

Design Competition for Hong Kong Observatory Tide Gauge Station at Tai Po Kau, New Territories

Jurors' Comments

With a mission to promote competitions for the young architectural practices in Hong Kong, this long-held idea has finally come to fruition through the collaborative efforts of HKO, CEDD, ArchSD of HKSARG and HKIA. From this onward, it would perhaps be able to spinning off further competitions in the public domain.

The jury panel is delighted this competition has received very high number of entries, and most importantly, the popular feedback with regard to the realisation of the concept into real architecture by the final awardee.

The jury panel conceived this competition most appropriate as a trial to examine what's possible, whilst to create a functional structure, to educate the public in the appreciation of good architecture in a local context. Because of its relatively simple program however at a strategic location, this Tide Gauge Station is with good potential to be perceived as a local landmark in the vicinity.

With this mindset, the jury panel was unanimous in arriving a consensus that iconic element would be predominantly a winning factor. The following salient points are the comments shared by our jury panel:

First Prize: 584158 Revealing the Tip of Iceberg

- Use of iceberg as a concept for tide gauge station is considered to be iconic/ symbolic and touches the heart of all people.
- Arousing public's awareness of global warming / climate change is a clever and good theme for educational purpose; and can call upon the joint effort of government and public on combating climate change.
- Aluminium perforated skin with simple structure demonstrates its structural and buildable feasibilities.
- Night scene effect is considered eye-catching with the proposed lighting design.
- Enhancement of the outlook during daytime can make the station more popular and a tourist point (打卡) along the cycle track.
- Encourage to further detailed develop the random metal skin form to address the budget control, construction programme and maintenance aspects.

Second Prize: 428820 Shore Tubes

- The cylinder tubes design reflects the essence of tide gauge station – measuring tidal level.
- Not only the design is considered to be eye-catching with the exterior, the functional requirements are also fulfilled.
- The pier-head signal light integrated into the entire façade, making the tide gauge station a noticeable landmark from afar in particular at night.

Third Prize: 970813 The Recorder

- A very practical, durable design fitting the functional needs of tide gauge station users.
- The design represents the classic notion of “form follows function”.
- The staircase adopts a user-friendly and safety-conscious design– facilitating tide gauge station staff to work safely.
- It is also a very inclusive design to enable travelers to access the first landing as observation deck to overlook the Tolo Harbour.

Commendation Entry: 251682 The Rhythm by the Sea

- The concept to use tidal patterns as part of the façade is interesting.
- The wave form metal skin produces an eye-soothing tidal patterns on the façade.
- The designer may consider to reflect more about the annual tidal pattern concept clearly.

Commendation Entry: 890146 Moonlight Cabin

- A playful and toy-like design that is reflecting from its forms and proportions of different elements.
- Its romantic feeling can be well conceived as a place for dating or gathering.
- The linkage to the story of oyster farming in Tolo Harbour is an interesting history of Tai Po.

Commendation Entry: 976989 One Step Back, Feel and See

- Thinking out of the box and not totally bounded by the set requirements.
- The staircase can serve as a rest area cum viewing point for travelers.
- The design with a lower deck helps promoting a water-friendly culture.

On the overall, the jury panel highly appraises Hong Kong young architects for having sought high standards in physical design. Nevertheless there's room for improvement in the interpretation of concepts in a generic way.

On behalf of the jury panel, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge all our hard working colleagues behind the scene. In particular, our special thanks to a group of passionate professionals who have tirelessly contributed to the success of this great attempt.

Chairman, Jury Panel

Prof. FUNG Wing Kee, Raymond JP FHKIA

Jury Panel Members

Mr. BOK Kwok Ming, Aaron

Dr. CHENG Cho Ming

Mrs. LAM YU Ka Wai, Sylvia JP

R.A. LI Kwok Hing, Felix