

Texas Architect

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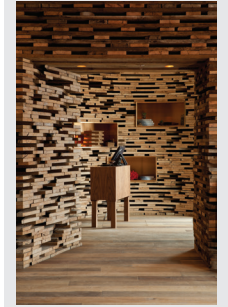
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Park West

A new trellis redefines a 1980s atrium, creating an intimate space in the lofted volume.

With a concrete-and-maple trellis, Malone Maxwell Borson Architects have redefined the atrium of a 1980s IBM complex in Farmers Branch. The design, which is based on a golden section's eternal ratio of 1:1.61, establishes a more inviting and intimate area for the seven-story atrium. The functionality of the trellis, which supports new programming on the lobby level also designed by the firm, is a gathering area with benches and tables, but it also directs circulation in and around the formerly lofted and largely empty space. The steel frame, concrete columns, limestone flooring, maple (slats in the trellis and millwork in the bulkheads), and Carrara marble

(tops on the bulkheads) all contribute to the contemporary yet warm feeling of the trellis. "We felt there needed to be a place people could gather or sit and not feel they were in an uncomfortable, huge volume," notes Michael Malone, AIA. "The trellis not only created a smaller-scale setting for informal gatherings; it also became the visual focal point of the space. It can be looked on from above, so the form had to be visually interesting and attractive from all perspectives."

To make the column and beam patterns more dynamic, Malone and his team decided to proportion and organize the trellis using a golden section, rather than a typical grid. The paving reinforces the geometry, also enhancing the view from above. ■

PHOTO COURTESY MALONE MAXWELL BORSON ARCHITECTS.