

ARCHITECTURE IN THE RINGTURM

Europe's best Buildings 2001

**European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture –
Mies van der Rohe Pavilion Award**

24th January 2002 – 22nd March 2002

Press tour: Wednesday, 23rd January 2002, 10.30 am

Opening: Wednesday, 23rd January 2002, 6.30 pm

Exhibition site

Wiener Städtische Allgemeine Versicherung AG

Ringturm Exhibition Centre

A-1010 Vienna Schottenring 30

Phone: [43-1] 531 39-1115 (Brigitta Fischer)

Fax: [43-1] 531 39-3178

Curator: Fundació Mies van der Rohe, Diane Gray

Opening hours

Monday to Friday, 9.00 am - 6.00 pm; no entry fee

Public transport

Underground: Schottenring U2, U4

Tram: Schottenring 1, 2, 31, 32

Bus: Schottenring 3A

Requests

Birgit Reitbauer (Ringturm Exhibition Centre)

Phone: [43-1] 531 39-1336

Fax: [43-1] 531 39-3134

e-mail: b.reitbauer@staedtsche.co.at

Photographic material available on our website

www.wienerstaedtsche.at or at request!

The jury's decision for the European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture – Mies van der Rohe Pavilion Award 2001 went to the Kursaal Centre by the architect Rafael Moneo in San Sebastián, Spain. From 24 January to 22 March, the ARCHITECTURE IN THE RINGTURM series of exhibitions will be presenting plans, photos and models of the winning project and a further 36 selected projects from among the entries for this significant award.

The European Union (EU) Prize for Contemporary Architecture – Mies van der Rohe Pavilion Award is granted every two years by the EU and the Mies van der Rohe Foundation in Barcelona, for outstanding examples of contemporary European architecture.

The proposals are put forward by a group of independent experts on contemporary architecture from all over Europe, selected by the Fundació Mies van der Rohe. From these nominations, an international jury of architects, critics and architectural historians selects the winning project, which is honoured with the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion Sculpture and a cash prize of € 50,000. Another sculpture is awarded in special recognition of the most promising young architect. In addition, a range of outstanding examples are distinguished and presented in an exhibition and a catalogue.

The jury's decision: In an initial meeting in February 2001 in Barcelona, the jury considered in excess of 200 works which had been put forward, selecting a preliminary shortlist of projects for the exhibition and the catalogue, which was later refined to 39 projects.

This round also led to the selection of the four finalists, which were viewed by the jury on site: the Altamira Museum and Research Centre, Santillana del Mar, Spain by Juan Navarro Baldeweg; the new Palais de Justice in Nantes by Jean Nouvel; the Unibank Centre in Copenhagen by Henning Larsen and the Palacio Kursaal in San Sebastián, Spain by Rafael Moneo.

In a second meeting in Copenhagen the members of the jury deliberated over the four works and their various virtues and decided as follows: The **Altamira Museum and Research Centre** reflects its topographical surroundings in an intelligent and sensitive manner. On visiting the **Nantes Palais de Justice** they were impressed by the drama and expression of the building, which give striking emphasis to its purpose as an important public building. The jury praised the **Unibank Headquarters** for its success in fulfilling the economic specifications with elegance, and the skilful design of an urban form which was a valuable addition both to the urban built environment and the overall landscape of the river bank.

The jury's final decision went to the masterful design of the **Palacio Kursaal**. Giving their reasons, they made special mention of the relationship of the building with its unique location. With its effective synthesis of various ideas of form, the Palacio Kursaal harmonizes beautifully both with the requirements of the built environment and also the surrounding landscape. The impressive image of two rocks washed up on the shore reflects its position in the bay and the mountain landscape beyond, while the massive dimensions, radical geometric lines and translucent materials of the overall structure give it a unique position in the urban picture.

Out of twelve projects submitted, the special recognition for a promising young architect was awarded to the **Kaufmann Holz AG Distribution Centre** in Bobingen (Germany) by Florian Nagler. This work is an excellent example of how a simple warehouse can make a significant contribution to contemporary architecture.

The winning project: the Palacio Kursaal in San Sebastián, Spain, by Rafael Moneo. The beauty of the city of San Sebastián lies to a great extent in its landscape and surroundings. The architect proposed to construct a building which did not have an adverse impact on the presence of the river in the city. The Kursaal Auditorium and the Congress Hall – the programmatic key elements of the projects – have been designed as separate autonomous volumes: two gigantic rocks washed up on the shores of the estuary. The exhibition halls, meeting chambers, offices, a restaurant and music association premises are located in the platform at the base of the cubes.

The auditorium, contained in the larger of the two prisms, recognises its special geographical location by a slight inclination towards the sea. The space of the 1,828-seat auditorium is placed asymmetrically in the glass prisms and thus appears to be suspended within it. As the visitor enters the foyer, this arrangement automatically leads him to the highest level, where the mountain of Urgull and the sea can be viewed from a unique position. This window breaks through to outside from the interior, through a double-skin steel framed construction clad with special pressed glass elements. The result is a neutral, translucent interior which only communicates with the outside world through the foyer window.

The rectangular hall was built according to the acoustic principles of sound optimisation: the ratio of the length to the width is approximately quadratic, the ceiling is flat and the height creates a volume of approx. 10 m³ per spectator. As the hall is freestanding with no subdivisions, visitors can reach all areas from all the entrance doors.

Similar design and construction criteria are at work in the planning of the smaller congress hall, also housed in an inclined prism. The open space on the platform below contains the entrances to the auditorium and the congress hall, the information and

ticket desk, and the entrance to the 500-space car park. The base plate is the place where the cultural complex and the city come together.

The exhibition: The “Europe’s best buildings 2001” exhibition (“European Architecture”) was presented for the first time in Summer 2001 in the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion, Barcelona. As a travelling exhibition, it is now coming to us from Leuven in Belgium, and after the Vienna presentation in the Ringturm exhibition centre, will be seen in other major European centres.

The presentation shows the winning project and the work awarded special recognition for promising young architects (Kaufmann Holz AG distribution centre) along with the 35 finalist projects. Plans, photos and over 20 models will demonstrate the rich quality and variety of this contemporary architecture in Europe.

The catalogue (in English): The exhibition is accompanied by a comprehensive catalogue. *European Union Prize for contemporary Architecture. Mies van der Rohe Award*. 176 pages with numerous colour illustrations. Verlag Actar Press, Barcelona. Published in 2001. Price: € 30 (ATS 412.81).

The exhibition and catalogue are implemented with the support of the Culture 2000 Programme of the European Union.

This press release can also be found at: <http://www.wienerstaedtische.at>.

Projects

Austria

Wohnanlage Wohnen Housing Complex
Innsbruck

Carlo Baumschlager, Dietmar Eberle
B&E Architekturbüro

Belgium

Museum Roger Raveel
Machelen aan de Leie

Stéphane Beel
Stéphane Beel Architects

Czech Republik

Muzo Centrum
Praha

Stanislav Fiala
D3A spol. s.r.o. – Fiala, Prouza, Zima

Denmark

Unibank Headquarters
Copenhagen

Henning Larsen
Henning Larsen Tegnestue A/S

Germany

Kaufmann Holz AG Distribution Centre
Bobingen

Florian Nagler
Florian Nagler Architekt

Embassies of the Nordic Countries
Berlin-Tiergarten

Alfred Berger, Tiina Parkkinen
Berger+Parkkinen Architekten

New German Parliament,
Reichstag Berlin

Norman Foster, David Nelson
Foster and Partners

Music School
Hamburg

Enric Miralles, Benedetta Tagliabue
EMBT Architectes Associats

Dutch Pavilion, Expo 2000
Hanover

Winy Maas, Jacob van Rijs, Nathalie de Vries
MVRDV

GSW Headquarters
Berlin

Matthias Sauerbruch, Louisa Hutton
sauerbruch hutton architects

France

La Licorne Football Stadium
Amiens

Philippe Chaix, Jean-Paul Morel
Atelier d'Architecture Chaix & Morelet Associés

Private Housings
Montpellier

Édouard François

Courthouse of Nantes
Nantes

Jean Nouvel

Greece

House in Palaio Psychico
Athen

Zoe Samourkas

New HELEXPO Gates
Thessaloniki

Katerina Tsigarida, Alexandros Skouvaklis,
Nikos Kalogirou

Italy

Appartment Building D
Giudecca, Venedig

Cino Zucchi
Zucchi Architetti

Netherlands

New Luxor Theatre
Rotterdam

Julia B. Bolles-Wilson, Peter L. Wilson
Architekturbüro Bolles + Wilson

Utrecht City Hall
Utrecht

Enric Miralles, Benedetta Tagliabue
EMBT Arquitectes Associats

Museum Het Valkhof
Nijmegen

Ben van Berkel
UN Studio van Berkel & Bos

Borneo Sporenburg
Oostelijk Havengebied
Amsterdam

Adriaan H. Geuze
West 8

Portugal

Students Housing at Polo II
Universidade de Coimbra
Coimbra

Manuel Aires Mateus, Francisco Aires Mateus
Aires Mateus e Associados, Lda

Tea House Paço das Infantas
Castelo de Montemor-o-Velho

João Mendes Ribeiro

Courtyard Houses
Matosinhos

Eduardo Souto de Moura
Souto Moura – Arquitectos Lda.

Slovenia

Chamber of Commerce and Industry of
Slovenia office building
Ljubljana

Jurij Sadar, Boštjan Vuga
Sadar Vuga Arhitekti

Cemetery Srebrnice
Srebrnice

Aleš Vodopivec, Dušan Ogrin,
Davorin Gazvoda

Spain

Kursaal Centre
San Sebastián

Rafael Moneo

Recreation and Culture Centre
Riudaura, Girona

Rafael Aranda, Carme Pigem, Ramon Vilalta
RCR Aranda Pigem Vilalta Arquitectes SL

Botanical Garden
Barcelona

Carlos Ferrater, Bet Figueras, José Luis Canosa

La Granja Escalator
Toledo

José Antonio Martínez Lapeña, Elías Torres
Martínez Lapeña – Torres Arquitectos SL

Fine Arts Museum
Castellón

Luis M. Mansilla, Emilio Tuñón
Mansilla + Tuñón Arquitectos

La Clota House
Barcelona

Enric Miralles, Benedetta Tagliabue
EMBT Arquitectes Associats

Herrera House
Sevilla

José Morales Sánchez, Juan González Mariscal
José Morales + Juan González

Altamira Museum und Research Centre
Santillana del Mar
Cantabria

Juan Navarro Baldeweg
Navarro Baldeweg Asociados SL

Faculty of Information Science
Universidad de Santiago de Compostela

Álvaro Siza Vieira

United Kingdom

Peckham Library and Media Centre
London

William Alsop
Alsop Architects

Canary Wharf Underground Station
London

Norman Foster
Foster and Partners

New Art Gallery and Public Square
Walsall

Adam Caruso, Peter St John
Caruso St John Architects