

VMI+SD

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Independents Day Competition

Seven Acclaimed Projects Show Resourcefulness, Efficiency



FOR THE SECOND STRAIGHT YEAR, VM+SD held a design competition for independent retailing (defined by the National Retail Federation as having annual revenues of \$5 million or less). The magazine's editors deemed the following seven entrants worthy of honor, based on their inventive answers to problems and objectives – especially those specific to independent retailers (budget, space, time and availability of resources).

Here are our 2002 Independents Day firecrackers.

After a Fashion

Fashion Statement is a small, independent, classic-yet-contemporary specialty apparel store in upscale Wyckoff, N.J. "The typical female Wyckoff resident is a stay-at-home mom in her 40s," says owner Sheryl Brian, "active in her children's school and other activities. She's affluent, college-educated, physically fit and has sophisticated taste in clothing, decorating and dining."

The design objective for Englewood, N.J., architect David Kepron was to create a unique, "classic contemporary" flair, an environment that's bright and clean, and a backdrop for multiple vendors.

Kepron called his design concept "eclectic-chic," contrasting the textural qualities of rich surface materials (crushed velvet, faux finishes and decorative metals) with clean geometries and light steel and wood details.

Large feature walls were created to merchandise goods in front of the windows. Elliptical tables allow for the possibility of bulk-folded presentations and also promote uninterrupted views through the space to the perimeter walls. Existing columns were utilized as vertical merchandisers.

Client Team: Fashion Statement, Wyckoff, N.J. – Sheryl Brian, owner

Design Team: Kepron Architect, Englewood, N.J. – David Kepron, Brian James, Will Tolentino, Lu Kepron

Outside Consultant: Glen Gray Construction, Mahwah, N.J. (general contractor)

Suppliers: MG Concepts, Central Islip, N.Y., B&N Industries, San Carlos, Calif. (fixtures); Chemetal, Easthampton, Mass. (laminates); sevencontinents, Toronto (mannequins); Barsouv, New York (fabrics)



Hello, Dali

The Salvador Dali Museum (St. Petersburg, Fla.) wanted to improve the sales performance of its 4000-square-foot bookstore. Creative Arts Unlimited (Pinellas Park, Fla.) was called on to come up with a more productive fixturing and visual merchandising system, but one that reflected the surrealist artist's unique personality and sensibilities.

"We began by creating core fixturing and a focal icon," says Creative Arts president Roger Barganier. "The fixtures would be called upon to present the wide variety of constantly changing custom merchandise. We designed two-way and three-way units and nested table sets. The table sets featured built-in abstract forms to hold T-shirts, beach towels, neckties and the like. The colors and shapes of these pieces were derived from design elements of Dali's work. Dyed maple and maple veneers were used in the construction of these fixtures, and their additional components were hand-sculpted."

All fixturing was arranged around a 10-foot-tall revolving icon of dyed maple, featuring a blue glowing realization of one of Dali's pieces of imagery. "Our dimensional sculpture glowed with an eerie halo," says Barganier, "thanks to a recessed outline of black lights sandwiched between sheets of ultra violet-sensitive acrylic. A Venus de Milo image was chosen because the museum is famous for housing many of the best examples of the artist's work with this motif."

The shop sells not only the usual array of posters, books and accessories but also a line of Salvador Dali fragrances and cosmetics.

Client: Salvador Dali Museum Gift Store, St. Petersburg, Fla.

Design Team: Creative Arts Unlimited, Pinellas Park, Fla. – Roger Barganier, president; Brian Chann, designer; Bruce Merenda, merchandising consultant

Suppliers: Creative Arts Unlimited, Pinellas Park, Fla. (fixtures, props, decoratives)





Sometimes, a Cigar is Just a Cigar

The cigar industry has played a significant role in the development of Tampa, and Ybor City is an historic district of that city, home to some of its earliest Italian-American and Latin-American communities.

So the **Ybor City Museum** was an attempt by the Museum Society and local Chamber of Commerce to commemorate those histories. The design objective, says Roger Barganier, president of Creative Arts Unlimited (Pinellas Park, Fla.), was to create a 17,000-square-foot interior that would welcome, inform, exhibit artifacts and sell merchandise.

The retail area is fashioned after an 1890s cigar emporium and features framed antique cigar labels, photos, books, cigar ads and cigar paraphernalia. The perimeter casework and fixturing echoes the style of turn-of-the-century woodwork common to the region.

Two stacked cigar boxes of Honduran mahogany and cedar form a cashwrap, from which oversized cigars float toward the ceiling. Each cigar belly-band contains the name of a sponsoring local business. The lid of the box, which serves as a partition wall defining the back of the theater area, incorporates the Chamber of Commerce logo in a vintage-style label.

In a carefully scaled re-creation of the district's first Spanish Community Theater, visitors can watch historic films about the area, seated in reproductions of rustic cigar rollers' chairs complete with nicotine-dyed leather coverings.



Client: Ybor City Museum Society and Ybor City Chamber of Commerce, Tampa

Design Team: Creative Arts Unlimited, Pinellas Park, Fla. – Roger Barganier, president

Project Management: Synergy Design Group, Tallahassee, Fla.

Outside Consultants: Sweger Construction, Oldsmar, Fla. (general contractor); Lynn Rogers Design & Consulting, Tallahassee, Fla. (lighting); Steiner & Assoc., Tampa (developer)

Suppliers: Creative Arts Unlimited, Pinellas Park, Fla. (fixtures, props, decoratives); Photobition, Atlanta (graphics)