

Luxury Retail Academy

“Moulding Talent”

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- Kenny Kinugasa-Tsui, co-founder of Bean Buro

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- Lorène Faure, co-founder of Bean Buro

The Brief:

Bean Buro was appointed by one of the world's leading luxury goods groups to design a retail academy in Hong Kong. Our client is globally represented through numerous franchises and boutiques through various businesses such as jewellery, watches, leather, and accessories.

The Narrative:

Recognising our client's pursuit to discover 'raw talents to be developed', we translated raw materiality into refined, curated pieces through the invigorating training environment.

Our concept was to create an agile and comfortable environment for learning about the retail trade. We believe users would be more encouraged to interact in the training environment if they feel relaxed. It was about creating a delicate balance between calmness and stimulation without extraneous forms, colours or textures.

The Process and the Solution:

Our architectural approach to this brief and addressing its functional requirements respond to the unique journey of raw talents coming through the retail academy.

Upon entering the hospitality-inspired academy, visitors are greeted with a homey reception with sofas facing each other with bookshelf and a screen displaying the works by the group's brands. Inside, the spaces are generous and open to encourage casual collaborations and discussions.

The types of training spaces vary within the retail academy. Larger training rooms can be partitioned into smaller interconnected training rooms through the operable walls or further opened to create an event space to fit up to 150 users. We also created two typical training rooms and a theatre space with stepped platforms and comfortable cushions facing a smart board for a casual and stimulating learning environment. Additionally, we have included small offices for managers and staff of the academy.

The Materials:

A vital factor of the mood and feel for this project was to elegantly strike a delicate balance of a soothing natural architectural setting while at the same time injecting just the right amount of colour to create an encouraging learning environment.

A muted red is used throughout the space, from the stained timber—contained by a datum line—in the reception to the acoustic wall panels in the theatre. We also designed a bespoke rug with pops of colour for the reception, allowing visitors to feel invigorated from their arrival. Luxurious accents are also included in the bespoke joinery, such as the metallic gold finish of the entrance, bookshelf, and pantry, to respond to the context of our client's businesses.

Well-being and Lighting:

As natural daylight allows users to feel relaxed, we orientated the spatial experience around the view so that visitors can enjoy a beautiful view of the city. We ensured employees of the academy would also be able to enjoy the benefits of daylight by creating small offices surrounded by glass.

To keep the project environmentally friendly, we included minimal built-in elements. We considered the longer life cycles of the furniture, utilising a lot of flexible, loose furniture that our client can reuse in the future for a different space and setting. For example, the bespoke bar table in the event space can be moved around to create other arrangements. Additionally, the carpet used in the theatre is also made of recycled fishnets.

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Main Contractor: Winsmart Contracting Co. Ltd

Location: Tsim Sha Tsui, Hong Kong