This home office for a private personal investment advisor responds to the client’s brief of a discrete yet sculptural design solution for a home office by conceptually draping a dynamic surface over an orthogonal arrangement of the required home office elements including a work desk, storage units, printer, paper shredder etc.
Set within a tiny 7sqm room in the client’s Chelsea flat, the design intent was to minimize the imposing presence of the boxy storage requirements the client required by disguising them within a sinuous form that emerges from the walls of the room. As the owner desperately wanted to reduce the visual clutter of “stuff” within his work space, storage for books, filing cabinets, printer, shredder, electrical cabling, phone, internet, and lighting controls are all concealed within the volume of the construction. The space is organized around the lone window in the room, in order to provide the client with a pleasant view and ample natural daylighting. The glow of natural light from the window further serves to articulate the geometry of the installation through the play of light and shadow.

Constructed with a strict budget of 7000GBP, the fluid geometric form is articulated as a series of alternating CNC milled birch plywood ribs which are pre-fabricated into modular units and spray finished with a clear lacquer. These units are hung on a series of z-clips bolted to the interior wall, and held in place by self-weight. Horizontal spacers, which stabilize the open ends of the plywood ribs, are arranged in a pixelized graphic pattern representing a world map, where the owner (a seasoned world traveller) can map out his travels.

The project is the result of an intense collaboration between designer and fabricator. This dialogue was made possible through the exchange of 3D files not only as design deliverables, but as production and fabrication documents. The result merges the digital with the handcrafted to produce a stunning result.
ALVIN HUANG, AIA is the Founder and Design Principal of Synthesis Design + Architecture and a Tenure-track Professor at the USC School of Architecture in Los Angeles. He is an award-winning architect, designer, and educator specializing in the integrated application of material performance, emergent design technologies and digital fabrication in contemporary architectural practice. This exploration of “digital craft” is identified as the territory where the exchange between the technology of the digitally conceived and the artisanry of the handmade is explored. His wide-ranging international experience includes significant projects of all scales ranging from hi-rise towers and mixed-use developments to bespoke furnishings.