

# SURFACE

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## STAYS OF THE UNION

It's been a stellar year of boutique hotel openings in the United States. Here, we select eight standouts that showcase classic American dynamism.

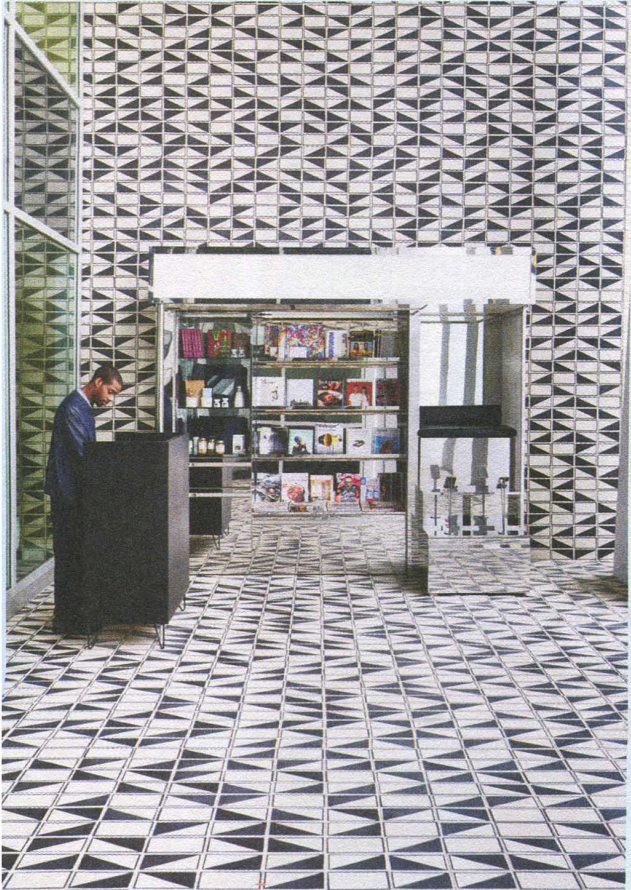






## THE DURHAM NORTH CAROLINA

For the uninitiated, Durham may recall images of airport layovers, Duke University hoops, tobacco smoke, and Kevin Costner wooing Susan Sarandon. These days, the central North Carolina city has been crawling toward relevance, specifically downtown. Real-estate developers have descended from high and low, leaving in their wake a bevy of trendy bars, offices, loft apartments, and art spaces. Banked in the middle of it all, on East Chapel Hill Street, is the 53-room Durham Hotel, which occupies the former Mutual Community Savings Bank, a building that dates back to 1969. The hotel's viscera is a bright explosion of midcentury modern designs—deep reds, yellows, and caramel tones throughout—by Los Angeles interiors outfit Commune, though a local style prevails. The rooms are appointed with custom Raleigh Denim blankets. James Beard Award winner Andrea Reusing of Chapel Hill's acclaimed Lantern helms the restaurant. Staff uniforms are made with materials produced at a Greensboro mill. But the lobby, with its black-and-white scalene triangle tiles, is the hotel's purely hypnotic piece de resistance. Its design, according to the developers, is reflective of both the historic integrity of the building and its period. In addition to that, the National Design Award-winning team looked to the Black Mountain College in nearby Asheville for inspiration. Sometimes all it takes to elevate a small town's status is a stylish hotel. *thedurham.com* —C.C.



(TOP TO BOTTOM) The Durham's exterior. The lobby and reception desk.