



Marco Beck Peccoz, courtesy of La Rinascente

## 2011-2017

### LA RINASCENTE DEPARTMENT STORE

Van Duysen is not a newbie to the retail sector. After designing a shop for fashion house Natan in Brussels in the 1990s, he was commissioned to do interiors for Sportmax (Milan), Alexander Wang (London), Aēsop (Hamburg) and Calvin Klein Jeans (Hong Kong). The work he's done for department stores represents the quintessence of his career. 'Ilse Crawford, now a very good friend, introduced me to Vittorio Radice, formerly associated with Selfridges,' he says. 'I designed the men's shoe department for Selfridges' Oxford Street location.' His

contact with Radice didn't stop there. When the influential retailer became CEO of La Rinascente, he asked Van Duysen to design interiors for stores in Milan and Padova (2007-2009). Radice's next request – for the iconic La Rinascente flagship store in Rome – elevated operations to the next level. 'The project went beyond a single store. This was a renowned *Italian* department store, and I was responsible not only for the façades but also for the most important public areas, including the atrium.' Inspired and slightly intimidated by the store's monumentally

designed halls and escalators, Van Duysen got down to business. 'As a prime example of crisscrossing the space with escalators, I thought of Le Bon Marché in Paris, designed by Andrée Putman. I wanted to come up something just as imposing that would bear my own "rational" signature while befitting Rome and its history.' He achieved his goal with references to Italian architecture, from Bramante's Cloister to modernist buildings of the 1920s and '30s, as well as with the use of materials: a combination of warm travertine and dark-bronze panelling.

Vittorio Radice plays a major role in Van Duysen's career. Following commissions for Selfridges, Radice asked the architect to design the façades and atrium of Rome's iconic La Rinascente flagship store.