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## This Brooklyn apartment took the roof off its hallways to flood the building with natural light

450 Warren, designed by architects SO-IL and real estate development firm Tankhouse, is a winner of a 2023 Innovation by Design Award.

BY ELISSAVETA M. BRANDON



Most apartment buildings are structured around long, bland corridors flanked by doors on either side. But a new building in the Gowanus neighborhood of Brooklyn offers a paradigm shift: Designed by architects SO-IL with real estate development firm Tankhouse, 450 Warren is comprised of 18 units (mostly two- and three-bedrooms plus three penthouses) that can be accessed through a series of sinuous, open-air walkways located in the building's hollowed core.

"Double-loaded corridors are the most depressing invention in humankind," says Florian Idenburg, who cofounded SO-IL with his partner, Jing Liu. "The value should

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not just be coming from the unit itself but from the quality of the journey from the street to your home and how that could be light-filled, joyous.”



SO-IL cofounders **Jing Liu** and **Florian Idenburg** [Photo: [Andrew Boyle](#)]

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Residents enter 450 Warren—the winner of the Home category in the [2023 Innovation by Design Awards](#)—via an atrium that features walkways and stairwells leading up to the five-story building's upper floors. The design increases the opportunity for chance encounters and conversations among neighbors. Each apartment has at least two balconies and a little front porch outside. This being New York, unit prices start at \$1.7 million, yet virtually every apartment was sold before the building opened in the spring of 2022.

*This story is part of Fast Company's [2023 Innovation by Design Awards](#). Explore the full list of companies creating products, reimagining spaces, and working to design a better world. Read more about the [methodology behind the selection process](#).*

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