

# vmsd

VISUAL MERCHANDISING + STORE DESIGN



# SEALED WITH A KISS

Hershey's launches a  
reimagined 'Chocolate World'  
experience in Times Square



# DESIGN DETAIL

By Georgia Mizen, Contributing Writer



DREW STONE, NEW YORK

## Solestice

NEW YORK

**Concept:** Heavily inspired by the likes of “2001: A Space Odyssey,” this shoe store in East Harlem has elevated its previous incarnation with an out-of-this-world makeover.

### 1 OPEN SPACE

*Solestice’s redesign had to align with its brand philosophy and speak to its clientele – a community of urban twentysomethings and sneaker collectors. Modeled after a spaceship, the reimaged store welcomes shoppers with its openness and glow. “The goal was to lift the image of brand and space, to give it a downtown feel,” says Christian Lahoude, Founder and Creative Director of New York based Christian Lahoude Studio*

## **2 UNDER THE ARCH**

*A golden arch marks the store's focal point, flanked by shelving and a gold-framed mirror. To continue the clean line, the arch features a hanging rack for graphic tees. "Very Instagrammable," says Lahoude. Throughout the space, the tunnel effect is reinforced by a series of white floating arches with integrated LEDs.*

## **3 TO INFINITY AND BEYOND**

*Above the cashwrap, a distorted mirror draws the eye. Perfectly placed to create drama and unique reflections, the mirror amplifies the natural light in this relatively compact store. "It gives depth to the space and produces [an] infinity effect," explains Lahoude.*

## **4 HANGING OUT**

*The vision for the space is to designate it as a "return-to hangout" spot. Plant life brings a natural element for a warmer welcome, while freestanding product displays allow potential for a flexible layout. A weekend DJ seals the deal.*

## **5 CONTEMPORARY COLORS**

*An all-white backdrop is flecked with gold accents in benches and product displays, as well as a touch of greenery. "We had to make a big impact with a low budget," Lahoude says. This color scheme delivers a high-end aesthetic – one that encouraged key client Nike to upgrade the store's account.*

## **PROJECT SUPPLIERS**

### **RETAILER**

Solestice, New York

### **DESIGN**

Christian Lahoude Studio, New York MILLWORK,

### **FIXTURES, LIGHTING, CASHWRAP**

Artisan Fabricators, New York

### **FLOORING, WALLCOVERINGS, LIGHTING**

DS Group Construction New York

### **ARCHITECT OF RECORD**

John Senisi,

### **GENERAL CONTRACTOR**

DS Group Construction, New York



STEFAN IRVINE, HONG KONG

## REFRESHING A LEGACY

When luxury brand Sulwhasoo, a Seoul, South Korea-based skincare retailer with a 50-year heritage, decided to open a store in Guangzhou, China, maintaining its classic aesthetic and projecting its use of historic Korean skincare ingredient ginseng was important, but so was meeting its clientele in a modern, educational environment.

Tying together heritage and a forward-thinking retail strategy was the greatest challenge, says Christian Lahoude, Founder and Creative Director, Christian Lahoude (New York).

“Beauty is unique in that, at a time when people default to e-commerce for much of their shopping needs, they still enjoy the experience of testing cosmetics, skincare and perfume in search of the perfect product,” explains Lahoude. “That said, technology is always a major factor in regards to reaching new and existing clients.”



To unify the two worlds, designers used digital screens that are visible to mall-going passersby to convey the brand's philosophy of cultivating raw ingredients for its high-end products, while projecting an updated store design that features ceiling-suspended glass ginseng blossoms and contemporary dark slate materials with gold accents, emphasizing consultation and trial.

