

Joburg Property Company sweeps up Best International Public Services Development award at the Global IPA 2017 held at the prestigious Savoy in London.

JOHANNESBURG. Joburg Property Company (JPC), managers of the City of Johannesburg (CoJ) property portfolio, has been honoured by the announcement that they are the winners of the Public Services Development category at the International Property Awards (IPA) held at a glittering event held at the Savoy in London.

Being a part of the IPA Public Services Development Awards category and the only nominee from Africa, has shown that the Speakers Council Chamber, is a world class architectural innovation which is not an anomaly in South Africa but in a globally competitive property development environment, stands as one of the best in its class. This regional award has given us JPC the opportunity to showcase the Chamber and its surrounding Piazza.

The inside of the now Iconic Chamber has been designed in such a way that it provides seating capacity for 363 councillors and 172 seats in the gallery for the public and media – 80 seats more than is currently required, in order to cater for future expansion. The state-of-the-art audio-visual and delegate system is fully programmable and completely customised to be updated in line with any future changes in the way that the Chamber operates. This development creates 500 jobs from the surrounding communities.

The form itself is that of a transparent drum – a cylindrical structure enveloped entirely by a glass façade with vertical glass fins covering the curved outer skin of the building. The glass building envelope enables an uninterrupted visual link between the indoor and surrounding outdoor spaces. This allows the outside world to have a visual connection with the building's occupants, which is symbolic of a constant dialogue between the public and municipal officials

This celebrates African principles of space-making, while incorporating smart technologies and green building systems. The open air Piazza alongside the Chamber encourages the local community to come together and enjoy the various aspects that have been built for their leisure and enjoyment such as the outdoor gym, children's playground and chess set, there is little that has not been covered.

The art that was selected for the inside of the building, in its simplicity and design ensures that a story is told from past and present using not only art forms but also different forms of material from copper to steel, from canvas to glass. As the years go by, the story will still be told in the way that it should be, that of the journey of Johannesburg and its residents to that of freedom within the city.

One of the unique features of the building is the 134 Kiat Totems, each of which expresses different emotions from the original artist. From hurt, to joy, from sadness and anger to euphoria. As permanent fixtures woven into the fabric of the Council Chamber's design, these totems will stand as testaments to the people of Johannesburg and their heritage.

The building stands tall at the top of one of Johannesburg's busiest streets, Rissk Street, and reminds us each day that the skyline is changing together with the people of the city.

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