

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **LOCAL ARCHITECT RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS 2003 AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE AWARD**

Local architect Mark Harris has been awarded the prestigious 2003 American Architecture Award. The award is one of the top four major honors within the American architectural community, and one of the top five international awards sought by architects worldwide. The award places Mr. Harris in the company of some of the most famous national and international architects on the world scene today, such as Frank Gehry, Antoine Predock, and Richard Mier. The award was given to Mr. Harris for his Billboard House project, itself a two-time winner of the American Institute of Architect's Honor Award.

The award, given by the Chicago Athenaeum Museum, recognizes new buildings and planning projects being designed in the United States by 'the best of America's architectural offices and firms.' The awards 'reflect the diverse architectural thinking found in contemporary American design today'.

The projects typically honored with this award are innovative, if not influential representations of contemporary architecture. Several of the past recipients have spurred new directions in contemporary architectural design, such as Frank Gehry's Bilbao Museum, Morphosis' Valley Ranch High School, and Eric Owen Moss's Stealth Building.

Mr. Harris' Billboard House was likewise given such accolades this year as being a primary winner. His project was noted for its 'superb aesthetic', carrying with it a high level of order, a distinct clarity of vision, and imbued with an all-to-rare level of social content that is often lacking in today's architecture. A future exhibition and publication is slated to open at The Chicago Athenaeum Museum of Architecture and Design later this year.

Mr. Harris has been a practicing architect in Colorado Springs for the past 12 years, with a diverse portfolio of national and international projects. He specializes in educational, commercial, and institutional projects, with several award winning private residences in exotic locations such as Moscow, Russia and Porte Penasco, Mexico. He is the past recipient of over 12 AIA awards for this and other projects, and is currently head of operations for H+L Architecture in Colorado Springs.

His two primary projects at the moment are an elementary school in Pueblo and a remote UN Security Council Facility. The elementary school uses common program elements and building forms as teaching tools. The buildings technology tower is used as a sundial, and a large parapet 'blade' wall is used as both a projection screen for after-hours outdoor movies, and as a solar observatory, marking important dates on the courtyard floor through apertures in the wall. The remote UN Security Council Chamber is located inside the remains of a former Titan Missile Silo, and allows already won several awards and gained attention for its innovative and poetic approach to re-use.