



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The American Institute of Architects/Los Angeles (AIA/LA) Announces the 2008 Restaurant Design Awards Finalists and Opens Voting for the People's Choice Award

Los Angeles, CA (September 29, 2008) - Today, the AIA/Los Angeles announced the finalists in the 2008 Restaurant Design Awards, marking the fourth year of the AIA/LA's much-anticipated awards program that recognizes the very best in restaurant, café, and lounge design. Voting now opens for the People's Choice Award where Angelinos get to choose their favorite establishments from the list of finalists. All Jury Winners and People Choice Award Winners will be announced on Thursday, October 16th at the Restaurant Design Award Ceremony to be held at the Pacific Design Center from 5pm to 7pm in conjunction with the Mobius LA opening night reception.

AIA/LA received over forty submissions in the three categories of RESTAURANT, CAFE/BAR & LOUNGE/NIGHTCLUB. The esteemed jury sequestered themselves in a room for five hours, pouring over digital submissions and graphic collateral material. After evaluating in detail each project's design concept, operational layout and overall packaging, they identified the following list of finalists:

RESTAURANT

Blue Velvet designed by Tag Front

Comme Ca designed by KAA Design Group, Inc.

Katsuya Glendale designed by Starck Network/DesignARC

Luckyfish designed by Tag Front

Mozza Osteria designed by Kelly Architects, Inc.

R+D Kitchen designed by stenforS|Associates architects/Hillstone Restaurant Group

CAFÉ/BAR

FOOD designed by Fleetwood Fernandez Architecture

Kitchen 24 designed by Spacecraft/Torres Architects

LAMILL COFFEE designed by Formation Association/Rubbish Interiors

Monsieur Marcel designed by New Theme, Inc.

LOUNGE/NIGHTCLUB

Elevate Lounge designed by Tag Front

oneworld Lounge at LAX designed by Gensler

Starting today, members of the public can vote for their nominee for the People's Choice Award at www.aialosangeles.org. The deadline to vote for the People's Choice Award is Monday, October 13th at 4 PM.

The distinguished jury included: restaurateur and chef extraordinaire **Joachim Splichal** of the Patina Restaurant Group; architect **David Montalba, AIA** who is known for designing I Dream of Cake, Kara's Cupcakes, and the sumptuous Monique Lhuillier boutiques in Beverly Hills and Los Angeles; AIGA/LA Fellow and award-winning designer **Michael Hodgson** of *Ph.D.*; and *Los Angeles Magazine* senior writer and devoted foodie **Margot Dougherty**.

"We evaluated projects for their excellence both from an aesthetic perspective but also from an operational standpoint," explained Joachim Splichal. "A good restaurant, café, or lounge must be supremely functional behind the curtain of design."

"It was refreshing to see how good, smart design can really give a project with a limited budget or of a smaller scale such added mileage and value," added Margot Dougherty.

"There is definitely an elevated sense of awareness for restaurant design in this city," remarked David Montalba, AIA. "We're seeing some pretty phenomenal spaces out there."

Michael Hodgson agreed. "With the quality of restaurant design in this city, we hope that more and more designers will think of the Restaurant Design Awards as a great platform from which to promote their work."

"It's always so interesting to see if and how our jury's esteemed opinions differ with those of the public," adds Carlo Caccavale, AIA/LA Associate Director. "Angelinos have a keen sense of design and this is their opportunity to be heard. We encourage everyone to get out there and vote for their favorites before October 13th."

About AIA/LA and the RDAs

The American Institute of Architects (AIA) is the voice of the architecture profession, dedicated to serving and empowering its members through advocacy, educational and outreach programs as well as educating the public on the value and importance of architecture. AIA/Los Angeles is a not-for-profit professional membership association. The Restaurant Design Awards (RDAs) honor excellence in restaurant design. The competition is open to all individuals and practices (both restaurant owners and architects/designers) for projects located in the greater Los Angeles area or projects outside of LA done by LA-based architects/designers. Submissions are accepted in three main categories: restaurants and café/bar and lounge/nightclub.