

## Delvaux presents “Le 27” in Brussels, much more than a boutique

*Vudafieri-Saverino Partners has transformed a historic nineteenth-century dwelling into a space halfway between a concept store and an art gallery, in the name of eclecticism and fusion: a revolution in the language of luxury retail*

**Delvaux**, the oldest luxury leather goods house in the world, founded in Belgium in 1829, has inaugurated a new store in the heart of Brussels: "**Le 27**".

Housed in a majestic villa on *Boulevard de Waterloo*, a high-end luxury shopping area, "Le 27" is much more than a boutique: it is a unique environment, combining the *savoir-faire* of the Delvaux collections with the beauty of the greatest items of Belgian design, paintings and ceramics, giving life to an art gallery in continuous evolution.

The project is signed by Italian studio **Vudafieri-Saverino Partners**, which since 2012 has been responsible for the design of **Delvaux** stores worldwide (more than 40 of them, including boutiques in Paris, London, Toronto, Antwerp, Shanghai, Beijing, Tokyo, Dubai ...), creating boutiques that are always different and unique of their kind, able to recount the brand with a refined narrative ability that is appropriate to the particular qualities of each city.

A philosophy that now reaches its culmination with "**Le 27**", whose design is based on a completely new, made-to-measure concept: **Tiziano Vudafieri** and **Claudio Saverino** assign a key role to Belgian historical memory, while still supporting the desire to make way for contemporary trends.

"**Le 27**" is also a place where **Delvaux's** philosophy and heritage finds its ultimate expression, a store in which to make a journey of discovery of its values and its historical, artistic and cultural heritage.

An entrance arcade welcomes visitors into what was once an imposing private villa. Set out on two floors, the store has retained its original structure, with the walls enriched with nineteenth-century mouldings, mirrors, medallions and frescoes that once decorated the reception rooms.

Four-metre-high ceilings give a broader scope and brightness to an environment where materials such as marble, wood and wrought iron stand out. The grand staircase at the entrance leads to the spacious upper floor which is immersed in surreal light projected through the windows of the Art Deco skylight.

**Vudafieri-Saverino Partners** has preserved these historic spaces, reinterpreting the interiors in an avant-garde language, rich in learned and refined references. The rooms present as a contemporary interpretation and celebration of the early period of modern design that was so important in the Belgian culture of the twentieth century.

Through a refined interaction of modular elements that combine geometric rigour and *trompe-l'oeil* supports, the display fittings organise, rationalise and embellish the presentation of bags and accessories.

The wall displays are conceived as abstract paintings whose design is a clear tribute to *Mondrian's De Stijl* artistic movement. Their geometric and classical form is balanced by vertical light-grey coloured bands, which interrupt the symmetry.

These in their turn combine with the pure, refined lines of shelves and consoles: designed as a combination of minimal asymmetrical shapes, they are enriched by the use of precious materials commonly used in furniture design during the *art-deco* period, such as marble or polished nickel. Both feature meticulously crafted details, a reminder of the masters of modern design, but also of Delvaux's unique know-how and punctilious attention to detail.

The combination of the apparently "simple" material of the Mondrian-style wall displays, the richly baroque finish of the wardrobes and the off-centre strips, disrespectful of classic spaces, creates a balanced coexistence between classic and modern, order and disorder, rule and exception.

A contrast that reflects the Delvaux attitude that presents rigorously classic forms, dialectically combined with extremely modern, chic, slightly playful additions.

The furnishings are enriched by emblematic Belgian design pieces created by the greatest designers of the twentieth century: *Jules Wabbes, Pieter de Bruyne, Renaat Braem, Emiel Verannema*

They are always works signed in limited editions, unique and rare, worthy of a museum collection, which come from the most prestigious retailers of furniture, from important museums, or even directly from designer collections.

There is also room for pieces by contemporary Belgian designers (*Nathalie Dewez, Alain Berteau* and *Ben Storms*) and international designers, such as the Italian *Gino Sarfatti*: master of lighting design. The globular shapes recall those of the Atomium, Belgium's iconic pavilion at the 1958 World Fair in Brussels.

Not just design. We are taken to the first floor by a collection of pictures: what appears to be a collection of ancient paintings turns out to be a series of photographs, archival pigment prints by the Argentine artist *Romina Ressia* in which her post-neo-Flemish portraits are combined with daily artifacts and kitsch. Yet another brilliant twist and playful illusion.

A collection of twentieth-century Belgian pottery appears here and there on a wall, stacked high, embodying the fantastic, endless creative momentum of Belgian artists. *Le 27* ingeniously brings together a number of pieces, of exemplary striking form and deep pigments. In ceramics as in leather goods, colour is the crowning glory.

In "*Le 27*" the Maison's bags and accessories engage with historical pieces of design but also with works by Belgian designers and other great international masters, who turn the boutique into a museum. Their presence contributes to the idea of *Le 27* as an authentic meeting place, for dialogue and discovery, a gallery in constant evolution.

Open to visitors, ideal for wandering around with its historical, contemporary and eclectic furnishings destined to change as new pieces are acquired, *Le 27* is a deliberately original and decidedly unique environment.

So unique that it will never be reproduced anywhere in the world.

Square metres: 270

Company used for the furnishings: Barth

Lights: Studio Amort | Emotional Lighting Design

Furnishings:

Displays, sofas, bookcases designed by Vudafieri Saverino Partners