

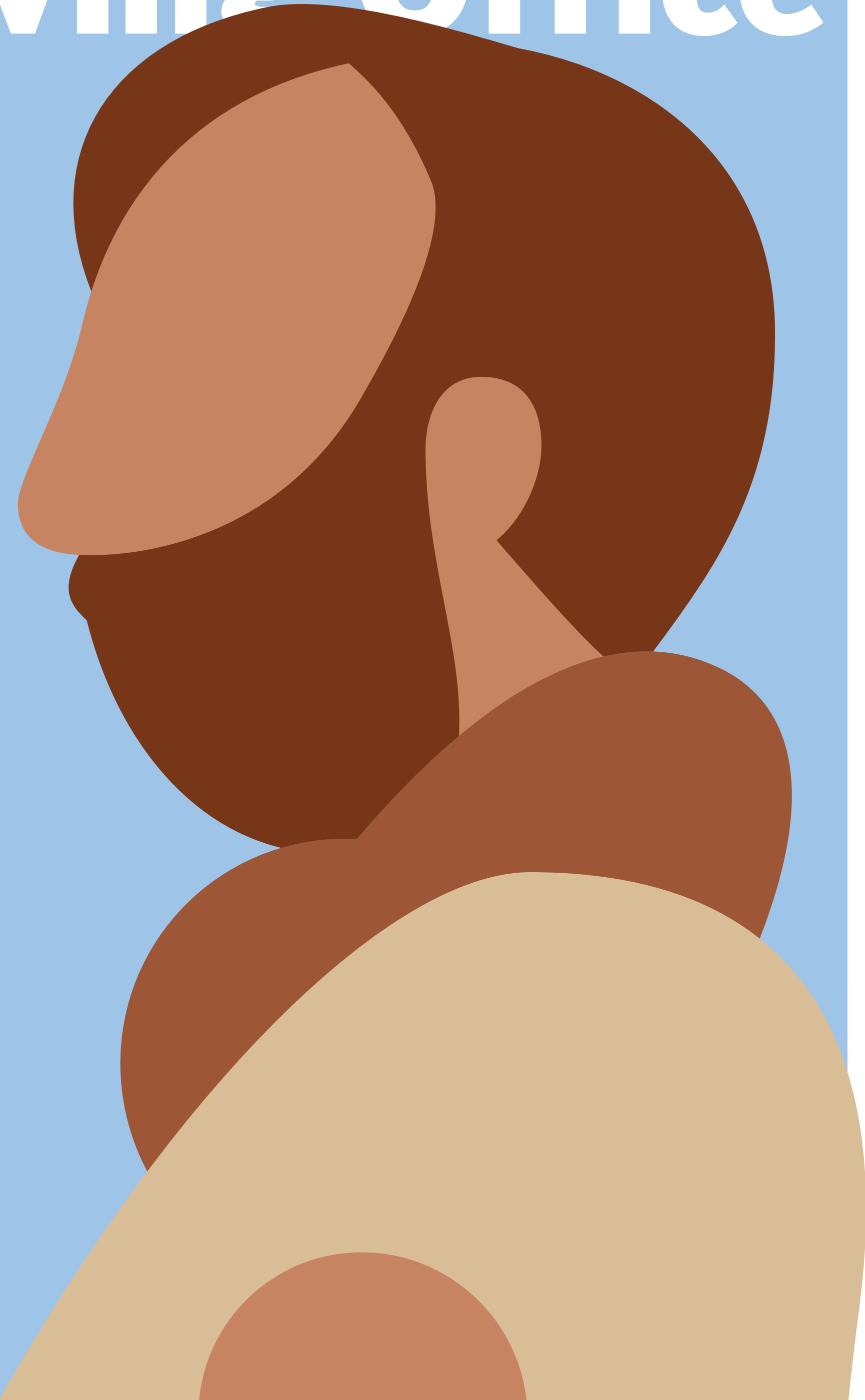
# Living Office

HermanMiller



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# THE NEXT BIG THING ISN'T FOR YOU

Each living office is unique, designed specifically for the work of unique individuals and organizations.

## Our Business Is People

In 1967, Hugh De Pree, son of our founder D.J. De Pree, wrote “our principal objective at Herman Miller is problem-solving in the various areas of living.” One year later, he led the introduction of Action Office, and catalyzed a shift in design that continues to influence how we think about workplaces. We are now embarking on the introduction of Living Office, another leap forward in understanding and advancing workplaces for people and organizations.

Hugh went on to tell us that problem solving in the various areas of living is “the examination of space and environmental problems and then solving these problems.” This is exactly what Herman Miller has been about for over 75 years—and it’s precisely what we’re about right now.

As you’ll discover over the following pages, Living Office is a wonderful, multi-dimensional response to all the changes we see happening around us. I’m deeply excited about it because it reaffirms one of our fundamental values—people are at the center of everything we do. To that, Hugh says, “We also meet the need for beauty, pleasure, joy, and excitement in living.”

In the coming months, I’m looking forward to plenty of “excitement in living” from Herman Miller—and from you. A successful Living Office requires your input and your energy. We want to hear what drives your most meaningful work, what kind of spaces inspire you, and how we can collaborate to redefine beauty, joy, and a more human experience of work.

Brian Walker  
CEO  
Herman Miller



# Designing for Tomorrow's Work

George Nelson once said, “I have never met a designer who was retained to keep things the same as they were.” At Herman Miller, this is exactly how we provide solutions to tomorrow’s questions. We recently sat down with our designers to discuss their process, and to understand their view of the changing landscape of work.

## Industrial Facility Sam Hecht & Kim Colin

**Locale makes working together more productive and pleasurable by intelligently organizing the office into social clusters that allow for free movement, variety, and adjustability.**

Locale took over two years to develop with more than 40 engineers. During this time, the conditions of work in terms of atmosphere and attitude have shifted, so it was important that we leapfrog any old conceptions of the modern office and design a new place based on our understanding of the current social and cultural changes. Don Goeman, Herman Miller’s Executive Vice President of Research, Development, and Design, noted early on in the project that the office is now becoming “a place you want to be” rather than “a place you need to be.” We are suspicious of recent efforts to achieve this: many offices try to evoke a kind of forced playfulness—slides, chill-out zones, ping-pong, even a faux home-like interior. To us, these are stylistic changes, while Locale is designed to accommodate a paradigm shift.



**Desk Accessories**

**Locale**

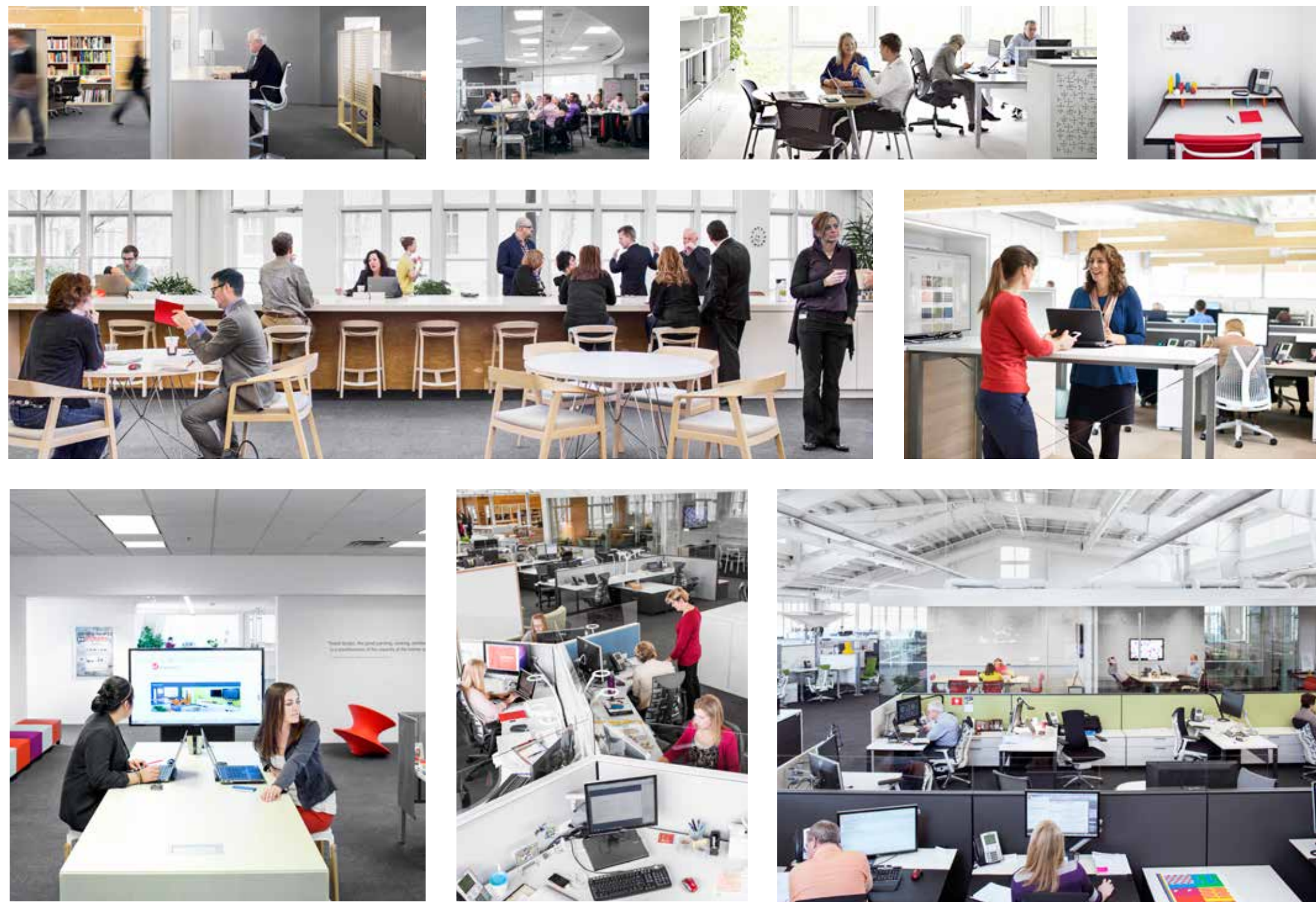
We find a lot of value in our own office, which is small, highly efficient, and considerate. Each of us is from a different part of the world, and we are collaborating constantly about ideas, methods, and opinions. Our work is never created in cultural isolation, and therefore our office behaves like a good, condensed international neighborhood, which is efficient, energetic, and pleasurable. We often talk about how social networks behave given current technology, where close relationships are no longer based on physical proximity, but instead on similarity of purpose or interest. You might make an alliance in a social network with someone who is very far away but very close to you in other ways. They are great spatial condensers in this respect. Locale is perhaps a physical manifestation of this principle, where the most relevant participants are kept close and communication is fast and frequent.

Locale is also informed by an urban idea and the way a thriving English high street serves the much broader city by arranging local variety and activity and services along one street. Locale is similar in that it organizes the office into clusters of activity along the Workbase, a linear architectonic element that helps give definition to the open-plan office. You can compose different clusters out of distinct functional modules, and the result is that disparate functions of the office will reside comfortably together. The library, the social setting, the working desk, and the meeting table can be close by, within one cluster. Useful mobile pieces (height-adjustable tables, screens, easels, storage, refreshment) can be “pulled up” to customize the group and individual settings off the Workbase, making for richer compositional and functional variety.

Spontaneous interaction is very relevant to productivity, and Locale encourages this in the open-plan office without relying on broader architectural-scale social devices (like open stairs and community eating areas). We spent a lot of engineering energy getting rid of table legs so you can work more freely around large, height-adjustable, cantilevered tables, and to create a mobile table and accessories program to accommodate the individual and the group in a porous environment.

One could argue that collaboration is a buzzword right now, that it’s going to go away, but we don’t think so. People are collaborating globally, empowered by digital networks, but the most ambitious businesses still need productive, collaborative physical environments. The offices we visited during our research—places where people want to work—are open-plan, transparent, and buzzing. Locale brings different parts of the office in proximity so you shouldn’t have to go away to talk to a colleague in a more conducive setting. Instead, you can raise a table, stand, and discuss, or move nearby to sit at a low chair and table in front of a mobile whiteboard—you don’t have to move to completely separate spaces to accommodate varied work styles. To maintain highly qualified, talented workers, companies need to provide space that better connects them to each other and brings more promise to the open plan.





## Work In Progress

Herman Miller facilities around the world offer clear evidence of our humanistic approach to design. These settings foster creativity, collaboration and flow, and inspire people to contribute their best work. We aim to create what former CEO Max De Pree describes as "places of realized potential."

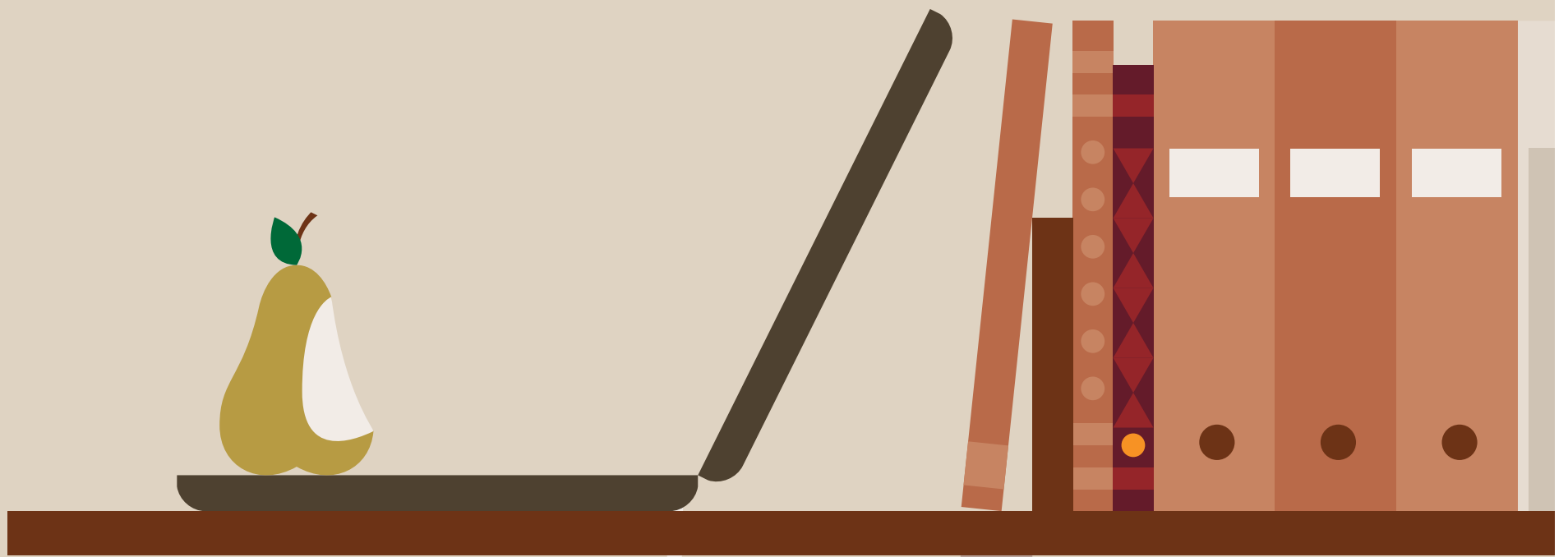


# LIVING BEATS DYING

A healthy, prosperous organization thrives on passion, purpose, and growth.

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**What works for your work?**  
Create a #LivingOffice  
with @HermanMiller

