

downtown

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Downtown design firm finds Houston is the center of the world

ROTTET STUDIO

BY HOLLY BERETTO



Walking into Rottet Studio changes your perception of what a downtown business might look like – and how it might act. Forget the cookie cutter corporate cutouts of street-level banks and cozy cafes. This hotshot architectural interior design firm is modern, elegant and setting the world on fire. Dedicated to providing functional work spaces with stellar design for its clients, Rottet walks the walk when it comes to melding form with function.

The space is white, marbled and accented with glass. It gives an impression that's ethereal and other-worldly, a space where benches disappear through walls and reappear on the other side. The space seems to float around you, creating a feeling that is at once comfortable while simultaneously announcing, "brilliant things happen here."

"For some time I have been looking at design from a holistic perspective. That is, I have come to believe that the best possible approach to design combines architecture, craft, graphics, lighting and art into our environments," said Lauren Rottet, founder of Rottet Studio, and one of the most renowned architects in the business. "Design is not just about the one-time image of a space or a building, it is about the daily exposure to an environment that delivers the necessary objects and services, and also brings pleasure and satisfaction to the inhabitants."

That's what Rottet does best, as evidenced by the running roster of awards the firm has received, including *Interior Design* magazine's 2009 Best of Year for Artis Capital Management in San Francisco. Upcoming projects on Rottet's roster include the W Liberty Plaza in Mexico City's Santa Fe District; the Rosewood Luxury Resort in Palm Desert, California; and the office designs for both Capstone Asset Management Company and Cameron International here in Houston.

"We offers design services ranging from commercial and hospitality interiors to base building

architecture and expertise across the corporate real estate spectrum," says Rottet Principal Kelie Mayfield. "The studio is a full-service firm providing construction documentation and administration services as well as design. We continue to expand our award-winning furniture and product design practice and offer branding, graphic design and art selection as well."

According to Rottet, "Our focus is on great design, which translates into creating efficient and inspiring architecture for small companies as well as for large high-profile clients. Our designers get excited about the opportunity, the challenge, whether the budget is small or large. As long as a client values design, we truly enjoy helping them realize and go beyond their imagination. That's what drives our firm."

DEDICATED TO DOWNTOWN

And if the driving force behind the firm is design, being downtown is certainly an essential part of the engine. The Rottet team watches the world go by and experiences the hustle and bustle of daily life from their offices on the street level of the historic Niels Esperson Building, one of downtown's oldest remaining edifices on the northeast corner of Travis and Rusk.

The space seems to float around you...



ROTTET STUDIO'S FAVORITE THINGS ABOUT THEIR DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD: BEAUTIFUL ARCHITECTURE • BUSINESS HUB • PEDESTRIAN LIFE (UNDERGROUND AND ABOVE) • CONNECTIVITY • THEATER DISTRICT • METRO LIGHT RAIL • SPORTS VENUES • RESTAURANTS • FRIENDLINESS OF PEOPLE • DOWNTOWN MAGAZINE!



“Our designers get excited about the opportunity, **the challenge**, whether the budget is large or small.”
-Lauren Rottet

“A street-level office in downtown is a unique business experience,” says Adam Gibson, Rottet’s business development director. “You feel more connected to the city because everything happens around you. You hear the noises, you actually experience the weather in a way you never would in a skyscraper.”

Gibson admits it’s sometimes hard to get a real urban feel in Houston, especially in downtown, when so much of business takes place underground and up in the air.

“From our vantage point, we are definitely closer to the urban vibe we so often miss,” he says.

The location of Rottet’s offices has also been a huge business boon. Gibson notes the company has received many new contacts from people simply walking in, something he says wouldn’t happen in a high-rise. That, in turn, has allowed Rottet to handle a series of varied projects, from law firm offices to private residences, to hospitality clients.

Following her graduation from the University of Texas at Austin’s architecture program, Rottet built her business over the last 25 years, working as an architect and designer around the country, with firms in San Francisco and Chicago. During her ten-

ure at Skidmore, Owens & Merrill in Chicago, the native Houstonian came back to Texas, where

she not only oversaw the design process on high-rises, museums and project planning, but also took on the interior designs of corporate buildings. She launched a new interiors practice for SOM in Los Angeles, which then merged with Daniel, Mann, Johnson & Menderhall, where she was the principal-in-charge of the interiors practice called DMJM Rottet. In 2008, she built Rottet Studio and knew that its location had to be Houston.

“Not only is the city incredibly supportive both of entrepreneurs and the arts, it is also an up-and-coming center in the design world,” said Rottet. “Many people don’t realize it, but Houston has spawned some of the most thoughtful, original thinking in interior design anywhere in the world.”

“Houston is very much the center of our practice,” emphasizes Mayfield. “Despite a portfolio of projects around the world, some of our most celebrated projects are in Houston, including a global management consulting firm, BMC Software Headquarters campus and Royal Bank of Scotland’s offices.”

Rottet Studio’s connection to Houston is evident by the excitement its designers and team members feel being here in the center of the Bayou City.

“Being downtown is a major part of who we are as a firm and how we work,” says Gibson. “Downtown is energizing and inspiring. We are in the center of the world energy capital. So many things happen here, it helps to be in the middle of it.”

And by being in the epicenter of Houston’s business world, Rottet is also helping bring the world of design concepts to Houston. Rottet is out to show that design influences and inspires people to connect with the space around them, and to use spaces as places to come together to create extraordinary work. This has always been the foundation of Rottet Studio, says Rottet, who knows there’s nowhere else she’d rather be doing business than right in the middle of downtown, in that historic building, where she’s created a space that pays homage to Houston’s history, all while connecting it with its dynamic future.

“I believe it is the ideal location to serve as the firm’s home base.”



ROTTET STUDIO AT A GLANCE



ADDRESS:

808 Travis Street

EMPLOYEES:

20 staffers and 50 firm-wide in New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Scottsdale

PRINCIPALS:

Lauren Rottet (founder), Kelie Mayfield (principal of Houston and Scottsdale), Richard Riveire (heads West Coast and Asia), David Davis (heads East Coast and Hospitality)

BUSINESS:

International architecture and design firm

WEB SITE:

www.rottetstudio.com