2019 AIA|LA Architectural Photography Awards Winners Announced by the American Institute of Architects Los Angeles

Los Angeles, CA – February 13, 2019 – The American Institute of Architects Los Angeles chapter (AIA|LA) is delighted to announce the 2019 AIA|LA Architectural Photography Awards (APA). The 18 recipients were culled from over 450 submissions of stellar quality, a two-fold increase from the 2018 program.

“This particular group of submissions was excellent and one of the markers of it that struck me, was its diversity of
approach,” said 2019 AIA|LA APA juror Matthew Rolston. Rolston’s renown initially derived through his images photographed for Interview magazine. Today, Rolston’s practice includes work as an artist, photographer, director and creative director. Of the breadth of APA submissions, he noted, “We’ve seen aerials, black and white, narrative, non-narrative, abstract, we’ve seen things we’ve never seen before—that’s always refreshing.”

“Most images, 452, in total were darn-good to extraordinary,” observed 2019 AIA|LA APA juror, architect Michael B. Lehrer, FAIA. In addition to heading his critically successful architectural practice, Lehrer’s creative output includes drawings, paintings and photography.

The 2019 winning entries continue the APÂ’s celebration of the use of architecture as a subject to make art, rather than a photograph as a documentational tool. Whether Luis Ayala, AIA’s, monochromatic patterned-parking lot— “It’s not quite Rothko, it’s not quite Kline, it’s not quite Diebenkorn, but it’s
familiar as an abstract piece” noted the jury—or Saide Serne’s almost extraterrestrial take on the interior of the Broad Museum: a couple ascending a tunnel through an escalator. “We’re all familiar with this building, but without that context it’s just this image of people entering into the unknown,” said Laure Joliet, the architectural photographer and the third 2019 jury member. “I think that’s something we can all relate to. It has a visceral effect which is again, what architecture can bring.”

Of the winning photographs, six were selected as Honor award recipients, the highest recognition level, six with Merit awards, and six at the Citation level.

The awards ceremony for the 2019 AIA|LA APAs was hosted at the MAK Center for Art and Architecture at the Schindler House. Winners, APA entrants, and jurors, mingled on the iconic property, celebrating awardees and discussing the art of being a photographer. ARC Document Solutions printed a beautiful array of post cards, each with a unique APA winner on the front, and
space for personal, handwritten letters on the back.

The AIA|LA established the Architectural Photography Awards program to recognize individuals who communicate a designer’s work. Through the awards, we celebrate the photographer’s eye, skill, and talent in expressing the transcendent nature of space.

To view the winning images, click here. (https://www.aialosangeles.org/awards/photography/2019-winner-images-2/)

Or view a list of winners and jury notes below.

**Honor Award-Winners**

**Honor Photographer:** Michael Moser  
**Title:** Ragnarock – Museum of Pop, Rock & Youth Culture  
Roskilde, Denmark  
**Architects:** Cobe, Copenhagen & MVRDV, Rotterdam.  
**Jury Notes:** “This is a traditional, classical, iconic building – and if not the building, certainly the image of it. | The huge, gold structure cantilevered out looks almost dangerously powerful, as if it’s going to crush a small child
who is kneeling beneath it. That creates a lot of visual interest and helps tell a big story about the power of architecture. | So often when you see an important building like this, it’s flattened in the landscape – this really exaggerates the cantilever, makes you feel the grandiosity... and gives you a sense of awe.”

**Honor**  
**Photographer:** Darren Bradley  
**Title:** Steel City  
Pittsburgh, PA  
**Architect:** Smithfield-Liberty Garage, designed by Mr. Philips B. Bown (Altenhof & Bown)  
**Jury Notes:** Architecture is so much about context, and this photograph truly captures that. | This photographer, by design or by chance, caught a shaft of light between buildings, illuminating a very surreal structure – or at least it appears surreal compared to its neighbors on the street front. | The svelte, suave curves, the lightness, the purity of it versus the dark, but not threatening, traditional urban context. The poetics and composition are really beautiful. | It’s a wonderfully evocative dream image.
Honor
Photographer: Luis Ayala, AIA
Title: Park Here!
Weil am Rhein, Germany
Architect: parking lot of the Vitra Design Center, designed by Herzog & de Meuron
Jury Notes: This photograph derives power from its abstraction. There are some very rigorous compositional effects here. It’s a painting, as a photograph. | You understand so intimately what this space is, but here it’s presented in this new way that really makes you look. You see the tire marks, you see the way that we park in clusters, it really brings humanity to something that could feel really stark. | It is a very rich, pure, abstract, and human image. Parking lots should look and feel so good when you are in them as they do from this angle.

Honor
Photographer: Florian W. Mueller
Title: Singularity No. 18
Cologne, Germany
Architect: Planungsgruppe Stielsdorf
Jury Notes: Some photographs have a totemic quality: you just stare at them and you begin to meditate. This is one of those images. Is it the
building or is it the photograph? Well, it’s both. | Framed by the sky, this abstract, minimal piece is incredibly engaging. It’s an object against space, but it could be an object on another field— it’s almost like a door, a window, or a gateway. | It draws the eye in. Looking up and down the color keeps the movement in the space. The photographer was very smart with how they composed to make it all sing.

**Honor**

**Photographer:** Paola Maini  
**Title:** Clap Clap  
Itsukushima Temple, Hiroshima, Japan  
**Architect:** built c. 1170 by Taira-no-Kiyomori, rebuilt c. 1571 by Mori  

**Jury Notes:** Not all photographs are narratives or have narrative qualities – this one does. It almost looks like a scene from a film. It seems to tell a story with a beginning, a middle, and an end. | There is a big idea here which is that architecture and people are a unity, a singularity, which isn’t always the case in architectural photography. | We’re not seeing the entire building, we’re getting information about the weathered wood, the woman praying, the prayers
that are hung up, such a sense of place without having to be shown everything.

**Honor**  
**Photographer:** Saide Serna  
**Title:** To the Moon  
Los Angeles, CA  
**Jury Notes:** This is a very intriguing photograph taken at The Broad, a shrine to contemporary art. We are truly in the belly of the beast. | It captures what is the most wonderous and a little threatening or scary about this particular ascent. | Without that context it’s this image of people entering into the unknown- and I think that’s something we can all relate to, a visceral effect which is what architecture can bring. It isn’t about something being beautiful, it’s about a place that you go, in your mind, and physically in space.

**Merit Award-Winners**

**Merit**  
**Photographer:** Daniel Aguilar  
**Title:** 100% Tempelhofer Feld  
Berlin, Germany  
**Jury Notes:** The richness in that tiny little bit of visual space is very beautiful and evocative. | It’s very formal and
yet you have that sense of being on the cusp of understanding more. | A visual moment where the elements come together, earth and sky meeting on a plane. People seem to be peacefully strolling into a kind of infinity. | Like when you’re traveling and seeing a skyline for the very first time – you’re approaching a new space, possibility, and the unknown.

**Merit**

**Photographer:** Ethan Rohloff
**Title:** Sydney Opera House Silhouette
Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

**Architect:** Jørn Utzon

**Jury Notes:** This photograph is striking. As soon as it came up, we all gasped. | It’s taking one of the most iconic buildings of the last 100 years, that has been photographed in all of its glory endlessly, and then flattening it and its shadow out into a two-dimensional graphic. | When is a building an artichoke? The effect of the light on the water, the silhouette, the somewhat symmetrical reflection through shadow of the building creates an entirely new architectural narrative.
Merit
Photographer: Kip Harris, AIA
Title: Taj Mahal from Gardens at Dawn
Agra, India
Designer: Usually attributed to Ustad Ahmad, aka Isa Khan
Jury Notes: Here we have this iconic building rendered in a way that makes you look at it again. It has mystery, romanticism, and awe that when it was first constructed it was meant to evoke. | Perhaps in this photograph it attempts to fulfill its real meaning, which is to contemplate death and the eternal. It is somber, and it’s exotic and dreamlike. | This is one of the most seductive images that we’ve seen. | To be able to find that magic again is really, really powerful.

Merit
Photographer: Miguel Ruiz
Title: L.A.
Los Angeles, CA
Jury Notes: L.A. as New York, or L.A. as what it is becoming, but not quite there yet. | This is a love letter to L.A. It’s not just trying to capture an impressive building, it’s showing the life that’s lived in the city and how the architecture is continuing to reshape it. | This is a neo-noir image, with tremendous rhythm and musicality. I’m hearing classic Jazz music, or
Arnold Schoenberg... It’s deeply engaging. | The overall scene, that classic urban scene, is what distinguishes this.

**Merit**
**Photographer:** Paul Turang, Affiliate AIA|LA  
**Title:** Time For Dodger Baseball  
Los Angeles, CA  
**Architect:** Emil Praeger  
**Jury Notes:** The symmetry of the photograph is astonishing... the quality of light, generated by the architecture itself, is mesmerizing. | It is such a testament to the space that can hold all of these thousands of people, that somehow even in all of that chaos it’s deeply poetic and beautiful. | All of the cars become this delicate little field and have never looked so beautiful as they do here in a very passive, textured way. This dreamscape, with L.A. carved out of the lawn, is perfectly symmetrical, classical, and ideal.

**Merit**  
**Photographer:** Francis Ssu-ting Wu  
**Title:** Manhattanhenge  
New York, New York  
**Jury Notes:** At the turn of the previous century they said, “come to America, the streets
are paved with gold!” Well, this image certainly lives up to that promise. | It’s about these moments that come, seemingly out of nowhere, to take your breath away. | The power and sensuality of urban space. Glistening, radiant, embracing, and dense. A really incredibly inviting photograph. | It feels fleeting, mysterious, and it feels larger than the day – it’s so much more than a building.

**Citation Award–Winners**

**Citation**
**Photographer:** David Mordoch  
**Title:** 911 Memorial  
Manhattan, New York  
**Architect:** Oculus, by Santiago Calatrava  
**Jury Notes:** [This image is] probably no more or less disturbing than the building itself being put in there, but it is an unusually muscular view of the building which is quite powerful. | This is a very interesting photograph. On a formal level there are some things going on: tangencies between the printed signs on the hoarding and the shapes of the building. | It is a rather disturbing photograph of a very graceful building.
Citation
Photographer: Elizabeth Daniels
Title: Ennis Midnight Storm
Los Angeles, CA
Architect: Frank Lloyd Wright
Jury Notes: This minimalist composition with the palm trees in the foreground, captures the power of the plein-airity that is the city of Los Angeles. It is so much about texture. The concrete forms, the blanket of lights that just become this sparkling, glittering, strip, and then a very unusual, ominous sky. People always try to capture those city lights, when it’s really about what holds them.

Citation
Photographer: Gregory Yager, AIA
Title: Scaffold
New York City, NY
Jury Notes: “The scaffolding in this image has been turned into a painting, a contemporary or modern art piece. This is really luscious. All the basics of construction, the visual density, it’s sensuous. The addition of the human element helps tell the story of what it means to construct something. It is, in fact, a great portrait of architecture in play.
Citation
Photographer: Javier Gil Vieco
Title: Glowing Profile
Seattle, Washington
Architect: Museum of Pop Culture (former EMP Museum)
by Frank Gehry (Gehry Partners, LLP)
Jury Notes: This one I absolutely loved. It is so minimal. It’s so confusing. It renders architecture as a body. You don’t know if it’s on its side, if it’s a landscape, or what the sky is doing. It just feels sort of sensual in a way that I don’t normally see architecture in a photograph.

Citation
Photographer: Michael Wells
Title: House on Lava
Hawai’i
Jury Notes: The grandeur of this lava field and this little building in the middle of it. What a struggle. | It’s quite a powerful, lovely, happy, and sad image. | In light of climate change, all of these things that are happening that are changing the face of our planet, to be reminded of how small we are. It’s just so very real.

Citation
Photographer: Ryan M. Gobuty, Assoc. AIA
Title: Dominus
Dominus Estate, Yountville, California
Architect: Herzog & de Meuron

Jury Notes: This is just a fairly perfect architectural image. Beginning with an extraordinary piece of architecture itself, but composition, color, tone, texture, and then the seductive, fertile, wine-producing, landscape framed in the bottom fifth. Geometry. It’s got all the basics. It’s too perfect.

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