Studio Dental
San Francisco Bay Area, California

SQ FT 230 DGSF
ARCHITECT(S) Montalba Architects, Inc.
COMPLETION DATE 2014

OWNERS/AFILITATION Dr. Sara Creighton & Lowell Caulder

ABOUT | DESIGN INTENTIONS

CHALLENGE
Fit a fully functioning dental office (waiting room, 2 operatories, and a sterilization room) on a 230 square foot trailer.

With only 230 interior square feet, the design team’s primary challenge was to create the illusion of a more spacious interior, while also packing required program into the tiny footprint, including a sterilization room, waiting area, and two operatories. The sterilization room is hidden behind millwork panels that wrap around to form the patient waiting bench with integrated tablet for patient forms and magazines. A centralized, double-sided millwork panel houses equipment for both operatories, while also concealing the sound system and HVAC unit.
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STRATEGIES

MINIMUM FOOTPRINT / MAXIMUM VOLUME
- Direct delivery of services reduces patient’s carbon footprint
- Materiality and natural light from skylights visually and vertically expand the space

Rather than opening the side panels to potentially unattractive exterior environments, each operatory gestures to the sky, with 11-foot-plus ceilings and translucent solid surfacing sculpted skylights above the patient chairs, which deliver abundant diffused natural light, and also house TV monitors. Strategically placed mirrored strips in the corner reveal visually expand the space and further reflect natural light. The material palette reinforces the office’s identity, with natural wood millwork, bright white surfaces throughout, and a custom perforation pattern that suggests a dense tree canopy. The 26-foot-long trailer’s exterior features reflective detailing that brings the same custom perforation pattern to the exterior panels, at once a memory of the original utilitarian trailer function, layered with the new use through the clients’ branding and imagery.

MINIMUM FOOTPRINT / MAXIMUM VOLUME

CONVENTIONAL BRICK & MORTAR

MOBILE DENTAL PROTOTYPE

Multi-use program maximizes the interior space to allow for private operatories and semi-private waiting area.

Custom CNC pattern reinforces brand identity, creates depth, and allows for necessary functions such as sound dampening, music / audio, and heating and cooling.

INTERIOR VIEW
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PATIENT EXPERIENCE

Mobile, paperless, & user-friendly digital services are fully integrated on-site.

1. EXTERIOR BRANDING

Custom signage and waiting benches extend the interior to the exterior.

2. WELCOME TOUCH SCREEN

A motion-sensed welcome screen connects to an off-site receptionist to help answer any patient questions.

3. IPAD PATIENT FORMS

Paperless registration forms save time and reduce waste.

EMAIL & TEXT REMIND PATIENTS OF APPOINTMENTS.

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FILTERING LIGHT

A. Beveled skylights direct natural light, while detailing creates illusion of depth and reduces dependency on electrical lighting.

B. Upward views are privileged over unattractive parking lot context.
Materials were selected for sound dampening, patient privacy, and distribution of natural light.

1. **MIRROR**
   - Creates openness
2. **ACOUSTIC FOAM**
   - Provides sound dampening
3. **PERF. SOLID SURFACE**
   - Distributes light
4. **PERF. WHITE OAK**
   - Allows sound from speakers & air from a/c
5. **RICHLITE**
   - Contrasting texture / depth
6. **WHITE OAK**
   - Defines storage & operatories / adds warmth

MATERIAL SOLUTIONS

**JURY COMMENT**

- Extremely creative and inventive solution, a mobile dentist office providing services direct to the patient.
- The pallet of materials and finishes are beautiful and refreshing, an unpredictable surprise. The design team really got into the details.
- The ceiling which a dental patient sees a lot of, is remarkable unlike any dental office I have experienced.
- At a time when the industry is re-evaluating methods of healthcare delivery, this project re-vision the concept of the mobile healthcare trailer with an elevated design that could give the typology some cache. Interesting juxtaposition between the somber exterior and the warm and inviting interior.
- Very efficient layout with great attention to materials and details.
- This is a creative example in both design and community engagement, bringing healthcare to the community and offering care in an unique environment.

A strategically placed mirror on the back fold down door gives the illusion of an expanded space.

AIA/AAH DESIGN AWARD WINNER

Category: Innovations in Planning and Design Research, Built and Unbuilt

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