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Photocall: 11.30 am, Thursday 24 January,  
Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Queen Street, Edinburgh

## **NATIONAL GALLERIES OF SCOTLAND ANNOUNCE ARCHITECTS FOR *PORTRAIT OF THE NATION***

The National Galleries of Scotland is delighted to announce that Page \ Park Architects has been appointed to *Portrait of the Nation*, the ambitious project to refurbish and transform the Scottish National Portrait Gallery in Edinburgh. This £17.6 million project will involve the repair, conservation and creative adaptation of this magnificent Arts and Crafts building, which opened in 1889 as the first purpose-built national portrait gallery in the world.

Starting from an urgent need to restore the building, the project aims to forge an innovative and exciting new gallery. *Portrait of the Nation* will double the amount of gallery space within the building, and will reinvent the way in which the national collection is displayed, with a new focus on photography and Scottish art. The project will also create a range of enhanced visitor facilities and a new Education Suite, including a community gallery, art studios and seminar room.

Selected from a shortlist of prominent architects, Page \ Park is a thriving Glasgow-based practice, working across a number of sectors including public building, conservation, education, housing and commercial projects. The practice has a reputation for thoughtful and dynamic design, responding to what are often challenging and sensitive contexts. Its previous and current conservation projects include work on the Centre for Contemporary Arts, Glasgow; Glasgow School of Art; Rosslyn Chapel Conservation and Access Project; and St Vincent Street Church, Glasgow.

Work on *Portrait of the Nation* will begin in 2009, with a provisional completion date of autumn 2011. The aim of the project is to conserve and enhance the building designed by the celebrated architect, Sir Robert Rowand Anderson, in 1882. Page \ Park has been charged with preserving the integrity and coherence of Anderson's design, which remains relatively unscathed. Twentieth-century interventions, including partition walls and lowered ceilings, will be removed and essential new interventions will be designed with a thorough understanding of Anderson's original concept.

New features will be added to the building, including a mezzanine level in the south east and south west wings, and a new glass feature lift that will operate from the ground to the top

floor. Improved access to the top floor will allow visitors to reach a suite of five beautifully proportioned top-lit galleries, while the transformation of previously underused areas of the building will lead to a 50% increase in public and gallery space. The ground floor will be remodelled to improve circulation through the building, and visitor facilities will be added, including an enlarged café, shop and cloak room. The new front entrance will be redesigned to become more welcoming and accessible and to cope with an increased number of visitors to the gallery.

The architects will work with the team at the SNPG to ensure that the design is sustainable. The project team will consider the design of the building, the way in which construction operations are undertaken and how the building is used and maintained to ensure that the National Galleries' aspirations to incorporate sustainability and environmental considerations are fully addressed. The building will minimise energy consumption, achieve awareness of energy management generally and promote good standards of environmental practice. It will optimise the use of natural daylight and ventilation wherever possible, and the environmental control systems will allow effective energy management. The choice of all materials, services and equipment throughout the building will be based on the principles of sustainability and low maintenance.

Speaking of the appointment of the architects, James Holloway, Director of the SNPG, said: "I am delighted that Page \ Park are now on board. With the whole design team in place we are all looking forward to getting to work in earnest on this amazing project. We plan to use this uniquely resonant Scottish building to bring the story of Scotland - its peoples, histories, places and cultures - to the widest possible audience. The result - *Portrait of the Nation* - will be like no other gallery; it will radically extend the ambitions and national role of the NGS, consolidating Scotland's capital as one of the top international cities for visual culture."

John Leighton, Director-General of the NGS, added: "We have been working on *Portrait of the Nation* for a number of years and are very excited to see our plans beginning to come together. We see this project as key to the realisation of the Galleries' recently restated mission which places a much greater emphasis on our audience and on providing visitors with an experience that is both friendly and first-class. We have been very impressed by Page \ Park's work in conserving sensitive buildings, and are looking forward to working with them, and the rest of the design team, in delivering our vision for the Portrait Gallery."

Last month the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and the Scottish Government pledged major contributions to *Portrait of the Nation*. HLF Trustees awarded the project a Stage One pass for £4,531,000 and development funding of £269,000. Linda Fabiani, Minister for Europe, External Affairs and Culture, announced the Scottish Government's support for the project with a contribution of £5.1 million.

## Notes to Editors

The RIBA<sup>1</sup> Stage C design proposals presented in the Stage 1 bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund were prepared by a consultant team selected some years ago by means of competitive interview. Over the course of the last year, the NGS has undertaken a new selection process to procure consultants to take forward the Stage C designs. This procurement process has been in compliance with European procurement requirements for government-supported institutions. As importantly, the process has allowed the Galleries to ensure that we are now working with the strongest possible team to develop and deliver the project. In terms of the principal disciplines, Gardiner & Theobald as project managers and Page \ Park as architects have been re-appointed to carry forward their previous work. The team has also been strengthened in two areas. Davis Langdon, who worked on the Playfair Project (which involved the refurbishment of the Royal Scottish Academy Building and the creation of Weston Link), will take on the quantity surveying and cost consultancy roles. Harley Haddow, who provided a supplementary report on conservation conditions in our Stage 1 application, will be our new service engineers and will realise our developing sustainability ambitions.

The full team is as follows:

Project managers	Gardiner & Theobald (Martin Sinclair)
Cost consultants	Davis Langdon
Architects	Page \ Park
Lighting designers	Foto-Ma
Structural engineers	Will Rudd Associates
Service engineers	Harley Haddow
Fire engineers	Buro Happold FEDRA

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<sup>1</sup> Royal Institute of British Architects