



REPURPOSED STRUCTURES

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BREATHING NEW LIFE INTO SIX HISTORICAL SPACES

When the occupants leave a space, their building remains. Remote or outdated structures may stand uninhabited for years, and time can transform an abandoned space into a haunting reminder of the past. A combination of skilled architects and determined minds have brought these six buildings firmly into the present day, but without compromising their integrity or their past.

THE DURHAM HOTEL EXTERIOR – PHOTO: SPENCER LOWELL, COURTESY OF THE DURHAM HOTEL

A 1960s Mutual Community Savings Bank was renovated by Commune Design into the most sought-after hotel in the area: The Durham. The studio preserved its mid-century aesthetics, keeping the exterior almost untouched.

THE DURHAM HOTEL LOBBY – PHOTO: SPENCER LOWELL, COURTESY OF THE DURHAM HOTEL

The Durham is both a boutique hotel for visitors and a community space for local creatives. Amenities include some welcome but unexpected touches: yoga, cooking classes, coffee tastings, a shoe shine, a selection of vinyl records and a newsstand offering a range of local and niche publications.

THE FOUNDRY LOBBY – PHOTO: JIM STEPHENSON, COURTESY OF THE ETHICAL PROPERTY GROUP

02. THE FOUNDRY – LONDON, ENGLAND

The Foundry is a former shoe polish factory transformed into a social justice centre by Architecture 00. Commissioned by Ethical Property, the building serves as an office and conference facility for charities as well as human rights and social justice organizations.

Thanks to its sustainable restoration process and blend of contemporary and industrial design, the project won the RIBA London Building of the Year and a RIBA London Regional award in 2015.

ALLEZ UP EXTERIOR – PHOTO: COURTESY OF SMITH VIGEANT ARCHITECTES

03. ALLEZ UP – MONTREAL, CANADA

When turning an abandoned sugar refinery into Allez Up, a climbing gym, Smith Vigeant Architectes had to address many issues. The soil was contaminated and the structures were neglected, but the studio successfully adapted them to their new purpose.

ALLEZ UP CLIMBING GYM – PHOTO: COURTESY OF SMITH VIGEANT ARCHITECTES

The renovation helped to revitalize Montreal's Southwest borough along the Lachine Canal. Today, the climbing gym unites a strong community of climbers in a safe, positive space, with classes in sport climbing, bouldering and yoga.

RESIDENTIAL CHURCH CONVERSION – PHOTO: JIM TSCHETTER, COURTESY OF LINC THELEN

04. RESIDENTIAL CHURCH CONVERSION – CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

An old church in Chicago's Little Italy neighborhood was converted into a modern residence for a family of five. [Linc Thelen Design](#) and [Scrafano Architects](#) joined forces to upgrade the church to contemporary living standards, while preserving its original brick walls and stained glass windows.

CHURCH CONVERSION FRONT ENTRANCE – PHOTO: JIM TSCHETTER, COURTESY OF LINC THELEN

The house features over 25-foot ceilings, a quartz-clad fireplace and even a climbing wall in the boys' room. Another special feature is the bell tower, which was converted into a glass-floored observation deck.

MUSEO ABC EXTERIOR – PHOTO: COURTESY OF CANO ESTUDIO

05. MUSEO ABC – MADRID, SPAIN

When the Museo ABC was looking for a new space to house their ABC Collection, they opted for the Mahou beer factory. The museum appealed to architects Aranguren & Gallegos to turn the brewery into the artistic hub it is today. Conveniently located in the historic Barrio de Universidad, within walking distance from the Conde Duque cultural centre, the museum is a dynamic, creative gathering space for locals and tourists alike.

STABLE CAFÉ EXTERIOR – PHOTO: COURTESY OF MALCOLM DAVIS ARCHITECTURE

In the 1800s, Stable used to be the local mayor's carriage house. When current owner Malcolm Davis discovered the location, the building was falling apart. But this didn't stop his architecture firm from reworking it into a trendy collective. Stable Café is owned and run by Thomas Brian Lackey.

STABLE CAFÉ EVENT SPACE – PHOTO: COURTESY OF MALCOLM DAVIS ARCHITECTURE

Stable is also home to the aforementioned Malcolm Davis Architecture and it's become an incubator for local businesses, such as the graphic design studio RVH Design, florist Lila B. Design and The Cheese School of San Francisco.

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Headline image of a residential church conversion in Chicago by Jim Tschetter, courtesy of Linc Thelen



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