

Date

2012

Client

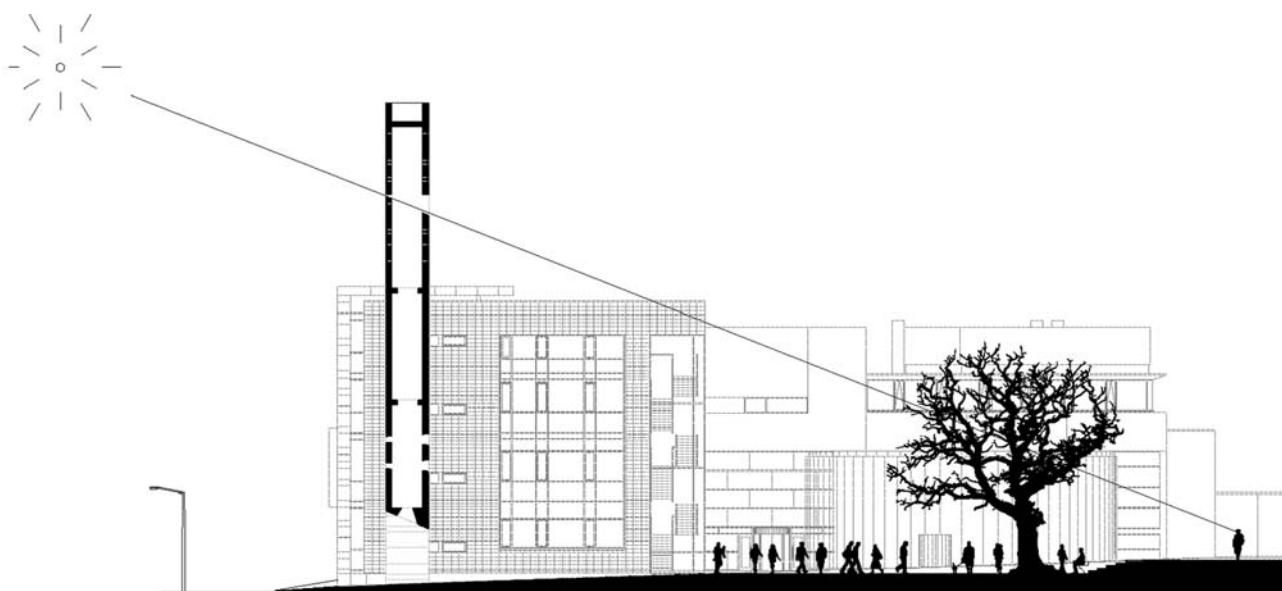
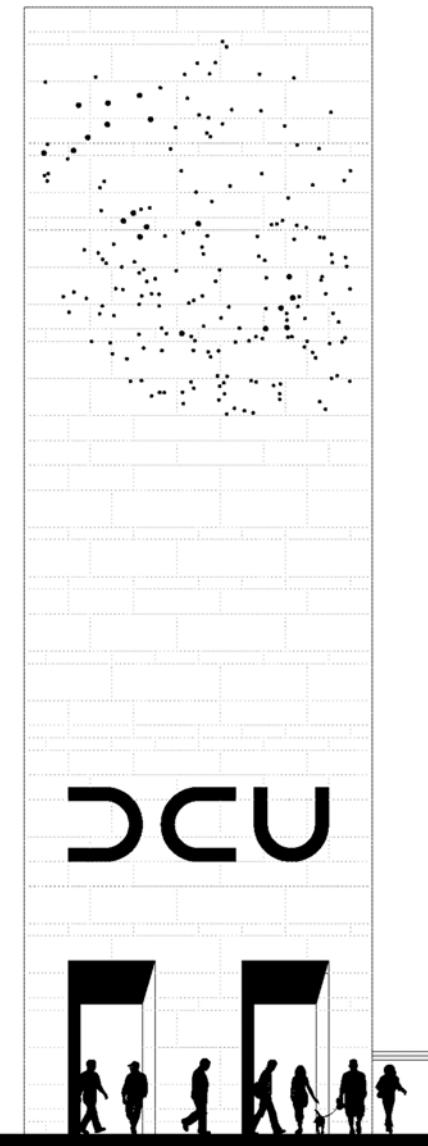
Dublin City University

Status

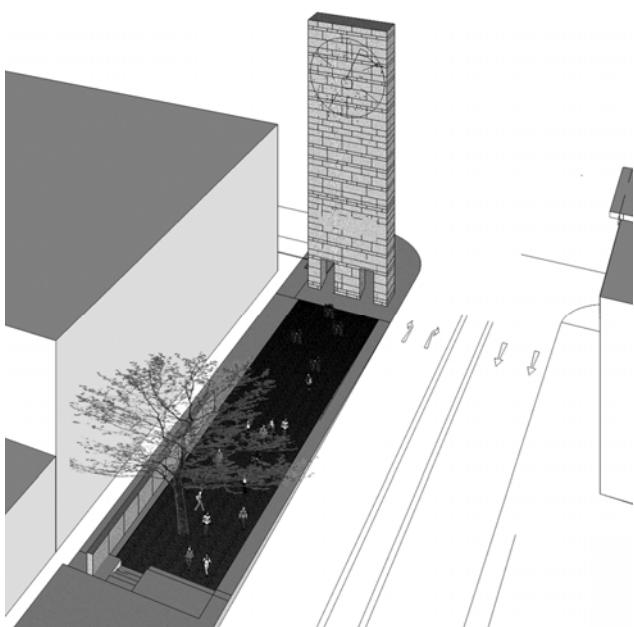
Competition Entry

Awards**Description**

“Keep your eyes on the stars, and your feet on the ground.” Theodore Roosevelt. Any marker, gateway or symbol that must represent an august institution as a University must be able to carry that message to a wide constituency. The **Pylon** was chosen to make a mark on the external and the internal landscape. Finished in granite it anchors the entrance. In ancient Egypt twin pylons would frame and direct the visitor to the temple. Here there is only one and it contains twin portals representing the way in and the way forward. These **Portals** are human in scale framing the entrance for the visitor above who are the letters “**D C U**” carved deep from the stone above. These and the threshold below are illuminated electrically from solar panels at the top of the Pylon. The **Logotype** utilises the same shape to form the 3 distinct letters (*inspired by a horseshoe magnet*). Above a **Star Map** to the fixed point in our sky, Polaris, is projected from the other side.



Constructed from a reinforced concrete spine the Pylon is a rectangular tube clad in granite. This provides space for the necessary electronic equipment to power the illuminations. There are three zones of illumination, the threshold of the twin **Portals**, the carved letters “**D C U**” and the **Star Map**. The construction is neither complicated nor exotic. The star map is drilled through from the university (**Court**) side where is a reminder for the students to be firm in their resolve setting their course by the north star.



During the day the **Pylon** will reflect light back onto the cobble stones towards the **Oak Tree** around which people. While the **Portals** symbolise the threshold between academia and the world this archetypal image represents education itself.

At night the **Pylon** is illuminated from within. The **Star Map** on the southern face will direct the eye towards Polaris reminding the spectator of this northern anchor.

As a singular entity the **Pylon** marks the main entrance and is legible from either direction. The combination of the Pylon and the strong **Logotype** provides an indelible brand identity for **DCU**. The cobbled **Court** with its allusions to more ancient traditions provides a place for and a sense of arrival. It is intended that the court with its **Memorial Wall** and a grand **Oak Tree** will be identified with the objectives of the University and the spatial quality will provide DCU staff and Students with a subtle but strong sense of identity. It certainly will not be anonymous. The design and materials are purposefully chosen to evoke a timeless and permanent quality. It will be a durable and marker which will grow old gracefully. Over time as the Oak Tree matures the space will transcend fashion to become a modest, timeless, memorable place; a place from which a direction might be set against the stars.