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Design of the Year award goes to 13 projects here

They include a building in Sungei Kadut and a mask that keeps out the haze

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DESIGNERS OF THE YEAR: (From left) Architect Siew Man Kok and landscape architects Franklin Po and Colin Okashimo were honoured for their creativity and achievements demonstrated by a sustained body of work. PHOTO: DESMOND WEE/THE STRAITS TIMES

President's Design Award 2015 recipients

Singapore

A BRIGHT yellow building is not something you would expect to see in the Sungei Kadut industrial area, which is why when the building was under construction, it drew many curious folk.

Some wondered if a hotel was opening in the area, or perhaps a shopping mall, but no. The outstanding building, in all senses of the word, is the Sunray Woodcraft Construction Headquarters.

The building, designed by DP Architects, is one of the projects that won the Design of the Year award at this year's President's Design Award.

Now in its 10th year, the annual award is Singapore's highest honour accorded to designers and designs from all design disciplines. It is administered by the DesignSingapore Council and the Urban Redevelopment Authority.

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Of the 111 eligible nominations, 13 projects received the Design of the Year award, which recognises the national significance and creative value to Singapore of projects or products in any design discipline.

In addition, there is the Designer of the Year award, given to designers or design teams for their creativity and achievements demonstrated by a sustained body of work. This year's Designers of the Year are accredited landscape architects Colin K Okashimo of Colin K Okashimo and Associates and Franklin Po of Tierra Design, together with architect Siew Man Kok, founding director of MKPL Architects.

President Tony Tan Keng Yam handed out the awards at a ceremony on Dec 11 at the Istana.

Angelene Chan, DP Architects' deputy CEO and lead project architect, said of the Sungei Kadut building: "It is a striking design statement that embodies the efficiency and pride Sunray has in its craft."

Sunray Woodcraft Construction Headquarters has a stacked box design creating interconnected volumes. The development houses a factory, warehouse, showroom and workers' dormitory. The use of yellow is a nod to the company's corporate colour and name.

Ms Chan added: "It raises the bar for similar developments in the surrounding Sungei Kadut area."

And if you had used an Air+ Smart Mask during the hazy months earlier this year, you would have been using an award-winning product too.

The AIR+ Smart Mask and Micro-Ventilator was designed by Innosparks Pte Ltd, a subsidiary of ST Engineering, in collaboration with local firm STUCK Design.

The team at Innosparks researched the breathing patterns of individuals and the airflow dynamics that occur within masks when they are worn. The engineers measured the face sizes of Asian adults and children and the various shapes were modelled on computers and then run through mathematical simulations.

Using 3D printing technology, the team designed prototypes in varying shapes and sizes that could fit a wider range of face profiles. Once the most feasible mask designs were achieved, actual fit tests were conducted on adults and children. The result was a truly differentiated product that offers mask sizes in small, medium and large sizes to fit typical Asian face profiles.

When paired with the Micro Ventilator, the AIR+ Smart Mask eliminates the unpleasant build-up of heat, moisture and carbon dioxide after prolonged use that has hitherto bedevilled conventional masks.

Project lead Jerome Lee of Innosparks said that "the AIR+ Smart Mask is innovation in action. We have arrived at an elegant solution to close the gap in today's protective masks and make a difference in people's lives."

Meanwhile, primary school pupils Renn and Aira Lim could well be the youngest recipients in the award's history. The brother and sister duo - he's 12 while she is nine - together with their parents Pann and Claire publish their own family magazine, the RUBBISH FAMzine series.

RUBBISH has won rave reviews from the magazine industry overseas but that hasn't gone to the heads of the children. When the jury panel asked Aira why the family submitted RUBBISH for the award, her reply was simply: "I don't know much about awards. I don't understand them, but I enjoy doing what we do and I enjoy when my family is together."

The jury was won over not only by the family's way of showing how they bond creatively but also by the effort that goes into each issue such as its latest where the magazine is placed in a traditional biscuit tin that is used as a time capsule of sorts.

This year's recipients for good design also include familiar spaces such as the newly opened National Gallery Singapore and Library@Orchard.

Singaporeans would be familiar with landscape architect Franklin Po's work which includes the green wall at Changi international Airport's Terminal 3 and the lush greenery at Parkroyal on Pickering hotel. Fellow landscape architect Colin Okashimo's works include private residences as well as hotels such as the Sofitel Sukhumvit Hotel in Bangkok and Halveli Island Resort in the Maldives.

Architect Siew Man Kok, whose projects include the HortPark Visitor Centre and several condominiums, won over the jury with his consistency in the exploration of embracing local climate and topicality.

An exhibition of the President's Design Award 2015 will be held at the National Gallery Singapore from Dec 14 to Jan 3, the URA Centre from Jan 5 to 31 and at the National Design Centre from Feb 2 to 29. Admission is free.

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