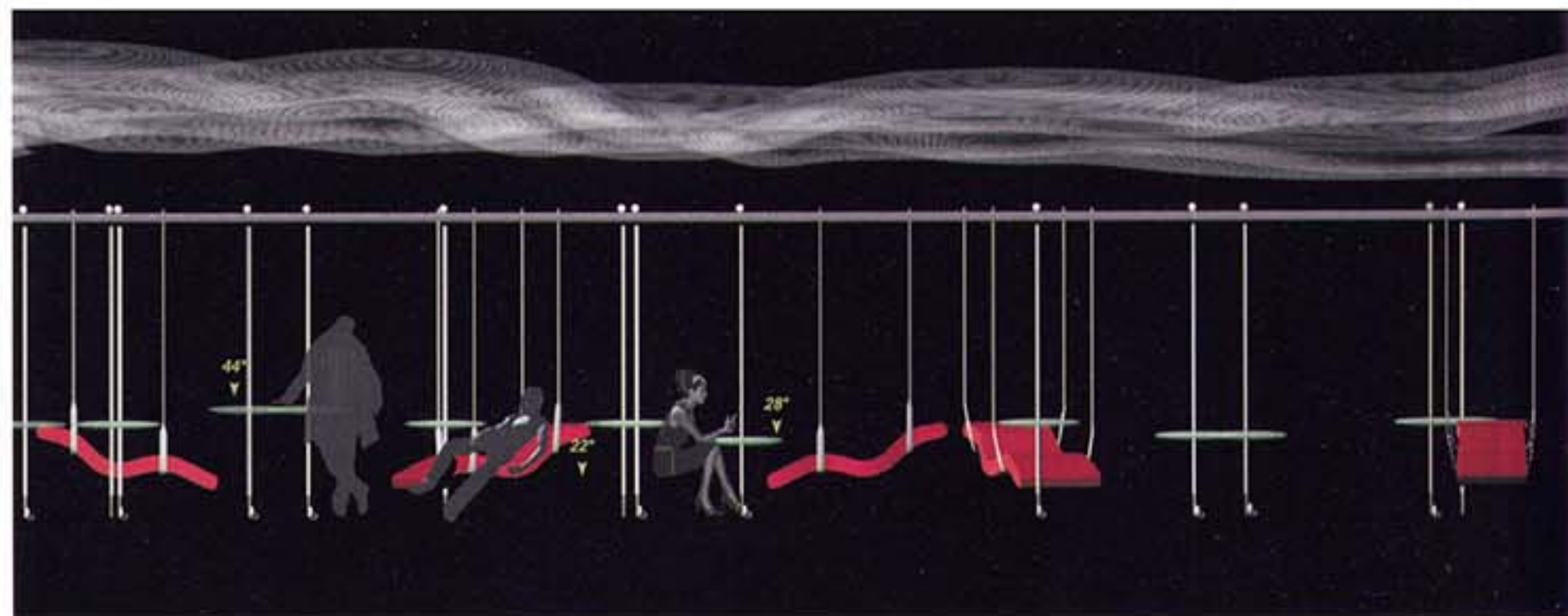




Tables and chairs are suspended from tracks and hooks mounted on the ceiling.

# A MEATY EXPERIENCE

LINDY ROY'S CONVERSION OF A NEW YORK MEAT-STORAGE UNIT INTO A CLUB FUSES FIBRE-OPTIC TECHNOLOGY AND EXISTING FITTINGS TO NOVEL EFFECT.  
BY JAN-WILLEM POELS.



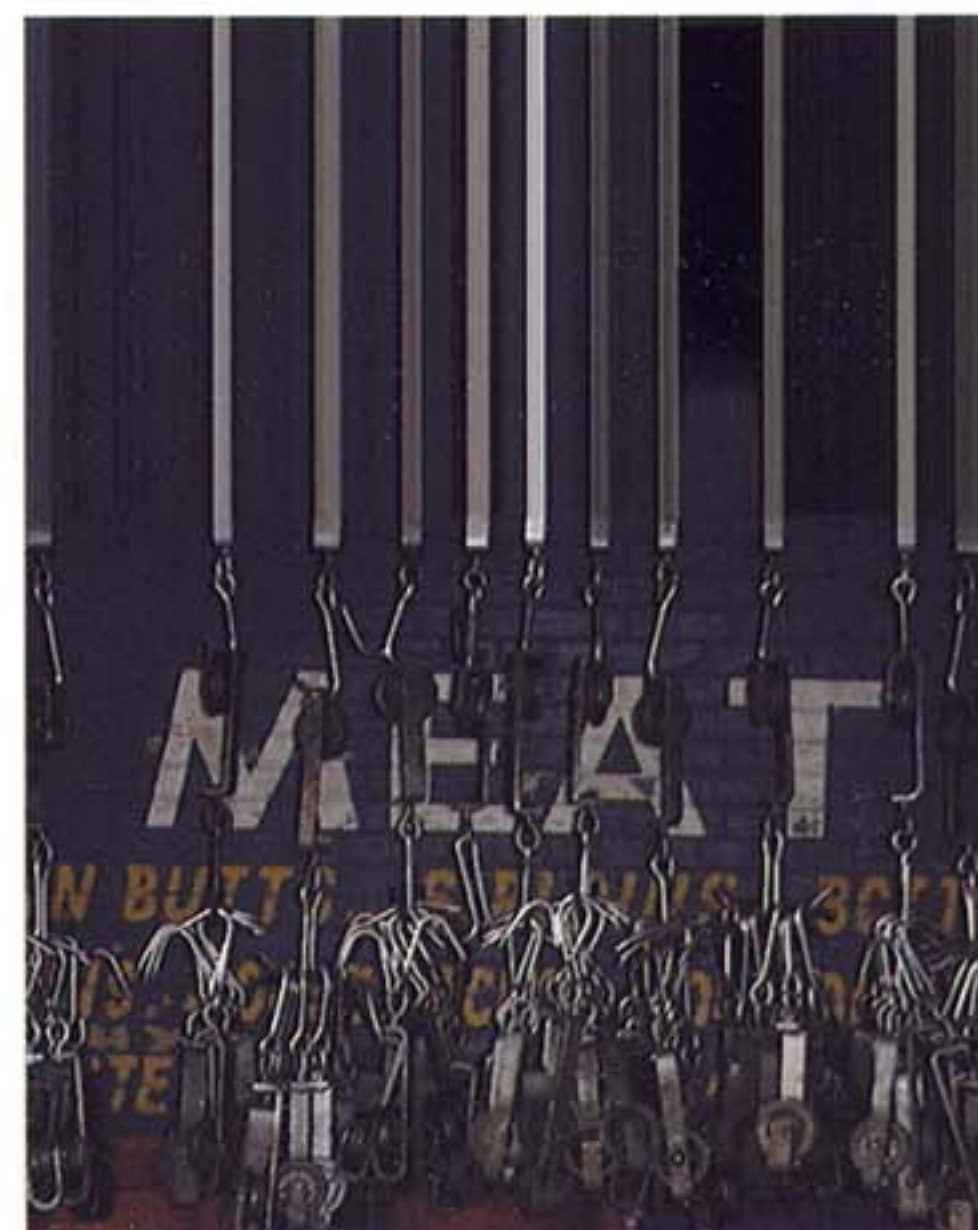
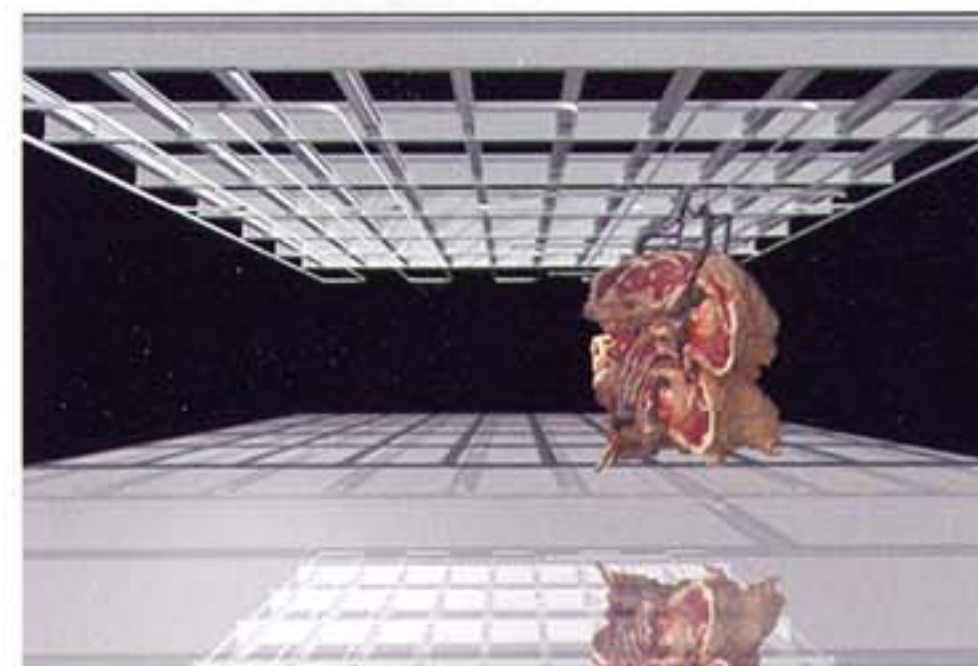
The industrial character of New York's meatpacking district, a pocket of small streets between West 14th Street and Greenwich Village, is changing rapidly. Only a few years ago the meat industry reigned supreme in this gritty neighbourhood, with meat luggers unloading carcasses from trucks and hanging them on hooks attached to ceiling rails that conveyed them to refrigerated cutting rooms. Dotted here and there throughout the district were a few obscure clubs, some of which were part of the SM scene.

Change is in the air today. New bars, clubs and restaurants, as well as boutiques and art galleries, are springing up in rapid tempo. But each new establishment signals the disappearance of yet another piece of local history. And though the penetrating odour of animal flesh still lingers in the air, at least during the day, the trendy establishments currently making an appearance are worlds apart from their predecessors.

A new bar designed by South African-born architect Lindy Roy is one of the latest to buck the trend. Her office, called simply ROY, opened in New York only a year ago and is now detailing the interior of this entertainment venue, the exact name and opening date of which remain unknown.

Occupying what used to be a refrigerated meat-storage space, the bar retains some of the original fittings, which Roy has put to novel use. The extensive system of tracks and hooks mounted on the ceiling – used to transfer carcasses from trucks to coolers – supports translucent cast-resin tables and red leather chaise longues. The custom-made furniture can be moved along the rails and positioned almost anywhere in the space, and the height of the tables can be adjusted to accommodate standing or lounging. The adaptive nature of the design allows for a reconfiguration of the space for special events or simply for the sake of creating a different ambience.

Another interesting feature is the lighting system. An engine in the basement provides the light source for three large bundles of optical fibres that are drawn up through holes cut in the ground-floor slab. The fibres create an illuminated screen along the street façade and then weave their way across the existing structural grid to form a light field at ceiling level. The cut ends of these fibres will also spell out the name of the bar on the façade. With this witty and sophisticated reuse of existing fixtures and her imaginative application of contemporary materials and techniques, Roy has given a new lease of life to a space otherwise surely threatened with extinction.



The trucks, carcasses and meat luggers of yesteryear have made way for trendy venues. Lindy Roy's design is a witty take on the distinctive character of the locality.

Bundles of optical fibres emerge from the basement to illuminate the ceiling and street façade. The cut ends also spell out the bar's name on the façade.



CUSTOM-MADE FURNITURE CAN BE MOVED ALONG CEILING-MOUNTED RAILS - FROM WHICH CARCASSES ONCE HUNG - AND POSITIONED IN ALMOST ANY CONFIGURATION

