



Electrical charges

Offices created out of a New York loft make logical use of the luminous space while expressing the character of a dynamic marketing and communications company.

- 1 Entrance hall with big pivoting front door.
- 2 Conference zone enclosed by diaphanous overlapping sails.
- 3 Web designers' table in centre of room weaving around columns.
- 4 Left: private offices. Right: conference zone.
- 5 Conference zone enclosure, a hovering sculptural presence.

Architect

Resolution. 4 Architecture

Project architects

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Lyraa partitions Installation

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Photographs

Peter Mauss/Esto

Thunder House is an energetic New York marketing and communications company. (Its name refers to Benjamin Franklin's house of thunder, the vehicle for his electrical experiments by which he showed how it was possible to channel electricity from the sky.)

Thunder House's new offices, designed by the New York practice, Resolution: 4 Architecture, occupy the top floor of an old warehouse in Chelsea. At the moment there are nine members of staff, but the company is expected to grow rapidly so the offices had to be capable of absorbing expansion. Design had also to reflect the informal character of the firm. To flourish in this fiercely competitive and lively

business, such firms require an environment that encourages interaction – discussion and the free, often intense, exchange of ideas. In addition, the architects were faced with a limited budget and a 10 week construction schedule.

To some extent, the nature and confines of the rectangular loft space, skylit with plentiful windows and cast iron columns, suggested its own solutions but in adopting them the architects have contrived a physical – in places poetic – expression of the way the company works. Use of translucent materials softens and enhances the natural luminance of the place, while finishes – white paint and original wooden floors – are austere and inexpensive.

A skylit entry hall lined with corrugated metal and translucent panels provides a transition. Offices and services have been arranged around the perimeter leaving a big communal space in the middle. The most private offices for account management run down the north side, separated from the main space by translucent doors and partitions of structural acrylic panels which diffuse light while being soundproof. Wrapped around the perimeter of the three remaining sides are semi-private offices for the creative department, enclosed by low partitions that permit easy communication while affording a degree of separation from website production taking place in the middle.



LOFT OFFICES, CHELSEA, NEW YORK, USA

ARCHITECT

RESOLUTION: 4 ARCHITECTURE

- a. entrance hall
- b. account management offices
- c. creative department
- d. website designers
- e. conference zone
- f. kitchen
- g. server



plan (scale approx 1:375)



THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

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Members of this last department are united by a large undulating table which occupies the central space and was specially made to weave around the columns. Made of Baltic birch and designed to link 10 people, the table accommodates the web designers and the receptionist.

This piece of expressionism within the orthogonally managed periphery is echoed by another at the north end, the ghostly structure that defines the conference zone where presentations to clients take place. This visually private domain is defined by diaphanous overlapping sails, the ensemble constituting a hovering sculptural presence in the room.

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