

## PRESS RELEASE

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**THE OBEL  
AWARD** | by the  
Henrik Frode Obel  
Foundation



## **Anandaloy by Anna Heringer wins the OBEL AWARD 2020**

The second OBEL AWARD is presented to Anandaloy, a project in rural Bangladesh by Anna Heringer. According to the jury, the unconventional building, which is made out of mud and bamboo, shows in its own playful and humble way that architecture can contribute to mending the climate as well as social injustice and segregation.

Martha Schwartz, Chair of the Jury, says:

“To all of us in the jury, Anandaloy is an outstanding project. It is an original piece. It is not in the style of; it is not imitating something else. I think Anna is absolutely dedicated to what she is doing, which is what you see when you see a good piece of art: that there is a good, focused intent behind it. Anna manages to integrate all of her values: she is building sustainably, using the materials that are there, having people involved, so that they can learn to build for themselves, and creating more opportunities for women and for people with disabilities. You can feel that she has a real respect for the culture, for the people, for the land.”

## **MOTIVATION OF THE JURY**

The Anandaloy building is not only a spatial solution to a number of both basic and specific human needs, the project as a whole is a multi-layered response to the challenge of mending by cleverly interweaving sustainable, social, and architectural design.

As Anna Heringer herself describes the role of her profession: „Architecture is a tool to improve lives.“

Anandaloy, which means Place of Deep Joy, hosts a therapy centre for people with disabilities (pwd) on the ground floor, combined with a fair-trade textile manufacturing workshop for local women on the first floor.

Architecturally, the building explores the plastic abilities of bamboo and rammed earth in order to create a stronger identity and thereby to celebrate nonconformity and diversity. Rather than being straight-lined, the building dances in curves, a ramp winding playfully around its inner structure.

Constructed from only local materials and with the know-how of local craftsmanship, the Anandaloy project respects the local culture and tradition, and from a very simple design and subtle approach still manages to integrate a diverse range of both human needs and programmatic abilities without damage to the environment.

Like science, politics and economics, architecture too is asked to take responsibility for the environment and to avoid further damage to our planet. The Anandaloy project affirms that taking on this obligation can be done both responsively and responsibly.

We believe that the Anandaloy project constitutes a seminal contribution to the field of architecture.

## **ANNA HERINGER CV**

German architect Anna Heringer, born October 1977, grew up in Laufen, a small town at the Austrian-Bavarian border close to Salzburg. At the age of 19, Anna Heringer went to live in Bangladesh for almost a year, learnt Bengali, and got deeply involved in the local culture. She learnt about sustainable development work but also about construction and architecture and the value of using existing, local resources — a strategy that she still advocates many years later. As an architect and honorary professor of the UNESCO Chair of Earthen Architecture, Building Cultures, and Sustainable Development, she focuses on the use of natural and readily available building materials.

Over the years, Anna Heringer has realised projects in Asia, Africa, and Europe. She has received numerous honours: the Global Award for Sustainable Architecture, the AR Emerging Architecture Awards in 2006 and 2008, the Loeb Fellowship at Harvard's GSD, and a RIBA International Fellowship. Her work has been widely published and exhibited at MoMA New York, the V&A Museum in London, and at the Venice Architectural Biennale in 2016 und 2018, among other places.

Anna Heringer lectures worldwide at conferences, including TED in 2017, and has been visiting professor at various universities, including Harvard, ETH Zurich (with Martin Rauch), UP Madrid, TU Munich, and University of Arts in Linz.

## **ABOUT THE OBEL AWARD**

The OBEL AWARD is a new, international prize for architectural achievement presented annually by the Henrik Frode Obel Foundation, founded by Henrik Frode Obel(1942-2014).The prize is 100,000 Euros and a unique artwork by leading artist Tomás Saraceno.

The aim of the award is to honour recent and outstanding architectural contributions to human development all over the world.The award is given to works or projects from the past five years. It can be given to an architect or group of architects, and the award-winning project can range from a manifesto to a masterplan and include buildings, landscape projects, and exhibitions.

Each year, the jury will set a special focus for the OBEL AWARD. In 2020, the special focus is: *MENDING - creative mending through climate-positive construction or design.*

The 2020 OBEL AWARD jury consists of: **Martha Schwartz**, Chair (founder, Martha Schwartz Partners, USA), **Kjetil Trædal Thorsen** (co-founder, Snøhetta, Norway), **Louis Becker** (design principal and partner, Henning Larsen, Denmark), **Dr Wilhelm Vossenkuhl** (professor emeritus of philosophy, Germany), and **XU Tiantian** (founding principal, DnA, Beijing, China).

## **MORE INFORMATION AND MATERIALS**

### **Press kit (including photos, videos, interviews, etc.)**

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/llx44dgepvali4w/AACkawkG5z3DXRzjCvDlkAwIa?dl=0>

### **Anna Heringer contact information**

Anna Heringer is available for online/phone interviews:

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### **The OBEL AWARD webpage**

<https://obelaward.org/>

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