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Smythson shop

為奢華零售空間注入情味

不少人對英國設計的印象還停留在經典復古的風格，然而英國建築及設計公司 Waldo Works 卻推翻了這個觀念，且看他們如何以現代手法解讀英式傳統，設計出玩味十足的商業空間。

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Waldo Works 參與過各類型和規模的項目，其設計團隊的能力無毋容置疑。在創辦人 Tom Bartlett 和兩位合伙人 Sasha von Meister 及 Andrew Treverton 的細意經營下，公司已躍升為一家世界知名的工作室，作品遍佈各地。

新舊共融

這家英國公司從事的设计業務十分多元化，包括跨國零售商舖、私人住宅、餐廳和酒吧。從經典尊貴的 Garrard 珠寶，到前衛另類的時裝品牌 PPQ，無一不對 Waldo Works 青睞有加。不過，無論合作對象是誰，工作室也會提供稱心的設計和項目管理服務，而設計商業空間時，他們會著力把客戶的品牌核心價值轉化為設計元素，把品牌的要素變為引人入勝的設計概念和靈動的空間。



Waldo Works

Waldo Works 的设计團隊表示：「我們會創作出有趣的設計構思和生機勃勃的空間。當為某品牌創作，我們會全面地發掘其品牌價值；當為私人客戶服務，我們則會以設計展現他們的生活方式。一個地方的過去和現在是緊緊相扣的，所以我們的設計與項目的選址、建築物、原址用途及建築用料也息息相關。」

能夠取得今日的成功，有賴公司在尊重過去和迎接未來之間取得平衡，設計出令人驚喜的作品，每一個細節都具備功能性，同時饒富美感。「我們的靈感來自建築物、品牌和個人的歷史。我們會審視建築物以往的用途，或者思索有沒有什麼原有的物料可以應用於新設計中，從而細訴新舊元素之間的故事。」

以設計點出顧客特質

新舊共融的手法貫穿他們的作品，兩個位於倫敦、備受注目的新作當然也不例外。最近，他們分別為 Selfridges 和英國流行品牌 Smythson 設計個人購物區和旗艦店。前者是一個 VIP 專用的購物區，陳列的貨品貴精不貴多，而 Waldo Works 的任務就是要為這空間注入個性和靈魂。

Waldo Works 團隊指出：「Selfridges 的創意總監 Alannah Weston 清晰地指出購物區的常客是企業高層、影視明星和皇妃公主，她們的共通點是逛一次街就便能添置整季的衣服。店舖的設計靈感正來自 Selfridges 這些外表神采飛揚、個性獨立硬朗的女顧客。我們忠於 Selfridges 的歷史與品牌價值，在中央位置打造一個會員專區，而周邊的房間則各以一位二十世紀出色女性的畫像為題，點出不同的個性。」

設計與品牌的互動

抓緊事物的特質是 Waldo Works 的強項，亦是他們成功的要素。他們懂得因時制宜，針對不同項目而作出轉變，不會局限於特定的風格和主題，並視每個項目為一次協作的過程，以與客戶保持良好關係為榮，而 Smythson 旗艦店項目就是良好合作的最佳例子。典型英國品牌 Smythson 自 1887 年起，一直向皇室成員和社會名流售賣紙製品和日記。適逢 125 週年紀念，品牌決定翻新旗艦店，Waldo Works 設計團隊正是最佳之選。

「Smythson 重視傳統之餘，同又與時並進，所以我們保留古老建築的神髓，另一方面為它注入現代元素，例如一盞以乳白玻璃和白漆製成、工藝巧奪天工的天花吊燈，便使顧客甫踏進門便馬上聚焦至「圖書館」區域。」Waldo Works 說道。

設計團隊與 Smythson 的創意顧問 Samantha Cameron 等一眾董事一直合作無間，從而為這間 300 呎的商鋪注入全新概念，為這間黏專售日記、紙製品、皮具和精品的百貨公司增添生氣。此外，



Waldo Works 也保留了原有的新喬治皇朝時期特色，同時以室內陳設點出 Smythson 的悠久歷史。「我們以一些戰時遭破壞的倫敦大宅為靈感，又用幽默輕鬆的手法演繹英國風格。例如，灰色代表了倫敦那時常烏雲密布的天空和梅費爾區那些掩蓋了戰前污痕的黑色房子。」

發展前瞻

縱使社會發展日益電子化，網上購物大行其道，Waldo Works 憑著對客戶清晰深入的了解和對新舊元素的掌握，發展勢頭毫無受阻。他們相信電子化的趨勢不會長期持續，並總結：「人們再次渴求真實、面對面的體驗。在後數碼年代，現實的購物體驗不只關乎奢侈生活與商賈往來（雖然兩者極為重要），而是需要變得更有意思、更個人化。品牌應創造家居化空間，向顧客傳達資訊，同時表現對他們的尊重。」Waldo Works 深諳室內設計在商業世界扮演的角色，通過度身訂造的設計，令每一個作品都能傳達該品牌的神韻，同時體現了英國設計的充滿創意和活力的一面。



Selfridges department stores



Where's Waldo

Known equally for their modern take on British design and witty outlook, this is a closer look at the London-based architectural and design studio, Waldo Works.

Through the collective experience of founder Tom Bartlett, and partners Sasha von Meister and Andrew Treverton, the studio has grown to be an internationally renowned studio that has its hands in all sorts of projects around the globe.

With a portfolio that spans international retail, private residential, restaurants and bars, with clients such as Garrard, and cult brand PPQ, Waldo Works specialises in delivering a fully integrated design and project management service to their customers. For commercial projects, they focus on translating their client's brand values into design identities, with the studio able to translate brand identity into engaging design concepts and liveable environments.

"We create engaging design concepts and liveable environments. For brands, it's about an all-encompassing identity, and for private clients it's an expression of how they live," comments the Waldo Works team, adding, "Our designs are connected to the heritage of a place, the architecture, former use, or materiality,



but remain very much tied into the present."

This careful balance between respecting the old and introducing the new is part of what has made the firm so successful today, with many of their projects also featuring a whimsical sense of playfulness which ensures that everything functional is beautiful.

"We take inspiration from the heritage of the building, brand or person; perhaps looking towards the former use of a building, or materiality which we can then skew in proportion or application. It's an approach that references the old and the new and gives a narrative," say the partners behind the firm.

This approach is well illustrated in two of their latest high profile projects in London; the Personal Shopping area of retailer Selfridges, and the flagship store of one of Britain's most loved brands, Smythson. The Selfridges Personal Shopping area is a unique retail space for VIPs and, with no products featured in the area as such, Waldo Works had to create a character and soul for the space.

"Alannah Weston, creative director of the brand, gave us a very developed brief on who the Personal Shopping customer is - from princesses to pop stars and company heads who come in and buy their full wardrobe in one go," one of the team leaders points out, adding, "Our inspiration for redesign came directly from the Selfridges Woman: glamorous, headstrong, and individual. Taking this essence, we set about creating a kind of members-only club for the central space, whilst injecting individuality into the suites for which we were inspired by female icons of the Twentieth century, staying true to the heritage and brand value of Selfridges."

Staying true to things is something that Waldo Works has become quite masterful at and this is part and parcel of their success. The firm does not have a particular style or theme and they take more of a design slant to projects. They see each project as a collaboration and pride themselves on their relationships with clients. This is exemplified perfectly in the way they approached the newly revamped flagship of Smythson, a quintessential British brand that creates paper and diaries. The revamp of the store was timed with the 125th anniversary of Smythson of Bond Street, which was founded in 1887 and has catered to members of the Royal Family and celebrities. For this project, there could have been no firm more suitable than Waldo Works. "Smythson is still true to its heritage but has its feet firmly in the modern world. We needed to pay respect to the historic shell but inject it with modern elements such as the highly engineered suspended raft ceiling light made of milk glass and white lacquer, which draws the customer through the space from the entrance right to the Library," says one of the Waldo Work's heads.

The Waldo Works team worked closely with the company's board of directors, including Creative Consultant, Samantha Cameron, to give the ,300 feet store a new concept that encompassed all of the brand's components, from diary and paper, to leather goods, and their bespoke department. Now that is has finished, the store has actually become a kind of department store with mini-departments, but there are still many original neo-Georgian features and the team drew from the company's rich history for the interiors of the store.

"Our concept and design pays homage to the great London houses lost in the war whilst incorporating a humorous take on Britishness. The greyscale colouring for example represents a thick London sky and a nod towards the black houses of Mayfair, which disguised the dirt of pre-war London," say the team.

With their clear lucid understanding of how brands work and their sympathy and knowledgeable grasp of the old and new, Waldo Works will continue to thrive, even as the world becomes more digital and retail experiences, virtual. However, the folks at Waldo Works feel that this trend will not last forever.

"People are longing for real physical memories again. However, post digital, these experiences need to become more meaningful, more personal and not solely about luxury and commerce (although these are undeniably important). Brands need to create homes that both educate and respect their customers," they conclude. With unique interpretation of how commercial design communicate with people and and mastery in discovering values of brands, Waldo Works will continue to bring a vivid and contemporary vibe to Britishness. ✨

