

Press release

16 abril 2007

RIBA Norman Foster Travelling Scholarship winner announced

The winner of the inaugural Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Norman Foster Travelling Scholarship was announced today, with £6,000 awarded to Ben Masterton-Smith for his proposal titled, Emerging East: Exploring and Experiencing the Asian Communist City. The grant, administered by the RIBA, will fund Bens international research on this topic, and will be presented in a report at the 2007 RIBA Presidents Medals Student Awards exhibition.

Currently a fourth year student at the UCL Bartlett, Ben aims to start his exploration in North Korea, examining the effects of communist ideologies on post- Korean War architecture. He then plans to conduct research in China, building on previous studies carried out in this country. Ben's journey will conclude in Vietnam where he will look at the contrasting cities of Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City as a counter point to Chinas rapid growth.

Isaac Maina Njeru of the University of Nairobi and Dean Munford of the University of Westminster also received £1000 each and commendations from the judges for their excellent submissions.

The judging panel comprised Lord Foster, Jack Pringle, President of the RIBA, Fiona McLachlan, Edinburgh University School of Architecture and Spencer de Grey and Stefan Behling of Foster + Partners.

Lord Foster said: We were delighted to receive a wide range of submissions from around the world for this inaugural competition, so many of which were of an extremely high standard. Of especial note was the emphasis that many placed on seriously addressing the complex design problem of a sustainable contemporary city. We congratulate Ben Masterton-Smith for his winning entry and look forward to seeing the results of his endeavour later this year.

Jack Pringle, President of the RIBA said: "The RIBA Norman Foster Travelling Scholarship is inaugurated with an impressive research project which involves a student travelling from Pyongyang to Beijing, Shanghai, ChongQing, Guangzhou, Hanoi and Ho Chi Min City. Ben Masterton-Smith will use a travel journal and his design skills to describe and order a 'cultural experience' of communist cities in very different circumstances. I can barely wait to see the result. I was also delighted that the projects about Transportation Technology (from Nairobi) and Modernisation in Bhutan (from Westminster) were commended."

Notes to editors:

The biennial RIBA Norman Foster Travel Scholarship of £6,000 is awarded to one student from one of the 98 RIBA accredited architecture schools in the UK and abroad. Applicants are chosen on the basis

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of proposals submitted for their proposed area of research, which might include: learning from the past to inform the future; the future of society; the density of settlements; sustainability; the use of resources; the quality of urban life; and transport.

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