





investing in creativity

Boom or bust, a San Francisco office by Rottet Studio proves just how highly Artis values art and design

text: edie cohen photography: eric laignel



Previous spread, left: The entry to Artis Capital Management, a San Francisco project by Rottet Studio, features a Steven Charles canvas in enamel.

Previous spread, right: A Verner Panton chair accompanies the custom reception desk in lacquered fiberglass and laminated foam.

Top: With the Bay Bridge and Treasure Island as a backdrop, reception's custom mohair-covered swivel chairs flank a Zaha Hadid stool. **Bottom, from left:** Installed behind the reception desk is an oil painting on aluminum by Jason Martin. Chairs by Charles and Ray Eames surround the custom marble-topped table in the conference room.

Opposite: The conference room's end wall displays a Richard Prince acrylic on board. Outside, custom wool-silk carpet and cleft-cut lava stone line the window wall.





It's a teaser. Break the name Artis in two, *art is*, and it implies a gallery or an art consultancy. So does the minimally appointed white reception area. Its glossy-white biomorphic desk could be mistaken for a piece by Zaha Hadid, whose stools, in fact, line the window wall straight ahead. Only on the other side of the floor does a long trading desk give the space away for what it is: Artis Capital Management, a San Francisco money-management firm.

The office was designed by two art devotees, *Interior Design* Hall of Fame member Lauren Rottet and her deputy Kelie Mayfield—who completed the job as Rottet Studio but were hired under the aegis of DMJM Rottet. “I didn’t know Lauren Rottet from Adam,” Artis founder Stuart Peterson remarks. But the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art board member did have

a vision, and he set out to find a designer who could make it a reality. “That’s the beauty of the Internet,” he says. Mouse clicks away, Rottet’s online portfolio presented a global tour of corporate quarters, many of them exhibiting his desired look. “Long-term,” he adds, “my goal is to populate all the walls with art and change it up over time.” (His \$20 million Tiburon spread, formerly owned by Andre Agassi, is populated with work by Jean Michel Basquiat, Anselm Kiefer, and Joel Shapiro.)

Occupying the 16,200-square-foot penthouse of the Steuart Tower, Welton Becket and Associates’s 1976 building near the Embarcadero Center and the Ferry Building, Artis boasts city and water views, the latter stretching from the Bay Bridge to Alcatraz. Rottet says she made sure nothing would impinge on them: ➤

"We carefully laid out the plan so that no walls touch the building perimeter." Planning reflected the familial, nonhierarchical corporate ethos, too.

Serving Artis senior staff and occasional visitors are 13 glassed-in private offices that, at first, look mysteriously empty, with nothing more than a task chair in sight. In fact, they're as intricately outfitted as steamer trunks. Wall systems deftly hide everything from printers, TVs, personal safes, and trash cans to full-size desktops—until the appropriate door swings open to reveal them. Meanwhile, traders and researchers spend most of their waking hours glued to the long desk that runs parallel to one

of the window walls. The desk, clad in shiny white plastic laminate, has articulated work surfaces equipped with small computer monitors as well as plug-and-play hookups to charge cell phones, BlackBerrys, or iPods. "We made it as human as possible," Mayfield says, adding: "Most of these traders are incredibly fit. Sometimes they work while sitting on exercise balls."

The gray and red plastic balls are stashed, along with free weights and elastic bands, in the lounge around the corner, under a seemingly endless bar of pale gray marble and ce-rused oak burl. And storage isn't the only clever surprise the bar holds. One of its ends is actually a 75-inch monitor for digital art. Along ▶

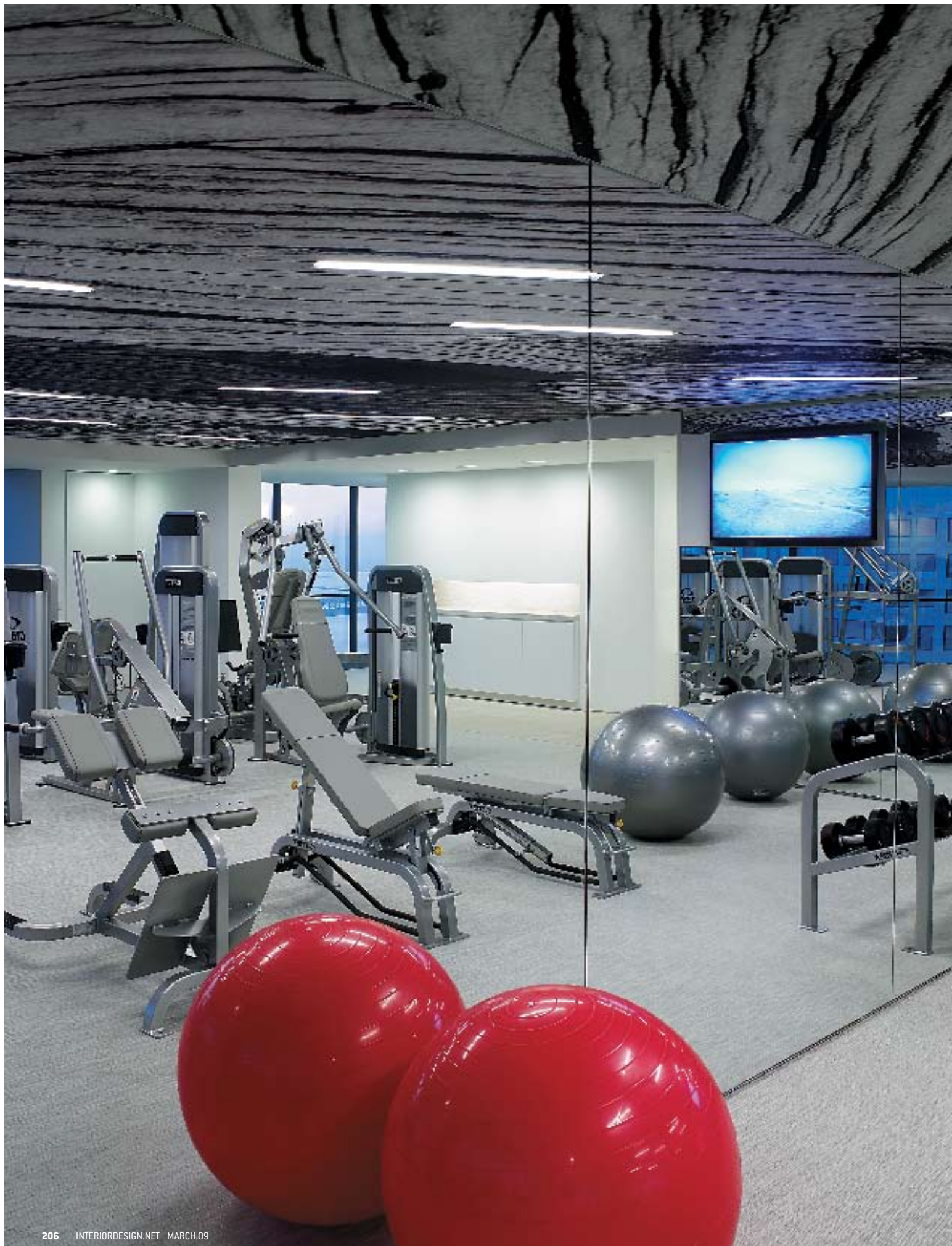




Opposite: A swath of limed oak burl defines a corridor where John Chamberlain's sculpture in painted chromed steel stands opposite Stephen Conroy's oil on canvas.

Top, from left: In the lounge, a 50-foot-long bar built from limed oak burl and Siberian marble terminates with a video monitor. Custom dining chairs with seats upholstered in hair-on hide slide under the opposite end of the bar. **Bottom:** A mixed-media wall sculpture by Doug Kerr accompanies a watercolor by Dave Muller on the partition between the lounge and the pantry.





the side is a wine refrigerator. At the far end, vertical sections of oak burl pull out to reveal themselves as the backs of dining chairs, popping with seat cushions in hot-pink and electric-blue hair-on hide. In other words, the bar is like the traders themselves: It multitasks.

Rottet and Mayfield programmed in more downtime options in the corner gym, where a photomural of driftwood stretches across the ceiling. For relaxation on the job, the designers placed a break-out area next to the trading desk. Here, the sober right angles of dark gray



lounge chairs and Rottet's low white table are relieved by the colorful floral wallpaper lining the table's drawers and the energetic lines looping across a monumental canvas by Matthew Ritchie.

In both work and play zones, a minimum number of materials produce maximum effects. The oak burl from the bar lines punched-up ceiling coffers. Most flooring is pale limestone, while charcoal-gray lava stone at the windows "reinforces the notion of ripples at the water's edge," Rottet notes. Between the two types of stone, spanning one whole ➤

Opposite: Flooring of polyurethane-cushioned vinyl and the canvas of the ceiling's printed photomural combine to control acoustics in the gym.

Top, from left: An office's door pull in brushed stainless steel. A table by BarberOsgerby in a break-out area. Cecily Brown's oil on linen in a corridor. **Bottom, from left:** Wallpaper lining a drawer of Lauren Rottet's table in a break-out area. Exercise equipment stashed in the lacquered bay of the bar in the lounge. The pantry's backsplash of Siberian marble and cabinets clad in plastic laminate.



Top: A break-out area's Matthew Ritchie canvas in oil and ink overlooks a table by Rottet and chairs by Fabien Baron. **Bottom, from left:** The largest door of this office's wall system swings open to reveal a desk. Traders and researchers share a custom desk that stretches for 53 feet across the stained-walnut flooring. **Opposite:** Artis staff contributed the clothing that Tejo Remy stacked and bound to make the chairs in the corridor. The oil on canvas is by Wang Guangyi.





window wall, an unbroken expanse of luxurious gray carpet displays a darker gray inkblot pattern, open to endless literal and figurative interpretations.

So what's the real meaning of that Artisan name? It applies equally to money management—at least when profitable—and to designs in its service. The word is Latin for *skill*. 🍷

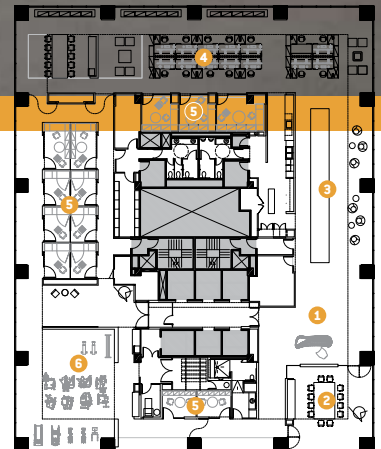
PROJECT TEAM

KAI BROMS (PROJECT MANAGER); **SANDY LAM**; **CHRISTOPHER OLEXY**; **LAINA GREGORY**: ROTTET STUDIO. **OUT-FIT**: GYM CONSULTANT. **RIVERA CONSULTING GROUP**: STRUCTURAL ENGINEER. **GLUMAC**: MEP. **DESIGN WORKSHOPS**; **IMPRESSIONS ARCHITECTURAL MILLWORKER**; **PATELLA WOODWORKING**: WOODWORK. **HATHAWAY DINWIDDIE CONSTRUCTION COMPANY**: GENERAL CONTRACTOR.

PRODUCTS SOURCES

FROM FRONT **VITRA**: SIDE CHAIR (RECEPTION). **ESTABLISHED & SONS**: STOOLS (RECEPTION, HALL, LOUNGE), ROUNDED TABLE (BREAK-OUT AREA). **MARTIN BRATTRUD**: CUSTOM LOUNGE CHAIRS (RECEPTION, LOUNGE). **LARSEN**: CHAIR FABRIC. **HERMAN MILLER**: CHAIRS (CONFERENCE ROOM, OFFICE), OTTOMAN (OFFICE). **COVERINGS ETC.**: FLOOR STONE (HALL), BAR STONE (LOUNGE), BACKSPLASH MATERIAL (PANTRY). **NIPPO ELECTRIC CO.**: RECESSED CEILING FIXTURES (LOUNGE). **KELEEN**

LEATHERS: CHAIR UPHOLSTERY. **SPRING STREET STUDIO**: STORAGE BAY LINER (LOUNGE), DRAWER LINER (BREAK-OUT AREA). **CHILEWICH**: FLOORING (GYM). **STEELTEX**: CUSTOM MURAL. **ROCKWOOD MANUFACTURING COMPANY**: DOOR PULL (OFFICE). **DECCA**: SQUARE TABLE (BREAK-OUT AREA). **DORNBRACHT**: SINK FITTINGS (PANTRY). **BERNHARDT DESIGN**: CHAIRS (BREAK-OUT AREA). **GLANT TEXTILES CORPORATION**: CHAIR FABRIC. **KARASTAN**: SOLID CARPET (BREAK-OUT AREA, OFFICE). **LA COUR**: CUSTOM DESK (TRADING FLOOR). **ZUMTOBEL**: LINEAR FIXTURE. **GLODEN STATE FLOORING**: FLOORING. **DROOG**: CUSTOM CHAIRS (HALL). **CRATE AND BARREL THROUGH MARTIN BRATTRUD**: TABLE. **THROUGHOUT** **DECORATIVE CARPETS**: CUSTOM CARPET. **VETTER STONE COMPANY**: LIMESTONE FLOOR TILE. **KURT VERSEN COMPANY**: RECESSED CEILING FIXTURES. **PRATT & LAMBERT**: PAINT.



- 0 10 20 40
- 1 RECEPTION
 - 2 CONFERENCE ROOM
 - 3 LOUNGE
 - 4 TRADING FLOOR
 - 5 OFFICES
 - 6 GYM