

Modern insertions
serve as **connective
tissue** at a *co-working
space* in Brooklyn

BROOKLYN — Owing to budget-induced, 19th-century design flaws, the Gowanus Canal in Brooklyn, New York, used to stink. Its water didn't even contain enough oxygen to sustain life. In a sharp turnabout, creative studios are now breathing new life into the neighbourhood.

To wit: the opening of work-share space Coworkrs, which offers 24/7 access to offices (and a kitchen stocked with

beer on tap). This is not your grandma's conventional workspace. Over three floors and 4,330 m², Coworkrs serves sundry creatives, not-for-profits and tech start-ups with radically diverse needs.

To offset the variance of private offices, Dumbo-based Leeser Architecture designed, among other things, robust communal space. Quite dramatically, Leeser dovetailed the historical timber,

concrete and brick factory with modern insertions — most notably an origami-like metal stairwell enclosure — that serve as 'connective tissue' for both the building and the community inside. The other unifying element is colour, which is used to signify 'object, motion and stasis': Yves Klein blue for the sculptural stair enclosure, teal for its interior and circulation, and glacial blue for lounges and other rest areas.

'The trend towards co-working spaces is only the beginning of an evolving hybridization of work and living spaces,' says Thomas Leeser. 'In the future, our workspaces will include residential components, micro-farming, childcare and education, as well as a growing maker industry spurred on by the 3D-printing revolution.' — SM
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