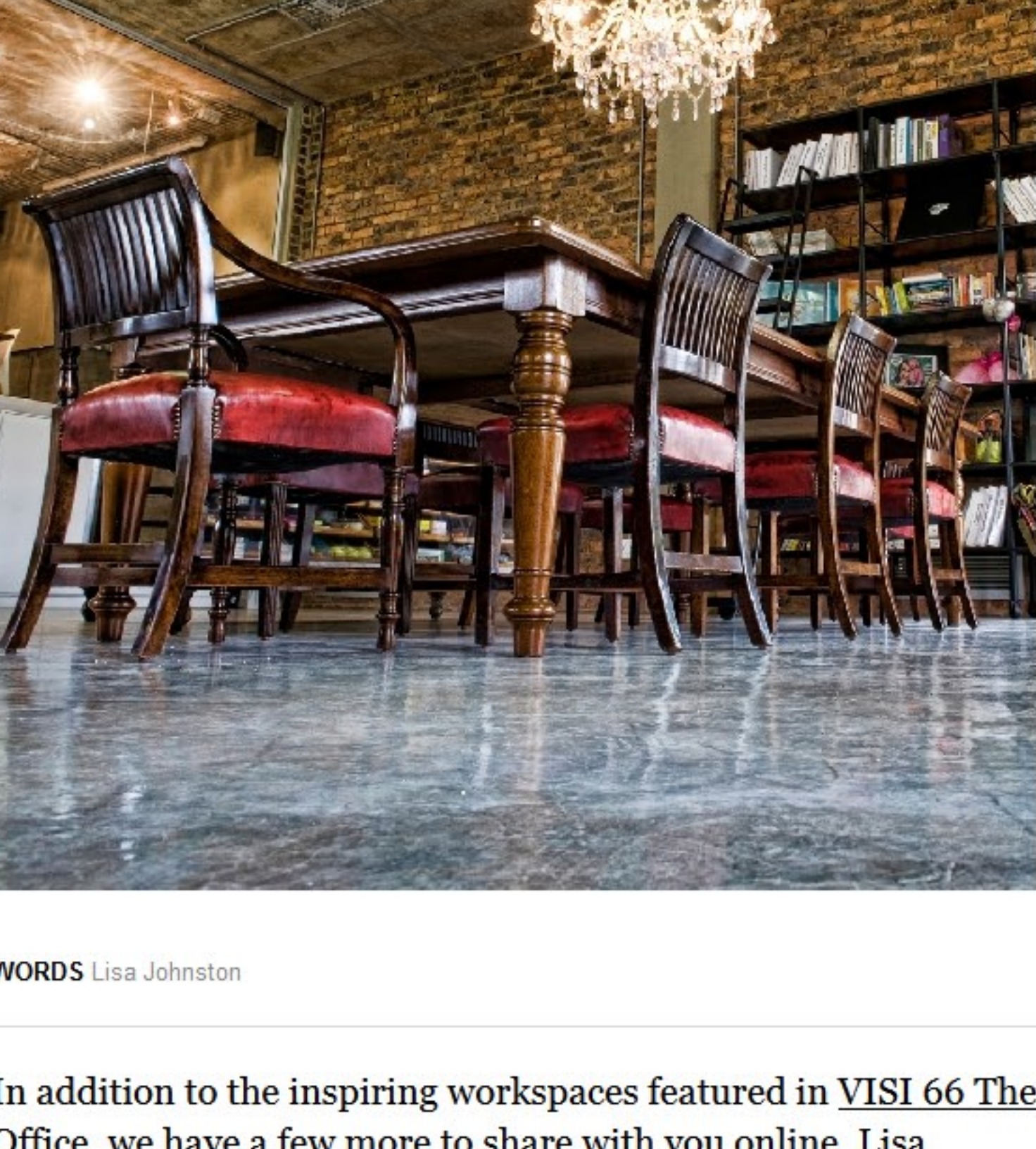


ALL GROWN UP

June 3, 2013 Tags: office, johannesburg, wood, vintage, work, lisa johnston, workspace, the office, visi 66, grow consulting



WORDS Lisa Johnston

In addition to the inspiring workspaces featured in [VISI 66 The Office](#), we have a few more to share with you online. [Lisa Johnston](#) peeks through the keyhole of a progressive business consultancy that offers its staff the space to live and play and grow.

To peek through the keyhole at **Grow Consulting** in Parktown North, Johannesburg, is a little like playing at Alice peaking down the rabbit hole. The large office space is surprisingly uninhabited with only a few busy staff members at any given time. The reception area is graced with a beautifully restored art-deco lounge set and a generous coffee table piled with art and classic-car books. To the left is a glass-walled conference room with an immense wooden table, constructed from recycled trusses. The interplay of cool industrial lines with warm shapes and textures is carried through to its zenith on the main floor, down a few stairs, below.

Once you tumble inside you discover that this is headquarters to what owner Michael Greyling, calls a "bunch of corporate refugees". The consultancy works in human development and leadership and the Grow office space is all about "living, role-modelling and showcasing work-life integration".

"There is a huge shift in business today. The conundrum is how to get more out of less and create a more diverse workforce," says Michael. "The way to do it is to create meaning [for employees]. Work is about more than just the monetary component. You don't have to leave your personality at the security desk when you check in; you bring your whole self to work and the office space must cater for your whole self."

The Grow office space succeeds in being a showroom for this approach through an effortless balance between form and function – creating a comfortable, spacious and light interior, with all the "mod cons" necessary for an efficient workplace.

To the right a neat row of perfectly interspaced corporate desks and computers sit below industrial lightshades. While the area to the left of the large screed floor is adorned with a row of antique lockers; a 1930s shop counter, packed with glitter pens, balloons and other workshop ephemera; and a long wooden table with classical regency chairs.

The contrast in styles is deliberate and intends to mirror the split between the right and left hemispheres of the brain – the rational and productive and the emotional and creative. The boardroom then, is a space of integration where the two halves merge, and dreams and inspiration are concretised and become real.

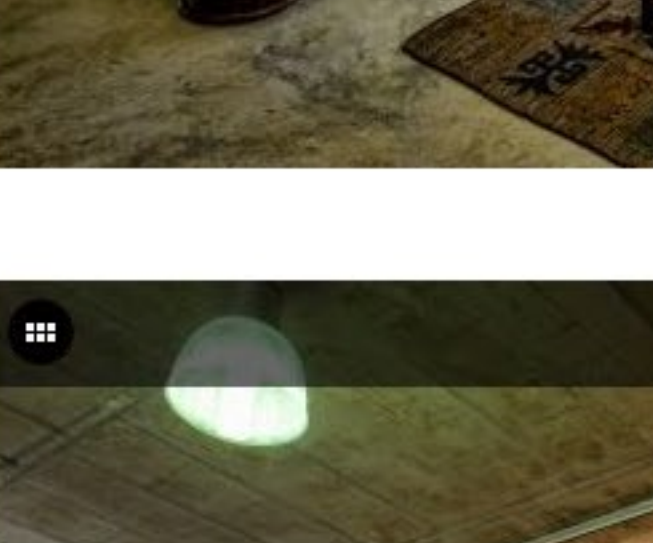
The precise attention to detail, with carefully chosen and placed objects, high-end technology and ergonomically designed desks also pay tribute to Grow's work ethos, which aims to "sweat the small stuff" to create more meaningful human interaction.

The result since they moved to the office space, Michael, has been a notable increase in productivity and desire to be physically present in the office, not just among staff but clients too. "Clients like being here," says Michael. "They often book the boardroom for functions that aren't related to work we do with them."

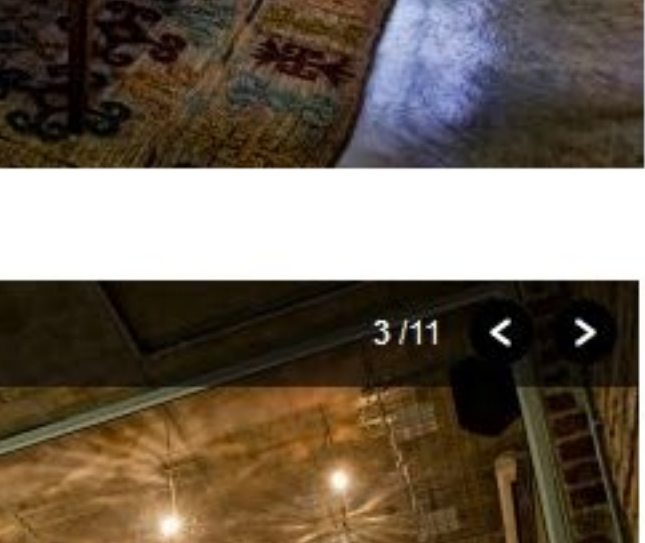
Featuring over 20 inspiring 9-to-5 spaces, VISI 66 The Office is a must-have collectable. Buy it in stores until 10 July 2013 or get the digital edition right here, right now.



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