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AWARD OF EXCELLENCE



MURALE TORONTO

DESIGNERS: Jesse Blonstein, Julia Vandergraaf
COMPANY: Lightbrigade Architectural Lighting
DESIGNER: Diego Burdi
COMPANY: burdifilek
OWNER: Shoppers Drug Mart
PHOTOS: Ben Rah/A-Frame

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

This 7,000-sq ft beauty boutique was developed as a new store concept for an established retailer. Lighting was instrumental in creating an inviting and interactive atmosphere. Pristine white surface finishes maximize light reflection throughout the space, giving prominence to the product. The clinical aspect of white light and finishes is softened with the rounded architectural forms and reserved

application of color using tinted glass panels at certain displays. Shelf and cove lighting illuminate the merchandise and provide most of the ambient light. High-CRI, 3,500K T5 fluorescent lamps were used. To emphasize circulation routes throughout the space, pinhole downlights (20-W MR16 IR lamps) were arranged in patterns. LEDs were also prominently featured, including LED arrays that light the curves in a screen of contoured glass panels.

FOR INTERIOR LIGHTING DESIGN

If you're looking for 16 million color combinations, try a more glitzy retail establishment. At the cosmetics boutique Murale, white light rules

BEAUTY AID

BY PAUL TARRICONE

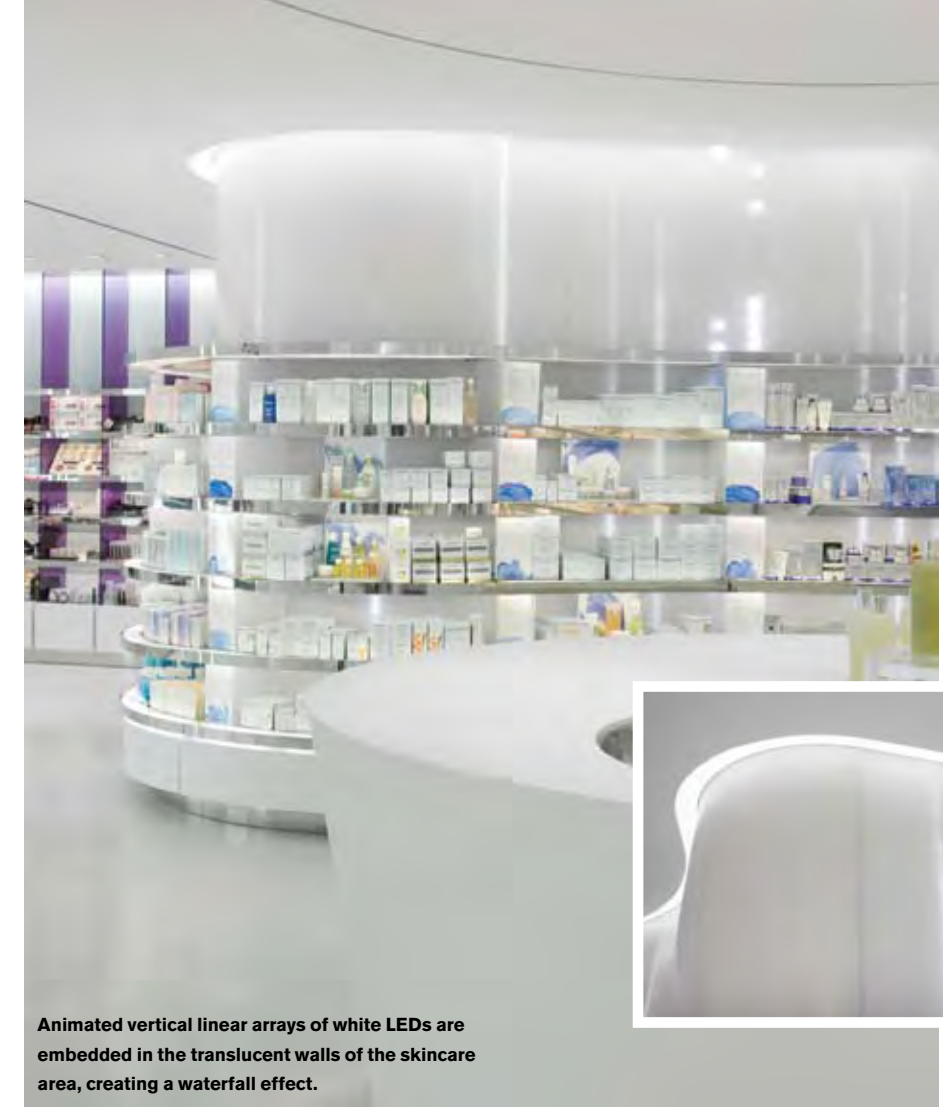
White surfaces plus white light, softened by rounded architectural forms and a dash of color, added up to a 2009 IES Illumination Award of Excellence for the lighting of Murale—Shoppers Drug Mart's "new beauty boutique" concept store. Lightbrigade Architectural Lighting, Toronto, created the lighting design for the 7,000-sq ft Ottawa store, in association with interior design firm burdifilek. The design concept, as they say, has "legs"; it was reproduced in Murale Montreal and a modified version will be adopted in a broader roll-out of five more Murale boutiques.

The majority of ambient light in Murale is actually generated by merchandise lighting built into the shelves, ceiling coves and vertical coves at the end of the display walls. This "localized light" is complemented by the discreet use of pinhole downlighting. "The emphasis was on lighting the products. It's retail, so that seems sort of obvious, but sometimes in

A screen of contoured glass panels serves as a gateway to the skincare department. LED edge-lighting emphasizes the unique curve of each panel, while a circular ring of MR16 downlights highlights a counter.



Vertical fluorescent covers in display end-caps highlight products.



Animated vertical linear arrays of white LEDs are embedded in the translucent walls of the skincare area, creating a waterfall effect.

drug stores or cosmetics stores, the lighting is uniformly applied with high footcandles and it's not focused on the products," says Jesse Blonstein of Lightbrigade Architectural Lighting.

Only three light sources were used to create the effect: T5 fluorescent tubes of varying lengths; MR16 for the downlights; and LEDs in several specialized applications. The design met budget and uses only 2.5 watts per sq ft (factoring in the allowance for display merchandise lighting). Though it's still too soon to tell (the store opened in November 2008), maintenance should also be simplified due to the limited number of lamp types.

Fluorescent is the workhorse throughout the store. "We went with 3,500K fluorescent as the standard to bring out the best in all the white surfaces. We didn't want to go too cool (4,100K) or too warm (3,000K). We went with the middle ground to create brightness," says Blonstein. The T5 fluorescent striplights are used in the wall covers, ceiling covers and for most shelf lighting.

"The ambient illumination produced by the shelf and cove lights ensures product visibility and visual acuity for customers," says Blonstein. The tubes are 2-, 3- or 4-ft long and use 14, 21 and 28 watts, respectively.

Fluorescent striplights are also incorporated into full-height mirrors to provide customers with low-glare light consistent with the lighting at the displays where the product was initially selected. These lights allow for effective "facial modeling," for example, offering "even illumination as customers try on makeup," says Blonstein.

Downlighting, meanwhile, supplements the built-in shelf and display lighting. Adjustable 20-W MR16 IR pinhole downlights serve three functions, providing ambient and accent lighting, as well as task light at freestanding display areas. The ceiling pattern of the downlights mimics the circulation route throughout the store, while a circular ring of MR16s illuminates the task at the demonstration counter.

NICHE USE OF LEDs

LEDs were used not for color (only white light illuminates Murale) but for their function and form in several applications. First, where the curve of millwork was too tight for fluorescent tubes, linear strips of white LEDs were built into the shelves.

Rounded architectural forms were used to soften the "clinical" aspect of white light on white finishes, says Blonstein. A prime example is a screen of contoured glass panels that serves as a gateway to the skincare department. Vertical LED edge-lights emphasize the curve of each panel. In addition, animated linear arrays of white LEDs are embedded in the translucent walls of the skincare area. The wall is comprised of sand-blasted acrylic panels. "Vertical runs of individually addressable LEDs points produce a waterfall effect, which evokes a spa quality in this area," explains Blonstein.

While there's no white light at Murale, there is "reserved application" of color in the form tinted glass

panels at certain displays, again to mitigate some of the clinical feel of the space. ☘

METRICS THAT MATTER

Murale

Watts per sq ft: 2.5 (complies with ASHRAE/IESNA 90.1-2007)

Illuminance Level: 40 fc (average)

Lamp Types: 3

Fixture Types: 3

About the Designers:

Jesse Blonstein, Member IES (2006), and Julia Vandergraaf are lighting designers at Lightbrigade Architectural Lighting.



Diego Burdi is creative director at burdifilek.