular oval-shaped
inflatable canopy. Made from translucent material, it
was illuminated at night. The canopy was raised into
the air or lowered to cover the amphitheatre below
according to the weather.*

Serpentine Gallery Pavilion 2005
Álvaro Siza and Eduardo Souto de Moura with
Cecil Balmond – Arup

The 2005 Pavilion architects sought to establish a dialogue with the Serpentine building. The result was a structure that mirrored the domestic scale of the gallery and reflected the landscape between the two buildings.

Serpentine Gallery Pavilion 2003
Designed by Oscar Niemeyer

Built in steel, aluminium, concrete and glass, Oscar Niemeyer's Pavilion's ruby-red ramp contrasted with the surprise of a partly submerged auditorium. The clean silhouette conformed to Niemeyer's principle that every project must be capable of summary in a simple 'sketch'.

Serpentine Gallery Pavilion 2002
Designed by Toyo Ito with Arup

Toyo Ito and Cecil Balmond's Pavilion was based on an algorithm designed by Balmond: "Although fun to look at, this structure was rooted in complex geometry…the Pavilion had no façade and no hidden structural frame behind it… what you saw was 100% pure structure, its holistic beauty like that of a crystal or a snowflake."

Serpentine Gallery Pavilion 2001
Designed by Daniel Libeskind with Arup

Daniel Libeskind's striking design for the Serpentine Gallery Pavilion 2001, entitled Eighteen Turns, was created from sheer metallic planes assembled in a dynamic sequence.

Serpentine Gallery Pavilion 2000
Designed by Zaha Hadid

Zaha Hadid's design was the inaugural Pavilion in the Serpentine's series. The structure radically reinvented the accepted idea of a tent or a marquee. It took the form of a triangulated roof structure spanning an impressive internal space of 600sq metres by using a steel primary structure.