

eastern cape institute of architects



August 2013

Dear Colleagues,

Is it not amazing how Architects generally, and our members specifically, continue to do such exceptional work in the face of seemingly insurmountable challenges? The world is coming through the deepest downturn since 1929, our country's infrastructure spend has been at snail's pace since the 2010 soccer tournament, our province is haemorrhaging population, our city floats leaderless and visionless and our chosen profession is under relentless attack from faceless bureaucracy and "supply chain procedures". Yet still, this year's *Merit Awards* programme attracted 22 entrants and 7 winners! Evidence of Architect's with an uncompromising spirit and a determination to materialise architectural excellence, regardless of the lists of reasons that make doing this impossible.

Can we please take a moment to acknowledge the judges that took of their time last month to scrutinise each and every one of the buildings bravely put forward by members? Education Committee chair, Andrew Palframan (convenor), Roger Fischer, Rory Riordan, Mary Mangan and John Blair.



No money or reward encouraged these individuals to give of their time, just selfless dedication to the built environment and to the profession which Architects call their own.

The regional winners will be announced at the Merit Awards dinner on 16 October 2013. This year's function forms part of a three day series of events at the Opera House called the "*2013 Urban Assembly*" an ambitious programme driven tirelessly by main committee member Debbie Wintermeyer. Keep a lookout for news of this event, but for now, please diarise 14, 15, 16 October 2013. **Save the date!**

And in news from SAIA, Tim and Albrecht were able to make a useful contribution to the recent "Constitutional Indaba" in Johannesburg. The leadership of each of the regional Institutes was represented, and though a constitution was not finalised, some important consensus points were arrived at. Thank you to all those of you that reviewed our "proposed mandate", thank you very much.

Albrecht Herholdt has selflessly been serving as our representative on the SAIA national board for the last three years. We are very grateful for his contribution and commend him for giving of his personal time and energy. Albrecht's term comes to an end this month and the main committee will be tasked to seek a replacement from their number.

Of course, the work of the ECIA in trying to get client organisations to act fairly and reasonably when appointing architects is on-going, as ever. In this work there are some successes and some failures. For example, in spite of our best efforts (and especially the efforts of Neil Kievit, Chair of the Practice Committee) the Makana Municipality has pushed ahead with an RFP that calls for a unnecessary amount of design work at tender stage for a new "Civic Centre". Explaining to the municipality that members of the ECIA and the BKIA would not be able to participate was unfortunately not enough to get the Municipal Manager to revise the wording of their RFP. The ECIA is clear and must remain firm

that our members may not participate in competitions that do not comply with Institute rules. The Makana Civic centre does not even come close to complying with the rules and members participating will be doing so with the clear understanding that they are knowingly violating the code of conduct.

In contrast, the NMMU has just run a very successful design competition for the new Bachelor of Education building on the Missionvale Campus. The rules of the competition were discussed with the ECIA prior to the launch and we were able to confidently encourage our members to participate. A number of our members did participate and we look forward to a high standard of working resulting from this process.

Many of you have been attending the stimulating and exciting series of talks put together by Habitat Committee chairperson, Phillip Loots. I have just in fact come from the "*Bio Mimicry*" talk by Windika Lemercier. Very exciting stuff! Keep a look out for these talks on email, Facebook and Twitter. For those of you that missed the lecture, it will be up on the ECIA YouTube site very soon. You can find it at <http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCg71yjXqFnu37NT6TIakuA>

Lastly and sincerely, I think we should all commend ourselves for participating in the work of the ECIA, we must commend ourselves for our on-going commitment in spite of less than ideal circumstances.

Let's give ourselves a break. We're doing an OK job!

Yours in the service of our beautiful profession,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Tim Hewitt-Coleman', written in a cursive style.

Tim Hewitt-Coleman

(President – Eastern Cape Institute of Architects)