



Aga Khan Award for Architecture

**Winners of the 2016 Aga Khan Award for Architecture
celebrate inclusivity and pluralism**



Al Ain, UAE, 6 November 2016 – The winners of the Aga Khan Award for Architecture were celebrated in a glittering tribute at the Al Jahili fort in Al-Ain, UAE, in the presence of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of UAE, Ruler of Dubai, His Highness Prince Karim Aga Khan, Chairman of the Award, and various dignitaries from the United Arab Emirates and abroad.

The Aga Khan Award for Architecture is one of the oldest and most prestigious awards in architecture. It was established by His Highness the Aga Khan in 1977 to identify and encourage building concepts that successfully address the needs and aspirations of communities in which Muslims have a significant presence.

In the speech he delivered at the ceremony, His Highness the Aga Khan said that “the spirit of the Award has been an inclusive one, valuing all manner of buildings and spaces, from skyscrapers to mud huts, from residences to work and gathering spaces, from reforestation and financing projects to cemeteries, bridges and parks, from the accomplishments of signature architects to those of anonymous craftsmen. This pluralistic approach may not echo the usual definition of the word ‘architecture’, but it is the closest we can get to the central inclusive message we want this Award to convey.” He also reaffirmed his belief that “the spirit of pluralism has been central to the great achievements of past Islamic cultures - and it remains a central principle for these Awards.”

The winners of the 2016 Aga Khan Award for Architecture, which were first announced on 3 October 2016 at the Al Jahili fort in Al Ain, are:

BANGLADESH

Bait Ur Rouf Mosque, Dhaka (Architect: Marina Tabassum): A refuge for spirituality in urban Dhaka, selected for its beautiful use of natural light.

Friendship Centre, Gaibandha (Architect: Kashef Chowdhury / URBANA): A community centre which makes a virtue of an area susceptible to flooding in rural Bangladesh.

CHINA

Micro Yuan'er Children's Library and Art Centre, Beijing (Architect: ZAO / standardarchitecture, Zhang Ke): A children's library selected for its embodiment of contemporary life in the traditional courtyard residences of Beijing's Hutongs.

DENMARK

Superkilen, Copenhagen (Architects: BIG – Bjarke Ingels Group, Topotek 1 and Superflex): A public space promoting integration across lines of ethnicity, religion and culture.

IRAN

Tabiat Pedestrian Bridge, Tehran (Architect: Diba Tensile Architecture / Leila Araghian, Alireza Behzadi): A multi-level bridge spanning a busy motorway has created a dynamic new urban space.

LEBANON

Issam Fares Institute, Beirut (Architect: Zaha Hadid Architects): A new building for the American University of Beirut's campus, radical in composition but respectful of its traditional context.

The Venue for the Award Ceremony: Al Ain

Ceremonies to announce the winning projects and mark the close of each triennial cycle are always held in settings selected for their architectural and cultural importance to the Muslim world. Today's ceremony was held at the Al Jahili Fort, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Al Ain, Abu Dhabi.

Construction of Al Jahili Fort began in 1891 under Sheikh Zayed the First. Completed in 1898, it remained a residence of the Al Nahyan family for many years. It underwent a comprehensive rehabilitation between 2007 and 2008 by the Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage with the collaboration of Eike Roswag, an Aga Khan Award for Architecture winner in 2007. The Fort was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2011.

Previous venues for Award ceremonies encompass many of the most illustrious architectural achievements in the Muslim world, including Shalimar Gardens in Lahore (1980), Topkapi Palace in Istanbul (1983), Badi' Palace in Marrakech (1986), the Citadel of Saladin in Cairo (1989), Registan Square in Samarkand (1992), Karaton Surakarta in Solo (1995), the Alhambra in Granada (1998), the Citadel of Aleppo (2001) and the gardens of Emperor Humayun's Tomb in Delhi (2004).

About the Aga Khan Award for Architecture

Over the last 39 years of the Award, prizes have been given to projects across the globe, from France to China. Architects and planners from New York to Dhaka have received one of 116 awards. During the nomination process, more than 9,000 building projects were documented.

Over the course of the last 39 years, most of the great architects of our time have either won the Award or served on its Master Jury or Steering Committee, from Zaha Hadid to Norman Foster, Charles Correa to Frank Gehry, Jean Nouvel to Hassan Fathy.

The Aga Khan Award for Architecture selects projects – from slum upgrading to high rise “green” buildings – that not only exhibit architectural excellence but also improve the overall quality of life. Because these achievements typically involve successful collaboration between many people, the Award recognises mayors, builders, clients, master craftsmen, engineers and end-users – as well as architects.

The 2016 Master Jury

The Master Jury was completely independent in the selection it made from the 348 nominated projects in 69 countries. Projects commissioned by the Aga Khan or any of the institutions of the Aga Khan Development Network were ineligible. The nine members of the 2016 Master Jury are:

Suad Amiry, Founder, Riwaq Centre for Architectural Conservation, Ramallah; **Emre Arolat**, Founder, EAA – Emre Arolat Architecture, Istanbul; **Akeel Bilgrami**, Sydney Morgenbesser Professor of Philosophy, Columbia University, New York; **Luis Fernández-Galiano**, Editor, *Architectura Viva*, Madrid; **Hameed Haroon**, Chief Executive Officer, Herald Publications, Karachi; **Lesley Lokko**, Head, Graduate School of Architecture, University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg; **Mohsen Mostafavi**, Dean, Graduate School of Design, Harvard University, Cambridge; **Dominique Perrault**, Founder, Dominique Perrault Architecture, Paris; and **Hossein Rezai**, Director, Web Structures, Singapore.

The 2016 Steering Committee

The Award is governed by a Steering Committee chaired by His Highness the Aga Khan (please see the biographies of Steering Committee). The current members of the Steering Committee are:

His Highness the Aga Khan (Chairman); **David Adjaye**, founder and principal architect of Adjaye Associates, which has offices in London, New York and Accra; **Mohammad al-Asad**, the founding director of the Center for the Study of the Built Environment in Amman, Jordan; **Francesco Bandarin**, Assistant Director-General for Culture at UNESCO, Paris, France; **Hanif Kara**, a practicing structural engineer and Professor in Practice of Architectural Technology at the Graduate School of Design at Harvard University; **Kamil Merican**, founding partner of GDP Architects Malaysia; **Azim Nanji**, a social scientist who is Special Advisor to the Provost at the Aga Khan University and a Member of the Board of Directors of the Global Centre for Pluralism in Ottawa; Professor **Gülru Necipoglu**, Aga Khan Professor of Islamic Art at Harvard University; **Brigitte Shim**, a principal in the Toronto-based design firm Shim-Sutcliffe Architects and Professor at the John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design at the University of Toronto; and **Yu Kongjian**, founder and dean of the College of Architecture and Landscape and the Changjiang Chair Professor of Design, at Peking University. **Farrokh Derakhshani** is Director of the Award.

The Award Book

A monograph, which includes essays on issues arising raised by the Master Jury's selections of the shortlist and the winners for the 2016 Award, is available from Lars Müller Publishers. The book, *Architecture and Plurality*, which was edited by Mohsen Mostafavi, includes descriptions and illustrations of the six winning projects. For more information, please see: <https://www.lars-mueller-publishers.com/>

For more information, please see the Press Kit: www.akdn.org/2016AwardWinners, the website (www.akdn.org/architecture/) and social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Linked In). The iPhone app is available from the iTunes store at: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/aga-khan-award-for-architecture/id485296765?mt=8>

For a full on-line press kit, which includes briefs on each of the winning projects, high resolution images, broadcast-quality video (for use by television stations and websites) and

other information, please see www.akdn.org/2016AwardWinners. For further information, please send an email to the press contacts listed at the bottom of this press release.

On 5 November, a seminar drawing in municipal planners, architects and architect students from around the globe was held in the Dubai Ballroom at the JW Marriott Marquis in Dubai. Each of the winning architects discussed the process by which they came to design their buildings.

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NOTES

His Highness Prince Karim Aga Khan, the founder and chairman of the AKDN, is the 49th hereditary Imam (Spiritual Leader) of the Shia Ismaili Muslims. He is a direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) through his cousin and son-in-law, Ali, the first Imam, and his wife Fatima, the Prophet's daughter. In Islam's ethical tradition, religious leaders not only interpret the faith but also have a responsibility to help improve the quality of life in their community and in the societies amongst which they live. For His Highness the Aga Khan, this has meant a deep engagement with development for over 50 years through the agencies of the Aga Khan Development Network.

The *Aga Khan Award for Architecture* is part of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC), which has a wide range of activities aimed at the preservation and promotion of the material and spiritual heritage of Muslim societies. As the cultural agency of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), the Trust leverages cultural heritage as a means of supporting and catalysing development. Its programmes include the Aga Khan Historic Cities Programme (HCP), which works to revitalise historic cities in the Muslim world, both culturally and socioeconomically. Over the last decade, it has been engaged in the rehabilitation of historic areas in Cairo, Kabul, Herat, Aleppo, Delhi, Zanzibar, Mostar, northern Pakistan, Timbuktu and Mopti. The Aga Khan Music Initiative (AKMI) is an interregional music and arts education programme with worldwide performance, outreach, mentoring, and artistic production activities. The Aga Khan Museum in Toronto presents an overview of the artistic, intellectual and scientific contributions that Muslim civilizations have made to world heritage. The Trust also supports the Muslim arts and architecture departments of Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), as well as www.ArchNet.org, a major online resource on Islamic architecture.

The *Aga Khan Development Network* (AKDN) is a group of private development agencies working to empower communities and individuals, often in disadvantaged circumstances, to improve living conditions and opportunities, especially in Central and South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. AKDN agencies work for the common good of all citizens, regardless of their gender, origin or religion. Its underlying impulse is the ethic of compassion for the vulnerable in society. Its annual budget for social and cultural development activities is US\$ 625 million. The Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development (AKFED), an AKDN development agency

that makes long-term investments in fragile economies, has annual revenues of over US\$ 3.5 billion, but reinvests all surpluses in further development.

Read online at: <http://www.akdn.org/press-release/winners-of-2016-aga-khan-award-architecture-celebrate-inclusivity-and-pluralism>