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## **Elbow's Guy Garvey enjoys Manchester Central Library**

In an in depth interview with Miranda Sawyer in The Observer, Elbow frontman Guy Garvey revealed that being a proud Mancunian he is constantly asked to perform civic duties such as snipping ribbons for Citizens Advice, new art schools and restored Victorian buildings.

His latest civic interest is Manchester's Central Library, which occupies a stunning location in St Peter's Square. It has recently been totally refurbished after a redesign by Ryder Architecture. Garvey was taken on a tour by the library director and was particularly taken with the wooden benches, restored and cleaned by hand using a toothbrush. Also the new digital TV screens downstairs, situated in cosy double-sided sofas.

Manchester Central Library is part of the wider refurbishment of Manchester's town hall complex. The grade II\* listed library, built in 1934 and an ultra modern flagship library in its day, had become tired, cluttered and no longer viable for the current role and content of libraries. The existing symmetrical circular structure was disorientating with too few points of reference as the visitor moves round its circumference. Stairs were enclosed and uninviting. It was designed as a civic statement and not as a visitor experience.

Ryder has transformed the previously rather forbidding and confusing building into a welcoming series of interconnected spaces. The existing book stacks were removed, which in turn meant taking out all the floors, and the insertion of new vertical circulation linking all levels. Clear, contemporary staircases and scenic lifts span the newly created floor apertures at each level. The generous new sweeping stair and glazed lifts take the visitor on a journey through the building.

Read the full Observer article here:

<http://www.theguardian.com/music/2014/mar/02/guy-garvey-interview-elbow-wistfully-hedonistic-years>