

Nippon Paint

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Winning architecture prize for M'sia

Young designer from UTM beats 11 others from around Asia to take home regional award

THE Nippon Paint Young Designer Award (NPYDA) 2015 saw youths from around the Asian region being acknowledged for their talents.

Tan Kwon Chong from Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) emerged as the regional winner for the Architectural category, after an intense round at the grand finale in Bangkok.

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

Tan, with his winning concept entitled "Evolving Nature: Eco-learning Market Centre" said he was honoured with this win.

"The theme 'Design with Heart: For a Sustainable Future: With People in Mind' had indeed prompted me to think about how I can contribute back to society which could benefit people from all walks of life.

"I would like to encourage all the young designers out there to be passionate and embrace the essence of 'having people and environment in mind' in their architectural creations," he said.

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, the place 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, his Eco-learning Market Centre aims to be a sustainable recreational park with the ability to maintain the natural beauty of its surrounding, promote community engagement as well as educate the public on the traditional living culture of the fishing village.

As for the Interior Design Category, Singaporean Soo Chunn Herr took home the regional award with his "Equine: Engage, Experience & Evolve" design that



Overall Regional Winner for Architecture Category Tan (left) and Overall Regional Winner for Interior Design Category Soo with their trophies.

focused on a lifestyle destination in Bukit Timah (Singapore) – for families to reconnect through various interactions – one that provides therapy for the disabled and the elderly as well as one that facilitates the rehabilitation or recovery of retired horses and ponies.

NIPSEA Group chief executive officer Wee Siew Kim congratulated the two regional-level winners, saying it was not a walk in the park to emerge as champions at the Asian level.

"NPYDA's success also lies in the network of industry veterans who share the same passion as Nippon Paint in nurturing the talents of tomorrow.

"The real-work exposure and mentorship that complements their academic pursuit will truly open more doors for their future career, and that would be the vision of this award platform," said Wee.

One of Asia's premier design competitions, NPYDA, saw three renowned captains in the architectural and interior design industry –

Paul Noritaka Tange (Japan), Serina Hijias (Malaysia) and Amata Lupaiboon (Thailand) – share their insights with young designers from 12 countries during its recently-concluded Regional Learning Programme in Bangkok, Thailand.

The NPYDA Bangkok Learning Programme, which was held at the prestigious Chulalongkorn University, kicked off with the keynote speaker Paul Tange, who is also president of Tange Associates and son of renowned architect Kenzo Tange, sharing his insights on various projects around the world and their unique characteristics.

Serina Hijias, a key figure in the area of green architecture and sustainable development, was the second speaker who delivered her thoughts on ensuring designs finding an equilibrium between the built environments with its surrounding finite resources.

She emphasised that a key driver for the future of sustainability was the convergence of nature and



Aspiring architects and interior designers learning at the NPYDA Bangkok Learning Programme coaching session.

technology, and drawing a fine balance between both.

Department of Architecture Co., Bangkok principal Amata Lupaiboon, delivered his sharing session on achieving the desired core design intent through research and inter-relationships within various architectural and nature-based elements, to an audience of over 200 students and industry professionals from across Asia.

A study tour was also organised as the final part of the Bangkok Learning Programme.

The participants experienced a guided tour around Bangkok to visit some of the capital's iconic buildings, one of which was The Grand Palace of Bangkok that boasts a palace complex size of more than 213,676sq m, as well as the Vimanmek Mansion, which is decorated in European neo-classic style with traditional Thai motifs.

The students also had the opportunity to view Wat Ratchanaddaram Temple, best known for Loha Prasat, a multi-tiered structure with 37 metal spires signifying the 37 virtues towards enlightenment, of which the gold-coloured spires were coated with Nippon Paint.

NPYDA was first introduced in Malaysia in 2008, and grew from just 87 entries in its first year to

more than 3,000 entries in 2015. This premier design competition for interior design and architecture students is present across 12 countries in Asia namely Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia, Vietnam, Hong Kong, China, Japan, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Papua New Guinea.

"I trust that the experience gained from the NPYDA's Learning Programme has positively impacted all the young designers from Asia, as it entails a thoughtfully-crafted platform that integrates the experience of industry veterans with the young creative optimism of its participants to provide a platform for real-world learnings and multi-country networking.

"Ultimately, Nippon Paint's interest is in nurturing Asia's next generation of designers whom will further elevate the industry's standards and capabilities.

"For the 2016 instalment, NPYDA will be extended to three additional countries, namely Sri Lanka, India and Taiwan, further firming its foothold as one of Asia's most established design competition.

"To reflect the scale in terms of its reach and stature, Nippon Paint has made a strategic decision to rename the competition as Asia Young Designer Award (AYDA) for its ninth year instalment," concluded Wee.