

The Honorary Graduate: Jane Elsa Duncan OBE

The Orator: Elena Marco

Jane Duncan is to be awarded the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Design

Director of Jane Duncan Architects Ltd, Little Chalfont, Bucks, a medium sized architectural and interior design practice established in 1992.

Trained at the Bartlett, University College London with a degree in Architecture, Town Planning and Building, diploma in Architecture and professional qualification, Jane formerly practised from Hammersmith and Notting Hill Gate in London, before setting up Jane Duncan Architects in Amersham.

The practice specialises in high end residential schemes including bespoke sustainable houses, working on sites in Green Belt, with historic and listed buildings, and tackles challenging commercial, education, leisure and residential developments, school and community buildings, principally throughout the South of England.

Jane has been a campaigner for better business skills in architecture, and fought an election for RIBA Presidency in 2014 on a manifesto promising to increase diversity in the profession. Her initiatives included setting up the RIBA diversity Role Models, introducing mentoring and guidance, and EDI policies for Chartered Practices, and the Institute.

She has travelled the world as RIBA President talking to architects and students on the key issues to be tackled urgently, including sustainability and the business case for increased diversity.

In order to offer opportunities for all bright pupils to apply to study architecture, Jane spearheaded a change in the education of architects to enable diverse and affordable routes into the profession – now including Architecture Apprenticeships. She was awarded an OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours list in June 2018 for services to diversity in the profession.

Jane's current drive is to influence the development of government regulation, and improve the culture of quality and accountability in the profession, through the output of the RIBA's Expert Panel of Fire Safety. She writes and speaks widely at professional panels and on the media, and meets MPs and industry leaders about designing for people's safety.

She lectures to students of architecture (and their tutors) to ensure that architecture students demand the knowledge required for an awareness of designing for fire safety, as they enter the profession - from their initial sketches to the technical design and construction of buildings in the future.

Jane:

- Chairs the RIBA Expert Panel on Fire Safety after Grenfell 2017 to present
- Is President of the Architects Benevolent Society 2017-20, supporting their mental health awareness campaign
- Served as RIBA President from 2015 to 2017
- Was the first RIBA Equality & Diversity Champion from 2012 – 2015

- Was Vice President Practice & Profession RIBA and chair of RIBA Practice Committee from 2007 to 2013
- Was an RIBA Board member 2011 – 2017
- Set up and steered the annual RIBA Small Practice business conferences 'Guerrilla Tactics' running since 2003
- Is a member of the Amersham on the Hill community Action Group, and chairs the Revitalisation group since 2000
- Is a steering group member of Equilibrium Network, aiming to reduce the attrition rates of women professionals, and promote gender diversity at the top of organisations working across the built environment
- Is a founder of YADA, bringing together young architects and developers.

The Honorary Degree is awarded in recognition of Jane's contribution to architectural education and the architectural profession.