**NEWS ARTICLE**

Corobrik Student Architecture Awards crowns its 36th winner

**18 May 2****023:** Describing it as “such a moment”, **Luzuko Funda** from Nelson Mandela University was declared winner of the 2022 [Corobrik Student Architecture Awards](http://www.studentawards.corobrik.co.za). The Awards was held at a special in-person ceremony at Langhams in Johannesburg on 16 May and also live-streamed.

Funda won a R70 000 grand prize and joins a prestigious list of Awards alumni. “I am deeply honoured by the recognition, as I am striving to make architecture accessible to all. I feel like I am already an inspiration for the next generation,” he said.

**Ané Meyer** from the University of the Free State received a Special Commendation and a R20 000 prize. “This year the judges felt it was such a close competition that they wanted to commend a student who delivered outstanding work,” commented Corobrik Chairman **Peter du Trevou**.

The finalists were selected from the eight major universities, based on architectural Master’s theses from the class of 2022. Each received a R10 000 prize and a chance to be in the running for the coveted top spot. For the first time since the Covid-19 pandemic, this year’s adjudication process was held in-person.

The judges were **Wandile Mntambo** from GASS Architecture Studios, **Jodi Davids-Harber** from TJA Architects, and **Henry Pretorius** from Typology Architects. The judges commended the eight finalists for the high quality of the work produced, which they said bodes well for the next generation of architects in South Africa.

Funda’s project, ‘The Design of Buildings for the Faculty of Agriculture at the University of Fort Hare in East London’, aims to revitalise the city surrounding the campus. It creates an ‘edge building’ that interacts with the public realm while lightly touching the natural landscape. It adapts the existing Old Miriam Makeba building on the site and uses modular systems to create a sustainable structure that fits the context.

Meyer’s project, ‘Ephemeral Skin: Towards a Reparational, Relational, and Respectful Engagement with the Temporal Environment’, involved the design of an algae research and manufacturing institute at Hartbeespoort Dam. The building will partly disappear over time, leaving a public park after the threat posed by hazardous algae blooms and the subsequent need for algae research is no longer dominant.

Speaking at the Awards ceremony, Corobrik CEO **Nick Booth** said the leading clay brick and paving manufacturer remains “steadfast and stalwart” in its support of the Corobrik Student Architecture Awards. Highlighting the dearth of awards and bursaries in the building and construction industry in general, Booth said “the lack of recognition of students and the excellent work they are doing is actually to the detriment of the built environment and the architectural profession.”

He added: “There is no doubt that the present economic environment in South Africa has had a deleterious effect on the building industry, which has not helped investment in future generations. Funding has also become a major driver for academia. That is why we need to continue to have events like this to recognise excellence. Corobrik remains committed to the Awards and to the architectural profession.”

“It is our pleasure to have hosted this event for the past 36 years to not only promote excellence, but to sustain the level of excellence that South Africa needs in industry and business today,” said du Trevou. “We need bright young people who are prepared to work hard and give back to South Africa.”

MC **Farai Mubaiwa**, a Strategy Manager at Accenture, said the fact that 70% of Africa’s population is under 30 means the continent “finds itself at the intersection of an opportunity and a crisis. How do we transform Africa’s youth boom into an economic opportunity rather than an economic burden?” she questioned.

Mubaiwa said the highest-growth sectors in Africa, from construction to energy, water, and manufacturing, all linked back to architecture. “Architects play such an incredible role in how we shape an Africa that is inclusive and full of growth. Even more importantly, architects are part of the narrative of achieving this in a sustainable manner.”

Booth concluded: “Once again next year, in conjunction with all the major universities, we will host the 37th Corobrik Student Architecture awards.”

To view the projects of all eight finalists, visit: [www.studentawards.corobrik.co.za](http://www.studentawards.corobrik.co.za).

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**About Corobrik**From small beginnings in 1902, Corobrik has evolved into South Africa’s leading clay brick and paving manufacturer. Corobrik’s product quality and performance attributes remain key to the company’s success.

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