

PRESS RELEASE

INVENTOR OF GROUNDBREAKING MUSICAL INSTRUMENT ROLAND LAMB WINS SWAROVSKI EMERGING TALENT MEDAL AT LONDON DESIGN MEDAL AWARDS



London September 16 2014 – Designer and entrepreneur **Roland Lamb**, whose work focuses on reshaping music creation, was announced winner of the 2014 Swarovski Emerging Talent Medal, which will be presented at the London Design Medal Dinner held at the Leadenhall Building this evening. The Seaboard GRAND, a radically new musical instrument that reimagines the piano keyboard as a soft, continuous wavelike surface, was invented by Lamb, who is founder and CEO of award-winning music technology startup ROLI. Earlier this year, the Seaboard GRAND was awarded the Design Museum's Design of the Year award in the Product category.

The London Design Medal, one of the UK's most coveted accolades for creativity, is awarded each year by a panel of judges to individuals who have made a major contribution to design and to London across four categories. The Swarovski Emerging Talent Medal honours a young designer whose creativity has made an impact on the design scene within five years of graduation.

A graduate of Harvard University and the Royal College of Art, Roland Lamb married his passion for jazz music with an innovative haptic technology, the SEA Interface, to create the **Seaboard GRAND**. This futuristic musical instrument has a soft, three-dimensional keyboard that enables musicians to play more expressively by manipulating the surface with their fingers to control pitch, vibrato and per-note dynamic changes. Early fans of

the Seaboard include celebrated film composers and musicians alike. Oscar-winning film composer Hans Zimmer previously described Lamb and his team of 50 designers and engineers, as coming the closest yet to “establishing a new, truly expressive digital instrument”

An accomplished jazz pianist himself, Lamb’s reinvention of the piano as a sleek and slimline black silicone panel whose sensors respond to the lightest touch and are able to pick up every musical nuance, resulting in an enhanced musical experience that players describe as “telepathic”. The Seaboard GRAND is now available for sale in three versions - Limited First Edition, Stage and Studio - and has shipped to over 33 countries worldwide to date from ROLI’s production facility in Dalston, where each unit is hand-assembled.

Roland Lamb said: Roland Lamb said: “It’s a great honour to win such a prestigious award, and for my work with the Seaboard to be recognised in this way by the design community. For me it validates the work that we do here at ROLI and encourages us to continue to strive to push the boundaries as we strive to reshape music and ultimately expand the bandwidth of interaction.”

Nadja Swarovski, Member of the Swarovski Executive Board, said: “We are delighted to present the Swarovski Emerging Talent Award to a truly exceptional young designer whose inventiveness and entrepreneurial verve have made a real impact. Roland Lamb has combined daring technical ingenuity with creative bravura to develop a groundbreaking new piano that is beautiful, inspiring and innovative in equal measure.”

Ben Evans, Director of the London Design Festival said: “Swarovski is renowned for nurturing talent so its generous support of the Emerging Talent Medal is a perfect complement. Roland Lamb’s pioneering spirit really stood out to the judging panel. He is an outstanding talent who has pushed the boundaries of both music and design with his new keyboard, and we think he’ll be a major figure in design going forward.”

Roland Lamb is a designer and entrepreneur. At eighteen he moved to a monastery in Japan to practice Zen Buddhism, and then travelled extensively, working as a visual artist and jazz musician. A passion for cross-cultural thought brought him to Harvard, where he concentrated on Classical Chinese and Sanskrit philosophy, before completing a PhD in Design Products at the Royal College of Art. He founded Dalston-based startup ROLI in 2009, whose mission is to create new interfaces that expand the bandwidth of interaction between people and technology.

Lamb was selected by a panel of 15 distinguished judges, who included Alexander Payne, Worldwide Director, Design at Phillips; Martin Roth, Director of V&A; Paul Thompson, Rector, Royal College of Art; and Sheridan Coakley, Founder and Owner, SCP.

The judges’ criteria for the Swarovski Emerging Talent Medal were that the winner excelled creatively and had shown clear design merit; demonstrated ambition and a strong commitment to the profession; achieved critical acclaim and the willingness to push the boundaries; and had attracted a diversity of clients.

The committee also awarded the London Design Medal to brothers Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec; the Coutts Lifetime Achievement Medal to Lord Rogers, and the Perrier-Jouet Design Entrepreneur Award to Nicolas Roope.

Swarovski is committed to nurturing creative talent, having worked with some of the most exceptional rising stars on the design scene in the past decade. Its collaboration with the London Design Festival is part of a programme of cultural support which is driven by the recognition that designers promote the values Swarovski has upheld from its beginnings 120 years ago: creativity, experimentation and innovation. Swarovski is currently supporting *Louis Kahn – The Power of Architecture* at the Design Museum, London and *Egon Schiele The Radical Nude* at the Courtauld Gallery.

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#SeaboardGRAND

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NOTES TO EDITORS

1. London Design Medal Judges

John Sorrell- Chairman, London Design Festival; Ben Evans - Director, London Design Festival; Justine Simons - Acting Deputy Mayor for Culture; Tony Chambers - Editor in Chief, Wallpaper* Magazine; Paul Thompson - Rector, Royal College of Art; Nadja Swarovski – Member of the Swarovski Executive Board; Alexander Payne - Worldwide Director of Design, Phillips; Jane Withers – Design Consultant and Curator; David Adjaye- Adjaye Associates; Domenic Lippa – Partner at Pentagram; Sophie Thomas - Director Thomas Matthews; Sheridan Coakley – Founder and Owner of SCP; Marek Reichman - Director of Design, Aston Martin; Martin Roth - Director V&A Museum; Sarah Wyse -Managing Director, Head of Marketing and UK Business Development, Coutts.

2. Swarovski

Swarovski delivers a diverse portfolio of unmatched quality, craftsmanship, and creativity that goes beyond the manufacturing of crystal. Founded in 1895 in Austria, Swarovski designs, manufactures, and markets high-quality crystals, genuine gemstones and created stones, and finished products such as jewelry, accessories, and lighting. In addition, Swarovski Crystal Worlds was established as a unique venue dedicated to showcasing artistic interpretations of crystal. Swarovski Entertainment collaborates with established industry partners and exceptional talent to produce international feature films, while the Swarovski Foundation supports creativity and culture, promotes wellbeing, and conserves natural resources. Now run by the fifth generation of family members, Swarovski Crystal Business has a global reach with approximately 2,480 stores in around 170 countries, more than 24,000 employees, and revenue of about 2.33 billion euros in 2013. Together with its sister companies Swarovski Optik (optical devices) and Tyrolit (abrasives), Swarovski Crystal Business forms the Swarovski Group. In 2013, the Group generated revenue of about 3.02 billion euros and employed more than 30,000 people.

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About London Design Festival, 13 - 21 September 2014

The London Design Festival is a key constituent of London's Autumn creative season, alongside London Fashion Week, Frieze Art Fair and the London Film Festival. Established in 2003 its role is to celebrate and promote London as the world's design capital and gateway to the international design community and it has now established a reputation as one of the largest and most exciting design events in the world. This year the Festival will run from 13-21 September and over 300 events and installations will be on offer across the capital, from an exciting programme at the V&A to a major installation within Trafalgar Square plus over 250 partners who will participate in the nine day Festival.

www.londondesignfestival.com