Short Note

Book Review 'International Interiors 2'

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New materials, new techniques, and a new awareness of the importance of design to success in a competitive marketplace are changing the face of commercial interiors. Other strong forces for change in the interiors of buildings are the demands and concerns of the people who use and work in them and their need for functional, comfortable, economical and ecologically sound environments. With the great success of the first volume, International Interiors established itself as a standard work of reference and inspiration. A comprehensive biennial survey of leading new public design, it provides both designers and their clients with a compact but rich source of information on current trends, materials and ideas for future projects.

An absolute criterion for inclusion is that each interior must be judged to be of lasting quality. Each project is illustrated in full colour along with the architect's or designer's own plans and drawings; a critical commentary on each project accompanies the illustrations and includes details of designers, clients, locations and dimensions, and special features or products. International Interiors 2 includes the very best of recent interiors - ranging from airports to art galleries, from fashion boutiques to night clubs. Japanese interiors are featured prominently in this edition, together with over seventy of the finest and most dramatic designs from the United States, Britain, Australia, France, Italy, Holland and Germany. Biographies of the designers represented

and a list of product suppliers complete this essential work of reference. This book included 356 colour illustrations, architects' drawings and plans.

The task of selecting the most innovative interiors from all over the world is one fraught with dificulties. Inevitably, there will be many more architects, designers, clients, and critics, whose taste is not flattered by the work included in the following pages than those who do find a mirror to their own sensibilities. But that wealth of subjective opinion is the very condition that makes the case for producing a volume such as this, in which the author has attempted to present in pictorial and factual detail, with analysis, some of the most influential commercial interiors produced in the latter part of the 1980s.

By concentrating on contract-designed interiors-from stores to seats of government, workspaces to leisure facilities-the focus of this new edition has been on revealing the most interesting locations around the world where various forms of interaction inspire significant new departures in the places in which we meet. This is because, unlike domestic spaces, the commercial or public interior is almost invariably designed by one party for another to make a statement to a third party. The self-consciousness of our cultural strivings in all kinds of activities-from literature to fine art, advertising to animation-has its relevance to the interior. At one level, a review of leading interiors can concern itself with celebrating or promoting a particular aesthetic. This book spotlights successful innovation that suggests directions for the future (no projects are included which are simply refurbishment or reproduction). There is no one 'style' argued for, no one ideal of beauty or good taste. The diverse range of stimulating work included suggests to the editor, at least, that the reductive approach of presenting a single coherent aesthetic would run counter to the author primary purpose of surveying the key work of the past three years. The simple linking factor behind all the projects included is the use of strong and original methods by clients and designers to put across a distinct and appropriate message to the users.

The last decade of the twentieth century is likely to be a highly significant one for developing greater internationalism in interiors. This selection of key new interiors from around the world, in created in the latter end of the 1980s, shows the coming together of a global design approach - without being as reductive as having an 'international style', they are often clearly the product of a professional culture that draws inspiration from all over the world. Material science, aesthetics, and even budgeting factors are now brought together, compared, and constrasted; the results are unique, but they come out of a global melting pot.