





# *feelin' groovier*

Workshop/APD and Metafor turn  
a 1960's motor lodge in the  
Canadian Rockies into the Moxy  
Banff, and the age of Aquarius  
has never looked so good

text: *jane margolies*  
photography: *younes bounhar/doublespace photography*



**When the Voyager Inn** was built in the Canadian ski town of Banff in 1964, road tripping was all the rage and motor lodges were opening in vacation destinations to cater to the traveling public. By the time Canalta Hotels bought the property in 2016, however, the Voyager—or the Voy, as locals called it—was seriously rundown, best known for its dive bar, liquor store, and budget accommodations for group bus tours. But its handsome, low-slung bones were still very much intact. Now, after a \$30 million overhaul helmed by Workshop/APD and Metafor, it has been reinvented as the Moxy Banff, combining the cheeky personality of the Moxy hotel brand and the outdoorsy spirit of Banff with the building's own mid-century roots.

“You take those three things and put them in a narrative pot and stir,” starts Matt Berman, cofounding principal with Andrew Kotchen of New York-based Workshop/APD, which handled the hotel's interiors. “As designers, we're always trying to tell a clear story for a hospitality project.” The story of the Voy's rebirth began when Canalta, a Canadian hospitality company,

hired the Calgary-based architecture firm Metafor soon after it purchased the property. Together they assessed the building and explored renovation possibilities.

The Voy had always been something of an outlier, beginning with its location on the eastern edge of the town of Banff, which itself is in Banff National Park. Then there was its architecture, which stood in contrast to the prevailing chalet-style aesthetic of the area. Both Canalta and Metafor thought the very things that had always made the property a little bit different could work to its advantage.

Although Canalta had never operated a Moxy—a Marriott Bonvoy brand introduced a decade ago that now has more than 135 idiosyncratic worldwide properties, each reflecting their locales—it convinced Marriott the Voy would make a good one. W/APD was on the list of firms that Marriott provided to Canalta, and soon after Berman and associate principal Andrew Kline took off for Banff to meet with the Voy's new owners and see the property, it was asked to join the renovation team. ➤



**Previous spread:** In a lower-level corridor at Moxy Banff, a 1964, three-story motel in the Canadian Rockies turned hotel by Workshop/APD and Metafor, custom neon signage backs a ski-lift chair, perfect for selfies, while the palette of the neighboring floor tile and custom wallcovering channels the era of the original property.

**Opposite:** A vintage floor lamp similar to the 1962 Arco joins a ceiling-mounted gas fireplace in the lobby lounge, where most seating is custom and paintings by local artist Kristen Bollen hang on walnut tambour paneling.

**Top, from left:** Douglas fir balcony railings replaced the building's painted-wood ones, but the walls of local Rundle stone are original. In the bar area, where hanging chairs recall Eero Aarnio's 1968 Bubble, the Brooklyn stools are by Gianni Tapizopoulos. **Bottom:** Painted loops inspired by '70's racetrack motifs sandwich the combination bar-reception desk and a Moxy-branded polar bear-shaped ceiling fixture in translucent resin, both custom.



**Left, from top:** A vintage Alpha Egg chair backs up to custom wallcovering outside the ski-bike locker room. Another Bollen artwork appoints the public restrooms with custom terrazzo flooring. **Right:** Custom sconces line the staircase, where the recessed mural was painted on-site by Tanya Klimp, also Canadian.

**Opposite top, from left:** A 1966 Volkswagen Kombi bus has been repurposed as a food truck for the lobby lounge. A custom powder-coated tubular-steel bench and seat furnish a guest room. **Opposite bottom, from left:** Another features tartan-patterned wallcovering, furniture, and rug, all custom. A guest-room corridor retains its original precast-concrete ceiling, the waves echoed in the custom carpet that extends up the walls to protect them from guests carrying skis.



Moxy advisors weighed in at key points in the design process.

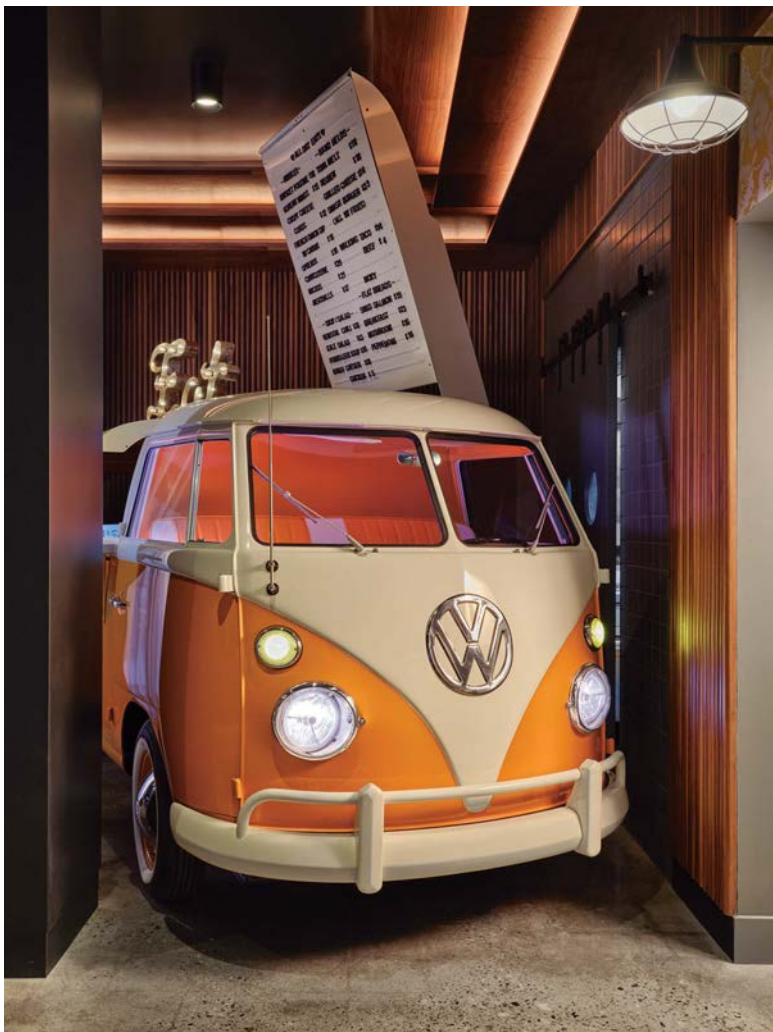
Metafor focused on updating the exterior of the 58,000-square-foot building, replacing windows, repointing original Rundle stone walls, and swapping out painted-wood railings for ones made of Douglas fir with a transparent stain. To make the hotel as welcoming to cyclists and pedestrians as it had always been to motorists, the area in front of the building where drivers had parked while checking in was trimmed, freeing up space for a welcoming staircase and terraces that step down to the street, beckoning passersby. “It’s a new opportunity for gathering,” Metafor principal Chris Sparrow says.

The layout of the three-story building—public spaces at the center, guest wings over parking garages on either side—already suited the Moxy brand, which emphasizes communal areas. But a second-floor ballroom was turned into more guest rooms, increasing the total from 88 to 109.

Interior walls at the center of the ground level were removed, opening space for an expansive lobby lounge with a pill-shaped bar that doubles as a check-in desk, a Moxy trademark. Instead of having liquor bottles on tiered shelves—the usual arrangement—Berman and Kline created bottle racks that resemble ski gondolas and hung them from the ceiling (yet still within a bartender’s easy reach). Entering the lobby, visitors now see clear to and through the back of the building, where a courtyard has been reinvented as an outdoor lounge with a hot tub, pool, firepits, and ample seating.

A retro palette of reds, yellows, browns, and oranges warms the interiors. Some patterns, too, hark to the ’60’s, including nearly hallucinogenic waves in the carpeting for a guest-room corridor. Other patterns evoke outdoorsy pursuits, such as the oversize tartan wallcovering inside the guest rooms, ➤







suggesting flannel shirts one might wear hiking. As for the striped blankets—another Moxy signature—they “looked so at home in our rooms,” Kline notes.

He, Berman, and their colleagues mixed custom furniture with mid century–inspired pieces and vintage originals. Some of the latter were acquired by Brooke Christianson, a Canalta vice president and a son of the company founders, who got into the thrill of the hunt. W/APD had prepared a wish list of vintage items, and Christianson, working with local dealers, located pieces and texted photos of his finds to Kline—a method that resulted in purchases that were far less expensive and more sustainable than if the team had shopped in New York and shipped to Banff. Christianson found the chrome floor lamp that now arcs over the lounge and the '70's Egg chair manufactured by Lee West that sits outside the bike and ski locker room.

Christianson also located the old VW bus parked in the lobby after W/APD came up with the idea of turning one into a food truck. Christianson's uncle, who does hot-rod restorations, cut a chunk out of the bus's middle—that's where the person who takes orders stands—and doctored the roof so it hinges up, revealing a vintage menu board. Groovy for sure. 🍷

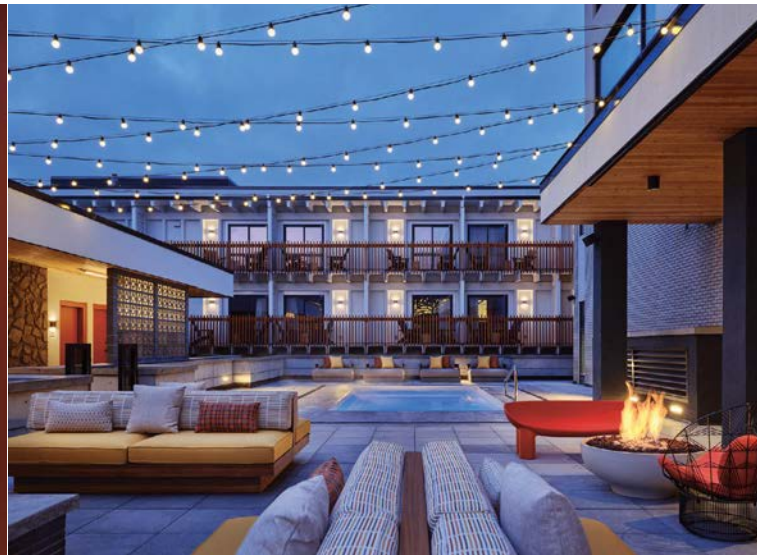
#### PROJECT TEAM

**FRAN FANG;** JOEL EDMONDSON: WORKSHOP/APD. **CLAUDIA SCHAAF;** ILONA CIUNKIEWICZ; STEVE TURCOTT; JAMES LINDSAY; DIANE SAWA; LISA PANASOVA; CHRIS McLAUGHLIN: METAFOR. **GROUND CUBED:** LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT. **KEVIN BARRY**

**FINE ART:** ART CONSULTANT, CUSTOM GUEST-ROOM WALLCOVERING. **ILLUMINATION LIGHTING:** CUSTOM INTERIOR SIGNAGE, CUSTOM LIGHTING. **BANFF SIGN COMPANY:** CUSTOM EXTERIOR SIGNAGE. **ISL ENGINEERING:** STRUCTURAL ENGINEER. **REMEDY ENGINEERING:** MEP. **WSP:** CIVIL ENGINEER. **SHURWAY CONTRACTING:** GENERAL CONTRACTOR.

#### PRODUCT SOURCES

**FROM FRONT SKI LIFT DESIGNS:** CUSTOM CHAIR (LOWER HALL). **DESIGN & DIRECT SOURCE:** FLOOR TILE. **FABRICUT:** CUSTOM WALLCOVERING (LOWER HALL), BOLSTER UPHOLSTERY (SUITE). **MAHARAM:** CHAISE LOUNGE FABRIC (LOBBY). **WARP & WEFT:** CUSTOM RUGS. **A PLUS R:** COFFEE TABLES. **FOCUS FIREPLACES:** FIREPLACE. **SURFACING SOLUTION:** PANELING. **VALLEY FORGE:** BANQUETTE FABRIC (LOBBY), DRAPERY FABRIC (GUEST ROOM), SECTIONAL VELVET (SCREENING ROOM). **TOPOSWORKSHOP:** STOOLS (BAR). **MODHOLIC:** HANGING CHAIRS. **CROWN DOORS:** GARAGE-STYLE DOORS. **WOLF-GORDON:** CUSTOM WALLCOVERING (LOCKER ROOM). **CONCRETE COLLABORATIVE:** CUSTOM FLOORING (RESTROOMS). **CLAYHAUS CERAMICS:** WALL TILE. **JC HOSPITALITY:** CUSTOM CHAIR LIFT (GUEST ROOM). **FAIRMONT DESIGNS:** CUSTOM FURNITURE (GUEST ROOMS). **WEST ELM CONTRACT:** CUSTOM RUG (PLAID GUEST ROOM). **PROSPER & PASION:** CUSTOM CARPET (HALL). **QUALITY & COMPANY:** CUSTOM SECTIONAL (SCREENING ROOM). **BLU DOT:** TABLE, OTTOMAN. **WALLPAPER FROM THE 70S:** WALLCOVERING. **BEAULIEU CANADA:** CARPET. **2MODERN:** BENCH (COURTYARD). **BEND GOODS:** WIRE CHAIR. **SOLUS DÉCOR:** FIREPIT. **SILHOUETTE OUTDOOR FURNITURE:** CUSTOM SOFAS. **MAHARAM:** SOFA FABRIC. **UNITED FABRICS:** PILLOW FABRIC. **KANTA MONTANA:** BREEZE BLOCK. **TECHO-BLOC:** PAVERS. **CALI LIGHTING:** STRING LIGHTS. **EVOLUTION SPAS:** HOT TUB. **ARTONOMY:** MINI TAXIDERMY (SUITE). **THROUGHOUT BENJAMIN MOORE & CO.:** PAINT. **THUNDERSTONE QUARRY:** RUNDLE STONE. **CUSTOM CEDAR RAILINGS:** EXTERIOR RAILINGS. **WINSPEC:** CURTAIN WALLS.



**Opposite:** In the screening room, a crushed velvet-upholstered custom sectional is surrounded by textured vinyl wallpaper appropriately sourced from Wallpaper From the 70s.

**Top, from left:** New mirror art—an installation of custom emoji faces—meets old stone in another corridor. Faye Toogood's Roly Poly bench stands by a firepit in the hot-tub courtyard with custom sofas. **Bottom:** In a suite, a custom bunk bed fitted with toe-to-toe twin mattresses creates an alcove for a king bed, all with built-in, vegan leather-covered bolster padding.

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