

PG Bison 1.618 Education Initiative 2023 winner announced

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Carmen Gregan, interior design student at Design Time School of Interior Design (Cape Town) was announced as the winner of the 2023 PG Bison 1.618 Education Initiative at a special awards ceremony in Johannesburg last night.

Tiago Loureiro Goncalves from University of Johannesburg - Interior Design placed second, and Kayla van Speyk from IIE Vega - Interior Design (Cape Town) came third.

The competition is aimed at showcasing creativity, innovation and skills of emerging young architects and interior designers, providing a platform for them to gain recognition from industry professionals and create valuable connections within the design community.

“This year’s competition attracted a high number of entries from accredited architecture and interior design institutions across the country,” said Nombuso Mwelase, communications manager at PG Bison. “Congratulations to Carmen, her lecturer and institution.”

Gregan was delighted to hear she had won. “Working on this project has been a lot of fun, and I want to express my gratitude to PG Bison for this fantastic opportunity!” she said.

The winning student and their lecturer won a cash prize of R50,000 each, the runner-up took home R25,000 and third place won R10,000. The remaining finalists each received a R2,000 cash prize.

“Most of the entries were of high standard and demonstrated creative prowess, attention to detail, and ability to push boundaries within the field of interior design and architecture, and this made our task as judges challenging,” said, Livia Coetzee, 2023 competition brief author and judge from DHQ. “If this is what institutions are producing in terms of graduates, then South Africa has a lot of beauty and style to look forward to!”

Henk Marais, 2023 competition brief author and judge from Connect Architects, said, “Well done to all finalists. It was an absolute pleasure judging your entries.”



This year's brief required the students to design a dream desert oasis consisting of an Instagrammable luxury residence, with entertainment areas and landscaped surrounds, celebrating the basic human needs of eating, sleeping, bathing and socialising, using the four elements of fire, water, earth and air. Gregan's winning design, titled "The Chrono", was inspired by the passage of time.

"When I first received the brief, I started thinking about time and how humans affect our environment. This inspired me to explore the difference between our impact on nature and how nature thrives when left alone," said Gregan.

Gregan's lecturer, Anél Joubert, said the 2023 PG Bison 1.618 competition brief was an exciting challenge that they embraced as soon as they received it. "It was a privilege working with Carmen on her design – from the initial context analysis to developing her concept of time and its contrast between human impact and nature's resilience, her creativity flowed into her layout and design. It was evident that she enjoyed the design process."

"It is always a pleasure interacting with all the finalists, and their lecturers, at the Awards Ceremony and last night was no exception. We congratulate all of them again on their exceptional entries, brimming with creativity," says Jason Wells, brand and marketing manager at PG Bison. "We are proud to have run this competition for over 30 years and are looking forward to the next 30 years of recognising and nurturing young talent, introducing students to real-world briefs and products, and encouraging creative thinking."

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