

DO GOOD DESIGN? ENTER THE AIGA (RE)DESIGN AWARDS

by K. Emily Bond



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Does design have the power to change the world?

AIGA, the premiere organization for professional and student designers, believes that yes, it can.

AIGA is hosting its second annual (Re)design Awards to prove that design is both a strategic tool and cultural force for transforming the way we function in the world. With the mission of “igniting change,” they’re looking for submissions in two categories: Environmental Sustainability and Social Responsibility. **Stan Evenson**, founder and CEO of Evenson Design Group and co-chair of the event, explains that those two categories can include anything from multimedia, interactive design, packaging and product design to brand identity, environmental design, permaculture and urban planning.

“If one’s design submission is using sustainable materials and/or promoting environmental sustainability or socially responsible actions to benefit people, it’s eligible.”

The competition runs through July 22, 2011 and is open to the international design community. Thus far, entries have come in from Greece, Australia, Canada and across the United States. All submissions will be judged by design luminaries Eric Benson, Rachel Martin, Naomi Pearson, Tim McNeil and Brian Dougherty. The winner will be honored at a special Gala event on October 27, 2011.

Design, Ever-Evolving

While infringements and frustrations abound, our collective consciousness is awakening, particularly when it comes to awareness about what we wear, how we eat, and what we buy. Design is elemental, both subtly and integrally, to the choices that we make (and have) as consumers.

“[My wife and co-chair] Tricia and I have had our design business, EDG, for over 35 years. And many of those years we were wearing blinders, encouraging our clients to print more and use more, and not stepping back for one moment to admit that we were definitely a part of an enormous problem.”

Three children later, they were “awakened” one day in 2005 with the realization that they wanted to be part of the solution. They, like so many of their colleagues, set out to revolutionize the field with sustainability in mind.

“How can we be enlightened through design,” Evenson wonders. “The (Re)design Awards are about rethinking, reengaging, reconnecting, repurposing our design. It’s about more than just creating something beautiful for a client. It’s about doing something bigger for this world. For designers, it’s a responsibility and an opportunity.”

We tried very hard to get the inside scoop on potential frontrunners and projects to watch, but to no avail. Like everyone else, we’ll have to wait. All you have to do, in the meantime, is enter.

“The deadline is impending,” Evenson warns.

(Re)designAwards 2011 from AIGA | Los Angeles on Vimeo.

Article Link:

<http://ecosalon.com/do-good-design-enter-the-aiga-redesign-awards/>

THE AIGA (RE)DESIGN AWARDS CELEBRATES THE BEST IN SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

by Johanna Björk



The AIGA (Re)Design awards celebrate the best in sustainable design.

On Thursday night, the winners of the AIGA (Re) Design Awards, a competition celebrating the best in sustainable design, were presented at the (Re) Design Extravaganza at the Natural History Museum in Los Angeles. Underneath a handsome Stegosaurus specimen in the museum's new Dinosaur Hall, guests could admire the winning work up close.

The (Re)Design Awards were started by the Colorado chapter of the AIGA in 2009, and was from the beginning, designed to be a traveling competition. This year, the L.A. chapter got their chance to represent. **Stan Evenson**, who co-chaired the competition with his wife Tricia, told me how far he thinks we have come: "As long as 15 years ago or so I remember speaking to our clients about sustainability practices and feeling I was considered slightly left of Communism when I would bring the subject up. Today, it's very different since designers

are more conscious than ever, understanding that our planet is headed on a collision course with nature if we continue wearing ‘design blinders.’ There is no room in our landfills to handle this oversight. It’s a great opportunity to encourage sustainability and social responsibility in our design solutions.”

The competition had two main categories: Environmental Sustainability and Social Responsibility. Within those two, each had subcategories for Individual/Agency, Student, For Profit Corporation and Non Profit Corporation.

Interestingly, two firms swept their categories, Method in Environmental Responsibility, For Profit, and SoftFirm Studios in Social Responsibility, For Profit. A handful of the winning entries were clients with "living" in their name (Living Principles, Living Cities, Living Buildings and Living Light), perhaps this is the new buzz word in the environmental field?



Environmental Sustainability: Individual/Agency: 1st Place: University of Hawaii, School of Architecture, Identity System by Design Workshop, University of Hawaii at Manoa.



Environmental Sustainability: Individual/Agency: 2nd Place: PUMA Clever Little Bag by fuseproject.

The Living Principles
creative action for collective good



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What you see below is the context from which The Living Principles for Design framework was drawn—a sampling of influential sustainability manifestos, principles, visions, frameworks and tools from the last 50 years. You might think of it as design thinking's sustainability ecosystem.



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Environmental Sustainability: Individual/Agency: 3rd Place:
Living Principles Community Website by Tomorrow Partners.



Environmental Sustainability: Student: 1st Place: Chinese Character Practice Book—No Print Book by Li Xu.



Environmental Sustainability: Student: 2nd Place: Sustainability Guide by Erin Harp.



Environmental Sustainability: Student: 3rd Place: Balanza Verde: Educational Waste Management Unit for Elementary Schools by Alëna Konyk.



Environmental Sustainability: Non Profit: 1st Place: Living Light by The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Team Living Light.



Environmental Sustainability: For Profit: 1st Place: Method Refills by Method Products Inc.—In-House Creative.

method
sustainability initiatives

method's entire line of home care and personal care products are non-toxic, made with naturally derived, biodegradable ingredients that are tough on dirt and easy on the planet.

PRODUCTS

- transparency
- recycled plastic
- Cradle to Cradle®
- ingredient safety
- EPEA-assessed

method's entire line of home care and personal care products are non-toxic, made with naturally derived, biodegradable ingredients that are tough on dirt and easy on the planet.

PROCESS

- biodiesel fleet
- reduction incentives
- greensourcing program
- fuel efficiency

the majority of our customer shipments in California and the midwest are made via biodiesel truck.

we offer incentives to suppliers to reduce carbon emissions resulting in lower our impact.

we have a supplier sustainability program that drives green innovation.

our domestic shipments are done with an EPA registered member freight company for better fuel efficiency.

COMPANY

- climate-sensitive
- B corporation
- Cradle to Cradle®
- never tested on animals
- LEED-certified

as a climate-sensitive business, we offer the widest range of green manufacturing, travel and office use.

we are a founding B Corporation business and use the highest standards of social and environmental leadership.

we are a Cradle to Cradle® business recognized for our environmental leadership and design and green business leadership.

we were PETA's 2006 company of the year and are a member of the Green Business Roundtable.

our San Francisco HQ is a LEED-certified green building.

Environmental Sustainability: For Profit: 2nd Place: Method Greenskeeping Tool Kit by Method Products Inc.—In-House Creative.



Environmental Sustainability: For Profit: 3rd Place: Method Laundry Detergent by Method Products Inc.—In-House Creative.



Environmental Sustainability: Non Profit: 2nd Place: A Zero Carbon, Handmade Stationery by Luce Beaulieu.



Environmental Sustainability: Non Profit: 3rd Place: GreenBlue Brand Identity by GreenBlue In-House Creative.

The range of entries was extremely diverse, from design students to seasoned designers and agencies. Entries included everything from the design of an undersea monitoring unit that studies decaying coral reefs, to a non-printed book with die-cutting and embossing that teaches the blind Chinese characters, to underwear products and packaging that gives 10% of profit back to charities, uses 100% organic, locally farmed cotton and sources packaging entirely within a 100 mile radius. Other projects that were entered included detergent packaging, a portable and reusable homeless shelter, an identity system for the University of Hawaii School of Architecture and a website for the creative community to share and showcase best practices, tools, stories and ideas for sustainability thinking. There was a fine line dividing sustainability and social responsibility and many times it just truly blended perfectly which made the judging challenging.

"I was impressed by the range of sustainable and socially innovative strategies shown by many of the entries," says Naomi Pearson, one of five judges faced with the task of selecting winners from a strong set of submissions. "Especially impressive were entries that tackled both environmental (and human) health and social responsibility, given that these two issues are so closely linked."

As an active practitioner in the field of graphic design, it is indeed nice to see that designers are starting to look beyond recycled paper and water-based inks, and instead looking carefully at the bigger picture. Sometimes sustainable design can be about coming up with smarter solutions and producing less stuff for the same amount of impact. And you don't have to work for big-name clients like Method to do great, sustainable design.



Social Responsibility: Individual/Agency: 1st Place: PACT underwear by fuseproject.

Social Responsibility: Individual/Agency: 2nd Place: HERproject Toolbuilder by Tomorrow Partners.



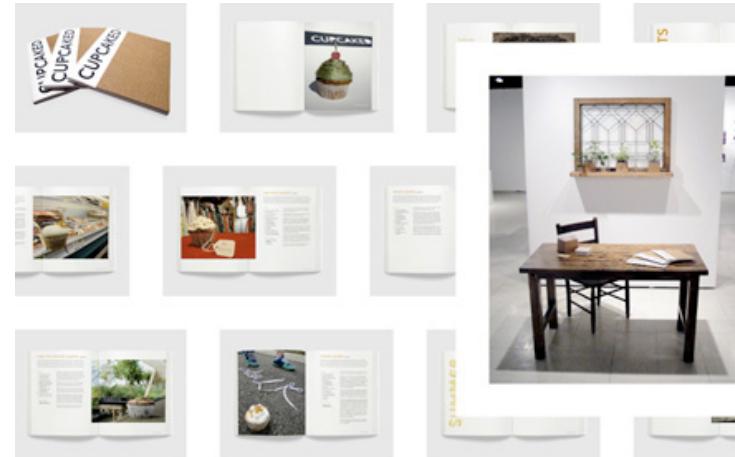
Social Responsibility: Individual/Agency: 3rd Place: Verbien "See Better to Learn Better" by fuseproject.



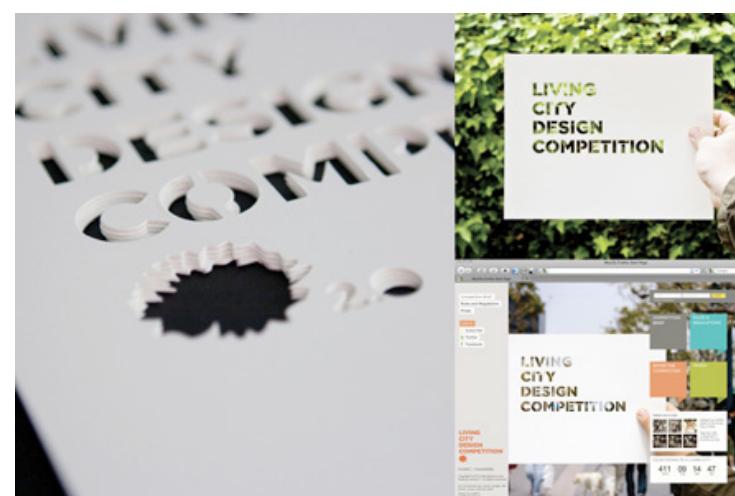
Social Responsibility: Student: 1st Place: Fresh Fest New Orleans Poster by Azu Romá.



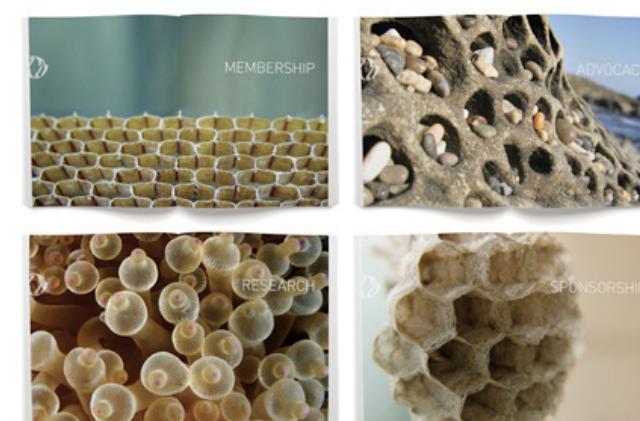
Social Responsibility: Student: 2nd Place: Helping Hands Guides by Karen Villalba and Kelsey Anderson.



Social Responsibility: Student: 3rd Place: Cupcaked by Derek Maxfield.



Social Responsibility: For Profit: 1st Place: Living City Design Competition by SoftFirm Studios.



Social Responsibility: For Profit: 2nd Place: Cascadia Programming Guide by SoftFirm Studios.



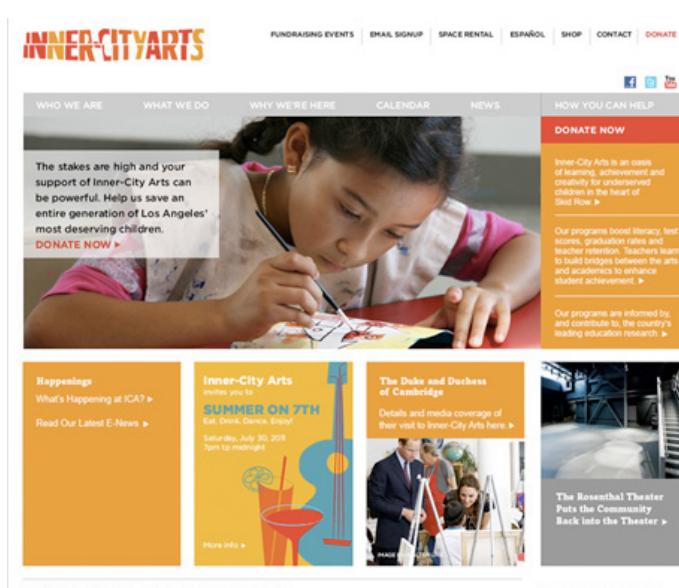
Social Responsibility: For Profit: 3rd Place: International Living Building Institute Identity by SoftFirm Studios.



Social Responsibility: Non Profit: 1st Place: cause/affect: *Make Your Mark* poster by Kristen Bouvier and Arvi Raquel-Santos.



Social Responsibility: Non Profit: 2nd Place: Cardborigami, Inc. by Tina Hovsepian (who I got to assist putting up her clever cardboard shelter).



Social Responsibility: Non Profit: 3rd Place: Inner-City Arts Website by Kim Baer.

"The (Re)design Awards competition encourages inclusivity for every level of designer, from student to professional, and from non-profit organizations to for-profit corporations in all disciplines of design including Graphic and Product Design, Multi-Media, Urban Planning, Interior Design, and Architecture, and we believe our mission was successful," says **Stan Evenson**. "Bringing this competition from national to worldwide, we were thrilled to have entries from 14 different countries and throughout the U.S., that featured great design thinking with purpose and substance in the categories of environmental sustainability and social responsibility."

"I decided I wanted to do something to help the homeless," says Tina Hovsepian about her school project Cardborigami. "It boiled down to the basic human necessity of shelter. I played with materials, ended up with cardboard, played with origami and picked this form that became the shell." Hovsepian's school project has since evolved to a non-profit, in the stages of funding. "I really believe that design can do a lot," she says. "Everything we learn through our rigorous training can be used for good. Green design is definitely the way to go."

"Thursday's gala event was all about celebrating sustainability and social responsibility," says Evenson. "We need to have the williness and conviction to make a difference on this planet by doing well, by doing good. And while doing that... take time to celebrate great design thinking for these two critical issues of our lifetime."

Maybe design can't save the world, but it can facilitate a great deal of important change, and that power should never be underestimated.

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