



Habitat or office? This Italian co-working space

Why Space10 has unveiled a public creative hub in



UNLOCK UNLIMITED DESIGN INTELLIGENCE

BOOKMARK ARTICLE 📌

25 NOV 2019 • RETAIL

WHAT DEVELOPING AMSTERDAM'S FIRST AESOP STORE TAUGHT A DESIGNER



A three-week-old Aēsop store on Amsterdam's Utrechtsestraat bears two firsts: it both introduces the Australian skincare company in the Dutch market and is Valentin Loellmann's inaugural retail space. Based in Maastricht, the German-born creative – known primarily for his sinuous wooden furniture – was approached by Aesop's European design team to take on the interiors. He and his studio jumped at the opportunity.

'I was aiming to do a public project like this for a long time – I was slipping too much into this world of only doing one-off furniture pieces and private residences,' Loellmann says. No matter what he's working on, though, he explains that his means of practice is spontaneous and that, when creating, he often makes of-the-moment decisions based on what *feels* right for each space. It's a quality that proved especially handy during the development of the Aesop store. After

planning the full design and preparing for construction, the team was denied permission to cover the historical interiors, which are reproduced to look as the 17th-century building's original spaces would have.



Finding a compromise was a challenge, but having the willingness to embrace spontaneity affords Loellmann a certain artistic freedom, and that ensured a solution. ‘When I was briefed the project, I thought, “Okay, now finally I can carry out this whole spatial concept”’, Loellmann explains. ‘And I was happy to do that, to show the energy I can provide with the pieces I’ve made. I respect the existing interior, but I wasn’t sure how to work with it – I didn’t see my work in combination with this style. But, after being denied, I knew I

didn't want to go back and copy this style or to create something too dissimilar that people wouldn't understand. I wanted to design a store that when you visit, you don't have any questions in your mind: you just feel comfortable, well, invited.'

The resulting interiors are a harmonious marriage between Loellmann's identifiable furnishings and the pre-existing decorative elements, officiated by a glowing, rosy light that completely engulfs the space. Walnut-timber and copper pieces bedeck the store, and are entirely handcrafted. 'I used the interiors as a background to bring something new in - the old and the new support each other in this way,' he says. 'Instead of being fit into a timeframe, the elements are made one.'





‘There needs to be a certain energy that can be carried along – that’s the most valuable medium you can work with in architecture and design’

While the attention to detail in the interiors may lead one to think otherwise, Loellmann designed from the outside in. In true Dutch fashion (Hollanders oft keep their curtains wide open), glass windows offer a generous viewpoint into the store from the street. The façade speaks to the shared value Aesop and the designer see in making spaces palatable – and pleasurable – for locals. ‘I believe that there are more experiencing the store from the outside than the inside,’ Loellmann explains. ‘So it needs to be attractive, not just for brand itself, but for every passerby. There needs to be a certain energy that can be carried along – that’s the most valuable medium you can work with in architecture and design.’

valentinloellmann.de

WORDS LAUREN GRACE MORRIS PHOTOS COURTESY OF AESOP



SPATIAL

AMSTERDAM

SPACES

VALENTIN LOELLMANN

INSIGHTS

RETAIL

SINGLE-BRAND STORE

THE NETHERLANDS

AESOP

RELATED ARTICLES

MORE RETAIL



05 MAY 2023 • RETAIL

How wellbeing is remodelling the malls of the future



04 MAY 2023 • RETAIL

Authenticity. Agility. A Milan shop shows why both are key to the future of luxury retail



03 MAY 2023 • RETAIL

How a Coach pop-up at Selfridges helps normalize sustainable retail design

FRAME

COMPANY

Frame Publishers B.V.
Zeeburgerkade 1198
1019 VK Amsterdam

service@frameweb.com
CoC 341 537 82
VAT NL 8096 16 981 B01

CONTENT

[Magazine](#)
[Awards](#)
[Events](#)
[Store](#)

SERVICE

[Memberships](#)
[Contact](#)
[About](#)
[FAQ](#)
[Vacancies](#)
[Advertising](#)

SUBSCRIBE TO NEWSLETTERS

Your email address

OK



© 2023 Frame. All rights reserved. For more information read our [Terms & Conditions](#), [Cookie Policy](#) and [Privacy Policy](#).