

Curry Stone Design Prize Finalists Announced, Include TreeHugger Fave Rob Hopkins

by Lloyd Alter, Toronto on 09.21.09



Orquideorama

Designers can be an instrumental force in improving people's lives, and the Curry Stone Prize is given architects who do the kind of work that normally would not make the conventional design scene, but that can have huge impact. (Last year we were all over the Curry Prize winner MMA for his [sandbag housing](#))

Kate Stohr of [Architecture for Humanity](#), an advisor to the program, wrote to tell us that this year's finalists have been announced. First up are public works in Medellin, Colombia instigated by Alejandro Echeverri and Sergio Fajardo, the former director of public works and mayor, who used architecture and design as one of their tools to clean up the notoriously deadly city.



Parque Biblioteca España

Politicians and bureaucrats don't normally get design prizes, but then they don't usually lead such successful makeovers.

Beginning in 2003, a team of renowned architects led by Alejandro Echeverri, former director of urban projects, and Sergio Fajardo, former mayor, implemented this initiative in consultation with local neighborhood residents. Together, Echeverri and Fajardo, as well as an extensive team of architects and technicians, helped champion and realize this cornerstone belief: "Our most beautiful buildings must be in our poorest areas," as expressed by Fajardo.

Paired with sweeping social programs, including education and micro-lending to small businesses, these projects helped rout the city's deeply entrenched social inequalities. "From the beginning, we involved the people in the activity of using public spaces to solve social problems and to change the lives of the community," said Echeverri.

HANDMADE BUILDING: Anna Heringer

