



VelopA
DesignAward

2008 | 2009
STREET FURNITURE

Press release 12 June 2009

Students competing in international design competition produce fresh and clever ideas for street furniture

Anne Caroline Müller wins first VelopA Design Award with 'Laissez-Faire'

An international expert jury has announced the winners of the VelopA Design Award 2008|2009. The first edition of this competition was contested by students from nine countries throughout Europe, producing a wide range of innovative designs for a seating element in a multifunctional city square. Anne Caroline Müller of the Fachhochschule Niederrhein in

Krefeld (Germany) won first prize with her Laissez-Faire, an elegant, comfortable bench that offers an unlimited range of possible seating positions. Seven other students from Germany, Austria and Belgium were awarded further prizes or honourable mentions, including the Public Prize for which almost 2,000 people voted on www.velopadesignaward.com.



'Design an innovative, yet robust and functional seating element for a modern, multifunctional city square.' This was the challenge for design and architecture students throughout Europe. The reward: cash prizes totalling € 10,000, plus the possibility of their design being taken into production – hence the competition's motto 'Meet your seat on the street'. An international expert jury judged the entries, chose the prizewinners, and nominated eight designs for the Public Prize.

The assignment

The competition's briefing included a description of a typical, modern city square and the various kinds of people who might use it. Students were asked to design an innovative yet comfortable and inviting seating element that would appeal to all groups mentioned. They were also encouraged to incorporate the 'Cradle to Cradle' philosophy, in which every part of a product can easily be disassembled and reused, either in other products or by being biodegradable.

International expert jury

From a total of 172 applications, 43 students from nine different countries made it to the final judging. Their entries were examined by Lars Engman (former Design Manager at IKEA), Dutch designer Gilian Schrofer and German architect and designer Tim Heide, as well as Ton van Klooster and Marc Brunnekreeft of VelopA, a leading Dutch manufacturer of street furniture, which organised and sponsored the competition. The jury was unaware of the students' country of origin, gender, college or university. Entries were assessed on originality, aesthetics, functionality, cost-effectiveness of mass-production, sales potential, and the choice of materials and production methods - in particular, whether these were compatible with Cradle to Cradle principles.

First prize: flying carpet or folded paper?

The jury unanimously awarded first prize to Anne Caroline Müller of the Fachhochschule Niederrhein in Krefeld (Germany), whose design stood out because of its simplicity, humour and conceptual strength. Laissez-Faire is a visually-captivating design, in the words of one juror resembling a "flying carpet", although in fact the design was inspired by a sheet of folded paper. It is very functional, elegant and, as one of few entries, is virtually ready for

production. Runner-up for the first prize but only narrowly losing out was Cyclist by Henriette Gruber from Weimar University in Germany, an elegant design for a combination of park bench and parking facility for bicycles. Third prize went to Pierre by Sam Peeters from Artesis Hogeschool in Antwerp (Belgium), an entry that stood out for its innovative and very well-researched use of materials.

In addition to the prizes awarded by the jury, the general public was invited to vote for the Public Prize (worth € 2,500). The eight entries selected by the expert jury were presented on www.velopadesignaward.com through images and a short video clip in which a jury member commented on the design's strong points. 1957 people visited the website and cast their vote. With 28,5% of the votes, Pierre by Sam Peeters was the runaway winner.

VelopA

As a leading street furniture manufacturer, VelopA wants to contribute to the vision and future of designing outdoor spaces. This first edition of the VelopA Design Award therefore presented students with a real-life design brief. It particularly encouraged students to explore the interaction between street furniture and the surrounding public spaces as good design can make or break the quality of public areas. In addition to initiating the competition, VelopA sponsored the € 10,000 prize money.

Media information

For information, including the jury's report, this press release text and high-resolution images of the winning designs, go to www.velopadesignaward.com. For further questions, please contact:

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ANNE CAROLINE MÜLLER LAISSEZ-FAIRE

Krefeld, Germany Fachhochschule Niederrhein

FIRST PRIZE

Anne Caroline Müller of the Fachhochschule Niederrhein in Krefeld (Germany) was unanimously declared the winner of the 2008-2009 VelopA Design Award for her Laissez-Faire. Her design was inspired by a sheet of folded paper. It's an elegant, comfortable bench that offers an unlimited range of possible seating positions. As one juror noted: "The more you look at it, the more you realise just how well this design was thought through". Anne Caroline wins a cash prize of € 2,500, and VelopA will consider taking Laissez-Faire into production.



HENRIETTE GRUBER CYCLIST

Weimar, Germany Universität Weimar

SECOND PRIZE

Cyclist earned Henriette Gruber from Weimar University in Germany second prize, worth € 1,500. It combines a sofa-like seating element with a place to park up to four bicycles, "a statement to encourage a bicycle-friendly city", according to the designer. The jury found its design elegant, characteristic, and felt Cyclist has great market potential both in its own right and as the starting point for a whole product line.

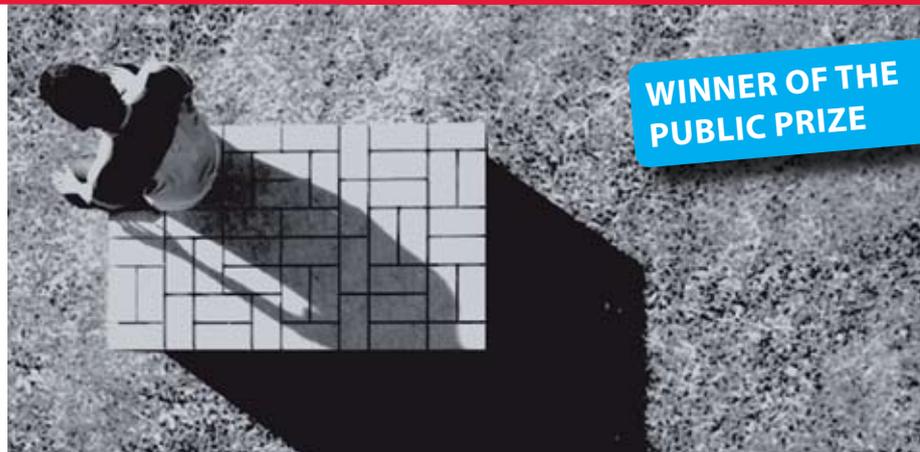


SAM PEETERS PIERRE

Antwerpen, Belgium Artesis Hogeschool Antwerpen

THIRD PRIZE

Of all the participants, Sam Peeters from Artesis Hogeschool in Antwerp (Belgium) provided the most extensive and convincing exercise in Cradle to Cradle thinking, earning him third prize (€ 1,000). Pierre is made of bricks produced from locally-dredged river silt, which are connected by compostable, bio-plastic connector pieces. Its construction method also gives landscaping architects great flexibility in creating different forms and sizes.



WINNER OF THE PUBLIC PRIZE

The five honourable mentions below are listed in random order. Each winner receives € 500.

HENRIETTE GRUBER MULTAMICUS

Weimar, Germany Universität Weimar

Second-prize winner Henriette Gruber also received an honourable mention for Multamicus. The jury appreciated its "conceptually strong" design. It can be used as a traditional bench and as a picnic table or open-air desk, while passers-by can also simply lean against it. Its multifunctional character dovetailed the competition's brief to design a seating element appropriate for all kinds of different users.



HONOURABLE MENTION

LUKAS JUNGSMANN HILL

Graz, Austria Fachhochschule Joanneum

Lukas Jungmann from Fachhochschule Joanneum in Graz (Austria) received an honourable mention for the sheer charisma of his design. The jury acknowledged that Hill very much fulfilled Lukas' ambition of "teaching the crowd what design is all about", praising its "intriguing, organic shape, a clear departure from the traditional concept of a bench".

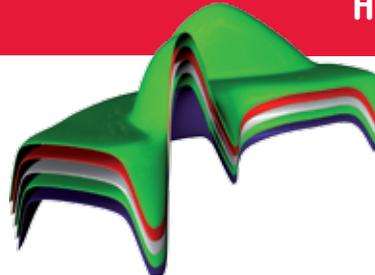


HONOURABLE MENTION

JEF VAN CAMPENHOUT SCULP

Genk, Belgium Katholieke Hogeschool Limburg

With Sculp, Jef Van Campenhout of the Katholieke Hogeschool Limburg in Genk (Belgium) caught the jury's attention because of its innovative, "almost Gaudi-like" design and its interactive qualities. Unlike the classic bench, on which people sit side by side, this seating element encourages people to sit face to face, looking each other directly in the eye.



HONOURABLE MENTION

DANIEL KRAFFT 360°

Krefeld, Germany Fachhochschule Niederrhein

This bench, designed by Daniel Krafft from Fachhochschule Niederrhein in Krefeld (Germany), can be revolved a full 360 degrees. The jury praised the interesting combination of materials (wood and concrete), and liked the "unlimited range of perspectives" users can enjoy.



HONOURABLE MENTION

SONJA HOPPE BAGSEAT

Krefeld, Germany Fachhochschule Niederrhein

Sonja Hoppe of the Fachhochschule Niederrhein in Krefeld (Germany) received an honourable mention for Bagseat: a seating element that looks like what it is made of - used plastic bags. "A fun idea", according to the jury, which also liked the idea of free-standing seats, which users can pick up and move. "It allows you to see how people have used the seats."



HONOURABLE MENTION

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