

RETAIL

# ACNE STUDIOS goes for gold in its largest store to date



Courtesy of Acne Studios



By juxtaposing asphalt with gold detailing, Acne Studios elevates the status of the crude substance in its New York City flagship.

**NEW YORK CITY** — At first glance, the only thing that seems to be different about Acne Studios' New York City flagship is the predominant colour. Whereas recent boutiques embraced the austerity of steel, creative director Jonny Johansson went for gold in the largest store to date, which signals another step in the brand's US expansion. A simple switcheroo of questionable noteworthiness, perhaps, but the fashion house has an undeniable way with materials that feels ahead of the retail curve, regardless of how quickly its aesthetic evolves.


Another take reveals more at play than just the Midas touch — the result of electrostatically gilded aluminium walls and fittings — as gold features are offset by asphalt, a by-product of the oil industry that was spotted in sculptural objects by Quintus Kropholler during Milan Design Week 2014 (*Frame* 99, p. 141). Here, however, it's been transformed into an interior surface that covers the floor and structural columns. While its juxtaposition with gold lifts the crude substance to a level befitting the brand, the asphalt is punctuated by a smattering of semiprecious stones to write the highbrow message home.

It's really the *mix* of materials that sets Acne stores apart, a hunch that Johansson corroborates: 'What interests me most is how you *combine* materials more than the materials themselves. I always look at the space first and where it's located before considering which ones to use.' The inclusion of gold, for instance, will be exclusive to the Madison Avenue flagship, which Johansson says 'elevates it into something spectacular that fits the location'.

Johansson remains mum when probed about the direction and locations of future outlets — unsurprising, given that Acne Studios obviously wants to *remain* ahead of the curve — but perhaps a new material trend at this year's Milan will crop up in a 2019 store. Keep your eyes peeled. — TI

acnestudios.com





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## Maxposé

London-based designer Max Lamb developed bronze pieces for the Madison Avenue store, as well as custom rugs that appear like incremental oases throughout the gallery-like space, softening an otherwise rather brutal material palette.

When asked whether the long-term collaboration with Lamb will continue, Acne creative director Jonny Johansson is deliberately aloof: ‘I enjoy working with creative people that inspire me, and I really like Max’s furniture designs. But the most important thing is what works for the specific space and location. We’re working on stores to come but won’t reveal anything yet.’

[maxlamb.org](http://maxlamb.org)