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Occupying Tribeca's former Verizon building, Spring New York houses photography studios and event spaces, alongside digital and creative facilities. A 12,000 sq ft rooftop, restaurant, cinema and members' club are set to open in 2016

Jacket, £920; skirt, £1,280, both by **Salvatore Ferragamo**. Shoes, £830, by **Valentino**

Space agency

There's lofty ambition at Tribeca's Spring New York, where monumental photographic studios meet a multi-platform creative enterprise

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ark Loy opened the original Spring Studios in north-west London's Kentish Town in 1996. Housed in the former Winsor & Newton artists' materials factory, the industrial space started as three photography studios for rent, but over the past two decades it has evolved into a multidisciplinary studio, event space and creative agency. 'I had a clear vision of wanting to make an amazing studio facility with in-house businesses that cater to the luxury and creative industries,' Loy says. This year, Spring officially expands across the pond in New York. 'Over time I broadened the vision and built our creative agency, production, digital development and e-commerce. And that became a successful content-generation business,' continues Loy. Spring's evolution reflects the changing nature of the creative industry – where photography studio equals event space equals content production firm equals art gallery, a merging of cultural spaces and professional expertise that has become almost standard.

Above, a green room overlooking one of the studios

Dress, £1,600, by **Jil Sander**

Opposite, Spring New York's furniture collection, curated by art advisor Andree Cooke and sourced with the help of a specialist team, includes this desk by Paul Crofts Studio and 1950s 'Model 42' chair by Kai Kristiansen

Coat, £7,512, by **Louis Vuitton**

In New York, Spring's industrial feel is about the only thing in common with the London location. 'Spring New York is much more outward looking and upfront in feeling,' says Loy. The 120,000 sq ft outpost in Manhattan's Tribeca neighbourhood was built out of the former Verizon building (the telephone company still has equipment on the fourth floor), but the look and feel is monumental – slick and bright column-less studios, with floor-to-ceiling windows, 30ft-high ceilings, glass-fronted green rooms, and extras that could only be found in a space this big and ambitious, such as mechanical black-out shades, private kitchens, en-suite bathrooms that are larger than most New Yorkers' apartments, and an epic rooftop with views of Lower Manhattan's West Side.

Architect Aldo Andreoli, founding principal of AA Studio, was enlisted for the project by Loy and real estate developer Estate 4, run by Alessandro Cajrati Crivelli (the developer of Zona Tortona in Milan and »





This page, a black steel staircase, prefabricated in Italy, connects the fifth floor to the roof terrace
Opposite, coat, £3,350, by Balenciaga





One of seven photography studios, which offer ceiling heights of up to 30ft. The 'FDCr' chair is a 1939 design by Brazilian architect and artist Flávio de Carvalho

All-in-one suit, €1,499, by Y/project

'In New York City, large open spaces with 30ft ceiling heights, with no low beams or pillars, are impossible to find'

Howick Place in London), a friend of Loy's who found the site. Andreoli, an Italian transplant who has lived in the US for over four decades and worked on many spaces in Tribeca, was tasked with creating extra-high studio spaces. 'The main request from Mark Loy was to have at least 17ft-high spaces for the studios. So we started designing the concept and decided to remove the slab between the fifth and the sixth floors,' explains Andreoli. When they removed the columns in the existing space, Andreoli discovered a set of 'beautiful trusses that were hidden in the ceiling. A portion of the building was a theatre in the 1930s; that's why there were these trusses. We decided to keep them and they are still visible now in the sixth-floor main space.'

The anchor of the space is a towering black steel staircase that connects the fifth floor to the rooftop (currently undergoing renovation to become a 12,000 sq ft event space, set to open in early 2016). The blackened steel, a favourite material of Loy's, recurs throughout the building; Andreoli highlights it in details like doors and mouldings, as well as the staircase. 'It was fabricated in Italy and was then shipped over piece by piece,' Andreoli explains.

The development of the site was long and complicated; the project started in 2010, 2011 was spent on design, and construction began in 2012. 'There were many challenges,' admits Loy. 'Getting the permits for what we wanted to achieve took many months, and the construction itself was delayed by nearly two years. We could have shortened the construction time, but we had a very clear point of view on what this project was to be and we had the will to deliver it without diluting its principles,' he says. Currently, the seven photographic studios and large event spaces are open; by January 2016, Loy expects that Spring New York's restaurant, cinema and private members' club will also open officially.

The space's interiors are minimal – stripped wood floors, white walls and the blackened steel doors and details, very much an art-world aesthetic. Loy brought in curator and art advisor Andree Cooke to help create the interior. Cooke, who worked with Loy on Spring in London, was directed to focus on vintage design from particular eras. The resulting collection of 222 pieces is made up largely of midcentury modern designs, mainly from Europe and Brazil. Cooke turned to specialists in vintage furniture, including Nicholas Chandor (who has worked extensively with Paul Smith on the look of his London stores), to source the pieces, many of which, such as 45 matching Kai Kristiansen dining

In one of the VIP rooms, a midcentury sofa by Edward Wormley, for Dunbar, reupholstered in Kvadrat fabric. The artworks are by Simon Moretti

Jumper, £920; skirt, £1,010, both by Hermès

chairs, were not easy to come by. 'My aim was to create surprising juxtapositions of pieces that are unique yet well matched, such as the J Muckey coffee table that sits between a Sergio Rodrigues sofa and two chairs,' says Cooke. 'Some of my favourite pieces are the rare jacaranda and black leather chairs by Percival Lafer [circa 1958], which ooze luxury and comfort; Paul Crofts' brutalist hot-rolled steel reception desk on the fifth floor; and interesting pieces like a modernist coffee table by Pierre Guariche, and a 1950s mango-wood hairpin low table by Pierre Jeanneret.'

Cooke paired the furniture with commissioned artworks that are dotted along the walls of the more intimate VIP spaces within Spring. '[For the] artworks, the idea in some cases was to bring out aspects of the past, and an aesthetic that enriches the design pieces. I selected well-respected but lesser-known international artists,' explains Cooke. Works include a set of specially commissioned large-scale prints by London-based artist Simon Moretti and a selection of pieces by late artist Rose Finn-Kelcey, a pioneer in British feminist art, which Cooke acquired from her estate. 'The approach taken with this body of art was to work with the artists [or their estate] directly, and where possible commission new pieces or select works that created a dialogue with the context of the space generally and with specific design pieces they were placed next to,' says Cooke. For example, in the VIP rooms on the seventh floor, an Edward Wormley sofa for Dunbar, reupholstered in pink Kvadrat fabric, is paired with Kofod-Larsen chairs and a coffee table by Torbjørn Afdal. The walls feature a series of collage and photographic works by Moretti, which Cooke points out, 'picks up on the furniture elements in the room.'

Design, art, fashion and film will all converge at Spring New York, or that's Loy's goal. The studios are currently being used by major photographers such as Inez & Vinoodh, Patrick Demarchelier, David Sims and Steven Klein. And the location has already hosted events such as A/W15 fashion shows – for Calvin Klein, Michael Kors, Diane von Furstenberg and Jason Wu, among others – and will add further brands, including Lacoste, to this roster for September's Fashion Week. Spring staged the Tribeca Film Festival in April this year and will welcome New York's edgy contemporary art fair Independent next March. The space has also hosted forums for such technology giants as Google and Microsoft.

To handle this side of the business, Loy brought in events specialist Maurizio Flammini. And on the»



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The building's simple white spaces have an art-world aesthetic

Dress, £2,310, by **Chanel**.
Bracelet, £795, by **Maiyet**

'The studios are currently being used by influential photographers such as Inez & Vinoodh, Patrick Demarchelier, David Sims and Steven Klein'



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‘We had a very clear point of view on what this project was to be and we had the will to deliver it without diluting its principles’



This page, a 1950s stacking chair by Roland Rainer, for Emil & Alfred Pollak
Opposite, jacket, £2,450, by Dior



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In a green room, a 'DS-600' sofa, designed in 1972 by Ueli Berger, Eleonore Peduzzi Riva, Heinz Ulrich and Klaus Vogt, for de Sede. The 'Dodec' table, 2015, is by London-based design partnership Makina



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This page, 'Sprung' table, 2015, by Makina

Opposite, the studios maximise natural light

Coat, £9,450; boots, £1,795, both by **Calvin Klein Collection**

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Hair: Tamas Tuzes at L'Atelier NYC using TIGI

Make-up: Akiko Sakamoto at See Management using Chanel

Manicurist: Natalie Pavloski at LMC Worldwide using Chanel A/W 2015 and Body Excellence Hand Cream

Digital operator: Abby Harrison at KSM

Photographer's assistant: Gabi Worosz

Fashion assistants: Josefine Skomars, Johnathon Doherty-Johnson, Nathalie Koenig

Model: Sojourner at Wilhelmina

Casting: Camilla Bigler at Star & Co

digital agency side, Loy tasked Robin Derrick, former creative director for British *Vogue*, to lead the direction of the company's 'content creation agency'.

'What we actually have now is a unified business,' explains Derrick. 'What we do is take clients into fashion and luxury. Now, whether that's an event in our space or whether that's an [advertising] campaign or a social campaign, or whether that's a fashion shoot, there's an audience around what we do in this building, which is also the audience that the agency clients have. So to work with Spring really is to talk together with the audience. We're like a luxury version of *Vice*,' he says only partly joking.

Derrick will work closely with David Sebbah, former creative director of *T: The New York Times Style Magazine*,

to create a media platform that is set to launch early next year, to complement the digital branding, experience and advertising work that Spring is currently producing for clients such as Louis Vuitton, Dolce & Gabbana, Versus Versace, Tom Ford and Calvin Klein.

'In New York City, or frankly in any city, large open spaces with 30ft ceiling heights, with no low beams or pillars, are impossible to find, so we knew if we could create a space like that we would have a fantastic opportunity,' says Loy. 'Combining this with world-class production, digital and creative work facilities, cinemas, restaurants and membership at this scale is, we feel, a unique model.' ✪ springstudios.com

