



Ghislaine Viñas put the greens in Mixed Greens, a New York gallery she designed with the white-on-white purists at Leven Betts Studio Architects

looks can be deceiving

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To put a slight spin on Kermit the Frog, it's not easy picking green. Especially when, like Ghislaine Viñas, you're an interior designer who's passionate about color, and you're collaborating on a project with architects who, like David Leven and Stella Betts, are equally passionate about the virtues of white. Viñas considered dozens of shades of green before proposing a palette that would reflect the spirit of Mixed Greens, a New York contemporary gallery founded on the belief that great, affordable art should be part of everyone's life. The two teams reached a resolution when they and the gallery's owner, Paige West, agreed to use green sparingly—and surprisingly. Otherwise, white would reign supreme, right down to the epoxy floor.

Besides agreeing on how to →

To pull clients from front to back, Leven Betts Studio Architects established a curved circulation path governed by five irregularly placed structural columns and echoed by the dropped ceiling's frosted-acrylic panels and flat aluminum bars. A silk screen by Rob Conger hangs midway along this route, on the wall of the inventory storage room.

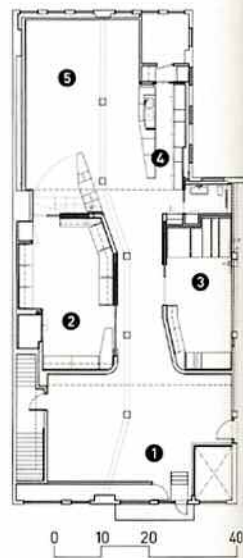
interpret "mixed greens," the greatest challenge faced by Ghislaine Viñas Interior Design and Leven Betts Studio Architects was to transform a derelict 3,500-square-foot space into a gallery that could accommodate a growing business by day and splashy openings by night while conveying West's message of accessibility. Luckily, the three-way collaboration was made easier by the fact that Viñas and Leven Betts had already worked together on the first Mixed Greens location, nearby. (Viñas then went on to

design West's town house, with its watermelon-red TV room, Tang-orange kitchen, and sky-blue library.)

This time, Leven Betts established a directional pull from front to back, along a wide central corridor, by playing off five irregularly placed structural columns that snake through the gallery "like a flattened-out question mark," says partner David Leven. Angled sidewalls and rounded corners reinforce this natural flow, and the frosted-acrylic panels of the dropped ceiling follow the same path.

They also hide a huge beam, HVAC diffusers, ductwork, and sprinklers. Flat aluminum bars run between the panels, while wall washers are aimed at art.

Accent lights illuminate key spots, particularly two sculptural interventions in the rear gallery: a stationary bar and a mobile table—both constructed of gleaming white-painted aluminum panels, with an identical cantilevered silhouette. "The shape abstractly echoes the ceiling," explains partner Stella Betts. The bar incorporates a sink and dishwasher, while →



- 1 ENTRY GALLERY
- 2 OFFICE
- 3 INVENTORY STORAGE ROOM
- 4 BAR
- 5 REAR GALLERY



Bottom left: In the rear gallery, Antonio Citterio's polypropylene Spoon stools accompany a custom 12½-foot-long pivoting aluminum table. **Top:** During evening openings, the office's frosted-acrylic door slides closed. **Bottom right:** For the restroom's wainscoting, Ghislaine Viñas Interior Design selected glass tile. Above hang oil pastels on paper by Paul Plante.





the table has flip-top compartments for laptops, so visitors can peruse mixedgreens.com.

The laptop table pivots out of the way for openings, leaving just three oversize round, white ottomans in the center of the floor. The office halfway down the main corridor can disappear, too—behind a custom sliding door of frosted-acrylic panels.

When the door opens, the office's white cantilevered desk stands out against grape-green walls. The inventory storage room, across the hall, is celery-colored. The restroom is iguana. And lime coats the inside of white cabinetry behind the bar.

The lively color helps compensate for the lack of natural light, much of which was sacrificed when the team took steps to gain precious display surface, covering all of the back windows as well as three of the ones in front. Installed between the new drywall and the front windows' glass are gelled fluorescents. At night, they cast a kelly green glow over the street below. ■

PROJECT TEAM (LEVEN BETTS STUDIO ARCHITECTS): **TIM FURZER; JONATHAN MAN.**

WALL WASHERS (CORRIDOR, GALLERY): **CAPRI LIGHTING.** STOOLS (GALLERY, OFFICE): **KARTELL.** FILE CABINETS (OFFICE): **TECHLINE.** CHAIR (OFFICE), OTTOMAN (ENTRY): **DUNE.** TILE (RESTROOM): **ANN SACKS.** SINK: **LACAVAL.** SINK FITTINGS: **DORNBRACHT.** TOILET: **DURAVIT.** SINK FITTINGS (BAR): **VOLA.** FLOORING: **HOFFMAN FLOORING.** PAINT: **BENJAMIN MOORE & CO.** LIGHTING CONSULTANT: **TILLOTSON DESIGN ASSOCIATES.** STRUCTURAL ENGINEER: **ROBERT SILMAN ASSOCIATES.** GENERAL CONTRACTOR: **TAOCON.**

Top: Leven Betts cut two laptop-size compartments in the rear gallery's pivoting table; when the computers aren't in use, the lids close flush with the top. A C-print by Julianne Swartz hangs nearby. **Center:** Behind the 17 1/2-foot-long bar, cabinets conceal document storage, a refrigerator, and a coffee machine. **Bottom:** The bar incorporates a sink and dishwasher. **Opposite:** The dropped ceiling is 16 inches deep to hide a beam, ductwork, sprinklers, and HVAC diffusers.

