

SPEIRS MAJOR

30 St Mary's Axe,
London, UK

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A delicate composition of internal light reveals the external form. Affectionately known to the public as the “Gherkin”, few modern buildings have acquired such instant notoriety as 30 St Mary Axe.

CLIENT
Swiss Re

INTERIOR DESIGNER
BID

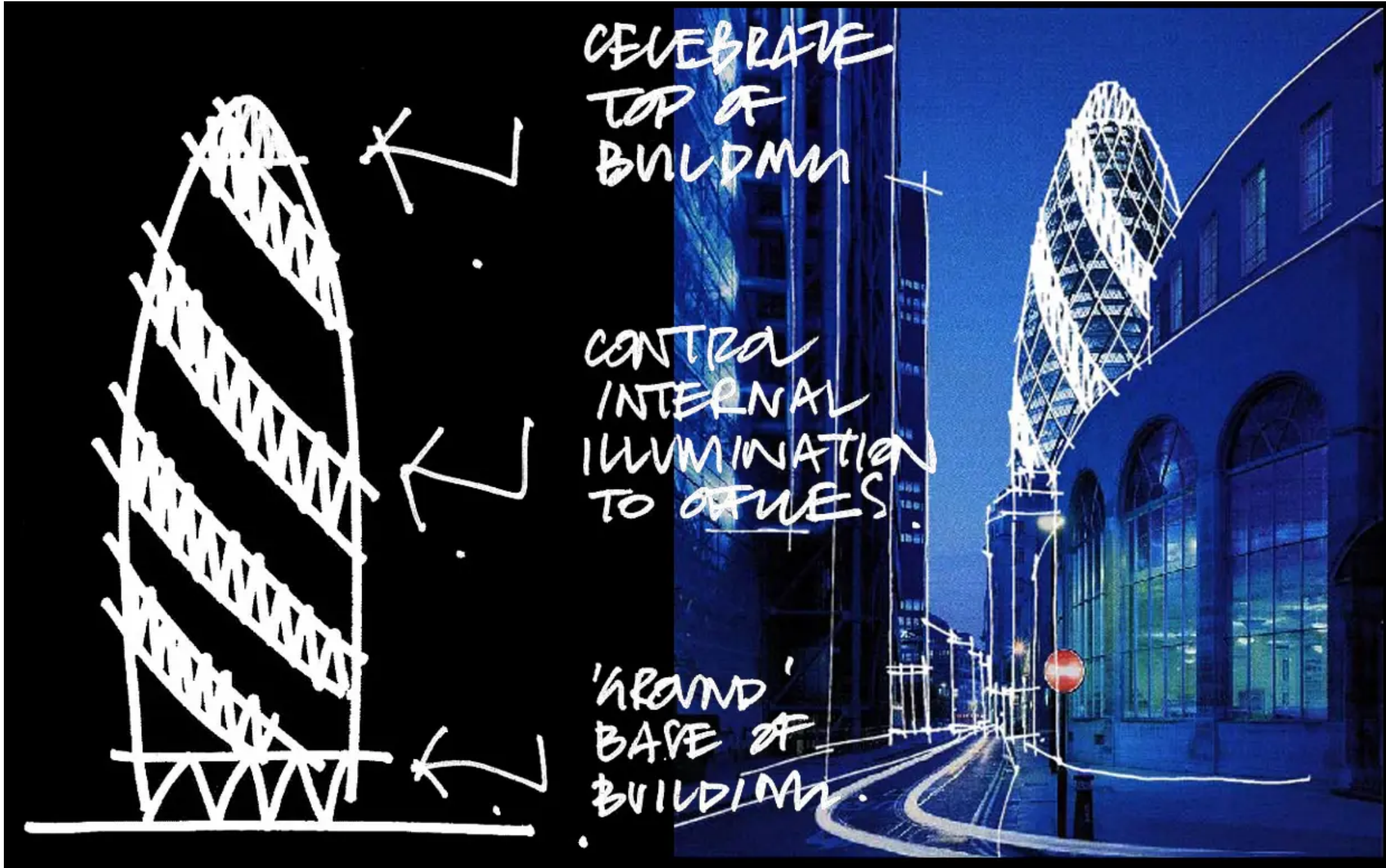
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MAIN CONTRACTOR
Skanska

PROJECT TEAM
Mark Major, Jonathan
Speirs

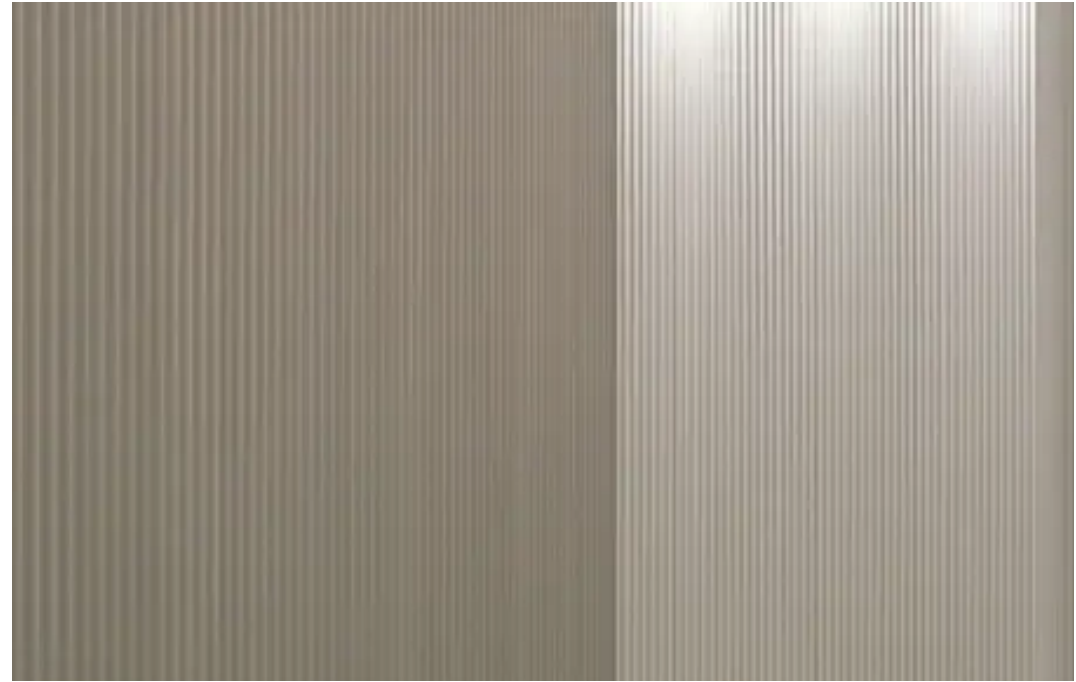
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"For both environmental and aesthetic reasons we decided not to light the exterior of the tower. Instead, we studied the composition of light and dark glass that characterises the tower's spiral form so that the diagram of the building would remain legible at night".

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Inside, daylight penetrates deep into the building plan from the spiral atria. To complement this, we used downlights within the main entrance at the perimeter only, keeping the ceiling clean and expressing the curving walls that lead to the lift lobbies.

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In the office areas, we washed the core of the building with light on all levels, including the tenant spaces, to maintain a consistent approach. Uplighting to the soffits of the spiralling atria adds general light as well as helping to define the external image of the building.

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At ground level, we avoided the visual clutter of light poles, opting to allow an uninterrupted view of the building from across the plaza. In their place, we carefully lit the perimeter walls, trees, colonnade and lower structural elements so that when viewed from above the entire building is ringed by a halo of light.