



Agatha Habjan and Suzanne Carlson: Fulfilling roles of co-directors of interior design at SHCA

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Swanke Hayden Connell Architects (SHCA) has been a leader in interior design for many decades with a significant portfolio of unique and award-winning projects ranging from commercial workspaces for major corporate clients, law firms and financial institutions to merchandising spaces and private residences.

Since September, 2007, Agatha Habjan and Suzanne Carlson, principals of the firm, have fulfilled the roles of co-directors of interior design, sharing overall responsibility for the department. Carlson's focus is primarily on business development and management, while Habjan has been responsible for providing design oversight for all of SHCA's interiors projects in the U.S.

"Suzanne and Agatha have been instrumental in the growth of our interiors practice, and will be largely responsible for its continuing success moving forward," said Richard Hayden, SHCA's managing principal.

Both Habjan and Carlson have been with the firm for 10 years. "We have established many long-term relationships with clients who value the quality of our work, our knowledge, and attention to detail," said Habjan. At SHCA, she has designed and been responsible for major interiors projects for prestigious clients such as Moody's Investor Services, Sotheby's Reuters America, and Brown Brothers Harriman & Co. Her award-winning designs have been featured in national publications, including Metropolis, Interior Design, Contract, and Buildings Magazine. For her work on Reuters and Brown Brothers Harriman, she received Society of Registered Architects awards.

A LEED Accredited Professional, Carlson has been involved with a wide range of high quality, complex projects at SHCA. Her portfolio of prestigious clients includes Milbank Tweed Hadley & McCloy, Federated Department Stores/Macy's, FGIC and BlackRock. "The key to our success is the fact that we work closely with clients to get the best out of their buildings, creating people-focused design solutions and interpreting an intelligent expression of a company's brand," she explains.

According to Carlson, SHCA's longstanding reputation for quality interior design results from its approach to the creative process. "We create a culture of communication that leads to projects that are responsive and beautiful. There is no obvious solution, but through collaboration, we find the right answers," she said.

Going forward, the new co-principals plan to continue to cultivate and grow a practice based on quality and integrity, with a strong focus on sustainability. Habjan adds, "I believe that innovative design is derived from the natural process of exploring solutions for clients' particular needs. It is not born from trends or showmanship. Our ideas are inspired by our clients."

Currently on the boards, among many clients, are projects for BlackRock, Brown Brothers Harriman, Skanska, David Yurman, Macy's, Milbank Tweed and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

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