

Folding plug wins international award for student inventor (w/ Video)

March 19 2010, by Lin Edwards



The folding plug.

(PhysOrg.com) -- A design student, frustrated at having his brand new wafer-thin laptop scratched by the unwieldy and bulky plug attached to it, set about re-designing the standard British 3-pin plug that has remained unchanged for over six decades, and invented a plug that folds to a mere one centimeter thickness.

Min-Kyu Choi, a design student from the Royal College of Art in London, won the 2010 Brit Insurance international award for Design of the Year with his folding plug, beating 90 rivals including fashion designer Alexander McQueen's last collection, a twin-seat electric

aircraft from China, and a social housing project from Monterrey in Mexico.

Mr Choi said he was disappointed when he bought his MacBook Air slimline laptop, which is thin enough to fit in an envelope, only to find a bulky 4.5 cm plug attached to it. The design of the British three-pin electrical plugs has remained unchanged since it was standardized in 1946. He said when he found the computer had been scratched by the plug on a trip to the university he decided to design a plug that could fold flat to make it almost as thin as the laptop, and to prevent the pins causing damage.



The folding plug.

The design of the lower section allows it to be rotated 90 degrees so the two pins are parallel with the top pin, making the unit less than 10 mm thick and able to be tucked easily in a laptop bag. The design is fully protected by patents and it meets the British Standard regulations, and like the ordinary British plug, contains an easily replaceable fuse. Mr Choi has also designed an adaptor the same size as a standard British plug that takes three of the folding plugs.



Artist Antony Gormley, who was chairman of the award judging panel, said the plug was an elegant design that had been thought through and was modest and responsive, and “could make a difference to everyone’s life.” It is also likely to make Mr Choi extremely wealthy if it is well marketed.

The folding plug will be officially launched later this year, and will

remain on show at the Design Museum in London until 31 October.

More information: MadeInMind Ltd. - madeinmind.co.uk/

© 2010 PhysOrg.com

Citation: Folding plug wins international award for student inventor (w/ Video) (2010, March 19)
retrieved 23 April 2024 from
<https://phys.org/news/2010-03-international-award-student-inventor-video.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.