Located within adjoining floors of an office tower above the bustling streets of the Causeway Bay district in Hong Kong, the F22 Foto Space is a gallery and cultural hub for the exhibition and incubation of photography and design. The gallery is a less formal extension of the F11 Photography Museum, located a few minutes away in the Happy Valley neighborhood of Hong Kong. By comparison to the global scope of the F11 Museum, F22 is meant to promote young, local photographers and artists from the Hong Kong and East Asian region. The brief for the space included a flexible event and gallery space, a small bookshop, office space for curators, a climate controlled photo archive room, a social space for staff and a conference room and lounge for meetings and events. The project is an interior design for the adaptive reuse of a former night club and commercial office space.

The focal points of the design include a circular stair that connects the two floors of gallery space and a rotating entry door in the form of a camera lens. The design team worked closely with engineers to remove a large section of the existing concrete floor plate and translate camera components into structural elements. The stair features a structural balustrade that hangs from a reinforced plate in the ceiling above. The twisting bars of the balustrade create transparency through the staircase and elegantly curve inward to blend into each of the stair treads. The base of stair is inscribed with a pattern that references a camera shutter mechanism and the details and mechanical connections of the stair are also modeled on the parts of a Leica camera body. Inspired by camera aperture, the circular staircase plays with light, shadow and speed. The overall structure creates a play between transparency and opaqueness that evokes the medium of photography and creates a unique backdrop for events.

To create a cinematic entrance, the design team studied camera development and used design elements from various generations of camera lenses to design the door. The aperture in the ceiling above the door is a lighting feature that controls the amount of light at the entrance space. Like early camera bodies and lenses, the spiral stair and entry door are fabricated from brass and then painted with black. Like vintage cameras, over time the black paint will wear off, revealing the brass underneath.

Other notable features of the space include a sleek bookshop that disappears behind a display wall, display screens and lighting integrated into the ceiling coffers. An espresso bar named Café 22 offers a gathering place for informal visits and a meeting point for cultural activities. The two galleries on upper and lower levels are designed in black and white, forming a dialogue between the two floors.
Located within adjoining rooms of an office tower above the bustling streets of the Causeway Bay district in Hong Kong, the F22 Foto Space is a gallery and cultural hub for the exhibition and incubation of photography and design. The gallery is a less formal extension of the F11 Photography Museum, located a few minutes away in the Happy Valley neighborhood of Hong Kong. By comparison to the global scope of the F11 Museum, F22 is meant to promote young, local photographers and artists from the Hong Kong and East Asian region.

The project is an interior design for the adaptive reuse of a former night club and commercial office space. The focal points of the design include a circular stair that connects the two floors of the building and a rotating entry door in the form of a camera lens. The design team worked closely with engineers to remove a large section of the existing concrete floor plate and translate camera components into structural elements that hang from a ceiling plate in the stairwell. The winding bars of the stair create transparency through the staircase and elegantly curve inward to blend into each of the stair treads. The base of the stair is inscribed with a pattern that references a camera shutter mechanism and the details and mechanical connections of the stair are also modeled on the parts of a Leica camera body. Inspired by camera aperture, the circular staircase plays with light, shadow, and speed. The overall structure creates a play between transparency and opacity that evokes the medium of photography and creates a unique backdrop for events.

To create a dramatic entrance, the design team studied camera development and used design elements from various generations of camera lenses to design the door. The aperture in the ceiling above the door is a lighting feature that controls the amount of light at the entrance space. Like early camera bodies, the spiral stair and entry door are fabricated from brass and painted with black. Over time, the black paint will wear off, revealing the brass underneath.

Other notable features of the space include a sleek bookshop that disappears behind a display wall, display screens and lighting integrated into the ceiling coffers. An espresso cafe named Café 22 offers a gathering place for informal visits and a meeting point for cultural activities. The two galleries on upper and lower levels are designed in black and white, forming a dialogue between the two floors.

Design Team: Carlow Architecture & Design
LAAB Architects, Hong Kong

Structural Engineers: BeFrank and Yasuhiro Kaneda Structure

Cafe22 Designers & Fabricators: LAAB in collaboration with Hoi Chi Ng and Roy Ng

Branding and Signage Designer: Milkxhake

Contractors and Fabricators: Made in LAAB with AVT, Buddy Concept, Chi Keung Kee, Golden Smart, Linko, Profit+.