



The International Highrise Award 2018

Internationaler Hochhaus Preis 2018

PRESS INFORMATION

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Office Tower 'Torre Reforma' in Mexico-City wins the International Highrise Award 2018

The jury of the International Highrise Award 2018 resolved unanimously: the office building 'Torre Reforma' in Mexico City/Mexico has won the prize, worth EUR 50,000, for the world's most innovative highrise. Architect L. Benjamín Romano received the prize statuette and the prize money today at the awards ceremony in Frankfurt's Paulskirche. The IHA prize was awarded by Dr. Ina Hartwig, the City of Frankfurt Deputy Mayor for Culture, Dr. Matthias Danne, Member of the Management Board responsible Finance, Treasury and the Property business division at DekaBank and Peter Cachola Schmal, Director of the Deutsches Architekturmuseum (DAM).

Mexico's capital on the world map of ground-breaking highrise architecture

In contrast to the internationally enduring trend toward residential towers as well as ever-larger mixed-use projects in Asia, this year's prize-winner is once again a classic office building. Here, however, it is only the type of usage that is conventional. The prevailing problem of earthquakes in Mexico City calls for an intelligent support structure concept, which lends the 246-metre-high office tower its striking appearance. In doing so Torre Reforma by L. Benjamín Romano places Mexico's capital on the world map of ground-breaking highrise architecture. A no less fascinating aspect of the project's story is the unusual path to its financing. The group of investors in Torre Reforma, Fondo Hexa, S.A. de C.V., considers their projects as long-term investments and therefore places emphasis on careful planning, high-quality materials and perfect detailing. This forward-looking economic approach also affects the architectural design positively and could thereby also serve as a blueprint for successful projects beyond Mexico's borders.

Exposed-concrete walls arranged as an open book

Conceived as a huge urban obelisk and defined by two exposed-concrete walls arranged as an open book, Torre Reforma stands out from the surrounding high-rises – not just because of its height. With the massive walls Benjamín Romano takes the Aztec building traditions up and interprets them in a modern way. Torre Reforma was the one building that inspired both the structural engineers and the architects in like measure as a masterful demonstration of a new approach to the highrise – and was therefore a worthy winner. It is a building that the entire jury felt did indeed embody the mission that Benjamín Romano set himself: "sustainable architecture, architectural structuring, high-tech and artistic integration".



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Statements by the winner and partners of the IHA

L. Benjamín Romano “ This award is especially valuable because it comes from my peers – architects, engineers, developers – who can appreciate not only a building on itself, but the inherent financial, structural, environmental and normative challenges. I believe that the best architecture is the one that finds the answer to these challenges. The one that emanates from needs, context and reality, and not only from someone’s imagination or aesthetic taste.“

Dr. Matthias Danne, Member of the Management Board responsible for Finance, Treasury and the Property business division at DekaBank explains: “With its innovative, earthquake-proof structural form, the building literally shows spine. Torre Reforma is also impressive on account of the creative use of building materials, its sophisticated load-bearing concept, and prime energy efficiency levels.”

The director of Deutsches Architekturmuseum (DAM), **Peter Cachola Schmal**, was also impressed by the architect’s business model: “Benjamín Romano shows us that a single architect can redefine the standards of building and construction in his field and in his city. First he won investors over, who bought the plot, then he developed the scheme, invented a massive structure that defied common curtain walls and got his structural designers to follow this lead. And then he built it. We are astonished that such a holistic approach is possible today and are stunned by the awesome result. He proved to us that this approach can really be a game-changer in certain countries.”

Dr. Ina Hartwig, Deputy Mayor in charge of Culture of the City of Frankfurt, expressed her enthusiasm: “Torre Reforma stands out on account of its extraordinarily clear, almost sculptural architecture and its triangular footprint. The futuristic façade looks out over one of the world’s largest downtown parks. Its sensitive, intuitive design is an impressive response to the local topographical challenges. The new building not only embodies Mexico’s advancing development, it also carefully integrates a heritage building into the historical district. A visual delight, not to mention environmentally friendly, this project is a more than worthy winner of the International Highrise Award 2018 and demonstrates that in comparison with other countries, Mexico boasts pioneering architectural solutions.”

During the awards ceremony, the four other short-listed projects will be honored:

- **MahaNakhon** (Bangkok/Thailand) by Büro Ole Scheeren, Bangkok/Thailand and OMA Office for Metropolitan Architecture, Beijing/China
- **Beirut Terraces** (Beirut/Lebanon) by Herzog & de Meuron, Basel/Switzerland
- **Chaoyang Park Plaza** (Beijing /China) by MAD Architects, Beijing/China
- **Oasia Hotel Downtown** (Singapore) by WOHA, Singapore



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From over 1000 highrises that were commissioned worldwide over the last two years, Deutsches Architekturmuseum (DAM) nominated 36 outstanding buildings from 15 different countries. An international jury of experts consisting of architects, structural engineers and real estate specialists selected the final five for the shortlist.

The International Highrise Award (IHA) was jointly initiated in 2003 by the City of Frankfurt, Deutsches Architekturmuseum and DekaBank and was awarded for the first time in 2004. Since then, it has been biannually organized and financed in partnership and cooperation between Deutsches Architekturmuseum and DekaBank Deutsche Girozentrale. It is being bestowed for the eighth time in 2018. It is aimed at architects and developers whose buildings are at least 100 meters high and have been completed in the past two years.

On the way to their decision, the jury's wide-ranging discussion considered how a high-rise contributes to the urban fabric and how it encourages street life. The following aspects were analyzed, among others: the overall narrative, the sculptural qualities, the structural concept, the mix of uses, and the balance between commerce and culture.

Deutsches Architekturmuseum is presenting all the projects nominated

The exhibition "Best Highrises 2018/19 – International Highrise Award 2018", will run at Deutsches Architekturmuseum (DAM) in Frankfurt from 3 November 2018 thru 3 March 2019 and will not only present the prize winners and finalists, but all 36 nominated projects.

For further information and press images as downloads please visit:

www.international-highrise-award.com / www.dam-online.de / www.deka.de/deka-gruppe/presse

Contacts:

Deutsches Architekturmuseum, Press and PR

Stefanie Lampe

T + 49(69) 21 23 1326 / stefanie.lampe@stadt-frankfurt.de

DekaBank, Press Officer

Dr. Daniela Gniss

T + 49(69) 71 47 2188 / daniela.gniss@deka.de



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