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A review of tables designed for heavy use with strength, durability and space-saving features.

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Don't tell Denver's breathtaking Colorado Convention Center, designed by C.W. Fentress J.H. Bradburn & Associates and Loschky, Marquardt & Nesholm, to be one of the faceless, immeasurable convention boxes so many cities have.

A TASTE OF CULINARY SHOCK
Swiss bankers craving Swiss cuisine in America escape to Union Bank of Switzerland's new Manhattan cafeteria, designed by Gensler and Associates/Architects.

OH SAY, WHAT CAN YOU SEE?
RTKL Associates' dramatic design for the Baltimore Area Visitors Center can really flag down tourists.

DESIGN GOES TO SCHOOL
Is school design making any difference in the education of America?

THE CHILDREN'S VILLAGE ON THE PLAINS
Visit a school that looks and functions as if it really belongs to its children—the remarkable Broken Arrow Elementary School in Shawnee, Kansas, by Abend Singleton Associates.

NOT QUITE YOUR ALL-AMERICAN HIGH
An elite group of Japan's future leaders are being educated in the unique Keio High School, just north of New York City, designed by Haines Lundberg Waecher with Shimizu America/Morse Diesel.

ILLINOIS AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR CAMPUS
For a preview of how the 21st century's electronic, computerized schools might look, come to the new campus of Illinois Institute of Technology in Wheaton, with interior design by Perkins & Will.

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Student health programs of a kinder, gentler era no longer work for the University of Virginia, so Wiley & Wilson/Metcalf and Malino & Metcalf responded with the Elson Student Health Center.

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Design firms caught in the devastated Texas economy of the 1980s were astonished to find they could actually win new clients and territories without being super salesmen—it's called marketing—which their colleagues can follow in an important new study for the IBD Foundation.

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A school designed to withstand vandalism, security problems and low maintenance probably doesn't look like what most designers would expect.

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How on earth did Architectural Supplements' Planter Wall train sheet metal to extrude, cut and join precisely?

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Guess Who’s Coming to School Now?

Veterans of World War II who returned to the nation’s campuses in peacetime to resume their studies may think they’re seeing a deja vu if they gather at the entrance to the school of the 1990s—practically everyone is coming to school today. Events at home and abroad have made it clear that Americans of all ages may never outgrow the need for education. Politicians, business and civic leaders, John and Mary Doe, and more than a few architects and interior designers are openly expressing concern over America’s deteriorating educational system, our loss of economic competitiveness, mountains of public and private indebtedness, growing disparities in personal income, and the physical decay of inner cities and infrastructure. Many are pinning their hopes for the future on better education.

Can schools really make a difference against odds like this? Alone, no way. As this month’s essay on “Design Goes to School” points out, America is often disappointed in its schools partly because we expect so much from them without giving them adequate support.

But if the United States can find the resolve to assign highest priority to investing in its own people—a big “if” in a recessionary economy—the school buildings that architects and interior designers are asked to create, remodel or restore will become a lot more useful and interesting. What kind of educational programs might tomorrow’s schools be asked to accommodate?

• Intervening in the lives of young families, starting when children are in their preschool years, could bring parents and children to school for lessons in parenting, preschool activities, daycare and family counseling—as well as enlist senior citizens whose time and experience in nurturing might prove priceless.
• Raising the esteem and compensation for teachers in society could attract new, top-flight recruits to school, perhaps with a desire to conduct their own academic research and outreach to organizations beyond academe’s walls even at elementary and high school levels.

• Confronting the need for retraining and other forms of continuing education with investment tax credits for businesses and tax credits for individuals could channel both blue-collar and white-collar workers into school classrooms that might resemble the “real world” more than an ivory tower.

Add up all the possibilities and you may still end up with a facility that resembles the Jeffersonian temple of learning with its dome or cupola and double-loaded corridors that America has always revered as a prototype; a reprise on this theme can be viewed in our current story on “Keeping Yahoos Fit For Life,” a new student health facility at Jefferson’s University of Virginia campus. When Keio University commissioned a new school in the United States to prepare children of Japanese expatriates for college in Japan—a project featured in this month’s article, “Not Quite Your All-American High”—it sought and received a school that could easily pass for its American counterpart—unless you happen to stroll past the tatami room. And why not?

However, what will emerge from the new constituencies of the school system of the 1990s might also be a true community learning center, as much devoted to the human spirit and culture as hospitals are to the human body. It might be open nearly 24 hours a day for most of the year. It might comprise different types of buildings on a campus, clustered around existing schools or perhaps that reluctant agora of 20th century America, the shopping center.

Best of all for designers, it might be furnished with interiors that respond to a universal spectrum of users and activities with new designs that hold more wonder and promise than educators or designers have ever thought possible. That should keep architects and interior designers happily in attendance for years.

Roger Yee
Editor-in-Chief

Roger Yee
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Papers from the Joel Polsky-Fixtures Furniture Endowment Awards to ASID, FIDER and IBD Available Now

Kansas City - Norman Polsky, chairman of Fixtures Furniture, has announced that design research papers commissioned through grants from the Joel Polsky-Fixtures Furniture Endowment awards to ASID, FIDER and IBD are now available to designers. These articles, indexed as reference material in the NCIDQ Study Guide, have contributed to the design profession in various, sometimes surprising ways since they first appeared in 1983; many have been revised to the FIDER Standards and Guidelines for interior design education as well as actual legislation using the papers as part testimony.

One of the more notable samples has been the 1989 SID Prize to Dr. Sandra Rijwis, EG, for her thesis, "Reframing the Past..." which won first place in Holland in 1989. Another notable award was the 1988 IBD Prize to Dr. Sandra Rijwis, EG, for her thesis, "Reframing the Past..."

The World Arrives—No Kidding—in Chicago in June

Chicago - The International Federation of Interior Architects/Designers (IFI) will hold its 1991 World Congress from June 11-14 in conjunction with NEOCON 23 at the Merchandise Mart. Founded in 1963 and based in Amsterdam, IFI's World Congress will convene hundreds of designers from more than 30 member countries for this bi-annual event. The theme of the Congress, "City 2000: A Living Laboratory of Modern Urban Design," will be examined through a series of lectures and field studies. Participants will explore 100 years of Chicago history, culture, architecture and interior design in the Windy City's various neighborhoods.

Chicago will literally be used as the focus of numerous discussions and meetings. Attendees will gather each morning at a unique venue for educational programs and presentations by prominent local and international professionals. In the afternoon, IFI members will take field trips to points of interest throughout the city.

Primary sponsors for the event include the American Society of Interior Designers, the Institute of Business Designers and the Merchandise Mart, with significant underwriting by Haworth, Allied Fibers and The Odyssey, a yacht that will host a three-hour dinner cruise on Lake Michigan for IFI attendees.

All in the Family?

New York - It may be too soon to report concrete details of discussions among the leaders of North America's top professional design associations on consolidating their various constituencies. However, the most recent meeting, held in Haworth's New York showroom, was characterized by open discussion, willingness to compromise and mutual desire to reach agreement. And the talks will go on....

Present at the January 16th gathering were: Jan Johnson, IBD, president, the Governing Board; Betty McKeever Treanor, IDEC, chairman; Foundation for Interior Design Research; Michael D. Knoedler, IBD, president; Institute of Business Designers; Carole Price-Shanis, FISID, president; International Society of Interior Designers; Lynda Tetrault, IDC, vice president; Interior Designers of Canada; Raymond M. Kennedy, ASID, president-elect; American Society of Interior Designers; and Carol Jones, IDC, president; Interior Designers of Canada.

Lighting World International 1991 Goes Dark

New York - Although more than 80 manufacturers had committed themselves to exhibiting at Lighting World 1991, scheduled for the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center from April 24-26, many manufacturers informed the show's management that they would prefer not to hold the event this year.

This leaves the industry with Lightfair, to be held in Chicago from March 5-7, RHIDEC, planned for Los Angeles from April 5-7, and other events to be conducted in 1992.

Commissions and Awards

MMAP, a San Francisco-based interior architecture firm, has been selected to design the 17,000-sq. ft. offices for Industrial Indemnity in San Jose, Calif.

An agreement has been reached between Taiko Kogi, a leading Japanese design and construction company and The International Design Group, a major Canadian design and planning firm, to form a business relationship to collaborate on planning and design projects worldwide.

The Dallas Hilltop Inn, Dallas, has awarded a commission for 292,000 sq. ft. to Designers II, an Atlanta design firm, and Dean, Dale & Dean Architects, a Jackson, Miss., architecture firm.

Contracts for interior design services have been awarded to Wilson & Associates, a New York interior design firm, to design its Los Angeles headquarters.

Sverdrup Corporation has been asked to design the new AMTRAK-Long Island Railroad computerized control facility for New York City.

The Travelers Group of Insurance Companies is retaining Al-Five, a Philadelphia-based architecture firm, to design its new offices at Marlin Crossing, Marlton, N.J.

In relocating its headquarters to Falls Church, Va., the American Red Cross has selected Architectural Interiors Incorporated, of Washington, D.C., to provide interior design and mechanical/electrical engineering services.

The Mossoviet Executive Committee has announced plans for a 450-room Moscow Sheraton Hotel to be designed by Brennan Beer Gorman, New York architects, in association with Mosproject 2 and Bechtel International.
Knoll design. Westinghouse engineering. Shaw
Reff style. One company. With the works.
TRENDS

People in the News

Eight new associates have been named by Perry Dean Rogers & Partners, Boston, including Frank D. Chirico, Douglas Dick, Jeffrey P. Heyne, David M. Mullen, Bruce D. Rhoades, Catherine Suttle, Joan D. Tommy and Paul C. Viccica.

Phyllis Spittler has been named a vice president of the marketing firm Peel & Thomas, Houston, to serve design and construction firms.

The board of directors of The Falick/Klein Partnership, Houston, has named Thomas R. Fannin vice president and Bruce L. Laniken, Charles R. Love and Gary S. Owens associates.

The Ritchie Organization, an architecture firm in Newton, Mass., has named Steven F. Fiore, Carlos E. Melendez and Michael P. Roughton to vice presidents/principals; Dana P. Cooper to senior associate; and David H. Deininger, Blair B. Chamberlain and Sharon Gustafson to associates.

The Institute of Store Planners, Tarrytown, N.Y., has elected as its international officers Ruth Melbergard, international president, Charles A. Raymond, as international vice president; Patricia Uileny, international secretary, and Robert Ceretti, international treasurer.

Melinda Poul has been appointed vice president of Theiss Business Interiors, Ltd., Milwaukee interior design firm.

Marc Daigle, president of Levi/Daigle Enterprise, of Cambridge, Mass., reports the renaming of the architectural firm to Daigle Adelberg Design with the addition of John Adelberg to the firm.

Combing Events

April 3-5: American Design Drafting Association 32nd Annual Convention, Wyndham Paradise Valley Resort, Scottsdale, Ariz; (301) 460-6075.

April 5-7: Restaurant Hotel International Design Exposition Conference (RHIDEC), Los Angeles Convention Center, Los Angeles; (212) 391-9111.


April 25-29: Artextpo, Jacob K. Javits Center, New York; (800) 331-5706.


June 12-14: WorldStore 91, retail store planning and design, ExpoCenter, Chicago; (212) 391-9111.


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Circle 9 on reader service card.
Rosemount Office Systems' line of Private Spaces Office Furniture has been expanded to include Prodigy, an ergonomic office chair available in managerial, guest and conferencing models. Prodigy features mechanical and "body-controlled" adjustments including a patented, synchronous "free-float" action that allows seat and back to adjust to the body's movements.

Circle No. 223

Dakota Jackson has extended his 'CuB-a' Collection to include casegoods and tables. The 'CuB-a High Cabinet, characterized by layered surfaces and geometric components, appears to float on four cherry wood legs capped in bronze. Fronted with a sliver of polished and brushed parchment, the doors open to reveal cubed and rectangular components.

Circle No. 225

The Hazel Siegel jacquard wallcovering line for KnoffTextiles uses worsted, spun Olefin, a proprietary yarn system exclusive to Knoll worldwide. The worsted spun yarns provide smoothness to the seaming indicative of a more expensive, densely woven wallcovering. The line is available in five patterns and 69 colorways.

Circle No. 220

The Profiles modular desk system, designed by William Sklaroff for Roffman, comes in nine distinctive top and reveal details, covering the gamut from traditional to contemporary. The flexible system highlights handsome woodworking in the tradition of the Pennsylvania Dutch craftsmen noted for their love of details.

Circle No. 226
Armstrong World Industries' regular Fine Fissured Travertone and concealed Georgian Minatone acoustical ceiling tiles are available in seven variegated finishes. The multi-toned paint finishes create visual appeal by imparting a multi-dimensional look to the ceiling while complementing the hues in other interior finishes.

Circle No. 222

Azrock's new slip resistant line of vinyl composition tile offers a safer walking surface than smooth-surfaced flooring. The tile's textured surface forms the first element of slip resistance. Long-lasting traction is achieved with special friction granules dispersed through the tile thickness. Styled in a design that resembles granite, the tile is available in four colors.

Circle No. 221

Soon to be introduced in pre-dyed colors, DANKO's Fan Chair is a moderately-priced stacking chair with a patented folded seat and back that conform to the sitter. Torsion box construction of seat with mortise and tenon joints make this chair sturdy.

Circle No. 227

The Oval Magazine Altar by Lugar Designs features mahogany top and legs with cherry ball feet, but can be custom specified in any type of wood or finish. The edges of the tops can be inscribed with laser-cut Morse code messages.

Circle No. 229

The Neo Classic upholstery collection by Douglass Industries includes miniflamestitch, textured pin dot, bold check and crepe patterns in a total of 60 in-stock colorways. The woven Antron nylon fabrics with acrylic backing are flame resistant and are also offered with Healthguard antimicrobial finish for superior performance in health care environments.

Circle No. 228
KNOLL INTERNATIONAL
KnollStudio introduces the Pensi Collection by Spanish designer, Jorge Pensi. The collection includes the Toledo Table, offering a futuristic aesthetic. Its stainless steel table top is embellished with a pattern of concentric circles, and its polished aluminum column rests on four pad feet reminiscent of the landing gear of a lunar module.

CUMBERLAND
Cumberland's Sprint Folding Tables can be locked in series end to end or side to side. They are offered in several sizes, with top in a choice of woods and finishes with black reveal, on a polished stainless steel or black stainless steel base.

AMERICAN SEATING
The versatile Solar Table Group by American Seating offers a broad range of shapes, sizes, surfaces and edge treatments for varied needs. Wood veneer finishes provide an upscale look while laminated surfaces meet the need for durability. The pedestal base, available in a variety of finishes, adds distinctive styling while maintaining stability.

INTREX CORPORATION
Intrex offers its selection of parson tables in sizes from 36 x 36 x 29 in. high to 96 x 36 x 29 in. high. The tables are given extra support by special die cast inner hardware, and are available in Intrex's selection of choice veneers, or a palette of 30 Trex® Lo-Glare or Hi Gloss polyester resin colors.

TRAINING, LIBRARY AND CAFETERIA TABLES
Furniture designs of the Western world have come a long way from the massive settles, benches, tables and chests of the Romanesque and Gothic ages, which were hewn from heavy timber and often stubbornly resistant to moving. Paradoxically, the tables specified for use in training, library and cafeteria interiors today must combine the strength and durability of their Medieval ancestors with compact form and space-saving features. They will get heavy use, as they are pushed about, sat upon, stored away and transported. When they're not needed, they are often expected to disappear—at least to fold their legs and stow away flat. As for the unusual situations that come their way, such as cafeteria tables at a high school dance when the action gets very hot, you are only limited by your own imagination.
FALCON PRODUCTS
Falcon Products’ seminar tables combine to create a virtually limitless number of configurations. The tables are available with a wide variety of bases and top treatments to fit all decors.

Circle No. 214

SAUER MANUFACTURING
Sauder Manufacturing has developed a line of tables to coordinate with the company’s Phylock chairs. Sauder’s table offering includes wood and metal leg styles, a complete range of edge mold treatments, and a variety of laminate which allows for color matching and coordinating to fit any decor.

Circle No. 212

JOHNSON INDUSTRIES
The Johnson Seminar Table design by Johnson Industries is one of a vast range of configurations available utilizing seven basic table shapes, nine edge profiles and a variety of leg designs. Material includes laminates, veneers, and Johnson’s exclusive Colorcast, Colorflex, and Novastone.

Circle No. 208

ATELIER INTERNATIONAL
A new addition to the Atelier International product line is the Ingot Table Collection, for general office and food-service applications. The tables, designed by the Cassina Research and Design Group of Milan, Italy, feature modular cast iron base components, contrasting base ring connectors and a range of top shape and finish options.

Circle No. 201

HOWE FURNITURE CORP.
The Diffrient Training Table by Howe Furniture solves the safety, maintenance and aesthetic problems associated with loose wires in the training room. A large-volume wire trough is accessed from a flip-down modesty panel. Wiring is carried to the floor in a concealed manner by means of an integrated wireway attached to the table leg.

Circle No. 209

FORMS + SURFACES
Café Site tables from Forms + Surfaces feature wafer thin tabletops constructed of a durable, high-pressure laminate composite. They are available in round, square and rectangular shapes and a selection of smooth and textured surface colors. The precisely detailed contrasting black edge detail may be specified with a chamfered or radius profile.

Circle No. 210

MARCH 1991
STEELCASE

4900 Series Contemporary Tables from Steelcase are designed to be sturdy, durable and versatile. The tables are constructed of rugged fiber board and covered with a laminate that resists scratches and fading. The pedestal base is made of electrically welded steel tubing. The Series 4900 is available in a variety of size, shape and finish options.

Circle No. 203

VECTA

vecta's ballet tables, designed by douglas ball, are available with k-bases, for training rooms, or x-bases, suitable for library or conference applications. Both are offered in folding or fixed versions. Table tops may be specified in laminate or veneer with bases in thermoset colors.

Circle No. 217

KINETICS

Kinetics 400/601 Modular Table Series uses components that allow configurations to change with no tools required. A shared base joins and supports each adjacent surface, providing maximum seating with comfortable leg room all around. Base columns are finished in Kinkote or chrome; a full range of plastic laminate and veneer tops is available.

Circle No. 205

HBF

Hickory Business Furniture's Ribbon Edge series combines modularity and a crisp outline with high craftsmanship. The collection represents a successful blend between new and traditional, and all pieces are available with multiple pedestal configurations in a wide array of finishes in plain sliced and book matched cherry veneers.

Circle No. 204

DOMORE

Domore's Series/System 7 pedestal table offers flexibility for a variety of applications in office, library or cafeteria environments. Round, square and rectangular shapes are each available in a range of sizes. One of three finish colors may be selected to contrast or complement a choice of 19 laminates.

Circle No. 211

EXECUTIVE OFFICE CONCEPTS

Executive Office Concepts has added a 48-in. diameter top model to its popular P Series Table offerings. P Series tables are designed and engineered for a variety of commercial uses. The tops are available in either self-edged laminate plastic or hardwood edged with wood veneer or laminate plastic inlay.

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BYE, BYE, DUMB BOX

Don't tell Denver's breathtaking Colorado Convention Center, designed by C.W. Fentress J.H. Bradburn & Associates and Loschky, Marquardt & Nesholm, to be one of those usual colorless and tasteless boxes.

By Roger Yee

You can't blame Denver for trying. With over 10,000 trade shows and conventions consuming 7% more space each year in America, the Mile High City has thrown its hat in the ring with the new Colorado Convention Center, designed by the architecture firm of C.W. Fentress J.H. Bradburn & Associates in association with Loschky, Marquardt & Nesholm.

However, considering the more than 330 convention centers already in place, what's the more or less?

Yes, the Center represents a state-of-the-art facility encompassing some 970,000 sq. ft., and yes, the Center can effectively do just about anything other convention halls can. But no, the Center is not your usual convention hall as mammoth civic eyesore. Nothing, it is astonishingly handsome inside and out. And it really works.

The Center started life with a bang when the City and County of Denver requested proposals from teams of architects, contractors and developers to produce a site, design and guaranteed cost for a new convention hall. Given the depressed real estate market of Denver in the late 1980s, the price contest that ensued to win the award—pitting very well-financed teams with prize-winning players against one another—came as no surprise to anyone, least of all the urban Land Institute, the national organization of real estate professionals which Denver invited to judge the entries. The winning team of Fentress Bradburn and Loschky Marquardt, architects, HPA, general contractor, and French & Company, developer, proposed to create a fascinating, two-story structure on a site just two blocks from Denver's main retail area.

"We won the award on logic," Curtis Fentress, a principal of C.W. Fentress J.H. Bradburn, believes. "We had to make the Center festive, friendly and exciting on a tight budget. We also wanted it to do the job."

What the jurors found was that the land chosen by his team was within walking distance from hotels, retail, restaurants, nightlife and activities, and was able to accommodate transportation for both visitors' cars and exhibitors' trucks. As for the city's team proposed, it would hold up to 5,100 conventioners largely indoors all day, around them with a flexible exhibition space and a wide range of services, and offer them up to three separate, concurrent events—or the ability to make rapid changes that could take them from a local dog show to a national farm equipment exposition in very little time.

In short, a winner.

At the heart of the Center's design is a stacking plan with two floors that boldly divides the building's functions into two vertical zones. Some 300,000 sq. ft. of continuous exhibition hall space occupies the upper floor, while 46 meeting rooms and a 35,000-sq. ft. ballroom dominate the ground floor. By splitting these activities apart, Fentress Bradburn and Loschky Marquardt have found a novel way to set up exhibitions quickly and efficiently while allowing public function to proceed without interruption.

The concept is exciting to witness in action. Trucks ascend a ramp to one of 27 truck docks that can handle 70-ft. tractor trailers—and actually drive onto the vast Exhibit Hall. Ease of configuration is key here. As Fentress points out, "Eighty percent of conventions occur in 100,000 sq. ft. or less. This hall can be easily configured to meet that
demand." Aiding exhibitors in tapping into the building's services are power boxes flush to the floor, providing power, air, electricity and all utilities every 30 ft.

Fentress admits that it will be rare to have three separate conventions going on at once. "It's more likely that you'll have one setting up, one breaking down and one going on," he says, "or you can divide the space in two or just use the whole space." To make sure this cast-of-thousands road show can happen without mishap, the Center employs 60 staff people who monitor every movement, making sure everyone is in the right place doing the right thing. Whatever happens, the hall can surely contain it within its 90-ft. wide clear spans between columns and its 30-ft. high ceilings.

Activity is equally frenetic on the ground floor. Visitors to the Center can enter on any side, although they will most likely choose one of the three main entrances. Conventionees typically register at booths set up in the lobby and then take escalators, stairs or elevators (for barrier-free access) up to the exhibit hall. Other visitors may linger along the concours that runs down the central axis of the floor—sampling information displays about what's going on in the Center and around Denver, reservation booths for skiing at Aspen and Vale, business services such as facsimile, Federal Express and telephones, daycare center and a 400-seat restaurant—before entering the Center's meeting rooms and ballrooms.

Sending the tractor trailers upstairs also offers some unexpected dividends on the ground. At the same time space is left safe and clear for pedestrians, the truck docks act as a porte cochere for buses discharging and receiving passengers, a feature that is particularly appreciated during the snowy Denver winter. Another bonus is the structural support given by the ground floor's many columns, which carry the Exhibition Hall's heavy live loads.

Having so much floor area to fill in just a

The main lobby of the Center (left) displays "marbled" carpet and circular lighting fixtures to greet arriving conventioners. Circling over the lobby's perimeter is cafeteria seating that encourages people-watching by patrons.

Outdoor light, indoor lighting fixtures and light transmitted through frosted glass unify one of the Center's upper level lobbies (left, middle). Paying attention to such details as the pairing of lighting with columns and permanent walls gives character to space that could have been all too anonymous.

Architecture in the Center's cafeteria (left, bottom) echoes that of the building's facade in this space overlooking the main lobby. Drywall and color are exploited to playful effect here to establish a sidewalk cafe atmosphere.

One of the many delightful visual contrasts between materials in the Center is evident on the stairs (opposite) where the flooring repeats the planning grid and adds some geometric variations of its own. Giving the floor design an architectural scale relieves the sheer size of large circulation areas like this.
Frosted glass and a grid of non-structural columns and beams (above, left) act as a friendly, porous barrier from the commons area in this vignette of the Center's cafeteria. To reduce the institutional character of the setting, the designers have introduced small-scale patterns via fabrics, glass and lighting fixtures.

A typical Center corridor (above, right) has double-loaded corridors feeding traffic to conference rooms that can be subdivided into as many as 46 separate facilities. Graphics, applied much like a frieze using raised characters, are kept bold and simple for quick reference.

accelerated design-build timetable of two and a half years from the granting of the award, Fentress Bradburn and Loschky Marquardt knew they would have to work quickly and pragmatically to complete the interior design. "We took a no-nonsense approach to the use of materials," Fentress indicates. "Everything was very economical. It's interesting to see what you can do with drywall, paint and fluorescent lighting, for example."

Visitors invariably respond to the design at once, owing to its powerful use of geometric forms, attractive colors and dramatic lighting. Columns, beams and ceilings are sculpted and successfully used to impart an image to a facility that is theoretically a neutral void until it is transformed by its exhibitions. The color scheme too is pure artistry. ("We have employed a color palette that really represents what we call Colorado colors—neutrals and mattes," says Fentress. "The colors are what help keep the Center from looking too futuristic.") As for the lighting, it serves to orient visitors and to establish an unexpectedly convincing sense of place throughout the facility; almost every room sports its own distinctive custom fixture or built-in architectural illumination.

The Colorado Convention Center opened in April of 1990 to considerable public acclaim. Of course, the ultimate judge of a convention hall is commercial performance. The Center has already hosted a variety of gatherings that have ranged from the sublime (a rocket show for Martin Marietta) to the down-home (a farm equipment expo for the American Egg Growers). Developer David French, of the Denver-based French & Co., calls the project "first class and efficient."

"We have an extremely successful design," says Carol Wallace, executive director of the Convention Center Management Corp. "Meeting planners really like the simplicity; it's a very user-friendly space." Anyone who can buy construction of this quality, delivered at a cost of $82/sq. ft. in two and a half years instead of the usual four, should feel very proud indeed. Pity any of the nation's 330 other convention centers who can't make the grade.

Project Summary: Colorado Convention Center

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A Taste of Culinary Shock

Swiss bankers craving Swiss cuisine in America escape to Union Bank of Switzerland’s new Manhattan cafeteria, designed by Gensler and Associates/Architects

By Jean Godfrey-June

For employees of the Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS), coming to America can trigger a case of serious culinary shock: Most American business people dine in dull, institutional corporate cafeterias much like the dreary school and summer-camp mess halls they marched through when growing up. For Swiss employees of UBS in New York, however, lunch is still the main meal of the day, thanks to a corporate cafeteria designed by Gensler and Associates/Architects. UBS’s new cafeteria is a place where you can enjoy gourmet food, impeccable service and high design—a far cry from mystery meal and tapioca pudding.

But America is not Switzerland, whether in the realms of corporate cafeterias or banking. A writer for UBS’s Zurich corporate newsletter observed in 1989 that the New York cafeteria would have to serve two types of clients: “Whereas the Swiss usually distinguish clearly between work and the lunch break, Americans often prefer to just plunk down a cardboard box with food and eat it at their workstation.”

The cafeteria attempts to appease both the cardboard box patron and “the relishing luncher,” as the writer puts it, “who seeks to enjoy a decent meal with his party.” UBS presented the challenge to Gensler and Associates, the architecture firm the bank has retained to plan, design and/or retrofit its U.S. headquarters over a four-year period.

In fact, Gensler’s design represented a second chance for UBS. It had outgrown its small, existing New York cafeteria, which was one-fifth the size of its replacement. In addition, the older space did not reflect the sophistication Gensler was bringing to the rest of the facility, particularly the dramatic ground floor, one of 17 floors UBS occupies in a midtown Manhattan office tower.

Without making specific demands on Gensler in terms of design, UBS sought what Dina Frank, vice president at Gensler, describes as “a beautiful, yet easy to maintain space” where the bank’s 1,200 employees could meet in a relaxed setting. How well Gensler succeeded can be gauged by Alan Levine, project manager for UBS, who declares, “The cafeteria has become a focal point for the entire bank—it’s worked out incredibly well. You do really feel like you’re at a fine restaurant.”

Gensler has transformed an office floor with both practicality and stagecraft to make dining at UBS as memorable as it is convenient. Existing structural columns form a colonnade behind which banquets are placed and partitioned by etched glass panels, creating remarkable privacy within a 200-seat room. Given the cafeteria’s high level of design, the private dining rooms represent only a slight upgrade. A separate entrance defined by metal doors with opaque glass panels leads to an executive facility distinguished by fabric-wrapped interior walls, waiters, a private chef and a separate dishwashing area; movable partitions make the 70-seat space extremely easy to rearrange.

Since the building’s central core dictates that all activity take place around the perimeter, Gensler’s circulation plan for the cafeteria begins at the elevator and continues in one direction around the floor. Employees begin by passing through a security turnstile into the servery. Here, circulation disperses them among separate serving areas to avoid the long lines and impossible bottlenecks of traditional cafeterias.

A diamond-shaped island in the middle of the servery displays the salad bar, dessert bar, espresso bar, soda fountain and a frozen yogurt machine. Other servery areas offer a cold entrees display case, a hot food area where chefs openly prepare dishes, beverage refrigerators and a gourmet sandwich board. “It’s absolutely not cafeteria food,” says Jacob Boussou, senior associate at Gensler, who takes advantage of meetings with UBS to sample the menu.

Circulation then takes employees through the dining area to the dishwashing area at the very end. The linear sequence of events has been carefully planned, as Levine explains, “so people eating at the tables never have to see lots of people coming by with dirty dishes.”

An adjacent space at the south end of the building which currently houses a training area has been pre-configured for possible expansion of the dining area.

Obviously, installing a cafeteria 27 floors above Manhattan has had its pros and cons. The view, which Gensler has fully exploited,
More than a room with a view: Frosted glass panels (above) enliven the Union Bank of Switzerland cafeteria's sleek modernity and create a distinct sense of privacy, while the Manhattan skyline beckons from beyond.
is spectacular. On the other hand, installing ventilation and exhaust systems is always far more difficult in the middle of a building than at either the ground or top floors.

A good deal of the budget ended up going into the kitchen for venting and exhaust controls in addition to state-of-the-art equipment. To run this glistening machine, UBS employs approximately 30 kitchen employees, who are managed for the bank by Marriott. "They do an incredible job," says Levine. "The food is always fresh and delicious, prepared in the kitchen itself."

Perhaps the cooks are inspired by the view, essentially the same one seen from the boardroom of Dunn & Bradstreet on the floor just below. Though D&B's board members may never know it, a lot of construction in UBS's kitchen was done after hours and on weekends in their boardroom. "We'd go in Friday nights," recalls Bousso. "take apart their entire ceiling—ducts, sprinklers, conditioning and other systems—and work our kitchen furiously all weekend. Then we'd put the ceiling back in place, re-painted it and get ready to go by Monday morning."

Gensler admits that the relatively hand UBS has given it to design comes from the trust developed in the course of a year relationship. During this interval, architects have combined what they know about American banking facilities and Swiss culture to create interiors such as the cafeteria—uniquely bridging the gap between the two societies. "New York shock, there's no way around it," says Christian Breudel, a Swiss employee of UBS now stationed in New York. "But the cafeteria lets us have it both ways."

As they say in Manhattan, bon appetit!

Project Summary: Union Bank of Switzerland Cafeteria

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OH SAY, WHAT CAN YOU SEE?

RTKL Associates’ dramatic design for the Baltimore Area Visitors Center can flag down tourists—literally—in their cars

By Jennifer Thiele

The City of Baltimore may boast one of the nation’s finest restored waterfronts, the second jewel in thoroughbred racing’s Triple Crown, and some of the best daw crabs around, but if Ina Fleischer, manager of the Baltimore Area Visitors Centers, has her way, the first place visitors will stop in town will be the new office building on the corner of Pratt and Howard Streets, just off Interstate 95. The tower, a contemporary addition to the historic Marsh & McLennan building, listed on the National Historical Register as one of the area’s few remaining cast iron facade buildings, houses the Visitors Centers’ main branch, designed by RTKL Associates as a pro bono project.

As an organization involved in the city’s visitor and convention trade, the location of the newest Visitors Center makes strategic sense. It’s across the street from Baltimore’s new sports stadium, scheduled to open the first day of baseball season in 1992, and its convention center: it’s within blocks of the city’s prominent downtown hotel area; it’s on the route of a proposed light rail system; it’s central to both the Inner Harbor waterfront and the main airport. Fleischer could not ask for a facility that is more in “the dead center of the major tourist area” in Baltimore, according to RTKL principal Laurent Myers.

But the prime location was not enough. The association wanted a dramatic design that could reliably capture the attention of pedestrians and drive-in visitors to lure them inside. Not coincidentally, the exterior architecture of the new office tower that houses the Center provided a very appropriate setting. The building is characterized by a white, grid-like framework and a glazed facade, so its ground floor retail space lent itself well to the need for high visibility. So well, in fact, that original concerns about tight space were put aside in favor of the prime location and the opportunity to be seen.

Since the interior would have maximum visibility from the street, RTKL allowed the design of the space to serve a dual purpose, as both an interior statement and an exterior sign. Myers and RTKL project architect Jim Brown immediately envisioned the use of bold interior color and signage that would stand out against the stark facade and consequently catch the interest of passersby. RTKL also wanted to play up the space’s visual uniqueness by making it as different as possible from the building’s grid-like appearance.

“We had the idea that there should be something about the space that was soft and undulating, as a contrast to the facade,” says Myers. “So we started thinking about what types of images would serve this purpose.” Happily, this idea fit like a puzzle with another initial design concept—emphasizing Baltimore’s importance in American history.

Playing upon the city’s significance as the birthplace of the Star Spangled Banner, RTKL arrived at a dramatic result: the design’s most prominent feature, a full back wall in the form of a billowing American flag. The theme celebrates Baltimore’s history at the same time it provides what Fleischer calls a “stunning” visual effect.

Far from being purely decorative, Old Glory is also highly functional. Inside the Center, one of the undulating stripes of the abstract, three-dimensional flag forms the front of a laminated reception desk. Two work stations, comfortably accommodating up to four volunteer workers with behind-the-counter storage, and a telephone counter are built into the folds of the flag. Another stripe contains the backlit sign that announces the Center’s purpose.

The Center manager’s glass-walled office, reminiscent of the city’s rich tradition of screen-painting, was painted by a local artist with a Baltimore skyline landscape. This 70-year-old folk art form unique to Baltimore involves the painting of the front picture windows of homes with pastoral scenes and landscapes to increase privacy without losing the view.

In terms of interior furnishings, the Visitors Centers’ requirements have been minimal. The most important functional element is the orderly display and distribution of literature and information accomplished by two freestanding kiosks that supplement the reception desk. Each is equipped with two sides containing brochure racks and two sides with changeable photo frame panels. Together, the kiosk display units delineate Baltimore’s architectural past and present.

Though the Center has only been functioning for a short time, Fleischer is confident that it is successfully capturing the public’s attention. “You can’t walk or drive by without seeing it,” she insists. And watch out for traffic to increase dramatically in 1992, when Baltimore’s Boys of Summer move into their new home. Until then, at least, the block already has one big hit.

Project Summary: Baltimore Area Visitors Center

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DESIGN GOES TO SCHOOL

Is design making a difference in the education of America?

By Jean Godfrey-June

architects and interior designers may wonder how design can help America's schools when they encounter statistics like these: One quarter of America's high school students never graduate; of the remaining 2.4 million students, one quarter of them cannot read or write above an 8th-grade, "functionally literate" level, according to the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). At the adult level, the IEA report says that 25% of the U.S. labor force lacks basic reading, writing and math skills. Business is finding the American work force too uneducated to do the jobs it needs. Others are forced to look outside the American work force for workers who can make the grade. After 150 years of turning immigrants into literate adults, our education system appears to have crashed.

It's not that our children are truant. Most high school graduates have spent between 10 and 14 years sitting in classrooms, apparently learning much less than was taught. What is emerging after perhaps a decade of national soul-searching is that the problem is larger than any one aspect of the system. So none of the many recent proposals, including intensive e-schooling, longer school years, nutrition programs, more traditional curriculums, less time for individual students, voucher systems, charter education, family education—or the removal of educational facilities themselves—seems to be the singular answer we seek.

If the sobering statistics aren't enough to inspire architects to action, economic necessity may be. Approximately 11% of venues for architecture firms come from educational facilities, as reported by the American Institute of Architects. "For some, the task of designing educational facilities means keeping alive," says Chris Gribbs, director of education, historic resources and interior studies at the AIA.

What kind of construction budgets are we doing about? The National Education Association reports that America spent over $4 billion on capital outlays (buildings and equipment) for public schools in the 1989-1990 school year. Expenditures don't always correlate with academic success, however. Alaska, which leads the nation in expenditures per pupil, ranks 43rd in its high school graduation rate. Minnesota, which is first in high school graduations and fourth in SAT/ACT scores, is only 18th in expenditures per pupil.

On a global scale, the United States outspends Japan by 0.5% on education as a percentage of GNP, yet 87% of Japan's high school seniors are eligible for university as opposed to America's 75%. As U.S. educators will attest, the Japanese build schools whose unadorned simplicity and modest equipment make many of our schools look almost luxurious. And the IEA notes that the land of the Rising Sun somehow stretches its money to cover 243 school days per year, as opposed to our 180.

Sheer dollars are clearly not the answer, nor is trying to model our schools after the Japanese or Europeans, whose homogeneous populations undoubtedly make the job of education easier. Comparisons are deceiving even within our own broad culture. What works for Grosse Pointe, Mich., may be markedly different than what works for East Los Angeles. How the money is spent seems to be almost as significant as the money itself, and this is where architecture and design come in.

Can design produce smarter schools?

While no panacea for education, design does count. The least it can do is to refrain from obstructing the daily activities of educators, children and communities. The best it can do is to support and anticipate what society wants to know. "Design will play a major role in a child's life," states Steven Bingler, president of Concordia Architects in New Orleans. "The question is whether that will be a positive or a negative role. Design is not neutral in education."

Socialization is a critical, often unspoken role of a school's design. "Children are extremely impressionistic and a child's surroundings will contribute to character formation," says Jack L. Gordon, a principal of Jack L. Gordon Architects in New York City.

A building can also reinforce what a school is trying to do, says Earl R. Flansburgh, president of Earl R. Flansburgh + Associates in Boston: "School is the first major social event in a child's life: It has a profound impact." Or as Jim Garretson, AIA, vice president of Perkins & Will's New York office, believes, "If you're in a space that you like, you function better, whether you're a teacher or a student."

But how to make those spaces better? Bingler characterizes positive educational experiences as primarily hands-on, like San Francisco's Exploratorium, Baltimore's Aquarium, and Boston's Children's Museum.
"Hands-on experiences are nearly always architecturally-based," he insists. Thomas Jefferson's University of Virginia campus, where each pavilion represents a different order of architecture, is a school he likes to cite in which architecture becomes part of the curriculum.

Becoming part of the curriculum, however, means architecture will bear responsibility for much more than putting up shelter. "Schools ideally provide a total learning experience," Gordon explains. For example, he points out, a school's organization can contribute to discipline; form, color and texture can encourage creativity; and proper scale makes students comfortable. "If the scale is right," Gordon adds, "it reinforces a child's sense of security, comfort and in turn involvement."

The proper scale ensures accessibility and involves far more than miniature desks and chairs. At almost every level in education, breaking the school down into smaller, more readily understandable units seems to give students of any age a sense of security, comfort and community. "To a first grader, the actual scale of an 800- to 900-child school can be truly overwhelming," says Garretson. "Making pods of smaller groups of classrooms keeps the scale at a level they can deal with. The pods can be grouped around larger, common spaces that encourage a feeling of community with the larger group."

In schools designed by Flansburgh's firm, the architects include project spaces, where the small scale of the classroom can be enlarged to share floor area with several other classrooms. "In the typical school it's either your tiny classroom, or it's the entire school," Flansburgh has found. "A shared space allows for a real feeling of community."

Gyo Obata, chairman and head of design at Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum in St. Louis, suggests that architects even consider giving a distinct character to each classroom. "Using different materials and spatial arrangements can make a classroom infinitely more interesting and inspiring," he states. Going further, he urges architects to eliminate corridors and create smaller pods around community areas, thereby changing the traditional scale, to give students a clearer sense of identity and purpose.

Now everyone wants to be principal

Breaking down the school's scale to make it much more flexible is a double-edged sword for some educators. At the same that budgets are cut and educational demands are increased, the American school has taken on new and formidable responsibilities. Being a place to learn is often just the beginning.

"The school is becoming an extension of the community in much the same way the church used to be, especially in the inner city," says Garretson. "They've taken on much more responsibility—at the same time funds have gotten more and more scarce. Now they feed people two to three times a day, run health centers, teach adults as well as children, show parents how to parent, provide child care, and offer space for every type of club and organization imaginable. The list goes on and on." Anecdotal evidence of this abounds.

- According to television's Today show, 150 high schools across the nation now have permanent health clinics in their facilities, each with a doctor, nurse and mental health professional.
- Time magazine made a grim yet salient contrast in its October 8, 1990 issue: a year of pre-school costs an average of $3,000 per child; a year in prison costs $16,500. As policymakers recognize the value of preschool, school child care and education, architects will soon be designing child care spaces in the schools themselves or in the corporate sector.
- Flansburgh, whose firm recently completed a large daycare center for John Hancock Insurance, predicts that corporate daycare centers will be the norm in the future, at least until policymakers make daycare an affordable option for the schools themselves to offer.

The demand for space has increased with changing usage: auditoriums need to be bigger, cafeterias must serve breakfast as well as lunch and so forth. "Where school rooms were once rows of desks and a blackboard at the front, they're now practical in the antithesis of that, with all kinds of new technical elements, computers and different class sizes," says Obata. "Thus, architects need to spend a great deal of time delving into programming." He also finds that educators are looking for ever more flexible uses.

With changing uses come longer hours as well. "As major public buildings, schools are open 14-15 hours a day," says Flansburgh. "The gym must be accessible by the front of the building, without having to go through the entire school, and the library should also be independently accessible."

Garretson observes that some school boards have come to view changing use as a liability, even going so far as to request that architects design some parts of their facilities to be less flexible. "They don't want politicians to be able to come in," he has discovered, "knock down a few walls and cram more kids or activities into spaces that really can't take it."

On the flip side, changing use can be a formidable source of revenue for schools, says Herb McLaughlin, a principal at Kaplan McLaughlin Diaz in San Francisco. "It can be a huge profit center," he feels. "It's important to plan for after-hours use."

According to McLaughlin, an auditorium or if designed correctly, a ballroom can probably be rented out at least 50 nights a year, particularly in urban areas. "So you have to design something people are going to want to rent," he says. In truth, colleges

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**SPENDING ON EDUCATION AS A PERCENT OF GNP**

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Source: UNESCO
A university student centers can be huge new makers, if designed to entice. Laughlin's University of California at San Diego Student Union grosses over $22 billion a year in retail. He says that KMD is always careful to design "one really spectacular space that outsiders are going to want to rent out."

"Happiness is two pencil sharpeners instead of—or why teachers must be taught to innovate

How can design firms arrive at what Laughlin refers to as the spaces that resonate in your memory after you've used them? Participatory planning sessions help ID arrive at concepts that can make a hool's space highly meaningful to its community. "We ask the faculty, the school principal and the students to name the three most memorable spaces in their town," Laughlin describes. "It starts them thinking about architecture. Then when we ask, 'What do you want to do with this hool?', they start getting very ambitious.' Invention is the key for McLaughlin.

What do students ask for? At a recent high school project, one student's earnest request was for "a secluded place to make out," Laughlin laughs. Some things never change. Bingler finds that it is often difficult to use educators' expectations. "Educators among the great oppressed," he says, lost teachers, when you ask them to really think about what they'd like, will ask for one pencil sharpeners instead of one. That's out as far as they can think in terms of improvements, since they have to fight so hard for even that small an improvement."

Bingler attributes the attitude to budgets, the "experts" that are often produced to advise educators on the instruction of a new school, including facility planners, superintendent office staff and other consultants, can easily channel a project down very predictable paths.

"Teachers are rarely included in the process in a collaborative way," Bingler argues. "In a way that encourages them to earn—outrageously innovative dreams, which is what it's going to take." Architects will have to be outrageously innovative themselves. They may even have to spend time in the classrooms they are trying to fix—observing and perhaps participating.

Flansburgh suggests that since capital costs run somewhere around 5% of a hool's budget, and operating costs, including teachers' salaries, take up about 5%, architects would do well to focus on signs that make teaching easier or more effective. "Teachers in private schools are ten paid less than those at public schools," he points out. "So private schools have to do other ways of keeping teachers happy."

Private school teachers often have their own offices, for example, which make good business sense to Flansburgh. "An entire classroom is an incredibly expensive place for teachers to prepare for class," he says. "With small offices for teacher's prep space, you can be making effective use of that classroom throughout the day."

Schools like prisons?

In his State of the Union address of January 31, 1990, President George Bush proclaimed "Every school must offer the kind of disciplined environment that makes it possible for our kids to learn." Bush's rhetoric as "The Education President" is powerful and persuasive. But exactly what does he mean by a "disciplined" environment, and how does he plan to create it in America's classrooms? Can design help teachers in performing the role of the disciplinarian? What architects have learned from experience offers some clues.

• Building a school that everyone loves goes a long way to protecting the school from vandalism, according to almost every architect interviewed for this story. "If students feel like it's their turf, they'll protect it," says McLaughlin, who suggests intense landscaping to deter exterior vandalism. "Say a kid and his spray can have an eight-foot range," he says. "Put up hedges and you've denied him at least three out of that eight, and then do some nice, multicolored brick or stonework. His image will come out very unclear."

• Gordon finds that design treatments that reinforce function contribute to a satisfying sense of order: "Taken together, a well-organized design communicates to the student that there are times and places for various levels of activities, thus contributing to a sense of order and discipline."

• Bingler cautions against designing in too much security. "You can start defeating your purpose," he says. "Students will take out revenge on designs they don't like. People don't graffito things they like. It's a demeaning experience to be in a space that anticipates your committing crimes in it."

• Garretson concurs: "Security and creativity can end up being mutually exclusive. Security, no matter how you slice it, often ends up making the school look more like a prison."

Designing spaces that make it easier to teach and learn, along with specifying reasonably priced furniture and other school products that will stand up to the rigors of educational life, can certainly help. But the design industry, like the rest of corporate America, can and must do more. At stake is the nation's work force and its very survival as an economic power.

Many companies, including those in the design and construction industry, are already sponsoring extensive employee education courses, on-site child care, mentoring programs with local schools, college scholarships and a host of other programs aimed at improving our education system. Our educational investments—like the schools architects and interior designers strive to create—will repay themselves countless times. §
The Children’s Village on the Plains

It is a school that looks and functions as if it really belongs to its children—the remarkable Broken Arrow Elementary School in Shawnee, Kansas, by Abend Singleton Associates

By Jean Godfrey-June

School like Broken Arrow can make a profound impression on children in many ways, including its visual imagery. In the words of Raj K. Chopra, superintendent of the Shawnee Mission School District, “Even with good teachers and a good curriculum, a bad environment makes it harder to learn.”

Clearly more was at stake in Shawnee Mission than providing a clean, well-lighted space. Stephen H. Abend, FAIA, a principal of Abend Singleton, emphasizes, “Schools need to go beyond shelter, and worry about things like scale.” Indeed, scale proved to be the key to Broken Arrow’s design, not only for aesthetic considerations but budgetary ones as well.

Abend Singleton incorporated state-of-the-art systems, fine art, imaginative architecture and a strong dose of local history into the 750-student, K-6 school—and came in $400,000 under budget. This is particularly remarkable given the school’s 10-acre, steeply-sloped site that is 40%
smaller than current standards. The school has also managed to emerge 20% more efficient than the national average with 100 sq. ft. per student—the largest elementary school in the district and very large by industry standards. "We didn’t want the building to be scary, or imposing," says Abend. "With so many children, we didn’t want them to end up feeling like a number."

A village concept divides the school’s academic, activities and administrative functions into three separate wings, then further scales down the design in the academic wing, where the children spend most of their time. Built around a two-story library/media center, whose cruciform shape creates one-story alcoves for a computer lab, story telling area and group instruction, the academic wing separates each grade into a mini school, with four classrooms grouped around a shared space which serves as an extension for all of the classrooms. This “school within a school” concept increases usable space and creates opportunities for combined class instruction and team teaching.

Teachers may fold back glazed French doors to take advantage of some or all of this shared learning space, allowing them to choose a completely autonomous, private classroom or to combine a room with other sections of the mini-school. The shared learning areas provide computer labs, meeting space, and support spaces. Abend Singleton set each mini school apart with an individualized color scheme and architecturally defined space, its own covered patio or balcony (for outdoor teaching), teaching team offices, storage, toilets and playgrounds.

The activities wing serves as a “Forum” or meeting place. Within it are multipurpose, eating and meeting areas opening onto a courtyard. Also contained within its boundaries is the kindergarten, separated from the rest of the school.

The “village” concept is strongest in the central administrative wing, which houses the main entrance lobby, administration and meeting spaces, and connects all shared program areas. Each administrative and faculty function is housed in its own “building” within the larger structure. The multi-purpose room, gymnasium, music and art classrooms and library/media center all branch off from the curved perimeter of the “village.”

“People are truly impressed when they come through the entryway,” reports Betty Degan, principal of Broken Arrow. “Their mouths drop open, and they look up to try to take in everything at once. Visitors tell me it’s a very comfortable, very homey and inviting space.”

What teachers like best about the design is its flexibility, particularly the community functions and the shared learning spaces, Degan declares. “While design can’t make a good teacher out of a bad one, it can make the learning process easier or it can be an obstacle. For instance, if you have to spend half your day telling the children to be quiet because the acoustics are bad, you’re wasting time that could be spent teaching.”

One vivid example of how Broken Arrow has streamlined the learning process can be seen in its alternative solution to the increasingly common computer room: Desirable as they are, computer rooms can waste teaching time because students must leave their classrooms to get to them. Worse yet, scheduling them is often a problem for teachers, and schools rarely have enough machines. Broken Arrow has no computer room.

“The budget was simply not there,” recalls Abend, “not only for the computers themselves, but for the air conditioning, electrical wiring and so on.” Abend Singleton reduced the total cost of technology about 75% through the “point of use” concept, which still realizes the District’s goal of one computer per two students. Each mini-school’s shared learning space is equipped with mobile computer stations, enough for an entire class. A class can employ these computers in the space itself, or move them to computer outlets in each classroom. Thus, the 1:2 ratio is achieved, while the school must only buy one computer per seven children.

Flexibility to accommodate future technology was extremely important,” explains Chopra. “From computers to wiring, we looked towards the future and realized that our needs are bound to change.” Under-floor wire management systems serve current computer needs and facilitate their future use as well. Every instructional space has computer outlets with cabling raceways. The district itself has an outstanding team of engineers and other advisors that has coordinated the project with the architects, Chopra adds.

But technology is only part of the picture. Nine areas in the school have been designated specifically for permanent art, created by student-teacher teams. Interior show windows and built-in display fixtures further reinforce the emphasis, as do tack strips provided for easy display of current projects.

In addition, Broken Arrow’s architecture reveals itself in understated ways through elements of its construction. Look around,
carefully and you find an exposed steel roof over doorways and arches. Specific details so as to call attention to the school's historic namesake, the Shawnee Indian Mission, the exterior and internal activities.

Any contextual cues are subtle and frequently indirect, of course. Outside, a masonry "headband" of symbolic patterns and colors creates a cornice for the entire structure and marks corner windows, the entrance canopy and the inner courtyard. On the inside, the architects repeat the patterns of the drinking fountains, in signage, and even a floor design in the cafeteria/multipurpose room that recalls the patterns and colors of nomadic rugs. Many large windows keep the surrounding meadows in glorious view, while curving interior walls throughout allow easy observation of the school's inner workings.

For all the care that has gone into its design, Broken Arrow has proved reassuringly easy to care for, thanks to all-masonry construction and mostly carpeted floors. Maintenance is simplified by an extremely enthusiastic student body. "If students see visitors, say, an after-school basketball team, throwing a basketball against a wall or something," Degan observes, "my crew is all over them."

The principal of Broken Arrow finds nothing odd about this. "A facility should feel like it belongs to children," Betty Degan insists. Apparently a waiting list of teachers, all eager to work at Broken Arrow, couldn't agree more.

Project Summary: Broken Arrow Elementary School

NOT QUITE YOUR ALL-AMERICAN HIGH

An elite group of Japan’s future leaders are being educated in a unique school just north of New York City—Keio High School, designed by Haines Lundberg Waehler with Shimizu America/Morse Diesel

By Roger Yee

rasshaimase! Welcome!

Many Americans might be startled to know that Japanese expatriate families in the United States live an anxious life. After all, food is some 40% cheaper in the States, rent runs between one-fifth and one-tenth of that back home, our average use is 45% bigger, and a round of golf for foursome here costs a fraction of the $800 it would take in Japan. But whereas an American family returning from abroad could probably be welcomed home as the talk next door with an exotic touch of class, any Japanese going back to Nihon feel as if they are aliens—"returnees" who must suppress acquired Western tastes and attitudes in order to fit into their homogeneous society again. For Japanese in America, the recent opening in Purchase, N.Y., of Keio High School of New York, designed by Haines Lundberg Waehler, architect, with Shimizu America/Morse Iesel, general contractor, offers an unusual opportunity for families and children to enjoy the best of both worlds.

What Keio High School, an offshoot of Japan's prestigious Keio University, has done is to import the rigorous, traditional Japanese high school curriculum to America. It’s a godsend for lucky expatriate families. Concerned that American schools cannot prepare children for admission to top Japanese universities, Japanese parents routinely send their sons and daughters to Saturday schools run by the Japanese government and local Japanese businesses or intensive schooling in Japan as well as standard academic subjects. By contrast, Keio High School students who maintain their academic standing are guaranteed places in Keio University—and theueling entrance examinations endured by high school graduates in Japan.

The High School began to develop in earnest when the University’s architect-taffed facility department in Japan produced a building program and conceptual design to house 450 students, including 250 boarders, on land acquired from Manhattanville College in Westchester county, just north of New York City. Haines Lundberg Waehler (HLW), a respected, century-old U.S. architecture firm, was selected along with Shimizu America, the U.S. arm of Japanese construction giant Shimizu Corporation, in joint venture with Morse Diesel, one of America’s top construction companies, to form a project team with Keio’s administration and facility department. With so much expertise on board, Keio asked for and got results—fast.

"We worked very intensely," admits Robert A. Djerejian, AIA, senior managing partner of HLW. "Keio wanted the job done as soon as possible." From schematic design, design development and construction documents through permits and approvals to construction, Keio sprinted to the finish line with few moments to slow it down. There were surprising revelations on both the American and Japanese sides, nevertheless, about how to create a Japanese high school in America.

The rotunda and curving staircase at Keio High School (opposite) in Purchase, N.Y., recalls a similar space at Keio University in Tokyo, one of many ways this high school designed by Haines Lundberg Waehler for children of Japanese expatriates has combined U.S. architecture with Japanese spirit.

Even in the Western-style housing so many young Japanese families seem to prefer, you can find a tatami room like this one at Keio (above). Fitting into Japanese society when they return is a deep concern at expatriates, and the tatami room helps keep Keio's high school students in touch with tradition.
For one thing, all those impressive statistics about the Japanese score in high school are normally accomplished by applying very straightforward teaching methods within a physical plant that can best be described as plain vanilla. Japanese children are exhorted, "gambatte"—"do your best"—with the belief that anyone can learn if he or she tries hard enough. And so they do—working 243 days a year versus 180 in the United States with plenty of homework and just a few (cram school) after school in spartan surroundings so that 90% of high school students graduate and over 99% of all adults achieve literacy. Little wonder that Keio wanted its American high school to mirror winning Japanese counterparts.

Thus, the complex of five two- and three-story buildings encompassing classrooms, cafeteria, gymnasium, dormitories and administration in 165,000 sq. ft. on 27 acres is remarkably similar to the classic U.S. educational campus of the 1950s and 1960s. In fact, Keio could easily be perceived as an American campus—except for the tearoom in traditional Japanese architectural style.

"We arranged the buildings to create a large and dramatic central lawn that would serve as the focal point as well as the major circulation space," explains Djerejian. "The lawn extends to two courtyards, one for the dormitories and the other for the academic buildings."

Inside the Keio campus buildings, HLW has used space more generously than would be possible in Japan, spreading light and view throughout the interiors. With the assistance of Shimizu America, HLW was able to transform the goals of Mr. Konno, Keio's director of facilities, into concrete plans that give the High School spacious classrooms and ancillary facilities, ample central corridors, skylighted ceilings and a rotunda that recalls Keio University's rotunda.

"We have a close relationship with Keio in Japan," notes Kenji Kido, vice president of Shimizu America. "So we know what the University wants." A design vocabulary of dry wall walls and ceilings, acoustical ceiling tile, carpet, terrazzo, metal window frames and slim blinds has been used to great effect in the new facility, giving Keio interiors that display an almost Shaker-like grace.

To shepherd Keio through the difficult construction documents, permits and approvals, and construction phases of the project, HLW, Shimizu America, Morse Diesel and Keio officials, now joined by Dr. Yasumitsu Nihei, headmaster of the High School, found themselves obliged to work closely together. Fortunately, the project team's members proved highly compatible with one another. Because the Japanese were not accustomed to the lengthy democratic process of presenting a proposal before a local community planning board, they had to rely heavily on the experience of HLW and Morse/Diesel in negotiating with Harrison Township, which has jurisdiction over Purchase.

In fact, the Keio team showed itself to be...
Community activities can be accommodated in Keio’s gymnasium (above) in its outreach to residents of Westchester County. The school’s willingness to respect local feelings has made it a model citizen, so that this handsome, Shaker-like space with its exposed trusses and columns serves numerous functions.

Construction proceeded briskly and easily in 1989-1990. In the Japanese tradition, special occasions were commemorated during the course of the work. In addition to celebrating the planning board’s approval, the Keio team held ceremonies for ground breaking, topping out and opening day.

The 1990-1991 school year started on schedule in September 1990, when Keio’s first 120 students, all tenth graders, arrived from homes in the United States and nine other countries to be instructed by a faculty of 16 teachers, mostly from Japan. To enroll, students’ families paid $12,000 tuition plus $5,000 each for the 85 boarders. Lessons are being conducted in Japanese, and although the work load appears to be very heavy at least by American standards, both faculty and student body appear to be enjoying the new facility very much.

Dr. Nihei has been questioned about whether the work load is indeed too onerous. “We may be asking a heavier work load of our students than some are accustomed to,” he diplomatically suggests. “The school is still in an experimental stage.” If you were to

a very quick study. It won over Harrison’s affluent residents with such resourcefulness in solving problems that the Township granted it permission to build after only one year’s review. “We avoided confrontation,” reports Djerejian, “absorbing what citizens had to say, accepting our fate and working out compromises.”

Keio went the full distance to be a good neighbor. An early concern of the Township was ground coverage by construction. “The law set a 10% maximum on ground coverage,” recalls Kido. “Since we needed 65,000 sq. ft. of construction, we enlarged the original 20-acre site by another seven acres.” Other important instances were: dormitories planned at four stories that were lowered to two at the community’s request; an architectural style designed to harmonize with neighboring Manhattanville College, which sold Keio its land; and a gymnasium and a cafeteria that were deliberately designed for community use.

With Shimizu America and Morse Diesel anticipating construction bottlenecks and keeping subcontractors on track,
poll the parents of Keio's students, mindful of how critical the "right" high school and the "right" college are to a child's career in Japan, you might hear "Gambatte, gambatte!" instead.

Project Summary: Keio High School of New York


Keio's cafeteria (top) gives students an airy, open place to unwind, interspersing lessons conducted only in Japanese with American meals that remind them where they are; soy sauce bottles sit beside the salt and pepper shakers at each table. The space can be made available to community groups.

Staff dining at Keio (above) overlooks the gracious central lawn that is the main focus of the five-building campus. Keio's architecture, visible through the windows of the dining room, reveals an elegant simplicity that recalls turn-of-the-century work by such architects as Wright, Hofmann and Mackintosh.
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Illinois and the Amazing Technicolor Campus

For a preview of how the 21st century's electronic, computerized schools might look, come to the new campus of Illinois Institute of Technology in Wheaton, with interior design by Perkins & Will

By Jennifer Thiele

For the college graduate going back to school for continuing education, the return to campus can be an interesting not downright mystifying experience. The administration of Chicago's Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT) had this thought firmly in mind when it decided to build a satellite campus to cater to working professionals—people well-accustomed to the business world—in pursuit of higher education. The challenge for Perkins & Will, the architecture firm retained by the Institute to handle the interior design and planning for the initial satellite building, was to develop a functional and effective teaching environment with a corporate ambiance.

Since the IIT Daniel F. and Ada Rice satellite campus is targeted to a different audience from IIT's residential, undergraduate-oriented main campus on Chicago's South Side, a convenient commuting location was a key factor. The new campus is strategically located on 19 acres of land donated by the Rice Foundation in the Chicago suburb of Wheaton. While this presents an hour's drive from downtown Chicago, it is central to a high percentage of the Windy City's professional population.

The Rice campus building makes a strong contemporary design statement in the community while maintaining a professional level of quality, according to Dohii Melenbacher, IIT's director of physical resources. "Of course the motherhood features of function and aesthetics were paramount," says Melenbacher. "But we specifically wanted the design to reflect the neighborhood and current styles in architecture."

IIT's main campus is steeped in the legendary Bauhaus tradition of its architect, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. For the satellite campus, however, the administration deliberately chose to depart from IIT's international style architecture as well as its traditional educational environment. "It was a carefully considered decision of the university that instead of continuing the Mies tradition of the downtown campus, this building would provide a professional environment," says Neil Frankel, senior vice president of Perkins & Will. "In particular, they did not want a design vocabulary with a collegiate notation to it."

Centered on a two-story atrium lobby with a grand staircase that greets visitors at the building's main entrance, the interior design of the building immediately suggests a corporate facility. At the same time, the space is also a highly functional school, complete with high-technology laboratories and computing centers, classrooms with video capability (a system known as MTV) and an electronic library. Perkins & Will's lengthy history in both building types is clearly visible here.

Wide circulation corridors punctuated by lounge areas are an integral element of the floor plan. "Your most intense periods of numbers of people are between classes," cautions Melenbacher. "so you must design

At the specific request of IIT's administration, Perkins & Will designed the first building of the Rice Campus with a corporate ambiance, as evidenced in the atrium lobby (opposite), with its grand staircase and bold color scheme.

The same color palette used in circulation areas was carried over into the classrooms and auditoriums (above) at the new Rice Campus building. Carpeting was also used in academic areas to enhance the corporate atmosphere.
Though one might envision a typical, workshop-like design for the very technical lab areas (left, top), Perkins & Will managed to infuse an artistic touch through the use of playful accent colors.

Despite its corporate character, the IIT Rice Campus building represents a highly functional academic environment, complete with high technology laboratories, classrooms with video capability and an electronic library (left, bottom).

the space for that." Other floor plan details he singles out for praise include the "neat placement of the library, classrooms and laboratories along two straight corridors on both floors, and the location of the administrative and faculty offices in a central position that is buffered from general academic areas.

Since the building accommodates evening commuters, Perkins & Will has designed the interior to encourage interaction between the diverse student population and the surrounding community.

A high percentage of space was devoted to non-classroom activity in the form of public gathering areas. "The building acts as a community center," says Frankel.

Although Melenbacher balks at the label—rightly pointing out that the campus is first and foremost a center for advanced learning—he admits that the new facility serves a vital peripheral function within Wheaton. "The campus provides service to the community," he says. "We want the community to use it." And so Wheaton does through such events as special seminars.

Perkins & Will project designer Dennis St. John was given considerable creative freedom by the IIT administration to develop a new interior aesthetic. St. John in turn recommended the use of simple but effective interior finishes throughout the new building, selecting bold accent colors, broadloom carpet in classrooms and crisp professional signage overall in direct contrast to the decidedly institutional milieu of the main campus. His justification: "more playful colors and surfaces could readily establish a unique corporate identity for the Rice campus.

There is a distinct logic to the rainbow of color, for example. Rounded columns are painted in orange, handrails in racing green and alcoves marked by a deep eggplant color against a neutral backdrop—a composition that could easily win favor with many contemporary businesses. Agrees Melenbacher, "These colors are rather common in corporate environments today."

Every space in the facility has been affected, including the laboratories. "We traditionally identify technology as being in very workshop-like spaces," Frankel indicates. "But since corporate America uses coloration, texture and contrast as part of its environment, we brought color into the labs as well." The busy presence of equipment has understandably dictated the need for an uncomplicated, neutral envelope, but orange has been successfully used to accent the seating while eggplant enlivens the entryways.

Beneath the brightly colored surfaces, massive wire management requirements have called for special raised floors in many areas. One of the most important elements of the wire management system (in fact, of the building as a whole) was the importance of building in easy access and ample capacity for future needs. Since IIT's curriculum will have to respond to the
changing educational requirements of professionals, the new building has not been designed as a single-purpose facility. "It was designed to have inherent flexibility. It wants to be almost a chameleon," says Frankel.

As the Rice campus develops, IIT fully anticipates that the function of this building will change. "Planning for today and for the future was important in terms of integration," says Melenbacher, who points out that plans for expansions on both the north and south sides of the building are already underway. In its first semester of use, the building has already exceeded its intended capacity by 50 students.

Color, vitality and creativity might seem to conflict in a technical environment. Was there any concern that the merging of science and art into one aesthetic would fail to work for IIT? "Not at all," declares John Melenbacher. "Color is technological in nature." Or to quote another professional authority, Mr. Spock, first officer of the Starship Enterprise on television's Star Trek, "Eminently logical."

Project Summary: Daniel F. and Ada L. Rice Campus, Illinois Institute of Technology

Location: Wheaton, IL. Total floor area: 52,000 sq. ft. No. of floors: 2. Average floor size: 26,000 sq. ft. Student capacity: 1,000. Cost/sq. ft.: $125.


What's first and foremost on the minds of today's average college students? Classes, current events, the opposite sex, and beer would probably rank high on the list. Recently, the University of Virginia in Charlottesville challenged students to take a new look at an old subject matter: their health. To highlight the lesson, the University has opened the new Elson Student Health Center, designed by Wiley & Wilson/Metcalf and Associates, Joint Venture Architects and Engineers with interior design by Malino & Metcalf.

Health has always been an important issue for UVa administrators, faculty and students alike. However, the old student health center, with its cramped, dark spaces, maze-like hallways and drab atmosphere, promoted more avoidance than wellness. UVa students ("Wahoos") often dreaded the trip to the doctor.

"The old building was not originally conceived or constructed as a health care facility," states James Mitchell, assistant director of the Center. "It was small and unsafe, with no handicapped access. To top it off, it was difficult to get to. Eventually, the student body assumed that the health care they received was as inadequate as the health center itself in it.

Another catalyst for building a new center was the University's decision to admit women in 1971. Practically overnight, the health center faced a need for gynecological services and greater patient privacy. And while enrollment doubled, the trauma on the old facility grew more than vo-fold as women generally seek health care more often than men.

Realizing something had to be done, administrators decided to replace the old building with the Elson Student Health Center. The new facility's 21,000 sq. ft. (versus the old center's 8,000 sq. ft.) would house four modular operating units, which are arrayed on the floor plan like the arms of a cross. Each module contains at least eight examining rooms, with the mental health section offering seven offices and one larger space for group therapy. The overall appearance is intentionally domestic and approachable.

"The University wanted a friendly, non-institutional atmosphere," notes Emily Malino, of Malino & Metcalf. As a result, the designers created private, intimately-scaled settings of wood and laminate to surround patients. Cabinets and casework create an unexpected and pleasant residential ambiance that makes the rooms "user-friendly." Most examination, laboratory and treatment area furnishings are standard, medically approved issue. Yet "We employed 'quasi-residential' style furnishings," Malino points out. "The desks are a little smaller, the chairs are a little more comfortable, and..."
Colors have been carefully chosen to foster a calm, pleasant atmosphere, with highly saturated colors being shunned in favor of a pastel palette. Quiet blue soothes in the general medicine and mental health modules, while soft rose pervades in the gynecological module. Art also has its place within the design. Among the many pieces that line the halls are numerous donated student works that make the students feel that the Center belongs to them—and help cut costs. Malino admits that staying within the budget was one of the biggest challenges of the project, so having the student works was an incredible boon.

One place where corners could have been cut but weren't was in the treatment of personnel areas. Working on the theory that happy employees make for happy patients, Malino treated staff spaces in the same friendly, relaxed mode as the others. Administration offices are grouped on the upper level to avoid the chaos prevalent in the old building. A lounge complete with kitchen allows workers to "decompress" during the day. And nurses' stations, which are situated in the building's interior, feature skylights to keep them warm and bright.

The Center's health education programs stress wellness from the moment a student enters the facility; classes in wellness are held in conference rooms in the front of the building. "The younger students are just now forming life-long health care habits," states Mitchell. "So we want to give them as much education as possible, not only how to deal with the big issues like AIDS, but how to handle the little problems like a cold."

No matter how much education students receive, they still get sick and still need primary health care. The Center has been designed to handle 50,000 visits during the school year as well as an eventual 10 to 15% increase in visits. Mitchell predicts that the facility will fulfill its primary health care duties for at least the next 10 years.

Judging by patient and staff feedback, the Elson Student Health Center will do so comfortably—thanks to two years of programming, planning, design and construction during which client and firm spent many a meeting to hammer out exactly what was needed. "The architect and designer were great," recalls Mitchell. "They listened to what we said and translated into brick, paint and furnishings."

Now the students who come to the center to treat the cold, learn about nutrition or just check out the latest exhibit have something in common. They all leave with a positive attitude towards health care. "You can't pass with flying pastel colors."

Project Summary:

University of Virginia Elson Student Health Center

Intriguing

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Circle 17 on reader service card
Don't put all your eggs in one basket? You're a designer, not a poultry breeder. But suddenly all five of your financial clients, your only firm prospects for 1991 billings, called this week to cancel or postpone work. Want another basket?

When the Texas market for contract design services evaporated in the 1980s, design firms in the Lone Star State swiftly learned the value of that second or third basket. Designers tried such tactics as entering new markets, adding profitable new services, or moving laterally into client sectors similar to those they served. Whatever they did to save themselves, they played roles never taught in design school—being as strategic planners and marketing managers of businesses that happened to have design services to sell.

With a generous grant from the Joel Polsky/Fixtures Furniture Endowment, The Institute of Business Designers Foundation has produced The Survival Report, a detailed examination of how 11 Texas design firms coped with the disastrous decline of the Texas economy in the 1980s—and what today's designers can do to effectively survive and compete—edited by Evagene H. Bond. What follows is the third of a four-part serialization by Contract Design, made possible through the cooperation of IBD. It deals with Part II, Work More Efficiently, Chapter 9, On Diversification and Part III, Chapter 13, Marketing, and Chapter 14, Image Building.

Firms that participated in the report include: Blakeman Design Associates, Austin; The Bommarito Group, Austin; LFI, Austin; Pierce Goodwin Alexander & Linville, Houston; Schenck Sanford/Southwest, Houston; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, Houston; Staffelbach Designs and Associates, Dallas; Vivian/Nichols, Dallas; Weber Design Associates, Dallas; The Whitney Group, Houston; and Ziegler Cooper Inc., Houston.

Whom do you know, what have you done, where are you looking?

Successful diversification seems simple, at least on paper: It depends on a firm's track record, relationships in the industry or region the firm serves, and market conditions. But you must look closer; especially at the market: the size, wealth and desirability of services of its potential client base; whether clients prefer a firm oriented toward service or efficiency; the nature of the competition your firm would encounter.

If conditions seem favorable, a design firm has two basic choices for diversification: by client or by geography. What's the most attractive opportunity of the moment? Having many oil clients, Pierce Goodwin Alexander & Linville diversified into the very similar gas industry. But the firm takes nothing for granted; its director of interior architecture, Marilyn Archer, advises, "Actively monitor your markets and produce your own diversification." Numerous variations on these two themes are possible.

• Add markets, not market share. Identify an industry that has rarely used interior designers and construct a marketing program to capture its work.
• Add profitable services and profit centers.

In our profession, the challenge is not in designing 10 new things a day, but in questioning everything we have done before.”

—Jo Heinz, Staffelbach Designs

Design firms caught in the devastated Texas economy of the 1980s were astonished to find they could actually win new clients and territories without being super salesmen—it's called marketing—which their colleagues can follow in an important new study for the IBD Foundation.

From the IBD Survival Report edited by Evagene H. Bond

Marla Bommarito-Crouch, of The Bommarito Group, says “Find services others are not offering.” She is constantly alert for opportunities to sell clients such services as post occupancy evaluations, maintenance manuals, assistance in their own long-range facility planning, facility management, standards guidelines and productivity studies.

• Build from a steady base. Use specialties such as tenant development as a springboard for other work, such as high-end or interior projects.
• Diversify laterally. Vivian/Nichols, reasoning that health care facilities require many of the same qualifications as hospitality, its specialty, is moving toward hospitals and nursing homes.
• Joint venture. When you need track records and relationships, join a national or international team. For instance, Ziegler Cooper is one of the consultants for the new National Airport Terminal in Washington, D.C.
• Initiate long-term projects. Devoting time to finding clients and funding can result in commissions billings years of fees.
• Specialize—but sell nationally or internationally. The local client base is often large enough to support a highly specialized firm. With most of Vivian/Nichols' work in hospitality, Reggi Nichols declares, "Texas is not the place to survive. The doors are shut. We are already a national firm. We have to be an international firm and we are looking to Japan and Europe."
• Open a new office. However, don't overlook the management stresses of a merger or acquisition that will be inevitable. Abandon geographical diversification means planned growth, which can be exhausting.
• Consider computers. Electronic linkages may become as common as phone and facsimile connections are today. The Whitney Group's Glen Whitney believes, "The process will affect the whole industry: Vendors, contractors and consultants will all be networked, sharing information."

Marketing is not a four-letter word

A slump brings the need to make hard decisions about money. Sales and profits are down. With limited resources, how do you spend it?

"On marketing," said several of the participants in this study. How the money

64 CONTRACT DESIGN
How it feels to be a hospitality specialist when the local hotel market runs dry:

"Texas is not the place to survive. The doors are shut. We are already a national firm. We have to be an international firm, and we are looking to Japan and Europe."

—Reggi Nichols, Vivian/Nichols

Allocated depends on the firm, but in general, firms are spending money and time on software—finding and qualifying leads, creating new markets, selling, remarketing old clients. They are cutting back on or getting more mileage out of "hardware" like brochures.

Good marketing is a matter of methodical planning, not brilliant salesmanship. The trouble with planning in boom times is that it doesn't seem valid when work appears to walk in the door overnight. Washington, D.C., management consultant Stuart W. Rose argues that boom thinking is myopic thinking.

A marketing plan that allows a design firm to project its income, accent its strengths when selling and correct its weaknesses to become more competitive should be prepared, tested and revised in good times and bad to remain consistent with the firm's changing goals. Possible strategies to consider for a marketing plan follow.

- Intensively efforts to find work among present and recent clients.
- Look for movement in markets.
- Build ongoing relationships by building lists of decision makers in target markets and contact or bird dog them. Then follow up contacts regularly, keeping track of key people on the job.
- Join associations where existing clients and potential ones meet.
- Respond to what the market wants and tailor services to client needs.
- Qualify leads to make front-end efforts pay.

While large firms have marketing specialists to entice and track leads, small firms follow suit as far as finances permit. But increasingly, principals are realizing they must motivate everyone on staff to market. Principals can only do so much even in a recession, and spreading out responsibility for a design firm's uniqueness to everyone is a good way to diversify responsibility. The day of the Icyal client is over. Maria Bommarilo-Crouch says, "Selection is on a one-job-at-a-time basis. You must constantly remarkt."

There has also been a change in team structure. The facility manager is a key player whose importance can hardly be overestimated. Bommarilo-Crouch finds that "For them, design solutions must work. Aesthetics are second. We have had to develop a design process that would produce them; while Marilyn Archer feels brochures must show installation photographs, Gary Whitney leaves them out altogether.

Getting good service these days?

Design firms large and small have noticed it: Clients are becoming more sophisticated. In addition, they are moving to control costs by managing the design process more closely, as the increase in the numbers of facility managers shows. Time and budget constraints are likely to rise no matter what the economy's condition.

Where does this leave the design profession? Hopefully, insisting on the highest quality work and service, devising new service strategies as part of the fee and assuming more accountability and responsibility. The day of the loyal client is over. Marta Bommarilo-Crouch says, "Selection is on a one-job-at-a-time basis. You must constantly remarket."

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THE TOUGH LITTLE RED SCHOOLHOUSE

A school designed to withstand vandalism, security problems and low maintenance probably doesn't look like what most designers would expect.

By Amy Milshetin

very kid wants to make a mark in school—to break a sports record, graduate at the top of the class, or be the "most likely to...⁴⁷ in the year book. All want to do something to ensure their names will live on. But sometimes being a mark takes on a more literal meaning—when students paint their name on a wall, punch a hole in the ceiling or urine. Can good design keep these things in check or even solve them?
The answer from architects and interior designers with educational design experience is resounding...maybe. "There are two kinds of vandalism," states Tim Scbrubrough, of the Rowett Scott Simpson office in Greenville, S.C. Scbrubrough just completed the programming for Florida's Dade County school system, which includes 96 inner-city schools. "The kids are either apathetic or determined," he believes. There is no stopping a determined vandal so employ forgiving materials, heavy ceiling and easy-to-clean masonry. For the apathetic variety, which is more common, try to cut down on the places where they can vandalize. So we suggest there be no corners and keep everything well lit.

Specifying rugged materials goes without saying, but designers who create a prison-like atmosphere may be embarrassed by the result. It's neither conducive to learning nor effective at solving the problem. "If you don't have an image of obvious protection, students will see it as a challenge, a challenge they will eventually lose," states Ezra Ehrenkrantz of Ehrenkrantz, Eckstut & Associates in New York, an architecture firm commissioned to design a prototype New York City public school for 1,200 pre-kindergarten to 8th grade students. "Instead," he continues, "allow the students to take possession of the building and give them a vested interest in it. It is no longer faceless public property—it becomes theirs."

Ehrenkrantz's prototype makes every part of the school student territory. Hallways, some art galleries and classrooms have front windows so students can look out and their work. "You've got to get the students to take pride and possess of their school if they are young, before the problems start. Then there is a chance that they never will," states Ehrenkrantz.

Scbrubrough has taken a similar approach. CRSS's projects for Dade County schools employ a "student wall" that kids can decorate and call their own. The architects have also tried to get students involved in the planning to give them a sense of ownership. Unfortunately, these workshops sessions tend to attract the better students, not the individuals usually responsible for vandalism. But Scbrubrough has gotten a few of these kids to speak.

"It was amazing," he recalls. "They would tell us what they did and how they did it. For example, there was a problem with kids getting into a school at after hours and tearing it up. They told us how easy it was to get on the roof and get inside. Fencing set up around the roof stopped the problem.

Design can also promote security by eliminating the opportunities that precipitate problems, as Dr. Ronald Stevens of the National School Safety Center suggests. "New schools should be built with fewer entrances so access can be easily monitored," he says. "The three hotspots for crime, bathrooms, playgrounds and hallways, should be designed so they can be naturally supervised."

Some of Stevens' proposals may seem rather unorthodox. For example, he proposes engineering the bathroom entry without doors, so that privacy can be maintained without offering the psychological safe haven of being "behind closed doors." Softscaping and landscaping should not provide a place to hide or give access to upper floors. And hallways should be straight with minimal corners and turns. "Not only does it make them safer," Stevens advises, "it makes them easier to maintain."

Easy maintenance is another important issue schools have to face as shrinking budgets may force the cutting of janitorial personnel. Architects can anticipate this unwanted development by specifying robust materials such as vinyl composite tile (VCT) or heavy-duty carpet for floors. Scbrubrough suggests non-permeable tile for bathrooms so that whole areas can be quickly hosed out. Masonry, brick and block tile are favored by Ehrenkrantz for providing rugged, easy-to-clean surfaces.

By using a combination of strong materials, sensible planning and sensitive design, America's architects and interior designers can produce schools that are clean, safe, learning environments. Hopefully, America's students can in turn leave school as respectful, responsible, educated adults. Obviously many additional issues factor into the equation, but design can and should be able to make a mark of its own on the schoolhouse.
Throwing A Classic Curve At Sheet Metal

How on earth did Architectural Supplements' Planter Wall train sheet metal to extrude, cut and join precisely?

By Roger Yee

Trees are never seen walking anywhere—unless you are caught in a typhoon or just happen to be Shakespeare's MacBeth. However, Robert Mayen, general manager of Architectural Supplements, had toyed with the notion of giving indoor planters the solidity of architecture and the mobility of movable partitions for some time before he found a practical way to raise planters up to the height of low walls. "I had made prototypes in plaster, metal and wood," he recalls. "But the prototype that I liked most, with a rectangular Neo-Classic Revival base in wood and walls in metal, was not quite the answer."

Mayen recently found the solution in an all-metal construction that depends on the ability to extrude the Neo-Classic base in sheet metal and then to cut and weld the extrusion into a miter joint at each corner. Pulling this off consistently is not a piece of cake. As Mayen points out, "The extrusion must hold its shape as it takes a precise, razor-sharp cut. Then the pieces must fit together exactly."

A number of key steps were finally taken by toolmakers and other skilled crafts people at Architectural Supplements to integrate everything into a smooth process. An extruder was set up to shape the proper architectural profile in aluminum sheet for the base. A custom jig was assembled to hold the extrusion firmly in place for cutting miter joints. And a carbide saw was modified to cut the extrusion accurately.

When the parts for a base emerge from this process, they are in turn placed into another jig and welded on the inside to form a rectangular frame. Then this sub-assembly is welded or bolted to a sleeve-like wall or box component, also made of aluminum sheet. Finally, the completed unit is spray painted with a baked-on finish. To display plants in the unit, a separate, interchangeable planting pot is inserted at the top.

The product, called Planter Wall, is being shown as part of Architectural Supplements' Neo-Classic Collection. Mayen has been able to offer pedestals, accessories and planters that match it by pairing smaller but similar bases with different superimposing structures. Designers who are specifying Planter Wall for commercial and institutional environments cite its ability to define open space, direct traffic flow and reconfigure quickly while lending an air of dignity and permanence as their design criteria.

If Mayen is to be believed, there are many more problems he would like to solve with Planter Wall-like designs. "There's so much more I'd like to do with this technique," he says. "Just think of boxes, walls and ovals."

Anyone like Robert Mayen who can make plants move should be taken seriously.
PROFESSIONAL LITERATURE

Caslon

A Filing and Storage Guide, a Caslon publication, provides a thorough overview of the dimensions and capacities of Caslon files. A buying and storage tool to help determine furnishing needs, the guide is organized into three sections, including a glossary of the various items used within the guide. Circle No. 231

Marble Institute of America

Dimension Stones of the World, available from the Marble Institute of America, contains over 30 full color plates of eight types of dimension stone, including granite, limestone, marble, onyx, quartz-based stone, slate, stone and onyx, quartz-based stone, slate, stone and onyx, quartz-based stone, slate, stone and onyx, quartz-based stone, slate, stone and onyx, quartz-based stone, slate, stone and onyx. Circle No. 232

Petrafina Inc.

Petrafina Inc., a major source for fine marble and stone, provides the Petrafina corporate brochure highlighting the company's capabilities, services, Architects & Designers Division and unique PetraSystem. Circle No. 234

Capri Lighting

Capri Lighting's new European Collection catalog is a veritable gold mine of Euro-styled, recessed lighting trim ideas. The European Collection comprises crystal, sharply faceted and stepped pyramidal frame trims that lend themselves to unlimited interior design imagination. Circle No. 236

George Kovacs Lighting

George Kovacs Lighting, has released its catalog for 1991. The catalog includes inspired illuminations for table, floor or wall use. Circle No. 235

Capitol Lighting

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Dorsett Caroset Mills

The lasting beauty and performance of Dorsett commercial carpets are documented in "Locations." Eleven diverse installation sites from across the United States—from health care to hospitality—are included in the brochure to illustrate the carpets' broad range of practical applications. Circle No. 238

Bobrick Washroom Equipment

Bobrick's 1991 Toilet Compartment catalog features the company's Designer, TrimLine, and DuraLine Series compartments, screens and dividers. Special emphasis on Bobrick's new fire-resistant 1800 Duraline Series solid phenolic compartments is documented with ASTM E-84 test results and new guide specifications. Circle No. 239

Buchtal Corporation

A new brochure highlighting Chroma Glazed Ceramic Tiles is available from Buchtal Corporation. The brochure boasts an energetic design with colorful pages and unique folding, and emphasizes Chroma's large selection of sizes (10) and colors (71) through product and installation photography. Technical information includes setting and maintenance recommendations, technical properties and actual sizes and trim. Circle No. 233

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Architects at War in Japan's Urban Desert


Downtown in Japan often strikes the Westerner as an urban disaster. Not only are the signs in kanji and other Japanese characters, but the typical intersection looks helter-skelter owing to the almost random, non-grid street patterns on which front buildings of all types. You can test your tolerance for eclecticism by walking through a Tokyo neighborhood, where you will encounter low-rise, traditional structures, Meiji-era copies of Western architecture, early postwar commercial structures of careless design and shoddy construction, as well as mainstream modern high-rises and the occasional, breathtaking tour de force from Japan's avant-garde architects—all cheek by jowl within a few, dense blocks.

In The New Japanese Architecture, Botond Bognar, professor of architecture at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, takes a critical look at where the avant-garde is some 30 years after it first appeared. Readers should be forewarned that this is a very selective review of designers on the cutting edge, accompanied by handsome photography and a demanding, highly theoretical text. More orthodox Modernism, as practiced by a respected independent firm like Nikken Sekkei, design-build giants such as Kajima, Takenaka or Shimizu, or venerable pioneers like Kenzo Tange, are not represented here.

Today, the avant-garde impulse to fight the city—responding to the amorphous urban landscape since the 1970s with architecture that symbolizes violence, confrontation or retreat—has clearly run its course. Bognar notes, "The defensive attitude and retreat from the urban realm have been replaced by a willingness to confront the megalopolis on its own terms." He adds that, "The latently preserved flexibility, vital energy, dynamics and resilience of the Japanese city are being rediscovered in a new renaissance of urbanism in Japan."

And what a rebirth this is. In page after page, architects both well known in the West and new faces, such as Arata Isozaki, Kisho Kurokawa, and Shin Takamatsu among many, take designers on a wildly unpredictable tour of the new Japanese architecture. When government reformers of the Meiji era urged the Japanese to combine Western knowledge with Japanese spirit, Japanese society would never be the same. As The New Japanese Architecture shows, neither the East nor West has seen design quite like this before.

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AD INDEX
DESIGN DETAIL

Flagging Down the Customers

The facade of the office tower housing the Baltimore Area Visitors Center in downtown Baltimore is sheathed in glass, ground level, offering the center maximum visibility from the street. Taking advantage of the Center’s prime location, RTKL created the prominent American flag interior detail (46 ft. long x 12 ft. high) for the Center with a double purpose in mind: to dominate the interior design with a reminder of the city’s heritage as the birthplace of the Star Spangled Banner, and to serve as exterior signage to stop passersby and lure them inside.

Each stripe of the three-dimensional flag is a separate piece of woodwork with its own curve, painted the appropriate color. One stripe has cutout lettering with a white background for the Center’s name; the stars on the flat blue field received the same treatment. The entire flag is mounted on a plywood frame that is supported by steel rods hanging from the slab above and by steel brackets anchored to the back wall. Fluorescent lighting mounted behind the stripes is used to illuminate the lettering.

The bottom stripe protrudes dramatically to become a laminated reception counter that follows the curving stripes above. From the outside, the stripe that forms the reception counter is not easily distinguishable from the rest of the flag. A closer look, however, reveals the clever merging of form and function.

Photograph by Scott McDonald, Hedrich-Blessing

VERTICAL SECTION

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ARCH 1991

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Dakota falls into The Gap

Dakota Jackson

No one ever called Dakota Jackson a back-to-basics kind of guy—until now. The furniture designer recently starred in a clothing ad for The Gap, complete with a black-and-white photo by Herb Ritz. Very back-to-basics.

How are other designers reacting to Jackson's 15 minutes of commercial fame? “They all want to know how to get in one,” he reports. It’s a mystery to Jackson: “I don’t know how they decided on me.”

Catching the attention of mainstream America comes on the heels of Jackson’s most successful year ever: Ke-zu, his first contract collection, has “gone platinum,” and he’s filled orders for Ameritech, Columbia Pictures and Ringling Brothers Circus’ headquarters.

In an effort to recreate the old Knoll Studio atmosphere, Jackson has hired three assistant designers. “I want to create a think tank,” he says. Since Ke-zu, Jackson has added the Cab-a collection, is considering a textile line, and plans to introduce “Vik-ter,” a chair in the $250 price range, in June—a dramatic contrast to Jackson’s $900 average price.

The Gap apparently appreciated Jackson’s design sense, since he got to pick out his own outfit for the shoot. “It was almost scary: I picked something and they were all yelling, ‘Fabulous! You look fantastic!’” Say cheese, Dakota.

Balancing Act

Denise Scott Brown

From roads and bridges or galleries and gift shops to knives and forks to contract fabrics: Denise Scott Brown, ARIBA, somehow manages to keep everything in perspective. The principal at Venturi Scott Brown Associates in Philadelphia will finally see her firm’s winning design for the Sainsbury Wing of England’s National Gallery when it opens this year in London’s Trafalgar Square. The wing houses some of the world’s finest Early Renaissance art, and took five years to complete.

Along with tourists who regularly amass there, Trafalgar must now accommodate more museum goers, who may total 4 million in 1991. Scott Brown says she kept those tourists in mind when designing. “Building in Trafalgar required a lot of analysis,” she admits. “The square is defined more by the activity it surrounds than by building walls.”

But museums aren’t the half of it. Scott Brown, in collaboration with husband Robert Venturi, has been putting perhaps an equal amount of energy into the decorative arts: fabrics—including a new collection for DesignTex—furnishings, chairs for Knoll and even some silverware.

Brown’s next museum project could be a package deal—the building and all the exhibits too!

No black sheep here

Iwan Tirtaamidjaja

What does a graduate of the London School of Economics, the University of Indonesia Law School and Yale University, who taught International Law in Indonesia and worked at the United Nations in New York, do for an encore? Become a fabric designer specializing in batiks? For Iwan Tirtaamidjaja, (Tirta for short), the jump was just natural. “I was researching the classical court dances of central Java, and I was drawn to costume patterns and motifs,” he says. In 1995 he published a book, Batik, and hasn’t looked back since.

Now Indonesia’s foremost batik designer, Tirta helped Scaliamandre put together its

Designers—better volunteers than Boy Scouts?

John Hartman

Who would have thought that designers would make great volunteers? John Hartman, executive director of the Design Industry Foundation for America (DIFFA), has worked with dedicated volunteers before: the Boy Scouts of America, the Gap, Diffa Projects, the Audubon Society and even the Volunteers of America. But designers are different. “I’ve never seen this level of dedication in a volunteer organization,” he says.

Hiring Hartman—experienced fundraiser instead of a designer—was a telling choice. DIFFA’s board of directors. “When I started, couldn’t have told you who Jay Spectre, J. P. Lenor Larsen and Max Buatta were,” he laughs. “Now I not only know that they’re incredibly dedicated and contribute to our cause, but I know what they do in the design world as well.” Twelve act DIFFA chapters keep his har full.

Hartman’s first move was to welcome executive director was to work on internal organization and make long-term goals. Tod the fundraising goes on deep economic obstacles. “It’s definitely more difficult to raise money during a recession, we’ve got to do it.” Hartman says. In his spare time, he relaxes by gardening, cooking and—remember, this isn’t Boy Scouts—fortifying his New Jersey home.

PERSONALITIES

the Gap

Dakota Jackson

Tirtaamidjaja

The Gap

Scott Brown

Hartman

Scott Brown

Tirtaamidjaja

Personality

Brown
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