

Deconstruction



ZINC FED SQUARE

Daniella Casamento

It is rare for the transformation of a hospitality venue to be completed in five days but in early October, and in time for the 10th birthday celebrations of Federation Square, Zinc re-opened with a chic new look. A Scandinavian design aesthetic of light colours and clean lines merges with the existing architecture of slanted concrete rendered walls and angles that are reminders of Zinc's relationship to the larger setting.

Helen Rice of Rice Design and the designer of the original fit-out, understood the complexities of designing for a function centre and the importance

of adhering to an inflexible timeline. "We found time in October when there were no bookings and worked back from there," explains Rice. "The builder started work on the Tuesday and handed back the following Monday lunchtime." This decision allowed the builder to work unfettered and to a fast program which was planned well in advance of the handover. Carpet designed for the function room was ordered in May to allow for manufacturing lead-times and delivery from Germany.

The existing ceiling was repainted and the stone tiled floor was retained at the bar and bathrooms while some tiles were removed to make way for the custom-designed rug at the entry. Dark toned perforated acoustic timber veneer panels that disguise doors were replaced with a lighter veneer which adds warmth and accentuates the graphic nature of the perforations. Glass clad columns were retained for their corporate look.

New white curtains, with sections of open weave that form a geometric pattern, give the interior a sense of occasion. They can be drawn to

increase the function space or closed to provide separation between the casual and formal setting. "As a function centre, the space needs to look corporate in the morning and sophisticated at night," explains Rice, adding "the view to the river is an important aspect of the venue's location." The large function area can be divided into two smaller rooms with dedicated facilities to cater for two different groups. This flexibility in design allows Zinc to manage up to three bump-in times per day in peak times.

Particular focus was given to the bar to achieve the desired minimalist aesthetic. A white marble countertop and illuminated backlit perspex to the bar front replace original darker finishes. Behind the bar, a rendered concrete wall now simplifies the overall scheme and provides the setting for a decorative art glass installation by Mark Douglass. The delicate nature of the white glass cells on the black painted background is in stark contrast to the surrounding hard surfaces and provides a graphic counterbalance to the minimalist scheme.

An artwork by Stieg Persson was the inspiration for the luxurious inset rug which features in the pre-function area. As an admirer of his work, Rice presented the client with an image she had saved from an exhibition held at Anna Schwartz Gallery some years prior. On the client's approval of the overall scheme the image was purchased then digitally recreated for the custom rug. "Persson was excited about the idea of using his art in this way," Rice says, "as his work will reach more people." This organic design paired with the cluster of new folded paper pendants above, acts to soften the otherwise very linear elements of the interior and is consistent with the selection of new interventions.

Zinc retains a sense of familiarity with the old, now invigorated by a less formal interior that has a fresh and youthful appeal.

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SUPPLIERS

1 FLOOR FINISHES

- Whitecliffe Imports
- Siltstone

2 JOINERY FINISHES

- Perspex
- Stainless Steel
- Statuario Marble

3 WALL FINISHES

- Sealed Hardipanel
- Rockcote
- Dulux
- Wattyl
- White Oak
- Baresque
- Kvadrat Maharam

4 FF&E FINISHES

- Grant Doorman
- Svenska
- Instyle
- Royston House
- Warwick

5 LIGHT FITTINGS

- Schaivello

6 ARTISTS

- Stieg Persson
- Mark Douglass