



Students play in the Mwabwindo School's covered courtyard. Photo: Chosa Mweemba / Courtesy of Selldorf Architects

MAGAZINE

AD

# AD100 Architect Annabelle Selldorf Unveils the Mwabwindo School for the 14+ Foundation

Enlisted by the 14+ Foundation, Annabelle Selldorf designs a new school for a remote community in need

In Zambia, miles of open country separate many villages from the nearest school. To expand educational opportunity in the region, construction executive Joseph Mizzi and Zambian-born stylist Nchimunya Wulf established the 14+ Foundation in 2012. Their first school was completed three years later, and it showed just how challenging their task really was. “We literally had to build roads to get to it,” recalls Mizzi.

Undaunted, 14+ has done it again on a still grander scale, with the opening of the new Mwabwindo School. To design it, Mizzi turned to Annabelle Selldorf. “I didn’t have to do any arm-twisting,” says Mizzi—though the project did represent something of a departure for the AD100 architect, best known for major cultural commissions like the Neue Galerie renovation and the Clark Art Institute expansion.



Constructed from mudbricks, the buildings are sheltered by a single metal canopy. Photo: Chosa Mweemba / Courtesy of Selldorf Architects

The results prove her elegant, urbane approach to be remarkably adaptable. “We always begin with the rigorousness of the plan,” says Selldorf. Laid down on a basic grid, Mwabwindo consists of rectilinear mudbrick volumes sheltered under a single metal canopy, with a long, low profile that seems to extend organically from the land. Rustic and refined, the school’s simple materiality also put it within the reach of local builders, a key component of the foundation’s broader social and economic mission. Providing construction jobs and on-site housing for teachers, Mwabwindo is part of a holistic vision for Zambia’s future. “The point of the structure is to be inspirational,” says Mizzi, noting a site-specific commission by artist Rashid Johnson as well as uniforms from fashion brand Studio 189. “I think the project speaks for itself.” [14plusfoundation.org](http://14plusfoundation.org)