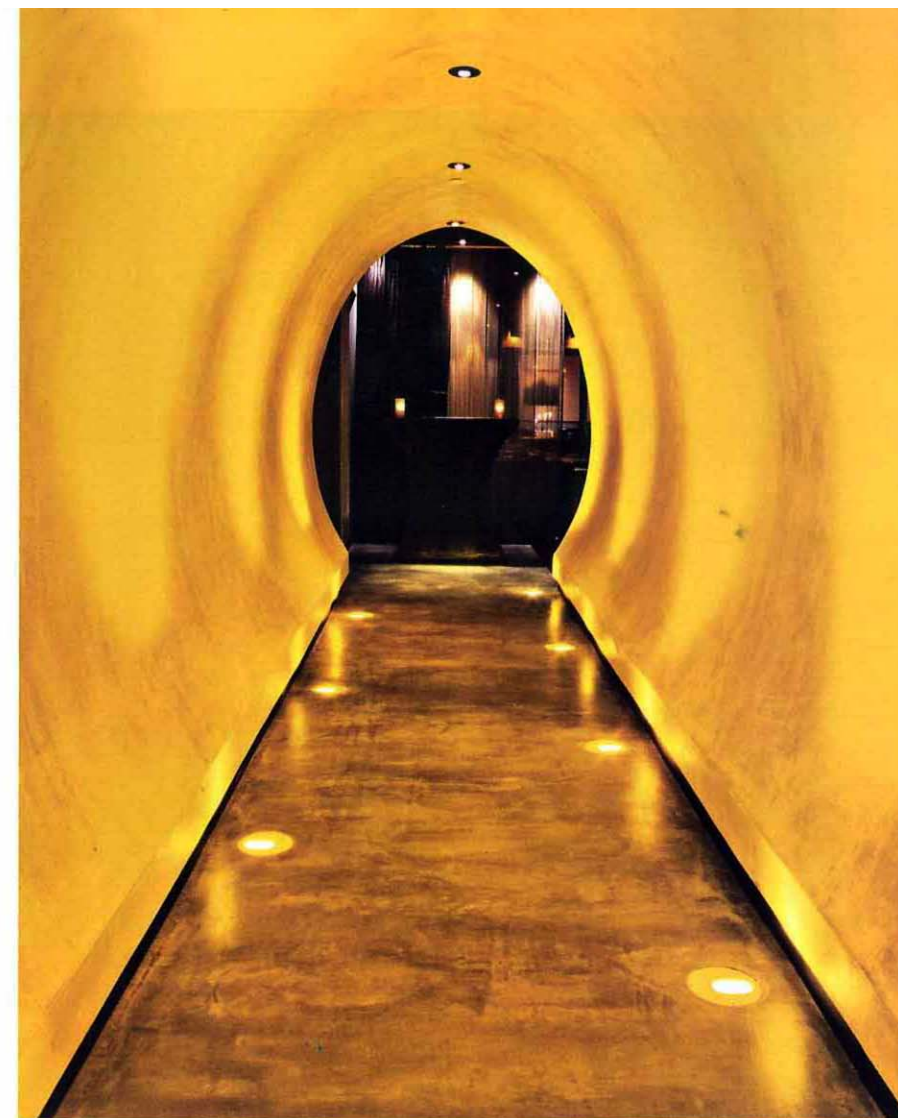


hot chocolate

New York City's grown-up definition of decadence

By Stacy Shoemaker Rauen
Photography by Eric Laignel



After starting the Meatpacking District nightclub frenzy five years ago with celebrity-filled Lotus, the owners are at it again: they recently opened Double Seven, literally across the cobblestone street from their original location. But this time, they wanted a more intimate space that offers a more “grown up” experience. And after visiting a few Los Angeles hotspots designed by Dodd Mitchell Design (DMD), they knew

who to hire for their newest venture. “We have been dying to work in New York for years,” says Gulla Jonsdottir, director of design for DMD, who headed up the project, the firm’s first Manhattan job. “But since we were in the Meatpacking and they were hiring us from LA we wanted to do something different and not have people say, ‘Oh, another one?’”

With the design direction of a secret, luxurious,



Opening page: A closeup of the glowing amber handblown glass teardrops that line the main wall at Double Seven. *Left, top and bottom:* Guests enter through a Bond-like tunnel; burnt glass artwork by a Brooklyn artist decorates the raised back room.

Right: A long-view of the lounge where the dominant material is brown crocodile-embossed Italian leather.

high-end lounge (she wasn't even sure that the owners have put the name up above the door), Jonsdottir grabbed inspiration from fashion (seen in materials), fire (found in artwork), and chocolate (the dominant color is brown, which is very appropriate since cocktails are paired with a selection of Debaube & Gallais chocolates). But first, the space, a previous bar which she says was more like "Fred Flinstone's house," had to be completely rearranged. Bathrooms, once the first thing guests saw, are now tucked in the back and dressed in black mosaic tile and Swarovski crystal signs; meanwhile the bar, once in the back, is now in the front, lining the right wall.

To enter the 2,500-square-foot space (90-person capacity, small by New York City standards), guests first have to enter a radiating bullet hole-shaped concrete tunnel. "It is inspired from the beginning of James Bond films. It's a tease," Jonsdottir says. Inside, the masculine, but decadent space is swathed in plush brown carpeting, \$60,000 worth of Italian crocodile-embossed leather on the bar top and banquettes, walnut furniture, and brown mesh and leather curtains separating seating and the bar's two rooms. And since the landlord lives above the space, Jonsdottir had to make sure sound didn't carry out or upwards so she covered the ceiling in acoustic panels wrapped in brown ultrasuede. "It's not so much about glitz as hard and soft materials in juxtaposition," she says. "It is sexy and warm at the same time."

To literally add a warm feel to the space, Jonsdottir at first wanted the focal point of the back raised room to be a fireplace. But "it is hard to get that through the city of New York," she explains. Instead, she decorated the space with artwork by Brooklyn artist Norman Mooney whose specialty is burning glass with a torch. "The pieces look like sepia toned images of fire and smoke," she says. "They fit nicely in the space, adding a calm energy." But the bar's main conversation piece is the hundreds of glowing amber glass teardrops that run the length of the main room's wall. "It's inspired by a dancing beaded skirt," she says. "It adds a little bit of happiness." hd



Double Seven
New York City

Owner Will Regan, David Rabin, Jeffrey Jah, Mark Baker, and Monika Chiang

Architecture/Interior Design Firm
Dodd Mitchell Design (DMD),
Los Angeles

Architecture/Interior Design Project
Team Gulla Jonsdottir, design director

Contractor Taocon, Inc.

Lighting DMD

Bathroom Signs Swarovski

Barstools/Booths/Lounge Tables
Custom designed by DMD and custom
made by Designer Imports

Leather and Upholstery Premier
Leather

Handblown Glass Drops Flux, Inc. and
Bill Akkers, designed by DMD

Smoke on Glass Backlit Panels
Norman Mooney