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West Edge

Langdon Wilson: Tomorrow's Classroom Today

Six design firms. Six environments. A 600 sq.-ft. space. And a whole lot of manufacturers.



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IIDA/NY Pioneering Design Series: The High Line Design Team

On Tuesday, April 11, IIDA/NY presented **The High Line Design** team, its' second installment in its Pioneering Design Series.



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Emergent Solutions: Where Design and Organization Meet

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NeoCon West: Allsteel Breakfast

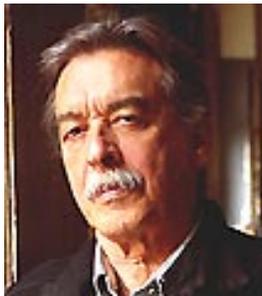
On the second day of **NeoCon West**, a rainy Tuesday in LA, **Allsteel** invited industry professionals to a breakfast at its downtown LA showroom (444 S. Flower Blvd.).



Full Story, page 10

Pritzker Prize Winner: Who?

In the 28-year existence of the \$100,000 **Pritzker Prize** for architecture, it has never gone to anyone as little known internationally as this year's winner. It is safe to say that 99% or more of U.S. architects have never before heard of **Paulo Mendes da Rocha** from Sao Paulo, Brazil.



Full Story, page 12

The Calibre Awards

The 18th annual IIDA Southern California Calibre Awards took place on March 28th at the Beverly Hilton.



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West Edge

Langdon Wilson: Tomorrow's Classroom Today

by Jonathan Katz

Six design firms. Six environments. A 600 sq.-ft. space. And a whole lot of manufacturers. For the third consecutive year, NeoCon West and Interior Design magazine teamed up to present the West Edge show and competition. This year, **Interior Architects, Griffin Enright Architects, Hodgetts & Fung, HOK, Langdon Wilson, and Gensler** participated, drawing an environment – corporate, multi-functional, spa, retail, education, or hospitality – to create and a list of manufacturers with whom to work. One of the resulting showrooms will be featured each week in officeInsight, between April 3 and May 8.

If a tree falls and no one is there to hear it, does it make a noise? Is a classroom without bookshelves really a classroom? How about a classroom without a teacher? This March, in room 230 of L.A. Mart, Los Angeles-based architectural firm Langdon Wilson answered at least two of these questions – the latter two.

Collaborative learning has become more popular in schools nationwide and the firm's education showroom was certainly not the first classroom to replace individual desks with long tables that favor group work; however, it may be the first with designated storage space for CD-ROMs instead of books.

"The concept [for the room] is based on computer technology in smaller classrooms, on students having laptops instead of pads and pencils, and on programs being done on-line by teachers who are virtual," said **Reginald Head**, the Director of Interior De-



sign for Langdon Wilson and the designer of the firm's West Edge space. The classroom of the not so distant future, he explained, is one where "everything is done on computers."

Tomorrow's classroom (as forecasted by Langdon Wilson) might also include **MechoShade** shades and **Jockimo** moveable floor tiles. The MechoShade product, presumably made of the company's environmentally friendly fabric, functioned as an adjustable partition separating the front, middle, and back of the classroom. It could be raised dur-

ing whole-class instruction and lowered to provide privacy to groups during collaborative work (an idea that might benefit some offices). Like this year's

winner, **Interior Architects**, Langdon Wilson's West Edge display was light-hearted. Jockimo's floor tiles, called **Living Surfaces**, were possibly the most conspicuous aspect of the showroom. Encasing a neon green and yellow liquid that shifted under one's foot, they added a playfulness that would have been as much at home in an elementary classroom as they were in a secondary or college classroom.

Mr. Head, however, doesn't believe that computer-centered classrooms will be making their way into elementary schools or even high schools anytime soon. "It probably won't trickle down to high schools for a while," he said. "But it's already happening in colleges."

The environment also included products from **Cooper Lighting, Global, Indiana Art Glass, Interface Flooring, Roman Architectural Finishes, and USG**.

2006 was not the first time the firm participated in West Edge. Last year, Langdon Wilson completed a health-care environment which won top prize. This year, Mr. Head and Langdon Wilson's assigned environment gave them one inherent advantage: many classrooms actually are 600 sq.-ft., a space artificially small for the other environments. The firm also has experience in designing educational facilities. Its list of educational projects includes three schools in both Pasadena and Beverly Hills, CA, and the DeVry Institute of Technology in West Hills, CA.

Cont'd on page 4, **West Edge** . . .

..WestEdgeCont'd from page 3

The firm's educational design experience showed through in at least one of the real world constraints to which it adhered. Because schools usually cannot afford architectural finishes, the environment was mostly painted. A window in the back wall also gave the illusion of looking out onto L.A.'s skyline.

There were also some conventional teaching tools to be found in Room 230. "I don't think you can rule out the possibility of interaction with teachers and professors and students altogether," Mr. Head said. For this reason, there were maps on the left wall (posters, not computerized renditions) and a dry erase board on the right (in case someone wants to write, as Mr. Head suggested, "Blog into your blog.").

Los Angeles-based Langdon Wilson International was established in 1951. In addition to its Los Angeles office, the firm also has locations in Orange County and Phoenix, Arizona. It has done or is doing projects in the U.S., as well as Mexico, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. Its projects include work for Lockheed Corporation, Creative Art-

ists Agency, The J. Paul Getty Trust, Hyatt International, Inc., Los Angeles Unified School District, and Wells Fargo.

Next week, we'll feature the West Edge space designed by **Griffin Enright Architects.**



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IIDA/NY Pioneering Design Series Presents: The High Line Design Team

by Jean Lin



The future of the High Line

On Tuesday, April 11 IIDA/NY presented **The High Line Design** team, its' second installment in its Pioneering Design Series. **Bruce Eisenberg**, New York City Parks and Recreation, **Jennifer Hoppa**, New York City Parks and Recreation, **Robert Hammond**, Friends of the High Line, **James Corner**, Field Operations, and **Ricardo Scofidio**, **Diller Scofidio and Renfro** discussed the history, present condition and future plans for the High Line, an elevated abandoned railway that stretches a mile through the west side of New York City.

The Tischman Auditorium at New School University was nearly filled to capacity, and the subject matter was clearly one of importance to the IIDA community. Keeping to the series theme of *forward thinking in design*, this project is innovative and groundbreaking. The old railroad structure was seen by many as an eyesore in the city and was on the brink of destruction in 1999 before Friends of the High Line swooped in and took steps not only to save the historical structure, but also to transform it to an outdoor park destination in New York City.



The High Line was built from 1930 to 1934 as part of the West Side improvement movement that sought to eliminate street level freight trains that caused numerous accidents and deaths in the mid 1800's. It was known as the "lifeline of New York" in the years between 1934 and the early 1960's. The High Line and its freight trains carried in dairy, produce and meats directly to warehouses and factories including what is now Chelsea Market.

Currently the line is a well-known "secret" that is not accessible to the public, but is known widely as a get-away from the city, beautifully overgrown with vegetation. The plan for the future of this historical structure is to transform it into a public space designed to preserve the "secret get-away" feeling while answering structural and functional concerns – such as entrance points, and over-passes, which will hopefully bring hundreds of thousands of people to experience the High Line for years to come.

The presentation was informative, displaying Field Operations and Diller



(l-r) Bruce Eisenberg, Jennifer Hoppa, Robert Hammond, James Corner, and Ricardo Scofidio

Cont'd on page 6, IIDA/NY

.. IIDA/NY Cont'd from page 5

Scofidio and Renfro's design plans for the space. The team outlined major concerns (keeping the unique feeling of today's High Line preserved), as well as areas and problems that required recruitment of more specified expertise (**Piet Oudolf**, Horticulture, **L'Observatoire**, Lighting Design, **Buro Happold**, Structural Engineering/Sustainable Engineering, and many, many others).

The Pioneering Design Series is an annual event and which, this year, is focused on individuals who are currently making positive strides and are forward thinkers in all aspects of design. It concludes with **Yves Behar** on May 23.▲



The High Line today

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NeoCon West Seminar Emergent Solutions: Where Design and Organization Meet

by Jonathan Katz

The dentist's chair. In America, at least, it has long enjoyed the reputation of being one of the least desirable places in which to be seated.

So what is it that makes the dentist's office so intimidating? Why, when dental work is not as painful as it was decades ago, does it continue to haunt young children? Is it simply the fear of having your teeth drilled? This writer would argue that it is not. Specific elements of the room's design make it less hospitable. For instance, while the moveable tray that is secured across one's lap is not the same shape and material as a seat belt, it certainly feels restrictive. Then there are those drills, lined up in a neat row, just behind the tray so that they can't be avoided. And have you ever noticed how the nurse puts the seat into a reclining position so that you can't run away once the drilling starts?

The conclusion seems unavoidable: dentists, by their workplace design, are sending patients a message: be scared.

The office environment, though generally less intimidating, is ruled by the same set of design laws. Whether done deliberately or not, the physical organization of an office is informed by its structural organization. Similarly, an office's physical space should take into account the type of workplace business owners envision, which is what **Dave Ancel**, Ed.D, **Emergent Solutions, Inc.**, discussed at NeoCon West in a seminar called "The Future of Workplace Design."

Workplace design, according to Mr. Ancel's PowerPoint presentation, is "an emerging discipline that combines professional knowledge and capabilities previously viewed as separate." It soon

became clear that workplace design attempts to integrate business processes, information technology, interior design, architecture, and organization development in order to create a more efficient and deliberate workplace.

The workplace of today, you see, is miles from yesterday's workplace. Social trends, technological trends, and trends in design practices have changed the way people work and, consequently, the type of space required for work.

Today, people tend to work "collaboratively" in "smaller, more flexible communities." Workers are often assigned group projects. Workplaces are often moveable. Consequently, it has become important for employees to be able to communicate easily, making isolated workspaces, such as cubicles, a bad fit for some office environments. Additionally, the proliferation of wireless broadband and web-based collaboration suites (multi-computer programs that interact through the internet) have

Cont'd on page 9, NeoCon West . . .

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increased the ways in which workers can communicate. The result is that business owners now have more ways than ever to shape their businesses and their workplaces.

The other side of this coin is that social, technological, and design trends, if not managed well, can make a business less productive.

Because there are so many factors that affect the workplace, the type of advice provided by firms such as San Francisco-based Emergent Solutions is becoming a much sought-after commodity. With social, technological, and design-related trends, business owners must now rethink how they want their employees to work with each other. Collaborating with clients, Emergent Solutions assesses a company's workspace, designs a plan for improvement, implements the plan, and, finally, reevaluates the workspace.

During his NeoCon seminar, Mr. Ancl was reluctant to get into the specifics of the planning because each phase differs depending on the particulars of the company. He did, however, stress the importance of physical space, providing two examples of floor plans the firm has implemented in the past.

The first, called the *neighborhood model*, resembles a more traditional workspace. In the middle of a rectangle lies a community space with workstations; the perimeter is lined with enclosed offices. The *community model*, on the other hand, is circular and provides less enclosed space. While a few offices sit on the perimeter, the majority of the space is open and dedicated to teams of workers. Which of these models a company might need depends, of course, on the makeup of the company itself. But Emergent Solutions has made it its business to get to the core of a company's needs. ▲

Make Recommendations for Design

The diagram shows two office models. The **Neighborhood Model** is a rectangular grid with enclosed offices along the perimeter and cubicles in the center. The **Community Model** is circular with enclosed offices around the perimeter and a large open space in the center.

- Enclosed Offices
- Neighborhood Model
- Cubicles
- Open Space
- Community Model
- Enclosed Offices

- Enclosed spaces with divided space (cubes) in between.
- People reserve space around others from their own organization.
- Private workspace is the primary aim. A percentage of the total group work force can be present on any given day.
- Central space is open with enclosed spaces around the perimeter only.
- Open space is shared common space with comfortable seating, a wireless network, coffee bar, personal storage, and decorated wall space (for personal photos, group memorabilia, etc.)
- Private workspace and public community space are shared aims. A percentage of the total group workforce can reserve private space on any given day and those without reservations are still welcome in the community space.

Imagining The Future of Distributed work at CAPITAL ONE...

A hand-drawn mind map with various branches and notes:

- 2005** (in a cloud)
- A MORE GLOBAL FEEL** - "don't get tied to one office"
- DRANDING THE WORK OFFICE** - "if you can't get to the office, why not work from home?"
- LESS FACE-TO-FACE INFORMAL CONVERSATIONS** - "a need for more structured conversations"
- AT THE CENTRAL OFFICE MORE BUZZ MORE INFORMAL, HIGH-ENERGY Collaboration** - "The need for real information... this happens electronically... The building separates"
- WHAT'S THE DESIGN CRITERIA?**
 - BROADCAST CAPABILITY
 - DISTRIBUTED FACILITIES
 - TIGHTLY CONTROLLED WORK
 - TEAM PROJECT ROOM
- THE OFFICE ENVIRONMENT IS LIKE A MARKETPLACE**
 - TOP PRIORITY WALLS
 - A LIBRARY
 - OPPORTUNITY FOR HEAD-TO-HEAD TIME
- QUALITY TIME COMES WITH HEADS DOWN TIME**
- INFORMAL SPACE FOR DIFFERENT KINDS OF WORK**
- WHAT'S THE DESIGN CRITERIA?**
 - Simple, come to the building a bright interchange of ideas...
 - A TOWN SQUARE
 - A LIBRARY
 - A COUSINHOUS/leader ship

NeoCon West's Allsteel Breakfast

by Jonathan Katz



On the second day of **NeoCon West**, a rainy Tuesday in LA, **Allsteel** invited industry professionals to a breakfast at its downtown LA showroom (444 S. Flower Blvd.). At 8:15 a.m., as I sleepily exited the elevator on the 4th floor, the sounds from beyond the ornate red-clad corridor that mark the showroom entrance – the vibrant buzz of conversations and the high-pitched clinks of plates, forks and glasses – were surprisingly loud, clangorous enough to make me wonder whether I was about to walk into an evening affair.

Immediately, upon stepping into the showroom, I was enlivened. My eyes immediately bypassed the black sea of suits and dresses for the white-clothed table that most people – the smart ones, – were huddled around. Before me were not the usual eggs, pancakes, and orange juice, but nothing short of a feast, catered by Pickwick Gardens. The food was not just a hit with me. One woman, going back for seconds (or thirds), said, “This is the best [catered Allsteel] event I’ve been to.” An-



other person, **Mark Sokolowski**, an associate at **Grubb & Ellis**, said, “I love it. It’s not typical. It beats having sausage and pancakes.”

Diana Parr, who is the Resource Center Manager for Pickwick Gardens, explained that their objective was to provide “food that blends in but doesn’t

take center stage.” The breakfast, set out on elevated trays, successfully transformed conventional breakfast foods, such as eggs, bagels, and fruit, into never-before-seen delectables. For instance, yogurt and berries were put into a cone with chocolate mousse for munching as if it were ice cream; watermelon was topped with 25 year-old balsamic vinegar; and eggs were served in a martini glass, alongside salmon, and derby, Gouda, and cream cheeses.

The breakfast was not all about food, or maybe the food was all about the guest of honor. In an attempt to unify practitioners of high-design in other industries, Allsteel invited **BMW Group** and its subsidiary, **DesignworksUSA**, to set up a display. Purchased by BMW in

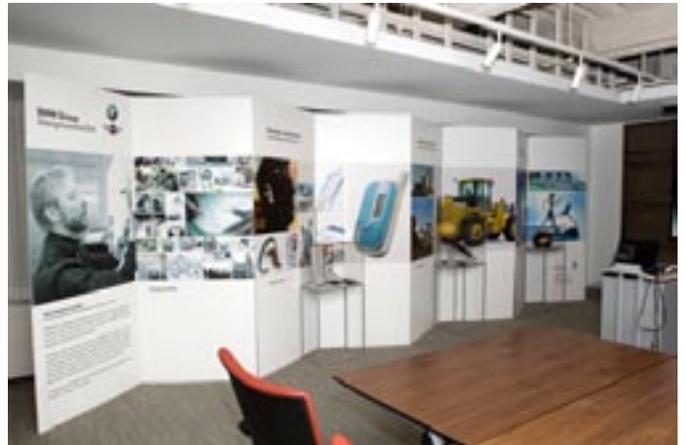
1995, DesignworksUSA has a long and wide-ranging portfolio, having designed earpieces and cellular phones for Kyocera Wireless, construction equipment for John Deere, skiing helmets for K2, fitness equipment for Star Trac, yachts, and airplanes.

While DesignworksUSA is clearly

not a regular in commercial furniture, **Kieran Wong**, Business Development Manager, Allsteel, said that he hopes to see more unity among the high-design community. “We wanted to show the power of design,” he said, explaining the company’s rationale for inviting BMW Group and DesignworksUSA to the breakfast. “Maybe other associations can embrace that as well.”

As the clock approached 11:00am, I had the opportunity to ask attendees about what they’d seen on the first day NeoCon West at the LA Mart. Some suggested that, in the future, organizers might want to take a page from Allsteel’s book, and invite vendors from a wider range of industries.

John Whichard, Vice President of **Corporate Business Interiors (CBI)**, however, was very positive. I think the West Edge displays are exciting and it’s a real value to see the creativity of the designers,” he said.



Overall, the event, which could have been marred by its early start time, was a great success. Mr. Wong and Allsteel, by forming relationships outside of our little design community, have the right idea.

Event planners, seriously, you need to contact Pickwick Gardens (www.pickwickgardens.com). ▲



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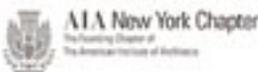
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Pritzker Prize Winner: Who?

by John Morris Dixon

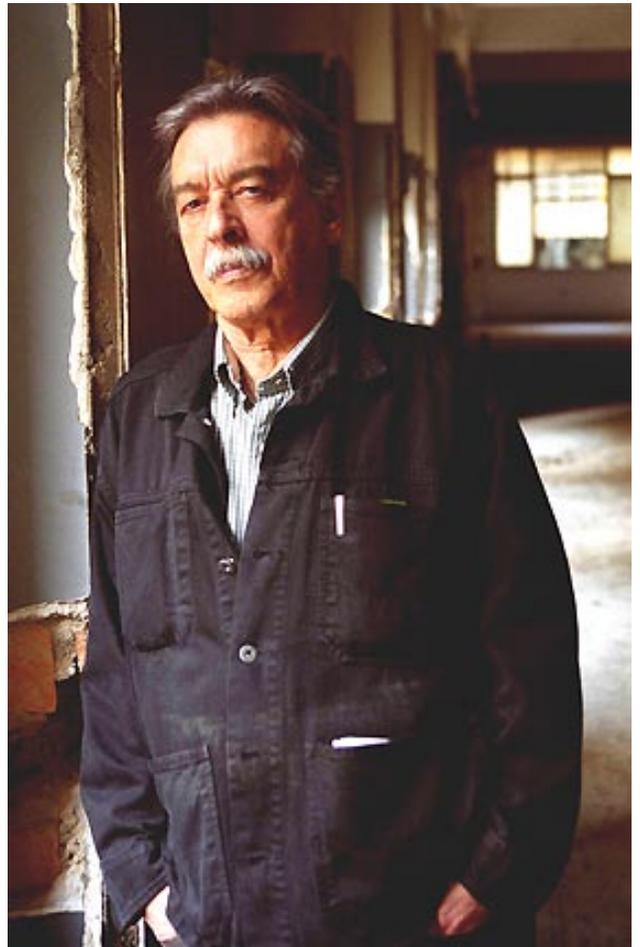
In the 28-year existence of the \$100,000 **Pritzker Prize** for architecture, it has never gone to anyone as little known internationally as this year's winner. It is safe to say that 99% or more of U.S. architects have never before heard of **Paulo Mendes da Rocha** from Sao Paulo, Brazil. His work did garner a two-page item in the 372-page December 2005 *Architectural Record*, most likely the first mention he had ever received in the U.S. press. (Never mind those 68,000 plus items you find when you Google him now — virtually all posted in the few days since the 2006 Pritzker was announced.)

Are there really little-known architects out there with world-class accomplishments comparable to those of past Pritzker winners **I.M. Pei**, **Kenzo Tange**, **Renzo Piano**, or the current winner's countryman, **Oscar Niemeyer**? Or could it be that at one Pritzker prize per year, the pool of exceptional talents is getting drained?

Quotations from the highly discerning Pritzker jury suggest that Mendes da Rocha is the genuine article. Juror **Carlos Jimenez** of Houston says, "He builds with exceptional economy to achieve an architecture of profound social engagement, an architecture that transcends the limits of construction to dazzle with poetic rigor and imagination." Juror **Rolf Fehlbaum**, Chairman of Vitra, is similarly

enthusiastic: "For Mendes da Rocha, the meaning of architecture is not to create isolated buildings, but to respond to eternal questions of human habitation." (This from an architecture patron who has commissioned buildings by such Pritzker winners as Frank Gehry, Tadao Ando, and Zaha Hadid — which look rather like "isolated buildings," great as they are.)

Mendes da Rocha is hardly an emerging talent. Now 77 years old, he was part of an avant-garde "brutalist" design movement in 1950s Sao Paulo. His buildings are characterized by simple, severe forms, often in rough-textured concrete. While curves appear in the work (this is Brazil, after all), they are usually crisply geometrical circles, rather than the flamboyant compound curves often found in the designs of his countryman, Niemeyer. His works can exhibit an almost shocking boldness, as in the



Paulo Mendes da Rocha (photo by Anna Ottoni)

park shelter for the **Plaza of the Patriarch** in Sao Paulo, where a vast canopy is suspended from a concrete beam that spans a whole city block. Of his roughly 150 projects listed in the Pritzker press information, many are of modest in scale and many remodels or renovations of existing buildings.

His contributions to the interior design world include his **Paulistano** chair of 1957, produced in three versions, and his **Forma Furniture Showroom** in Sao Paulo, which is notable for a window spanning the length of its building, opening the interior to the cityscape. During his career, he has designed other furniture, as well as theater sets. Outside Brazil, his work has included the Brazilian Pavilion at the Osaka Expo of 1969, and he is currently at work on the campus of the university at Vigo in northern Spain, as well as a housing complex sponsored by the Spanish government. He taught architecture for many years in Sao Paulo and has lectured widely in Latin America



Forma Furniture in Sao Paulo (photo by Nelson Kon)

Cont'd on page 13, Pritzker

...Pritzker Cont'd from page 12

and Europe – but not the U.S.

Making a convincing case for selecting Mendes da Rocha, the Pritzker jurors have brought to our attention an architect who seems to rank with the celebrity architects who won before him. In doing so, they must have passed by numerous potential candidates such as **Peter Eisenman** of New York (now basking in praise for his Berlin holocaust memorial), **Richard Rogers** or **Nicholas Grimshaw** of England, **Jean Nouvel** of France, **Toyo Ito** of Japan, or the currently celebrated **Santiago Calatrava** of Switzerland – all of them still waiting in the Pritzker queue as younger talents line up behind them.

This year's Pritzker will be presented at the Dolmabahce Palace in Istanbul, a royal residence of fabled opulence sited along the Bosphorus. Previous award sites have include such landmarks as the Hermitage in St. Petersburg, the White House in Washington, the Getty Center in Los Angeles, and the Todaiji Temple in Nara, Japan. Last year's prize was awarded to the American **Thom Mayne** at a particularly apt site, the new Jay Pritzker Pavilion, designed by Frank Gehry, on the Chicago lakefront. ▲

Jury for the 2006 Pritzker Prize

Lord Palumbo, chairman architecture patron London
 Balkrishna Doshi architect, planner Ahmedabad
 Rolf Fehlbaum chairman, Vitra Basel
 Frank O. Gehry architect Los Angeles
 Carlos Jimenez architectural designer Houston
 Victoria Newhouse architectural historian New York
 Karen Stein publisher, Phaidon Press New York
 Martha Thorne Pritzker Prize exec. dir. Chicago

Pritzker Prize Winners to Date

1979 Philip Johnson U.S.
 1980 Luis Barragan Mexico
 1981 James Stirling U.K.
 1982 Kevin Roche U.S.
 1983 I.M. Pei U.S.
 1984 Richard Meier U.S.

1985 Hans Hollein Austria
 1986 Gottfried Bohm Germany
 1987 Kenzo Tange Japan
 1988 Gordon Bunshaft U.S.
 + Oscar Niemeyer Brazil
 1989 Frank Gehry U.S.
 1990 Aldo Rossi Italy
 1991 Robert Venturi U.S.
 1992 Alvaro Siza Portugal
 1993 Fumihiko Maki Japan
 1994 C. de Portzamparc France
 1995 Tadao Ando Japan
 1996 Rafael Moneo Spain
 1997 Sverre Fehn Norway
 1998 Renzo Piano Italy
 1999 Sir Norman Foster U.K.
 2000 Rem Koolhaas Netherl'ds
 2001 Jacques Herzog Switzerland
 + Pierre de Meuron “ “
 2002 Glenn Murcutt Australia
 2003 Jorn Utzon Denmark
 2004 Zaha Hadid U.K.
 2005 Thom Mayne U.S.

May 20–23 2006

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 International Interior Design Association (IIDA)

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Product Intros

► **Arc-Com Design Studio** has added the botanical pattern **Jardin** to its Woven Crypton Collection. Jardin is available in a range of versatile colors including soft green, brilliant orange and soothing light blue. For more information, visit www.arc-com.com.



Noteworthy

► **Karen Herlt**, an interior design student at the International Academy of Design & Technology, has won the Association of Registered Interior Designers of Ontario's (ARIDO) Norma Ruth Ridley Scholarship. The \$2,000 prize (formerly the ARIDO Provincial Scholarship) honors interior design students who display impeccable professionalism and ethics, and who understand the importance of good business practices and professional standards.

► **Cameron Sinclair**, co-founder of the nonprofit organization Architecture for Humanity, has been teaching at the U. of Minnesota's College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture (CALA) in Minneapolis this semester. According to a recent article by Linda Mack ("Global architect touches down at the U") in the *Star Tribune*, Mr. Sinclair's studio assignments have dispatched his 90 students to disaster-stricken locations such as Waveland and Biloxi, MS, to design projects for real people in need. Local architect **John Dwyer** told Ms. Mack that he and his peers are trying to convince Mr. Sinclair and his partner, **Kate Stohr**, to stay in Minneapolis.

► The **brain** cannot see itself fooling itself, according to an editorial ("I'm O.K., You're Biased") in Sunday's New York Times, 4.16.06, by Daniel Gilbert, professor of psychology at Harvard. But, routinely, we are more biased than we think we are, but less than others imagine.

"Rumors of the **corner office's** death were greatly exaggerated," according to a new article by Betsy Schiffman ("Reclaiming the Corner Office") from Forbes.com. Ms. Schiffman suggests that an upswing in the economy may revive many corporate perks, including rooms with a view for executives. To read the article, visit www.forbes.com/forbeslife/collecting/2003/10/17/cx_bs_1017home.html.

► **Coverings 2006** was a resounding success, according to its organizers. More than 33,600 people registered for the four-day event in Orlando, a 4.4% increase since 2005. About 1,200 exhibitors from 56 countries were present. This year's keynote speaker was retail anthropologist **Paco Underhill**, and seminar leaders included **Donato Grosser**, a longtime consultant to the ceramic tile industry; color consultant **Leatrice Eiseman**, and interior designer **Clodagh**. More than 70 seminars were offered in all. The next Coverings will be held from Apr. 17–20, 2007, at Chicago's McCormick Place Convention Center. For more information, visit www.coverings.com.

► **Interface Flooring Systems Canada** has received a **Globe Award for Environmental Excellence**, which honors businesses who balance competitive business strategies and sustainable development."The award is a testament to the commitment of our employees here in Belleville and across Canada, who everyday live and promote our sustainability vision that ensures our business decisions are weighed against their potential impact on all economic, natural and social systems," says **Claude Ouimet**, Senior VP and general manager of Interface Flooring Systems Canada.

► **izzydesign** is expanding its Chicago showroom (Space #1150 at the Merchandise Mart) by about 50%, from 3,844 to 5,777 sq. ft., in preparation for its fifth-year anniversary celebration at NeoCon 2006. The extra real estate will showcase izzydesign's introduction of Isis seating, offered through a

strategic partnership with Methis of Italy.

"We have such a great story to tell, and it gets better every year," Chuck Saylor, founder and president, said in a statement. "When we launched izzy in a temporary showroom in June 2001, industry leaders wondered what we were doing. Then there was Sept. 11, and the recession hit. A lot of people thought we couldn't have picked a worse time to launch a business. . . . And yet, those defining moments end up being the best time to introduce something different and fresh like izzy. The essence of izzy is all about being unique, special and to bring better value."



KI: Engage

► **KI's Engage** seating was recently chosen by **Allina Hospitals & Clinics** in Minneapolis to outfit Allina Commons, the company's new headquarters, which will house 1,800 employees. (Allina Hospitals & Clinics is the largest health system in Minnesota.) To make a decision about which chairs to choose, Allina enlisted the help of its staff. Over a two-month period, employees at six different Allina facilities tested four chairs from different suppliers, choosing KI, which worked with Allina to customize Engage chairs specifically for its nursing stations.

"Working in the healthcare field, it is important to us that our employees

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remain comfortable throughout their work days," said **Mark Hank**, Ergonomist for the Employee Health Services department at Allina Hospitals & Clinics. "The features of Engage allow me to easily fit the chair to employees of varying sizes and seating preferences to ensure that all employees are maximizing their comfort."

► **Material ConneXion** will preview "Transformation: Nature & Beyond," a materials development project that it initiated with the Philippine Department of Trade and Industry, during the **International Contemporary Furniture Fair** from May 20-23, 2006, at the Jacob Javits Center in New York. The unique project explores new applications of Philippine indigenous materials.

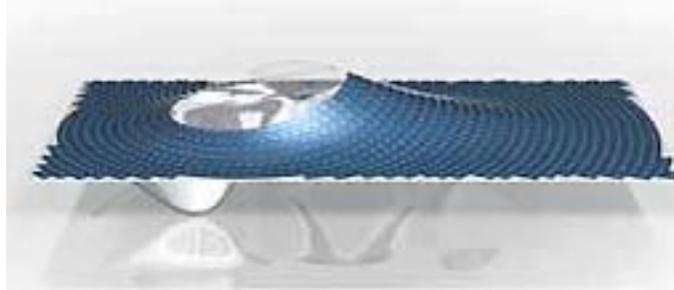
After visiting the Philippines and inspecting the manufacturing facilities there, **George M. Beylerian**, President & Founder of Material ConneXion, invited designers including **Gijs Bakker**, **Dror Benshetrit**, **Clodagh**, **Tom Dixon**, **Arik Levy**, **Karim Rashid**, and **Kevin Walz** to participate in the project by designing modular building and decorative elements. Each designer received a kit of materials such as abaca fiber, bamboo, saguing (banana plant fiber), coconut shell, lahar (pumice), and nito (a supple fern) and was asked to select at least one material to transform into something precious. The Philippine government identified suitable manufacturers for the items. Their prototypes for furniture items, floor and ceiling tiles, and different kinds of screens will be on view at the show. (Karim Rashid's line of benches, tables and stools is already installed in the Semiramis Hotel in Athens.)

Material ConneXion states that although the Philippines "possess a wealth of natural materials and a long, rich history of skilled craftsmanship . . . strenuous competition from China—which can make such products for less—has seriously threatened this income source." Mr. Beylerian said in a statement, "My solution was give up on the souvenir-shop trinkets and create more expensive things—the ad valorem concept. The added value would be big designer names from around the world who could create something with cachet that could be sold to archi-



DuPont Corian: Z. Island by Zaha Hadid

itects and interior designers whose clients will pay a higher price for a substantial, enduring object. Sure these pieces can be copied by the Chinese, but there is less encouragement in that market because it is so exclusive." For more information, visit www.materialconnexion.com.



Swarovski: Crystal Aerospace

► The 45th annual **Milan Furniture Fair** was covered in the mainstream press this week. The fair, which was held from Apr. 5-10, 2006, at a stunning new 2,000,000-sq.-ft. facility designed by **Massimiliano Fuksas**, attracted almost 200,000 visitors. Writing in the *New York Times*, Bradford McKee ("Louche Life") reported that there were "more than 300 product debuts, exhibitions and events held in Milanese storefronts and galleries, and more than 1,500 exhibitors."

One of the stars of the show was **Ross Lovegrove's Swarovski Cryst-**

tal Aerospace, a 14-ft. solar concept car made for the crystal company's annual group installation. Linda Hales of the *Washington Post* ("Coming to a Driveway (or Runway?) Near You") notes that Mr. Lovegrove "worked with Swarovski's optical lab, Sharp Solar Systems, and Anthony Lo, director of

advanced design for GM Europe." The designer told her, "If GM, Toyota or somebody wanted to engage, we're 50% there." Ms. Hales was also impressed by **Ron Arad's Ripple chair**, which incorporated a

cushion from **Issey Miyake's** famous A-POC collection; **Zaha Hadid's** concept kitchen for **Corian**; and pet accessories from **Gaia & Gino** designed by **Yves Béhar** and his students at the **California College of the Arts**.

Paola Antonelli, MoMA's acting chief curator of architecture and design, told Mr. McKee that exhibitors seemed less obsessed with novelty than they had for years; she was also "struck by the number of goods brought out to appeal to collectors, particularly art collectors,

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Moroso: Ripple

who, she observed, have been attending the fair recently in greater numbers." Mr. McKee's favorite designs seem to have included **Patricia Urquiola's** Antibodi chair for **Moroso**, **Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec's** Slow chair for **Vitra**, and **Fernando and Humberto Campana's** Brasília table for **Edra**. He noted that rapid prototyping and mass customization (seen in **Cappellini's** Mr. Bugatti chairs by **François Azambourg**, which are "made of crumpled tin injected with polyurethane") had influenced many projects.



Moroso: Antibodi

Los Angeles Times correspondent J.J. Martin ("Surprise! Milan gets pretty") stated, "[T]rends were everywhere. Perhaps most prominent was the demise of stark minimalist interiors." Ms. Martin noted the extensive use of prints, particularly on "non-fabric surfaces, such as the laminate tabletops that **Tom Dixon** covered in colorful pinstripe or chain-link patterns." She also liked **Hella Jongerius's** Worker chair for **Vitra**.

► **Poliform**, the Italian furniture manufacturer, has renovated and expanded its showroom in Chicago. The new two-story space in River North was designed by **Bestetti & Associates** and has more than doubled in size to 11,500 sq. ft.

► **POLLACK architecture** in San Francisco has announced the promotions of **Sharron Harper**, **Christopher Hume**, and **Todd Levine** to Associates. Ms. Harper joined the firm more than two years ago as its Finance and HR Director. She previously worked for The Kuba-la Washatko Architects of Cedarburg, WI. Mr. Hume has been with POLLACK for more than three years. Mr. Levine has worked on POLLACK projects for Intrax Cultural Exchange and Comerica Bank.



Sharron Harper



Christopher Hume

► **Tai Ping** has just opened a 3,600-sq.-ft. showroom in the Pacific Design Center (Suite B400, 8687 Melrose Ave.) in Los Angeles, its first on the West Coast. Tai Ping will introduce two new collections in the LA showroom, *Nomad* and *Orientalations*, designed by **Yasmina Kossmann** specifically for the US market. Both combine raw silk, traditional silk, angora, New Zealand wool, and other yarns. In addition, the new space will have samples of Tai Ping's hand-tufted offerings, the company's new "Jan Kath for Tai Ping" collection, and the archives of **Edward Fields**, the American carpet company recently acquired by Tai Ping. The showroom was created by **Matthew Baird Design**, which is also responsible for Tai Ping's headquarters in New York and the company's upcoming showrooms in Hong Kong and New Delhi.

Re-Sited

► **Seamus Bateson** has been named CEO, President, and the Chairman of the Board of **Commercial Furniture Group, Inc. (CFGroup)**, formerly known as **Falcon Products**. Mr. Bateson was formerly President and CEO of **Maitland-Smith**, a high-end residential furniture, lighting, and accessory division of **Furniture Brands International**.

► **Allen W. Ho**, AIA, has joined **RTKL Associates'** Los Angeles office as a principal in the firm's healthcare practice. Mr. Ho was previously an associate at **NBBJ** in Columbus, OH. He has more than ten years of experience designing hospitals in both the United States and Asia.

► **Rick Leonard** has joined **Krug** as a GSA Regional Sales Manager. Mr. Leonard has extensive Government experience, having worked with **Herman Miller** in a similar position. He was previously a wood casegoods specialist, and held a Design Director position for prominent design firms in the Midwest.

► **WB Wood** has brought **Dick Connolly** and **Brian Fitzpatrick** into its New Jersey office as Business Developers. Both previously worked for **Dancker, Sellev & Douglas**.

Projects

► **Mack Scogin Merrill Elam Architects** is designing **Carnegie Mellon's** new 159,000-sq.-ft. **Gates Center** for Computer Science, according to a recent article by **Andrew Peters** ("Architects unveil Gates Center design") in *The Tartan*, the university's student newspaper. The center will feature 318 offices, a 250-seat auditorium, a café, and exterior landscaping by **Michael Van Valkenburgh**. Mr. Scogin believes it will achieve a minimum of **LEED Silver** certification.

► **Skidmore, Owings & Merrill** is designing the \$85 million renovation of the **Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History**, which will close for almost two years in Sept. 2006. Construction should be completed by summer 2008. In a recent article in the *Washington Post*, "Museum

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Is Going Dark to Add Light," **Jacqueline Trescott** reported that the firm will "redo the core" of the 750,000-sq.-ft. building, adding "an atrium with a new skylight and a glass staircase" as well as a new welcome center, balconies, and gallery space.

► **Sorg & Associates, PC**, is designing US embassy compounds around the world. The Washington DC, firm's current projects include a four-story, 120,000-sq.-ft., \$110 million compound in Baghdad, Iraq; a \$142 million compound with 660,000 sq. ft. spread over nine buildings in Kabul, Afghanistan; a 110,850-sq.-ft., \$80 million compound in Kathmandu, Nepal; and a compound in Bridgetown, Barbados.

► **Wall Innovators** has been commissioned to install a demountable wall system in a 338,000-sq.-ft. clinical research building at the U. of Miami's Miller School of Medicine.

Events

► **Design Miami Basel** will be held in conjunction with the contemporary art fair Art Basel from Jun. 13-16, 2006, in Basel, Switzerland. It will feature design and decorative arts from 17 galleries including New York's Antik, Barry Friedman, and R 20th Century. The show will feature symposia with curators and museum directors from the Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum and MoMA in New York, the V&A in London, and the Wolfsonian-FIU in Miami.

► **EnvironDesign10** has announced its eight keynote speakers. (The conference is being held from Apr. 25-27, 2006, in Toronto.) They are: **Jianke Yu**, Environmental Activity Department, China (*The Greening of the Beijing 2008 Olympics*); **James P. Cramer**, The Greenway Group, Inc. (*Transforming Success: New Directions for Sustainable Design*); **David Gottfried**, WorldBuild, and **Gary Lawrence**, Arup (*The New World of Green*); **Vivian Loftness**, FAIA, Carnegie Mellon University (*Health, Productivity, and Innovations in Buildings*); **Chandrashekar Prabhu**, Chief Consultant for India's first Green City (*Environmental Design – Past, Present, Future*); **David Orr**, Chair of Oberlin College's Environmental Studies Program (De-



Sorg & Associates: US Embassy in Kathmandu, Nepal

sign on the Edge); and author **Daniel Pink** (*A Whole New World: Why Right-Brained Thinker Will Rule the World*). For more information, visit www.environmentaldesign.com.

► The next **High-Performance Green Building Design Salon**, "Building Green in NYC: Case Studies with an Emphasis On Materials Sourcing," will be held at the Center for Architecture (536 LaGuardia Place) in New York on Thurs., Apr. 20, 2006, from 5:30-7:30 pm. The guest speakers will be Chris Garvin, AIA, LEED AP, VP, Croxton Collaborative Architects; and Matt Berk, CEO and Founding Partner, Bettencourt Green Building Supplies. (AIA/CES Learning Units - 2 HSW 2 offered, Professional Engineering Credits - 1.5 PDH offered.) Pre-Registration is required by noon Wed., April 19, 2006. Admission is \$15 for AIA NY Chapter, ASHRAE/NY Chapter, EBANYS, USGBC NY Chapter members, \$25 for non-members, and \$30 at the door for those not Pre-Registered. To register, visit <http://go2buildings.com>.

► **Merchandise Mart Properties Inc. (MMPI)** and **Women in the Home Furnishings Industry Today (WithIt)** will host a networking tent party on Fri., Apr. 28, 2006, from 6-8 pm in the Century Courtyard in High Point, NC, for attendees of the International Home Furnishings Market. Guests will enjoy mingling with industry colleagues, cocktails and refreshments, a raffle to benefit the WithIt Scholarship Fund and live music from the band Special Occasions, after a long day at Market. The raffle will feature a

life-size wooden motorcycle from Market exhibitor Groovystuff. Raffle tickets are \$25 and can be purchased in the Groovystuff showroom, Suites at Market Square G-1352 every day during Market, or at the Furniture Today kick-off party, the WithIt tent party and all other WithIt events during Market. All proceeds will go to the WithIt Jena and Stephen B. Hall Scholarships, which support college students who plan to enter the home furnishings industry. For more information about all the special events during the High Point Spring Market, please visit www.merchandisemart.com/highpoint.

► **Stamford Office Furniture (SOF)** will host "Eames on Film," a seminar with **Kathleen Reehil**, AIA, on **April 26**, 2006, with refreshments served at 5 pm. (The program will begin at 6 pm.) The program will feature short, experimental films created by **Ray** and **Charles Eames** such as *Design Q&A*, *Powers of Ten*, *House: After Five Years of Living*, and *Goods*. A discussion will follow each film. AIA members can receive 2 CES units by attending; IIDA and ASID members can receive .2 CEUs. RSVP by Apr. 19 to Lynn Amos at lamos@sof328.com or 203.348.2657 ext. 215. ▲

Job Site

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Project Management

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Develops creative strategies to utilize regional showroom for business development functions and improve sales opportunities.

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-Bachelor degree in business administration or marketing/design/advertising or equivalent. -Four years experience coordinating work of others in lead capacity in the contract office furniture or commercial interiors industry.

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Special Feature: The Calibre Awards

The 18th annual IIDA Southern California Calibre Awards took place on March 28th at the Beverly Hilton. There were 19 industry sponsors including top level donors: Allsteel, Antron, Architectural Woodworking Company, Bentley Prince Street, Haworth, Kimball Office and Tandus. There were nine categories of award winners as follows (projects were nominated by the design firms involved):



Retail

Cox Communications

Nominated By: HOK Interiors

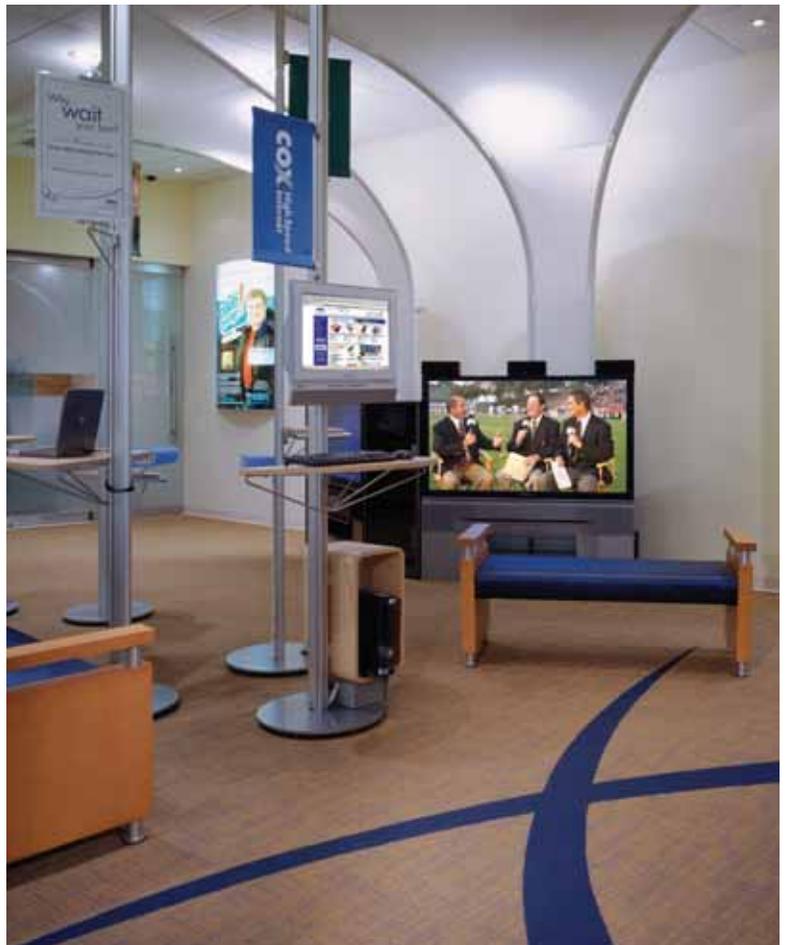
Team: Cox Communications

Howard Building Corporation

PacifiCraft Custom Wood

Designs, Inc.

B&N Industries



Hospitality

Umenohana

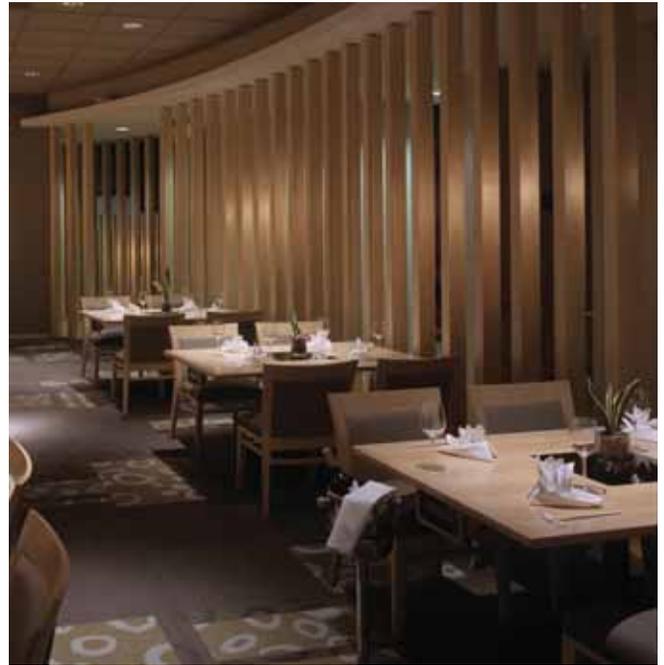
Nominated By:H.Hendy Associates

Team:Taisei Construction Corporation

WB Powell, Inc.

Fox + Fox Design

RW Smith & Company



Educational/Institutional

Rebecca and John Moores UCSD Cancer Center
Nominated By: Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership

Team: McCarthy Building Companies

Francis Krahe & Associates, Inc.

Louis Poulsen Lighting, Inc.

Katherine Spitz Associates, Inc.

bkm OfficeWorks



Boutique Firms (5 people or under)

Endurance US Insurance Operations

Nominated By: Studio V, Inc.

Team: Cushman & Wakefield

Environmental Contracting Corporation

Knoll

Western Office Interiors



Creativity on a Budget

Studley

Nominated By:Gensler, Newport Beach

Team:Studley

Howard Building Corporation

Seeley Brothers

Workplace Resource

Solomon Fine Art



Residential

Kings Road Residence

Nominated By: Zimmer Gunsul Frasca
Partnership

Team: Poole Construction, Inc.

Geo Tile & Stone

Ann Sacks

Louis Poulsen Lighting, Inc.

Bentley Prince Street



Healthcare

Hoag Memorial Hospital Presbyterian

Sue & Bill Gross Woman's Pavilion

Nominated By: Taylor

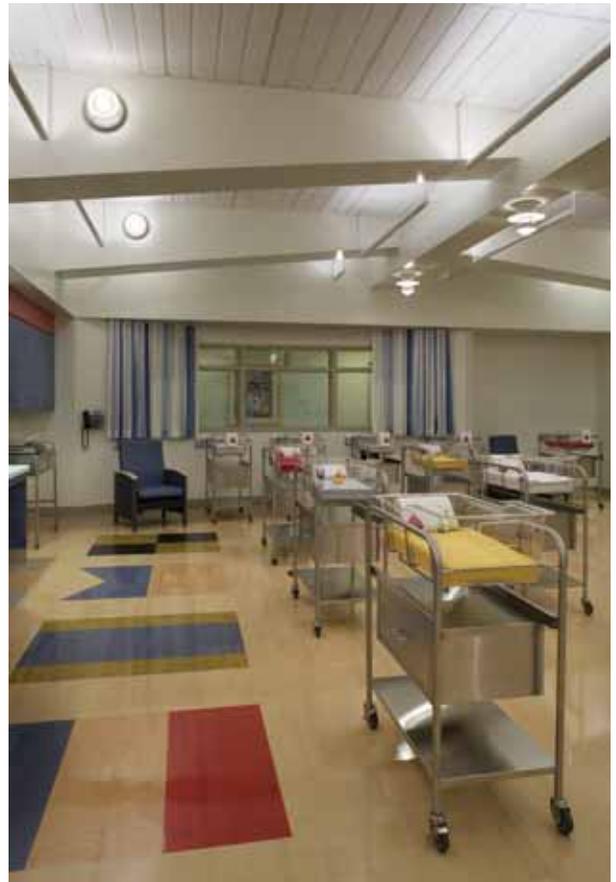
Team: Hoag Memorial Hospital Presbyterian

Systems Source, Inc.

McCarthy Building Companies

Jacobs Facilities, Inc.

MHS & Associates, Inc.



Small Office (under 35,000 sq.ft.)

CB Richard Ellis - Leadership

Nominated By:HKS Architects, Inc.

Team:CB Richard Ellis, Inc.

The Staubach Company

Environmental Contracting

Corporation

Western Office Interiors

Art Source L.A., Inc.



Large Office (over 35,000 sq.ft.)

Biogen IDEC

Nominated By:HOK Interiors

Team:Turner Construction

Lighting Design Alliance

Cisterra Partners, LLP

bkm OfficeWorks



Contract Furniture Industry 4th Quarter 2005 Review: Public Companies

The results for our group of seven publicly reporting companies for the fourth fiscal quarter of 2005 continued to improve, with aggregate revenues up 5.1% over the previous quarter and up 13.7% over the same quarter last year. All of the companies covered reported higher revenues, something that has not occurred for some time.

The results for the latest twelve months (LTM) reflect a 13.1% increase in overall revenues. Teknion has had the largest resurgence with revenues up over 20% for the period. Not far behind are double digit performances by **Herman Miller, HNI, Knoll** and **Steelcase**. Inscape appears to be on the mend from earlier difficulties while **Kimball** showed quarterly improvement but the year to year results continue to be depressed by the discontinuance of its residential products division in the first quarter of 2005.

The results represent the fiscal quarter(s) ending in the latest calendar quarter.

Revenue (\$MM)	Reporting Period									Q to Q	LTM %
	-8	-7	-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	Latest Q	Change (%)	
INSCAPE ¹	32	28	24	22	24	30	24	23	26	8.1%	5.7%
Teknion ¹	112	114	126	119	138	136	152	146	173	15.9%	21.9%
HMiller	330	330	354	357	368	382	408	431	438	1.7%	17.7%
HNI	457	464	509	574	547	562	594	632	662	4.5%	17.1%
Kimball ²	301	285	288	285	294	276	280	271	274	1.2%	-4.5%
Knoll ³	179	153	179	181	193	179	198	209	222	5.6%	14.4%
Steelcase	615	563	598	651	674	691	676	703	751	6.4%	13.5%
Total	2,026	1,938	2,077	2,188	2,238	2,257	2,331	2,415	2,545	5.1%	13.1%

1) All figures are in millions of U.S. dollars except for INSCAPE and Teknion which report in Canadian dollars (1 Canadian \$ = \$.65 U.S dollars through 2002, 1 Canadian \$ = \$.73 through 2003, 1 Canadian\$ = \$.78 for 2004 and 1 Canadian\$ = \$.84 for 2005).

2) Kimball discontinued its residential branded products in the first calendar quarter of 2005 and has restated its reported financials for the effect of the discontinued operations. These numbers are not restated.

3) Knoll became a public company again on December 17, 2004.

BIFMA reported (March 3, 2006) that the industry produced 12.7% more goods in 2004 than 2005. When the results of this group are adjusted for furniture-only revenues, the increase is an even more impressive 14.5% on a year-to-year basis. While some of this improvement results from the fact that **Teknion** and **Inscape's** results have been converted to (weaker) U.S. dollars, HNI reflected stronger results in its furniture business relative to its hearth products. In **Kimball's** case the furniture business is showing greater improvement relative to its electronic cabinet assembly business.

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Furniture Revenue (US\$MM) ¹	Reporting Period									Q to Q	LTM %
	-8	-7	-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	Latest Q	(%)	Change
INSCAPE ¹	24	21	18	17	20	25	20	20	22	8.7%	13.6%
Teknion ¹	85	87	95	94	115	112	125	125	149	18.9%	30.9%
HMiller	330	330	354	357	368	382	408	431	438	1.7%	17.7%
HNI	327	350	385	436	401	428	455	477	496	3.8%	18.1%
Kimball	190	170	176	177	181	164	172	162	169	4.2%	-5.1%
Knoll	179	153	179	181	193	179	198	209	222	5.9%	14.4%
Steelcase	615	563	598	651	674	691	676	703	751	6.8%	13.5%
Total	1751	1675	1803	1914	1952	1981	2053	2128	2246	5.5%	14.5%

¹ Results for the Canadian companies have been translated into US dollars at the prevailing quarter-end rate. At 12-31-2004 the rate was \$.78 while at 12-31-2005 it had risen to \$.84.

The improvement in revenues carried over to the operating profit with all but one company reporting profitability and five of the seven reporting higher margins for the latest quarter. Importantly, all of the companies equaled or exceeded the margin average for the latest nine quarters, suggesting times have definitely improved.

Oper Margin (%)	Reporting Period									Latest Q	Average
	-8	-7	-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1			
INSCAPE	7.5%	3.5%	-14.5%	-9.6%	-8.7%	-29.1%	-17.8%	-3.3%	-2.0%	-8.2%	
Teknion	-12.5%	-6.4%	0.8%	-6.8%	-0.6%	-3.2%	0.9%	-1.4%	6.0%	-2.6%	
HMiller	5.1%	4.1%	5.3%	6.4%	6.8%	7.6%	11.1%	9.1%	10.1%	7.3%	
HNI	9.1%	7.5%	8.0%	10.1%	8.2%	7.2%	9.1%	10.2%	8.7%	8.7%	
Kimball	1.8%	1.2%	3.0%	1.0%	1.7%	0.0%	1.0%	-0.6%	1.8%	1.2%	
Knoll	12.3%	7.5%	10.1%	11.7%	10.7%	9.5%	12.2%	12.6%	11.5%	10.9%	
Steelcase	-1.0%	-7.2%	-0.9%	2.6%	0.9%	0.0%	2.2%	3.6%	4.4%	0.5%	
Average	3.4%	0.8%	3.8%	5.1%	4.4%	3.3%	5.9%	6.2%	6.9%	4.4%	

Surprisingly, with all of this good news, the need to restructure continues. In the most recent fiscal quarter five of the seven companies felt the need to "take a charge". This represents the 19th consecutive quarter (beginning with the second quarter of 2001) that some of the companies in this group have done so. Steelcase has been the most consistent performer, taking a charge in 18 of these periods, followed closely by Herman Miller (17) and Kimball (15). Knoll continues to have the best record with only one instance, in 2001.

Restructuring (\$MM)	Reporting Period									Latest Q	Total 9 Qtrs
	-8	-7	-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1			
INSCAPE			1.4			9.9	2.4		0.5	14.2	
Teknion	0.6	5.6	-0.7							5.6	
HMiller	4.4	1.1	0.9	0.5	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.1	7.7	
HNI	2.4	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.0			1.1	2.4	6.7	
Kimball	0.6	0.9	0.1	0.3			0.1	4.8	2.6	9.4	
Knoll											
Steelcase	6.7	24.5	5.1	2.0	0.3	4.6	10.8	9.7	7.3	71.0	
Total	14.7	32.6	7.0	3.0	0.4	14.8	13.4	15.8	12.9	114.5	

Net income continued to improve quarter to quarter, achieving its highest aggregate level since the second quarter of 2001. All of the companies except Teknion reported at higher levels than their respective averages for the last nine quarters and all of the companies except the two Canadian companies were profitable.

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Net Inc. (\$MM)	Reporting Period								Latest Q	Average
	-8	-7	-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1		
INSCAPE	0.3	0.2	-2.1	-1.2	-1.4	-7.9	-3.2	-0.4	-0.2	-1.8
Teknion	-7.3	-4.1	1.4	-5.2	-9.9	-6.3	0.2	-3.3	-11.3	-5.1
HMiller	9.1	7.8	19.3	14.3	15.4	16.9	21.6	23.7	27.9	17.3
HNI	27.6	22.4	25.8	36.8	28.6	26.1	35.0	41.6	35.8	31.1
Kimball	6.7	4.4	7.6	5.0	6.2	1.3	4.1	-6.6	5.1	3.8
Knoll	9.3	5.2	8.8	6.0	6.8	6.9	11.4	8.2	9.5	8.0
Steelcase	-9.5	-18.4	-5.7	7.3	10.1	1.0	6.7	13.8	19.1	2.7
Total	36.2	17.5	55.1	63.0	55.7	37.9	75.9	77.1	85.9	56.0

The overall margin for the group improved to the highest level since the first quarter of 2001 and Herman Miller reported its highest result for the five year period. Five of the companies bettered their average for the past nine quarters with Teknion and HNI falling below.

Net Margin. (%)	Reporting Period								Latest Q	Average
	-8	-7	-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1		
INSCAPE	0.9%	0.8%	-8.7%	-5.4%	-5.9%	-26.0%	-13.3%	-1.8%	-0.8%	-6.7%
Teknion	-6.5%	-3.6%	1.1%	-4.4%	-7.2%	-4.6%	0.2%	-2.2%	-6.5%	-3.8%
HMiller	2.8%	2.4%	5.5%	4.0%	4.2%	4.4%	5.3%	5.5%	6.4%	4.5%
HNI	6.1%	4.8%	5.1%	6.4%	5.2%	4.6%	5.9%	6.6%	5.4%	5.6%
Kimball	2.2%	1.5%	2.7%	1.8%	2.1%	0.5%	1.5%	-2.4%	1.9%	1.3%
Knoll	5.2%	3.4%	4.9%	3.3%	3.5%	3.8%	5.7%	3.9%	4.3%	4.2%
Steelcase	-1.5%	-3.3%	-1.0%	1.1%	1.5%	0.1%	1.0%	2.0%	2.5%	0.3%
Average	1.8%	0.9%	2.7%	2.9%	2.5%	1.7%	3.3%	3.2%	3.4%	2.5%

Looking at the most recent nine quarters for the group as a whole finds an end-to-end 25% improvement in revenues, a nearly 200% improvement in pretax income and over a 100% improvement in net income. BIFMA's forecast for 2006 and 2007 is not as rosy as for the year just ended, with production forecast to increase 7.0% and 7.1%, respectively. Nevertheless, it is interesting watching how each of the companies are impacted (or cope with) the same environment.

Summary	2005								2005 4Q
	2003 4Q	2004 1Q	2004 2Q	2004 3Q	2004 4Q	2005 1Q	2005 2Q	2005 3Q	
Total Revenues	2,026.0	1,937.6	2,077.4	2,188.4	2,238.5	2,256.5	2,330.6	2,415.1	2,545.1
Gross Margin	609.3	571.2	640.4	672.9	676.1	670.3	734.1	772.8	806.6
Gross Margin (%)	30.1%	29.5%	30.8%	30.7%	30.2%	29.7%	31.5%	32.0%	31.7%
Restructuring Charges	14.7	32.6	7.0	3.0	0.4	14.8	13.4	15.8	12.9
Operating Profit	68.5	16.2	78.4	111.8	99.1	73.5	138.6	150.8	174.6
Operating Profit (%)	3.4%	0.8%	3.8%	5.1%	4.4%	3.3%	5.9%	6.2%	6.9%
Pretax Income	56.0	3.9	71.0	96.6	88.9	65.0	127.4	137.7	161.3
Pretax Margin (%)	2.8%	0.2%	3.4%	4.4%	4.0%	2.9%	5.5%	5.7%	6.3%
Net Income B4 Extra	38.4	22.0	54.6	63.0	56.4	39.9	75.4	83.9	85.9
Net Income	36.2	17.5	55.1	63.0	55.7	37.9	75.9	77.1	85.9
Net Margin (%)	1.8%	0.9%	2.7%	2.9%	2.5%	1.7%	3.3%	3.2%	3.4%

The market also enjoys watching and reacting to how companies are performing. Interestingly, five of the seven companies closed down quarter to quarter with only Herman Miller and Steelcase reporting modest improvements. In HNI's case the quarter to quarter price declined 8.8% even though the company completed an announced \$202.2 million (fiscal 2005) stock buyback. In Knoll's case the stock declined 6.8%, notwithstanding an announced increase in the dividend. All this is despite a 1.4% increase in the Dow Jones Industrial Average for the period.

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Stock Price \$	Reporting Period					Variance			
	2004 4Q	2005 1Q	2005 2Q	2005 3Q	2005 4Q	1stQ	2ndQ	3rdQ	4thQ
INSCAPE	11.7	8.0	10.0	8.5	4.0	-31.3%	25.0%	-15.0%	-52.9%
Teknion	5.5	5.9	6.5	6.0	5.5	6.4%	11.1%	-7.7%	-8.3%
HMiller	25.0	29.0	29.8	29.3	30.8	15.9%	2.7%	-1.8%	5.4%
HNI	43.1	44.8	50.9	60.2	54.9	4.1%	13.5%	18.3%	-8.8%
Kimball	14.8	14.5	13.2	12.1	10.6	-2.1%	-9.0%	-8.4%	-12.1%
Knoll	17.5	16.7	17.1	18.4	17.1	-4.7%	2.6%	7.2%	-6.8%
Steelcase	13.6	13.6	12.7	14.5	14.8	0.4%	-6.7%	13.9%	2.6%
Average	18.7	18.9	20.0	21.3	19.7	1.1%	5.8%	6.2%	-7.4%
DJIA	10,783.0	10,503.8	10,275.0	10,569.5	10,717.5	-2.6%	-2.2%	2.9%	1.4%

This stock price performance may suggest that the market thinks the companies' ability to improve results has peaked, a prognosis confirmed in part by BIFMA's much lower sales growth forecast for the next two years. This remains to be seen; Steelcase appears to be gaining strength after an extremely long period of difficulty while Knoll continues to rapidly reduce debt from its last recapitalization. As noted previously, Herman Miller achieved its highest net margin in the last five years while HNI continues to roll-up the hearth market with numerous acquisitions. All in all, the industry's performance is as interesting and varied as its products. (See *Industry Stock Prices* this section for the most recent closing prices.)▲

Financial Affairs

► **Knoll, Inc.**, will host its first quarter conference call at 10 am ET on Wed., Apr. 26, 2006. Since the call will include slides, participants are encouraged to view the presentation via webcast at www.knoll.com. (Go to "About Knoll" and click on Investor Relations.) The conference call may also be accessed by dialing 866.362.4666, Passcode 95562584. A replay of the webcast can be viewed by visiting the Investor Relations section of the Knoll corporate website. In addition, an audio replay of the conference call will be available through Wednesday, May 3 by dialing 888 286- 8010 (Passcode: 67867461).

► **Office Depot** and **Staples** have both had coverage initiated on them at "Outperform" by William Blair.

► **Teknion Corporation** has announced its first quarter results. (All dollar amounts are in the millions except EPS, earnings per share.)

3MosEnd	2/28/06	2/28/05	%chg
Sales	\$134.03	\$135.86	-1.35
OpInc	-\$6.22	-\$4.38	-42.01
NetInc	-\$7.53	-\$6.32	-19.15
EPS	-\$0.12	-\$0.10	-20.00

"First quarter revenue was in line with our expectation," commented **David Feldberg**, President and CEO. Mr. Feldberg continued, "We are encouraged by the strength of the market and the activity that we are seeing, and we expect to grow our revenue in 2006."

Teknion stated that new sales and marketing programs are "broadening the company's customer base into market segments in the US where [it] did not previously have a strong presence, including the health, education

and government sectors. As a result, management expects to generate improved financial performance in fiscal 2006 compared to fiscal 2005."

► **USG Corporation's** disclosure statement and plan voting procedures have been approved by the Honorable Judith Fitzgerald of the US Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania. This will enable the company to begin soliciting votes from asbestos personal injury claimants for its plan of reorganization, in connection with its plan to emerge from Chapter 11 later this year. Under the court's order, voting on the plan runs until Jun. 2, 2006 and any objections to the plan must be filed by May 26, 2006. Confirmation hearings are scheduled for Jun. 15-16, 2006, in Pittsburgh. ▲

Industry Stock Prices

	4.14.06	3.31.06	12.30.05	9.30.05	6.24.05	3.24.05	12.31.04	%frYrHi	%fr50-DayMA
ChromC	13.32	13.50	13.10	13.6	13.77	14	12.3	-9.39	0.25
CompX	16.50	16.20	16.02	16.4	16.41	17	16.5	-18.11	2.42
Hmiller	30.82	32.40	28.19	30.3	30.64	29	27.6	-6.52	-1.28
HNI	57.99	59.00	54.93	60.2	51.2	45.11	43.1	-7.08	-1.03
Inscape	3.50	3.30	4.36	6.8	8.96	10.01	9.1	N/A	N/A
Interface	14.18	13.80	8.22	8.3	7.59	6.77	10	-9.68	8.41
Kimball	14.27	15.00	10.63	12.1	12.89	14.12	14.8	-7.10	-2.17
Knape	18.55	18.50	14.18	13.1	12.22	12.95	13.1	-1.01	0.25
Knoll	21.07	21.30	17.11	18.4	17.34	17	17	-8.19	0.79
Leggett	23.95	24.40	22.96	20.2	26.51	29.13	28.4	-16.40	-1.09
MityEnt.	18.62	19.50	17.82	17	15.85	15	14.9	-4.90	-1.53
Mohawk	78.88	80.70	86.98	80.3	82.34	84.5	91.3	-14.68	-6.70
OffDepot	37.95	37.20	31.40	29.7	22.25	22.45	17.4	-0.55	3.34
Staples	25.94	25.50	22.71	21.3	21.57	30.99	33.7	-2.52	3.84
Steelcase	18.35	18.00	15.83	14.5	13.5	13.7	13.8	-0.81	3.55
Teknion	5.10	5.40	5.35	5.5	6.4	6.45	5.7	N/A	N/A
20-20Tech	6.70	7.20	8.00	7.4	7.25	9.1		N/A	N/A
UntdStat	52.57	53.10	48.50	47.9	47.91	44.31	46.2	-2.99	2.61
USG	111.25	95.00	65.00	68.7	42.49	32.3	40.3	-3.46	17.99
Virco	5.16	5.30	5.50	7.6	6.6	7.71	7.5	-2.39	-35.01
SUM	574.67	564.00	496.79	499.1	463.7	461.6	462.9	N/A	N/A
DJIndust	11,137.65	11,109	10,717.50	10,568.70	10,297	10,443	10,783	N/A	N/A

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