

Mies van der Rohe once said "God is in the details." In the case of illuminating architectural façades, especially those of a historic or unusual nature, it's been a task more easily said than done.

ARCHITECTURAL SSL

SSL BUZZ

Color and shape continue to be redefined thanks to LED's evolution; theater overcomes dimming issues; a look at SSL's role in healthcare.

AT THE FRONT

During daylight hours, buildings and structures can sometimes "hide" in plain sight; but at night new illumination ideas create PM drama.

SSL PROJECT

Thanks to CBBLD's vision, a former industrial facility is reborn into an award-winning, multi-purpose student center at Emerson College.

NUMBER 60 • FEBRUARY 2020 www.architecturalssl.com

EMERGING FROM DARKNESS

BRIDGE TO THE LIGHT

That's the case no longer, as a "devil" that's thwarted brilliant nighttime creations has been exorcised with 21st century tools and technology.



A PAINTERLY APPROACH GILDS MANHATTAN DINING EXPERIENCE

ASSET
New York, NY

Asset's artistic interpretation of architecture and lighting brings a vintage building to life.

With a checkered history of manufacturing, entertainment and retail, the location for Asset, one of Manhattan's newest restaurants, became a variation on architectural archeology for the firm of Bates Masi + Architects. According to architect Paul Masi, they literally sought to "excavate the existing space in search of unique textures and hints of the past that would enrich the guest experience."

The "excavation" was joined at its inception by lighting designer Greg Friedheim, president of Miami-based Radiance Lighting, who had previously served as a consultant to the architects, as well to as the owners, Will Tracy and Larry Bellone; the latter also operate Tessa, a popular Mediterranean restaurant nearby. Closely following the progress of the architects' 3D scanning of the existing building, Friedheim planned the illumination program. Vaults of expanded metal lath were discovered above the fire-rated ceiling. They became an exposed element serving multiple functions. Structurally, they would conceal steel girders, supporting the hanging elements of the sculptural stair, bar shelves—and for Friedheim—functional and decorative light fixtures.

Two Dining Levels

Utilizing the exposed ceiling height of 18 ft., the designers created a bi-level interior with a palette of wood, metal and stone. The street-level area is anchored by a sculptural brass bar, while an upstairs balcony has a smaller bar, and seating for just over 50.

Architect Masi expressed the original industrial use of the ceiling vaults as a distinctive, but classic, overhead design element. With concealed LED linear strip lighting from Lumini, Friedheim



ABOVE: In Manhattan's Upper West Side, a pair of New York restaurateurs converted an existing light industrial structure into "Asset." The new dining destination was created to attract the neighborhood's visually design-aware and discriminating diners as well as guests from surrounding areas. Excavation revealed successive layers of paint and a hidden vaulted ceiling, which now gives the restaurant a distinctive historical personality.

THE CHALLENGE:

The owners of Asset, located in a classic Upper West Side neighborhood in Manhattan, also operate a successful restaurant nearby. They spent a year searching for a site that would be both convenient to residents and visitors. At 329 Columbus Avenue, between 75th and 76th Streets, they took possession of a building with interior spaces that could be adaptively redesigned to provide the atmosphere that would appeal to its intended market. The objective was to differentiate Asset from the area's casual restaurants patronized by families and older locals, into a venue that also reflected a downtown energy to draw a younger group on both weekdays and weekends.

THE SOLUTION:

Architects Bates Masi + Architects and lighting designers at Radiance Lighting collaborated from the inception of the planning process that required that the building be gutted. It had served, among several other uses, as Memphis, a 1970s celebrity gathering spot, and as a retail store. For the adaptive reuse, the lower dining level can accommodate 145, while the 56-seat upstairs balcony can double as a private party space. Lighting is strategically integrated into the architecture. Overall, the effect resembles a painterly approach to architectural illumination, balanced and forming a vision where users are part of the visual composition.

PROJECT CREDITS:

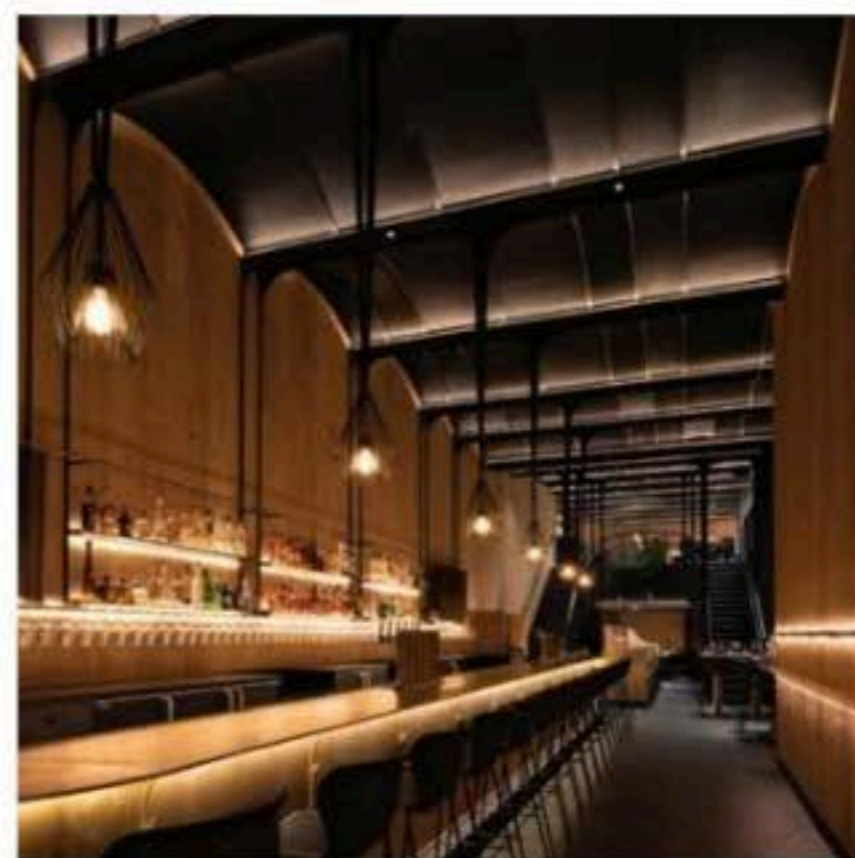
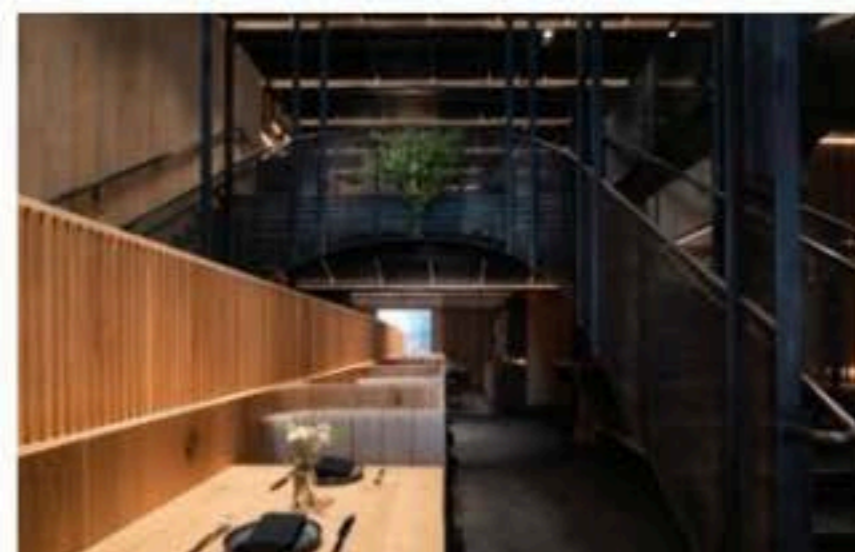
Lighting Design: Radiance Lighting

Architect: Bates Masi + Architects

Photographers:

Courtesy, Bates Masi + Architects

Text: Vilma Barr



ABOVE: Oak paneling was revealed through careful removal of layers of wall coverings, and add to the character and richness of the space. Radiance Lighting established primary visual lighting pattern levels that succeed in contributing to the unified contemporary expression of the architecture.

dramatized the front-to-back rhythm of the dark painted ceiling with soft, glowing accents. Above the bar, Friedheim created a mid-level visual pattern of illumination with pendants from Zangra, suspended with black cords, each containing 3.5W LED lamps. Placement of each fixture was integrated with the curves of each vault to unify the architecture with the contemporary requirements of an elegant urban restaurant.

Friedheim and his designers were mindful of the light level at each table top to allow for ease of menu perusal by older guests. Above the free-standing tables and booths are 13W LED recessed downlights from Zaniboni that highlight table surfaces. Subtle dim spaces between them give a feeling of individuality within the open interior vista.

The two levels are joined by a U-shaped double-steel staircase that echoes the curves of

the ceiling. The mesh guardrail and balustrade are suspended from horizontally oriented steel wide-flange girders which support the vaulted metal ceiling. Another luminous pattern stands out in relief of the dark background with lighting mounted from beneath the treads; the soft glow is visible from the side of the staircase and by looking up from the main dining level.

To contrast with the vertical and horizontal geometry of the primary architectural elements and their complementary lighting patterns, uninterrupted bands of lighting fixtures were installed to introduce a floating image to the main bar area.

Asset's owners evaluated the final product as "approachable," certainly meeting their goal to bring a new level of hospitality design and "vibe" to the Upper West Side." ■