

Nippon Paint

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Village boy bags Asian architectural award



Tan celebrates his win with (from left) Noritaka, Thailand Architect Council president Jedkamchorn Phromyothi, Chulalongkorn University architecture faculty vice dean Sarayut Supsook, Nippon Paint Malaysia group general manager Gladys Goh and Thailand Nippon Paint decorative coatings general manager Chalermpong Mahavanidvong.

UNIVERSITI Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) student Tan Kwok Chong emerged as the overall regional winner for the Architectural category at the Nippon Paint Young Designer Award recently.

Tan, who beat 11 other participants from several Asian countries during the final in Bangkok, clinched the title thanks to his concept 'Evolving Nature: Eco-learning Market Centre'.

Themed 'Design with Heart', Tan said: "For a sustainable future with people in mind, I worked around the idea of how I can contribute to society through design."

"I would like to encourage young designers to be passionate and embrace the essence of 'having people and environment

in mind' in their architectural ideations." Tan's design was based on his vision of his hometown Pontian Kechil, a fishing village in Johor.

Infusing elements of human and ecology interactions, reflecting the site's history and blending architectural concepts with its surroundings, Tan's Eco-learning Market Centre serves as a sustainable recreational park that promotes community engagement as well as educate the public on the village culture.

As for the Interior Design category, Singaporean Soo Chunn Herr took home the regional award with the 'Equine: Engage, Experience & Evolve' design.

It focuses on a lifestyle destination in

Bukit Timah, Singapore, which features various facilities including therapy for the disabled and elderly as well as a rehabilitation centre for horses.

Nippon Paint Southeast Asia group chief executive officer Wee Siew Kim said: "This award requires 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."

Three architectural and interior design industry captains — Paul Noritaka Tange (Japan), Serina Hijjas (Malaysia) and Amata Lumphaiboon (Thailand) — shared their insights with designers in conjunction with the final's Regional Learning Programme.

The award, introduced in Malaysia in

2008, has garnered positive response — from just 87 entries in its first year to more than 3,000 entries last year.

The competition is spread across 12 Asian countries, namely Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia, Vietnam, Hong Kong, China, Japan, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Papua New Guinea.

Sri Lanka, India and Taiwan will make their debut at this year's competition, which has been rebranded the 'Asia Young Designer Award'.

"The competition will continue to push the boundaries in terms of design and colour innovations as well as talent creation," Wee said.