

Meet George Jetson

Hanna-Barbera's
Los Angeles home is now
the Gensler-designed
office of AddedValue

text: greg goldin photography: patricia parinejad



Previous spread: Chairs by Charles and Ray Eames complement the glass, stainless steel, polished concrete, and plastic laminate in the upstairs café of the Los Angeles office Gensler designed for market-research firm AddedValue.

Opposite: On the 40-foot-wide lacquered bench in the large lounge, cushions are attached with Velcro. The bench faces groups of Eames chairs and coffee tables and George Nelson side tables. Photography: Ryan Grobuty.

Top: Polished concrete flooring flows around the reception desk. **Center:** The precast concrete screens of Arthur Froehlich's 1963 building have been freshly painted. **Bottom:** The large lounge is carpeted with 36-inch-square nylon tiles.



In the Hollywood version, the most likely candidate to resuscitate the image factory that once housed the Hanna-Barbera animation studio would be an upstart production company or an ad agency with a buoyant sense of humor. So it comes as something of a surprise that the 1963 Arthur Froehlich building—where *Tom and Jerry*, *Yogi Bear*, *Scooby-Doo*, *The Flintstones*, and *The Jetsons* came to life—is now occupied by an international market-research firm, AddedValue. Still, the scalloped concrete facade of this fabled Los Angeles building doesn't conceal silent scribes poring over data on behalf of *Fortune* 500 companies. "For a firm that deals in serious metrics and knowledge and knowledge management," North American CEO Maggie Taylor says, "we view ourselves as creative, spontaneous mavericks, embracing challenge and change."

After Gensler principal Nila R. Leiserowitz gutted the 35,000-square-foot interior of the two-story T-shape building, she discovered raw board-formed concrete, steel I beams that had never been sprayed with gooey fireproofing, and 12-foot ceilings with a sober quality that Leiserowitz and regional design director James Young chose to emphasize. In effect, their design began from the top down, with the new sheet-metal air-conditioning ducts, copper water lines, galvanized-steel electrical conduits, and black-iron sprinkler pipes overhead. The ceiling planes signal integrity, a message amplified by the polished concrete floor.

The sunny reception area, a white-on-white →



landscape of painted drywall and lacquered millwork, leads to a short compressed passageway, where the ceiling drops to 8 feet. The bright neutrality of the first space, followed by the dimly lit interlude of the second, adds to the drama of the encounter with the huge areas where the 150 L.A. employees work. There are no doors, and the few walls top out well below ceiling height, allowing dappled sunlight to filter through the facade's restored concrete lattices.

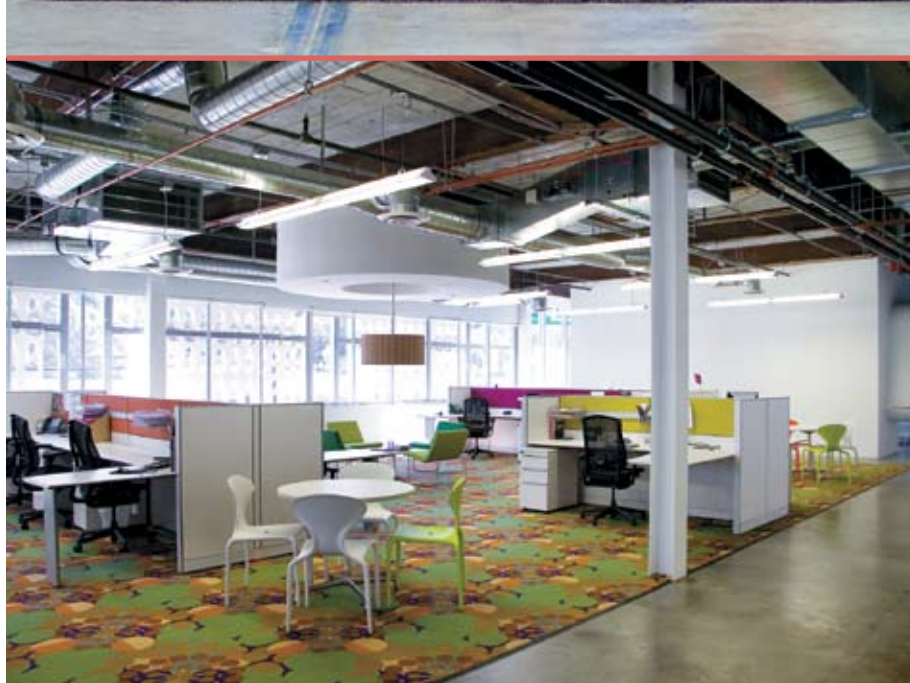
At 10,000 square feet, the largest area is an updated version of a mid-century typing pool in the sense that dozens of desks are spread across lots of floor space. Yet there's no commotion. The calm may arise, counterintuitively, from the absence of strict orderliness. Desks are not aligned on a grid; workstations are all low-walled but otherwise dissimilar. What's more, the work zone randomly dissolves into break-out "living rooms" appointed with lounge chairs, grasshopper-green shag rugs, and drum fixtures wrapped in zebrawood. In addition, "dens"—aka small lounges—feature retro-looking television sets.

The feeling is unrestricted, which doesn't mean undisciplined. All the openness and the hint of eccentricity imply that you're encouraged to apply yourself wholeheartedly without losing your individuality. "For the way we work, it was critical not to build a cube farm," Taylor says. That's clearly evident in the "generator room," a huge lounge at the back of the building. The space is defined by a sunken concrete floor the size of a starlet's swimming pool—no one knows why. But just about every designer Taylor considered planned to fill it in. Instead, Gensler made this mysterious feature a true 1960's fantasy, a conversation pit.

It's here that Leiserowitz and Young were particularly influenced by Hanna-Barbera cartoons, especially *The Jetsons*. The show was "all about bold, optimistic environments with limitless possibility," Leiserowitz says. →

Opposite: Arne Jacobsen's swivel chairs and a glass-topped stainless-steel table assemble on a polyester rug in a break-out area. Photography: Ryan Grobuty.

Top: In the café, real zebrawood veneers the custom shades of pendant fixtures, while custom cabinets are clad in zebrawood-patterned plastic laminate. **Center:** Workstations were configured from various off-the-shelf components. Photography: Ryan Grobuty. **Bottom:** Polyester sheers separate a break-out area from the work zone.



The Flintstones plays a part, too, with a giant white built-in C shape reminiscent of Fred Flintstone's foot-powered roadster. The upper part of the curve, which is matte-painted drywall, serves as a canopy for the bottom, which resolves into a bench that's lacquered to a snowy piano-key finish and lined with deep-purple square cushions. Along with a couple of similar elements, this is where Gensler—working on a tight budget of \$89 per square foot—really splurged.

White surfaces throughout provide a foil for bursts of bright color, the other key to the design. In the “generator room” and other assorted locations, circles of green, orange, yellow, brown, and purple make the carpet dance. Sunset-colored sheers separate break-out areas from workstations outfitted with magenta tackboard fabric. The mint green and cherry red shell seats of chairs by Charles and Ray Eames dot the entire interior. For large gatherings, Ross Lovegrove's green and red polyamide stacking chairs come out. These combinations characterize AddedValue as imaginative without telegraphing *antic*. “We're a marketing research firm,” Taylor admits. “We can't pretend to be Hanna-Barbera.”

PROJECT DESIGNER: JOANNA LAAJISTO. PROJECT TEAM: ALEX CHUN; TIM COWELL; CHRIS RAMSEY.

REFRIGERATOR DRAWERS (CAFÉ): MARVO. CABINET, COUNTER SURFACING: FORMICA CORPORATION. STACKING CHAIRS (LOUNGES): MOROSO. CUSHION FABRIC: MOMENTUM GROUP. PRESENTATION BOARD (LARGE LOUNGE), WORKSTATIONS (OFFICE AREA): KNOLL. SOFA FABRIC, PILLOW FABRIC, CURTAIN FABRIC (BREAK-OUT AREA): MAHARAM. SWIVEL CHAIRS: FRITZ HANSEN; KVADRAT (FABRIC). RECTANGULAR GLASS-TOPPED TABLE: MARTIN BRAT-TRUD. ROUND GLASS-TOPPED TABLE: ROOM & BOARD. RUGS (BREAK-OUT AREA, SMALL LOUNGE): DECORATIVE CARPETS. SOFA (BREAK-OUT AREA), MOLDED-PLASTIC, MOLDED-PLYWOOD, TASK CHAIRS, TABLES: HERMAN MILLER. TV (SMALL LOUNGE): TELSTAR ELECTRONICS. UPHOLSTERED CHAIRS (BREAK-OUT AREA): HARTER. CUSTOM PENDANT FIXTURES: CHERYL TOWNSEND. CARPET TILE: MILLIKEN & COMPANY. BASE MATERIAL: FLEXCO. CONCRETE SEALER: L&M CONSTRUCTION CHEMICALS. PAINT: BENJAMIN MOORE & CO. (INTERIOR); ICI PAINTS (EXTERIOR). MILLWORK: EPPINK. MEP: PBS ENGINEERS. GENERAL CONTRACTOR: TURNER CONSTRUCTION COMPANY.

Top: The café's Eames chairs seat 20 at a time. **Center:** Ross Lovegrove's stacking chairs and a reproduction of Philco's Predicta television from the 1950's furnish a small lounge. **Photography:** Ryan Grobuty. **Bottom:** A round soffit above a break-out serves a purely decorative purpose.

Opposite: The area is furnished with Nelson's table and Timothy deFiebre's chairs.

