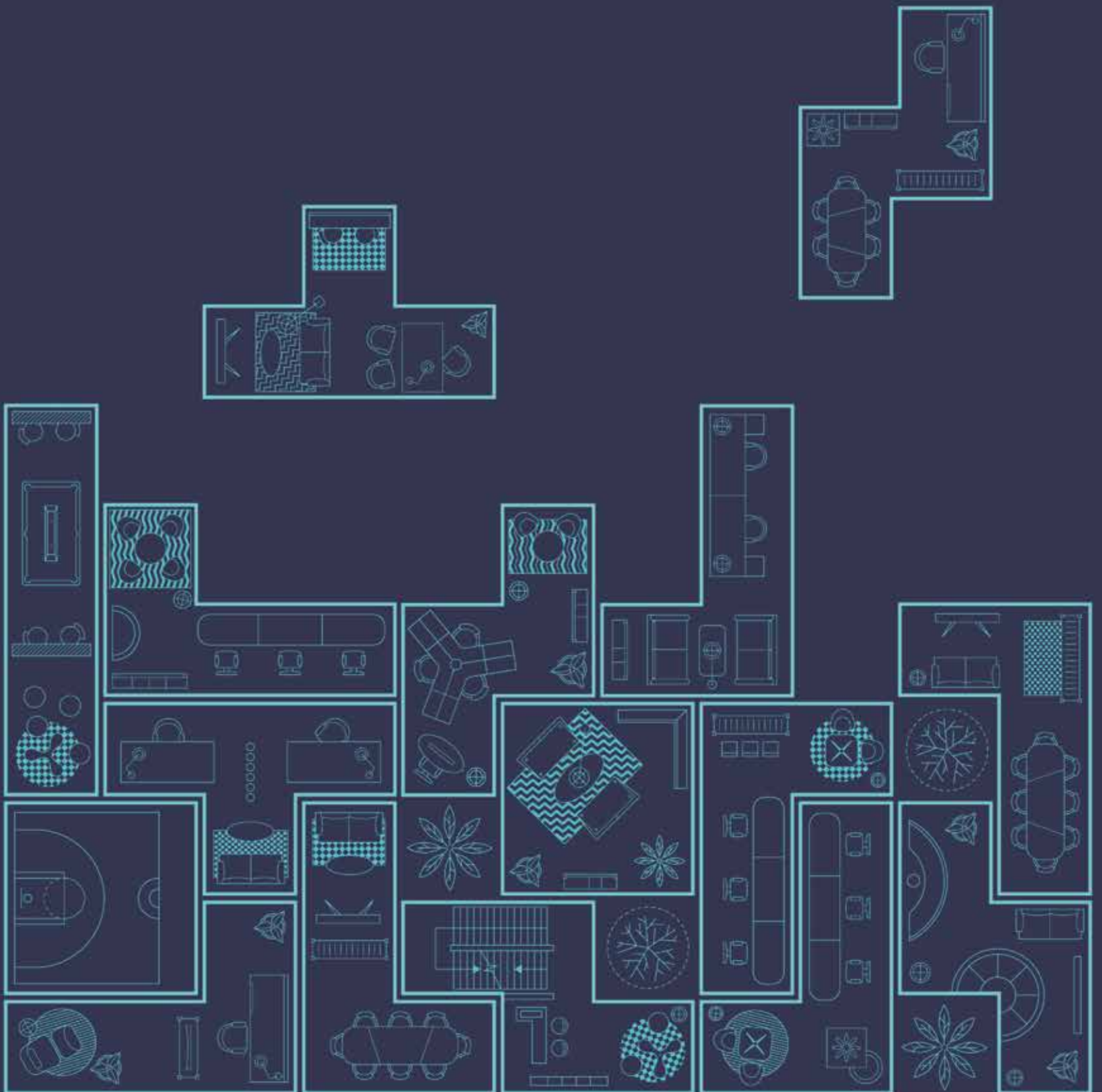


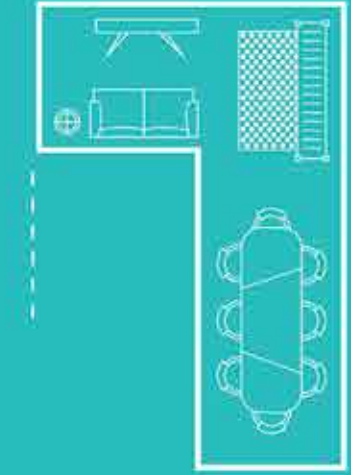
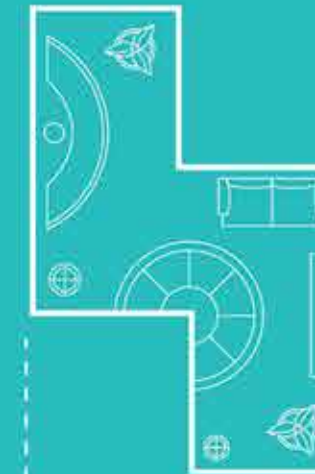
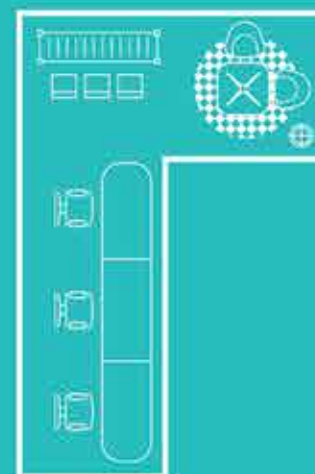
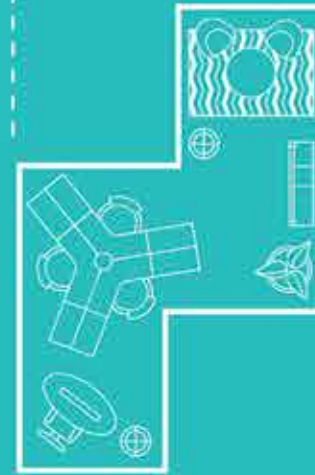
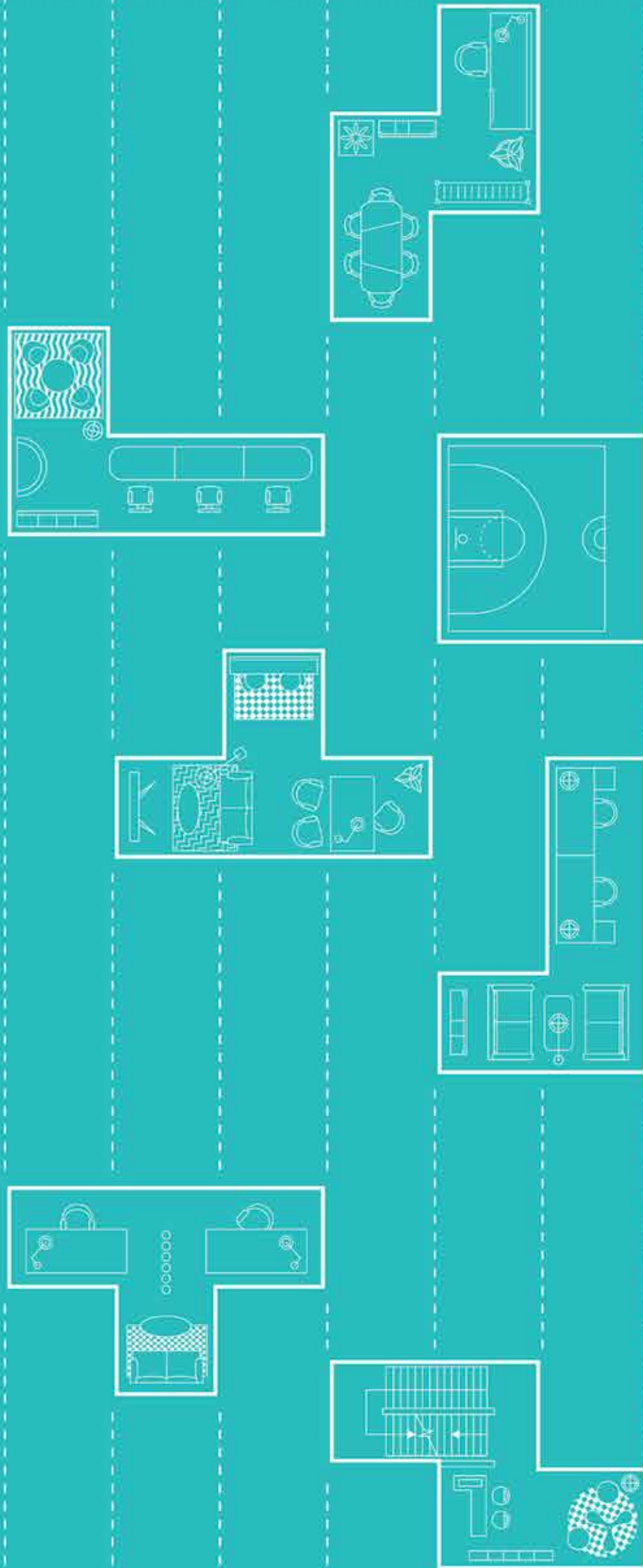
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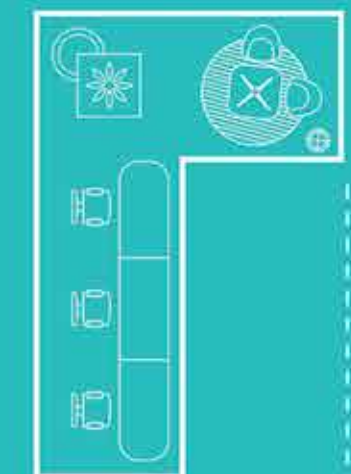
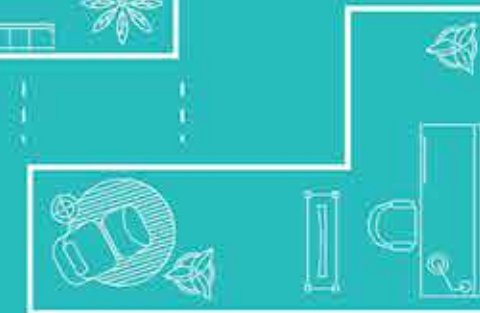




# WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENTS

We devote endless hours to being hunched over paperwork, computer screens or our chosen medium of livelihood. The average adult is said to spend at least a third of his/her 24-hour-day working or in work-related activities. Many put in much more time than that too. The workplace thus becomes our second home, spending more awake-hours there than anywhere else. A growing acknowledgment of the workplace playing a critical role in our lives has led to a distinguished design approach in this realm. Today, design of the office space is trending towards a changing dynamic of the workforce and its mindset. These environments address the physiological as well as the psychological sensitivities of their inhabitants, encouraging not only efficiency but also a motivated proficiency of work.

While some organisations address an unyielding structure of hierarchy that is representative of maturity and stability, others cater to an open culture of interaction and collaboration. While some prefer the seriousness of a monotone palette, others break into motley of colours. The design language is evolving to create a balance between ergonomics, visual comfort, as well as a sense of individual and community identity. And light is increasingly becoming the chosen tool to articulate this design and its altering subtleties. The following are projects which illustrate that it is not enough to offer a desk and chair, but presenting an environment that is stimulating, energizing and invigorating can transform the mundane task to an exhilarating experience.





Pic: Vitus Lau / M Moser

## EXPLORING ENGAGEMENT

*International furniture giant, Steelcase sets the bar for collaborative office settings, as M Moser Associates design a white canvas to illustrate their philosophy of engagement, as well as showcase their vibrant collection.*

When the client is a creative engine driven by innovation, the architect is a leading design practice that has carved its name in the global community, and the lighting consultant is an expert in the highly specialized field, one can not and should not expect anything less than a meticulously envisioned space, tactfully detailed and strategically rendered. Such is the case of the swanking new WorkLife Centre for Steelcase in Gurugram, designed by M Moser Associates and illuminated by vis a vis. Michael Held, Director of Design for Steelcase describes WorkLife Centres as, “not mere showrooms, nor are they just offices. They are spaces for customers to experience our brand as well as for our

employees to live the brand. We aspire to create distinct interior elements that make tension in scale, form, and surface, but maintain a coherent logic.” Thus, it is a functioning corporate office, but is as importantly a showcase of the multitude of furniture by Steelcase. Playing the dual role, it becomes imperative for the space to be designed in a manner that caters to the employees that inhabit it on a daily basis, and do justice to the experience offered to visiting clients and customers. Steelcase hosts many such WorkLife environments world over, mostly located in premium localities within luxurious buildings that carry at least a LEED Gold compliance. Moreover, having established

multifarious such centres, the company has benchmarked certain parameters to work within that outline the overall look and feel of the space.

Having recently completed a WorkLife centre in Mumbai, which was designed by the in-house team, working on the Gurugram centre with M Moser was a different experience. For the architect, the challenge lay in conforming to a larger global view of the brand, yet reflecting back to a local context.

Responding to the rigid guidelines of a work and display environment that focuses on showcasing the furniture, M Moser experimented with a staid palette and stirring accents. Albeit decorous at first



Pic: Kapill Kamra

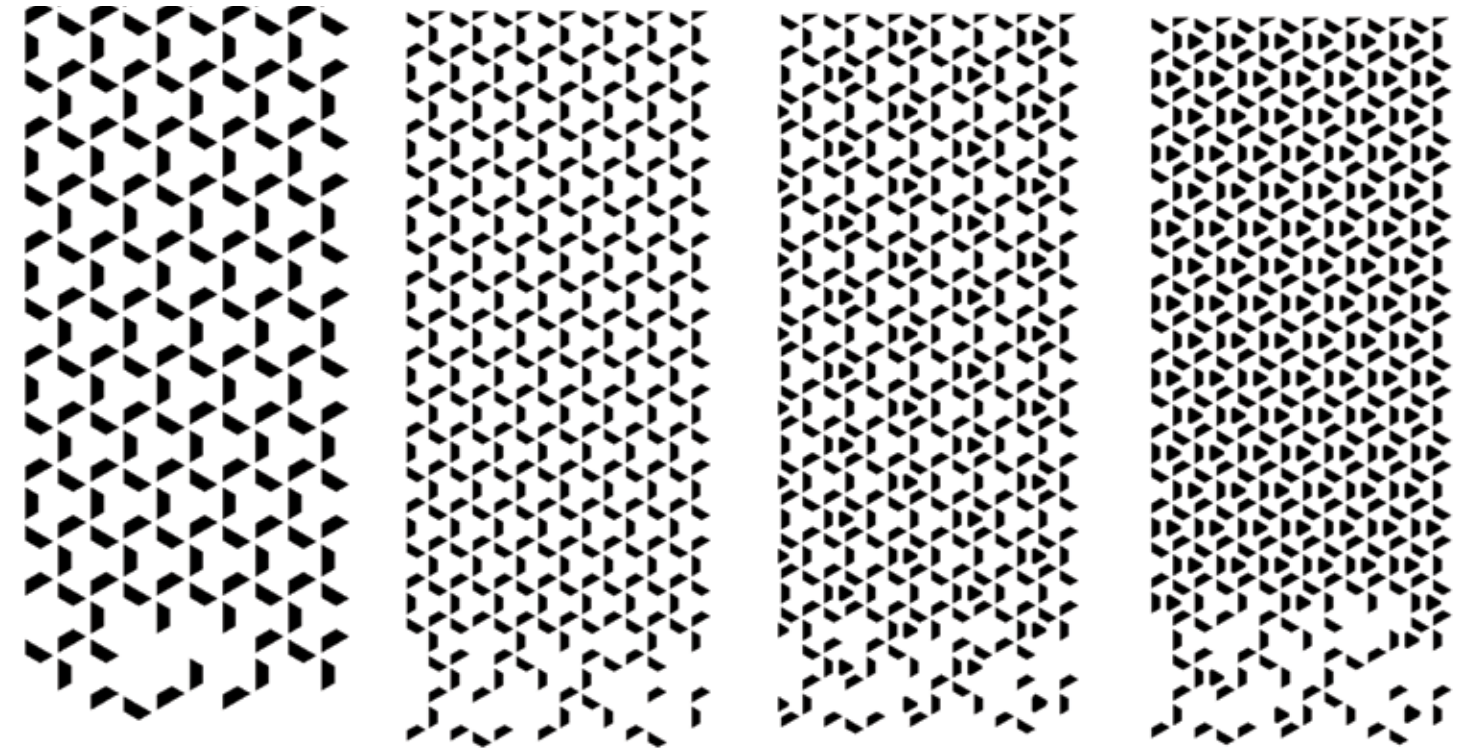


Pic: Kapill Kamra

glance, this simplicity was borne of a complex journey of ideation. The long, linear volume went through multiple iterations of vibrant pigments before being bathed in the predominant monochromatic hues of white. The blanched canvas was the perfect backdrop for the vivacious furniture to be displayed. "In this project, furniture was the king," exclaims Subhashish Mandal of M Moser. "We had to create a setting that would respond to the extremely controlled environment, so we used architectural features to create accents in the otherwise austere space, and subtly introduce Indian elements." While polished white Satvario marble

drapes across the office, a tessellated pattern reminiscent of a jali can be seen incorporated in various forms. The design was derived from an in-depth analysis and evolution, and pointedly translated to varying elements such as carpets, wall graphics, cut outs in the glass film, as well as physical partitions. "It became a larger aesthetic of the graphic language, resulting in a minimal, simplistic and contemporary pattern," says Mandal. Perforated screens are placed intermittently before the large glazed edge that flanks one length of the office volume. After rigorous time lapse studies, the density and intensity of these jalis were determined to facilitate

desired light effects in the space. While roll-down blinds soften direct daylight from the open façade, the partitions create fascinating patterns across the floor, cutting the influx of direct light and adding a layer to the designed intent. "I particularly like the interplay of daylight and shadows that the Jalis produce. It is wonderful to see the light and shadows wander across the floor and furniture throughout the day," exclaims Held. The workstations, bathed in natural light require little assistance from added light sources. An array of tracks that run across the width of the hall are fitted with ERCO Optec Floodlights that are aimed to create



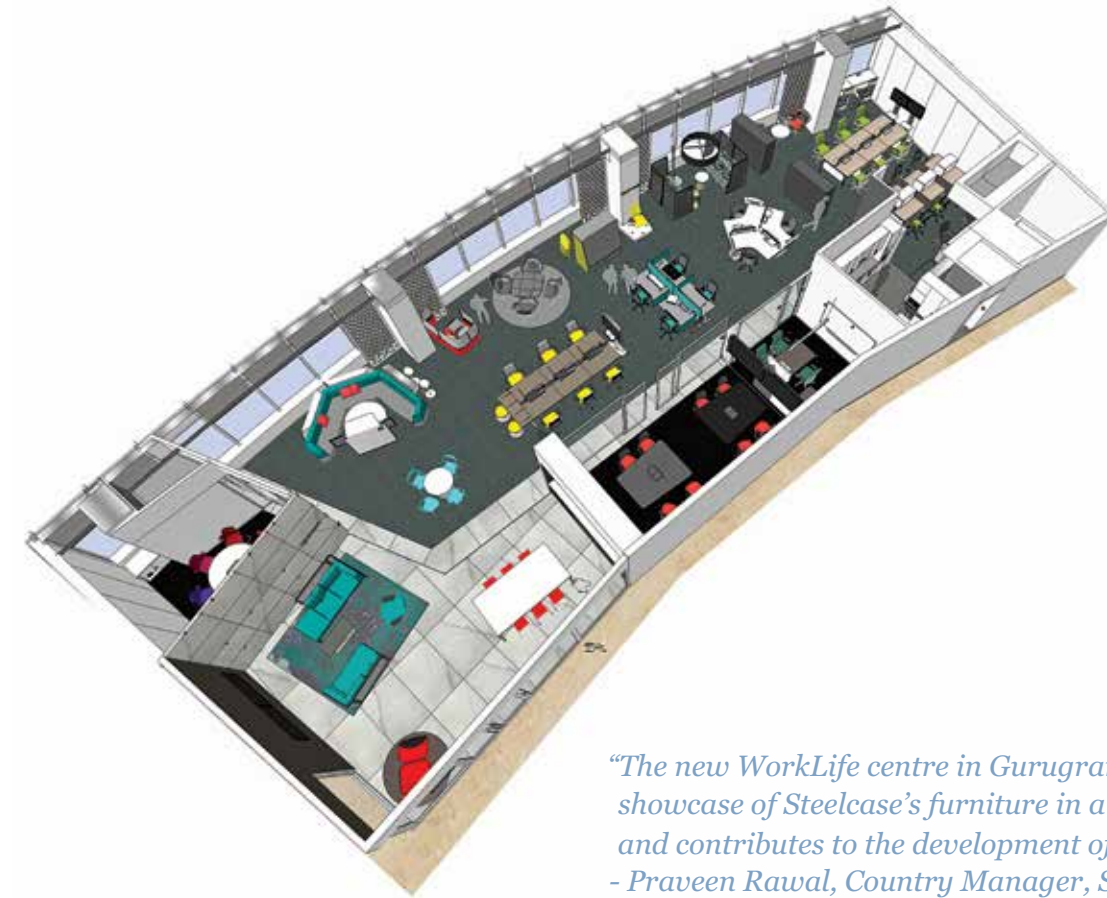
Pic: Vitus Lau / M Moser

*"The international aesthetics and an in depth understanding of Steelcase gets interpreted in an interesting Indian way."*  
- Subhashish Mandal, M Moser

focus on points of interest - worktops, table surfaces and huddle settings of furniture. Each of these luminaires can be fitted with varying lenses to control their beam output - wide flood, oval flood, spot beam, and even wall wash. Thus, achieving desired effects on the furniture settings as well as additional accentuation on individual pieces that are required to be highlighted, creating a hierarchy in visual perception. Given that the WorkLife is required to showcase rotating collections of their furniture, vis a vis kept the lighting scheme flexible to adapt to changing settings. The meeting rooms on the other hand are illuminated with Uniline TRT from Deltalight, that are linear asymmetric



Pic: Vitus Lau / M Moser



*“The new WorkLife centre in Gurugram is a truly unique showcase of Steelcase’s furniture in a manner that attributes and contributes to the development of collaborative spaces.”*  
- Praveen Rawal, Country Manager, Steelcase



Pic: Vitus Lau / M Moser

profiles recessed in the ceiling and strategically directed towards the speakers, away from the large TV screens. This ensures vertical illumination of their faces minimizing shadows, and facilitates an environment conducive to video conferencing. Even the Phone Booth and Mediascape rooms follow similar principals, wherein light is directed onto the people and away from the cameras. The rotund Supernova by Deltalight sits in perfect reflection of the table beneath, tilted to accurately illuminate participating personnel. “In spaces with lots of screens and tele-presence like in our Teamstudio, it was important to make people look good on camera, without dark shadows under their eyes, and allow them to easily collaborate with remote locations,” adds Held. The far end of the office that accommodates the accounts section is but ignored. Acknowledged as an equally important part of the organisation, their workstations are lit with Optec Floodlights from ERCO with oval distribution mounted on tracks. The pantry on the other hand caters to a more casual and laid-back environment, accepting of four Boxy downlights from Deltalight fixed to the ceiling to give ambient light, and a striking Toldbod 155 Suspension from Louis Poulsen

that casts a warm glow in the volume. As the day dims, the lighting effects become more dramatic. The uniformity in light gives way to accents and highlights. While the architectural lighting takes care of the general ambience, the mood is set with a series of decorative lamps that are prudently placed to draw the eye. A Kundalini Treis hunches over a table setting celebrating a break out space, while a sumptuous red chair seated near the entrance corner is attended to by the delicate Bolshoi Theatre pendant form Lasvit. The deliberate juxtaposition of contemporary furniture with a stylized fixture that reflects flavours of the native land is what gives this particular WorkLife Centre another layer of warmth, an air of romance, but most particularly, a distinct edge.

“We worked for a long time to get the minimal aesthetics right,” says Mandal about the interiors. “Even the textured grey carpet was a methodical and measured decision, wanting to inject the neutral shell with levels of interest. This can also be seen in the selected colour and surface of the accent walls. The open office remains nebulous, and ready for recurrent change.”  
[www.mmoser.com](http://www.mmoser.com)  
[www.visavisindia.com](http://www.visavisindia.com)

#### PROJECT DETAILS

**Steelcase WorkLife Centre, Gurugram**  
Client: Steelcase  
Architect: M Moser Associates  
Project Team: Subhashish Mandal, Vijay Iyer, Supratim Sengupta, Neha Bhalla, Sukhpreet Singh  
Lighting Design: vis a vis

#### LIGHTING SPECIFIED

Aldabra: Zen Asymmetric, 16W  
Deltalight: UNI TRT Profile  
ERCO: Optec Flood Light, 12W  
ERCO: Compact Downlight, 8W Oval Flood  
ERCO: Compact Lens Wallwasher, 8W  
ERCO: Optec Lens Wallwasher, 12W  
Fagerhult: Open Box, 56W Up-Down  
Kundalini: Treis Suspension, 12W  
Lasvit: Bolshoi Theatre Suspension, 18W  
Louis Poulsen: Toldbod 155 Suspension  
Philips: Cirrus  
Lighting Supplier: vis a vis India Pvt. Ltd.