



Opened for Business

In Salt Lake City, a talented team transforms an old industrial building into Publik Coffee Roasters' spacious, innovatively designed roasting facility and coffee house.

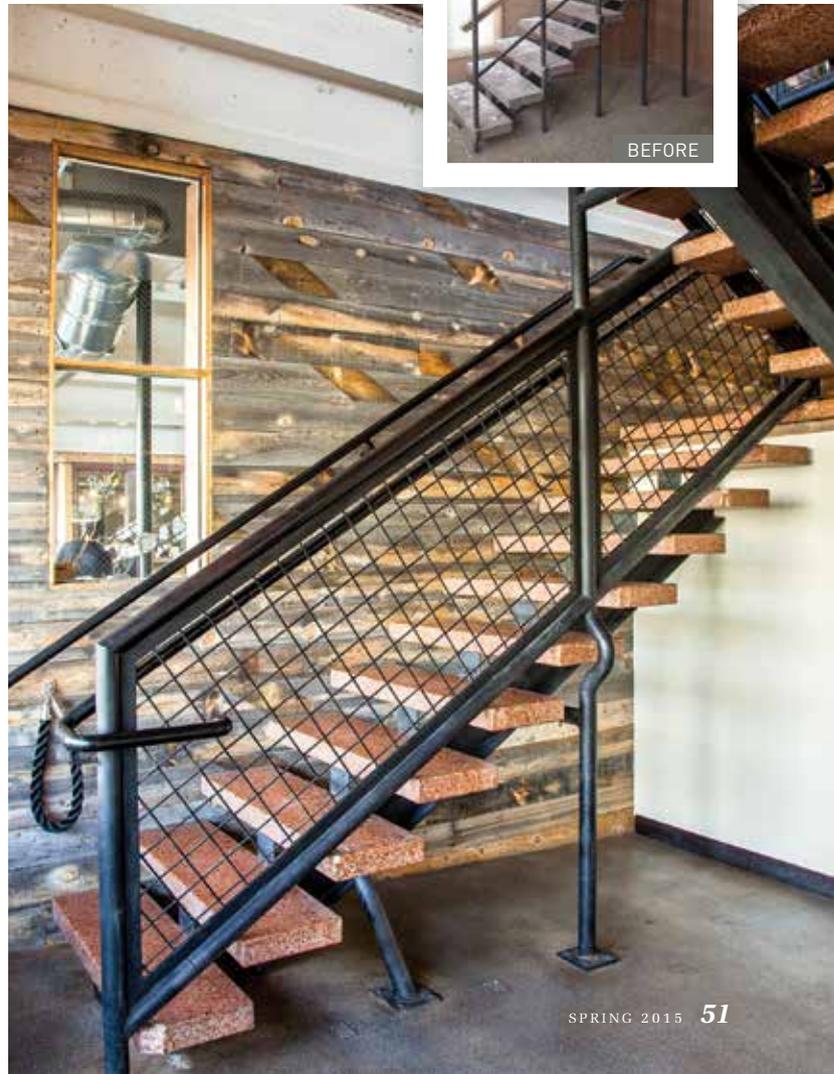
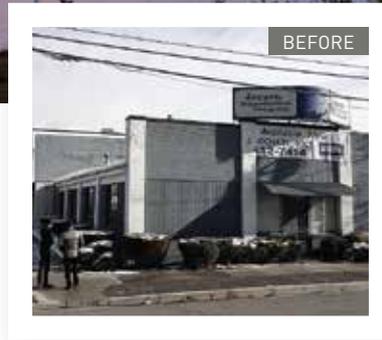
BY BILLY YANG PHOTOS BY DARRYL DOBSON



Above: Owners Matt Bourgeois and Missy Greis stand in front of a green wall that has taken on a life of its own on social media, according to Greis. "Sometimes I see people come in and they stop to take a picture in front of the green wall before they even order a coffee."

Upper Right: Publik is a Dutch variation of the term and means, not coincidentally, community. The name boldly identifies a new location for Publik Coffee Roasters, an industrial building once home to a printing house.

Right: Many reclaimed materials were used to buildout Publik. The railing from the original stairway was upcycled and used as the base for tables in the second-level conference room.



It takes a certain type of person to see potential in something like a dilapidated printing press building.

"We found it online while lying in bed at 5 a.m. It was blue and terrible looking," says Matt Bourgeois of Publik Coffee Roasters. "We waited for the sun to come up then drove down to look at it and we knew it was the one."

The building that he and Missy Greis—Bourgeois's partner in life and business—found in Salt Lake's fledgling Central Ninth neighborhood was a two-story, 13,000-square-foot labyrinth of offices and darkrooms filled with lithography equipment. Beyond all of this clutter (which eventually took 30 dumpsters to remove), Bourgeois saw a place to build out his vision for a coffee roasting facility and cafe.

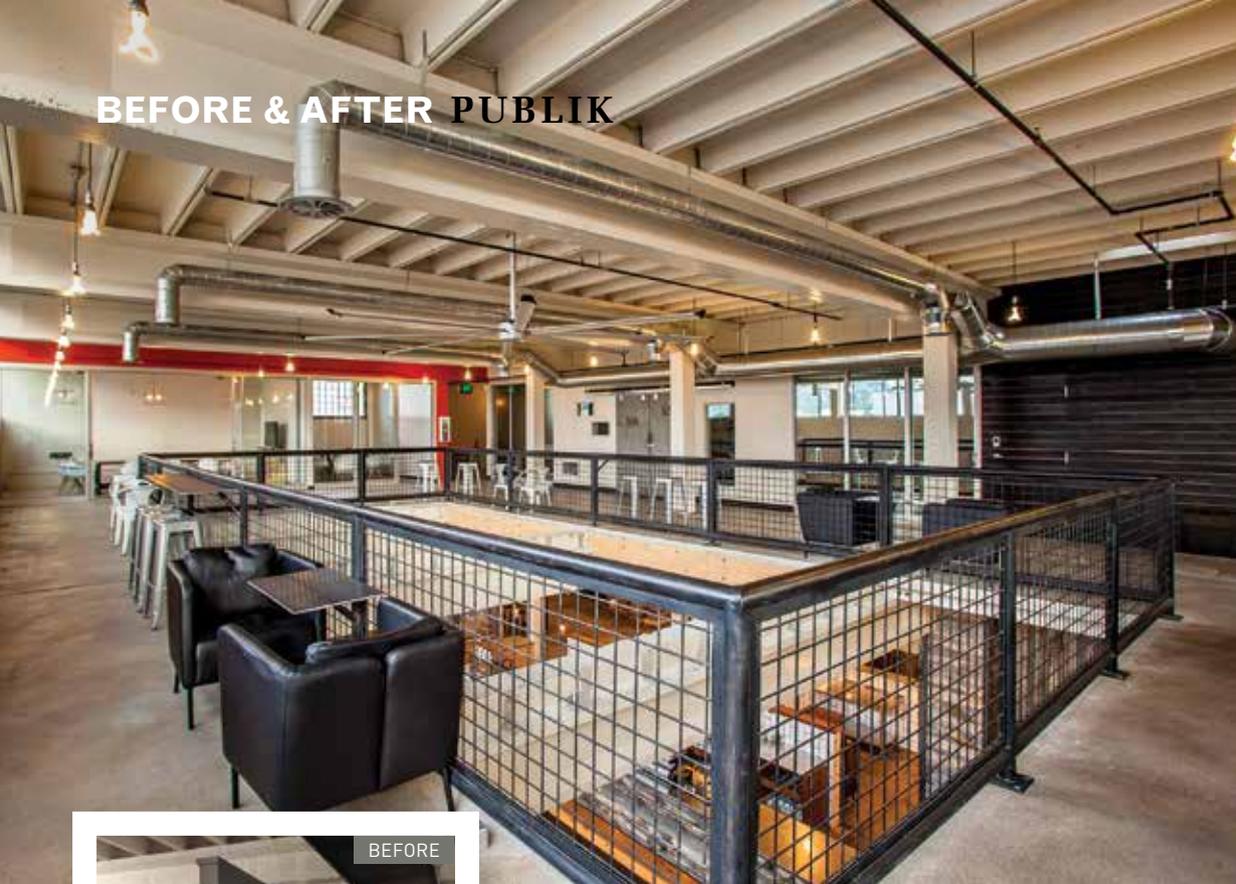
About six years ago, Bourgeois, who was a founding partner of Porcupine Grill located at the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon, was spending a lot of time in coffee shops dreaming up ideas for his next restaurant concept. This is when he became enamored with cafe culture. "Coffee shops are used by everybody. Professionals, students, first dates, last dates, break ups, make ups," Bourgeois says. He saw coffee shops as gathering places and he wanted to be a part of that.

For Bourgeois and Greis, it was just a matter of making this industrial space feel a bit more welcoming. But there was no room for the dark, dated, and overstuffed sofa-filled coffee shop décor of yesteryear. "We wanted it to feel like a warehouse. We wanted to show off the production end of it. At the forefront, it's a coffee roastery," Greis explains, "but we also wanted it to be warm and comfortable."

Teaming with architect Warren Lloyd and contractor Chris Nielson of Evergreene Construction, Bourgeois and Greis successfully combined these contrasting goals through innovative design, unexpected materials and unique fixtures and finishes.

Lots of natural light pours through the building's large windows, and with the maze of walls and small rooms removed, it floods the interior. To amplify this

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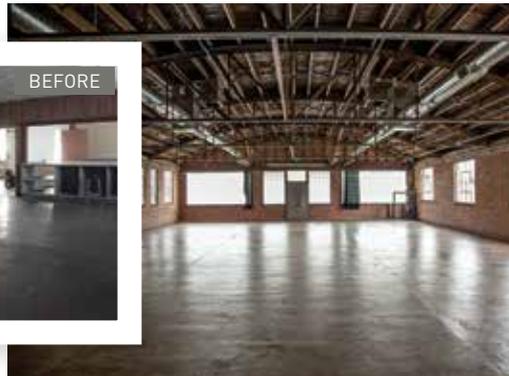


Top left: A nearly 500-square-foot slab was removed from the second floor to create the building's mezzanine open to the main level.

Above: Design elements, including the giant fan from Big Ass Fans and Edison-style lights, remind patrons the building is an industrial space.

Left: The large west room now serves as a venue for functions including weddings, bar mitzvahs and photo shoots.

Below: While it's been a trend to buck WiFi at coffee shops around the country, Publik makes sure its customers can stay connected. There are even conference rooms available for rent. "We want people using our space. We don't mind if people sit all day. Come sit, we don't care. We'll add more seats," Bourgeois says.



effect, Lloyd suggested blowing out a huge section of the second floor to form a mezzanine. The major modification boldly expanded the project's open-design concept. The team chose warm Edison-style lights and liberal use of reclaimed wood found by Nielson, such as the 50-year-old Wyoming snow fence around the counter, to help make the industrial space look and feel more inviting. But there's another purpose to the use of salvaged materials.

"It also fits our model, which is sustainable and green. Part of the mission is to be environmentally responsible," Greis says. Publik has 60 solar panels installed on its roof. The roaster they use has an afterburner that negates odor and carbon dioxide. "With all the air quality issues this city has, we're not adding to it," Bourgeois says. "We made significant investments so we wouldn't add to it. We're trying to be responsible neighbors."

Since setting up shop about a year ago, Bourgeois and Greis have not only been good neighbors, they've also been good for the neighborhood's redevelopment efforts. People from all over the Salt Lake Valley flock to Publik for the coffee and to spend time in the space, which is exactly what Bourgeois envisioned. "The idea is to come use our space. We truly want it to be a community space," he says. "For me, that's what coffee is about." **USD**

