

June 2023



Dear Club Members,

Thirty years ago, in June 1993 Iraqi-British architect Zaha Hadid completed the Vitra Fire Station in Germany. Over the next 23 years her work continued to innovate and surprise with many going on to become landmarks in the cities where they were constructed. Anyone who watched the London 2012 Olympics will have seen her work, the Aquatic Centre was designed by her with streamlined curves to mimic the flanks of a shark. If you're in Scotland you may have visited the Riverside Museum in Glasgow.

In 2004 and she was the first woman to win the Pritzker Architecture Prize, and she remains the only woman to be awarded the Royal Institute of British Architects' Gold Medal. She said about her work and her standards "If I was a guy they would think I'm just opinionated. but as a woman, I'm difficult".

Born in 1950 in Baghdad, Iraq, to an upper class family, her father was a business man who also co-founded a left-liberal political group in the 1930's, and the National Democratic Party in 1949, during the Nasserite coup in 1963 the party ceased to exist. During this time Hadid attended private boarding schools in England and Switzerland. After studying mathematics at the American University of Beirut she then went on to study at the Architectural Association School of Architecture in London.

She went on to develop a reputation as a lecturer, and developed many colourful and radical designs. These were mostly published in architectural journals but remained unbuilt. One of the most discouraging points in her career was winning a design competition for an opera house in Cardiff, selected by the competition jury in 1994, but the Millennium Commission who were responsible for allocating funding, refused to pay for it, instead selecting a less ambitious design. In the end the project failed to go ahead altogether, with the site instead being used for the Millennium Centre, housing multiple arts and culture groups.

Finally in 1992 she received the commission that launched her career as a creator of real life buildings, not just ambitious designed. The president-director general of Swiss furniture firm Vitra invited her to design a fire station for the factory. The design uses sharp angles of concrete and glass, and is now an exhibition space housing the work of Hadid and other renowned architects.

After this her list of buildings and project becomes a list of major cities around the world. In 2008, she was ranked 69th on the *Forbes* list of "The World's 100 Most Powerful Women. Her architectural design firm continued after her death in 2016, and is currently based in London employing more than 400 people

Now you may be wondering about the name of your fibre, Sam Tân, I thought I would pay homage to her first successful major commission, and her failed attempt to create a building in Wales. Fireman Sam is one of the most famous firemen in the world, I spent my childhood watching

the cartoon, and the series is still being made and sold globally. The series was first made in 1987 for Welsh Language channel S4C, tân is cymraeg for fire. So we have a fiery blend, for a fiery character. I'm sorry we didn't get to have her opera house in Wales, but the Millennium centre is a much beloved beautiful building, on the front, lighting up Cardiff Bay is the message "CREU GWIR FEL GWYDR O FFWRNAIS AWEN (*Creating truth like glass from inspiration's furnace*) IN THESE STONES HORIZONS SING"

Words that could have been written about all of Hadid's work.

Happy Spinning

Katie

Fibre Content- In case your parcel is missing the label
50% Shetland, 25% Seacell, 12.5% Tussah Silk, 12.5% Linen

Further Reading-

Words on the Millennium Centre-

http://www.gwynethlewis.com/biog_millenniumcentre.shtml

First episode of Fireman Sam-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fHUCyExx9M0>

Fireman Sam in Welsh-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TI2IF8DFtDA>

Video review of Hadid's work-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b3Bhv2T8Naw>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FwOqd5Rf0tc>

Her buildings-

<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2016/mar/31/zaha-hadid-10-best-buildings-in-pictures>

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/05/zaha-hadid-woman-reshaped-modern-architecture-170530200456379.html>