Prestigious Churchill Fellowships awarded to Designers

Monday 24 April, 2017

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The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust has just awarded three Travelling Fellowships to people working in the applied arts in interiors, product and graphic design and architecture.

The UK has the second-largest design sector in the world and the largest design industry in Europe.[1]

This is the third year of a partnership with the British Council, during which time 16 Fellowships have been awarded – an investment of over £100,000 into British designers. Past projects have included research into prison design, glazed architectural ceramics and optimising housing density through high-rise living.

This year's award winners are:

- **Alpa Depani**, an architect from **Hackney**, who will be travelling to Hong Kong, Japan and the USA to explore approaches to the design of public realm in global cities.
- **Anna Raymond**, from **Glasgow**, and Project Manager and Community Consultant for creative consultancy Pidgin Perfect, who will be travelling to Canada and the USA to investigate approaches to empowering women from disadvantaged backgrounds to work in the design sector.
- **Pras Gunasekera**, Designer and Researcher from **Edmonton**, who will be travelling to Germany, the Netherlands and Norway to research prison resettlement and rehabilitation practices using design methods.

Julia Weston, Chief Executive of the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust said:

"Churchill Fellows travel globally and return with innovative ideas and a commitment to sharing their findings to help others in the UK. These designers will contribute to the booming UK design industry through identifying outstanding international design and incorporating it into their own work."

Sarah Mann, Director, Architecture Design Fashion at the British Council said:

"We firmly believe that the opportunity to travel and return with new connections and skills to be shared back in the UK is a crucial way to enrich our design sectors. We are therefore extremely happy to be working with the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust to create links overseas, and look forward to seeing the results of the Fellowships and possible international collaborations in the future."

Fellow's Case Study

Maria Gasparian travelled to the Netherlands, the USA and Hungary in 2016 on her Churchill Travelling Fellowship to research the manufacturing of architectural ceramics and their application in public spaces.

Through her Fellowship, Maria wished to address how cities can create socially inclusive public spaces that reduce alienation by placing people at the centre of design. She believes that architectural ceramics can make a vibrant and interesting contribution to public spaces, whilst carrying important cultural references and being a high-quality, sustainable building material.

After returning to the UK, Maria secured a PhD at Central Saint Martins. The project is a practice-led inquiry into the social and physical aspects of architectural ceramics. The findings of her Fellowship will form the starting point for her research.

1. Creative Industries

Ends

Notes to Editors

The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust

In total 150 Fellowships have been awarded across the UK in 2017, an investment of over £1.4 million in UK citizens. The Fellows will be travelling to 49 countries between them, across six continents, where they will carry out a wide range of projects, designed to benefit their communities and professions in the UK. The average length of a Fellowship is six weeks.

Churchill Fellows come from all over the UK and from many different backgrounds. They must be UK citizens aged 18 or over, but no qualifications are required. What Fellows share is a passion to make a difference and a desire to share their passion to inspire others.

The categories for the 2018 Winston Churchill Travelling Fellowships will be announced on Tuesday 9th May 2017. See www.wcmt.org.uk for more details.

We have many examples of Fellows' stories of achievement from 1965 to the present day. If you would like one from a particular year or location, or would like to interview a Fellow, please contact The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust Press Office on 020 7799 1660, or email press@wcmt.org.uk

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About the British Council

The British Council is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We create friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and other countries. Using the UK's cultural resources we make a positive contribution to the countries we work with – changing lives by creating opportunities, building connections and engendering trust.

We work with over 100 countries across the world in the fields of arts and culture, English language, education and civil society. Each year we reach over 20 million people face-to-face and more than 500 million people online, via broadcasts and publications.

Founded in 1934, we are a UK charity governed by Royal Charter and a UK public body. The majority of our income is raised delivering a range of projects and contracts in English teaching and examinations, education and development contracts and from partnerships with public and private organisations. Eighteen per cent of our funding is received from the UK government.

The British Council's Architecture Design Fashion (ADF) department creates links between designers and cultural institutions around the world, through a diverse range of projects across the three disciplines. The department forms part of British Council Arts, which works to build trust and opportunities for the UK through the exchange of knowledge, experience and ideas worldwide. For further information about Architecture Design Fashion at the British Council, please visit http://www.britishcouncil.org/design.

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