

# Breaking creative conventions

THE prestigious Nippon Paint Young Designer Award (NPYDA) 2014, now in its seventh consecutive year, announced the winners in the Architecture and Interior Design categories in line with the theme “Re: Think. Re: Create. Our Community, Our Home”.

NPYDA is an annual, region-wide industry award aimed at cultivating young talent and raising the standards of design excellence in Malaysia and in nine other countries including Vietnam, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, Pakistan, China, Japan, Hong Kong and the Philippines.

Organised by Nippon Paint Malaysia, in partnership with IJM

Land Bhd, NPYDA 2014 saw a total of 623 entries – 528 for architecture and 95 for interior design – being submitted.

The two Gold Winners were Wong Kail Li from Universiti Putra Malaysia and Lim Yong An from KBU International College, for Architecture and Interior Design respectively.

Kail Li’s design for “Bond the Vicinity – Hydrophilic Retirement Retreat” tackled the issue of isolation faced by the retired and elderly community, who are often cut-off from the community and unable to enjoy their golden years in a meaningful way.

In addition to the complete facili-



**Solid gold:**  
(From left) Kail Li and Yong An posing with their trophies.

ties that feature separate social, recreational and living spaces, water is used as a core design element within a beautifully landscaped site.

"I wanted to use water as an attracting element which would bring members of the public to the area, to create stronger bonds between the retired and elderly and the community," said Kail Li.

Architecture category chief judge Jasmeet Singh Sidhu said, "Kail Li's concept demonstrated a refined grasp of a very real social issue.

"By incorporating initiatives for the elderly to participate in the community, and creating a green and sustainable environment that everyone can enjoy, she showed the judges that she was truly designing with the needs of the community in mind.

"This comprehensive interpretation of the theme ultimately tipped the balance in her favour."

For the Interior Design Category, Yong An's LEAF Agricultural Nursery grew from the idea of creating more green space within the city.

"I wanted to recreate the feel of a rural village or farm, with stalls and a cafe, and provide an experience where people can come together to enjoy fresh produce," he explained.

Selecting the Sinar Kota area for its high-density and multi-racial population, his vertical, urban farming design maximises space, engages the senses, educates urbanites and unites a fragmented community through the experience of growing their own food and instilling greater appreciation for the environment.

"Yong An's design was very well thought out, marrying practical aspects such as utilising the produce effectively and using the organic waste as compost, with beautifully designed areas for harvesting and enjoying fresh produce, such as the cafe," said NPYDA 2014 Interior Design chief judge Fendarie Su Pek Fuang.

"His design stood out as a creative take on a future community space with sustainability as a key element," she added.

The Gold Winners in the

Architecture and Interior Design categories each received a RM3,000 cash prize, a six-month paid internship at IJM Land Bhd and an exclusive, fully-paid trip to Japan for the Japan Learning Programme, to be held in March in Osaka.

The Silver Winners in each category, in addition to a RM2,000 cash prize each, also received a six-month paid internship at IJM Land Bhd, giving them the same opportunity to learn from experienced professionals.

Furthermore, the panel of judges were so impressed by the quality of work when reviewing the entries that they decided to offer internships at their respective consultancies to selected participants.

"The theme 'Re: Think. Re: Create' has a special meaning for us at Nippon Paint, because it encourages us to see things in a whole new light. This is the essence of creativity, and we want to nurture this ability in the younger generation, so they can break through the boundaries of conventional design," said Nippon Paint Malaysia managing director Yaw Seng Heng.

"Without the inspiration of the young, the design world will be stagnant.

"However, we also recognise the value of experience, which is why the Japan Learning Programme will fuse the ideas of the young with the insights of renowned industry experts – together, they will shape the future of our physical world," he continued.

Sharing similar philosophies on design, IJM Land Bhd chief executive officer and managing director Datuk Soam Heng Choon said, "As one of Malaysia's property developers, we have always aspired to create living spaces that inspire and nurture the human spirit while maintaining respect for the environment.

"We all want homes and communities that are socially sustainable and practical where people want to live, work and enjoy life, and we look forward to nurturing NPYDA winners' design thinking skills to address the multi-faceted issues that we faced today," he concluded.