



A collection of spinner fixtures set upon a shoe display platform to provide added focus to accessories and shoes.

INTERNATIONAL FEATURE

MUSIC AS A LIFESTYLE

Hot Topic was launched in 1989 as a store for music-influenced accessories, read cross necklaces and fingerless gloves a la Bill Idol. The store has since grown to offer "Everything about the Music" with a merchandise range that includes CDs, clothing, accessories, shoes, makeup and body jewellery, all inspired by the Indie music/ modern rock scene and pop culture phenomena. The brand's latest store in Riverside, California, designed by JGA, represents the fourth evolution of the Hot Topic store concept and marks another reinvention to meet the youth market's evolving expectations and passion for music.

As a target audience they can be quite capricious, to say the least, the young men and women whose culture and lifestyle centre on the intrinsic relationship between music and fashion. The intensity of the relationship can be redefined by trends that come and go, but Hot Topics focus continues to derive its inspiration from the world of music and musicians.

"The objective of the new prototype is to entice shoppers and introduce a new reorganized entry, layout and product presentation approach", says Ken Nisch, Chairman of JGA. "The store is about a point of view, living 'Everything about the music'. It is definitely of the moment; where the moment can range from a tongue-in-cheek interpretation of a Disney classic or the new release from a local garage band."

Inspired by a trip to Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin and Hamburg, a unique street front-like entry was created as a gathering place for the music-loving Net Generation within the retail setting of the mainstream mall. The exterior, reminiscent of a 1900 neighbourhood store that has been altered through a series of uses over a number of decades, is the first signal that the world inside is quite different than at mall centre-court. With a recessed entry shop front element and bay window, details of brick and wood are still visible "aged" layers of paint. Details that are both edgy and warm exist in the mosaic tile entry and wooden details.

With 'security-barred' windows in the 'weathered' entry doors, shoppers cross the threshold to a newly reorganised environment. Serving as the close-to-home alternative to a trip downtown, the environment creates a totally unique destination where it really feels as if one has left the confines of the mall.

The interior of the 2,147 sq. feet (200 sq. metre) retains remnants of what would appear to be the 'original' tin ceiling, in part stripped away to expose the 'bones of the structure', exuding the character of the back street retail stores – raw, unfinished and hip.

"Like the independent stores that inspired it, the store details appear more like a casual assembly of pieces – metal fixtures and walls of particle board slat wall, assembled together in a gutted space", explains Michael Curtis, Creative Director, JGA. "For the environment, materials are selected, collected and repurposed in a way that is fairly reflective of society's view of the consumer – opting out, rebellious and revolutionary."

Metal fixtures are massed around single merchandising points. Updated circulation patterns provide an opportunity to browse the store perimeter leading to a new Music Zone positioned as an island at the rear. Featuring hot and local bands, the Zone reemphasises "Everything about the music". Another new feature incorporates a collection of spinner fixtures set upon a shoe display platform



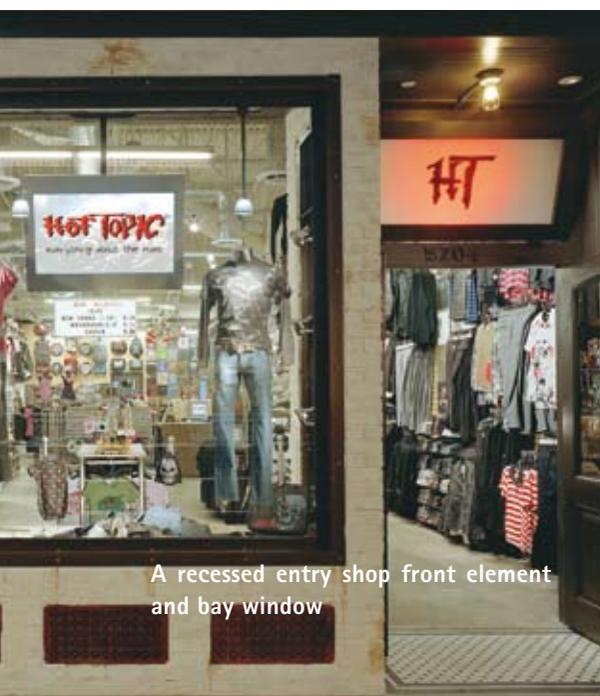
Rusted patina metal like flooring accentuates merchandise in the Music Zone



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Updated circulation patterns provide an opportunity to browse the store perimeter



A recessed entry shop front element and bay window

"Exposed concrete floors, galvanized metal slat wall fixtures, industrial lighting and a more neutral colour palette differentiate this design iteration from the past." ●

Design & Concept

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Baselite
Con-Tech Lighting
Times Square Lighting
L.A. Lighting

Floors

American Olean
Centiva

Storefront

Arto Brick Veneer
Virginia Tile

Millwork & Fixtures

Laurel Manufacturing
Dan losca Temeka Inc.
Spacewall West

Graphics/Signage

LCD Signage - Recom Group
Marquis Signage - Loren Signs

Laminates

LCD Signage - Recom Group

Paint

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Photography

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to provide added focus to accessories and shoes.

The materials are common but are used in unusual ways. The use of post-industrial materials is inspired as much from the basement hangout space or the room above the garage, as from a retail space. Rusted patina metal like flooring accentuates merchandise in the front window and in the Music Zone.

"The use of digital media in the windows, product plexis that highlight the graphic character beyond the apparent value of T-shirts and the integration of accessories into presentations entice the customer to explore the store with a great deal of detail and over a fairly extended period of time", says Nisch.