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PRESS RELEASE

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The 2009 IABSE International Award of Merit in Structural Engineering to: Professor Christian Menn, Chur, Switzerland

Professor Christian Menn has been awarded with the 2009 International Award of Merit. Jacques Combault, President of the IABSE, will present the Award on September 9, 2009, at the Opening Ceremony of the 33rd IABSE Symposium in Bangkok, Thailand.

This IABSE Award is conferred for outstanding contributions in the field of structural engineering, with special reference to their usefulness to society. Contributions may include various aspects in Planning, Design, Construction, Materials, Equipment, Education, Research, Government, and Management.

Christian Menn graduated from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH), Zurich, in Civil Engineering in 1950 and earned his doctorate there in 1956. In the first years of his professional career he worked for engineering companies, as a research associate at ETH Zurich, and as a consulting engineer in private practice (1957 to 1971). He was Professor of Structural Engineering at ETH Zurich from 1971-1992. Since then he is a consulting engineer in private practice, Chur, Switzerland.

Professor Menn has contributed significantly to the art of bridge engineering as an engineer, professor and researcher through numerous advancements in the general conceptual design of bridges, in the design of fully and partially prestressed concrete structures with interior and exterior prestressing, as well as slender concrete elements, in the research of cracking behaviour and crack control of concrete structures, durability issues of concrete structures, and in general concrete design approaches.

Christian Menn has always stressed the importance to simple design models (“reduce to the max”), clear and simple structural calculations with sufficient accuracy for construction practice and structures allowing for reasonable execution tolerances. In recent years, he has emphasized the importance of creativity for structural engineers, from a technical, aesthetical and economical point of view. The guiding principle in his more than 100 bridge structures worldwide is “form follows function” with regard to the proportionality and harmony of a bridge in its surroundings. The structural systems, elements and details in Menn’s bridges are developed with regard to holistic orderliness and visualization of the flow of forces, reflecting a balanced structure of technical efficiency and aesthetic harmony.

Christian Menn is one of the most important structural engineers in the field of concrete bridges and belongs to a prestigious list of eminent structural engineers. Menn’s numerous bridge structures, such as the Ganter Bridge and the Sunniberg Bridge in Switzerland, or the Leonard P. Zakim Bunker Hill Bridge in Boston, USA, as well as many others, are renowned worldwide for their structural beauty, economic efficiency, technical innovation, and for simply being structural engineering oeuvres of art.



The International Association for Bridge and Structural Engineering (IABSE) comprises 4'000 members in 100 countries. Founded in 1929, IABSE deals with all aspects of planning, design, construction, maintenance and repair of civil engineering structures. To fulfil its mission, IABSE organises conferences and publishes a quarterly journal, Structural Engineering International, as well as books and reports. The Association has a number of technical groups and presents awards in recognition of outstanding contributions in the domain of structural engineering.

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