



**Matteo Thun mixes past and present at a newly refreshed Zürich department store.**

BY HALLY WOLHANDLER

“The relation to the spirit of the building was missing,” architect and designer Matteo Thun says of the Modissa flagship in Zürich, the interior of which he recently gave a total redesign. “The building is a protected cultural heritage site, and it’s really elegant. We wanted to bring the sophistication inside.”

Modissa, a family-run Swiss department store with six locations in its home country, purveys brands like Opening Ceremony, Cappellini, Kenzo, and Christian Wijnants. Positioned on Bahnhofstrasse in Zürich—“when it comes to shopping, Bahnhofstrasse is the vein of the city,” Thun says—the seven-story giant is housed in a ’70s industrial building with a compellingly curved, glass-and-steel shell. Thun, the principal of his firm Matteo Thun & Partners, worked with designer Benedetto Fasciana to recreate the grand space as a reflection of the building.

“The design of the store follows the building language,” Thun says. “The building has huge glass facades; we wanted to connect the exterior and the interior, keeping it stylistically consistent.” He connected the dots by bringing the original architectural materials inside, by way of custom-made bronze tubular display modules. “Modissa carries an interesting mix of young and established designers,” he says. “The modules allow

a specific atmosphere to be created for each one.”

The store’s signature windows bring natural light into the space, which Thun complemented with gray and black accents and a mixture of terrazzo tile and light-wood flooring—stark materials he warms with textured fabric walls. It gets a little cozier (and punchier) with furniture in muted pastel colors and bright design details, like ceramic glazed cactuses. “It was a great adventure, restyling the interior of a protected cultural heritage building,” Thun says. “We very much enjoyed finding solutions for an interior concept that honors the architecture—but at the same time allows the clothes to be the focus.”

(THIS PAGE AND OPPOSITE)  
Interior views of the Modissa store  
in Zürich.



PHOTOS: THOMAS PAGANI