

**SPEIRS
MAJOR**

John Hope Gateway Building,
Edinburgh, UK

**LIGHT
ARCHITECTURE**

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The lighting is both environmentally sustainable and commercially successful, creating exciting spaces suitable for exhibition and retail as well as evening functions.

CLIENT
Royal Botanic
Gardens, Edinburgh

ARCHITECT
Edward Cullinan
Architects

PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR
Xircon

PHOTOGRAPHER
James Newton

PROJECT TEAM
Jonathan Speirs,
Dave Morris

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Edinburgh's Royal Botanic Garden provides unrivalled facilities to allow the public to discover the world of plants and botanical science.

The lighting had to resolve the need for the building to be both environmentally sustainable and commercially successful, while ensuring the health of rare plantlife. Exciting, flexible spaces had to be suitable for exhibition and retail, yet cater for evening functions such as weddings. We designed two distinct ambiances for the building – a white light look that creates a crisp, functional space and a dramatic evening look for celebrations.

Throughout the project, lighting had to be suspended – no luminaire could be recessed into the timber walls and ceilings. Within the exhibition areas, all lighting is neatly integrated into a suspended panel system that also provides heating and acoustic dampening.

The upper floor restaurant is dominated by intersecting fir beams. Responding to the architecture and acoustical requirements, we suggested lozenge-shaped suspended rafts which integrate both lighting and acoustic elements in a single detail. Flexible lighting enables the restaurant to be reconfigured for hospitality and events. After dark, the ambience changes as blue cold cathode concealed above the panels heightens the feeling of warmth below. Gobo projectors cast dappled "tree-canopy" shadows onto the floor.

In the atrium, a timber staircase makes a sculptural addition to the space. Working with the architects and manufacturers, we integrated light in an eye-catching way to accentuate the spiral form. LED strips of light, embedded into the timber treads, simultaneously light both



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