



a Asymptote, the New York architect, used a neutral palette of white and shades of pale green, blue and gray as a backdrop to Miele's colorful clothing. The store's shiny contoured ceiling is formed from a high-gloss stretched PVC-based material.

b Mannequin forms are suspended from a cable, silhouetted against the full-height sculptural form. Two-tone high-gloss epoxy flooring is imbedded with neon and halogen lighting set beneath tempered glass rings.

Brazilian Air

Carlos Miele

408 W. 14th St.

BRAZILIAN DESIGNER CARLOS MIELE HAS BECOME known for his colorful dresses and second-skin leather cat-suits, wildly popular with celebrities looking to make a statement. He's also known as one of the industry's more cause-driven designers, using native Brazilian craftwork and employing locals in his São Paulo hometown to create the crochet and beadwork featured in many of his designs.

But every designer needs to come to New York at some point in order for his organization to grow and become a fashion staple name. Miele felt it was necessary to bring the vibrant and colorful flair found in multicultural Brazil to his first store in New York's Meatpacking District.

The designer worked closely with New York architecture firm Asymptote to create a cultural icon representing his brand. In addition, Vanguard Construction & Development [known for its work on high-end, design-driven retail projects] was general contractor.

The store's creamy white interior is visible from 14th Street, especially the full-height endomorphic form that runs down the middle of the space. For Miele, it is tradition for public spaces to have a promenade; therefore, he wanted the center of the store to be seen as inviting with a place to sit.

"This form adds a roundness and sensuality to the space," says Michael Strauss, president of Vanguard Construction & Development [New York]. "It's used as a bench, a theatrical backdrop and a way to display Carlos' dramatic and colorful apparel against sculpted architecture."

Around the perimeter, curved-formed steel hanging displays are cantilevered from the walls. "The sense of the hanging wall fixtures floating becomes more evident with concealed lighting sources inside and on the back of the unit," says Strauss.

Throughout the space, suspended mannequin forms float above the floor, installed on transparent fish wire.



The centerpiece endomorphic form is used for both seating and display, and is fabricated from lacquered bent plywood over a rib and gusset substructure that was laser cut directly from CAD drawings. Around the perimeter, curved formed steel hanging displays are cantilevered from the walls.

"Directly beneath the forms, circular troughs with imbedded neon and halogen lighting are integrated into the two-tone high-gloss epoxy flooring," says Strauss, "providing individual spotting and a glow. The entire lighting package is unconventional. It's integrated into the physical objects that create the space."

The store's shiny contoured ceiling is formed from a high-gloss stretched PVC-based material, which blends with the neutral palette of white and shades of pale green and gray.

It was not only the material that was stretched. "Carlos Miele really stretched the envelope in terms of shapes and form," says Strauss. ●

— Alicia Hanson, Associate Editor

Client: Carlos Miele, São Paulo, Brazil

Architect: Asymptote, New York — Hani Rashid, Lisa Anne Couture, principals; Jill Leckner, project architect; Noboru Ota, John Clester, Peter Horner, Cathy Jones, project team; Michael Levy Bajar, Jangheon Cheon, Teresa Cheung, Mary Ellen Cooper, Shinichiro Himematsu,

Michael Huang, Lamia Jallad, Tobias Keyl, Ana So, Markus Schrieler, Yasmin Shahamiri, assistants

General Contractor: Vanguard Construction & Development, New York

Engineers: Kain Chiu, Andre Thomas Chaszar, New York

Outside Design Consultants: Focus Lighting, New York (lighting design); Ben Greenfield, Williamstown, Mass. (audio/visual); 555 Intl., New York (fabricator)

Suppliers: Barriol, Kembs, France (ceiling); 555 Intl., New York (millwork); MAGIS, Treviso, Italy (furnishings); A&L Lighting, Medford, N.Y.; GE Lighting,

Cleveland, Juno Lighting, Des Plaines, Ill.; Lamar, Farmingdale, N.Y.; Let There Be Neon, New York; Lightlab, Buffalo, N.Y.; MDL, Philadelphia; Osram Sylvania, Danvers, Mass.; Philips Lighting, Somerset, N.J.; R&R Plastic, Passaic, N.J.; Rosco Laboratories, Stamford, Conn.; RSA Lighting, Chatsworth, Calif. (lighting); Universal Display & Design, New York (forms)