



Looking up: The meandering wooden walls of this trend-watching agency in Berlin are offset by an illuminated ceiling of frosted glass.

02 office overhead

Office ceilings are the neglected stepchildren of interior architecture. Usually, their sole task is to hide cables and pipes while being as unobtrusive as possible. Yet this project by Berlin-based design duo Martini Meyer for the headquarters of a trend-watching agency demonstrates the decorative potential of the ceiling. The office occupies two storeys of an old warehouse overlooking the River Spree. It was clear from the beginning that the cir-

culatation zone needed a light ceiling, says Alexandra Martini, explaining that 'the warehouse is very deep and little daylight reaches its inner areas'. The designers wrapped curvaceous wooden walls around reception, stairs and hallways. The resulting room-in-a-room has an amoeba-shaped footprint and penetrates both floors, a solution made visible by a circular opening in the ceiling-cum-floor between levels. As a contrast to the warm,

velvety walls, the space has been fitted with an illuminated ceiling of translucent safety glass. Originally, the designers considered transparent glass, which would have exposed all mechanical systems housed in the space above the ceiling. Ultimately, says Martini, they decided it would have looked 'too restless next to all that walnut wood'. Size and arrangement of the custom-made ceiling modules are based on a mathematical grid. They hang on

chains which are attached to the glass with stainless-steel point fixtures. The comparison between the geometrically patterned ceiling and the free-form walls adds a strikingly ornamental touch to the office interior.
Anneke Bokern
Photography by Arwed Messmer