

15TH ANNUAL INTERIORS AWARDS

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INTERIORS®

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DESIGNER OF THE YEAR
LAUREN ROTTET, PARTNER
KEATING MANN JERNIGAN ROTTET

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Lauren Rottet, interiors partner of Keating Mann Jernigan Rottet, puts the spotlight on Los Angeles' new trajectory

Text by Beverly Russell

According to visionary R. Buckminster Fuller, the world changed so dramatically in the 1950s with the launching of the "Sputnik" heralding the Space Age that anyone born in that decade was bound to perceive life differently and act accordingly. *Interiors'* 1994 Designer of the Year, Lauren Rottet, born in 1956, belongs to the computer-driven, Star Trek generation. Furthermore, she grew up in Texas in the 1960s right under the influence of NASA. As early as age six, she began to be aware of her surroundings and environment, drawing ideal houses, furniture, and decorations that expressed her strong likes and dislikes.

"Space exploration, science fiction entertainment, the efficiency of home appliances, and advances in technology had a definite impact on my perception," she admits. "We have, as architects, been made aware of the visionaries throughout time that have put on paper outrageous ideas, unbelievable for their time, that have indeed come true. My frame of reference is that what is impossible today is highly likely tomorrow. When you consider the designs of German filmmakers and architects who conceived of ideas like *Metropolis* in 1927, or if you think of "Star Trek" in the 1960s, and then realize that we now have bullet trains, high-rises and space shuttles which were conceived of creatively up to 66 years ago—it is astounding."

The reality that no one in the design industry could have foretold, however, indeed happened to Rottet twice, and it has had an equal impact on her work. Both in Houston and now Los Angeles, recessions and urban issues have affected the practice of interior design. The ability to shift from a concentration on high design to thinking strategically about corporate relocations, downsizing, and the bottom line impact has been Rottet's forte and is an attribute that makes her such an outstanding example in the profession today. Rottet's career definitely exhibits a record of life on the fast track so symbolic of her generation. A measure of diversity is evident, too, expressive of her age group and home base.

An 11-year period in the Chicago, Houston, and Los Angeles offices of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, where she

rose to the level of associate partner, preceded her present position as a partner in the full-service Los Angeles-based firm Keating Mann Jernigan Rottet, a 40-person multi-discipline organization with over \$200 million in projects on the boards. With an equally focused interiors and architecture practice, it is a forward-looking, energetic, and efficiently organized firm. The principals see their roles first as problem-solvers (a quality which is evident in their portfolio), considering the practical project issues such as budgets, schedules, and image, and then finding ways to creatively interpret them into projects that function over the long term. At 37, with more than 40 awards in her portfolio, Rottet is far from being the token woman in the five-partner firm. An architect who graduated with honors from the University of Texas but subsequently made a specialty of interiors, she is actively involved in all aspects of the firm's work, holding equal status with her male architectural partners.

Also typical of her generation, she feels at home in Southern California on the Pacific Rim where East meets West and technology drives the mega-billion-dollar world of entertainment. Once the outpost, Los Angeles is moving center stage as the tentacles of entertainment create higher demands on communications and computer technology, spawning new jobs and suggesting a new frontier. The other side of Los

Angeles is the hard look it has taken recently at the myriad issues arising from its diversity and the new majority. It is difficult to imagine that these influences will not affect the design that comes out of Los Angeles in the future.

Led by Richard Keating, for 22 years a design partner at Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, the story of Keating Mann Jernigan Rottet's rise to prominence in three short years has the storybook flavor of a Hollywood film script. "It seems a short time and yet the story began a long way back," declares Keating, 49, who gathered together his four partners, Michael Mann, 40, Robert Jernigan, 38, Lauren Rottet, and Paul Danna, 32, while at SOM's office in Houston, which he launched in 1974 at the age of 30 /continued on page 49



In step in L.A. Lauren Rottet with her partners, left to right: Rob Jernigan, Paul Danna, Richard Keating, and Michael Mann

CHAS McGRATH

Screen Actors Guild

Founded in 1937, the 80,000-member Screen Actors Guild representing actors and performing artists in motion picture, television, and educational entertainment has a star-studded history. James Cagney, one of its first presidents, was followed by such luminaries as Charlton Heston and Ronald Reagan in later decades. Previously housed in a converted Hollywood church with cramped office space and inadequate meeting rooms, the Guild turned to Zornizer and Associates and KMJR for advice on lease negotiation, space planning, and interior design.

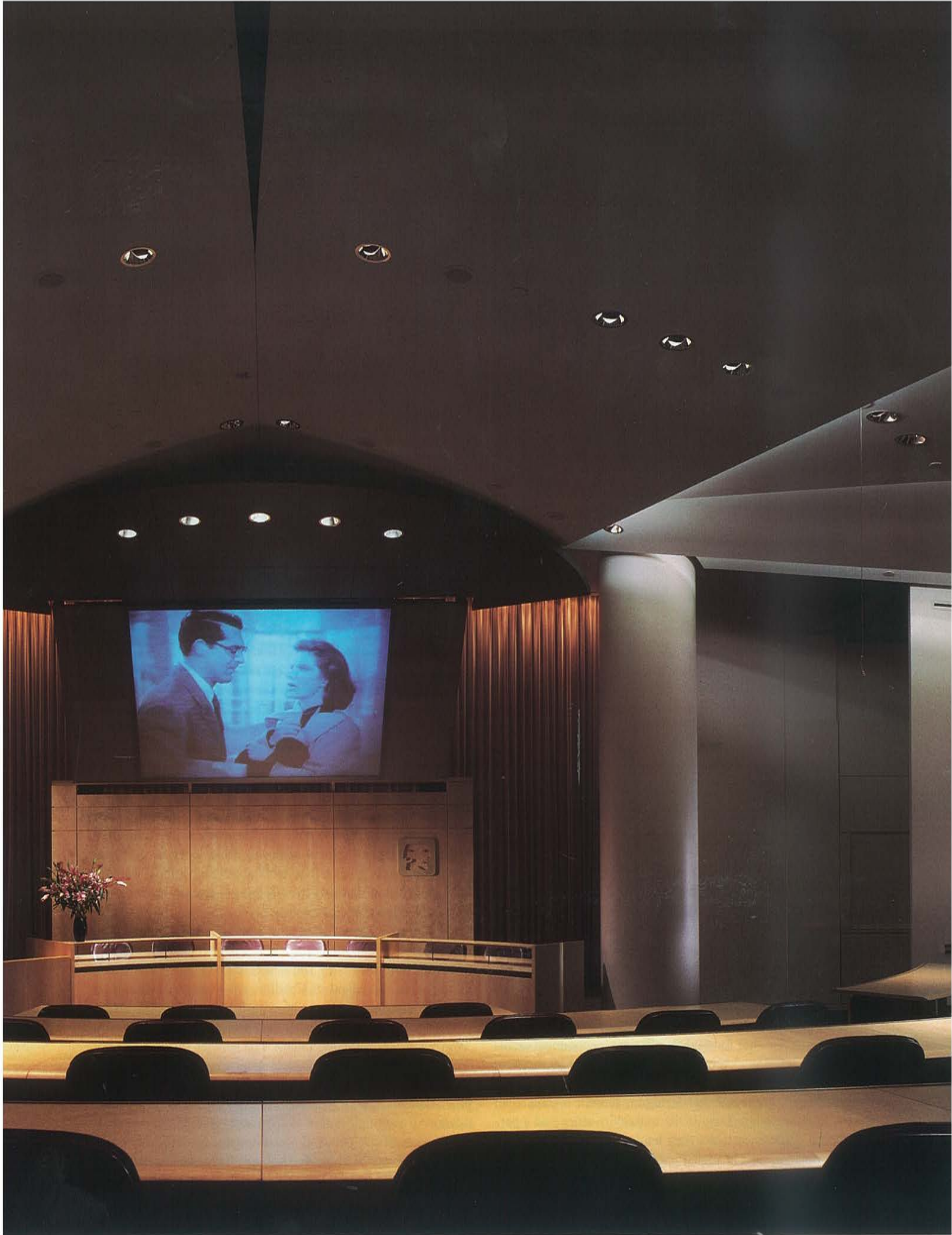
The operational requirements prompted the selection of 80,000 square feet in a classic International-style building on Wilshire Boulevard, near the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. KMJR divided the project into three separate areas: membership, meeting rooms, and administration. Each is housed in a different space within the building, but easily accessible by elevator and interior stairway. Richard Riveire, senior designer for the project, created a requisite aura of theatricality appropriate to the culture of the client, and achieved it on a very modest budget with more imagination than money.

The most dramatic space is the James Cagney Room, an auditorium which can accommodate up to 160 people for screenings or 80 people in a table configuration for board meetings. With its ceiling shape derived from an orchestral shell in response to a request for state-of-the-art acoustics from the clients, this is an imposing, lofty room. Equipped for teleconferencing, audio-visual, and movie screenings, its neutral colorings and maple wood finishing details give a professional, yet soothing atmosphere—necessary for meetings that can get into heated discussions about industry matters.

Right: State-of-the-art projection, audio-visual, and teleconferencing facilities are integrated into the James Cagney Room to meet every need. The room functions as a training room for new members, as well as a screening and meeting room.

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Opposite left: With custom-designed tables set up in meeting style, the James Cagney Room holds 80 people. When required, the tables are easily disassembled and stored, and 80 more seats can be added for auditorium functions.

Above left: The Cagney Room servery is an important support space as meals are a fixture of board meetings. It is fully equipped with steam tables, ice bins, and warming ovens all fitted behind dark high-gloss plastic laminate cabinetry.

Above right: The pre-function room, called the President's Circle, is used as a gathering space and is named for the framed pencil portraits of each SAG president including Jimmy Cagney in 1937. Spot lighting set behind perforated metal ceiling panels gives these stars the emphasis they deserve. Richly upholstered chairs and banquettes, organized around sparkly glass and steel tables provide a mood of glamour. James Cagney's Lifetime Achievement Award and a life-size bust add a focus at each end of the Circle.

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and built up to a 100-person office. After establishing a new SOM office in Los Angeles in tandem with Houston in 1986, and building some of the cities' most notable new high-rises, including the elegant Gas Company Tower, Keating's group had developed such a close bond between each other that they decided to set up their own firm. This was both a risky and audacious move in 1990, considering, according to Rottet, "that everything was falling apart with the recession, the bottom had dropped out of the economy, and we had *no* work."

Opening an office with a staff of six, the partnership established an unconventional format that produced results. "We found a small space, moved in over a weekend, and began a hands-on practice that focused on efficient, economical architecture and interiors," recalls Rottet. The name of the firm emphasized the major disciplines: Keating, architectural design; Mann, management; Jernigan, technical expertise; Rottet, interior design. Despite the makeshift office and a particle-board conference table, they landed the 600,000-square-foot Hewlett Packard headquarters in Atlanta, which led to a

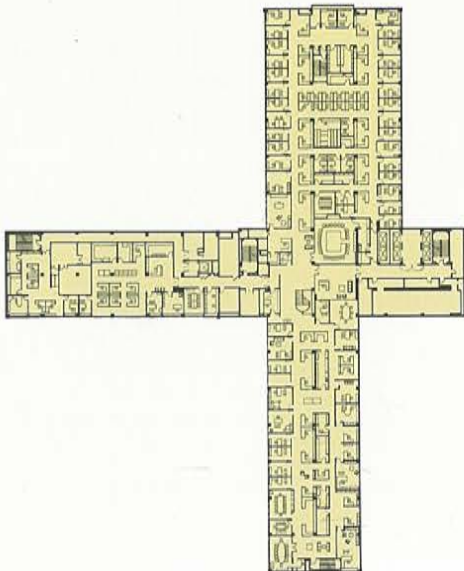
lot of local and national press. From then on, everything looked up. Past clients such as First Interstate Bank and Maguire Thomas Partners began to bring work to the firm. And soon others, such as Equitable and First National Bank of Chicago, trusted that they would bring a unique level of service and design to their projects.

Now a substantial firm with a national reputation and with major projects completed, the partners still like to integrate work and lifestyle. They sometimes sail off and spend a day climbing on the island of Catalina, for example, to get their thoughts together and come up with fresh new ideas. KMJR's corporate culture reflects what they feel are today's priorities. "We believe in servicing clients 110 percent of the time, but we also believe strongly in communicating among ourselves and within our firm and most importantly, weaving in and out of disciplines," says Keating. KMJR's partnership not only integrates working life, but also believes in being understanding of each other's personal commitments. Rottet had her second child, Evan, a sister for her son Kyle, during the early

Screen Actors Guild

Right: A unique art program titled "Great Actors in Great Roles" is the main feature of the SAG administrative wing. It provides dramatic color and form to the neutral architecture of the interior spaces.

Below: The cruciform shape of the floors that accommodate the administrative offices of SAG are laid out to maximize natural light. Workrooms, copy rooms, and support areas are located in small interior islands, with workstations conference rooms and offices on the perimeter.



NICK MERRICK/HEDRICH-BLESSING



days of the new office start-up, reflecting an ideal that parenthood, marriage, and career should hang together naturally without one being sacrificed for another.

Cognizant of the realities of the future, KMJR stepped up to the new responsibilities of a design firm in the '90s. This has involved taking on retrofits of existing buildings and interiors (a whole new market for architects at a time when very few new buildings are being commissioned), upgrading lobbies to help developers capture new tenants and increase office rents, and meeting low budgets with grace and innovation. The firm gained such a positive reputation for giving clients what they wanted that within 18 months of starting up their business they were in need of more office space. In keeping with their smart business sense, KMJR moved into the 13,000 square feet of office space formerly occupied by ISD on Olive Street in the heart of downtown L.A.—a real estate "deal of the century,"

according to Mann. They added a few key finishes to personalize the image of the place, then quickly added staff to work on projects from clients all over the country.

Because there is no distinguishing hierarchy between disciplines, KMJR does not keep tabs on one or the other. Recently, however, interiors projects have accounted for about 40 percent of the total workload. Interiors projects range from large corporate and public sector projects to small intensely designed spaces. KMJR is pleased that they are becoming equally well known for their expertise in programming, space planning, and feasibility studies as they are for their design. And furniture designs for Halcon and Brayton, along with showrooms for these new collections, have resulted in welcome publicity for the firm.

If there is one principle that Rottet and her partners stand for it is that each project responds, */continued on page 54*



McCutchen Doyle Brown & Enersen

With an average age of 45, the partners at McCutchen Doyle Brown & Enersen represent a new, younger generation of Southern Californian lawyers. And their practice attests to this description. They are in the forefront of health care and environmental law. When KMJR was called in to provide a new headquarters for the firm, it was clear that the mandate was to provide a progressive environment which would infer the correct cutting-edge imagery. At the same time, the aesthetic presentation had to be considerate of the firm's range of clients, from nonprofit organizations to major corporations.

An extensive programming and building analysis phase resulted in the selection of the two top floors of a prominent Bunker Hill high-rise in Los Angeles. It offered excellent views, a large and unusual triangular floor plate, and good lease economics. Furthermore, the 12-foot-high ceilings allowed for a maximum of light and openness.



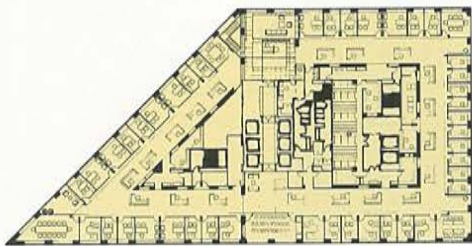
Directly off the elevator lobby on the top floor, the reception area serves both floors and eventually a future third floor for expansion. To meet two conflicting requirements—openness and privacy—a glass “art wall,” specially commissioned by Merry Norris from Linda Hudson, is positioned behind the desk to divide the space. Composed of three different types of glass—clear, ridged, and multi-colored using the “mille fiori” technique, it effectively screens the seating area from the entrance lobby.



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McCutchen Doyle Brown & Enersen



Above: The floor plan indicates an unusual floor plate.
Right: Elegantly detailed in painted steel and clad with stone treads, the interconnecting stairway with a maple handrail allows for easy access between floors.



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not to a fashion or a style, but to its specific cultural and physical context. For this reason, there is no recognizable KMJR stamp when you walk into a newly completed project, although you may catch a glimpse of an elegant Rottet-designed piece of furniture, distinguishable for its asymmetry and sleek, modern combination of glass, steel, and wood. The broad common denominator from interior to interior, is a feeling of quality, often achieved through studying the effects of light. Rottet and her team spend time exploring the changing character of light throughout the day and in various weather conditions within a space. In some instances, three different kinds of glass—transparent, opaque and decorative—may be used to manipulate the light. It is this consistent attention to a design subtlety that engenders a dimension of quality into their work. Beyond the design sensibility, Rottet attributes the quality of the firm's technical expertise to Rob Jernigan. "His ability to detail a design, put together a set of working documents, and work with a contractor for a polished end result is unmatched."

Another consistent thread is the use of art and, wherever possible, commissions for site-specific works by local artists. For the Screen Actors Guild headquarters (page 46), for example, five local painters were commissioned to create 30 life-size murals and portraits of great actors in great roles. (A respect for the client and subject and the honor of being includ-

ed was such a draw that it brought the artists' prices down to a fraction of their actual worth). In a project with a very modest budget, these artworks act as a dramatic and unifying enhancement throughout the 80,000-square-foot space. Another creative touch arising out of the exigency of the budget is a patchwork carpet in the lobby waiting area. Designed by KMJR principal Richard Riveire with Rottet, it is composed from left-over pieces of carpet from other floors. For the law firm of McCutchen Doyle Brown & Enersen, on the other hand, a site-specific glass screen was commissioned from artist Linda Hudson to provide an opaque yet translucent barrier between the reception area and the entrance. In the Baker & McKenzie law offices, while no site-specific work was commissioned, the existing collection as well as key new artworks were sensitively integrated into the space.

Bringing art into interiors comes naturally, of course, to a designer who started out as an art major and was subsequently schooled at SOM. But frequently what makes Rottet's work a departure from the traditional SOM vocabulary is her use of color and materials. "We're always trying to use a material in a new way—woods, stones, metals, and glass. A simple material when celebrated in a special way can take on a whole new feeling. The subtle manipulation of color and texture with artificial and natural light is a

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Above: The secretarial corridor is bathed in natural and artificial light. Daylight penetrates through the ingeniously designed walls of the partners' offices, which are fitted with three different types of glass—clear, laminated with a translucent film, and backpainted (see page 32). The custom-designed uplighting affixed to the interior wall augments the illumination with sensitivity. Stainless-steel door pulls on the anigre partners' doors are custom designed by KMJR. Secretarial workstations are custom designed in glossy laminate.

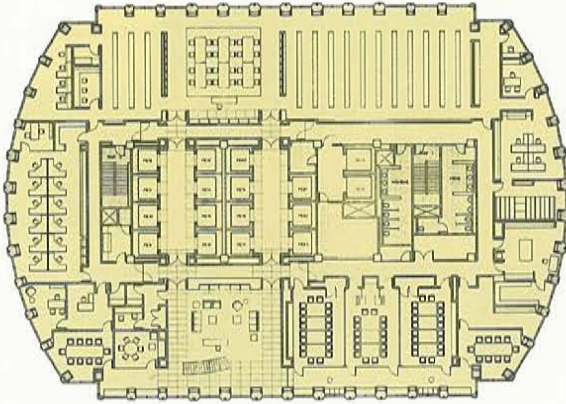
Left: Typical of the intricate and flawless detailing of their interiors, KMJR's storage wall expresses a streamlined image appropriate for this client.

Seating Niedermaier; *Upholstery* Edelman Leather; *Carpet* Suncraft Mills; *File wall* Storwall (files), Formica (laminare); *Attorney wall* Stow Davis/Wigand (millwork), Wilkinson Architectural Products (glass); *Custom lighting* Prudential Lighting Co.; *Reception desk* Naomi Asai (design), Newsom Duinick (fabricator); *Stair* Washington Iron Works (metal work), Carnevale & Lohr (stone); *Fabric wall* Architectural Fabric Systems, Rudolph W. Robert Scott (fabric); *Art wall* Linda Hudson (artist), Merry Norris (advisor); *Millwork pyramid wall, secretarial desk, file wall, glass art wall* Stow Davis/Wigand

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Baker & McKenzie

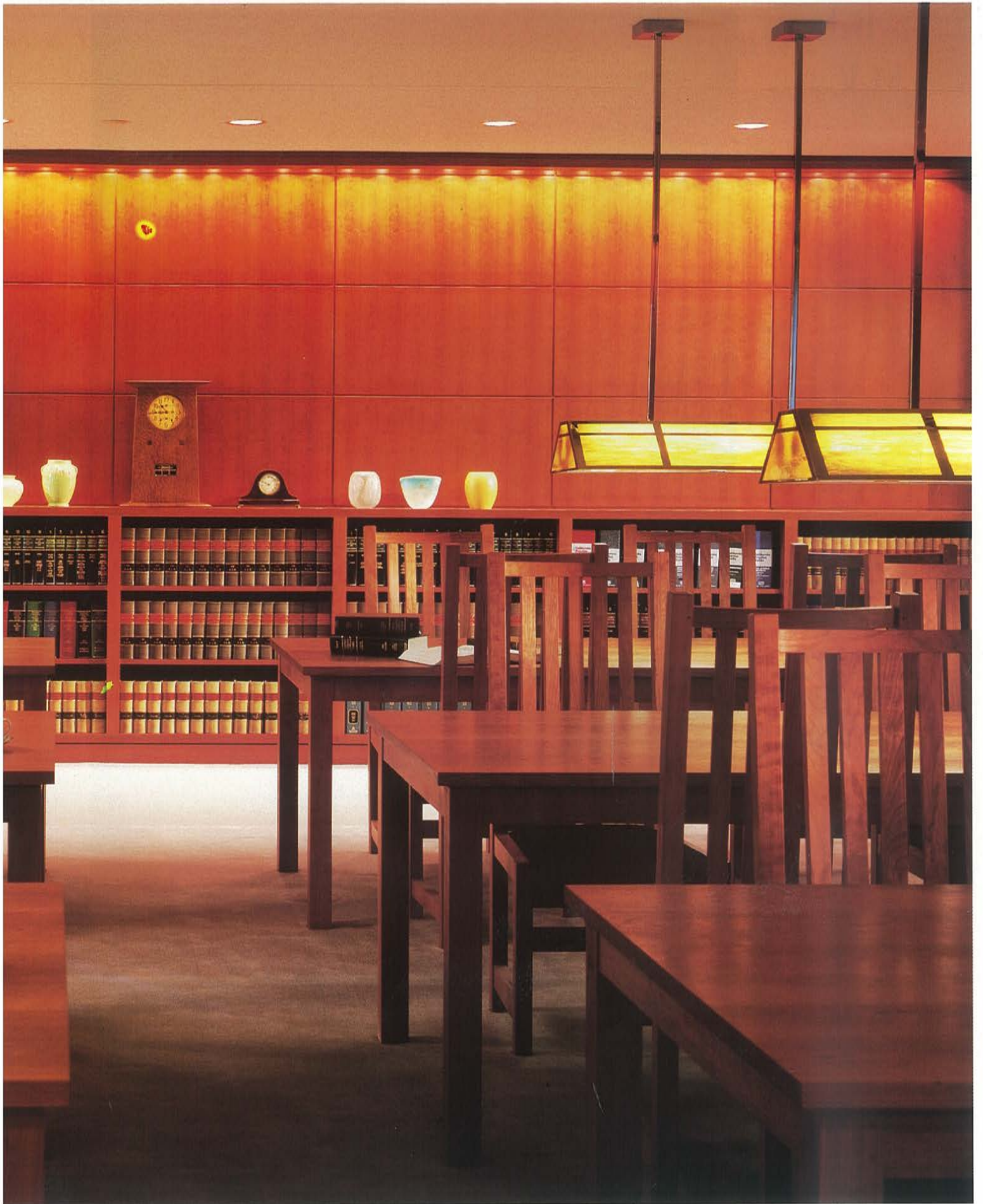
With an international clientele and an image as one of the nation's most prestigious law firms, Baker & McKenzie needed new offices in Los Angeles upon its merger with another firm. Lauren Rottet, while she was with SOM, advised on the consolidation and the move to 117,000 square feet of space on six floors of a downtown Los Angeles high-rise. The design concept is derived from the client's wish to reflect a regional character, while striking a balance between traditional and contemporary expression.



Above: The plan of the reception floor shows the arrangement of conferencing rooms onto the exterior corridors, the private phone rooms, and the law library, which are central to the functional requirements of a large international law firm.

Left: Visitors have no doubt about the regional message conveyed in the law library. The sturdy oak reading tables and upright, slat-backed chairs refer to the California Arts and Crafts heritage. Lauren Rottet designed the elegant custom glass pendant reading lights which hang low over the tables. Walls are paneled in a rich cherry wood.





Baker & McKenzie

A typical satellite reception area on a subordinate floor has a distinctive KMJR touch. The etched-glass panel creates privacy but allows natural light to penetrate from an exterior corridor. The combination of a sleek upholstered banquette and Mission-style furniture is arranged on an innovative area rug of geometric design.

Seating Steelcase, Charles McMurray Designs, Thomas Moser, Martin Bratrud, Knoll, Arroyo Design, Woodwork Corporation of America; *Upholstery* Brickel, Clarence House, Lee Jofa; *Tables* Thomas Moser, Arroyo Design, Zographos, Scope; *Carpet* Decorative Carpets, Bentley Mills, Almar; *Lighting* Edison Price, Jack Lenor Larsen; *Wallcovering* Jim Thompson Thai Silk, Edelman Leather; *Stone* DBM/Hatch; *Etched glass* Berger Iron Works, Carvist Corp.; *Clock* Baker, Knapp & Tubbs; *Planters* Crate & Barrel; *Art* Ann Thorneycroft, David Trowbridge, Charles Arnoldi

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palette I like to work with. And in our group everyone is listened to and has a say in things," she adds. "This helps the process of creativity."

Saluting the interiors team that works with her, Rottet has the highest regard for her two principals, Richard Riveire and Steve Zimmerman, as well as her partners. Each makes invaluable contributions, such as Michael Mann's ability to guide a client and team and to make the right decisions in the early stage of a project and Paul Danna's unique ability to recruit the best talent in the industry. "Put simply," she says, "the projects would not be the same without them."

Managing her work load, interfacing with clients, directing the team is by no means the totality of Rottet's activities. She participates in IBD's principals roundtable

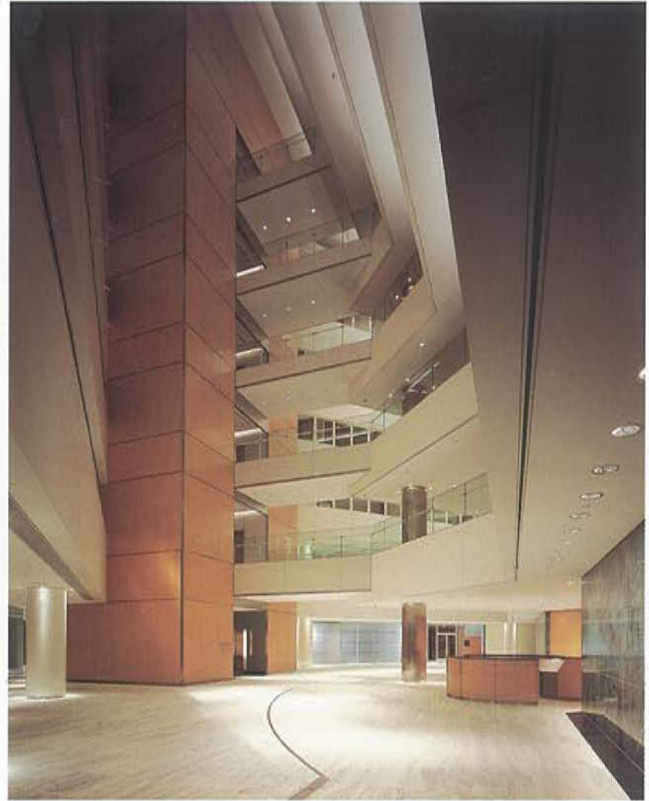
and is currently on the board of directors of the Los Angeles Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and is the chairperson of its Interior Architecture Committee, and as such supervises seminars and events on a monthly basis. Under Rottet's direction, the committee has implemented a scholarship program for students interested in interior architecture. And besides this, there are frequent calls from manufacturers wanting her to infuse their lines with her creative thinking. Furniture design, she says, is an aspect of design creativity that she enjoys wholeheartedly and is appreciated by her clients.

If this Thirtysomething generation has one moniker that fits accurately, it is surely the Nike slogan, "Just do it." Rottet does it all, does it well, and deserves the rewards.

First National Bank Center



Above: The First National Bank Center concourse prior to renovation by KMJR had brown brick pavers, rippled oak paneling, and a mirrored ceiling. Right: In contrast, after the remodeling the space is lighter and sparkling with white marble, limestone, and granite finishes, its overall effect recalling the blue of the harbor and marine activities outside.



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The First National Bank Center in San Diego, now owned by Equitable and completed in 1982, was typical of its day with dark materials and finishes. Its circulation was also confusing and cluttered, due to the installation of a fountain and unnecessary escalator. The renovation takes its cues from the building's blue reflective glass, prowlike atrium, and views of the San Diego harbor. The result is a lighter and more sparkling effect.

Left: Existing bridges that span between the elevator lobbies are lightened to create the effect of one large atrium.

Fiberoptic floor lighting Fiberstars; Lighting Modular, Edison Price, Bega (exterior); Stone Margraf Spa (interior), Forti Graniti, Spa (exterior), Cleveland Marble Mosaic Co. (installation), Elevator cab Millar; Custom reception desk Wigand; Exterior curtainwall Harmon Contract; Glass handrail S&R Industrial Sheet Metal; Concrete paving Shaw & Sons; Exterior stone



15

Brayton International Showroom

With resources reminiscent of a low-budget film (no time, little money, no crew, and high expectations), the KMJR design team was faced with creating a temporary environment at the Pacific Design Center for WestWeek 92 that would create a stir for Brayton International and walk away with honors. They took their cues from the Hollywood location and capitalized on movieland assets, creating five antique backdrops in the showroom space to showcase furniture groupings of Lauren Rottet's new Evaneau line (named after her young daughter). The effect was such a smash hit that it received the Best Temporary Installation award and led to a second temporary showroom with a similar theme in 1993, shown in these photos.

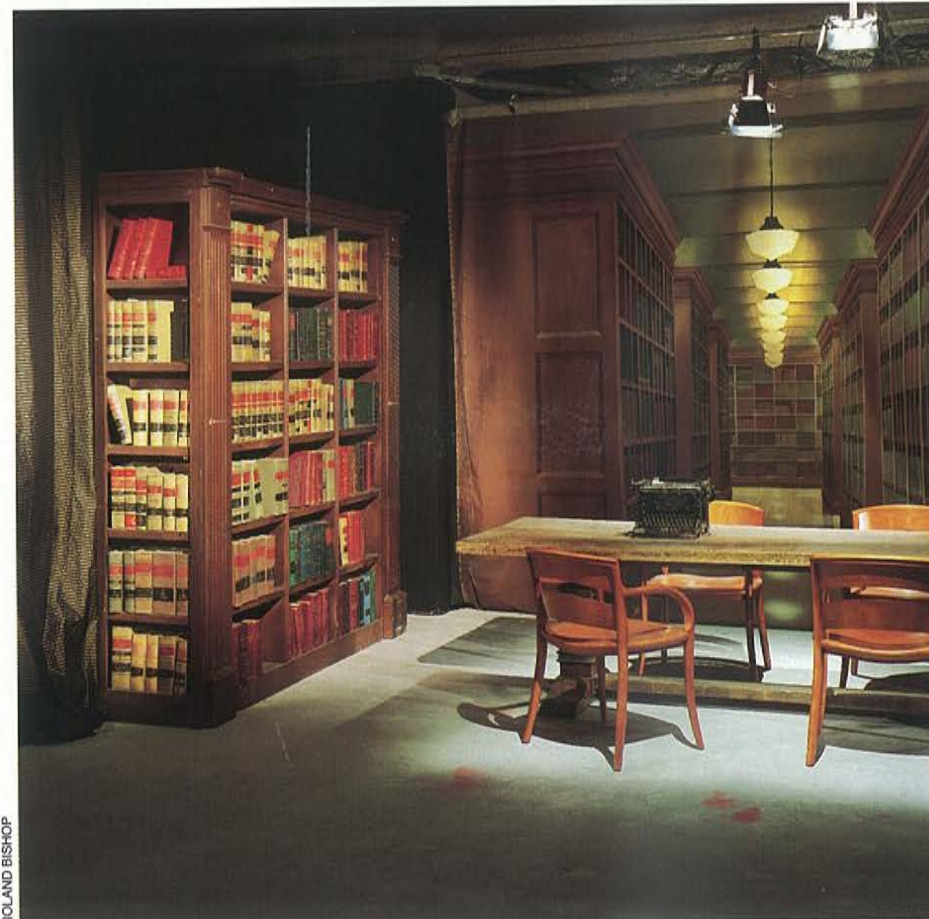
Top right: A view of the Hollywood Hills with the famous Hollywood sign is accompanied by a projected image of a Richard Neutra-designed house—several of which were built in the Hollywood and Silverlake areas in the 1940s.

The Evaneau line of furniture designed by Lauren Rottet reflects the simplicity of that architectural sensibility with its clean, classic modern character.

Bottom right: A vintage library backdrop is augmented with some library shelves which are authentic props from the set of the popular TV show "Murder She Wrote." The typewriter seemed a "logical" prop on the refectory table, which is paired with four Chisholm chairs by Brayton.

Top far right: A projected image of Pierre Koenig's Case Study House #22 and the view of the city from its deck set the stage for this living arrangement complete with a vintage television set. The furniture shows the adaptability of the Evaneau lounge seating with its versatile pillows grouped around the Biarritz table.

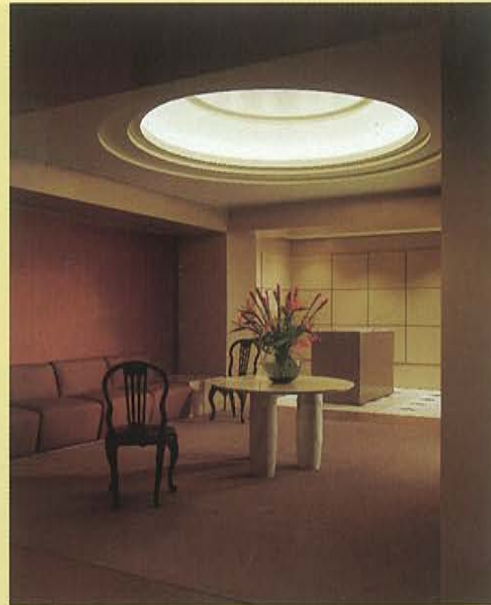
Bottom far right: This backdrop of the Waldorf-Astoria is complemented with a projected image of Pierre Chareau's salon at the Maison de Verre in Paris, both architectural monuments of the 1930s. Brayton's graceful curved Bloom chair and sofa grouped around the Boothe table illustrate a classic quality that transcends time and fashion.





Trammell Crow Headquarters

Judged one of Dallas's most distinguished skyscrapers, the Trammell Crow headquarters building earned numerous honors for its architect Richard Keating. The interiors of the executive offices of the Trammell Crow company occupy the top floor and are suitably detailed for a company whose network of real estate operations stretches across the globe. A palette of soft colors serves as a backdrop for an art collection which encompasses sculpture and painting from around the world.



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Above:The reception area with ceiling rotunda.
Left: The lobby floor is punctuated with black granite inset in a field of white marble and lit by myriad recessed spotlights which add sparkle to the space.

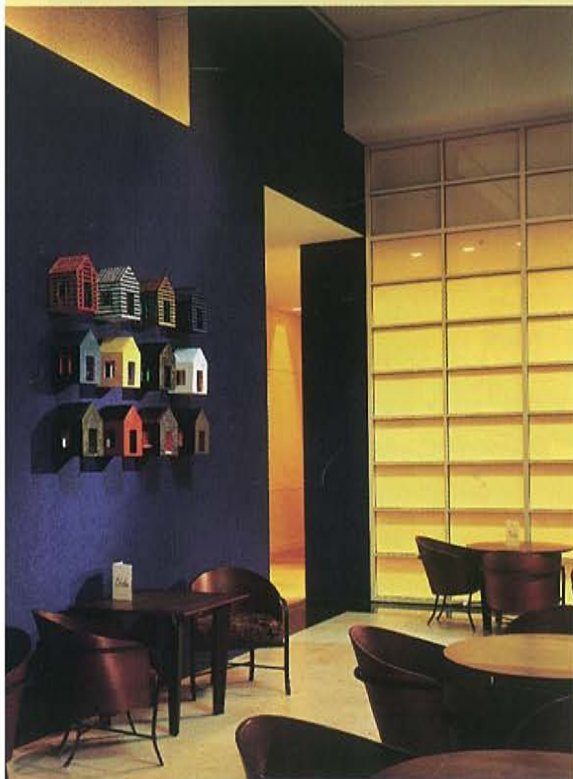
Solana Marriott Hotel

An opportunity to work with the Mexican architect Ricardo Legoretta is a dream of many interior designers. Lauren Rottet was fortunate to experience this reality when she was brought in to create the interiors for the Solana Marriott Hotel in Dallas/Fort Worth. The hotel services visitors to IBM and other corporations in an adjacent, almost utopian 600-acre office park, where buildings are restricted to five stories and their surrounding landscaping controlled by Legoretta to enhance his architecture. With fields of wild flowers and native grasses in abundance, Rottet decided the hotel called for a Mexican country feeling, which she translated into wood flooring, rough-finished plaster walls, and patinated bronze detailing, all traditional elements found in old Mexican houses.

Right: A symmetrically positioned fireplace is flanked by comfortable lounge seating and shaded lighting.
Left: In the bar area, a brightly painted house collage by artist Leonard Pitkin recalls Mexican domestic architecture. The leather and metal seating references the materials of Mexican gauchos.



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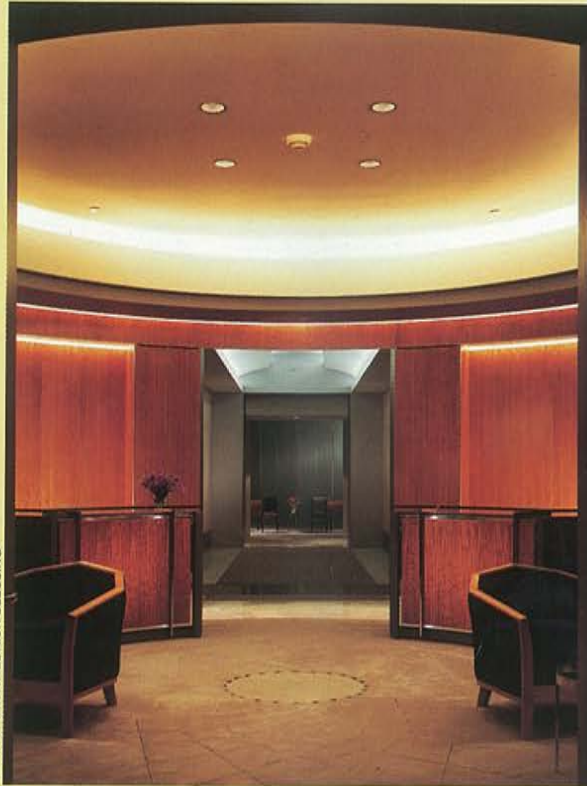


Latham & Watkins

The Latham & Watkins law firm is a blockbuster project composed of eight floors of offices, conference, and dining facilities totaling 203,000 square feet. The design program responds to an international firm with more than 85 partners in this regional office. The graceful yet imposing atmosphere is harmonized in a palette of greys and neutrals embellished with rich materials including granite floors, wood paneling, and sandblasted glass panels detailed in stainless steel, leaving no doubt in visiting clients' minds that this is a firm with power and influence.



Right: Although done on a modest budget an imposing reception area makes an initial impression of power and influence with its marble floor and leather seating.
Left: The heart of the offices, the law library, is graciously laid out with spacious seating areas and architectural book stacks.



The City Club

One of the most prestigious clubs in Los Angeles, the City Club is located on the 54th floor of a trapezoidal downtown high-rise. The 15,000-square-foot space is laid out graciously with entrance foyer, library, a main dining room, and seven private dining spaces of varying sizes. The program called for a melding of the conventional club-like atmosphere and a modern ambience reflective of the nature of business conducted in Los Angeles. There is a notable absence of the stereotypical antique rugs and patterned fabrics, although wood paneling in the bar area satisfies the requisite measure of tradition.



Above: The main diningroom is furnished with Davis Allen's Bridgehampton chairs, which provide a reinterpretation of traditional motifs. Modern Italian pendant lights add to the contemporary feeling.

Left: Comfortable seating and reading lights furnish the library lounge where members gather before dining.

Attaché



Design
Lauren Rottet
Richard Riveire

1.800.593.4235
Showrooms
Chicago, New York

H A L L C O N