PRESS RELEASE
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IABSE Awards 2019

The International Association for Bridge and Structural Engineering (IABSE) is pleased to announce the Laureates of the IABSE Awards 2019. The President of IABSE, Fernando Branco, will present the awards on the occasion of the IABSE’s Congress in New York City, which will be held during the ‘Opening Ceremony’ on September 4, 2019.

The International Award of Merit in Structural Engineering is presented to people for outstanding contributions in the field of structural engineering, with special reference to usefulness for society. Fields of endeavour may include: planning, design, construction, materials, equipment, education, research, government, management. The first Award was presented in 1976.

The International Award of Merit in Structural Engineering 2019 is presented to Niels Jørgen Gimsing, Denmark; ‘in recognition of his important contribution to Denmark’s expertise in bridge building, his international outlook and contribution to the field of structural engineering with a number of iconic structures.’

The International Award of Merit in Structural Engineering 2019 has been conferred to Prof. Niels Jørgen Gimsing. He is a renowned structural engineer, bridge expert and lecturer—his ability to engage and fascinate his audience is legendary. Not only engineering students and the professional engineering community has realised Prof. Gimsings communication skills, but also the general public has become familiar with bridge building through a number of popular television programs where he has demonstrated his unique ability to present complicated subjects in a simple, logical and very inspiring way.

As a student, Niels Jørgen Gimsing won the first prize in an international competition launched by US Steel for design of highway bridges (1959), 1st, 2nd and 3rd prize in the Great Belt Fixed Link Design Competition 1967, Saxild Prize 1991, Anton Tedesko Gold Medal 2000. This was followed by a brilliant career in the field of structural engineering.

Before the development of computers and finite element tools, it was not possible to carry out exact calculations of complex structures. Engineers had to prepare simplified models and in order to derive a meaningful simplification it is fundamental to have a profound understanding of structural behaviour. Prof. Gimsing excels with his intuitive structural understanding and this has been a cornerstone in his work and teaching. Nowadays, even though sophisticated analytical tools are available at fingertips, the engineer's intuitive structural understanding is as important as ever in the conceptual design, and in assessing the soundness of results generated from computer models. Several generations of students from the Technical University of Denmark share happy memories of Prof. Gimsing’s lectures where he often illustrated a subject with examples of real structures from his immense photo library.

Prof. Gimsing is an outstanding ambassador for structural engineering and design. He has participated in the development of a large number of landmark bridges and fixed links around the world—often in close collaboration with architects, which has resulted in a legacy of beautiful bridges designed throughout his long
career. These projects have contributed to pushing the boundaries of structural engineering and bridge design. The list includes the Great Belt Fixed Link (Denmark), the Öresund Fixed Link (Denmark-Sweden), the Messina Strait Bridge (Italy), the Gibraltar Strait Crossing (Spain-Morocco), the Stonecutters Bridge (Hong Kong SAR), and the Queensferry Crossing (Scotland).

As a member of IABSE and the Danish Society of Structural Science and Engineering (DSBy) Prof. Gimsing has contributed very actively to innovation and development of the profession and has promoted knowledge sharing. He has combined his academic expertise with his unique experience from practise. This has resulted in a large number of iconic structures that enrich people’s lives every day. Within IABSE, he has served as a Honorary member (1996), Chair of Organizing Committee of the Copenhagen Congress (1996), and as the Chair of the Danish Group of IABSE (1991-1999), Chair of Scientific Committee of the Malmö Conference and Chair of the Organizing Committee together with the Chair of the Swedish Group.

The International Association for Bridge and Structural Engineering (IABSE) founded in 1929, operates on a worldwide basis and deals with all aspects of planning, design, construction, maintenance and repair of civil engineering structures. The mission of IABSE is to exchange knowledge and to advance the practice of structural engineering worldwide in the service of the profession and society. To fulfil its mission, IABSE organises conferences and publishes a high-quality journal, Structural Engineering International (SEI); publishes books reflecting the work of its Technical Groups; creates Working Groups, as required by new needs and technological progress; offers activities within National Groups of IABSE; supports Young Engineers with a programme, and presents annual Awards in recognition.

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