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Vol.22

Indesign.com.au
August 2005

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Tailored Space

Photography
Sharrin Rees

The brief for Farage, a high-quality men's and women's clothing boutique, was for "minimal detailing, but also with an old world feel". Seemingly a contradiction in terms.

But designer, Greg Natale, saw the use of contrast as a way of resolving the conundrum. The background is a soft cream. Against this palette – almost as a graphic element – the designers have placed long, horizontal shelving down either side (men's clothing on one side, women's on the other) in a warm chocolate tone derived from 90% walnut and 10% black.

In the centre of the space they have created a continuous sculptural form in the same chocolate tone – a slatted false ceiling which hides the lights and turns into a timber 'shirt and tie wall' (itself an old world touch) before returning as a central carpet laid down the middle of a Panna limestone tiled floor.

Floor to ceiling mirrors on either side of the shirt wall generate a sense of depth to what is really a small space. The product itself provides most of the colour, while the gloss level on the island accessory display cases gives additional richness to the interior. "At the end of the day," says Natale, "the shop had to be tailored because that's their product."

This strategy also applied to the way the shop addressed the pedestrian concourse outside – it is a part of the elevated walkway connecting the two buildings making up the new Westfield shopping mall in Bondi Junction. Westfield permitted full-height glazed walls for the retail spaces. So, instead of defining the shop, the designers opened it up to passing trade. The strong and dynamic horizontals inside – including the tracer effect of laying the

limestone tiles in a staggered way – draws the attention of passers-by.

This is amplified by the lowered, slat ceiling. Most of the shops in the centre have opted for plain plasterboard ceilings. But Farage's ceiling, turning as it does into a dynamic sculptural form, animates the interior and draws potential customers in rather than keeping them at arm's length. The strong horizontal elements inside counterpoint with another low horizontal shelf across the front of the shop which takes advantage of the fall of the concourse to set up the geometries inside. A loading-bearing column uses restrained colour-backed glass in a 'crazy paving' technique to define the left-hand side of the shop and lead the eye towards the welcoming palette inside.

Architect Greg Natale Interior Design
Project Team Greg Natale, Stacey Pappas, Idioa Claramunt
Builder and Joiner Duncan Colvin

Greg Natale Interior Design
(61 2) 8399 2103, gregnataleid.com.au

Finishes

Joinery is American Oak black-stained veneer. General wall colour is Dulux 'Buff It', ceiling colour Dulux 'Taupe Wood', islands full gloss 2-pak Dulux Taupe Wood'
Dulux
13 25 25, dulux.com.au

Flooring

Carpet is 'Patagonia' from White Cliff Imports. Stone floor uses 'Panna' limestone tiles from RMS Stone.
White Cliff Imports (61 2) 9692 8822
RMS Stone (61 2) 9316 9677

Lighting

All lighting from JSB Lighting
JSB Lighting (61 2) 9571 8800

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