



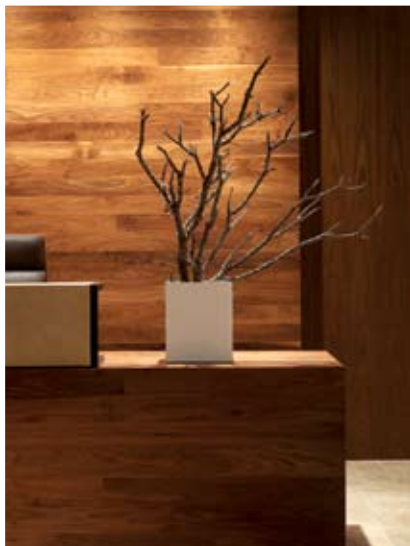
hole in one

text: **edie cohen**

photography: **eric laignel**

**Rottet Studio aces a
MidFirst Bank office in
Arizona's golf capital,
Scottsdale**





“It looks very different for us, don’t you think?” That’s architect Lauren Rottet’s unsolicited assessment of MidFirst Bank’s private-banking and executive office in Scottsdale, Arizona—the first project completed by Rottet Studio’s satellite in the resortlike Phoenix suburb.

Rottet is better known, of course, for her highly polished, mostly white offices, many of them published in these pages over the past 21 years. Paul, Hastings, Janofsky & Walker in Los Angeles, Artis Capital Management in San Francisco, and the Royal Bank of Scotland in Houston immediately pop to mind. By contrast, MidFirst is, dare we say, warm and

even a bit cozy. It’s also contextually correct, with subtle references to the Southwest vernacular.

Traces of vintage Rottet nevertheless emerge. The floor plan, with 10,000 square feet on a single level, shows a good deal of open space, particularly toward the back. Here, president and CEO Jeff Records’s office, which inevitably does have a door, surveys a virtually continuous expanse shared by an open library-lounge and a 12-seat meeting facility called the Idea Room, basically a boardroom without borders.

At either end of the Idea Room, Rottet installed a large canvas by a Danish trained architect who left CAD

drawings behind to try her own hand at interpreting abandoned spaces and desolate structures. These pieces—figurative representations of the brainstorming that this space is supposed to inspire in even the most buttoned-down of bankers—are among Rottet’s discoveries for the project. Another appears on the outside of the free-standing partition that gives the Idea Room a modicum of privacy: A gray lithography collage, mounted on cotton, is by a textile designer who went on to earn an MFA from Yale University and receive a MacArthur Fellowship. Smaller works are by more established names, for example René Magritte and Chuck Close. Regardless of size or provenance, artwork is always a consideration near and dear to Rottet’s heart, a vital component rather than an afterthought.

Then we have Rottet’s own artistic enterprise. A constructivist sculpture if you will, stacked walnut posts form the base for the conference table in the Idea Room. “Jeff and I sketched it out while talking,” she says. “He should share in the credit.”

She also praises Records as a design advocate. Early in the planning stage, she recalls, he coined the phrase “design as a business differentiator.” The fact that design makes a difference factored heavily into his Oklahoma City–based operation’s decision to enter the Phoenix-area market. “In this economy,” she remarks, “design is one more way ➤



Previous spread: In the open boardroom at Rottet Studio’s MidFirst Bank office in Scottsdale, Arizona, Gerrit Reitveld chairs keep company with a canvas in acrylic and polymer by Mie Olise Kjaergaard.

Opposite top: A partition in front of the boardroom displays Ann Hamilton’s lithography collage, mounted on cotton.

Opposite bottom: The reception area is a study in walnut.

Top: A secretarial station faces a nylon-carpeted corridor. **Bottom:** Lamps by Christian Liaigre stand sentinel in the open library-lounge, which could become office space should expansion require.

to give yourself an edge.” She subsequently spearheaded the rollout of 13 MidFirst branches based on a prototype by BraytonHughes Design Studios.

Her decision to forego her customary look went hand in hand with MidFirst’s dedication to “personal service and a family partnership,” she says, as well as the Scottsdale location in a complex called DC Ranch, a private golf community where upscale residences, restaurants, and shops have Spanish, Southwestern, or craftsman-style roots. After Records started off by showing her “images of rustic places like houses in Colorado and the Four Seasons Resort Jackson Hole in Wyoming,” she adds, walnut



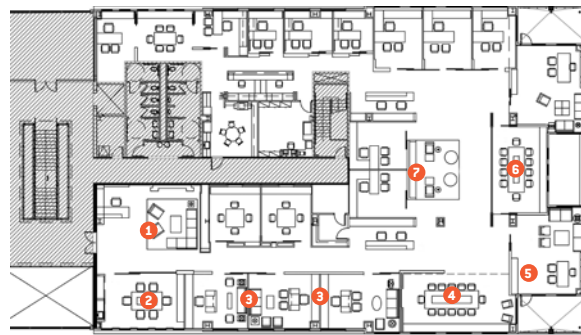
became her new white. In addition to the aforementioned table base, she used the wood to surface the floor, focal walls, and sections of the ceiling.

“It was the neutral over which I layered other materials,” she says—prominent among them the ecru hemp that wraps paneling. “It’s sustainable and, since I buy it directly from the importer, inexpensive.” Existing windows, with their bronze frames and mullions, fit the picture just fine. ➤

Left: Walnut posts, bolted together, form the base of the boardroom’s custom table. **Right:** Charles and Ray Eames designed the surrounding chairs. On the end wall hangs another Kjaergaard canvas in acrylic and polymer.







- 1 RECEPTION
- 2 MEETING ROOM
- 3 GUEST OFFICES
- 4 BOARDROOM
- 5 PRESIDENT AND CEO'S OFFICE
- 6 CONFERENCE ROOM
- 7 LIBRARY-LOUNGE

0 10 20 40



The president and CEO's corner office, by contrast, is "almost residential, not architectural," designer Angelique Nossa says. "We went for a look that might have been collected over time." But Rottet did take advantage of a newfound familiarity with hospitality materials: a stain-resistant cotton velvet for the sofa, a Teflon-treated cotton-rayon construction for chairs, and a synthetic like Berber wool for carpet. "It holds up and looks great installed," Rottet notes.

By now, you may have guessed it: This longtime office specialist has thrown her hat into the hospitality arena. Drawing on memories of her own favorite European hotels—the Villa d'Este on Italy's Lake Como, the Four Seasons Hotel Milano, the Meurice in Paris, Claridge's in London—she's already completed New York's Surrey hotel and the Affinia Shelburne. Round two is a Mexico City property, a collaboration with a fellow *Interior Design* Hall of Fame member, Richard Meier. ▀

Top: A panel of oil-rubbed bronze anchors the glass enclosure of the conference room, with its sculptural piece of dried cactus on the table and mixed-media work by Kim Dorland on the wall. **Bottom:** The meeting room features Suzanne Trocmé's chairs and a Chuck Close photograph of another artist, Kara Walker.

Opposite top: In the president and CEO's office, the desktop and custom credenza are mahogany. **Opposite bottom:** Hemp covers the walls of the three guest offices.





PROJECT TEAM

KELIE MAYFIELD (PRINCIPAL); **BERNARDO RIOS** (ASSOCIATE); **JENNY CHALFANT**: ROTTET STUDIO. **AECOM**: ARCHITECT OF RECORD. **HORTON LEES BROGDEN LIGHTING DESIGN**: LIGHTING CONSULTANT. **GFG STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS**: STRUCTURAL ENGINEER. **KRAEMER ENGINEERING**: MEP. **CHRIS FISCHER PRODUCTIONS**; **PROFESSIONAL MILLWORK INSTALLERS**: WOODWORK. **STEVENS-LEINWEBER CONSTRUCTION**: GENERAL CONTRACTOR.

PRODUCT SOURCES

FROM FRONT CASSINA: LOUNGE CHAIRS (BOARDROOM). **R&Y AUGUSTI**: SIDE TABLES. **DTANK**: CUSTOM CONFERENCE TABLE. **EDELMAN LEATHER**: TASK CHAIR UPHOLSTERY (BOARDROOM, SECRETARIAL STATION, CONFERENCE ROOM, CEO'S OFFICE). **HERMAN MILLER**: TASK CHAIRS (BOARDROOM, CONFERENCE ROOM, CEO'S OFFICE). **VITRA**: CHAIRS (SECRETARIAL STATION). **DESSIN FOURNIR**: CHAIRS, FOOTRESTS (LIBRARY). **PERENNIALS**: CHAIR FABRIC, FOOTREST FABRIC. **JOHN HUTTON TEXTILES**: PILLOW FABRIC. **DECORATIVE CARPETS**: CUSTOM RUG. **THERIEN & CO.**: TABLES. **HOLLY HUNT**: LAMPS, OTTOMAN UPHOLSTERY

(LIBRARY), GUEST CHAIR FABRIC (CEO'S OFFICE), COFFEE TABLE (GUEST OFFICE). **TRS FURNITURE & TEXTILES**: OTTOMANS (LIBRARY). **ENVIRONMENT LTD CUSTOM FURNITURE**: CUSTOM TABLES (CONFERENCE, MEETING ROOMS). **BERNHARDT DESIGN**: CHAIRS (MEETING ROOM). **RALPH LAUREN HOME**: DESK (CEO'S OFFICE). **RESTORATION HARDWARE**: SOFA. **PINDLER & PINDLER**: BERGÈRE FABRIC. **HENREDDON FURNITURE INDUSTRIES**: BERGÈRES (CEO'S OFFICE), SOFA (GUEST OFFICE). **BRIGHT CHAIR COMPANY**: ARMCHAIRS (OFFICES). **CIRCA LIGHTING**: LAMPS. **MOORE & GILES**: CHAIR UPHOLSTERY (GUEST OFFICE). **THROUGHOUT PRESCOLITE**: TRACK LIGHTING. **KURT VERSEN COMPANY**: RECESSED CEILING FIXTURES. **J+J/INVISION**: CARPET. **OWENS**: FLOORING, CEILING PLANKS, CEILING PANELS. **THROUGH HEMP TRADERS**: WALL PANEL FABRIC.

