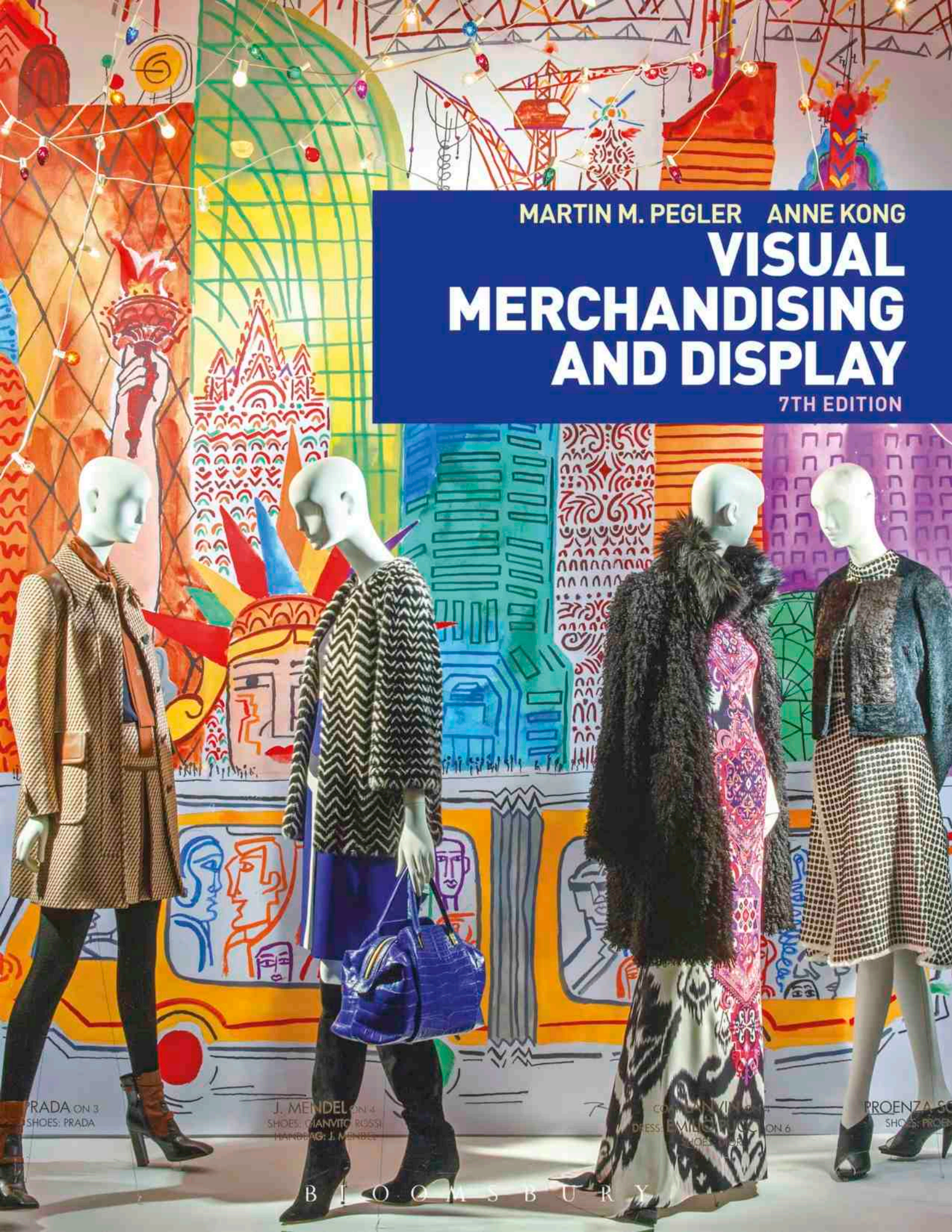
MARTIN M. PEGLER ANNE KONG
VISUAL MERCHANDISING AND DISPLAY
7TH EDITION
BLOOMSBURY

This book is dedicated to my sister Professor Mary Costantini, who passed away while I was revising this text. She was an incredibly supportive sibling who encouraged me to pursue my passion for retail design and store window display from an early age. I would not be the educator I am today without her guidance and encouragement throughout the years. She taught beside me for over twenty years as an adjunct assistant professor, and her students enjoyed her spontaneous nature. She was a gifted sculptor, a mother, and a friend to many; I will always treasure memories of building spectacular exhibits together with our students in the D Lobby at FIT.

Anne Kong

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Preface

There have been so many advances and changes in how we perform visual merchandising and create displays, and although I am "old school" and have been out of school for several years now, I have been fortunate to have a co-author who is "new school." She is thoroughly immersed in the ever-changing techniques and approaches to visual merchandising and display, and is actively employed in the industry while also educating the next generation of creative professionals. With much pleasure, I now turn you over to Anne Kong, an associate professor in the Visual Presentation & Exhibit Design Department at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City. Professor Kong has served as the chairperson of that department, created much of the BFA, and led all the special projects for the department. Professor Kong is also the recipient of the President's Award for Faculty Excellence. She is an innovative and excellent educator—much loved and admired by her students and greatly respected not only by her academic peers but by many in the Visual Merchandising industry.

We both agree however, that none of these modern wonders, digital devices, and innovative tools that are now available and are a vital part of the industry can take the place of the human mind and the creativity it can conceive. Nothing, as yet, can replace the thinking process, the internal search, and the hand-drawn scribbles, squiggles, and doodles that eventually morph into ideas that can be realized with the assistance of technology. With Anne Kong we welcome the future while holding on to the much valued "good old ways." Meet Anne Kong.

Martin M. Pegler

It is an honor and a privilege to collaborate as co-author with Martin M. Pegler. This book serves as an invaluable resource for anyone interested in learning more about retail design. *Visual Merchandising and Display 7th* focuses on retail design; however, the skills and information offered here are beneficial to those in related industries including architecture, communications, fashion merchandising, fine arts, graphic design, interior design, marketing, and packaging design.

This completely updated book serves as a complement to the original viewpoint. Over 400 new images support the written content as visually inspiring reference. Designed to guide students, designers, and retailers on the fundamentals of retail design, this book examines behind the scenes in a window display—to the morning after the store opening. It defines the practical applications of what few people know or consider in terms of what goes into making windows, stores, events, exhibits, and trade shows. The many former students, now distinguished industry professionals, are a testament that success in any business begins by knowing the applied or "hands-on" approach that begins in the trenches. In fact, merchandising magnates such as Ralph Lauren built their empires just this way.

How the process of show and sell will evolve is a question I pose to my students often. How do we shop? Why do we buy? As technology continues to enhance our lifestyles, the design of the physical store will evolve upwards with the heightened need for us humans to look, touch, and experience beautiful merchandise. The new paradigm of shopping is upon us, inspiring new ideas about store design, store experience, and placemaking. The retail world is ever-changing—new stores, brands, and shopping

experiences are become more exciting as they find ways to immerse the shopper in the brand environment, integrate innovative store fixtures, and discover smart wayfinding means to engage the shopper. We hope that the insights you gain from this book serve as valuable reference for the vast opportunities in visual merchandising and display.

Anne Kong

NEW TO THIS EDITION

This new edition of *Visual Merchandising and Display* has been thoroughly updated to include the following:

- Eight new case studies throughout
- Extensively revised and updated images
- Updated content on lighting, fixtures, point-of-purchase displays, and interactive media reflecting the latest technology and practices
- Expanded sections on store planning including more information about CAD programs, floor plans, an planograms
- New section *Tools for Getting a Job* in Chapter 27 includes tips for creating your own website and using platforms like Behance to showcase your portfolio
- Updated and new *Go Green* boxes discuss current topics in sustainability and visual merchandising

INSTRUCTOR'S RESOURCES

Teaching resources include an Instructor's Guide, Test Bank, PowerPoint presentations, and a new Image Bank of key images from the text.

VISUAL MERCHANDISING AND DISPLAY STUDIO

Fairchild Books has a long history of excellence in textbook publishing for fashion education. Our new online STUDIOS are specially developed to complement this book with rich media ancillaries that students can adapt to their visual learning styles. *Visual Merchandising and Display* STUDIO features include online self-quizzes with scored results, personalized study tips and flashcards with terms/definitions, plus videos that bring chapter concepts to life, to help students master concepts and improve grades.

STUDIO access cards are offered free with new book purchases and also sold separately through www.fairchildbooks.com.

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Martin and I would like to especially thank these architects, designers and store planners who gave so graciously of their time and knowledge to provide us with the quotable quotes that add so much to the case studies scattered throughout the book. We sent them endless "questions" and relied on their patience, good will and erudite statements to provide you, the readers, with first-hand knowledge of how professionals approach design assignments. We thank and applaud—in alphabetical order: Giorgio Borruso of Giorgio Borruso Design, Marina del Ray, California (Carlo Pazolini, London and WithMe, Chicago); Pam Flanagan of Brinkworth, London (All Saints, Glasgow, Scotland); GHA Design of Montreal, QUE. Canada, for Aeropostale, New York; Ken Nisch of JGA, Southfield, Michigan (McCormick World of Flavors, Baltimore Harbor, Maryland and Timberland Exhibit Booth, Salt Lake City, Utah); Roundhouse Portland Oregon, Adidas NBA's All-Star Weekend Concept Store); Bruce E. Teitelbaum, Ellen Friedman, Eric Williams, of RPG, New York City (Burt's Bees, Furminator, Sugarpova, The Glossary); Michelle Alandete, Starbucks Coffee Company, Global Design and Innovation, Janet Wardley of Harvey Nichols, London (Christmas 2015); Steve Weirsema, West Office Exhibition Design for Robert Mondavi and the National Museum of Toys and Miniatures; Jerzy Wodniak and Pawel Garus of Mode:Lina of Poznan, Poland (Clae Pop Up Shop, Poznan, Poland); and the owners of K'OOK in Wormerveer, The Netherlands—Anne van der Spoel and Karen Schoen. And let us not forget to thank profusely the photographers for permitting us to use their artistry to illuminate our stories; Aaron Dougherty, West Office Exhibition Design; Alberto Ferrerro of Milan for Carlo Pazolini; Benny Chan for WithMe; Lazlo Regos Photography, Farmington Hills, Michigan for McCormick World of Flavor; Mark Steele Photography for

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My love to all those people who are real and make my life real and fulfilled—to Suzan, my wife, and to my children, Karen, Jess, Lysa, John, Risa, and Adam. And here is to the next generation—Brian, Amanda, Mike, Jake, Sam, Ben, Marley, and Heather.

Martin M. Pegler

Thank you to my faculty colleagues at Fashion Institute of Technology who were incredibly supportive, Professor Marianne Klimchuk, Packaging Design Chair; Professor Craig Berger, VPED Chair; Professor Glenn Sokoli, Creative Director Global Visual Group; and Professor Joshua Benghiat, Lighting Designer. I appreciate the countless emails, proofreading and advice. Thank you to the team at RPG, New York for their time and support of this text, Bruce E. Teitelbaum, Ellen Friedman, Eric Williams, and Samantha Freistat.

Thank you to my parents Victor and Bernice who nurtured me to become a "maker" and create things by hand. To my design partner and husband David, my kids Abby, Hannah and David who supported and encouraged me—each of you inspire me every day.

Anne Kong

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PART ONE

Getting Started—Visual Merchandising and Display Basics

Visual merchandising is no longer just a matter of making merchandise look attractive for the customer. It is the actual selling of merchandise through a visual medium. Visual merchandising is a way for stores to say, "This is who we are and what we stand for." An understanding of basic visual merchandising concepts and theory is essential to the effective presentation of a store and its merchandise to the customer. Part One of this text is devoted to those merchandising "basics."

Chapter 1 introduces visual merchandising and display and, for the first of many times throughout the text, discusses the important concept of store image, the retail experience, customer engagement and the challenges of omnichannel shopping. The use of color and texture to add excitement to visual presentations is explored in Chapter 2.

Artistic principles, such as line, balance, contrast, and rhythm, which are central to any visual medium, are applied to visual merchandising and display in Chapter 3. Proper lighting is vital to selling, both inside and outside the store. Light directs customers' eyes to the merchandise and invites them to buy. Chapter 4 discusses the various types of light sources available and how they are used in store merchandising and display.

From the start of writing a design brief to final implementation of a display, Chapter 5 covers the phases of the design process.

Chapter One

Why Do We Display?

A colorful cut-out display at Harvey Nichols, London, United Kingdom. *Copyright WindowsWear PRO http://pro.windowswear.com contact@windowswear.com 1.646.827.2288*

AFTER YOU HAVE READ THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO DISCUSS

- the definition of visual merchandising
- the concept of store image and its relationship to visual merchandising and display
- the purposes of visual merchandising
- how omnichannel retailing has influenced display
- new strategies for customer engagement

We show in order to sell. Display or **visual merchandising** is showing merchandise and concepts at their very best, with the end purpose of making a sale. We may not actually sell the object displayed or the idea promoted, but we do attempt to convince the viewer of the value of the object, the store promoting the object, or the organization behind the concept. Although a cash register may not ring because of a particular display, that display should make an impression on the viewer that will affect future sales.

The display person used to be the purveyor of dreams and fantasies, presenting merchandise in settings that stirred the imagination and promoted fantastic flights to unattainable heights. Today's visual merchandiser, however, sells "aspirations." Today's shopper can be whatever he or she wants to be by simply wearing certain lifestyle brands that have a built-in status. The visual merchandiser dresses a mannequin in slim-fitting jeans, flashes the lights, adds the lifestyle graphic depicting the fashionable crowd, and reinforces the image of sexuality and devastating attractiveness that is part of the prominent brand. Wearing Brand X jeans, whether size 8 or 18, makes the wearer feel special. She imagines herself to be that slim, sensuous Kardashian she has seen on social media, surrounded by crowds of admirers. She feels special when she is wearing her slim-fitting jeans.

Today's mannequin represents any shopper on the other side of the glass; it may have a flawless figure, abstract facial features, an egg head, or a branded neck cap, but it still prompts the customer to think, "That mannequin looks great, so why not me?" That's reality; that's selling! The visual merchandiser, therefore, presents more than the merchandise. He or she presents the image of who or what the shopper can be when using the merchandise displayed.

It has been said by presidents and vice presidents of large retail operations, and it has been uttered by experienced shoppers and consumers: There is very little difference between the merchandise sold in one store and that sold in another. Many department and specialty stores carry the same name brands—the same globally advertised lines seen

FIGURE 1.1 *Lights! Color! Line and Action! Theater! Razzle Dazzle!* That is what display is all about—and getting the shoppers' attention and drawing them in to the store. At Christmas time it takes all of the above plus more. *Harvey Nichols, London, United Kingdom. Photo: Heather Berrisford.*

on fashion blogs and in magazines. Often, the real difference is in the price of the merchandise being offered for sale.

Why, then, does an individual shop in Store A and pay more for the same item selling for less in Store B? Why does a shopper tote the shopping bag from Store C rather than an equally attractive bag from Store D? Why do shoppers cover themselves with garments branded with a store's name on pockets, patches, shoulders, and hips? It has to do with the **store image**! If everyone believes that people who shop in Store A are young, smart, sophisticated, clever, trendy, and fun to be with, then a shopper who buys clothes at that store can also be young, smart, sophisticated, and so on. The visual merchandiser reinforces that belief with merchandise displays, the types of mannequins shown, and the manner in which the mannequins are dressed, positioned, and lit. In this way, the visual merchandiser promotes the store's image and fashion trendiness. Often, the visual merchandiser is not selling any one piece of merchandise, but rather the idea that any purchase from that store will guarantee social success and the stamp of the "right" taste level. However, visual merchandising is still *selling*. We will return in later chapters to the concept of image and image projection in merchandise presentation. (See Figure 1.1.)

In addition to selling actual merchandise, displays can be used to introduce a new product, a fashion trend, or a new look or idea. The display may be the first three-dimensional representation of something the consumer has thus far seen only in ads or on the website. Displays can be used to educate the consumer concerning what the new item is, how it can be worn or used, and how it can be accessorized. Displays may also supply pertinent information such as the price, promotion, and other special features.

The visual merchandiser may create a display that stimulates, tantalizes, or arouses the shopper's curiosity to such a degree that he or she is "challenged" to enter the store and wander through it, even though the shopper is not motivated by the displayed product itself. This is still a victory. It gives the visual merchandiser and the merchant many more opportunities to sell that shopper once he or she is inside the store. To make a shopper a stopper and a "walk-in" rather than a "walk-by" is a commercial achievement. And always, as mentioned earlier, the purpose of visual merchandising is to promote the store image—to let people know what the store is, where it stands on fashion trends, what one can expect inside it, to whom it appeals, its price range, and the caliber of its merchandise and merchandising.

The visual merchandiser always puts the store's best "face" forward. His or her duty is to bring shoppers into the store, while at the same time ensuring that the interior presentation is in keeping with what has been promised on the outside. (See Figure 1.2.)

It is important to remember that visual merchandising and display has always been a hands-on career. Whereas some jobs may be desk- or table-bound, visual display and merchandising has always been out on the floor, in the window, up a ladder, or down in the shop getting ready for the aforementioned activities. It has always been creative and interactive and has involved the person's hands, body, and brain to create something special or memorable. What did the display persons of decades ago do before

FIGURE 1.2 Up close the window is filled with eye-arresting decorative details that help set the look and create the mood for the featured garment. *"The Artist." Stacy Suvino, Director of Visuals for Miss Jackson, Tulsa, Oklahoma. Rachel Everett, visual artist.*

staple guns, Velcro, and hot glue? Pins, tacks, tape, and small nails worked—maybe not as well, but the display person managed. There have been many advances in the tools used today; most visual merchandising departments resemble design labs with the advances in technology. It's not unusual to find a vinyl cutting machine, a large-format printer, and several computers near the worktable and mannequin storage bins. Visual merchandising has progressed way beyond just the display of merchandise in windows and the store interior; it's grown 360 degrees to encompass the "total retail experience."

The Retail Experience

It is an exciting time to be part of the visual merchandising and display industry! More thought, energy, and imagination goes into designing retail spaces than ever before. The consumer no longer comes to the store to shop but rather is on a quest for new experiences, sparking the growth of what is termed "experience design." Shoppers empowered by technology and smartphones have changed the retail landscape. They are making up the rules, and retailers are listening—providing customers with the products they want, when they want it, at the price they are willing to pay.

Technology may have changed the strategy for getting products to consumers, but the job of the visual merchandiser and store designer has remained the same. We continue to innovate new ways to entertain customers and inspire them enough to post, tweet and Instagram about it. The impact of technology on retail has generated the phenomena of **omnichannel** retailing. "Omni," meaning all, and "channel," referencing the many retail mediums, merges an array of shopping experiences to reach consumers. Consumer preferences are reinventing the essence of shopping, as they choose to blend shopping channels either for fun or convenience, or to simplify their busy lives. Smartphones, computers, tablets, social media, email, television, direct mail catalogues, and call centers all afford consumers shopping opportunities. They may visit the retail store to try on the product and then return home to make their purchase online, possibly taking advantage of a value-based offering not found in the brick-and-mortar store.

Omnichannel shopping has increased the need for retailers to stay focused on what customers want, and data analytics are increasingly relied on to aid in this process. The crystal ball, or customer's "click," has presented new ways for retailers to track and learn about consumer behavior. This has spawned a new level of engagement and shifted the approach to visual merchandising and store design. Through observation we know more about consumer habits thanks to social media, websites, or eye-tracking devices within the store environment. Kiosks, digital scanners, and NFC (near field communication) technology allow consumers to find and pay for products more quickly while enabling the retailer to better predict consumer expectations. Retailers are leveraging this information by providing more energetic retail activities including additional space for food services, free Wi-Fi access, and tablets anchored to fixtures to support mobile app purchases during the brick-and-mortar store visit. Omni-retailing and social media have inspired new segments in the marketplace. There are smaller niche shopping environments designed to appeal to a targeted demographic, merchandise offerings that connect luxury goods with value-based items, and online stores establishing temporary or permanent brick-and-mortar store; these are all ways that retailers seek to gain more traction. It is evident that retailers can no longer depend solely on brand loyalty and expect the customer to return—each day is a new day, and satisfying each customer is the first goal on the retail home front.

Consumer Engagement

In the present economic climate, designers, firms, and retailers recognize that forging an emotional bond with consumers—much like a good friendship—is one key strategy in keeping the relationship steady. The following twelve retail strategies are energizing and humanizing the retail landscape:

- **Customer-Centric and Service-Oriented** American Girl set a standard by extending its brand, providing personal services for young customers and their dolls. It has partnered with leading NYC hotel brands and offers in-store amenities such as a doll hospital, a hair/nail salon where customers can have their

ears pierced, and a café experience to have lunch or a birthday party. These activities not only promote repeat store visits; they forge a heritage and a long-term relationship with consumers.

- **Value Proposition** Provide services and features that are innovative and add value to your brand. Apple was first to inspire retailers to step up in-store customer services and offer educational programs with the "genius bar." The friendly band of Apple associates eased uncertainties about learning new technology and convinced users that the iPhone was as simple as touted in the company's Apple ad campaign. Small niceties go a long way, and add-on services are now "a given" consumer expectation. Retailers need to simplify the checkout process and adopt a friendly payment solution. The checkout experience should be as simple and engaging as the displays in the store; shoppers want to use mobile devices to shorten the wait.
- **Esteem and Aspiration** Promote product quality, transparency, and sustainability. Customers are forming emotional bonds with brands and businesses that align with their beliefs and rewarding them with their loyalty. Retailer Marks & Spencer leads by example through programs that keep employees engaged in social responsibility, sustainable business practices, and customers' health and well-being. Panera Cares stores feed thousands of hungry Americans each day, asking patrons to pay what they can afford. Panera Cares community cafes are designed to help raise awareness about the very serious and pervasive problem of food insecurity in our country. Timberland employees can receive forty annual paid service hours to support local environmental projects.
- **Sense of Community** Build kinship. SoulCycle brings consumers together in an atmosphere that motivates individuals, encourages teamwork, and nurtures community. Capital One Cafés, designed to feel more like a gathering space than a bank, often including public seating, private nooks, coffee bars, and more. Lululemon provides in-store yoga classes that instill a sense of connection to neighbors, friends, and likeminded community members. Comfortable customer-focused spaces are core to humanizing the new retail experience.
- **Personalization** Incorporate selling opportunities that are personalized; engage the consumer along every step of the shopping journey. Nordstrom's partnership with the online retailer Shoes of Prey invites consumers to design a custom pair of shoes in-store. Once seated at the elegant design station, the consumer can explore 170-plus swatches of materials and feel how the different shades and textures work together. A shoe stylist guides the customer through process, from choosing the style, heel height, and materials to deciding which size and special add-ons are perfect for the individual. (See Figure 1.3.) Nike, Converse, and Adidas all offer personalized services that enable consumers to customize their athletic footwear based on their sport, style, comfort, or endurance level.
- **Entertainment** Williams-Sonoma's center-of-the-store "island kitchen" inspires customers to experience and indulge in culinary arts via product demonstrations and hands-on opportunities. Shoppers of all ages can learn how to prepare exotic recipes and use work gadgets purchased in the store. House of Vans, a retail destination located underground in New York and London, entertains visitors with an art gallery, a

FIGURE 1.3 This glossy white table fitted with digital tablets invites customers to design their own shoes at Nordstrom's Shoes of Prey destination. Oversized flowers created from stilettos and flats sprout from the center and hover as shoppers choose their size, fit, and style. An adjacent wall with 170-plus fabric samples offers an opportunity to feel the textures and choose colors with the keen eye of a seasoned stylist on hand. *Shoes of Prey, Nordstrom Stores. Photo: Courtesy of Shoes of Prey.*

VansLab artist incubator space, a cinema, a live music venue, a premium café and bar, and a gifting suite. Their skater-built and -designed concrete bowl, mini ramp, and street course provide a full entertainment experience to customers and community.

- **Emphasize the Journey** Warby Parker tells an enchanting brand story. The customer journey emphasizes accessible price points, high style, and a user-friendly store environment. The company's mail order service allows customers to try eyewear on in home, while its showrooms keep consumers engaged with personalized service and experience. IKEA welcomes a world of shoppers to experience home decor with many of the same features. IKEA consumers design their own kitchen in-store using easy to use software tools, eat Swedish meatballs and other delicacies, and entertain the kids in a supervised ball room.
- **In-Store Animation** An ever-growing number of fashion retailers such as Urban Outfitters provide a platform for shoppers to take dressing room "selfies" and share them with friends. Eager consumers enjoy the opportunity to taste, listen, smell, and test products boosting the appeal of sensory motivation. Tastings, demonstrations, and classes at Urban's in-store eateries are gatherings to build better relationships with consumers. Notable chefs such as Marc Vetri, Michael Symon, and Ilan Hall have partnered with the store to create a trendy gathering place. Today, making dinner plans with friends could mean meeting them at the local Urban Outfitters. In addition, Urban Outfitters and Marc Vetri support annual philanthropic events like The Chef Event for Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation (https://www.alexslemonade.org/campaign/great-chefs-eventn).
- **Cross-Selling** Customers delight in Anthropologie's "curated" selection of products in the store. This editorial approach to merchandising immerses the consumer in a shopping excursion that feels intoxicating, distinctive and personal. The *treasure hunt* shopping experience of each uniquely designed Anthropologie captures the flavor of an exotic marketplace. Discovery, imagination, and visual stimulation are highlights of the consumer's shopping experience.
- **Sweet Spots** Whole Foods transforms endcaps and feature tables into mini destinations as opportunities to engage and educate consumers about its products and ingredients. Every aisle reveals a feast for the senses. The hallmarks include staging colorful products in still-life settings, using unexpected elements such as a bed of soil, hand-painted signage by local artists, and authentic crate and pallet structures.
- **The Product Is the Hero** Emphasize the product with dynamic product presentation that is easy to navigate and understand. Nespresso makes it easy and intuitive for consumers to navigate merchandise selections. Groupings by color, style, size, and flavor (depending on the category) keep the products accessible and in the spotlight. Maintaining brand consistency through logo, imagery, color, and other brand assets is essential. The conformity of application of brand elements helps to ensure consumer perceptions are accurate and eliminates brand confusion. Target, Starbucks, Apple, and McDonald's all serve as exemplary models.
- **Retail and Technology** As retail and technology continue to merge to provide support and experiences, omnichannel shopping will unify with the brick and mortar store. Virtual reality and augmented reality will present new opportunities for customers to experience products and spaces.

Stores of the future will need to accept and adapt omni-retailing—it is here to stay. The "integration" rather than just the "addition" of technology may be the most significantly beneficial change to future retail models. As social connectivity continues to grow in importance, retailers need to intensify their focus on creativity, authenticity, communication, discovery, and emotion. Any one of these can stimulate the visitor experience in a store setting. Brick-and-mortar stores will eventually evolve from being a place to sell product into a showcase of experiences that can sell lifestyle and entertainment. Stores could rival a museum visit, concert, four-star meal, or sporting event. The successful retail store of the future needs to be all of these bundled into one. The next generation of designers will align these to craft a new store model fusing the physical store, the online store, and the consumer experience.

Go Green 1.1: Sustainable Retail Practices

There are lots of opportunities to "Go Green" and reuse, repurpose, and recycle while enhancing brand identity. Old and maybe seemingly discarded objects can add new life and interest in a retail environment. If the brand is elegant and refined, and real antiques are not within the reach of a limited budget, try making your own "antique" furniture or furniture-as-fixtures by using paint and imagination. A visit to a local secondhand store or a search at garage sales may turn up reproductions of period furniture in imperfect condition. Depending upon your brand and what it stands for and who the customer is, strip off the upholstery fabric; paint the frame a neutral color, a sophisticated shiny black, or a cool, matte white; and reupholster with a fabric that carries through the store's theme—or, if there is one—the signature color of the brand. If the brand is young and trendy and a bit frivolous, the same frames can work in bright, sharp colors or an array of happy pastels.

Always consider the brand first and the clientele you are trying to impress. No matter how contemporary your shop, there may be a spot for a focal fixture that stands out. That fixture may be an armoire that is now a color it was never intended to be or wallpapered over in a striking pattern. A tall chest of drawers with several drawers pulled out to display merchandise can also be a rescued piece from a refuse heap. See Chapter 17: Furniture as Merchandisers and Fixtures.

When it comes to display props, have fun. A shopper who steps into the store with a smile after seeing the window or up-front display is easier to satisfy than one who is glum or frowning. Throughout this book there are references on the use of repurposing everyday objects—especially obsolete ones—in new and enticing ways. Sometimes, you don't even have to refinish the pieces; just dust them off and let the shabby, scaly finish contrast with all the new and bright products. A weather-beaten, age-stained dress form on a cast iron roll-around base can do more than highlight the new arrival. It can suggest tradition or hand tailoring or maybe the vintage quality of the dress design. Whatever the message, that dress will get the shopper's attention in ways a brand new, crisp and clean dress form wouldn't. Relics of the past that perform similar functions as new household products—like coffee makers, steam irons, toasters, and air conditioners—are sure attention getters that may come off the refuse heap and be recycled as decorative props that contrast the items for sale.

It is all about enhancing the brand by making the brand identity more appealing and more memorable while finding a new use for an old disposable device or object.

FIGURE 1.4 In keeping with Robert Redford's feelings about the ecosystem of the world and sustainability and recycling, Redford's Sundance shop in Edina, Minnesota, designed by JGA of Southfield, Michigan, "celebrates the natural characteristics and finishes of the materials" and makes use of rough, hewn, reclaimed wood and the weathered patina. *Photo: Troy Thies Photography, Minneapolis, Minnesota.*

Brand Box 1.1: Brand and Brand Identity

Unless you have been hibernating or totally out of the retail scene, you must have heard the word that is reverberating through the media—the word is *brand*. Everything we do or say seems to refer back to brand and how it is presented. Just exactly what is a brand, and how do we get it? If we have it—how do we show it so that others will recognize and acknowledge that brand?

The other definition of brand—the brand or mark that cowboys burn into the hides of cattle—is not quite the same, but it is close. The brand identifies who you are—what you are or who is the producer of the object or provider of the service. It distinguishes you or your products from same or similar ones. It can be a word (Kleenex), a name (Campbell's Soups), a symbol (the "swoosh" of Nike or Apple's bitten apple), a color (the red-and-white bull's eye of Target), a graphic design that is applied to a product or service (Starbuck's crowned siren), or a combination of any of the above. Companies get graphic artists to render the "look" of the brand, selecting the just-right signature color, a specific (if not original) font, a quirky logo that they hope will be memorable—anything that will make the representation of their brand unique, appealing, and memorable to a specific audience.

What is the brand? In the book *Designing B to B Brands: Lessons from Deloitte and 195,000 Brand Managers* (John Wiley and Sons 2013), Carlos Martinez Onaindia, global brand senior manager, and Brian Resnick, global brand director, both at Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Ltd., answered that question. In that book, Onaindia said that the brand was more than the logo, tagline, or mission statement—"It's what people say when you leave the room—it's about perception. It's about reputation—why you are different from your competition."

Resnick said, "A brand is a collection of distinguishing intangible assets that is most commonly associated with and shaped by a product, person, or organization, but ultimately defined by the consumer or audience. At the heart of any successful brand is that idea of consistency in communications and consistency in experience." Now, what happens when that company or corporation invites the public into its domain—be it a retail store, a trade show, a café or restaurant, a bank, or even a gone-in-a-minute pop-up shop? How is the corporate brand made evident in that specific site? We now come to *brand identity*.

What is the brand identity? Brian Resnick provides us with this definition in his book. "Brand identity is expressed through the most physically embodied aspects of the organization. It is the manifestation of the brand that can be seen, heard, and immediately experienced. Brand identity encompasses visual identity, aural identity, and other sensory components of a brand"—like walking into a shop and seeing, feeling, and being totally involved in and surrounded by the brand imagery. It is about adding emotions and sensory appeal. This is where the store planners, visual merchandisers, and display persons make their contributions. This is where the creative and talented showpeople step in to create the desired ambience that will define the story that the brand wants to project—with an appeal to all five senses. It is the designers who gives it form and shape—add texture and materials, a color palette, an emotional context and appeal, the sound, or the specific aroma. This is the drama that will create the desired perception of what the brand stands for and adds extra value to the product. And you can be the talent that makes it happen. (See Figure 1.5.)

There is no special formula—no magic word that suddenly provides the ideal brand identity. The presentation of the merchandise and the displays that bring shoppers into the store are vital to creating the brand identity. If the store uses mannequins, are they distinctive? Do they truly represent the retailer's selected shoppers? Do they complement the

FIGURE 1.5 When red is the team color and you are selling merchandise for the team's fans, then you promote the color and all of the items that flaunt the team's brand color. *VFB Fan Club, Stuttgart, Germany. Designed by Blocher Blocher Partners. Photo: Joachim Gropius for Blocher Blocher Partners.*

merchandise? Are they as smart, sophisticated, and stylish as the garments or as amusing, young, and trendy as the retailer would like the wares to appear? What does the display of stock on the wall and floor fixtures—on the display tables and racks—say about the brand and the merchandise? If your brand is elegant and refined, is that evident in the look and texture of the shop interior—the materials and colors used? If it is a fun, funky sort of brand, how much of that feeling does a shopper get as he or she walks into the store? Is the shop fun to be in, and is the presentation of merchandise lighthearted as well? If your brand is represented by a white jungle cat leaping off of a signature red background, how do you make sure that image is woven into the store's decor and its displays? How do you work this familiar logo or trademark into your display calendar so that it is always present but always looking fresh and new? Add a red Santa hat to the puma and maybe a sack overflowing with sports shoes on its back for Christmas or turn the red background into a giant heart through which the puma leaps to greet Valentine's Day. Where the brand features a special or signature color, find clever and surprising ways to use that color in your visual merchandising and your displays. If "heritage" or "tradition" is an important part of your brand, emphasize it by the use of "antique" or just very old items that refer to the product or the theme you are developing. Reuse and repurposing can be applied here as well.

As you make your way through this edition, be aware and make note of the numerous ways you can enhance the brand you are working with—whether it be the store's brand or the brand of the product you are featuring in your window or interior display or the product line you are highlighting as a shop-within-the-shop in the store. First and foremost is the store's brand, then the product lines that are carried in the store. If you are fortunate enough to work in a designer's boutique, your task is simplified because it is the designer's brand that is the only brand you are presenting.

Today, we are a brand-conscious society and it is important that the brand develop a strong identity that plays well in the chosen marketplace. That "look" can mean continuity and goodwill and enhance the store's reputation, especially if the retailer decides to open up branches of the brand in other locations.

Why Do We Display? Trade Talk

consumer engagement
omnichannel
store image
visual merchandising

Why Do We Display? A Recap

- Sell by showing and promoting.
- Encourage the shopper to enter the store.
- Get the customer to pause and "shop" the selling floor.
- Establish, promote, and enhance the store's visual image.
- Entertain customers and enhance their shopping experience.
- Introduce and explain new products.
- Educate customers by answering questions on the use and accessorizing of a product or fashion trend.
- Omnichannel retail practices changing the retail experience.
- New strategies to promote customer engagement.

Questions for Review and Discussion

1. Describe the role of visual merchandising in retailing today.
2. Compare and contrast the store images of H & M and Urban Outfitters. How does each store promote the individual image through visual merchandising and display? Relate specific examples.
3. List five purposes of visual merchandising and describe a display that would fulfill each of these purposes.
4. How has omnichannel retailing affected retail and display?
5. List three ways to promote customer engagement.
6. What are some of the challenges designers must face when "going green"?
7. Give three examples of branding.

Chapter Two

Color and Texture

The year of the Rooster inspires Christian Louboutin, Hong Kong. *Copyright WindowsWear PRO http://pro.windowswear.com contact@ windowswear.com 1.646.827.2288*

AFTER YOU HAVE READ THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO DISCUSS

- the relationship between color and visual merchandising and display
- the common associations with, and reactions to, various colors
- colors in the warm and cool families
- the concepts of color mixing and of value as it relates to color
- primary, secondary, intermediate, and tertiary colors
- the differences between a tint and a shade
- the relationship of colors to each other on the color wheel
- how neutral colors are best used in store design
- the relationship between texture and color

Color is the biggest motivation for shopping. People buy color before they buy size, fit, or price. People also react to the colors around the garment being considered. Some stores, such as Gap, will introduce a whole new palette each season. Although the styling may be similar to or the same as an existing item, it is the new color presentation that brings the shoppers onto the carefully color-schemed and color-coordinated sales floor. Malls, shopping centers, big-box stores, and small specialty stores are all reconsidering the colors they use to attract shoppers and keep them in the store after they have been lured inside. The color of a store's signage sometimes says more than the words on the sign: Is it subtle? Is it sophisticated? Is it daring or demanding? Intrusive? Inviting? Ingratiating? Color says something about the kind of store, the kind of merchandise, and the kind of market the retailer hopes to appeal to. Taste and colors, like everything else in fashion, change, and though some basic conclusions can be drawn about color and how people respond to the various hues, tints, and shades, there is still the "in" fashion or trend that determines when a color is in and when it is out. (See Figure 2.1.)

Many books have been written about color and the psychology of color: which colors expand or go forward, which contract or withdraw, which will "raise the roof" (or the ceiling at least), and which will seem to bring the ceiling down. Some colors make the viewer feel warm, expansive, generous, full of good feelings, all aglow, and responsive enough to buy anything. Other colors make the viewer feel cold, aloof, unresponsive, moody, and impossible to reach.

FIGURE 2.1 The sign says *sale* but the story is about *color*. The panels are painted in an assortment of warm, fashionable colors befitting the Milanese boutique—rather than the sharp red usually used for sales. Note how that complementary turquoise garment pops out of the presentation. *Stefania D'Alessandro/Getty Images.*

To add to the color confusion, not everyone reacts in the same way to the same color. A happy childhood, for example, surrounded by a loving family and associated with a pink and pretty bedroom, pink and frilly dresses—just pink and pampered all the way—can make pink a joyful, loving color. But, if the pink room were forced on the person, the pink-but-not-so-pretty dresses were hand-me-downs, or pink evoked the memory of medicine, hospitals, and sickness, then pink will certainly not be a "turn-on" color. The visual merchandiser/store planner will not be able to provide the ideal setting for each and every customer, but it is possible to satisfy the vast majority while alienating only a few.

Physical and Psychological Reactions to Color

Color psychology is very important in visual merchandising. Many theories have been espoused concerning the effects of color on people and their moods while shopping. Color can immediately create a mood. Most of us have colors that tend to cheer us up when we are feeling down and colors that calm us. Each of us also has colors that can make us physically feel hotter or cooler. The problem for the visual merchandiser is that each person may have a distinct reaction to the same color. In our vast and global marketplace, there are cultural and regional differences in color preference. Also, public taste in color changes, sometimes dramatically, over time. However, in trying to predict the effects of color on the public in general, many visual merchandisers rely on these widely researched color responses.

YELLOW

It is the color that the eye registers first, and therefore it is used for hard hats and safety equipment. It is sunshine and gold; happy, bright, cheerful, vital, fun-filled, and alive; daisies, marigolds, and lemons. It is optimism, expectancy, relaxation, and a wide-open-armed acceptance of the world, suggestive of change, challenge, and innovation. It is spring, summer, and Easter; when it "turns to gold," it is autumn.

ORANGE

A friendly, sociable color, orange is agreeable, overt, glowing, and incandescent. It is exciting, vibrant, and filled with anticipation. It is fire and flame, a rising sun in the tropics or a setting sun in the desert; Halloween and autumn leaves. It signals safety and hazards. It declassifies and indicates an economical product.

RED

Exciting, stimulating, loving, powerful, and sexy—these are some of the words used to describe red. It can be assertive, demanding, and obvious, possibly even cheap or vulgar. Generally, it comes across as warm, stirring, and passionate. Red is Valentine's Day and Christmas. It stands for valor and patriotism—the flag and firecrackers. It conveys "sale," "clearance," a warning, a fire, and a fright. In most cultures, red means stop. It can symbolize luck and has the ability to make you feel hungry.

PINK

It may be regarded as feminine, sweet, lovely, pretty—little girls, rosebuds, and ribbons and lace. Or it may connote something fleshy, raw, undercooked, and underdeveloped. Pink is also flowers for Mother's Day, Easter eggs and bunny ears, intimate apparel, and an elegant approach to Christmas.

GREEN

An alive, cool, and "growing" color, green is springtime and summer—lawns, bushes, vegetables, trees, and rain forests. When lightened it can be sterile and clean and symbolize nature, recycling, and sustainability. It is St. Patrick's Day and the other half of a Christmas color scheme. Some shades of green can also be bilious and stomach turning—or reminiscent of khaki and war. It can also remind people of mold or decay.

BLUE

Blue is always a popular color choice and the favorite of most. Cool, clean, calm, comfortable, and collected, it

speaks of soft, soaring skies, serene lakes, gentle horizons, and the security of hearth, home, flag, and patriotic celebrations. It is quiet but can become cold, moody, or even depressing. It is always right for spring and summer skies, shadows on snow, and icy winters.

BLUE-GREEN

This is the happy marriage of blue and green. It is a cool, tasteful color—sensitive and restful, but alive; vital yet quiet. It is water, sky, and grass, peaceful and growing, a great summer color to complement white and glowing tan complexions.

PEACH

Peach suggests the warmth and happy excitement of orange (toned down), with none of its grating qualities. A smiling, glowing color, it is easy to be with and delightful to be in. A new neutral and a pastel earth tone, peach is a friendly color that will go with almost anything.

RUST

The other end of the orange scale, it is deep, rich, and earthy without being earthbound. Rust is a full-bodied color with the warmth of orange, but with none of its obvious, blatant, or irritating qualities. It is the earth color that goes with other colors but is neither invisible nor intruding. It is the personification of autumn.

VIOLET/PURPLE

This traditionally regal color has, in recent years, become a favorite with children. In some shades it is a happy, youthful color, whereas in its deepest and richest form it is a color of taste, distinction, and discretion. It is a high-fashion color that has to be sold. Purple can sometimes come off as overbearing and pompous. Lavender may convey old-fashioned Victorian charm and Easter trim.

GRAY

Gray is the neutral barrier that makes separations, but no statements. Gray exists—and exists well—with other colors that have more to say. Gray may be either a depressing, down-in-the-dumps color or a super-elegant and sophisticated color that suggests fine jewelry, silver, furs, and designer salons.

BROWN

Brown is the earth, hearth, and home; the family and the farm; the simple things: wood, clay, and other natural materials. It steps back to let other colors go forward, but unlike gray, it does not disappear. Brown is warm and can sometimes cast a glow. From the lightest off-white beige to the deepest charcoal brown, it is relaxed, unexciting, and in no way unnerving. It is the deep color for autumn.

WHITE

White is the blankest of the blank, but a strong and able supporting player that makes every other color, by comparison, turn in bigger, bolder, brighter performances. It is innocence and hope, purity, angels and religious celebrations, a wedding gown, and the blinding brilliance of clear light. Cotton white can be a sparkling accent, a sharp highlight, a crisp delineator, or an unpleasant comparison by which other "whites" may come off as dingy or unhappily yellowed. White can also be sterile, antiseptic, bleak, and harsh.

BLACK

This color connotes night, a vacuum, and an absence of light. It is mystery, sex, and death, as well as the color of intrigue and sophistication. Ultrachic or ultra-depressing, it also can be ominous and threatening or downright dull. It can be as sensuous as satin or as deep as velvet. Black is a neutral, but a neutral that requires careful handling.

GOLD, SILVER, AND PLATINUM

Known as metallics, these often suggest premium-priced products and tiers of quality.

Color Families

In the descriptions of reactions to the colors listed in the previous sections, certain adjectives appear over and over again. Some colors are described as warm and glowing, whereas others are cool, calm, or aloof. Still another group of colors could be categorized as neutrals. Thus, most colors are grouped into ambiguous but convenient families.

Red, orange, yellow, pink, rust, brown, and peach can all be classified as **warm colors**, aggressive, spirited, advancing colors. Blue, green, violet, and blue-green are regarded as a group of **cool colors** and receding colors. That leaves white, gray, black, and brown to band together as **neutral colors**. Neutrals can be either warm or cool. Black, white, and all the shades of gray are considered cool, whereas anything from warm off-white through all the shades of beige and to the deepest brown is called a warm neutral.

By personal preference, people of certain age and social groups will respond more readily to one family over another. Young children and nonsophisticates, however, commonly delight in and respond to bright, sharp colors: yellow, red, green, brilliant blue, shocking pink, and clear turquoise. Casual, outgoing, fun-loving, high-spirited people who want fashions and settings to match are drawn to the warm colors. Sophisticated people are supposed to appreciate subtlety: the slightly off-colors, toned down and neutralized without being neutered. Elegant and big-ticket merchandise seems to make a better showing and get a better customer response in a "cool" environment. "Serenity" sells silver, furs, and other choice merchandise.

COLOR MIXING

In working with color, it is wise to have a basic idea about what color is, how it works, and what it can do. If we accept the long-established theory that there are three basic pigment colors from which all other colors can be mixed, we are well on the way to understanding color.

Red, yellow, and blue are called **primary colors**. By mixing red and yellow, we get orange. Blue and yellow combined will produce green. Equal parts of red and blue make violet, or purple. These resulting colors—orange, green, and violet—are **secondary colors**. Furthermore, mixing yellow (a primary color) with green (a secondary)—depending on the quantity of each color used—results in a yellow-green or a green-yellow. These are **intermediate colors**. Mixing two secondary colors (orange plus green or green plus purple) results in **tertiary colors**. All those romantic, exotic names with which fashion and decorating abound, such as shrimp, mango, avocado, chartreuse, pumpkin, plum, and so on, are actually selling names of these tertiary colors. (See Figure 2.2.)

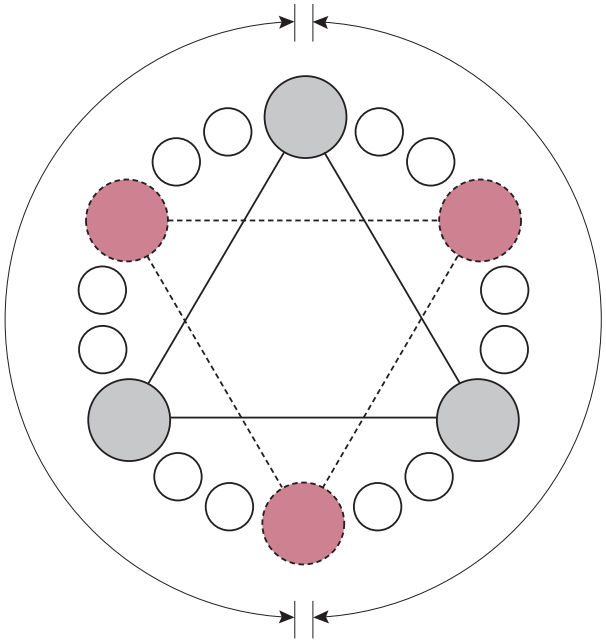

FIGURE 2.2 Mixing color pigments. *Illustration by Rob Carboni.*

Value refers to the amount of light or dark in a color. Add white to any of the full-value colors (primary, secondary, or intermediate) and, depending on the amount of white added, the result will be a **tint**, or **pastel**, of that color—a lighter, more gentle variation of the original color. The addition of black to a color will produce **shades**, or deeper, richer, fuller-bodied versions of the color. Thus, the addition of white to red could result in a pretty, soft, baby-sweet pink, whereas the addition of black to red could produce a masculine, heady garnet, dubonnet, or maroon.

Color Schemes

The color wheel graphically shows the relationship of colors to each other. The location of colors on the wheel is relevant to the following discussion.

ANALOGOUS, OR ADJACENT, COLORS

Colors that exist harmoniously next to each other on the wheel, because of shared characteristics (and pigments), work together in a display area to create specific effects. Yellow, yellow-green, green, and green-blue are examples

of neighboring, adjacent, or analogous colors, as are yellow, yellow-orange, orange, and orange-red. Adjacent colors reinforce each other; they are compatible and usually can be counted on to create a close harmony. Thus, when used in close groups or clusters, they create an **analogous color scheme**; for example, blue sky and green grass to make a turquoise outfit appear cooler and crisper.

COMPLEMENTARY COLORS

Complementary colors are found opposite each other on the color wheel. Red is the complement of green (and vice versa); blue and orange are complements, as are yellow and violet. These opposites do not make for close harmony or gentle combinations. Complements bring out the intensity and brilliance of each other. Thus, complementary color schemes are usually strong, demanding, and vibrant. Complementary colors will vibrate against each other (creating kinetic patterns) when placed very close together. They will make "motion" where there actually is none. (See Figure 2.3.)

Complementary schemes are fine in bright, youth-oriented areas, where the creation of a shocking or attention-getting palette is desired. They can be fun, dynamic, exciting, and sometimes irritating. However, it is possible to minimize or even eliminate some of the dynamic or irritating qualities of the complementary scheme.

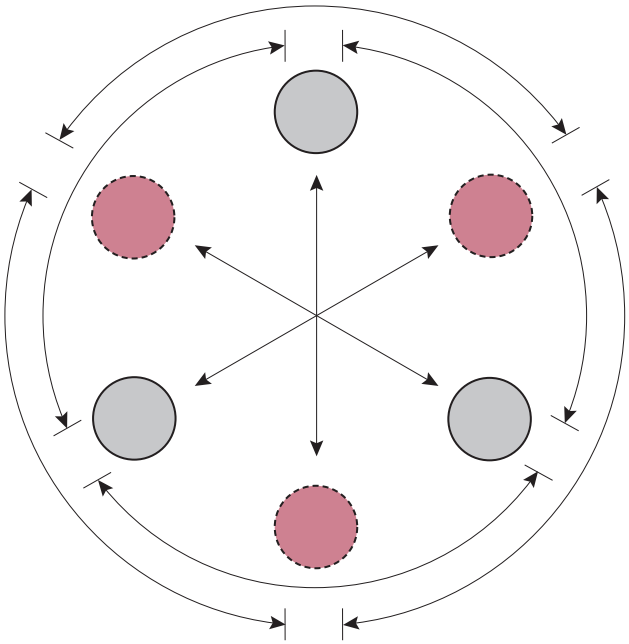

FIGURE 2.3 Complementary and analogous color schemes. *Illustration by Rob Carboni.*

This can be accomplished by reducing the intensity of the colors being used. **Intensity** refers to the purity and strength of the color. The addition of white or black will reduce the intensity, as will the addition of some of the complementary color (e.g., adding a little red to green). A pink-and-apple-green color combination may be basically complementary, but it is easier to live with than a pure, full-strength red and a fully saturated green!

CONTRASTING COLORS

Colors are often selected for the amount of **contrast** they provide. For example, two light colors adjacent to each other provide little contrast, and a light color next to a medium one provides some contrast; however, a light color next to a dark one creates a bold contrast. That is why one rarely, if ever, finds a garment, fabric, or other product designed with black and navy blue. This is an extreme example of minimal contrast.

MONOCHROMATIC COLORS

If you start with one color and develop the full range of that color, from the palest off-white tint to the deepest, darkest shade, you will have a **monochromatic** (one color) **color scheme**. Baby blue and sky blue through the intermediate blues and up to a navy or midnight blue is a monochromatic scheme. A monochromatic color scheme can be restful and easy to accept, and it can provide a controlled setting for merchandise. It generally sits back and takes it easy.

NEUTRAL COLORS

Black, white, gray, beige, and brown make up the neutral color family. Neutrals make good backgrounds for stores because they allow the merchandise itself to have full impact. Neutrals evoke less image and tend to disturb customers less. They do not compete with the merchandise on display, but rather provide a complementary background for the goods.

An all-white scheme can be young, exciting, sparkling, and ultrachic or a perfect foil for brightly colored merchandise. However, all white may also come off as absolutely sterile and bland, draining the color right out of the merchandise.

Beige tones have been used a great deal by store designers in the past few years, and they remain popular, people pleasing, and merchandise complementing. The blending

of the casual but warm off-whites and beiges with wood tones (from bleached oak to deepest ebony) has a strong following. Generally, this kind of color scheme is easy to live with; it enhances the merchandise, but hardly ever overwhelms. It probably appeals to the rural instincts hidden inside each urban dweller.

From the past, and continuing strongly into the future, comes the gray color scheme. When elegance, the chic, and ultra-new is desired, it can be found with gray—gray by its aloof, cool self or made even icier with accents of Lucite and chrome. Gray is a foil for bright colors; it tones them down. It is a relief for the whites; it makes white appear whiter. Gray is a buffer for black, relieving the gloom of this noncolor. Neutral gray has long been popular as a setting for silver, furs, and expensive giftware, but it is now reaching into designer areas and even bridal displays.

Black and white may be neutral individually, and most colors will coexist with them, but when used together, they demand and get attention.

Using Color to Promote Color

The visual merchandiser can usually control the color against which merchandise is shown. The background color is important because it can either add to or detract from the color of the merchandise presented. A white dress shown against a white background can be very effective—or a total disaster! Against a stark white background, a dress that is not a pure white, but a soft, lovely ivory color, can look dingy and yellow. If, however, the background were a deep gray or very dark green, the sharp contrast would make the ivory dress appear whiter.

White against white is usually smart, sophisticated, and subtle. White against black is dramatic, sharp, and striking. The price and type of merchandise, the store's image, and the department or area in a store will determine which background is best for the white dress.

FIGURE 2.4 Soft blue tones are complemented and enhanced by the vivid red-orange prints and fabrics shown together in this Parisian shop window. *Antoine Antoniol/Getty Images.*

The white against white will be more dramatic and striking if a red light floods the white background and leaves the dress white, but softly outlined in pink, from the light reflected off the background. The white dress against the black background will seem more elegant if the background is softened with a blue or violet light, to ease the sharp contrast between foreground and background. By using colored panels behind and around merchandise, and assorted colored lights to "paint" those panels, the visual merchandiser can create the best of all possible settings for the merchandise. The use and effect of colored light are discussed in Chapter 4. (See Figures 2.4 and 2.5.)

In many ways, the accessories shown with the merchandise can also affect the color. Imagine the white dress with a navy blue belt, shoes, and handbag and a red-and-blue scarf. The white will appear crisp and sparkling in contrast to the navy. Now, suppose that same dress were completely accessorized in toast beige. The white is softened and warmed by its proximity to the beige. Popularly priced merchandise, however, will often rely on sharper and more contrasting accessories and displays. They help make the garment stand out and look like more for the money.

Visualize a bright red dress with emerald green trimmings. The red appears redder and more intense because

FIGURE 2.5 It is always black and white at White House Black Market—a chain of women's fashion stores that specializes in black-and-white apparel. Even at Christmas, the black contrasts sharply with the white, down to the spots on the dogs. The silvery dark gray abstracts continue the neutral palette. *White House, Black Market, Soho, New York.*

FIGURE 2.6 It is all about blue, as the sign in the window at The Bay, in Toronto, points out. Assorted shades and tints of blue denim are featured in this cool, monochromatic display. Note the blue accent lights that serve to highlight the theme. *The Bay, Queen Street, Toronto, Canada.*

the complementary green intensifies the red. The same red with shocking-pink accessories will seem more red-orange because the "hot pink" of the accessories is bluer by comparison.

Understanding the effect of color on color will enable the visual merchandiser to select the proper settings and accessories for the merchandise and the store's fashion image. (See Figures 2.6 and 2.7.)

FIGURE 2.7 Off-white, beige, toast, and brown—a palette of warm neutrals—come together in this Harvey Nichols Knightsbridge window in London. The framed stained glass windows add to the gentle faded ambiance that extends down to the mannequins' makeup and wigs. *Harvey Nichols Knightsbridge, London, United Kingdom.*

Texture

Another very important aspect of color is **texture**. The texture—surface treatment, or "feel"—can affect the color of the merchandise. Smooth and shiny surfaces reflect light and, therefore, always appear lighter. Satin, chrome, highly lacquered or enameled surfaces, waxed woods, and so on will all pick up and reflect more light than objects that are flat and lusterless. Rough, nubby, and deep-piled surfaces will absorb and hold light and, therefore, appear darker. Velvet, sandpaper, deep carpets, and untreated and natural woods or tree barks will all appear darker. Smooth or shiny reflective finishes around merchandise will add more light to the presentation. The background will reflect more light back onto the product being shown.

Textures are also suggestive. They can suggest familiar symbols by which the visual merchandiser attempts to explain the merchandise, in terms of surrounding materials. Soft silks and satins suggest femininity and sensuousness. Velvet is deep and rich, dark and mysterious, subtle, elegant, and expensive. Rough textures, such as burlap, coarse linens, nubby wools, and tweeds, are masculine, outdoorsy, rugged, natural, earthy, and wholesome. Gravel, sand, stones, brick, and ground-up cork suggest the great open spaces: sportswear, beachwear, camping, and the country.

In creating a setting for a bridal gown, for example, the textures utilized should suggest—and, at the same time, enhance—the softness and loveliness of the gown. A complementary texture to a satin-and-lace gown might even be rough wood planking. The gown would seem even more delicate, fragile, and feminine in comparison to the rough, burly quality of the wood. But what would this do to the bride-to-be and her illusions of romance? In this case, the background should be more of the same: The gown could be enveloped with other soft fabrics and gentle textures—wisps of tulle and net, ribbons and lace. Anything that suggests a fairy-tale setting and a "happily-ever-after" ending should be used with the bridal gown.

The use of opposite textures, however, can work very effectively in promoting other types of merchandise, especially when humor, scale, or shock is the attention-getting device to bring the shopper over to the display. Imagine a pair of natural leather outdoor hiking boots, nail studded and roughly sewn, sitting on a lace-edged, red satin pillow with a sheer, silky fabric draped behind. The copy might read, "It will be love at first sight." The contrast may be silly and out of place, but it is intriguing, unexpected, and attention getting. Or visualize a woman's nightgown—all pink and lace, soft and sheer—hanging from a peg on a wall of rough, split logs. The juxtaposing of two very different textures, the very feminine against the very masculine, makes the feminine seem more feminine and the masculine even more so. With a copy line like "Why rough it when you can go in style?" the visual merchandiser could explain the combination and possibly bring a smile to the viewer's face.

In an ensemble there should be a relationship of textures, a flow and continuity rather than startling change, unless the merchandise is meant to startle and call for attention. A fine wool challis tie, rather than a shiny silk one, is the choice for a tweed jacket, just as an oxford cloth shirt is more appropriate to the texture of nubby wools than a fine broadcloth. Similarly, coarsely textured suits are more compatible with grained leather than patent leather shoes.

Textures have to be balanced in a display arrangement. Rough textures usually seem heavier or suggest more "weight" in a composition or display. A roughly textured cube, for example, appears to take up more space and volume in the display area than a smoothly lacquered cube of the same size and color. Therefore, a visual merchandiser may balance a small, coarsely textured element with a larger smooth or shiny one. A textured floor "sits" better than a smooth or shiny one, whereas a smooth ceiling "floats" better than a roughly textured one. (See Figure 2.8.)

Some materials are especially popular for use in displays because they are texturally neutral (neither very

smooth nor very rough) and because they are available in a wide range of colors. Felt, jersey, and suede cloth have neutral textures and can be used with soft or rugged merchandise. Seamless paper is another favorite with visual merchandisers because it, too, lacks texture. These materials will be discussed more fully in Chapter 18. To learn more about the relationship of brand and color, see Brand Box 2.1: Color and the Brand Identity.

FIGURE 2.8 'Tis the season to warm up, and Macy's women's outerwear is shown against a textured, snowdrift background and accented by a tree of rough cut slices of logs. These "outdoor" textures are complemented by the glossy, slick finish of the stove on the left. *Macy's, Herald Square, New York City. Eugene Gologursky/Getty Images.*

Brand Box 2.1: Color and Brand Identity

If your store or the brand you are featuring has a signature color or color scheme—colors that are associated with your logo or packaging—by all means play them up in your store design or displays. However, be careful not to overdo that usage. If the color is a strong and dynamic one (any full-bodied primary or secondary color) that might intrude on the merchandise or product display, be especially aware of where you use it and how you use it.

The brand's color may be effective on a focal wall or behind a cash wrap in conjunction with the brand name and/or logo. Note how effectively the Joe Fresh's signature red-orange color pops out of the store's façade to stake a claim on Fifth Avenue in New York City. As designed by the Burdifilek design team of Toronto, the occasional focal walls highlight the almost all-white design of the store. On the interior, "a select number of glowing light boxes in Joe Fresh's signature orange contribute to the liveliness of the store and allow the merchandise to glow," said Diego Burdi, the Creative Partner at Burdifilek.

For storewide sales, the brand-colored shopping bags and boxes can be effectively used in displays as well as gift-giving promotions (Christmas, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Valentine's Day), depending on the color. The assorted boxes covered in the color and ribbon-tied to match can be a great way of promoting the brand in a colorful way. Think of Tiffany blue boxes with their white satin ribbon bows. If the sales staff wears store or brand identifying garments or accessories like aprons, T-shirts, scarves, or ties, these could flaunt the store's color without detracting from the merchandise. Examples would be the red aprons that distinguish the sales staff at Ace Hardware stores around the country and the brown uniforms worn by the UPS delivery people.

As previously stated, there is such a thing as "too much"! When enough is enough depends on the brand, the type and appeal of the product, and the anticipated shopper. The more upscale or up-market the brand's appeal, the more subtle the use of the signature color; just whispers or mere suggestions may be sufficient to make the point. Popular-priced operations or more highly competitive fields may require more color emphasis and a bolder display of the company color.

FIGURE 2.9 Through the windows that envelop the Joe Fresh store on Fifth Avenue in New York City, one gets the message: "Bright orange is our signature color." A long and dominant focal wall is painted orange, and the abstract mannequins are wearing their brand-colored jackets to make the branding point even more obvious. *Designed by Burdifilek, Toronto, Canada. Photography: Ben Rahm at A-Frame Studio.*

Color and Texture: Trade Talk

analogous color scheme
color
color psychology
complementary colors
contrast
cool colors
intensity
intermediate colors
monochromatic color scheme
neutral colors
pastels
primary colors
secondary colors
shades
tertiary colors
texture
tint
value
warm colors

Color: A Recap

- Color is the biggest motivation for shopping.
- America's color taste is changing—softening up, warming up, returning to earth tones.
- The warm colors are red, yellow, orange, rust, and peach.
- The cool colors are blue, green, violet, and blue-green.
- The neutral colors are white, black, and all the grays in between as well as warm off-white, brown, and all the beiges in between.
- The primary, or basic, colors are red, yellow, and blue.
- The secondary colors are orange, green, and violet. They are obtained by mixing two of the primaries.
- An intermediate color is obtained by mixing a primary and a secondary color.
- A tertiary color is an "in-between" color obtained by mixing two secondary colors.
- Intensity is the purity, strength, and brilliance of a color.
- A tint, or pastel, is a color with white added.
- A shade is a color with black added.
- A monochromatic color scheme is one that includes a range of tints and shades of a single color.
- An analogous color scheme consists of colors that are adjacent to each other on the color wheel.
- A complementary color scheme consists of colors that are opposite each other on the color wheel.
- A neutral color scheme is a "no-color" color scheme of whites, blacks, grays, or browns.

Texture: A Recap

- Texture is the surface treatment or "feel" of the merchandise.
- Smooth surfaces reflect light and appear brighter.
- Rough surfaces hold light and appear darker.
- Rough textures seem heavier and suggest more "weight," whereas smooth textures seem to take up less size and volume.

Questions for Review and Discussion

1. Provide an example of a current fashion trend that supports the Color Marketing Group's forecast of a return to "earth" colors.
2. Why might two people react differently to the same color? Give an example of two diverse reactions to the same color.

3. For each of the following colors, list some common associations and reactions:
   a. blue
   b. red
   c. yellow
   d. black
4. List some cool colors. What types of customers are most attracted to cool colors?
5. Provide examples of the following:
   a. monochromatic color scheme
   b. contrasting colors
   c. intermediate colors
   d. complementary colors
6. Explain the relationship of the terms value, tint, and shade.
7. What are neutral colors? How are neutrals often used in store design?
8. What is texture? How can textures be suggestive of merchandise and settings?
9. Explain the proper relationship of textures in a display setting. How should textures be "balanced" in a display?
10. How can a signature color be used to support the brand in the overall store design?

Chapter Three

Line and Composition

Like salt and pepper. *Kleinfield, New York City. Copyright WindowsWear PRO http://pro.windowswear.com contact@windowswear.com 1.646.827.2288*

AFTER YOU HAVE READ THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO DISCUSS

- the three major types of lines used in display
- composition and its relationship to visual merchandising
- the differences between symmetrical and asymmetrical balance
- how dominance can be achieved in a visual presentation
- the use of contrasting elements in a display
- the relationship between proportion and contrast
- the concept of rhythm as it relates to visual presentation
- the relationship between repetition and dominance

Line

Line is a direction. It is a major part of composition, and second only to color in creating a response to the merchandise in a display. Lines can be vertical, horizontal, curved, or diagonal. The way in which these lines are utilized and combined determines the effectiveness of the merchandise presentation. Each line suggests something else and, like letters combined to form words, lines are arranged to make selling "pictures."

VERTICAL LINES

What is more inspiring than the soaring spires of a Gothic cathedral? Is there anything more classic or elegant than a tall, fluted Ionic column? How about the power and majesty of a stand of cypress trees? Proud people stand tall and erect. What do the spire, the column, the cypress, and the proud person have in common? They are all straight and vertical. They emphasize and exemplify the **vertical line**. When a display is mainly a vertical one, filled with straight elements that seem to join floor and ceiling, the viewer will get the message: strength, height, pride, majesty, and dignity.

When the vertical elements are not only tall, but also thin, an impression of elegance and refinement is conveyed. For example, a mannequin standing erect with arms at her sides, head uplifted, and shoulders back will look elegant. She will add stature and class to the garment she is modeling. Fur coats, evening gowns, bridal wear, and well-tailored suits are shown to advantage on a vertical figure. The long, straight, falling line of a garment can be enhanced by the "dignified" mannequin, which, in turn, will add a vertical quality to the entire display. A straight line can also be direct and forceful or rigid and precise. (See Figure 3.1.)

HORIZONTAL LINES

Long, low, wide, spreading lines—the bands that run across a window or around perimeter walls—suggest an easygoing, restful quality. All is peaceful and calm in a horizontal presentation. A reclining mannequin, relaxed and at ease, is perfectly compatible with robes, loungewear, or nightwear. The horizon sets the world to rest; lazy ripples and gentle waves are horizontal. As the line stretches out and makes objects look wider, it also tends to make them look shorter.

FIGURE 3.1 The long slivers of mirrored foil board of different lengths and widths create a strong vertical, yet not too formal, pattern in this window. The headless mannequin adds another vertical line to the composition. Dignified—but not stuffy. *Hugo Boss, Milan, Italy. Design: Marketing Jazz.*

A pattern of **horizontal lines** will cut the vertical effect and reduce the "uptight" or dignified feel of a design or setting. A balancing of the horizontal with the vertical can create an easy, restful, but elegant setting. (See Go Green Box 3.1: Sustainable Design Solutions.)

CURVED LINES

The **curved line** personifies grace, charm, and femininity. It is soft and enveloping. The curved line, or arc, can ease the tension that might be produced by too many vertical lines. It is the circle and the sphere, the sun and the moon, the heart, billowing waves, rolling hills, fluffy clouds, the swirl of a seashell, a spiral, an opening rose. Curved lines can also be used for a spotlight or target against which an object is shown or a spiral that leads the eye from object to object. (See Figure 3.2.)

FIGURE 3.2 To bring springtime into the jewelry store, the designer created a soft, graceful frame around the shadow box with a curving garland of flowers and leaves. The gentle, flowing line adds a feminine look to this presentation when compared with the shadow box in Figure 3.11. *Cada, Munich, Germany. Design: Peter Rank of Deko Rank.*

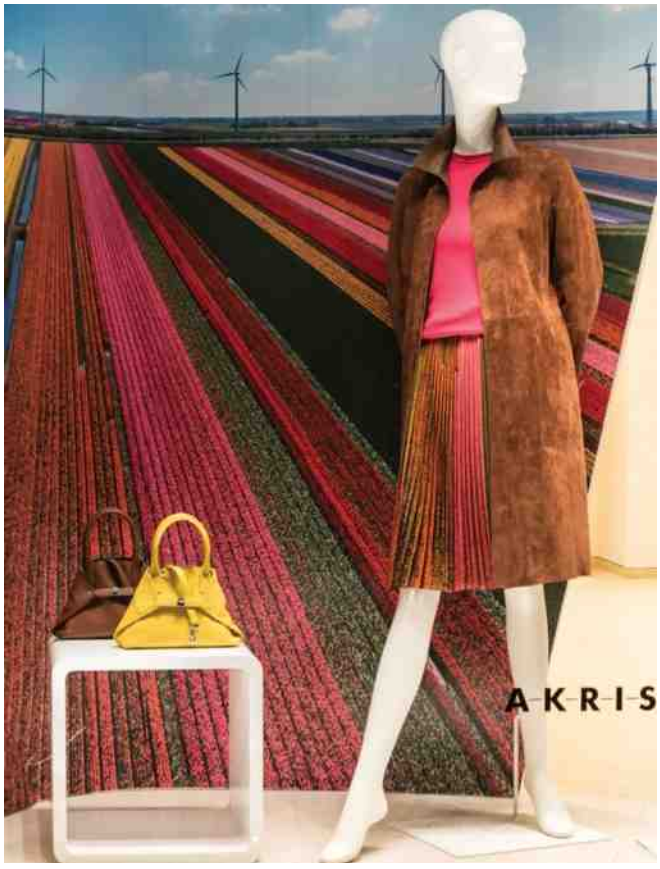

FIGURE 3.3 The abstract mannequin looks away as she poses against the strong diagonal lines in the background, inspired by the texture of the skirt. The strong rows of color compliment the handbags displayed on open cubed fixtures and playfully echo the colors in the printed scene. *Akris, New York City. Copyright WindowsWear PRO http://pro.windowswear.com contact@windowswear.com 1.646.827.2288*

DIAGONAL LINES

The **diagonal line** is a line of action; it is forceful, strong, and dynamic. The diagonal is a bolt of lightning, a firecracker going off, a thrown javelin, rain streaming down, a shove or a push, a seesaw or a playground slide, an arrow, or a pointing finger leading the eye right down to where the action is. The active sportswear mannequin, for example, is often all angles: arms akimbo, knees bent, head thrust back, and shoulders shrugging. That mannequin is a study in diagonals. It is possible to suggest movement and excitement in a static and predominantly vertical or horizontal presentation by adding some forceful diagonals. (See Figures 3.3 and 3.4.)

FIGURE 3.4 Inspired by the shapes and details of the Spring/Summer fashions, the designers made use of the diagonal lines and triangular and other geometric shapes. "Our aim was to create a moody, almost ethereal scheme. Playing with different textures, shapes, colors, and light allowed us to produce a contemporary flow across the window run," according to Janet Wardley, head of the visual display team at Harvey Nichols. The triangles within triangles add repetition as well as radiation to the design. *Harvey Nichols, London, United Kingdom.*

Composition

Composition may be defined as the organization or grouping of different parts or elements used to achieve a unified whole. In display and visual merchandising, composition is the arrangement of lines, forms, shapes, and colors into a pleasing whole that directs the viewer's eye to the various bits and pieces of the setting and that relays a particular message. The quality of the composition will depend on the elements used and where and how they are used.

BALANCE

A well-designed display should have **balance**. This involves the creation of an easy-to-accept relationship between the parts of the composition. If a design were cut in half by an imaginary line drawn through its center, and one side were an exact replica or mirror image of the other side, that would be a classic example of **symmetrical** or **formal balance**. In reality, however, the objects on each side of the imaginary line are usually of similar weight and prominence, not an actual mirror image. For example, if on one side of a display a mannequin is sitting on a chair, while on the other side a similar mannequin is sitting on a comparable chair, both halves of the composition would be considered the same, equal in weight and importance. This is formal balance and, although staid and traditional, it can be very effective when expensive or quality merchandise is being presented. (See Figure 3.5.)

Asymmetrical balance is more informal and often more interesting. Although the two sides appear to be of equal weight, they are not replicas of each other. The individual units composing the display may differ, but they achieve a dynamic balance of weight and size at each side of the imaginary central line. For example, there may be two mannequins on one side balanced by a mannequin standing next to a draped table. If, on the table, there is a vase filled with flowers and foliage extending to about the same height as the mannequin's head, then visually, the table with the vase and flowers will be equal in weight and shape to the second mannequin on the other side. (See Figures 3.6 and 3.7.)

Sometimes, the creative and experienced designer can do marvelous things by balancing color with form. A strong or hot color may appear heavier than a pastel or cool color, so a mannequin in a vivid red dress might be balanced with an armoire painted antique white. This asymmetrical or informal balance is more casual, more interesting, and certainly more exciting.

FIGURE 3.5 Formal balance figures in this Ann Taylor window, with the composition centered on the central vertical red band, the red bench, and the single suitcase on the floor. Although the outfits on the four headless figures vary, they are set into equally balanced spaces to the right and left of the central band. *Ann Taylor, Madison Avenue, New York. Design by Victor Johnson.*

FIGURE 3.6 A variation of the same Ann Taylor promotion, here the composition features asymmetrical balance. The large graphic serves as the center of the composition, with the two headless forms on the left balanced by the piles of luggage and the column of globes on the right. *Ann Taylor, Madison Avenue, New York.*

FIGURE 3.7 The romantic scene designed for the Robert Ellis boutique in Culver City, California, is an asymmetrically balanced composition, with a dominant curved crescent moon played against a diagonal stream of stars and sparkle dust. The copy on the left adds several horizontal lines while balancing the mannequin on the right. The vertical strings of stars add to the look of the composition and complete it. *Robert Ellis, Culver City, California. Design: Keith Dillion.*

At times, a display presentation can be completely lacking in any sense of balance and still be very good. This is done for a reason. A lack of balance may be used as an element of surprise—as a vehicle to direct the viewer's attention to the merchandise. Or the visual merchandiser may be catering to a particular traffic flow. He or she may find that most shoppers travel north to south on the store's side of the street. It can make for a better presentation if the merchandise is shown in the southern half of the window—angled to face and attract the shopper walking from north to south. The empty or near empty, less weighty northern part of the window gets less attention and, therefore, little, if any, merchandising.

DOMINANCE

In every composition, it is advisable that some element be dominant. There should be some unit or object that, by its color, its size, or its position in the composition, attracts the eye first and possibly directs the viewer to other parts of the composition.

In most displays the dominant element is the merchandise, often with a big assist from a mannequin that is wearing it. In the one-item display, the single unit should dominate—should be the eye-catcher and the eye-filler—and the rest of the design or composition should exist in order to make this one item seem more beautiful and more special. However, some stores with unique images will play games with their viewers. Knowing how very "special" they and their merchandise are, the store designer will casually drop an exquisite single item into a beautifully conceived composition, leaving it up to the shopper to find it. But this can be successfully done only where the store and the visual merchandiser know what

they are selling—and to whom—and can afford the luxury of these little games.

A mannequin can be dominant in a display by virtue of its size or the color it is wearing. A small object, like a diamond brooch, can be made dominant in a composition by sharply contrasting it with its background, without any distracting props nearby, and with a strong light on the piece. An object may also be made dominant by the arrangement of lines and shapes, the weights of the various elements of the composition, and gradations of color and light. Through these various techniques, the viewer's eye is directed to the main object or the featured item of the display. (See Figure 3.8.)

FIGURE 3.8 The lady in red is the dominant force in this display, whereas the assorted dressed and undressed dress forms serve as her ladies in waiting. They also provide a sense of scale and contrast. The swag of bare bulbs adds another interesting touch to the composition. *Design: Polar Buranasatit.*

CONTRAST

Contrast is the composition of elements used to show a sharp difference between them. It consists of a juxtaposition of different forms, lines, or colors in a composition that intensifies each element's properties—for example, a white gown displayed against a midnight background, a diamond bracelet on a black velvet pad, or a pair of red shoes on a green grass mat.

A difference in texture or an incongruity in the objects themselves can also heighten the contrast: a power saw nestling on a fluffy angel-hair cloud. The outrageous difference in the feel and texture between the item or merchandise and its environment will attract attention and maybe even promote the softness, ruggedness, or smoothness of that item. The effective use of contrast makes it possible for the feel, or touch, of an item to be more apparent without actually touching or stroking the object.

PROPORTION

Contrast can also consist of a difference in **proportion**—the relationship of the size, scale, or "weight" of elements and between each element and the entire composition. A pair of baby shoes, for example, will appear more delicate and adorable when placed next to a gigantic teddy bear. A four-foot tennis racket will bring attention to mere human-sized tennis shoes. The visual merchandiser must be careful to consider not only the size of the merchandise and props, but the size of the display area as well.

Experience has taught us to take the size of certain objects for granted. We know, for example, that a mannequin is life-size. Yet, the mannequin, in proportion to a greatly oversized table and chair, would appear to shrink from its actual size. Our mind knows the mannequin is still life-size, but our eyes are not so convinced.

Certain proportions or relationships in a composition or display are easily accepted by the viewer's eye: a ring will fit a mannequin's hand; a hat will sit on a mannequin's head. Put the same feathered hat into a straw "nest" that is three feet in diameter with "eggs" the size of footballs—the hat now appears to be small and fragile. The nest is out of proportion; it is overscaled.

Proportion and contrast are important elements of good composition. Drastically changing the proportions between

FIGURE 3.9 The overwhelming size of the ice cream cones not only attracts the viewer's eye but also serves as a base for the mannequins. This is dominance by size. *Moschino, Meatpacking District, New York. Copyright WindowsWear PRO http://pro.windowswear.com; contact@windowswear.com 1.646.827.2288.*

items and dramatic contrasts of color and texture can work wonders in attracting attention to a display and in helping promote an idea or a look. These attention-getting techniques are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 10. (See Figure 3.9.)

Rhythm

A good display composition should have a **rhythm**, a self-contained movement from element to element, from background to foreground, from side to side. The rhythm should lead the viewer's eye from the dominant object to the subordinate object (or objects), from the major presentation of an ensemble down to the arrangement of accessories or alternate parts of the outfit.

This flow can be created, for example, by the manner in which a mannequin is posed. Her hand may be resting on a chair back that happens to have a coat draped from it; a scarf, which is casually tossed over the coat, is trailing onto the floor over to an arrangement of shoes, handbags, another scarf, a flower, and some fragrances. The eye is led first to the mannequin (dominant in size, color, and weight), down to the chair, and then to the cluster on the ground. That downward sweep may be subtly reinforced by a background design of lines or shapes and by the use of color and lighting, which also lead the eye in the same direction.

The eye will naturally go around in a circular route if the objects are arranged to lead the way—like a snail's shell swirling inward to a central point. The eye will follow a triangular trail, or a pyramidal pattern, that leads from a flat, weighted base to an apex, or point. A successful rhythm or flow is a gentle one, one that guides the viewer in easy movements from one stop to another along the way. In some cases, like sales or hard-sell promotions for which dynamics are demanded, a jumpy and jarring presentation will be more effective. (See Figure 3.10.)

REPETITION

Repetition of a color, a line, a shape, or a form can add to the success of a display composition. By repeating or reiterating an idea or motif, that concept becomes more emphatic, more important, and thus, more dominant.

In this way, even a small object can be made to stand out in a large display area because the eye has been trained to look for it. Try to visualize a dark floor with an appliqué of red footprints "walking" across it. At the very end—in a pool of light—is a pair of red shoes. The pattern, or repetition, of the red footprints will carry the viewer's eye forward to the single pair of shoes, which now dominates the composition and the viewer's eye—and mind. **Radiating** a line, a form, or a product will lead the eye and add a sense of motion to a composition. By graduating the size of shapes, greater depth can be implied even in shallow spaces. Overall, repetition can be used to create larger dynamic shapes by radiating or graduating in size or color. (See Figure 3.11.)

FIGURE 3.10 The stage is set and all eyes are drawn to the star as arrows, angles, dagger points, and lights all converge on the mannequin center stage. Subtle, sophisticated and multi-pointed, it is sensational. *Bergdorf Goodman, New York. Eugene Gologursky/Getty Images.*

FIGURE 3.11 Caught in the whirlwind of radiating slats, the Cole Haan shoes slide down the ramp in unison. Radiating out from behind the animated figure are more subtle gray-on-gray lines that bring the viewer's eye to the message—Zero Resistance—while the figure's hand directs the eye toward the procession of shoes. *Cole Haan, New York. Copyright WindowsWear PRO http://pro.windowswear.com; contact@windowswear.com 1.646.827.2288.*

Go Green 3.1: Sustainable Design Solutions

To create strong linear patterns in your displays, you might try using easily available, recycled or recyclable materials, such as lengths of bamboo or corrugated paper tubes. They come in assorted lengths and diameters and can easily be hung horizontally, stood up vertically, or even propped at an angle to effect a dynamic angular line. In addition, these materials can be painted and repainted or wrapped in ribbons or tape. Natural bamboo is a perfect fit for beachwear and swimwear as well as cruise-, summer-, and casual wear; however, paint it shiny black, and it becomes quite an elegant thing instead.

Another linear material that can be used effectively and inexpensively and that is also energy efficient is fluorescent tubes. These come in a variety of lengths and can be used when electrically connected—or even when they are dead. Also, there are colored transparent gel sleeves that can slide over the tube to create assorted colored light effects. In that way, you can add not only a linear element to your composition but also color and light. Do not be concerned about the electrical wires that may be providing the current. They can add to the overall display, so use them imaginatively.

Can you think of some other easily obtainable materials that can be used as linear design elements? Props are all over—all it takes is a creative eye to decide how to turn something ordinary into something special. How about clotheslines for horizontal effects? Brooms and mops for verticals? Step ladders? Simple, unadorned workaday ladders can serve as a platform for showcasing merchandise or even as a riser for mannequins or forms. Look around you and imagine—and think recycle, reuse, and repurpose.

Line and Composition: Trade Talk

asymmetrical balance
balance
composition
curved line
diagonal line
horizontal lines
proportion
radiating
repetition
rhythm
symmetrical, or formal, balance
vertical line

Line and Composition: A Recap

- Line is a direction, and a major part of composition.
- There are vertical, horizontal, curved, and diagonal lines.
- Composition is the organization of different elements to create unity.
- Balance is the creation of an easy-to-accept relationship between the parts of the composition.
- Balance can be symmetrical or asymmetrical.
- Dominance refers to the element in the composition that first attracts the eye.
- Contrast is meant to show differences.
- Proportion is the relationship of the size, weight, height, or scale of the elements.
- Rhythm is a self-contained movement that leads the viewer's eye from one element to another.
- Repetition of an element within a display can make a concept more emphatic.

Questions for Review and Discussion

1. Describe a display using vertical lines. What feelings do vertical lines suggest to the viewers?
2. How can curved lines be introduced into a visual presentation? What type of response do curved lines tend to evoke?
3. Differentiate between symmetrical and asymmetrical balance and explain how each can be achieved in a visual display.
4. Provide a quick sketch illustrating first symmetrical and then asymmetrical balance in a display.
5. What should be the most dominant element in visual presentation? Why?
6. How can contrast be achieved in a display using texture? Color? Line?
7. Describe the concept of proportion and explain why it is important to any visual presentation.
8. How can you tell if a display has rhythm?
9. How does repetition assist in achieving rhythm in a display?

Chapter Four
Light and Lighting

Keep an eye on the accessory display at Dior, Paris, France. *Antoine Antoniol/Getty Images.*

AFTER YOU HAVE READ THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO DISCUSS

- the relationship between color and light
- the terms of measurement used in lighting: CCT and CRI
- primary and secondary store lighting
- techniques for lighting open-backed windows and closed-back windows
- ways in which lighting can be used to draw shoppers to particular areas within a store
- new LED lighting technology and retrofits
- the effective use of light in visual merchandising

Retail Lighting and the Color of Light

Lighting is an important aspect in every area of a retail operation. It begins outside where the customer arrives in the parking lot and stretches into the aisles and perimeters of the retail selling space. It illuminates the window displays, display cases, shelves, fixtures, and dressing rooms, as it functions behind the scenes to light the workplace for employees in stockrooms and warehouses. It affects the mood, safety, brand perception, and the visibility of the merchandise as well as the high electrical cost on the store's operating budget.

Retail lighting is not the same for each store environment; it is an orchestrated blend of color, contrast, control, and energy efficiency. It requires a full understanding of applications and lighting techniques and the latest lamp technology in order to meet the goals of the retailer. When planned by an expert, it has the power to influence decision-making and entice the consumer to purchase merchandise in a striking atmosphere. According to retail statistics, a customer that is excited about his or her shopping experience will stay longer, spend more money, and be more likely to return.

Retail lighting must have great color. Color—as color—means little unless it is considered in relation to the type of light in which the color is seen. It is light that makes things visible. All colors depend on light. There is natural daylight and artificial light, which can be LED, incandescent, fluorescent, or high-intensity discharge (HID) lighting.

It is not quite that simple, however. These four broad classifications of artificial light are further subdivided. There are many different types of LED and fluorescent lamps available, ranging from a warm white deluxe that attempts to create an "incandescent" effect to the cool, bluish "daylight" quality typically associated with fluorescent lighting. HID lamps can cast cool to the warm end of the colored light scale. Traditional incandescent lamps (i.e., bulbs) are warm and glowing, but placing filters over them can change the color and quality of the light. Let us, therefore, consider the color of light, the effect of light on pigment color, and how light can affect the merchandise and the area that surrounds the merchandise. (See Figure 4.1.)

Visible light is actually composed of the whole spectrum of colors, from violet to red. Imagine a beam of light passing through a glass prism or reflecting in a pool of water or oil, and you will see that spectrum broken up into a rainbow of colors—from violet, through the blues and greens, to the yellows and oranges, and finally, red. All light is caused by waves of radiant energy that vary in length. The shortest wavelength of the visible spectrum is violet light; then comes blue light, green light, and so on; and at the other end of the spectrum, with the longest wavelength, is red light. All these wavelengths—the entire spectrum—combine to form visible, or white, light, which is the light we see.

Ultraviolet light, X-rays, and gamma rays have shorter wavelengths than we can see. Infrared and radio waves are too long for us to perceive. For the purpose of understanding light and color in display and store planning, this discussion will be limited to the colors that appear in the visible spectrum. We will find that some light sources reflect the shorter wavelengths and emit cooler, or bluer, light, whereas others have a warmer light and favor the longer wavelengths.

To comprehend the relationship between color and light and why an object is perceived by an observer as a particular color, it is important to understand that light is capable of being reflected and absorbed. The **color of an object** is seen as a result of the object's selective absorption of light rays. Thus, if an object is blue, for example, this means that it absorbs all the wavelengths of light except those of blue light, which are reflected back to the observer. The same occurs with other colors, but with a different wavelength being reflected.

If the object is pure white, the full visible spectrum of light is being reflected back in approximately equal quantities. If it is pure black, then all colors in the spectrum are being absorbed by the object.

Light bounces from one surface to another, and in this movement it is capable of throwing off new

FIGURE 4.1 In the blacked out area of the new Primark store on Oxford Street, a variety of light sources and paints that respond to the lights created this exciting, youthful, casual space. The spotlights, in theatrical barn door fixtures, are hung all over the metal frames that line the ceiling and soffit, while other lamps are focused on the black abstract mannequins and the product presentation in the bright, fluorescent colored wall units. *Design: Dalziel & Pow, London, United Kingdom. Photography: Andrew Townsend.*

colors. For example, a wall or panel is painted pink. A wedgewood-blue carpet is installed. If warm, incandescent lights are used, the carpet may turn slightly lavender from the warm pink reflection cast by the walls. The incandescent light may also play up any reds that are in the warm blue carpet. (A warm blue has some purple in it, i.e., red and blue. Incandescent light reflects most in the red end of the spectrum.) If a daylight fluorescent light were switched on instead, the blue of the carpet might seem more sparkling and cool, and the walls would take on the lavender tone. The overall light will affect the color of the walls, the floor, and the ceiling, and bouncing around as it does, most of all it will affect the color of the merchandise.

Correlated Color Temperature

Choosing light with the right color temperature and color rendering index (CRI) is essential for retail space. CRI and correlated color temperature (CCT) are two units of measurement used to define the properties of light source color.

Correlated color temperature is a measure of a lamp's color appearance when lighted. All lamps are given a color temperature based on the color of the light emitted. All light sources differ. Two white light sources may look the same but can render colors differently or provide a

different feel to the space. By using lamps of the same CCT and with the same, or similar, color rendering indexes, the space will have even, consistent illumination throughout.

White light falls into three general categories: warm, neutral, and cool, measured in Kelvin (K). White light with a hint of yellow candlelight is called "warm white" (below 3,000K); it enhances reds and oranges, dulls blues, and adds a yellow tint to whites and greens. Neutral white (3,000K–3,500K) enhances most colors equally and does not emphasize either yellow or blue. Bluish white, like moonlight on snow, is considered "cool white" (above 3,500K); it enhances blues, dulls reds, and imparts a bluish tint to whites and greens. Warm light makes a space feel smaller, more comfortable and familiar, where cooler light make areas appear more spacious. Neutral light improves the feeling of well-being, which may extend the amount of time the customer spends in the store, leading to a purchase. (See Figure 4.2.)

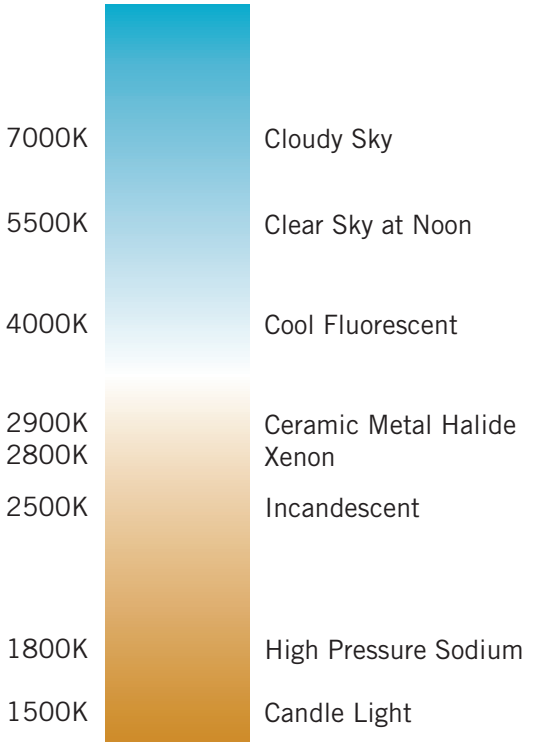

FIGURE 4.2 The CCT chart illustrates the color difference between warm white (2,000K–3,000K), cool white (3,100K–4,500K) and daylight (4,600K–6,500K) measured in Kelvins on a scale. Daylight is the most desirable lighting for retail environments and display areas.

Color Rendering Index

Once you have decided what the color of a lamp is with CCT, you also would want to know how accurate that lamp is in revealing an objects color. Color rendering index is that measurement. **Color rendering index** is a measure of how a light source renders colors of objects compared to how a reference light source renders the same colors. CRI can be used to compare sources of the same type and CCT. A palette of specific colors is used, and the CRI calculation is the difference between each color sample illuminated by the test light source and the reference source. The group of samples is averaged, and a score between 0 and 100 is calculated, with 100 being the best match between light sources.

The higher the CRI of a light source, the better—and more natural—colors appear. For products to be presented in a true-to-life way, which increases a store's credibility, a CRI value of 80–100 is recommended. (See Figure 4.3.)

	Appearance
R1	Light Grayish Red
R2	Dark Grayish Yellow
R3	Strong Yellow Green
R4	Moderate Yellowish Green
R5	Light Bluish Green
R6	Light Blue
R7	Light Violet
R8	Light Reddish Purple
R9	Strong Red
R10	Strong Yellow
R11	Strong Green
R12	Strong Blue
R13	Light Yellowish Pink
R14	Moderate Olive Green

FIGURE 4.3 The CRI color chart reveals the light quality of a particular light source measured against natural light. It can be used to compare sources of the same type to determine better clarity.

New Lighting Trends

ENERGY SAVING RETROFITS

Retailers concerned about economical ways to light stores have been experimenting with LED lighting for some time now. Nearly every day major retailers like Sainsbury's, Tesco, Next, Target, and Walmart are announcing cost-saving new LED lighting rollouts in the news. Completely overhauling a store's existing system with new LED lighting can be extremely expensive, and it can take three to five years for the savings to be realized. This has generated the more affordable trend of upgrading as opposed to complete refurbishments for many stores. The most popular trend in lighting is **energy-saving retrofits**. **Retrofitting** is a term often used when converting older, outdated lighting technologies such as fluorescent, CFL, and HID (metal halide) to a newer, energy-efficient technology, like an **LED** (Light-Emitting Diode) system.

This process has been streamlined with the introduction of a whole new variety of LED light bulbs, allowing stores to reduce consumption without the cost of changing all of their original lighting fixtures.

BRANDING WITH LIGHT

Another ongoing trend is **branding with light**. The competition from online shopping has put more pressure on bricks-and-mortar retailers to distinguish their stores with a brand experience. Lighting is one of the most effective ways to project a distinctive and recognizable brand presence. For stores like Hollister, Sephora, and Primark, lighting has become a part of what makes the brand identifiable in the landscape of competing retailers. Each store's lighting differs in warmth or coolness and the "theatrics," or lighting effects. Note the extreme contrast of lighting used in the Hollister store environment. The brightest amount of light is focused on the merchandise, contrasting against the shadowed store environment. Hollister's exaggerated use of spotlighting makes the products visually pop from the fixtures.

Primark has opted for a bright feel all over, the opposite approach of Hollister, by highlighting its retail space with various strengths of strong, bright light. Hard-goods retailer Crate and Barrel chooses to "paint" its merchandise with light. By using strokes of light on glassware and tabletop merchandise, a more subtle contrast of light and dark plays up colors, patterns, and textures. (See Figure 4.4.)

FIGURE 4.4 In a store designed all in black and white and the numerous silvery tones between, the profile silhouette of the designer, Karl Lagerfeld, is outlined and backlit with the cool blue light. The blue is Lagerfeld's brand color. *Karl Lagerfeld, London, UK. Designed by Plajer & Franz.*

SMART LIGHTING

Thanks to digital technology, lighting can guide you around a shop and send you special offer on your phone when you're looking at particular items. This is **smart lighting**. Current market leader GE's LED lighting fixtures use indoor location technology embedded inside to deliver high-value applications to retailers, providing the precise location of shoppers using an opt-in application on their smartphones and tablets. The solution combines Visible Light Communication (VLC), Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE), and inertial device sensors, and supports any Android or iOS application on a smart device equipped with a camera and/or Bluetooth® Smart technology (http://www.gelighting.com). The comprehensive approach enables retailers to reach a broad number of shoppers across the largest area—from the parking lot to anywhere in the store where there is LED light. As a result, retailers can achieve continuous return on investment on their conversion to LED lighting while providing a strategic platform for the connected retail store of the future. To help retailers increase in-store traffic and basket size, leading manufacturers are connecting smart LEDs to digital marketing platforms to deliver relevant content and create social shopping experiences. For example, retailers can use indoor positioning systems to:

- Welcome repeat customers with personalized shopping lists as they approach the store front, then provide an easy-to-follow map to optimize their shopping time.
- Offer coupons and promotions based on shoppers' position and direction in the aisle combined with shopping history.
- Present customer reviews, play product information videos, and connect on-demand with virtual associates to make brand choice easier.

OLED

We are finding new sources for light that are more energy efficient—lamps that burn longer and brighter, with better color rendition—that are revolutionizing lighting as we knew it. The newest and latest lighting is **OLED, organic light-emitting diodes**. OLED comes in the form of large, flat wall or ceiling panels. Without using any bulbs, the panel-shaped fixture allows for a more even distribution of light over a wider space without the need for additional components to distribute the light. Due to its low intensity, there is very little of the glare and harsh shadowing that you might get with single-point lighting.

OLEDs are known for producing the kind of high-quality illumination that closely resembles natural sunlight. Although many high-end LEDs have been able to achieve this, OLED also tends to be superior at bringing out the true colors of the store surroundings, fixtures, and merchandise. Its rating on the color rendering index, a measure of how well a light source performs, is consistently above 90. The maximum score is 100 (sunlight).

Most incandescent lamps are outdated because they deliver too much heat, use too much energy, and need constant maintenance because they burn out too quickly. Fluorescents have long been energy efficient, and now, in a new form, it is possible to screw a fluorescent bulb into a socket meant for an incandescent bulb, and no ballast is needed. LED lamps have finally mastered new color technology. In the past, LED meant compromising on color quality. Halogen has been the benchmark for color quality, but in fact many newer LED products are now outperforming halogen.

Lighting solutions are changing daily. Each new issue of architectural and store design publications brings more news about newer and better lighting techniques, fixtures, bulbs, and such. The only way to know "what's new" and "what's best" for an installation or lighting plan is to work with a professional lighting specialist. It is much too confusing for the layperson to do on his or her own. The following is current for today but may be old news by tomorrow, so consider what is mentioned here as recent, but perhaps no longer "now."

General, or Primary, Lighting

General, or primary, ambient lighting is the foundation or base level of illumination in an area. It is usually the light that fills the selling floor from overhead using a fixed lighting system, such as a pattern of fluorescent troffers or

recessed downlighting in the ceiling. Primary lighting promotes good orientation, a sense of comfort for the shopper in the retail environment. It is the first layer of light that subsequent layers of light build upon. It does not include accent lights, wall washers, or display highlighting lamps. (These are forms of secondary lighting.) Also, it does not include "glamour," or decorative, lighting: the sconces, counter or table lamps, indirect lighting, and so on.

Secondary, or Accent, Lighting

Flat, shadowless, overall lighting can create a static and boring selling floor. Glare or overly bright, strong light can be irritating and a detriment to selling. Shadows, highlights, and contrast are necessary; they can delight, intrigue, and pique the imagination. A selling floor, and especially a display, needs changes from light to dark, from highlights to shadows. They need flash and sparkle and should make the viewer's eye travel over an area emphasizing texture, shape, finish, and color. **Secondary, or accent, lighting** should accomplish all this.

Key lighting supplies the hard accents; it is the stronger light that adds "punch" to the selling floor. Using variable strengths of light helps indicate hierarchy or what the shopper should see first. *Fill lighting* provides softer, wider distribution to smooth shadows, and *highlighting* produces wide shadows that reveals the intricacies of products, fabrics, and finishes. *Backlighting* will intensify shapes and size; it makes an object glow and separate from the surrounding space. *Up-lighting* may be used to break up or divide spaces; it causes more dramatic effects. It can also be ghostly if improperly used. Secondary lighting is sometimes referenced as feature and display lighting. It can diffuse a ledge area with a glow or an aura of light. It can be integrated into racks or the light in a case or under a counter.

When lamps are hidden behind valances or recessed under grids or baffles, and warmer colors are not needed, fluorescent lights may work effectively to provide secondary lighting. However, newer LED lights can add highlights, provide shadows, mold and dimensionalize the merchandise, and even flatter the customer's complexion.

Accent or focal lighting not only highlights the product or the group of merchandise but also makes it stand out from its surroundings. Under the accent light, the color of the merchandise appears sharper and more brilliant, the textures are defined, and the details are brought into prominence. The strong, focused light of the accent lamp can make a product stand out in a highly illuminated selling floor or in a sunlit window. It works most effectively when the surrounding area is low-keyed and rather dim so that the accent light seems even more brilliant by contrast. Spotlights are used as accent or highlighting lamps in the showing and selling areas, in display windows, on platform and ledge displays, and on island setups.

Perimeter Lighting

Larger store environments demand stronger perimeter definition that helps contribute to the perception of size and orientation of space. It is common for the shopper to feel weary in a big box store that only uses flat primary or general lighting. Perimeter lighting improves visibility and encourages the shopper to wander out of the main aisle and into the merchandising space.

Perimeter lighting might be a long linear span of fluorescent tubes covered by a baffle that up-lights the perimeter of the store above the sightlines. It can enhance wayfinding by directing attention to department or category signage. Vertical illumination can be achieved in a number of ways depending on the store type, size, and budget. Tubular lighting can be inset into a ceiling drop; other techniques include scalloping the light across the walls or grazing with different light intensities. Wall washing bounces the light back into the store and makes the space seem larger.

Decorative Lighting

Secondary lighting devices can be decorative solutions such as "candlelit" chandeliers, wall sconces, and pendants that