

ASSOS OF SWITZERLAND

St James's Market, London

Design: Ab Rogers
Opening date: November 2016
Store size: 304 sq m

Cycling brand ASSOS of Switzerland opened its first international concept store in November, at the new St James's Market development in London's West End, marking the 40th anniversary of the company. Designed by Ab Rogers (the brainchild behind the design of Comme Des Garçons as well as projects for TATE, the V&A and Conde Nast), the landmark store is split across two levels and houses the full ASSOS apparel collection, helmets, eyewear and accessories.

'As a cycling enthusiast myself, I'm drawn to the unwavering commitment to performance and the attention to detail ASSOS invest in every garment,' says Rogers. 'I wanted to design a space that echoed this ethos, but importantly, also offered an innovative retail solution to guarantee customers an unmatched experience, both on and off the bike.'

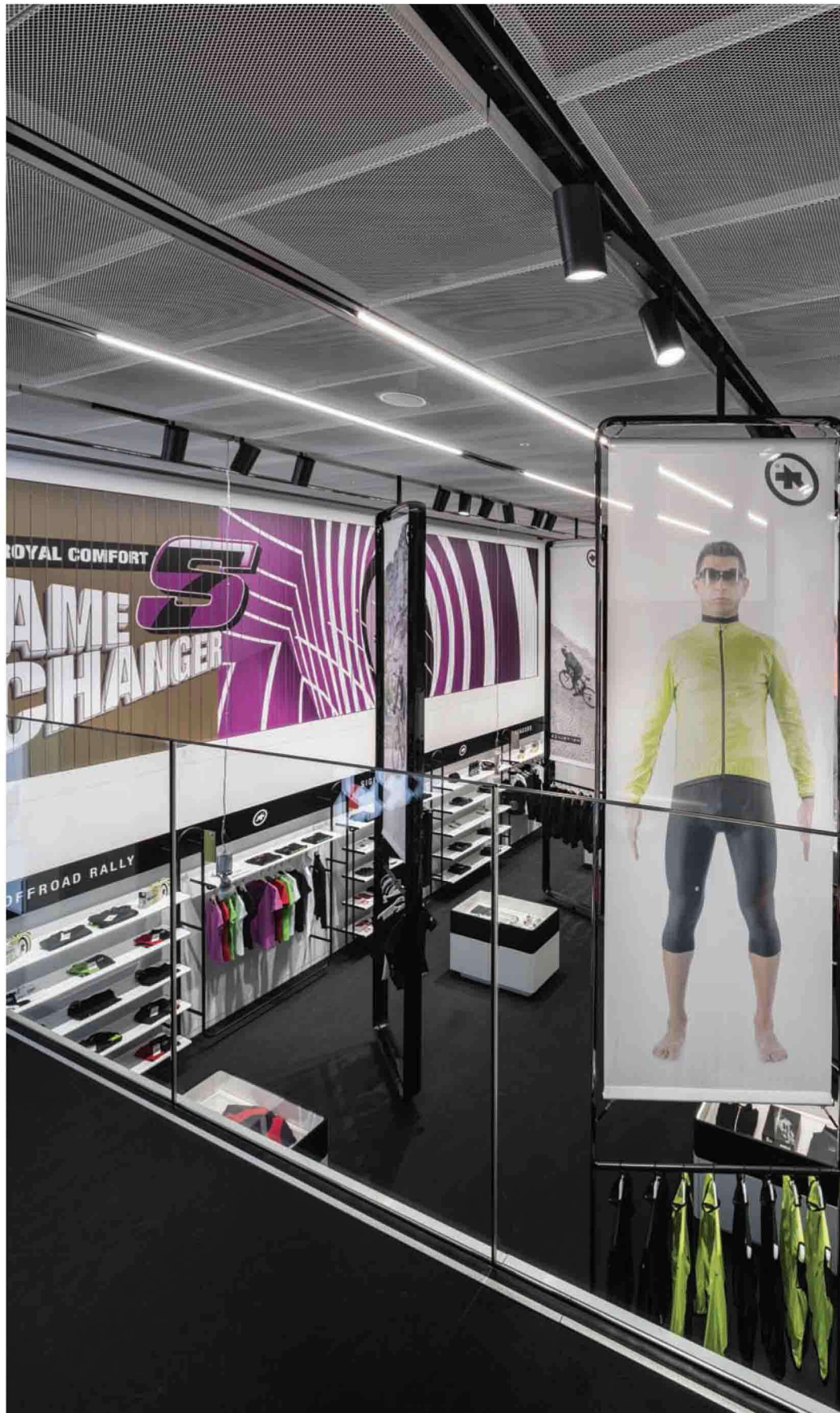
The 304 sq m space is inspired by Rogers' work with museums as well as aspects from the film *2001: A Space Odyssey*. '2001 is an endless inspiration for us, which itself was inspired by the Superstudio design aesthetic of the 1960s and 70s,' adds Rogers.

The store is designed to help professionals and cycling enthusiasts find their perfect kit by providing the opportunity to road-test the performance-led range in store. An elliptical changing room at the back of the ground floor enables customers to trial garments in the collection on a Goomah racing bike, to determine the fit in the saddle before they leave the store.

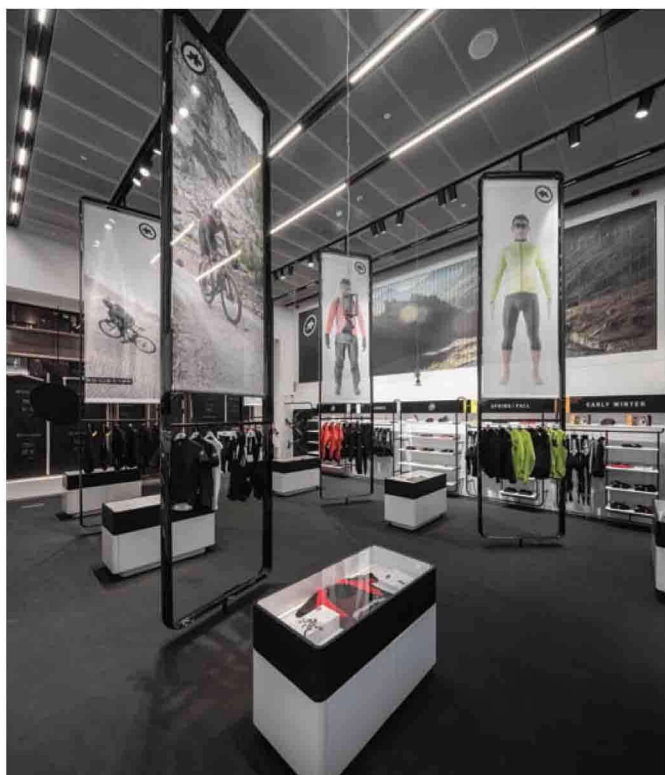
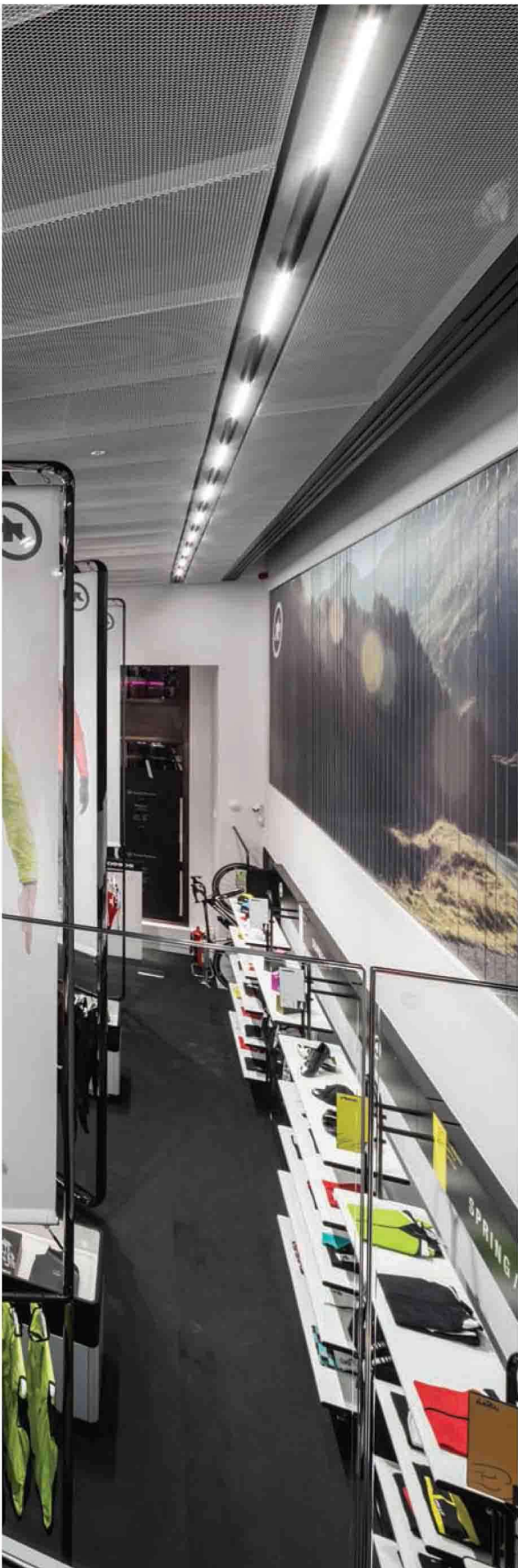
'We are committed to developing the most technically advanced product and through our new retail experience, customers can rest assured they have chosen the perfect fit before they take to the saddle,' says Phil Duff, CEO at ASSOS.

The ground floor also houses the main collection while the mezzanine focuses on the brand's exclusive product partnerships.

The store is full of dynamic prompts that inspire you to go cycling in the countryside, including rotating billboards, a communication tower and a never-ending display rail along the back wall, inspired by the bike frame. 'It curves from vertical >



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Chris Gorman Photography



to horizontal holding the racks of clothes, while a collection of graphic signage tells you about the collection and the season underway,' explains Rogers.

Giant totems act as central floor fixtures with hanging rails holding bibs and large format images, inspired by the notion of a rotating wheel that serves to draw the eyes up, allowing you to appreciate the double-height space.

The design team has deliberately played down the colour palette to show off the colours of the brand. The smooth surface black rubber flooring from Jaymart, was specified as it provides sound absorbency, underfoot comfort and warmth, and won't be scarred by cleats, which attach to the soles of cycling shoes.

'ASSOS clothing is about creating

something fit for purpose, a kind of pure engineered aesthetic and we have adapted that approach to the boutique,' says Rogers. 'To me, it is like we have created a wine cellar for ASSOS's garments.' **RF**

