



Japanese architect Hiroshi Sambuichi and American researcher Greg Ward receive The Daylight Award 2018

Today on The UNESCO International Day of Light, the poetic Japanese architect Hiroshi Sambuichi and pioneering American researcher Greg Ward are announced as laureates of The Daylight Award 2018. They follow the footsteps of earlier recipients, such as Jørn Utzon, SANAA, Peter Zumthor, Lacaton & Vassal, Marilyne Andersen and Steven Holl. In addition to the honour, the laureates each receive €100.000 for their groundbreaking work and dedication to daylight.

Since 1980, The Daylight Award has recognized prominent practitioners in the fields of daylight in architecture and daylight research for the benefit of human health, well-being and the environment.

The 2018 laureates, Sambuichi and Ward, both brilliantly illustrate the versatility of working with daylight. However, as different as they may seem, they both share a deep commitment to daylight. Inspired by nature, Sambuichi integrates geophysical characteristics of the site; earth, wind, air, water, and sun in his architecture. Computer scientist Ward creates and captures a physically accurate representation of the luminous environment and of the human response to intensity, colour, contrast, glare and views in his computer software.

Sambuichi's buildings serve as a continuous inspiration to the architectural discourse with its extraordinary simplicity and allowing daylight to always be present in its variable life - and the breadth of Ward's work has transformed the field of daylight modelling and has empowered thousands of engineers and architects to work with daylight in their projects. As such, contemplation meets computation and architecture powered by the forces of nature meets powerful software.

Hiroshi Sambuichi: architecture powered by nature

Hiroshi Sambuichi is a master at balancing the relationship between nature and architecture. The movement of earth, wind, air, water, and sun are integral parts in his buildings including the Shizuki Castle House and Naoshima Hall in Japan. As such, his buildings exist in harmony with their surroundings. It is not objectifying light as a singular event, but rather opening our awareness and experience of light to be timeless, fluid and rich.

"To me, architecture is ideal when you look at its form and the moving materials around the site, such as when the wind, water and the sun become visible. A close examination of changing wind directions and intensities in daylight influences the site and enables me to understand what kind of architecture is really needed on each location," says Hiroshi Sambuichi.

Sambuichi's approach to a site is one of great particularity, entailing long-term study and reflection upon the qualities and forces of nature which are embedded within, and active upon, the site. In pursuit of balance before developing the design, Sambuichi investigates the landscape's seasonal climate and experiments with physical models on site over one to two years. The architecture thus emerges through these considerations. His works are rooted in the local environment and are manifestations of the skilful use of the moving powers of nature. The American architect James Carpenter, former laureate of The Daylight Award and member of The Daylight Award jury, describes Sambuichi's approach:

“What is really extraordinarily unique about Hiroshi Sambuichi’s work is the amount of emphasis he puts on research relative to the site of his buildings. All architects speak of the site being important for the work. However, for Sambuichi, there is a much deeper and finer grain to his understanding of the site. It is an understanding that resonates with the forces of the wind, rain, sun and earthen elements, speaking to a more metaphysical sublime.”

Greg Ward: creator of revolutionary software

Greg Ward is the creator of the revolutionary software simulation programme, Radiance, which has enabled three decades of researchers to imagine the possibilities of daylight. Ward’s passion for iterating and improving the software, has led to a strong community of Radiance users who further impact the fields of daylight research and daylight in architecture. Ward is known as a generous initiator of numerous daylight seminars and engages in personal dialogue with young researchers and PhD students as well as professionals.

“My emphasis has always been on working, practical systems, as opposed to purely academic pursuits,” says Ward.

Ward has investigated the interaction of light and matter across a wide range of physical scales, from unique building materials with specialized optical properties, to the spatial definition of complex building interiors and facades, and to our urban and natural environments.

Radiance is widely applied in architecture, product design, horticulture, motion picture, health effects and medical research. It has also been utilized in unique situations such as assisting astronauts in training to work under the harsh lighting conditions in space.

“The programme, which has been in use now for over 30 years, captures all of the subtle interactions that light has with the environment – from how it transfers through glass to how it bounces off surfaces inside a room to how people actually experience it in an indoor or outdoor space. Each year Ward helps co-sponsor a Radiance workshop and this brings together some of the more interesting research and applications with Radiance as well as engaging the people who use it,” says Stephen Selkowitz, member of The Daylight Award jury.

“Greg Ward has developed the engine that thousands of people – researchers and architects – now use to make decisions and develop further work,” explains Swiss researcher Marilyne Andersen, former laureate and chair of The Daylight Award jury.

Celebration of the laureates in Lausanne, Switzerland

The Daylight Award is presented by the philanthropic foundations, VILLUM FONDEN, VELUX FONDEN and VELUX STIFTUNG. The laureates will be celebrated on 27 September 2018 in a unique award ceremony at The Rolex Learning Centre in Lausanne, Switzerland. The event will gather international architects, researchers and business representatives for a celebration of the laureates’ outstanding contribution to daylight in architecture and daylight research.

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The Daylight Award

The Daylight Award is presented by the philanthropic foundations, VILLUM FONDEN, VELUX FONDEN and VELUX STIFTUNG, established by Villum Kann Rasmussen – inventor of the VELUX roof window. The foundations support a wide range of non-profit purposes, in scientific, social, cultural and environmental projects.

Since 1980, they have awarded daylight prizes to, among others, Jørn Utzon (DK) (1980), Henning Larsen (DK) (1987), Bob Gysin (CH) (2007), Richard Perez (USA) (2008), Peter Zumthor (CH) (2010), James Carpenter (USA) (2010), Lacaton & Vassal (F) (2011), Gigon & Guyer (CH) (2012), SANAA (JP) (2014), Marilyne Andersen (CH) (2016) and Steven Holl (US) (2016). The award puts specific emphasis on the interrelation between theory and practice. The award is given biannually and the laureates each receive €100.000.

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