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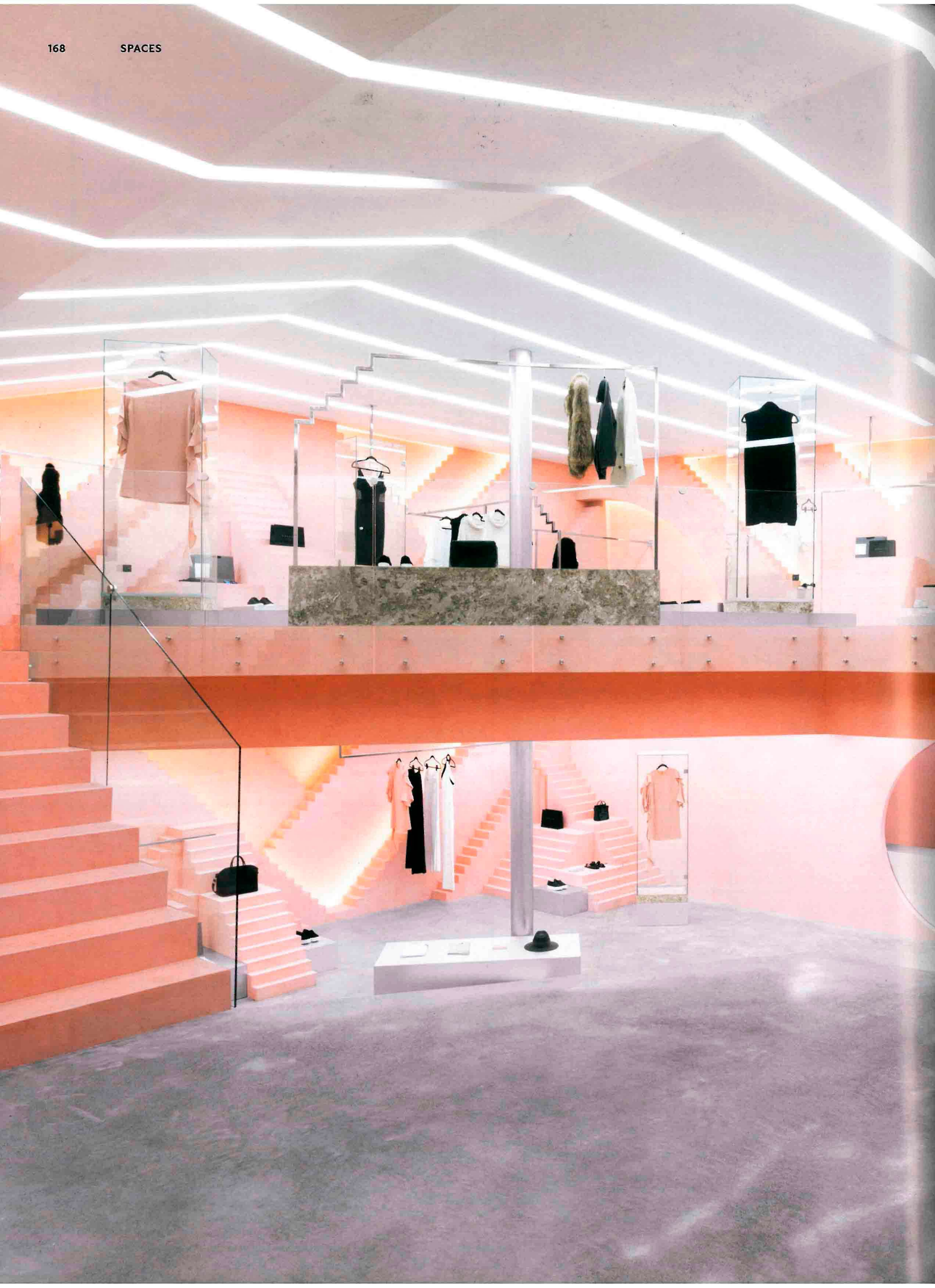
18 — The past GETS AN UPDATE

Anagrama channels architectural greats into a Mexican fashion boutique.



Infigo Rizo-Patron C.







MONTERREY – Founded in 2013 by a pair of graphic designers, Novelty Apparel sells accessories and clothing bearing the labels of various high-end international brands. Local outfit Anagrama is responsible for the interior of the store's first – and so far only – location. It's in San Pedro Garza García, a suburb of Monterrey, Mexico.

Inspired by the colourful works of noteworthy architects – Spain's Ricardo Bofill and the late Luis Barragán from Mexico – the boutique takes mimicry to the next step, making the old and familiar feel suddenly new again. Graphic references to Bofill's iconic La Muralla Roja residence – which was built in 1973 in Calp, Spain – can be spotted throughout the shop's two-storey interior, where a layered backdrop of crisscrossing staircases sets the scene. The effect recalls that of an ancient fortress or a surreal rocky landscape. A system of steps and landings provides endless opportunities for staging displays. Rectangular glass cases rising from marble plinths showcase individual garments as if they were precious relics or works of art. Meanwhile, geometric motifs and contrasting materials – concrete, glass, stainless steel and the aforementioned marble – add extra layers of texture to the otherwise minimal, modernist interior.

'The idea was to create a multisensory experience using colour and texture,' says lead architect Roberto Treviño. The result is a playful and contemporary retail space that's as functional as it is varied. 'It's a complex design,' he says. 'Visitors will discover something new around every corner.' Besides dishing up fashion, the boutique also serves beverages, encouraging clients to linger for a while. 'The stairs were also intended to be used as seats, where shoppers can take a moment to relax.'

When it got to strategizing the store's expansion and redesign, Anagrama opted for a complete makeover. 'We wanted to reinvent ourselves and make something totally different,' he says. 'With the exception of the pale pink tones, everything is new.' The colour pink was adapted from Novelty's existing branding and packaging design, which Anagrama developed in 2013. Getting the right shade of pink was not easy, says Treviño. 'We made more than 20 samples before applying the cement-plaster mix to the walls,' he says. After a few trial runs, they finally achieved the pink punch they had in mind. – MEO

anagrama.com