



# The Glittering Maison

Women RTW

*Luxury retailing requires a prominent position, in a prestigious location and a perfectly-executed design.*

*The unveiling of the largest Louis Vuitton Maison in Hong Kong was a testament to these three “P’s”.*

Immediately following the unveiling of the renovated Maison on the Champs Elysees (Paris) and the brand new location at China World Trade Centre (Beijing), the opening at The Landmark Central demonstrates Louis Vuitton’s (LV) “strategic expansion in the luxury market.”

Landmark is one of Hong Kong’s most prestigious retail spaces and LV has had space there since 1982. LV is part of the LVMH Group of companies, which also owns other brands such as Dior, Celine, Loewe, that also have space in the building. According to Stuart Young, negotiations with building owner, Hongkong Land (HKL), revolved around space for all brands and he knew that the amount of space needed would be very difficult to find in Central, Hong Kong.

Around the same time HKL had plans for upgrading the Landmark and it was in conjunction with these activities that LV was able to negotiate their three-storey prime-corner position. One difficulty for HKL, for example, was relocating Tiffany & Co, the jewellery store that had long been the tenant of the Pedder Street, Des Voeux Road corner. However, once the floor plate was agreed upon, the rest of the negotiations went relatively smoothly, as HKL were keen to house the new flagship-type store.

### Cherry Hoarding

While construction was underway the store was already making waves. LV branded “trunk” hoarding had been used in other locations worldwide and was given a different take for the Hong Kong manifestation. It was printed with this season’s cerise (cherry-patterned) logo and announced to passers-by that something significant was taking place within.



Antique Trunk Display

Company	Scope of Work
<b>Contractors</b>	
East Joint	Main Contractor Interior
MBM	Façade Contractor
Keio Engineering	Electrical Installation
TJ Engineering Service	MVAC + Fire Services Contractor
Vertigo	LED Staircase
LSI	Music System
Rich Creation Int'l	Trunk Hoarding Installation
Chubb HK	Security, CCTV & Alarm System
ADT HK	Sensormatic
Megaprint HK	Hoarding Graphic Installation
PCCW	Telephone System



Louis Vuitton Exterior

The store is the second largest in Asia and follows the designs of many of the other stores, yet is unique in its own right. Peter Marino, who worked on the interior says, “Our aim is to always develop new elements for each project, taking into account its location, site constraints, etc.”

It differs from the new Beijing store, which was designed by the in-house design team, in a “Guggenheim” style where the larger space allows for the spiral journey experience. The Hong Kong interior design has more in common with the Champs Elysees flagship store. The Beijing façade is also more like a standard LV façade seen in other shops worldwide.

Company	Scope of Work
Consultants	
Jun Aoki & Associates	Façade Architect
Peter Marino Architects in conjunction with LV Paris Architecture team	Interior Designer
LV Asia Pacific Store Projects	Project Management
DCM HK	HK Architectural Consultant
Ferrier Chan & Partners	M&E Consultant
Maunsells	Structural Consultant
Goerge Sexton Associates	Lighting Consultant
Davis Langdon & Seah	Quantity Surveyor
Aedas Ltd	Authorised Person Services

According to Jun Aoki, the Japan-based designer who has worked on a number of other LV store facades, “LV’s sole request was to express “louis vuitton-ness”. The interpretation of “louis vuitton-ness” will differ from person to person, but for me it is rich texture realised in their products, although its form is quite simple.”

Following the brand image was as important to Aoki as having a design that fitted best in the Hong Kong environment. “Hong Kong is a peculiar place: physically, the strong sunlight, weather and humidity/mentally, the mixture of Asian and Western culture expresses unique vigour. I decided to use zigzag profiled louver blades, finished with a mirror surface, for the main feature of the façade. This design solution seemed to be appropriate to Hong Kong, because the sparkles on the edge of the louvers, express the similar vividness of the city. Looking from inside, though, the streetscape is fragmented

into light and movements, a sort of abstracted landscape.”

The 7000 stainless steel, alternately polished, brushed, mirrored and whitewashed louvres that form the glass façade interlay, were custom designed. It also shows a checkerboard pattern, which is also LV’s “damier pattern”, and is adopted worldwide in LV facades. Different contractors proposed many methods and materials that the design team had to chose between. Cost looked as though it was going to become an issue, until an Austrian company put forward a proposal that showed their ability to deliver high-quality, while being cost-competitive compared to the other, Japanese, contender.

Peter Merino, a US-based designer, designed the interior of the store, and with Aoki formed the design team that also designed the major New York store. Marino is familiar with the LV design concept but as this is “constantly evolving”, the layout for this store is still very unique to this location, says Young.

Merino says, “Most of our work is custom designed. Our office is constantly experimenting with new materials. In some instances we work with artists in developing surface materials, such as plasters. For HK Landmark we experimented with Corian, which is used in several wall units. We also designed the woven leathers used in some of the furniture and several of the hard furniture materials.”

One of the most striking features is LV’s first installation of a glass staircase connecting three floors, featuring built-in LED flat panels on the flat surfaces of each step. The whole image can be viewed from the top floor or step at a time as they walk down and customers at ground level can view reflected images from the mirror on the ceiling. Technically, this was one of the most difficult parts of the construction, said Young, and after the design and technical details had been worked out with the display screen suppliers and the designers, it was necessary to decide upon the appropriate content. A creative design company was enlisted to create content that is relatively simple to upload onto the screens and can be updated, with the idea being that changing the images regularly is a way of “freshening up the store.”



Keepall Display



Watch & Jewellery



Louis Vuitton, Beijing



LED staircase



LED staircase



Watch & Jewellery



Women RTW



Mens Formal



Mens RTW

“The project was managed by LV and we were very lucky to work with an excellent contractor.” Peter Marino, Architect

Company	Scope of Work
Suppliers	
Agencement Distribution Fabriation (ADF)	Furniture
Architectural Lighting	Show Window Lighting
AV Promotion	Plasma
Carbondale	Model Maker
Cariipa System	Video Player
Carpet Master	Carpet
Cassina	Furniture
Daniel C. Duross	Weave
Decca Furniture	Furniture
Edelman	Stone Flooring
Europe Flair	LED Lighting (W&J)
Hazard Product	Small Scale Display
Golden Field Flooring	Wooden Flooring
Laboratorio Morseletto - Vicenza	Interior Stone
Light Contract	LED Lighting (W&J)
Litelab	Lighting Fixtures
Peter Marino Architects	Furniture
Rich Honour	Furniture
Swire Duro	Stone Flooring
TIR	External Façade Lighting
Tung Fat Ho	Ironmongery
Vielie	Wooden Flooring



Mens Shoes



Bag Bar

the jewellery department and an upper private salon was also a first for those working on it and a full size model was made before installation in the store. This was a method that was also used by the façade designers. Aoki explains: “We used models as means for communication with the client as well as contractors. We started with models in scale 1:200 then gradually raised the scale closer to 1:1 for clear understandings. Our design intent was transmitted correctly to other team members, owing to the visual clearness of the models.” The models encouraged efficient decision-making and when Young and team saw a whole corner mocked-up, “we were blown away”.

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As are visitors to the store. The interior and exterior models allowed LV management to understand that they were bringing something special to Hong Kong and have meant that people involved in the project are doubly proud of the realisation of their goal. In the words of Aoki, the design achieved “prominent elegance” and his feelings echoed those of the other team members: “I am very proud that with the Landmark store I designed a façade that expresses “Hong Kong – ness” as well as “Louis Vuitton - ness”.

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