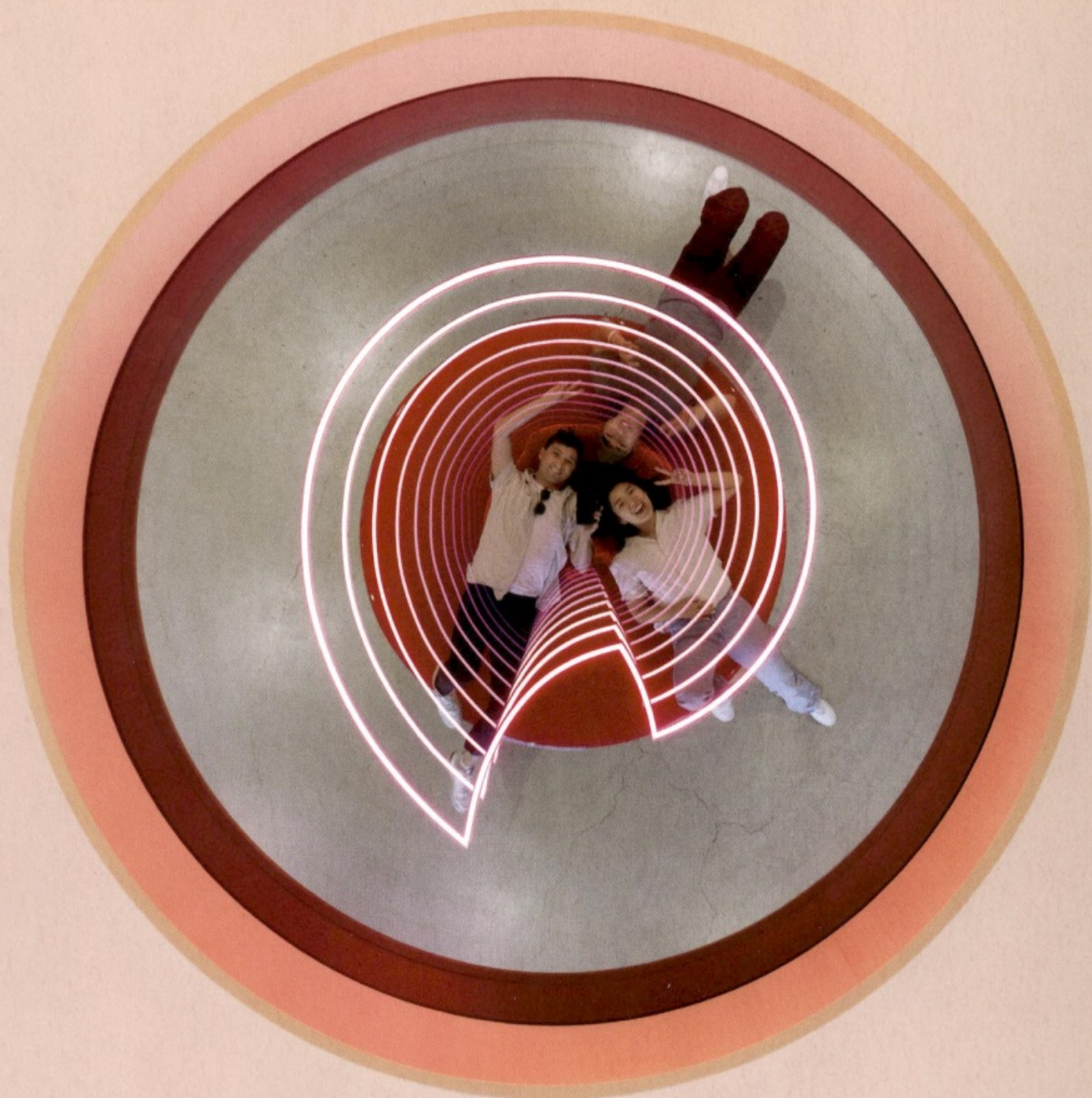


INTERIOR DESIGN[®]

APRIL
2023



giants of design: a new view

Long before the pandemic, Boston Consulting Group had embraced hybrid work, giving employees the freedom to come to the office—which total more than 100 across the globe—meet with clients at their workplaces, or complete certain tasks from home. Whichever made the most sense for the business at hand. That said, collaboration is at the heart of how the management consultancy, often referred to as BCG, operates: Staffers form teams to tackle knotty problems clients are facing and puzzle through the issues to arrive at solutions. And this sort of teamwork, BCG felt, is best carried out face-to-face.

Back in 2017, when the company tapped HOK for its new Canadian headquarters on three floors—46, 47, and 48—of a tower rising in Toronto's financial district, BCG sought an office that would be dazzling enough

to draw employees to the workplace, that would provide a variety of bespoke settings so that teams could be as productive as possible while on-site. All of which is to say that when the pandemic hit in 2020—sending companies around the world scrambling to, first, figure out how to work remotely during lockdowns and, then, how to lure employees back to the office after they'd become accustomed to doing their jobs from home—BCG was way ahead of the game. Sure, there were tweaks to HOK's concept for the 100,000-square-foot BCG project because of the pandemic—designers had to make sure workstations were 6 feet apart, for example, and they loaded up meeting rooms with video-conferencing and audiovisual equipment for staffers participating remotely—but the changes amounted to fine-tuning a good plan that was already in place. And the result is this spectacular, ultra-sophisticated space that serves as a showplace for the company and a magnet for a workforce now numbering more than 400. "On the busiest days, we're approaching pre-pandemic attendance levels," Nina Abdelmessih, BCG's chief of operations and external relations in Canada, says. "Everybody is coming in."

The plan's success started with carving out an atrium near the window wall on the two lower floors—one advantage of coming to the project while the building was under construction was that this could be done before the floor plates were in place. Working with the developer, HOK specified an opening measuring a generous 20 by 80 feet, envisioning it as the "heart of the organization," Caitlin Turner, HOK director of interiors in Canada and the project lead, notes. The ➤



Previous spread: Beyond the custom steel sconces attached to columns, city and Lake Ontario views fill the two-story atrium of Boston Consulting Group's three-level Canadian headquarters in Toronto by HOK.

Top: Visitors arrive at reception on the top floor, then descend to the atrium via a staircase backed by a hand-troweled plaster wall. **Center:** In the café, Leeway chairs by Keiji Takeuchi stand before custom moveable iron screens, while a Parlez bench by Eoos near the window overlooks the lake. **Bottom:** Paola Navone's Brass pendant fixtures suspend over Umami booths; photography: Karl Hipolito.

Opposite: Part of the café is double-height, and it's where Emilio Nanni's Spy chairs line custom oak tables and the floor tile is encaustic cement.



(as well as 10th and 45th for Healthcare and Sustainability Giants, respectively). Hand-troweled plaster adds texture to a wall near reception on the top floor. Fine oak millwork appoints the library. Touches of brass gleam throughout, from pendant fixtures over banquettes in the café to the vertical panels on a timeline of BCG's history, also near reception. HOK also commissioned Canadian artists for paintings and artisans for tables with wood or marble tops.

But serendipity also played a part: Turner tracked down a black-stained oak credenza she spotted on Instagram for use in a touch-down room, where it joins an oversize pendant fixture by Marcel Wanders and sinuous Italian armchairs. It's just a sampling of the international, contemporary aesthetic permeating this buzzing workplace—one that is clearly not cookie-cutter but has helped become something of a model for other BCG offices in the throes of relocation and renovation. 🍷

PROJECT TEAM

PAUL GOGAN; BRITTANY TOD; KRISTINA KAMENAR;
CALEB SOLOMONS; SALLY SHI; FARIBA SAJADI;
ROWENA AUYEUNG; BETHANY FOSS; DANIEL MEEKER;
HOK. RJC ENGINEERS: STRUCTURAL ENGINEER. MITCHELL
PARTNERSHIP: MECHANICAL ENGINEER. MULVEY & BANANI
LIGHTING: LIGHTING DESIGNER. MCM: CUSTOM FURNITURE
WORKSHOP.

PRODUCT SOURCES

FROM FRONT VISO: CUSTOM SCONCES (ATRIUM), CUSTOM
CEILING FIXTURES (BOARDROOM). GEIGER: WOOD CHAIRS
(CAFÉ). PENGELLY IRON WORKS: CUSTOM SCREENS. KEIL-
HAUER: BENCH. EUREKA LIGHTING: RING PENDANT FIX-
TURES. STEELCASE: BOOTHS. GERVASONI: BRASS PEN-
DANT FIXTURES. BILLIANI: GRAY CHAIRS. TRIBU: BROWN/
WHITE CHAIRS. CEMENT TILE SHOP: FLOOR TILE. MUUTO:
PENDANT FIXTURES (OFFICE AREA). STUDIO OTHER: WORK-
STATIONS. KNOLL: CHAIRS (OFFICE AREA, LIBRARY). SHAW
INDUSTRIES GROUP: CARPET TILE (OFFICE AREA, NOOK).
HERMAN MILLER: CHAIRS (DIGITAL ROOM). HALCON FUR-
NITURE: TABLES. FLOS: CEILING FIXTURES. INTERFACE:
CARPET TILE. NIENKAMPER: TABLES (TOUCH-DOWN, COFFEE
BAR). GALLOTTI&RADICE: CHAIRS (TOUCH-DOWN). POIAT:
CREDENZA. AREA ENVIRONMENTS: WALLCOVERING. FLOS:
PENDANT FIXTURE. CASALA: CHAIR (NOOK). VICCARBE:
TABLE. MOOOI: PENDANT FIXTURES (LIBRARY). DECOUSTICS:
CEILING. BUSTER & PUNCH: HARDWARE. CAPPELLINI:
CHAIRS (BOARDROOM). PRISMATIQUE: CUSTOM TABLE.
CREATIVE MATTERS: CUSTOM RUG. DAVIS FURNITURE:
BENCH. FILZFELT: PANELING (MEETING ROOM). HAWORTH:
DEMOUNTABLE WALLS. ALLIED MAKER: PENDANT FIXTURES
(COFFEE BAR). ARMET: CHAIRS. MOSAÏQUE SURFACE:
WALL TILE. THROUGHOUT STONETILE: VINYL FLOOR TILE.
BENJAMIN MOORE & CO.; SHERWIN-WILLIAMS: PAINT.

Top: Near reception, flooring is wood-look vinyl tile and the company timeline incorporates digital screens looping BCG-related videos. **Center:** Custom light fixtures drape across the ceiling in the boardroom, where the commissioned painting is by Toronto artist Kim Dorland. **Bottom:** Glass encloses much of a raised meeting room, but wool-felt paneling covers its back wall. **Opposite:** Upholstered Strike chairs, Allied Maker's Arc pendants, and Cerchio mosaic tile lend a hospitality vibe to the coffee bar.