

BIG BRANDS AND A ZEN ATMOSPHERE

The sound of nature is the sound of future retail. Created with a visionary outlook that combines avant-garde design with a predominant role for nature, The Hyundai Seoul department store in the South Korean capital is a welcoming and relaxing place, its lush vegetation making it a prime meeting point ahead of its function as a commercial space. As well as offering dedicated zones for stores and major brands, The Hyundai Seoul combines business, work and leisure in the multifunctional Yeongdeungpo-gu district, on the Hangang River, which is home to office and residential buildings.

Founded in 1993 by Diego Burdi and Paul Filek, Canadian firm Burdifilek imbued its interior design for the atrium and three-floor, multi-level complex with a Zen-like atmosphere.

Inaugurated just over a year ago, The Hyundai Seoul has become a symbol of resilience, its 89,100 m² enhanced by numerous atria that, above and beyond the typical commercial experience, make it an ideal place for socialization.

As co-founder and creative director Diego Burdi explains, “surrounding nature” was Burdifilek’s overarching concept for the large central atrium and the second, third and fourth floors: “By playing with the concept of scale, the decision to bring the outside in creates something unexpected. As the greenery extends, the building becomes softer, more conducive to diverse, memorable experiences.”

Every unique floor is connected to the others by clearly recognizable sculptural elements, creating a melody of nature and the future out of unique yet repeated parts and refrains.

The heart of The Hyundai Seoul is its experiential ground floor atrium, an alternation of solids and voids overlooked by the upper floors. The visitor’s eye is drawn upwards to the large skylight that serves as a source of natural light. The auditory sensation of a waterfall hints at the design’s centerpiece, a 12-meter-high sculptural Waterfall Garden surrounded by organically-shaped floating islands topped by dozens of plants. Reflective edges and shrubs at the base of the waterfall stand out against white surroundings, triggering watery visual effects and providing seating in round-shaped areas.

The upper floors were conceived in experiential palettes, their lines and colors inspired by their respective products and brands. For the women’s fashion house, Burdifilek created a timeless luxury hub, exploiting delicate texture and fluid lines for the walls and ceiling. The minimalist hanging structures used to present dresses help create a sophisticated atmosphere. Suspended sculptural elements recur on the floor dedicated to men’s and women’s fashion in a provocative and innovative space: contrasting deep blue, bright yellow and various shades of gray are mirrored in the seating, beneath a bold ceiling with exposed installations.

“Our approach was to create environments for each floor that spoke to a specific audience,” Burdi concludes, “evoking nature in an infinite number of ways.”

As the greenery extends, the building becomes softer, more conducive to diverse, memorable experiences.

Burdifilek

Boutique The Hyundai Seoul
Seoul, South Korea





The dedicated women's fashion floor was conceived as a timeless space with minimalist structures and soft colors, incorporating natural elements and references to nature.



Minimalist, sculptural elements are reprised on the floor dedicated to men's/women's fashion, with a provocative, innovative style and exposed installations.

Conceived like an art gallery, this sophisticated, elegant space uses a series of reflections and indirect lighting to enhance iconic and fluid shapes, details and finishes.



On this level, the designers drew inspiration from a range of cultural inputs from the worlds of art, design and fashion that go beyond the shopping experience. Elements from other areas of the store are reinterpreted here, combined with bright palettes and transparent materials.





On all levels, Burdifilek strove to reinforce the image of the brands on sale, ensuring that every material, item of furniture and layout detail helps create an ad hoc invitation to each consumer type.

Location: Seoul, South Korea – **Client:** The Hyundai Department Store Group – **Completion:** 2021 – **Gross Floor Area:** 9,550 m² – **Interior Design (atrium, selected areas of 2nd, 3rd, 4th floors):** Burdifilek – **Interior Contractors:** Dongeyu Architecture, Daewon – **Atrium:** TBC

Consultants

Electrical: Keunwood – **Mechanical:** MKG – **Lighting:** Marcel Dion, be:Che

Photography by Yangon Choi Photography, courtesy of Burdifilek

The main attraction of the large experiential atrium is the Waterfall Garden, a 12 m-high sculptural structure with organically shaped islands topped by plants and shrubs, in a space lit by natural light filtering through a skylight.

