

INTERIOR DESIGN

MAY
2008



office
full spectrum



From top: Everyone at the firm, including the founding principal, works at a custom table of painted fiberboard; across the epoxy floor, project renderings can be considered in proper perspective. The 7,300-square-foot Silverlake warehouse was built in the 1950's. Garage doors open to a rear garden.

Light, space, the outdoors, the value of community. Michael Lehrer puts a great deal of thought into what should be some of architecture's cornerstone tenets—nowhere to better effect than at his firm's own office. Lehrer Architects LA occupies a 1950's warehouse that later served as headquarters for both *LA Weekly* and a thriving sex-toy distributor before becoming a 7,300-square-foot studio.

Start with that light. "It just keeps dancing," Lehrer says. And it's almost entirely natural all morning and afternoon, entering from multiple skylights and reflected back by white furniture and whiter epoxy flooring. Next comes space. "A





industrial strength

Firm: lehrer architects la site: los angeles

corner office was a nice idea, but my core values make it critical for me to work alongside my architects," he explains. That's why he sits, like everyone else, at one of the simple tables lined up next to a wall of painted steel shelving. Likewise, the conference area, defined by nothing more than a plywood platform, offers a sense that all work is part of the whole. As for the outdoor connection, it's addressed by two garage doors that are open to a garden nine months a year. "We can watch the light change, the seasons change," he says. "The preschool we can hear over the garden wall, the street traffic—they ground us in our community. After all, that's who we work for."

—Maria Shollenbarger →



Above: The studio stretches 100 feet, front to back.

FRONT FRONT CAL WESTERN PAINTS: PAINT (EXTERIOR); OVERHEAD DOOR CORPORATION: GARAGE DOORS; THROUGHOUT STEELCASE: TASK CHAIRS: IKEA; TASK LAMPS: PRUDENTIAL LIGHTING; LINEAR FIXTURES: THROUGH WAREHOUSE EQUIPMENT; SHELVING: MASONITE INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION; WORKTABLE MATERIAL: GEORGIA-PACIFIC; DRYWALL: DUNN-EDWARDS PAINTS: PAINT; FOX + FOX DESIGN: LIGHTING CONSULTANT; MIA LEHRER + ASSOCIATES: LANDSCAPING CONSULTANT; JOHN LABIB + ASSOCIATES: STRUCTURAL ENGINEER; CONCRETE RESTORATION: FLOOR INSTALLATION: JUAN GALLEGOS CONTRACTING; WOODWORK: AITAL CUSTOM GLASS & MIRROR; GLASSWORK