

"You can put down a bad book; you can avoid listening to bad music; but you cannot miss the ugly tower block opposite your house." A quote from Renzo Piano, the architect behind the Shard - one of my favorite modern structures. It highlights how architecture has a profound lasting effect on the environment in which we live. Having grown up in the outer suburbs of west London, I became used to a distinct lack in the differentiation of architecture.

My first inspirations arose from an interest in games such as SimCity and Minecraft, in which I spent hours creating more refined structures and environments than those I could see around me. I also drew large imaginary cityscapes and even fictional road atlases. As I grew older design software such as Google SketchUp became a blank canvas for my imagination.

I have practiced art throughout my life and at XXX school I was encouraged to make my own stylistic decisions and create responses to ideas without much guidance, which developed my ability to study independently. However, an aspect of the course that I enjoyed was being able to share ideas and learn from others as it aided the progression of my own ideas. I took AP Physics and Business elective and these two subjects gave me an insight into the feasibility of structural designs and the socio-economic implications of their construction. During my studies I have developed skills such as teamwork, problem solving and leadership. Leading marketing tasks for Business a Level showed me that listening to others' ideas and coordinating these to achieve the aim is an important factor for success. It also provided me with practice in other types of design software, skills which I then transferred to designing my dad's company's website. To deepen my interest and widen my knowledge of the profession, I have applied to several design firms for work experience early next year. From this, I hope to continue with a renewed passion for pursuing my career. I hope to learn fluency in a language at university and use it while working abroad for my placement.

During my studies I discovered new creative techniques, such as Jackson Pollock inspired abstract paintings, created with a dripping technique. I have continued this outside of study and I am exploring the use of model making, creating structures out of card, wood and other common materials, and they provide a more tangible realization of my ideas than drawings alone. I also practice photography, while living in Shanghai, I often got up early in the morning to take photos of changing light patterns across the modern skyline. Despite this, I believe no image can replace the experience of seeing a structure in person. My proximity to living in Shanghai has also enabled me to attend many exhibitions and lectures. One designer I am particularly fond of is Thomas Heatherwick, recently famous for his proposed garden bridge in London. His designs resound with me because of his use of green space and flora intrinsically within the structures; for me it is vital that modern architectural design should incorporate sustainability and respond to their environment in a way which will benefit the surroundings.

I see myself as a well-rounded individual. Aside from reading, I write songs and play bass guitar in a band with my close friends. Balancing these with my full-time job in my parents' company and socializing has meant I can manage my time effectively.

Winston Churchill said, "We shape our buildings; Thereafter they shape us", and my view is that a successful design is an embodiment of the needs and culture of those who will be using it long after it is built. My aim is to help create a future where design tackles the issues facing urban

living intelligently and sustainably, and I believe that studying architecture at a well-respected university will help me achieve this.

