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## THE MIDTOWN SOUTH ISSUE



### STRAIGHT SHOOTER

Midtown South player  
Gregg Schenker of ABS  
shares deals and vision

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### SOHO'S RETAIL SCENE

As demand for retail space  
continues, community members  
reject more flagship stores

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### BUILDING WITH LEGOS

L&L's Andrew Weiner is riding  
high from Flatiron District  
Lego deal

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LESLIE PARROTT/FOR COMMERCIAL OBSERVER.  
INSET: MICHAEL NAGLE/FOR COMMERCIAL OBSERVER





**150 West 22nd Street** - The M. Rapaport company renovated and redesigned its 1910 Gothic Chelsea building into what it termed "The Chelsea Castle," with the company placing a six-foot-tall knight's suit of armor and Medieval-era inspired light fixtures on the building's ground floor. The company has inked new tenants for seven out of its 12 floors over the past two years.



**2 Park Avenue** - Gensler's vision for the lobby in the office of beauty products brand Coty between East 32nd and East 33rd Streets implemented an urban square concept with retail-style display cases featuring the company's products. The reception also leads into residential features of the company's office such as a kitchen and a living room, said Laurent Lisimachio, a principal at Gensler.

## The Imaginative Lobbies of TAMI-heavy Midtown South



**915 Broadway** - As part of ABS Real Estate Partners' \$10 million in renovations at 915 Broadway in the Flatiron District, the company started a rotating art exhibit in the property's new two-story lobby, said ABS President Gregg Schenker. (See CO's full-length Sit Down interview elsewhere in this week's issue.) Tech educators General Assembly recently inked an expansion to over 40,000 square feet in the building.



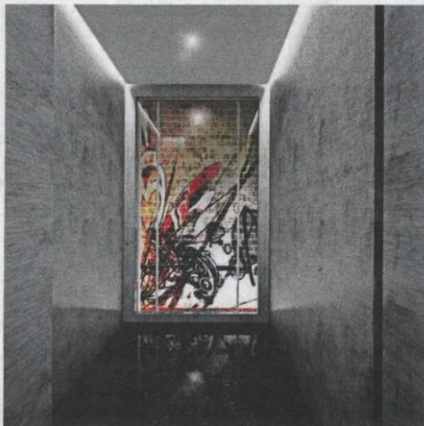
BY TOBIAS SALINGER

Landlords looking to woo the next generation of tenants in the trendy and tight Midtown South district have embraced imaginative designs in their front lobbies and reception areas as the district takes on a "cultural indicator" status previously held by more heralded traditional office properties on Park and Madison Avenues, said Thomas Vecchione, the design director and principal of the Gensler architecture, design and branding firm. "Lobbies are starting to engage communities so that there's a community of like-minded tenants there," Mr. Vecchione explained. "They're not about the big corporate presence anymore; they're about the cultural touch points."

*Commercial Observer* collected a snapshot group of six office buildings in Midtown South where landlords or tenants have implemented novel approaches to greeting employees and visitors in their lobbies, including two from Gensler.

**210 11th Avenue** - The lobby of this 11-story office and retail building in Chelsea features an exhibition of photography, collages and mixed media works by young artists from New York City public schools entitled "Reflections of New York." ABS has filled the building to capacity with three new leases, company officials announced last week.

**350 Hudson Street** - Gensler designed a new reception area for clinical trial tech company Medidata in the company's Hudson Square office. And the open-flowing reception area will lead directly toward the company's café, conference center and rooftop area when it's complete, said Mr. Lisimachio.



**Madison Square Portfolio** - The Kaufman Organization's in-progress improvements at 19 West 24th Street, 13 West 27th Street and 45 West 27th Street include glass-encased elevators that show off art on each floor and lobby walls with computerized wooden fins that create optical illusions. The company wants to attract "our target audience—tech, media and creative firms," Grant Granspan, a principal with Kaufman, told CO.



ADAM JONES/FOR COMMERCIAL OBSERVER