DESIGN EXCHANGE

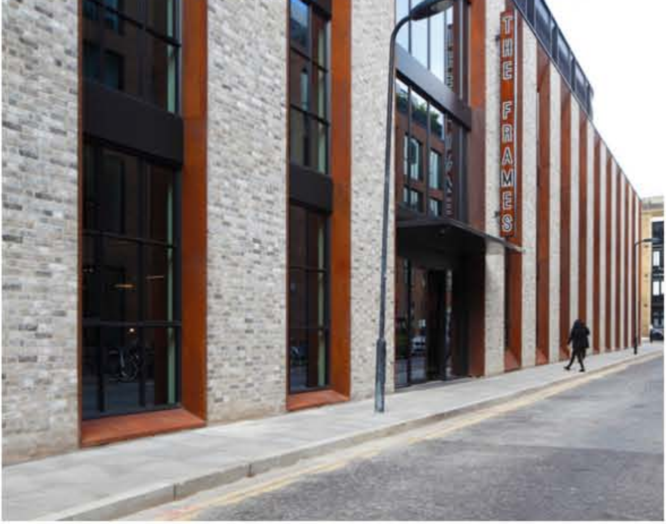
A GLOBAL NETWORK DEVOTED TO THE EXCHANGING OF IDEAS

The Frames, Shoreditch

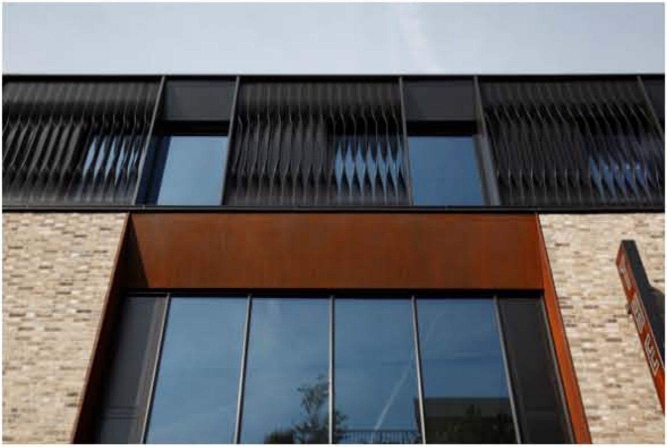
Architecture, Featured, Interiors, News, Thursday 13 Dec, 2018

Pin 5 G+ Share 17 Email 0 Share 5 Tweet 3
Share 4

The Frames is a bespoke development tailored to small and creative businesses in Shoreditch by architects Squire and Partners . The five-storey building is one of the 64 London properties owned by the workspace group, creating 80,000 sq. ft. of flexible workspace for London's new and growing companies, providing office and studio units to suit a variety of users, along with shared meeting rooms, break-out areas, tea points, cycle storage, shower facilities and a café.

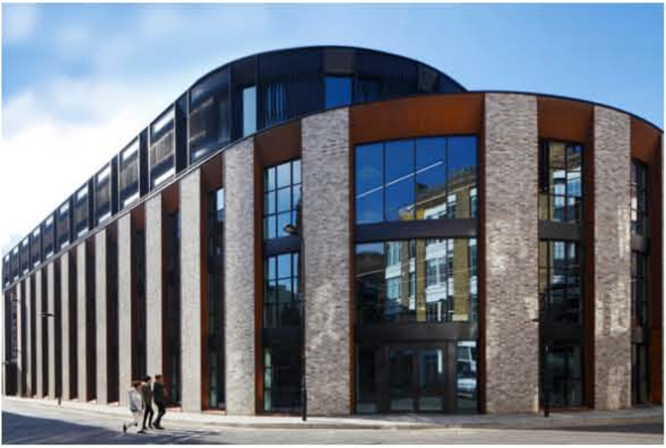


©James Balston



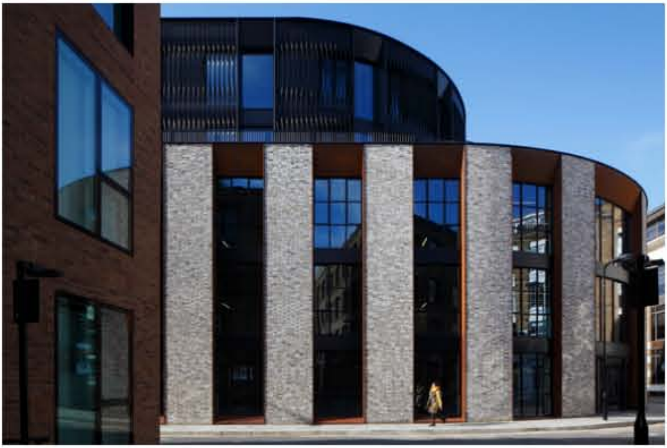
©James Balston

Influenced by the characteristic warehouse vernacular of the surrounding South Shoreditch Conservation Area, the building envelope employs a palette of brick, metal and glass. Following the curved line of Phipp Street with a series of brick columns punctuated by corten-clad window reveals, the design emphasises the vertical proportions of the structure.



©James Balston

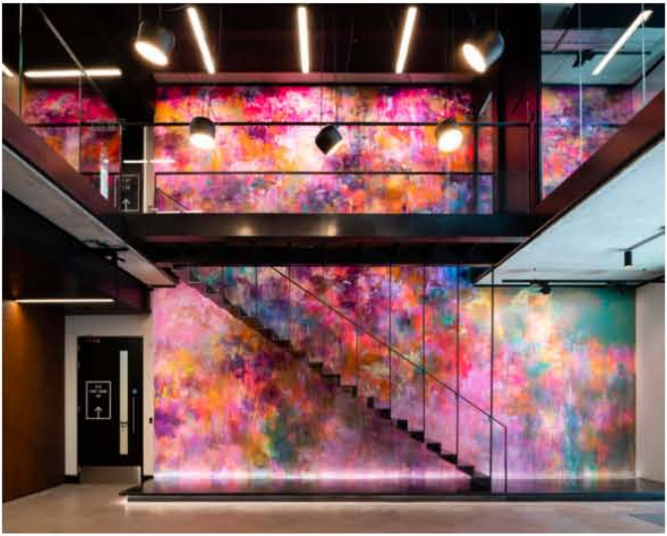
The top two floors of the building are set back and feature twisted dark grey perforated aluminium fins, which reference the historical textile manufacturing history of the neighbourhood and provide solar shading.



©James Balston

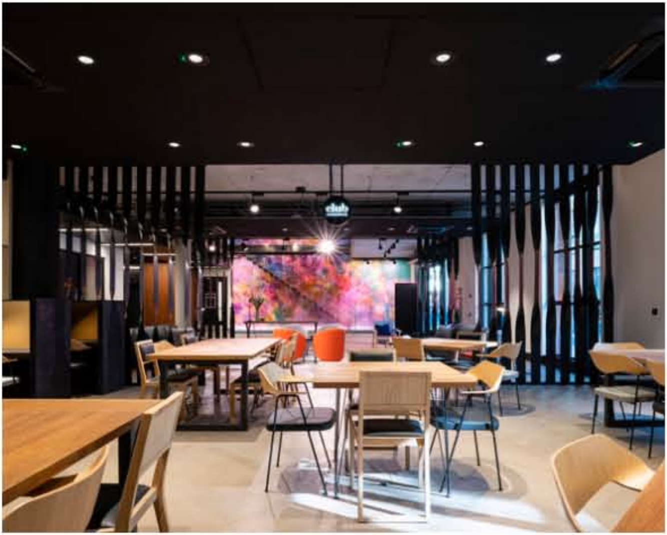
©James Balston

A language of raw materials and finishes continues inside the building, with polished concrete floors, exposed soffits, corten-clad lift cores and a striking folded steel staircase. An art installation in the reception area by renowned artist Mr. Jago creates a unique double-height mural.



©Jim Stephenson 2018

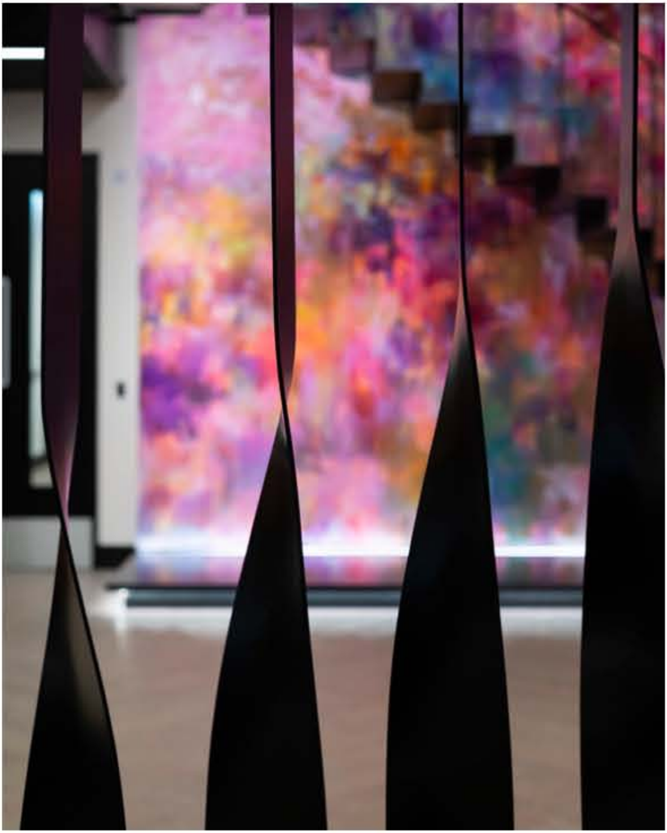
Interiors at The Frames were designed to create a relaxed and comfortable aesthetic in contrast to the raw industrial finishes of the building. Inspiration was drawn from traditional trades in Shoreditch from the 1830s-1910s, which included textile manufacturing, press-printing and furniture making.



©Jim Stephenson 2018

On entering the building, the striking mural establishes a vibrant colourscape for the main ground floor reception, and acts as a backdrop to a folded perforated metal staircase. A bespoke reception desk formed from raw polished steel with a dark oak top references the area's industrial heritage.

An open plan lounge for informal and social meetings is furnished with contemporary Scandinavian tables and seating, upholstered in grey or black textured fabrics with accents of orange and mustard to complement the artwork and the corten steel of the lift lobbies and exterior.



©Jim Stephenson 2018

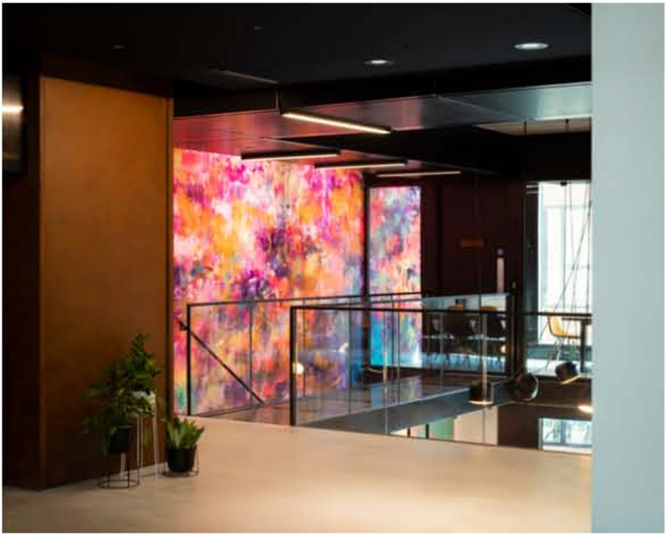
The twisted metal fins on the outside of the building are carried through internally to create subtle partitions between the different spaces on the ground floor. Beyond the lounge space is a working area that comprises both open plan space and private desk booths. The bespoke design of the desk booths marries black stained ply with cork lining, and provides focused personal work zones.

Tables are metal framed with reclaimed teak tops that will lighten over time, and seating includes the iconic 'Robin Day 675' chairs – upholstered in a special edition grey fabric as a nod to the textile history of the area. All furniture in this space is moveable for flexible working, functions and presentations, with a drop down presentation screen incorporated into the ceiling design.

Renowned contemporary artist Mr Jago, known for his abstract and expressive style, created the striking double-height artwork that was applied directly to the wall of the building.

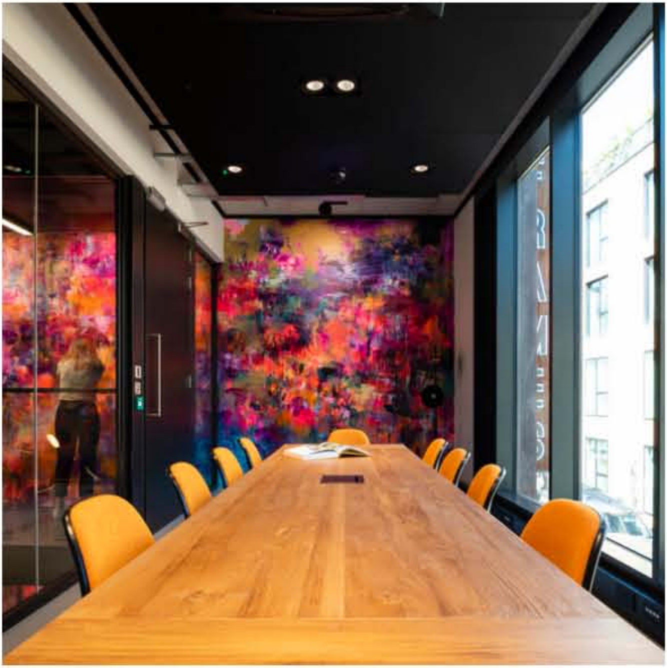
"Much of my work is about our environment and humankind's relationship with it. Aira Force Loop, my mural within the Frames, is an extension of that theme. The mural's name references Aira Force, a Cumbrian waterfall. The mural is a reimagining of that natural feature within a designed urban space.

Just as water falls from a height via Aira Force, so does my mural span two floors. Aira Force is a showcase for the power and beauty of nature; I hope that Aira Force Loop is a showcase for my style and palette as well as for the structure and decorative materials of the Frames.



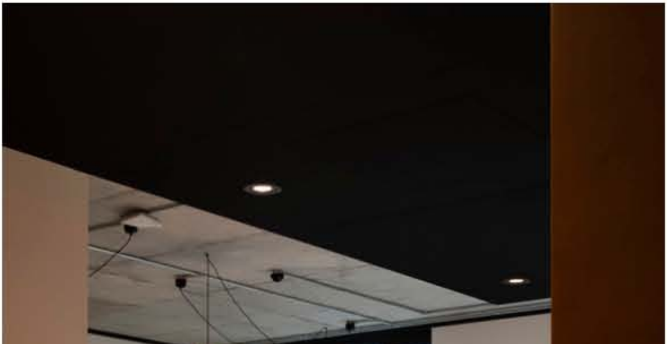
©Jim Stephenson 2018

Aira Force Loop presented a challenge in terms of its scale and layout across two floors, two rooms and position behind a staircase. I am pleased with the way that the mural remains cohesive from all angles. I hope that Aira Force Loop is inspiring to the eventual users of the Frames and that my artwork is as satisfying to those that occupy the Frames, and view it from the outside, as it has been to me to create." Mr Jago



©Jim Stephenson 2018

At the summit of the metal staircase is an open plan first floor breakout space with workspace units beyond, and a glazed bridge which links to a glass walled meeting room – the Mr. Jago artwork extending into the room to create a feature wall. Chair upholstery fabrics are selected to highlight the vibrant orange tones in the artwork.

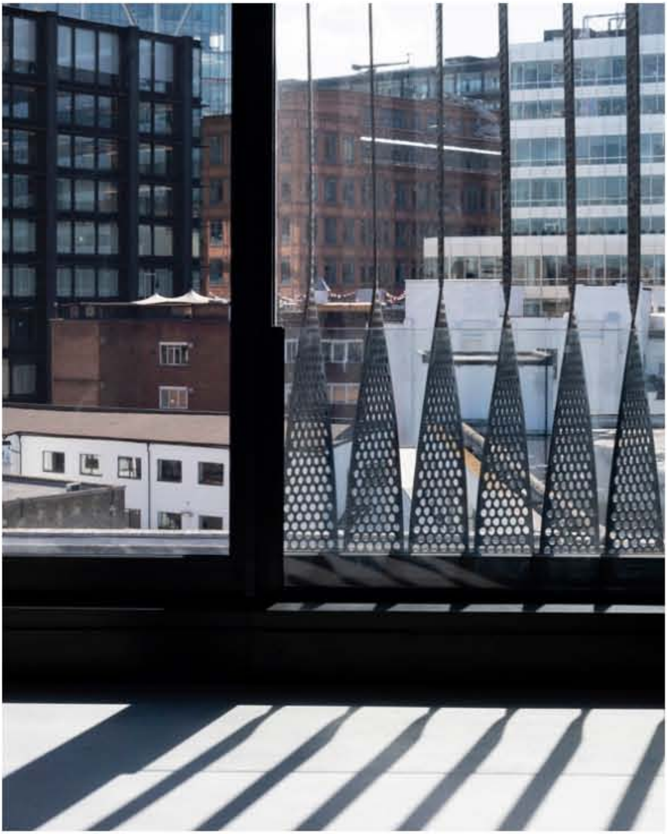


©Jim Stephenson 2018

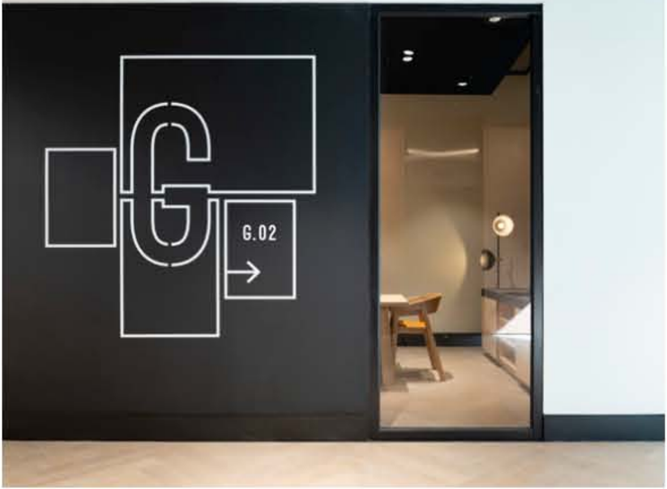
The design of breakout spaces on all work floors is light and comfortable, with soft furnishings set against concrete finishes and low pendant lights providing intimacy to the seating areas. Patterned tiles in the tea points, WCs and showers introduce ornamentation in muted colours to balance the concrete and metal surfaces.

©Jim Stephenson 2018

On the upper levels, workspace units offer concrete floors and ceilings together with whitewashed walls to create a blank canvas for inhabitants. The shadows cast inside the rooms by the external perforated fins add a layer of visual interest to the spaces and change throughout the day with the movement of the sun.



©Jim Stephenson 2018



©Jim Stephenson 2018

A strong graphic identity is used throughout the building to assist with way-finding, created by Squire & Partners in collaboration with their sister branding company, Mammal.

Visit the Workspace Group website for more information on the flexible office space.