

MEDIA/PUBLISHING

Architectural Digest reunites with BIDN for sustainability-themed virtual event

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In 2020, *Architectural Digest* partnered with the Black Interior Designers Network (BIDN) for the first installment of *The Iconic Home* showhouse. Image credit: *The Boundary*

By KATIE TAMOLA

Cond Nast shelter publication *Architectural Digest* is unveiling another digital designer showhouse exclusively featuring Black interior designers, with this installment focusing on sustainability.

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As consumers spend more time at home than ever before, issues such as sustainability have become top of mind while brands and publications have pivoted to virtual events to better reach audiences. With the new showhouse, consumers will hear insights on an issue immensely pertinent to the design community, specifically from diverse voices through a partnership with the [Black Interior Designers Network \(BIDN\)](#).

"A primary goal of the showhouse, similar to the mission of the BIDN, was to spotlight the breadth of Black interior designers' creativity, influence and talent on a national platform," said Amy Astley, New York-based global editorial director at *Architectural Digest*. "It was the culmination of years of dialogue between *AD* and BIDN with the pandemic acting as a catalyst to put plans and long-standing discussions into place and create this groundbreaking virtual event.

"It's an incredibly important partnership and one we definitely plan to continue," she said.

Building more homes

In November 2020, *AD* partnered with the BIDN for the first installment of *The Iconic Home* showhouse.

The weeklong digital event featured 19 designers, 15 360-degree room renderings and 10 Instagram live events. Sponsors included Caesarstone, CB2, Crate and Barrel, Gaggenau, Interface, LG Signature, Purple Innovation Inc. and The Shade Store ([see story](#)).



Last year's Iconic Home brought in over 114 social impressions and 1.2 Instagram Live views. Image credit: The Boundary

Designers from over 16 firms across the country participated in the event, which brought in more than 114 million social impressions and 1.2 million Instagram Live event views.

The title "The Iconic Home" is a tribute to the late Kimberly Ward, who founded the Black Interior Designers Network. Ms. Ward wished to give the showhouse a name that highlighted the talent within the Black design community.

AD will be continuing its partnership with BIDN in launching this year's Iconic Home on sustainability this summer.

The two groups recognize how important sustainability is to consumers and to the world at large.

"At Architectural Digest, we believe that sustainability begins at home the way we live, the way we build, the way we decorate these choices all make a real and lasting impact on the environment," said David Kaufman, digital director at *Architectural Digest*, New York. "As the effects of climate change grow more and more immediate, *AD* remains committed to spotlighting great design that not only enriches our lives today but lays the foundation for a better tomorrow."

Elizabeth Graizolo, the founder and principal of Yellow House Architects in New York, will be serving as the architect for this year's Iconic Home installment on sustainability. There will also be an entirely new cast of designers.



This year's Iconic Home will be launching in the summer. Image credit: The Boundary

With climate change on the minds of many, the partnership is prioritizing forward thinking.

"We at the Black Interior Designers Network pride ourselves on being forward thinking and hyper vigilant of what is most important to our community," said Keia McSwain, president of the Black Interior Designers Network.

"Sustainability is the future of not only our industry but the world as a whole and our members seek to be at the forefront of that paradigm shift."

With more collaboration, focus on important issues and digital-facing events, *AD* and other organizations continue to look towards the future.

Sustainability matters

Brands have actively kept sustainability in mind, and the interest and prioritization of the matter only seems to be getting stronger. This includes in home design and real estate.

Sustainability and green architecture are now routinely included in high-end remodeling plans, after years of being dismissed as out of reach or extreme.

Speaking at the State of Luxury Real Estate eConference on Jan. 14, architects elaborated on why luxury and excellent design do not have to come at the expense of sustainability. These days, enthusiasm for going green excites architects who are studying the latest trends to keep up with fresh demand ([see story](#)).

A much stronger focus on sustainable luxury is needed to help protect the environment, increase care for animals, and reuse or recycle wherever possible. But it is also necessary because of a radical change in consumer expectations ([see story](#)).

Meaningful partnerships and the work of brands will be essential in promoting sustainability, spanning beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.

"With Elizabeth's vision, an all new cast of BIDN designers, and the incredible visualization team at The Boundary, *AD* and BIDN are excited to take this year's event to the next level," *Architectural Digest's* Mr. Kaufman said. "The 2021 showhouse will be even more immersive than last year's."

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