

# Feminine touch at the national architectural awards

Four talented women are among architects from across the country to enter their designs in the 2015/16 Corobrik-SAIA Awards of Excellence and Merit which will be presented at a gala dinner at Shine Studios in Braamfontein on 2 September 2016.



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Karlien Thomashoff of Thomashoff and Partners has entered the “Last Glass House” in Johannesburg, Gallagher Lourens Architects have put forward the Hermanus Community Day Centre in which Tina Gallagher played a major role, Kate Otten of Kate Otten Architects has submitted the Wits Rural Facility, and a Johannesburg home dubbed "House Nicholas" was entered by Noero Architects in association with Tanzeem Razak of Lemon Pebble Architects.

A record 66 entries were received for these prestigious awards which have been bestowed every two years by Corobrik and the South African Institute for Architects (SAIA) for the past 26 years.

The four women, along with the other competitors, stand to win Awards of Excellence, which represent the highest accolade that can be bestowed on a building in South Africa, Awards of Merit conferred for a significant architectural achievement or special commendations for notable design.

The awards operate on a two-year system in which SAIA members from all of the institute's regions are eligible to enter their best architectural work. Regional awards are presented in the first year of the cycle and national awards in the second year.

Obert Chakarisa, CEO of SAIA, said that each of the 66 entries had already won an award in the regional events and, as such, was in the top design echelons in the country.

He went on to say that it was heartening to see the growing impact that women were making in the architectural profession.

"A mere 21.54% of our members are women, of which 19.46% are professional architects bearing the acronym PR Arch," he said. "Encouragingly we are seeing increasing numbers of women in our Candidate Architect in Training category, currently 42%, which bodes well for the future."

"There is no doubt that women bring a unique perspective to architectural design and that they are involved in a significant proportion of the world class designs that are being produced in South Africa. We value their mounting contribution to the industry."

This year's winners will receive their awards from SAIA President, Sindile Ngonyama, SAIA CEO, Obert Chakarisa and Corobrik managing director, Dirk Meyer.

The awards dinner will be attended by members of SAIA and dignitaries as well as the judging panel which this year was made up of Kevin Bingham, awards convenor, SAIA vice president and a director of FGG Architects in Durban; sponsor representative Musa Shangase, who is commercial director of Corobrik; Mokena Makeka, who is founder and principal architect at Makeka Design Lab in Cape Town; Prof Paul Kotze, who is professor of Wits University's School of Architecture and Planning; and eminent layperson Sumien Brink, who is editor of VISI magazine in Johannesburg.

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