

Lendrums win awards for their own UH offices



by MARY-ANNE THOMSON

Upper Hutt's R E Lendrum and Associates have just won two New Zealand Institute of Architects awards for their own Main Street offices.

Offices which when they opened last year, caused passers-by to give quizzical looks, others to peer in and some to go inside and ask what was in there.

From the outside the baby-corrugated zincalume clad entrance in the building on the corner of Main and King Streets gives no clues to its identity. Most were surprised to learn the contemporary building was the new offices for Lendrums - a team of architects, surveyors, engineers, project managers and planners.

"The awards are quite a pat on the back for whole the team," says creator of the design, Davor Mikulcic.

"It's not just me who put this together but a whole team including all the subcontractors," he says.

"Not only is it confirmation to us that we are using our knowledge and experience in the right way, we see it almost as a warranty for our customers that we are doing the right things for them," says Davor.

Architect Davor worked tirelessly on the project. He aimed to create a building of presence and strength which fitted into its neighbouring surroundings. He wanted subdued colours and splashes of bright.

Furniture is purposely limited, simple and practical. People can flow easily through the offices on a series of diagonals. The open-place work space hasn't been thrown at the back of the building or

● **The contemporary baby-corrugated zincalume clad entranceway to R E Lendrums' office provides no clue to what is inside.**

screened off - each work space has been intentionally exposed so people walking along the street can see everyday work, projects, models and photographs.

There are many categories in the NZIA awards from residential to commercial, education to hospitality.

R E Lendrums' awards are for interior design and colour.

"The fit-out was designed to create a strong first impression. It uses bold, gutsy forms and strong textured materials to good effect," the judges said in announcing the interior design award.

"The careful planning of the entrance thoroughfare at once reveals the different staff work spaces and affords them some separation from each other. The fit out is expressive, creates an illusion of space and evokes curiosity through the complexity of its forms."

Announcing the colour award, judges commented that "This bold and expressive fit-out plays with the textural qualities of aluminium tread plate and baby corrugated steel but its restrained use of primary colour applied in selected areas gives the space focus. Colour acts as a counterfoil



to the metals and enlivens and accents the office."

- When Lendrums entered their offices into the awards they first had to send off a large display of concepts, drawings and photos.

They were short listed as finalists then the judges came to have a look at the finished product.

"They talked to staff and tried to get their own impressions of things like functionality, light and colour," says Davor.

"They also looked at the quality of the finishing and details like handles.

"It was fun to enter our own office into the awards. We couldn't have won without a huge effort from everybody involved in the project," says Davor.

● **Award-winning interior: Textural qualities of aluminium tread plate and baby corrugated steel combined with use of primary colour has won R E Lendrums an award for the interior design of their own offices.**

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