

## THE DESIGN PRIZE

Another Design Award?

Yes. Unlike any other, it is the crowd-sourcing of nominations and fluid award categories that make THE DESIGN PRIZE stand apart as an initiative built by and for the creative backstage. THE DESIGN PRIZE was co-founded by **Abitare Magazine** and **Designboom**, and is an international award: although intrinsically linked to the city of Milan — the global epicentre of design.

THE DESIGN PRIZE goes behind the scenes of the industry, recognizing design culture 'from within' by consulting a broad network of creative practitioners on which projects, initiatives, concepts and accomplishments — **realized over the past 12 months** — most deserve to be honored. A network of **over 150 acclaimed professionals** presented a 'longlist' of more than **750 nominations**. Experts in their respective fields, these voices combine to create an essential litmus test of the industry at large.

This network, in the recently concluded selection process, included such vital creative figures as **Baranowitz Kronenberg** (architects, Israel), **Barber & Osgerby** (designers, UK), **Fernando & Humberto Campana** (designers, Brazil), **Claesson Koivisto Rune** (architects, Sweden), **Matali Crasset** (designer, France), **Guta Moura Guedes** (ExperimentaDesign, Portugal), **Massimiliano and Dorians Fuksas** (architects, Italy), **Ron Gilad** (artist/designer, Israel), **Richard Hutten** (designer, The Netherlands), **Deniz Ova + Bahar Turkay** (Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts, Turkey), **Marcio Kogan** (Studio mk27, Brazil), **Jin Kuramoto** (designer, Japan), **Daniel Libeskind** (architect, USA), **Alberto Meda** (designer, Italy), **Jasper Morrison** (designer, UK), **Jo Nagasaka** (architect, Japan), **Nina Yashar** (Galleria Nilufar, Milano, Italy), and **Carlo Ratti** (MIT Senseable City Lab, USA).

Their selections are then distributed across 10 distinct categories, flexible in their definitions and open to interpretation.

**Social Impact** (Public Spaces, Infrastructure)  
**Distribution** (Retail, Packaging and Shop Design)  
**Communication** (Advertising and Branding)  
**Artistic Realm** (Limited Editions)  
**Exhibition** (Concept and Spatial Design)  
**Experimentation** (Research, Education, Labs)  
**Design Curator and Design Critic** (Design Events, Design Weeks)  
**Best Design Newcomer**  
**Best Designer**  
**Lifetime Achievement**

Once a short list is assembled, the final winners are chosen by an esteemed panels of judges that includes both internal and external examiners. Whittling the list down to just a handful of prospective winners, this jury pinpoints the architects, artists, engineers, designers, artists, curators and creators that made the biggest splash over the past year. It's a tough job, so to keep it fresh this committee changes every year, promising an ever alternating line-up of perspectives and positions. In 2017 this team included:

### Internal Panel

**Silvia Botti** (editor-in-chief of Abitare, Italy)  
**Birgit Lohmann** (editor-in-chief of Designboom, Italy)  
**Cristina Tajani** (Councillor for Employment Policy, Economic Development, University and Research at the Municipality of Milan, Italy)

### International External Panel

**Alexandra Cunningham Cameron** (design curator, Design District Miami, USA)  
**Ingeborg de Roode** (industrial design curator, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, The

Netherlands)

**Maria Cristina Didero** (independent design curator, Italy)

Antón García-Abril + Débora Mesa of **Ensamble Studio** (Spanish land art/ architecture, Spain)

**Ma Yansong** (founder of MAD Architects, China)

**Jeffrey Schnapp** (founder and director of metaLAB Harvard, USA).

### THE DESIGN PRIZE CERIMONY on April 4, 2017

At this year's ceremony, the winners took to the stage of the beautiful Gerolamo Theater in Milan to accept their golden statuettes, a limited edition artwork, a contemporary version of one of Milan's greatest symbols — the Madonnina. The prize sculpture (created from a series of interconnecting slats) was presented on the night to 11 recipients of THE DESIGN PRIZE 2017.

Winners included **Ravi Naidoo's Design Indaba Conference** Initiative in Cape Town, South Africa and the **Better Shelter Refugee Project**, a durable, easy to construct dwelling with a life-span far beyond that of conventional means of emergency relief - a collaboration with UNHCR, funded by the IKEA Foundation. On behalf of Better Shelter, IKEA's head of design Marcus Engman received the statuette, customized in a humorously flat-packed version.

The prize for Social Impact went to **Christo and Jean Claude's Floating Piers**, an immense project which saw the islands of Italy's Lake Iseo bridged by vast golden paths, completely free and open to the public. The project was first conceived in 1970 and finally realized in 2016. The 3km long walkway engaged with its huge audience (over 1.5 million visitors) in an original and daring way.

In the Experimentation and Research category the Danish-Icelandic artist **Olafur Eliasson** has been awarded for the 'Little Sun Diamond'. The new solar-charged crystalline lamp is part of the 'Little Sun' research project of how sustainable energy can change people's lives now. For each unit sold in a market with electricity, Little Sun sells a similar product in communities without electricity worldwide at an locally affordable price. THE DESIGN PRIZE is the first official recognition for 'Little Sun Diamond' and unable to attend the gala ceremony, Eliasson sent THE DESIGN PRIZE a short video of thanks stating how happy and proud he was to receive the award, and urging attendees to promote social change through this new product.

Meanwhile, the DESIGN PRIZE for Lifetime Achievement went to **Marc Newson**, to prove that it is a long process, but you don't need to be over 65 to be considered a pioneer in your career.

Here is the full list of Nominations and Winners:

### THE DESIGN PRIZE NOMINEES, 2017 (winners bolded)

#### 01. Social Impact

Paper Partition System by Shigeru Ban Architects (Japan)

Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture by Adjaye Associates (UK)

## **Floating Piers by Christo and Jean Claude (Bulgaria & France)**

Bulgarian born Christo and French born Jeanne Claude's 'Floating Piers' left a giant yellow stamp on our memory of 2016. Like veins of gold travelling across the natural landscape, the project was first conceived in 1970 and finally realized in 2016, connecting land, sea and sky in a monumental intersection of art and earth.

### 02. Distribution

Aesop Stores (worldwide)

RED valentino by India Mahdavi (France)

**VALEXTRA Pop-up Intervention Flagship Store Milan by Snarkitecture (USA)**

Juxtaposing hard architectural surfaces with tenderly arranged billows of white mesh, US based Snarkitecture's surreal pop-up intervention for VALEXTRA's Milan flagship reduced and simplified the concept of a traditional retail environment. Exploring the relationship between product, art and architecture, the design blurred the line between one surface and the next, creating an immersive and filmic stage from which to showcase the brand's latest collection.

### 03. Communication

Céline's Spring/Summer 2016 Ad Campaign by Juergen Teller (Germany)

**Design Indaba by Ravi Naidoo (South Africa)**

**The Better Shelter Refugee Project in collaboration with UNHCR and the IKEA Foundation (Sweden)**

This category saw two ex-equo winners: Ravi Naidoo for Design Indaba and the Better Shelter Refugee Project (a collaboration with UNHCR, funded by the IKEA foundation).

The Cape Town-based annual Design Indaba festival was created by Ravi Naidoo in 1995 with a focus on African and global creativity. Still under the direction of Naidoo, 2016 saw an external curator join the team, the Senegalese fashion designer Selly Raby Kane. Naidoo's Design Indaba has, since its inception, changed the way we perceive design fairs and creative events and has cemented in our minds the momentous significance of African art in the world today.

The Better Shelter Refugee Project was founded in Hällefors, Sweden in 2010. Today, the project responds in an original and unhesitating way to the crisis of our time, by granting safe, comfortable and sustainable dwellings to the displaced. The flat-packed prefabs are assembled in only four hours and can last up to three years (six times longer than an typical emergency tent).

### 03. Artistic Realm

**The Speed of Light at Design District Miami by Philippe Malouin (Canada/UK)**

Bethan Laura Wood (UK)

Didier Faustino with Cosmogonie for Hermès' 'Haute Bijouterie' collection « HB-IV Continuum » (France)

Both kinetic and meditative, Canadian-born Philippe Malouin's 'The Speed of Light' guides

a glowing LED orb along a meter high rail in the heart of Miami's design district. Malouin plays with our perceptions of conventional urban architecture, turning something as innocuous as the humble street light on its head and suggesting new ways of approaching designs thought for years to be unshakeable. Present on the night to accept his award, Malouin blurs the line between performance and purpose, function and form.

#### 04. Exhibition

Biennale Venezia 'Reporting from the Front' by Alejandro Aravena (Chile)

Design Anatomy exhibition by Taku Satoh of 21\_21 Design Sight (Japan)

**The MAAT Lisbon by Amada Levete/AL\_A Architecture** (UK)

Sitting on the banks of Lisbon's Tagus river, The MAAT (museum of art, architecture and technology) opened its doors in 2016 to become Portugal's new home of contemporary culture. behind the design is London-based AL\_A Architecture and Design Studio — founded in 2009 by Amanda Levete (who was present to receive the award) and directors Ho-Yin Ng, Alice Dietsch and Maximiliano Arrocet. Clad in a dynamic tiled façade that reflects the surrounding landscape, its gently sloping form acts as a seamless continuation of the existing promenade and is set to play host to a range of exciting exhibitions over the coming years.

#### 05. Experimentation

Dirty Art Department Education Program for Design and Applied Art (The Netherlands)  
Formafantasma (Andrea Trimarchi and Simone Farresin) for objects and installations that exploit geometry, colour and shadow (Italy/The Netherlands)

**Olafur Eliasson for 'Little Sun' and 'Little Sun Diamond'** (Iceland/Denmark)

Founded in 2012 by Danish-Icelandic artist Olafur Eliasson (who was accepted his award through a short video of thanks) and South African engineer Frederick Ottesen, the Little Sun project has, for over 5 years, been providing energy to communities without electricity worldwide — a figure which now comes to more than 1.1 billion people. Originally founded to realize a solar powered lamp, the project has since expanded into a full range of solar products, each new idea experimenting with how sustainable energy can change people's lives now. The project's most recent creation — completed in 2016 — is the 'little sun diamond', a crystalline lamp that can provide up to four hours of illumination. With both a directed reading light and a more ambient light setting, the diamond acts as a more mature iteration of its colorful predecessors. THE DESIGN PRIZE is the first award that this new project has received.

#### 06. Design Curator/Design Critic

**Aric Chen, Design and Architecture Curator of M+ Museum, Hong Kong** (China)

Alice Rawsthorn (UK)

Andreas Angelidakis (Greece)

Once the creative director of Beijing Design Week, Chen has written for the New York Times, Monocle, Wallpaper\*, Surface and PIN-UP, and was present on the night to receive his award. Chen's inaugural design exhibition for M+ — 'Shifting Objectives' — took an involved look at the history of asian design within a global context, while simultaneously examining the state of the industry in 2016 and beyond.

## 07. Best Design Newcomer

Zaven (Italy)

**Muller Van Severen** (Belgium)

Faye Toogood (UK)

Muller Van Severen's offbeat approach to furniture involves employing primitive forms and basic materials, but activating them with original and contemporary functions. With backgrounds of sculpture and photography respectively, Belgian husband and wife duo Hannes Van Severen and Fien Muller (who were both present to accept their award) gained international attention in 2016 with their material driven, minimalist furniture collections of sculptural wire displayed at the Biennale Interieur Kortrijk.

## 08. Best Designer

**Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec** (France)

Yves Béhar (Switzerland)

Michael Anastassiades (UK)

Needing no introduction, the Bouroullec Brothers were present at the Gerolamo Theatre to accept this year's DESIGN PRIZE for Best Designer. Constantly interpreting and reinterpreting the world around them, the Paris-based Bouroullec brothers' much loved work has more than earned them this award, most notably their 2016 installation 'Rêveries Urbaines/Urban Daydreaming' at the Vitra Fire Station in Weil am Rhein, where they have been exploring better ways for nature and cities to interact.

## 09. Lifetime Achievement

Naoto Fukasawa (Japan)

Konstantin Grcic (Germany)

**Marc Newson** (Australia)

Marc Newson approaches design as an experimental exercise in extreme structure and advanced technologies, combined with a highly tactile and exacting exploration of materials, processes, and skills. In the past, his work has included body jets, aircraft interiors, cars, he re-designed the Beretta Woodbridge shotgun, photo cameras, watches, footwear, luggage, a boat for Riva and a fountain pen for Montblanc. In a world where the distinction between art and design are becoming increasingly blurred, Newson is a trailblazer, pursuing parallel activities in exclusive and mass production for more than twenty years. Newson currently lives and works in London.

## **THE DESIGN PRIZE GALA CEREMONY**

The official DESIGN PRIZE ceremony takes place each year in the heart of Milan, coinciding with the city's monumental design week. In 2017, the invite-only gala event was hosted at 10pm on April 4th in the beautiful **Gerolamo Theatre**. Designed in 1868, the stunning building was constructed with the intent of reproducing on a smaller scale the famous Milanese Scala Theater. This jewel among the city's monuments closed in 1983 and today — 33 years later — has opened its doors again after a long refurbishment.

Here, essential figures in the fields of architecture, art, design and the creative industries

came together under one roof to celebrate the inaugural edition of the event. Guests took to the red carpet, enjoying a champagne reception courtesy of **Veuve Clicquot**. The ceremony itself was hosted by **Giacomo Nicolella Maschietti** and **Holly Mumford** and streamed live to the world. Live music by Detroit-based sound designer **Amp Fiddler**. Production was managed by **PRY**.

## **THE DESIGN PRIZE STATUETTE**

Each year, THE DESIGN PRIZE statuette takes on a new shape, every subsequent version adding to an ongoing artistic embodiment of the city of Milan. For each iteration of the awards, we approach an artist, designer or architect to reinterpret a Milanese symbol/landmark into a limited edition statuette. For THE DESIGN PRIZE 2017, the golden Madonnina, symbolizing the pinnacle of excellence, has been designed and conceived by banker-turned-artist and philanthropist Vasily Klyukin. The Russian creative has envisioned a structure of 10 stainless steel pieces that intersect to create the three dimensional form of the true Milanese icon.

## **THE DESIGN PRIZE is energized by EDISON**

When it comes to the development and promotion of smart cities and homes, Edison is an experienced and well-equipped partner. The company employs its unique knowledge and know-how — developed over 130 years of activity in the energy sector — in collaborative projects with architects and designers that look to creating a sustainable future.

The solutions, business models and technologies proposed by Edison to its clients and partners are designed and developed in response to their specific needs, resulting in tailor-made energy systems that aim to improve and simplify the lives of people worldwide.

In addition to this, Edison actively develops relations with cultural foundations and think tanks, both in Italy and abroad. Through close collaboration with architects and designers, it identifies and proposes opportunities for energy efficient architecture and is actively engaged in the debate on sustainable energy through research centres and advisory boards.