

Not to be published before 1 September 2009

PRESS STATEMENT

Design Preis Schweiz 2009

Every two years, the Design Preis Schweiz is awarded by an international panel of judges. This year, it is already being held for the tenth time. As the most important national award, it raises the profile of Swiss design far beyond the local scene. Designers, companies and design students submitted projects and products conceived and brought to fruition over the last two years. The award ceremony is to take place in Langenthal on 6 November 2009. At the same time, an exhibition of the prize-winning submissions and other nominated projects will be opened in the new "depot for design".

Participants

The competition is open to Swiss designers working here or abroad and to foreign designers who are active in Switzerland. Projects that are produced in Switzerland are also permitted.

Prominent companies such as Vitra, Lantal Textiles, Nestlé Schweiz, Jakob Schläpfer and Aebi are represented. The competition also features many renowned Swiss designers and labels, including Atelier Oi, Freitag, Jörg Boner, Fries & Zumbühl, Oskar Zieta and Holzer Kobler Architekturen.

Procedure

The two-stage competition is based on nominations. A group of acknowledged experts invites designers to submit entries. Following this, they view the submitted projects and present the cream of these to the international panel of judges, who then award a maximum of five prizes.

Projects were nominated from the field of Communication Design, Product Design, Furniture Design, Interior Design, Fashion Design and Textile Design. These were divided into three categories: Research, Newcomers and Market and were to be entered in the database of the Design Centre, Langenthal, by 30 April. Over 330 projects were submitted in total, an increase of ten percent on last year. Of these, the nominators recommended 36 projects from which the panel of judges will select the winners. The panel will come together at the exhibition in Langenthal and award prizes from the projects on display.

The judges

Konstantin Grcic, KGID
Martin Heller, Heller Enterprises
Ascan Mergenthaler, Herzog & de Meuron
Jasper Morrison, London
Lars Müller, Lars Müller Publishers
Eugenio Perazza, Magis
Robb Young, London
Daniel Zehntner, Eclat

New developments in 2009

“A good vintage” is the verdict of designer Konstantin Grcic, who is on the panel of judges for the second time. This year saw a ten percent increase in entries. Nonetheless, the nominators recommended fewer projects than two years ago. Konstantin Grcic sees this as an indication of the high quality: “This says a lot for the high standard of the award.” He is suitably satisfied with the projects that were nominated. While the Market category accounted for 70% of last year’s entries compared with only 30% for Newcomers, there was a more or less even split in 2009. Both categories also recorded a similar number of nominations. One clear development is that the Newcomers include a great many young Swiss designers who are establishing themselves abroad or who have already made a name for themselves.

In absolute terms, the overview shows that five projects were submitted for the Communication Design category, eight each for Product, Furniture and Textile Design, four for Interior Design, three for Fashion Design and two for Research. Konstantin Grcic is impressed by the range of this year’s submissions, finding only the Product and Furniture Design categories a disappointment. “Considering the wide variety of materials and production processes currently available, there are only a small number of products that make full use of this potential.” The bar was set high and expectations were correspondingly lofty. Once again, the textile industry – one that is well aware of the importance of research and design for commercial success – was well represented. There were a number of surprises in the area of Communication Design in the form of interesting multi-media designs. Once again, nominations for the Fashion Design and Interior Design categories were small in number but high in quality.

As can be seen from media coverage in previous years, the Design Preis Schweiz is perceived as an award for products that are outstanding in terms of content and design as well as being commercially successful.

Heidi Wenger, curator of the Design Preis Schweiz, was ultimately struck by the visual appeal of the nominated projects: “A very aesthetically pleasing selection and a lovely farewell gift” – after eight years of coordinating the award, 2009 is to be her last time.

Finance

In addition to the Swiss Textile Association (TVS), the main partners of the Design Preis Schweiz are the Zumsteg Foundation and RADO Watches. The award also receives substantial support from the cantons of Berne, Solothurn and Zurich and from Langenthal City Council.

DATES

Presentation of awards

6 November 2009

5 p.m. Vernissage, depot for design, Mühleweg 14, Langenthal

7.00 p.m. Presentation of awards at the Markthalle in Langenthal (public)

8.30 p.m. Dinner at the Markthalle in Langenthal (limited number of seats)

The award ceremony is open to the public and is free of charge.

Admission for dinner: CHF 100/€65 per person, limited number of seats.

Register online at: www.designpreis.ch.

Exhibition

7 November – 20 December 2009

Nominated and prize-winning projects

depot for design, Mühleweg 14, Langenthal.

Opening hours: Wednesday to Sunday, 3.00 to 7.00 p.m.

Publication

A publication will be produced for the exhibition.

This can be ordered online at: www.designpreis.ch

Further information:

Heidi Wegener, Kuratorin Design Preis Schweiz

WCONSULT

Rauchgässli 31

CH-8706 Meilen

Fixnet +41 (0)44 923 53 42

Mobile +41 (0)79 758 12 50

heidi.wegener@wconsult.ch