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TheBuzz

Erika Engle

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Punahou graduate has designs on bringing Olympics to NYC

A 1974 Punahou graduate is on the graphic design team hired to lure the 2012 Olympic games to New York City.

Ann Harakawa also happens to have studied at the Rhode Island School of Design, finished her graduate work at Yale University and, as a Fulbright Scholar, served as a graphic design intern in Japan. In Rhode Island, she studied with Dale Chihuly, perhaps best known for his colorful glass ceiling installation at the Bellagio Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas. Her interest in glass blowing stemmed from classes at Punahou, but her attention later zeroed in on graphic design.

Back on the East Coast, she signed on with New York City-based **Two Twelve Associates**, a graphic design company of which she is now a partner and co-owner.

"What we really do is public information branding," a specialty area of graphic design, Harakawa said. "It's all about being able to deliver information to broad audiences."

For more than five years, the company has been working on a bid to base the 2012 Olympics in the Big Apple.

"We're getting down to the wire. We've made it successfully through different stages. Now the final decision is being made in Singapore," she said. London, Paris, Madrid,

Moscow or New York City will be announced as the winner July 6.

An invitation-only gathering will see some films, graphic design and other work Harakawa's company has prepared for the years-long project this evening at the Pacific Club in Honolulu. Others can find information at www.nyc2012.com.

She's been up to a little more than that during her visits home.

"I was able to get three really nice projects here," she said. Signs to honor donors at Case Middle School on the Punahou campus is one; a sign program for the Waikiki Business Improvement District is another. The third is a "wayfinding strategy" for the Queen's Medical Center, something Two Twelve has done for other medical centers back east.

"Before you actually think about signage, (you have to figure out) how do you get people through a complex facility?"

A high-profile project Harakawa has worked on, that almost nobody has seen, was to create a book cataloging the Asian art collection belonging to gazillionaire David Rockefeller. "This was the fourth volume ... it was privately published and put in a vault, to be distributed posthumously," she said. "Nobody has seen it ... it was a wonderful project, though."

See the [Columnists](#) section for some past articles.

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