



# Bees to Honey

Shinsegae's new shoe department in its Gangnam store strives to be more than just a destination.

*By Eric Feigenbaum, Editorial Advisor/New York Editor*



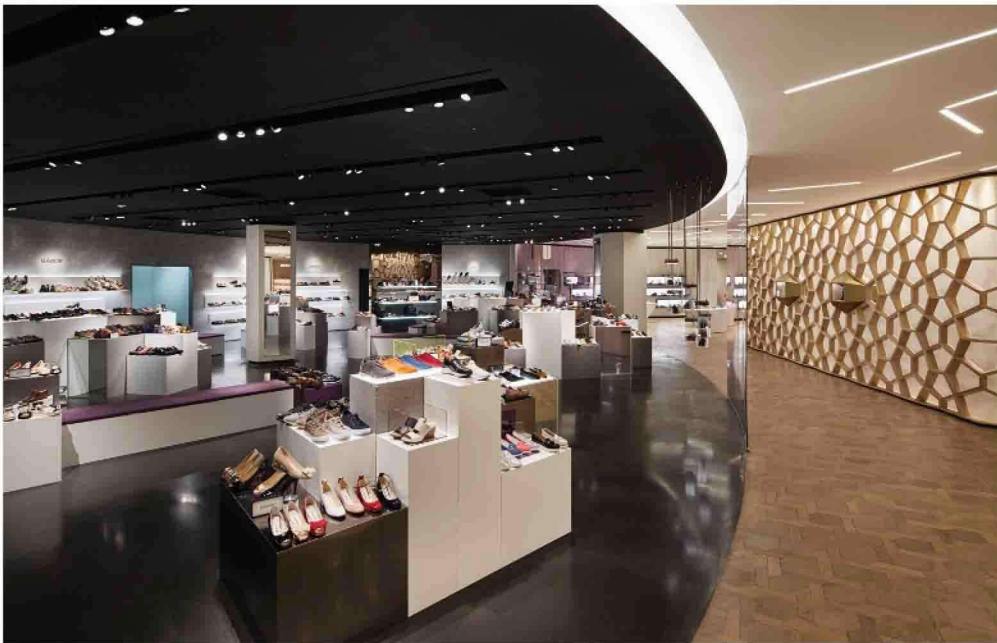
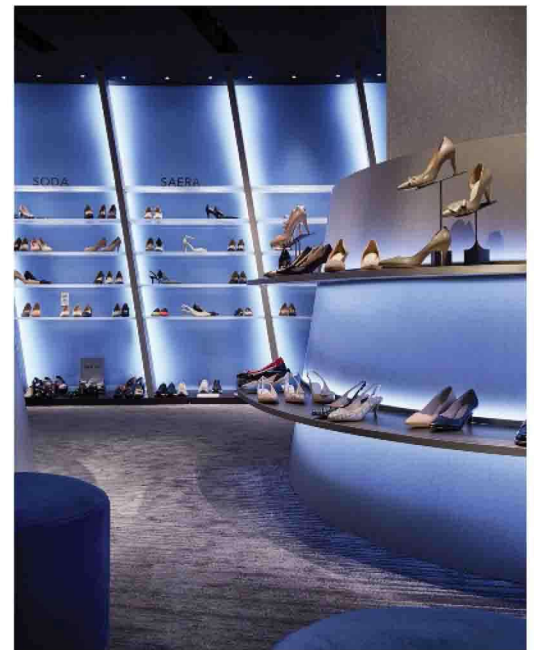
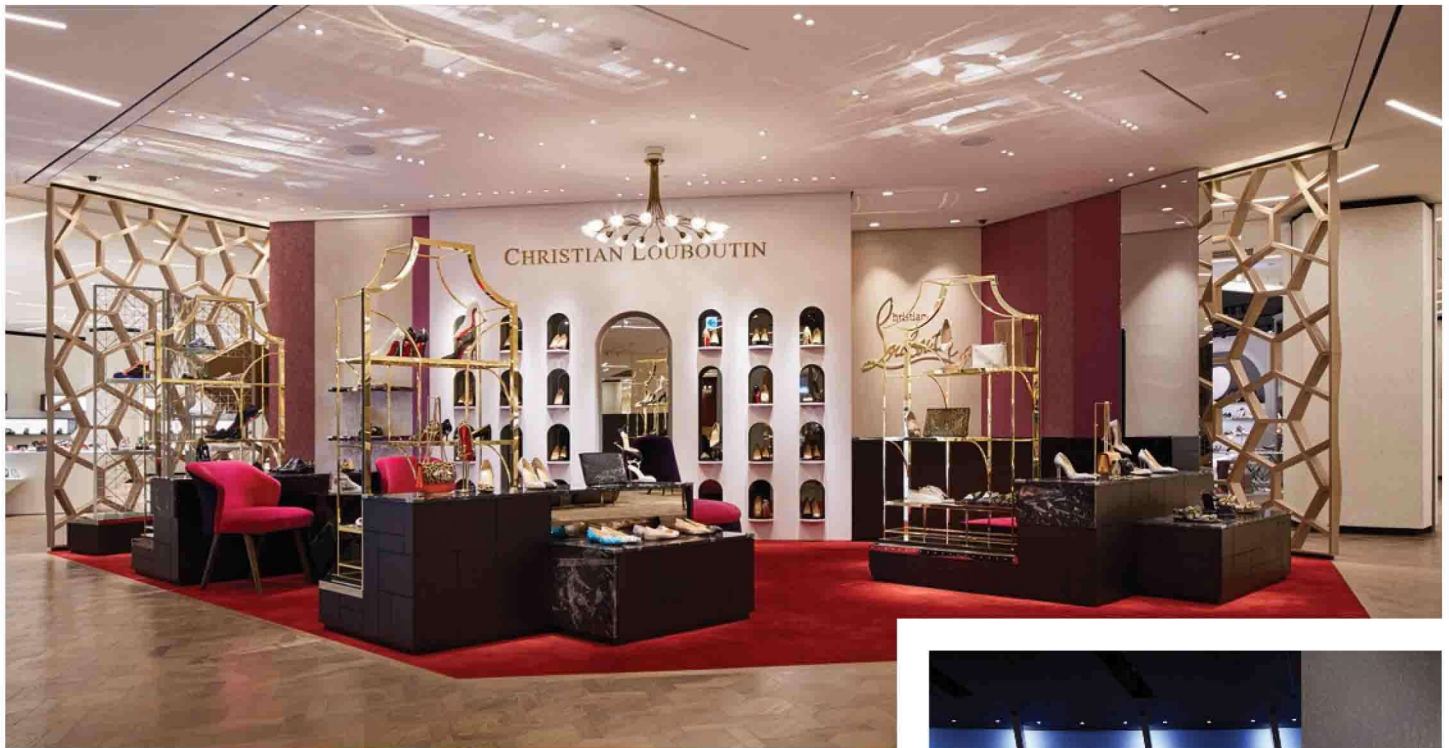
MACASA & PARTNERS, TOKYO

**IN CELEBRATION OF THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY** of Shinsegae's Gangnam store in Seoul, South Korea, the upscale department store partnered with New York-based retail design firm Jeffrey Hutchison & Associates to redesign the store's shoe salon.

Envisioning a central women's area that would be recognized as the "new world of shoes," the footwear

department was created to unify multiple shoe areas positioned throughout the location. The design solution helped expand the department by 20,000 square feet, while seamlessly accommodating more than 140 different shoe brands.

With all of these elements in mind, the design team created the "hive" as a reference to a community



**ABOVE LEFT** Each room displays its own individual look, complementary of one another, thereby helping customers navigate the comprehensive product selection.

**TOP** Constructed with bronze fixtures, light taupe wooden screens and a Cerused oak, hexagon-patterned Versailles floor, the hub presents high-end footwear alongside relaxing seating.

**ABOVE RIGHT** Five distinct spaces, named "The Lab," "The Gallery," "The Closet," "The Living Room" and "The Galaxy," all meet in the central area of the "hive."

#### PROJECT SUPPLIERS

RETAILER  
Shinsegae, Seoul,  
South Korea

DESIGN  
Jeffrey Hutchison &  
Associates, New York

LIGHTING  
Schwinghammer  
Lighting, New York

gathering. "We wanted a central space on the floor, a hub evoking a sense of community," explained Jeffrey Hutchison, owner, Jeffrey Hutchison & Associates.

The hive concept is brought into focus through five main rooms that revolve around a central space – each with a correlating product focus that speaks to a specific customer. The biggest challenge facing the design team was the location of the department, positioned at a dead end within an expanded area of the existing store. Although an escalator was installed within the space, overcoming the perception that the department was a singular destination, rather than an integrated part of the shopping experience, was a hurdle.

The salon is defined by curvilinear shapes and



forms, which are particularly evident in the fixtures and in the reflected ceiling plan. "It was important to create a variety of experiences and spaces to allow for continued attraction and reasons to explore," says Hutchison, explaining that the use of curved forms for each room add contrast between the hive and other areas, while still supporting a coalescent motif. "[The design] provided a cohesive element while letting each space take on different characteristics."

Pentagonal, honeycomb-like screen dividers, reflective of a beehive's geometry, are positioned at the edges of the center space, serving as a common thread that holds the five vocabularies of the individual rooms together. Each room has its own material palette, thereby enhancing and defining the nuances of each product offering.

The innovative design concept has clearly created a buzz in what is now the largest department store in Seoul, South Korea. ▴



**ABOVE LEFT** Screen walls constructed similar to the geometry of a beehive, thematic throughout the space, form the edges of the center luxury shop.

**ABOVE** The conceptual remodel expanded the shoe department by 20,000 square feet while integrating more than 140 different brands into the space.