CONCRETE DESIGN COMPETITION 2017/2018 – 'TACTILITY'

Jury: Carole Pollard
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Winners:	**Concrete Column**
	Cellular Formations
	Striated
Highly Commended:	**Musselcrete**
	Stitched Concrete
Commended:	**Tributaries**
	Concrete & Plastic

JOINT WINNER: CONCRETE COLUMN

The plain-speak title of this cutting edge experimentation with concrete's plasticity is in direct contradiction to the subtlety and sinuosity that has been brought to the casting of concrete columns. The entrants set out to merge the possibilities of new design programmes such as rhino and grasshopper with the potential of fabric formwork to realise biomorphic architectural elements. They have illustrated the depth of their research with a combination of well-resolved technical diagrams and photographs. The construction and application of the concrete mould technology demonstrates the versatility of the proposal, and the results are illustrated by way of hauntingly beautiful photographs of the sculptural forms. The practicality of the application each with a uniquely distinctive tactility.

JOINT WINNER: CELLUAR FORMATIONS

This scheme addresses the critical contemporary environmental issues beyond the field of architecture and its tectonic challenges. The proposal for a "Cellular formed concrete" material, which constitutes a host for biological growth, offers a rich potential of use to tackle some of those issues. The proposed porous cellular concrete could be a low tech/low maintenance green wall, thermal and acoustic insulation, a pollution control device, or an artificial soil for food cultivation. Also addressed are the issues of weathering and decay in concrete, and more generally in buildings which can be transformed into a positive outcome. The presentation and descriptions clearly demonstrate good observation, research and investigation skills which is backed up with a series of striking experimentation models. The response to the brief "Tactility" is innovative, sensitive and engaging: exploring the use of concrete and its technology as a way to try overcome the eternal dilemma between urbanization and nature, between hard and soft, between decline and growth.

JOINT WINNER: STRIATED

Using a concrete surface of ridges and grooves this project aims to encourage inhabitation from decomposing leaves, mosses and plant life. The surface would allow the material to merge with the landscape in a natural and quite unpredictable way. Rather than creating a surface that is expected to remain unchanged and pristine, this proposal has taken on the idea that a building should be allowed to weather and embrace the character of the surrounding environment, rooting it to its place. The idea has been explored through a series of beautiful concrete models one of which demonstrates how using varying depths of channels would allow for differing plant types to take hold over time. A simple and elegant idea.

HIGHLY COMMENDED: MUSSELCRETE

This submission explores how we can recycle natural waste from mussel production and consumption for use as concrete aggregate. The proposal explores the potential of Ireland's 'blue' economy through the creation of immersible concrete structures designed to encourage mussel growth for the production of 'musselcrete'. An interesting twist on the traditional use of beach aggregates in the formation of tactile concrete.

HIGHLY COMMENDED: STITCHED CONCRETE

This proposal challenges the perception of concrete as a heavy material through the design and creation of stitched concrete panels which are suspended to form a type of sculptural veil. This apparently "lightweight" product can be adapted for uses such as facade cooling or decoration, or to form internal screens. The quilted texture of the individual panels combine to produce excitingly tactile results.

COMMENDED: TRIBUTARIES

This project explores the potential in exposing the movement of rainwater across a site in Limerick, and in doing so creates a tactile landscape of waterways. Utilising deep concrete drainage channels as beams at upper levels and small open surface channels at ground level the proposal attempts to slow down the process of rainwater reaching the soil below.

COMMENDED: CONCRETE & PLASTIC

We all know that plastic consumption is out of control and it is all the more shocking to learn that Ireland is one of the worst culprits in the EU. This submission explores ways in which we can recycle and reuse plastic in the production of concrete tiles. Three methodologies are tested to show what is achievable in terms of texture, durability and use.