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Innovation in Humanitarian Design Recognized

by Barbara Murdoch

Rendering of MMA's 10x10 Jonker House in Cape Town

September 5, 2008. A new international design award administered by the University of Kentucky College of Design for innovation on humanitarian projects, the Curry Stone Design Prize recently announced its five finalists. They'll be recognized at this month's 11th International Venice Architecture Biennale, and the winner will be revealed on Sept. 25th at the IdeaFestival in Louisville, Kentucky. The jurors for this year's award included journalist John Hockenberry, architect David Adjaye, designer and Droog co-founder Renny Ramakers, prize founder Clifford Curry, and Michael Speaks, the dean of the university's College of Design.

They selected the following projects: Cape Town-based MMA for its low-cost (under \$6,900 budget) 10 x 10 Jonker House; Shawn Frayne's Windbelt, the first non-turbine wind-powered generator, which could help poor communities stay illuminated, keep small vaccine refrigerators running, and juice cell phones at minimal cost; Antonio Scarponi for his Human World map, which uses arbitrary categories (number of internet users, regions where the death penalty is legal) to indicate geographical boundaries in order to underscore information that could lead to the development of more sustainable behaviors; artist and architect Marjetica Potrc's Dry Toilet, which, in communities without running water, converts waste to fertilizer; and architect and Ball University professor Wes Jantz's ongoing One Small World work with students in Sri Lanka in 2003 to build pavilions from found materials, including mud and rubble from demolished campus buildings. currystonedesignprize.com, currystone.org

Shawn Frayne's Windbelt, the first non-turbine wind-powered generator

Antonio Scarponi's Human World map

Marjetica Potrc's Dry Toilet converts waste to fertilizer

2003 pavilions built from detritus by Wes Jantz and students