

ART OF THE AIRPORT TOWER





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TRAVELING EXHIBITION

Art of the Airport Tower is a photographic journey to airports around the world. Smithsonian photographer Carolyn Russo explores the varied forms and functions of air traffic control towers throughout aviation history, making these ordinary structures extraordinary: more than mere aviation artifacts, they are monumental abstractions, symbols of cultural expression, and testimonies of technological change.

Fifty striking photographs, informative captions, an introduction by Smithsonian commercial aviation expert F. Robert van der Linden and an essay by the National Air Traffic Controllers Association examine the history and evolution of airport towers to contextualize Russo's work.

FEATURED TOWERS

CONTEMPORARY TOWERS

Aberdeen International Airport
Scotland, United Kingdom
ABZ/EGPD

Abu Dhabi International Airport
United Arab Emirates
AUH/OMAA

Bangkok-Suvarnabhumi Airport
Thailand
BKK/VTBS

Barcelona El-Prat Airport
Spain
BCN/LEBL

Bilbao Airport
Spain
BIO/LEBB

Birmingham Airport
United Kingdom
BHX/EGBB

Changi Airport
Singapore
SIN/WSSS

Dubai International Airport
United Arab Emirates
DXB/OMDB

Dubai World Central-AI Maktoum International Airport
United Arab Emirates
DWC/OMDW

Edinburgh Airport
Scotland, United Kingdom
EDI/EGPH

Edwards Air Force Base
California, United States
EDW/KEDW

Fort Worth Alliance Airport
Texas, United States
AFW/KAFW

Frankfurt Airport
Germany
FRA/EDDF

Hangzhou Xiaoshan International Airport
China
HGH/ZSHC

John F. Kennedy International Airport
New York, United States
JFK/KJFK

Kuala Lumpur International Airport
Malaysia
KUL/WMCK

Kuala Lumpur International Airport
Malaysia - Tower West
KUL/WMCK

London Heathrow Airport
United Kingdom
LHR/EGLL

Los Angeles International Airport
California, United States
LAX/KLAX

Newark Liberty International Airport
New Jersey, United States
EWR/KEWR

Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport
Arizona, United States
PHX/KPHX

Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport
Virginia, United States
DCA/KDCA

Orlando International Airport
Florida, United States
MCO/KMCO

Örnsköldsvik Airport
Sweden
OER/ESNO

Oslo Airport
Norway
OSL/ENGM

Oulu Airport
Finland
OUL/EFOU

Paris-Orly Airport
France
ORY/LFPO

Stockholm-Arlanda Airport
Sweden
ARN/ESSA

Sundsvall Airport
Sweden
SDL/ESNN

Sydney (Kingsford Smith) Airport
Australia
SYD/YSSY

TAG Farnborough Airport
United Kingdom
FAB/EGLF

Vienna International Airport
Austria
VIE/LOWW

HISTORICAL TOWERS

Abu Dhabi International Airport
United Arab Emirates

Barcelona El-Prat Airport
Spain /1995

Barcelona El-Prat Airport
Spain/1965

Cincinnati Municipal Airport-Lunken Field
Ohio, United States

Croydon Airport
United Kingdom

East Fortune Field
Scotland, United Kingdom

Floyd Bennett Field
New York, United States

Ford Island, Pearl Harbor
Hawaii, United States

Kingman Airport
Arizona, United States

LaGuardia Airport
New York, United States

Lemnos (Limnos) Hephaestus Airport
Greece

Old Port Columbus Airport
Ohio, United States

Paris-Le Bourget Airport
France

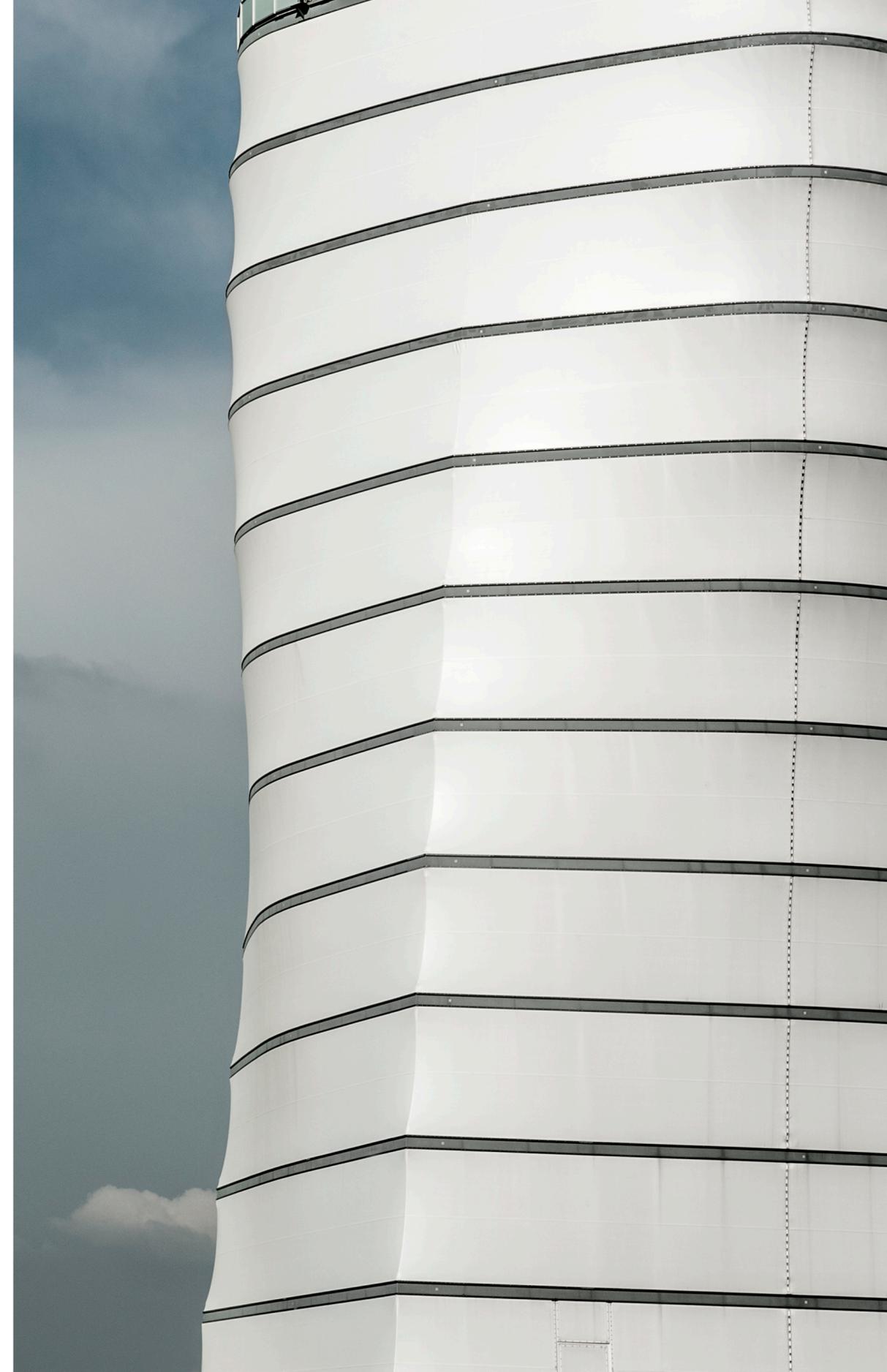
Torslanda Airport
Sweden

Turnhouse-Edinburgh Airport
Scotland, United Kingdom

Washington Dulles International Airport
Virginia, United States

Wichita Municipal Airport-Kansas Aviation Museum
Kansas, United States

Wittman Regional Airport
Wisconsin, United States





EXHIBITION COMPONENTS

COMPONENTS

- 50 large-format framed photographs
- 50 text labels to accompany each photograph describing the airport history and / or tower description
- Six text panels / essays

SUPPLEMENTS

- Educational activity material developed by NASM Education Department
- Art of the Airport Tower book publication (Smithsonian Press, 2015)

SPECIFICATIONS

SPACE REQUIRED:

234 Running Linear Feet
71.32 m.

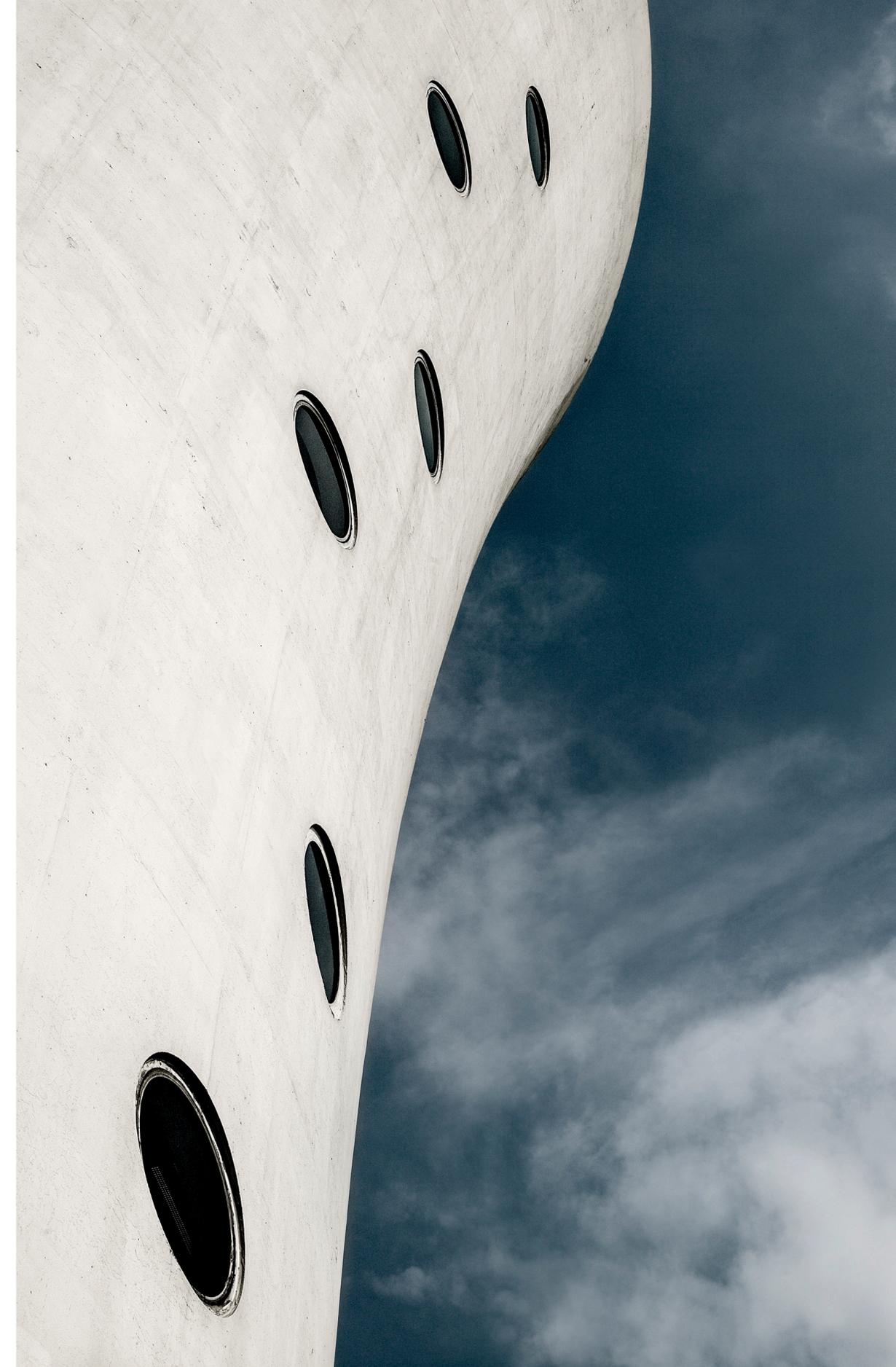
FREIGHT:

- One (1) climate-controlled trailer

“I believe that architecture is a pragmatic art. To become art it must be built on a foundation of necessity.”

— **I. M. Pei,**
architect

LaGuardia's Art Deco Marine Air Terminal is one of the oldest terminals in the United States. Designed by William Delano under the New Deal Work Projects Administration, it opened in 1940. The 1964 tower was designed by Wallace K. Harrison, famous for his 1939 World's Fair sculptures, Rockefeller Center, Lincoln Center, and the United Nations headquarters. The New York Times referred to the whimsically designed tower as "a design for a giant ice cream cone." In 2010 a new tower superseded the old one. The upper section of the original 46 meter (150 foot) tower was removed because it obstructed the new tower's view.



TOUR AVAILABILITY

2025 - January 2026,
June 2026 and Beyond
Inquire for availability

The airport tower has come to symbolize and define each airport, each community, and even each country.

Art of the Airport Tower brings a heightened awareness to the architectural beauty and historical significance of these structures.





BIOGRAPHY

Photographer and Curator, CAROLYN RUSSO, has been a photographer and museum specialist at the National Air and Space Museum since 1988. Her previous publications include *In Plane View: Abstractions of Flight* (powerHouse Books, 2007), *Artifacts of Flight* (Harry N. Abrams, 2003), and *Women and Flight: Portraits of Contemporary Women Pilots* (Bulfinch Press, 1997). Her photographs have been widely exhibited in both solo and group exhibitions in the United States, Finland, and China.



Smithsonian
National Air and Space Museum

The Smithsonian Institution's collection of aviation-related artifacts began with a gift of kites from the Chinese government in 1876. During the subsequent years, the collection grew in direct proportion to the increasing number of advances in aviation, aeronautical engineering, and space flight. Today, the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C., has become one of the most popular museums in the world, hosting more than 200 million visitors since it opened in 1976. The Museum's Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center in Chantilly, Virginia, which opened in December 2003, displays many more artifacts.

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Art of the Airport Tower is a traveling exhibition by The Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum and toured internationally by Flying Fish.

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