

Outgoing SAIA president Ruben Reddy describes tenure as one of rebuilding

The South African Institute of Architects (SAIA) will on 10 June officially inaugurate its current president, Ruben Reddy. His tenure not only encompassed Covid-19, but also saw the untimely passing of SAIA CEO Mthembeni Mkhize on 24 July 2021.



SAIA president Ruben Reddy

“The fact that we delayed this inauguration is due to the respect that we all had for this wonderful human. It would have been impossible to celebrate after his passing,” said Reddy.

Describing his tenure as one of rebuilding, Reddy says that both the SAIA management committee and board acted decisively in engaging more openly within and outside the organisation during Covid-19.

The president’s inauguration will be followed by the 2019-2020 Corobrik-SAIA Awards of Merit and Excellence. The awards programme, held biennially, is the highlight of the SAIA calendar, says Reddy: “It is the recognition of the work of our peers and a celebration of our unique talent in South Africa. It is a demonstration of us as leaders in design and thought leaders in the creative industry.”

Architecture not about trends, fashion

Reddy highlights that architecture is not about trends and fashion. “Other creative industries seem to embrace these. Our role in society is to recognise the unique opportunity and challenges of our diverse society and respond with responsibility in all its forms. I would argue ours is a political profession and not just a cultural one.”



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Looking back on his difficult tenure, Reddy concludes: “I have attempted to serve this profession to the best of my ability, providing protection to our members against the constant onslaught from the authorities and industry. We need to continue this struggle without fear and never be afraid to speak truth to power in whatever form it might take.”

The new term of office for elected incoming president Dr Amira Osman commences on 1 July.