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Kelly Grant Recipients Travel Different Paths

by Clara Powell

Richard Kelly is widely recognized as one of the pioneers and great contributors to the profession of architectural lighting design. The Richard Kelly Grant, established in his name in 1980 by the New York City Section of the IES, aims to preserve and carry forth Kelly's ideals, enthusiasm and reverence for light.

That reverence for light and Kelly's understanding of the behavior of light were promulgated in the design values of *focal glow, sparkling brilliance and ambient luminescence* (his "ABCs of lighting"). Kelly worked with more than 80 prominent architects and designed over 300 major projects, always seeking to first understand the problem and then follow with a creative solution. His synthesis of technology with artistic purpose transformed the ordinary into beauty.

The purpose of the Kelly Grant is to "recognize and encourage young people whose work displays creative thought and activity in the use of light, preserving and carrying forth Richard Kelly's ideals and passion for light." Over nearly three decades, an eclectic collection of accomplished individuals have been honored with the grant. The IES New York City Section offers the following look at three past grant recipients and their stories.



Markus Earley – 1985

Markus Earley received the Kelly Grant in 1985 in recognition of an impressive body of work generated early in his career. He had learned about the grant as a young member of the IES and was encouraged to apply for it by peers and mentors. Then 25 years old, Earley had been working in architectural lighting for four years at Howard M. Brandston & Partners, Inc. His lighting teacher at Pratt Institute, Gene Stival, had been a mentor and recruited him to start working at BPI while still in school. The grant submission included the design of custom multi-function chandeliers for the Atlantic City Convention Center, which Earley had developed at Brandston & Partners.

"The Richard Kelly Grant was a nice encouragement to give back to the community, especially with my teaching," says Earley, who has taught at Pratt and the Parsons School of Design.

Earley eventually moved to southern New England when Lightolier relocated to Fall River, MA, where he designed and managed the fixture manufacturer's TechCenter. He developed a line of lighting fixtures and also designed the lighting in the company's new showroom. In 1998, Earley founded his own lighting design practice, earleylight, located in Providence, RI. His firm has designed prominent projects in hospitality, retail, commercial, residential and exhibit design.

Earley says that he takes inspiration from the fact that Kelly was a masterful educator and amazing speaker, and he refers to Kelly's ABCs of lighting when teaching his own students. "In retrospect, receiving this grant gave me a healthy respect for trying to keep things simple and well thought-out, taking after Richard Kelly, which means staying focused on a simple design approach, while addressing new technology, energy codes, sustainability and all aspects of design."



Matthew Tanteri – 1989

Receiving the Richard Kelly Grant has played a crucial role in Matthew Tanteri's career. After capturing the award in 1989 based on a portfolio of current works using lasers, neon and 3-D projections, Tanteri used the funds to develop a project (SARAS, Museum Gallery) that won a Lumen Award the following year. He then became the Richard Kelly Grant Committee chairperson and soon co-curated the 1993 "Richard Kelly: Selected Works" exhibit with Renee Cooley. Tanteri went on to become vice president and then president (in 1997) of the IES New York Section. In 2003, he established his firm Tanteri and Associates, specializing in architectural lighting, daylighting and art projects.

Tanteri admits that as a light artist he didn't know of the architectural lighting field until he applied for the Kelly Grant. Whereas his previous art work consisted of short-term pieces, the grant introduced him to the concept of a creative and artistic approach to the permanent built environment. Tanteri was so interested in this newly discovered field that he went on to Parsons School of Design to pursue an MFA in lighting design. Beyond architectural lighting using electric sources, Tanteri discovered the

depth of the art and science of daylighting under the tutelage of Hayden McKay, who taught daylighting at Parsons School of Design. "There is a link between daylighting and lasers," says Tanteri. "The very intense point source that is a laser is not such a different phenomenon than the sun. Both require a very formal and systematic approach."

In addition to his design work, Tanteri has taught at the Fashion Institute of Technology and at the New York School of Interior Design and Parsons School of Design. Reflecting on what the grant ultimately meant to him, Tanteri says, "it is a powerful vehicle for linking recipients not only with an individual's legacy, but an entire community of lighting professionals."



Margaret Maile - 2002

Margaret Maile received a Richard Kelly Grant in 2002. She is a different type of recipient: a historian and researcher.

Unlike most young people who apply, Maile learned of the grant program while researching Kelly, himself. With a background in architectural, industrial and graphic design, Maile was researching interiors by famous designers and architects when she came across Kelly's interaction with these architects. She was finishing her Masters and starting her Ph.D. when she received her grant.

The grant, beyond its financial aspect, brought validation to the in-depth historic research work she had done. Especially rewarding was the acknowledgment from professionals within the lighting industry, which wasn't her field of study. "The grant has good recognition in the lighting industry and it helped me to talk to lighting

professionals." It led Maile to Elizabeth Donoff, editor of *Architectural Lighting* magazine, and to writing for the magazine. It also resulted in a teaching opportunity at Parsons School of Design, in the MFA Lighting program, where Maile has worked in various capacities, first helping to write the Nuckolls Fund Grant application and then as an teacher and thesis coordinator. "The grant really helped me diversify out of the historian world and into the world of architectural lighting. It acted as an eye-opener. Simply put, receiving the grant gave me credibility and allowed me to engage with the larger community of the architectural lighting field."

Today, Maile is a senior lecturer position at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, where she will help to establish a new design studies program, in the school of design.

The Richard Kelly Grant is administered by the New York City Section under the auspices of the IES. For more information about the grant, please contact the IES at 212-248-5000, ext. 118, or go to www.ies.org/programs/awards.cfm. An overview of past recipients' submissions and current accomplishments can be viewed at www.richardkellygrant.org/

Clara D. Powell is vice president of marketing and business development for Eden Park Illumination. Ms. Powell received a Richard Kelly Grant in 1991, has held leadership positions with the New York City Section of the IES, including vice president and president, and is currently a board member of the Richard Kelly Grant.

Members in the News

Leviton has appointed Leong Yar Tham as business development manager for the Asia-Pacific region and Brian Sorensen as director of national distribution accounts for the company's commercial data networking business.

WAC Lighting has received UL Certification for its on-site testing laboratories at its manufacturing campus in QingXi, DongGuan in China.

Randy Breske, vice-president of sales engineering for **Stay-Lite Lighting**, received the NALMCO Distinguished Service Award for his willingness to give his time and energy for fellow NALMCO members and the betterment of the industry.

Day-Brite Capri Omega has launched an employee sustainability program to increase employee participation in sustainability practices at work as well as at home.

IES Calendar of Events
May 3-7, 2009
 LIGHTFAIR International
 New York, NY
Visit
www.lightfair.com

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