



Presentation of the Dr. Richard Escales Prize 2022

Trophy Goes to Two “Movers and Shakers” from Science and Industry

On the opening evening of K 2022 in Düsseldorf, Germany, the Dr. Richard Escales Prize was awarded for the ninth time – and, notably, for the first time in two fields: Prof. Thomas Seul was honored in the “Research and Development” category, while the entrepreneur Kurt Gebert received the award in the “Industry” category.



The award winners Kurt Gebert (2nd from left) and Prof. Dr. Thomas Seul (center) with the hosts of Carl Hanser Verlag Susanne Schröder, Florian Streifinger (left), and Oliver Rohloff (right). ©VDWF

The Dr. Richard Escales Prize is a media prize that is awarded every three years for special achievements in imparting plastics technology expertise. The person for whom the prize is named, Richard Escales, was an application-oriented chemist and author of several authoritative chemical engineering publications, who lived from 1863 to 1924. His neologism for the title of the magazine he founded was groundbreaking and became the normal term for “plastics” in the German language: **Kunststoffe**.

The festive presentation of the Dr. Richard Escales Prize was once again jointly organized by Carl Hanser Verlag and the VDWF (Association of German Tool and Moldmakers) this year. **Kunststoffe** editor-in-chief Susanne Schröder and her

colleague Florian Streifinger hosted the evening and welcomed more than 100 guests from the plastics industry to the award ceremony. However, co-hosting was not the only first on the evening of 19th October 2022. For the first time in its history, the Dr. Richard Escales Prize went to two winners this year.

Link between Different Disciplines

Prof. Thomas Seul was honored in the “Research and Development” category for his commitment and special achievements in communicating plastics technology expertise between different disciplines. He has rendered outstanding service to the plastics industry as an expert technological intermediary between the

industrial worlds of injection molding, toolmaking, and medical technology.

In 2007, he founded the Applied Polymer Technology Department at Schmalkalden University of Applied Sciences, which he constantly expanded and strengthened in terms of facilities and personnel. Together with colleagues, he initiated practical, in-service training courses and distance learning courses. Numerous publications in professional journals and filed patents demonstrate his commitment to serving as a link between the various scientific disciplines.

As a speaker and participant in panel discussions, Seul enriches symposia and conferences. The award winner also plays an important role as chairman in VDI (Association of German Engineers) Standardization Work and not least as president of the VDWF and the FDWF (Research Association of German Tool and Moldmakers), which was newly founded in 2021. There are many more roles he fills, according to the jury. As a thought leader, motivator, creative mind, and someone with a good understanding of mold makers.

Passion for Soft Materials

The entrepreneur Kurt Gebert received the award in the “Industry” category for his commitment to promoting innovation in the field of plastics technology and cooperation across company and organizational boundaries. Gebert originally came from a family of bakers and actually wanted to study mechanical engineering. But his brother inspired his passion for plastics technology. The jury’s reasoning: Kurt Gebert is passionate about the de-



The trophy is a replica of the mosaic by the Italian artist Lady Be, depicting the chemist for whom the prize is named: Dr. Richard Escales founded the magazine "*Kunststoffe*" in 1910.

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Info

Previous Winners

The previous winners of the prize, which has been awarded by Carl Hanser Verlag since 1998, are Dr. Erwin Bürkle (1998), Prof. Dr. Tim Osswald (2001), Dr. Erwin Baur (2004), Prof. Dr. Christian Bonten (2007), Prof. Dr. Georg Steinbichler (2010), Prof. Dr. Erich Wintermantel (2013), Prof. Dr. Sonja Pongratz (2016), and Prof. Dr. Andreas Gebhardt (2019).

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sign possibilities of soft materials and their seemingly never-ending variety of properties. He wrote the thesis for his degree in plastics technology at the University of Applied Sciences in Würzburg, Germany, on the subject of "rubber analysis" for Audi and then lived out his enthusiasm for soft materials at Mercedes.

It is important to the award winner that success is always a team effort and therefore he is personally very happy to know all the people he knows today. Among other things, Gebert is active on

the board of the VDI (Association of German Engineers) Plastics Technology Section, on the Research Advisory Council of the DKG (German Rubber Society) and in the Forum Werkstoffe e.V. (a materials forum). He can also be found in many plastics associations in his Franconian homeland in Germany and nationwide.

The guest of honor that evening was Sabine Escales, granddaughter of Dr. Richard Escales. She addressed her words of thanks to the honorees and award recipients. ■

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Plasco Engineering Inc.

www.plasco.com.tw



Tel: 886.5.2376175 · Fax: 886.5.2376176 · E-mail: sales@plasco.com.tw

