

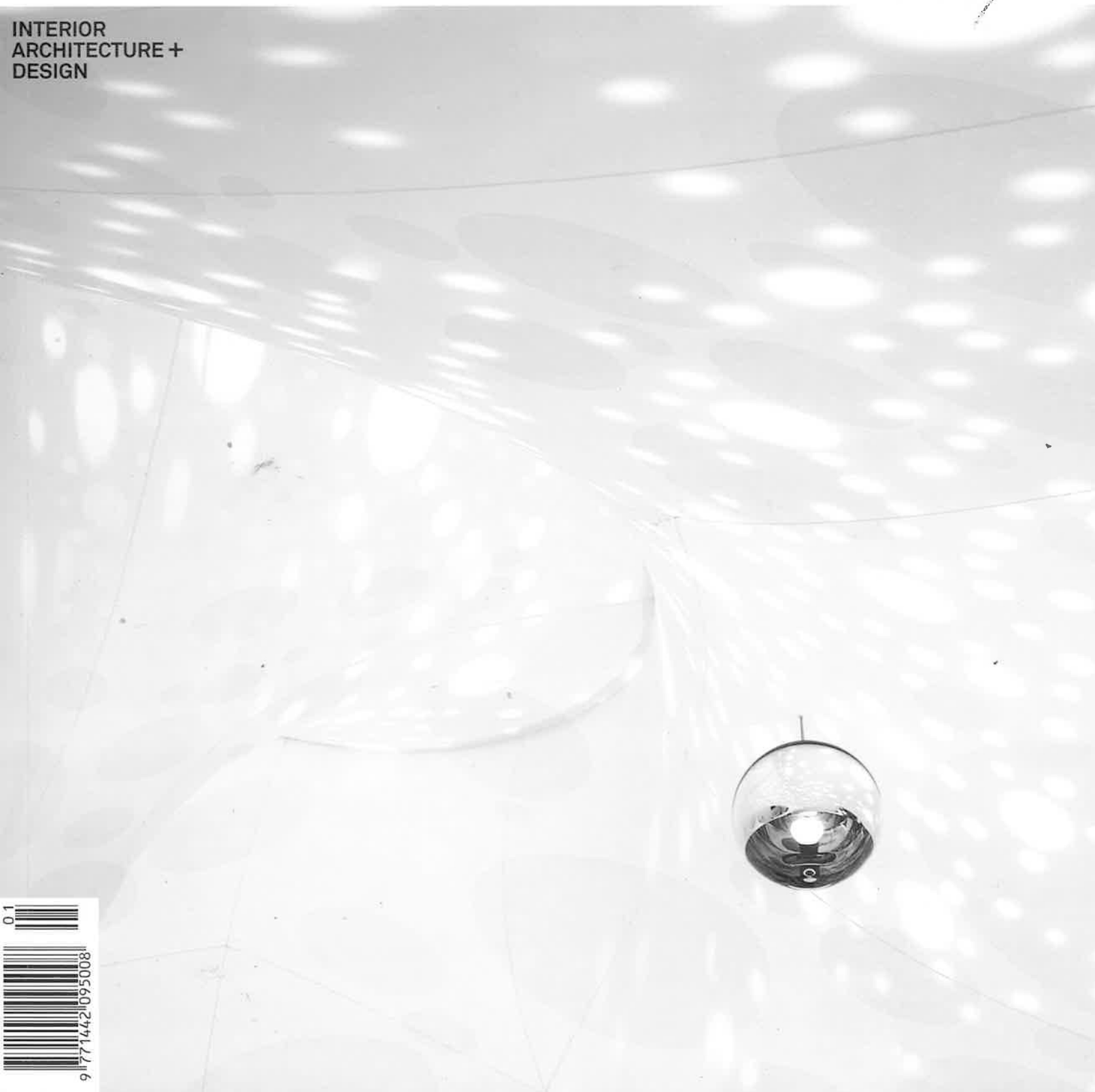
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by Landini Associates

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HARROLD'S

LANDINI ASSOCIATES HAS CREATED A NEW FLAGSHIP
MENSWEAR STORE FOR HARROLD'S THAT MIXES BUSINESS
WITH PLEASURE.

words
FREYA LOMBARDO
photography
TREVOR MEIN

How many guys love shopping? Getting males to part with their hard-earned cash on clothes isn't easy. High-tech gadgets, boys-toys, sports gear, top shelf spirits and leisure pursuits are more likely to tempt wallets to open.

"Men don't shop, they commando raid," says Mark Landini, creative director of Landini Associates and the designer behind the new-look Harrolds at the top end of Collins Street, Melbourne. Landini Associates has created a luxury flagship store for Harrolds – amongst the designer denizens Armani, Bally and Hermes – that dares to make men enjoy shopping.

Harrolds has long been part of the fabric of Collins Street, with a boutique presence at the foot of 101 Collins and another beneath the Rialto towers. Both were characterized by a somewhat old-world appearance. Harrolds proprietors, brothers John and Theo Poulakis, know their clientele personally. Their client attention and retention is second to none. "Walking down the street with John and Theo is like a Who's Who of Melbourne, with every well-suited businessman greeting them warmly", recalls Landini. "They know their customers very well, literally, and so were quite clear about how they shop and what the experience should be like."

Having decided to consolidate three stores into one, the brothers approached Landini. They had seen the flagship store he created for Lanvin in Rue St Honore in Paris while leading a team at Conran Design Group. The brief – to create the best menswear store and menswear experience in Australia – centred as much on increasing the cachet of their brand identity as their need for a premium retail space. From the outset, Landini knew the gentlemen's outfitter was ripe for an update, but any makeover had to be contemporary with a timeless, classic appeal. This is a project which draws out Landini's considerable retail design and strategic branding experience honed through international projects for the Conran Design Group, Harrolds and Harvey Nichols, and local work with Sass and Bide, Jigsaw and Vintage Cellars, to name a few.

The design response expands the store experience from boutique to emporium. Fusing two shopfronts under the 101 Collins office tower gives Harrolds a presence muscular enough to stand up to its designer-chic rivals. From the street, the storefront makes a sleek and striking impression. Double-storey glazing patterned with diagonals across each panel gives a signature look that the brand previously lacked. Window displays are confined to illuminated lightboxes suspended behind this glazed expanse and a mutable light display changes the surface hue from lime green to indigo to onyx on a daily basis. This chameleon feature is a calling card to the suit-set. It announces the arrival of a high-end fashion store and attracts the attention of passers-by while merely hinting at the garments and accessories to be found within.

The entry is defined by a discrete, sheltered transitional space that seals out the hubbub of the street. Inside, the spatial arrangement is on a tight

grid formation with a soaring triple-height void. The ground level expanse has two main zones. The first contains the shirts, ties and cufflinks that constitute the fastest turnover stock. Floor-to-ceiling mirrors bookend the ebonized-ash timber joinery that defines this area, providing ample storage and display niches. Dark timbers contrast with the honed cream Travertine flooring, giving the space a clean, streamlined richness.

Behind the cabinetry is an area dedicated to casual and sports attire, with a focus on brands like Paul Smith and Dunhill. The opulence of the entry softens here with plush carpeting, tub chairs and the champagne shimmer of deco-style wallpaper. The generous change rooms have a more traditional air. They are dressed in fabric panels that can be easily updated with fresh materials as seasons or styles change. Lighting is integral to the design. "We tend to start with the lighting and then see what the budget allows after that," notes Landini, who collaborated with Complete Metro Lighting, on the lighting design. The fixtures include cabinet spots, ceiling tracks and soft lights recessed within the racks and displays.

A steel-encased glass elevator beckons customers upstairs, where the large expanse is graduated by massive joinery elements in the same dark wood as downstairs. "We didn't want people to feel overwhelmed, to feel like they were in a cavernous vacuum. We wanted to create interesting environments as the clients move from one space to another," says Landini. These sections contain the latest collections in a manner reminiscent of ships travel trunks. Like the fitting rooms, they are lined with fabric panels that playfully reference the suiting. Each graduated space displays suits for different occasions – formal, lounge suits, business suits, race-wear, outerwear – breaking up the volume of stock into smaller, more intriguing parcels.

The sensibility of a gentleman's club pervades the upper level. Lounge suites, occasional tables and leather-finished desks make it a welcoming place for partners to relax while clients try on their selections. There is plenty of eye candy between the Juan Davilla painting over the void and, the constant projection of couture catwalk shows and black and white movies. A private room for bespoke suiting boasts two very large change rooms. Two captains of industry could easily hold a meeting in here while being fitted for new suits. A grand marble bar is a key feature of the first-floor space. By day, clients are greeted with the option of a barrista-perfect coffee or a juice. After hours a scotch or a gin and tonic is on offer. Impeccable customer service completes the desired club-style experience.

The new Harrolds shifts the retail experience away from mere shopping and cultivates belonging instead. Lingering and loyalty are encouraged. The customer service is attuned to investment and not rash purchases. This flagship store is an environment for schooling men in the fine art of dressing well. Take the time to enjoy it and you'll find a welcome respite from the vicissitudes of office life.

¹/THE HARROLD'S FLAGSHIP STORE IS AN ENVIRONMENT FOR SCHOOLING MEN IN THE FINE ART OF DRESSING WELL.

²/PANELS OF LUXURIOUS FABRIC HAVE BEEN USED TO DRESS THE CHANGING ROOMS.



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- × **project**
Harrolds Flagship Store
101 Collins Street
Melbourne Victoria 3000
☎ 03 8660 7888
🌐 www.harrolds.com.au
- × **design practice**
Landini Associates
42 Davies Street
Surry Hills
New South Wales 2010
☎ 02 9360 3899 ☎ 02 9360 4899
🌐 www.landiniassociates.com
- × **project team**
Creative director: Mark Landini
Associate director, interiors:
Paul Gates
Graphic designer: Emily Bird
- × **time frame**
Design and documentation:
4 months
Construction: 6 weeks
- × **builder and project manager**
Fusion Interiors
- × **lighting**
Complete Metro Lighting

- × **products**
 - flooring**
Tuftmaster High Fidelity II "Great Wall" and "Hazelwood" carpet.
Classic Ceramics Magestic "Cream" tiles
 - walls**
Dulux "White Swan". Baresque Lifestyle wallpaper, Loop Andante and Papicio wallpaper
 - furniture**
Jardan Oscar chair, Enzo sofa and Uno low back chair, Norman and Quaine Demille armchair, Pitch Kroll visitor chair
 - Joinery**
Gitani Stone Emperado "Brown" bar counter. White oak with custom black stain. Dulux Precious "Bronze Pearl"
 - artwork**
Juan Davila



³/THE ROOM FOR BESPOKE SUITING DRAWS ON DESIGN SENSIBILITIES FROM THE ERA OF THE GENTLEMAN'S CLUB



× design statement

The size and volume of the existing space and the views created by void connections between the two floors provided an opportunity to design a space that would offer Harrolds customers the ultimate menswear shopping experience.

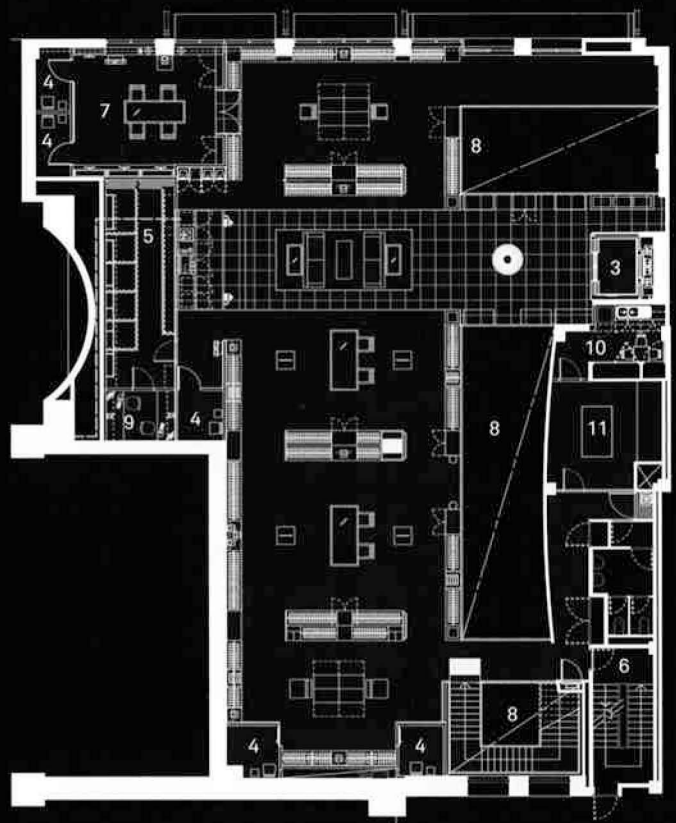
The design has a modern sense of eclecticism that reflects the nature of the product. Careful emphasis was placed on selecting luxurious fabrics to be used in varied ways throughout the store. The use of different patterns and textures allows the store to have a range of atmospheres as the customer moves through it. Dark timber creates a solid foundation for the design and hints at the era of the Gentleman's Club.

A critical component of the design is ensuring that the customer can actually see the variety of products in the store. The result is a plethora of display units and merchandising features. Downstairs the "shirt wall", made up of over 1500 shirts, covers most of the wall space and gives the customer a true indication of the styles, colours and patterns available. The carefully considered lighting scheme was developed to highlight the choice and variety of the products.

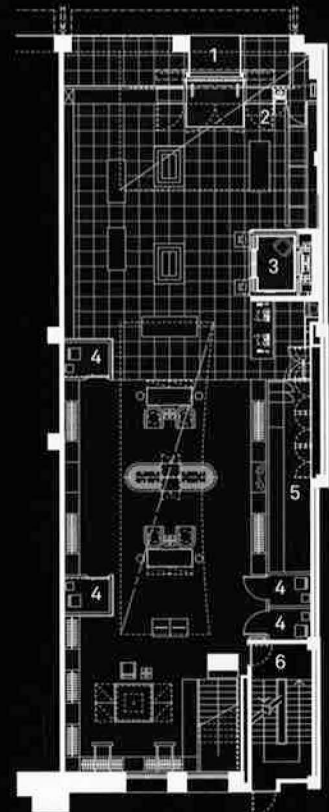
The upstairs floor offers space and comfort. The changing rooms are extremely generous in size. The design also features a private made-to-measure room that defines modern luxury today – comfortable, personalized and discreet. The generous use of mirrors, furnishings, fabrics and lighting creates an exclusive dressing room – like a suite in a luxury hotel.

The upstairs bar completes the personalized luxury of the experience. It creates an ambient point on the level that encourages relaxation and allows the customers to take their time browsing.

Landini Associates



- key
- 1 Entry
 - 2 Concierge
 - 3 Lift
 - 4 Change room
 - 5 Store room
 - 6 Fire stair
 - 7 Made to measure
 - 8 Void
 - 9 Office
 - 10 Kitchenette
 - 11 Tailor



⁴ / THE "SHIRT WALL" ON THE GROUND FLOOR DISPLAYS OVER 1500 SHIRTS.

⁵ / A WELCOMING PLACE FOR PARTNERS TO RELAX ADJOINS THE GRAND MARBLE-FACED BAR THAT ANCHORS THE FIRST-FLOOR OF THE SPACE.



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