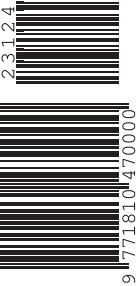




**SA R110**  
OTHER COUNTRIES  
**R95.65**  
EXCLUDING TAX



DECOR ■ ARCHITECTURE ■ DESIGN

# THE DESIGN ISSUE

- **TAKE A SEAT** INTERNATIONAL SOFA AND CHAIR TRENDS
- **SWITCH ON** LOCAL LIGHTS BY SA ARCHITECTS
- **HEAR FROM** LI EDELKOORT, JULIA DAY, TONIC DESIGN

**WINNER**  
ART DIRECTION  
2022 FOLIO  
AWARDS  
NEW YORK

**WINNER**  
BEST USE OF  
PHOTOGRAPHY  
2022 PEARL  
AWARDS  
NEW YORK

LOOP MODULAR  
SEATING BY SPANISH  
BRAND SANCAL AND  
DUTCH DESIGN  
STUDIO RAW COLOR

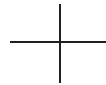
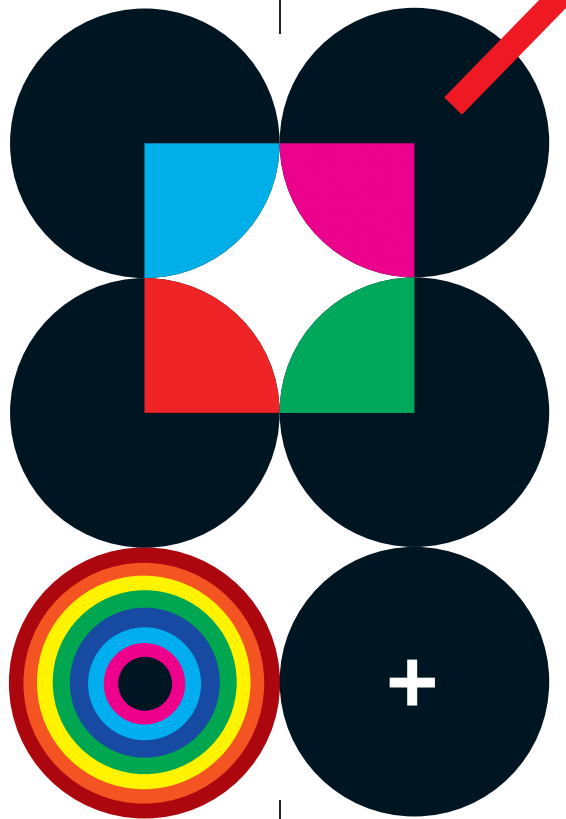
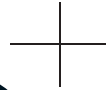
**WIN**  
LUXURY POOL LOUNGERS  
WORTH R35 000  
P62



**THE ART OF ARCHITECTURE** FROM BRUTALISM TO BRAAMFONTEIN (AND BENONI)



P L A Y  
—



THIS JOBURG  
INNER-CITY OFFICE SPACE IS A  
**QUIRKY  
TREASURE  
TROVE**  
OF ICONIC DESIGN,  
ART AND  
NOSTALGIA.

WORDS

JO BUITENDACH

PHOTOS

PARIS BRUMMER







An eye-catching vintage cupboard greets you as you enter the office space. It's a family heirloom that company founder Adam Levy had sprayed an electric blue. The sculpture is by Johannesburg-based Jason Bronkhorst.

**WHEN ASKED** what makes

Play Braamfontein's office special, founder Adam

Levy responds simply: "A 30-metre-long, floor-to-ceiling panoramic view of the Johannesburg skyline." He is right, of course;

the vista, which includes the iconic Nelson Mandela Bridge and a multi-storey

Shepard Fairey mural, is breathtaking. But this workspace is so much more than a view.

Located in a Brutalist 1970s office block, now home to the area's weekly Playground

Market, with a concrete facade that was designed by famed abstract sculptor Edoardo Villa, the

property development company's 11th-floor office is simple and light-filled, and offers a sense of

calm away from the urban madness below. Its industrial white walls and exposed concrete ceiling are a

strong contrast to almost homely parquet flooring. This is the perfect canvas to show off Adam's extensive

collection of art, vintage furniture and curiosities. Visiting this den of delights is, as he says, "like travelling

through my memory – this space is the history of Adam". He explains how important each item is: "I don't have an affinity to the possession of the thing; it's the reminder of a memory or a moment in time that it brings."

Adam's art collection, which liberally lines the walls of the office, illustrates the long relationship he has had with the art world. It includes several pieces by Zimbabwean artist Kudzanai Chiurai, as well as a print of Dale Yudelman and Arlene Amaler-Raviv's *Joburg Man*. Adam has been collecting art for more than two decades but explains that the first piece he ever bought at auction was a Cecil Skotnes totem pole. "I then got so carried away, I bought two Norman Catherines and a Walter Battiss," he adds. While these hasty purchases left him with some buyer's remorse and an empty bank account, in hindsight, they were a great investment.

Influenced by his mom, who has "fantastic taste", Adam has been trawling antique shops since he was a child. And although his style errs towards minimalism, he feels a strong connection to the mid-century period. This is evident in interesting pieces of colourful glass and retro ice buckets found in the boardroom, or in a skilfully styled Giotto Stoppino magazine rack. Other fascinating pieces include his grandmother's vintage cupboard, which he had a mechanic spray a glossy electric blue. Then there's the original Memphis Milano Super lamp, designed by Martine Bedin in 1981. Adam spotted it in a Cape Town antique shop and immediately fell in love with "the greatest lamp I had ever seen". After coveting it for a decade, and thanks to a successful business deal, he was finally able to buy it.

It's not just art and antiques that make the workspace quintessentially Adam – it's also the playful inclusion of his obsession with LEGO, which can be found throughout Play Braamfontein in many guises, from a London bus to a potted Bird of Paradise plant. After a lifetime of collecting the

Danish toy bricks, Adam is still able to tell you when he got each set, starting when he was six years old. It's, he says, his oldest possession and a real connection to his childhood.

Possibly, it's this sense of childish excitement that makes this an office you want

to spend time in. The rooftop eyrie is a fun and dynamic place, where you'd

be welcomed and encouraged to sit and sift through its treasures,

one beautifully designed and idiosyncratic item at a time.

[playbraamfontein.co.za](http://playbraamfontein.co.za)

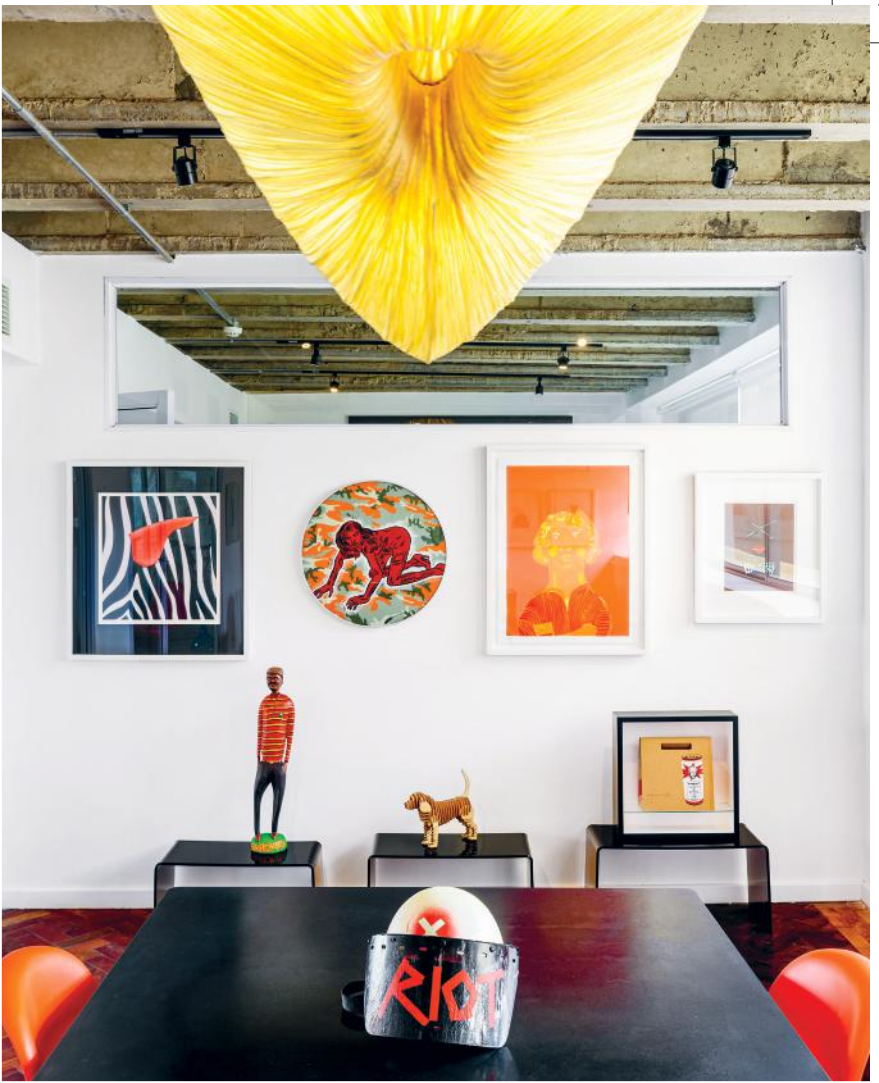


THE BRUTALIST 1970s OFFICE BLOCK'S  
CONCRETE FACADE WAS DESIGNED  
BY FAMED ABSTRACT SCULPTOR  
**EDOARDO VILLA.**

**OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT** Part of Adam's extensive art collection is displayed gallery-style above an Ateljee sofa by Finnish designer Yrjö Kukkapuro; the boardroom features works by local artists such as Conrad Botes, as well as a military helmet, titled *RIOT*, by Sindiso Nyoni; Adam amid his treasure trove of collectables, including a Giotto Stoppino magazine rack and a red acrylic dice piece by Pierre Fouché; Play Braamfontein's workspace doesn't take itself too seriously – Adam's collection of LEGO can be found throughout the office.















The 11th-floor office is open-plan and light-filled. Adam had parquet flooring installed throughout the building when he bought it. All workstations have an authentic Eames moulded side chair. The space heaves with countless pieces of art and furniture, each with its own unique story. The wooden totem by Cecil Skotnes was the first artwork Adam purchased on auction.









**THIS PAGE** Play Braamfontein's view of the Johannesburg inner city is unbeatable, with the iconic Nelson Mandela Bridge just a short walk away. The whimsical crocodile is by Durban artist Cameron Platter, and the vintage Poltrona 4818 armchair is by Anna Castelli Ferrieri for Kartell. **OPPOSITE** Another sculpture by Jason Bronkhorst stands among mismatched furniture. The Noguchi table was designed by Japanese-American artist Isamu Noguchi for Herman Miller, and the black-and-chrome Plona folding chair is an original Giancarlo Piretti for Castelli.









THIS PAGE The black-and-red *Y Propaganda* artwork by Kudzanai Chiurai is a seminal piece in Adam's collection. A LEGO Botanical Collection vase adds a playful pop of colour. Adam had the small black table, which belonged to his grandmother, restored and lacquered. OPPOSITE Neutral white walls, an exposed concrete ceiling and simple furniture provide the backdrop for a grouping of bright Danish Holmegaard Carnaby glass vases.









THIS PAGE The boardroom features a light fixture by Israeli designer Ayala Serfaty, and a collection of Mid-century ice buckets and glass. Adam waited four months for the Panton chairs to arrive from Italy. The table is by South African designer Gregor Jenkin. OPPOSITE A photograph by Mohau Modisakeng hangs in Adam's office while an original Memphis Milano Super lamp rests on the floor.