

Nippon Paint

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Regional winners bested by M'sian

BEST CONCEPT: UTM student tops 8th Nippon Paint Young Designer Award

TAN Kwon Chong from Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) emerged as the overall regional winner in the Architectural Category of the Nippon Paint Young Designer Award (NPYDA) 2015, after an intense grand finale round in Bangkok.

He beat 11 other young designers who had won in their respective home countries in Asia.

Tan's winning concept was entitled Evolving Nature: Eco-learning Market Centre based on the theme, Design with Heart: For a Sustainable Future, With People in Mind.

"I'm truly honoured with this win. The theme had prompted me to think about how I can give back to society by way of a design concept that will benefit people from all walks of life," he said.

"It is my wish to encourage all young designers to embrace the essence of having people and environment in mind in their architectural ideations."

Tan's architectural design is based on his vision to give back to the people and the natural environment at Pontian Kechil, a fishing village in Johor, where he grew up.

Infusing elements of human and ecology interactions, reflecting the site's history and purpose and blending architectural concepts with its natural surroundings, Tan's Eco-learning Market Centre would be a sustainable recreational park

with the ability to maintain the nature of its surrounding, promote community engagement as well as educate the public on the traditional living culture of the fishing village.

In the Interior Design Category, Singaporean Soo Chunn Herr took home the regional award with his Equine: Engage, Experience & Evolve design which focuses on making the island's Bukit Timah a lifestyle destination for families to reconnect through various interactions like providing therapy for the disabled and elderly, and facilitating the rehabilitation or recovery of retired horses and ponies.

Commenting on the wins, NIPSEA Group chief executive officer Wee Siew Kim said: "It is not a walk in a park to emerge as Asia-wide champions. It takes a form of symbiosis for the artist and

his art to speak the same tune, for the artist to present his art like an extension of himself."

One of Asia's premier design competitions for interior design and architecture students, the NPYDA was first introduced in Malaysia in 2008 and has witnessed increased popularity year after year, growing from just 87 entries in its first year to more than 3,000 entries last year. Apart from Malaysia and Singapore, the competition was also held in Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia, Vietnam, Hong Kong, China, Japan, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Papua New Guinea.

For its 9th instalment this year, NPYDA will be extended to three more countries, namely Sri Lanka, India and Taiwan, and will henceforth be known as Asia Young Designer Award (AYDA).



1. Tan Kwon Chong (left) and Soo Chunn Herr 2. Aspiring architects and interior designers at the NPYDA Bangkok Learning Programme coaching session 3. Regional speakers and participants at the NPYDA Bangkok Learning Programme 4. From left) Amrita Lughaloon, Savina Higgs NIPSEA Group chief executive officer Wee Siew Kim, Nippon Paint Malaysia Bhd managing director Yaw Seng Heng, Paul Naritaka Tonge, and Nippon Paint Decorative Coatings (Thailand) general manager Chalermping Mahavandivong pose during the NPYDA Bangkok Learning Programme.