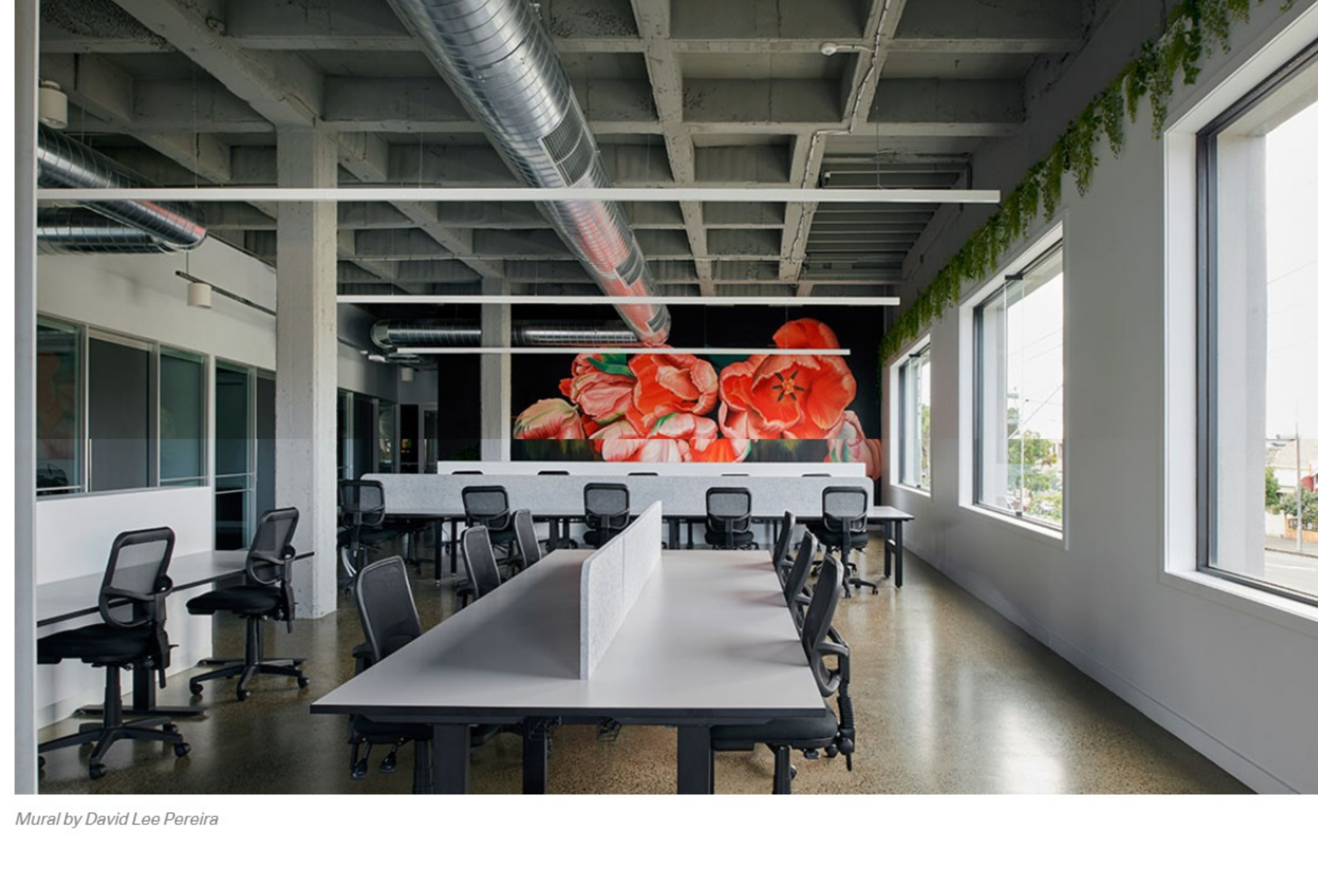


The good workplace: Our Community House

This newly opened co-working space in Melbourne provides the perfect setting for social enterprises to make an impact with their work.



Mural by David Leo Pereira

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BY PIA SINHA
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A landmark co-working space supporting social organisations – Our Community House – has recently opened its doors in North Melbourne. Interior architecture firm Studio Tate has transformed the former National Union of Workers headquarters into a thriving workspace for 60 employees. An additional 180 co-working desks are available by application for not-for-profit companies, government, philanthropic, corporate grantmakers and other enlightened businesses.

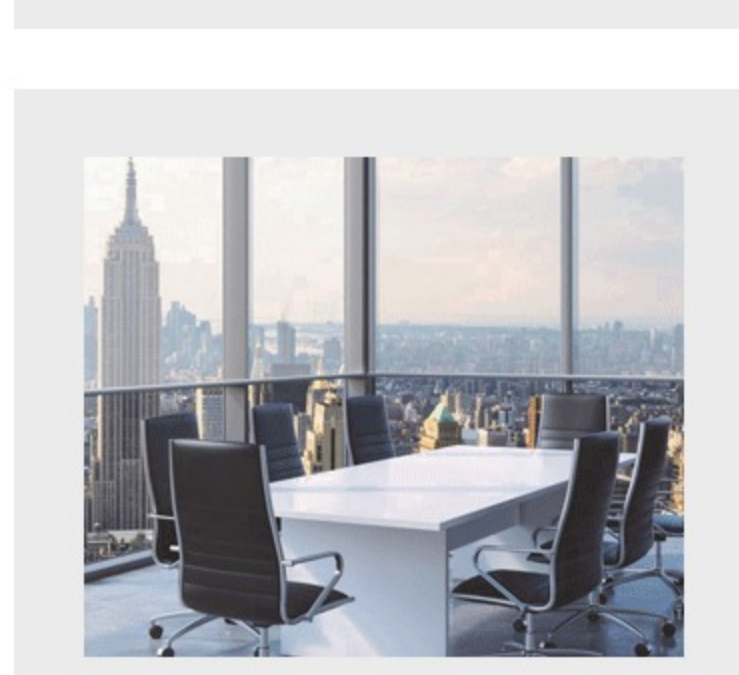
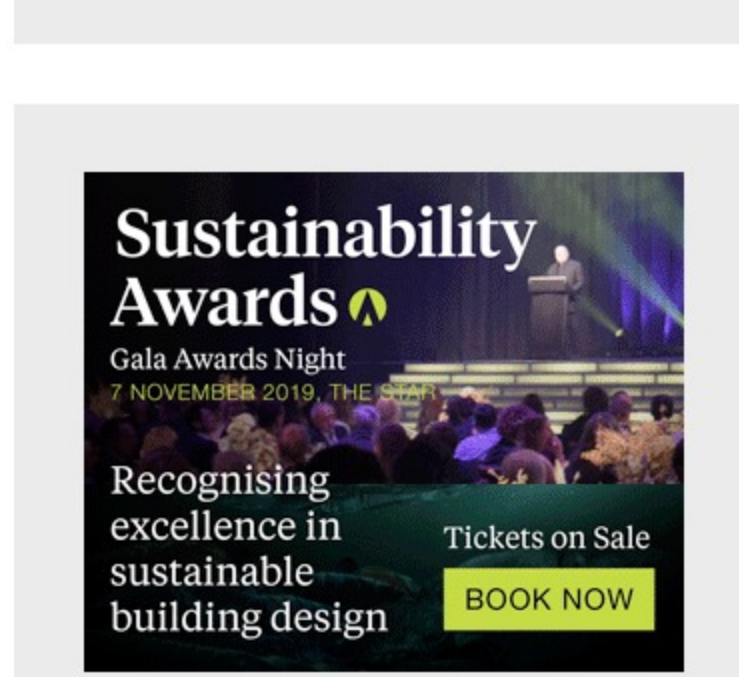
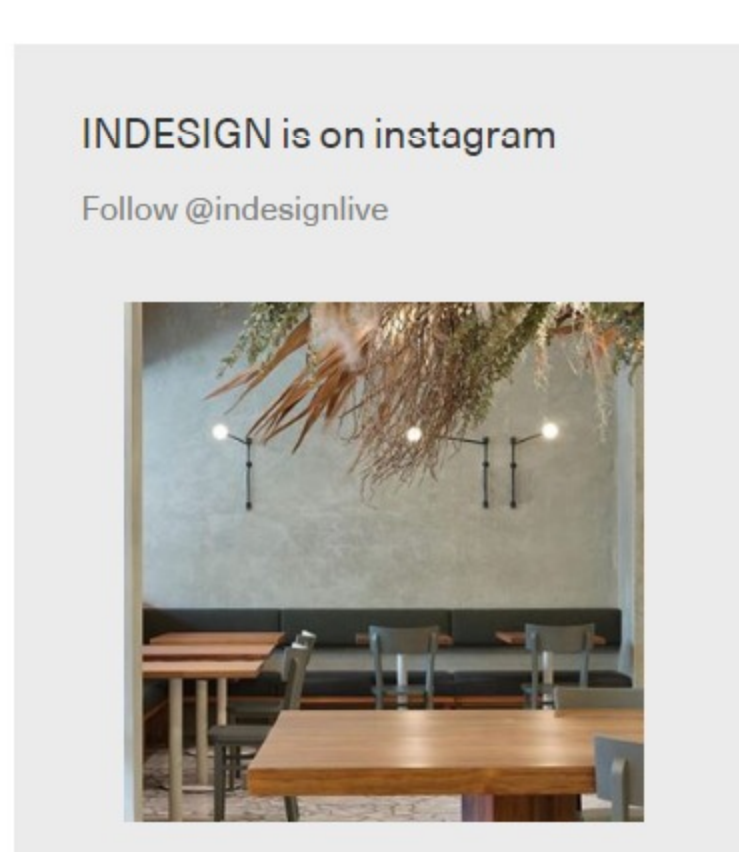
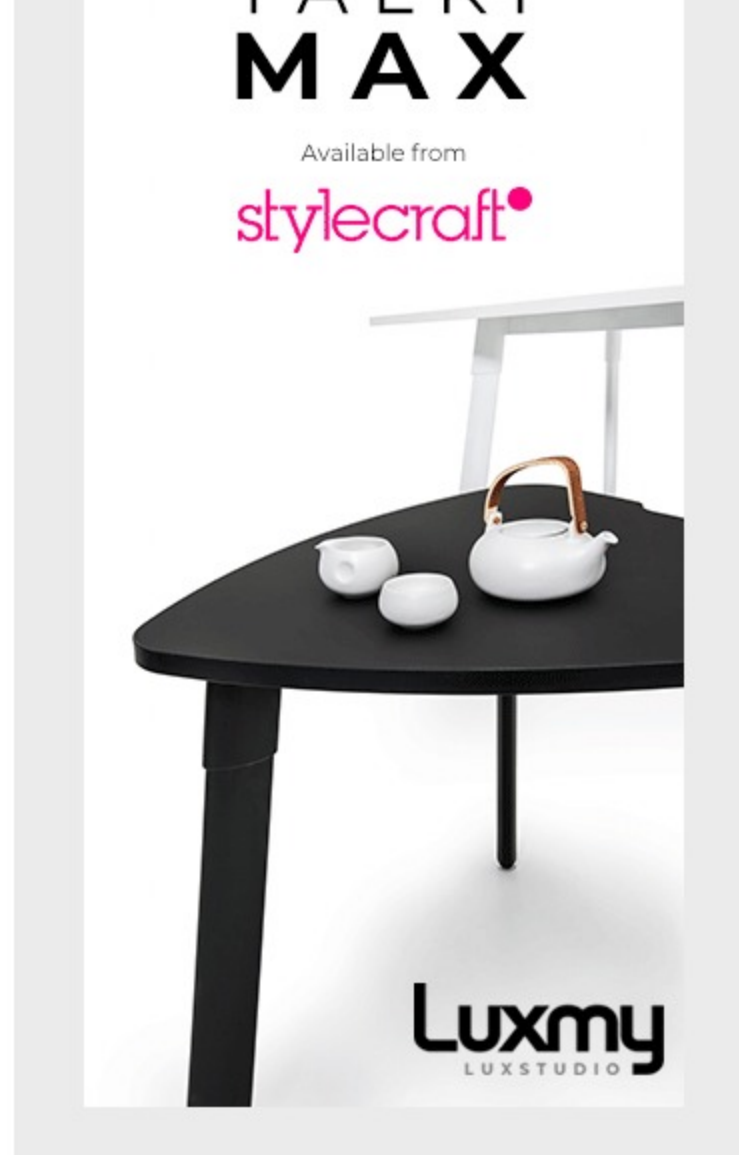
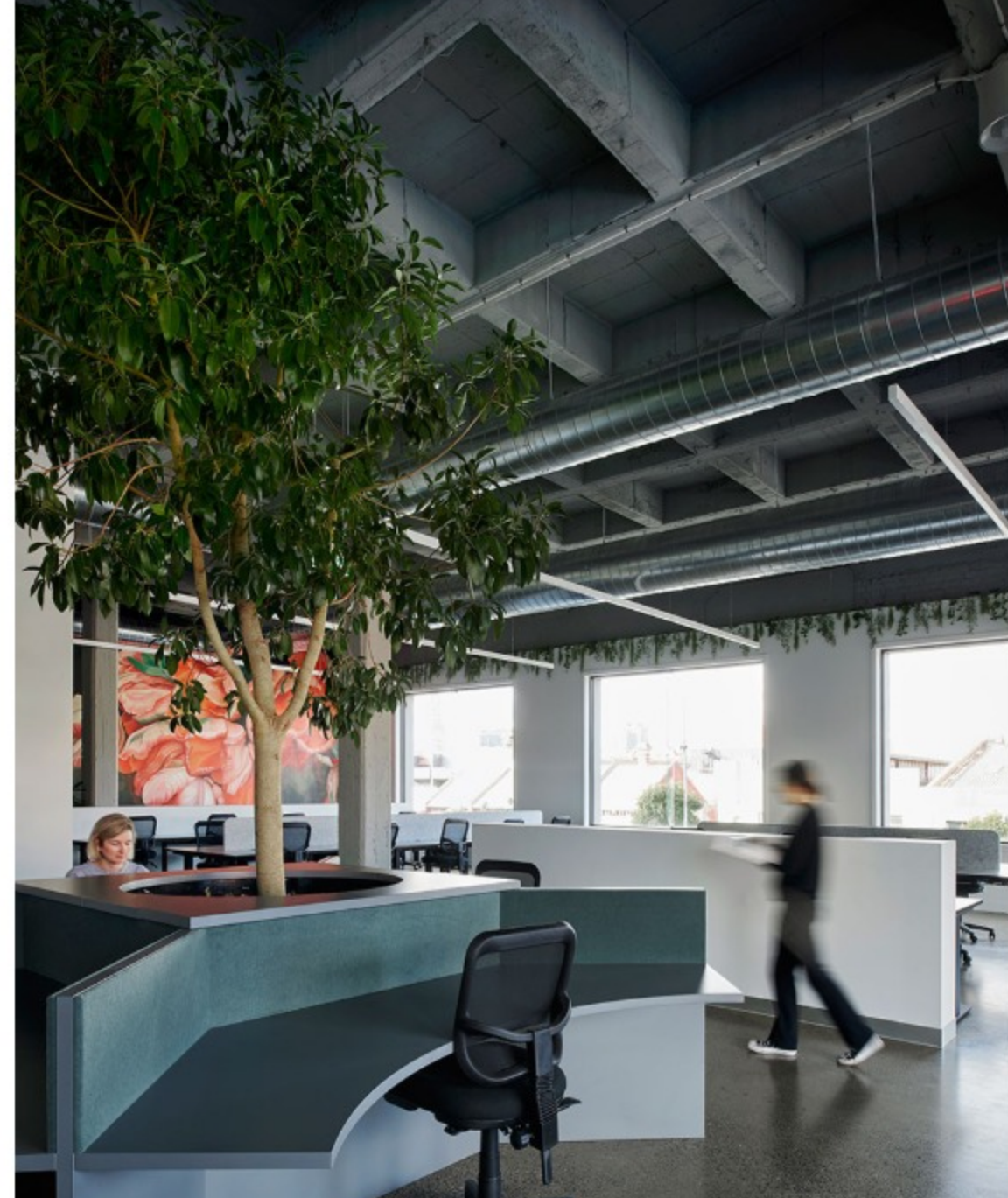


Within each of the four co-working zones in the building, there is a generous mix of private offices, open plan workstations and breakout settings, suggesting at the possibility of customising spaces depending on the tenant's requirements. "Transformation was the central theme of our design narrative," says Studio Tate principal interior designer Alex Hopkins. "We sought to create a space that provided a framework for the not-for-profit sector to evolve and grow, and drew inspiration from the transformative nature of art, colour, light and nature."

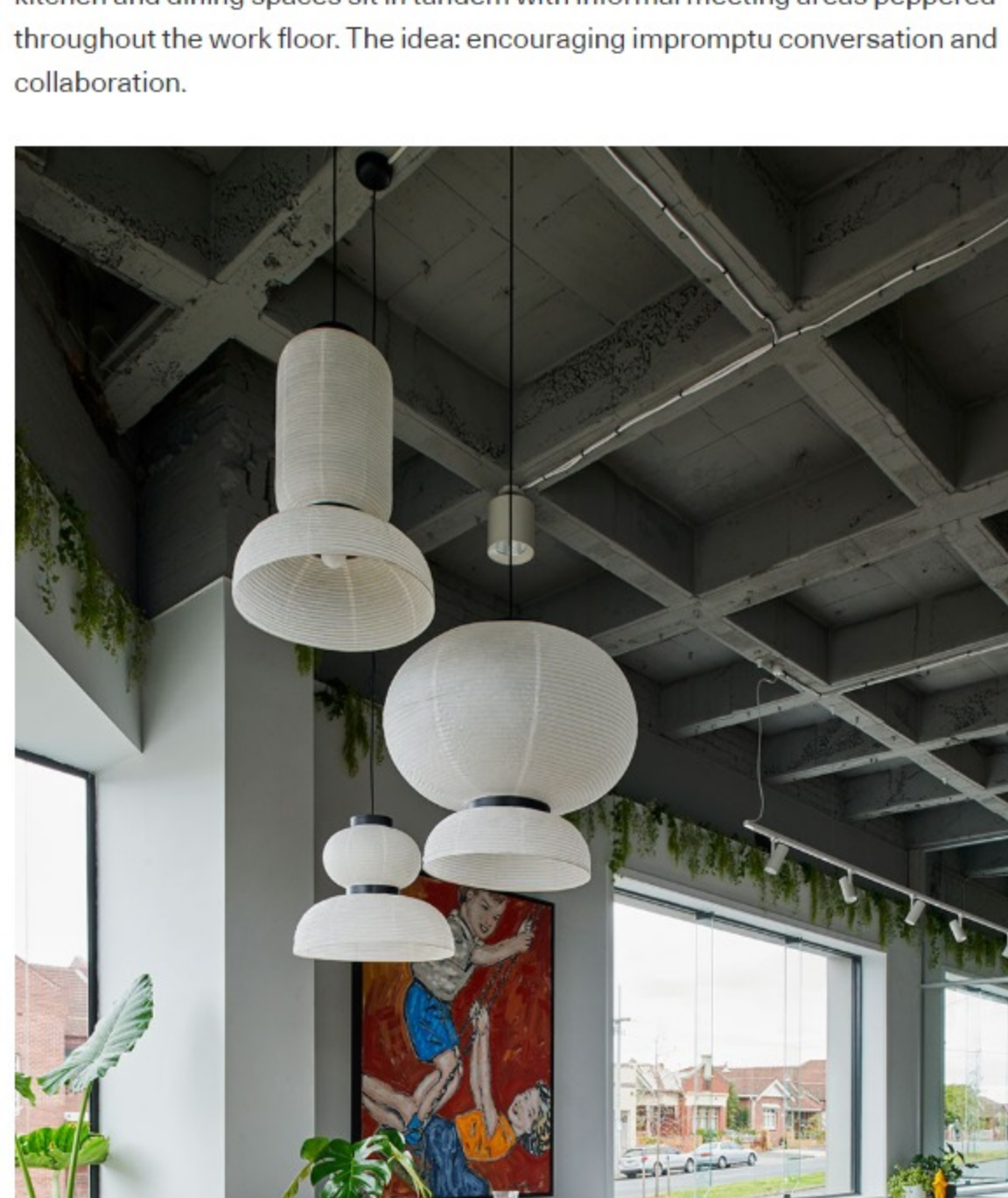


"With limited resources, not-for-profits and social start-ups often work in less than desirable conditions, so the 'house' was an opportunity to demonstrate how intelligent design can positively impact communication, productivity and wellbeing in this sector," adds Hopkins.

Our Community House is in many ways also the workplace of the future, incorporating amenities like parent and milk-expressing rooms, gender-neutral bathrooms, solar heating and cooling efficiencies, as well as waste management systems. The workspace also offers ergonomic sit-stand desks supporting a wide variety of tasks.

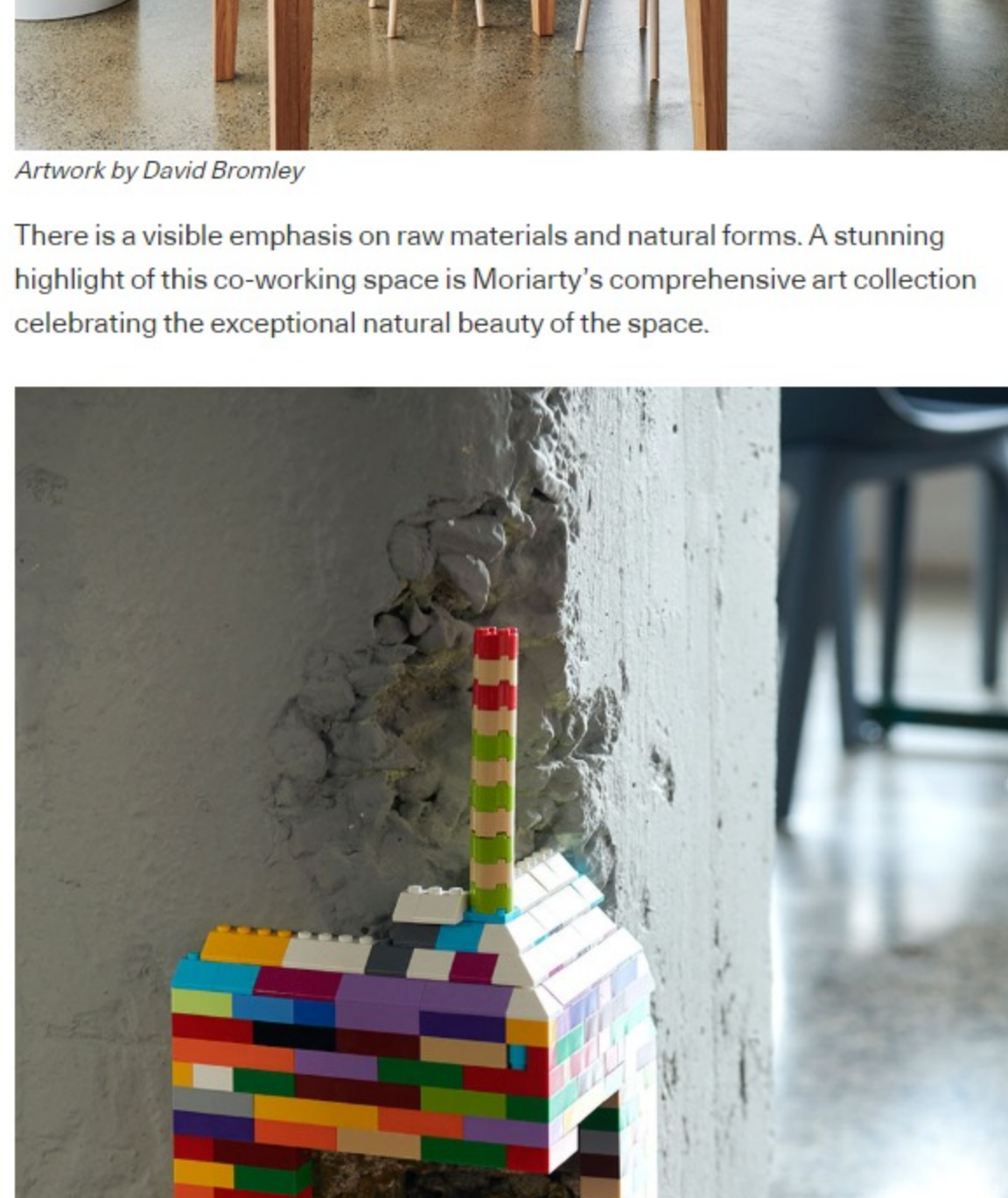


The design pays attention to employee wellbeing as well. The extensive use of indoor plants fosters biophilia creating a heightened connection with nature and the outdoors. What's more, generous breakout spaces, communal areas, kitchen and dining spaces sit in tandem with informal meeting areas peppered throughout the work floor. The idea: encouraging impromptu conversation and collaboration.



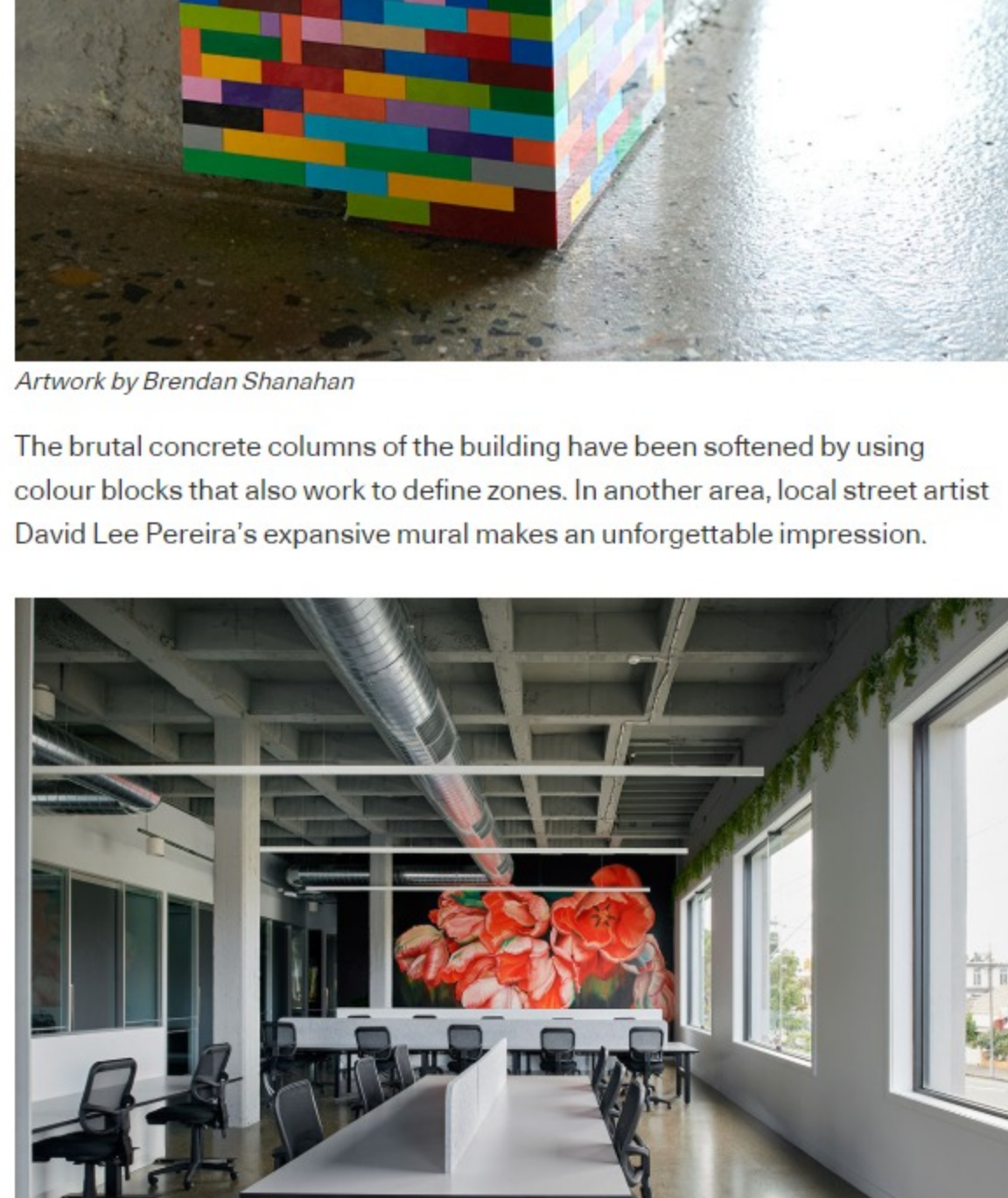
Artwork by David Bromley

There is a visible emphasis on raw materials and natural forms. A stunning highlight of this co-working space is Moriarty's comprehensive art collection celebrating the exceptional natural beauty of the space.



Artwork by Brendan Shanahan

The brutal concrete columns of the building have been softened by using colour blocks that also work to define zones. In another area, local street artist David Lee Pereira's expansive mural makes an unforgettable impression.



Mural by David Lee Pereira

Our Community House is a contemporary co-working space that does well to support community, helping social organisations put their best foot forward.

Photography by Thomas Brooke Photography.

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