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# 3 Architects Win President's Designer of the Year Award in Singapore



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by Eric Oh

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The President's Design Award, which honours Singapore designs and designers, has named its three Designers of the Year for 2015. Dr. Colin K. Okashimo (sculptor and landscape architect), Mr. Franklin Po (Principal of landscape architecture practice Tierra Design) and Mr. Siew Man Kok (co-founder of MKPL Architects) were selected from 111 nominations by a 14-member panel, which included British architect Richard Rogers.

MKPL Architects, Siew Man Kok's firm, celebrates its 20th anniversary this year. Having won the President's Design of the Year award in 2014 for their project Kent Vale, the office has been enjoying time in the limelight for its detail-oriented projects. Founded in 1995, Mr. Siew Man Kok was motivated by his desire to focus on the smaller details of his projects.

"Those were the days of the industry. Most architects were looking at only the big details," he told The Straits Times. "The mantra then for most practices was that an architect could not be so detailed because the fees they were paid were not sustainable."

Tierra Design, the Landscape architecture office of Franklin Po, has had significant projects across the world. The landscape masterplan at Changi Airport Terminal 3 in Singapore and Parkroyal on Pickering are just a few of the high-profile projects that they've completed. With a diverse history, including medical degrees and accreditation as an architect, Franklin Po has a holistic approach to design

"There's no difference between a landscape architect and architect," he said. "Both should blend and give you a product that looks like it came from the mind of one person."

Sculptor and landscape architect Colin K. Okashimo is being recognized for his sensitivity to projects. Typically he meditates on-site after accepting a job. "I'm trying to understand the site at a different level and to develop a sensitivity towards what I believe exists in every place, a state of calm that we should respect as we make an intervention into it," he said. "I do it with the idea that I'm going to experience the nuances of the site and develop an intuition I would later use as part of a criterion when I'm designing the property. Whether it's a resort or a high-rise residential project, there's something to understand at a deeper level."

Read more about the winners and their work here.

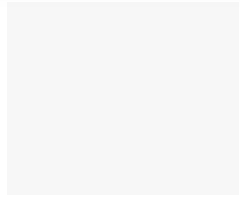
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Eric Oh
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