

Honouring the best in Singapore design

Nine projects, including futuristic pavilion and insulated shelter, and two designers win President's Design Award



Mr Hans Tan, founder of Hans Tan Studio, is one of the two Designer of the Year winners.



DP Architects' chief executive Angelene Chan is the other Designer of the Year recipient.

Toh Wen Li

An insulated shelter for homeless families, a futuristic pavilion, and an elevated pedestrian walkway winding 19km through Fuzhou are among the projects that have bagged Singapore's most prestigious accolade for design this year.

The President's Design Award, conferred by President Halimah Yacob at the Istana yesterday, is jointly handed out by the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) and DesignSingapore Council.

This year, it recognised nine Designs of the Year and two Designers of the Year – Mr Hans Tan, founder of Hans Tan Studio, and DP Architects' chief executive Angelene Chan.

Four of this year's winning designs are architectural projects: Mediacorp Campus by Maki & Associates and DP Architects; Oasia Hotel Downtown by Woha Architects; China Fuzhou Jin Niu Shan Trans-urban Connector (Fudao) by Look Architects; and The Tembusu condominium by Arc Studio Architecture + Urbanism.

The others are Changi Airport Terminal 4 by Changi Airport Group; The Future of Us Pavilion by the Singapore University of Technology and Design; The Warehouse Hotel by Asylum Creative; insulated shelter weatherHyde by billionBricks; and the Who Cares? Transforming the Caregiving Experience in Singapore project by design consultancy fuelfor and the National Council of Social Service.

The President's Design Award was established in 2006. Previously an annual affair, it was recently relaunched as a biennial award.

The Design of the Year award now places greater emphasis on the economic, social and cultural impact of design – how it can improve productivity, raise the quality of life, connect communities, and advance the design industry

and the role of the designer.

Mr Tan, 38, who is also assistant professor at the National University of Singapore's division of industrial design, mused: "What is Singapore design? Something that is designed by a Singaporean."

"Perhaps in Singapore, being extremely young and transitory, it's not about having a fixed pattern," he added, with a nod to his white "Singapore Blue" porcelain vase that invites people to draw their own designs on it with a blue marker pen.

Mr Prasoon Kumar, the 41-year-old co-founder of non-profit billionBricks, was inspired to create the weatherHyde tents after the 2013 communal riots in India left 50,000 homeless.

"We want to make it into a movement, to bring people together to think about global problems, and use design as a way to solve them."

The President's Design Award recipients were chosen from 24 eligible entries for the Designer of the Year award, and 107 eligible entries for Design of the Year.

A multidisciplinary jury panel – a first in the award's history – evaluated the non-architectural entries.

The 17 local and international jurors, who are leaders in design, business and architecture, also commended Light Collab partner Toh Yah Li for her work in lighting design.

Mr Mark Wee, DesignSingapore Council's executive director, said this year's winners "represent what we advocate for design in Singapore – an exceptional form of human-centric creativity that goes far beyond aesthetics".

Mr Larry Ng, URA's group director for architecture and urban design excellence, said of the architectural recipients: "We applaud their celebration of community and greenery in ways that are also respectful to the projects' contexts."

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The Future of Us Pavilion by the Singapore University of Technology and Design, one of nine Design of the Year award winners, became a permanent landmark at Gardens by the Bay last year and plays host to festivals and other events. PHOTO: KOH SZE KIAT/ ODDINARY STUDIOS



Mr Prasoon Kumar, co-founder of billionBricks, was inspired to create the insulated weatherHyde tents following the 2013 communal riots in India, which left 50,000 people homeless. ST PHOTO: ALPHONSUS CHERN



China Fuzhou Jin Niu Shan Trans-urban Connector (Fudao), by Look Architects, is an elevated pedestrian walkway winding 19km through Fuzhou in Fujian province. PHOTO: ZHOU YUE DONG