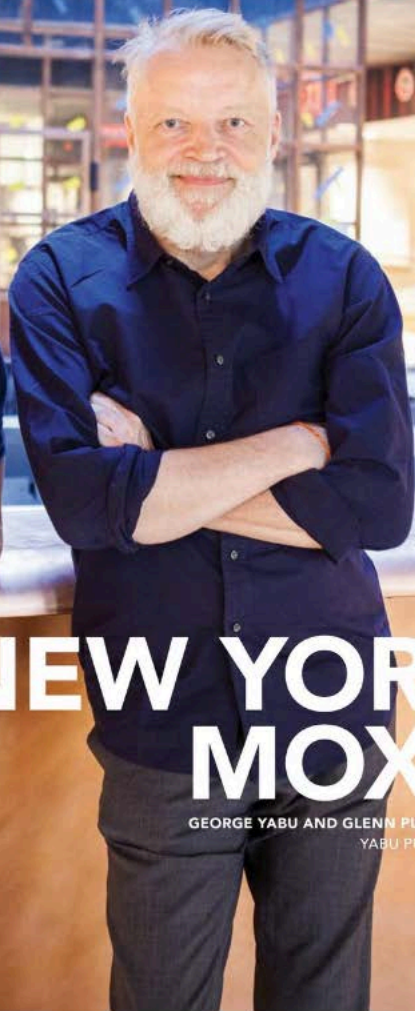


# BOUTIQUE design

HOSPITALITY REINVENTED

NOVEMBER 2017



## NEW YORK MOXY

GEORGE YABU AND GLENN PUSHELBERG  
YABU PUSHELBERG

NEW IN NEW YORK HOTELS, PART V

# COUNTER CULTURE

It's not just dinner—for a new generation of New York restaurants and nightlife spaces, it's a meal- or evening-long staycation with hints of another time or place.

BY ORIANA LERNER

**RETHINK LOCAL**, say the masterminds behind a trio of NYC food and drink hotspots, from Suzuki NYC, a sushi spot hidden in plain sight beneath a bank building in Midtown; to The VNYL, an East Village supper club with a strong 1970s vibe; and SUGARCANE raw bar grill in Dumbo, the Big Apple outpost of the Miami-based small plates concept. Escapism is back in a big way, and that's putting the onus on designers to make like sci-fi writers and create their own universes. And, yes, that means finding ways to insulate them from the city outside.

For The VNYL, interiors firm Functional Creative Design owner Sarah A. Abdallah channels her art therapy and psychology background into modulated design to help guests decompress gradually. "I used lighting and wall paneling coupled with a wallcovering designed in the 1970s to create a warm residential corridor leading into the main dining area. As guests move up through the four-story enclave, they pass the VIP Mezzanine designed to resemble a jewel box with fluted walnut wall panels and antique beveled mirror glass. The ceilings are lower than on the other floors to further create feelings of privacy and intimacy."

Nancy Ruddy, founding principal, CetraRuddy, found the Civil War-era building offered the raw volume to give SUGARCANE's open kitchens and four bars the scope each needed to stand on its own. Unlike Abdallah, Ruddy used only FF&E, finishes and lighting, not architecture, to define the spaces. "The lighting in each space varies—from glass pendants to custom ceiling fixtures, to minimal accent lighting that highlights the dramatic existing historical elements. The chorus of pattern, texture and form create natural zones that differentiate the space without using walls or dividers," she says.

PEDRO ABETA/ABDALLAH; COURTESY OF CETRA RUDDY (BUDDY); CHRIS COOPER/PHOTOGRAPHER; SUZUKI; COURTESY OF WOOD INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE (ISOGAI)



HIRO ISOGAI  
WOOD INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE



NANCY RUDDY  
CETRA RUDDY



SARAH A. ABDALLAH  
FUNCTIONAL CREATIVE DESIGN

1 Suzuki's dark walls take advantage of its underground location to create calm in the bustling Times Square neighborhood.



**2** Decadent texture on chair backs in The VNYL invites guests to stay at the bar. Patterns on the wall and floor add depth.

**3** SUGARCANE raw bar grill's warm tones set the mood. Screens and low sofas give off a relaxed vibe as balance to the industrial DUMBO location.

Suzuki's location gave it automatic velvet-ropé cachet (along with more than a few design and operational headaches). Hiro Isogai, managing principal, interior architecture, WDG Interior Architecture, uses the palette to reinforce the sense of retreat and exclusivity in the restaurant's three areas: Suzuki, Satsuki and bar Three Pillars. The final touch? Layering in elements that add a sense of history—even if it involves events that are half a world away. "This is a bit more prevalent in the Three Pillars bar but the basis of design for the all the spaces was an influence from early 20th century Japan. During this period architecture and fashion looked toward adopting styles from France and Italy, as well as other European sensitivities of the era," says Isogai.

As for making magic happen in the real world? The basics of utilizing layout and existing materials haven't changed. Placing the private dining area of Suzuki at the back creates automatic privacy. Abdallah's work on good traffic flow has the added benefit of simplifying meeting ADA regulations. Ruddy turned not only to using materials from the site as focal points, but also to the schist walls to form a focal point (they sparkle when lit). Practical ingredients, maybe, but they come together for a magical cocktail. ◉



## PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

### THE VNYL

#### CLIENT

The VNYL: Vintage New York Lifestyle

#### DESIGN FIRM

Functional Creative Design; Sarah Abdallah, owner

#### ARCHITECT

K.V. Lambiris Architect LLC

#### GENERAL CONTRACTOR

Navac Builders

#### PURCHASING COMPANY

Orior New York

#### DESIGN CONSULTANTS

AKL Design Inc. (woodworking and fabrication)  
Damaris Cozza (decorative vintage sourcing)  
Ian Nolan (client project manager)

#### FABRICS

Angela Brown Ltd.

F. Schumacher and Co.

Pierre Frey

#### FIXTURES

Fios

#### FURNITURE

Orior By Design Newry Ireland (fabrication for custom pieces designed by Functional Creative Design)

#### LEATHER

Tiger Leather

#### LIGHTING

Fios

#### WALLCOVERINGS

David Hicks

Flavor Paper

### SUGARCANE RAW BAR GRILL

#### CLIENT

Samba Brands Management

#### DESIGN FIRM

CetraRuddy: Nancy Ruddy and John Cetra, principals; Kana Ahn, senior designer & project manager; Viviana Fernandez, junior designer; Joseph Jebran and Jordan Caylor, architects

#### GENERAL CONTRACTOR

Streamline

#### OWNER'S REP

Ironbridge

#### FF&E PURCHASING

Dorothy Vagi Consulting

#### DESIGN CONSULTANTS

Brian Orter (Lighting Design (lighting))

#### CHARRED WOOD

Resawn Timber Co.

#### COUNTER TOP STONE

NY Stone

Stone Source

#### CUSTOM METAL & MILLWORK

Moink Design

#### FURNITURE

Hillcross Furniture

#### LIGHTING

Michael Riggio Design

#### TILES

Ann Saks

Artistic Tile

Cle Tile

Design and Direct Source

Fireclay Tile

Prett & Larson Tile

SUZUKI NYC

#### CLIENT

Yuta Suzuki

#### DESIGN FIRM

WDG Interior Architecture: Hiro Isogai, managing principal, interior architecture; Ricardo J. Rodriguez, associate and project manager, and Sadaf Mohammadi, senior interior designer