 Rubin Museum of Art
NEW YORK, NY

BBB has transformed a high-end retail emporium into a contemplative environment for the Rubin Museum of Art, the largest facility devoted to Himalayan art in the Western World.

The 21st-century home of the Rubin Museum began its life as six tenement buildings that BBB renovated into a Barney's Women's Store in 1986. When Barney's vacated, BBB was re-engaged to collaborate with the Museum and a team of specialists in a major planning effort to adapt the commercial space for the display of a unique collection of art. To create the sense of intimacy that is required to appreciate the art, the galleries are isolated by surrounding wall panels. Inspired by Tibetan designs, the wall system surrounding the main stair provides key additional display space on two sides and low walls for long axial views across the gallery floors. The Tibetan motif is echoed overhead with a mandala-shaped, luminous fabric ceiling at each floor where the circular stair opening provides the center point of the square. BBB's scope of work also included building-wide security, museum-quality environmental controls, multi-use theater design, sophisticated lighting controls, café and museum store design, and the acoustic treatment of spaces.

Client  Shelley and Donald Rubin Cultural Trust
Size  64,000 SF
Completion Date  2004
Construction Cost  $21 million