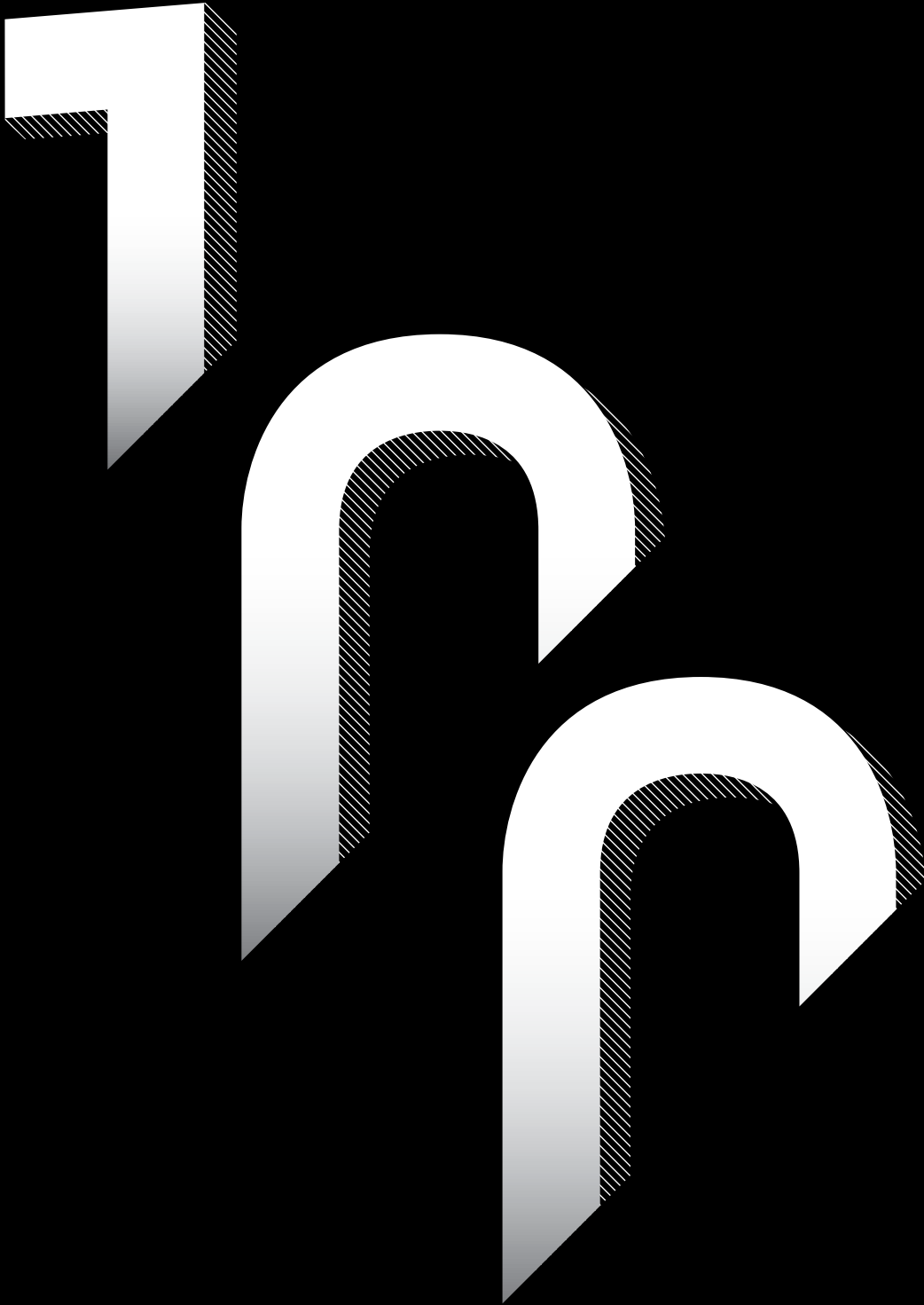


DESIGN BUREAU



SPECIAL EDITION



THE DESIGN BUREAU 100

A CARDINAL COLLECTION OF ARCHITECTURE AND INTERIOR
DESIGN THAT INFLUENCES WHERE AND HOW WE EXIST



311

82 / 100

FROM CARS TO CABINETS

A CANADIAN AUTO-PARTS PLANT
TRANSFORMS INTO A KITCHEN
COMPANY'S SHOWROOM/OFFICE,
COMPLETE WITH MADE-IN-HOUSE,
ECO-FRIENDLY CASEGOODS

BY SABY REYES-KULKARNI

FEATURED COMPANY
AMANTEA
ARCHITECTS

LOCATION
VAUGHAN, ONTARIO,
CANADA

PROJECT TYPE
SHOWROOM/OFFICE

PROJECT NAME
Q.T.K. SHOWROOM/
OFFICE

When Michael Amantea was tasked with converting a 45,000-square-foot auto-parts plant north of Toronto into a space that would serve as a one-stop-shop—manufacturing facility, showroom, and central office—for QTK Fine Cabinetry, he knew he was in for a challenge. **| CONTINUED »**

CONTINUED » “They wanted a modern, open environment that would best showcase their product range and foster productive communication between the engineering and design staffs,” Amantea says. The logistical concerns were clear to the architect from the start, as he wondered how he and his team would provide an open environment while accommodating both public and private functions in a space with limited exposure to natural light.

“Our strategy was to contain all of the private offices and semi-private meeting rooms within a volume of translucent and transparent glass located in the center of the space,” Amantea says. “These offices give structure to the plan, but more importantly provide light and framed views into other spaces. A glimpse of the exterior can be seen from almost every desk and workstation.” He adds that the configuration of the program elements lets the entire space function as one large showroom while allowing for moments of privacy without total separation.

To keep in line with its firm sustainability ethics, QTK requested that all of the project’s custom casegood furniture be fabricated on site, using only QTK’s own materials. “This meant that all components had to be designed and engineered specifically to suit their manufacturing capabilities,” Amantea says. Fortunately, he already had founded his practice on the belief that “collaboration is essential to the making of a successful building.”

The prescribed guidelines were clear: QTK voiced its support of the use of reconstituted veneer, formaldehyde-free, low-pressure laminate interiors, zero-emission finishes, and products that come from locally controlled forest environments. “They have invested in the industry’s most advanced automated machinery in an effort to minimize material waste,” Amantea says. “Their commitment to sustainable practice influenced the choices we made when undertaking the renovation of the existing building.”

He also notes that the team used a combination of skylights and LED fixtures throughout the entire showroom and office space to reduce energy consumption and eliminated the need for new flooring by polishing the existing concrete slab.

Additionally, Amantea was able to strike a balance between handcrafted and machined finishes. “We collaborated with local artisans Scott Eunson and Lubo Brezina on the custom entry furniture, door pulls, reception desk, and an ‘end grain’ wall installation built using reclaimed timber sourced from old warehouse structures in Toronto.” A complete makeover, done with Mother Earth in mind. 🌱



For its showroom and office, QTK wanted a modern, open environment that would best showcase its product range and foster productive communication between the engineering and design staffs.