

Design at the White House

The Clinton administration's efforts to raise design consciousness need architects' support.

file
Design

Architecture and design gained national attention on April 28, when President Bill Clinton presented the Presidential Awards for Design Excellence at the White House. The eight winners, ranging from public housing to an explosives detector (pages 26-27, this issue), received the nation's highest official honors for design excellence in federally supported projects. They were selected in 1992, but were never announced by former President George Bush. Sensitive to political opposition to the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), which runs the quadrennial Presidential Awards competition, the Bush administration scrapped the ceremony to avoid controversy during an election year.

The recent Presidential Design Awards ceremony, the first ever held at the White House, indicates that the Clinton administration has begun to take design seriously as part of its "competitiveness" strategy for American businesses. "The federal government is the largest purchaser of design services in the world," Clinton proclaimed. "And the designs we commission should reflect not only the best artistic execution available, but also taxpayers' money well spent."

To make Clinton's rhetoric a reality, NEA Chair Jane Alexander, who urged the president to hold the April ceremony, is spearheading efforts to create a White House Council on Design. The council would comprise public- and private-sector design advocates. According to Thomas B. Grooms, NEA program manager for federal design improvement, it would "promote design as a management tool and show how it not only influences products, but also performance, cost, and environmental impact." Like the cross-disciplinary Presidential Design Awards program, the White House Design Council could extend its purview from the design of products to quality-of-life issues, from government brochures to pollution controls and urban design. The new council could take the form of a private, government-supported or-

ganization, such as the National Trust for Historic Preservation, or a presidentially appointed, independent panel, such as the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

The idea for such a design council is a good one and long overdue. More than 100 countries have national design councils, influencing commerce and culture. A White House Design Council would send the message from top government levels that design fosters economy in production; design is not a frill but a necessity for American businesses to compete abroad. The NEA plans to take its White House Design Council proposal to the design community for feedback and submit its proposal to the White House this summer.

Meanwhile, small steps are being taken elsewhere within the federal government to raise design consciousness. A bill is currently being drafted by U.S. Representative George Brown (D-California), chairman of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, to establish a design council within the technology administration section of the U.S. Department of Commerce. Brown wants to make U.S. manufacturers more aware that design is important to ensuring the quality of their products. His bill would establish programs to educate the public about the value of design and guidelines for innovation in products. Such a council could serve as a model for similar design watchdogs in other federal government agencies.

Design-related organizations like the AIA must actively support the far-reaching potential of Brown's bill and the White House Council on Design. We need to remind the president that innovative design is essential not only for competing abroad, but for ensuring a better environment at home as well.

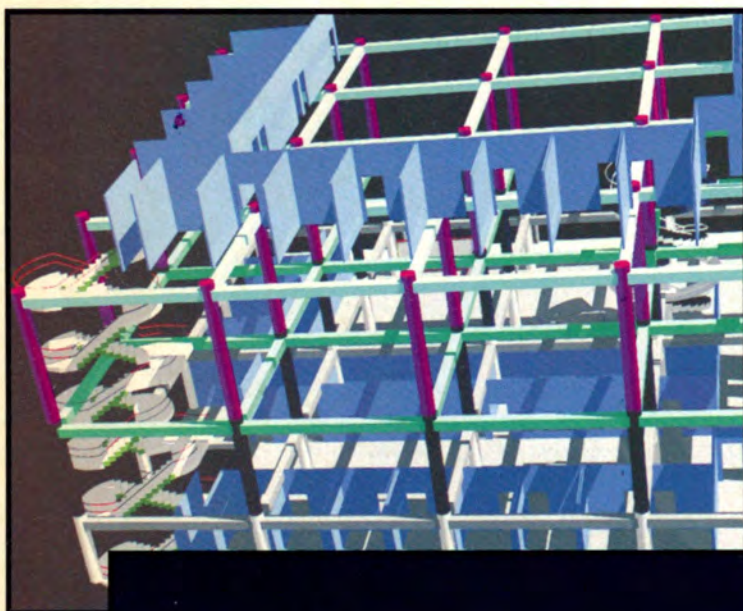
Debra K. Dietz

**Make CAD
work for you!**

Join leading industry experts at
A/E/C SYSTEMS '94 for MicroStation University
— it's FREE! June 20-23 in Washington DC. Call 800-807-2200 to enroll.

**“What sells clients is 3D modeling.
With DesignWorks, I can automatically
generate 3D models from floor plans.”**

— *David Bader*, president
neubau imaging



To complement MicroStation's powerful production capabilities, architects and designers are turning to DesignWorks. For designers at Neubau Imaging, MicroStation and DesignWorks are the perfect 3D tools. “Once the plan is made, only a few steps are needed to transform the work into a 3D model. This brings life to any space-planning concept, and provides a vivid spatial understanding for our clients.” — *Curt Dilger*, designer



Combining MicroStation and DesignWorks, Curt Dilger, David Bader, and Steven Johns enjoy increased productivity at Neubau Imaging.



Art museum rendered using Intergraph's ModelView software.

INTERGRAPH
Solutions for the Technical Desktop

Circle 57 on information card

DesignWorks and MicroStation — giving you the designing edge.

 **MicroStation**



Have a look at MicroStation and DesignWorks on Intergraph's Technical Desktop Series personal workstations.

Call 800-345-4856 for free brochures and demo disks on MicroStation and DesignWorks.

Intergraph® is a registered trademark and DesignWorks, ModelView, and Solutions for the Technical Desktop are trademarks of Intergraph Corporation. MicroStation® is a registered trademark of Bentley Systems Inc., an Intergraph affiliate. Other brands and product names are trademarks of their respective owners. © 1996 Intergraph Corporation, Huntsville, AL 35894-0001. E104D15240.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 12, 1994

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

SUBJECT: Presidential Design Awards Program

As the largest purchaser of design services in the world, the Federal Government should be a leader in fostering design excellence. Good design can profoundly affect our lives by beautifying our surroundings, improving our productivity, and helping to effect social change.

Over two decades ago, the National Endowment for the Arts was asked by the White House to assist Federal agencies in improving the quality of design in the Federal Government. Over the years, the efforts of the Endowment's Federal Design Improvement Program have helped agencies to make significant progress in the pursuit of design excellence. I am committed to furthering those efforts.

The Presidential Design Awards Program was established in 1983 to honor successful achievement in Federal design and encourage excellence throughout the Federal Government. I recently announced the call for entries for Round Four of the Presidential Design Awards and asked Jane Alexander, Chairperson of the National Endowment for the Arts, to implement the Presidential Design Awards Program. I am confident that she will have your full support. Please designate an individual with an appropriate background and position to serve as your liaison with the Endowment to ensure the success of this important program. Please be advised that there will be a Presidential Design Awards Program briefing at the National Endowment for the Arts on July 18, 1994.

William S. Clinton

NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE
ARTS

**OFFICES OF THE CHAIRMAN
NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS**

FAX TRANSMITTAL FORM

*The Federal agency
that supports the
visual, literary and
performing arts to
benefit all Americans*

*Office of the
Chairman*

Arts in Education

*Challenge &
Advancement*

Dance

Design Arts

Expansion Arts

Folk Arts

International

Literature

Locals

Media Arts

Museum

Music

*Opera/Musical
Theater*

*Presenting &
Commissioning*

State & Regional

Theater

Visual Arts

TO: Nicole Rabner

Name

WH

Affiliation

456-6244

Fax Number

FR: Alexander Crary
Chief of Staff

RE: _____

DATE: 15 July

MESSAGE:

Number of pages (including cover sheet): 3

Please call (202) 682-5652 if you do not receive all the
pages

**NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE
ARTS**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CONTACT: Cherie Simon
202-682-5570**

**ARTS ENDOWMENT
TO FORMALLY OPEN
PRESIDENTIAL DESIGN COMPETITION**

*The Federal agency
that supports the
visual, literary and
performing arts to
benefit all Americans*

**Briefing To Be Held for Federal Agencies and Public
on Competition Details**

Monday, July 18, 1994 - 3:00pm

Room M-09 (Main Floor)

**Nancy Hanks Center/Old Post Office Pavilion
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC**

Arts in Education

*Challenge &
Advancement*

Dance

Design Arts

Expansion Arts

Folk Arts

International

Literature

Locals

Media Arts

Museum

Music

*Opera/Musical
Theater*

*Presenting &
Commissioning*

State & Regional

Theater

Visual Arts

WASHINGTON -- Jane Alexander, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, will launch the fourth round of the Presidential Design Awards Program for exemplary federal design achievement, this Monday. Her remarks will be followed by a briefing on the competition's criteria. Initiated in 1983 to recognize and encourage extraordinary achievements in federal design, the Awards Program is held quadriennially by the Arts Endowment at the behest of the President of the United States.

Issuing a call for entries this week, President Clinton issued a memorandum to the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies. "As the largest purchaser of design services in the world, the Federal Government should be a leader in fostering design excellence," he said. "Good design can profoundly affect our lives by beautifying our surroundings, improving our productivity, and helping to effect social change."

As in the past, the President delegated responsibility for the Awards Program to the Arts Endowment and requested government-wide support for it. In doing so, he noted that more than two decades ago, the Arts Endowment was asked by the White House to lead the way in improving Federal design quality resulting in considerable progress toward design excellence. "I am committed to furthering these efforts," he said.

Presidential Design Awards Program will be open to entries until October 31, 1994. Following Ms. Alexander's opening remarks, a briefing will be held for federal agency representatives and the public on the qualifications and deadlines for the competition.

-more-

Presidential Design Awards - page 2

Applications for the Fourth Round of the Presidential Design Awards will be accepted for federally-funded projects in the fields of:

architecture,
engineering, graphic design,
interior design, historic preservation,
landscape architecture, product/industrial design,
urban design and planning

Entries will be accepted for projects completed or implemented and in use between June 1, 1984 and June 1, 1994.

For those unable to attend Monday's briefing, entry forms and information on the Presidential Design Awards Program may be obtained by writing:

Design Arts Program
National Endowment for the Arts
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20506
202-682-5437

#