



Anthropologie



All Saints

TIM GREENHALGH
CHIEF CREATIVE
OFFICER, FITCH

"I still love **Anthropologie**. It's going from strength to strength, whether you look at the fashion or spot a great painting on the wall. It's all about the environment and its ability to show things off in an interesting manner.

"After that I'd still choose **All Saints**. I'm actually so over the sewing machine thing – how many of the things do you need? But you still feel like you're in a 19th-century industrial workplace and that does impress.

"Finally, I'd opt for **Cos**, the grown-up version of **H&M**. The Regent Street store is simple and understated and it does know how to show off product. There's a lot to be said for not overcomplicating things and Cos shows what is possible."



RRL, Mount Street

DAVID DALZIEL
CREATIVE DIRECTOR,
DALZIEL + POW

"I'm heartily sick of nostalgic and vintage stores when that description is applied to disguise the lack of original thought or an individual point of view.

"It's fitting, therefore, that my new favourite store is **RRL** in Mount Street in Mayfair – the most nostalgia-led vintage store to open this year. I saw the New York version of this on Bleecker Street last month and loved it, and when I heard the London store had just

opened, I had to go. "It is impeccably executed, beautifully visually merchandised and totally convincing.

"I spent more money than I have for a long time in the store, buying a suit and a few bits and pieces without really questioning the cost (and it's not cheap). Service was good too. This shop has really hooked me in. I could buy the shop today and replace my whole wardrobe."

An inside job

Retailers defied a year of worsening trading conditions to create some memorable store interiors, albeit almost exclusively in London

Words John Ryan

When it comes to a close, 2011 will have been 365 days long – nothing too exceptional about that. For many, however, it may seem to have been much more protracted, with the sense that as one door shuts another closes, whether it's additional VAT, faltering consumer confidence or the prospect of banks calling in lines of credit.

Easy to be gloomy really, but there have been highlights over the past 12 months as new stores have arrived, others have been revamped and pop-ups have come and gone.

At the higher end, luxury accessories retailer Coach's flagship on New Bond Street and the men's Shoe Salon in Harrods have both shown that money is fine when it comes to creating an interior, but it's ideas that really count. More

generally, trashy LA garage glam or Alice in Wonderland might go some way towards describing what Forever 21 has done for its store on Oxford Street, while Primark continues to prove it still has pulling power and the ability to improve on its store environments.

If this sounds London-centric, there is a reason. Westfield's Stratford City was the only major new mall to welcome shoppers in 2011 and almost every retailer that took space went the extra mile in terms of interiors. Others worth mentioning are the Topman General Store in Shoreditch, Debenhams' Edition pop-up store, the UK's first Ralph Lauren Rugby store and the Ben Sherman concept store on Portobello Road.

In fact, the more you look, the more it becomes apparent that, far from running dry, the retail well has been topped up

this year. We asked a number of figures within the design and retail industry to consider their stores of choice for 2011.

What is interesting about their opinions is the relatively low profile that has been maintained by stores beyond the capital. There are, without doubt, many new stores that should have been given column inches that do not pay the high rents expected of their London rivals, but they have been less adept at ensuring that news of their compelling environments has spread beyond their immediate hinterlands.

A last word should go to the Next Home and Garden store in Shoreham, Sussex. You might not have imagined that a branch of Next would also be a garden centre and a DIY shed, but the retailer's fashion offer is combined with these other elements... and it works. ●

JULIE OXBERRY MANAGING
DIRECTOR, HOUSEHOLD DESIGN

"First up is **Topman General Store** on Commercial Street in Shoreditch, as it stands as proof that big chains can behave like an independent through new formats and limited edition product lines. I'd also choose **Primark** in Stratford for its integrated digital technology.

"Then there's **Mary at House of Fraser**, which I've selected for its merchandising and understanding of the customer. Also, men's indies **Present** on Shoreditch High Street and **Darkroom** on Lamb's Conduit Street, as well as **Folk's** standalone store also on Lamb's Conduit Street. Some of the most interesting fashion offers are men's."



Mary at House of Fraser



Topman General Store, Commercial Street

NICK BUBB
RETAIL ANALYST

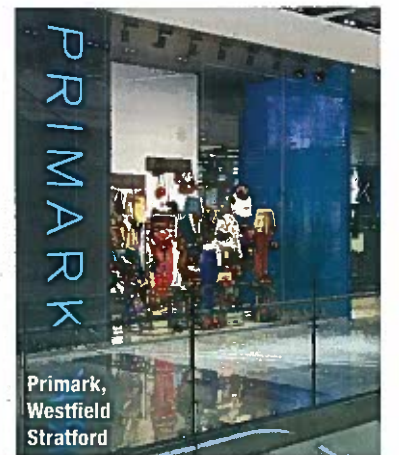
"I'd go for **Primark** in Stratford and **Jack Wills** in Kingston. Primark has moved on its offer in merchandising terms and it does seem to be the most successful store in the Stratford mall.

"The Jack Wills store in Kingston looked fantastic. It's in the old Next store and has a real attention to detail – in contrast to what Next did there. On the ground floor there's even a waiting area for men. It's only been open a couple of months and seems to be doing well.

"The new **Austin Reed** store on Regent Street not only looks good but also has stock I'd actually want to buy. It'll be interesting to see what Superdry does with the old Austin Reed shop across the street – but all its interiors do have a tendency to look the same."



Jack Wills, Kingston



Primark, Westfield Stratford