

# INTERIOR DESIGN

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## DESIGN

## good joints

YOU MIGHT GET A MASSAGE out of it, but a visit to the chiropractor isn't quite like a day at the spa. There are often medical reasons for going, and usually aches and pains are involved. But that doesn't mean the office has to look clinical. Proving the point is **Amie Gross Architects**, which created a peaceful, calming environment for the new office of Duke Chiropractic Center for Alternative Sports Medicine in New York. "I didn't want it to feel medicinal," recalls principal Amie Gross.

With a clientele that includes celebrities, Olympians, and professional athletes, the 4,000-square-foot practice is a retreat hidden nine floors above the bustle of Midtown Manhattan. Greeting clients is the soothing trickle of water flowing down the pebbled fountain installed on the west wall of the reception area. Floors of eco-friendly bamboo and walls coated in low-VOC paint also evoke nature, and respect it, too—a socially conscious imperative for an architect who specializes in the development of affordable housing.

The office's secluded feeling is heightened by a dearth of windows and, hence, natural light. Gross compensated by painting the walls in reception and the main hallway a golden ochre that shimmers ever so slightly from its pearly finish. A hazy glow also emanates from above →

*In the New York office of Duke Chiropractic Center for Alternative Sports Medicine, a vaulted canopy of perforated and corrugated aluminum leads down the main hallway while filtering the fluorescent light from above. Walls coated in low-VOC paint complement the sustainable bamboo floors.*



the curving reception desk, veneered in aniline-dyed maple and topped in aluminum laminate. It's over this that Gross dropped a large ellipse of aluminum-framed honeycomb Panelite, backlit by fluorescents, 18 inches from the ceiling. A vaulted canopy of corrugated and perforated aluminum, running the length of the main hallway, is treated in the same fashion. "I tried to replicate the quality of sunlight through these filtering effects," Gross explains.

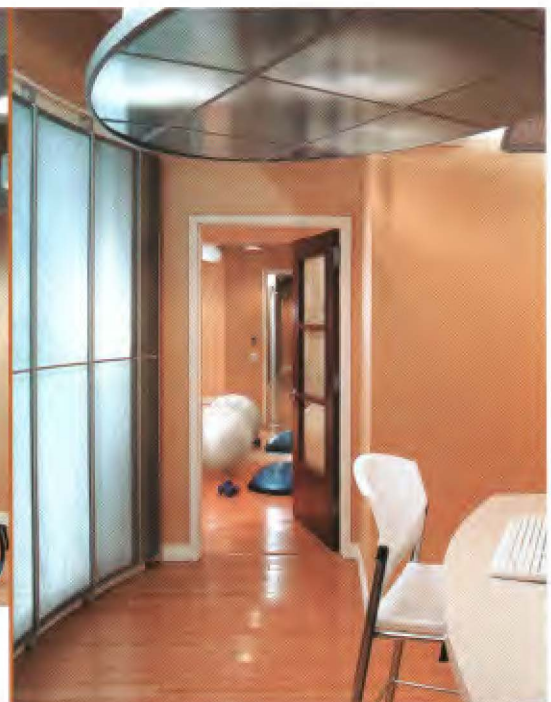
That same filtering comes in handy even where fenestration does exist: Since the single window in the reception area looks out onto an "ugly courtyard," Gross concealed it behind perforated aluminum blinds and a display system of cable-suspended glass shelves used for nutritional products and books. Daylight percolates in, but the undesirable view doesn't.

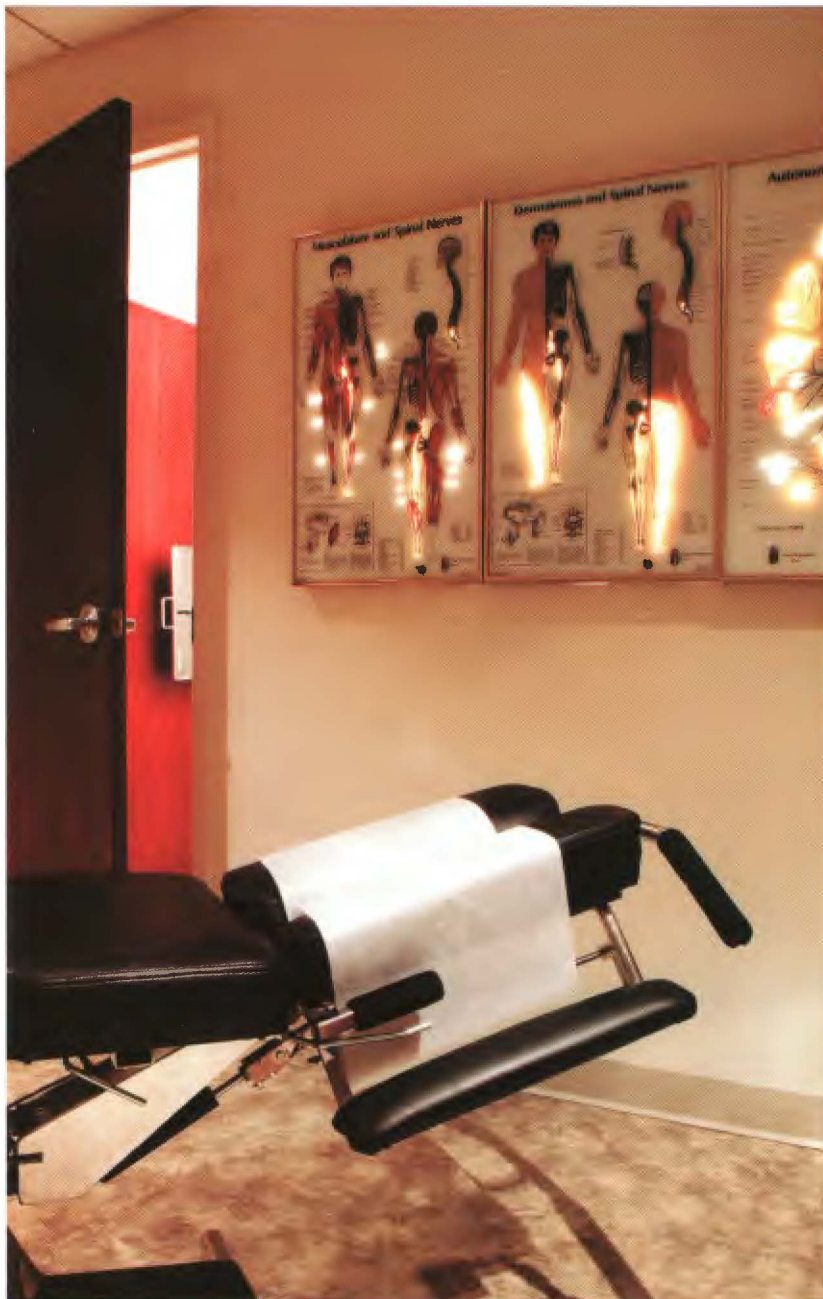
As part of her gut reno-

vation, Gross placed the nine treatment rooms off the main hallway, the office's L-shaped spine (to use an apt metaphor). Halfway down is a multi-purpose therapy suite where two facing pairs of smaller exam rooms are closed off by sliding Panelite doors in translucent sea blue. "It's a pleasing transition from the warm gold tones of the rest of

the office to the watery tones of the therapy suite," says Gross. At the base of the L is the therapist station, above which the architect hung a second ellipse, and the office of Dr. Scott Duke. →

*Clockwise from top left: A Panelite ellipse hovers above a reception desk of maple veneer and aluminum laminate; architect Amie Gross installed the pebbled fountain for a calming effect and the window's perforated aluminum blinds and glass display shelves to conceal an unsightly view. Dr. Scott Duke at work in the exercise studio. At the end of the main hallway is the plastic-laminate therapist station and a second ellipse; the exercise studio's entrance is beyond. The studio's arcing Panelite wall.*





RUCEK

*From right: Flooring switches to vinyl tile in the nine treatment rooms, where anatomical diagrams are set in wall-mounted light boxes. The treatment rooms and therapy suite are situated off the office's main hallway.*

Gross diagnosed a need to maintain visual interest throughout the space by establishing contrasts in colors, textures, and materials. She also threw a few curves into the otherwise rectilinear plan. The vaulted aluminum canopy of the hallway, to cite one example, leads back to an apse of arcing Panelite with a radius that, Gross explains, "was the maximum you could achieve without breaking it."

Behind it is an airy exercise studio that Dr. Duke uses for Pilates, yoga, and physical therapy. The studio's mirrored wall reflects light from the room's southern exposure—also treated with perforated aluminum blinds—and bamboo floors. "I was aiming for a mix of surfaces, materials, and effects," says Gross, "to achieve a certain serenity and complexity." —Aric Chen

CANOPY (HALLWAY): ALPRO. FOUNTAIN (RECEPTION AREA): WATER WONDERS. DESK: DE JIL SYSTEMS. CHAIR (RECEPTION AREA). STOOL (THERAPIST STATION): DAUPHIN. LIGHTING (RECEPTION AREA): ALFA LIGHTING. CEILING PENDANTS (EXERCISE STUDIO, THERAPIST STATION): INDYLIGHTING THROUGH LITE TECH. DESK (THERAPIST STATION): FORMICA CORPORATION. FLOOR (TREATMENT ROOM): TOLI INTERNATIONAL. PAINT: BENJAMIN MOORE & CO. FLOOR (THERAPY SUITE): AZROCK. FLOOR: WARNER BAMBOO FLOORS. PAINT: ZOLATONE. GENERAL CONTRACTOR: BRISTOL CONSTRUCTION COMPANY.