

NYT says Mexican architect among 10 leading women to follow



[The New York Times](#) has recognized Mexican **Fernanda Canales** as one of **10 women** who are changing the landscape of **leadership around the world**.

The publication shared that only **3 of the world's largest 100 architectural firms** are **headed by women**.

Fernanda is a **board member** of the [Tec de Monterrey](#) **School of Architecture, Art and Design**, and one of her goals is to **inspire** more young people and women to work on **innovative and sustainable architecture**.

*"It's very important to **think** about **things differently**, to **question** how something is done, and to **change** what doesn't work or isn't justified,"* she explained in an interview with CONECTA.

Designing Buildings That Open and Unite



Fernanda Canales, 46, is an architect based in Mexico City known for designing poetic, responsive buildings that emphasize openness, tactility and community. Meghan Dhaliwal for The New York Times

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“Let’s have more women in architecture.”

Fernanda said that the **presence of female architects** and their **vision** will become increasingly **important**.

She shared that **architects** like her or some of those from her **generation** had no role models. They also **faced discrimination** at work.

*“It’s a real source of **motivation to show that** you’re a **professional** and that **your time is valuable**,”* she mentioned in the interview.

The architect recalled that she had participated in a **competition to design a monument** for the **Mexican Independence bicentennial** in **2010**. Of the **50 projects** received, **only 2** were submitted by women.

Fernanda highlights the **importance** of having **diversity** in architecture and **including more women**.

*“I think it’s very **important** to promote **diverse** and **unique visions** that approach problems with a **fresh pair of eyes** and resolve current issues, not past ones.”*



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Leaving her mark on Casa Bruma

One example of Fernanda's work is [Casa Bruma](#), which was designed to look as if it had **exploded** and its parts had been scattered around, accommodating themselves within the vegetation.

The **living room**, **main room**, **bedrooms**, and other spaces are located **around a central courtyard** and are **joined** together by **glass-walled** corridors.

The **objective** was to **avoid felling trees** on the site, and so that each space can receive **natural light**.

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CLLQce0jVj1/>

Building the cities of the future

"Creating cities for everyone," is what Canales says when asked about the main **challenges** presented by the **cities of the future**.

*“**Cities** are going to **change** because today we know things that we didn’t know a few years ago, especially in terms of **environmental issues**,” she says.*

She also believes that **Mexico** is one of the **countries** that will most need **societal involvement** in future **urban planning**.

*“We need to **stop placing urban development** in the hands of **politicians** with short-term visions and speculative agendas,” she says.*



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Projects, education, and new generations

The **projects** that demonstrate her **flair** range from libraries, parks, markets, and retirement homes to childcare facilities, civic centers, and sports venues.

*“**Architecture** must be both **personal refuge** and a space for interacting with people and the world,” she says.*

Fernanda Canales’ projects include **supporting education** as a **board member** of the **Tec de Monterrey School of Architecture, Art and Design**.

*“The **role** of **schools** is very **difficult** because they have to **teach** students to **question established practices**, to question their teachers, and to question the school itself,” she says.*

<https://www.instagram.com/p/C1rD8Cmjfdu/>

<https://twitter.com/fernandacanale/status/858719099437826049>

Her achievements

- Casa Bruma, **winner** of the **2018 CEMEX Building Award** in the National and International Residential Housing categories.
- **Winner** of the **2018 Emerging Voices award**, organized by The Architectural League of New York in 2018
- Contender for the **2018 Swiss Architectural Award**
- Nominated for the **2019 Royal Academy Dorfman Award**
- **The only Mexican participant** with an exhibit in the central Pavilion of the **Venice Biennale**, January 2021

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