



**BIG IDEAS WIN**  
SEGD GLOBAL DESIGN AWARDS

**2012 SEGD FELLOW:  
PATRICK GALLAGHER**

**SIGNS OF THE  
NAKED CITY**

**RICHARD POULIN'S  
HISTORY OF EGD**

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# Just-right Design

For years I've been searching for just the right word to describe the level of design effectiveness epitomized in the SEG D Global Design Awards.

It's difficult to assign objective criteria to the very subjective landscape of design effectiveness. Just ask our multi-disciplinary juries, who work diligently for two days sifting through hundreds of projects in search of that indefinable quality of a winning design.

Like Goldilocks, our juries are looking for design that's not too big (in its own way or overpowering) and not too small (falling short of the impact it could have on the space it exists to support). Not too hot (too trendy or of-the-moment) or too cold (lacking in an essential vitality). I could continue the fairytale metaphor, but you get my meaning.

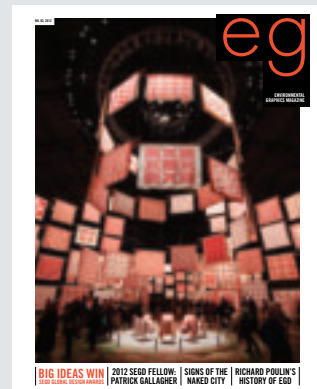
This issue presents a beautiful collection of—if you will excuse my imprecise language—"just-right" design honored in the 2012 SEG D Global Design Awards. You'll enjoy projects diverse not only in their physical application—Pentagram's centennial exhibition for The New York Public Library and an outdoor sculpture trail in Tasmania—but in their scale and budget—a sophisticated multi-media exhibition for IBM and a modest donor recognition program for a Beirut art school.

As diverse as they are, they all share two crucial qualities: they are all founded on strong and sound ideas and they are all "just-right" in their application of those ideas. You'll find the combination inspiring.

You'll also be inspired by our 2012 SEG D Fellow, Patrick Gallagher, who has blazed his own highly successful path in exhibition and museum planning and design and, along the way, enriched the SEG D community and the practice of EGD.

And finally, SEG D Fellow Richard Poulin's book on the history of EGD has been in the works for close to a decade, and in this issue we include an excerpt from the long-awaited book in advance of its November 2012 publication by Rockport.

**Pat Matson Knapp**  
Editor in Chief



**On the cover:** For the exhibition *Infinite Variety*, Thinc Design choreographed a tornado of red and white quilts, using them as both object and environment. *Photo: Thinc Design Story, page 45*

MERIT  
AWARD

**Infinite Variety:  
Three Centuries of  
Red & White Quilts**

American Folk Art  
Museum, New York

Thinc Design

**Budget**  
\$800,000

**Project Area**  
53,000 sq. ft.

**Open Date**  
March 2011

**Design Team**

Tom Hennes *creative director*,  
Steven Shaw *lead designer*,  
Sherri Wasserman *concept  
design and project director*,  
Aki Shigemori *graphic  
designer*, Bix Biederbeck  
*concept design and design  
support*, Joe Ruster *design  
detailing*

**Fabrication**

PRG *fabrication and  
installation*

**Consultants**

Palazzo Lighting Design  
*lighting*

**Photo**

Gavin Ashworth, Tom Hennes



**Infinite Variety: Three Centuries of Red & White Quilts** opened to acclaim at New York's Park Avenue Armory in March 2011. Utilizing the bold quilts as both object and exhibition environment, it filled the tall volume of the hall with gossamer pavilions, sweeping walls, and arcs of exuberant quilts. The sheer volume—651 quilts in all—was both the star feature and the central exhibition challenge: how to display this spectacular collection in a way that hints at its origins, thrills the public, and enables extended inspection without fatigue?

Thinc Design centered the exhibition on a ring of chairs with a “tornado” of quilts rising 45 feet above them—a nod to quilting circles and their prolific production. Flowing outward from

this feature were cylindrical pavilions that enabled intimate viewing while permitting people to take in the breathtaking array of patterns criss-crossing the exhibition.

The project scope included all exhibit elements, on-site graphics, installation coordination, and publicity graphics and banners. Signage included a large entry plinth with a curatorial statement. iPad/iPhone apps and mobile tours were also available.

The exhibit's minimal materials, simple MDF viewing platforms, and seating for more than 50 people were fully re-usable and recyclable.