

PRESS RELEASE

Diversity in Architecture (DIVIA)

divia award Ceremony

The first-ever *divia award* goes to the Italian architect **Marta Maccaglia** for her commitment to education in Peru.



The winner of the 1st *divia award*, Marta Maccaglia with initiator Ursula Schwitalla.
All photos: Erik-Jan Ouwerkerk

On Saturday, the winner of the first *divia award* was announced and the exhibition of the five finalists was opened at ANCB The Aedes Metropolitan Laboratory in Berlin.

Marta Maccaglia, founder of Asociación Semillas, was awarded the first-ever prize for her exceptional commitment to education in Peru and received a prize of 20,000 euros. The jury justified their decision as follows:

"We were impressed by the consistency of the architectural approach in Marta Maccaglia's projects, from small to large, while each project also reflects the local culture and the particularities of the place. Working in underserved regions, Maccaglia's buildings respond to the dynamic needs of the community with a humanistic approach and bold commitment."

The international, biennially awarded prize aims to promote the visibility of women in the architecture industry. It is owed to diversity in architecture and may be dedicated to other under-recognized groups in the future.



Elisabeth Kaiser, Parliamentary State Secretary at the Federal Ministry of Housing, Urban Development and Building

Elisabeth Kaiser, Parliamentary State Secretary at the Federal Ministry of Housing, Urban Development and Building, was among the guests of honor and emphasized the importance of the divia awards in her speech. Dario Armini, Head of Cultural Affairs at the Italian Embassy, thanked the award winner Marta Maccaglia for her merits, as did H.E. Augusto Arzubiaga Scheuch, Ambassador of Peru – the chosen home and place of work of the woman architect.



Ursula Schwitalla, Dario Armini, Marta Maccaglia, H.E. Augusto Arzubiaga Scheuch

A high-calibre jury – Sol Camacho, Odile Decq, Rahul Mehrotra and Martha Thorne – selected five finalists from 27 nominees from all six continents: May al-Ibrashy (Egypt), Katherine Clarke & Liza Fior (United Kingdom), Marta Maccaglia (Peru), Noella Nibakuze (Rwanda), and Tosin Oshinowo (Nigeria).

The accompanying catalog for the award, dedicated to all five finalists and published by Hatje Cantz Verlag, was also presented that evening and can be ordered from the publisher.



ABOUT THE AWARD WINNER

Marta Maccaglia, Italy /Peru

Italian architect Marta Maccaglia, trained at Sapienza Università di Roma, has been implementing collaborative architectural projects in education in her chosen home of Peru since 2011.

When the architect arrived in the Peruvian jungle as part of an exchange program fresh out of university, she originally wanted to work there as a teacher. However, upon her arrival she found a dilapidated kindergarten on site. Ready to take on the challenge, she decided to stay and rebuild the building with a local NGO.

It is fitting that the non-profit organization that Marta Maccaglia later founded is called Semillas, which means "seeds" in Spanish. The organization, based in the Peruvian capital Lima, as well as the Junín and Cajamarca regions, is now working with its members to promote access to education and public infrastructure in places where this is by no means a given.

"For me, education is the most important instrument for freedom. If we want a better society, we need an educated population. Architecture can make a difference here – architecture is social," says Marta Maccaglia.



One example of Marta Maccaglia's educational buildings in Peru, which she has built organisation "Semillas"

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