

# BEST of year

nonprofit

Adopt a tiny tiger for your tiny space.

Take me to your tiny home.

Admit it, you want to pet me.

For every cat who goes home, we're able to welcome another. Whether it be one life or "nine lives," when you choose to adopt, you help...

I make small spaces fun.

I fit perfectly in your walk-up.

## ra-da

Best Friends Animal Society, New York

**Raise a rafter?** Sure. But how about raising consciousness? Conceiving a Utah-based organization's first East Coast adoption center, principal Rania Alomar pictured not just a place to resettle pets but also a platform to articulate the mission of eliminating U.S. kill shelters by 2025. "The center is a sanctuary in the middle of Manhattan, referencing the temperament of the organization," Alomar explains. And winning acclaim, starting with a NYCxDesign Award prior to BoY.

Canyons between Utah's grandiose red-rock formations inspired the 3,900-square-foot facility's winding circulation path, paved with wood-patterned porcelain planks to complement the white oak on the walls and ceiling. Punctuating the trail are discovery zones: dog suites, a kitten nursery, a photo booth, and a shop selling pet collars and treats. Playrooms and consultation spaces, wrapped in sound-absorbing panels, give potential adopters one-on-one time with adoptees. Animal-specific areas remain resilient and cleanable, thanks to solid-surfacing and epoxy. Scattered across various surfaces, quirky quotations give frisky voice to the animals, while longer text conveys the organization's objectives. Orange-flagged stations, equipped with tablet computers, are strategically placed to suggest practical ways of getting involved.

LED fixtures, programmed to mimic natural light, brighten in the morning and dim at night-fall. That keeps the pets' circadian rhythm on track for the day when they find their new home. —**Mark McMenamin**

PROJECT TEAM: CATHERINE WU; SHU CAI.

RALF STRATHMANN

