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PRESS RELEASE

Swiss Embassy opens in Seoul – architecture by Burckhardt+Partner

The new Swiss Embassy in Seoul was opened on May 17th, 2019, in the South Korean capital. The building's design comes from Swiss architectural office Burckhardt+Partner. The embassy building, inspired by a traditional hanok, successfully represents the bond between the two countries.

In the middle of a densely populated residential neighborhood in the megacity Seoul and surrounded by high-rises, the embassy is the only building in the traditional style and comes across as an oasis. After winning the architectural competition seven years ago, Burckhardt+Partner was commissioned to realize the embassy by the Federal Office for Buildings and Logistics (FOBL). Inspired by the traditional Korean dwelling, the architects developed a multifunctional building that accommodates an embassy's manifold usage requirements. On 3,540 m² of space, the embassy building combines the ambassador's residence, representative rooms and the office.

With its spiral shape, the building adapts to the topography, rising from two to three stories. As a result of cooperation between Burckhardt+Partner and local companies, extraordinary details have been implemented. For instance, Burckhardt+Partner used traditional Korean formwork to shape the exterior exposed-concrete facade, in which the formwork's wooden structure is visible. The wooden slats typical of Korean courtyard houses also constitute a key element of the embassy's design. The interior courtyard, which all rooms face, has a significant role: It connects people with each other and with nature.

The architecture by Burckhardt+Partner establishes a dialog: The embassy building serves as a symbol for integration and openness, for that which is native and that which is foreign, as well as for the urban space and the diplomatic space.

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About Burckhardt+Partner

Burckhardt+Partner is an internationally distinguished and technologically prominent architectural company. It was founded in 1951 in Basel and has continued to develop ever since. Over the past 65 years, Burckhardt+Partner has not only had a major influence on architecture in Switzerland, but has also been able to compete on the international stage. Burckhardt+Partner currently runs five branches in Switzerland and three in Germany.