

Cosmetic Makeover

Light and color blend to revamp a beauty powerhouse

BY DIANA VENTIMIGLIA

Before big-name cosmetic companies like Revlon, Estée Lauder and Cover Girl there was Elizabeth Arden, founded in 1910 by Florence Nightingale Graham. The beauty empire carrying her alter ego's name has been favored by woman all over the world. Randy Sabedra, RS Lighting Design, New York City, knew that history well when he was hired to develop a lighting concept for Arden's longtime office in Stamford, CT.

"We worked with the architects, Highland Associates, for many years and developed a great friendship," says Sabedra. "Our teams worked closely with Elizabeth Arden on the renovations of their New York City and Toronto offices, and their flagship store on Fifth Avenue in New York City." One of the challenges working in the approximately 50,000 sq ft space was the amount of reflective glass. Sabedra and his team needed to develop a system that would support the daily activities of its employees and play with the refractive and reflective qualities of light through the glass.

Visitors are greeted with a sparkling crystal perfume bottle chandelier. Some 92 white LEDs are suspended at various heights, accentuating Elizabeth Arden's signature red color.

Photos: Eric Laingnel



Meeting rooms are enclosed in different colored glass. The sapphire blue room contains a chandelier with a chrome light fixture and clear lamps to add

sparkle against the silver furniture.

“The architectural elements of the project were very distinctive to the brand,” says Sabedra. “We needed to make sure we highlighted each feature without overpowering it.” The plan primarily used fluorescent lamps and fixtures. LED lighting was only used in the lobby chandelier and for backlighting the receptionist desk.

PRODUCTS AS METAPHORS

The visual impact begins at the entrance with a red glass receptionist desk illuminated with LED lighting and fluorescent lighting concealed within coves and downlights. A customized decorative chan-

delier (Bruck Lighting) suspended above packs a punch for visitors. Ninety-two glass perfume bottles are suspended at various heights to create a cloud of sparkle. Each bottle is equipped with a .5-W white LED, creating a lively and kinetic sculpture. “This play of light sets a tone and lighting concept for the remaining spaces and asks, ‘What does it feel like to be inside a perfume bottle’,” says Sabedra.

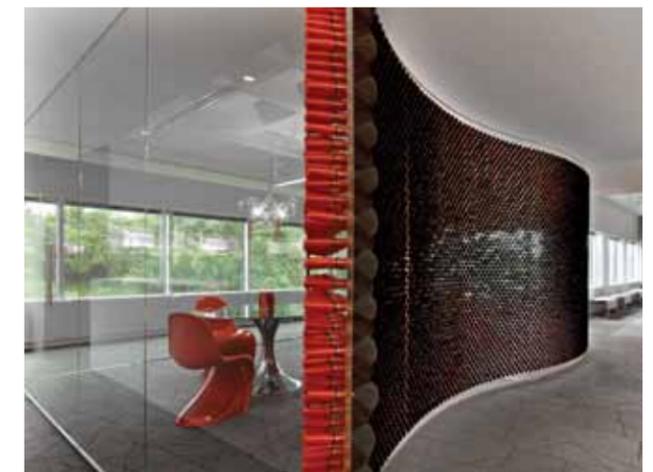
A continuous, lensed fluorescent ceiling slot links circulation and defines edges between offices and meeting rooms. The trio of meeting rooms is enclosed in different colored glass, forming abstract and over-scaled containers of light. The canted glass en-

closures replicate the angles of various fragrance bottles, and the sapphire blue, emerald green and topaz yellow of the transparent vinyl film surfacing the glass transforms the rooms into giant gemstones. Each space contains a variety of suspended decorative chandeliers—each with a different play of light through translucent and transparent materials, and exposed lamps. “Each chandelier was specifically selected for the distinctive furniture style and material,” explains Sabedra. “They were diffused with white, patterned with texture and exposed with chrome.”

The meeting room with blue glass has shiny, silver furniture. As



Yellow, curved furniture is accented with a clear, yellow bowl-shaped chandelier.



Some 8,000 make-up brushes adorn the curved wall conjoining meeting rooms. The wall allows daylight to emphasize the details of the space.

a result, a chandelier with a chrome light fixture with clear lamps was selected to create sparkle. The meeting room with red glass has white furniture, so a white, frosted light fixture was selected to play with translucency. The yellow-glassed room was lighted with a clear yellow bowl-shaped fixture to accent the yellow curved furniture in the room. The green-glassed room contains soft, textural furniture. A clear, crystal fixture was selected to not overpower the delicate features of the room. Rooms with clear glass had red and clear furniture, so a clear fixture was selected to play on the idea of invisibility. “To compensate for the over-saturated light filtering through the col-



Large ceiling domes are placed in a specific pattern to further emphasize the intricate details of the conference room.

ored glass walls, recessed halogen downlights ensured sufficient white light is present in the rooms,” says Sabedra.

Another dramatic element is the slightly serpentine, 40-ft acrylic wall fronting a pair of conjoined meeting rooms. The wall consists of approximately 8,000 make-up brushes. The placement of the brushes allows filtered daylight to come through and adds sparkle to the clear lamp chandelier. The boardroom reveals a bold pattern of large ceiling domes with perimeter lensed slots to define spatial boundaries. “Our experience with Elizabeth Arden afforded us the freedom to be creative,” says Sabedra. “The overall lighting design not only supports the functions of the office environment, but also shows how light can be playful with the appropriate selection of materials and light fixtures.” ■

METRICS THAT MATTER

Elizabeth Arden, Stamford Offices

Watts per sq ft: 1.1, with additional 1 watt allowance in select spaces with decorative fixtures (complies w/ASHRAE/IESNA 90.1-2007)

Illuminance Levels: offices = 30 fc; primary circulation = 10 fc; lobby = 5 fc; main board room = 50 fc

Lamp Types: 12

Fixture Types: 27

THE DESIGNER



Randy Sabedra, IALD, Member IES (2001), is a lighting designer at RS Lighting Design and past president of the IES New York City Section.