

Hartsfield International Airport

For most visitors, their experience of the Centennial Olympic Games will begin the air.



LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS PARTICIPATED IN THE EIGHTY ONGOING PROJECTS AND OVER \$170 MILLION IN RENOVATIONS THAT CHANGED THE ENTIRE INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR APPEARANCE OF THE HARTSFIELD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT.

All photos by Gary Knight & Associates, Inc., provided courtesy of Turner Associates.

The "jewel" of the Hartsfield International Airport, the newly designed and reconstructed Atrium, reconciles harsh, dramatic architectural features with a soft, family-room environment that will surely delight Olympic travelers and airport businesses for decades to come. Passengers can now meet and greet in this centrally located oasis between the north and south terminals in what is described as a "giant living room of the city" as they flood into Atlanta for the competitions. To complement the grand statement that the Atrium makes, the Department of Aviation has developed and merchandised the Atrium to reflect both the city's international status and its local flavor, featuring the native tastes and talents of the South.

Turner Associates/Architects and Planners, Inc. -- proud to be the architects who also designed Concourse E, the "front door to the world" for the Olympics -- have strived to give visitors to both locations a feeling of "warmth and Southern hospitality" with their dramatic architectural features. According to project leader Turner Associates, "The design grew from a desire to create a central terminal with a strong geometric space filled with rich qualities of light." And, as a crowning touch to the Atrium, a stunning glass dome sweeps a relaxing, natural light across the landscaping of the common seating area.

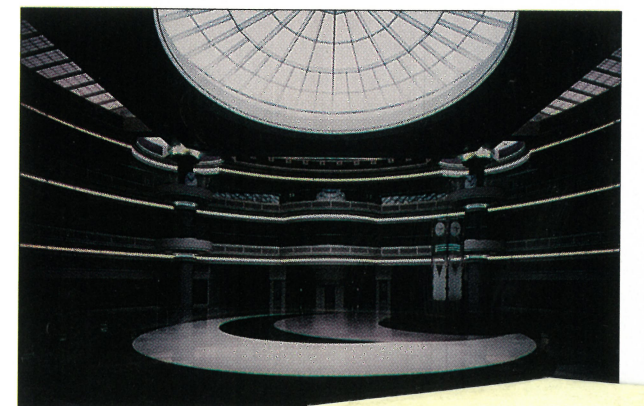
This common area, lined with planters containing tall, silk ficus trees surrounded by ivy foliage, serves as a peaceful respite for hurried travelers. Living-room-style seating for 100 people is positioned amidst the interior landscaping. Consulting Landscape Architect, Edgar Hillsman and Associates, explained that soft-seat benches and small group settings of individual chairs were chosen to create a living room/lobby atmosphere that is "homey and less stressful" than other

utilitarian airport lobbies. Special custom lighting, comfortable seating and custom marble planters set the stage for what Edgar Hillsman describes as "quite a lovely place." Although the airport opted for an interior landscape of large, 18- to 20-foot-tall silk trees, augmented by smaller living plants, Hillsman understands that he was certainly "obliged to find the most cost-effective way to create the look that the clients desired." However, he adds with a chuckle, "all of the visually-close plants are living!"

By infusing progressive architectural treatments and new "concession concepts," the Atrium was the creative economic brainchild of former Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young and represents the latest effort by airport officials to restore Hartsfield to a more passenger-friendly airport. A total of three stories above and two basement floors are the setting for this grand four-phase development project; an underground train unifies this passenger-friendly airport by transporting visitors from terminal to terminal. Cedric Curtis, AIA, of Turner Associates, praises the giant sixty-foot-tall skylight complemented by several smaller skylights that give the Atrium "a bright, outdoorsy feeling."

As a result, the Hartsfield International Airport Atrium has become a corporate standard for commercial development in the Atlanta market, and visitors from all over the world will certainly enjoy these unique and festive urban spaces. More and more evidence reveals that Landscape Architects have led the relay race to beautify Atlanta for the Games with preparations that will continue to profit the city well after the competitions are over, putting down roots for the growing urban ideal of "Atlanta 2000."

LASN



BY FAR, THE MOST EYE-CATCHING POINT OF THE ATRIUM IS A TWO-STORY, CUSTOMIZED, GLASS TOWER CLOCK -- WITH A CARILLON THAT WILL RESONATE SOOTHING, MEDITATIVE CHIMES AND SONGS ON THE QUARTER-HOUR, HALF-HOUR AND HOUR. THE CLOCK CAN BE PROGRAMMED TO PLAY MORE THAN 1,000 SONGS, INCLUDING VARIOUS NATIONAL ANTHEMS AND A WIDE ASSORTMENT OF POPULAR TUNES.