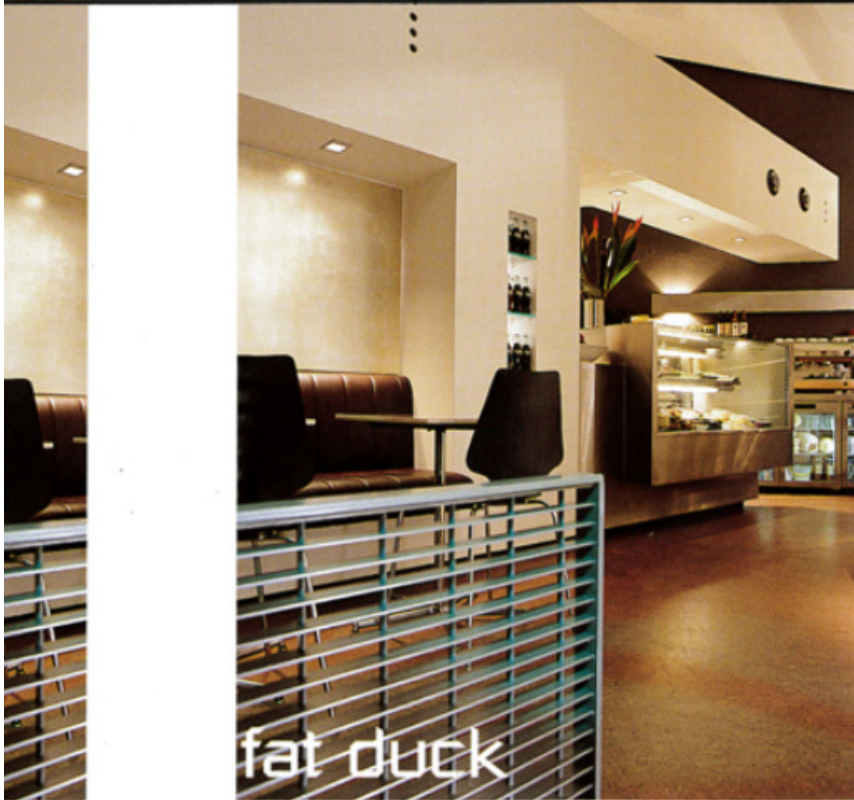


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SITE

SPACE



IN PADDINGTON, on a tiny site of reclaimed space (formerly the cloakroom of the Grand Pacific Blue Room restaurant), architects Jon Cullen and Michelle Feng of Cullen Feng have created a cafe/deli mixing elements of high design with an innate sense of useability.

The combined background of architecture and industrial design which the partnership brought to the brief, aided in the planning of a difficult site. A centrally located custom designed servery acts as a pivot point for two plush leather banquette seating

walls, with crystallised glass tables spaced at regular intervals which give the cafe a sense of linearity beyond its true square dimension. This 'stretching' of space is continued in the use of an overhead bulkhead encasing ductwork with large air diffusers finished in industrial paint. Ramping along the ceiling, this device creates a pelmet for recessed downlighting repeated in the rear wall mirror supporting the illusion of a bigger space.

A feature wall of backlit illuminated boxes displaying products emphasises the cafe as both a

server and retailer of fine foods and after hours becomes a glowing attraction for passers-by. Recessed seating which faces the street is backed by an aluminium-leaf wall-cladding. This, mixed with the dark leather and elephant-grey highlight walls, adds a regal feel to the eatery. Although the design was driven by the constraints of the unusual site, the architects believe it to be the type of space you would like to originally invent. Here, however, they were ultimately given the opportunity to reinvent it.

Elly Bloom