



Press Release
Immediate Release

DFA Awards 2019 Honours Design Giants

Shining a light on designs that impact work, live and play

DFA Lifetime Achievement Award 2019 winner – Rei Kawakubo

DFA Design Leadership Award 2019 winner – teamLab

DFA World's Outstanding Chinese Designer 2019 winner – Wang Shu

(HONG KONG, 3 December 2019) DFA Awards 2019 stands true to its commitment of recognising design with an Asian perspective by both established and emerging designers. This year, DFA Awards celebrates design leadership and exemplary design by giving the highest honour and recognition through its major annual award programmes. Design giants include **DFA Lifetime Achievement Award 2019 winner – Rei Kawakubo**, Founder of Comme des Garçons; **DFA Design Leadership Award 2019 winner – teamLab**, the International Art Collective; and **DFA World's Outstanding Chinese Designer 2019 winner – Wang Shu**, Co-Founder of Amateur Architecture Studio.

“This year, our honourable judging panel has highlighted individuals that have created true impact to our daily lives, and teams that have shown dedication to creativity in design project after project. Design is something that enhances life, it’s not just cosmetic. It is important to show value for the visionaries’ creations of unique experiences within this built world across professional, personal and playful environments. The Awards programme allows us to continue foster innovative thinking and creative confidence.” said Professor Eric Yim, Chairman of the HKDC.

Underpinning the role of designers in society while celebrating design leadership, exemplary designs and projects with impactful commercial success in Asia, DFA Awards alumni are an incredible list of creators and innovators that have shaped the conversation around today’s design thinking and design excellence. DFA Lifetime Achievement Award, DFA Design Leadership Award and DFA World’s Outstanding Chinese Designer are the highest honour ones can receive in Asia. Every year, judges ensure to pick winners that make a difference to the industry and our society.

DFA Lifetime Achievement Award 2019 (DFA LAA)

Rei Kawakubo

Founder of Comme des Garçons



The Award recognises an individual who has made life-long contributions to the design profession, with visionary shaping designs across a variety of fields, and who uses design to educate and promote wider use of design in society.

Photo Credit: ©Paolo Roversi

Rei Kawakubo is one of the most iconic designers in the late 20th century. Studying art and literature at Keio University, she later entered the fashion industry as a freelance stylist at a textile factory in 1967. As a self-taught fashion designer, she began making her own clothes under the label Comme des Garçons in late 1960s and opened her first boutique in Tokyo in 1975. By the late 1980's Comme des Garçons was operating more than 300 stores worldwide and Kawakubo's challenging designs had become accepted within the fashion world. In 2004, she developed the brand into a market-based department store concept 'Dover Street Market', stocking its main collections, its other brands, such as Shirt, Play, and a wide range of international designers. Numerous designers, including Martin Margiela and Helmut Lang, have referenced Kawakubo as an inspiration for their own designs. Kawakubo is often considered to be both a fashion designer and artist. This speaks to the ways in which her designs are able to bridge the boundaries between fashion and art.

DFA Design Leadership Award 2019 (DFA DLA)

teamLab

International Art Collective



The Award is presented to a corporate or leader who consistently demonstrates outstanding business performance, supports the design development in his organisation and the international community.

teamLab (founded in 2001) is an international art collective, an interdisciplinary group of various specialists such as artists, programmers, engineers, CG animators, mathematicians and architects whose collaborative practice seeks to navigate the confluence of art, science, technology, design and the natural world. Digital technology has allowed art to liberate itself from the physical and transcend boundaries. The philosophy is that everything exists in a long, fragile yet miraculous continuity of life. teamLab aims to transcend the boundaries of our understanding of this continuity. teamLab has been the subject of numerous exhibitions at venues worldwide, including venues in New York, London, Paris, Singapore, Silicon Valley, Beijing, Taipei, and Melbourne among others. It also opened the permanent museums MORI Building DIGITAL ART MUSEUM: teamLab Borderless in Tokyo in 2018 and teamLab Borderless Shanghai in Shanghai in 2019. The

permanent museum teamLab SuperNature will open in Macao in February, 2020.

DFA World's Outstanding Chinese Designer 2019 (DFA WOCD)

Wang Shu

Co-Founder of Amateur Architecture Studio



It awards a Chinese designer who has an exceptional track record for quality and success, is involved in academic exploration or practical application, and displays a strong social conscience.

Wang Shu co-founded Amateur Architecture Studio with Lu Wenyu in 1997 and in 2003, they founded the architecture department at China Academy of Art in Hangzhou, where Wang was the department chair. In 2007, the School of Architecture was established, where he served as the first dean of the school. His academic interests and research is focused on the re-establishment of a contemporary language for Chinese architecture, which is reflected in his built works such as Ningbo Historic Museum, Xiangshan Campus of China Academy of Art, Renovation of Wencun Village, and Fuyang Cultural Complex.

Wang is often found guest lecturing at top universities such as Harvard, MIT and Tongji University. He's swept numerous awards and doctoral degrees, naming him one of the 100 Most Influential People in the World by Time in 2013. He is now a juror of the Pritzker Architecture Prize 2019.

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High-resolution images can be downloaded at:

http://www.hkdc.hk/download/awards/DFA2019_hi-res_image.zip

Full DFA Awards winner list can be downloaded at:

http://www.hkdc.hk/download/awards/DFA2019_WinnerList.zip



About DFA Awards

In 2003, the Hong Kong Design Centre has launched the DFA Awards to underpin the role of designers in society, to celebrate design leadership and exemplary designs and projects with commercial success or impact in Asia, as well as to recognise the rising force of emerging designers in Hong Kong since 2005. The DFA Awards, through its five major award programmes, has grown in its international influence in Asia.

DFA Lifetime Achievement Award (DFA LAA)

Signify the design community's respect for individuals who have made lifelong contributions to the design profession, education, and the society, especially in Asia.

DFA Design Leadership Award (DFA DLA)

Recognise the business leaders or companies who create exceptional and sustainable business success through strategic and innovative use of Design.

DFA World's Outstanding Chinese Designer (DFA WOCD)

Acknowledge the designers of Chinese origin who have significant design achievement and international recognition.

DFA Design for Asia Awards (DFA DFAA)

Commend a wide range of design that embodies Asian aesthetics and culture, with influence to the design trends in Asia and for Asia.

DFA Hong Kong Young Design Talent Award (DFA HKYDTA)

Nurture the development of emerging designers by providing a maximum financial sponsorship of HK\$500,000 for overseas work attachment or education.

Learn more about us at www.dfaawards.com

About Hong Kong Design Centre

Hong Kong Design Centre (HKDC) is a non-governmental organisation, and was founded in 2001 as a strategic partner of the HKSAR Government in establishing Hong Kong as an international centre of design excellence in Asia. Our public mission is to promote wider and strategic use of design and design thinking to create business value and improve societal well-being, with the aim of advancing Hong Kong as an international design centre in Asia.

HKDC's flagship programmes include Business of Design Week (BODW; since 2002) – Asia's leading annual event on design, innovation and brands; DFA Awards (since 2003) – a well-recognised annual awards that celebrate outstanding designs with Asian perspectives; and Knowledge of Design Week (KODW; since 2006) – an annual thematic programme that gathers the global design community to explore how design can solve complex challenges of our society.

We also manage a Design Incubation Programme and Fashion Incubation Programme (since 2012 and 2016) – 2-year programmes to nurture future design and fashion entrepreneurs; and launched FASHION ASIA HONG KONG (since 2016) – an initiative combining conversations, interactions and cultural exchanges to position the city as an Asian hub for fashion trade and business development.

Learn more about us at www.hkdesigncentre.org

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