

Oculus

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ASSET

NEW YORK, NY

BATES MASI + ARCHITECTS

In creating Asset restaurant, the architects excavated what had been a retail store in search of unique textures and hints of the past that would offer a rich guest experience. A point-cloud scan revealed vaults of expanded metal lath above the fire-rated ceiling. The vaults were reintroduced as an exposed element serving multiple functions. Formally, their rhythm punctuates the expansive, 6,000-square-foot space to provide a more

intimate scale. Structurally, they conceal steel girders, from which are hung the stair, bar shelves, and light fixtures, allowing those elements to be more delicate than if they were self-supporting. Oak wall paneling was sandblasted to erode the soft earlywood that lies on top of the harder latewood grain, thereby enhancing its character and increasing its sound-absorption properties. A mezzanine, also a remnant of the earlier space,

overlooks the bar below and gives a view of the street beyond through a two-story glass curtain-wall façade. A grand stair connecting the levels is divided in two parts, one side for service and the other for guests. The two sides merge in a gentle curve reminiscent of the ceiling vaults. Beneath the mezzanine, the more intimate space can be divided into private dining rooms using expanding metal screens. **RS**

“The stair, the vault—all of these things would generally exist in other materialities, weights, and thicknesses.” —Juror Bryan C. Lee Jr.

Architecture Design Team

Architect and Lead Designer: Paul Masi, AIA, LEED AP;
Project Architects: Xiao Lin, Nick Braaksma

Architect of Record
SRAA+E

Collaborators

SRAA+E, TSF Engineering, CRAFT Engineering Studio,
MTC Construction, Radiance Lighting, AAV Corp