

Press Release

Dornbirn/ Austria, 29 June 2007

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First Zumtobel Group Award goes to Morphosis Architects for Ecological High-Rise Building and Schlaich Bergemann Solar for Solar Updraft Tower

Dornbirn, Austria – The Zumtobel Group has announced the winners of the first international Zumtobel Group Award for Sustainability and Humanity in the Built Environment. Designed to commend outstanding sustainable and humanitarian solutions in contemporary architecture and engineering, the award carries a purse of EUR 140,000, shared among two categories. In the category “Built Environment” the jury honoured Morphosis Architects, Los Angeles, USA, for the San Francisco Federal Building; while in the category “Research and Initiative” the award went to Schlaich Bergemann Solar, Stuttgart, Germany, for the design of the Solar Updraft Tower.

The two winning projects were selected from a worldwide total of 40, proposed by a global network of experts in architecture and engineering. Determining the laureates in the two categories was the task of an independent, interdisciplinary and international 9-person jury comprising leading architects and engineers, a philosopher, the Executive Director of UN Habitat and the CEO of the Zumtobel Group. As they assessed the nominations, the jury applied wide-ranging criteria from the fields of sustainability and humanity, from environmental and aesthetic quality to high ethical, social and economic standards.

In the category “Built Environment” the Zumtobel Group Award 2007 was won by Morphosis Architects of Los Angeles for their naturally-ventilated high-rise San Francisco Federal Building. In this recently completed project, Pritzker Prize laureate Thom Mayne combined leading-edge sustainable technology with intelligent design strategies to create an architectural landmark of outstanding aesthetic quality. In the words of the jury: “Through its leadership in sustainable thinking, this building sends out a strong signal and message in the urban context, not only in the US, but all over the world.”

The winner of the Zumtobel Group Award 2007 in the category “Research and Initiative” is Schlaich Bergemann Solar of Stuttgart, for the design of an alternative power plant: the Solar Updraft Tower. The idea behind the Solar Updraft Tower has been developed over many years and is now close to large-scale implementation in Australia. The jury expressed the hope that the award will foster progress in this respect, because “this seminal technology opens up new prospects for efficient and renewable energy and therefore represents an important and extremely valuable contribution to the future of mankind.”

In addition to the awards, there were honourable mentions for four other projects in each category, ranging from development projects in Africa and Bangladesh to an open-source Internet platform and experimental approaches to flood protection. With reference to the diversity of the projects considered, the jury expressed the opinion that “the Zumtobel Group Award offers a very interesting and challenging opportunity to discuss and promote the manifold aspects of sustainability and humanity in a global context.”

zumtobel group award

for sustainability
and humanity in the
built environment

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The first Zumtobel Group Award went to Schlaich Bergermann Solar, Stuttgart, Germany, for the design of the Solar Updraft Towers (category "Research and Initiative", left picture) and Morphosis Architects, Los Angeles, USA, for the San Francisco Federal Building (category "Built Environment", right picture)



The jury of the Zumtobel Group Award (from left to right): Enrique Norten, Stefan Behnisch, Yung Ho Chang, Andreas Ludwig, Kazuyo Sejima, Colin Fournier, Anna Tibujuka, Peter Head, Peter Sloterdijk

A media kit with high-resolution photos of the winning projects and a full list projects with an honourable mention is available at www.zumtobel-group-award.com

Information about the award

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The award was launched by the Austrian-based Zumtobel Group in collaboration with the Aedes Architecture Forum, Berlin, Germany. For many years now, the Zumtobel Group – present in the global lighting market through its Zumtobel and Thorn brands and components manufacturer TridonicAtco – has assigned top priority to sustainability and energy efficiency in the function and application of its products. The award aims to promote outstanding sustainable solutions in architecture and engineering that make a notable contribution to a liveable, sustainable, equitable and more humane future. The award in the ‘Built Environment’ category is offered for exceptional architectural, engineering or urban design projects realised within the last two years that meet current demands for sustainable living and envisage the needs of the future. In this category, the award carries a purse of EUR 80,000. In the “Research and Initiative” category, the award is offered for an innovative, current research project or social initiative in architecture and the built environment, developed and run by non-governmental organisations, universities or independent groups and individuals. Aiming in particular to encourage researchers and practitioners in architecture and urban design, in this category the award carries a purse of EUR 60,000 and is intended to facilitate and foster the progress of an ongoing initiative or emerging research project. For more information about the award, please visit www.zumtobel-group-award.com

The first international Zumtobel Group Award ceremony will be staged on 14 September 2007 at Kunsthau Bregenz on the shores of Lake Constance in Austria. An exhibition and catalogue featuring the award-winners as well as the other projects considered by the jury is planned for autumn/winter 2007/08.

Founder

Zumtobel Group

Curator and organiser

Aedes Architecture Forum

Award categories

Built Environment: EUR 80,000

Research and Initiative: EUR 60,000

Jury

Stefan Behnisch, Architect / Behnisch Architects, Stuttgart (Germany)

Yung Ho Chang, Architect, Head of Department of Architecture / Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge (USA)

Colin Fournier, Architect / University College London, London (United Kingdom)

Peter Head, Structural Engineer / Arup, London (United Kingdom)

Andreas Ludwig, CEO Zumtobel Group, Dornbirn (Austria)

Enrique Norten, Architect / TEN Arquitectos, Mexico City and New York (Mexico, USA)

Kazuyo Sejima, Architect / SANAA, Tokyo (Japan)

Peter Sloterdijk, Philosopher, Dean of Hochschule für Gestaltung, Karlsruhe (Germany)

Anna Tibaijuka, General and Executive Director / UN Habitat, Nairobi (Kenya)

Dates

14 September 2007

Press conference at Zumtobel Light Forum, Dornbirn

Award ceremony at Kunsthaus Bregenz

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