

DESIGNxri

2015 RI Design Hall of Fame Inductees:



Lifetime Achievement: Eugene Lee

Eugene Lee's career seems like almost too much for one person: He has been the Resident Designer at Trinity Repertory Company since 1967. As Production Designer for *Saturday Night Live*, he has designed the look of one of the most influential forces in pop culture since the show premiered in 1975. He is a three-time Tony Award winner for his designs on *Candide*, *Wicked* and *Sweeney Todd*, earning him a 2006 induction into the Theater Hall of Fame at Broadway's Gershwin Theater. Television came calling once again when Eugene was hired to design the sets for the new "Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon" and "Late Night With Seth Meyers." Through it all, he has remained dedicated to Rhode Island, not only living and raising his family in Providence, but contributing to the community by helping to refurbish the auditorium at Hope High School, designing fundraisers for WaterFire, and creating a traveling Shakespeare cart for the Brown/Trinity MFA Program. "His commitment to being here and his dedication to Trinity never veered, even with all his worldwide success," exclaimed the selection committee. "It's amazing to have someone in our community who is so prominent and highly decorated in his field."



Lifetime Achievement: Friedrich St. Florian

Friedrich St. Florian's career as an architect and educator spans more than 55 years, and though his success has taken him all over the world, his commitment to his adopted home of Providence has made him an influential figure in the city's renaissance. Along with fellow RISD professor William Warner, Friedrich famously helped reimagine the Providence waterfront with a sketch on a restaurant napkin. He has been at RISD for more than half a century, including eight years as the Dean of Architecture and three as Acting Provost. Some of his early works are housed in the permanent collections of the RISD Museum, the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and the Centre Pompidou in Paris. He has reshaped not only our state's capital, but the nation's as well, winning a national competition to build his most important work, the World War II Memorial in Washington, DC. "Friedrich St. Florian is a titan in the architecture world," declared the selection committee. "What really elevates him is his strong commitment to teaching. He has continued to teach and mentor throughout a career that has taken him all over the world."



Emerging Designer: Kyla Coburn

Kyla Coburn is an acclaimed interior designer and an advocate for creative urban revitalization. Her impressive body of work includes some of Rhode Island's most beloved restaurant and bar spaces, including The Avery, Loie Fuller's, Salvation Café, and the former Providence Black Repertory Company. She has also worked on residential projects, graphic design services for clients like Firehouse 13 and World Party Entertainment, and even set/costume design for theatrical productions like *A Kwanzaa Song* and *A Raisin In the Sun*. Her support for Rhode Island's creative community takes physical form in several revitalization projects: her team redeveloped a turn-of-the-century Central Falls mill building into a unique riverside live/work space for artists, and they are in the process of doing the same for a former church in Pawtucket. What ultimately won over the selection committee, however, is much simpler: all the fun people have had in the spaces she's designed. "Her work is about creating spaces in which people

can enjoy themselves. People have a very emotional response to her work," said the committee. "Her combination of being an artist and designer is what really sets her apart."

Emerging Designer: Asher Rodriguez-Dunn

Asher Rodriguez-Dunn boasts a prodigious and accomplished career that makes it hard to believe he is not yet 30 years old. His company, Studio DUNN, has attracted accolades and awards for beautifully handcrafted wood furniture and lighting designs. That work landed him on *Vogue's* 2013 list of "Ten Contemporary Designers to Collect Today," and in 2014 *Forbes* named him one of their "30 Under 30." Not content to simply succeed on his own, Asher has dedicated his talents and resources to helping others in their creative and entrepreneurial pursuits, founding Keeseh Studios, a community woodworking space providing tools, machinery, and education, and ANCHOR, a start-up incubator offering workspace and shared resources to entrepreneurs. Asher embodies design not just as a creative endeavor, but an economic driver for a city still striving to revitalize its industrial past. "He's got a unique combination of youth with a prolific track record," said the selection committee. "It's not just the quality of his work, but the fact that he's making woodworking accessible to anyone and trying to help other businesses grow. We're impressed by what he's doing now, and looking forward to what he's going to do over the next five to ten years."



Established in 2014, the RI Design Hall of Fame recognizes proven leaders in the Rhode Island design community for their contributions to the industry on local, national and international levels. It is presented by DESIGNxRI, an organization working to maximize the assets of the RI design community, highlight the breadth of talent in the state, and nurture growth in the sector. Honorees are inducted and celebrated during the annual [DESIGN WEEK RI](#).

DESIGNxRI is a non-profit organization with a mission to create a vibrant and opportunity-driven environment for RI designers, design businesses and the design sector to thrive. Through education, economic development and community development, we coalesce designers, elevate awareness of the RI design sector, spotlight the diverse talent base located in the state, and invest in strengthening and growing RI design-driven businesses. Learn more at www.designxri.com.
