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Architecture students celebrate award success

The innovative work of two Northumbria University Architecture students has been recognised at the RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects) North East Student Awards.

BA (Hons) Architecture graduate Bor-Ren Hui was awarded the Hadrian Medal for undergraduate projects, while Masters of Architecture (MArch) graduate Matthew Glover won the Highly Commended title in the masters category.

Both students focused on well-known regional locations or landmarks,

designing buildings which reflected the sites' historical significance while offering a fresh approach to design.

Bor-Ren's project, entitled Leaping the Fence, focused on British landscaping and in particular the work of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown. Using the backdrop of the Wallington landscape in Northumberland, close to where Brown grew up, Bor-Ren designed a functional folly to be used within Wallington's new Botanical Garden for Plant Preservation.

Speaking about his design, Bor-Ren said: "I studied the gardens at Stowe in Buckinghamshire, which Capability Brown and various other landscape architects designed and which featured a number of follies. I then applied my research to design a folly which would compliment the landscape and nature of Wallington, close to where Brown grew up.

"I am very pleased to have been awarded the RIBA Hadrian Medal – my time at Northumbria University has given me the freedom to experiment and be creative with the way I approached architecture and design, which has been of huge benefit."

Masters graduate Matthew's project, entitled PRIMEART, focused on the cultural and architectural regeneration of the former Odeon Building in the East Pilgrim Street Development Area of Newcastle.

Matthew said: "The aim of PRIMEART is to create an experimental 'palace' of art, community and exchange, where artists and audiences work side by side. The scheme provides an opportunity to culturally regenerate the city centre of Newcastle by creating a permanent sustainable solution for the established artistic community and encouraging public interaction and exchange with the arts."

Speaking about his time at Northumbria, Matthew said: "I have thoroughly enjoyed my time at Northumbria University and being part of the large community within the architecture department. Through both my Undergraduate and Masters courses there has always been great support from tutors and other students. Being recognised at the RIBA Student Awards was a very proud moment for me."

The RIBA North East Student Awards are delivered each year to celebrate the

talent of architecture students in the region and to reward them in the pursuit of excellence in the study of architecture.

Paul Yeomans, Director at Medical Architecture and Chair of the Student Awards jury said: “It was an intriguing day with a great variety of high quality work presented by the students. Two students from Northumbria University were given awards.

“Bor-Ren Hui won the undergraduate award for his botanical gardens project at Wallington, Northumberland. We loved the design process Bor-Ren went through in his early analysis. This created a well resolved building which the judges thought would be a delight to explore.

“Matthew Glover was highly commended in the postgraduate category. His scheme looked at the re-use of the old Newcastle Odeon site on Pilgrim Street. The project successfully investigated social and economic issues to create the ‘Prime Art’ building and the level of resolution in the final scheme was very good, particularly the physical models.”

Speaking about Bor-Ren’s achievement, Senior Lecturer Stephen Roberts said: “Continuing our engagement with the North East region, the BA (Hons) Architecture Third Year projects referenced the 300th anniversary of Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown’s birth at Kirkharle, Northumberland. Brown’s less celebrated and documented ‘Northern Landscapes’ at Alnwick Gardens and Wallington Hall provided an ideal context to interpret the theories and motivations informing his work.

“Bor-ren’s proposition thoughtfully references and integrates historical architectural landscape typologies with a strong understanding of prescient ecological issues forming a coherent and clearly communicated architectural response.”

Sebastian Messer, Senior Lecturer in Architecture at Northumbria, said of Matthew’s success: “The Final Year Master’s Thesis is an opportunity for the students to develop specialist interests and really to engage with a place, people and contemporary issues over a protracted period of time.

“Matthew’s project demonstrates a genuine understanding of the spaces required for contemporary art practice and embeds this in a much-loved (but

now lost) landmark.

“Through his forensic analysis of the former Odeon Building on Pilgrim Street, his project acts almost a memorial, to the building and celebrating a home-grown and grassroots artistic community, which are now being displaced from Pilgrim Street, as well as a tour de force demonstration of what could have been an extraordinary public space to rival Tate Modern’s Turbine Hall.”

For more information about Northumbria’s Architecture programmes please visit www.northumbria.ac.uk/about-us/academic-departments/architecture-and-built-environment/

Northumbria has a limited number of spaces on it’s BA (Hons) Architecture course available through Clearing. For more information please visit www.northumbria.ac.uk/clearing

For further information about the RIBA North East Student Awards visit www.architecture.com/knowledge-and-resources/knowledge-landing-page/riba-north-east-student-awards

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