



BEN RAHN, TORONTO

A SENSE OF PLACE

Brown Thomas Luxury Hall didn't need the luck of the Irish to win top honors in RDI's annual store design competition. Just a dazzling array of materials, lighting and natural colors to create a world of refined luxury.

By Anne DiNardo, Editor

Brown Thomas' Dublin Street Flagship has been an established landmark in Ireland since the 1840s, earning its place on the international stage of luxury retailing.

The brand houses some of the world's most exclusive designer collections – Louis Vuitton, Chanel, Hermes – coupled with a high-end level of service that creates "the Brown Thomas experience."

When the retailer wanted to evolve its offering to include a new department featuring fine watches, jewelry and



Store of the Year

New Floor or Shop Within an Existing Department or Specialty Store

Innovative Award: Materiality

BROWN THOMAS LUXURY HALL
Dublin, Ireland
Burdifilek

luxury gifts, designers sought to create a space that would transport shoppers to a luxurious setting while still staying grounded in its Irish heritage.

"We needed to create a space that was iconic on a global point of view," says Diego Burdi, creative partner, Burdifilek (Toronto), the firm that designed the award-winning space.

Inspired by the country's natural richness, designers introduced a soft color palette, feminine design aesthetics and what Burdi calls "feats of engineering" to create an 8500-square-foot department that's a delight to the senses.

Among the riches are honed Italian marble flooring in mottled, creamy shades; columns clad in tinted, antiqued mirrors; and seamless, semi-circular glass display cases in soft polished nickel

that appear to float over champagne-colored Starfire glass bases.

Perimeter walls in dichroic glass reveal a shimmering, gold-hued iridescence. Toronto-based artist Dennis Lin was commissioned to create a Bertioia-inspired installation with hand-articulated polished nickel rods that extend from floor to ceiling.

"When you look at it all together, it speaks beautifully and demographically to where the store is situated," says Burdi.

Judges admired the jewel-like quality. "The sinuous character of the arrangement, balanced with the light reflectivity of the merchandising elements and interior treatments, create an environment that is evocative of surprise and uniquely distilled splendor," says Tim Girvin of Girvin | Strategic Branding & Design and one of the competition judges.

VMSD presents the winners of the 2010 Retail Design Institute's annual International Store Design Competition on the following pages. For more awards coverage, visit vmsd.com.

RDI International Store Design Competition Judging Panel

ELIZABETH DOWD, store planning and fixture design, Recreational Equipment Inc.

MICHAEL FORREST, senior director, customer experience, Microsoft Corp. Retail Stores

TIM GIRVIN, principal and founder of Girvin | Strategic Branding & Design

JUSTIN HILL, senior principal, MulvannyG2 Architecture

TIM PFEIFFER, owner, Tim Pfeiffer Design Collective and Branded Environment Design Consultancy

RUSSELL SWAY, president, R. Sway Associates

JUDY THEODORSON, assistant professor interior design, Interdisciplinary Design Institute, Washington State University Spokane

Hosted by the Seattle Chapter of RDI