

INTERIOR DESIGN



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For its new offices in Portland, Oregon, Mahlum Architects transforms a raw warehouse space.

Arts and Crafts

POST-INDUSTRIAL CHIC is still chic in just about every urban center these days, at least those with a stock of warehouse buildings that long ago served light industry. And Portland, Oregon, is no exception. The city's Pearl District, a SoHo of the West pioneered by artists in the 1960s and 1970s who set up shop in the area's early-20th-century industrial buildings, is now a mixed-use district and a magnet for creative types and entrepreneurs of many stripes. Galleries, shops, restaurants, and ad agencies have, in recent years, taken up residence, along with loft, condominium, and apartment dwellers.

Architects, too, cannot resist the downtown district's heavy masonry structures and lofty interiors. The new home of Mahlum Architects' Portland office is a Pearl District anchor: the Prael Hegele building, a brick edifice (now known by locals as the Maddox building) completed in 1906 for a fine crockery and glassware wholesaler. Mahlum's project →



Opposite: A former loading dock serves as the entrance to Mahlum Architects' Portland, Oregon, office.

Above: New windows bring light and air into the conference room.

PHOTOGRAPHY: ECKERT & ECKERT



designer Anne Schopf, along with Michael L. Smith, principal in charge, and Miles Woofert, collaborated with industrial designer Jack Kearney of Company K on the rehabilitation of an irregular space that snakes around existing tenants on the ground floor. T-shaped in plan, the 4,840-sq.-ft. space was organized following the existing grid of the heavy timber warehouse structure. The design studio, which occupies nearly the full length of the building's 100-ft.-long east-west dimension, serves as a central spine and organizing element for the office. The reception area, conference room, and pin-up spaces all face the street, providing Mahlum with a strong public presence. A former loading dock serves as Mahlum's front door. Further emphasizing its desire to be part of the community, Mahlum's public spaces do double-duty as gallery space for emerging artists.

The architects chose their materials palette—in neutral colors animated by both rough and polished textures—to echo, figuratively speaking, the adaptive reuse of the Pearl District itself: belting leather is fashioned into a reception desk, hardboard is laminated to make countertops, salvaged steel plates are reused as flooring material, and patinated sheet steel is fabricated into doors and shelving.

—Abby Bussell

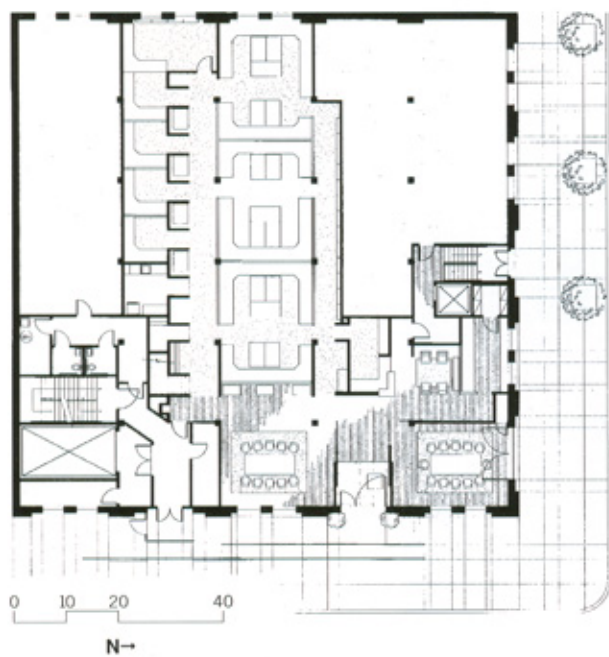


Above: The sliding metal doors appear to be original to the old warehouse structure. But, no, they were fabricated from patinated sheet steel for Mahlum's new offices.

Left: The long, narrow studio, with its 18-ft.-high ceiling, serves as the main organizing element of the project. Private offices flank one side of the studio.

Opposite: The conference room occupies the most public corner of the building, just a few feet above street level.

CARPET: **DURKAN**. CORK FLOORING: **DODGE-REGUPOL**. SISAL RUG: **DESIGN MATERIALS, INC.** CURTAIN FABRIC: **KNOLL**. RECESSED LIGHTING FIXTURES: **RSA LIGHTING**; **HALO**. LOW-VOLTAGE PENDANTS: **LUMIERE**. STUDIO UPLIGHTING: **HUBBELL**. PENDANT FIXTURES: **ABOLITE**. TEAK TABLE AND CHAIRS: **DAVID SMITH & CO.** ARTWORK: **ELIZABETH LEACH GALLERY**. METAL FABRICATOR: **GULASSA & CO.** PLASTERWORK: **CEMENTICS**. CASEWORK: **ARTEC CONTRACTING**. GENERAL CONTRACTOR: **WESTWOOD SWINERTON**. LIGHTING CONSULTANT: **PACIFIC LIGHTWORKS**. STRUCTURAL CONSULTANT: **KPFF**.



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