



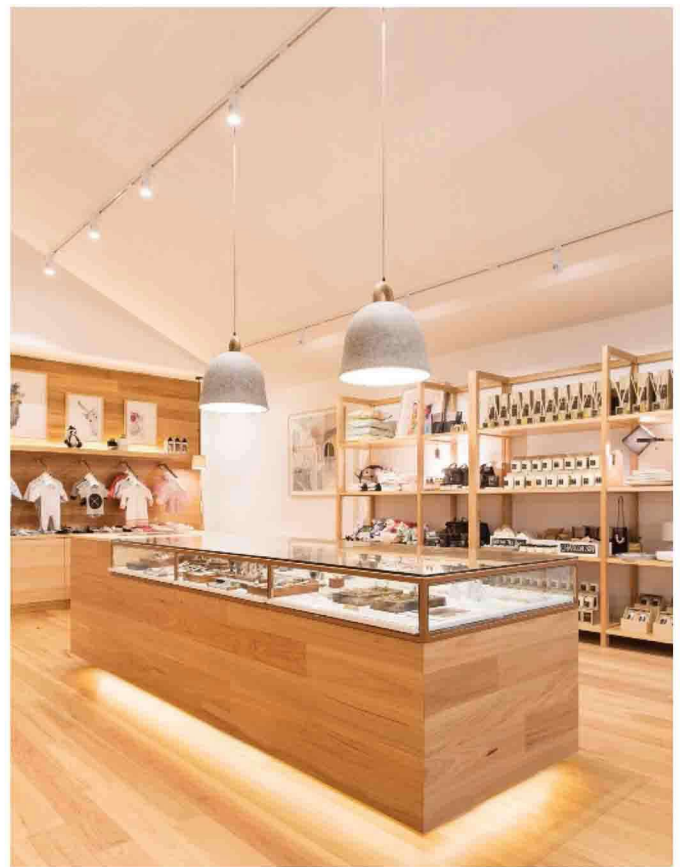
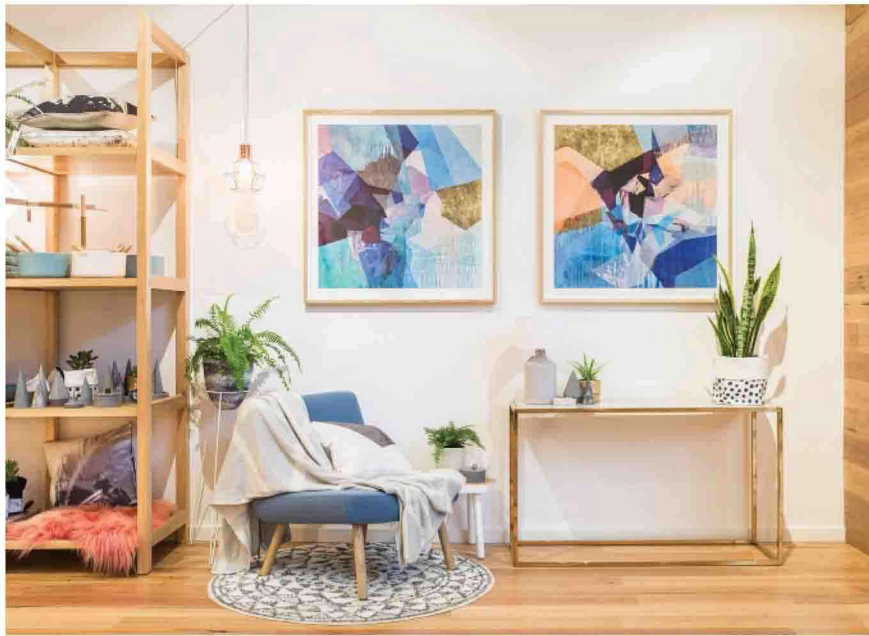
Comfort and Joy

Australian housewares and body care retailer Hart Co. invites shoppers to make themselves at home in its first flagship.

By Lauren Mang, Contributing Writer

THE ENTRANCE TO HART CO. HOME + BODY'S MORE than 1000-square-foot flagship inside Melbourne, Australia's Casey Central Shopping Centre is the architectural version of a welcome mat: a locally sourced blackbutt timber-clad façade angled into the shape of a roof and an open storefront with an unenclosed display window.

Those elements are courtesy of creative design consultancy Biasol: Design Studio (Melbourne, Australia), which worked to create an adaptable system for the growing Carrum Downs, Australia-based home goods and organic body care retailer (which is also family-owned and has since



TOP LEFT *In the home goods section, greenery and a single pendant lamp are paired with a relaxed seating area to create a residential atmosphere.*

BOTTOM *The children's area is decorated with playfully sophisticated wildlife illustrations and is merchandised with crocheted plush animals within little ones' reach.*

expanded from a kiosk- and online-based operation).

Designed to blur the line between the mall and the store, shoppers step inside through an asymmetrical, pitched-roof-shaped entrance and are drawn into a minimal, open space where 13-foot-high ceilings (at the highest point) maintain the façade's angles. The pillar flanking the open display window serves as a way to hide a retractable security screen.

"Mall timelines were our major challenge," notes Biasol principal, Jean-Pierre Biasol. The shopping center originally opened in 2000 and underwent a significant renovation between February 2015 and March 2016, thus handing the design team extremely tight deadlines to work within.

The warm timber material used on the storefront was carried over to the interior where it's found on the

floors, within a recessed rear display wall and wrapped around the center, glass-topped display counter, which features LEDs at its base to create the illusion that it's floating. According to Biasol, the locally sourced timber complements the brand's ethos in representing Australian designers. Above, concrete pendant lighting adds texture. Custom, modular timber shelves, crafted as freestanding furniture pieces, avoid a commercially built-in look and line the bright white walls that were chosen as a simple backdrop to emphasize Hart Co.'s collection of colorful curios.

Hart Co. opened a second brick-and-mortar location in summer 2016 in Eastland Shopping Centre in Melbourne's Ringwood suburb. It recently relaunched a larger rebranded kiosk shop at the Frankston Bay-side Shopping Centre. ▾