



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

News Release

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70-year wait for student medal is finally over for architect

A 94 year-old architect denied a prestigious student award during World War Two because of his German origins, has been finally honoured at a ceremony in Edinburgh.

Born in Berlin in 1920, Antony Wolffe fled his homeland in 1937 in the face of Nazi oppression. He received a scholarship of £80 a year to study at Edinburgh College of Art (ECA) where he won the City of Edinburgh Civic Design Medal after coming top in his final year.

However, giving an award to a German in 1944 was deemed too sensitive. Another student was offered the medal instead, but he turned it down.

Last night (Monday) at the opening of a retrospective exhibition of Mr Wolffe's student drawings, he was presented at last with the award he won 71 years ago.

Officials from ECA had sourced the original medal mould and ordered a new version to be cast in silver.

Mr Wolffe said: "I am chuffed. I never thought this would happen. It is wonderful and extraordinary. I've lived longer than I ever thought I truly would, so to see this exhibition of my work and to finally receive this medal, it is quite exciting."

Mr Wolffe's life was marked with incident. A period of internment in Quebec, Canada and the Isle of Man as an 'enemy alien' interrupted his student years in Edinburgh.

He has spent the majority of his subsequent career based in Gatehouse of Fleet, in Galloway, only retiring in 2012, aged 92.

In 1994 he was awarded an MBE in recognition of his services to architecture.

The current exhibition of his work has been organised by trainees from the Heritage Lottery-funded 'Skills for the Future' project at the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS), working with ECA. The exhibition provides an impression of architectural education in the late 1930s and the wartime period as well as his time as a student in Edinburgh.

It is open between 10am and 4pm every day from 27 to 30 January at ECA's Minto House on Chambers Street, with a late opening on 29 January until 6.30pm. Admission is free.

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