

INTERIOR DESIGN

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MMA Architects Wins Inaugural Curry Stone Design Award

MMA will complete 10 of their homes by year's end with volunteer help from local women.

by Nicholas Tamarin

Proving that high design isn't just for the wealthy, South African firm [MMA Architects](#) has claimed the inaugural \$100,000 [Curry Stone Design prize](#) for its design prototype for low-income housing in a Cape Town shantytown.



One of the few black-owned architecture firms in South Africa, MMA created the single-family home prototype by borrowing elements from indigenous mud-and-wattle building techniques that forgo traditional brick-and-mortar foundations.

MMA principals Luyanda Mpahlwa and Mphethi Morojele's design features a two-story frame of timber and sandbag infill construction, which is energy efficient and requires little or no electricity or skilled labor to construct. The firm will complete 10 of their homes by the year's end with volunteer help from local women.



The jury for this year's prize, administered by the [University of Kentucky College of Design](#), included architect David Adjaye and prize founder Clifford Curry, who is the principal architect for the Colson & Colson general contracting firm. Along with his wife H. Delight Stone, Curry donated \$5.5 million to the college.

"MMA's elegant solution for a low-cost, single-family dwelling shows what can be done with simple materials and a sensitive eye to what local people need -- as well as what they bring to the table," says Dave Mohny, prize secretary and Curry Stone Chair in Design at the University of Kentucky. "Their ideas are exactly the kind that the Curry Stone Design Prize hopes to promote and encourage in the broader field of design. Because now, more than ever, the world needs them."



Four other finalists for the prize, including Shawn Frayne, inventor of the world's first non-turbine wind-powered generator, will each receive \$10,000.

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