

Designing Achievement: Society Awards Interview

 aspiremetro.com/society-awards

August 31, 2018 By

August 31, 2018



David Moritz CEO of Society Awards

The world of design is wide-reaching and varied, and nothing solidifies this sentiment better than an exploration into one of its very unique niches: the design of the entertainment industry's top awards and trophies. Society Awards, helmed by CEO David Moritz and head designer Jason Garcia, creates and manufactures these symbols of achievement, including MTV's Moonperson, Billboard Music Awards, the NAACP Image Award, the Golden Globes' Cecil B. deMille Award, NBC's The Voice's trophy, among others. We reached out to Moritz to ask a few questions and learn a little more about this rare segment of design.



From left to right: the SOCAN, ACM, Hip Hop Honors, iHeartRadio Music Award, AMA, Billboard Music Award, NBC's The Voice trophy.

From a design perspective, which is your favorite award you've helped to create?

“There are too many to pick a single one as favorite. We created the world’s first musical trophy for SOCAN, the Canadian music rights association. That was a great project and a great challenge. In creating that trophy, we had to develop an all-new, custom instrument to also serve as an award, something both artful and functional. The Golden Globe holds a special place because the stakes were high. Working with the HFPA (Hollywood Foreign Press Association), we pored over each and every detail. We did a lot of research to get the perfect marble – a rare variety of brown marble sourced from eastern Europe – for the base and a lot of research on how to enhance the globe form itself. It was a lengthy and highly rewarding process and to see the trophies on stage now, the Society Awards team has a lot of pride for our part in refining an icon. We also had a lot of fun updating the MTV VMA Moonman, which is now of course the Moon Person. It was another instance of trying to change a trophy without changing it, to make it the best version of itself. The statuette’s spacesuit was made to more closely match the details of a real spacesuit – that took research because you have to merge the real-world details with the whimsical, artistic style, otherwise you just have a figurine.”



Society Awards Exclusives Collection; Artful and Ready-To-Award

What are the most unique or luxe materials you've worked with?

“Clients come to us with all sorts of challenging materials. We’ve crafted awards out of the precious, like malachite and the unconventional, like a client [who] wanted an award made from Corian, a common countertop material. One of our most luxurious awards creations was for the Academy of Country Music’s 50th Anniversary program. In a collaboration with designer David Yurman, we crafted the trophy out of more than one thousand grams of sterling silver and over 4 carats of black diamonds. The trophy incorporated Yurman’s signature cable pattern into the silhouette of the iconic ACM statuette. It also features a black onyx stone with the number “50” in gold inlay. The trophy is among the most valuable in the world. It was a really thrilling experience to work with the David Yurman team, the results couldn’t have been better.”



Milestone Award Trophy

As a professional entrenched in the entertainment industry, how do you feel about the new Popular Film Oscar category?

“There has been a lot of discussion about this new category at the Oscars. I see a lot of people bashing it and saying how this is such terrible idea. I’m simply not one to join in on this headline hysteria. The Academy has built an incredible brand – that statuette is undeniably one of the great icons of our modern society. What we’re talking about is an organization that has stayed relevant and prestigious for nine decades. There are few if any brands that transcend generations so gracefully. Personally, I applaud their efforts to try new things. The media landscape is in flux and the average dissenter isn’t well informed about the entertainment, media and business landscape. We have to keep in mind that in watching entertainment award shows, we are voyeurs on an industry association’s awards gala. Similarly, we make Oscar-quality awards for the American Welding Society and their

black-tie annual gala represents innovation, excellence and service in their field. If there were celebrities honored in that event, we would be voyeurs there too and start to analyze what categories they should have. We certainly all use and live with welded products, but this is their industry event. The Academy simply can't allow popular opinion to dictate their future, they would stagnate. Whether this category endures the next ninety years or not is irrelevant, the Oscars will never be anything less than the Oscars."

Tags: ASPIRE DESIGN AND HOME, David Mortiz, Jason Garcia, MTV Moonperson, NAACP Image Award, Society Awards, The Voice Trophy