

# DAILY JOURNAL OF COMMERCE



January 10, 2001

## Benaroya Hall wins AIA award

*The concert hall is the first civic building in the city to win the national honor.*

By SAM BENNETT  
Journal Staff Reporter

The American Institute of Architects announced that Benaroya Hall has received an AIA 2001 Honor Award for outstanding architecture, making it the first civic building in Seattle's history to receive the award.

Designed by LMN Architects, Benaroya Hall was one of 14 winners out of 421 submissions in its category.

Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership won in the regional and urban design category for its Santa Monica Boulevard master plan. The Portland firm Crandall Arambula PC won in the same category for its downtown Racine, Wisc., development plan.

The projects were among a pool of winners that AIA President John D. Anderson said shared the theme of "improving the quality of life for communities and citizens." Other projects included a drop-in center that offers a dignified respite for the homeless in downtown Los Angeles, and an aquatics complex in suburban Detroit.

Benaroya accommodates not only a 2,500-seat auditorium and 540-seat recital hall, but also the terraced memorial garden on Second Avenue, commercial activity on Third Avenue and a bus tunnel.

"What we generally hear is that people are intrigued by the way it is both a terrific symphony hall and it meets all the aspirations for what that kind of building is about," said Mark Reddington, LMN design partner. "It's a very strong urban design that responds to its place in the middle of the city."



LMN Architects received the AIA National Honor Award for architecture last week for Benaroya Hall. Jurors applauded the downtown building's warm, natural wood finishes, with modern steel and glass facades. The building also manages to "greet and welcome the public whether or not they are concertgoers," a juror said.





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The Third Avenue side functions as an entrance to underground parking, shops, cafes and ticket booth, while the grand lobby in the southwest corner offers concert goers views of the city and bay.

Moving through the grand lobby "allows you to feel very connected to the city," Reddington said. He added that the nighttime lantern effect of the cylindrical lobby makes the building "very inviting."

AIA jurors echoed that sentiment. "The design of public circulation within the open lobby not only gave definition to the urban context, but also created an event reminiscent of the Paris Opera house," a juror wrote. "By opening the first floor to the busy sidewalk it creates an urban connection and incorporates the public, taking advantage of a great marketing and civic opportunity."

Another juror said: "A most urban building! Situated on one of Seattle's major downtown streets, it greets and welcomes the public whether or not they are concertgoers."

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