

A stack of several books is shown from a low angle, with the pages fanned out. A white helix graphic is overlaid on the books, starting from the bottom left and spiraling upwards towards the top right. The entire image has a warm, orange-gold color cast.

Helix

Brandon Clifford, Matter Design

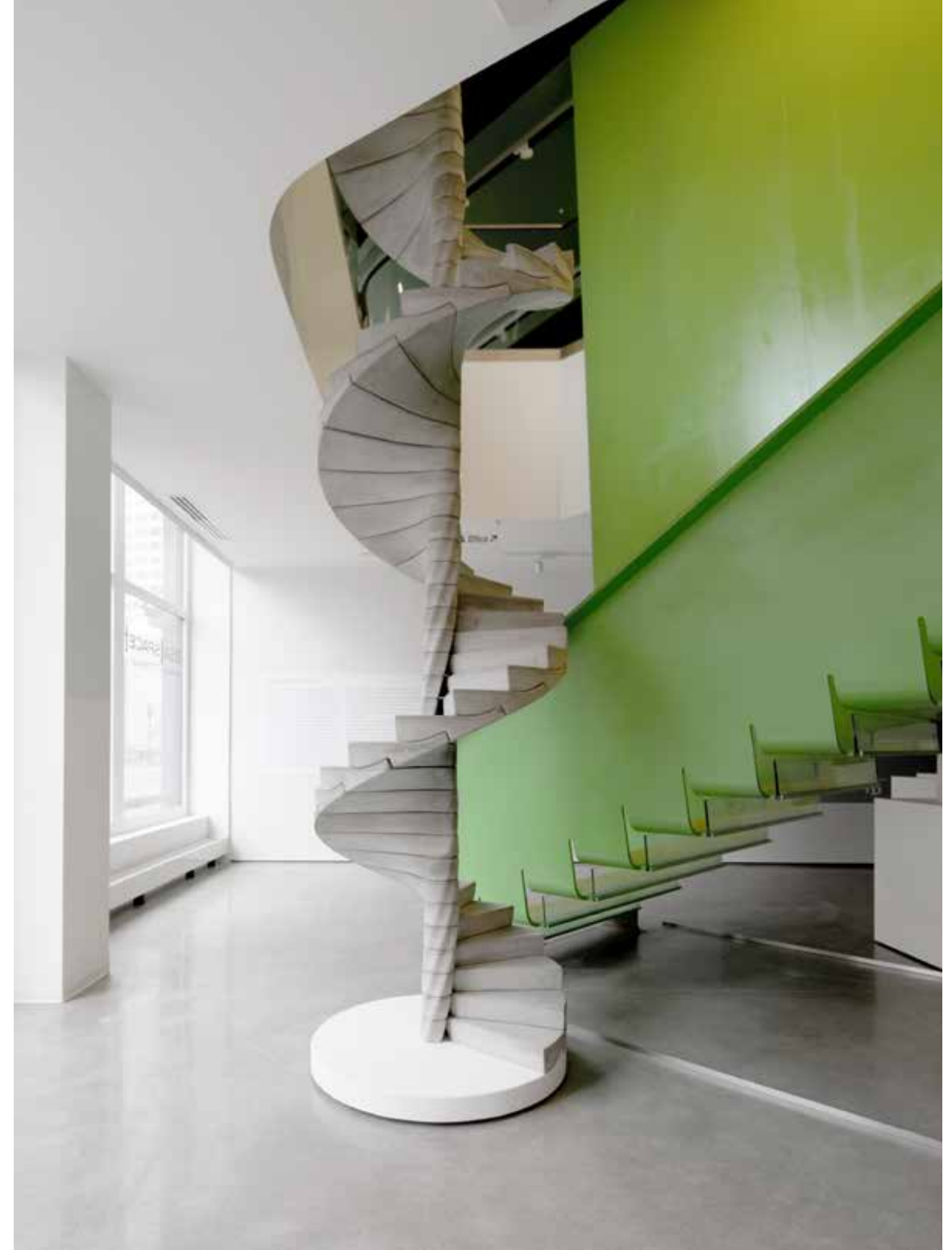
Our outlook and work demonstrate a preoccupation with translating lost methods of making into contemporary culture and practice. *Helix* is a product of an ongoing research agenda that centers on volume as an area of architectural exploration.

Helix is a half-scale spiral stair. While this reduced size resolves a number of practical concerns—weight, liability, access—the piece celebrates its impracticality. It is both column and stair, yet hangs from the ceiling. Its uncertainty and changed scale inject playful characteristics into the surrounding space, while maintaining an allegiance to the past and the known.

A second preoccupation of ours is what we term “plastic rhetoric.” The solid, heavy, and volumetric action of casting concrete transforms a liquid matter into a solid mass that wants to crack. The stair’s plastic and curvaceous treads reflect the material’s earlier liquid state. Its twisting accelerates as it wraps around the support column, appearing to re-plasticize the figure. The entire construct’s organic and malleable appearance is counter-intuitive in light of the zero-tolerance system of nesting and keying from unit to unit.

Spirals are ubiquitous across cultures and times. *Helix* is our spiral.





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