

Markopoulos Award 2019

Dan Evans is a talented visionary and kind creative. He is tireless, generous and driven. He is considered to have the biggest heart in the visual world. And now, he is the esteemed recipient of the 23rd Markopoulos Award.

BY JENNY S. REBHOLZ

With a career spanning decades, Dan Evans has seen the ups and downs of the industry, played a key role in the big showroom era in New York, advanced the world of visual display and embraced the power of technology. He has worked, and made an impact on, every side of retail.

Named in honor of the late Andrew Markopoulos, the Markopoulos Award represents more than recognition for distinctive career accomplishments. For its recipients, it is a honor to be acknowledged and respected by their peers, and to join the The Markopoulos Circle.

Members of The Markopoulos Circle are esteemed for their ability to innovate and inspire, their contributions to the success of a retailer or company, their ability to nurture and mentor young talent, and their ongoing contributions and support of the retail design and visual industries. Evans' achievements and contributions in each of these areas is more than exemplary. He is considered an industry champion.

FROM HUMBLE BEGINNINGS TO VP AT 23

Growing up in the Midwest, Evans credits his humble upbringing for igniting his creative talents and stirring his dreams of bright lights and bigger things in the enticing city. He was always sketching, and to his mother's dismay, rearranging things. His first job as an Arthur Murray dance instructor was a creative outlet as well.

After spending some time at Indiana University, he embarked on his retail career with an opportunity at Paul Harris

Stores Inc., a national chain of young woman's fashion apparel stores, headquartered in Indianapolis. Working with an emerging company, he was exposed to all the creative aspects of the business. Gerald Paul and Earl Harris recognized his potential and charged him with developing a visual department. He relished the challenge. By the age of 23, Evans was vice president of visual presentation, store planning and design. During his 11-year association with the company, he held many creative and senior management positions, and helped the fashion chain grow from 11 stores to more than 275 stores nationally.

"Gerald Paul believed in my talents at an early age and gave me carte blanche," Evans says. "I was working with great design firms, the top talent in the industry. It was an exciting timeframe."

Evans' next career move took him from Indianapolis to Chicago and New York, and gave him the opportunity to travel internationally with Hart Schaffner & Marx, helping to revitalize its creative departments and being part of its transition to a Fortune 500 company. He served as corporate senior vice president of design, store planning and visual merchandising for Hartmarx, which owned and operated 44 individual retail branded companies, with more than 400 retail stores within the United States and United Kingdom.

"During my time with Hartmarx, I learned so much from Dick Hamilton. He had an unbelievable taste level that opened up my retail world," Evans says. "And working with CEO Harvey Weinberg really developed my knowledge of the business side of creative."

While he was entrenched in the day-to-day of retail design, he was not immune to the changes impacting the economy and the industry. Stores were closing all around him. "I didn't close stores well," Evans jokes. "I was better at opening them."



“Dan appears to be constantly reinventing himself, he effortlessly moves across changes in the industry and keeps himself relevant.”

-DEREK JOHNSON, PEAK9PARTNERS



1997
Ignaz Gorischek



1998
Tony Mancini



1999
Judy Bell



2000
James Mansour



2001
Linda Fargo



2002
Chuck Luckenbill



2003
Simon Doonan



2004
Christine Belich



2005
James Damian



2006
Michael Cape



Evans designed the showroom and all the mannequins at the Goldsmith showroom on West 26th Street in New York.

with business partners Craig Marcroft and Barrie Wests, he has expanded the company's offerings of creative design, branding services, digital and interface design, and full management consulting services for the retail suppliers' chain globally.

THE RETAIL COMMUNITY

Evans is a proud member of the retail community and is grateful for the opportunities it has afforded him. He has been honored for his award-winning showroom designs, and recognized for product designs and mannequin collections (and was named a Retail Design Influencer as part of *design:retail's* Portfolio Awards). He also has been an expert voice on national and international news stories, contributed to trade publications and given seminars and presentations in his related fields internationally.

As he navigated his career and influenced every aspect of the retail business, he has always found time to support the growth of the industry and colleagues through professional memberships and leadership roles, including roles in the past as International Retail Form Director of the International Interior Design Association (IIDA) and as president of the Chicago Chapter of Institute for Store Planners (ISP), now known as the Retail Design Institute (RDI). He also served on the board of The National Association of Display Industries Inc. (NADI), which later became A.R.E., and then Shop!, as president for more than 10 years.

"The years I spent as president of NADI is significant to me, because it was a time when showrooms were closing," Evans says. "I am a big New York showroom supporter, and we were committed to keeping the visual industry alive in NYC at that time."

Evans continues to support the growth of the industry. He recently served on the board of Shop!, and he commits significant time to mentoring the next generation of retail professionals. He has served on the Retail Fashion Advisory Board of the

CHANGING SIDES

In order to maintain his relevancy and find a successful path forward in the industry he loved, Evans transitioned to the manufacturing side of the business. He held senior executive positions with leading visual merchandising, store fixturing and design companies, from New York and Chicago to Ontario and Miami. This list includes organizations such as Seven Continents, Ontario Store Fixturing and Design Industries, as well as Leggett & Platt companies, Edron Store Fixturing & Phase II Furniture, and Met Merchandising. This timeframe also included his own entrepreneurial venture, a visual merchandising company called Joint Collections Inc. All these roads led him to Goldsmith.

From creative and marketing to sales, Evans held significant leadership roles and was involved in all aspects of these manufacturing businesses. At one point, he moved back to the Midwest to oversee a new factory project. When he merged Joint Collections, and his long list of notable retail clients to partner and refresh the Goldsmith brand, he once again returned to New York. This is where he knew Goldsmith needed to be, and he located and designed its award-winning showroom in the now-famous Starrett Lehigh Building. And after 11 years, when rising rent costs necessitated a change, he

designed and reopened Goldsmith in a new showroom in the historical New York Garment District. This premier location is now home of Noa Brands' New York showroom.

"I have to acknowledge what I learned from Jean Marc Mesguich, founder of Window Mannequins, during this period of my career," Evans says. "I had a 10-year partnership with him while I was at Goldsmith. I learned a lot about the European mannequin business. He was an incredible creative mentor."

When it comes to experiencing every side of the retail business, Evans has played a key role in brand launches and relaunches, the design and opening of showrooms, as well as a number of sales, mergers and acquisitions. In 2009, Goldsmith joined the Blue Sage Group, which was later acquired by Noa Brands. This made him part of the world's largest mannequin and visual merchandising company with global manufacturing capabilities and facilities in Colorado, Mexico, Spain, Italy and China, as well as showrooms in New York, Milan, Paris and Barcelona. Evans served as president and creative director of Goldsmith and ambassador of Noa Brands.

Today, he is a managing partner and executive vice president of marketing and business development for Wests Designs. In his new role, along



Jack Hruska



Alfredo Paredes



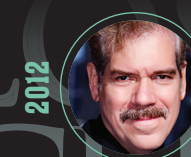
Ralph Pucci



Tom Beebe



Denny Gerdeman



Eric Feigenbaum



[Left] The Goldsmith penthouse showroom on Seventh Avenue in New York, designed by Evans, featured Windows mannequins.

[Right] Evans collaborated with fashion designer Asher Levin.

Laboratory Institute of Merchandising (LIM) since 2003, and Indiana University's School of Art, Architecture, Fashion + Design Advisory Council since 2010. He has also worked with the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) and Pratt Fashion Design School and supported students through his involvement with PAVE.

"I think one of the reasons Dan offers the college such timely insight into changes in the visual studies industry is because in his career he hasn't been afraid to grow and adapt with its changing landscape," says Pamela Linton, vice president of industry relations, LIM College. "It's his talent and his willingness to try new things that I most admire about his work."

"Dan has not only given generously of his time and expertise on our School of Art, Architecture + Design advisory council, but when we bring students to New York for industry field seminars, he has hosted our large group in a showroom several times over the years," says Deborah Christiansen, director of undergraduate studies, School of Art, Architecture + Design, Senior Lecturer, Fashion Design of Indiana University. "The students always remember him and our appointments with him as one of their favorite field seminar memories."

Evans is also proud to be involved with The Round Table, a gathering of diverse artistic talent in

the New York scene. Together with [Markopoulos Circle members] Tom Beebe and Eric Feigenbaum, Evans has worked to bring together the industry's most seasoned professionals and new young talent to share ideas. This is not a sponsored group, and he hopes to keep it that way in order to preserve the authenticity of the creative forum, which is inspired by the original Round Table from the 1920s at the Algonquin Hotel.

THE FUTURE OF RETAIL

Evans is excited for what the future holds for retail. He believes it is just starting to wake up again. "Technology is opening the doors for brick and mortar and making things exciting again" Evans says. "It brings opportunities and challenges to the visual world." This excitement is what he finds so rewarding and believes will continue to attract people to the industry.

"Dan champions reinvention for the industry, for students and for himself—pushing it all forward in a positive, must-happen direction," says Tom Beebe, creative consultant, stylist, window wizard and 2010 Markopoulos Award winner.

As he continues to support school programs and mentor young professionals, his advice is to be completely open to all aspects of the industry as each opportunity opens the door into another

direction. He credits this mentality for his own personal success and believes dabbling in different areas allows people to really understand all aspects of the industry. He also encourages a focus on communication skills and a business sensibility. "Managing budgets, understanding ROI and selling and presenting ideas to sophisticated, numbers-oriented management teams is critical," Evans says.

"Dan appears to be constantly reinventing himself, he effortlessly moves across changes in the industry and keeps himself relevant," says Derek Johnson, a former CEO of Noa Brands, now operating partner of peak9partners.

"Aside from being the consummate professional, Dan is a true gentleman who has made major contributions to our industry," says Eric Feigenbaum, president of Embrace Design and 2012 Markopoulos Award winner. "Dan has touched us all with his wit, good humor, talent and knowledge. He is a vital asset to our community and is a great addition to the Markopoulos Circle."

As the retail world evolves, it is safe to say Evans will continue to evolve with it and help guide students and colleagues along the way. The Markopoulos Circle welcomes him with open arms and couldn't be prouder to have such a well respected retail advocate and honorable human being join their team.

d:r



2013

Joe Feczko



2014

Harry Cunningham



2015

Ken Smart



2016

Bill Goddu



2017

Linda Lombardi



2018

Anne Kong