

Fashion + Architecture

Introduction by Martin Pawley
Compiled by Helen Castle

Architecture has become a powerful tool in the fashion business. Perfectly poised and detailed shopping environments help to launch and build the corporate identities of the most conspicuous and prevalent fashion houses worldwide. As clothes designers diversify into all sorts of product ranges from homeware to sports gear, and expand into the virtual world of e-commerce, the architectural image of built shops is becoming all the more apparent and all-pervasive.

Featuring interviews with high-profile architects Rem Koolhaas, Jan Kaplicky of Future Systems and David Chipperfield, and covering, among others, Comme des Garçons, Dolce & Gabbana, Issey Miyake, Prada and Yves Saint Laurent stores, this issue takes a close look at the relationship between fashion and architecture. It examines issues such as what role architecture plays in the formulation of fashion houses' identities, whether the line between fashion and architecture has become blurred, and if virtual shopping environments are intensifying the need to experience architectural space in the high street. Probing and far-reaching in its editorial content, *Fashion and Architecture* is the most comprehensive and high-quality visual record of current fashion retail.

Architects

David Chipperfield Architects

Din Associates

Future Systems

Mark Guard Architects

Gluckman Mayner Architects

Janson Goldstein

Gabellini Associates

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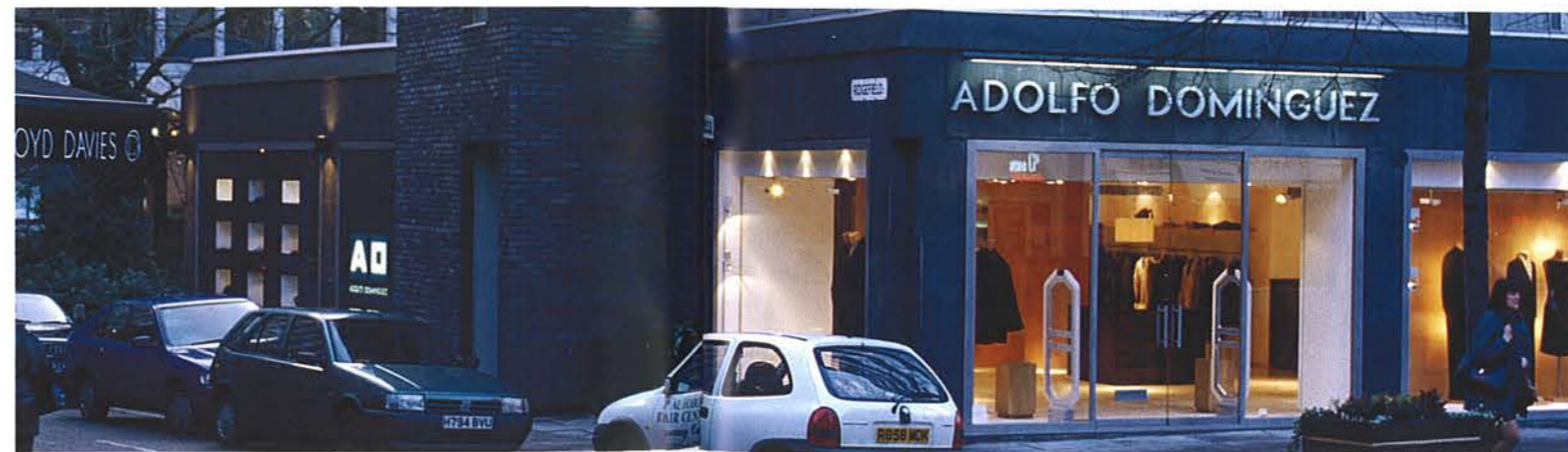


Adolfo Dominguez Manchester

Juan Salgado's design for a Spanish fashion designer's store in Manchester has an indisputably European feel. It was his use of the store's particular local context and site, however, that helped him to communicate this continental brand effectively to Mancunians.

The main aim of this project was to give the Spanish fashion designer Adolfo Dominguez a presence in Manchester. The third outlet in Britain, it is the first shop outside London. Though Juan Salgado, a young architect from the same town in Galicia as Dominguez, had been involved in the Regent Street store, the Manchester one was his first major retail design. Adolfo Dominguez is a small brand here although it is well known in Spain and Salgado seized the opportunity to give the logo optimum impact by transforming it into an architectural symbol. The shop is in many ways a testament to the architect's ingenuity. Salgado made the existing retail space, located on the ground floor of a seemingly uninspiring 1970s office block, work not only for him, but also for its site, squeezed between a square at the rear and the entrance on John Dalton Street. As a foreigner, he took the opportunity to look at the city with fresh eyes, choosing to optimise Manchester's warm blue light and long hours of winter darkness in his design.

Previously a computer-software shop with retail space on John Dalton Street and offices at the back, the Adolfo Dominguez shop was designed so that it penetrated the whole shell. This had obvious benefits for the interior space, but also for the exterior. A continuous facade was wrapped around the corner of the building. Three shopfronts were placed near the entrance and a central shopfront on the rear elevation. This gave the volume as a whole far greater transparency – an important quality in such a grey,



Right
The front of the Adolfo Dominguez on John Dalton Street, Manchester. Three shop windows are grouped around the door.

Above
The rear of the store, which backs on to a small square, with a central shop window and logos to either side.



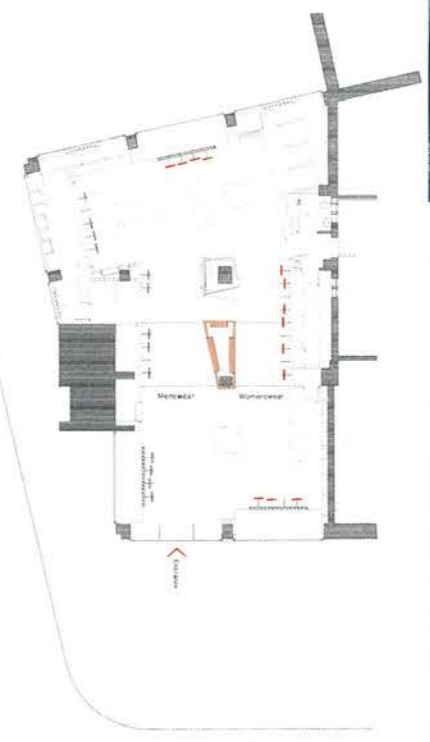
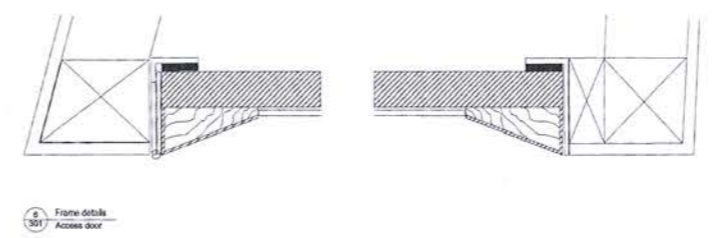
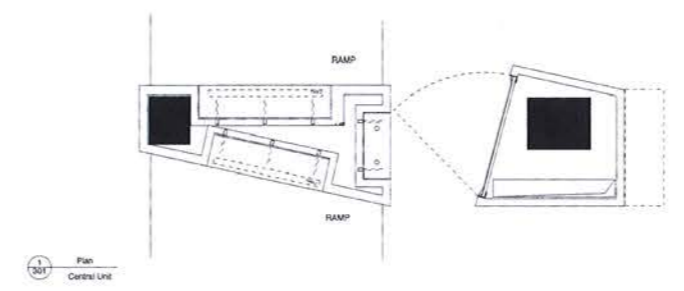
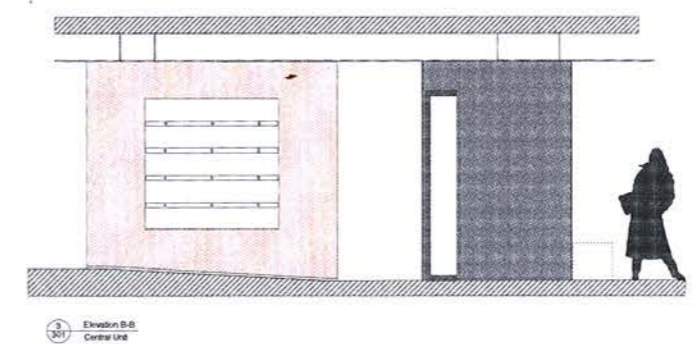
monolithic structure. It was, however, the frequent use by office workers and shoppers of the urban square at the back of the shop as a pedestrian thoroughfare that allowed Salgado to redistribute the shop's point of focus, generally reserved for the front elevation, to the side and the rear. At the back, a glazed block protrudes out flush with the facade. It is divided into three equal sections, with a central shop window, and the left and right sections have black backing and light boxes built into the wall, illuminating Adolfo Dominguez's logos. These emphasise the monolithic stone cladding and bring the shop to life after daylight hours. This is particularly effective in the winter months, when people cross the square on their way to work in the dark and return home after dark.

The side wall elevation also creates an important focal point, as an axis between the front and the rear of the store. Designed as a chequerboard of cubes for displaying accessories, it mirrors the niches that are a standard shopfitting behind the counter in Dominguez's other shops. This not only sets up a relationship with the vocabulary of existing shops, but also makes a connection with the display of products in the interior.

Inside, two existing structural elements necessitate a lengthways division of space; a division that is underlined by the separation of the shop floor into menswear and womenswear areas. By wrapping the elements around the structural columns, Salgado effectively integrates them into the architecture of the new store. The first element is used to open up the view of the store and stretches the length of the ramp, which Salgado introduced to replace some steps in the old shop. The other element is used as a display unit for accessories. These two volumes thus become an efficient architectural solution for easing the split between the two floor areas and for creating showcases.

Opened in November 1998, the Manchester Adolfo Dominguez store was produced in a four-month design and construction period. This left the architect very little time in which to manoeuvre, since he had a 12-week construction contract. Salgado wryly observes that the slowness of architecture and its construction runs contrary to the contemporary condition of the fashion world. What is apparent, however, is that in spite of the race for completion Salgado was cannily able to establish a foreign brand image through a number of small architectural interventions, which also drew heavily on their local context. ▢

This article is based on an interview with Juan Salgado.



Above
Rear and side of store.

Right
Floor plan of store.

Far right
On the side can be seen the chequerboard of cubes, which mirrors the niches that are a standard fitting in Adolfo Dominguez stores.

Opposite top
View of interior from back of store showing the two new elements that Salgado created out of the structural columns.

Opposite bottom
Plan of central unit or element.