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A Wake-Up Call to Design With Resilience

This issue is focused on retail, but I had to take a detour with this editorial in the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy. I wrote this a few days after Sandy hit the East Coast and right before Election Day. So, by the time you read this, much may have changed. Or perhaps not much at all. Sandy had an impact on Contract, but we’re all fine. I live in downtown Manhattan and lost power and cell service at my home for days, and Contract’s office—also within the blackout area—and adjacent downtown subway lines were inaccessible for days as well. This issue is reaching you days later than planned due to Sandy. But New Yorkers are a hearty bunch and we’ll persevere.

In the big picture, at this writing, we do not fully know the complete extent of the storm damage along the East Coast, but we know that it was absolutely devastating for a wide swath of infrastructure and our built environment. To be sure, Contract’s readership focus is on commercial interiors, but Hurricane Sandy has a far-reaching impact and it offers us all a moment to pause, think about the larger world around us, and possibly reconsider how we design and build.

Perhaps this is a time for us to consider sustainability and resilience in new and different ways. That is, sustainability that goes beyond LEED® or other green building checklists. Designing for real resilience for years and decades to come takes assimilating the vast knowledge we have of our land and climate, and being smart about how we rebuild. Time to work with nature and not against it.

In the days after Sandy, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo suggested that the city and the state, among other infrastructure considerations, might have to consider building a levee to protect lower Manhattan. “We have a new reality, and old infrastructures and old systems,” Cuomo said. “We’re going to rebuild better and stronger.”

The governor noted, pointedly as a statement of fact rather than as a political commentary, that there have been more severe weather-related catastrophes in New York in his two years as governor compared to his father’s 12 years in the same office. “Climate change is a reality,” Cuomo said. “Given the frequency of these extreme weather situations we have had—and I believe it is an increased frequency—for us to sit here today and say this is once-in-a-generation, and it’s not going to happen again, I think would be short-sighted.”

Given that reality, it is a matter of how we plan for future disaster with the everyday built environment in which we live and work. Rachel Minnery, an architect based in Seattle, who is the chair of the AIA National Disaster Assistance Committee and cofounder of Architects Without Borders Seattle, reminds us of this. The winner of the 2012 AIA Seattle Young Architect Award, Minnery told Contract, “There’s no harm done when we can anticipate future negative consequences. We have to take a good, hard look at where our priorities are.”

Architects and designers do have a role in both the near-term and long-term related to disaster mitigation. In a statement, AIA National President Jeff Potter, FAIA, said, “To the many communities in Hurricane Sandy’s path, members of the AIA and the AIA National Disaster Assistance Committee will work closely with our colleagues, as we have following other severe weather events, to assist local communities in their recovery efforts. Through our network of chapters, we are beginning to assess the damage to communities in the Northeast region. We will formulate plans to assist architects there in evaluating the building damage caused by the storm and map a path to recovery. Experienced disaster responders with the AIA have resources to help prepare architects for this important role.” To get an overview of the AIA Disaster Response Program, visit aia.org/disasterresponse.

What we can control, and what architects and designers can do, is to seize the responsibility to design spaces and places that are resilient and lasting, to partner with engineers, developers, and governments and to share expertise on everything from building codes to how to rebuild smarter. This is a moment to design, expertly, for the realities of the locations in which a building is built.

Much can change. Or perhaps not much at all. The world is waiting for you to share your knowledge and skills. What will you do?

Sincerely,

John Czarnecki, Editor in Chief
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Ennead completes major Yale University Art Gallery expansion and renovation

A $135-million renovation and expansion at the Yale University Art Gallery—the oldest and one of the most prestigious university art museums in the United States—will be complete in December. Led by Duncan Hazard and Richard Olcott, partners at award-winning Ennead Architects, the ambitious project combines spaces from three adjacent campus buildings of different eras into a single, seamless museum that still preserves the iconic architecture of each.

The three buildings, previous homes to the gallery, include the 1866 Street Hall designed by Peter Bonnett; the 1928 Old Yale Art Gallery by Egerton Swartwout; and the 1953 modernist structure designed by the legendary Louis Kahn. While maintaining the architectural identity of each, Ennead has transformed and connected the buildings to increase gallery space from 40,266 square feet to 69,975. Though parts of the gallery remained open throughout the 14-year expansion, the newly renovated museum will open in its entirety with a ribbon cutting on December 12.

"The reinstallation of the gallery is a stunning testament to the transformation that this project has achieved," says Jock Reynolds, the gallery director. "The new galleries are superb places for viewing art, providing space for generous installations in which recently acquired works enable new perspectives on longtime favorites." The gallery’s collection to date numbers 200,000 objects ranging from antiquities to present day art. —SHEILA KIM
News in Brief

**Architect Gae Aulenti dies at 84**
Italian architect and designer Gaetana (Gae) Aulenti, best known for converting a Paris train station into the Musée d’Orsay, died on October 31 at the age of 84. One of only two female graduates in her 1954 Milan architecture class, she was also one of the few Italian women to earn acclaim in architecture in the postwar years. Aulenti was also recognized for her showrooms for Fiat and work on residential villas, and products such as accessories for Louis Vuitton, furniture for Zanotta, and the 1980 Tavolo con Ruote (Table With Wheels) for FontanaArte, which was accepted into the Museum of Modern Art’s collection.

**ASID to hold events at Dwell conference**
The America Society of Interior Designers (ASID) announced in October that its annual Chapter Leadership Conference (a two-day training event for chapter leaders that had traditionally taken place in Chicago the weekend prior to NeoCon®) and its Celebration Awards ceremony will now be held later in conjunction with the Dwell on Design conference in Los Angeles in June 2013. Autumn Conrad, a spokesperson for ASID, says, “By hosting these two events at Dwell on Design, we hope to broaden the Society and our members' exposure and outreach with consumer audiences. Through our involvement at NeoCon®, ASID will continue to focus on activities and programs related to the trade and commercial interiors market.” asid.org

**Lebbeus Woods dies at 72**
Influential architect, artist, and educator Lebbeus Woods died October 30 at age 72. He was a long-time professor of architecture at the Cooper Union in New York, and his design work, futuristic illustrations, writings, and theory had a significant impact on architects and designers. In his 2002 book War and Architecture, Woods wrote, “I am an architect, a constructor of worlds, a sensualist who worships the flesh, the melody, a silhouette against the darkening sky.”

**Shaw sponsors education design exhibition in New York**
The Center for Architecture in New York has opened “The Edgeless School: Design for Learning,” an exhibition on how the digital age affects learning environments and, in turn, how architecture responds to these changes. “Design and technology are inextricably linked. The classroom setting is rapidly evolving in an effort to capitalize on the teaching power of technology,” says Shaw Contract Group Director of Education Markets Wanda Dunaway. Shaw is an underwriting sponsor of the exhibition, which runs through January 19, 2013. cfa.aia.org

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Solve for x by setting your sights lower.
Getting Crafty

Gandia Blasco’s latest rugs revive centuries-old crafts

Contemporary tapestries for the floor, these rugs from Spanish company Gandia Blasco give new meaning to “knit one, purl two.” Traditional crafts and woven arts, in fact, continue to resurface with modern twists in the furnishings market, and some undoubtedly influenced the dimensional pieces released this year by Gandia Blasco’s flooring division, Gan Rugs.

Canevas (1), designed by Charlotte Lancelot, plays on cross stitch and embroidery techniques. Its wool felt ground measures 5 feet 7 inches by 7 feet 11 inches and sports a grid of perforations through which vibrantly colored yarns weave a series of X’s. The Canevas design is also translated for poufs and generous cushions. Meanwhile, the low-and-high-pile Hidra (2) evokes block printing in a combination of neutral and primary colors. Designed by José A. Gandía-Blasco, the wool rug sports raised, ornate diamond motifs that create a relief or frieze-like surface. Hidra comes in two sizes: 5 feet 11 inches by 7 feet 11 inches and 7 feet 5 inches by 9 feet 10 inches. And the in-house designed Trenzas (3) features a large-scale, stockinette-stitch pattern. Its high-pile wool on cotton backing feels like a hand-knit sweater underfoot, and its neutral palette of ivory, taupe, and brown make it versatile for a range of settings. Trenzas measures 5 feet 7 inches by 7 feet 11 inches or 6 feet 8 inches by 9 feet 10 inches; a 7-foot-5-inch-diameter round version is also offered.

Other recent offerings from Gan Rugs are equally visual and textural, drawing on geometry, symbols, crochet, and quilt and patchwork design. —SHEILA KIM

gan-rugs.com
Reader Service No. 210
A conference seating line that departs from the formal, businesslike furniture typically encountered in boardrooms, Phoulds boasts a geometric design that is reminiscent of clean folds in origami. The shell is composed of beech veneer that can be stained or tinted, and is lined on the interior or completely covered with pads upholstered in fabric or leather. Base options include an aluminum four-pronged star base or four legs.

Italian fashion house Missoni brings a few of its classic styles to Swedish flooring company Bolon. Optical sports an electromagnetic wave-like pattern in bold colors such as raspberry and turquoise. Bayadere is a stripe pattern formed by wide black and white bands and slimmer stripes in accent colors such as pineapple and orange. And Flame features uneven zigzags in monochromatic black and gray. All are made from woven vinyl.
Apps, designed by Richard Hutten, plays on current technology with a rounded cube form that evokes icons displayed on mobile device screens. Webbing on the back and a generous layer of foam for the seat enhance comfort, while monochromatic or contrasting upholstery adds a pop of color. The chair is offered as a single (called 1.0) and a two-seater (2.0).

An elegant bamboo and plywood honeycomb structure provides sturdy support in the Bee bench by Fritsch-Durisotti Design. Finished in a clear, extra-matte varnish, the seat rests on a white-coated steel frame. An optional wool cushion is available in Granny, Mouse, or Anthracite. The bench measures 90 inches long by 17 inches deep by 20 inches high.
Designed to offer infinite possibilities, Signs modular seating pieces combine to create forms that reference crop circles, ideal for public spaces. The line consists of five basic components: a curved Y shape, an L corner, a square, and cylinders in two heights. The unit bases are upholstered in black fabric, allowing the color of the seat covers to jump.
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Andreu World America: Flexa
andreuworldamerica.com
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Taking cues from clean-lined midcentury modern designs, Flexa is a slim-profile chair defined by a single seat-and-back shell. The thermo-polymer shell features rib-like horizontal grooves that provide both give and resistance. The flexible piece can be specified with tubular legs, a sled base, a pronged base, or casters, and with or without arms.

Masland Contract: Organics
maslandcontract.com
Reader Service No. 217

Organics modular tile collection comprises eight patterns that reference naturally occurring visuals in an abstract manner. Oblique (left), for instance, alludes to the nature of floating and colliding elements. Scope (middle) depicts molecules as seen through a microscope. And Glaze (right) shifts between light and dark to create a haze effect. All are 100 percent Antron Legacy nylon.
Tracey Sawyer of New York interior design studio Krause + Sawyer launched her rug line The Nought Collective in 2006, offering both kitschy doodle-like graphics and spare, urban designs. Her most recent collection, Will You Be My Friend?, features three traditional Japanese motifs including a pattern of swelling lines that mimic textiles (shown), delicate flowers, and a fierce dragon. Hand-knotted in wool, silk, or blends, the rugs come in four sizes.

Eisenhower possesses the look of an Arne Jacobsen piece, or other Scandinavian modern classics. But just as its name sounds, the chair is all-American—designed and produced in Michigan. The gently curved bentwood chair is defined by a one-piece seat-and-back shell that rests on turned solid wood legs. Finishes include rich walnut, ash, or maple veneer or laminate.
Rows of bright color run parallel to one another, each trying to outrace the other. Varying width stripes introduce an organic quality to the classic precision of pinstripes while deeply saturated colors provide pure streaks of cheer. The feeling is dynamic, optimistic and fresh.
A long black-granite "box" appears as if it has been dropped into the center of the lounge. This anchoring structure houses the bulk of the lounge's programming.
HyundaiCard Air Lounge
A Gensler-designed VIP lounge and kiosk take off at Incheon International Airport

Once upon a time air travel was a pleasure and a privilege. That time has long since passed. Now going to the airport is about as stressful and uncomfortable as visiting the dentist. While brainstorming for the design of the HyundaiCard Air Lounge at the Incheon International Airport, near Seoul, South Korea, Gensler wanted to create the antithesis of that experience: a relaxing, helpful place that would become a respite for travelers. But since the lounge was located in front of baggage claim, the designers faced the challenge of providing amenities and enlivening the experience to draw travelers who might otherwise keep moving. The result is a striking, futuristic, efficiently organized space that is a mix between a high-end boutique, a grown-up playland, and a spa.

"It couldn't be the typical air lounge, where it's a sea of couches and not much going on besides eating and reading the paper," explains Gensler Design Director and Senior Associate Philippe Paré.

Planning a compact space within the larger context
Because the 2,700-square-foot space is so small, and cut off from natural light, Paré and his team from Gensler's Los Angeles office focused not just on excitement and comfort but on flow, organization, and ways to make the space feel bigger. The organization, which Paré likens to that of a well-packed suitcase, is a simple, fluid layout consisting of a reception in the front with the bulk of the program inside a long bar-shaped structure in the center, and VIP lounges in the back. To visually augment the space, the firm installed highly reflective surface materials such as white gypsum board on walls, high-gloss painted metal on ceilings, and white terrazzo for the floors. Minimal design makes the space feel bigger and calmer—not to mention timeless—while recessed lighting coves above produce ethereal, soft halos that enable guests to feel like they're aboard a cruising ship as opposed to a traveler about to be packed into a sardine can.

The lounge's dominating element is the large black rectangle that runs perpendicular to the simple welcome desk. The polished black granite box punches through the lounge's metal ceiling, appearing to float in space and increasing its sense of dominance and mystery.

Cut by chambers running through it and niches slicing into its sides, the black mass contains, among other things, a concierge, travel accessories, printed materials, food and refreshment stations, and a business center with computers. It even features video installations by noted Japanese artist Hiroshi Sawa and a robotic vending machine that dispenses gifts for HyundaiCard holders. To help with the lack of natural light in this part of the airport, the firm installed virtual skylights above two of the chambers that are actually LED screens that cycle through the spectrum of sky colors to match what's going on outside.

Thinking inside the black box
The black volume's design, says Paré, was inspired by unusual sources: the black HyundaiCard itself, whose elite members access the space; the black box of an airplane; and even the monolithic computer HAL 9000 from 2001: A Space Odyssey. All this high-tech drama creates a poetic quality for a space that could otherwise have been mundane.

Beyond the slab and past sheer curtains blocking out the terminal traffic, a VIP lounge allows guests to perch inside spherical Ball Chairs that shield them from their surroundings. Fifteen colorful, bar-shaped LCD screens, loosely evocative of the old tickers inside train stations, display individual flight information and flash when flights are getting close to departure.

A winner of a 2012 American Institute of Architects (AIA) Institute Honor Award for Interior Architecture, the project earned jury praise such as, "The project takes an innovative approach to the airline lounge model, effectively establishing a unique relationship between the passenger and the space. The well-conceived assimilation of technology engages the traveler in both the 'black box' and the surrounding walls that integrate the helpful passenger flight status flip-screens."

Don't let this combination of simplicity, futurism, and fun fool you: this is an unexpectedly powerful project that is the perfect antidote to the airport outside.
The entrance (above) is marked by a simple reception desk. Gensler drew on classic train station flip screens for an LCD wall (right) that cycles through a series of slides displaying guest name, flight info and status, and boarding time and gate—all captured at concierge check-in. Ball Chairs provide semi-private enclaves for guests.
A traveler uses an interactive touch screen to learn about retail offerings and make purchases that they can have shipped anywhere.
To make up for the lack of daylight in the space, the design team created virtual skylights within the black box; their gentle illumination, powered by LED, mimics the sky, corresponding to the time of day. The space includes a retail component, as well as a place to relax.

Highly reflective surface materials such as white gypsum board, high-gloss painted metal, and white terrazzo help to visually maximize space.

Gensler implemented a polished black granite box to delineate the central program zone that houses the concierge, travel accessories, printed materials, food and refreshment stations, and a business center with computers.

Virtual skylights provide sky-simulating LED illumination for this daylight-challenged space.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Floor Plan</th>
<th>Entrance</th>
<th>Reception</th>
<th>Large VIP lounge</th>
<th>Small VIP lounge</th>
<th>Freight elevator</th>
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How much time do you have?

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Cutouts within the black box contain most of the programming—from retail merchandise display to business center computers.
With a modern take on vintage, the fashion and accessories of Orla Kiely—now hot in the UK—arrive stateside

Even the fashion-challenged among us will recognize Orla Kiely's signature stem pattern, comprised of cheerfully upturned leaves, which graces hats, journals, pillows, and tops. Proclaimed by The Guardian as the "Queen of Prints," Kiely is Irish-born and London-based, and with three retail locations to her name in the United Kingdom, she has recently hopped the pond.

The Kiely brand encompasses a range of products from handbags to housewares, perfume, stationery, and clothing that is at once lady-like and playfully girlish; Kiely puts a modern spin on vintage patterns and silhouettes. Her entire line is on display in her new flagship store in New York, which "is really a lifestyle store," explains Paula Flynn, president of Orla Kiely USA. The Kiely team leased a 2,300-square-foot storefront on Mercer Street in fashionable SoHo. To translate the brand into a three-dimensional experience, it engaged Dublin-based firm contractdesign.com
Movable pieces within the main space (left), made by Oikos, one of Ireland’s top joiners, easily reconfigure for evolving merchandise and events in the store. Vignettes are established in recessed rooms—much like a dollhouse—and walls are sheathed in Kiely’s custom pattern designs.

Architecture Republic, led by Maxim Laroussi, who designed Kiely’s family home in South London. New York firm Ogawa Depardon Architects served as executive architect.

A discovery of the brand

Orla Kiely is a brand with a UK following—both loyal and royal: Kate Middleton was photographed wearing a Kiely bird-print coat, sparking a frenzy that temporarily threatened to paralyze the brand’s website. Now, Americans who’ve been carrying stem-patterned bags for years will finally get to know the full Kiely brand. According to Flynn, “this store is intended to introduce Orla’s world to America—her complete line and lifestyle.”

Maintaining the space’s quintessential SoHo, New York features, including ornate cast-iron columns, exposed brick, and high ceilings with a pitched skylight in back, was a priority. “The idea was to not touch the fabric at all and just tidy up a little bit,” explains Laroussi. Since the building is landmarked, the designers couldn’t drastically alter the storefront, anyway.

Enticing customers to move from the front to back of a store is every retail designer’s primary objective. As Laroussi notes, “people enter a shop and make it 15 or 20 feet in, and then they think they know what it’s all about, so they leave.” Kiely’s space is narrow and deep at 25 by 100 feet, making the layout process that much more challenging. Laroussi’s solution was to divide the space into two distinct linear zones: an open volume flanked by a series of partially interconnected, intimate rooms that encourages customers to explore deeper and become familiar with the whole Kiely brand.
The furniture and displays (above) installed throughout the store are a mix of new and vintage pieces. Vintage light fixtures by G Plan, discovered by Laroussi on eBay and in salvage yards, add an intimate touch to the dollhouse rooms. Orla Kiely will soon launch a new furniture line, which will be available in the store.

Orla Kiely

Architect: Architecture Republic
Executive Architect: Ogawa Depardon Architects
Client: Kiely Rowan PLC
Where: New York
What: 2,100 square feet on one floor
Cost/sf: $120

For a full project source list, see page 62 or visit contractdesign.com.
The main volume features movable displays that can be reconfigured as merchandise evolves and easily pushed aside to turn the stained oak strip floors into a catwalk. Aside from hosting fashion shows on the fly, the space also doubles as a long dining area for press lunches with a stage for DJs, and the store's staff has plans to host a movie night. Laroussi describes the main volume as an "interior street" and, continuing that metaphor, it is faced by a series of more intimate rooms, revealed like the cross-section of a dollhouse. Several of Kiely's wallpaper designs line these rooms, which display her stationery sets, housewares, and clothing. Shopping in high-end New York boutiques can often feel more like visiting a museum, but Kiely's customers are welcome to touch the merchandise, or even rest on a sofa.

Custom furnishings mixed with vintage
A mix of furniture includes midcentury vintage pieces and new ones designed by Kiely and the architects. The movable pieces within the main space were made by one of Ireland's top joiners, Okos. London-based workshop Oval fabricated the bentwood rails from which clothing hangs along the long south wall. Orla Kiely will soon launch a new furniture line, which will be available for purchase in the store.

Laroussi's design drops the ceilings to just below eight feet in the series of side vignette rooms, establishing a more domestic scale on par with a living room, kitchen, or walk-in closet. The proportions of the millwork correspond to seat and desk height. Other domestic details in the rooms include vintage light fixtures, a giant reproduction of an old television, baseboards, and textured-vinyl tile flooring.

"Your body understands those kinds of dimensions. They give comfort and a sense of being at home," explains Laroussi. That home-like feel will welcome New York shoppers as they get to know the Orla Kiely brand.
Vintry Fine Wines
Rogers Marvel Architects crafts a bright, airy wine store with a fresh, modern twist
By Jean Nayar
Photography by Paul Warchol

With a longstanding history as a favored restaurateur in New York’s Financial District, the Poulakakos family was at the top of the list of potential storefront tenants within the new Goldman Sachs headquarters building in lower Manhattan’s Battery Park City. The family welcomed the opportunity to parlay their expertise in food and wine into a new retail venue called Vintry Fine Wines, which is distinctive in its approach to the display and sale of bottles of wine.

“We really wanted each bottle to have its own identity on the shelves,” says Peter Poulakakos. “And we wanted a refined, clean, bright environment that would be an expressive backdrop for our wine bottles.” To craft a space that would reflect their core idea and well-edited offerings, the Poulakakoses enlisted New York–based Rogers Marvel Architects, who designed a crisp, jewel box of a store that departs dramatically from the musty, woody, jumbled qualities typically found in a wine shop.

Crafting a new typology

Peter Poulakakos wields the reins of the legacy begun by his father, Harry Poulakakos, founder and impresario of Harry’s restaurant in lower Manhattan, and has built his own emerging food empire, including Bayard’s, Adrienne’s Pizza Bar, Financier Patisserie, and Ulysses. The Poulakkoses’s history in the food business enabled Rogers Marvel to design a clean, clutter-free space within a 2,100-square-foot footprint.

“Most wine stores generally require a ratio of 80 percent storage space to 20 percent display space,” says Tim Fryatt, the Rogers Marvel architect in charge of the project. “For every bottle on display, there are typically 11 in storage and the excess inventory results in dirty, cluttered environments filled with boxes.” The Poulakakoses, though, developed a business model that allows for much of the storage to be in remote locations. This enables “a new typology,” says Fryatt, “that allowed us to appropriate 30 percent of what would have been storage space for display, giving us 65 percent of the space for display.”

To accommodate the family’s distinct approach to marketing the wines, the architects also opted to depart from linear aisles and flat shelves characteristic of a typical wine shop. Instead, the space is designed as a series of undulating continuous shelves that wrap around a central display table and curve into a hidden niche at the back of the store. “The sinuous wall system allows the number of bottles in any given region to expand and contract as the inventory evolves, giving the store owners flexibility to adapt to variables in inventory as needed,” says Fryatt.

With undulating display walls and clean, white surfaces, Vintry dramatically departs from a typical wine shop.
Vintry Fine Wines occupies 2,100 square feet on the ground floor of Goldman Sachs's new building (left). The retail experience is enhanced with touch-screen directories (below) and a custom display case and cash wrap.

**Vintry Fine Wines**

**Designer:** Rogers Marvel Architects, PLLC  
**Client:** Vintry Fine Wines  
**Where:** New York  
**What:** 2,100 square feet on one floor  
**Cost:** Withheld at client's request  

For a full project source list, see page 62 or visit contractdesign.com.
The cues for the flowing wall system were inspired by vineyard landscapes and that, in turn, influenced the overall aesthetic of the space. "We were obsessed with the rolling typography of a vineyard," says Fryatt. "We were struck by the beautiful, languid views of grape vines on hills. And by working with curving continuous shelving, we were also able to visually expand the depth of field in the space and make it feel larger."

**Bottles animating the space**

According to the architect, the presentation of the wine bottles in the store was inspired by Harry Poulakakos's history and experience as a sommelier. "When you consider the most generous way to present a bottle of wine, you think of a maître d' at a table, holding a bottle at the base and neck at an angle of slight repose with the label facing up at eye level," says Fryatt. With this image in mind, Rogers Marvel used digital software to design a series of water-cut openings in the shelving to hold each bottle in a semi-upright position at varying degrees, allowing the bottles to become active players in animating the space and giving each its individual space to shine.

The wine itself, on the other hand, guided the architects' choice of materials for the space. "We aspired to use materials that would age well as wine does," says Fryatt. Luminous terrazzo covers the floor, counters are stain-resistant and durable white Corian, and rich brown leather that will develop an antique patina with age lends warmth as a backdrop behind and beneath the bottles.

With a design as highly honed as the shop's retail concept, this bright, airy shop is sure to become a welcome downtown destination.
Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama puts the luxury brand on the spot at Selfridges in London

With endorsements from Andy Warhol and Donald Judd, Japanese painter, sculptor, and writer Yayoi Kusama made a name for herself in the New York art scene in the 1960s. Art critics were drawn to the psychedelia of her early work, with her counter-culture staging of “Grand Orgy to Awaken the Dead” at the Museum of Modern Art where she and a handful of nude performers adorned the fountain of the museum’s sculpture garden. But the obsessions that gave birth to Kusama’s aesthetic—her iconic polka dot pattern, which communicates her vision of life as “a dot lost among millions of other dots”—compelled her return to Japan and commitment to life in a mental institution.

There, she continues creating works through the course of therapy and of late has been showing and collaborating with cross-disciplinary artists and brands. Most recently, she collaborated with luxury brand Louis Vuitton, which resulted in an exclusive collection of shoes, accessories, and clothing emblazoned with her dot motif.

In anticipation of the collection’s launch, and celebration of Kusama’s recent high-profile exhibitions at the Tate Modern in London and the Whitney Museum in New York, the fashion house also tapped the artist to decorate a series of windows for its stores worldwide. One of the most impressive displays is a pop-up boutique and windows at London department store, Selfridges. The artist styled 24 windows—the largest number in the store’s history to be designed by a single collaborator—that stayed on view through the official launch of the Louis Vuitton collection.

Street side observers are first drawn into the rhythm of Kusama’s world with patterns that flash like an old Morse telegraph pulse replicating dot, upon dot, upon dot. Her obsession with infinity is expressed by dots and circles—shapes with no end. Within Selfridges, the concept store itself bears the artist’s stamp: The Louis Vuitton boutique is defined by a circular footprint that is framed by a dot-perforated cage. Within it, a googol of polka dots covers the floors and punches through white-painted display fixtures. Wayfinding is undefined, allowing visitors to explore the space organically.

**Pumpkin theme morphs into sea urchins**

Her collection for Louis Vuitton still manages to stand out amidst the dot matrix with vivid red, yellow, green, and blue palettes that form dot-pattern stencils revealing the Louis Vuitton monogram pattern in the negative spaces; in some products, the positive and negative spaces are reversed. Her hallmark pumpkin motif, a prominent theme in her sculptural work, morphs into a sea urchin shell shape to form various floor and hanging fixtures. The hanging pendants provide soft illumination and a dappled effect over vignettes where legs of pants and arms of jackets extend like tentacles.

“By boldly combining key characteristics of two forward-thinking retailers with an extraordinary international artist, the result produces something new and completely unique for the customer,” says Linda Hewson, head of creative at Selfridges. “[This collaboration] brings luxury and high art to the high street and appeals to a broad audience from young to old to international.”
In the Diptyque store in London’s Leadenhall Market, no surface was left undesigned. A liquid metal, which appears like brass, was used as a surface covering on the tin ceiling and on the moldings.
Christopher Jenner creates bespoke interiors for two different contexts

By John Czarnecki
Photography by Michael Franke

British designer Christopher Jenner, who just began his studio for interiors two years ago, is quickly developing an impressive portfolio of luxury interiors. For Diptyque in both London and New York, his role is akin to a cultural sieve, translating and incorporating a multitude of visual cues to produce incredibly detailed, bespoke interiors that reflect the brand and the specific location.

Diptyque, founded by three textile designers in Paris in 1961 as a purveyor of avant-garde fabrics and decorative items, has further developed its business and reputation as a luxury fragrance and scented candle company. Two of its newest retail locations are the London and New York shops designed by Jenner, a native of Cape Town, South Africa, who established his own London-based design studio in 2010. Previously an event designer, Jenner and his staff of five focus on niche luxury retail and hospitality design.

"Design in the retail and hospitality sphere is moving toward spaces that are unique and engaging," Jenner says. "As a designer, one needs to evoke an emotive reaction. Diptyque products are inspired by journey and experience—this process of discovery is at the heart of our work for the brand and informs our creative process in which the joy of craft and distinction is central to the result."

As if it is a piece of history
In a stall in London's Leadenhall Market (shown above and opposite), Jenner designed a store—about 120 square feet—that is visually inspired by both classic English libraries and the admittedly garish Victorian Leadenhall structure itself. Appearing as if it had been in the market for years, this Diptyque shop is full of reference to its location.

With a simple limestone floor, the shop features product displays on what are seemingly oversized library cabinets. A liquid metal—a powder mix of brass, stainless steel, and copper—is applied both as a coating on the Victorian-inspired tin ceiling and as a heavy moulding detail. Both hand-rolled, stained-glass inlays and brass details are in the shape of Diptyque's oval logo. Blue linen wallpaper designed by Jenner has a pattern similar to the market's ceiling. And a diffused halo light fixture is suspended above the room. With such a small space, the storage is underground, accessed by a stairwell under an automated...
In the Diptyque flagship in New York's West Village, 10 mirrors line the walls, with acid-etched images that depict the four seasons and iconic scenes from New York. The tables have hand-carved legs in Tulipwood, wrapped in fabric designed by Jenner.
Inspired by the Art Deco style of the Chrysler and Rockefeller Center buildings, and industrial rigor in general, the American walnut display cases feature rounded edges and solid stainless steel legs, all custom-designed by Jenner. On the wall behind the walnut cash-wrap, original wallpaper sports a pattern inspired by Native American Mohawk bead and basketry work.

Centrally placed and inspired by fixtures in Turkish mosques, a steel chandelier holds 100 lights in hand-blown candleholders. Under the chandeliers are tables with white Greek marble table tops and eccentric hand-carved legs in tulipwood, covered in fabric of Jenner’s design and pinned with steel studs.

“The proposition for the brand is based on a cross-pollination of community heritage with that of the heritage and values of the brand, each time considered and refocused for a new marketplace,” Jenner says. His artisanal skill and craft, evident in the elegant detail in his interiors, help to relay a story of assimilation and discovery in both Diptyque stores.

Reinterpreting New York imagery
A celebratory, whimsical concept for Diptyque’s New York flagship on Bleecker Street captures three distinct characteristics: journey, eccentricity, and craft. With an Austrian tiger oak floor underfoot, a pressed-tin ceiling above, and walls composed of 180 mirror panels, the interior literally reflects the vitality of the brand and city. Images depicted in the mirrors are indicative of the four seasons, and also reference cherry blossoms (Bleecker is one of the few New York streets with cherry trees), skyscrapers, the Statue of Liberty, and the Eiffel Tower (a nod to Diptyque’s Parisian roots). Installed at each mirror junction, a stainless steel Diptyque logo is a discrete branding device.

gas-assisted trap door in the floor behind the American walnut transaction desk. And a matching walnut wall behind the desk is carefully crafted in laser cut marquetry with a Diptyque heritage pattern.

Jenner explains that he implements, “a concept of ‘fractal discovery’ to deconstruct and analyze the inherent values of a project, reassembling the assets to create layered, magical solutions.”

In the New York store, walnut showcases with solid stainless steel legs were inspired by Art Deco style.
For the wall behind the cash desk, Jenner designed a wallpaper inspired by Native American Mohawk bird and basketry. The wallpaper is adjacent to a walnut wall section that features laser-cut marquetry with a Diptyque heritage pattern.
Camper Granada

A-cero carves out a striking canyon-like space for the trendy footwear company

The Granada store design is defined by undulating red and white ribbons, most of which are realized in lacquered wood.
If it seems like there’s no cohesion among the retail shops of Spanish company Camper, that is the intent. Bent on presenting a unique experience in every store, the trendy shoe brand collaborates with different architects, designers, and artists: Its roster of past collaborators includes the Bouroullec brothers, Shigeru Ban, Jaime Hayon, and Konstantin Grcic, among many others. The result is a collection of diverse interiors connected by really only one common thread—the brand’s signature red color. For its Granada store, Camper selected Madrid-based A-cero, led by principals Joaquin Torres and Rafael Llamazares, who in turn used the color to seemingly carve out a space located on the pedestrian-only Calle de los Mesones.

Working with a little more than 500 square feet, A-cero opted to create a dynamic backdrop that evokes movement, which also strikes a chord with the brand message as it emphasizes life as a journey: Its ad campaigns have heralded slogans such as “The Walking Society” and “Imagination Walks.” Llamazares adds that “the fluid and organic design was also inspired by the curves of a foot.”

Sinous curves enliven the interior
Pedestrians first glimpse the cavernous space through amorphous windows in a red aluminum-and-composite storefront. The glossy hue then weaves into the store space on all sides: On the floor, ribbons of Bolon vinyl flooring form the main circulation path. Above, the ceiling almost mirrors the floor below with curving red and white bands rendered in lacquered wood. Red paint coats the undulating walls, while its cantilevered shelving and floor units underneath—all of which hug the walls—are also white lacquered wood. LED lighting creates the illusion that the display fixtures are floating.

To break up the space without disrupting the flow, the architects inserted a central element where the ceiling’s red canopy curves downward and branches out in two directions as it meets the floor. One arm forms a simple bench for customer seating; the other becomes a cash-wrap desk. The checkout counter integrates a transaction screen to adhere to the shop’s overall minimalist aesthetic. At the back of the store, full-height mirrors conceal a small stock room and also visually expand the space.

Looking as though a river cut through the store, the canyon-like interior achieves the individuality the client desires and, in keeping with the Camper brand culture, presents a journey for shoppers to traverse and experience.
The Future in Technology and Experiential Interiors

By Irwin Miller

An expert in retail environments examines emerging technologies that will have a direct impact on how we design spaces.

The technological evolution of recent years has advanced to a point where we can finally see how these innovations are changing the way people interact with and experience interiors. As designers, the implications this will have on our own design decisions—whether about navigating space, managing big data, or creating a seamless user experience—are very exciting and the opportunities are limitless.

Interaction with environments through technology has been evolving the past few years to the point that we’re now seeing how these innovations are already changing the way we interact with space, and thus how design is impacted. Design challenges have become more complex with these updates, but the following constants remain strong drivers for the success of retail projects: relevance, customer experience, interconnected brands across multiple platforms, and differentiation in the marketplace.

Navigating our environment

A big milestone in the recent timeline of technology and spatial advances was Google Maps and soon thereafter Street View. By now, most of us have “googled” locations and have been brought to the virtual doorstep of these places through our screens and handheld devices. Last year, Google brought us further inside these facades with Business Photos. Special panoramic cameras were brought inside stores and famous entertainment and cultural attractions around the world so that one can now visually shop the displays and environments by clicking inside of these stores.

A few new tools have now greatly expanded the options for how we interact through technology in the built environment. Finnish company IndoorAtlas has developed location technology that uses GPS, physical structures, and Earth’s own magnetic field to create highly accurate maps that can help users navigate spaces. While this highly innovative technology is fairly new, it will likely be adopted quickly by large-scale malls, big-box retailers, and even smaller shops in the coming year. With the app loaded onto a smartphone or tablet, one
will be able to navigate the store plan and find both the items one wants to find and items that the retailer wants the customer to see. To expand on this, the retailers can tie in their omni-channel infrastructure and offer an enhanced retail experience while gathering potent data of consumer shopping habits.

The indoor navigation startup aisle411 has recently engaged the more than 7,000 Walgreens stores in the United States. Customers can download this app directly to their smartphones to access maps of every Walgreens store, locate products by aisle and section, while utilizing personal shopping lists and even price-scan barcodes.

Data from technology such as this will allow retailers to understand which products are in demand and can inform future store layouts. This will also enable merchandise and store design decisions based on accurate customer feedback through tracking of customers' performance metrics.

A seamless user experience

A Deloitte analysis of the evolution of retail, "Store 3.0: Planning Tomorrow's Store Today," had noted last year that, "the role of the physical space is shifting from a transactional model to an experiential one, in which customers have a personalized experience with the brand."

Our Gensler Los Angeles office has recently started exploring the possibilities of experiential space by collaborating with Oblong, a technology company headquartered in downtown Los Angeles. Oblong is an inspiring think tank founded by MIT graduates and staffed by numerous MIT Media Lab alumni, and is most associated with a spatial operating environment (SOE) called g-speak, the technology first seen in the movie Minority Report as Steven Spielberg's vision of how we would interact with information and visual environments in the future. During a recent visit to Oblong, our team had the opportunity to engage with several interactive displays and environments that exhibited this technology. While I loved Minority Report and the scenes with this environment in particular, it is a mind-expanding experience trying this in person. The technology fills the void between touch surfaces that we use every day, large-scale digital displays, and gesture-like devices such as a Wii mote or a Kinect. It also allows one to actually interact with objects anywhere in your view using motion. The takeaway from interacting with g-speak is how much it changes one's view that—by using this elaborate technology—a person actually feels more natural in their interactions than expected.

As a designer, I can see far ranging implications for this technology that transcend devices and surfaces. Imagine moving and changing elements of a store environment by moving your hands and simply gesturing. You could select the items that interest you based on your social media and user feedback profiles to create your own shopping experience when you enter the space.

The future is now: What it means for retail design

What does this mean for the spaces we design and the processes in which we now work? As you interact with these technologies, you begin to imagine an entirely new way of working and it feels very natural and instinctual versus overly technological. Much like the way we have all grown accustomed to touch-screen responsiveness and the speed at which our devices and applications perform, these

contract
Platforms started to change one's perception of how we can work and interact with space and information. These useful tools not only yield high productivity and enhance results, but they allow for new interactions and responses that we would not typically be inclined to make.

We are starting to see retail environments act as extensions to not only one's smartphone and online lifestyle, but as a curated and deeply personal experience. [For example, see the Gensler-designed HyundaiCard Air Lounge, page 30] As Walmart CEO Joel Anderson was quoted in a July 4, 2012 New York Times article, “We are living in the age of the customer, and you can either fight these trends that are happening... or you can embrace them.” The ability to manipulate the spaces one occupies and make them about the inhabitant will be increasingly more important and easier to accomplish.

As Pinterest has done for collecting images of places and things one would like to experience and have someday, the future of successfully designed retail spaces will be about embracing the desired personalization so customers experience something new every time and keep coming back to see what happens next. The Deloitte retail trends study indicates that, “The free flow of real-time information will reshape the way sales associates and customers interact. Whether the retailer has a relationship-centered or transactional-centered customer service model, this change will impact nearly every aspect of how a store operates.”

All of these technological advances deepen the possibilities of what designers and operators can employ when developing compelling retail environments. The simple discussion of how a store looks is becoming something of the past. The attitude of today's consumer focuses on what the brand, retail, and transactional experience means personally to them. Storeowners and operators are realizing how the store performance, experiential design solutions, and operation on multiple channels simultaneously is key to their success now and in the future. Our role as designers is to orchestrate and interact among these drivers. If we can understand the trajectory of how these technologies affect and enhance the spaces we design, we can continue to offer valuable, measurable solutions for our clients.
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Baltus: Zen

baltuscollection.com
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"I appreciate the engineering and detailing involved in this piece; it's stunning. It has gravity and weight. I love the contrast between the table's rustic quality of the oak detailing with the smooth lacquer finish."

**MASH studios: PCH Buffet**

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"Silas Ranch fog, northwest winter swell. The PCH series, so well named, and brings you to the California coast in teak squares."

**Nucraft: Passport**

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"What is striking about this piece—a side table and console—is its clever assembly and use of color. It's more like an art installation."

**Vitra: Corniches**

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"Recently, I spent a few nights in an antique miner's cabin high in the Sierras. The walls were splattered with utility hooks at every height. Instead of unpacking my things into a closet, I unpacked onto the walls. I was reminded of this night when I saw Corniches—they're perfect for propping up that beloved letter."

**Partner, 1by1 Design**

Toronto

"I appreciate the engineering and detailing involved in this piece; it's stunning. It has gravity and weight. I love the contrast between the table's rustic quality of the oak detailing with the smooth lacquer finish."
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Contract welcomes its new Editorial Advisory Board members

Contract is pleased to welcome seven new members to its editorial advisory board (see full list on page 6). All notable architecture and design practitioners from across the country, the new members are also national leaders within IIDA, ASID, and AIA. The editorial advisory board offers expert guidance on issues and trends within the profession as well as direction for the Contract brand.

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Sources

Hyundai Card Air Lounge (Page 30)
who Interior designer: Gensler.
Interior design project team: Philippe Pard, AIA, design director; Neil McLean, AIA, project manager; Jamelvyn Sham, job captain; Lynn Kubin, color and materials specialist; Dominic Ricci, senior graphic designer; Sarah Gibson, project coordinator. Contractor: Kessel International Consultants: Kaslan Gehring McCarron (lighting); Kessel International (engineering); Laschober + Switcho (kitchen); Gensler (graphics). Architect of Record Spackman Associates.

Retail experience: To Partnership.


Vintry Fine Wines (Page 40)


Diptoque Leadenhall Market and Bleeker Street (Page 48)
Architect: Architecture Republic. Architecture project team: Joaquim Torres; Rafael Llamazares. Interior designer: Christopher Jenner.

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A Lighting Installation Emphasizes Decadence in a Brussels Confectioner’s Shop

Willy Wonka’s chocolate factory meets Oz’s Emerald City at the Patrick Roger Chocolatier in Brussels, where Parisian lighting designer Gilbert Moity has designed an engaging green-hued installation. Within the confines of Cultural Heritage Authorities guidelines for the more than 200-year-old site in the Place du Grand Sablon—and the shop’s compact size of 33 feet by 16 feet—Moity was able to design a distinctive focal point without altering any of the interior surfaces or finishes. Dubbed the “Hanging Forest,” the installation is composed of light fixtures that Moity custom designed.

To take advantage of the space’s soaring 23-foot ceilings, Moity conceived a grouping of long plastic tubes to highlight the shop’s sweets. The confections are displayed on a long sculptural block, which Roger himself made from chocolate and cast in bronze. To recreate the appearance of lichen growing across tree trunks, Moity used several plastic materials for each tube, including frosted, colorless, and opaque green textured varieties for a total grouping of 90 tubes, with each measuring anywhere between two and five feet in length. As a whole, the Hanging Forest measures 24 feet long by 3 feet wide, and weighs just over 1,000 pounds. To ensure each highlighted morsel of chocolate doesn’t suffer the fate of the melting wicked witch, Moity integrated ventilation with the LED bulbs, and the shop is kept at a constant, cool 64 degrees Fahrenheit.

“This installation required nine months of study, prototyping, and reflecting in order to create a huge object that appears very simple,” Moity tells Contract of his design. “With the size and weight, and using the very high ceiling that disappears into the dark, I really wanted to get a feeling of floating and lightness; an object that one doesn’t know how it is suspended in the air.” —EMILY HOOPER