

Doric, Ionic...Acrylic

Situ Studio outfits the columns at New York's Brooklyn Museum

They seem to sway and dance, the giant illuminated skirts ballooning

over 16 Doric columns at New York's Brooklyn Museum. Inaugurating its reopened great hall, following phase one of a renovation by Ennead Architects, "ReOrder: An Architectural Environment by Situ Studio" is the result of an invitational competition. Situ Studio won, beating out a handful of other firms, by contemplating the complex history of the building—completed in 1897 by McKim, Mead & White and widely considered to have been disfigured in 1934, when the facade's grand entry staircase was demolished. "While researching, we came across this removal of ornamentation and thought, *We can bring it back on a whole new level,*" Situ partner Aleksey Lukyanov-Cherny says.

"ReOrder" takes the form of crinolines, popular when the museum first opened, and reinterprets them in acrylic solution-dyed antique white. To construct what Lukyanov-Cherny calls the "underwire," Situ attached "collars" to the tops of the columns, then suspended rope from these close-fitting steel rings to support the various steel hoops that create the skirtlike profiles. Roping the larger hoops to another collar tilts and stabilizes them. Farther down, rings

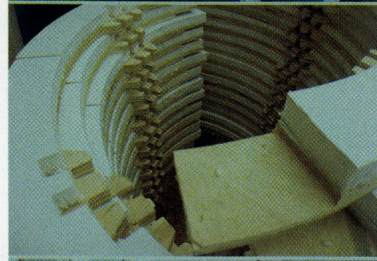
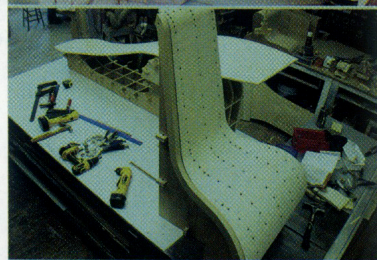
CNC-cut from plywood and laminated with foam clamp onto excess fabric that's been creased into French

centerfold

folds and fed through the hot rollers of an industrial press. At the base of the columns, the fabric disappears inside circular banquettes thermoformed from white solid-surfacing.

The 10,000-square-foot great hall was jam-packed on the first free Saturday evening after the installation's unveiling. And, Lukyanov-Cherny adds, "Weddings are getting booked left and right." By creating a social hub, Situ Studio's play on architectural ornamentation appears to be fulfilling McKim, Mead & White's intentions for the space. It's thought to have once been a ballroom. —*Meghan Edwards*

From top: Early research for "ReOrder: An Architectural Environment" by Situ Studio involved images of lightweight structural systems and improvisations with fabric folding. Situ's proposal showed the installation in the museum's great hall. A full-scale mock-up was built off-site. Before the banquettes encircling the column bases could be thermoformed from acrylic solid-surfacing, molds had to be made from plywood. A stack of CNC-cut plywood rings, laminated with foam, awaited transport. Installation at the museum took nearly a month. Internal lighting comes from 1,800 LEDs.



THROUGHOUT GLEN RAVEN: FABRIC. LG HAUSYS: SOLID-SURFACING. RENFRO DESIGN GROUP: LIGHTING CONSULTANT.

UNFOLD

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY OF SITU STUDIO (2); KENT SIRCHIO



Transforming 16 original columns in plaster and steel, "ReOrder" will occupy the great hall until January. After that,



the 2,200 yards of acrylic will be either recycled by its manufacturer or used for another Situ Studio project.

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