

Interior Awards Breakfast, Friday January 30

by Brad Powell

There is Still Time to Sign Up

This industry has to start talking to – and reading about – each other. For the past couple of years we've been trying to convince manufacturing, dealership and design leadership to attend each other's events, a good place to enhance collaboration, right? What is obvious to me, however, seems unimportant to those constituents. I probably just don't understand what is going on, an inevitable consequence of looking ahead to what might be (no, to what inevitably will be).

As a result, **BIFMA** (Business & Institutional Manufacturer's Association) scheduled its annual leadership conference at the same time as the **Interior Awards Breakfast**. Neither we nor a lot of others can be at both places, and I had hoped to be, before the scheduling snafu. More's the pity.

This year's BIFMA theme is **Managing in Turbulent Times**. Boy, talk about something that manufacturers, dealerships and design firms should be talking about together. (More collaboration, eh? How come we don't hear that buzzword buzzing outside of narrow select circumstances?) Part of the BIFMA presentations will also be about the **BIFMA e3 Furniture Sustainability Standard**, which, in the future, could bring important LEED points for projects, and, in any event, should be of great interest to design leaders.

But we are foregoing BIFMA to attend Contract magazine's 30th Annual Interior Awards Breakfast, one of the most important national events for interior design. For the contract design and furnishings industry, it is also the kick-off for the industry's new calendar year. Just being in Cipriani's, 42nd Street, is a treat of which we never tire. Networking with



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over 600 important interior professionals is a wonderful opportunity, and surely there is a lot of street-talk to tune into. But the big draw is the project awards, which, for a contract furniture focus, are the most important project awards in the country. In fact, we come away heartened each year, basking in the knowledge that truly exceptional work is being done.

So, it's time to pick some brains, learn about this year's 12 winning design teams and the 2009 Designer of the Year, and pay tribute to this year's Legend Award recipient, **Wing Chao**, Executive Vice President of Master Planning, Architecture and Design, and Resort Development for Walt Disney Imagineering.

January 30, 2009 7:30am
Cipriani 42nd Street, New York City
(Click through to registration on the cover page of this issue.) ■



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