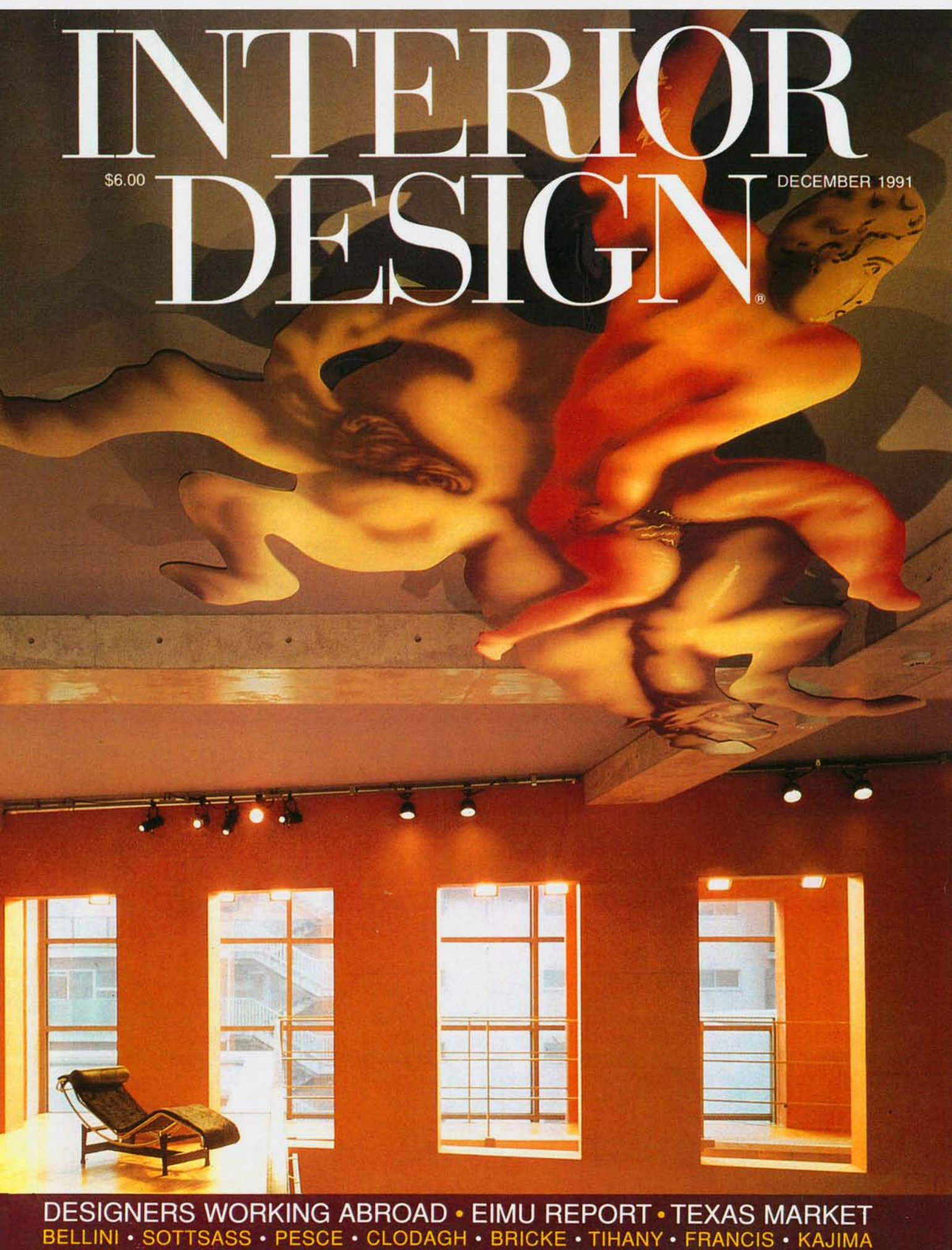


INTERIOR DESIGN

\$6.00

DECEMBER 1991



DESIGNERS WORKING ABROAD • EIMU REPORT • TEXAS MARKET
BELLINI • SOTTASS • PESCE • CLODAGH • BRICKE • TIHANY • FRANCIS • KAJIMA

Mitsui

*The Japanese banking institution's New York offices
by the Interior Design Division of Kajima International*

PHOTOGRAPHY: MARK ROSS

Mitsui Trust & Bank (USA), a subsidiary of Mitsui Banking Company Ltd., and the Interior Design Division of Kajima International (its construction arm included) have a strong background of extensive collaboration in this country and Japan. Thus the client firm's principal, in stating his desiderata for the 36,500-sq.-ft. [rentable] spaces at Tower II of lower Manhattan's World Financial Center, could sketch out his ideas broadly. As Makoto Ishida, Kajima's project manager/designer recalls, the client said that he would prefer "something different from other banks...like an art gallery, perhaps...progressive-looking, yet reflective of the bank's stability." While none of this alludes to the parent company's Japanese provenance—nor, for that matter, could the ensuing results ever be mistaken for *any* bank in Tokyo—it was, the Mitsui spokesman admits, the established performance of Kajima, rather than shared nation-

ality, that accounted for his not turning to an American design group. Living up to expectations, the designers, in their very first proposal, came up with a plan that precisely captured the spirit of his vision.

Taking up the tale, Ishida notes that the choice of

Opposite and below: Views of reception area ringed with wood-paneled enclosure, 30 ft. in diameter. Asymmetrical breaks are established by shapes of lounge seating, carpet pattern and thick granite-clad wall fins. Overhead light, begun in elevator lobby, acts as directional traffic pointer.

Carpet throughout: Mohawk • **Lighting:** Lightolier (recessed); Artemide (Tizio desk light); IPI Lighting (table lamp) • **Custom desk, wood paneling:** Gale Woodworking • **Reception chair:** Vitra • **Sofa, upholstered chairs:** Atelier International • **Coffee table:** Herman Miller • **Stonework:** Stone Structures • **Ceilings throughout:** Commercial Drywall • **Art consultant:** Vick Corporate Art • **Floral arrangements:** Makaso Maenami • **Electro/mechanical consultants:** Flack + Kurtz • **Structural engineer:** Lev Zetlin Associates, Inc. • **Contractor:** Kajima International, Inc.





Still more asymmetry in the meeting rooms. . .

contemporary modern styling was a foregone conclusion. But before deciding on the apt interpretation of "something different," he followed his customary route of first assessing the given space. It is his belief that conventional room shapes, invariably bland if not boring, require unusual treatments that relieve the monotony and thus enliven the scene. (Odd-shaped floor plans, by contrast, should be handled more simply so as to avoid undue busyness, he says.) In this instance, his antidote to regimented order was the concept of asymmetry expressed by varied means and media.

Starting with the elevator lobby, for example, a streak of overhead lighting breaks up the confined space and, additionally, points the entering visitor to the reception room. Here the lit-up arrow adds to the contrapuntal rhythm created by the installation of a wood-paneled circle surround, its curve interrupted by openings and, at one point, by angled wall fins of granite. Still more asymmetry can be seen in the carpet design and in

meeting rooms where shaped ceilings counteract the regularity of rectangular delineations.

The first-seen example of asymmetry is, of course, the decidedly unconventional furniture choice for

Above: General manager's office.

Guest chairs, lighting: Atelier International • **Window blinds throughout:** Levolor • **Table, sofa:** B & B Italia • **Desk, credenza:** Stow & Davis • **Desk chair:** Vitra • **Wall covering throughout:** Kinney Contract

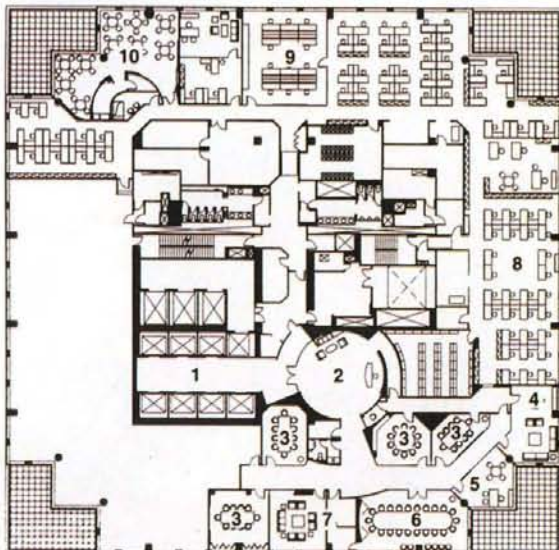
Opposite: Two meeting rooms with angled walls under dropped ceilings shaped to hint at concentric continuity with curvature of nearby reception room.

Opposite, above

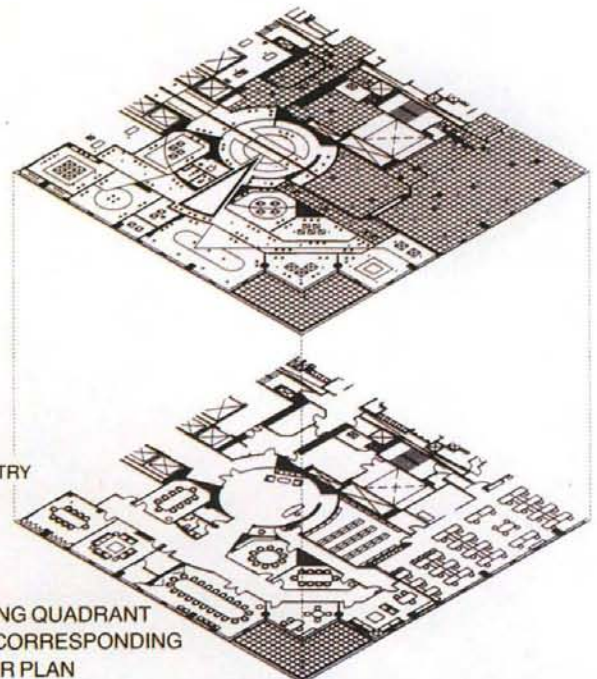
Lighting: Columbia Lighting • **Table:** Atelier International • **Chairs:** Vitra • **Hardware throughout:** Union Corp. (Japan)

Opposite, below

Custom table, wood paneling: Gale Woodworking • **Glass:** Lexington Glass Co. • **Chairs:** Vitra



- 1 ELEVATOR LOBBY
- 2 RECEPTION ROOM
- 3 CONFERENCE ROOM
- 4 CHAIRMAN'S OFFICE
- 5 PRESIDENT'S OFFICE
- 6 BOARD ROOM
- 7 SMALL RECEPTION/PANTRY
- 8 GENERAL OFFICES
- 9 TRADING ROOM
- 10 CAFETERIA



CEILING QUADRANT
AND CORRESPONDING
FLOOR PLAN

