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Image Credit: Teeter-Totter Wall designed by architects Ronald Rael and Virginia San Fratello with Colectivo Chopeke

See-saw at the border wall between the USA and Mexico named best design of 2020

the Design Museum
19 January 2021
IMAGES

The Design Museum names temporary interactive installation the 'Teeter-Totter Wall', designed by architects Ronald Rael and Virginia San Fratello with Colectivo Chopeke, as the Beazley Design of the Year 2020

The project created a place where children from both countries could connect playfully through three bright pink see-saws

Other winners include an illustration of the COVID-19 virus, the vegan Impossible Burger 2.0 designed to replicate a beef burger, and a protest performance denouncing sexual violence towards women and LGBTQ communities in Latin America

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Teeter-Totter Wall, an interactive installation that allowed children based in both the USA and Mexico to play together across the border wall, and that went viral online in 2019, has been named by the Design Museum as the overall winner of the Beazley Designs of the Year 2020 and the Transport Category.

The Mexico/US border is the most frequently crossed border in the world and one of the most politicised. For the first time, children from both El Paso, Texas and the Anapra community in Mexico were invited to connect with their neighbours, in an attempt to create unity at the politically divisive border. The project took ten years

to realise because of the sensitive context at the border. Architecture studio Rael San Fratello aimed to demonstrate that actions taking place on one side of the border have direct consequences on the other, viewing the boundary as a site of severance. The three bright pink 'teeter-totters' (seesaws) were slotted into gaps in the steel boundary wall by designers from both sides of the border and installed for just under twenty minutes on 28 July 2019.

Although a temporary installation, the event lived on through footage shared virally on social media as well as in coverage in the mainstream media.

Razia Iqbal, Chair of the 2020 Judges and Broadcast Journalist, BBC News said:
"The decision to pick the Beazley Designs of the Year winner and category choices was not an easy one. From a wide array of projects exploring urgent topics such as futuristic technology for health and sanitisation, inequality and racism, and water and food security, the Teeter-Totter Wall is the overall and transport category winner of this year's awards.

This was an idea that really moved the judges. Not just something that felt symbolically important, it talked about the possibility of things; that all kinds of things are possible when people come together with great ideas and determination."

Tim Marlow, Chief Executive and Director, Design Museum said:
"It is great to see a project that is seriously playful and playfully serious is the winner of our Beazley Designs of the Year Award for 2020. The Teeter-Totter Wall was originally installed for only 20 minutes in 2019 across the US/Mexico border, but it encouraged new ways of human connection and struck a chord that continues to resonate far beyond El Paso in the USA and Juarez in Mexico. It remains an inventive and poignant reminder of how human beings can transcend the forces that seek to divide us.

All of this year's category winners (Digital, Architecture, Transport, Graphics, Product and Fashion) contain powerful messages of change and demonstrate design's capacity to explore new ideas that confront some of the difficult issues the world currently faces. I'd like to thank and commend the judges and all the designers who took part."

Category winners:

<u>**Graphics category winner:**</u>

Name: 3D rendering of SARS-CoV-2
**Designers:** Alissa Eckert (MSMI) and Dan Higgins (MAMS)
This is an image of the novel coronavirus, identified as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARSCoV-2), that causes the illness COVID-19. It was commissioned by the US health organisation Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which opened its emergency operations centre for the COVID-19 outbreak in January 2020. The purpose of commissioning this image was to help raise public awareness of the oncoming pandemic. The image depicts the virus as viewed through a microscope: a speckled grey sphere with bright red spikes that create the now infamous crown-like appearance of the virus. Using lighting, texture, contrast and colour, Eckert and Higgins give the virus a beautiful yet deadly form.

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Matt Jones, Judge and Principal Designer at Google AI said:
"What we loved about this entry was, although it was a scientific rendering and visualisation of the virus, it was also clear that design decisions had been made. The rendering exacerbates and emphasises the characteristics of the virus and the threat we were facing, to communicate that to the public, but also be part of the solution in how we might respond to it with vaccines and the like."

Brad Myers, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Director of Division of Communication Services:
"During a pandemic, sharing timely information with the public to help people make better informed decisions for their health and security is critical. Using scientific imagery of its microscopic composition, the creation of the 3-D SARS-CoV-2 animation by CDC medical illustrators Alissa Eckert and Dan Higgins has provided a visual rallying cry around efforts to prevent the spread of the COVD-19 pandemic by helping to engage populations across language barriers and unify communication messages or alerts. To drive this point home, a search on Google for the SARS-CoV-2 illustration developed by CDC results in 1.8 BILLION results. The recognition by the Design Museum of the Beazley Award of Alissa and Dan's work is both well-deserved and appreciated for the vast public benefit they have provided through their creation."
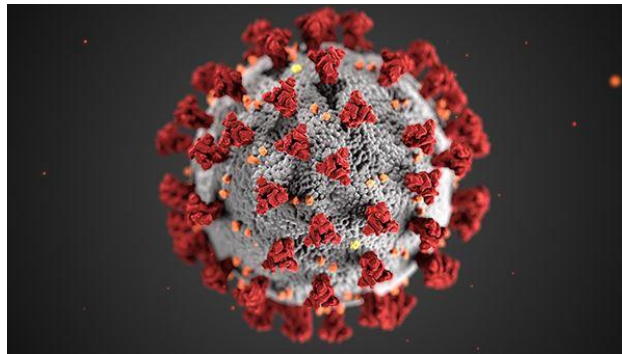
Product category winner:

Name: Impossible Burger 2.0 'A Better Meat for the Planet'
Designers: Impossible Foods
Impossible Burger 2.0 is more sustainable than its predecessor, which was launched in 2016, and aims to be tastier, juicier and – crucially – beefier. Although the patty is made from plant-based proteins and is suitable for vegans, its core consumers are meat eaters. It is currently served in thousands of restaurants and is entering grocery stores worldwide. It is kosher, halal and gluten-free certified, and fortified with as much iron and protein as a comparable serving of ground beef.

Samuel Ross, Judge and Founder and Creative Director of *A-COLD-WALL** said:
"Some of the reasons the Impossible Burger 2.0 really stood out to the panel and myself was this notion of food being a format for design as we move further into the twenty-first century. The idea that meatless, carbon-neutral food products can carry the same semantic language in the form of visual and product representation through taste, touch, feel and density really feels like a step forward into a far more conscious way of food consumption. That layer of design language and process, tied to the visual communication of the Impossible Burger 2.0, alongside the direct

relationship it holds with its user, really stood to the front of the discourse that we were having around the product category."

Architecture category winner:

Name: ModSkool
Designers: Social Design Collaborative
ModSkool is a school that is designed to be easily erected and dismantled in response to forced evictions of farming communities on the floodplains of the Yamuna river in India. First built in 2017 in less than three weeks by students, school staff, parents and local volunteers, the school was dismantled one year later due to landownership issues. The new school, relocated further south in 2019, was held together with the form of weave used for a charpoy, a multifunctional piece of furniture traditionally used as a daybed. The school's design mirrors its teaching methods, which focus on a holistic education that includes issues of sustainability.

Edwin Heathcote, Judge and Architecture and Design Critic at The Financial Times said:
"The judges felt that this entry was modest, self-effacing and yet it still had an identity. It was super practical, an elegant piece of design addressing a real critical situation and providing genuine social good."

Digital category winner:

Name: A Rapist in Your Way ('Un violador en tu camino')
Designers: Colectivo LASTESIS
A protest performance denouncing sexual violence against women and LGBTQ communities, A Rapist in Your Way was devised by the Chilean feminist arts group Colectivo LASTESIS. It is rooted in studies of rape in Latin America, specifically the

work of the Argentine anthropologist Rita Segato. The first performance in Valparaíso in November 2019 highlighted the use of political-sexual violence by the police during a recent social uprising. It has been replicated by protestors in Chile and around the world in multiple languages.

Camille Walala, Judge and Artist said:
"When the judges were discussing this entry, we were struck by how powerful it is. The song highlights the use of political sexual violence by the police during a social uprising in Chile, but has since been replicated by feminists in India, Kenya, Mexico and beyond. The rhythm of the chant, as women stomp their feet and pump their fists, is infectious."

Fashion category winner:

Name: Telfar bag
Designers: TELFAR
Dubbed 'the accessory of the decade' by *Dazed*, the vegan leather, gender neutral Telfar bag has become highly coveted. The bags are available in a wide array of colours, and in three sizes that correspond to those of Bloomingdale's disposable shopping bags. They are priced according to the average earnings of a New York DJ for a single night's work. Telfar bags represent the brand's ethos that luxury should be both practical and financially accessible, with restocks and new colours now selling out online in minutes.

Emily King, Guest Curator said:
"TELFAR is a firm who have managed to really redefine the relationship between themselves and their customers, so much so that owning a Telfar bag is not just owning a brilliant product, it's about making a vote for things to be done differently. TELFAR have redefined what luxury means and, in an era where true luxury is having a functioning health and social security system, I think their slogan - 'Not for you, for everyone' - rings very true."

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Transport category winner and overall winner:

Name: Teeter-Totter Wall
Designers: Ronald Rael and Virginia San Fratello with Colectivo Chopeke
Architecture studio Rael San Fratello have been researching the border that
separates Mexico from the USA since 2009. Viewing the boundary as a site that
severs relationships between the two countries, they wanted to create a place
where those across the border could connect, designing three bright pink 'teeter-
totters' (see-saws) to slot into gaps in the steel border wall. One designer worked
from Juárez in Mexico and another in El Paso, USA. For just under twenty minutes
on 28 July 2019, residents of El Paso and the Anapra community in Mexico could,
for the first time, unite through play.

Dr Philipp Rode, Judge and Executive Director of LSE Cities said:
*"We felt that this idea of overcoming a wall or border is ultimately all about
transportation. Rather than transporting ourselves from A to B, it's much more
about the idea of connecting, having access to and really bonding with each other,
even though there may be space or even a wall between us. A very innovative
project, a thought-provoking project, a political project, which really seems to hit
the moment in a fantastically beautiful way."*

People's Choice Award:

Visitors were able to vote for their favourite designs in the exhibition gallery and on
the Design Museum website. Brick arches, an ankle-high roadblock assembled in
Hong Kong by protestors, received the most votes from the public.

Name: Brick arches
Designers: Hong Kong protestors

Made from ordinary bricks, these small but powerful structures were used by Hong Kong protestors from the pro-democracy movement as roadblocks to slow down police vehicles. When struck by a wheel, the top block falls away leaving the two remaining bricks, which together form a buttress that prevents the wheel from moving forward. These arches were referred to locally as 'mini-Stonehenges' or 'brick battlegrounds'. Easier to make and more difficult to clear than ordinary roadblocks, they became widespread when the protests escalated in November 2019.
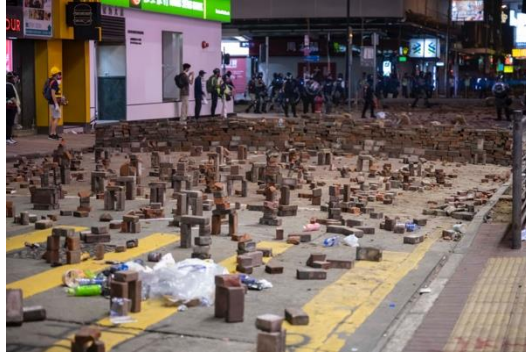
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About Beazley Designs of the Year:
Now in its thirteenth, Beazley Designs of the Year is an annual celebration of the most original and exciting products, concepts and designers across the globe today. Nominators were asked to select their favourite designs that inspire, represent change in their field and capture this moment in time.

Experience the best moments in design from January 2019 to the moment global attention shifted in late January 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic took hold. From futuristic technology for health and sanitisation, to exploring projects tackling inequality and racism and questions around water and food security including mainstream veganism.

2020 Judges:
Razia Iqbal, Broadcast Journalist at BBC News (Chair)
Edwin Heathcote, Architecture & Design Critic at The Financial Times

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Matt Jones, Principal Designer at Google AI
Dr Philipp Rode, Executive Director of LSE Cities
Samuel Ross, Founder and Creative Director of *A-COLD-WALL**
Seetal Solanki, Founder and Director of Ma-tt-er
Camille Walala, Artist

Beazley Designs of the Year 2020 catalogue is available from the Design Museum shop and online at designmuseumshop.com

Beazley Designs of the Year – The Virtual Experience
Adults £5, Members Free
[Available here](#)

Explore a complete 360 degree 3D rendering of this year's Beazley Designs of the Year exhibition and go beyond the objects with footage of the designers talking about their work and contextual articles explaining how the designs were made.

Discover Stormzy's stab-proof vest by Banksy, a self-sanitising door handle, the Ouroboros steak grown from human cells and much more all from the comfort of home.

The Design Museum is the world's leading museum devoted to contemporary architecture and design. Its work encompasses all elements of design, including fashion, product and graphic design. Since it opened its doors in 1989 the museum has displayed everything from an AK-47 to high heels designed by Christian Louboutin. It has staged over 100 exhibitions, welcomed over seven million visitors since November 2016 and showcased the work of some of the world's most celebrated designers and architects including Paul Smith, Zaha Hadid, Jonathan Ive, Frank Gehry, Eileen Gray and Dieter Rams. On 24 November 2016, The Design Museum relocated to Kensington, west London. Leading architect John Pawson converted the interior of a 1960s modernist building to create a new home for the Design Museum giving it three times more space in which to show a wider range of exhibitions and significantly extend its learning programmes.

designmuseum.org

Beazley is proud to partner with the Design Museum and to support the Beazley Designs of the Year.

As a specialist insurer Beazley is well placed to understand the value of good design. It sees first-hand the consequences when things go wrong, and its products and services are expertly designed to assist individuals, communities and businesses when they most need help.

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Previous Designs of the Year Winners:
2019 Anatomy of An AI System by Kate Crawford of AI Now Institute and Vladan Joler
2018 Counter Investigations, Exhibition by Forensic Architecture
2017 Sir David Adjaye OBE for the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington D.C
2016 Better Shelter by Johan Karlsson, Dennis Kanter, Christian Gustafsson, John van Leer, Tim de Haas, Nicolò Barlera, the IKEA

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Foundation and UNHCR
2015 Human Organs-on-Chips by Donald Ingber and Dan Dongeun Huh at Harvard University's Wyss Institute
2014 Heydar Aliyev Center by Zaha Hadid Architects
2013 GOV.UK – UK Government website by GDS
2012 London 2012 Olympic Torch by Edward Barber and Jay Osgerby
2011 Plumen 001 by Samuel Wilkinson and Hulger
2010 Folding Plug by Min-Kyu Choi
2009 Barack Obama Poster by Shepard Fairey
2008 One Laptop Per Child by Yves Béhar

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