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Teeter-Totter Wall at U.S.-Mexico border named Beazley Design of the Year 2020

By: Alexander Walter
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Beazley Design of the Year 2020 & Transport category winner: Teeter-Totter Wall by Ronald Rael and Virginia San Fratello with Colectivo Chopeke. All images courtesy of the Design Museum London.

The binational Teeter-Totter Wall intervention, connecting children on both sides of a U.S.-Mexico border fortification through three bright pink see-saws for a brief, viral moment in 2019, has been named the Beazley Design of the Year 2020.

"It is great to see a project that is seriously playful and playfully serious is the winner," said Tim Marlow, Chief Executive and Director of the Design Museum in London. "It remains an inventive and poignant reminder of how human beings can transcend the forces that seek to divide us."

Awards were also presented to designers whose creations had a broad social impact in the categories architecture, digital, fashion, graphics, product, and transport.

Following COVID-related lockdown restrictions, the Design Museum is hosting a virtual exhibition of this year's most innovative designs until March 28.

Teeter-Totter Wall by Ronald Rael and Virginia San Fratello with Colectivo Chopeke

Beazley Design of the Year 2020 & Transport Category Winner:
Name: Teeter-Totter Wall
Designers: Ronald Rael and Virginia San Fratello with Colectivo Chopeke

Summary: "Architecture studio Rael San Fratello have been researching the border that separates Mexico from the USA since 2009. Viewing the boundary as a site that severs relationships between the two countries, they wanted to create a place where those across the border could connect, designing three bright pink 'teeter-totters' (see-saws) to slot into gaps in the steel border wall. One designer worked from Juárez in Mexico and another in El Paso, USA. For just under twenty minutes on 28 July 2019, residents of El Paso and the Anapra community in Mexico could, for the first time, unite through play."