

Amanda Gunawan & Joel Wong

Keeping Up with the Clients



The Biscuit Loft, an apartment housed within the former Nabisco cookie factory and redesigned by the OWIU team, houses the company headquarters and serves as a physical manifestation of the brand's values.

The Los Angeles-based architecture and design firm OWIU has a longer name and one that is really more of a motto. “The only way is up,” its co-founders Amanda Gunawan and Joel Wong say, “is a lifestyle.” The expression that has woven its way into their studio, their home, and their everyday lives implies an always upward trajectory and a constant state of evolution. It makes sense, then, that after starting their firm in 2017, they found themselves looking to rebrand.

Much like their work, Gunawan and Wong's ascent has been simultaneously progressive and mindful. Both raised in Singapore, the duo met in high school. They then studied at the Southern California Institute of Architecture before joining Morphosis, the interdisciplinary practice from Pritzker Prize-winner Thom Mayne. After just under one year working at the prestigious office, they received an email from Paris Design Week asking if they wanted to exhibit furniture that they had produced while students. Gunawan and Wong found themselves at a turning point, but true to their slogan, they kept forging ahead. They subsequently left their coveted jobs at Morphosis behind and set OWIU right into motion. Fast-forward, and they