

Winners of the Design Foundation Awards 2017 announced

Top South African design leaders were honoured on Saturday, 25 November at the fifth annual Design Foundation Awards, at a ceremony held in Cape Town.



Gregor Jenkin, winner of the Icon Award and winemaker, Rudiger Gretschel. Image credit: Kerry Red.

The 2017 awards signal a fresh approach by the Design Foundation, formerly known as the Southern Guild Design Foundation. Says board member Trevyn McGowan, “With our independent think-tank board representing diverse industries, our aim is to have a foundation that supports the design industry at large – from grassroots and educational levels to manufacture, retail and export. Our partners are seeing the value in supporting local design and growing this multi-layered industry together, as we move it away from its association with a collectible design gallery to be run as an autonomous non-profit foundation.”

Abigail Rands, marketing director of Krone, sponsor of the prestigious Icon Award, won by Gregor Jenkin, says: “Design is at the heart of the way we live and work. We believe it has the ability to change South Africa, and by supporting local design we’re investing in a positive future.”

This win marks the second Icon Award for Jenkin, who was the inaugural recipient in 2012. As this year’s 100% Design South Africa Feature Designer, and with a solo show currently running at Southern Guild, featuring over 20 monumental pieces, 2017 has seen this South African stalwart create bodies of work that have garnered praise worthy of icon status yet again.

M&C Saatchi Abel, known for its extensive collection of South African art, has ventured into the design industry too, sponsoring the Maker to Market Award, won by Robin Sprong. “We believe in creating beautifully simple solutions for an increasingly complex world,” explains creative director Ashraf Majiet. “We call this brutal simplicity of thought and nowhere is that more evident than in great design.” Sprong won the award for the professionalism of his global marketing, consumer interaction and world-class service.

Other winners

Other winners include Thabisa Mjo, founder of Mash T Design, who won the Future Found Award, having already achieved excellence with limited resources in her lighting and furniture design company. She will receive a year of free legal

consultations from intellectual property lawyers Von Seidels. University of Johannesburg 3rd year Industrial Design student, Keitumetse Maake received the Apprentice Award, affording her a 12-month internship with acclaimed furniture designer and maker David Krynauw, himself a past Design Foundation Award winner. The Manufacture Award, sponsored by Bronze Age Studio, was won by Ngwenya Glass, for going beyond expectation to aid designers in realising their products, while the Object That Moves Award, for an original product that has experienced great commercial success, went to Adam Hoets of Willowlamp, who will receive free exhibition space from sponsors 100% Design South Africa in 2018. Sponsored by AfriSign, The Design with Purpose Award, recognising socially responsible work with a focus on design, went to SolarTurtle, a social business that deploys ultra-secure energy kiosks at rural schools to provide basic electrification needs.

The awards were judged by a Design Foundation board sub-committee, after nominations were received from past winners and an external jury of industry insiders that included Cathy O'Clery of Platform Creative Agency, curator and interior designer Tracy Lynch, Tiaan Nagel of House and Leisure, Sumien Brink and Annemarie Meinjies of Visi, and Leigh Robertson and Ntombenhle Shezi of *Elle Decoration*, as well as nominations from tertiary institutions for the Apprentice Award.

With this new wave of support for the industry, and businesses vying to become involved in more meaningful ways with the Design Foundation in 2018, this year's awards are an indication that local design companies have much to celebrate.

Design Foundation Award winners 2017

Icon Award

Winner: Gregor Jenkin

Sponsor: Krone

Awarded in recognition of work produced in the last 12 months, acknowledging outstanding achievement, innovation and career advancement.

Object That Moves Award

Winner: Willowlamp

Sponsor: 100% Design South Africa

Celebrates an original product that has experienced great commercial success – aspirational and top-end, yet commercially viable to sell in multiples.

Maker to Market Award

Winner: Robin Sprong Wallpaper

Sponsor: M&C Saatchi Abel

Awarding a design company that understands the value of marketing, consumer interaction, packaging/service and delivery.

Manufacture Award

Winner: Ngwenya Glass (Chas and Cathy Prettejohn)

Sponsor: Bronze Age Studio

Recognising a manufacturer who has gone beyond expectation to aid designers in realising their products.

Future Found Award

Winner: Thabisa Mjo (Mash.T Design Studio)

Sponsor: Von Seidels

Celebrating a young designer who has already achieved excellence with limited resources.

Apprentice Award

Winner: Keitumetse Maake (University of Johannesburg)

Sponsor: David Krynauw

Awarding the winner a 12-month internship to work alongside this designer, craftsman and manufacturer.

Design With Purpose Award

Winner: SolarTurtle (James van der Walt, Lungelwa Tyali and Charlene Barnes)

Sponsor: AfriSign

Recognising socially responsible work done by a company, within the South African landscape, with a focus on design aspects, that makes a difference in the lives of communities.

Click [here](#) to view images of the event.

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