

# Tessa

Scaffolding, fire escapes, and security gates unintentionally contribute to the urban character of Manhattan. These urban necessities are ubiquitous and forgettable. However, without these items, the visual context of the street would be very different. When these utilitarian components are brought into focus, there is an expression of patterns and raw material that have a sculptural quality. The design of this new restaurant focuses on celebrating these elements for a unique dining experience within the undercurrent of this urban context. The selection of the materials, detailing, and graphics were derived by focusing on the security gate. The result is a comprehensive environment that is connected to the place it is located.

The kinetic steel security gate has the ability to open and close. In the closed position, it can appear opaque. In the open position it is transparent. Two layers of the blackened steel gate make up the dropped ceiling and blur the perception of the beginning and end of the ceiling. The gates conceal the numerous mechanicals in the plenum space. Ceiling lights shine through the diamond shaped openings of the gates, illuminating the geometry and creating shadows. Adjusting the apertures of the gates alters the quality of light throughout the space and compliments the existing raw brick walls.

The simple texture of this element initiated the selection and detailing of other materials. Classic wire glass, with varying levels of opacity, define the space. Herringbone patterned wood flooring and the bar top reflects the ceiling at various scales. Diamond plate steel stairs align the functional element with the material and pattern choices throughout. Industrial scissor lamps, derived from the security gate, provide flexibility when seating is reconfigured. The lights illuminate custom tables, which are a further refinement of the new architectural language. Even the smallest details of the space, such as strategically spaced steel fasteners, compliment the narrative in varying scales.

The idealized perception of a city like Manhattan can differ from what is really there. Small and often overlooked components make up the complete context of the city. Exploring and celebrating the mundane uncovered a new language and strong brand for the restaurant.