

Kerstin Zumstein & Helen Parlon

Total Office Design

50 Contemporary Workplaces

Thames & Hudson

STECKELHÖRN 11

T 4243.2

W2

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藏书章

For my daughter Mariella, who was born in the process of writing this book, and my mother Kathleen. Special thanks go to my husband for his endless support.
Kerstin Zumstein

I would like to dedicate this book to my Mum and Dad and my fantastic friends for giving me the love and support to see it through.
Helen Parton

Page 1: S11 office by Jürgen Mayer H.
Pages 2-3: PostPanic office by Maurice Mentjens Design.
Right: Gummo office by I29.

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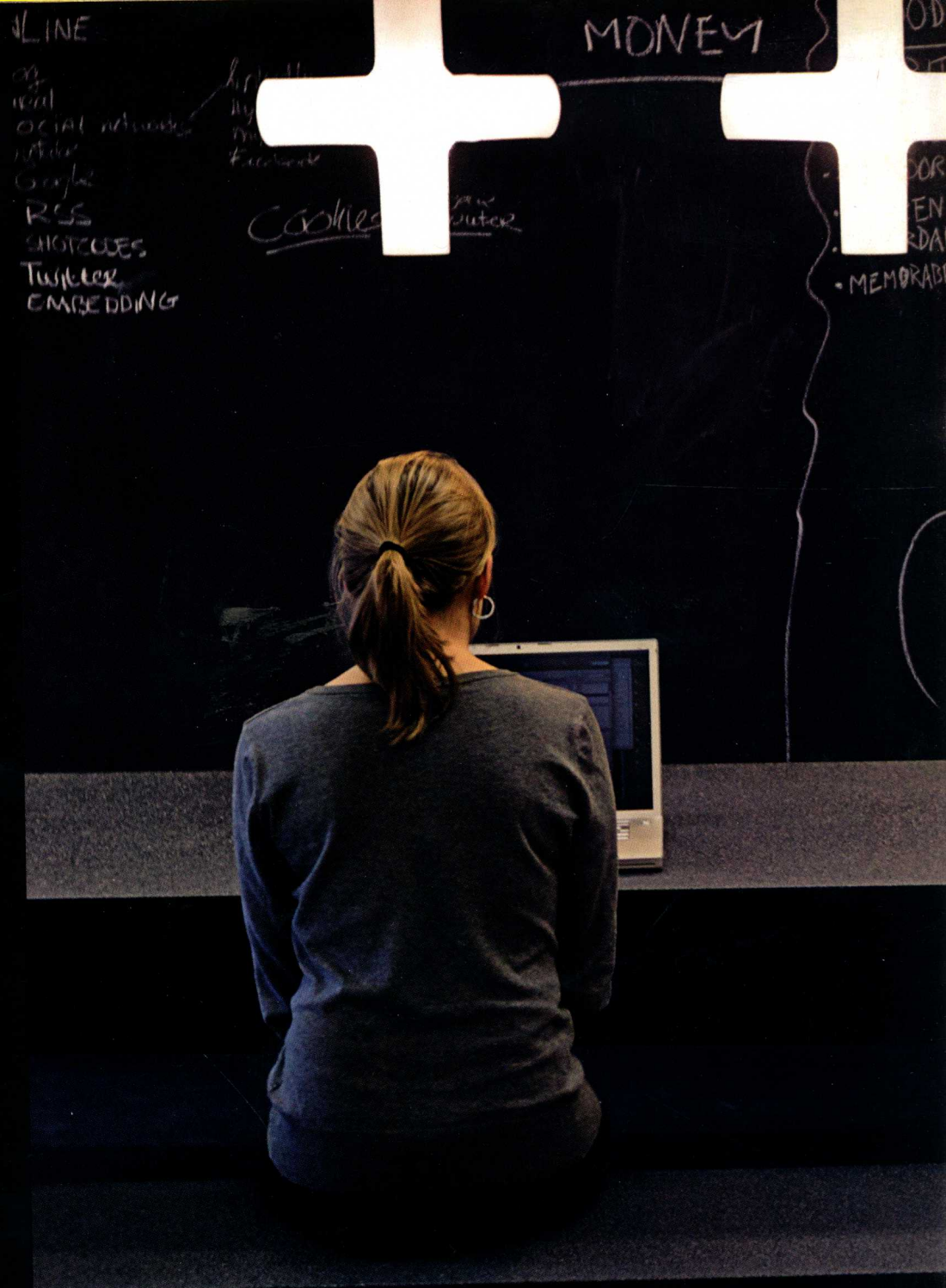
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A photograph of a modern office interior. The space features high ceilings with exposed concrete and track lighting. A tall black ladder is leaning against a wall on the left. In the foreground, there are white armchairs with red cushions. The overall aesthetic is industrial and minimalist.

TOTAL OFFICE DESIGN

50 CONTEMPORARY WORKPLACES

Kerstin Zumstein & Helen Parton



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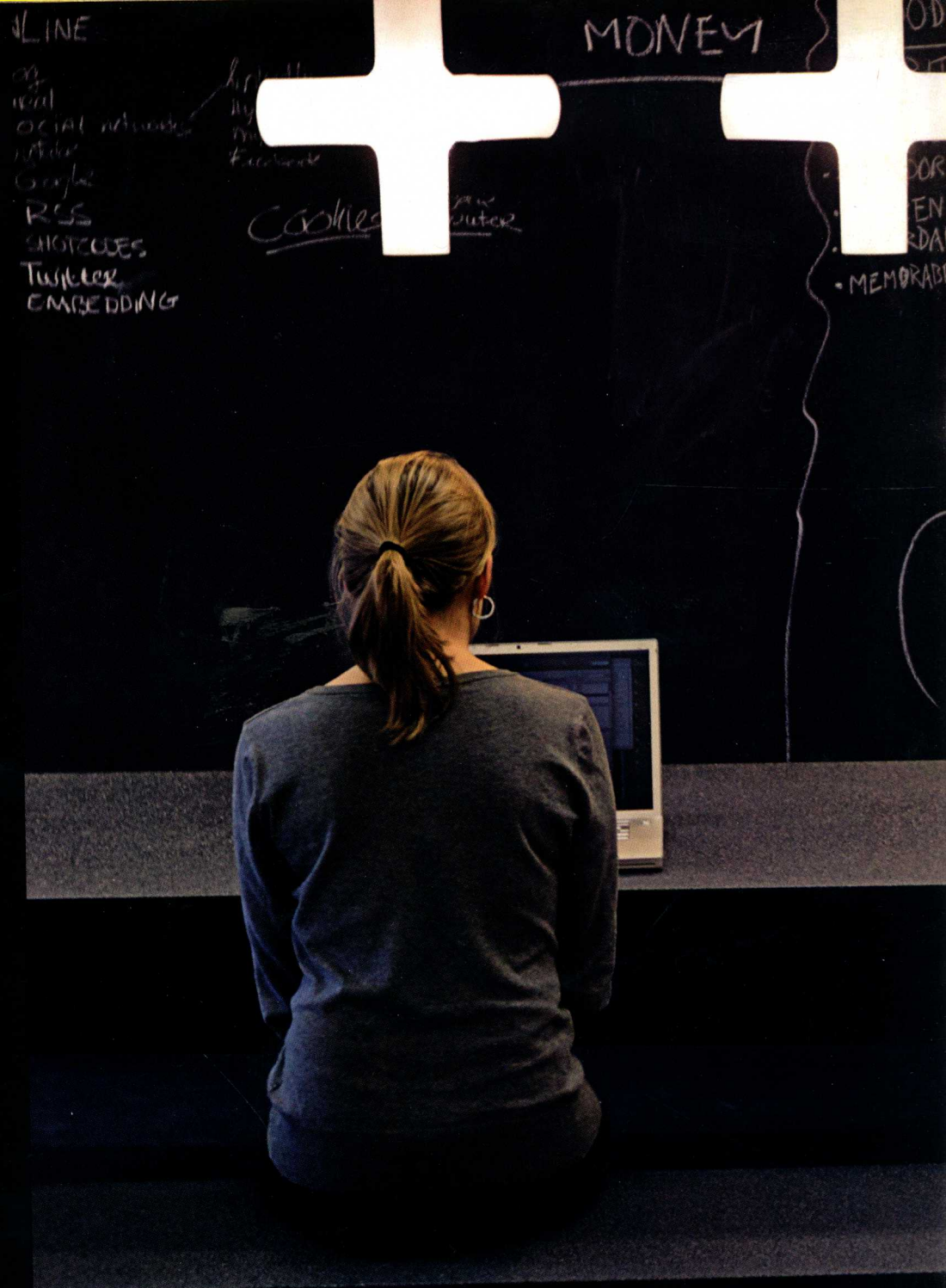
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Introduction

Architecture and, in particular, workplace design, have undergone great change since the recession struck in 2008.

A much closer check on budgets, as well as heightened levels of accountability for ecological design decisions, are shaping a new office model.

Although certain elements, such as break-out areas, sleep pods, gyms and other leisure facilities remain in some places of work, as we move forwards into the next decade of the twenty-first century, **workplace design will never fully return to that work and play concept of the 1990s.** Then, the office was treated almost as an extension of the home by introducing a domestic design language and the concept of wellbeing into the workplace.

Gone, too, is the ostentation and excess that characterized much design in the earlier part of the noughties, when expensive materials and gimmicky features became the norm of the office landscape, with scant regard for cost and long-term benefits. **Now it is no longer about how much you spend on an office fit-out, but how you spend it.**

Today's progressive office design is essentially concerned with effective resource management: a new responsibility for the modern architect. It includes managing all resources efficiently, from budgets to materials, as well as ideas. **Being ecologically aware and cost-efficient has become an integral part of good design.**

We have reached a state of effective pragmatism, where architects make sure every element of the modern office works as hard as the staff do. A reception area is not just a place to meet and greet guests, but provides a useful space for mobile workers. If directors are allocated a cellular office, this is used as another meeting room when vacant. And while hotdesking is an outmoded buzzword, the concept of **flexible working has evolved to meet the need for greater staff capacity in a decreasing floor plate.**

Considering the environment is no longer confined to token gestures, such as recycling bins or office plants. Developers, architects and end-users are more eco-conscious than ever before. While legislation has dictated this to some extent, it is every stakeholder's growing awareness of an office's carbon footprint that has really made environmentally sound measures a 'need to have' rather than a 'nice to have'.

Rainwater harvesting, biomass boilers, increased natural ventilation and natural light are becoming more commonplace, and **designers are working hard to source materials that have serious green credentials.** At the same time, developers realize the cost savings that come from a building that wastes fewer resources.

Total Office Design highlights fifty international projects chosen to demonstrate that a **contemporary cost-conscious and eco-aware approach to design need not**

stifle creativity but can function as a design catalyst.

The workplaces featured undoubtedly have the 'wow' factor now, but they also use materials and layouts that mean the interiors will be appealing in the future as well.

The book is divided into three distinct categories, which reflect the diversity of projects in terms of size and approach across a range of industries. The first section is made up of **small, low-cost offices**, up to 500 sq m (5,382 sq ft). These projects embody the spontaneity and make-do-and-mend approach that have flourished in other areas of contemporary culture, from pop-up retail outlets to the increased popularity of DIY and homecrafts. What these offices lack in budget, they more than make up for in creativity. **We may be living in austere times, but that doesn't mean we can't have fun where we work, and take a more craft-led approach.**

Paul Coudamy's work with IT firm Bearstech in Paris is a perfect example of the creativity found in these small offices. The project used wood scraps rescued from dumps and skips around the French capital to create a concave ceiling and a framework that define various interior spaces. The recycled wood gives the office a raw aesthetic, but also has a practical function as an acoustic buffer.

Keeping an open mind was crucial when it came to choosing materials for many of the featured projects. Alrik Koudenburg and Joost van Bleiswijk's design for the advertising agency Nothing in Amsterdam was intended to be temporary, so an extremely low-cost office was created from cardboard. 1,500 pieces were cut out and simply slotted together, making the office easy to transport elsewhere. Being both a recycled and recyclable material, cardboard ticked the environmentally friendly box top. The space is split into three zones: the reception area, the communal area and the workstations.

And to maximize the space, Koudenburg and Bleiswijk created an upper platform, supported by wooden beams, where the partners who run Nothing sit. The cardboard is sturdy enough to withstand around two years' wear and tear and its use reflects the aspirations of many start-ups to create strikingly innovative workplaces without significant capital outlay.

Staying in the Dutch capital for the moment, i29 interior architects have achieved a seamless look on a budget. In their design for Gummo their aim was to make an installation-like space that reflected the creative agency's personality; this was achieved through the use of a spray-painting treatment on reused furniture.

Below left: The designer Paul Coudamy used wood salvaged from Parisian skips to form a new internal structure for the Bearstech headquarters. **Below middle:** This desk, spray-painted with polyurea hot spray, is part of the furniture that defines advertising agency Gummo's office in Amsterdam. **Below right:** A demountable modular system of furniture, made from cardboard, forms the basis for the Nothing offices by Alrik Koudenburg and Joost van Bleiswijk.





Utilitarian elements can often be refashioned to become design focal points, as was the case in the offices of the non-profit organization TED, who promote new ideas in the fields of technology, entertainment and design. Here the standard steel parts of the ceiling, which distribute the services around the office, form the basis for the workplace colour scheme.

Back in Shoreditch, East London, the Klassnik Corporation used inexpensive materials such as birch-faced plywood and polished concrete. In keeping with the need for flexibility within these smaller spaces, the ground floor of this office contains modular storage units on castors; these can easily be reconfigured like a jigsaw, depending on what kind of space is required – be it a gallery, a library or even a retail space. At the heart of this scheme is a real desire to reconceive the most humble of pieces of office furniture to make this space multipurpose: filing cabinets are enveloped in a ribbon desk and a similarly bespoke approach was taken when it came to the meeting tables. The project responds to the creative staff's need for a place where they could develop ideas – something common to many of the smaller projects in the book.

Mid-range, commercial offices, 501–2,200 sq m (5,393–23,680 sq ft), often retain a more classical approach to interior design. They place some emphasis on green elements and are conceived on tight budgets. Architectural practice Rios Clementi Hale's own offices transformed an old building in Los

Angeles, and reflect the trend for non-hierarchical, open-plan working. The project's exposed timber and ductwork is a familiar sight within contemporary workplaces.

Mid-range workplaces are also determined to be anything but mediocre. In an attempt **to rise above the competition they may go for an 'office as a local landmark' approach**, such as the Austrian motor technology firm Prisma Engineering. Architects SPLITTERWERK clad the manufacturing plant in graphic tiles to create a pixellated surface that dazzles from afar. Inside, the office space is kept clean-cut with exposed concrete floors counterbalanced by large, colourful artworks on the meeting room walls. In Milan, studiometrico converted a former cinema into the headquarters of skateboarding brand 'bastard'. Here a light, deft design touch was deployed – surfaces were simply painted black, and original features, such as a marble floor and concrete pillars, retained.

At Pullpo Creative Lab in Santiago, Chile, it was again important to work sympathetically with the industrial backdrop, in this case a former salt factory, but also to create a modern workplace suitable for a twenty-first-century creative agency. In order to balance the scale of the old building, architect Hania Stambuk created a series of flexible units for working, meeting and displaying campaigns, an approach that maintains a human scale in this medium-sized office.

At Langland's offices in Windsor



in the United Kingdom, Jump Studios have used a central spine of workspaces – library space, storage and break-out areas, tea points, and the reception – to break down barriers between teams. The spine is clad in white tiles and features green upholstery, providing a bright, visual connection well suited to the scale of the space, as well as conveying a sense of cleanliness and hygiene that underpins the branding of this healthcare advertising agency.

The final category is **large-scale commercial workplaces**, which are more than 2,200 sq m (23,680 sq ft). These offices are typically those of big, blue chip firms, which require significant square footage for their employees. Although these projects have larger budgets in total, money still has to be spent efficiently. The clients are keen to acquire official green accreditation or certification for their buildings, such as LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) in the USA, or BREEAM (BRE Environmental Assessment Method) in Europe. To avoid 'silo working' – the reluctance of a large workforce to interact across departmental boundaries – **these offices encourage inter-departmental collaboration**, encouraged by the interior design of break-out spaces, corridors and even staircases.

At the University of Edinburgh, architects Bennetts Associates have used the scale of the Potterrow development, which houses the School of Informatics, to facilitate users'

interaction via dramatic 'wormhole' stairways. In London, the council headquarters for the Borough of Newham flies the flag for innovation in the public sector. Interior designers ID:SR have not only persuaded the client to move to more flexible desking solutions, but have also created a colourful, inspiring range of informal workspaces.

Large-scale projects can lead to a seismic shift in the way staff work. Microsoft's offices in Amsterdam are a shining example of the use of technology to optimize working procedures. No staff member has, or needs, a desk when each employee has a laptop and a mobile phone. Instead, staff are encouraged to work wherever they feel is most productive, whether that's a café area, work carousel or even a relaxation zone.

This book also looks at how successfully these larger projects have responded to their environments, from the home of the International Fund for Animal Welfare in an outstandingly beautiful part of Cape Cod to Vodafone's Portuguese base, skilfully integrated with Porto's iconic traditional architecture by Barbosa & Guimarães.

Especially in the current financial climate, large-scale office projects have to justify major new builds by adding value to the urban context and the immediate local environment. Unilever's new office in Hamburg has set the benchmark for the city's ongoing regeneration project HafenCity. Behnisch Architekten have, metaphorically and aesthetically,

created a ship that houses a spa, a restaurant and a shop, all of which are open to the public, with a terrace overlooking the harbour as a local focal point.

Rojkind's design for Nestlé's Latin American headquarters in Mexico is a prime example of how **creative workplace design can drive brand identity**. The clever twist of quoting the traditional architectural heritage of the region in a modern way is a visual expression of what this 'competence centre' does in terms of product innovation.

In short, *Total Office Design* is an invaluable and informative guide to workplace design in the new economy.

Opposite top: Jigsaw-puzzle-like modular furniture designed for YCN's gallery space in London.

Opposite middle: A series of intersecting arches define entrances to Nestlé's Latin American headquarters in Querétaro, Mexico. **Opposite**

bottom: Circular LED lights hang in the spacious atrium of the Unilever office in Hamburg. The project pioneered a special ETFE façade structure.



SMALL

(Up to 500 sq m)





Over the past decade, advertising agencies typically chose an office design that reflected their 'work and play' ethos: a multicoloured interior echoing the aesthetic of a kindergarten playroom. Today, however, that element of play has matured into the mantra 'reduce, reuse, recycle', as shown here by i29's design for advertising agency Gummo. Its monolithic grey fit-out stands in line with the agency's house-style colours but also ticks all the boxes regarding affordable and ecological qualities.

Given that Gummo plan to occupy the space for only two years, i29 came up with a design solution that would impact the environment and the client's wallet as little as possible by sourcing all of the required furniture second hand. Many items, from the desks to the pool table, including decorative objects such as a figure of Jesus Christ, were collected locally at markets and charity shops or bought in auctions on Marktplaats, the Dutch version of eBay. Furniture was also brought over from Gummo's previous office.

The trick was to get the interior to look and feel as good as new, despite reusing old furniture. Here, i29 were proactive and first cleaned then spray-painted every item with polyurea hot spray, a solvent-free and highly durable rubber coating. The coat covers almost any material, including wood, steel, fabrics and flooring. As a result, the space radiates a unified ambience rather than the jumbled mixture of disjointed objects that the initial collection of untreated items presented.

For i29, the inspiration came from rethinking the office fit-out as an installation of the company's personality. But the bottom line remains that the space has to function as a workplace. To guide staff through the office space, i29 painted grey squares onto the concrete floor. The shapes frame each area separately and delimit spaces such as the reception, working zone, the lounge, a mini grandstand for presentations and the canteen. The desks within this open-plan space are kept anonymous, as Gummo runs a 'clear desk' policy so that anyone can sit anywhere, simply connect their laptop and start working.

All in all, the office is a perfect example of austerity chic. The spray-paint treatment of reused furniture allows the workspace to expand or reduce very easily should the company grow, shrink or move – a prerequisite for the twenty-first-century creative office. Post-recession, this inspired yet simple approach, based on temporary occupancy and upgrading existing items, calls for more interpretations.

GUMMO OFFICE

Architect: **i29 interior architects**

Client: **Gummo**

Location: **Amsterdam,
the Netherlands**

Completed: **February 2009**

Size: **450 sq m (4,840 sq ft)**

Budget: **€30,000**