

Winners Announced in RSA Design Competition

Submitted by: Magnificent PR

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Pushing forward the boundaries of ceramic.

Winners of the 2005 Ceramic Futures Design Direction Awards are to be officially announced on May 20th following entries from a record number of students. The competition run by The Royal Society for the Encouragement of the Arts and Commerce (RSA) in association with the Ceramic Industry Forum, asked entrants to design an "Object of Beauty", which could be manufactured in Bone China and to look for new uses for the ceramic material.

As an additional boost to the design careers of the winning and short-listed students, their final pieces will be exhibited at Selfridges during London Design Festival in September.

The two joint winners, who were each awarded £2500, are Scott Bradford of Northumbria University and Camila Prada of Staffordshire University. Three commended entries included Emma Finch of Bath Spa University, Fiona Alston of Staffordshire University and Charlotte Copping of Central St Martins.

Joint winner Scott Bradford has designed an ingenious heated coat stand, which doubles as a portable room heater. Aimed at style conscious consumers, the Sp>rk coat stand combines function with ornament, taking the form of a tree with stylized shaft and ceramic heated branches for hanging. Its green grass-like base is non-heat conductive, whilst the conductive properties of the ceramic body of the stand form the "top" of the tree. Scott impressed the judges with his understanding of the manipulative qualities of the ceramic material and the product's overall marketability.

Joining Scott as joint winner is Camila Prada with her stunning ceramic vessels can be used in a kitchen as Oil & Vinegar holders, or to hold bath oils and lotions in the bathroom. The judges loved the combination of the beautiful shaping of the white ceramic decanters, which utilized industrial technology, alongside the "found object" bottle stoppers.

Camila explains "I like the idea of combining a turn-of-the-century, low-tech device with contemporary shaping and style. I'm interested in making useful, delightful products with longevity...my goal is contemporary not trendy. I would love to take this idea further by collaborating with a food manufacturer to design high quality ceramic containers, used as packaging."

The three runners-up include Charlotte Copping's unique heated pet sleeping and feeding vessel, Fiona Alston's sculptural spoons and serving items and Emma Finch's lights and wall shades. Other short-listed entries included primary school crockery which encourages the eating of a traditional "meat and two veg" lunch by young children. A mobile phone, garden secateurs, a ceramic stay-sharp razor and digitally printed tiles were also key entrants to this hard fought category.

"The CIF is committed to reinforcing the importance of ceramic design education. By sponsoring the Ceramic Futures Award, we hope to show students that the UK ceramic industry is a vibrant one, that is willing to adopt new designs and ideas in order to succeed. For many designers these awards have opened a whole new avenue of exploration for their work, with the September exhibition providing an international

showcase with potential for career opportunities.” Gavin Pryke (CIF Design Advisor).

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NOTES TO EDITORS:-

For 80 years the RSA (Royal Society for the encouragement of the Arts, Manufacturers and Commerce) has been running student design award schemes to encourage students, from the UK and Europe, to design products with realistic commercial potential, across a wide range of design disciplines. Forging links between industry and education, the CIF sponsored Ceramic Futures category encourages students from ceramic courses (via The Maker & Industry brief) and non-ceramic courses (via No Boundaries brief) to explore the potential of ceramic in new manufacturing techniques and innovation in both material and end use. Penny Egan, Executive Director of the RSA said “The quality of entries this year shows the raw talent and exciting potential of young designers.”

All winning entrants of the RSA Design Directions Awards will be posted on the website www.rsa-design.net from 20th May 2005.

Encouraging links between design courses and industry, the RSA Design Directions Awards sponsors include GlaxoSmithKline, British Airways, John Lewis Partnership, Royal Mail, PDD, Ideal Standard, BBC, Springetts and Australian Wool Innovation. Previous entrants in the competition include Jonathan Ive (Creator of iMac), Andy Clark (Heathrow Express Train) and Betty Jackson (fashion designer).

A DTI funded organization, The Ceramic Industry Forum, based in Stoke on Trent, was created in 2000 to promote, encourage and improve the competitiveness of the UK Ceramic Industry via Design & Marketing, Manufacturing Efficiency and Workforce Training. Backed by the Industry, with an executive board of some of the industry’s senior management, Ceramic Futures is one of eight projects being run under the “Leading By Design” programme which includes schools and industry projects, market intelligence events and seminars. The CIF will be sponsoring the Ceramic Futures Award, as part of the RSA Design Direction Competition, over three years from 2004. www.ceramicindustryforum.co.uk

Judges on this year’s Ceramic Futures panel included Martin Hunt (Queensberry Hunt), Gavin Pryke (CIF), Daniel Csete (ceram.com) Charlotte Abrahams (Freelance Journalist) Keiran Long (Icon Magazine)