Destroyed City Told
Earthquake memorial and archaeological museum, Agadir, Morocco

Main author
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Summary by the jury
The town of Agadir in Morocco was hit by a devastating earthquake in 1960. The “kasbah” or fortified town on the hill was entirely destroyed and the site abandoned. This dramatic event in the history of the town establishes the very narrative of the submitted project: the creation of a place of contemplation in memory of the 15,000 residents who died in the earthquake. The scheme incorporates a memorial on the site and an archaeological museum retracing the history of the city. The building, for example, integrates the ruins of the fortification wall, establishing a dialog between the old and the new, between the past and the present.

Appraisal by the jury
The jury was captivated by the clarity and beauty of the models and drawings featured in the submission. Here, architecture in its purest disciplinary form is brought to the fore to create a magnificent ensemble, one touching the senses and foregrounding aesthetics as a key tenet of sustainable development. The scheme merges tradition with a contemporary understanding of architecture without mimicking the past or succumbing to the pitfalls of orthodox historic reinstatements. The proposed structure tells a story, one told in the present, while recalling a past and pointing to a potential future.

Project data
Context Architecture, building and civil engineering
Client Greater Agadir
Background Research project

Further authors
Laurent Sanz, architect, France; Mohamed Belhouari, architect, Morocco