

This April, the design report award was presented to the Newcomer of the Year in Milan for the tenth time – with prize money of 10,000 Euros in honour of the anniversary. As in previous years, an international jury of experts selected the winner from amongst the participants at the Salone Satellite, the Milan furniture fair's forum for up-and-coming designers. The coveted award went to a Norwegian designer, the three Special Mentions to entrants from Belgium, Germany and Finland.



Mitbegründer und Förderer des design report awards: Nasir Kassamali (links) mit Lars Quadejacob und Organisatorin Juliane Grützner



Jurorenparade: Oskar Zieta, Barbara Schmidt, Giulio Iacchetti und Janne Kytönen (v.l.n.re.)

Report

Wettbewerbe/Events

54

design report award 2009

3/09
design report

■ Normally the sponsors stay in the background during the award ceremony. But in this anniversary year, Lars Quadejacob isn't about to let them get away with such genteel reserve. design report's editor-in-chief has good reason to ask them to step up to the stage and accept his personal thanks for their commitment – which in some cases dates back to the early days of the award. Without the generous support of firms like Axor/Hansgrohe, Richard Lampert, Luminaire, Nils Holger Moormann, Thonet and Vitra there wouldn't be any award and this anniversary ceremony on the afternoon of 23rd April 2009 would not be taking place. And so, hesitantly but visibly full of pride, they step into the spotlight: first Nasir Kassamali, head of US trading company Luminaire, then Rudolf Pütz, managing director of Vitra Germany, followed by Philipp Thonet, Richard Lampert and Nils Holger Moormann.

Asked by Lars Quadejacob why he has supported the award right from the outset, Nasir Kassamali answers: "It's simple. I love good design and want to encourage talent. And when it comes to choosing an outstanding young designer, the Salone Satellite is the best platform in the world." Rudolf Pütz goes on to say: "Young designers can't live on their dreams. We're delighted to be able to give at least a few of them a little money so they can spread their ideas throughout the world."

A little money? To mark the tenth anniversary, the winner of this year's award will pocket no less than 10,000 Euros – twice the usual amount of prize money. No wonder some of the approx. 150 exhibitors at the Salone Satellite crowding round the stage are starting to get sweaty palms. The many retailers, design managers and journalists at the ceremony are also on tenterhooks as they wait for the

winner to be announced. Even Marva Griffin, originator and long-standing organiser of the Salone Satellite, puts her cell phone aside and keeps her eyes fixed firmly on Lars Quadejacob. But before he lets the cat out of the bag, he introduces his fellow jury members: industrial designers Giulio Iacchetti from Italy and Janne Kytönen from Finland, designer and ceramic artist Barbara Schmidt from Germany and Polish architect and designer Oskar Zieta.

Together with Lars Quadejacob, these four experts spent the whole day going from stand to stand to judge the exhibits. They opened drawers, switched lights on, sat on chairs, armchairs and stools and scrutinised smaller items en masse. Again and again, it was obvious that even a thorough examination of a design's formal and functional characteristics is by no means an adequate basis for a well-founded verdict. There are certain usage featu-



Viel beschäftigt, aber stets gut gelaunt: Salone Satellite-Kuratorin Marva Griffin (Mitte).



Seite an Seite: fünf der sechs Förderer des design report awards. Nasir Kassamali, Rudolf Pütz, Philip Thonet, Richard Lampert und Nils Holger Moormann (v.li.n.re.)



Strahlende Gesichter bei den Preisträgern: Raphaël Charles, Daniel Rybakken, Arihiro Miyake und Mark Braun (v.li.n.re.)



Stoßen auf eine gelungene Veranstaltung an: Lars Quadejacob mit Nils Holger Moormann, Rudolf Pütz und Richard Lampert.

res, manufacturing tricks or design details that even the canniest customer won't discover for himself – they have to be explained by a "salesman". At almost every stand, the jurors were provided with convincing evidence that, when it comes to "selling" their own work, today's designers are competent, patient, polyglot salespeople and publicity experts. The product demonstration was inevitably followed by printed or digital handouts to help the jurors refresh their memories later on.

But, at the end of the day, what was it that really stuck in their minds? The sculptural, perfectly crafted chests of drawers "Pour les Alpes" by a group of designers from Zurich. The simple furniture with sheet metal fittings by the Berlin-based "Nachact" team. A design by Britain's Asif Khan, who presented a seat shell made of PU foam as a material study. And, last but not least, the works of

design students from Chicago who, under the heading "Objects for the Age of Obama", had designed an abundance of utility objects with a social-educational touch. "Good – but not good enough" was the jurors' final verdict on the above-mentioned exhibits. It was others who made the running.

"The winner is ... Daniel Rybakken." A lanky Norwegian clad in jeans and a T-shirt steps onto the stage. He smiles as if he'd always known what the outcome would be. In fact, he was the whole jury's favourite right from the start. His lighting object – a mood lifter rather than a room illuminator – is so simple and yet so imaginative that nobody could pass it by. Not even Mark Braun, Raphaël Charles and Arihiro Miyake, whose excellent work was rewarded with Special Mentions.

In the end, they're all smiling: the winners, jurors and sponsors line up for a

group photo against a backdrop that deserves a special mention in its own right: ten posters, each of them advertising the design report award in a different but unfailingly fascinating way. Since 2001, the award's corporate design has been created by Stuttgart-based information design firm Projekttriangle. It will be interesting to see what they come up with next year. One thing is certain: the new emblem will definitely include an "11".

Translation: Allison Du Bovis
www.design-report.de