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Santiago Calatrava to Design His First London Complex

By FARAH NATEER FEB. 2, 2017



A rendering of Santiago Calatrava's design for Peninsula Place. Uniforum

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LONDON — The Spanish-born architect [Santiago Calatrava](#) is known among New Yorkers as the designer of the World Trade Center Transportation Hub, which cost almost twice its original \$2.2 billion estimate, an overshoot that has been attributed partly to him.

That hasn't prevented Mr. Calatrava from landing his first London project, right next to the O2 concert arena on the Greenwich Peninsula.

The 1 billion [British pound](#) (about \$1.25 billion), 1.4-million-square-foot complex — named Peninsula Place — will consist of three towers with curving sides, a domed Winter Garden public passageway, an arcade and a vast footbridge. The client is Knight Dragon, a development company owned by the billionaire Hong Kong entrepreneur Henry Cheng.

At an event unveiling the project, Sadiq Khan, the mayor of London, said he told Mr. Calatrava that "now that he's practiced around the world, he's ready to design in London."



Santiago Calatrava Eric Bales

"New York and Lisbon and Bilbao: they were rehearsals for the important piece of work he's about to do for us," Mr. Khan said.

The Greenwich complex will contain offices, apartments, a hotel, shops and restaurants, while the footbridge will mark the Greenwich meridian, the line on the world map that separates east from west.

The complex is part of London's biggest single regeneration plan, an £8.4 billion urban transformation scheme that will lead to the construction of 15,720 new homes, schools, public spaces, a film studio and a design district.

Mr. Calatrava said in an interview that he spent a year and a half on the project, producing 10 different studies and models. He said he believed that the client had chosen him because he had done several other transportation hubs in cities including Lisbon; Lyon, France; and Zurich.



A rendering of a domed Winter Garden public passageway, part of Santiago Calatrava's Peninsula Place project. Uniforum

Peninsula Place will be partially built over a London Underground subway station, and be "at the heart" of a transportation hub, he said.

Asked about the cost overruns in New York, Mr. Calatrava attributed them to "extra work."

Subway lines had to be "rebuilt completely all the way through the site," he said, and as much as \$500 million in additional expenses became necessary after the 2004 and 2005 terrorist attacks on the transport networks in Madrid and London.

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Has his reputation suffered?
"My reputation brings me to do this magnificent project in London, and I am happy," Mr. Calatrava said.

The vice chairman of Knight Dragon, Sammy Lee, said he was "not worried at all about cost overruns."

Mr. Calatrava's only other project in England is a footbridge in Manchester.

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