

THE WORLD'S ONLY GLOBAL RETAIL AND LEISURE MAGAZINE

RLI



RETAIL & LEISURE INTERNATIONAL

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GLOBAL FOCUS

THE LEISUREWAY BRINGING LIFE TO PLACES

ETOILE GROUP
A Passion for
Creation

361°
Push Beyond
your Limits

EXPLORAR HOTELS & RESORTS
Experience,
Exchange & Exhale

AR & VR | FREYA ROSE LONDON | GLOBAL RLI AWARDS SHOWCASE | URBAN REGENERATION | VOYAGER - ASIA & AUSTRALASIA



The World's only Global Retail & Leisure Deal-Making Forum

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Sands
RETAIL



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Cover Story

Based in Zaragoza, Spain, theleisureway leads genuine, iconic projects and they create innovative places where emotions come alive. Their expertise extends through the entire process from idea to installation.



Editor's
Foreword

Our two annual events in London are coming around quickly and anticipation is building in the RLI office. Back to the present though and our May issue is here, which features all the regular news, views and interviews you could wish for along with our annual Global RLI Awards Showcase feature, which gives you a chance to look at all the finalists in the 16 categories in more detail.

Till next time...

James Quinn, Editor



Publisher's
Comment

May is here, the sun is out, the days are getting longer and it's finally getting a little warmer, just in time for our second May Bank Holiday and the Kings Coronation this weekend... the perfect time to sit back with a cocktail and enjoy the read! This month's Cover Story takes a trip to Zaragoza, Spain, where we speak to Gastón Gaitán, Founder of theleisureway which leads iconic projects and creates innovative places where emotions come alive.

We are now Spurring ahead with our events to take place in just over six weeks having announced Tottenham Hotspur Stadium as the venue for this year's RLI Connect Global in association with Platinum Partner Sands Retail and the Pan Pacific London for this year's prestigious RLI Awards, take a look at our special awards showcase starting on page 34 for a low down on all shortlisted companies.

This month's lead interviews include Etoile Group, who have a passion for creation with their personalised approach to coveted luxury fashion and lifestyle brands; 361° an integrated sportswear enterprise who are expanding across Europe; Explorar Hotels & Resorts who deliver lifestyle experiences to digital nomads and millennial demographics and last but by no means least Freya Rose London who redefines modern luxury with a unique collection of jewelled shoes and handbags.

For those of you who are attending MAPIC Italy in Milan 16-17 May, I look forward to seeing you there.

Finally I look forward to welcoming you to our events in London next month, ensure if you haven't already booked your space, do so before you miss out.

Enjoy the sunshine!

Jayne Rafter, Publisher

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WHO'S WHO IN RETAIL

RLI MEETS

Mikkel Grene

CEO - SØSTRENE GRENE

What are the company's key objectives for the next 12-18 months?

After a period of fairly low growth during Covid-19, we are now getting back on the growth track. We have gotten off to a great start in the UK and our plan is to expand Anna and Clara's wonderful world in this market with more physical stores in the years to come. In the coming months we will also honour our obligation to help our customers in these difficult times with inflation and financial instability. We do not wish to let the prices increase as much for the end-customer as the prices do for us and our suppliers. That is why we will absorb most of the price increases from our suppliers instead of sending them forward to our customers. Naturally, it will affect our margin negatively, but we want to lend them a helping hand in a difficult time.

Would you say events around the world in the last few years have affected the business at all and has it had any effects on future plans?

Yes - our customers are affected by the ongoing crisis and we see that they buy less products. On the other hand, we see an increase in footfall and we believe that we have a place in the market to attract more customers who are looking for products with lower price points. The past months we have also seen an increase in our like-for-like turnover.

What key leadership skills do you feel are the most important in the current retail climate?

In a dramatically changing world, we must be agile and able to adapt to new market conditions very quickly. Changes have always been a condition for leaders to deal with - but they are happening at a much faster pace. We should prepare our organisation to be open for and curious about changes - and be able to communicate what opportunities they may provide us with. So that we embrace changes instead of being afraid of them.

As a leader who makes key strategic decisions, do you prefer to rely on facts and figures, your natural instinct, or a combination of the two?

I would say it's a combination of the two for me. I follow the figures every day - but I also highly depend on my gut feeling, when the data does not show me where to go or what to do looking forward. But more importantly: as we all need the facts and figures I think it is important to understand that they do not motivate people when they stand alone. So we also need to be able to bring them into a narrative of where we are heading and sometimes it is even more important to communicate your feelings of passion and dedication because let's be honest - sometimes you do not know how the business case looks like in figures - your instinct just tells you that it is an area where you need to invest more and have more focus to follow the market and the customers.

Do you feel that CEOs and company leaders can continue to be transformational in the new retail landscape and will this actually be more important than ever now?

Yes, I believe they can and they must because even though the physical stores came back strong after Covid-19, we must be careful to conclude that the challenges related to the traditional retail business have been solved. We are still facing fundamental challenges in creating an attractive alternative to online shopping by providing the customers with meaningful and attractive experiences in the physical stores. In SØSTRENE GRENE, we have gone through a very successful digital transformation the past years, but this transformation will continue in the years to come. Over

the recent years, we have developed a new store concept 'Retail for the Senses' which will be a solution to some of these challenges and may also increase the time spent in the store as we invite the customers for an even more wonderful shopping experience that touches all senses.

What do you make of social media and its importance in the world of retail and how prominent is e-commerce and online activities within the business?

It would be a big mistake to count social media out as it continues to play a predominant role in our dialogue with customers. We see new social media emerging which are becoming very strong so we might need to consider additional platforms. That being said, we want to own our customer data ourselves where we previously delegated this task to tech giants because we did not have the tools to handle it ourselves. Even though e-commerce represents a fairly small part of the total turnover, one should not underestimate the importance of showcasing your products online. We see many customers starting the customer journey online and finishing it in the physical stores. Without our e-commerce business we would not have digitalised our products to the same extent.

Taking a step back from right now, what would you consider your career highlights to date to be?

Without any doubt it's been to see talents bloom and employees develop in SØSTRENE GRENE. We have a fantastic organisation and I'm very proud of all our Sisters. The culture of the Sister Spirit is thriving across markets, stores and offices. It's amazing to travel to a city where you have never been to visit a store there which just has that special SØSTRENE GRENE atmosphere. It makes me proud to see that the Wonderful world of Anna and Clara has proven to be so international and strong that it actually works out in 16 different countries without any changes.

With everything that has happened in recent times, how are you feeling about the 12-18 months that lie ahead?

Although everything seems to be positive now, I think it is too early to say that we are past the crisis. It's very important as a retailer to move closer to the customers and to understand the reality they are facing - and to adapt your communication and assortment to their new reality.

If we look at the retail industry as a whole, do you have any words of warning for the industry or advice from your own experiences?

We should not expect everything to be back to normal once the crisis is over. There are always winners and losers of a crisis and there is always a new reality after a crisis. Instead of just seeking cover waiting for things to "go back to normal", we as retailers should try to understand the changes we are facing and how we can adapt our business accordingly. In that way we will be stronger once the crisis is over.

Lastly, any final thoughts or anything else you would like to add for our readers?

I believe in a bright future for the retail business - if you have the courage to embrace the future changes while at the same time holding on to yourself and your values - and if you manage to transform your business according to a new reality. You should not be afraid to change what is but at the same time you should hold on to what you stand for as a company and never compromise on your beliefs and your values. Even though we talk a lot about crises and digital transformation now, we must also remember that the biggest transformation we will face in the years to come may very well be the entire ESG agenda.



11-12 October 2023 | Dubai

Investing for the Future

The IGDS World Department Store Summit (IGDS WDSS) is the industry's annual get-together of CEOs and senior executives from leading department stores, brands and business partners.

Our forthcoming 14th IGDS WDSS, held for the first time in the Middle East, proposes an ambitious agenda addressing the most prompting challenges and showcasing compelling new avenues for future developments.

The two-day in-person Summit is a unique opportunity to exchange important experiences, network and compare insightful notes with peers from around the world.



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IGDS WDSS 2023 is organised by
Al Tayer Insignia and Intercontinental Group of Department Stores



ICONIC SWIMWEAR LABEL, HUNZA G, OPENS FIRST-EVER STORE AT SEVEN DIALS, COVENT GARDEN

Shaftesbury Capital has announced that Hunza G, the sustainable swimwear brand, has opened its debut store at 35-37 Monmouth Street in Seven Dials, Covent Garden. With physical collections only previously stocked within leading multi-brand stores including Selfridges, Harrods and Harvey Nichols, the opening of Hunza G in Seven Dials marks a milestone moment for the brand as it commits to its first retail store. The 1,583sq ft space launched last month and will be open to customers until the end of the summer.

Established in 1984, Hunza G has become renowned for its signature crinkle stretch fabric used throughout its lines of swimwear and clothing.

The brand expresses a commitment to creating beachwear products that work for all, maintaining a 'One Size Fit' mantra and utilising fabrics that complement all body shapes and figures.



STORY CELLAR, THE SECOND RESTAURANT VENTURE FROM TWO MICHELIN STAR CHEF TOM SELLERS, HAS NOW OPENED IN NEAL'S YARD, COVENT GARDEN. LOCATED AT 17 NEAL'S YARD, THE 1,700SQ FT PARISIAN-INSPIRED ROTISSERIE STYLE RESTAURANT, WELCOMES STEPHEN NAYLOR AS HEAD CHEF AND SPECIALISES IN ROTISSERIE CHICKEN, WHILST BOASTING AN EXPANSIVE WINE PROGRAMME. STORY CELLAR IS A CONTINUATION OF TOM'S FIRST RESTAURANT, RESTAURANT STORY AND FEATURES A CONCISE MENU OF HOUSE CURED CHARCUTERIE AND CLASSIC DISHES INTERPRETED BY TOM, ALONGSIDE ITS PRIMARY FOCUS OF ROTISSERIE CHICKEN. THE OPENING OF STORY CELLAR FOLLOWS THE RECENT ANNOUNCEMENT THAT CRUDO CEVICHERIA, LONDON'S FIRST BUILD-YOUR-OWN CEVICHERIA, IS SET TO OPEN IN SEVEN DIALS LATER THIS YEAR.

SHELLEY SANDZER SECURE HOLY CARROT FLAGSHIP

Specialist UK leisure property agency, Shelley Sandzer, has secured a debut permanent site for plant-based restaurant Holy Carrot at 156 Portobello Road.

The unit occupies 2,000sq ft over the ground floor and basement, the eatery will deliver Holy Carrot's signature dishes to a new customer base, when it opens later this Autumn.

Beloved customer classics like the Sexy Tofu, Holy Buffalo Wings and the Truffle Celeriac Risotto are set to feature on the menu alongside exciting new additions.

Irina Linovich, Founder at Holy Carrot, commented on the signing by saying: "We are delighted to be opening our flagship location in London as we expand our presence throughout the capital. Portobello Road is an iconic destination and one which is rich in creativity and difference, mirroring our unique offer seamlessly. Shelley Sandzer have provided invaluable advice as we take the next step in our brand journey and we're looking forward for what's to come."

TAG HEUER REOPENS FLAGSHIP BOUTIQUE

The luxury Swiss watchmaker has proudly reopened the doors of its flagship boutique on London's Oxford Street, welcoming visitors into a space that has been reimagined to capture the motor-racing DNA of the brand.

Echoing the modern spirit of the brand, the boutique spans over 102sq m was conceptually developed by TAG Heuer's in-house design and architectural team in Switzerland. The design draws inspiration from its avant-garde spirit and from the Monaco and Carrera collections, which are celebrated for their motoring history.

A modern linear theme now runs throughout the space, which features three backlit arches set into the boutique's brick walls, tall contemporary bookcases presenting memorabilia from the brand and a partition of angular wooden tiles on which the TAG Heuer shield is displayed. The bar upstairs has also been reimagined in parallel with the ground floor space in the same shade of deep blue.

OXYGEN CROYDON PARK ADDS NEW £1.23M TRANSFORMATION

Oxygen, the UK's first choice indoor family activity brand, has unveiled its upgraded customer proposition through a £1.23M refurbishment at Croydon Park, featuring transformed activity zones, facilities, café and revamped event offerings.

Launched to the public over Easter, the new impactful concept, which was first introduced at Oxygen's Wilmslow and Acton parks, has focused on significantly enhancing the customer experience through leading play, interactive facilities and new café offer.

Extensive customer feedback and insights have been utilised to drive the delivery of the experience that includes an upgraded and more streamlined welcome and check-in space. The 31,560sq ft space, which spans across two floors, includes a neon experience tunnel that guides customers.



TOMMY HILFIGER SIGNIFICANTLY UPSIZES ICON OUTLET AT THE O2

Icon Outlet at The O2, which is owned and operated by AEG and Crosstree Real Estate Partners, has announced that leading designer lifestyle brand Tommy Hilfiger, has significantly upsized its store by more than 110 per cent. This latest development follows stellar trading results throughout Q1 for both brand and destination and is a significant vote of confidence in its presence at The O2 from the global fashion brand.

Tommy Hilfiger has upsized its store at Icon Outlet at The O2 by over 3,100 sq ft, more than doubling its presence on the upper level. Located adjacent to a range of high-profile brands such as Calvin Klein, GANT, Hackett and Ted Baker, the new 6,000 sq ft Tommy Hilfiger store is open now. Showcasing the brand's classic American style across menswear and womenswear, with the addition of a childrenswear range, the upsized store has

broadened its appeal to an even wider variety of shoppers.

Scott Murdoch, Chairman of Retail at CBRE, said: "Tommy Hilfiger at Icon Outlet at The O2 has continued to be a strong performer within the outlet portfolio and we are delighted to have played a part in its upsize."

Louisa Dalgleish, Leasing Director at Icon Outlet at The O2, also commented: "Following a successful start to 2023, we are delighted to open the newly upsized Tommy Hilfiger store. As one of our leading brands and long-standing tenants, we are thrilled to see the global fashion house committing to and investing in, our outlet shopping destination. This latest move indicates how much the brand values its position at The O2 and delivers a strong vote of confidence for the year ahead, further cementing our position as one of London's leading outlet shopping destinations."

NIKE TO LAUNCH ARNDALÉ UNIT

Manchester Arndale is excited to announce that global sportswear brand Nike has agreed to lease a new 13,418sq ft store which is due to open in 2023. Set across two floors, Nike's first store in Manchester will fill the last remaining space in the former Topshop unit and will be home to its digitally focused Nike Rise concept.

LIBRE LONDON OPENS POP-UP

Longmartin Properties Ltd, a joint venture between Shaftesbury Capital and the Mercers' Company, has announced that Libre London, the online retailer specialising in women's fashion and vegan beauty, has opened its debut pop-up at The Yards, Covent Garden, highlighting the destination's appeal in securing a first-time brand.

YIQI'S DEBUT LOCATION AGREED

Pan-Asian restaurant concept, YiQi, will make its debut on Chinatown London's Lisle Street and the new venue is set to open this summer. The YiQi menu will celebrate different cuisines from across the ESEA region. YiQi's debut will employ innovative cooking methods, from Sous Vide to Teppanyaki and Binchotan.

ROXY BALL ROOM TO ADD SITE

Roxy Leisure are bringing their competitive gaming concept to Leicester city centre. The latest Roxy Ball Room will be located on Humberstone Gate and will feature an exciting range of activities including ten pin bowling, ice-free curling, batting cages, three karaoke rooms, shuffleboard, American pool, deck shuffle, ping pong, crazy pool and beer pong.

RUDY'S ANNOUNCES OPENING

Rudy's Pizza Napoletana has announced it is due to open in Harborne, Birmingham in July 2023. The neighbourhood pizzeria will bring its relaxed dining concept to the former Hawkshead bar, at 77 High Street. Serving the perfect and classic Neapolitan pizza since 2015, the new restaurant marks its third location in Birmingham.



NEPI ROCKCASTLE TO OPEN PROMENADA CRAIOVA IN OCTOBER

Property investment group NEPI Rockcastle will open its new Promenada Craiova shopping centre this October, following an investment of more than €125M. The project will include more than 150 stores.

Promenada Craiova shopping zone will have an area of 78,500sq m, of which the new shopping centre, which includes a retail park, will occupy 62,500sq m and the Dedeman store another 16,000sq m.

"We are confident in Craiova's potential, which is why we decided to implement our newest project outside Bucharest here. At the same time, this is also the largest retail investment to take place in Romania in the last period. Although the market context remains challenging, I am convinced that this is a favourable moment for investments that will boost the national economy while focusing on sustainability and community support," said Rüdiger Dany, CEO, NEPI Rockcastle.



BERSHKA, THE INTERNATIONAL FASHION RETAILER, HAS OPENED THE DOORS TO ITS NEW STORE AT BLANCHARDSTOWN CENTRE, DUBLIN'S LARGEST RETAIL AND LEISURE DESTINATION. BERSHKA IS OWNED BY SPANISH MULTINATIONAL CLOTHING COMPANY INDITEX, WHOSE PORTFOLIO ALSO INCLUDES ZARA, MASSIMO DUTTI, PULL & BEAR AND STRADIVARIUS, AMONGST OTHERS. THE NEWS FOLLOWS THE RECENT OPENING OF ZARA'S LATEST STORE IN IRELAND AT THE CENTRE. SIGNED ON A 12-YEAR LEASE AND SPANNING 10,000SQ FT, THE NEW BERSHKA STORE SITS ON LEVEL TWO, BESIDE THE NEW ZARA, IN A PRIME POSITION. IT OFFERS THE LATEST WOMENSWEAR AND MEN'SWEAR COLLECTIONS, ALONG WITH ACCESSORIES, THROUGH A WORLD-CLASS AND VIBRANT IN-STORE EXPERIENCE. THE ADDITION OF BERSHKA AND ZARA FOLLOWS SEVERAL OTHER SIGNINGS AT THE CENTRE OVER THE LAST FEW MONTHS.

TRAVELLO OPENS ITS FIRST PHYSICAL RETAIL STORE

Online travel experience provider Travello has opened its first brick-and-mortar store, in Cairns. The move comes as the local tourism sector experiences a strong rebound and the group reports significant growth in bookings and sales for both inbound and outbound travel.

Ryan Hanly, Co-Founder and CEO of Travello, said that with the Australian tourism sector rebounding, the company wanted to take an omnichannel approach to its growth. Having a retail store is another way to expose our Backpacker Deals brand to the domestic and international tourist market and further brand exposure," the CEO said.

The new store offers customers the opportunity to experience a private jet – modelled after an aircraft flown by Kim Kardashian – where they can take selfies, access in-person travel advice and get exclusive in-store promotions.

In addition to opening its first store in Cairns, Travello is committed to investing in job creation for the Cairns tourism sector by establishing a regional customer support team.

STARBUCKS VERIFIES 3,500 GREENER STORES GLOBALLY

Starbucks has certified 3,508 of its eco-friendly Greener Stores worldwide, expanding the program to 20 regions as part of its strategy to accelerate progress towards what it dubs "resource-positive targets".

With many first-in-market Greener Stores across Asia Pacific, Europe, the Middle East and Africa, Starbucks is expanding the program into Latin America and the Caribbean by building all-new stores in the region under the Greener Stores framework by the end of this year and going forward.

Greener Stores, according to Starbucks, is an example of how the company is aiming to lessen its environmental footprint and create a more sustainable future for its communities and the planet. The coffee giant plans to reach its target of 10,000 Greener Stores globally by 2025.

"With a company of Starbucks scale – any one action, no matter how small, has the potential for massive impact," said Michael Kobori, Starbucks' Chief Sustainability Officer.

SLOVAKIA'S LARGEST SHOPPING CENTRE TO OPEN THIS MONTH

After 13 years of operation, Eurovea will become the largest shopping centre in Slovakia as its extension is set to open on 25 May. The centre reports an occupancy rate of 95 per cent and promises to bring new brands and innovative concepts. The developer J&T Real Estate is now completing work on most of the buildings in the second phase of the Eurovea project.

Eurovea will become the largest and most comprehensive shopping centre in Slovakia after its opening, offering 320 shops, restaurants, bars and cafés in an area of 85,000sq m. The shopping centre is directly connected to the first Slovak skyscraper Eurovea Tower, the office building Pribinova 34 with BREEAM Excellent green certificate and the Riverside residences lining the Danube promenade.



PORTO MONTENEGRO UNVEILS LINE-UP OF EXCITING NEW OPENINGS

Porto Montenegro, located in Tivat, is renowned for its world-class retail and commercial offerings, public facilities, waterfront promenades and the famous Regent Hotel. This vibrant luxury marina village also boasts gourmet and fine dining restaurants, cafes and a range of other facilities that add to the overall one-of-a-kind leisure experience.

With over 100 retail premises, Porto Montenegro offers a great mix of regional and international brands and services. The shops are clustered in zones, with exclusive designer fashion boutiques dotted around the beautifully landscaped Strada Navale.

Established brands that already thrive in Porto Montenegro include DIOR, Bvlgari, Dolce & Gabbana, Fendi, Rolex, Pal Zileri, Zimmerman, Montblanc, Rado, Chopard, Cartier, Omega, Damiani, Hublot,

Vilebrequin, Paul & Shark, Pinko, Twin set, Boss, Elisabetta Franchi, Emilio Pucci and Heidi Klein. Besides shops, there is a rich offer of cafes and restaurants serving Italian, Mediterranean and Asian cuisines. All this is complemented by a variety of local business and services such as bakeries, banks, a supermarket, hair salons, day spas, yacht broker offices, marine services and much more.

Jelena Sretenović, Porto Montenegro's Head of Retail: "We are delighted to have attracted such esteemed international and regional brands to Porto Montenegro. Our international village community continues to embrace the world-class shopping and dining options and we are committed to continue to build this outstanding offering of varied and exciting experiences with new openings throughout 2023."



DIOR UNVEILS NEW SPAIN STORE

Late last month the French house Dior has opened its largest store in Spain in the premium complex Galería Canalejas. The recently opened space, with minimalist decoration and light tones, displays the offer of the firm owned by the luxury conglomerate LVMH through two floors and presents two different entrances.

JULY OPENS MELBOURNE STORE

Australian luggage brand July has opened a flagship store in Melbourne's QV Centre. Designed by architect Ewert Leaf and builders Trust Projects - who created the famous pastry brand Lune Croissanterie stores - the flagship references "the golden era of travel". The store stocks the brand's colourful, functional range of luggage and bags.

KAUFLAND OPENS RETAIL PARK

Situated in the southwestern city of Sandanski, Kaufland's first Bulgarian retail park spans over 5,000sq m. The German retail chain has invested over €1M in the outdoor retail area, according to a press release. The new shopping area is part of the chain's One Stop Shopping concept in response to rising consumers' demand to shop all in one place.

LENARD'S LAUNCHES NEW UNIT

Lenard's has opened its first new franchised store in six years, with Founder and Director Lenard Poulter saying the company is renewing its focus on new franchises nationwide. The latest store, in Dubbo, is the first franchised Lenard's in the region and was opened by Lachlan Harris, a local who worked at Lenard's for seven years as a teenager.

CHEMIST WAREHOUSE HITS 500

The company has hit a mega milestone, officially opening its 500th store. The pharmacy retailer commemorated the landmark new store, at Croydon Central, Victoria, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Co-Founders Mario Verrocchi and Jack Gance cut the ribbon in-store to officially kick off trade.

IKEA TO INVEST OVER \$2.2BN IN NEW US STORES AND PICK-UP SITES DURING NEXT THREE YEARS

The Swedish home and furniture giant will invest more than \$2.2bn during the next three years in its omni-channel growth strategy. In the first phase of the initiative, Ikea plans to open eight new stores and 900 pick-up locations where customers can collect purchases.

In addition, it will open nine "Plan & Order points," including a location in San Francisco and at Pentagon Centre shopping centre in Arlington, Virginia, both of which are set to debut this summer. The Plan & Order sites, an extension of IKEA's Planning Studio format, provide personalised assistance on home projects. Customers can order goods to be delivered to their home or picked up at one of IKEA's collection points. No items are stocked in the store for take home.

IKEA said the new investment will bring it closer to US customers both physically and digitally - making it easier and more convenient to shop.



CARIBOU COFFEE IS ON THE FAST-TRACK FOR EXPANSION VIA FRANCHISING. THE COFFEE CHAIN, PART OF PANERA BRANDS, SAID IT HAS SIGNED SEVERAL MULTI-UNIT DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS TO FRANCHISE MORE THAN 300 NEW LOCATIONS DOMESTICALLY. CARIBOU COFFEE LAUNCHED ITS FIRST-EVER DOMESTIC FRANCHISE PROGRAM IN OCTOBER 2021. IN MARCH THE FOLLOWING YEAR, THE CHAIN ANNOUNCED THE SIGNING OF ITS FIRST MULTI-UNIT DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT WITH MIKE MARIOLA RESTAURANTS TO FRANCHISE LOCATIONS IN OHIO. MARIOLA OPENED ITS FIRST CARIBOU COFFEE LOCATION IN LATE 2022, IN WOOSTER, OHIO, WITH PLANS TO DEVELOP 60 SITES IN THE COLUMBUS, DAYTON AND CINCINNATI MARKETS. MOST RECENTLY, THE BRAND ENTERED INTO ITS LARGEST DOMESTIC FRANCHISE AGREEMENT TO DATE WHICH WILL SEE 60 CARIBOU LOCATIONS OPEN IN FLORIDA.

SKIMS LAUNCHES AT SAKS FIFTH AVENUE

This partnership marks an important milestone for SKIMS, further solidifying multi-brand retail as an essential pillar in the brand's growth strategy, as it aims to reach and acquire customers beyond its direct audience.

The partnership signifies an opportunity for SKIMS to leverage Saks Fifth Avenue's extraordinary network and make an impact within the luxury ecosystem.

Beginning late last month, SKIMS was available for purchase on Saks.com and in the Sak's Fifth Avenue New York flagship, with plans to open additional doors across the US, including Bal Harbour, Houston and Boston throughout the rest of the quarter. The product assortment features SKIMS' signature collections, including Fits Everybody, Seamless Sculpt and Cotton.

The brand worked closely with Willo Perron of Perro-Rottinger to design its dedicated shop inside the fifth floor of Saks New York. The space features SKIMS signature rounded edged features, inclusive mannequins and a shapewear wall.

AUTHENTIC BRANDS GROUP INKS DEAL WITH VINCE

The Authentic Brands Group business continues to dive deeper into fashion. The brand owner and development firm has entered into a partnership with Vince Holding Corp. (VNCE) to acquire the Vince brand intellectual property. Under the terms of the agreement, the Vince brand will operate within a subsidiary in Authentic called ABG Vince.

In return, Authentic will pay VNCE \$76.5M in cash and a 25 per cent interest in the new subsidiary. Through the agreement, Authentic will own the majority stake of 75 per cent membership interest in ABG Vince. In connection with the partnership, the two companies signed a ten-year license that will allow Vince to continue running its current operations with the option for eight 10-year renewals.

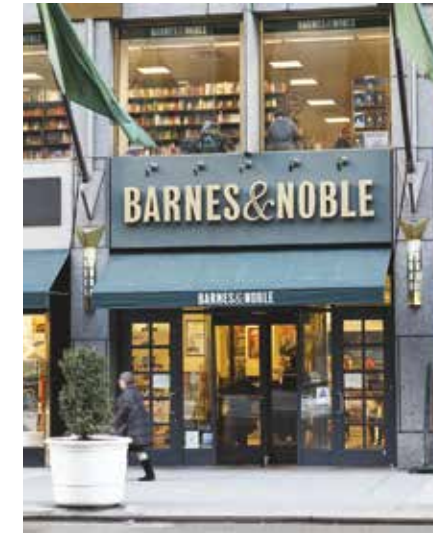
Founded in 2002, the brand offers women's and men's clothing, footwear and accessories through 50 full-price retail stores, 17 outlet stores, its e-commerce site and through its subscription service, Vince Unfold.

BARNES & NOBLE HAS PLANS FOR OVER 30 NEW STORES

Barnes & Noble is responding to what it calls a resurgence in sales with new store construction and a redesigned loyalty offering. The bookseller, which opened more than 17 new stores during 2022 after only opening one or two new stores per year since 2009, plans to open more than 30 new stores during 2023. The openings include four new units which have already launched since the start of 2023.

According to the privately-held, New York City-based Barnes & Noble, it has been experiencing increasing sales, supported by "significant expansion of the market for physical books driven by word-of-mouth and social media recommendations."

Meanwhile, the business is revamping its loyalty program to include both paid and free levels of tiers.



H-E-B HAS DEBUTED ITS BRAND NEW CONVENIENCE STORE MODEL

The Texas grocery powerhouse H-E-B is transitioning its convenience stores to "H-E-B Fresh Bites", which is part of a rebrand that will include an emphasis on providing customers with more fresh options such as produce, prepared food and convenient meal options.

Last month, the first H-E-B Fresh Bites opened at a new location adjacent to the H-E-B store in Leander, Texas. With the opening of the Leander store, H-E-B has 12 convenience stores throughout Texas. Starting this year, the company will update the layout of its remaining convenience stores to the H-E-B Fresh Bites model.

H-E-B Fresh Bites will offer customers an array of fresh options that go beyond offerings usually found at a traditional convenience store, according to the company. The stores will feature several refrigerated cases

stocked with items such as fresh produce, salads, sandwiches and sushi made daily, meat and cheese snacks, fresh juices, kombucha and "meal simple" options. Throughout the store, customers will find nutritious and wholesome products in addition to normal convenience offerings such as soft drink fountains, beer and wine and other snacks. A self-checkout option will also be available.

Many of the locations will also include a True Texas Tacos, an eatery concept that H-E-B launched in San Antonio in 2018. The concept features a menu of more than a dozen breakfast and specialty tacos.

"With the introduction of H-E-B Fresh Bites, we're bringing the freshest products to our customers on the go but want a better alternative to traditional convenience stores," said Scott Campbell, H-E-B Convenience Store Operations Manager.



CHIPOTLE SET FOR EXPANSION

The fast-casual chain Chipotle Mexican Grill has reported an impressive first quarter and confirmed its plans to open between 255 to 285 new restaurants in 2023. It opened 41 new sites during the first quarter, 34 of which featured drive-thru lanes ("Chipotlane") that are dedicated to digital order pickups.

TANGERTO ADD NEW OFFERINGS

Tanger Outlets is set to launch three new dining and entertainment destinations to its centres. Shake Shack will open at Tanger's centre in San Marcos, Texas this summer and Dave & Buster's will open at Tanger's at Savannah, Georgia and Atlantic City, New Jersey. These openings will mark both companies' debut in the Tanger portfolio.

HÄSTENSTO OPEN 20 NEW SITES

A sixth-generation family-owned Swedish company that makes luxurious beds and mattresses is expanding its US footprint. Luxury distributor MadaLuce Group has entered into a strategic partnership with Hästens to open 20 new stores across the US during the next five to seven years. The first is set to open in Dallas early this month.

PINKTACO LAUNCHES NYC UNIT

The Los Angeles-based restaurant company known for its music-filled party vibe as much as for its Mexican-inspired fare has opened a 10,519sq ft outpost at 7 Times Square in Manhattan. The location has seating for 300 people across two floors. The business was first established at the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas and was founded in 1999.

TOYS "R" USTO OPEN IN MEXICO

WHIP Global, the parent company of Toys "R" Us, has entered into a partnership with Mexican retail brand El Puerto de Liverpool to launch the toy brand in Mexico for the first time. The partnership will include the opening of multiple flagship stores in key locations across Mexico, as well as a robust e-commerce platform.



Explore...

QATAR AIRWAYS ANNOUNCES VIP AIRPORT LOUNGE WITH SPA, GYM AND QUIET ROOMS

Qatar Airways has opened a VIP business lounge at Hamad International Airport. Called 'The Garden', it includes an airport-spa, quiet rooms, a gym, nursery, sushi station and gelato dining. The new Al Mourjan Business Lounge overlooks 'The Orchard' and features retail and dining spaces along with uniquely designed relaxation spaces and areas to socialise.

This sanctuary is available for Qatar Airways Premium Passengers and stretches over 7,390sq m and can accommodate up to 707 passengers. It features 24 quiet spaces, each designed to offer optimum relaxation available free of charge for the first six hours.

The new lounge fulfils the needs of business, leisure and family travellers with numerous dining options, relaxation rooms, a fitness studio, pedicure and manicure stations, spa facilities, dedicated private spaces, recreational areas and a nursery.



THE DEVELOPERS OF THE UAE'S FIRST CASINO RESORT HAVE GIVEN A FIRST LOOK AND NEW NAME FOR THE GAME-CHANGING MULTI-BILLION-DOLLAR PROPERTY. WYNN RESORTS HAS ANNOUNCED THAT THE HIGHLY ANTICIPATED RESORT COMING TO RAL AL KHAIMAH WILL BE CALLED WYNN AL MARJAN ISLAND. THE GLOBAL HOSPITALITY GIANT ALSO UNVEILED THE DESIGN VISION OF ITS FIRST-EVER BEACHFRONT RESORT, WHICH IS INSPIRED BY THE TRANQUIL SEASCAPE OF AL MARJAN ISLAND, A GROUP OF FOUR ISLANDS. THE RESORT IS BEING DEVELOPED WITH LOCAL PARTNERS MARJAN LLC AND RAK HOSPITALITY HOLDING. SET IN A PRISTINE SETTING OVERLOOKING THE ARABIAN GULF, WYNN AL MARJAN ISLAND RISES 305M ABOVE THE SEA, WELCOMING VISITORS TO A PREMIUM LUXURY EXPERIENCE, INCLUDING ENTERTAINMENT, HIGH-END SHOPPING ESPLANADE AND GAMING AMENITIES.

BLACK FORGE INN SET TO GROW ACROSS MIDDLE EAST

The Black Forge Inn, owned by UFC star Conor McGregor, is reportedly eyeing Dubai and Abu Dhabi for new locations as part of its global expansion plans.

McGregor's pub has become popular among global celebrities since it opened in Drimnagh in 2021. Along with The Marble Arch in Drimnagh and The Waterside in Howth, McGregor's pub empire is set to expand further with plans to open The Black Forge in multiple locations worldwide.

According to the front-of-house manager, Liam Flynn, The Black Forge is planning to open in the Middle East, US and England. "We're going Abu Dhabi and Dubai," said Flynn. "Then it's going to get exciting, we're going to Boston, New York, Chicago and then we're going to London. And all of these pubs abroad are going to be called The Black Forge."

While it is unclear when the expansion will happen, the Black Forge Inn's plans to go global have already created a buzz among McGregor's fans and pub enthusiasts worldwide.

DUBAI REVEALS AED300M YACHT-SHAPED BUILDING

Dubai will soon be home to a Mykonos-inspired yacht-style project, as announced by Samana Developers, the AED300M development will be located in Arjan.

'Samana Mykonos Signature' will be a mid-luxury residential project and is one of the twelve to be launched in 2023. The launches are attributed to the growth of European buyers and tourists in the UAE. The development is designed and named with inspiration taken from the Greek Island, Mykonos. The project will have 24 retail units and will offer residents features including private pools and resort-style amenities.

Samana Mykonos Signature intends to be a cost-effective option for tourists and residents looking for staycations. Handovers are expected to begin in October 2025.

Dubai was recently named the world's top destination in the 2023 Travellers' Choice 'Best of the Best' Awards by Tripadvisor. The city emerged victorious and was crowned the winner over popular cities such as London, Marrakech, Bali and Paris.

WORLD-FIRST IN QATAR AS WORLD'S NUMBER ONE COOKIE OPENS A STORE

The world's number one cookie has landed at Doha's Hamad International Airport (HIA), with the opening of the first permanent OREO Café outside of the US and first in an airport.

The 116sq m café in the new North Node of Hamad International Airport is delighting travellers with a delicious selection of sweet inventions including OREO milkshakes, muffins and cheesecakes.

There is also a comprehensive savoury food and beverage menu, while chefs create unique treats live at the café's OREO Creations Bar.

The bespoke café concept features the OREO brand's signature blue, white and black, with the aim of attracting transiting passengers with giant OREO furniture, digital walls and a retail area.



FOUR SEASONS CONTINUES MIDDLE EAST EXPANSION

Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, the world's leading luxury hospitality company, along with NEOM Hotel Development, the division that is responsible for building a future-centric hospitality ecosystem in the developing region, have announced plans for a new luxury resort as part of the NEOM master project, located on Sindalah Island.

Extending over an area of approximately 840,000sq m, Sindalah is one of a group of islands in the Red Sea that will be developed in NEOM, each according to its unique vision and design.

In addition to the upcoming Four Seasons resort, Sindalah will be home to a luxury marina and yacht club, 9-hole golf course with 18 pin experiences and a vast array of dining destinations. It will also host sophisticated cultural events, grand sporting spectacles and glamorous social celebrations

throughout the year.

"Four Seasons' upcoming resort in NEOM will be a one-of-a-kind project, blending the natural wonders of the Red Sea with the future-forward technologies on which this new, exciting destination is being built," says Bart Carnahan, President, Global Business Development and Portfolio Management, Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts. "We are proud to be part of the ambitious vision that our partners at NEOM have for transforming the future of hospitality in the region and look forward to welcoming guests to discover a new part of the Kingdom."

The resort will feature 225 guest rooms and suites with terraces overlooking the beaches of the Red Sea, as well as 52 villas with one- to four-bedroom configurations with plunge pool and beach views.



ZAROOB ADDS TWO NEW SITES

The popular Levant street eatery Zaroob, which is owned by Kitopi, has announced the opening of two new locations in Bahrain. The new outlets at Juffair Square and Zayed Town will serve Zaroob's delicious street food inspired by the old streets of Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine and Syria, the company said in a statement.

FLAGSHIP STORE FINDS ITS HOME

Optitalia Group, a distributor of eyewear across the GCC, has launched its optical concept store Vision Industry at the Mall of the Emirates. Located on the first floor of the mall, it offers a bespoke eyewear service, optometric care and a fully functioning lens and artisan frame lab. Optitalia Group is also the owner of the optical retail brand Optifashion.

JEWELLERY BRAND OPENS DOORS

Al Majed Jewellery, the region's leading retailer of luxury watches and jewellery, in partnership with Swiss watchmaker Patek Philippe has celebrated the official opening of a new boutique at the Place Vendôme Mall in Qatar. With exclusive novelties, a VIP area and the opportunity to discover the brand's history, the boutique offers a welcoming atmosphere.

HAWKERBOI LAUNCHES AT JLT

Tom Arnel's Hawkerboi, which started life as a supperclub in Dubai, is getting a permanent restaurant at The Park in JLT. The outlet, located above the Tom & Serg's founder's Splendour Fields cafe, opened its doors on 26 April. The menu includes cereal fried chicken wings, wagyu skewers and whole fried sea bass.

ADRIFT BURGER BAR UNVEILED

David Myers was one of Expo 2020's biggest winners when his burger pop-up Adrift Burger Bar, proved so popular that it sold around 115,000 burgers over six months. Following the positive reception, he has decided on a permanent home for his burger brand and has moved ahead and opened the company's first branch in Abu Dhabi's Yas Mall.

UNIQLO HAS UNVEILED A BRAND NEW PROTOTYPE STORE CONCEPT IN JAPAN

The new prototype Uniqlo Maebashi Minami IC store is located at Maebashi, in the Gunma Prefecture and features innovative design elements designed to help minimise energy usage, in line with the company's target to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions in its own store and office operations by 90 per cent by 2030.

With Kashiwa Sato, Creative Director and CEO, Samurai Inc at the design helm, the store also brings together a range of the newest Uniqlo lifestyle services, including the Uniqlo Flower florist shop, Uniqlo Coffee café and Japan's first permanent Re.Uniqlo Studio – the company's repair, reuse, recycle and remake service.

"With the new Maebashi Minami IC Store, we have created a new type of Uniqlo, where customers can both shop for our clothing, as well as gather and connect with each other," Group Executive Officer, Masahiro Endo commented.



SOUTHEAST ASIAN FASHION RETAILER FJ BENJAMIN IS LEANING INTO THE POST-PANDEMIC RETURN OF BRICK-AND-MORTAR RETAIL WITH THE OPENING OF 'AVENUE ON 3', A SWANKY MULTI-BRAND LIFESTYLE STORE IN SINGAPORE'S PARAGON SHOPPING CENTRE. DOUGLAS BENJAMIN, GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF FJB, SAID: "WE HAD A LOT OF TIME DURING THE COVID-19 LOCKDOWN TO THINK OF HOW WE WANT TO DO THINGS DIFFERENTLY FOR OUR CUSTOMERS, HOW TO MAKE THEIR SHOPPING EXPERIENCE MORE EXCITING AND EXPERIENTIAL AND ESSENTIALLY, HOW WE WANTED TO REIMAGINE THE BUSINESS OF FJ BENJAMIN. DESIGNED TO CATER TO HIGH-END CUSTOMERS CRAVING FRESH AND INNOVATIVE SHOPPING EXPERIENCES, AVENUE ON 3 IS AN 8,000SQ FT BOUTIQUE OVERLOOKING THE SHOPPING CENTRE'S ATRIUM FROM THE THIRD FLOOR.

CULTI MILANO OPENS FLAGSHIP IN HONG KONG

Italian fragrance brand Culti Milano opened its first Asia flagship store in Hong Kong in April, located along Hollywood Road in the Central Business District.

Designed by Hong Kong-based interior decorator Alexis Dupont, the new store recreates Culti Milano's 'culture of ambience,' presenting the brand's range of home fragrances and genderless perfumes in a well-appointed space. A Bauhaus-style lounge area welcomes customers to explore the store's retail range.

Founded by Italian interior designer Alessandro Agrati in 1990, Culti Milano's bestselling products are its home fragrances, which use reed sticks with natural microscopic pores in diffuser bottles. Agrati is credited for being among the first to create and retail reed diffuser scents for the home.

The flagship store is designed to highlight the unique atmosphere of each home fragrance, featuring warm, balanced tones alongside maple wood and travertine typically used in Italian architecture to create a refined yet cosy atmosphere.

LOEWE OPENS FIRST-EVER RECRAFT STORE IN OSAKA

Spanish luxury brand Loewe has unveiled its very first store to specialise in repairing and maintaining Loewe leather items, making its debut in Osaka, Japan.

Located in the Hankyu Umeda department store, the new 'Loewe ReCraft' store has opened with a full-time leather artisan who will be on hand to mend and fix Loewe's small leather goods, including restitching, puller replacements and edge painting, as well as regular leather goods, for eyelet and rivet replacement, in addition to handle replacements.

The store will also offer woven leather baskets that were created from re-purposing high-quality surplus materials from previous collections.

As a limited offer at Loewe ReCraft, signature basket bags will be reintroduced with leather patches and straps crafted from surplus leather materials. The store will also feature a space where Loewe items can be personalised with monogramming, straps, charms or studs.

LA MER HAS OPENED ITS LARGEST FLAGSHIP STORE IN HAINAN

Estée Lauder Companies' La Mer has opened a first-of-its-kind omni-channel retail destination at CDF Haikou International Duty-Free Shopping Mall, in partnership with China Duty Free Group (CDFG).

Spanning more than 242sq m, the new flagship store is appointed with marble finishes and statement pieces that reflect the prestige skincare brand's luxurious offerings. In addition to a full display of the brand's product lines are private VIP lounge and consultation areas designed to enhance the in-store experience for clients.

For the store's grand opening, La Mer hosted Chinese actress Qin Lan, who appeared in a special livestream event on CDFG Hainan's social platforms. The livestream drew over 39 million views across Weibo and WeChat.



PHILIPPINES WELCOMES ASICS' LARGEST FLAGSHIP IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Japanese athletic footwear and apparel brand ASICS has opened its largest store in Southeast Asia. The new flagship appeared in Glorietta 2, Makati City in the Philippines.

The retail space features an expanded range of Asics merchandise - Performance Run and Core Performance Sports along with Sportstyle apparel, footwear and accessories. The new collection includes GT 2000 11 TR, METASPEED+ and GEL-CUMULUS models.

The total area of Asics conceptual outlet is about 460sq m. Gazini Ganados, Kathleen Paton, Kirk Bond, Jefferson Lo and other famous sportsmen friends of the brand came to the opening of the new flagship.

The store is distinguished by its use of the latest technological advances in retail. In particular, the use of a 3D Foot ID Scanner, which allows visitors to choose a sneaker.

The outlet also has locker rooms and showers designed exclusively for ASICS Running Club members. Exclusive benefits from store vouchers to limited-edition ASICS merchandise and event invitations are also available to program members. Everyone is welcome to join the program - the brand posts invitations on their ASICS Philippines social media accounts.

In April 2023, Asics will also launch the OneAsics loyalty program, which allow customers to accumulate points with every purchase and then redeem them for additional perks.

The ASICS brand is a Japanese company that specialises in athletic footwear, apparel and accessories. The business was founded in 1949 in Kobe, Japan and has become one of the world's most famous athletic footwear brands.

HUGE NEW DIOR TO OPEN IN H2

Following the launch of its concept store in Seoul's Seongsu-dong district last year, LVMH-owned luxury house Dior will open its largest brick-and-mortar store in South Korea in the second half of this year. The upcoming store will be situated inside one of the country's largest department stores, Hyundai Department Store Pangyo.

K-WAY ADDS HONG KONG STORE

Following the opening of its first Hong Kong store at Pacific Place, French outerwear brand K-Way opens its second concept store at K11 Art Mall in partnership with Bluebell Group. Inspired by the brand's ethos, the new store features characteristically modern interiors with sleek lines and minimalist spaces to allow the product collections to stand out.

PALM ANGELS OPENS IN SEOUL

Italian luxury streetwear brand Palm Angels last month opened its first-ever South Korea store, in the nation's capital, Seoul, in partnership with Forward Global Fashion Co. Ltd. Located in the luxury shopping hub, the Forward Global Fashion building, the new store features a ceiling-high window façade and marble backdrops.

LE LABO BRAND MAKES DEBUT

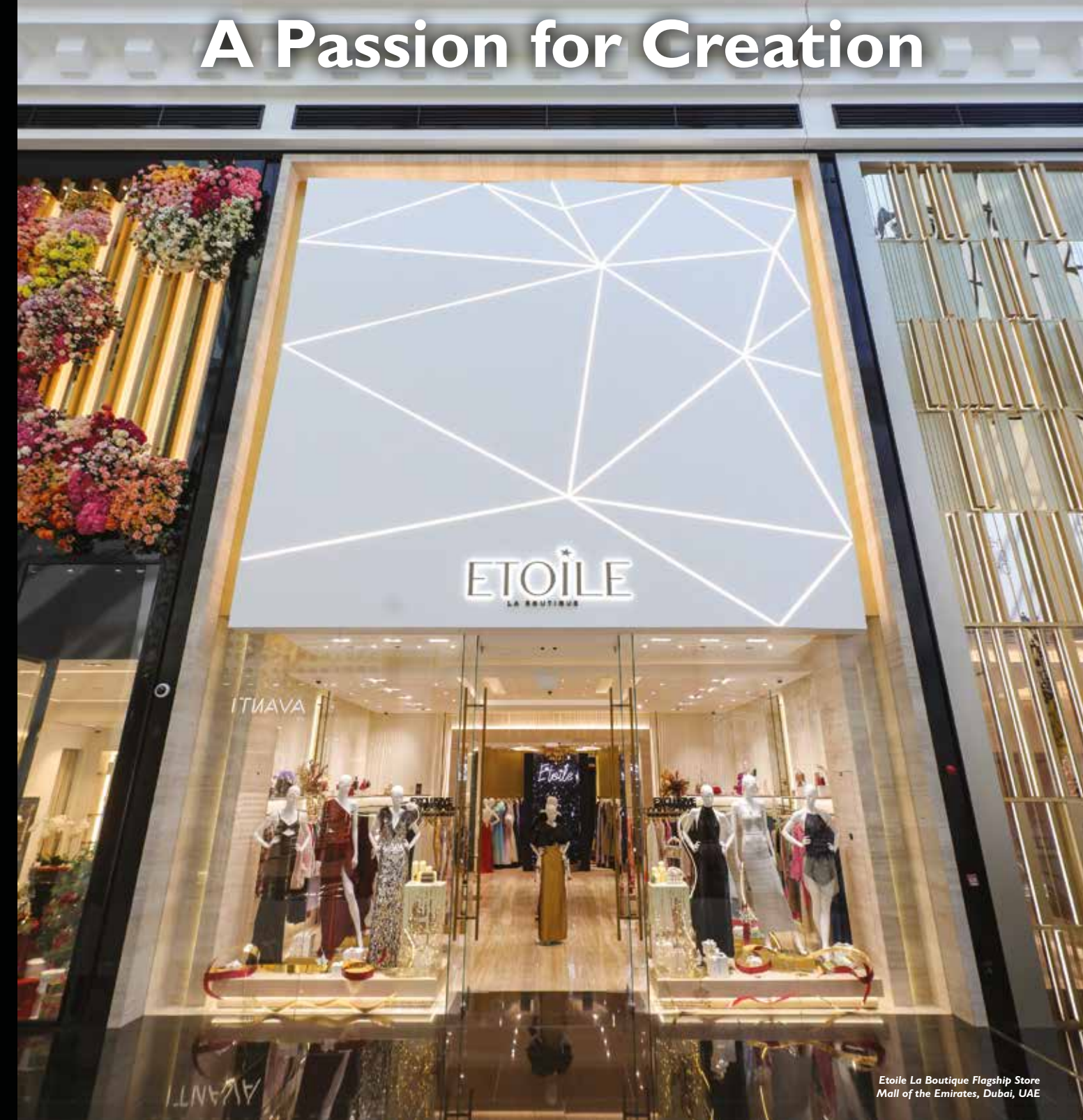
High-end fragrance and sensory lifestyle brand Le Labo has made its entry into the Mainland China market as it launched its first store in Shanghai's Xintiandi district. Le Labo is known for its retail spaces' unique, open laboratory-inspired style and the brand is housed in freestanding stores in major cities including New York, London, Paris and LA.

SINGAPORE LANDS BHC CHICKEN

BHC Group has announced it has opened its very first store in Singapore as part of its efforts to break into the Southeast Asian market. The store launched at a shopping complex in Marina Square which is located on Marina Bay, a popular tourist spot. It will serve not only fried chicken but other Korean street food.



A Passion for Creation



Etoile La Boutique Flagship Store
Mall of the Emirates, Dubai, UAE



Since its inception 40 years ago, Etoile Group has carved out a niche in the Middle East's retail market and today they are a boutique group with dedicated personnel equipped with expertise and a personalised approach appertaining to coveted luxury fashion and lifestyle brands. Here, RLI spends some time with Ingie Chalhoub, Founder & President of Etoile Group to speak about the evolution of the business.

Driven by a passion for fashion and art, Ingie Chalhoub has always worked hard to achieve her goals – combining her creative and business skills. When planning the next steps for the company, she continues to truly believe in listening to her intuition and this is something that has been engrained in her throughout the Etoile Group journey which began back in 1983 when she was the first to introduce French luxury brands to the region.

In the last four decades as a pioneer in luxury fashion, Ingie has built the reputation of Etoile by understanding

her clients' expectations, listening to their needs and ensuring she creates memorable experiences through moments of personal discovery.

Today, Etoile Group represents over 50 high-end brands within their multi-brand Etoile La Boutique stores, which were the first of their kind in the region and introduced brands and represented them across the whole region with exclusive products. The company also works with the best in luxury fashion including Chanel, Valentino, Etro, Aquazzura, Ralph Lauren, Tod's, Yamamay and Hogan.



Inside of Tod's Store, Dubai Mall
Dubai, UAE



Aquazzura Flagship Store, Dubai Mall
Dubai, UAE

"It is not so much about the number of brands or stores, for us what is more important is the quality and value of our partnerships and – looking ahead – the expansion by the brand and the development plans we are undertaking," explains Ingie Chalhoub, Founder & President Etoile Group. "Etoile Group has been able to place each of these premium brands' growth in the region on an upward trend throughout the course of our partnerships with them, assisting them in reaching new markets and gaining access to new client demographics."

Last year was a strong one for the Group as it achieved double-digit growth, even eclipsing their own projections. They on-boarded new brands to broaden their portfolio and they launched boutiques in new and existing locations, improving accessibility to and increasing the awareness of their brands.

To continue this momentum, there are ambitious yet attainable plans for 2023 and 2024. Ingie feels that making smart investments in the Group's physical presence over the next two years, will drive further growth and success.

As part of this continued expansion strategy, they now have 60 projects in progress or planned for the future. This includes renovating existing boutiques to improve the experience for their clients, as well as opening new boutiques to reach new markets and audiences.

"Our focus today is on the Gulf Cooperation Council nations. This is our home market and I believe that our customer understanding and client relationships are unmatched. This region not only delivers strong returns for us today, but also continues to offer significant growth potential. That's why, in the coming months, we will be opening new boutiques in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Kuwait, as well as reopening boutiques in Lebanon," Ingie highlights.

The focus of Etoile Group has always been on providing a very high level of personalised service and unmatched attention. By offering a concierge-like service, the company has built strong relationships with its clientele over generations. By investing in these deep connections, they were able to grow the business during Covid-19, as they made home visits to their clients, sharing hand-picked collections that reflected their clients' individual sense of style and aesthetics.

As well as continuing this level of personal engagement today, they

are also investing in highly effective customer relationship management tools, which allow businesses across the Group to further enhance their interactions with clients. This helps them to increase their collective understanding of customer preferences and feedback, to then provide an even more bespoke experience. They are also firm believers that their ongoing investment in long-term partnerships is what has helped convert their clientele into brand ambassadors who help to tell the Etoile story.

With a greater importance placed on sustainability than ever before, Ingie feels that brands understand the need to embed sustainability into their business models, as consumers grow more conscious of the environmental and social effects of their purchasing decisions.

"At Etoile Group, we have taken a sustainable approach across our head office and boutiques and prioritise procurement from partners and suppliers that are compliant with the rules of the Fashion Pact, a global initiative that was launched in 2019 and is aimed at reducing the fashion industry's environmental impact. I also strongly believe that there is an intrinsic commitment to sustainability in luxury fashion. Whether this is in preservation of craftsmanship and artisanal skills or in the production of quality fabrics and materials, luxury fashion and design is about creating collections and pieces that can be passed down through generations. It is the antithesis of fast fashion."

When presented with the question of what she considers to be the main reasons behind the success and longevity of Etoile Group, Ingie responds by saying this is due to the expertise and hard work of the people they employ. She goes on to say that perseverance and diligence when combined produce a culture that propels the Group to success.

"In terms of what lies ahead, I have great expectations. With an aggressive plan to double Etoile Group's revenue by 2025, we have multiple plans and projects in the works, including launching more boutiques, acquiring new brands and venturing into new markets," explains Ingie.

She concludes the interview by saying the Middle East's luxury retail industry has a bright future and will continue to be influenced by factors such as the region's growing e-commerce and digital channel adoption, the demand for sustainable and ethical luxury goods and the growth of the luxury travel industry.

"Etoile Group is embracing these trends and is eager to further solidify its position as an ambassador of luxury fashion expertise and excellence."



Tod's Store, Dubai Mall
Dubai, UAE

Push Beyond Your Limits

Taiyuan City Shanxi Province, China



Guiyang City Guizhou Province, China



Established in 2003, 361° is an integrated sportswear enterprise which principally engages in brand management, research and development, design, manufacturing and distribution in China and across the globe. In this interview, RLI sits down with Stephanie Jin, Group Vice President and General Manager, Overseas Business to talk about the brand's major expansion drive into Europe.

The 361° company is a global sports footwear and apparel brand whose mantra is 'One Degree Beyond', a concept which helps drive their customers to go further than they previously believed possible, using their products to do so.

Originating in China, most of its brand stores are located in the mainland area, but it also has a growing number of concept stores appearing outside of China. Today, the brand has in total around 8,000 stores across the world.

The company is currently focusing its efforts on expansion across the European region through its performance category. This is built around the fantastic core range of high-performance running shoes including the best-selling 361°-CENTAURI, which features best-in-class technology that

suits the needs of both the independent running retailers, which is the best place to find their products in the EU and UK and ultimately their end consumer of runners of all levels and abilities.

"Going forward, the opportunities for our business are unlimited. We will continue to heavily focus on performance running, whilst also beginning to introduce other high-level performance lines, such as basketball, as we develop our positioning and brand awareness in the region," explains Stephanie Jin, Group Vice President and General Manager, Overseas Business.

"In the EU, we feel we have a strong point of difference compared to a lot of bigger, more established brands. We aspire to be "the brand" of the independent running retailer by focusing our attention on specialty running

retail, using marketing efforts to drive consumers to our retail partners instead of buying on our web shop. By being a brand you would only see in a specialty running store, 361° is able to be marketed differently as a legitimate high-performance running brand."

When discussing initiatives to maintain their presence in the market, Jin highlights that the process for the business involves identifying trends and gaps in the marketplace, using their team of talented experts and designers to then move quickly in a way to capitalise on these gaps and bring products to market. They are constantly pushing boundaries, thinking about how they can use their resources to further support the needs of their customers, which includes incorporating fresh concepts such as using carbon dioxide as a foaming agent in their supercritical midsole platform "ENGAGE".

In the EU and UK, their marketing strategy has been built around the idea of engaging with the best running specialist retailers in the region, using an omni-channel approach of digital, social and in-person activity to build trust and awareness through them. They act responsibly in the way they choose the partners they work with, helping them to present themselves as a running brand to the consumer.

The key focus for Spring/Summer 2023 has seen them begin a ground-up approach. For 361°, this has meant being visible in-store, often working with key retailers to build community focused events, where potential customers have the chance to test out their shoes on a run, free of charge. By being active in the community, they can build long-term relationships with the selected retailers and help potential customers to associate 361° with the store, so that the next time they are in the market for a new pair of running shoes, their company is the one they think of.

"In the future, for key products such as Centauri and the upcoming trail shoe Futura, we will make use of emerging technology to present information in an easy to digest, digital format through scanning a QR code attached to the shoe. This allows us to offer an immersive view of both the brand and individual product's story, sometimes acting as a sales tool at the point of sale, or as follow-up information post-sale," Jin explains.

Social media is an important aspect for any company, but for 361° it forms a crucial cornerstone of their omni-channel approach to marketing.

This means keeping the message consistent, whilst adapting the content in order to better engage with each platform's audience.

One emerging platform that is key in their industry is Strava, which is used by all athletes to share their activities with their friends. Much like other social media platforms, a brand is able to create a page (called a Strava Club) in order to appear in feeds.

"The runners and athletes of Strava often use the platform as a much more personal 'journal' of their sporting endeavours when compared to Facebook or Instagram. With this in mind, it is vital that we match the sentiment of these users, allowing for us to hopefully be heard through the noise," highlights Jin.

Like a lot of actions in the running footwear industry, the sustainability commitments of the company are very much product-focused. As mentioned earlier, their all-new platform design incorporates industrial carbon dioxide as a foaming agent in a supercritical process. By using CO2 gas, the midsole is able to take on bouncier, lightweight properties compared to previous types of midsole foam, whilst also helping to remove carbon dioxide from the environment.

In addition, they now make use of recycled yarns to produce upper fabric. As a complete package, Jin says they are still a long way away from being fully sustainable, but they are really proud of the steps they have taken so far and excited to keep innovating, both in their processes and their products to help make the world we live in a greener place in the future.

As our time begins to run out, we ask Jin what lies ahead and what is the greatest challenge facing the business?

"Like many newer brands, the greatest challenge is breaking through the noise. We understand our brand awareness in the region is still relatively low. This, coupled with widespread overstocking in the running industry from other famous running brands, has slowed down the growth of 361° for a few seasons, particularly post-pandemic. However, we have seen excellent growth in recent seasons and it is important that we stay the course, rise to the challenges faced and make use of the talent we have at our disposal, acting as a close-knit team, pushing to go 'One Degree Beyond'," Jin concludes.





Experience, Exchange & Exhale



Explorar Hotels & Resorts was created in April 2022 by Co-Founders Tim Sargeant, Adam Boulton, Gordon Oldham and Niels Huby who believed there was a demand for an innovative and genuine hospitality offer that focused on delivering lifestyle experiences to digital nomads and millennial demographics. Here, RLI speaks with Niels Huby, CEO of the company to learn more about their unique offering and what the future holds.

The recently launched company is an innovative and genuine hospitality brand dedicated to a new way of travelling that incorporates leisure, remote working, relaxation and discovery in one. Since inception, Explorar Hotels & Resorts has been based around the three key pillars of EXPERIENCE, EXCHANGE & EXHALE.

Their core pillar of EXPERIENCE means they want their guests to discover new places off the beaten path or rediscover popular places through fresh eyes.

EXCHANGE focuses on the idea that they develop their hotels and concepts to foster social interactions and offer new experiences for guests, whether through co-working spaces or daily events.

Finally, EXHALE is centred on how people in their busy everyday lives need to stop, rest and relax, be treated with kindness and take care of themselves. The team at Explorar want their guests

to feel energised and relaxed during their stay, either through multiple modern wellness activities or simply through the interactions with the wonderful teams at their locations.

“We currently own and operate two properties, one in Koh Samui and one in Koh Phangan. These are not only two beautiful modern properties on the beach front, but they are also our testing grounds where we develop and implement all our concepts and ideas: from co-working spaces with gigantic aquariums to fine culinary pop-ups with upcoming chefs, collaborations with local artists and music festivals with world-famous DJs. We make sure there is always something new and exciting at Explorar,” explains Niels Huby, CEO of Explorar Hotels & Resorts.

“However, the method is always right there behind the madness and we continually analyse guests’ satisfaction, marketing ROI and financial returns to decide which of these concepts should be developed further and offered as part of our HMA packages to other hotel owners and developers.”

Koh Samui and Koh Phangan were reopened in a record five months following the Covid-19-enforced lockdowns. To accommodate these two openings in such a short space of time, which included structural renovation and construction after the properties were left unoccupied for two years, the full team lived on site as they ran constructions, renovations, training and concept development all at the same time.

As for new openings, their upcoming project is the Explorar El Nido in Palawan, Philippines explains Huby, who goes onto say that it is the brainchild of visionary developers Gemmalyn and Rick Crosby and will feature 69 treehouses designed by Underwood Phuket, a one of a kind jungle spa and a tree bar with views over the pristine jungles of El Nido and the ocean.

“We are particularly enthusiastic about the emphasis on environmental protection and sustainability that is at the very core of this project and was included in the development process from the very beginning,” highlights Huby.

Additional new sites are being considered in Phuket, Bangkok and Chiang Mai within Thailand and Bali in Indonesia as the fast-growing company looks for new properties that will continue to attract digital nomads and millennials. Aside from the right locations, they are also looking for the right people and the right partners. It is important to the company that they find like-minded partners that share their commitment to sustainability and care for the people who are willing to work on developing a truly unique experience for guests.

“It is at the core of our thinking to offer guests and travellers something new every day. This could be in our hotels where we offer new events or activities every day: local cooking classes, relaxed pool parties or art exhibits with local upcoming artists. But if guests want to venture outside, our local crew is happy to show them truly new and authentic experiences that are not mentioned in guide books.”

At the forefront of their marketing and sales strategies is social media and e-commerce. Their marketing strategy focuses on creating organic and genuine content either by themselves or in collaboration with micro-influencers who get to capture and share authentic images and videos with their respective audiences. They also continuously research the latest digital marketing innovations and trends outside the hospitality industry and implement these to maximise the reach of their direct and social media campaigns and increase their direct conversion booking rate.

Sustainability is at the core of the brand’s essence and is an integral element of their offer. They actively recruit from the nearby community and try to purchase their supplies from local farmers and fishermen. They also recently started an ambitious project to deploy solar panels in both of their properties and designed it to have extra output that they can share with the local communities’ centres and schools. They also encourage their guests to pay it forward and join them in beach clean-ups or diving expeditions to clean up reefs and remove ghost nets that are damaging the local sea life.

On the topic of guest loyalty and what makes the Explorar name stand out, Huby explains that he believes guests see the genuine efforts put into creating a unique experience where they are treated as unique individuals and that they appreciate the comfort and ability to enjoy extended stays with them and at the same time, discover or experience something new and exciting.

“Our crew is what makes us stand out. We have built up a young and highly motivated team that combines the dynamism of a start-up and the experience of having worked in very challenging hospitality projects. Our key priority will be to maintain this special team spirit and manage to extend it together with Explorar as we grow throughout the region. We want to continue to build an innovative, kind spirited and genuine hospitality brand that puts creativity and the happiness of our people, crew and guests alike as our absolute priority,” Huby points out.

As our time with the CEO comes to a close, Huby highlights that for the coming six months, their priority is to continue to test new concepts on their properties with the objectives of making both Explorar Koh Samui and Explorar Koh Phangan must visits on each island.

“To support our rapid growth and ambition, I am focusing heavily on recruitment of top management and our crew alike. We are looking for very special people who combine genuine care for our staff and crew, extensive experience in hospitality development and operations and start-ups problem solving skills and energy,” Huby concludes.



Atrium Reduta
Warsaw, Poland

Bringing Life to Places

Based in Zaragoza, Spain, theleisureway leads genuine, iconic projects and they create innovative places where emotions come alive. Their expertise extends through the entire process from idea to installation. Here, RLI speaks with Gastón Gaitán, Founder of the company to learn more about the company and what makes them stand out from the crowd.



Future places will need to feel like they have been collectively created, which requires a deep connection and appreciation for the layers of interactions between people and the surrounding pieces in their immediate environment. theleisureway identifies and connects with local communities using their three pillars – people, place, and emotion, to merge the community's needs with the asset owner's objectives. "We call this methodology leisurethinking and we believe it is the key driver behind our success to date and our main differentiating factor," explains Gastón Gaitán, Founder of theleisureway. "Every project we work on has a unique story and personality especially created for it."

Designing leisure spaces will be essential in the coming years. Shopping centers or areas that do not include places where people can enjoy themselves in their free time and relax will become obsolete. "Furthermore, in a world where competition is increasingly fierce, such as in the real estate or retail sector, you must differentiate yourself with innovative, unique, and sustainable proposals. This is what we specialise in at theleisureway. We

design and implement projects that create connections between people and spaces so that they would want to return to them, because of the great memories that were made there during their last visit," highlights Gaitán.

Just like people have a favourite bakery or restaurant, Gastón feels that this mall or this park, this residential area, mixed-use space or resort can also be people's place of choice for enjoying their free time. Fundamentally, theleisureway's interventions reactivate businesses by creating innovative, attractive spaces and filling them with life again, especially after a time in which businesses might have lost the interest of their clientele. The company's focus is on humanising these places and making them more sustainable, through attractive design elements that make them stand out from the competition.

The business currently works in more than 30 countries worldwide, mainly in Europe and the Middle East, adding up to more than 75 projects. Therefore, they are not only developing projects in Spain, although - this year - they are inaugurating a special project carried out in a Spanish shopping

centre, which will be in Puerto Venecia, a shopping centre in Zaragoza.

"This project is one of the top five shopping destinations in Spain. With over 200,000sq m of retail and leisure, it is one of the country's most extensive and original development projects. It is a unique shopping area with a high leisure value and a high attraction for the people in the region, attracting around 19 million visitors a year," says Gaitán.

The intervention area of approximately 1,000sq m missed personality and a distinctive use. In this context, theleisureway was invited to work on the design of the new outdoor family area to activate and enhance the outdoor customer journey by integrating a unique leisure solution that complements the existing offer, by bringing fresh ingredients that boost the pedestrian flow and make that area part of Puerto Venecia's story and active life.

Zaragoza is a city with cold and windy winters and sweltering summers, but despite the extreme weather, locals are used to enjoying the outdoors, which is why a green oasis that brings comfort, human scale and freshness was a must-have addition for this space.

"The critical points of the project were the look and feel of the new area, an extension of the architectural language of Puerto Venecia, blending in with the general landscape design: angular shapes and natural textures with an innovative and fashionable touch that's appealing for everyone with its unique WOW factor."

The new garden is located at the end of the shopping centre's natural flow axis, a lake that is the heart of the project and organises and distributes the different areas. As the end pole of this axis, they took the opportunity to generate the background of this landscape picture, a new leisure anchor that would complete the route around the lake, activate it and bring back the flow to a cold area of the shopping centre, extending in the process the flavor and curiosity.

The concept, introduced as "El Manantial", lives up to its name and

presents a modern and fashionable interpretation of natural elements. The immersive landscape, the diverse nature that is discovered and water as the protagonist and generator of the space, creates a new concept of a leisure garden full of life. This extension consists of several social meeting spots, events spaces, areas where children can freely discover and have fun and a large 16m-high tower with a waterfall inside, games, slides, and lastly, an impressive viewpoint over the lake.

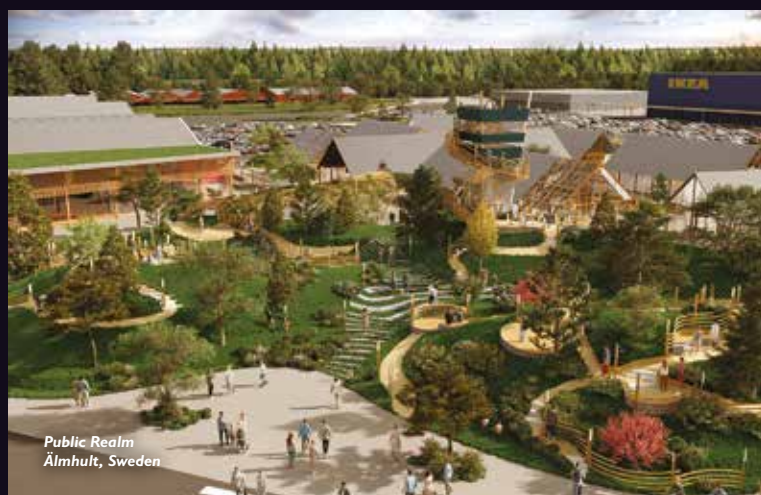
"Away from Puerto Venecia, we have recently entered the Middle Eastern market through various projects, with one of our biggest projects yet. The Village, being close to inauguration in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. It gives us immense pride to see how our work and thinking methodology are being trusted by clients from all over the world, especially within Europe and during the years ahead, we are committed to expanding our presence into more uncharted territories and set our own leisure thinking as a philosophy to follow and take as reference," Gaitán explains.

The objective at theleisureway is to increase the value of a place and attract people to these intervention areas through their projects. This, in turn, creates traffic that enhances the commercial offer.

theleisureway approaches each project with a three-layered strategy. First, the social and spatial layer is focused on architecture, interior design, construction, and installation. Second, the emotional layer involves generating a leisure strategy, developing storytelling, experience mapping and designing a customer journey. Finally, the business layer is concerned with brand analysis and understanding the lifecycle challenges of the asset, as well as the commercial vision.

With a multidisciplinary team that blends technical, emotional, and business expertise, they are able to deliver on all three layers of their approach and this is set to continue in the years ahead.

www.theleisureway.com

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Redefining Modern Luxury

The unique collections of Freya Rose's eponymous label incorporate her knowledge of fine jewellery to create luxurious, jewelled shoes, using precious materials such as mother of pearl, brass and sterling silver. In this interview, we spend time with the lady herself as we discuss how she is fast becoming regarded as one of the UK's leading shoe couturiers and what the next steps are for the brand.



Freya Rose London began in 2010 through a £3,000 loan that Freya Rose received from the Prince's Trust and ever since has grown organically to become an international business without investment. The jewellery industry has been in Freya's DNA since an early age through her mother, the international award-winning fine jewellery designer, Barbara Tipple and her step father who is a master goldsmith.

"When I started the business over a decade ago, I dreamed of creating world-respected shoe designs that would be worn by the most celebrated, style-revered women," explains

Freya Rose, Founder of Freya Rose London. "Over the last few years, I also launched a demi-fine jewellery line and my pieces have been worn by figures including the Princess of Wales, Rihanna, Olivia Palermo and Kate Moss."

Today Freya Rose London is stocked in over 25 stores worldwide, which includes a number of prestigious stores such as Harvey Nichols, while the company has also launched a boutique showroom space in Chelsea, London.

As the company continues to go from strength to strength with their e-commerce, the next few years will see their primary

focus shift to furthering their international expansion and developing their global and business-to-business strategy.

Over 60 per cent of their current sales are credited to the US, which particularly excites the company as the market has a proven interest and love for their product, especially within California, New York and Texas.

"I have also established a few royal clients within the UAE, Qatar and Saudi Arabia over the years; our unique, innovative and opulent use of mother of pearl on our jewelled heels is an aesthetic that particularly resonates with the region. We see the GCC as a key market to explore. Back in March I attended the Retail Summit at the Atlantis with hopes of attaining opportunities for Freya Rose within the GCC and we are now in discussion with a number of potential buyers and distributors," Rose highlights.

In addition to this, they are in the process of setting up distribution in the US and Europe to facilitate the growth of their omni-channel business as they are launching with world renowned department stores Saks Fifth Avenue and Macy's in the coming weeks.

The founder works closely alongside her skilled team of artisans, continuously exploring new alchemistic techniques and materials that push the boundaries of design. Her creations are unique investment pieces and because they are handcrafted, no two pairs will ever be the same. Their process showcases an unparalleled artistry and craftsmanship passed down and honed through generations. She and the team are continuously looking for ways to push the boundaries of design and Rose remains focused on how she can further develop the business.

Discussing social media, Rose feels that it is pivotal to the

success of any business as it holds the power to discover and connect with customers. She goes on to say that no matter your business, products or values, social media offers every brand the chance to establish themselves as a thought leader and connect directly with their desired audience and communicate their authentic voice and values.

"The platform offers the ability to showcase the humanity behind brands, which is a must in the modern world as consumer attitudes have shifted tremendously. They now seek storytelling and purpose over a materialistic item. We have connected with many brand advocates via social media and truly cherish the community we've established within this space. Now we all appreciate that new platforms and social trends constantly emerge, such as increased content – we're always moving with the tide with open ears, to keep our Freya Rose London content current and exciting," says Rose.

As the interview moves onto the topic of sustainability, the Founder points out that she is a huge advocate of slow fashion and that ethically produced designs are integral to her brand's philosophy. She carries on by saying the provenance and traceability of the materials used in her designs and the people she works with are fundamental to her business philosophy. One of her most significant materials is nacre (mother of pearl) – a material that is actually in abundance as a mollusc doesn't always create a pearl and the shell can be disregarded.

"As a small business we have an ambitious long view to be continuously better. There is much to learn and we will continue to research and develop our products in the most ethical and sustainable way. We will continue to be open and honest with ourselves and our customers," Rose comments.

Freya Rose London has redefined British modern luxury with creations that are a marriage of shoes and jewellery. They create shoes that are sculptural, wearable works of art that transcend the boundaries of design whilst reflecting the wearer's individuality. No two pairs are ever the same and their ultimate philosophy is to create beautiful wearable works of art that can be treasured forever and it is for these reasons that Rose feels the brand has achieved a high level of success in quite a short space of time.

"Looking to the future, I am excited to develop our jewelled bag collection, to introduce more pieces influenced by my passion for art and sculpture and I am looking forward to developing the physical presence of Freya Rose London around the world, watch this space."

Flight to Prime

Rhys Evans, Head of Asset Management at Pradera Lateral, the team behind the Trafford Centre in Manchester, discusses the ‘flight to prime’ trend and what it means for retail destinations.



The retail market is a dynamic entity that is heavily influenced by multiple factors, including design, consumer trends, the economy, regional preferences, the list goes on. One phenomenon we’re seeing across the board, likely due to all of these factors, is the ‘flight to prime’, whereby both occupiers and customers gravitate towards centres offering the most attractive experience.

Defining what the most attractive experience looks like is tricky, as it won’t be the same for every shopper or visitor. This is why breadth and variety of offer are both key to building the desirability of a destination. Whether a customer is looking for experience, quality, convenience or a seamless journey, this layer of relevance creates the sweet spot that pulls visitors in and keeps them coming.

In today’s retail market, consumers have more options than ever before, which means they have the luxury of choosing where to spend their money. From virtually browsing online baskets with same-day delivery to physically browsing a bricks & mortar centre for a day out experience, customers can select what is most attractive to them. This puts the onus on retail destinations to make themselves the standout choice.

When it comes to town centre shopping, flight to prime is rather less applicable. Local high streets have generally grown from more organic origins and don’t have the tailor-made back-of-house set-up that designated shopping centres have been designed with. The larger, international tenants tend to find a natural home in shopping centres, with town centres providing a home for more traditional retail day-to-day offerings.

At the outset, landlords and asset managers need to focus on the areas of their schemes that need bolstering to build a more rounded offering that will appeal to a wider audience. What does the customer want or need and are you providing it? By incorporating a variety of occupiers, the offering will draw a wider mix of customers. For larger schemes this will mean a mix of categories and user classes, so diverse fashion brands, diverse food offerings and diverse leisure, as well as alternative uses, such as medical offers.

From a retailer perspective, we have seen increased curiosity around understanding our strategic approach to leasing and building out the different categories. Interested parties will seek relevant adjacencies that could bolster their own trade in a shopping centre. It’s certainly

something we’ve seen work very successfully at Trafford Centre where we’ve created clusters of like-minded brands, such as Dyson, Hugo, Boss, and Calvin Klein.

This is where flight to prime can become a bit of a self-fulfilling prophecy in that, once a centre has established itself as one of these prime locations, it will then begin to reinforce this status by attracting more and more desirable tenants and offerings, making it more and more desirable again. This makes prime locations extremely appealing, as brands will be exposed to higher levels of footfall and potential spend, a big determinate in profitability. It will also often mean they benefit from the specialised management that goes with managing prime assets.

Destinations vary, of course, and some are better placed than others to implement this approach. Others may face unavoidable challenges, such as high levels of competition or not having the necessary scale to manipulate tenant locations. The flight to prime phenomenon will also be affected by regional factors, as some brands will trade better in certain areas of the UK. This is particularly true of fashion, but it is also seen in F&B, so landlords will be acutely aware of this when planning their tenant mix. For all centres, there is always a way to understand what your catchment and customers require and it doesn’t always have to be traditional retail.

Thanks to the ongoing evolution of flight to prime, certain destinations are becoming increasingly competitive. Vacancy numbers are shrinking, presenting a growing challenge to retailers, with multiple brands beginning to chase the same unit. This shift is affecting leasing too, with flexibility built into terms to ensure that, if either party is not faring well, there are mechanisms to allow an earlier parting of ways. It is common now to include performance clauses within lease terms.

There is also a greater focus on tenant trading forecasts in the decision-making process – centres will want tenants delivering strong sales figures. Flight to prime has heightened the requirement for strong data analytics in retail destinations. Understanding your customer and catchment demographics is imperative to forecasting how brands will trade, feeding into the leasing process.

There will always be a focus on prime schemes for larger tenants, however this will only become more competitive as these schemes get stronger and occupiers will need to remain nimble in choosing where to secure space.



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Tconcept is an international design studio based in the Netherlands. We create inspiring places around the globe, transforming destinations into experiences for people to live, work and stay. People and human scale are at the centre of what we do, our experienced and enthusiastic team work closely with our clients to meet their needs and expectations, enabling us to deliver a diverse portfolio of concept design and placemaking in urban mixed use, retail, landscaping and interior design.

www.tconcept.nl

* minimum of 12 months

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Breathing New Life and Laughter into City Centres

In this issue, Rich Beese, Co-Owner of Flip Out, the UK's biggest indoor adventure park group, and Putt Putt Noodle, the UK's fastest-growing Asian-inspired adventure golf experience, looks at how competitive socialising can revitalise city centres while reconnecting people.



Mention the term 'competitive socialising' to your Gen Z kids. They might look blankly back at you, but chances are they're doing it – and have been for some time. A Saturday night bowling with mates, a first date playing mini-golf, even a game of pool at the local pub – they are old hands at competitive socialising.

It's always been an industry sector that's attracted young people: still child-like enough to like throwing a ball – or themselves – around, but old enough to want a beer while they're doing it. In a nutshell, it's a laugh – it's fun. And the young know how to have fun. But this sector is fast gaining mass appeal.

According to a recent research report by KAM Media, the intent is certainly there for all age groups: 41 per cent of Gen Z has engaged in competitive socialising before and 47 per cent would like to go in the future. For millennials, these figures are 29 per cent and 60 per cent, and for the 45+ age group, while only 16 per cent of them have, 55 per cent want to go in the future.

Of course, smaller children have always combined social interaction and physical activity. Soft play areas have been around forever – leading to games, which in turn become organised sport. The success of our Flip Out indoor adventure parks across the country is proof enough of the need for children to get together while releasing huge amounts of pent-up energy – preferably while mum and dad have a coffee and unwind for a few minutes.

Millennials had already seen the value of 'experience', due in part perhaps to the growth of social media and their subsequent ability to document and broadcast their enjoyment – the bragging rights of living in the moment, if you like. Gen Z also ran with this baton, preferring immersive experience to pointless drinking. Then the pandemic struck, forcing everyone to hit the pause button and re-examine life's priorities. After months of being denied face-to-face human contact, physical connection and socialising – unsurprisingly – rose to the top of the list. We needed to laugh with each other again.

Entrepreneurs saw the writing on the wall – usually on the walls of derelict shopping outlets in retail malls and city centres. These spaces were ingeniously repurposed to accommodate new and exciting games

and experiences, which can challenge both mind and body. Escape rooms, axe-throwing, ping pong – you name it, you can find a place that does it. Throw in some tasty, good-value food and drink options and brightly coloured Instagrammable interiors and what's not to love for friendship groups, couples on dates, families?

The explosion of the popularity of this sector is gratifying – and not just to companies like mine, which, as well as having Flip Out, also launched the Asian-inspired adventure golf experience, Putt Putt Noodle, to outlets across the country over the past few years. Consumer demand, and the appetite for new fun and stimulating experiences for all age-groups, is now so high that we are introducing a range of other imaginative activities to our Putt Putt Noodle concept in addition to the golf, as well as opening new Flip Out family entertainment centres in disused retail spaces. These include the Dolphin Centre in Poole and in the main shopping centre in Telford, both opening Flip Outs this summer.

But it's also good news for cities, councils, retail centre managers, town planners – and ultimately for residents.

The manager of the Telford Centre, Glynn Morrow, says in the local paper Shropshire Star: "Retail is our core business but people are looking for more than that. They want somewhere to go shopping, but also have a bite and be entertained."

He goes on: "We see ourselves as not just a shopping centre. We have the former Debenhams here which has been re-let for Flip Out, who are fitting in there, and Putt Putt Noodle. They are taking up 90,000sq ft of space, which is really positive. It gives us a different level in terms of the leisure offer moving forward."

The emergence of experience outlets next to clothes shops and chemists is revitalising our urban landscapes. There's nothing more depressing than empty retail outlet spaces – they lead to a vicious cycle of dilapidation and despair, which in turn increases crime rates and affects young people and families in particular.

Our city centres desperately need reinventing, both to boost local economies but also human morale. And competitive socialising re-energises them and us too.

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Spurring on the Industry

The landmark tenth edition of RLI Connect Global, the renowned deal-making and networking event, will take place in London on the 13 and 14 June 2023 and once again present its trademark networking atmosphere in an all-new venue as we assist retailers, franchise partners, entertainment concepts, leisure & F&B operators, developers and delegates in getting those all-important deals over the line.

Having taken place in London, Dubai, Istanbul, LA and more recently Riyadh over the last 11 years, RLI Connect Global has brought together thousands of retail real estate professionals to connect, explore and develop business opportunities worldwide and moving forward it will be essential to continue to collaborate, exchange ideas, explore opportunities and network with industry colleagues.

In 2023 RLI Connect Global will return to its iconic home in London, to continue building those all-important relationships whilst bringing together the world of retail & leisure under one roof to Connect, Explore, Develop.

To mark the milestone edition of the event, RLI has chosen a brand new venue for RLI Connect Global and it is one that is bound to astound as it is a fast-growing global sport and leisure destination in the capital that is capable of staging major sporting and non-sporting events,

including NFL, rugby and concerts and it is of course the home ground of Tottenham Hotspur F.C. Their world-class conference and events facilities will provide the perfect setting for attendees from around the world to conduct business meetings, work on those all-important deals and network amongst industry colleagues.

London continues to maintain its position as a global retail landmark. For decades London has led the way in terms of innovation, fashion and retail trends and it remains a focal location for new retailers seeking representation in the UK, as well as a global beacon for retail, leisure and entertainment brands and concepts. RLI's long-standing association with the city of London allows us to leverage these opportunities to connect, explore and develop relationships and that is why we are delighted to be bringing back both our renowned RLI Connect Global Deal-Making Forum and our highly-coveted and prestigious Global RLI Awards to the location where they both originated.

The thinking behind RLI Connect Global is simple and when this year's event takes place on Tuesday 13 June & Wednesday 14 June, it will provide the perfect opportunity to connect with each other under one roof to look at new markets for expansion nationally and internationally.

Headline Partner Sands Retail retains its partnership with RLI Connect Global for the tenth year. Sands Retail is a leading player in the Asia-Pacific retail space with over 2.8 million square feet of leased retail space. Shoppes at Londoner is part of Sands Shoppes Macao, the largest network of interconnected malls in Macao, offering a total of 850 retail stores under one roof, putting it at the heart of one of Asia's great retail experiences. With over 150 boutiques, Shoppes at Londoner provides a unique ambience creating a one-of-a-kind shopping experience. Its design inspiration is from London's Oxford Street, one of Europe's busiest shopping districts. Unique details were included in the feature elevator, which is inspired by Victorian-era metalwork and incorporates a Tudor rose, a traditional floral heraldic emblem of England and eight replicas of the Greater London Blue plaques are also found across Shoppes at Londoner, with names of famous people in British history. Akin to being transported to London's classic shopping district and chic boutiques, the 48,774sq m of premium retail space has an extraordinary range of brands. They include Apple, Bottega Veneta, Gucci, Rolex, Tudor and Lady M New York.

Following the end of meetings on Day One, RLI will be hosting a VIP Networking Reception that will allow all event attendees to take the chance to wind down after a long (and productive) day and catch up with colleagues and friends whilst enjoying a drink or two.

Throughout two days of extensive networking opportunities and pre-arranged meetings, RLI Connect Global will continue to assist you in making connections and building those all-important relationships, an integral role for those companies wishing to stay ahead of the curve within the retail and leisure industry. There is one simple objective: to help you do business in a fast changing environment, whilst enabling you to explore new markets and develop new relationships.

Another event highlight will be a Retail Safari, 8am-2pm on the 15 June for International Delegates to explore some of London's innovative retail and leisure concepts.

The Global RLI Awards 2023 will follow RLI Connect Global in London and we can't wait to welcome you to one of the world's retail capitals for two events you cannot afford to miss.

To learn more about the RLI Connect Global event, to take a look at who is already registered or to book your place, please visit www.rliconnect.com





Simply the Best

The eighteenth edition of the Global RLI Awards will take place next month on the 15 June at Pan Pacific London, where it will play host to concepts and companies from all around the world on an evening where the very best in retail and leisure will be celebrated for their outstanding achievements in an ever-evolving industry.

The world has undergone many significant changes in the past few years and the retail and leisure sectors have seen wholesale alterations across the board. However, this has not stopped the industry from reinventing itself and continuing to innovate at a time when customer's wants and needs change more frequently than ever.

The eighteenth edition of the Global RLI Awards will take place in London, one of the world's retail hotspots on 15

visionary and innovative retail and leisure concepts from across the globe.

As the event returns to its iconic home, it will continue to strive for excellence in an industry where the boundaries are always being pushed and now, more than ever, it is essential that we continue to collaborate and recognise achievements and ground-breaking projects around the world. We will once again recognise innovation and dynamism in an inspiring industry that continues to adapt and evolve according to fast-changing market environments. The event will pay homage to the best of the best in retail, leisure and entertainment and play host to global CEOs, Managing Directors and industry experts from around the world on a night like no other in the industry calendar.

This year's venue is the graceful Pan Pacific London, which fuses together meaningful design, boundary-pushing wellbeing and a myriad of dining and drinking destinations. It is located in Bishopsgate in the heart of the City of London, in London's premium Square Mile moments from Liverpool Street Station. It is on the doorstep of world-renowned locations, yet also home to its own inner world, a luxuriant haven with signature restaurant Straits Kitchen showcasing Singaporean-style dining, Ginger Lily, a lively cocktail bar and The Orchid Lounge, a timeless elegant living room serving Kopi Tiam, their bespoke Singaporean-inspired afternoon tea.

Taking place at the Pan Pacific London, the evening will commence with the annual networking reception, where guests can relax and enjoy the opportunity to catch up with friends, colleagues and associates in

the industry. Attendees could even make a new contact or two before everyone is called for a luscious three-course meal, accompanied by 'West End' show 'The Tina Turner Musical' before the main event takes place.

The ceremony itself is where the elite in the industry will be recognised across 16 categories as the worlds of retail, leisure, entertainment and technology come together to celebrate the outstanding achievements of the industry.

Events such as these do not just happen and RLI would like to thank our esteemed panel of international judges for their hard work in creating tonight's final shortlist for the ceremony. We truly offer them our sincere thanks and gratitude for the time they have taken from their busy schedules to compile their votes.

We would also like to thank our category sponsors to date, Chalhoub Group, HMY Group, MK Illumination and Trison Necsum whose valued support is helping make this event possible.

Jayne Rafter, Publisher of RLI explains that: "The event will continue to strive for excellence in an industry where the boundaries are always being pushed and now, more than ever, it is essential that we continue to collaborate and recognise achievements and ground-breaking projects around the world. The Global RLI Awards 2023 will once again celebrate the most visionary and innovative retail and leisure concepts from across the globe."

The event is once again taking place alongside the tenth edition of RLI Connect Global, which remains a sustained platform for doing business and building value through strategic partnerships, on a truly global scale. This year's event takes place across 13-14 June in association with Headline Partner Sands Retail at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium.

To learn more about the event or to book your seat, please visit www.rli.uk.com/awards or email jayne.rafter@rli.uk.com



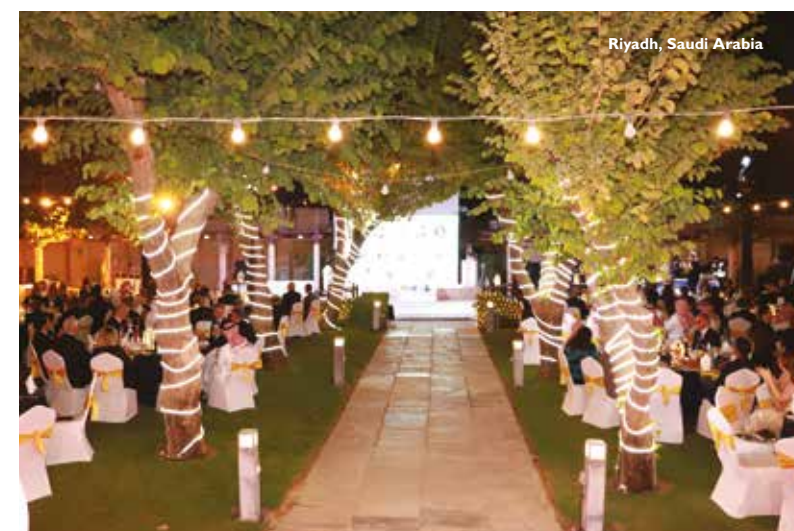
London, UK



Dubai, UAE



Los Angeles, US



Riyadh, Saudi Arabia



June and the event will continue to wow and delight as RLI pays tribute to the cream of the crop in retail and leisure after being held in London, Dubai, Los Angeles and more recently Riyadh in previous years.

Last year's awards ceremony took place in the GCC as the area continues to boost its drive to become a global capital of future economy. Held on 2 November 2022 at the British Embassy in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Retail and Leisure International's seventeenth Global RLI Awards provided a memorable evening that recognised and celebrated the most

AND THE FINALISTS ARE...

RLI FUTURE PROJECT

I I SKIES, Hong Kong
Abha Mixed-Use Development, Abha, Saudi Arabia
Champions Park, Warsaw, Poland
Hof van Rijswijk, Rijswijk, The Netherlands

RLI MOST ANTICIPATED OPENING 2023

Puerto Venecia, Zaragoza, Spain
Sparky's Red Sea Mall, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
The Exchange TRX, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Zhuhai Shizimen Huafa Mall, Phase 2, Zhuhai, China

RLI INTERNATIONAL SHOPPING CENTRE - NEW BUILD

MixC Nanjing, Nanjing, China
The Splendors Zhangjiagang, Suzhou, China

RLI INTERNATIONAL SHOPPING CENTRE - RENOVATION

Creteil Soleil Shopping Centre, Paris, France
Shopping Centre Zuidplein, Rotterdam, The Netherlands
Shopville Gran Reno, Bologna, Italy

RLI SUSTAINABLE PROJECT OF THE YEAR

Chalhoub Group
nkd Life
The Boulevard

RLI SUSTAINABLE RETAILER OF THE YEAR

Aranyani
Chalhoub Group
DeFacto

RLI GLOBAL RETAILER OF THE YEAR

Baraka Retail Group
Daiso Industries Company Limited
DeFacto

RLI ENTERTAINMENT & LEISURE OPERATOR OF THE YEAR

Al Hokair Group
Gravity UK
Immersive Gamebox

RLI MOST IMMERSIVE ATTRACTION & EXPERIENCE

EmotionHall Arena
Frameless - London
Monopoly Lifesized
Outernet London

RLI HOSPITALITY OPERATOR OF THE YEAR

Al Hokair Group
BOXPARK
BrewDog Retail
Chotto Matte

RLI DEVELOPER OF THE YEAR

Azad Properties
DAMAC Properties
ROSHN
Zhuhai Huafa Properties Co., Ltd

RLI MOST INNOVATIVE RETAIL & TOURISM DESTINATION

American Dream, New Jersey, US
BrewDog Waterloo, London, UK
Cocomelon Playdate, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Monopoly Lifesized, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

RLI DESIGNER OF THE YEAR

Design International
DLR Group
Tconcept

RLI CONTRACTOR OF THE YEAR

HMV Group
umdasch Store Makers

RLI INTERIOR EXCELLENCE

Breitling, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia by Store Makers Middle East
Luxottica by HMV Group
Moet & Chandon Bar, London, UK by umdasch Store Makers
Printemps, Doha, Qatar by HMV Group

RLI INNOVATION IN TECHNOLOGY AWARD

Costanera Center
Frameless - London
Nanovo Phygital
Outernet London



DeFacto
defacto.com

RLI FUTURE PROJECT

11 SKIES, HONG KONG

11 SKIES is a future HK\$20bn mixed-use destination located at SKYCITY. Conceived as Hong Kong's largest hub for Retail, Dining and Entertainment (RDE) and the first such development to also combine office space for Greater Bay Area enterprises including wealth management and wellness services, the development will transform the land surrounding Hong Kong International Airport. The scheme is located directly adjacent to Hong Kong International Airport and will act as a super-regional connector accessible by air, sea and land via trains, cars and buses. Integrating an expansive transportation terminal to accommodate the influx of visitors from the newly constructed Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Mega Bridge and the Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Link, 11 SKIES is positioned to play a key role in driving the future growth of the Greater Bay Area.

ABHA MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT ABHA, SAUDI ARABIA

Red Sea Markets Co., a real estate development company, is intending to develop a mixed-use development in Abha, in the South West of Saudi Arabia with an area of 75,564sq m. Set to be a unique retail and hospitality destination that will offer a magnificent experience for the capital city, the land is located in the Al Areen master plan to the East of Abha that faces King Fahad Road from the southern side. The client intends to develop a mixed-use urban centre that includes Retail, Lifestyle F&B, Mini-Anchors, FEC, Cinema, Hypermarket, a Youth Center and a Medical Clinic. It will also include a 150-key 4-Star Hotel tower and a 100-key Serviced Apartment tower to be operated by Canopy by Hilton and Hilton Residences respectively. A central parking structure will also be provided to support the flow of pedestrian footfall.

CHAMPIONS PARK, WARSAW, POLAND

Champions Park project is the development of a new "garden city / community". It will be a sustainable, self-sufficient "5-10-15 min" mixed-use development located in the suburban area of Warsaw. Located next door to the state-of-the-art football training centre of the top-tier, multi-sports club Legia Warsaw (biggest sports brand in Poland and one of the biggest in CEE region). The goal of the development is to create a place where everyone can become the "champion of their life". It will be a place of wellbeing, of healthy lifestyle, of meaningful inspirations and ambitions, of valuable design, sustainable solutions and partnerships of leading brands and partners, so that everyone can feel like a champion – of all ages, professions, passions and positive values. Champions Park will be a green, inclusive place where residents, visitors, tenants and all other stakeholders shall feel welcome and inspired.

HOF VAN RIJSWIJK, RIJSWIJK THE NETHERLANDS

The greenest centre in the Netherlands is emerging in Rijswijk. That is the ambition of the large-scale transformation of shopping centre In de Bogaard. In the coming years it will become the new Bogaard city centre with a large number of new homes, inviting parks and squares, small-scale stores and amenities. The new Bogaard city centre is set to become an exemplary sustainable, contemporary living area. Hof van Rijswijk is a prominent part of this development. Around an extraordinary, communal courtyard garden, Hof van Rijswijk offers a diverse mix of attractive housing types. What connects all the homes is the combination of the lively city centre on the outside and the green oasis on the inside of the complex. This makes Hof van Rijswijk a unique place to live and stay, for everyone.



CHAMPIONS_PARK

Warsaw Metropolitan Area,
Poland

- Innovative concept for active living, shopping, leisure and personal development – for everyone mastering life
- Located next to the state-of-the-art football and multi sports international high performance Legia Training Center – setting the standard in sports training facilities since the opening in 2020
- Catering to the fast-growing needs of rapidly developing areas around the capital city of Warsaw – the place to be in CEE
- Multi grade residential / special offer of retail and F&B / top brand hotel with longevity center / community hub and international educational project / unique outdoor sports and activities offering
- Golf course in the final phase
- The greenest and most sustainable mixed-use project in this part of Europe of total commercial area 200 000 m²

RLI MOST ANTICIPATED OPENING 2023



PUERTO VENECIA, ZARAGOZA, SPAIN

Located in Zaragoza, Puerto Venecia is one of the top five shopping destinations in Spain. With over 200,000sq m of retail and leisure, it is one of the largest and most original development projects in the country. Puerto Venecia is a unique shopping area with a high leisure value and a high attraction for the people in the region, with around 19 million people visiting the site a year. In this context, the leisureway has been invited to work on the design of the new outdoor family area with the aim of activating and enhancing the outdoor customer journey by integrating a unique leisure solution that complements the existing offer. The opening date was scheduled for 28 April 2023. The goal of the scheme is to transform it into an exciting outdoor family area that extends the leisure experience, bringing new ingredients that boost the pedestrian flow and makes the area part of the Puerto Venecia story and active life.



SPARKY'S RED SEA MALL JEDDAH, SAUDI ARABIA

Sparky's by Al Hokair Group is an entertainment space inspired by the idea of LIGHT. As fun lovers, they dream of reinventing family amusement destinations. Their passion for technology and real dreams keep guests inspired. The Sparky's brand is their expression and purpose in the form of a Family Entertainment Experience. One of their main goals is to continuously innovate in the area of entertainment and they strive to become an internationally recognised industry leader in the field. They have developed their flagship entertainment brand "Sparky's" and taken it to next level with creative new entertainment concepts, modern interior design and state-of-the-art games and attractions through adding new entertainment concepts like Sparky's Lasertag and VR Zones. At Sparky's, guests will have the opportunity to enjoy a wide selection of indoor rides, simulators, skill games and attractions.



THE EXCHANGE TRX KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

The Exchange TRX is a vibrant, experience-led lifestyle destination that is seamlessly integrated with a 10-acre activated public park. Set to be the new lifestyle epicentre of Malaysia's capital city of Kuala Lumpur, The Exchange TRX will offer socially immersive experiences encompassing events, entertainment, arts and culture, sports and leisure and over 430 lifestyle, dining, concept stores and new-to-market brands. Designed as 'a lifestyle precinct in the park', The Exchange TRX is purposefully and harmoniously connected to the 10-acre rooftop TRX City Park containing open spaces with cascading greenery, a children's play area, water features and beautifully shaded areas, making it one of the best places for alfresco dining. Complementing this central attraction will be event-ready destinations, as well as a dedicated area for aspiring local arts and culture. The Exchange TRX will truly be Kuala Lumpur's most scenic location to celebrate arts, culture, events and most importantly, the community.



ZHUHAI SHIZIMEN HUAFA MALL PHASE 2, ZHUHAI, CHINA

Zhuhai Shizimen Huaafa Mall, Phase 2 (Plot A8) will have its grand opening on 30 June 2023, with a total GFA of approximately 40,000sq m. This three-storey-high retail project will be positioned as an "Innovative Lifestyle Mall", which is one of the components of the mixed-use development consisting of 150m-high hotel and office building and 150m-high residential building. Besides the two main merchants of the IMAX theatre and the boutique supermarket (Aeon Mall) that are stationed in the mall, the other merchants will be comprised of the family-style consumption needs, sports and trendy clothing, creative and intelligent products, high-end catering, family activities and living format supports. The project aspiration is to create a new vision of retail, culture, entertainment and experience in Zhuhai and finally create Zhuhai Retail Archipelago, an exciting new retail destination and the centre of community.

RETAIL REIMAGINED AT THE EXCHANGE TRX

The new social heart of Kuala Lumpur offers a visionary glimpse into tomorrow's urban living



In creating places where communities thrive, leading international real estate group, Lendlease, is bringing its expertise in placemaking to its largest integrated development in Asia. The Exchange TRX, located in Kuala Lumpur, is a lifestyle precinct that forms the social heart of Malaysia's first master-planned international financial district. Within The Exchange TRX are Malaysia's first Kimpton® Hotels & Restaurants; six premier residential towers, TRX Residences; and a low-rise large floor plate campus style office which are all anchored by a 1.3 million sq. ft. lifestyle destination featuring over 400 exciting retail and dining offerings.

Lendlease's global portfolio includes some of the world's most iconic developments that have pushed the boundaries of innovation like Sydney's Barangaroo South, London's Elephant and Castle, and Malaysia's iconic Petronas Twin Towers. These developments deliver some of the finest thinking in technology, wellbeing, sustainability, design innovation and placemaking, and we are excited to bring this forward-thinking approach to The Exchange TRX.

"Our vision and the cornerstone of Lendlease's strategy with The Exchange TRX is to create a city defining project for Malaysia. As a global organisation, we will showcase our international placemaking expertise alongside our 43-year history in Malaysia to introduce our signature approach to experiential retail. We believe the diverse retail mix complemented by dynamic leisure and entertainment activations will serve as a key point of differentiation and will drive visitors to linger longer and make repeated visits when we open our doors to the public in Q4 2023," says Mitch Wilson, Project Director for The Exchange TRX and Head of Retail for Lendlease Malaysia.

The Exchange TRX boasts a fully leased luxury floor, with the LVMH Group opening 17 brands such as Louis Vuitton, Christian Dior, and Tiffany & Co.; the Kering Group bringing in Gucci, Saint Laurent, and Balenciaga; and Chanel showcasing a new, full-line store that celebrates the French house's longstanding heritage. The High Street Fashion precinct features exclusive collections from leading brands like Adidas, Puma, and Nike that will help customers strike the perfect balance between style and sports.

While retail plays a crucial part in The Exchange TRX's masterplan to rejuvenate the local commercial scene, it manages to seamlessly integrate with nature to create a preferred destination for arts, cultural exchanges, and healthy living with the 10-acre TRX City Park. This rooftop activated public park features a biodiverse ecosystem of over 150,000 plantings from close to 150 native plant species, offering children's play areas, water features, and shaded enclaves, joining other notable urban parks in the world such as High Line in New York, Namba Park in Osaka, and Gardens by the Bay in Singapore.

www.theexchange.my

RLI INTERNATIONAL SHOPPING CENTRE NEW BUILD



MixC NANJING, NANJING, CHINA

MixC Nanjing is a future retail-led, mixed-use development located in the city's central 700-year-old district known as Sanshan Street. The scheme is situated within the historical urban texture of the ancient city, at the heart of the site sits an original 'Yunzhang Gongso' building. As one of the four great ancient capitals of China, Nanjing's collection and development of a rich and diverse variety of architecture containing buildings from multiple dynasties is a part of its identity. For that reason, the brief for this unique site called for a design which would respect the centuries-old historical context of the location while at the same time imagine a vibrant future for the area. The careful balance between 'traditional' and 'new era', therefore, underpins the approach by Lead8. With this unique positioning, location and concept, MixC Nanjing offers



a new city destination that balances modern commercial life with local history. Since its opening, the scheme has offered a new-generation experience within Nanjing's famous Qinhuai Tourist Area; a place that captures and celebrates the city's rich history within its dynamic future. The design strategy for MixC Nanjing blends three façade strategies to ensure the street and internal facing appearance of the development is not in opposition with the surrounding historic urban fabric. To support the cultural centerpiece of the design, the commercial retail strategy has been altered. In most retail-led schemes, the focal retail units have the strongest visibility to the external street. In the case of MixC Nanjing, this hierarchy has been restructured to place anchor tenants within the internal pedestrian streets to draw visitors through the main courtyard.



THE SPLENDORS ZHANGJIAGANG SUZHOU, CHINA

The Splendors Zhangjiagang Shopping Center is the prime commercial component of Zhangjiagang Smart City Development by China Jinmao Group. The site is located within the nucleus of a new High Technology Development District, north of the city and is situated at the confluence of Zhenxing Middle Road and Huachang Road, surrounded by natural river courses and green belts. Peripheral retail developments within a five-kilometer radius are currently inadequate for the expected high-profile population growth within China Jinmao Group's new Smart City. The Splendors Zhangjiagang is one of the most important commercial components of the Zhangjiagang Smart City whole development by China Jinmao. The Splendors is located in Zhangjiagang, well known as a famous port city on the south bank of the Yangzi River with a magnificent waterfront. The city is rich in its own unique waterfront culture and



lifestyle. The design of The Splendors had to be carefully considered because of these aspects. The design must be woven into the unique waterfront culture of communities and its landscape, while creating the way in which the vitality of the project and its communities allowed to blossom altogether in and modern and innovative environment. The Splendors Zhangjiagang design precepts are based on the consistent beliefs that every project should endeavour to respond to its contexts, landscapes and customers' lifestyles in a seamless and meaningful fashion. Located on the south bank of the Yangtze River in the port city of Zhangjiagang, a city renowned for its history and culture along its expansive waterfront, the concepts of the project respond to its aquatic settings through metaphoric interpretations that are literally woven into design features, defining a fluid interior ambience and cultural sensibility.

RLI INTERNATIONAL SHOPPING CENTRE RENOVATION



CRETEIL SOLEIL SHOPPING CENTRE PARIS, FRANCE

In 2016, Chapman Taylor won a design competition for the complete refurbishment of the Creteil Soleil Shopping Centre. The centre had not been refurbished since the 1970's when it was built. It was extended in early 2000 but not renovated (aesthetically or in terms of MEP). The shopping centre is located in a suburb of Paris where there is a large immigrant and student population. The current shopping centre is a "barrier" between two residential areas and also between the metro station and the public administration buildings where many people work. There is no "public square" in this town and there is a lack of places for the public to congregate. Chapman Taylor's proposal for the competition was to make Creteil Soleil less of a traditional shopping centre and more "urban", to invite the city into the building, enhancing the shopping ambience and for the benefit of the wider area.



SHOPPING CENTRE ZUIDPLEIN ROTTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS

Tconcept's design of the renewed Shopping Mall Zuidplein in Rotterdam was (re)opened on 25 January 2023 by the mayor of Rotterdam Aboutaleb. The Dutch-based architectural firm designed a renewed fresh interior with some impressive shopfronts for the outdated '70s shopping mall of 60,000sq m GLA, while the mall also got an extension of 7,000sq m GLA with convenience stores. Zuidplein is the main shopping centre of the southern part of Rotterdam with over 160 shops and is one of the biggest shopping malls in The Netherlands. The mall is the centre of the Heart of the South mixed-use densification area with residential elements, a cinema, a theatre, a hotel and a convention centre. The upgrade of Shopping Mall Zuidplein focussed primarily in improving the quality, circulation and the experience of the mall. Entrances, malls, squares and touch points have been redesigned. By removing bridges and stairs, creating higher shop fronts and using light and natural materials, the mall transformed to a transparent and fresh environment.



SHOPVILLE GRAN RENO BOLOGNA, ITALY

The project led by Design International is a transformative scheme from a single mall anchored by a Carrefour hypermarket and associated shop units to an entirely new two-level "loop" shopping mall, with a large food plaza on a third level, integrated with skyline landscaping, an open theatre and over 4,000 car spaces. It has attracted major international occupiers not previously seen in Bologna. The scheme opens almost fully let, from a mix of typically Italian brands to international names such as Primark, H&M and Zara. This enhanced tenant mix means the former out-of-town retail park is now a regional shopping centre. The development presented an opportunity to resolve some of the circulation issues around the site. The new scheme provides direct links with IKEA, the Unipol stadium and the train station, with Gran Reno at the centre. Meanwhile, the new car park feeds directly onto all floors, including the third-level food plaza. The design was outdated and lacking in light, family and children's sharing spaces and green areas.

RLI SUSTAINABLE PROJECT OF THE YEAR



CHALHOUB GROUP

One of the latest projects by Chalhoub Group is the STEP Certificate (Stores Towards Earth's Protection). The objective of the project was to assess their new store openings to improve their stores' environmental performance from behavioural, operational, architecture and engagement perspective; with an aim to reduce their carbon emissions in line with their objective to be net-zero by 2040. As part of the Group's sustainability ambitions, they endeavour to reduce their environmental footprint through introducing measures that help optimise their operations and resources. Environmental regulations and requirements are becoming more frequent in the region. For example, MAF requires our stores to meet certain sustainability criteria to obtain "the license" to operate instead of responding to these regulatory and societal demands ad-hoc, Chalhoub wants to take a pro-active approach and become a leader in the Middle East.



NKD LIFE

nkd LIFE is a British Company specialising in the design, development, manufacture and sales of cutting-edge water purification and filtration technologies that stand clearly ahead of the market in terms of design, technology, quality, functionality and ease of use. They carefully select each and every one of their materials to ensure they identify by their slogan 'naked as nature intended'. They only use the safest, most durable and technologically advanced materials to construct each product giving it a premium quality feel, finish and functionality. Each of their product lines are manufactured using highly efficient and advanced technological production equipment ensuring the smallest carbon footprint. Unfortunately, in our world not all children have access to clean drinking water. It is a tragic statistic that every 20 seconds, a child dies from water-related diseases and 24,000 children under the age of five die every day.



THE BOULEVARD

The Boulevard at Outlet Park is an example of a best-in-class sustainability focused scheme, through the execution and outcomes of the ambitious vision set by Lotus Property to create a forward-thinking and sustainable destination that makes positive lasting environmental, economic and social impact on the area. Now a destination with truly global reach, The Boulevard has set new standards for sustainability whilst enhancing the local community and wildlife of the area. From a desolate outlet on the periphery of a small Northern Irish town to Ireland's most exciting retail and leisure destination, The Boulevard and wider Outlet Park attracts upwards of 4.5 million in footfall to the Park annually, employing more than 500 people from the local community. Committed to ensuring The Boulevard operates with a sustainable first mindset, Lotus Property have made achieving 'Green Tariff' a priority, with the scheme now meeting 100 per cent of the company energy requirements through purchased renewable energy.

THE BOULEVARD

OUTLET SHOPPING | NORTHERN IRELAND



SHORTLISTED FOR 'RLI SUSTAINABLE PROJECT OF THE YEAR' 2023

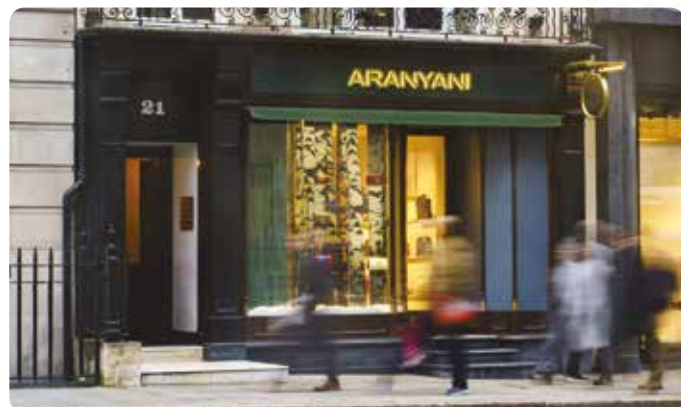
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RLI SUSTAINABLE RETAILER OF THE YEAR



ARANYANI

Aranyani's Forest welcomes you. As you enter, you feel a sense of energy and life. Your senses are stimulated by the sights, sounds and exotic scents of the forest. You feel the texture underfoot and the softness of the leaves as you brush by. Initial curiosity turns to calmness. The dappled light dances through the canopy, illuminating pockets of flowers and fluttering wildlife, allowing pops of colour to break free. The forest opens up to a bright clearing, as you move from under the dense tree canopy into the flood of light, you encounter enchanting and wonderful creations, as if they were left there for you to discover. Their design principles are inspired by nature and crafted by tradition. Nature inspires them to be global in their outlook and style while tradition taught them to be inclusive in order to allow the continuous evolution of art. Aranyani brings the best of the global talent in our state-of-the-art atelier. The Aranyani store can be thought of as a forest with a conceptual narrative.



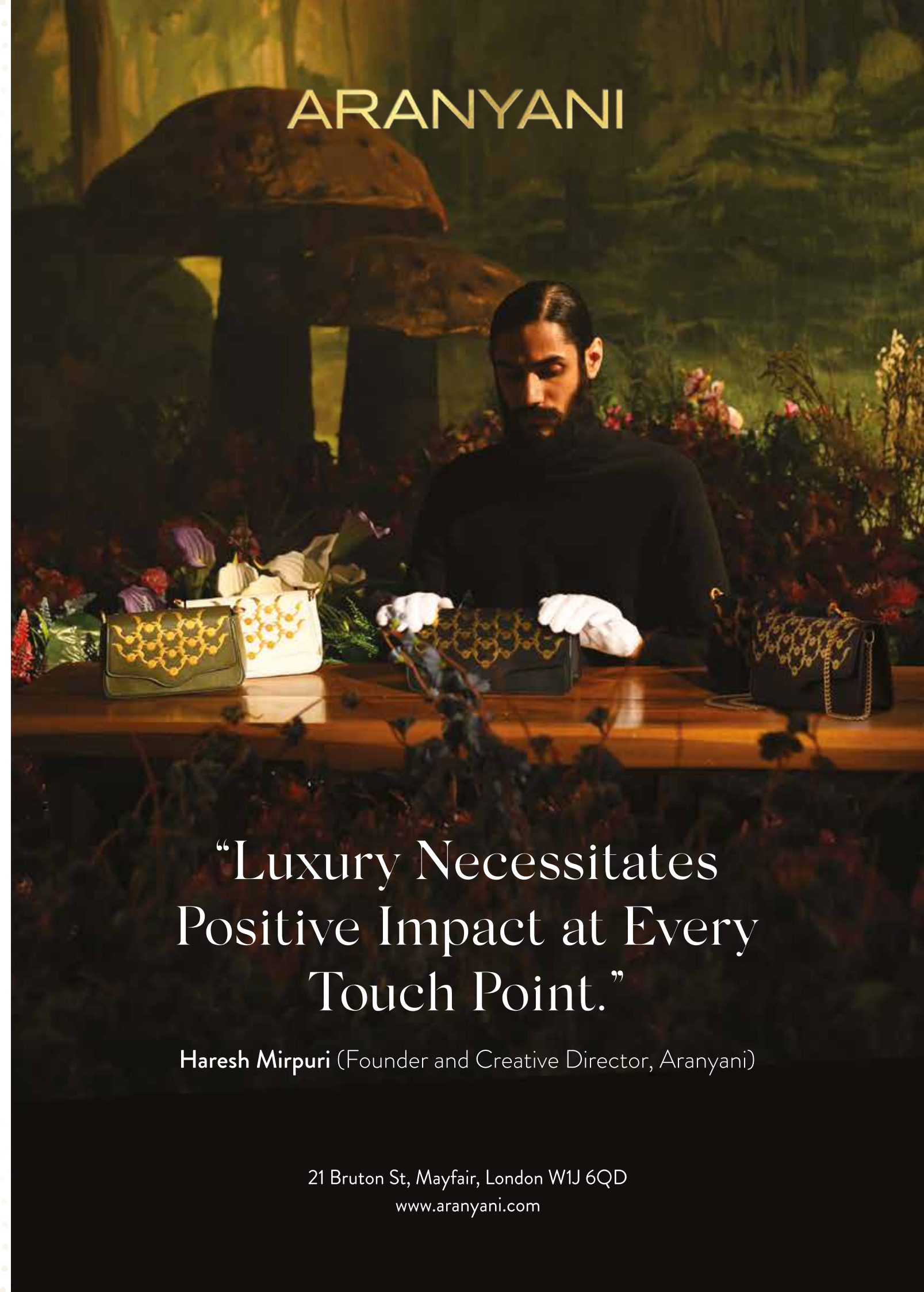
CHALHOUB GROUP

The Chalhoub Impact represents their ongoing commitment to live up to their purpose to inspire, exhilarate, delight and create a positive impact built on solid foundations of business ethics and integrity. While being deeply rooted in their values of respect, excellence and entrepreneurial spirit, their approach to sustainability is designed to create a long-term impact in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. They are committed to diversity, equity and inclusion beyond gender balance to succeed together as one team, one culture. Their inclusive retail design principles were incorporated in their offices and stores to increase accessibility, while they are proud that their total number of women team members has reached 53 per cent. The company is also committed to achieving a 35 per cent rate of women in senior leadership roles by 2024. Their long-standing commitment to advancing sustainability is at the heart of everything they do. By working with ethical and responsible suppliers and partners, they are building a more resilient future.



DeFACTO

DeFacto's 2021 Sustainability Report is a manifestation of DeFacto's goal to carry the company into the future as a partner in the global environmental, economic and social transformation. They have committed themselves and all of their stakeholders that they will fulfil their responsibilities within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals and support sustainable development in all geographies of operation, especially in Turkey. The steps they have taken towards their corporate governance and sustainability goals, of which Ozon Textile is a part, have been shared with all their stakeholders. Their commitments in the field of sustainability have not only turned into a promise, but also into the efforts they were already implementing. The DeFacto 2021 Sustainability Report is the seventh published sustainability report, conveying the environmental, social and economic impacts of all activities conducted by the company and its approach to these impacts.



“Luxury Necessitates
Positive Impact at Every
Touch Point.”

Haresh Mirpuri (Founder and Creative Director, Aranyani)

21 Bruton St, Mayfair, London W1J 6QD
www.aranyani.com

RLI GLOBAL RETAILER OF THE YEAR



BARAKA RETAIL GROUP

Baraka Retail Group launched in 1979 as a wholesale business focusing on optics within their home nation. Serving highly intellectual and trend-savvy individuals, each with their own unique style, they are committed to bringing what will complement the fashion preferences of every taste. They strive to continue bringing novel products to the market and expanding our offerings to ensure their customers are always satisfied and that they become their gateway to everything they desire while staying up to date and innovative. Today, they are proud to operate in various industries: optics, fashion and e-commerce. The business has expanded its presence within the Middle East, with over 13 brands retailed across 70+ stores in Egypt and the GCC. They aim to strengthen their fashion division profile through organic expansion, develop their e-commerce story by expanding their exclusive product offering and stretch their logistics reach in the global market, starting with the GCC.



DAISO INDUSTRIES COMPANY LIMITED

Daiso has established its business model by creating its stores not based on a product genre, but rather on a genre of selling all products for a flat 100 yen and is the first to have expanded this to a global chain of such stores. At present, Daiso has become a huge chain of stores, with 4,042 stores within Japan and 2,296 stores in 25 countries overseas, for a worldwide total of over 6,338 stores (as of the end of February 2022). Daiso's stores carry a wide range of products to make people's lives better, from daily necessities to hobby items and luxury goods, currently offering approximately 76,000 different products. 90 per cent of these products are developed in-house. In addition, they also develop 1,200 new products each month to keep our customers surprised at new finds. They currently continue to open approximately 150 stores within Japan each year and are highly regarded as a business which serves as infrastructure for the daily lives of people all over the world.



DeFACTO

DeFacto's key strategy is its one stop shop approach and its dynamic merchandise offering that serves the whole family with a diverse product mix. Womenswear is a key segment as they target the broad wardrobe, with a focus on newness and a broad offer of basics and fashion at good value prices. Menswear is its core segment and their merchandise position is a strength in their sector. Its baby and kids range is its fastest growing category and their position is to offer a range of products including updated basics and fashion newness at great value to their customers. Meanwhile accessories are another key product category to help drive the frequency of visits and add units to sales transactions. Footwear is an important category to support their One Stop Shop strategy and enable complete outfit building. With its brand-new face and wide product range, the homewear sector offers customers comfort and elegance at the same time, with affordable prices.

DAISO

JAPAN



**Enriching people's lives
with a single-price**

- The best quality with the best price -



A little better is always really nice.



ADORABLE. JUST FOR YOU.

Over **6,400 Stores Worldwide**, throughout **27 Countries and Regions**.

<https://www.daiso-sangyo.co.jp/en>

Contact Us: <https://daisous.com/pages/contact>

RLI ENTERTAINMENT & LEISURE OPERATOR OF THE YEAR



AL HOKAIR GROUP

The Al Hokair Group name has been associated with tourism and entertainment in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Arab world for almost 50 years and they have become pioneers of hospitality and entertainment. It all began in 1975 when Sheikh Abdul Mohsen Al Hokair started his career by investing in the entertainment and hotel hospitality sectors. Over the past five decades, the Group's activity has expanded to today include 80 entertainment centres, 35 hotels and three commercial centres in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Al Hokair Group continues to develop its tourism investments to provide the best of what major international companies offer by attracting expertise and forming fruitful partnerships that develop investment returns and make a difference in the fields of entertainment and hotel hospitality in the Middle East. Since the beginning of its business in the Malaz theme park in Riyadh, the entertainment sector of the group has expanded until it became the largest in its field in the Middle East region.



GRAVITY UK

Gravity has been taking active entertainment to new heights since 2014. In that time, they have welcomed over 10 million visitors through their doors – and created countless memories for their loyal customer base. With 30 different activities across 23 sites worldwide (including Europe and Saudi) by the end of 2023, they are now one of the world's leading active entertainment companies. But how did we get to this point? Well, they have pushed boundaries in their sector every year since their inception. In 2021 they became the first UK company to launch a big box leisure venue when they opened their Wandsworth site, featuring eight immersive activities and driving a +30 per cent increase in footfall to the Southside shopping centre. Gravity was the first UK company to open an electric go-karting track (along with the highest-powered e-Karts on the market) and introduced the same e-karting format to Europe at their Leipzig location. They were also the first company to introduce Hologate VR: the world's leading virtual reality experience, which is also available at the Wandsworth location.



IMMERSIVE GAMEBOX

Immersive Gamebox began in 2018 when escape rooms, VR experiences, arcades and the like were all the rage... but immersive entertainment wasn't even a thing. Will Dean MBE and David Spindler understood that how one spends their free time greatly affects happiness and mental health. They bonded over their frustration that there weren't many ways to connect with friends and family that were equally fun, active and accessible to all. Immersive Gamebox has continued to inspire audiences around the world and allows them to escape to new worlds! Part of that was the launch of Squid Game at Immersive Gamebox. In collaboration with Netflix, at launch players entered their venues to find Pink Soldiers, dressed in their pink suits with masks at the entrance to their venues and the infamous doll from Red Light, Green Light staring ominously from the corner. Players work together in teams to survive the six challenges from the hit show. Making all this possible is a designated gaming area, aka your "Gamebox", powered by cutting-edge technologies.

IMMERSIVE GAMEBOX

BUILDING THE WORLD'S FIRST

IMMERSIVE ENTERTAINMENT PLATFORM



A WORLD OF ADVENTURE AWAITS

IMMERSIVEGAMEBOX.COM

Immersive Gamebox is a revolutionary product for a completely new genre of group entertainment in which shared experience is the priority. Each Gamebox is an interactive smart room designed for 2-6 players at a time who play 30-60 minute minutes from our popular IP or IGB Original content library. Our scalable business model allows us to provide interactive entertainment experiences anywhere in the world and open new locations quickly and efficiently. At the core of our company is a commitment to using tech for good.



RLI MOST IMMERSIVE ATTRACTION & EXEPIERIENCE



EMOTIONHALL ARENA

EmotionHall is a unique and engaging place, located in the context of Tiare Shopping, a “Meeting Place” that is part of Ingka Centres in the North-East of Italy. EmotionHall is the first permanent interactive area dedicated to immersive art, cultural and entertainment experiences, created by a high-performance projection and sound system. Its uniqueness is represented by the presence of an “art container” in a shopping centre, a unique case in Italy and the flexibility of the equipment that allows us to program different artistic expressions for different targets. Its annual planning calendar includes alternating art exhibitions, realised in collaboration with international artists, as well as theatre and music events and much more. Because of the characteristics described, this project embraces customers with widely differing interests, with a good propensity to spend on cultural and entertainment goods.



FRAMELESS - LONDON

Situated in Marble Arch in a stunning 30,000sq ft permanent location, Frameless features award-winning galleries and showcases some of the world’s greatest works of art, presented on a scale and in ways never seen before. Frameless is an art collection of the surreal and spectacular, where visitors are not only in the art, they are part of it. Their multi-dimensional galleries are transformed with a 21st-century interpretation of the classic masterpieces, designed to delight. Four unique galleries harnessing different types of projection technology opened its doors back in October to bring art to life. Guests take a unique journey as they travel through masterpieces, having an intimate view of every brushstroke, seeing details in a fluid, moving dimensional way bringing these artworks to life. Thoughtful music composition triggers emotion through the highest climactic moments, as well as very peaceful self-reflective interludes. This is a digital playground for all ages!



MONOPOLY LIFESIZED

Welcome to the world of Monopoly. A world where anyone can own it all... and even find Free Parking in Central London! It all began circa 1935 – at the height of the Great Depression – when Charles B. Darrow presented a game designed around the promise for fame and fortune to Parker Brothers. From colourful green stacks of money, green houses and red hotels, players picked their favourite game pieces – the top hat, car or even the Scottie dog. The game consists of up to four teams and each of them can have up to a maximum of six players. The game is managed by three staff members, representing traditional playing pieces who will guide them through the game. Win or lose, at the end of the game all teams can head to the Top Hat Bar & Restaurant to celebrate a game well played.



OUTERNET LONDON

Outernet is an immersive entertainment district in the heart of London where communities come together to enjoy culture in breathtaking new ways. They have brought together the best content and latest immersive technology to create new experiences for music, arts, culture and creators. Londoners and global travellers alike can discover free immersive experiences every day at Outernet. They have created an exciting schedule of entertainment and arts content using the latest technology and talented metaverse creators. Their innovation has no limits, with world-class creative plans in the pipeline that are set to launch later this year. Not only do they drive deep engagement with the hundreds of thousands of people they reach each day in the district, but they reach many millions more through wider earned, owned and paid strategies.



EmotionHall Immersive Art Experience

EmotionHall is the large immersive arena located at Tiare Shopping in Villesse, Gorizia (ITA); it is a place of harmony and entertainment that, thanks to its innovative technologies, allows visitors to move beyond the passive role of spectators and experience firsthand the emotions of the exhibitions, concerts, and all the events hosted there.

EmotionHall



emotionhallarena.com

RLI HOSPITALITY OPERATOR OF THE YEAR



AL HOKAIR GROUP

The group has succeeded in maintaining its leading position in entertainment as the first and most significant investment company in the Middle East region. Entertainment options for the family, considering the provision of entertainment that suits all age groups and the entertainment sector continues to expand its activities in the sisterly United Arab Emirates and Egypt. Furthermore, plans are in place to expand further in the Middle East and North Africa. In a country where cultures mix and they are witnessing an increased growth in food and beverages, Al Hokair Group's restaurant sector was established primarily to meet visitors' desires as their entertainment sites expanded to include many hotels. As a result, the number of branches reached more than 40 branches in various regions of the Kingdom. Later, the group began investing in foreign restaurants and plans to attract many international brands suitable for the Saudi community.



BOXPARK

BOXPARK is the UK's casual dining, retail and leisure concept which operates its own bars and houses over 100 street food restaurants, retailers and leisure spaces. The concept has expanded across three locations in Shoreditch, Croydon and Wembley - all of which deliver a positive regenerative effect within each of their respective local communities. Coined as the world's first pop-up mall born in 2011, BOPARK Shoreditch effortlessly fuses the concepts of the modern street food market and the pop-up retail mall. The vibrant site stands proudly in the heart of London's Shoreditch and is home to an ever-changing array of concepts, from small boutique pop-ups to leading global brands. Now in its twelfth year, BOPARK has reached a major milestone having operated for over a decade. The future is looking optimistic for the business as it continues to evolve and adapt to consumer demand and trends, whilst always creating compelling reasons for people to visit and spend time and money at its venues.



BREWDOG RETAIL

In 2007 James and Martin started BrewDog with a mission to make other people as passionate about great craft beer as they were. In April 2007, in a godforsaken industrial estate in North East Scotland, BrewDog came howling into the world. Since then, BrewDog has consistently been considered one of the UK's fastest growing companies. Reaching customers in over 80 countries and with over 1,500 employees, 200,000 crowdfunded shareholders, five breweries, 100 bars and one awesome craft beer hotel, BrewDog is a force to be reckoned with. First and foremost BrewDog are a brewer. Their sites have the best range of BrewDog beers as well as from some of the best local breweries. As well as beer, they distill their own spirits and stock a full range of wines, cocktails and soft drinks from independent producers. They are also not afraid to experiment, beer slushie anyone?



CHOTTO MATTE

Chotto Matte opened its first restaurant on Frith Street in Soho, London in 2013 to serve authentic Japanese Peruvian Nikkei cuisine. They identified a gap in the market for premium Nikkei food made using fine, organic ingredients and served in exciting environments. Nikkei dishes are fresh, healthy and delicious and the complexity of the recipes are hard to replicate. The Chotto Matte fine-dining restaurants are cool and stylish — they offer unique and experiential atmospheres that welcome the young and aspirational. Kurt Zdesar is the inspiration behind Chotto Matte, a concept he founded in 2011. His portfolio includes introducing Nobu to the UK and Europe, helping establish the original Hakkasan and founded the Ping-Pong global dining chain. The Chotto Matte concept has been a phenomenal success since the first venue opened in Soho.

CHOTTO
MATTE

THE GLOBAL
RLI
Awards
2023
FINALIST



THE NIKKEI EXPERIENCE

SOHO | MARYLEBONE | MIAMI | TORONTO | DOHA

chotto-matte.com - @chottomatteglobal

RLI DEVELOPER OF THE YEAR

AZAD PROPERTIES

Azad Properties is an asset property management & commercial development company based in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Founded in 2017, Azad specialises in real estate activities and projects including retail, workshops and other commercial properties. Azad unlocks the potential of its real estate portfolio by developing and operating properties around the Kingdom; creating and managing great spaces that cater to investors, retailers and tenants. They aim to form strategic partnerships with businesses to improve the nation's quality of life. Keeping in mind the Saudi Vision 2030, Azad intends to bring about real development of its properties in Saudi Arabia by introducing innovative solutions in real estate. It plans on accelerating the business and entertainment sectors to improve the facilities made available to the Saudi public.

DAMAC PROPERTIES

DAMAC Properties has been at the forefront of the Middle East's luxury real estate market since 2002, delivering award-winning residential, commercial and leisure properties across the region, including the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, Maldives, Canada, the United States, as well as the United Kingdom. Since then, the company has delivered approximately 42,000 homes, with a development portfolio of more than 28,000 at various stages of planning and progress. Joining forces with some of the world's most eminent fashion and lifestyle brands, DAMAC has brought new and exciting living concepts to the market in collaborations that include a golf course managed by The Trump Organization and luxury homes in association with Versace, Cavalli, Just Cavalli, de GRISOGONO, Paramount Hotels & Resorts, Rotana and the Radisson Hotel Group. With a consistent vision and strong momentum, DAMAC Properties is building the next generation of Middle Eastern luxury living.

ROSHN

Established in 2018 and recognised as a Giga-Project supporting Vision 2030, ROSHN is own by the Public Investment Fund and the purpose of its creation is to enhance the citizens of Saudi Arabia's lifestyle. ROSHN as a Giga-Project is unprecedented in scale and is set to deliver a significant impact with retail offerings. The business wants to be the most disruptive and valuable real estate developer in the region and the most trusted national developer in the Kingdom. ROSHN will become the region's first factory-based and most efficient developer, the developer of choice for integrated, highly livable mixed-use communities, become the new standard for sustainability in mainstream development and become the catalyst for private sector enablement, localization and talent development.

ZHUHAI HUAFU PROPERTIES CO., LTD

Zhuhai Huafa Properties Co., Ltd. (abbreviated name as Huafa Properties) was established in 1992. It is a platform company that undertakes the real estate and retail development sector of Huafa Group. Huafa Properties obtained national first-class real estate development qualification and became a listed real estate company on the Shanghai Stock Exchange in 2004. Since 2017, it has been included in the list of "Top 500 Enterprises of China" in Fortune magazine for five consecutive years and ranked the 183th in the end of 2022. In 1994, it obtained the national first-class real estate development qualification. Over the last 40 years, Huafa Properties has maintained a leading position in the industry of Zhuhai, which has made various important contributions including the improvement of the city's livable environment, the optimization of urban functions and the enhancement of brand image.

The largest commercial acquisition in the Kingdom – Riyadh Front

A Saudi giga project creating impact through innovation, human-centric and technology driven approaches to retail experiences from flagship retail offerings to neighborhood and district centers.

The ROSHN way



ROSHN.sa

RLI MOST INNOVATIVE RETAIL & TOURISM DESTINATION



AMERICAN DREAM, NEW JERSEY, US

Originally conceived as Meadowlands Xanadu by the Mills Corporation who purchased the land in 1994, American Dream has a storied history with a triumphant outcome. In 2012, the Triple Five Group purchased the abandoned property and the metamorphosis began. Over the years, a series of trials and tribulations impacted the project launch ranging from funding challenges to consecutive pandemic closures which resulted in limited retail and food & beverage openings. The project was obliged to open in subsequent phases with all assets becoming fully operational by mid-September 2021. American Dream is the world's first project to combine as varied a mix of shopping, entertainment and attractions under one roof with 45 per cent of the GLA dedicated to retail and 55 per cent to leisure.



BREWDOG WATERLOO, LONDON, UK

BrewDog Waterloo is a multi-concept craft beer venue with everything a customer would need to enjoy their visit no matter the time of day. They have created an extended version of their popular BrewDog menu including burgers & pizzas as well as Oak fired chicken – the top-selling dish from DogTap Ellon which was previously exclusive to that site. The London commuter can enjoy the onsite Grind café, private meeting rooms and co-working zones with zoom pods and desks which flip into ping-pong tables in the evening, all conveniently located in one of London's busiest transport hubs, a minute from the Southbank. They created the cocktail hideaway in collaboration with The Cocktail Guy, Rich Woods, in order to provide an elevated drinks experience comprising of seasonal menu of reimagined classic cocktails.



COCOMELON PLAYDATE RIYADH, SAUDI ARABIA

Cocomelon is a kids and family-oriented YouTube channel specialized in music and nursery rhymes content helping preschoolers learn prosocial life lessons. It is a place where imagination comes to life! The future of Imagination is here and it is powered by the world's coolest & most iconic kids brand, Cocomelon. The on-site offerings allow for guests to develop an educational-friendly environment where kids can enhance their learning and imagination abilities. The environment develops a creative mindset where kids can experience some real-life complications along with gamification and education and it offers parents the ability to leave their kids in safe hands no matter how young they are. Buckle up, prepare your imagination and let your creativity run wild as the journey is about to start...



MONOPOLY LIFESIZED RIYADH, SAUDI ARABIA

Monopoly Lifesized, is an interactive and immersive, 80-minute, physical version of the world's favourite board game. Challenging for all ages; families, friends and children will love racing around life-sized Monopoly boards, with real-life representations of the tokens from the legendary board game acting as the players' guides. Monopoly Lifesized is a permanent attraction located at the BLVRD World, Riyadh and with many other locations to follow. Footfall and revenue have exceeded the forecasted figures since the attraction has been sold out most of the days it has been operational since its opening last November 2022. Monopoly Lifesized Riyadh is the first-of-its-kind in the MENA region and the second Monopoly Lifesized FEC after the opening of one in London.

RLI DESIGNER OF THE YEAR



DESIGN INTERNATIONAL

Design International believes there is a solution to any problem and they feel they can craft places by blending local stories with innovative design. They ensure their buildings meet the needs of the client and the community. For them, it's all about understanding the customer journey, creating an emotional and engaging experience. Ultimately they want to shape buildings that reflect community values. In their Research Hub they experiment, improve and grow their sphere of architecture: Sport, Healthcare, Culture and Transport. Their expertise and services is spread across the areas of masterplanning, landscaping, architecture, interior design, lighting design and branding & signage. On any given project they work in multiple stages that encompass the following: feasibility study, concept design, schematic design, design development and artistic supervision. There are their general stages which are then tailored and studied depending on the project and the location.



DLR GROUP

DLR Group is an integrated design firm who promised to elevate the human experience through design. This inspires a culture of design and fuels the work they do around the world. They are 100 per cent employee-owned: every employee is literally invested in their clients' success. At the core of the firm are interdisciplinary employee owner teams, engaged with all project life-cycle stakeholders. These teams champion true collaboration, open information sharing, shared risk and reward, value based decision making and proficient use of technology to elevate design. They provide an integrated approach that allows all the project components to seamlessly work together. Their collaboration across market sectors provides a cross pollination design approach. DLR Group believes that the success of a project comes when all the component parts are truly integrated, are functional for their specific requirements and designed as an architectural piece that fits within its special urban context.



TCONCEPT

Their mission is to create places where people like to go and want to stay. They create concepts where the aesthetic, economic, feasibility, sustainability and quality aspects are all in full harmony. In an ever changing world with a growing population, sound urban design will create a balance between density and landscaping, ensuring a sustainable future. Tconcept BV is specialised in architecture, concept design and placemaking across the globe. They are closely engaged in all the design phases of their projects. From the concept design to the schematic design phase they, as architects, work through an integrated process with the client. In the other phases, they create specialised teams composed of local and international companies with expertise in market research, landscaping, food & beverage and light designs. To ensure the quality of the design, Tconcept operates as a design supervisor for all stages of the process up until the project's final construction and official opening.

RLI CONTRACTOR OF THE YEAR



HMY GROUP

HMY is the story, whereby a group of companies specialising in the world of retail decided to join forces, become stronger and continue to move forward together, setting new trends in the market. Experts in comprehensive solutions for brands & retailers, HMY are a world leader in global services with 360-degree vision and innovation for the retail industry. They build life into spaces through their eight factories, more than 90 offices and 60 years of experience which has established HMY as the "one stop partner" of choice for a highly credible portfolio of international retailers and brands. HMY are the trusted partner for brands & retailers who need global account management combined with local implementation. HMY is the leader in engineering, manufacturing

and assembling of furniture for retail and offer the following services: consulting & design, site and project management, value engineering as well as technological and lighting solutions. Their mission is to transform customer sales areas into attractive and efficient spaces that provide products, services and innovative solutions, to create excellent and personalised shopping experiences and their vision is to be the number one choice of global providers of commercial equipment and retail services, creating value for their customers, employees and shareholders. At HMY, they are fully committed to a set of values that identify and differentiate them in any country in the world where they are present and which, together, comprise their policies.



UMDASCH STORE MAKERS

As digital pioneers with a heritage of craftsmanship and a personal approach, umdasch Store Makers make successful stores. Regionally rooted and internationally successful, for more than 150 years the company has been driven by the innovative power of tradition created by people who belong among the best in their field. Their three divisions, Doka, Umdasch Group Ventures and Store Makers, with their 8,250 employees make up a strong, globally active company with a good economic background. Umdasch Group with its more than 170 branches on all continents is a family business exclusively owned by siblings Hilde and Alfred Umdasch. Tailor-made quality with guaranteed deadlines and at competitive prices forms the backbone of their business. Within the Project Management department, experts and craftsmen ensure that all the individual services are coordinated

in a professional manner. They specialise in the efficient and effective execution of orders and they can master projects of all shapes and sizes. Even under tremendous pressure as regards both time and budget, they remain calm and confident. They also see themselves as the manufacturers of practical furniture solutions for the retail sector. Their versatile production teams supply well-engineered programmes of shelving and shop systems for all sectors. This means they can reliably meet all requirements, from customised, project-specific special solutions to volume productions for trouble-free rollouts. Their partners – prestigious manufacturers – round out this extensive range of products, so that they can offer precisely tailored store solutions to meet your requirements at any time.

RLI INTERIOR EXCELLENCE

BREITLING, JEDDAH, SAUDI ARABIA BY STORE MAKERS MIDDLE EAST



An exclusive industrial building in a dynamic city of the mid-twentieth century serves as the setting for the new store presentation by Breitling. It is a tribute to time, on which the reputation of the brand with its exclusive watches and measuring instruments rests. Among the highlights of the boutique are the props used, such as airplane propellers, a bicycle and a surfboard, which have been slickly integrated into the store design to create a link to land, water and air - Breitling is at home everywhere. The uncompromising branding of the store concept traces the charm of the exclusive watchmaker's art. The Store Makers were asked to execute and refurbish Breitling's new 'urban loft' design concept. The redesigned boutique not only maintains Breitling's heritage but also adds an upbeat, cool and informal vibe within a contemporary design palate.

LUXOTTICA BY HMY GROUP LAS VEGAS, US



EssilorLuxottica is a 21.5Bn € revenue French/Italian vertically integrated multinational corporation, founded on 2018 from the merger of the Italian Luxottica with the French Essilor. The group designs, produces and markets ophthalmic lenses, optical equipment, prescription glasses, frames and sunglasses. The company has a portfolio of proprietary and licensed brands including Ray-Ban, Oakley, Michael Kors, Varilux, Crizal, Transitions and LensCrafters. The company dominates the global eyewear market as the largest single player in that market. The challenge of this project was to scale the initial high-end concept design (using high level materials and customised finishes) to a format replicable on a large rollout. Being LensCrafters the largest EssilorLuxottica retail brand in North America, the attention to details and the expectation on the development was constantly monitored by the customer top managers.

MOËT & CHANDON BAR, LONDON BY UMDASCH STORE MAKERS



Champagne maker Moët & Chandon opened its first permanent space in Europe within the Harrods beauty halls in London on 7 July 2022. Manufactured and installed by umdasch The Store Makers to a design by architectural studio Sybarite, the Moët & Chandon Champagne Bar at Harrods is a contemporary take on the heritage of the Maison. The 34-seat bar itself is the welcoming centrepiece, a curved shape echoing the contours of the land where the champagne emanates: Epernay; the terroir and the clay are embodied in the base and the bar top in different forms. It is manufactured in glass fibre with a textured application, a brushed brass bullnose curving around the whole bar completed by a chalk-like texture beneath the glass. The bar includes a fully fitted kitchen for the preparation of food and drink.

PRINTEMPS, DOHA, QATAR BY HMY GROUP



Qatar is now home to the prestigious Parisian department store Printemps, launching for the first time outside of France in a strategic location: Doha Oasis. Printemps Doha is the luxury fashion, beauty and lifestyle department store in Qatar, housing all the most iconic maisons under one roof, including among others Louis Vuitton, Dior, Valentino, Gucci, Dolce & Gabbana, Bottega Veneta, Balenciaga and Balmain. The department store also features the biggest beauty & wellness area in Qatar with 2,000sq m and 137 brands, ranging from the most illustrious names in the industry to the latest sustainable and vegan brands and all-time consumer favorites. HMY was commissioned to translate to reality the concept inside the iconic building created by the award-winning Yabu & Pushelberg studio.

RLI INNOVATION IN TECHNOLOGY AWARD



COSTANERA CENTER

A new digital art experience will amaze visitors of Costanera Center, located in Santiago (Chile) and owned by Cencosud. A digital wall, with a total height of 19m, 45 million pixels of image quality and professional sound, projects incredible images that completely change the experience of visiting the shopping centre that Trison Necsum has digitalised. One of the main attractions of the mall are the WOW 3D contents, which will not go unnoticed and will viralise Costanera Center across social networks. Impressive digital art content, highlighting the digital architecture and a sophisticated fountain shocks those present with its three-dimensional architecture. One of the funniest and most creative moments is starred by an amazing Goddess Justice, in which this imposing digital sculpture comes to life to surprise and interact with the visitors of the centre.



FRAMELESS - LONDON

43 masterpieces, four unique galleries, Framess is a place where visitors can surround themselves with colour. 'Beyond Reality' is a spectacular cinematic sensory feast that sees the experience literally pushed Beyond Reality, as the gallery name suggests. 'The Colour in Motion' gallery has uniquely composed music and audio design which enables the visitor to be fully surrounded by the art as well as hearing conversation suggested by the original artworks with musical sounds that are cohesive with the visuals. 'The World Around Us' gallery uses six sided 3D spherical projection, fully surrounding the visitor in some of the world's most recognisable masterpieces. Meanwhile, the 'Art of Abstraction' gallery invites the visitor to wind through a maze of colour, shape and form to discover abstract art in a way never seen before.



NANOVO PHYGITAL

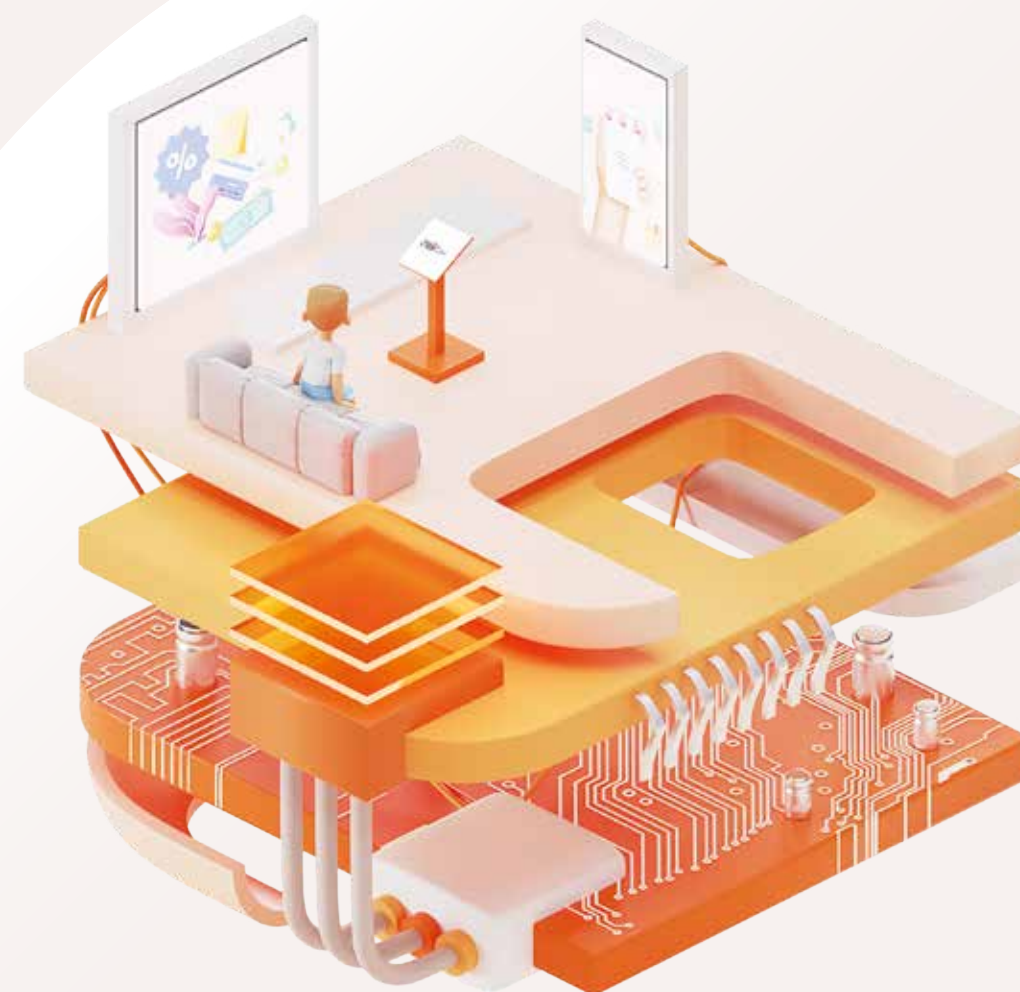
Nanovo is a premier European union service provider, an award-winning technology company who design and implement digital in-store solutions and service spaces dedicated to modern retail, enhancing client attention and engagement. They serve as a technology partner for the largest retail brands and have executed projects in Europe and are now fully present in the GCC and Mena regions servicing and supporting clients from our regional office in Dubai. Nanovo helped our client 6thStreet.com from Apparel Group to achieve all that with a Nanovo Phygital store solution, creating a new and unified customer experience and a new way to shop. With Nanovo's expertise the GCC Region's first phygital store was launched in September 2022 for 6thStreet.com at the new Dubai Hills Mall.



OUTERNET LONDON

Outernet London is home to two contrasting live venues. HERE at Outernet is a 2,000 capacity underground venue featuring cutting-edge audio and video. It plays host to some of the biggest names in live music and DJ talent. The Lower Third is a grassroots performance venue showcasing the best emerging talent. In addition, their breath-taking Now Building really has to be experienced to be appreciated. Standing four storeys high it broadcasts entertainment, music and digital artworks onto 360-degree, LED screens with 4D and interactive capabilities. They have designed The Now Building to bring creative storytelling to life in new and inspiring ways using the latest immersive technology. They believe the possibilities are endless. Meanwhile next to The Now Building, Now Trending is a more intimate space tailored to individual product trial and screen interactivity.

We set phygital in motion



Nanovo's Phygital store solution is leading the way in the future of retail, with a focus on user interaction, operational excellence, and design ergonomics. Proud creators of the GCC region's first Phygital store for 6thStreet.com in Dubai, Nanovo invites you to experience the future of shopping today.

NANOVO

See our Phygital concept
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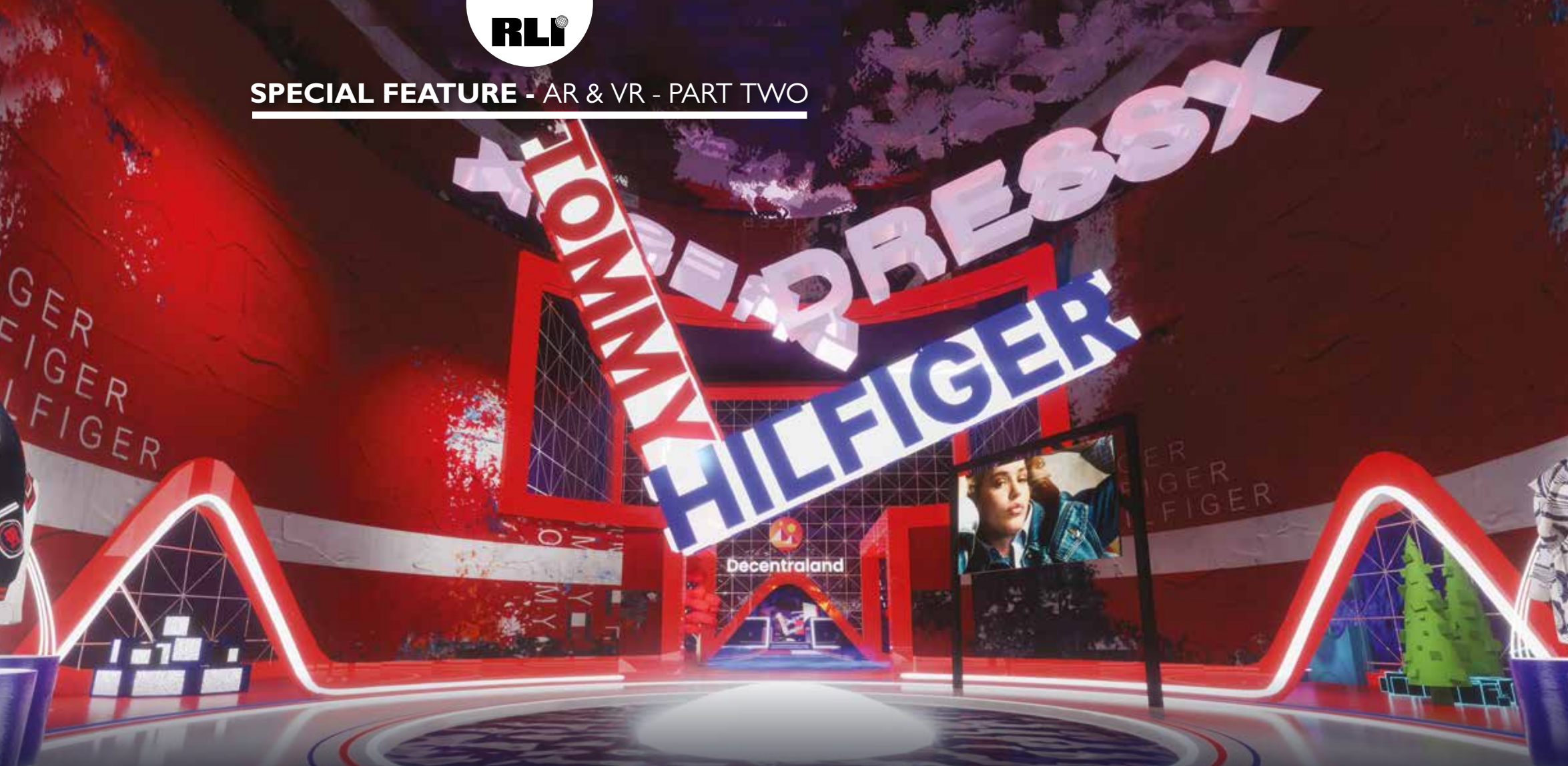
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A New Era of Retail

Following on from Part One of our Special Feature on AR & VR in last month's edition, this issue sees RLI take a closer look at a number of examples of AR & VR in the world of retail to highlight how it is being used to enhance the offering of companies and entice customers to enter this new era of retail.

Retailers are using both virtual reality (VR), where customers typically wear a headset to enter a completely digital world, and augmented reality (AR), which overlays digital projections into the real world and can be accessed on a smartphone. This is the viewpoint of Simon Read, Senior Writer at Formative Content and Contributor to the World Economic Forum in his article 'How many consumers are shopping in virtual reality and what can it offer them?'

He goes on to say that such technology is being used to sell products shoppers have traditionally been reluctant to buy online and that more of us are turning to VR to do our shopping and it is a switch that could signal big changes in the retail sector. Below we take a look at a few examples of AR and VR in the industry.

Within the roles of AR & VR, the Metaverse is another new element that is being incorporated by retail brands around the world. One example of this is how Tommy Hilfiger, which is owned by PVH Corp., one of the world's most recognised premium lifestyle brands and a 3D technology pioneer, presented a brand-new, multi-metaverse hub, powered by Emperia, which launched simultaneously and brought together, interoperably, the most iconic metaverse platforms: Decentraland, Roblox (designed by Sawhorse Productions), Spatial, DressX and Ready Player Me, all part of Tommy Hilfiger's Decentraland Metaverse Fashion Week 2023 presence. The new Tommy Hilfiger digital hub also focuses on enhancing the product experience, by offering four exclusive selected items, led by the Tommy Hilfiger iconic Varsity Jacket, presented in different aesthetic representations across all platforms and

available for sale in two different forms: physical - connected to

Tommy's e-commerce; and digital - connected to digital fashion platform DressX. The Varsity jacket is available for sale in physical form via the Emperia hub, while the Ready Player Me platform is offering the digital version, which can be used in various games and environments, multiplying the interoperability possibilities.

Another example that is powered by Emperia is Tatcha's new virtual store which launched back in February. The virtual experience aims to "immerse guests in the tranquil scents and sounds of the Japanese hinoki forest" while introducing them to the brand's Forest Awakening collection. In addition, the store includes information about the benefits of forest bathing, also known as shinrin-yoku, a common medical treatment in Japan known for its immunity and mood boosting powers by connecting to nature through the senses. Starting with a walk through the Hinoki forest, visitors can explore several rooms that "engulf them in the Tatcha Hinoki experience" and allow them to move freely, explore products, learn about them and shop.

Fashion brand H&M has teamed up with leading technology company Snap Inc. to launch augmented reality (AR) try on experiences - available now on H&M's mobile app and on visual instant messaging app, Snapchat. The AR experiences are co-designed by H&M and the Institute of Digital Fashion (IODF), the London-based digital atelier and thinktank. Powered by Snap's camera technology, the Lenses offer the ability to try on one-of-a-kind digital designs, expanding the expressive possibilities of fashion. Anyone can select an outfit, strike a pose, and

share their favourite digital looks. H&M utilises Snap's Camera Kit to build augmented reality into their mobile apps. Camera Kit is a cross platform, software development kit that enables businesses like H&M to integrate Snap's camera technology and Lenses into their own mobile and web properties, "meeting their customers where they are". The Swedish retailer joins other brands such as Puma in leveraging Camera Kit to enhance customer experience.

Meanwhile with Swedish brand IKEA's new app IKEA Kreativ gives customers the opportunity to bring their ideal home to life. Visitors can take advantage of advanced technology to create a complete 3D replica of their room. The process involves scanning the room with LiDAR technology, which is integrated into iPhones. Once the scan is complete, customers can easily remove their current furniture and explore new products. This feature provides a precise visual representation of how new furniture will look and fit in their home, without the need for bothersome physical measurements. It takes the guesswork out of furniture shopping and offers a convenient and hassle-free way for customers to redesign their living spaces.

Moving on, with the Sephora Virtual Artist, you can get a virtual makeover, star in your own tutorials, and share your obsessions with friends more easily. Customers can experiment with an infinite library of eyeshadows, lip colours, and even false lashes to find their perfect shade and perfect lip - all without stepping foot in a store. Bringing virtual reality technology to the beauty industry, Sephora's makeup app uses facial recognition to empower customers to try on products anywhere. The app scans your face, detects your eyes, lips, and cheeks for product placement and lets them try on makeup virtually to see just what this eyeliner or that lipstick looks like on them. Undecided between a KVD Vegan Beauty liquid lipstick or Anastasia liquid lipstick? No problem—try them both, see how they look, and compare before you buy. Who doesn't want a virtual lipstick tester to filter through colours, textures, and finishes?

Stepping away from traditional retail sectors such as fashion, furniture and makeup, Audi is the first car manufacturer in the world to bring



virtual reality entertainment by holoride to series production. At CES 2023 back in January in Vegas, US, visitors could experience rides in the rear of an Audi e-tron and e-tron Sportback. The Audi Hub at the Waldorf Astoria will be their starting point. Behind holoride is a new technology that adapts the virtual content to the car's driving movements in real time. For example, if the vehicle takes a right turn, the spaceship in the virtual world will also fly to the right. If the car accelerates, the spaceship speeds up, meaning a ride in the car becomes a multimodal gaming event. An added bonus is that by synchronising the user's visual and felt experiences, holoride reduces the risk of motion sickness, which many passengers experience when watching movies or other dynamic content in a moving car.

It is not just in the physical world where AR and VR is making an impact. The online giant Amazon has incorporated AR technology to enhance the online shopping experience. Recently, the retail giant unveiled a new feature called Virtual Try-On for Shoes that enables customers to visualize how a pair of shoes will look on themselves from multiple angles by utilizing their mobile phone's camera. To use the Virtual Try-On for Shoes feature, customers only need to point their mobile phone's camera at their feet, and the AR shoes will appear on their screen. With the included functionality, shoppers can quickly swap out the colours of the same style of shoes plus snap a photo of their virtual try-on session, which they can save on their device or share on social media.

SPECIAL FEATURE - URBAN REGENERATION

Transformations for the Next Generation

At its most basic level, Urban Regeneration involves the investment of public money or private finance into areas in need of lasting improvement to proceed with a program of land redevelopment often used to address urban decay in cities. Over the coming pages RLI spends some time looking at a selection of global schemes that best highlight the transformation of run-down areas into thriving economic hubs.

Urban Regeneration brings back underutilised assets and redistributes opportunities, increasing urban prosperity and quality of life. Every city has pockets of underused and underutilised land or distressed and decaying urban areas. These pockets of underused land weaken the city's image, liveability and productivity. They are usually the result of changes in the urban growth and productivity patterns.

What Urban Regeneration seeks to do is create new opportunities both for the local community and individuals and businesses looking to invest in the area by repurposing underused or redundant land and buildings in a wholesale transformation intervention. At its heart it has an ambition to increase prosperity and in turn improve people's quality of life by reducing social inequalities in these areas.

Examples of Urban Regeneration Around the World

Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield (URW) has announced Mill Creek Residential (MCR) as co-developer for the first phase of the landmark transformation of Westfield Garden State Plaza in Bergen County, New Jersey. Anticipated to break ground in 2024 and slated to open to residents in 2026, the first phase will include the construction of 550 luxury apartment homes that will be integrated with the shopping centre via a one-acre 'green town' for residents, visitors and shoppers to enjoy, as well as introduce a 'main street' outdoor district featuring restaurants and everyday conveniences and services. The development will also include significant community and sustainability features such as new parks and greenspaces, green building construction, upgraded connectivity to

public transportation networks, electric vehicle charging stations and the restoration of a section of the beloved local Sprout Brook.

A game-changing retailtainment destination, 11 SKIES will be Hong Kong's largest hub for retail, dining and entertainment and the first to combine wealth management and wellness services in one complete ecosystem. Opening in phases from 2022 to 2025 by New World Development, it is set to bring brand new experiences for consumption, entertainment and wellness services to everyone. 11 SKIES will bring together 3.8 million square feet gross floor area; 2.6 million square feet of retail space, encompassing over 800 shops and more than 120 dining concepts; 570,000sq ft of experience-based entertainment facilities including immersive, fun and interactive role-play learning experiences at KidZania and Grade-A office towers. Strategically located right next to the Hong Kong International Airport, Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge and Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Link, 11 SKIES will benefit from a high volume of passengers who travel through Hong Kong International Airport, which recorded 71.5 million in 2019 and will become a centrepiece within the GBA 'one-hour living circle' and a gateway to the rest of the world.

Global real estate company Hines has revealed plans to build and operate a 74-storey mixed-use tower in Busan, South Korea's second-largest city. Called the Global Quantum Complex, the \$1bn project will house the nation's first quantum computing R&D hub, as well as next-generation offices and space for education, retail and residential offerings. The development in Busan's Haeun-dae district will span more than 180,000sq m and will be one of South Korea's five tallest towers

upon completion. Architects Skidmore, Owings & Merrill is designing the project as a "vertical city" which is expected to generate \$3.6bn in economic value and create 18,000 jobs in and around Busan. Construction of the Global Quantum Complex will begin in 2024 and complete in 2027, with the finished structure incorporating sustainability features to comply with South Korea's 2030 carbon reduction goals.

After extensive land reclamation in the 19th century, the Dutch municipality of Haarlemmermeer, part of the Amsterdam Metropolitan Region, has been designated as an area for sustainable urban growth.

Arup is working with Schiphol Area Development Company (SADC) and Schiphol Trade Park (STP), to develop Mixity. Sustainability drives this mixed-use urban regeneration project, combining rural tranquillity and bustling city life within a unique heritage setting. People and community will take centre stage in this development with 75,000sq m of shared indoor space and 25 hectares of green park space. An engine for the regional economy, Mixity is set to deliver 400,000sq m of flexible space to accommodate new businesses, strengthening innovation and competitiveness in the region.



Abha Mixed-Use Development, Abha, Saudi Arabia
Developer: Red Sea Markets Company



The Ellinikon, Athens, Greece
Developer: Lamda Development

The largest city-centre project in Europe, Westfield Hamburg-Überseequartier is set to become a new urban community hotspot in Germany. Encompassing a unique culture, leisure, entertainment and dining offer, it will feature a 10-screen flagship cinema, beauty and wellness centres, international and local restaurants, bars and cafés and the latest trends in entertainment technology. This mixed-use urban district will feature flexible offices with 360° views over HafenCity and the harbour, modern apartments with direct access to the waterfront, three hotels and a 200-store shopping centre offering the best local and international brands together with a wide range of services and digital innovations, for an enhanced customer journey. The shopping centre itself will span 80,500sq m of retail, leisure and restaurant space and it is set to open in the second half of 2023 by developers Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield. The scheme will expand the Hamburg City metropolitan area by 40 per cent and the proportion of public and publicly accessible private open spaces is 38 per cent.

The renewed Shopping Mall Zuidplein has been opened by the mayor of Rotterdam Aboutaleb. Dutch-based architectural firm Tconcept designed a renewed fresh interior with some impressive shopfronts for the outdated '70s shopping mall of 60,000sq m GLA, the mall also got an extension of 7,000sq m GLA with convenience stores. Zuidplein is the main shopping centre of the southern part of Rotterdam with over 160 shops and is one of the biggest shopping malls in The Netherlands. The mall is the centre of the Heart of the South mixed-use densification area that includes residences, a cinema, a theatre, hotel and a convention centre. The upgrade of Shopping Mall Zuidplein by the Owners Association of the shopping centre of Zuidplein focussed primarily on improving the quality, circulation and the experience of the mall.

Lamda Development has revealed its plans for Riviera Galleria and Commercial Hub retail destinations at The Ellinikon, Greece's and Europe's greatest urban regeneration project that is being built on the former Athens airport. Adjacent to central Athens, the nearby Piraeus Port and the International Airport, The Ellinikon is unique in Europe for its location, its size — three times larger than Monaco — as well as its scale and ambition. The Ellinikon will set new benchmarks for the future of Mediterranean coastal development — for integrated, sustainable living; for iconic placemaking; for smart-infrastructure; and for its broad base of business potential, from tourism to innovative commercial properties to ground-breaking destination retail. A collection of several communities will be home to thousands, supported by essential services available to all — such as education and healthcare. This groundbreaking

development is on course to open in 2025.

Poland is home to Browary Warszawskie, the current “best urban regeneration project” in the world, according to the MAPIC real estate awards. Developed by Echo Investment, work on the 4.4ha plot began in 2016 and in the short time since it launched, it has already been recognised as the capital's “best public space” in the annual architectural prize overseen by Warsaw City Hall, whilst also making it onto the final shortlist of MIPIM's “best mixed-use development” category. Seen as Echo Investment's flagship project, architect's JEMS Architekci created a concept that merged pre-existing historical structures with modern buildings whilst simultaneously striking a balance between public and private space. Though featuring no shortage of office space, Browary Warszawskie has helped bring the area to life by introducing over 1,000 apartments to the local housing stock as well as over two dozen food and drink concepts. Of these, highlights have included an award-winning brewpub, a premium food hall, exclusive live entertainment venues and a sports bar owned by football legend Robert Lewandowski.

Battersea Power Station opened on 14 October and is a modern mix of over 100 stores, dining, leisure, medical, wellness, co-working and offices. The scheme is at the heart of a much wider redevelopment of the south west London site, with several stages of its residential and convenience retail and leisure plans already complete and a new London Underground station open. However, the iconic power station will inevitably be the standout. Brands including Ray-Ban, Ralph Lauren, Tommy Hilfiger, The Kooples, Aesop and Calvin Klein will be opening among more than 100 shops, bars and restaurants, 254 apartments, office space as well as a leisure offering that includes the Chimney Lift experience. Developed by Battersea Power Station Development Company, the scheme is also home to a new six-acre riverfront that is open to the public.

Sellar, the developer of London Bridge Quarter and Paddington Square and MTR, a leading global operator of sustainable rail transport services including the Elizabeth line and Network Rail have submitted a joint planning application to the City of London Corporation for proposed vital upgrades to transform Liverpool Street station. The £1.5bn vision for Liverpool Street station has been developed in collaboration with Pritzker Prize-winning architectural practice Herzog & de Meuron and will create a world-class transport hub and landmark seven-days-a-week destination, with new retail and leisure facilities for visitors, passengers and the local community. The designs being submitted follow several years of working with the City of London Corporation as well as ongoing consultation with



Westfield Hamburg Überseequartier, Hamburg, Germany
Developer: Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield

heritage organisations and other key stakeholders, including three public exhibition events, resulting in the proposals incorporating a number of design changes and improvements. A decision by the City of London Corporation is expected in 2024.

Developer Deeley Freed will work with LaSalle Investment Management to transform The Galleries shopping centre in Bristol and create a mixed-use quarter through a £550M regeneration. The project to transform the five-acre site will begin in 2024 and complete in 2027. The proposals involve replacing the existing shopping centre and multi-storey car park with a modern mixed-used development including offices, purpose-built student accommodation, residential (open-market, affordable housing and build to rent), an aparthotel and mixed retail - all to be built around a new pedestrian landscaped street.

As part of the Kingdom's 2030 Vision, the Diriyah Gate Development Authority (DGDA) is transforming Diriyah into what will become the world's largest cultural and heritage destination. Located 15 minutes from Riyadh, Diriyah will become the world's largest cultural and lifestyle mud city. Celebrating 300 years of Saudi Arabian history and heritage, Diriyah is destined to become a world-class lifestyle destination with Saudi's greatest collection of museums and cultural attractions, luxury international hotels and resorts and luxury retail, leisure and dining experiences. In December last year the first element of the Giga-Project launched to the public, that of Bujairi Terrace, a collection of 21 globally renowned restaurants over a 15,000sq m area. The historical area and the birthplace of the Kingdom houses the exciting new restaurant hub and meshes together rich culture,

modernity and world-class dining. On full completion, Diriyah will become Saudi's premier lifestyle destination to visit, live, work, shop, dine and celebrate the wonder of the Kingdom's rich heritage and culture.

The bountiful region of Abha is poised to be the perfect location for an upcoming regional mixed-use developed by developers Red Sea Markets Company that is due to complete in mid-2026. The developer intends to develop a mixed-use urban centre that includes retail, lifestyle F&B, mini-anchors, FEC, cinema, hypermarket, a youth centre and a medical clinic. It will also include a 150-key four-star hotel tower and a 100-key serviced apartment tower to be operated by Canopy by Hilton and Hilton Residences respectively. A central parking structure will also be provided to support the flow of pedestrian footfall.

Unlike Saudi's other giga-projects, ROSHN is delivering new urban communities across the Kingdom. Backed by the PIF, the real estate developer is creating its communities in cities such as Riyadh, Jeddah, Al Kharj, Al Hofuf, Al Qatif, Makkah and Abha. These feature pedestrian-friendly 'living streets', green spaces and retail and entertainment outlets, as well as hospitals, medical centres, mosques and sports facilities. Having been established in 2019 by Saudi Arabia's sovereign Public Investment Fund (PIF), ROSHN specialises in developing integrated urban neighbourhoods featuring residential communities with modern standards across the Kingdom. The idea behind the project's launch was to meet the demand for new housing supply while developing integrated neighbourhoods, localising international best practices, incorporating the latest technologies in construction and enhancing the quality of life.



Alfulwa, Al Hofuf, Saudi Arabia
Developer: ROSHN

Retail on the Road to Recovery

While the Chinese market has taken longer to recover, things have picked up quickly in recent months and the whole retail real estate sector is quickly returning to what people expect. Over the coming pages, RLI zones in on the continent to point out a series projects which should have people excited for the future as the industry rebounds and once again puts mixed-use development schemes front and centre.

Although 2022 saw most Asia Pacific (APAC) markets, with the exception of China, begin to shake off the effects of regional Covid-19 restrictions, as investors look to 2023 they find themselves confronted with a different, but no less dangerous, set of threats: high inflation, rising interest rates, unsustainable levels of public and private-sector debt and an impending global recession. This is the view of PWC in their article 'Emerging Trends in Real Estate Asia Pacific 2023'.

The article continues by speaking about retail, saying that transaction volumes dropped off in 2022, reflecting diminishing interest among mainstream investors for conventional retail assets, although nondiscretionary subtypes continue to find favour. Over the long term, however, well-performing assets in good locations will continue to be successful and margins should begin to improve once landlords and tenants are able to find a successful formula to reimagine assets in ways that work to their mutual benefit.

Meanwhile, CBRE's '2023 Asia Pacific Real Estate Market Outlook' report highlights that despite rapid change and uncertainty experienced worldwide last year, they retail a relatively positive outlook for the Asia Pacific commercial real estate market in 2023. From an economic perspective, inflation is expected to ease and interest rates in the region are set to stabilise in the second half of 2023. In terms of retail, the report explains that while 71 per cent of retailers plan to open more stores, retailers will remain prudent in extending their presence in new markets. Space in prime assets will remain keenly sought after while interest in secondary retail will strengthen.

Projects Across Asia & Australasia

Back in October, Simon and Mitsubishi Estate Simon, a joint venture between Mitsubishi Estate Group and Simon, announced the opening

of Fukaya-Hanazono Premium Outlets, the 10th Premium Outlet centre in Japan and the first new location in Japan in 10 years, located approximately 45 miles northwest of Tokyo. Building on the success of Gotemba and Rinku Premium Outlets and the other seven properties in Japan, Fukaya-Hanazono Premium Outlets will feature 137 brand name stores in 296,000sq ft. Of the stores, twenty-four stores have launched their first outlet centre concept location worldwide or first in Japan. The centre also features an impressive food hall design and several new restaurant concepts consisting of Asian, Western and local Japanese food and beverage options. Fukaya-Hanazono Premium Outlets is built to a modern contemporary architectural design which complements the landscape of the local area, including the red-brick and wood finish that is local to Fukaya City.

Developed by China Resources Land and opened last year, MixC Nanjing is a, 83,800sq m, retail-led, mixed-use development located in the city's central 700-year-old district known as Sanshan Street and it is situated within the historical urban texture of the ancient city, at the heart of the site sits an original 'Yunzhang Gongso' building. The retail planning for MixC differs from traditional centres and has made a contribution to the city. To support the cultural centrepiece of the design, the commercial retail strategy has been altered. In most retail-led schemes, the focal retail units have the strongest visibility to the external street. In the case of MixC Nanjing, this hierarchy has been restructured to place anchor tenants within the internal pedestrian streets to draw visitors through the main courtyard.

The Splendors Zhangjiagang Shopping Center opened last year and is the prime commercial component of the Zhangjiagang Smart City Development by China Jinmao Group. The site is located within



11 SKIES - Hong Kong
Developer: New World Development

the nucleus of a new High Technology Development District, north of the city and is situated at the confluence of Zhenxing Middle Road and Huachang Road, surrounded by natural river courses and green belts. Peripheral retail developments within a five-kilometer radius are currently inadequate for the expected high-profile population growth within China Jinmao Group's new Smart City. The philosophy of 3MIX when designing the project was to create a place that fits to its landscape, neighbourhood and lifestyle of its customers.

A game-changing retailtainment destination, 11 SKIES will be Hong Kong's largest hub for retail, dining and entertainment and the first to combine wealth management and wellness services in one complete ecosystem. Opening in phases from 2022 to 2025 by New World Development, it is set to bring brand new experiences for consumption, entertainment and wellness services to everyone. 11 SKIES will bring together 3.8 million square feet gross floor area; 2.6 million square feet of retail space, encompassing over 800 shops and more than 120 dining concepts; 570,000sq ft of experience-based entertainment facilities including immersive, fun and interactive role-play learning experiences at KidZania and Grade-A office towers. Strategically located right next to the Hong Kong International Airport, Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge and Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Link, 11 SKIES will benefit from a high volume of passengers who travel through Hong Kong International Airport, which recorded 71.5 million in 2019 and will become a centrepiece within the GBA 'one-hour living circle' and a gateway to the

rest of the world.

JQZ, a Sydney-based property development firm, has collaborated with Colliers to launch Mall 88, a new shopping destination, in the heart of Sydney's St Leonards. The mall, which has an 8,000sq m retail space, is designed to be a lifestyle destination for both locals and visitors. Across four levels, Mall 88 features an open-air plaza and dining area with a mix of cafes, alfresco dining and a laneway eat street, as well as a public library and medical centre. According to Julia Batterley, Colliers' MD of real estate management, Mall 88 is the area's first modern retail precinct that incorporates a civic plaza and public library. In addition, the mall is anchored by a full-service Coles supermarket, Vintage Cellars, a Medical Centre and an Asian supermarket, as well as a variety of premium dining and service brands spread across 30 retail establishments. The centre also has 374 undercover parking spaces. The reimagined newest retail destination in St Leonards is key to JQZ's strategy to supply customers with a new "live, work and play" area and fill a retail void on Sydney's north shore market.

The new 39-storey mixed-used project Park Silom shopping centre is set to launch in June in the heart of Bangkok's Silom, positioned as a 'Third Space Retail'. Park Silom, developed under NYE & RPG Company, is a partnership between Thai retail giants – Minor International, Siam Piwat and NYE Estate. The centre's retail space – which spans 9,300sq m over five storeys – will be managed by Siam Piwat, offering a new retail concept it dubs 'Everyday Indulgence for New Breed City Living'.

MixC Nanjing, Nanjing, China
Developer: China Resources Land



Mall 88, Sydney, Australia
Developer: JQZ



The Exchange TRX, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Developer: Lendlease

The retail space will be home to more than 80 brands, covering lifestyle, fashion, F&B and wellness, along with a premium supermarket. The basement floor 'The Help & Service' offers 24-hour shops, parcel-delivery services and supermarkets, while the upper floor features a brunch and all-day dining space called 'The Balcony' and a meeting space 'The Cellar'. 'The Lobby' will house chic cafes and 'The Dining Room' is dedicated to more up-market restaurants. The second and third floors of the development will house 'The Dressing Room' – a collection of fashion and beauty stores – and 'The Clubhouse & Spa' zone.

Zhuhai Shizimen Huafa Mall, Phase 2 (Plot A8) by developers Zhuhai Huafa Properties Co., Ltd will have its grand opening on 30 June 2023, with a total GFA of approximately 40,000sq m. This three-storey-high retail project will be positioned as an "Innovative Lifestyle Mall", which is one of the components of the mixed-use development consisting of 150m-high hotel and office building and 150m-high residential building. The shopping mall is placed along an east-west axis and the outdoor entrance plaza and nodes are designed at the podium below the two towers. The layout design highlights the flexibility, in which a variety of store sizes are designed in the layout plan to flexibly fulfil various tenants' needs of different business style and requirements. Furthermore, pedestrian flow in the shopping layout has been designed to maximise

the flow of people going through each commercial floors.

The Tun Razak Exchange (TRX) is a vibrant, experience-led lifestyle destination that is seamlessly integrated with a 10-acre activated public park. Set to be the new lifestyle epicentre of Malaysia's capital city of Kuala Lumpur, The Exchange TRX will offer socially immersive experiences encompassing events, entertainment, arts and culture, sports and leisure and over 430 lifestyle, dining, concept stores and new-to-market brands. Designed as 'a lifestyle precinct in the park', The Exchange TRX by developer Lendlease sits at the heart of a 17-acre retail-led mixed-use development located in Malaysia's first international financial district. The Exchange TRX is known as a lifestyle precinct that encompasses retail, Malaysia's first Kimpton® Hotels & Restaurants that is connected to the TRX City Park, six premier residential towers, a low-rise large floor plate campus-style office and a dedicated Mass Rapid Transport (MRT) station. The entire development is expected to be completed in stages from 2023 –2027, with the retail component opening in Q4 2023.

K11 Group has unveiled a new harbour front cultural retail destination in Shenzhen dubbed K11 Ecoast, a flagship for its Mainland China expansion plan. The US\$1.4bn project, located in Prince Bay, is scheduled to open at the end of 2024. It is jointly developed by



Chongqing Yuelai TOD, Chongqing, China
Developer: Chengdu Wide Horizon Investment Group

K11's parent company New World Development Company and China Merchants Shekou Holdings. The development will have a GFA of 228,500sq m, featuring a K11 Art Mall, K11 HACC multi-purpose art space, K11 Atelier office building and a Promenade. K11 Ecoast was designed and constructed in accordance with China's 14th five-year plan national guidelines, using renewable energy, recyclable materials and hospital-grade air filtering systems. The development includes a 60,000sqm outdoor landscaping, the largest among all K11 projects.

Hong Kong-based architectural and design firm CAN is excited to reveal the design for Chongqing Yuelai TOD Project for its client, developer Chengdu Wide Horizon Investment Group. The project bridges the boundaries of ecology and arts for a mixed-use development. The firm is delivering the masterplanning and architectural design for the development which consists of a retail podium, retail precinct and office towers. Located adjacent to Wangjiazhuang Subway Station, the site is a comprehensive transport hub with the seamless connection of major railways, air and sea routes. It is just over 10 kilometres from the central business district, giving it a superior economic position. Inspired by the hilly and mountainous landscapes of Chongqing, the design creates a spatial journey through connecting nature and spaces. The world-class integrated masterplan delicately brings together elements

of pedestrian circulation, precinct retail, F&B market, shopping mall, office and different featured spaces in a multi-dimensional approach, creating an iconic gateway integrated green urbanism, creative and cultural hub.

Snøhetta has unveiled the design for its largest project in Japan to date, a mixed-use development in Tokyo offering retail, a hotel and art and cultural experiences. The 117,000sq m Shibuya Upper West Project by developers Tokyu Group is located in the Shibuya district of Tokyo. Billed as the city's newest 'urban retreat', it is scheduled for completion in 2027. "In such a well-known and historically significant area in one of the world's most exciting cities, the project is paying homage to and respecting traditions as well as looking ahead," said Robert Greenwood, Partner and Managing Director of Snøhetta Hong Kong. "We aim to design for the future and aspire to find the most sustainable solutions, contributing to Japan's goal of being carbon-neutral by 2050." The project will be developed in collaboration with the adjacent Bunkamura cultural complex, which promotes art and culture throughout Tokyo. According to a news release, the 36-storey building pays tribute to "the distant foothills of Mount Fuji". Snøhetta plans to achieve the highest possible sustainability ratings for the Shibuya Upper West Project.



K11 Ecoast, Shenzhen, China
Developer: New World Development Company



Snøhetta Shibuya Upper West Project, Tokyo, Japan
Developer: Tokyu Group



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