

Inside/outside

# The tables of Elements



A colleegetown kickoff that will serve CSU and the community with a fresh approach to dining

lements Bistro on Euclid, the new restaurant on Cleveland State University's campus, has a name drawn from the title of the mathematician Euclid's *Elements*, regarded as the most influential textbook ever written, and a play on the restaurant's university setting and its address. While restaurants can be a difficult business venture, Cleveland State president Michael Schwartz says "this restaurant is not a copy of anything, and it doesn't compete with others out there." When Schwartz joined CSU as president in 2001, he brought a vision to create a sense of community and place on campus. As a part of this vision, and as a result of a University survey for its Campus Master Plan, it was identified that Cleveland State lacked a formal, sit-down restaurant to meet student and faculty needs.



**Left:** View through the big windows let diners become part of the neighborhood's lively scene.

**Opposite:** The bistro has close ties to its environment, with the best of regional cooking.

"The University wanted a storefront presence, either retail or restaurant, in order to help create a comfort level on campus," says John Boyle III, CSU's vice president for Business Affairs and Finance. In 2004, the opportunity arose to open the restaurant in the storefront space that would be a part of CSU's \$16.5 million project, funded by university bonds, to renovate historic Howe Mansion and build the new Parker Hannifin Administration Center. Braun & Steidl Architects served as the lead designer for the Howe Mansion, administration building and Elements.

"We consider Elements to be a Cleveland restaurant that happens to be on CSU's campus," said Clare Rahm, assistant vice president for Campus Support Services. Elements will use local products when feasible, including Amish cheeses, locally produced sausages and pastas, and eventually will feature Ohio wine and beer. Culinary consultant and CSU alum-Tim McCoy of KMST Culinary Consulting assisted in the development of the restaurant concept and menu selections.

### Planning the space

The space was designed by Braun & Steidl in collaboration with Karpinski Engineering, Thorson Baker & Associates and Birchfield Jacobs Foodsystems, Inc. Acting as the general contractor was Apex Construction with electrical work provided by Ellis Brothers, mechanical work provided by Bay Mechanical and food

service equipment provided and installed by Best Equipment.

In the spring of 2007, the University hired Studio Graphique, Inc. to assist in naming the restaurant and to design a logo, exterior

signage, menus and marketing collateral. Studio Graphique wanted to reflect the four elements, wind, earth, fire and water, and CSU roughly took the concept into its menu concepts. The exterior identity sign and window graphic help draw attention to Elements.

Sculptural wood panels greet customers at the main entry, while backlit translucent panels are installed over the back bar. These both create accentuated backdrops for the res-

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Scott Pease Photography

“Elements is really spearheading community development and building a sense of neighborhood on campus.”

– Ned Hill, vice president of Economic Development at CSU



Scott Pease Photography

**Above:** The bistro evokes the elements of earth, air, wind and fire in decor and cuisine.

**Left:** Euclidian geometry includes both playful curves and straight lines.

restaurant signage. The bar front is faced with bamboo and is topped with a black quartz countertop providing richness to the space. Curved panels are suspended from the ceilings, adding to the fun atmosphere.

The Bistro’s contemporary space of

fers a main circular-shaped bar and a secondary free-standing bar which seats 15 on Italian leather stools. Sixty seats are available in the dining area. Warm, intimate spaces are created with three banquettes that offer views to the adjacent plaza and recently renovated Howe Mansion. French doors open the restaurant to an exterior patio that seats 52 during the seasonal months. However, patrons will always feel engaged to the exterior due to the expansive windows that run the entire pe-

rimeter of the restaurant.

“Elements is really spearheading community development and building a sense of neighborhood on campus,” says Ned Hill, vice president of Economic Development at CSU. “It’s the start of a village node that is growing with the renovation of Fenn Tower (See *BXM* Vol 5, issue 7), Howe Mansion and the administration center and shops at Trinity Commons (See *BXM* June 2003). They all create a triangle of convenience that is forming here with education, housing, retail, dining and access to the RTA Healthline (See *BXM* November 2004).” **BXM**



**STUDIO GRAPHIQUE** ▪ *design with direction*

Providing strategic branding and environmental graphic design for the building industry.

Studio Graphique is proud to have developed the brand identity and marketing communications for Elements Bistro on Euclid at Cleveland State University.

We wish you tremendous success!

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**Project specs:**

**Elements Bistro**

**Architects:** Braun & Steidl Architects

**Engineers:** Karpinski Engineering, Thorson Baker & Associates

**GC:** Apex Construction

**Branding:** Studio Graphique

**Mechanical:** Bay Mechanical

**Electrical:** Ellis Brothers

**Food systems:** Birchfield Jacobs Foodsystems, Inc.

**Food systems install:** Best Equipment