



Sir Misha Black Awards

for Distinguished Services to Design Education



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HONORARY SIR MISHA BLACK MEDAL

for Distinguished Services to Design Education

to be given to **MARY V MULLIN**

The 1851 Royal Commission and the Sir Misha Black Awards Committee have announced that an Honorary Sir Misha Black Medal will be awarded to Mary V Mullin in 2024.

Mary Mullin is the former Chairman of the Sir Misha Black Awards Committee. She joined the Committee in 1993 and served as Chairman from 2003 until she stepped down in March 2024. In that time she oversaw the introduction of the Award for Innovation in Design Education in 1998, and more recently the move to the Awards' current home under the auspices of the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851.

Mary is Trustee of the Robin and Lucienne Day Foundation, Trustee of INSPIRE Trust, and Regional Adviser to the World Design Organisation. She served as Secretary General of the International Council of Graphic Design (ICOGRADA now ICO-D) for fourteen years, and as a founding Trustee for the ICOGRADA Foundation.

Her contribution to the promotion of design and education is extensive. Positions held include being the first woman elected to the Board of ICSID, serving as Vice President and developing its Interdesign Programme of events across Ireland and continental Europe. She remains a Founder Member of the Crafts Council of Ireland, has been a consultant for UNIDO, and was National Chairman of the DIA. She was Founding Director of the National Centre of Culture and Arts in Dublin (now the Museum of Modern Art), and worked in the Kilkenny Design Workshops in Ireland.

She ran her own consultancy practice in design and special event management in London from 1981 to 1998. Clients included the 'Boilerhouse' at the V&A, the precursor of the Design Museum; Science Museum; Design Research Unit and other leading design practices and commercial clients.

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Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851

Co-opted Member
Dr Nick de León



MEDIA RELEASE

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Mary Mullin is an Hon. Fellow of the RCA, the University of the Arts in Bournemouth, the International Society of Typographic Design, and Honorary Life Fellow of the RSA. In 2017 she was awarded the RSA Bi-Centenary Medal “for encouraging and promoting design across education and industry”. In 2018, with Sir Christopher Frayling, she co-edited ‘Fitness For What Purpose’, a book documenting the 40 year history of the Sir Misha Black Awards.

The Sir Misha Black Awards Committee, in honouring Mary Mullin, recognises her thirty years of dedication to the Awards Committee, promoting and endorsing on an International stage the principles initially championed by Sir Misha Black in his work, over 40 years ago, at both the Royal College of Art and Imperial College London.

Malcolm Garrett, Chairman of the Sir Misha Black Awards Committee, commented: “There are barely enough words that I, on behalf of the Awards Committee, can summon to express the immense gratitude for the leadership and vision Mary has shown over 30 years of dedicated service to the Sir Misha Black Awards.”

Mary Mullin has commented: “To have had the privilege of calling some of the most distinguished design educators in this country ‘my colleagues’, representing as they do, the Royal Commission, dedicated to promoting design and engineering excellence for over 170 years, plus the leading Royal Design and Engineering Institutions in the UK, has been an education and reward in itself. To be awarded the Misha Black Medal and thus to be linked to educators from around the globe, recognised for doing extraordinary and innovative work, is indeed a special honour for which I am deeply and truly appreciative.”

Mary V Mullin will receive the Honorary Medal at a Ceremony to be held at Imperial College London, at 6pm on Thursday, 21 November 2024.

The Sir Misha Black Medal for Distinguished Services to Design Education and the Award for Innovation in Design Education will also be presented at the ceremony.

For further information contact the Administrator: mishablackawards@gmail.com

Website: royalcommission1851.org/fellowships/sir-misha-black-awards



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BACKGROUND NOTE FOR EDITORS

Set up to commemorate the legacy of Sir Misha Black, the **The Sir Misha Black Medal for Distinguished Services to Design Education** is awarded to individuals across the globe who have made a significant contribution to design education. First awarded in 1978, the Medal began life as a biennial event but has since become an annual date within the design world calendar.

In 2020, the Sir Misha Black Awards Committee came under the wing of the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851. The inclusion of the Sir Misha Black Awards in the Royal Commission's portfolio, effective from February 2020, reinforces the Commission's mission to "increase the means of industrial education and extend the influence of science and art upon productive industry".

Sir Misha Black

Sir Misha Black was an industrial designer who with his partner Milner Gray, founded DRU (Design Research Unit) in the late 1940s. It became one of the first international, interdisciplinary design practices with major clients in industrial design, architecture and graphics. In 1959 Misha Black was appointed the first Professor of Industrial Design at the Royal College of Art, a post he held until his retirement in 1975. He was the most influential design teacher of his time, involved in international design affairs as well as being a gifted speaker and writer on design matters.

About the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851

The Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851 offers major awards to scientists and engineers for research, development and design. First established to stage the Great Exhibition in 1851, the Royal Commission's extraordinary history is founded on an inspired vision of the importance of education to economic success.