



BNA Kubus for Ben van Berkel and Caroline Bos of UNStudio

The 2016 BNA Kubus has been awarded to the founders of UNStudio, Ben van Berkel (architect) and Caroline Bos (art historian / urban planner). The aim of the architecture prize, this year bestowed for the 41st time by the Royal Institute of Dutch Architects (abbreviated as BNA), is to express the institute's appreciation for an exceptional contribution to architecture. The Kubus was awarded on the recommendation of a jury made up of Nathalie de Vries (chair), Steven Nobel, Ton Idsinga, Wienke Bodewes, Willem Hein Schenk and Willem Jan Neutelings. The presentation ceremony will take place on 3 November in Amsterdam.

Extract from the jury report

The jury concluded that Van Berkel and Bos, together with their UNStudio team, are more than deserved winners of the 2016 BNA Kubus. 'No one controls the creative and technical process better than UNStudio. They prove that in-depth research pays off, as does network-driven collaboration with professionals in the fields of architecture, infrastructure and urban development. The cutting-edge nature and absolute craftsmanship of their body of work makes it both exemplary and innovative.'

High quality, iconic buildings and international appeal

The jury's decision was based on three criteria: excellent craftsmanship, a recognisable and innovative body of work, and a relevant contribution to the profession. From the time UNStudio was established in 1988, Van Berkel and Bos have been building up an impressive body of work, according to the jury. Their work is always of high quality, the buildings are iconic and have international appeal. Moreover, the firm stamps its work with its own unmistakable signature. UNStudio's body of work ranges from furniture to urban architectural plans that have been realised all over the world. Great attention to detail and execution is clearly visible in all the works. Another factor that is in Van Berkel and Bos's favour is the major contribution they make to dialogue and theory development within the profession. They do so by, among other things, participating in debates, giving lectures, teaching at architecture faculties abroad, and through their many publications.

National and international reputation

Famous works of UNStudio include Villa Möbius (1998), the iconic Erasmus Bridge (1996), the Mercedes-Benz Museum in Stuttgart (2006), and the railway station in Arnhem (2015). Other buildings in the Netherlands include the Agora Theatre in Lelystad (2007), De Stoep Theatre in Spijkenisse (2014) and the Education Executive Agency and Tax Office in Groningen (2011). In addition, the firm has worked on projects in Asia, Australia and North and South America. Currently, UNStudio is designing four metro lines in Qatar, complete with thirty-five metro stations, each with its own character. The firm can also work with modest budgets, as proven by the theatres in Lelystad and Spijkenisse.

BNA Kubus

The BNA Kubus is the highest honour bestowed by the Royal Institute of Dutch Architects (abbreviated as BNA). The prize is awarded to persons or institutions that have made an exceptional contribution to architecture in the Netherlands. This year, the Kubus will be presented for the 41st time. The BNA Kubus was last awarded in 2010, when it went to Neutelings Riedijk. Earlier winners include the architects Van den Broek, Kloos, Hertzberger, Quist, Van Gool, Stokla, Coenen, Benthem Crouwel, Van Velsen, and Hannie & Aldo van Eyck. Agencies and institutions have also been awarded the prize, for example the municipality of Rotterdam, the office of the Chief Government Architect, and the RAI.

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