

HOUSTON'S THIRD BIENNIAL INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE DESIGN AWARDS GO TO 4 GIANTS, 1 SMALL UNKNOWN

Houston, the spectacular city to which the ASID repaired—out of natural curiosity—for its national conference last summer, is famous for many desirable things: a humming petrochemical industry; a direct flow of Arab oil and Arab friendship; an unprecedented growth rate; a total absence of urban zoning laws; the lowest taxation and unemployment rates of any big city in the nation; and apparently unlimited work for architects. It is the city to which young professional people are continuing to flock, and the city to which unemployed architects from the northeast and midwest immigrated in droves during the recent recession. Its appetite for architectural services is so great that many leading out-of-state architectural and design firms, such as Philip Johnson's and Saphier, Lerner, Schindler Environetics, Inc., maintain branch offices for the supervision of ongoing projects there.

Where interior design is concerned, Houston is notable for the fact that several years ago many of its most famous architectural

firms made it their business to build strong interior design departments, and to bid for whatever interior design commissions arose in connection with their building design commissions. As a corollary to this effort, the architects involved decided, about five years ago, to keep organizational control of interior design within the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects, implying a cold shoulder to interior designers who are not architects and who belong, many of them, to the American Society of Interior Designers, the Institute of Business Designers, or to both.

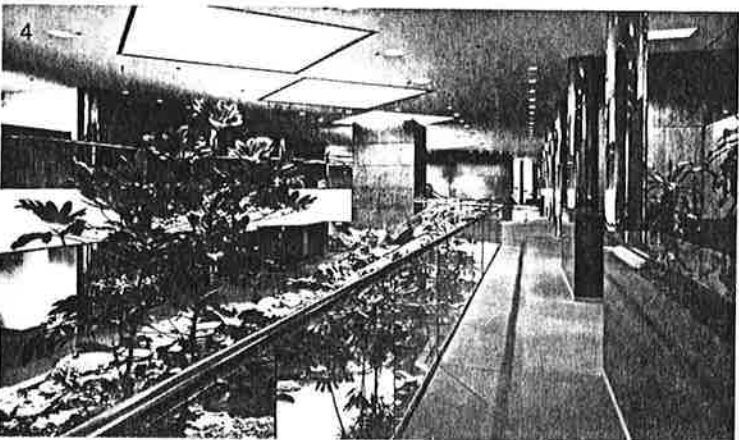
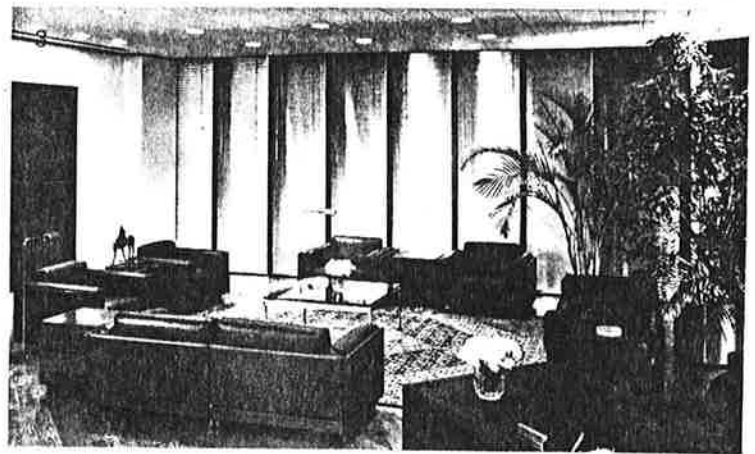
In the last two years, this trend has softened somewhat, under the impact of the accelerating improvement in ASID which was the natural result of its consolidation out of its rival predecessors, AID and NSID. The tremendous progress in raising standards of design education and qualification made through FIDER and NCIDQ—institutions independent of, though largely supported by ASID—may also bring the Houston AIA interior architects into friendlier rela-

tions with other Texas interior designers. In any case, leading ASID officials who also belong to AIA, such as 1975 National ASID President Norman DeHaan and 1978 National ASID President Irving Schwartz, are working to narrow the breach.

In the meantime, however, the members of the Interior Architecture Committee of the Houston Chapter of the AIA have won just renown for work which ranges from distinguished to merely sumptuous, and the AIA-IA has set up its own Biennial Interior Architecture Design Awards program to bestow official recognition on the best of this work. Always, the jurors have been chosen from outside the Houston area.

For the Third Biennial Awards, which were juried and announced on January 17th, a three-person jury was announced as usual, but since one of the jurors, Elmer Bot-sai, 1977 National President of the AIA, was unexpectedly prevented from attending, only two people did the job. The two functioning jurors were interior designer Ward Bennett and CONTRACT INTERIORS'

1. CRS's Fodrea Elementary School;
2. PGA's Blanton Ray Residence;
3. CRS's Bracewell/Patterson Law Offices;
4. 3D International's Harbert Construction Company's Corporate headquarters;
5. Urban Architecture's Texas International Airlines Facility.



HOUSTON continued

Editorial Director Olga Gueft.

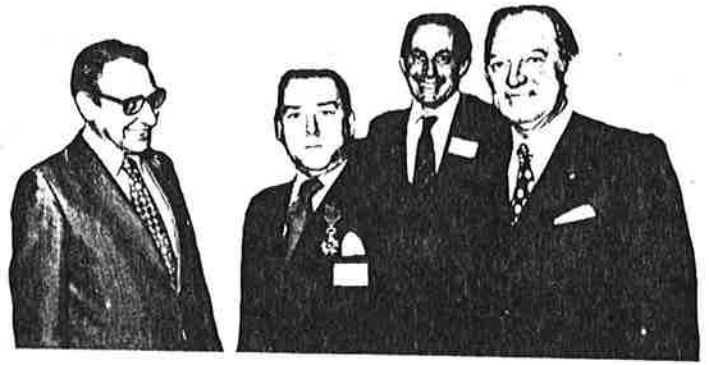
The program called for five categories: *Institutional, Commercial, Residential, Low Budget, and International*. The last was created because some Houston firms have had important commissions outside of the United States and its possessions, and both the jurors and the members of the AIA-IA Committee expected to see a few spectacular interiors in the Near East. Whether because of a desire for secrecy or because of problems in obtaining photographs, however, no International entry turned up, though most of the awards in the other categories were snapped up by the giant firms who presumably have government commissions in Saudi Arabia and its neighbors. Only one award, in the *Commercial Category*, was won by a small, rather new firm, Urban Architecture. Of the other five firms, one is an interior design, not an architectural firm, though it is a spin-off of one (Perkins & Will), and has always been associated with architectural interiors; this is ISD Incorporated, now headed by Michael Pinto, who came to Houston from Atlanta, where he was in John Portman's interior design department. Mr. Pinto's wife, Linda Pinto, heads the interior design department of Caudill, Rowlett, Scott, which won three of this year's awards. And to emphasize how closely knit this architectural/interior design community actually is, we might mention that Jim Hughes, one of the interior design vice presidents of still another heavy winner, 3D International (formerly Neuhaus & Taylor), came to that firm from ISD Incorporated, whose Houston office he opened after leaving John Portman's Atlanta office, where he was chief interior designer; he was Michael Pinto's boss at both the Portman and ISD offices.

In the *Institutional Category* both awards went to Caudill Rowlett Scott, for the Fodrea Elementary School in Columbus, Indiana, and the Wake Forest Fine Arts Center Classroom Building in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Bennett commended CRS for the exciting use of industrial materials in the school, and both judges praised the articulation of elements and use of color in the arts center, particularly in its theater in the round.

In the *Commercial Category*, the winners were the Greenway Plaza Summit Suite in the Summit Arena by Goleman & Rolfe (for drama achieved with lighting and slick, sophisticated materials); the First National Bank of Harlingen by 3D International (for classical dignity, spacious harmony and a democratic openness); the Galleria Bank by Pierce Goodwin Alexander (for a distinguished solution to a difficult planning problem); the Knoll International Showroom by S. I. Morris (for the "sails" that transform a confusing vertical space into an asset); the Bracewell Patterson Law Offices by Caudill Rowlett Scott (for a sumptuous interior distinguished by angular spatial organization); 3D International's Harbert Construction Co. headquarters (where even the computer department enjoys plants, view, and natural light); and a Texas International Airlines Reservations Facility by Urban Architecture (for an interesting 3-dimensional spatial solution). Urban Architecture, incidentally, was the only small firm winner.

In the *Low-Budget Category*, the winner was the Hyatt Regency Memphis Hotel with interiors by ISD (shown in the October 1977 CONTRACT INTERIORS and cited by the judges for beautifully formed and organized public spaces).

In the *Residential Category* the winner was the residence of the Blanton Rays by Pierce Goodwin Alexander (of which Blanton Ray is a principal). The house was cited for its serene main living space, effective use of a neutral palette and of corrugated roofing.



Belgian Order of the Crown to Harry Banks

Last fall, on unveiling "Belgian Linen Environments" designed by Cicanow Ltd. for the Belgian Linen Association, the Belgian government took the occasion to award Belgium's Order of the Crown upon Harry Banks, President of Hamilton Adams Imports Ltd., whose textiles and wallcoverings from Belgium are featured in many of this industry's resource firms. Above, from left, are Pierre Bodson of the Association; Mr. Banks; the Honorable Rene Van Hauwermeiren, Belgium's Consul General in New York, and, in the background, Jean-Loup Libeert, also of the Association.

IBD New York Chapter Directors

Newly elected members of the Board of Directors of the New York Chapter of the Institute of Business Designers were photographed during a Board meeting held at the New York showroom of Habitat/Intrex. Left to right are Muriel Henry of the IBD Board; Pasqual Pagnotta (Treasurer); Ken Muller (Chairman); Bruce Rabbino (President); Helen Schwanda (Secretary); Sydelle Hird (Vice President, Membership); Peg Walker (Vice President, Public Relations); Del James Blessinger (Vice President, Programs); Muriel Mayer of Habitat/Intrex; Don MacDougall (Secretary).



DALLAS MARKET CENTER'S CREATORS RECEIVE AWARDS

At the January Winter Homefurnishings Markets at the Dallas Market Center, not one but two organizations in the field bestowed kudos upon the two men who made the Dallas Market Center—the world's largest—possible. In the left photograph below, Market Center President William E. Cooper (flanked at his left by Mrs. Sue Cooper) is receiving a Certificate of Appreciation from Carolyn Blakey of the Texas Chapter of the Institute of Business Designers. In the right photograph, Trammell Crow is accepting the National Homes Fashions League's Honorary Recognition Award from Betty Watson, National President of NHFL. Crow is of course the developer of the multi-building Market Center which has transformed Dallas.

