

TIME AFTER TIME

From ancient to ultra-modern, this year's fixtures trends span the ages.

BY GEORGIA MIZEN | CONTRIBUTING WRITER

THE LAST THING the retail industry wants to do is go out of fashion. Moving through the aftermath of the Covid pandemic, the pressure is on for designers to create spaces that are timeless, versatile and relevant – spaces that won't date quickly in the rapidly evolving market. This year's emerging trend is for fixtures to reference the details of an era, to evoke nostalgia, or a sense of being at the cutting edge.



COURTESY OF RMDK, NEW DELHI

SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW

For Heritage, a destination for bridal couture in New Delhi, India, the aim was to “marry indigenous details with a clean-lined layout to underline the merchandise,” says Dhruva Kalra, Principal Designer, I’m D’sign (New Delhi; formerly RMDK).

The space is rustic with contrasting touches of burnt brick, polished brass, stressed wood and coarse granite, with exquisite artisan workmanship evident across shelving, furniture and light fixtures. It’s designed to inspire nostalgia and capture memories all at once.

Bridalwear in the *sari* section hangs

elegantly from rails, “a contemporary interpretation of a handloom shuttle,” explains Aarushi Kalra, Senior Designer, I’m D’sign. “The hints of antique gold in these metallic embellishments recall the details of India’s heritage monuments.”

Design features “celebrate ties to native culture: hand-beaten brass of the traditional craft, the parquet floor in ochre yellow radiating auspiciousness, the serpent joineries and ornate elements such as the *kalash* (sacred pot) and *devi* (goddess) feet inspired by ancient Hindu scriptures. A 150-year-old arch in the bridal section pays tribute to the *vedi*, a traditional wedding altar, contemporized for the retail experience, with brass drawers that store exclusive bridal pieces.”

With so many nods to a bygone era, the Heritage shopping experience “suits contemporary Indian taste without compromising on traditional roots.”



THIS PAGE In addition to the parquet flooring, the space’s hand-beaten brass fixturing harkens back to traditional design motifs.



LOOKING FORWARD

In contrast to Heritage, Chroma Modern is the polar opposite – an ultra-contemporary eyewear store in Fort Worth, Texas. Designed by Ibañez Shaw Architecture, the space is almost futuristic, with a white, minimalist aesthetic.

“As the product is too small to see from the street, we wanted to project the interior out,” explains Bart Shaw, Principal.

Outside are framed walkways and windows looking in, so the interior of the store is flooded with light. “We looked for ways to embrace the daylight, which is not in short supply here. As a result, the fixtures are sunlit, rather than backlit,” he says. This spotlights the glasses, with the movement of the sun dictating the color temperature inside.

Fitting neatly into the seamless design, signature products are displayed in custom acrylic cubes in a concrete wall. “Sets of shelving are laid out like a sculpture



DROR BALDINGER, SAN ANTONIO

garden, creating space for exploration and meandering,” says Shaw. “We didn’t want to limit how customers view the product, so we’ve presented fixtures in such a way that the merchandise can be admired three-dimensionally, from all angles.” The result is an up-to-the-minute backdrop for modern eyewear.

With experiential shopping on the rise, shoppers expect to be transported, whether it’s back in time or forward, to another era entirely. Stores set the stage for time travel with fixtures as their props. ▀



BELOW Using a minimalist aesthetic, Chroma Modern found unique ways to display eyewear, often a difficult product to merchandise.

