



RETAIL

19 — CONTRAST breaks shopping-mall monotony

Popping out from its samey surroundings, X Architekten's ice-cream parlour offers punters a mix of dazzle and delicacy.

LINZ — How to stand out in a crowd of 200 competitors? It was the challenge faced by X Architekten, an Austrian outfit commissioned by progressive ice-cream makers Eisdieler to design a store in Plus City, a large shopping centre in Linz. In this case, the answer was straightforward: build on the client's heritage. 'The autonomy of appearance and taste is the unique selling point of Eisdieler,' says X Architekten's Daniel Birgmann. 'Ever since the first Eisdieler shop opened in the historic centre of Linz, our client's entire corporate design has been black and white — from napkin to interior. We wanted to retain and intensify this element.'

Handed a pint-size 25-m² space, the architects covered floor, walls, ceiling and everything else in a distinctive black-and-white

motif reminiscent of the dazzle painting used to camouflage warships. The result — which helps the shop to pop out of monotony in the expansive mall — is a deliberate confusion between two- and three-dimensionality. Rather than merely catching attention, the bold *Gesamtkunstwerk* directs visitors' eyes to what matters: ice cream. At the counter, a palette of peachy yellows, pale pinks and strawberry reds stars as tempting dollops of colour that double as a point of orientation. Even the bright and unforgiving shopping-mall lighting becomes an accomplice, further emphasizing the chromatic contrast. When asked if a similar concept can work in a bigger space, Birgmann laughs: 'Let yourself be surprised.' — IA

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