

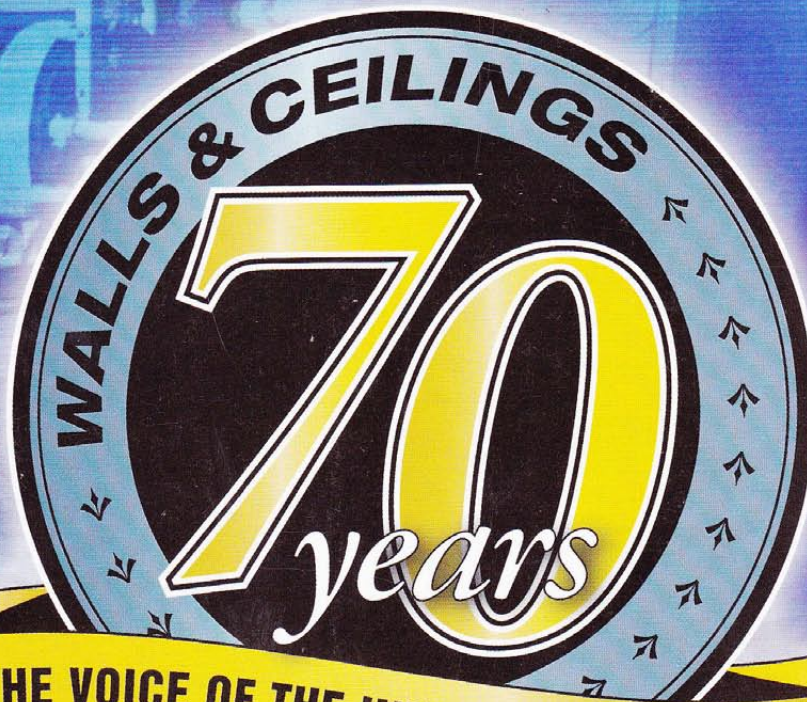
WALLS & CEILINGS

September 2008

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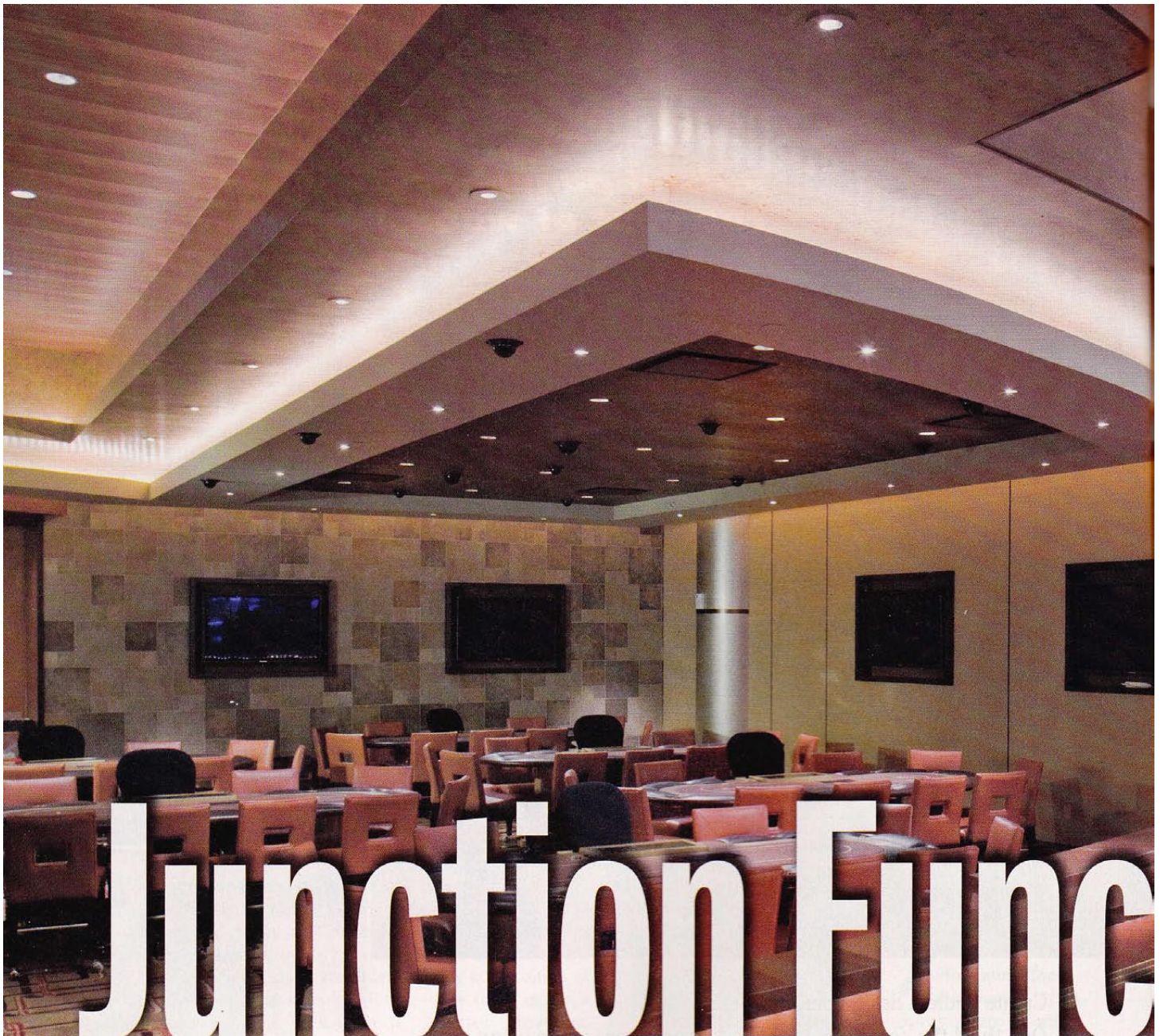
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70TH ANNIVERSARY/INSULATION ISSUE



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Architects and designers keep exploring materials and finishes and are finding new ways to use traditional ceilings to create “high design” looks. They are a relatively small portion of all ceiling installations, but an area in which exciting things are taking place.

“Building owners want something different than the place next door,” says Sara Jazayeri, DPLG, CID, an interior designer at Studio 5 Partnership Architects/Planners. “They are willing to have a ceiling plane that stands out.”

“Stand-out” ceilings offer visual appeal, and building owners, architects and designers can create them

High-design ceilings create a signature look without compromising function. **By Kim Graaskamp**

without compromising the ceiling’s functionality, with good interior acoustics and the ability to hide subsystems such as lighting, HVAC, and sprinklers.

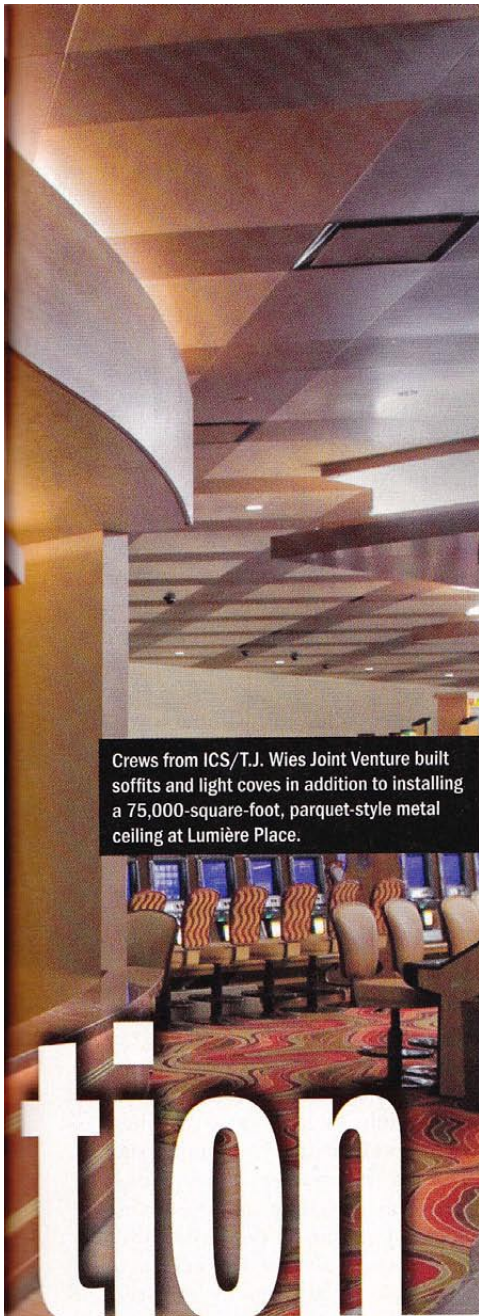
What’s more, such ceilings give ceiling contractors a chance to showcase their work. As senior project manager for ICS/T.J. Wies Joint Venture, Tim Tighe supervised the installation of a 55,000-square-foot, parquet-style ceiling at St. Louis’ Lumière Place Casino & Hotels. Crews installed approximately \$1

million worth of ceiling material each month during the project, and that’s a point Tighe plans to tout for some time.

“It was a very enjoyable project to be on because it was so high-profile,” Tighe says. “The experience overall was fabulous.”

FORM AND FUNCTION

Ceilings designed for visual appeal require additional effort, but deliver aesthetic benefits that represent a compelling blend of function and



Crews from ICS/T.J. Wies Joint Venture built soffits and light covers in addition to installing a 75,000-square-foot, parquet-style metal ceiling at Lumière Place.

tion

form. Architects, designers and contractors are now finding new ways to draw attention to a property and influence the mood of its occupants, while providing sound control and access to the plenum.

Consider how high-design ceilings function in retail spaces, corporate environments and public places.

RETAIL SPACES

In retail, ceilings can help play up the merchandise and give shoppers a fresh experience. “The trend is about bringing excitement to the ceiling,” says architect Josephine E. Coleman, AIA, associate, Studio 5 Partnership.

“It’s about bringing a sense of the upscale to the public.”

Ceilings can fulfill this need by offering shoppers appealing overhead forms. They also give retail clients the ability to integrate the ceilings with the lighting systems, to reflect colors and patterns on the walls, and to create overhead “clouds” that help define store departments. Overall, then, high-design ceilings can create a more intimate space for shoppers, one that spotlights the merchandise.

“Shoppers love it,” says Coleman. “It makes them excited to shop.”

CORPORATE SPACES

Corporate lobbies can offer opportunities to set the tone for a building and its tenants. When architects and designers take an imaginative approach, they can highlight these spaces with signature looks—strong statements that make use of colored panels, panels with unusual perforation patterns, or geometric systems.

Some lobby ceiling designs have become sculptural. They may take advantage of the newer, three-dimensional ceilings systems available in the market, or they may employ creative ways to use existing systems.

High-design ceilings are even being added to the office workspaces themselves. The offices of Forum Studio, the architectural arm of Clayco, feature Hunter Douglas’ TechStyle ceiling panels. According to Mike Benz, principal project designer, the team sought to use the panels “like origami,” applying the panels horizontally, vertically and on angles. Benz’ firm backlit the panel assemblies with high-efficiency lighting, taking advantage of the system’s translucent material. The resulting ceiling planes filter ambient light and highlight the 25-foot tall lobby space.

PUBLIC SPACES

In public buildings and educational venues, architects and designers



Metal panels swing open for easy plenum accessibility at Lumière Place.

have been integrating design across the walls and ceilings. In the past, decorative motifs typically have been placed on the vertical surfaces. An interesting development lately is for these elements to appear on the ceiling plane. In other words, design is migrating upward and onto the ceilings, turning them

into canvases of color, patterns, imagery and iconography.

CASE STUDY: UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI

At the University of Cincinnati, inside the Richard E. Lindner Center, there are sepia-toned graphic murals on metal ceilings by Hunter Douglas. The flatness and flush joints of the system keep the photographs looking continuous and clean.

From the start, architect Bernard Tschumi envisioned a full-height atrium running through Lindner Center. The graphic murals simply define one passageway between buildings in an athletic quad. “It seemed like a natural path through the building,” says Kim Starr, project manager with Bernard Tschumi Architects. “Students already tend to use UC buildings as cut-throughs.”

Tschumi brought in a top designer—Eva Maddox, principal of the Branded Environments group at Perkins + Will. Maddox’s focus in the atrium was to integrate the current campus community with its legacy—the athletes and programs that have made a name for UC.

According to Brian Weatherford, creative director of Perkins + Will’s Branded Environments group, the graphics were applied directly to the ceiling panels by means of a digital printing press using a flat-bed printer: “Originally we thought we might apply film so that the images would be changeable, but because the ceilings are perforated with an acoustical backing, we said, ‘What if we print right on the metal instead?’”