



MBH Architects serves as executive architect for Bucherer TimeMachine

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Manhattan, NY MBH Architects served as executive architect for watch retailer Bucherer to transform its flagship store at 12 57th St. The new flagship, “Bucherer TimeMachine,” will inspire other Tourneau stores as they transition to Bucherer. Tourneau was acquired by European retailer Bucherer AG in 2018. Bucherer transformed Tourneau’s NYC store to reflect the Bucherer brand, after a successful partnership renovating the San Francisco Centre and Waterside Shops locations.

Having partnered with MBH in renovating the San Francisco Centre and Waterside Shops locations, Bucherer turned once again to MBH to serve as executive architect. The extensive renovation, including concept and fixture design, took nearly three years to complete.

As the executive architect, MBH’s first task was to redevelop a previously recessed façade to activate the new flagship from the street and capture more square footage. The design team extruded the entire ground floor towards the sidewalk on 57th St. to elevate the traditional bi-partite design of the existing high-rise.

Honed Atlantic black granite stone panels were chosen to surround the double-height windows and nicely supplement the connecting IBM building’s polished Atlantic green stone façade. The façade was also designed to accommodate the store’s extensive security needs. Decorative, illuminated pillars hide the sturdy steel frame, and the design team specified a glass which was the optimal size to compliment the pillars and hold the display showcases. In place of the original façade’s iconic clocks, a Bucherer timepiece is projected onto the double-height glass panels from the inside.

To bring the store to life, MBH played an essential role in defining the zoning requirements, building code, and approvals associated with the renovation. Located within the IBM high-rise building in Manhattan, the MBH team provided feasibility studies for unique and complicated features. For example, Bucherer envisioned the relocated stairs to enhance the circulation and cultivate the customer’s journey through the space. As MBH reviewed the blueprints, they found the proposed placement of the stairs was not feasible; they pivoted to conducting multiple design studies to test relocating the building ductwork and infrastructure while preserving the stairs’ location as a dramatic focal point.

As concept design support, MBH implemented an interior design layout that encompassed Bucherer's luxurious residential aesthetic while also giving visitors a private and personalized experience through shopping, lounging, and servicing products. Artwork and sculptures further highlight Bucherer's commitment to luxury by providing a museum quality shopping experience. For their flagship store with close to 40 brands on display, Bucherer wanted a hybrid design that combined the elements of their company and other brands in their portfolio to make one fluid and engaging customer experience. This design approach introduced the client to the Bucherer experience while enabling each brand to share its own unique story without creating individual shop-in-shops.

To seamlessly pull the hybrid design together, warm dark wood, bronze, limestone, and a variety of stone finishes fused by the modern concrete were added to the space, along with elements of the major brands, Rolex, Cartier, Patek Philippe, Carl F Bucherer, IWC, and Omega. The major brands are captured in prominent corners of the ground floor experience. Their respective placement maximizes natural light and entices the consumer to enter the store. During the design process of the major displays, Bucherer allowed the brands to provide input on the design, including feedback for additional electrical, lighting, and structural engineering. The design curation required extensive coordination with numerous stakeholders over the course of 16 months to perfect the design.

The brands are separated by a custom curved library that distinguishes each brand area while welcoming the consumer on a seamless journey through the showroom. As guests make their way to the center of the store, the focal point is the redesigned staircase and video wall. The mosaic of the 86" LED screens intertwined with the staircase modernizes the store with an effortless grace. The optimized placement of the staircase invites guests to explore the additional retailers on the bottom concourse floor and the second floor. MBH integrated over 100 entirely custom-designed fixtures into the space, including three bars for each floor, large full height libraries, and a dual-level library.

The second floor is home to the Bucherer Fine Jewelry, Piaget, IWC Pilot bar, Omega, and a multi-brand gallery. In a multi-brand gallery, fabric wall panels provide a neutral background for the brands' displays while the light pink wall niches provide a lively pop of color in the jewelry area. The materials are matte to ensure the displayed products can shine. In the cellar, an open layout prevents the space from becoming dark and uninviting, and a visible service room allows guests to see their watch be repaired. Bars and lounge areas adorn each floor, extending the personalized hospitality. Custom decorative lighting fixtures that were developed with lighting consultants and vendors are on each of the three floors.

Overall, the reimagined scape leaves a lasting impression for American shoppers experiencing the Bucherer brand for the first time.