

First Movement, an organization that develops arts projects with people that suffer from learning disabilities, has moved to a new home designed by Clash architects. An acronym for «Live Event Link» and a world first in the use of new arts technology with learning disabled people, the Level Centre allows those who live many miles apart to collaborate on the same project by means of live video and audio link-ups. Located in rural Derbyshire, at the edge of a national park, the Centre comprises a suite of studios and spaces, which are used for performance, video projection, digital artwork, music and dance. Overall, the Centre was conceived as a safe and inclusive space, presenting no barriers to anyone with reduced mobility; its clear spatial organization enables easy and intuitive movement. The exterior — an assembly of strong variable forms — mixes zinc with handmade multi-coloured burnt brick. Changing its appearance in the sunlight, from green-grey to charcoal, zinc blends easily into the valley and surrounding hills. The outer skin of the building, robust and low-maintenance, will weather and oxidize with age. A cluster of Creative Studios with large windows placed at high level animates an irregular plan and eccentric volumes. The day-lighting strategies that create a sequence of overlit (workshops) and underlit (ancillary) rooms have highly influenced the architectural concept. Tall slit windows are sited at corners and edges to give the maximum wall space for artwork and daylight projection, while allowing glimpses of the world outside.

