

BDS STAND AT THE VM & DISPLAY SHOW 2023

Welcome

to our September edition!

Hopefully you have all had a wonderful summer break!

This year, August has seen an unusually high amount of 'out of office' email responses, therefore to ensure maximum readership we have moved the August edition to September. Thank you all for sending your articles and waiting the extra few weeks, as you'll see, the wait was worth it!

The International Creative Display Conference held at TU Dublin in June, resulted in creative discussion about the changing face of display. Dr. Kerry Meakin, organiser and creator of this event, has kindly included her paper in this issue for those of you who could not attend. It makes very interesting reading.

Tim Radley, a speaker at the conference has also contributed an article about the 'Shop of the future' and how retail businesses are having to adapt to the shifts that are occurring in the industry, and the importance of being interactive and making space for community hubs within their stores. This is where VM consultants need to use their creative brains on behalf of the stores to bring it all to life.

We also include a Q&A session with a VM graduate from the London College of Fashion - one of our Centres of Excellence. Natalie Sin also states 'The future of VM lies in expanding into digital sectors. Visual merchandisers must possess digital design skills, encompassing digital stores and spaces alongside physical designs'. 'Phygital' as it is now known, Display has evolved so much over the years!

Other articles include looking at a 'Lift and learn' technology, sustainability and physical retail - so keep up to date with the latest trends in this edition, and keep sending us your ideas and photos of your current projects - it's always good to share with other VM experts.

Jain Kimmins FBDS
Chair



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Today's 'Shop of the Future' is an opportunity to indulge in the richness of visual display and the skills & enthusiasm of visual merchandisers

Visual Merchandising, like any other function within a retail business is having to adapt in response to the paradigm shifts that are occurring in the retail industry.

Those changes are becoming a revolution, not an evolution. What began with globalised supply chains, fast fashion, the advent of ecommerce, pureplay retail, has accelerated into social and rich media shopping, the re-thinking of the high street, through to every area of sustainability from recycling to re-sell, rental, repairs, and up-cycling.

All within the space of a few decades, where the biggest change now is the rate of change.

As with other retail functions VM cannot adapt and respond in isolation. This is not a matter of improving visual display itself.

A good place to begin is with the physical shop. The bastion of visual merchandising. The longer trend has been less shops as ecommerce takes its share, but the resurgence in the customer's clear desire for physical shops after lockdowns is testament to the fact that less shops is only one issue, and arguable not the main one here.

The threat and opportunity for VM is how the role of the physical shop is changing. What is the purpose of a shop for the customer? This is where we find the real ramifications.

The role of the physical shop is no longer just about selling product. Best practice commercial retailers are using the space and the resources in other ways as they create 'retail hubs.' These are 'focal points' for the retailers themselves, for the customer, and for the local community around the physical shop.

The 'Shopper Paradise' will still be the priority for the majority and shops, with its role more inspirational and theatrical than ever. But it will be a smaller part of shops. The trend for many years has been less product, less options per square metre or less square metres. Whichever way you look, the direction is for more considered visual merchandising theatre working with only the best products from the assortment. With the promise of more space and less clutter so that displays really have visibility & stand-out.

This reduction in option numbers should also add some improved visual impact within the main display areas as well. With less colours, patterns, and clashing styles to fit in, hopefully better sell-through from what is in shops, and less remnants on the shop floor, this will allow for clearer, more authoritative blocking delivering a more ordered backdrop for those stand-out displays.

In the new 'Shop of the Future' the 'Community Hub' is growing in importance with more space set-aside to engage customers and build loyalty. The 'Collection Crossroads' is the dedicated area also growing to serve the collections, returns and deliveries of the omni-channel customer. Where stockrooms of unsold products are replaced with storage for paid for purchases.

Increasingly all gross space can be commercialised and put to good purpose, from studios for online customer demonstrations, to meeting rooms for internal and community use, to desks for de-centralised 'work at home' colleagues. There is a lot going on in today's, 'Shop of the future.'

This new incarnation of the physical shop has exciting opportunities for visual merchandisers to take their undoubted product enthusiasm beyond display.

I have rarely met an enthusiastic visual merchandiser, who wasn't also an enthusiast of the products they work with, and the customers they try to please and inspire. Most are very adept and comfortable talking & demonstrating to customers the features, benefits, and the beauty of products.

Visual merchandisers are product people, but they are also categorically people people. You could not wish to find a more gregarious group of people. The 'Craic' at the recent 'International Visual Display Conference' in Dublin, lays testament to that.

Whilst most retailers are growing to realise the importance of the new 'Community' hub in their stores, it is not always as easy to work out how to engage and interact with the customer, and who should do it. For sports & fitness brands such as Sweaty Betty & Lululemon, rolling back the fixtures to make space for yoga lessons held by local instructors is an excellent initiative but for retailers without such a clear lifestyle opportunity, brands need to be a little more creative, and use better the skills and enthusiasm with their own existing ranks.

Interactive workshops and customer activities, anything from lessons in how to dress, how to coordinate, how to make a fashion statement, how to 'wear your wardrobe', to teaching how to repair, to up-cycle to create new products from old.



These are all well suited to visual merchandisers, who could drive traffic to shops, and inspire loyalty in customers. Add to this the opportunity for visual merchandisers to evolve naturally into the role of stylist, the role of personal shopper, and even a one-to-one confidant for special customers. Working across both the physical store with the physical customer, and via Zoom link from the shop's personal video studio, or even into the homes of special customers.

There is a significant shift in how customers are dressing, the confidence that they have as individuals or through influencers to make their own decisions on what clothes to mix & coordinate. This is a more personal and spontaneous approach to styling and visual merchandising. It happens more on the body than in window displays or mannequins, and it relies less on a structured visual plan from buyers and merchandisers, and much more on the dynamic response of the customer community.

For visual merchandisers this is the opportunity to evolve from simply recreating guidelines from head-office teams to this more spontaneous approach, creating new and different looks for each shop profile, in situ, supported by daily sales figures, and inspired by the requests and conversations with customers.

For many visual merchandisers who have been constrained in their creativity by corporate regulations and display rules, this potentially could unleash a wealth of inspiration for customers.

Does this sound exciting and fulfilling? How many visual merchandisers would be liberated and regenerated by the opportunity to work not only with plastic mannequins, but also with real flesh & blood and the personalities inside them? How many retail CEOs would, and should, jump at the opportunity to increase their sales by allowing this important resource to inspire customers, generate revenue and build personal customer loyalty?

The pragmatic and short-sighted alternative is to simply manage chains of shops, each with less product, each with apparently less justification for dedicated visual merchandisers. The operational viewpoint, to spread their VM resources across more stores. More hours on the road and less on the shopfloor, more remote guidance than hands-on inspiration. Would visual merchandisers prefer to be spread themselves more cost-effectively across more stores? Or would they like to be embraced as a rich resource, that can bring shops, customers, and communities alive, and satisfy the new role of the physical shops, the need for retail brands to be brought to life in front of customers eyes, and to respond to the new dynamic and spontaneous customer lifestyles?

I have personally always viewed visual merchandisers as worth their weight in creative and commercial gold, but many hard-nosed retail businesses will think more pragmatically. In this new retail world, the old battle to convince boardrooms of the commercial value of visual merchandisers is set to continue with more passion and conviction than ever.

Tim Radley

Tim Radley is the CEO of VM-Unleashed and is the author of *Meaning in the Retail Madness: How to be an Essential Retailer* (Wordsworth Publishing 2021). Using his experience as an international retail and VM specialist, Tim advises 'good people how to become great retailers'.



Book Publication:

“Hello, I’m Your Customer”

by Retail Expert Matthias Spanke



From baby boomers to generation alpha:

Getting to know customer needs, ensuring success in brick-and-mortar retail

Due to permanent and rapidly accelerating transformation on a global scale, retail customers and target groups are no longer as they used to be. How do today’s customers tick? What do they like? What bothers them? Only if you truly know your customers can you make informed predictions about what will amaze them. This knowledge determines whether a brand remains relevant and successful in the future.

Every marketing strategy is based on the identification of target customer groups. These groups are often divided into generations to simplify this complex topic: from baby boomers through to Generation X, to millennials, Generation Z, and Generation Alpha. Marketing experts may believe they know who they’re dealing with at their store, but here’s a shocking revelation: Since Covid-19 and Russia-Ukrainian war, accelerated globalization, digitization, climate and energy crises, nothing has been like it used to be.

As a result of deep, even epochal disruptions in all our lives, customers and their needs have changed enormously. This is true for all generations without exception, although in different ways for each one.

After many years of focusing on living out one’s individuality with the fulfillment of personal desires, there has been a huge paradigm shift – it’s as if the cards had been reshuffled: The impacts of various crises have moved the focus to basic human needs. To put it bluntly: We are in survival mode. The fulfillment of basic needs such as health, safety, social connections, and work no longer feels like a sure thing, even in the affluent, industrialized world.

The pursuit of safety is reflected in many facets of health and, beyond that, in the struggle for greater well-being. Customers are paying more attention to a healthy diet and physical fitness. Brands that help improve physical and mental well-being will increasingly receive a positive response from customers.

Health and well-being are associated more and more with the demand for sustainability. Customers expect brands to lead by example and create more sustainable and fair solutions that are geared toward a positive future for our world. Environmentally oriented retail strategies, such as resell, upcycling, recycling, and waste prevention, are increasingly becoming essential criteria for customers’ purchasing decisions.



Millennials already felt the ramifications of the 2008 global economic crisis firsthand when they entered the workforce and have even experienced a crisis of the century with the Covid-19 pandemic. Their financial worries, coupled with their desire for freedom and self-fulfillment, require well-thought-out retail strategies to get this generation enthusiastic about products and services. For Generation Z, on the other hand, the pandemic was the first major crisis in their adulthood – this generation has set itself the goal of changing the world. A commendable approach that offers brick-and-mortar retail a lot of opportunities to support this target group in its endeavors.

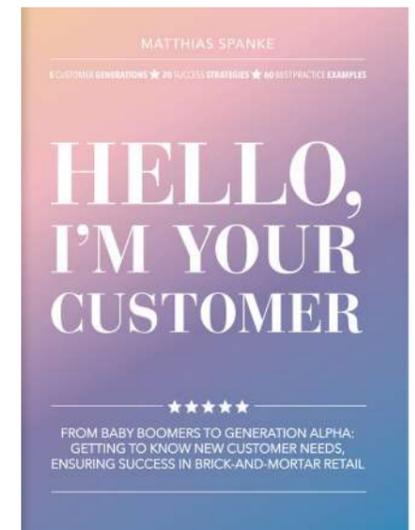


The youngest group of all is Generation Alpha, whose parents are millennials, joined, in part, by groups of Generation Z. Since 2010, members of Generation Alpha have spent an important phase of their development being home-schooled during an economic lockdown. To reach this target group, retailers need to fundamentally change their concepts: This will range more and more frequently from gender-neutral departments to the now indispensable digital in-store technologies.

No retailer will ever forget the Covid-19 crisis and its impact. Brick-and-mortar retail is still facing uncertain times, triggered by the above mentioned transformations. Times in which retail must change even faster in order to reach its evolving target groups. Even though each generation has lived through the same formative events, the impact on their needs is often fundamentally different. And that calls for fundamental changes for marketing strategists around the globe.

In this book, you will get to know five generations of customers in a new light. You will gain an overview of their altered attitudes, motivations, and shopping habits. After all, only those who really know their customers and what motivates them can be sure to initiate the right measures for successful brick-and-mortar retail. It is important to bear in mind that there can be major differences depending on a customer’s age segment within a generation. The generational overviews are accompanied by the 20 most important strategies for success in brick-and-mortar retail, which are illustrated with 60 best practice examples from around the world.

Find out how people shop, work, and learn. Get to know the new strategies for success and be inspired by richly illustrated examples. “HELLO, I’M YOUR CUSTOMER” is available as a hardcover book at www.amazon.com for \$39.00, €39.00, and £30.00. ISBN: 979-8988279600



Every generation of customers deals differently with socio-economic challenges. For example, while it was easier to convince the older generation of baby boomers to return to brick-and-mortar retail after COVID, it took far greater effort to do the same with Generation X. Nowadays, members of this busy target group are typically at the peak of their careers and are also responsible for looking after their kids and often caring for their parents. Today’s shopping experiences need to offer them the highest level of service quality with a low amount of time investment.

MATTHIAS SPANKE has been shaping the brands of leading international retailers as retail and visual merchandising expert for more than 25 years. His career began in Europe and led him to Macy’s New York as Vice President Creative Director of Visual Merchandising. As the founder and managing director of the visual merchandising agency BIG IDEAS with headquarters in the US and Germany, Spanke now develops innovative strategies for brand experiences in support of his customers. His agency has local teams worldwide that can implement concepts at almost any location in the world.

Matthias Spanke is the author of the industry books “Retail Isn’t Dead“, “Easy Branding in Fashion Retail“, and “Successful Visual Merchandising.“

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Testimonial

“For more and more manufacturers, the point of sale is getting to be the decisive point in the competition for customers. That is why it is more important than ever to know your customers exactly and to adapt to their current needs. Matthias Spanke’s book provides valuable information on that. His analysis is not only enormously insightful but also exciting and entertaining thanks in particular to the numerous examples from all over the world.”

Alexandra Ettler
Director Creative Services CEE, Ralph Lauren

“Retailers witness it every day: Nothing is the way it used to be before the pandemic. Matthias Spanke sees this as a huge opportunity for our industry. He analyzes with precision what expectations different generations have of brick-and-mortar retail today and shows how they can be met. The right book at the right time.”

Iain Kimmins
Director & Chair, The British Display Society
Owner & Founder, Creative Download



► The charity Slow Shopping was founded in Newcastle upon Tyne, Great Britain, in 2018. Here, they train and support retailers in making it easier for customers with mental or physical disabilities, as well as age-related restrictions, to shop, providing a better shopping experience. Slow Shopping partners include shops and malls such as Sainsbury’s, Tesco, Ikea, and John Lewis.

**SLOW SHOPPING
LEARNING
TO SLOW DOWN**

As the organization’s name suggests, Slow Shopping fosters an environment for customers who, for a variety of reasons, can only shop at a slower pace. After all, shopping plays a significant role in the lives of seniors and people with disabilities as it involves social interaction, health, and participation in daily life. For many relatives and friends who act as caregivers, shopping together is a major challenge that requires one thing above all: patience.

Slow Shopping advises companies and offers training and resources to help them make the necessary adjustments to the slow shopping processes. Training is offered both online and in person.

Here’s how it works for customers at the stores: Slow shopping is offered on fixed days for a period of two hours. In this time, people who want to use this service are greeted at the store entrance. Employees then assist customers with their shopping. Chairs are set up throughout the store, inviting you to take a break. In addition, service points are set up in the store where the staff can cater to the special needs of their customers.

Employee training is a critical factor in the success of Slow Shopping. After all, this ensures that they are taught to handle customers and their visible or invisible disabilities the right way. At these stores, every customer should be made to feel that no one is excluded.

STORE DESIGN
FOR BABY BOOMERS



► Since its founding in 2012, Instacart has grown into the world’s largest on-demand grocery delivery service. More than 500 million products from nearly 55,000 stores in over 5,500 cities across the US and Canada are available through the platform for delivery to customers’ homes. The company is headquartered in San Francisco, California, and currently employs 2,500 corporate employees across North America, and more than half a million Instacart shoppers.

**INSTACART
PERSONAL
SHOPPER IN
THE DISTRICT**

Instacart is an intuitive online platform that facilitates the delivery of groceries and household goods from the customer’s neighborhood directly to their home. You log on to the website or app and select the retail store where you want to shop. Products are then selected online from the entire range, and an Instacart shopper compiles and delivers them. This usually happens within one to two hours or at a time selected by the customer.

After the World Health Organization (WHO) declared Covid-19 a pandemic in March 2020, Instacart recruited 300,000 additional full-service shoppers across North America. The goal was to meet growing customer demand for online grocery delivery and pick-up in the US and Canada. In collaboration with a panel of experts in health, food safety, and disease control, a concept was developed to ensure the safety of customers, retailers, and Instacart employees.

Instacart also expanded its range of services to satisfy more diverse customer requests throughout the pandemic. In addition to fresh fruit, vegetables, meat, alcohol, and cleaning agents, the service also delivered urgently needed medications. Following a pilot project with the wholesale supermarket chain Costco, this service was expanded to all US states in May 2020. This also enabled sealed prescription drugs to be delivered discreetly to customer front doors.

To facilitate access to Instacart for customers over the age of 60, a special ‘Instacart Senior Support Service’ was provided. A dedicated team of employees helps customers set up their Instacart accounts over the phone. Seniors can access this service every day between 8 a.m. and 11 p.m. to clarify any matters related to the account or their orders.

OFFERING ONLINE
ADVANTAGES OFFLINE



**C&A
“WEAR THE CHANGE” –
ANYONE CAN
INSPIRE CHANGE**

Sustainability is not a new strategy at C&A. As early as 2020, C&A achieved its goal of sourcing 100% more sustainable cotton. In addition, the ‘We take it back’ return program has already been in place since 2018. Customers can send discarded clothing of any brand to C&A. In return, they get a ten percent voucher toward their next purchase. To date, the program has recycled over three million kilograms of textiles, which is more than impressive.

By collaborating with the online company Carou, founded in 2015, the fashion retailer aims to expand its sustainable range to include secondhand clothing.

The Hamburg C&A branch was selected for this project since this modernized store already had a focus on sustainability. A large part of the space is dedicated to collections from more environmentally friendly cultivation and sustainable production. Energy-saving LED screens inform customers about the company’s circular economy initiatives.

The C&A motto ‘Wear the Change’ is not just a tagline – the company enables customers to put this ethos into practice. As a fashion retailer, C&A demonstrates that sustainability is possible even for large companies and in any price segment.

Reselling clothing is another way to support the closed fashion cycle. The importance of this is illustrated by the fact that on average, each item of clothing is only worn seven times before being discarded. This means that the possible lifespan is far below the lifetime actually used for almost all garments. For this reason, C&A’s Hamburg Altona store in Germany is offering preowned fashion alongside its latest collections as a trial.

► The fashion company C&A was founded by the brothers Clemens and August Brenninkmeijer in 1841 in Sneek, the Netherlands. The name of the chain store is derived from the first letters of the founders’ first names. The company is still under family ownership through the Swiss Cofra Holding AG. The headquarters of C&A are located in Vilvoorde, Belgium, and in Düsseldorf, Germany. Every day, more than two million customers purchase clothing from one of the nearly 1,400 stores in 18 countries. The company currently employs about 23,000 people.

RESELLING
A SECOND CHANCE

Why local retail communities are important, and how retail design can encourage community retailing.

Ghalia BOUSTANI. Senior retail consultant at Univers Retail
Published author | Visiting lecturer.



Creating a brand community has always been an important marketing concept and a valuable brand asset. Many brands have been particularly attentive to strengthening their community relations during and after the global health crisis (COVID-19). They understood to what extent building and maintaining a relationship with their clients had an impact on their survival. Examples of brand communities include Apple enthusiasts forming online forums, Harley-Davidson motorcycle owners participating in rallies, or Nike fans engaging on social media. Other brands, such as LuluLemon or Huda Beauty, have invested in the power digital to grow a following and establish an engaged community.

A **'brand community'** refers to a group of consumers who share a common interest or passion for a particular brand. They actively interact with the brand, its products or services, and with one another, forming a sense of belonging and loyalty. The brand acts as a central connecting point and provides a platform for interaction between its members. Brand communities often grow organically but may also be facilitated and nurtured by the brand itself. Brand community members identify themselves as part of the community and feel a sense of belonging. They share common values, interests, and experiences related to the brand. Moreover, they actively participate in co-creating content, providing feedback, or shaping the brand's direction. In fact, brand community members actively engage with the brand.

The notion of **'community retailing'** is quite different; it focuses on the physical or digital spaces where retail businesses operate and interact with their customers. It places emphasis on integrating the retail environment with the local community and building strong relationships between the retailer and customers. Community retailing aims to create a sense of belonging in the retail space by fostering customer engagement, retention and a supportive local economy. Traditionally, community retailing initiatives included local farmers' markets, boutique stores hosting art exhibitions or workshops, or retailers supporting neighborhood cleanup campaigns. More recently, retailers are embracing local retailing to connect with communities, support local economies, and meet the changing preferences of consumers. The trend reflects a growing desire among consumers to support local businesses, connect with their communities, and have a more personalized and authentic shopping experience.

Physical retail can encourage developing retail communities.

Physical retail can encourage the development of retail communities by fostering a sense of belonging, collaboration, and engagement among customers and local businesses. However, it is an ongoing process that requires consistent effort and a genuine commitment to customer engagement. Retailers need to embrace physical spaces and give customers the opportunity to actively participate in the space. Customers are also the primary drivers of the project and its sustainability. As local retail becomes a vibrant scene, retailers and customers must both commit to making the project a success.

"Everything should revolve around "us", "here" and "now" (G.Boustani)

In line with local authorities to revive "local retail" and retailers' efforts to stay relevant and loyal to customers, there should be a new school of thought.

- A shift from investing "spaces" to investing "environments".
- A shift from "customers" to "communities".
- A shift from "communications" to "conversations".

Environment	Create a welcoming atmosphere	Physical stores should strive to create a warm and inviting atmosphere that encourages clients to spend time in the space. These can include comfortable seats, nice lighting and well-designed store layouts.
	Store design and aesthetics	Retailers integrate local elements, themes or artworks into their store designs. This may include the use of locally inspired scenery, the presentation of works by local artists, or significant historical or cultural references for the local community. By reflecting the local flavour in the store's design, retailers create a sense of belonging and strengthen their relationship with the community.
	Gathering spaces	Dedicating areas within the store for customers to socialize, relax, or work. This can include creating a cozy coffee corner, communal tables, or reading nooks. By offering people spaces where they can connect, brands encourage them to spend more time in stores, fostering a sense of belonging.
	Pop-up shops and marketplaces	Retailers are creating opportunities for local businesses and entrepreneurs to showcase their products through pop-up shops or shared marketplaces.
	Hyperlocal marketing	Retailers implement hyperlocal marketing strategies to reach customers in specific neighbourhoods and regions. This includes adapting marketing messaging and campaigns to resonate with the local community, using location-based targeting and leveraging community-specific channels. For example, local publications or community websites.
Community	Community events	Organising events that bring together customers and local companies. This could take the form of workshops, product demonstrations or even cultural celebrations. Through events like this, the store becomes a hub for community engagement, allowing people to connect and interact with each other.
	Philanthropy and community support	Organising events that bring together customers and local companies, engage in corporate social responsibility initiatives that benefit the local community. This could include supporting local charities, holding fundraisers, or attending community cleanups. By giving back to the community, retailers demonstrate their commitment to local well-being and build goodwill among customers.
	Supporting local artisans and suppliers	Brands could collaborate with local artisans, artisans and suppliers to present their products at the store. By showcasing local talent and unique offerings, brands not only support the local economy, but they also provide customers with a reason to visit their own store and discover something new.
	Collaborating with other businesses	Partnering with nearby companies creates cross-promotion opportunities. These can include joint marketing campaigns, shared loyalty programs, and collaboration events. By working together, businesses can benefit from others' customers and strengthen the retail community.
	Community-focused events	Retailers host events which celebrate local community and culture. This may include organizing workshops, launching products showcasing local influencers, or sponsoring community events and festivals. Through active participation at community events, retailers foster a sense of connection and demonstrate their commitment to the region.
Conversations	Encouraging customer feedback and input	Soliciting client feedback and actively listening to their suggestions may include the implementation of suggestion boxes, conducting surveys or holding focus groups. Engaging customers in decision-making processes makes them feel valued and increases their sense of belonging to the retailer community.
	Local product sourcing	Retailers rely more and more on local artisans, manufacturers and suppliers. By offering local and locally sourced products, retailers support local businesses, provide unique offerings and respond to consumer preferences that value local products.
	Embracing technology	In-store technology integration to personalize the customer experience includes interactive displays, personalized recommendations or on-line and off-line shopping experiences. By adopting technology, brands can create a modern and vibrant retail environment that leverages technology-savvy, and connected, customers.

What role retail design plays in fostering retail communities?

Retail design plays an important role in promoting retail communities through the creation of attractive, functional and supportive spaces for community interaction. An attention to design is a key success factor. The exterior design and window display are the first impression for clients and passers-by. A well-designed display window that matches the aesthetics, culture and values of the local community can attract attention and people in the retail space. It sets the tone for the overall retail experience and can help build a sense of pride and belonging among community members.

Store design and workflow can encourage customers to explore different areas of the store and interact with a variety of products. Consequently, the integration of dedicated community spaces in the retail environment promotes a sense of belonging and encourages community interaction. By strategically locating high traffic and community areas, such as seating areas, demonstration spaces or communal tables, retail design can facilitate spontaneous interactions and promote socialization between clients. These “gathering places” encourage social involvement and facilitate connections between customers.

Effective visual merchandising can showcase local products, highlight community events, or communicate the store’s values and engagement with the community. It is crucial to curate displays that reflect the local community, retail design reinforces a sense of identity, attracts like-minded customers, and sparks conversations among shoppers. With visual merchandising, retailers provide a scene on which community members live their story.

As people change, preferences change, and conditions change, commercial spaces should change. Retail



environments that should be scalable and flexible to host a variety of community events and activities. Design features such as mobile fixtures, modular furniture or flexible display areas make reconfiguration easy, allowing the store to host different types of gatherings, workshops or pop-up events. This flexibility is in keeping with the changing needs of retailers.

Incorporating technology that connects customers to local businesses or community initiatives can strengthen the link within the retail community.

Integrating technology with retail design can improve the customer experience and drive community engagement. Interactive displays, digital signage or virtual reality experiences can offer customers attractive and personalised experiences. They broaden the possibilities of communication from the physical to the digital sphere.

If retailers become more relevant to the hearts and minds of clients, they should actively demonstrate their social and societal involvement. The integration of sustainable and green design components demonstrates a commitment to the well-being of the community. The use of energy-efficient lighting, environmentally friendly materials or the implementation of recycling programs convey a sense of responsibility and appeal to clients who favour sustainable development. A retail design that supports sustainability can inspire the community and foster conscious consumer behaviour.

By considering these factors, retail design can shape the physical environment in a way that fosters community engagement, promotes social interaction, and creates a welcoming space for customers to connect and participate in the retail community. Local retail environments will hold a meaning that goes beyond the transactional definition. They will be unique in their own way and meaningful to all those who have invested in them.

More on: <https://linktr.ee/gboustani>

Retail videos available on YouTube: @ghaliaboustani

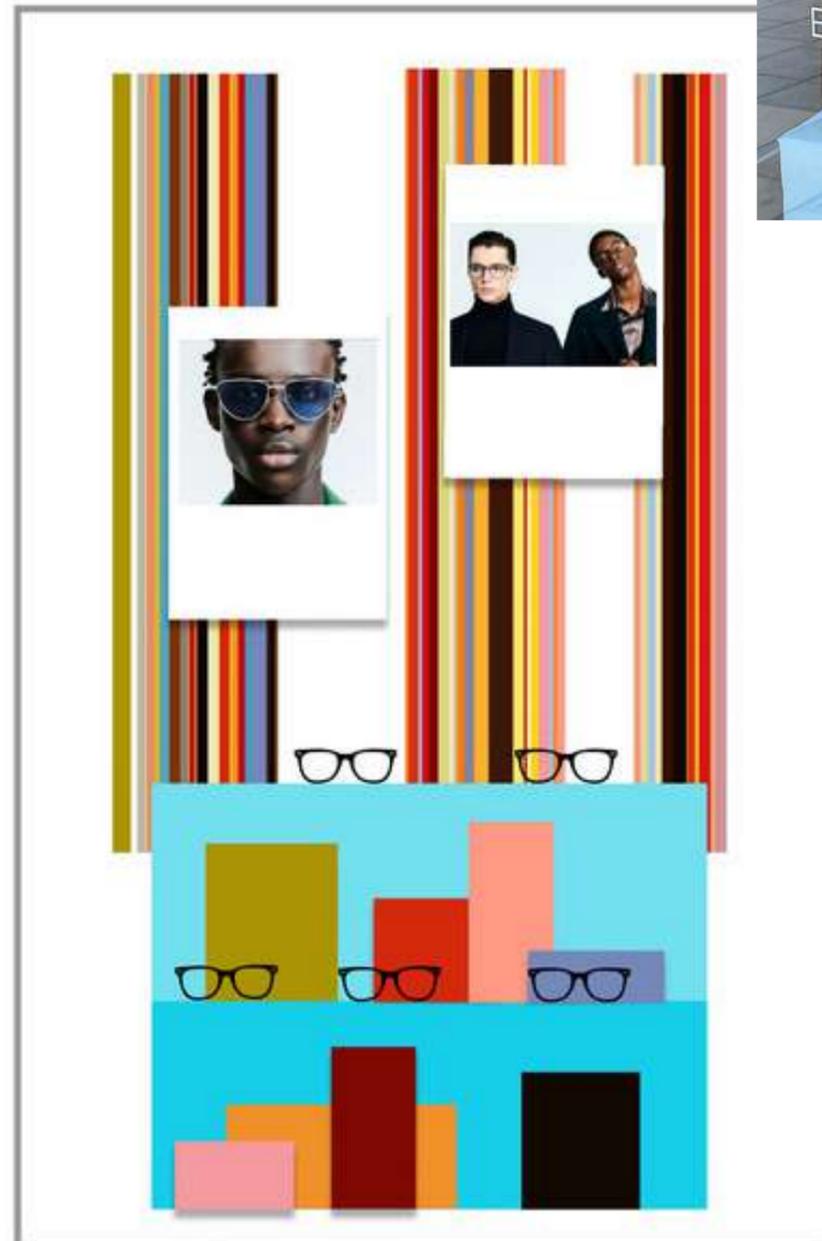
Eye Design

From visualisation to implementation. A colourful summer window promoting Paul Smith frames for Eye Design opticians.

Using the strong graphic photography as a starting point the window was built around the iconic Paul Smith stripe recreated as a backdrop of different widths of ribbon. Other elements included painted geometric shapes to enhance the bright summer theme.

A bright, fun, impactful window to draw customers in to the shop and purchase from the new range of sunglasses.

Kat MacLennan
Dot to Dot



From Art Nouveau to Metamodernism – the changing face of display

Paper presented at the International Creative Display Conference, TU Dublin June 14-15, 2023.

Dr. Kerry Meakin BA (Hons), MA, PhD, Honorary Fellow of the BDS. Kerry is a lecturer in Visual Merchandising at TU Dublin



The BA Visual Merchandising & Display at the Technological University Dublin and the British Display Society joined forces to hold a two-day conference in Dublin, Ireland, on June 14 & 15, 2023. International academics, practitioners, students, and retailers joined together to reflect and debate the needs of both the designer and the client in the new age of phygital. A world where the fundamental physical practice of the Visual Merchandiser collides with the digital, leaving more aesthetic, real, and virtual spaces. Attendees are taking in hand the future of future practitioners by exploring and discovering alternative perspectives in the fundamental practice of visual merchandising. With sustainability always at the core, display practitioners will rename and re-situate themselves, ready for the remainder of the 21st century and beyond.

The conference included presentations on themes such as:

- Reimagining the Future for Visual Merchandising - praxis and theory,
- What's in a Name? - rebranding display
- Innovations in Visual Merchandising
- Customer and Retail Design

The following paper was one of three under the theme Innovations in Visual Merchandising.

We, display practitioners, have always been innovative. For us, display has never been just about commerciality but rather a combination of art and commerce. Due to our close connection with the quickly changing nature of retail, we understand what styles are in the past, what are current, and what styles are yet to come. Armed with this knowledge we are inventive. Using the fundamentals of display as a baseline, we are constantly learning to do things in new ways. As consideration of the future of visual merchandising was the rationale behind the International Creative Display Conference (Dublin 14 and 15 June 2023), I originally requested that those with much more knowledge than I have in the areas of information technology in the visual merchandising sector present their research! However, the response was that they felt they did not yet have enough expertise in this area. When I considered this, I realised that the Metaverse and Artificial Technology are moving so fast that even those at the forefront are chasing behind. So, I ask for your forgiveness. I have collated as much information as I can over the past few weeks, but even by the time you read this, it may be out of date! I also ask the understanding of those who know much more regarding the Metaverse and AI than I do.

To look forward, I believe we need to look back and be aware of the changing face of display. However, to look forward we also need to be aware of our past. This article first considers the history of innovation in display by examining how the fundamental practices of display materialised during its inception as a profession in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Second, it explores the compelling link between modern art movements and window displays throughout the twentieth century. Display windows were often the platform from which the general populous were introduced to new art movements in a three-dimensional context. Third, it examines the current art movement Metamodernism and discusses ways in which Visual Merchandisers of today and in the future can use the myriad omnichannels available to us to make the consumer experience even more exciting.

As stated by Harry Trethowan, the Head of Display at Heal's in London in January 1928, '...Before embarking haphazardly to follow a new fashion, the whole matter has to be carefully studied...We are merely on the fringe of what possibilities there are in the display world, and certainly this phase cannot be ignored by progressive minds.'

¹ Display practitioners have always been innovative. Display has never been just about commerciality but rather a combination of art and commerce. Due to display practitioners' close connection with the quickly changing nature of retail, we understand what styles are in the past, what are current, and what styles are yet to come. Armed with this

knowledge we are inventive. Using the fundamentals of display as a baseline, we are constantly learning to do things in new ways. Our desire for development explains how display styles went from windows full of product in the 1900s to researched, considered designs today. Late nineteenth and early twentieth century window displays consisted of either what was termed massed displays, in which every inch of the window was filled. Mise-en-scene displays depicting realistic settings, or novelty displays which were also termed stunt displays. The latter called for some artistic merit. However, they were generally copies of displays introduced at World's Fairs. These three-dimensional installations mainly consisted of sculptural models of architectural or organic structures; made from products such as handkerchiefs, gloves, and cotton reels. The same process happened synchronically on both sides of the Atlantic.

Window display in Britain only became more considered in 1909. The catalyst for the move away from heavily stocked massed windows or stunt displays was Selfridge's opening in London. Selfridge's launch windows were based on those of Marshall Field's in Chicago. Simple techniques, such as grouping objects in three's was also a method that migrated transnationally. After the First World War, display practitioners shifted their display methods to an awareness of modern art movements. This change in direction was driven by Cubism, Abstract Constructivism, Symbolism, and Futurism. Display providers designed and supplied suitable props based on these movements. The articulation of modern art into display windows saw the mid to late 1920s as a progressive period in window display.

From 1925 and into the 1930s Cubist abstraction, Art Deco, and Streamlining made it in the windows of stores [Fig. 1]. Creative concepts were adopted and adapted for a consumerist audience, therefore demonstrating the growing professionalisation of the practice. Display windows were often the platform from which the general populous were introduced to new art movements in a three-dimensional context. By the 1930s, there was an obvious influence between display and the cinema screen. These displays drew visual references from films to create windows that looked like movie stills, complete with film-star-like mannequins. It was hoped that the merchandise would sell if it were associated with the glamour of Hollywood [Fig. 2].

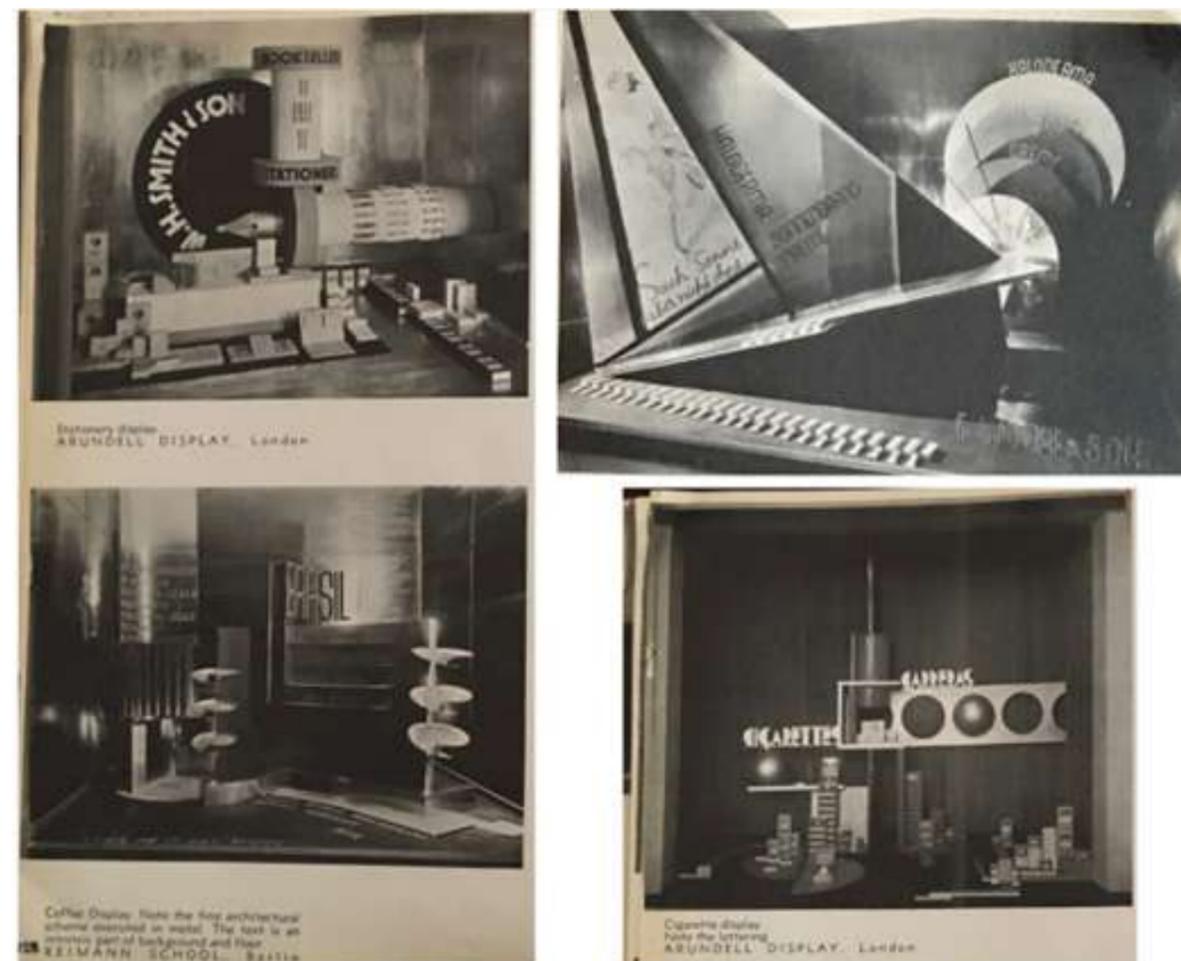


Fig. 1 Student work from London and Berlin. Frederick Kiesler, Contemporary Art Applied to the Store and its Display New York: Brentano Publishers (1930), 128, 129, 130.

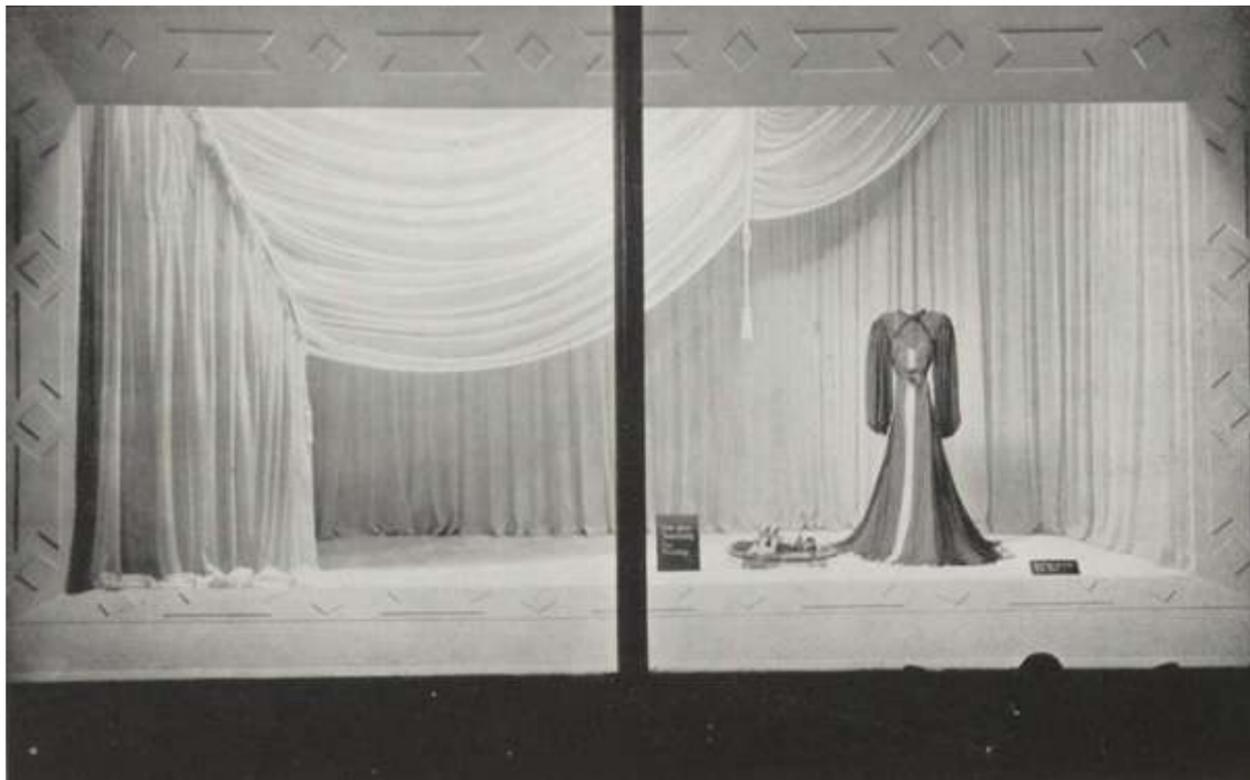


Fig. 2 'Symphony in White,' Art & Industry 24, no. 141 (March 1938): 107.

During the 1940s and the 1950s, display designers such as Natasha Kroll of Simpsons Piccadilly and Eric Lucking of Liberty London demonstrated a post-war aesthetic of utilising found and recycled objects as props in their window displays. Kroll was later to become the first female set designer at the BBC. Window displays looked to Post Modernism in the 1970s. Anti-authoritarian by nature, postmodernism refused to recognise the authority of any single style or definition of what art should be. It collapsed the distinction between high culture and mass or popular culture, between art and everyday life. In Candy Pratt Price's 1978 post-modern display for Bloomingdale's New York, white porcelain emerges from a mound of black coal as if they were archaeological treasures recently renovated. Because postmodernism broke the established rules about style, it introduced a new era of freedom and a sense that 'anything goes' ². Often funny, tongue-in-cheek or, it could be confrontational and controversial, challenging the boundaries of taste. It often mixed different artistic and popular styles and media.

Britain's Simon Doonan used post-modern creative irreverence at Barneys New York's luxury store from 1986 until 2010. ³ Display practitioners at luxury department stores have used their creativity and the media to make statements, including those on cultural and current events. Many displays are designed with a sense of humour. Examples include Harvey Nichols' Covid-19 Christmas 2020 'BAH Humbug' window campaign and, in recent years, sustainability. Selfridges use their windows to send the message of their sustainability commitment towards 2025. We are now in the technology era. Technology has been used in interactive window displays since the 2010s. However, with interest only generated when passers-by interact, the expense of these displays outweighed the benefits. Unlike instore or online shoppers, passer's-by prefer to be entertained in a passive way, without having to be involved. Interactive displays lacked consideration of those passing by in moving vehicles.

What's happening in phygital retail. A lot. And fast. Vogue declared 2022 as a Year of Fashion Non-Fungible Tokens. ⁴ In one week in 2023 more than 200 Artificial Intelligence tools were released. H&M have released a list of Buzzwords to know ⁵. The four that I believe are core for visual merchandising include:

Artificial Intelligence: Utilises computers, machines, and data to mimic problem-solving and decision making.

Metaverse: A combination of multiple elements of technology, including virtual reality, augmented reality, and video where users "live" within a digital universe. Supporters of the metaverse envision its users working, playing, and staying connected with friends through everything from concerts and conferences to virtual trips around the world.

NFTs (non-fungible tokens): Blockchain-based records, or receipts, that confirm ownership of pieces of digital media. The piece of media is then verified by the NFT as the original, therefore one-of-a-kind. The media can be anything in a digital format, including art, photos, videos, music, and even limited-edition digital garments.

Virtual fashion: Garments that exist only virtually and can be worn only in the digital world. This makes it possible

to wear impossible materials, such as liquids, electricity, ice cream, clouds, or digital materials, like AI-generated patterns. Garments or outfits are called skins. ⁶

With the arrival of the Metaverse, and brands heading into the next era of digital commerce, visual merchandising will find a place in the new world of phygital. A combination of physical and digital that allows for enhanced retail experiences. I am not a Metaverse or Artificial Intelligence expert, but I had a conversation with someone who organises virtual reality catwalk shows in London, Paris, and Milan. The following points came up.

- The Metaverse still maintains a sense of being a bit like a video game. Humanoid figures are still clunky, backgrounds still pixelated. However, AI is generative. Things look more real. More photographic. More relative to how we live.
- Visual merchandisers of the future should be able to populate Metaverse retail environments. Not only as retail designers but as those with an awareness of display fundamentals such as colour, cross-merchandising, displaying products, and how to create drama within a retail environment.
- Visual merchandisers have unique assets that they have collated during their period of study and/or working in the practice.
- They are voyeurs that link the brand and the consumer. They can translate the message of the brand into a reality, in three or two dimensions.
- However, there will not be a democratic viewing of all brands. Exclusive brands will keep views of their Metaverse fashion shows and store interiors to a small, invited audience.
- Bring in the whole Blockchain environment.
- We will not be just working in a virtual world. For example, a store environment and its props designed by Visual Merchandisers in Britain or Ireland could be downloaded and printed in 3D for a pop-up-shop in Hong Kong. Therefore, what is created in A1 is pulled into reality.

We have seen on LinkedIn and other social media platforms how AI is generating Pop-up-shops and window displays. ChatGPT, Midjourney, DALL-E and Stable Diffusion are changing the visual merchandising and store design process. Rather than arguing they are hurting the integrity of design concepts, we need to use these platforms to improve efficiency and accelerate creativity – both of which are crucial for brands working to differentiate their physical environments.

So, *what about visual merchandising in the Metaverse?* It can be considered a new frontier – although unlike the Klondike Gold Rush of the 1890s, it is one that doesn't physically exist. Some retailers may have their own branded Metaverse. In March this year Clinique launched Clinique Lab, an all-immersive, multi-sensory gamified experience that combines retail with edutainment. Having created a collection of nearly 9,000 female and non-binary profile picture avatars users can explore zones including a museum spotlighting the brand's history, a skin school offering both video tutorials and interactive diagnostics with customized skincare solutions defined by consultants in real time ⁷. According to Clinique Vice President of e-commerce, Emmanuel Rousson, 'It's a new way to present our brand – an adventure that's deeply experiential and aspirational, with an element of personalization both in the avatar and the way you decide to engage with it.' ⁸

Is the Metaverse: a new land of opportunity? According to the Parisian company METAV.RS, who offer immersive customer experiences there are five ways retailers can use their branded Metaverse. ⁹ I consider the four which I believe are relevant for visual merchandising.

Physical and virtual branded stores

To create immersive shopping experiences for their customers brands will build virtual stores. Shoppers can explore the brand, find out about its story, and experience and purchase products in a 3D environment ¹⁰.

Themed stores in the branded metaverse

This is about creating a destination for a brand. From a holiday-themed experience that lasts for a few weeks to a fantasy store, virtual themed stores will create customised ever-changing environments ¹¹.

Virtual showrooms for product testing

Virtual showrooms can also be used as an experimental shopping tool for brands wishing to test the attractiveness of new products ¹².

Virtual trials for physical pop-up stores

Virtual stores provide a way to maximize the potential of a pop-up store. They allow brands to keep their pop-up store open longer than traditional physical retail, and offer deeper insight into consumers' interests and interactions with the brand ¹³.

In the future many of us will work, play - and shop - in the metaverse. Or at least our avatars will. A growing number of companies are buying up space in the metaverse so that they can set up shop there. These firms include the likes of Adidas, Burberry, Gucci, Tommy Hilfiger, Nike, Samsung, Louis Vuitton. The question for such businesses, though, is what location do they pick? There are now some fifty or so different providers of worlds within the metaverse. Retailers and other investors are having to gamble on which of these will go on to become the dominant force in the metaverse. And which other worlds may fade away into obscurity. We need to be aware that as with new technologies there will always be winners and losers. Some of us remember Betamax versus VHS tapes!

Not all Metaverse worlds will survive.

The three that I believe have the most potential for VM's in the future are:

Decentraland

The Sandbox

Spatial

Spatial is the Metaverse world that was mentioned to me as the one that has excellent graphics and hosting fashion shows.

What about retailers setting up shop in the Metaverse?

Katie Witkin, chief marketing officer at Everyrealm, an immersive media company, states that 'The metaverse is a space where [retailers] can create experiences, and build, and be creative,...you don't have the confines of physics.' ¹⁴ New York Professor of Marketing Scott Galloway of the Leonard N Stern School of Business believes that the winning metaverses will end up packed with much that companies offer us in the real world. 'Retailers will build entertaining experiences...they will build useful tools' ¹⁵

How is technology being used to merge visual merchandising and creative digitalisation?

Zara commissioned a [video which was shared on the brand's TikTok](#). ¹⁶ It was widely believed to be showing a real LED window display. But the simulation exists only on the internet.

While it is good to see an expanding, albeit virtual, universe in which VM's can be involved with in creative ways, there are also innovative ways that brick and mortar stores can make their real physical presence felt. Brands are also turning spaces into places. In late 2021 Hermes launched Hermes Fit. A pop-up that has appeared in cities such as Tokyo, New York, Sydney, and Singapore. The workouts and fitness classes incorporate Hermès' accessories. This type of pop-up totally immerses the consumer. The timing was clever – directly after the lifting of Covid restrictions for most countries. By only releasing the location of the pop-up's on Google pins, finding them becomes a game exploration. Changing interiors, and holding events give consumers a reason to physically visit the pop-up or store.

During Milan's Fashion Week in 2022 Benetton took an omnichannel approach by linking their Metaverse experience with reality. ¹⁷ Visitors to the Benetton store in the metaverse were not able to buy clothes, instead they participated in gaming experiences that allowed them to accumulate QR codes, which were then used to make purchases in physical shops. Benetton's flagship store in Milan reopened at the same time with the same experiential look and feel. This type of retailing is not all about selling product - it's about engaging with the brand.

In summary, as educators I believe that we will still need to teach our future practitioners to research, conceptualise and realise three-dimensional displays. However, as seen throughout its history, by its very nature, display is synonymous with change. Students already design for virtual worlds. They use digital modelling software such as CAD, SketchUp, and VRAY to realise their designs for retail interiors and pop-up-stores. This will expand into designing for the Metaverse and the use of AI.

However, a very interesting point was made during the Conference discussion time by a graduate who is employed in the creative department of a high-end international department store chain. They have investigated the use of the Metaverse and AI. Their very valid point was the use of energy while using the Metaverse, which will be powered by massive data centres consuming significant amounts of energy. ¹⁸ For example, a single real-life credit card transaction only consumes approximately 149 kilowatt hours of electricity, however a Metaverse digital currency transaction will consume fourteen times that amount. What is encouraging is that the younger generation of Visual Merchandisers (or as the discussion on name change suggested Visual Experience Designers) is conscience of the impact of future trends on the environment. So, to visual merchandisers of the future. I say the most important aspects of your job in Visual Merchandising will be to stay curious, informed and be prepared to constantly evolve. But above all, consider sustainability.

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3. 'Window Dresser Simon Doonan's Extraordinary Fashion Life,' August 19, 2017 accessed June 1, 2023 <https://thewardrobecrisis.com/podcast/2017/8/16/podcast-ep-12-simon-doonan-on-the-fashion-asylum-dressing-barneys-windows>
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11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
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16. Jennifer Hahn, 'Shane Fu fools "gullible" viewers with hyperrealistic window animation,' Dezeen August 27, 2021, accessed June 2, 2023 <https://www.dezeen.com/2021/08/27/shane-fu-zara-window-display-animation/>
17. Martino Carrera, 'Benetton to Step into the Metaverse With Retail Project,' Women's Wear Daily February 22, 2022, accessed June 3, 2023, <https://wwd.com/fashion-news/fashion-scoops/benetton-metaverse-store-retail-1235090566/>
18. 'What the Metaverse Means for Sustainability,' accessed July 26, 2023 <https://dublitechsummit.tech/what-the-metaverse-means-for-sustainability/>



Lift&Learn Technology

Client: ghd

Project: Introducing a concession concept which stands out from the crowd, featuring innovative Lift & Learn technology for ghd's iconic haircare. Currently nominated for a Creative Retail Award!

Over the last year, we have elevated our work with revered haircare brand ghd to include lift & learn technology and one of our most notable installations is within Flannels Liverpool. Billed as the UK's "destination for new luxury" the store offers a full-bodied retail experience, with everything from fashion and beauty through to bars, bootcamps and spa-like experiences. The luxurious nature of Flannels meant that it was only fitting for ghd to take a prominent placement in-store.

Shoppers attention is immediately caught by the beauty station, with illuminated glimmering gold discs and media screens displaying impactful ghd media content. As shoppers take a seat, they are brought into the glamorous world of ghd with Hollywood-style mirror lighting, a halo of gold discs and playful messaging such as "It means you're always ready to run into your ex".

When approaching the central gondola, a proximity sensor interrupts the brand campaign video content and triggers a call to action on the magic mirror, while simultaneously brightening the LED dome lights. Below this, the styling tools are elegantly displayed, with each product individually elevated as if floating – ensuring that picking up a product is now irresistible to the shopper.

When the products are lifted, an inspirational and educational product-specific video begins to play, highlighting information and key styling tips. Information is also readily available on the printed plaques or shoppers can lift the product again for even more video content of the products being used.

Since the first installation, new products such as the Duet Style have been easily integrated within the gondolas and what's more, the digital content can be updated from anywhere in the world.

"Endorsed by professionals" is still the leading message from ghd, it is in fact the pinnacle of the brand. As much as a brand ambassador can sell their knowledge of products, the lift and learn technology aids the consumer in this learning experience and opens a conversation between brand and consumer.

ghd Lift & Learn spaces are a modern take on what all retail environments should be – dynamic, luxurious and entirely focused on customer experience.

impactretail.co.uk





WITH



MAGNWALL

Brownings

Brownings Ltd - a leading supplier of tensioned fabric systems - and MAGNWALL - a German start-up company with a unique technology that allows the magnetic positioning of lights, monitors, shelving and others, without wires and totally gridless - have announced a new partnership. The partnership will see the two companies collaborate on the development and marketing of a new range of tensioned fabric systems with integrated MAGNWALL technology.

The new systems combine the durability and versatility of Brownings' Tension Fabric Systems with the exciting and innovative MAGNWALL technology. The result is a powerful new product that allows brands to stand out in a crowded marketplace.

The integration of the MAGNWALL technology with Brownings popular TexSign tension fabric system brings a new dimension to soft signage. What was once predominantly 2D can now become 3D. By integrating the MAGNWALL technology behind the TexSign textile skin, you can attach one of the many magnetic and electrical accessories available from MAGNWALL. Alternatively, you can even add your own products to the skin. MAGNWALL's clever technology will conduct wireless power from the back wall into the product. This means you can use endless innovative products and accessories. As they are only attached magnetically you can simply remove the accessory, change the graphic and remount the accessory in a new position when the advertising changes. This makes it a very sustainable choice.

Klaus-Dieter Feld, founder of MAGNWALL, is delighted to have found a congenial partner for the UK in Brownings Ltd. "For us, the innovative strength and performance of Brownings Ltd is the decisive point for this cooperation. Our customers will be extremely satisfied with this partnership. Innovation and service are not just words at Brownings Ltd, but a living attitude."



Nathan Ward

Paper-craft Image Maker | Director

Your bum can help save forests

(If you use the right toilet paper)

Paper-craft artist and BDS Corporate member Nathan Ward created this papercraft activation for positive loo roll brand 'Who Gives A Crap'. Running across three days in July, the eye-catching installation featuring colourful brand-patterned trees caught the attention of commuters and visitors to London's King's Cross.

Nathan says, 'I had so much fun putting this one together; working with the brilliant team at Sense Marketing, we created an engaging and playful activation. Joined by a great team of assistants in my South London studio, we crafted each element by hand from sheets of paper. The finished installation itself is fully recyclable. Working for an ethical brand that shares many of my values has been incredible.'

Who Gives A Crap produces only 100% bamboo & recycled toilet paper. Has B Corp certification and donates 50% of its profits to build toilets helping to ensure everyone has access to clean water and a toilet.

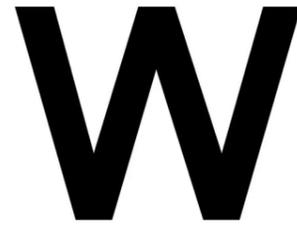
The installation was created using high-quality and sustainably sourced G.F Smith papers produced in the English Lake District with printing from F.E Burman.

You can see more of Nathan's work on his website at www.thisisnathanward.com or you can follow him [@thisisnathanward](https://twitter.com/thisisnathanward)

If you would like to collaborate/ work with Nathan, please get in touch:
By email at nathan@thisisnathanward.com or by phone on +44 (0)7712738597.



Window France



WINDOW
FRANCE

While on a visit to Paris in July, it was great to catch up with Rachael Alexandra Ferguson (Sales Executive) and Xavier Benayad (International Sales Director) at their showroom in Paris.

Window France is one of the world's leading creators of contemporary off the peg and custom-made mannequins as well as tailor-made window display objects. Its principles: innovation, evolution, inspiration, revolution, all values that the company has applied since its creation in 1980 and for which it has become renowned. Implanted the world over Window France has a design and production capacity second to none that has earned its place in the retail market today of being a privileged partner for the design and production of mannequins and display objects to market leaders in all sectors of the fashion world. One of its major assets is a unique prototyping centre in France for the creation of custom-made product, whether that be mannequins or other objects or decor for displays. A team of creatives and technicians, 2D and 3D image studios, plasticians and craftsmen are at your service in a relaxed and professional environment surrounded by the blue skies of the French Riviera. For off the peg solutions Window France has the largest selection of positions available in the world, with over 70 collections to choose from of varying age, size and attitude to find the exact profile that corresponds to your brand's public - from ultra slim to voluptuous plus size, from contemporary to classical attitudes. The Window France team is open minded, contemporary thinking and has all the experience to move your projects ahead with speed and professionalism.



Rachael and Xavier made me welcome and gave me a tour of the various ranges within the showroom, which was very interesting and informative. A great collection of mannequins and busts! It was a very enjoyable afternoon.

www.windowfrance.com

Iain Kimmins FBDS



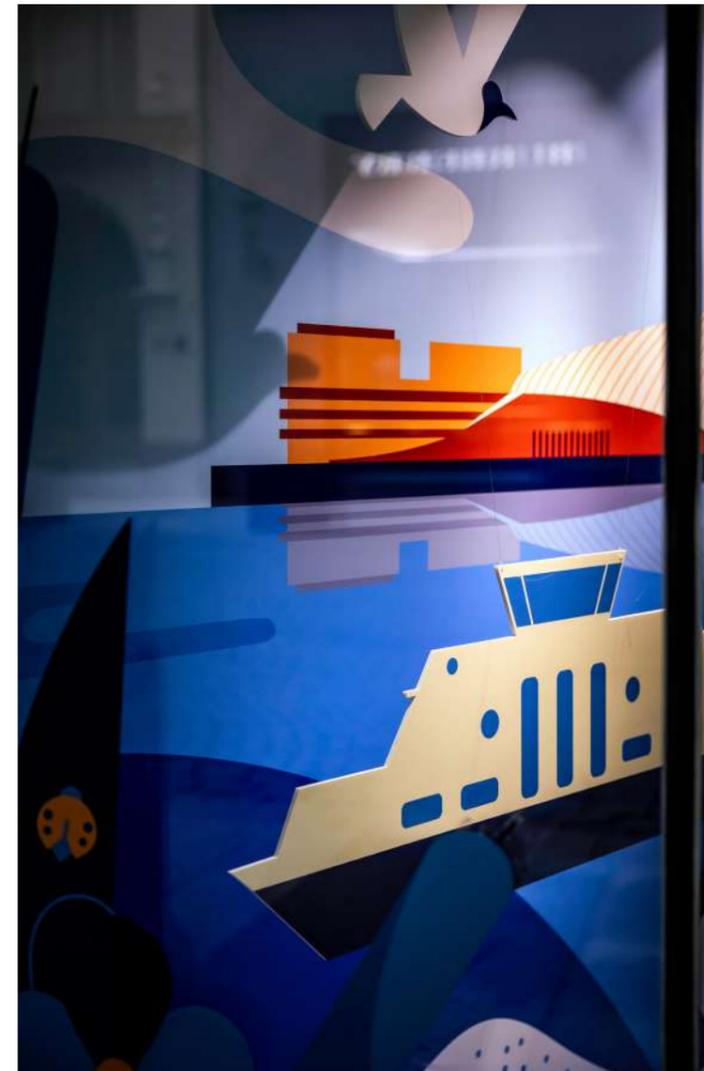
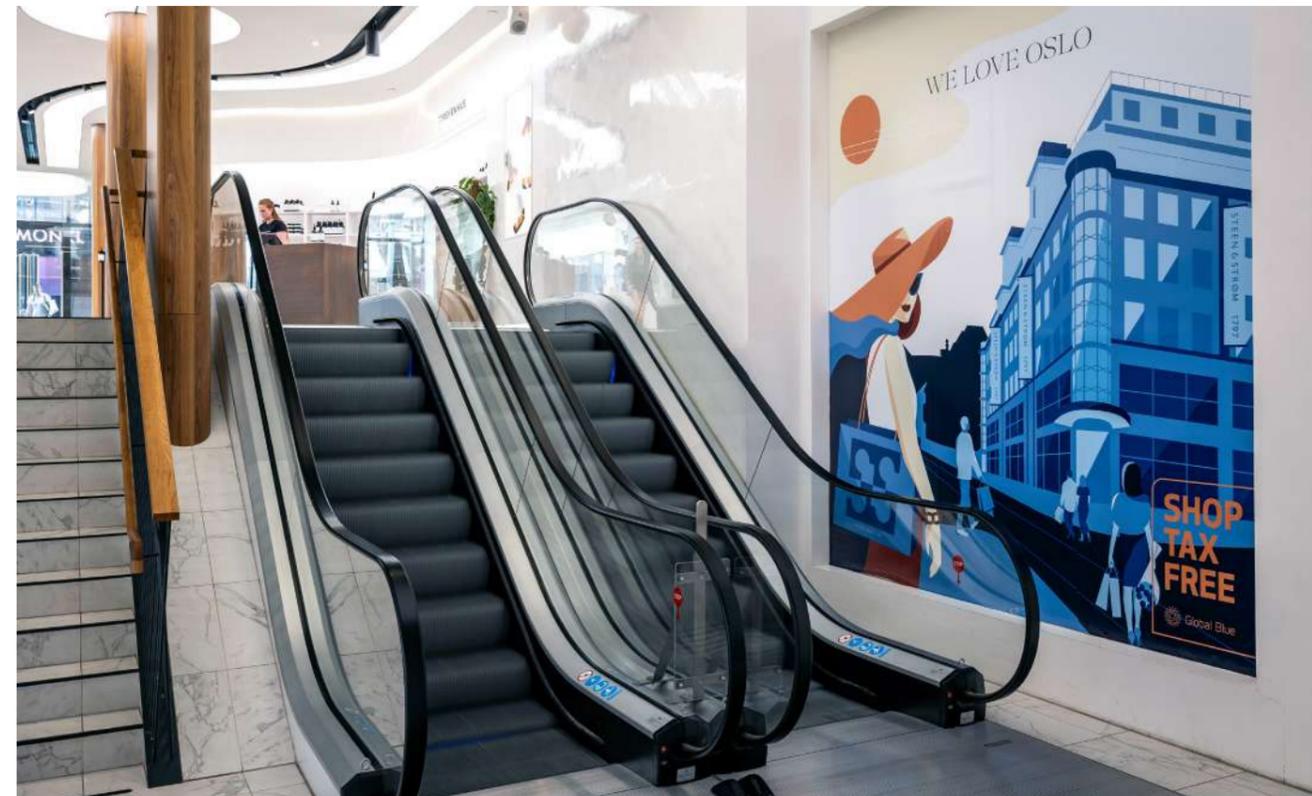
We Love Oslo

Get ready for an extraordinary summer campaign by Steen & Strøm in 2023! We're on a mission to uncover the hidden gems of Oslo and establish ourselves as the ultimate destination in the city.

Join us as we unveil the true essence of Oslo through six must-visit locations that will leave you breathless. Dive into the refreshing waters of the Oslofjord at Ingierstrand, embark on a thrilling hike through the picturesque Oslomarka surrounding Frognerseteren, and immerse yourself in awe-inspiring art at the renowned Astrup Fearnley Museum. And of course, don't miss the chance to indulge in a world-class shopping experience at the world's oldest luxury department store.

But it's not just about the places; it's about the love we have for this vibrant city. We want to ignite the passion in every Oslo resident and make every visitor fall head over heels for Oslo's charm. Steen & Strøm truly adores Oslo, and we're here to spread the love.

Stay tuned for an unforgettable summer filled with excitement, adventure, and a celebration of everything that makes Oslo truly remarkable. Steen & Strøm loves Oslo – and we can't wait for you to fall in love too!





London College of Fashion Undergraduate Event

UNDERGRADUATE LCF CLASS OF 2023

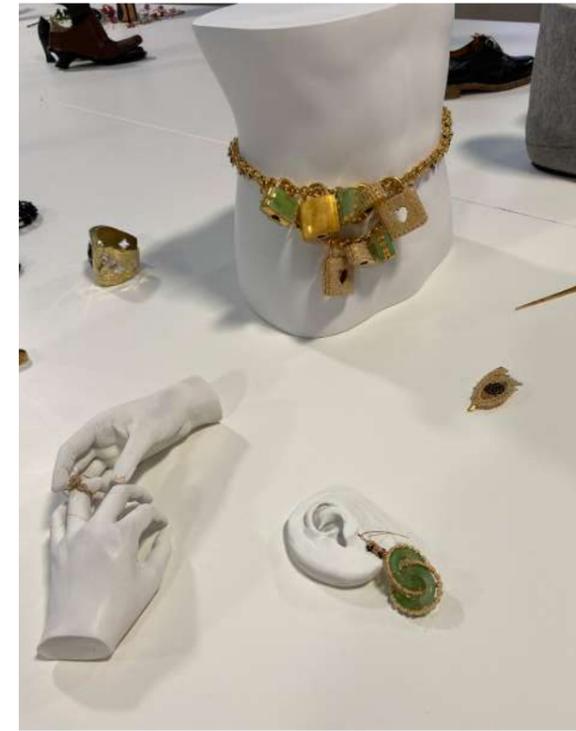
Join us on Friday 14 July as we present the Fashion Business School at London College of Fashion Undergraduate Class of 2023.

Date: Friday 14 July
Location: **Protein Studios, 31 New Inn Yard, London, EC2A 3EY.**

We are pleased to invite you to our LCF Undergraduate Class of 2023 Fashion Business School event. Discover and celebrate the work of all the students class of 2023, through this fashion business breakfast, with a morning of VR, demos and refreshments.

Time	Event	Courses Included
10:00am – 1:00pm	Fashion Business Breakfast	BA (Hons) Fashion Buying and Merchandising BA (Hons) Fashion Marketing BA (Hons) Fashion Visual Merchandising and Branding BSc (Hons) Fashion Management BSc (Hons) Psychology of Fashion Graduate Diploma Fashion Management MSc Strategic Fashion Management

On the 14th July, John Abbate FBDS and I were invited to the LCF undergraduate business breakfast at Protein studios in East London. As London College of fashion is one of our prestigious Centres of Excellence, we always take particular interest in the work of their students. We were not disappointed. The standard of work was quite amazing this year, we were so impressed. The work on display was not only that of the BA (Hons) Visual Merchandising & Branding students but a variety of graduates from other courses also, for example BA (Hons) Fashion and Merchandising, BA (Hons) Fashion Marketing and BA. (Hons) Fashion Management.



We were also a part of some really fascinating panel discussions going on throughout the morning which covered some interesting and thought-provoking subjects such as the use (or not) of bloggers by high end luxury brands and also thoughts on brand collaborations with celebrities such as Gucci/Harry Styles.



It's so great to see such talent being cultivated by such an amazing and progressive college like the London College of Fashion. Thanks go to Ed Stammers (a fellow BDS Leadership Team member) and also Associate Dean, whom organised our invitations. The future of the fashion and retail industries is indeed bright!

Barbara Chapman FBDS

Marcela Bonhome

Graduate from London College of Fashion



“Hello, I’m Marcela Bonhome, a Fashion Visual Merchandising and Branding graduate from LCF (London College of Fashion). Throughout my academic journey, I honed my expertise in VR and 3D design, enabling me to craft remarkably successful projects. Alongside my studies, I immersed myself in the world of fashion marketing and visual merchandising, working with various esteemed fashion labels. This incredible experience led me to organize three captivating pop-up stores at iconic London locations, showcasing my creativity and passion for the industry.”

In the digital era, the relationship between consumers and brands has undergone an unprecedented transformation. Technological advancements and the omnipresence of social media have driven companies to search for ways to remain relevant in an information-saturated marketplace. The answer to this challenge lies in creating unique and innovative experiences that meaningfully connect with audiences.

For brands, achieving virality on social media has become a strategic objective. Sharing engaging and surprising experiences in their physical spaces not only increases visibility but also cultivates communities around their products and values. While the digital world has simplified access to products with just a click, physical shops have adapted and are now conceived as captivating spaces that go beyond product offerings, creating unique atmospheres for customers. To stand out in this saturated environment, creativity is essential. The creation of eye-catching spaces that fuse technology and art becomes essential to transport customers to unexplored realities, establishing emotional connections beyond mere commercial transactions. However, virality and attracting new customers are just the beginning. For long-term success, audience loyalty is essential. The key lies in staying up to date, anticipating trends, and evolving with the market.

My final thesis focused on virtual reality as a powerful tool for brands to create innovative and unique spaces, providing customers with exceptional experiences. This technology allows for unique interactions from the comfort of homes or within physical stores, fostering lasting connections with customers and driving long-term success. To demonstrate this concept, I designed a branded space featuring cutting-edge technology. Smart fitting rooms were incorporated, enabling customers to try on different looks in seconds and share photos on social media with the brand logo in the background. This not only enhanced the shopping experience but also allowed digital trials of products before making physical attempts. Additionally, I crafted a virtual reality room where customers could immerse themselves in the brand’s products like never before. This extraordinary environment cannot be replicated in the real world, making it an extraordinary and unforgettable experience.

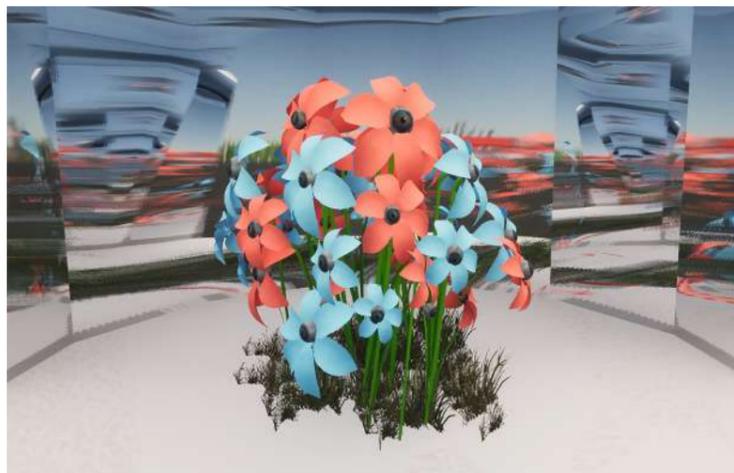


The project draws inspiration from surrealism, which has become a powerful tool used by companies in their visual proposals, and its popularity is growing. The extravagance of surrealism holds a particular appeal to consumers, capturing their attention in a memorable and enduring way. Moreover, its link to the idea of escaping reality creates creative freedom rarely found in the fashion world.

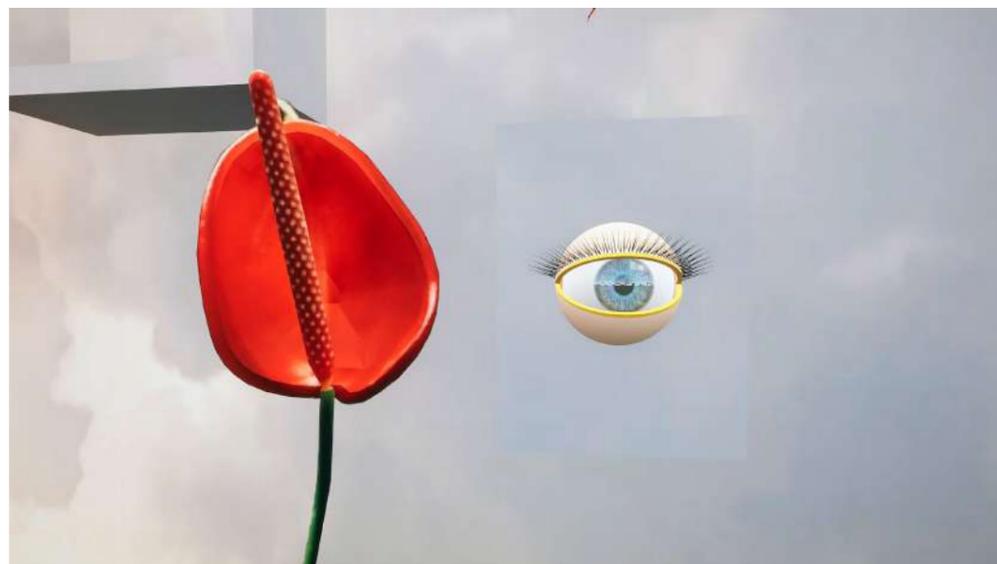


The Surrealism art movement originated as a response to the harrowing events of World War II when people, in agony and despair, sought refuge from reality. Surrealism provided them with an escape, and it is for this reason that, after the recent difficult years, this movement has experienced a significant resurgence. This resurgence of surrealism and its link to the concept of escapism has become a highly valuable tool for creating original campaigns and spaces for brands today. By offering consumers the possibility to escape from reality into new environments designed to connect with their deepest desires, it creates a greater attraction and relationship with the brand, forming a subliminal connection with the brand.

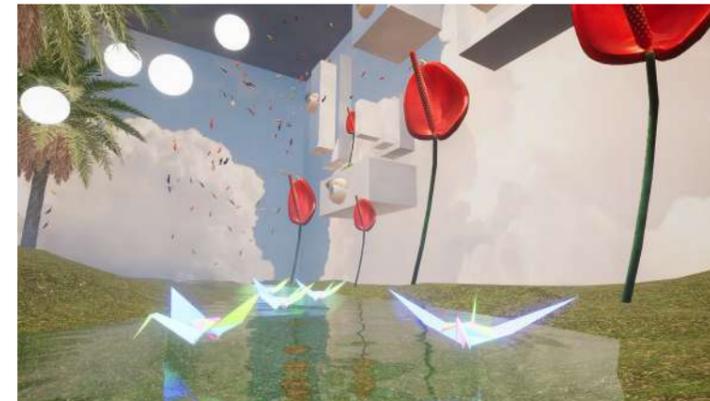
Undeniably, the creation of spaces that emulate new universes, where customers can interact, would be unthinkable without the support of virtual reality. This tool is essential for creating environments both outdoors and indoors, small or large, with elements and events that simply cannot be found in the real world. Moreover, day after day, virtual reality technology is offering us improvements and innovative features that make the user experience more and more immersive and realistic.



Thanks to virtual reality, creators can realize designs and experiences without the physical and human limitations that bind us to the real world, giving brands unprecedented creative freedom and allowing imagination to materialize as never before. It represents a unique opportunity to create without boundaries, bringing to life universes designed by brands that take the storytelling of their collections to even greater levels. It is a fascinating journey where creativity finds endless possibilities, captivating and capturing the attention of users in surprising ways.



“Espejismo” is the name of my virtual reality project, which means Mirage in Spanish, representing the dimension of desire in its most imaginary aspect. This digital world uses surrealism to approach the unconscious and the deepest dreams of the human being. The space is a representation of an abandoned supermarket in the middle of the desert. At first glance, it appears to be of normal size, but upon approaching it, it is revealed that the building is gigantic. To access the interior of the establishment, one must pass through a lock located at the bottom of the door, which was not perceptible from afar. This bolt symbolizes the desire to escape the solitude of the desert and the curiosity to explore new realities, to look through that bolt to discover what is closed and out of sight.



Within the space, there are several surprising areas of interaction. Highlights include chess heads, a hand holding a cracked egg that acts as a waterfall for the river, neon birds made of paper, and a wall of eyes holding on to a distorted sky that protrudes in geometric shapes. There is also a forest of palm trees with a new door that invites the user to escape, even from this new reality, thus opening up the possibilities for further discovery and fuelling the desire to explore the unknown.



In the sky, flying fish can be seen amidst large balls of light, creating a magical and surreal atmosphere. This unique setting invites visitors to immerse themselves in an experience where reality and fantasy intertwine, defying expectations and awakening the imagination.

This space is a reflection of the human quest to escape monotony and routine, yearning to enter new worlds and pursuing the thrill of the unknown. Through its unusual and surprising elements, this environment invites people to question the perception of reality and to explore the infinite possibilities that await beyond the obvious.



Q & A session with VM graduate Natalie Sin

By Barbara Chapman FBDS

In this month's issue I thought we'd steal a glimpse into the mind of an amazingly talented VM graduate whom I've recently met.

In mid-July, John Abbate FBDS and I attended the London College of Fashion Graduate Business Breakfast at Protein Studios in East London. As our readers might know, London College of Fashion is one of our prestigious Centres of Excellence and consequently we always pay particular attention to their students' work. It was an amazing show and the standard of graduates work so incredibly high. One piece of work which immediately caught our eye was by Natalie Sun, so I thought I'd chat a bit more with her and find out more about her graduate assignment and a little more about her hopes and aspirations for the future in our amazing industry. So Natalie, tell us.....

Q1. How did you come to be studying VM? Tell us your education journey to where you are now? Where and what you studied and what inspired you to start studying VM.....

A1.

From a young age, I developed a passion for visual arts as a hobby. As my mother is an interior designer, growing up I was encouraged to explore my creativity and develop an appreciation for spatial design. I honed my skills through drawing, painting, and sharing my digital artwork on Instagram. Transferring to an art school in high school, I engaged in life drawing, visual arts, and painting as electives. The annual fashion show at my school became an opportunity for me to create dresses and displays, further fueling my interest in fashion. However, when the time came to pursue a design program in Toronto, Canada, I found limited options locally. Determined to explore my passion further, at the age of seventeen I made the bold decision to move to London. Enrolling in the International Preparation for Fashion Foundation Course, I immersed myself in diverse fashion sectors. During a recent summer trip to South Korea, I stumbled upon an Instagram post by Yoon Anh, a renowned Korean fashion designer, announcing her captivating 2019 AMBUSH x Gentle Monster collaboration launch in Seoul. The store's awe-inspiring features, including immersive digital screens, surrealistic art installations, and captivating lighting, leaving me feeling as if I had transcended into a fantastical realm. This unforgettable experience ignited my desire to design similarly memorable experiences for others.

Q2.

As you know, London College of Fashion is a BDS Centre of Excellence. How did you find the course and what were your favourite aspects of it?....

A2.

As a recent graduate, the VM course holds significant memories for me, providing opportunities to explore uncharted territories of spatial design such as experiential retail and sustainable practices. What I loved most about the course was its keen focus on current and future VM trends which allowed me to develop future-facing designs. The course leaders were exceptional in their communication with students and presented us with engaging and exploratory design briefs which provided me with creative freedom whilst following professional guidelines.

Q3.

What do you know about the British Display Society? What are your thoughts on the Society.....

A3.

I learned about the BDS through the London College of Fashion course website and my course leader, Jonathan Baker, showcased winning BDS student submissions as visual merchandising examples. This emphasized the BDS's commitment to nurturing and setting industry standards for aspiring visual merchandisers. Moreover, the presence of BDS board members, who shared their industry expertise and experiences during class visits, enriched the learning process with valuable hands-on insights.



Q4.

What benefits would you like to see the BDS offer to students and how do you think we may be able to help you in your career path?

A4.

As I am looking for jobs, as a recent graduate, I find it difficult to find VM specialised opportunities. I also feel a sense of disconnection with younger creative networking events. I envision BDS creating a social platform for VM students to connect, share designs, and collaborate. This platform could include a message board featuring job listings and collaborative opportunities. A creative community of like-minded individuals would foster productivity, skill improvement, and unique opportunities, potentially through a separate mailer or subscription-based message board.

Q5.

Tell us about your graduate assignment that you showed on Friday at the show. Can you share some images of your work with us and tell us the journey that got you to the finished project, your thought processes etc?

A5.

My graduate assignment explored visual merchandising in the technology-driven metaverse. Fashion retailers are increasingly adopting an omni-channel strategy to enhance shopping experiences in a post-pandemic society. Based on my findings, I created a VR metaverse concept store for Dover Street Market, situated at Regent St.'s Apple store. This store enables customers to connect to seven different metaverse stores using on-site VR technology. Each store represents a specific geographic location, featuring products from local designers. The VR store showcased at the graduate show is one of the seven metaverse stores I designed. It underwent significant improvements after receiving constructive feedback, incorporating elements of Japanese culture for a serene atmosphere reminiscent of a zen garden, with accessory displays on each side. Inspired by Japan, I included a Torii gate commonly found at shrines. My 2016 family trip to Fushimi Inari Shrine in Kyoto left a lasting impression on me. The vibrant red gates and peaceful surroundings mesmerised me, and I aimed to evoke the same emotion for the user.

the role of the metaverse in visual merchandising

aim

To determine if the metaverse can be implemented within future omni-channel retail strategies through immersive environments and memorable experiences.

objectives

- Determine the existing consumer perception of the current metaverse market within fashion.
- Analyse the economic and demographic landscape that influence the development of branding within the metaverse.
- To identify the form and function of NFTs and digital spaces.
- To investigate the importance of immersive experiences and how emotional connection affect overall brand perception

introduction

In response to this paper, the following design rationale implements elements gathered from research. The final design is presented as an example of what future retail stores may look like with the implementation of metaverse technology. The aim of this rationale is to create a concept which utilises the metaverse as a tool within immersive environments to create a seamless physical experience. Thus, the design will feature advanced technology that allows customers to travel through the metaverse.



fap woodboard



metaverse woodboard

THE LOGO

The colour palette is built around the brand's colour future look, featuring cool tones of blue, purple, and silver with shades of black and muted grey. This neutral futuristic colour palette supports the colourful mood displayed on the screens and connects with DSM's edgy brand image.

The event logo features an identical style to all of DSM's logos throughout all channels. The orange graphic complements the brand's architectural design palette.



META • MORPHOSIS

THE BRAND

DOVER STREET MARKET
Popular luxury multi-brand retailer, Dover Street Market provides the ideal community and brand message for this futuristic concept.

TARGET AUDIENCE

With Generation Z making up 40% of the user in the metaverse, the target customers for this design are people born from 2007 to 2012. (Statista, 2022) Gen Z are digitally fluent as they have grown up surrounded by technology. This event which is focused on emerging technology will be best suited for these customers.

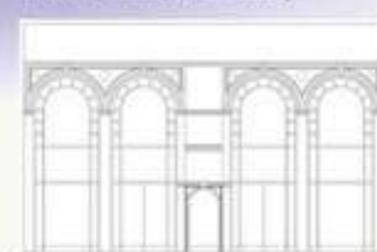
CONCEPT

Dover Street Market's Meta-morphosis is a futuristic pop-up store which explores the use of the metaverse within fashion. As the metaverse is an emerging technology, many of the public are unknowledgeable about its function and capability, which being unable to create or visualize this technology. Meta-morphosis evokes the digital world represented in the physical.

The aim of the event is to educate customers about the metaverse and its technology while creating memorable experiences. Immersive technology will allow customers to travel the world, build communities, and share aesthetically designed spaces. The name Meta-morphosis is based on the scientific word, meaning to change, develop, and grow. This relates to our society as it is ever-changing and constantly transforming with new technology and behaviours. It is also linked to the word metaverse as Meta can be referred to the technology company.

THE LOCATION

235 Regent St.
The event will be located at Apple's Regent Street store in London. 235 Regent Street is one of the older buildings in Mayfair, built in 1888 by J.S. Martin. The red glass windows with minimal design provides the perfect space for small merchandise displays and brand installations. With its original use as a technology store, customers associate this space as a hub for innovation and design.



features:

- Technology of the metaverse
- earn NFTs through tasks
- experience immersive worlds



Q6.

That's amazing work Natalie! Tell us more about what you've learnt about the Metaverse on your London College of Fashion course and how you see its effects on VM.

A6.

In addition to my coursework, I am an NFT artist selling digital creations. Initially, I viewed web3 as a new and unfamiliar concept. To my delight, the VM course mentioned it shortly thereafter, revealing its potential within various design sectors, including VM. This discovery motivated me to delve deeper into these ideas. During class discussions on metaverse technology, we explored digital showrooms and personalised shopping experiences. I firmly believe that the metaverse opens up a realm of opportunities within omni-channel models, paving the way for unforgettable experiences.

Q7.

Now you have left London College of Fashion, what area of the industry would you like to pursue?

A7.

Currently seeking opportunities, I aspire to design remarkable shopping experiences focused on fashion and web3 to bend and push my creativity to achieve exciting and unique environments. I would also like to work within pop-up retail design, creating installations and immersive branded spaces.

Q8

Can you tell us how you see the future of VM and what impact AI will have upon it?

A8.

The future of VM lies in expanding into digital sectors. Visual merchandisers must possess digital design skills, encompassing digital stores and spaces alongside physical designs. AI integration in VM enables personalised shopping experiences, such as detailed styling recommendations and 24/7 customer service within metaverse stores. The potential of AI in VM is limitless and constantly evolving.

Q9

What brands do you think are getting it right at the moment with their VM and utilising it well across all of their channels?

A9.

Nike exemplifies the future of VM through innovative technology and modern business models. Their Seoul, South Korea store showcases high-tech elements like real-time running stat displays for the local community. In January 2022, Nike partnered with augmented reality platform providers 8th Wall and BDRG Studios to launch a prize giveaway, encouraging customers to visit their stores and play augmented reality games on mobile devices. This demonstrates the growing integration of digital experiences into bricks-and-mortar retail, signalling a trend that will continue in 2023 and beyond.

Q10

Tell us... what's the future for Natalie look like?

A10.

My future goals involve furthering my knowledge of VR and realising a functional Metaverse store for exchanging and selling digital fashion assets. Additionally, I plan to launch a fashion-focused NFT collection with real-life utility. Ultimately, my dream is to establish a digital fashion company that crafts personalised immersive experiences. I aspire to pursue a career path that combines fashion, experiential design, and web3 into a cohesive whole!

I'd like to thank Natalie for giving me her time in order to share her thoughts and aspirations. It's an incredible insight in to a modern and relevant students studies into VM. I'm sure that Natalie will be snapped up by some amazing brand who will spot her brilliant skills and passion for this industry. We wish her every luck and hope she'll report back to us with whatever happens to her in her future career.

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**WE NEED
YOUR
HELP**

Our BDS Centre of Excellence colleges would like to ask if any of our Corporate Members could donate any of the following items of equipment for the education of VM students and the future of skills.

- **A TABLE TOP LASER CUTTER FOR CUTTING OUT TYPICAL DISPLAY MATERIALS. FOR EXAMPLE; FOR CUTTING OUT 2D SHAPES AND LETTERING.**
- **2ND HAND MANNEQUINS**
- **PLINTHS, CUBES, DISPLAY PLATFORMS FOR BASIC VM DISPLAY**
- **PAINT BRUSHES**

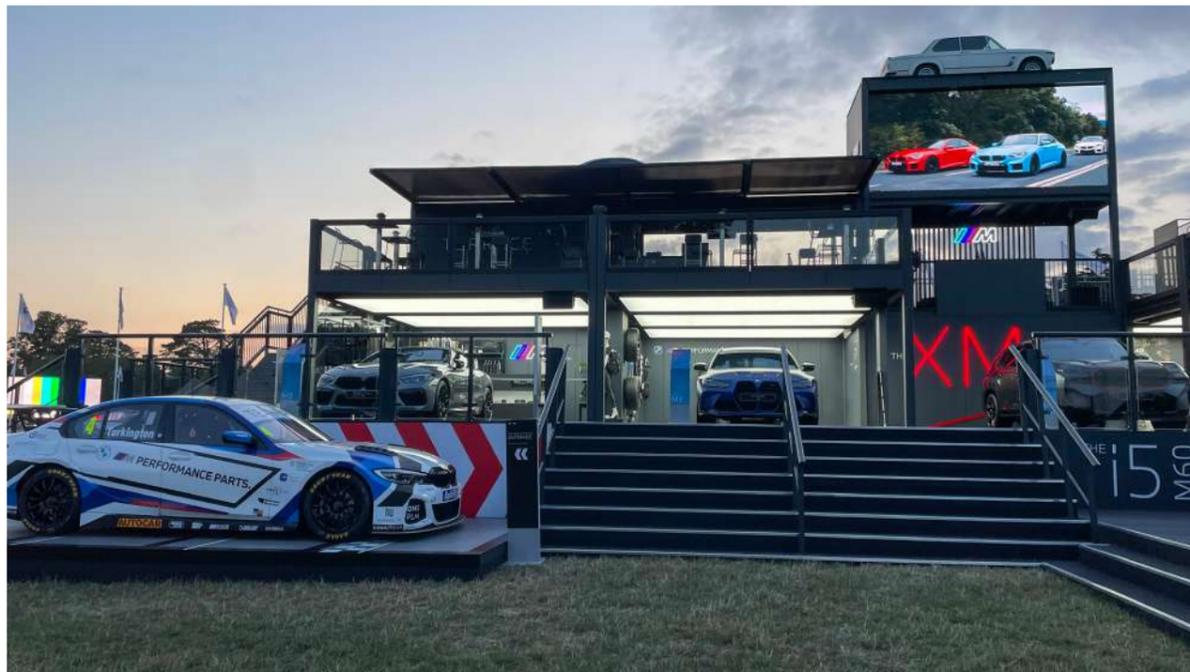
At the BDS we are dedicated to helping and supporting the future of the VM industry through our Centres of Excellence. We invite all our members to help some of these institutions that struggle with the cost of equipping their VM departments.

Please contact us admin@britishdisplaysociety.co.uk for donations.



VM at Events

I've been lucky enough to be on the set up at Goodwood Festival of Speed for many years starting with BMW/MINI and this year adding Porsche. I love my job, creating the finish product but with Goodwood it's on such a huge scale I have always been in awe of the event, the organisation, beauty of the grounds and the different brand exhibiting. Early starts, walking for miles with my ladder, high vis, display kit, endless amounts of food, steamer, pretty much everything in case, always prepared! As I walk through the gates with the endless trucks queuing to drop cars/ materials off, high vis bibs as far as the eye can see, dusty tracks and that amazing smell of engines, I love it! So much going on, it fascinates me. The screeching tyres as cars race round the track practising for the open event, the hustle and bustle of set up never gets boring and I love watching it all evolve around me.



Organisation for Goodwood is everything before the event set up, Teams calls to go through the shop design, layout, stock, all building up to the big day. Walking into the empty shop area for the first time, recognising areas from the sent plans, organising my day, checking the weather to see where to place umbrellas, caps, jackets, t shirts, or depending how the weather is predicted to what will sell (outdoor events, the weather is everything!) What will be placed and where to upsell. Every detail is worked out, mannequin position for maximum impact, pricing placement and the customer journey. Due to the volume of people, items are displayed in volume where possible, in draws underneath the display stand or easily labelled in the storeroom behind the till area so the sales team can run efficiently. This year due to severe weather Saturday was cancelled which was such a shame as that's a day lost in retail sales.



Another event my team has completed recently is a dealer conference for Renault at the O2 Victoria Warehouse Manchester. My brief was to create a shop area for dealers to view, showing product and inspiring them to buy in for their dealerships. Furniture/ display stands were bought to compliment the warehouse feel, working out product, what was needed such as umbrella stands, lanyard holders, clothing hangers, all to complement and enhance the look of the brand. My team were briefed beforehand on what the client wanted, equipment chosen and general layout. The day was a success due to the planning and everything covered just in case, the team delivered colour popping displays with a great customer journey.

I've been incredibly lucky to work at many events for retail shop set ups/ events in fabulous places such as Blenheim Palace, Somerset House, Wentworth, Longleat to name a few, events can be stressful but if you are organised and plan it's enjoyable, especially when you see the finish product across social media/ websites. #ilovemyjob



5 Compelling reasons to mark your calendar for the VM and Display Show 2024



The VM and Display Show has announced the dates for their eagerly anticipated 2024 event. The show will take place on April 16th to 17th, 2024, at the esteemed Business Design Centre in London. It's a vibrant opportunity that retail professionals should enthusiastically mark in their diaries.



The [VM and Display Show](#) is not merely an event; it's an experience that offers a fusion of learning, inspiration, and networking. It is a must-attend occasion for those striving to stay at the forefront of an ever-evolving retail industry. Here are five reasons you should be part of the only dedicated visual merchandising and display show in the UK:

1. Industry Insights and Trends

The VM and Display Show is a unique opportunity to gain insights into the latest trends in visual merchandising and display. With industry leaders and innovators sharing their knowledge and experiences, attendees can get a comprehensive view of the sector's future direction. If you're keen on staying ahead of the curve in the fast-paced world of visual merchandising, this event is an absolute must.

2. Networking Opportunities

The VM and Display Show is an excellent platform for networking, providing an ideal setting for exchanging ideas, forging new partnerships, and expanding your professional network. With a diverse mix of industry leaders, decision-makers, and fellow professionals in attendance, the opportunities for collaboration and connection are immense.

3. Exposure to Emerging Talent

The VM and Display Show provides a showcase of the industry's future, highlighting both established professionals and up-and-coming talents. From design students to new brands making their mark, this event offers a window into the future of visual merchandising and display. If you're interested in discovering fresh ideas and engaging with the industry's next generation, this is an event you won't want to miss.

4. Access to a Wide Spectrum of Products and Services

With a vast range of exhibitors showcasing an extensive variety of products and services, the VM and Display Show is a one-stop-shop for all things related to visual merchandising and display. Whether you're on the hunt for mannequins, print, Christmas decorations, display services, props, design consultation, graphics, bust forms, point-of-purchase displays, lighting, fabrics, or even more specialised items, you'll find all this and much more at this event. This is a fantastic opportunity to explore new resources and tools that could elevate your business or projects.

5. An Opportunity for Inspiration

With the VM and Display Show attracting the most innovative minds and creative talents in the industry, it serves as a significant source of inspiration. The event is a showcase of creativity, innovation, and excellence in visual merchandising and display. It's where concepts come to life and where you can witness the future of the industry taking shape. If you're seeking fresh ideas or a creative spark, the VM and Display Show is the place to find it.

The [VM and Display Show](#) 2024 is an unmissable event for retail professionals. Offering an ideal platform for learning, networking, discovering innovative products and services, and finding inspiration, the event encapsulates the vibrant future of physical retail.

For suppliers, this show presents a unique opportunity to showcase your offerings to a broad and engaged

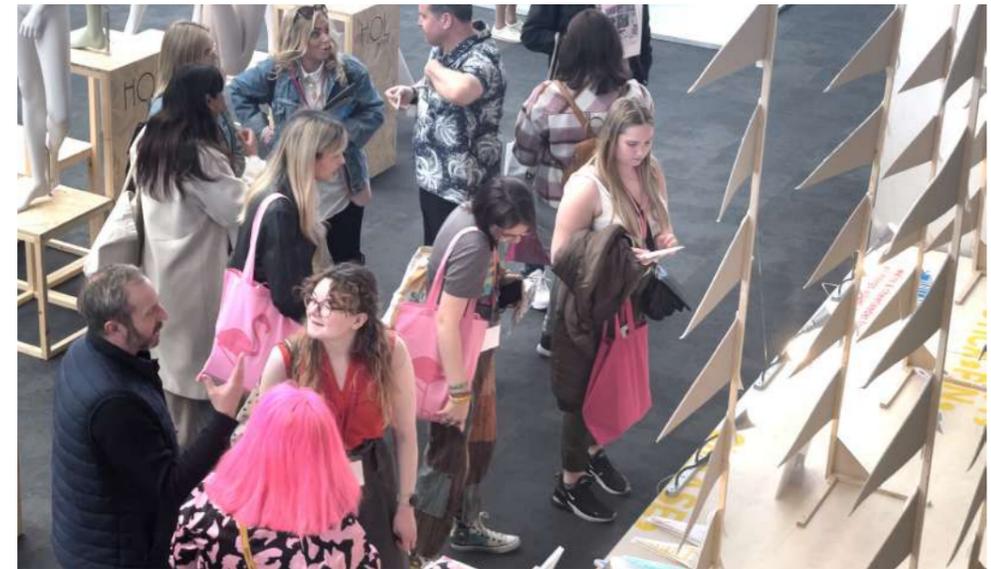
audience. Given the record levels of rebooking from the 2023 event, it's clear that the VM and Display Show offers significant value to exhibitors. This is your chance to increase your brand's visibility, connect with industry leaders, and engage with potential customers.

With limited stand space available, it's recommended to book early to secure your spot. So, mark the dates in your diary – April 16-17, 2024 – and prepare to be a part of an event that shapes the future of retail.

In addition to the show, we are excited to announce the highly anticipated return of the VM and Display Awards on March 12th, 2024. This prestigious event celebrates the excellence and innovation in the world of visual merchandising and display. The VM and Display Awards have long been recognised as the industry's most coveted accolades, highlighting the outstanding creativity and craftsmanship of professionals in this field.

With the categories now accessible on [vmanddisplay.com](#), the excitement for the upcoming awards is building quickly. It is an event that ignites passion, celebrates talent, and reinforces the significance of visual merchandising and display as a powerful tool in capturing the attention and imagination of customers.

Register your interest today to be a part of the 2024 VM and Display events by emailing: enquiries@vmanddisplay.com or calling +44(0)1945 420068. www.vmanddisplay.com



LIBRERÍA XIRIPOT

I am thrilled to share the successful collaboration with Xiripot Bookstore, where I provided comprehensive visual merchandising services and guidance during their recent business relocation. As a seasoned professional in the field of Visual Merchandising, I was delighted to assist Xiripot in every step of their journey towards a fresh and captivating retail experience.

Xiripot is a bookstore/stationery store located in Ermua, Bizkaia, that decided to relocate their business.

Throughout the entire process, I was able to advise Xiripot. I meticulously studied the new space and analyzed its layout to develop a strategic plan. My goal was to create an engaging and immersive environment that fosters an optimal shopping experience for customers.

My proficiency in optimizing store layouts was showcased through careful placement of furniture and products. I ensured that high-traffic areas were maximized for customer engagement.



ZAIDA DE LAS HERAS
VISUAL MERCHANDISING CONSULTING

I meticulously studied the new space, optimizing furniture placement and devising attractive displays, transforming the store into a welcoming haven for book and stationery enthusiasts.

Additionally, I provided comprehensive staff training, ensuring a consistent and exceptional customer experience.

Witnessing Xiripot's successful transition and growth has been very rewarding, and I look forward to continuing to create captivating retail spaces in the future.

Petter Pharmacy London

"Summer Brights" is the concept that has recently been installed into this pharmacy store by the VM team at Creative Download.

Given the current cost of living crisis, this is having a knock-on effect with many retailers. As we know, creating a concept is always thinking about what can be re-used to keep costs down.

On this occasion, large postal tubes were cut down and covered in an assortment of brightly coloured cotton fabric. Circles cut from 6mm MDF sit on each of the tubes to create a shelf for the merchandise. To add a pop of vibrancy, coloured card was cut into circles which add height to the window.

Petter Pharmacy is a well-known independently owned pharmacy store in Crouch End, London which has been trading for many years. Apart from the usual medicines/prescriptions etc, the pharmacy sells many beauty brands which include Clarins, Caudalie, Neals Yard and L'Occitane to name a few.



CREATIVE DOWNLOAD
VISUAL MERCHANDISING CONSULTANCY



Retail Experience & VM Day

Visit multiple retail stores in a small group under the guidance of expert Visual Merchiser Michelle De Neys and learn how retailers influence and inspire customers to purchase their goods and to get the customers coming back for more!

Michelle De Neys is managing director of the global VM company MDN Display and Design Ltd. She has been a window dresser/VM for 37 years working with premium brands such as BMW, Porsche, Radley, Mont Blanc, Triumph, Kuoni Travel and Nespresso. Her experience has taken her from in front of the camera giving her experience for VM videos, global VM Manager and retail experience amongst others.

Joining Michelle for this unique day will mean you see and experience retail with a fresh pair of eyes. It will offer you a different perspective on merchandising, observing what works, and what doesn't, what's important and what isn't. We are planning to hold Retail Experience & VM Days at some of the biggest and best retail shopping centres in the UK so there should be a location within easy reach for everyone!

Further details

Costs per person are £250

The day will begin by meeting for coffee and a briefing and will finish at approx 4pm. There will be breaks during the day for group discussion and for refreshments and lunch (and to rest your weary feet!).

Costs for travel to / from the event and for food and drink consumed during the day is the responsibility of the attendee.

Register your interest

To register interest in attending a Retail Experience Day with Michelle, please email: michelle.deneys@britishdisplaysociety.co.uk with your contact details and we'll be in touch as soon as we have details of a Retail Experience Day in your area.



A Retail Experience & VM Day will cover the following topics:

- Window display
- The Customer Journey
- How retail staff interact with customers
- Pricing and sizing
- Outfit combinations
- Promotions and offers
- Display stands & mannequins
- How retailers upsell
- How colours are used
- Changing rooms
- The importance of music and how it effects our shopping



The Anya Hindmarch Ice Cream Pop Up Concept Store

The Ice Cream Project has returned to The Anya Hindmarch Village in Pont Street, London, and business is brisk.

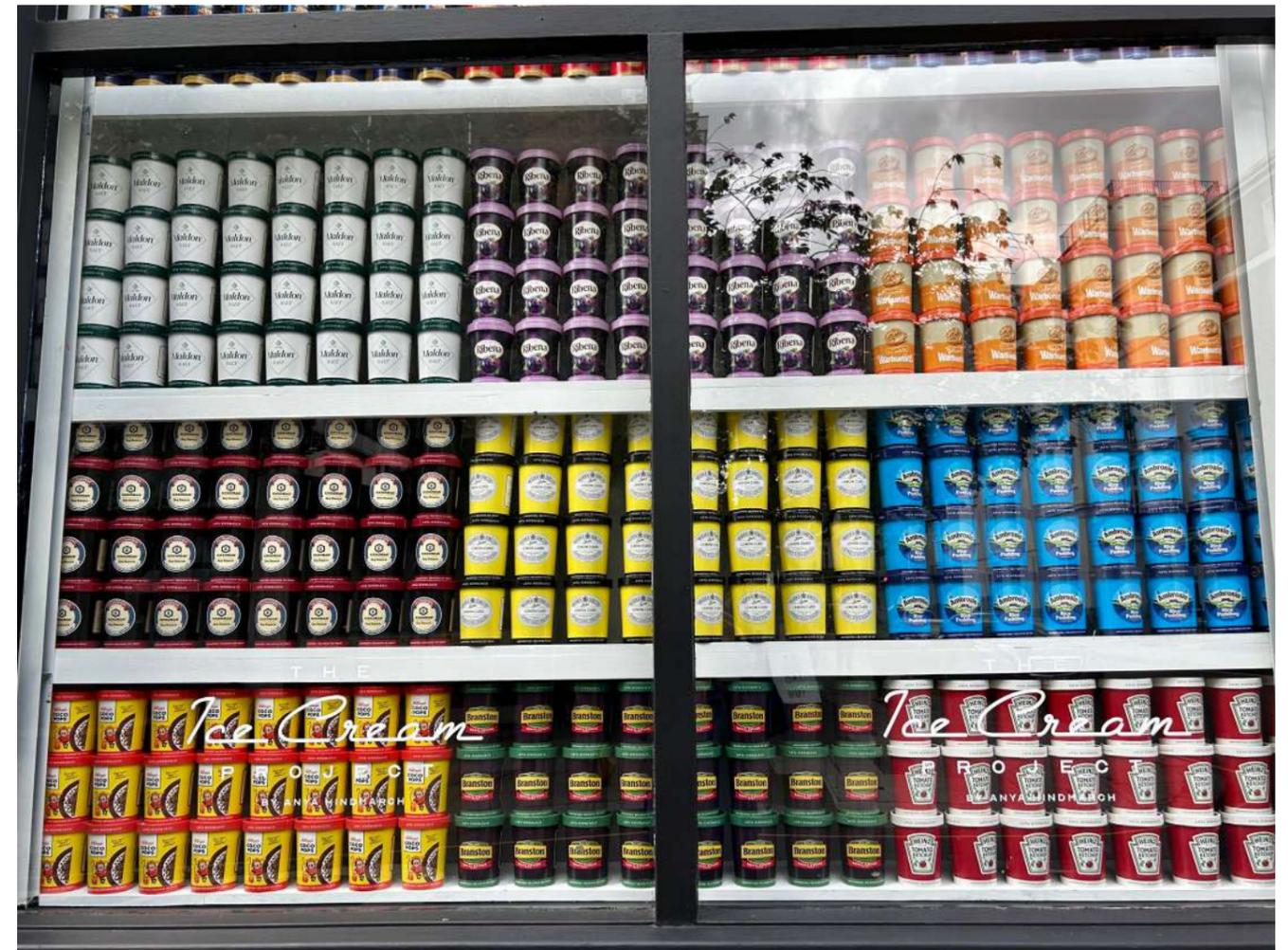
From 29th June to 27th August, this ice cream pop up store is serving up unexpectedly delicious ice creams and sorbets which include Maldon Salt, McVitie's Digestives, Kellogg's Rice Krispies, Ambrosia Rice Cream and Lemon Curd, to name a few.

Handmade in small batches in Devon, it is available by the scoop or in 500ml tubes to take away.

With its freezers packed full of ice cream pots, it the delicious way to enjoy summer with a twist!

The Ice Cream Project
11 Pont Street
London
SW1X 9EH

Iain Kimmins FBDS



Merci, Paris

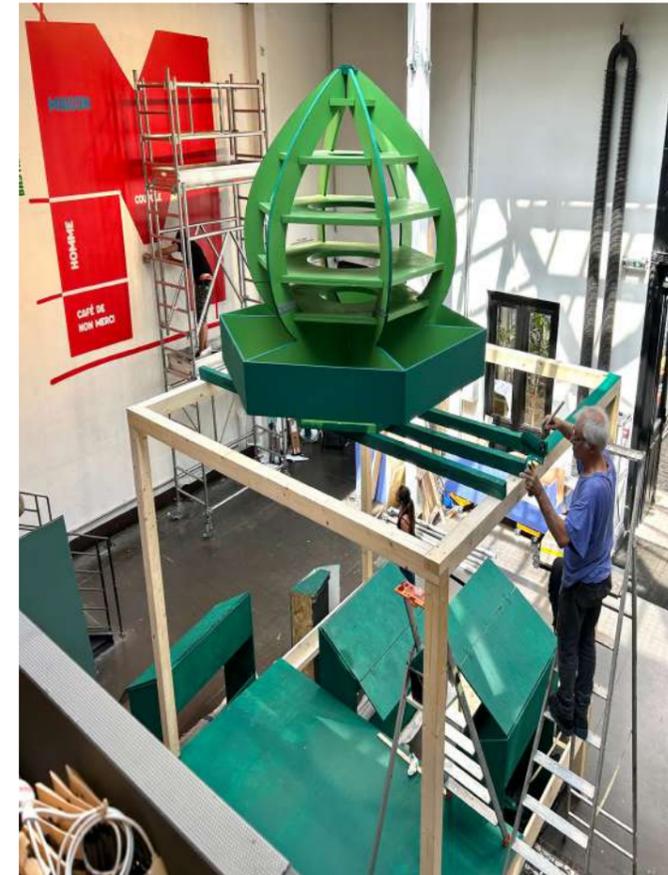
Merci
111 boulevard Beaumarchais
75003 Paris

A trip to the concept store Merci is always a must when visiting Paris. This quirky store has everything from homewares, gifts, cookshop through to fashion, not forgetting the great coffee shop.

On my visit during the summer the VM team were in the middle of installing a new concept which is always located in the main entrance as you walk in. It was great to see the VM team busy painting and setting up the new concept.

I returned several days later to find the new installation. The fun Summer concept which resembles newspaper kiosks uses fixtures made from OSB Board selling Paris souvenirs, gifts mixed with colourful quirky objects evoking Paris and Merci.

Iain Kimmins FBDS



Samaritaine, Paris

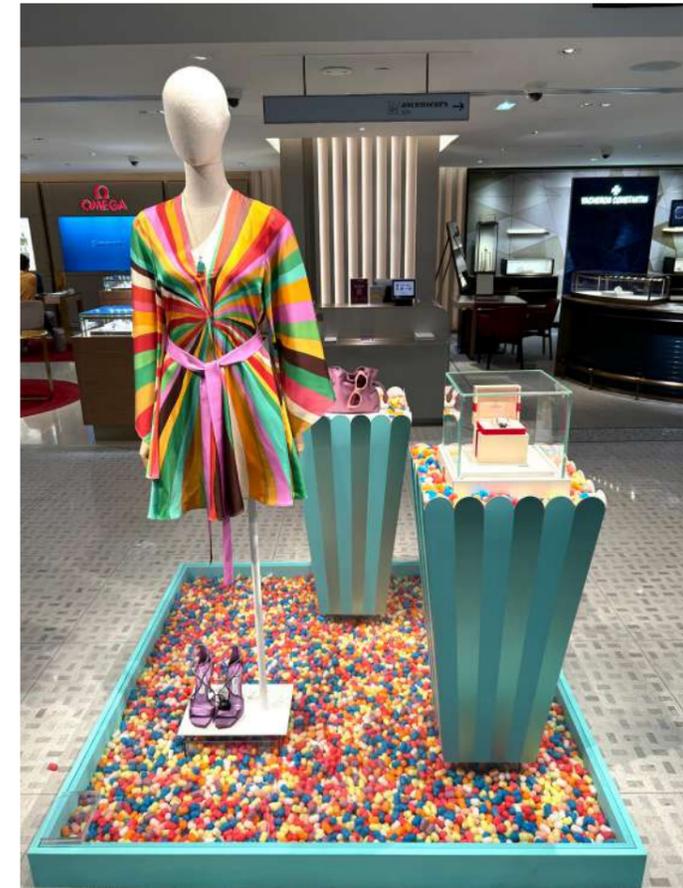


La Samaritaine is a large department store in Paris owned by LVMH. The company was owned by Ernest Cognacq and Marie-Louise Jay who hired architect Frantz Jourdain to expand their original store. It started as a small apparel shop and expanded to what became a series of department store buildings with a total of 90 different departments.

The store closed in 2005 because the building did not meet safety codes. Plans for redeveloping the building involved lengthy complications, as the representatives of the store's founders argued with new owners LVMH over the building's future as a department store or a mixed-use development.

After seven years of renovation, it has reopened to public on 23 June 2021, having been previewed by the French President Emmanuel Macron and journalists the days before. Its retail offerings targeted at affluent consumers, restaurants, and a boutique hotel that includes a penthouse suite with its own private swimming pool.

Iain Kimmins FBDS



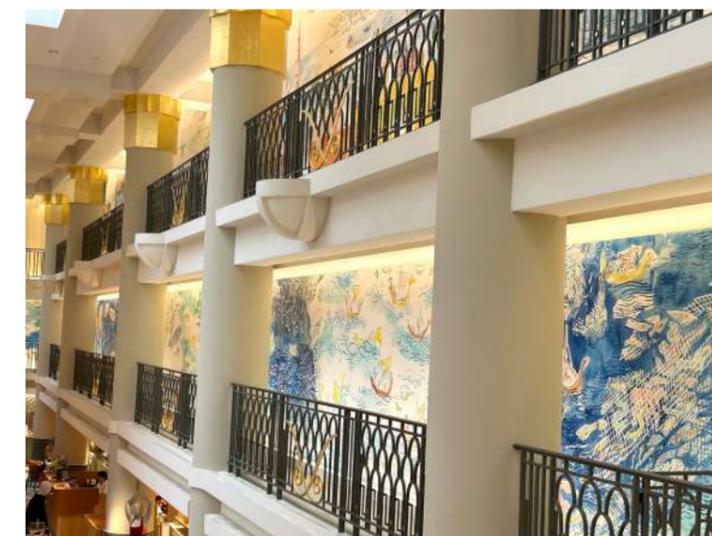
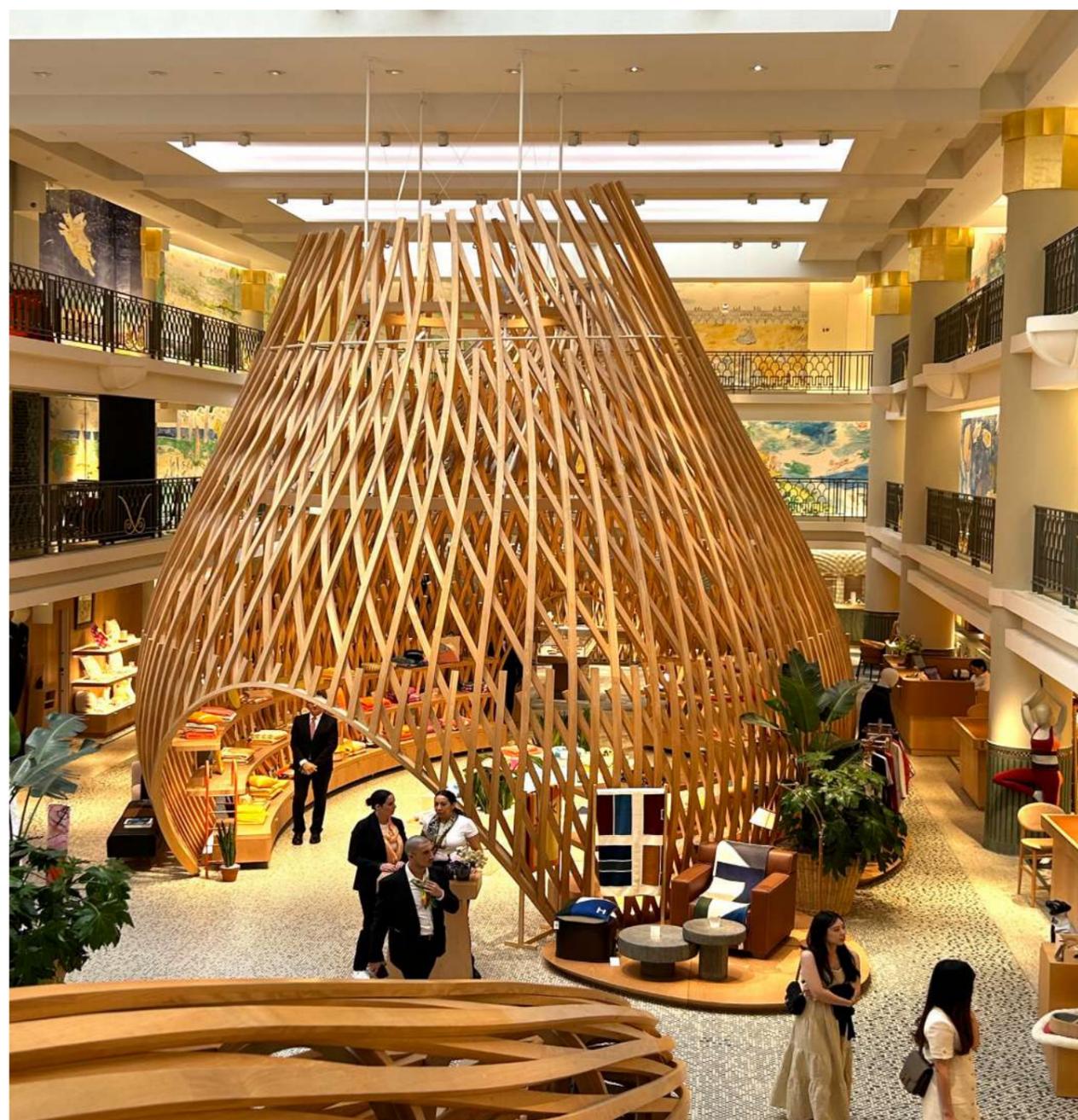
Hermes, Paris



The Hermès shop near Le Bon Marche in the heart of Saint Germain, is a stunning architectural piece that used to be the Hotel Lutetia's art deco swimming pool of a Paris Club. I haven't visited the store for a couple of years and it was pleasure to walk into a friendly shopping environment. It's a great stop for lunch or an afternoon drink that serves superb coffee and cake!

Designed by architecture agency RDAL, the three-floor concept store contrasts original 1930s features with Denis Montel's intricate wooden cocoons and wave furnishings, reflecting the building's original purpose.

Iain Kimmins FBDS



Farm Rio

Farm Rio started as a small, independent stand in 1997 on the streets of Rio by founders Katia Barros and Marcello Bastos.

Farm Rio has become a beloved brand of Brazil with its strikingly vibrant, toes-in-the-sand spirit. With a strong belief in creating positivity through the use of vivacious colour and shapes, the exquisite quality and attention to detail truly speak for itself.

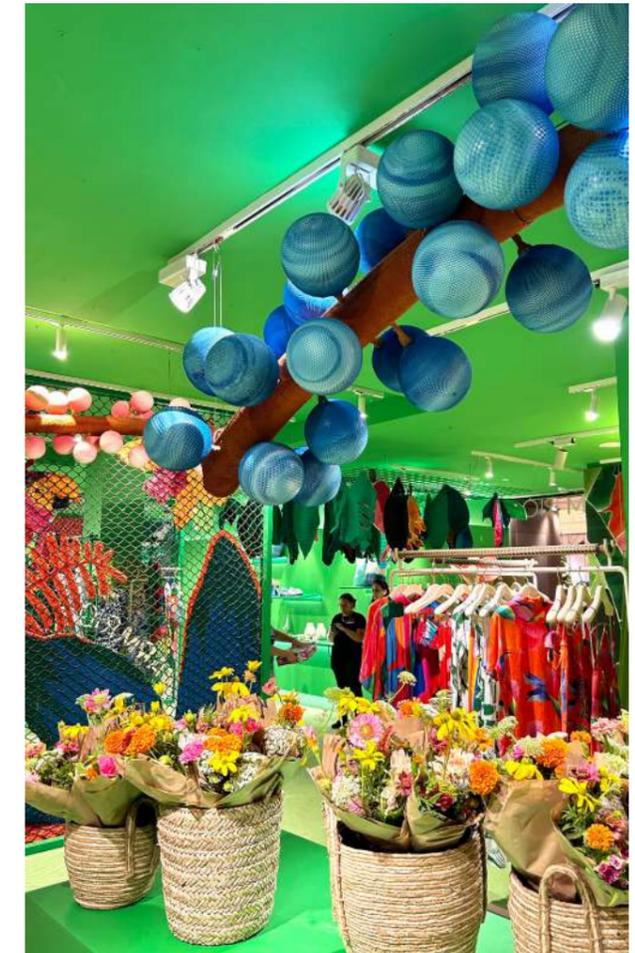
While in Paris during the summer, I visited the department store Le Bon Marche where Farm Rio have a concession. I had never heard of this brand, but it was the bright vibrant colours that attracted me to this concession.

Iain Kimmins FBDS

Hello!

We are a group of creatives from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, who believe in the existence of happiness.

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L'ECLAIREUR

Tucked way on Rue de Sevigne in Paris, in the heart of exceptional architectural buildings, I stumbled across this quirky concept store that brings fashion, art and design to create places with a unique atmosphere. There are three of these concept stores in Paris each with their own distinct personality that is definitely worth a visit.

Iain Kimmins FBDS

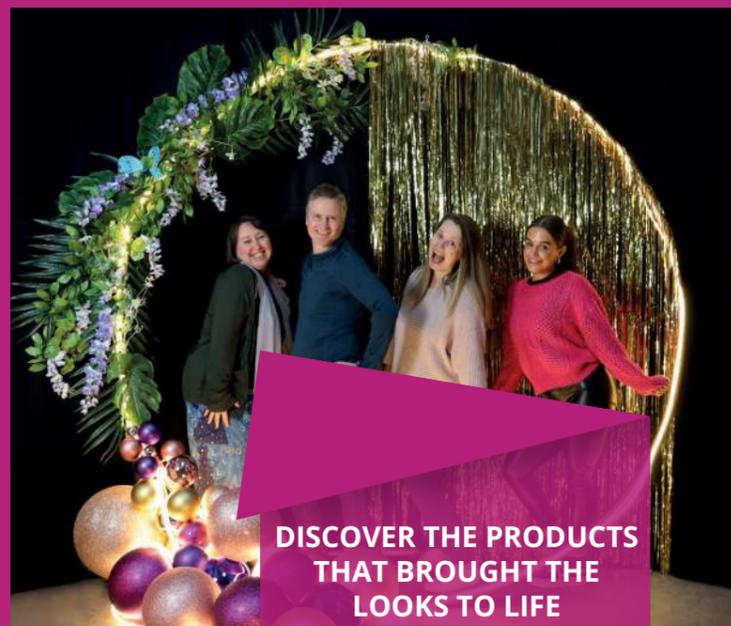


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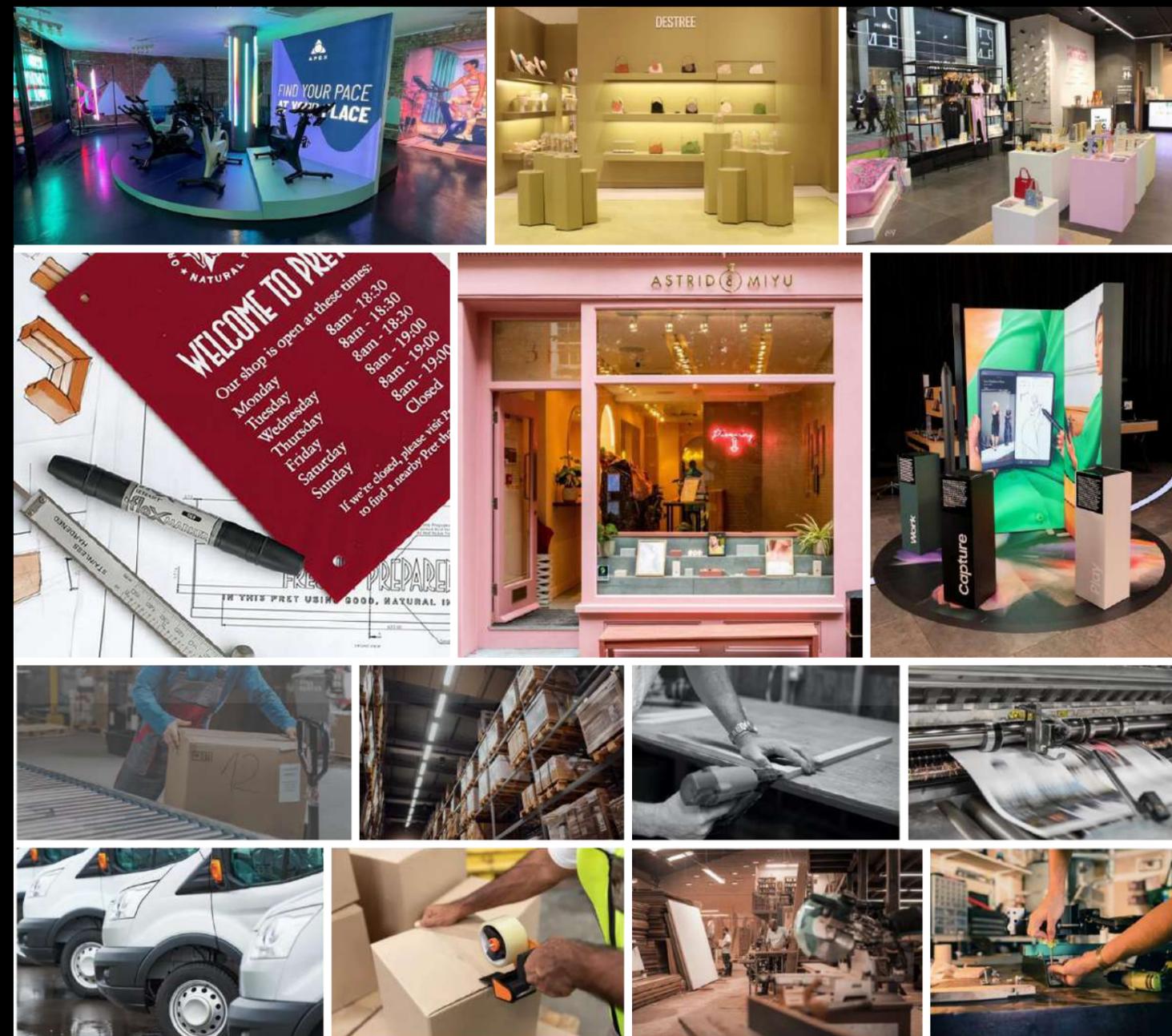
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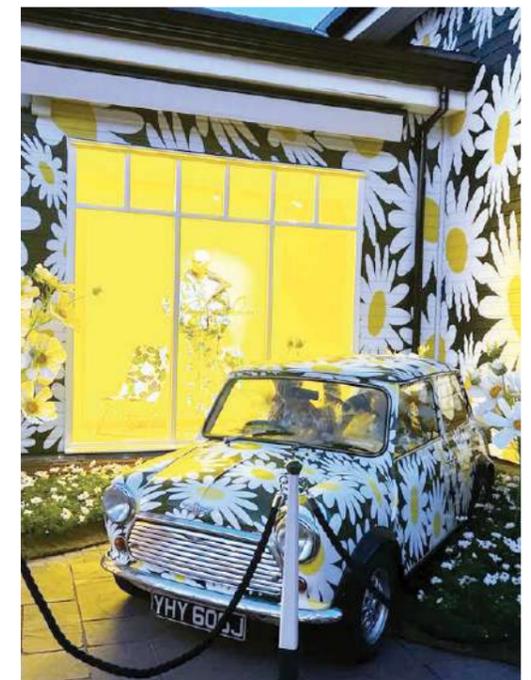
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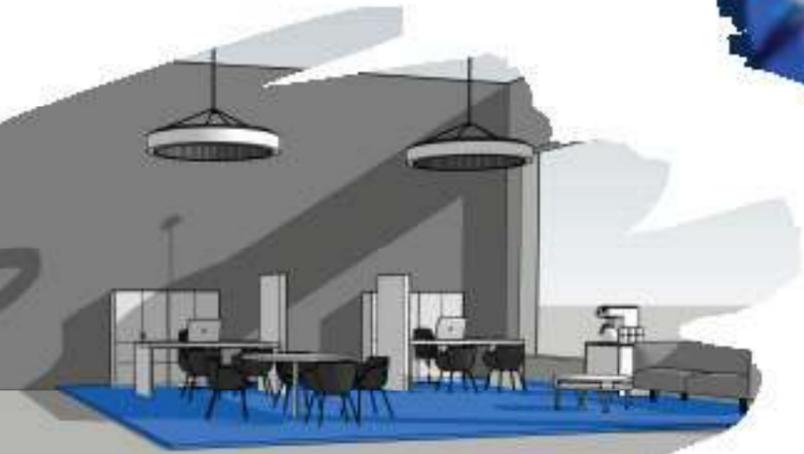
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Fleur Adamo, York

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There have been occasions when Creatives have found themselves in the role of Visual Merchandiser with absolutely no training, and they can be fabulous at it! Yet there are always a few VM's with no formal training, and, although full of great ideas, they've been really glad to learn the basic building blocks of display to give them that extra confidence and assurance they need for their creations. Composition or 'grouping' is key to a well-structured display and many installations have been let down without these skills.

There are also small independent retailers or businesses whether hospitality, service industries or similar with or without windows, Pop-Ups, market stalls even, or many who work from home so networking events are crucial in getting the message across in a visually appealing way.

Sadly not everyone has the budget to hire a professional which would, of course, always be preferable, but everyone needs to start somewhere!

So here are the basics, a tried and tested course we've carried out successfully over many years, helping so many businesses along the way. It has always been a live workshop which naturally stopped during lockdown, but now we have the Online version too - something that you can do in your own time. And for those who are hard of hearing we have added subtitles so just let me know when you buy the course and I'll switch them on for you.

It is also with great delight that our LIVE DAY WORKSHOP in YORK is back with bookings being taken now for September - so don't miss out as it's just in time for all your Christmas displays!

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"The course is really good & I've recommended it to the local council! It's made a big difference already to our shop. Thankyou!!"

"I enjoyed the course and learnt a lot from it, and it made me feel confident in the displays I have already achieved. I thought the course was easy to navigate and I was able to log in and out as necessary, which I found very helpful. I thought you explained the contents in good detail, and it was visually appealing too."



Verve Arvola ABDS

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The BDS Leadership Team comprises of experienced Visual Merchandising professionals and experts in the industry, who also volunteer their time to manage the BDS. It is their passion and enthusiasm for VM and Store Presentation that drives the industry to maintain standards and ensure Visual Merchandising is not a dying art.



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