The Perkin Medal

In 1906 at a meeting of the Royal Institution the members of the SDC who attended were struck by the deep feeling with which the chairman, Sir William Henry Perkin, spoke when he received from the German Chemical Society the medal struck in memory of the person he called "my old master" which was the Hoffman Medal.

The Council of the SDC decided that no more fitting way could be thought of to associate the name of Sir William Henry Perkin with the objects of the Society than to found a "Perkin Medal".

At the 1907 Annual Dinner the Chairman of the London Region who were hosting the dinner announced that their President, Sir William Henry Perkin, had kindly given his consent for his name to be used for the medal.

Council wished this medal to be considered a rare and proud distinction and intended to confer it not for solutions of problems or as a prize for any competition but "*for investigations, discoveries or inventions of high scientific or industrial importance, applicable to, or connected with, the tinctorial industries*".

The Society awaited with pleasure and interest the first recipient and hoped they would receive it with the same pride reverence and humility with which Sir William Henry Perkin received the Hoffman Medal.

The first award was made in 1908 for the synthesis of alizarin.

There have been a further 24 awards made during the past 115 years for outstanding discoveries and inventions in the tinctorial arts and related fields, such as the synthesis of indigo, the permanent lustre on cotton, the discovery of Nylon and Terylene, the synthesis of reactive dyes and the invention of vapour phase transfer printing and ink jet printing.

It has therefore fulfilled the ambitions of the original Council of the Society of being a rare and proud distinction only given in exceptional circumstances, and it is thus the Society's most prestigious medal.

Andrew Filarowski, SDC Technical Director, SDC Awards Ceremony, York, 17th November 2023

Previous recipients of the Perkin Medal:

1908 - Prof. Carl Graebe and Prof. Carl Liebermann – synthesis of alizarin (40 years earlier)

1911 - Prof. Adolf von Bayer – synthesis of indigo

1914 – Comte Hilaire de Chardonnet – discovery of artificial silk

1917 – Prof. Arthur George Green – synthesis of Primuline

1919 – R Vidal – synthesis of Sulphur Black

1921 – Horace Lowe – discovery of permanent lustre on cotton

1923 - Charles Frederick Cross – discovery of viscose rayon

1925 – Maurice Prud'homme – synthesis of Aniline Black and Alizarin Blue

1928 – Dr Robert Emanuel Schmidt – synthesis of anthraquinone derivatives and dyes

1938 – Dr Henry Dreyfus – for his discoveries and work of outstanding importance in connection with the development of the cellulose acetate rayon industry in England
James Baddiley – in recognition of his national services for the renaissance of the British dyestuffs industry through many important investigations in the field of colour chemistry conducted or directed by him

1950 – Prof. John Bamber Speakman – outstanding contributions to the science and technology of textiles

1954 – Dr Arthur Zitscher – discovery of new class of azoic dyes based on arylamides of *o*-hydroxycarboxylic acids

1956 – Dr Wallace H Carothers (posthumously) – discovery of nylon
John Rex Whinfield – discovery of terylene

1959 – Dr Cecil John Turrell Cronshaw – as a leader under whose enthusiastic guidance the phthalocyanine pigments and derived textile dyes were first made available and their basic constitution established

John Thompson Marsh – outstanding contributions to the practice and the literature of textile chemistry

1963 – Prof. Guilio Natta – development of the stereospecific polymerisation of hydrocarbons to crystalline fibre-forming polymers

1966 – Dr Guido Schetty – research on 1:2 metal-complex dyes

1970 – Prof. Ian Durham Rattee and Dr William Elliot Stephen – contribution to the discovery and exploitation of reactive dyes

1973 - George Holland Ellis (posthumously) – contribution to the discovery and development of disperse dyes

1977 – Noel de Plasse – development and commercial exploitation of the vapour-phase transfer-printing process

1992 – Dr Colin W Greenhalgh – for the discovery and development of benzodifuranone dyes

1993 – Dr Abul Iqbal – for the development of new chemistry leading to the commercial success of diketopyrrolepyrrole (DPP) pigments

2000 – Dr Johannes Heyna and Dr Wilhelm Schumacher – for the development of sulphatoethylsulphone reactive dyes

2005 – Ichiro Endo – for leading the research to develop commercial thermal bubble ink-jet printers
Minoru Usui – for leading the research to develop commercial piezo ink-jet printers
John Vaught – for leading the research to develop commercial thermal ink-jet printers

2019 – Prof. Mas Subramanian – for unique and outstanding contributions to the coloration industry through the development of a novel blue pigment

2022 - Wolfgang Saus, Dierk Knittel, Eckhard Schollmeyer - for significant contribution to the development of critical CO_2 dyeing and its positive effect on environmental aspects of textile coloration.