Winners announced for the 
2018 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation

Shijo-cho Ofune-hoko Float Machiya of Kyoto, Japan, wins Award of Excellence; 
projects in Australia, China, India, Japan and Thailand also honoured

BANGKOK, 9 November 2018 — The renewal of the early 20th-century Shijo-cho Ofune-hoko Float Machiya has received the Award of Excellence in this year’s UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation. Ten projects from five countries – Australia, China, India, Japan and Thailand – have been recognized by an international Jury of conservation experts in this year’s Awards. The Jury met in August to review 41 entries from eight countries across the Asia-Pacific region.

The Jury praised the Award of Excellence winner, the Shijo-cho Ofune-hoko Float Machiya, for “celebrating Kyoto culture through the safeguarding of the city’s endangered wooden townhouse typology as well as the iconic annual Gion Festival. The meticulously restored building today houses the Ofune-hoko float, itself resurrected after a 150-year hiatus to regain its place of pride in the annual ritual parade. The project sets a model for its seamless approach to safeguarding built heritage intertwined with intangible cultural heritage in a mutually enriching way.”

Other Awardees include:

Award of Distinction
- The LAMO Centre, Ladakh, India

Award of Merit
- 5 Martin Place, Sydney, Australia
- Aijing Zhuang, Fujian, China
- Old Warehouse of the Commercial Bank of Honjo, Saitama, Japan

Honourable Mention
- Hengdaohezi Town, Heilongjiang, China
- Rajabai Clock Tower & University of Mumbai Library Building, Mumbai, India
- Ruttonsee Muljee Jetha Fountain, Mumbai, India

New Design in Heritage Contexts
- Kaomai Estate 1955, Chiang Mai, Thailand
- The Harts Mill, Port Adelaide, Australia

The UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation programme recognizes the efforts of private individuals and organizations that have successfully conserved structures and buildings of heritage value in the region. The Awards aim to encourage other property owners to undertake conservation projects within their communities, either independently or by seeking public-private partnerships. Awarded projects reflect a clear understanding and application of various criteria, such as the understanding of the place, technical achievement, and the project’s social and policy impact.

‘Ever since the Awards programme was established in 2000, we have witnessed major strides in cultural heritage conservation over the past twenty years,’ said Dr Duong Bich Hanh, Chair of the Jury and Chief of UNESCO Bangkok’s Culture Unit. ‘This year’s projects show the heightened level of public awareness, policy support and private sector investment in an ever-widening range of heritage typologies. It is notable how the 2018 winners showcase the increasing recognition of industrial heritage in the Asia-Pacific region.’
The upcoming year 2019 marks the 20th anniversary of the Awards, with a regional event planned in Penang, Malaysia, where the Awards programme was originally launched. It will provide a platform to reflect on the past two decades of the Awards and the larger realm of heritage in the Asia-Pacific region, as well as to engage in a strategic forward-looking dialogue on the role and contribution of cultural heritage more broadly. Past winners, Jury members, heritage conservation professionals, academics, and private and public partners will be invited. The event will be organized in collaboration with the community-based urban regeneration organization Think City.

UNESCO Bangkok and Think City have signed a three-year partnership spanning 2018 to 2020 in order to promote outstanding practices in cultural heritage preservation in Asia and the Pacific.

For further information about the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation and upcoming events, please see: https://bangkok.unesco.org/theme/asia-pacific-heritage-awards

Call for Entries for the 2019 UNESCO Awards will be made at the end of 2018, and further details will be available on the awards website.

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<td>- High-resolution images of 2018 award recipients are available here: <a href="https://goo.gl/L7PTTV">https://goo.gl/L7PTTV</a></td>
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Project name: Shijo-cho Ofune-hoko Float Machiya
Location: Kyoto, Japan

The renewal of this early 20th-century machiya celebrates Kyoto culture through the safeguarding of the city’s endangered wooden townhouse typology as well as the iconic annual Gion Festival. The meticulously restored building today houses the Ofune-hoko float, itself resurrected after a 150-year hiatus to regain its place of pride in the annual ritual parade. Through careful documentation and a light-handed approach to conservation, the project has transformed a residence to serve a meaningful communal function in a manner that has enhanced the ethos of the historic building. Undertaken by master carpenters in collaboration with conservation experts, the artful conservation work showcases innovation within a traditional architectural context. The project sets a model for its seamless approach to safeguarding built heritage intertwined with intangible cultural heritage in a mutually enriching way.
Award of Distinction

**Project name:**
Ladakh, India

**Location:**

The recovery of two aristocratic houses from a state of partial ruin establishes an important precedent for conserving the non-monumental urban fabric of Leh Old Town. Informed by detailed research and investigation, the systematic restoration project used salvaged and local building materials, and indigenous construction techniques while adroitly introducing modern amenities to assure its ongoing use. A dynamic programme of arts activities enlivens its space for the benefit of both local residents and visitors. Strategically located at the foot of the Leh palace, the restored structure contributes significantly to the continuity of the historic townscape dating back to the 17th century.
**Award of Merit**

**Project name:** 5 Martin Place  
Location: Sydney, Australia

The iconic Commonwealth Bank building has been revitalized as a premier commercial property while retaining its historic fabric and character. Anchoring Martin Place, the building effectively maintains its connection to the street and its urban context. The quality of the interior spaces and period detailing were carefully retained, notably with the use of a thoughtfully designed cantilever strategy to introduce a major new building addition. The project adds a new milestone to the evolving history of the property, reinvigorating it for the 21st century.

**Project name:** Aijing Zhuang  
Location: Fujian, China

The conservation of Aijing Zhuang residential complex demonstrates a sensitive approach to sustaining a rural settlement as a living place in harmony with its natural setting. The rigorous seven-year conservation process was initiated by clan members with the collective support of scholars, local craftspeople and the local government. With a commendable sense of restraint, the project has safeguarded the authentic character of the vernacular housing, defensive structures and waterways that are emblematic of this site, providing a model for other historic villages across China.
Old Brick Warehouse of the Commercial Bank of Honjo
Saitama, Japan

The restoration of the former warehouse of the Commercial Bank of Honjo has recovered a significant brick masonry landmark and opened it up for public use through seismic retrofitting and modernization of building services. The project is to be praised for its systematic conservation methodology based on thorough research. In giving new life to a building related to the once prosperous silk business in the area, the project serves as a notable example for interpreting local industrial and commercial heritage.

Honourable Mention

Hengdaohezi Town
Heilongjiang, China

The successful preservation of the 19th-century railway town of Hengdaozi in north China is notable for its holistic approach, encompassing the heritage buildings, infrastructure, and related public spaces. Demonstrating a sound understanding of both locality and function, the project reinstates and sustains the spirit of place of the historic urban industrial landscape. The conservation work was carried out in a restrained manner, respecting the historic patina and functional character of the buildings and their setting.
Project name: Rajabai Clock Tower & University of Mumbai Library Building
Location: Mumbai, India

The recent renewal of the University of Mumbai’s Rajabai Clock Tower and Library opens up a new chapter for one of the city’s significant neo-Gothic landmarks. A comprehensive programme of restoration arrested decay and stabilized the stone masonry, interior timber structure, and extensive decorative works. The project was well thought through and the quality of conservation reflects a competent hand, employing local craftsmanship and materials that sustain the authenticity of the historic fabric.

Project name: Ruttonsee Muljee Jetha Fountain
Location: Mumbai, India

The restoration of the Ruttonsee Muljee Jetha Fountain has reinstated an Indo-Saracenic landmark in the heart of Mumbai. The project has revived both the functional and aesthetic qualities of the monument through careful water engineering, stone repair, and tasteful historically-accurate landscaping. Undertaken in partnership with the municipal authorities as part of a larger on-going programme of civic works, the conservation of the fountain contributes meaningfully to enhancing the public sphere of the historic district.
Award for New Design in Heritage Contexts

**Project name:** Kaomai Estate 1955  
**Location:** Chiang Mai, Thailand

Kaomai Estate 1955 is an inspired model for rescuing and repurposing an overlooked and disappearing industrial typology by combining a commitment to conservation with a contemporary design aesthetic. New architectural interventions in steel and glass provide a counterpoint to the historic built fabric that spans different eras, including wattle and daub, brick masonry, and concrete block. The reactivation of the abandoned tobacco-processing barns adds a layer of meaning to the hotel complex, providing a nostalgic evocation of the local history and agrarian heritage associated with Chiang Mai’s once-thriving tobacco industry.

**Project name:** The Hart’s Mill  
**Location:** Port Adelaide, Australia

The remarkable transformation of the former flour-milling complex and wharf into a lively series of public spaces revitalizes a derelict post-industrial waterfront area for present-day use. The three interconnected interventions have rejuvenated both the buildings and the surrounding area through a successful urban place-making strategy, using contemporary art to reference historical function. Resulting from an extensive consultation and engagement programme, the development of trails, play areas and event spaces has created a major urban amenity for the city of Adelaide.