



RETAIL

## 04 — Shopping malls aim for NEW TARGETS

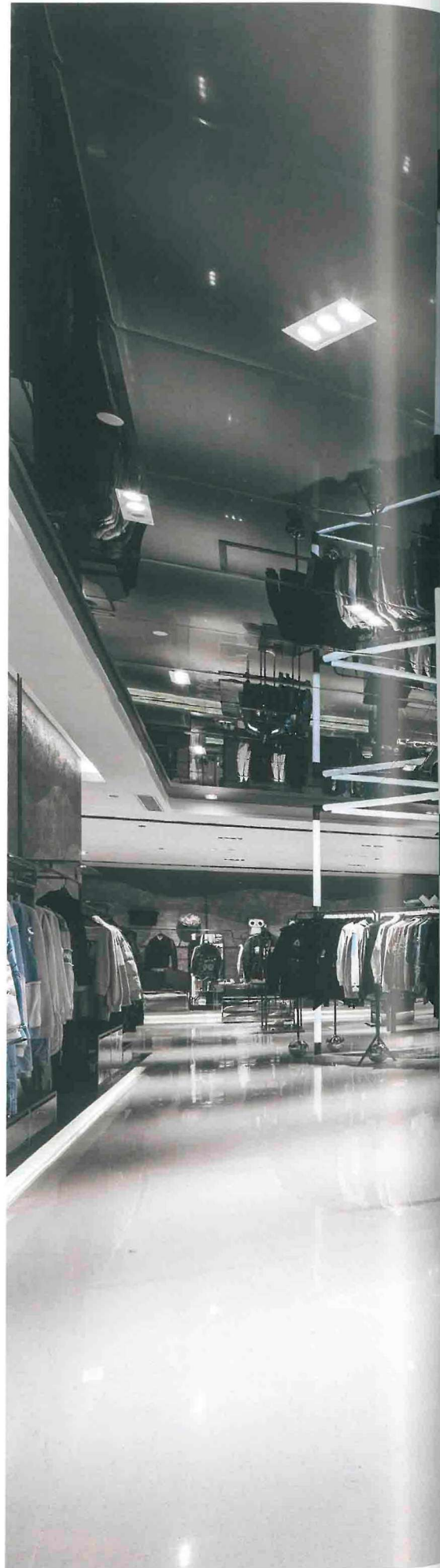
Benoy's interventions into Hangzhou Tower 501 Plaza are designed with a younger crowd in mind.

**HANGZHOU** — If the movie *Mallrats* taught us anything, it's that today's youth aren't typically a shopping mall's most desirable clientele. The mind behind Hangzhou Tower 501 Plaza in China, however, wanted to appeal to the younger office workers and families inhabiting the city's new commercial district. Okay, so perhaps these demographics are a little different to the *Mallrats* crew, but design studio Benoy knew that a stuffy retail setting wouldn't cut it.

Ping Zhu, Benoy Shanghai's associate director, says the concept is based on a jewellery box. The premise may sound familiar if you've seen OMA's Repossi store (*Frame* 113, p. 98) or Brunoir and Java Architecture's showroom for Nuun. But while Nuun and Repossi sell only the treasures you'd expect to find in such a container, Hangzhou Tower 501 Plaza's offerings run the department-store gamut.

Benoy's theme is felt most strongly in the fashion area — where clothing is housed in abstract light boxes — and in glitzy glasses displays finished with mirrored stainless steel. 'Glasses help people to see more clearly,' says Zhu. 'There's an element of drama there, so we chose a material that would help us capture that.' These and more of Benoy's boxes — which play with different materials and scales — are scattered across the floor plan. Serving as design-driven interventions that create pockets of interest, they also visually connect the shopping-mall sprawl. — TI

benoy.com



Courtesy of Benoy

