

# Milse

Takanini, New Zealand  
Photography Jeremy Toth



Scraped together from the off-cuts of our neighbours, this site was planned as a rubbish holding room. We were required to deliver of this site a commercial production kitchen, a retail store, a dining space offering a singular intensity of experience, and a lane-front bar serving the greater precinct.

The plan bends its spaces through the room. It seeks to shape a few still eddies and deny a vantage of the whole room from any one point, tempting discovery and implying a perceptual volume that exceeds its physical constraints.

Of this volume we sought a diversity of experience through the manipulation of a singular element rather than the profusion of many. We sought a space of cave-like intensity, leavened with the fragility of a filigree screen. Most of our sweet tradition evolved out of ancient Arabia. The crystalline structure of their sugars is here folded together with the patterned delicacy of carved wooden moucharaby panels: a collective conceit for creating a world of quiet delight within a chaotic left-over geometry surrounded by service lanes and delivery trucks. Everything about that conceit is intended to support the mystery, intricacy and surprise of the dessert craft it celebrates.







The geometries of the moucharaby net were mathematically programmed with bespoke parametric systems assembled in the Grasshopper plug-in to Rhino. This enabled two key things: a free geometry that could fluidly absorb the chaos of the received envelope, and a variation of opacity via the relative dilation of its perforations. Collectively these enabled a singular element to act as wall, shutter, ceiling and light fitting at once. The universality of use coupled with the direct outputting of the panels from architect to cutting machine helped shape the entire public environment for the price of a gelato fridge.

