

MONITOR

#63

WORK SPECIAL

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flight club > sportswear store // new york city @ usa

DESIGN: SLADE ARCHITECTURE // PHOTO © SLADE ARCHITECTURE



Slade Architecture designed a flagship store for Flight Club: regarded as a Mecca for sneaker collectors and urban fashionistas around the world, it will now occupy a loft building in Greenwich Village, NYC. «Our goal was to create a clean, authentic urban space within the existing shell of the building,» comment the architects — James Slade and his team. «We also wanted to reference urban recreational spaces like basketball or handball courts, and playgrounds as well as the urban spaces that skaters, bikers, stickballers and others appropriate for recreation and sports.» To create this feeling of appropriation on the given site, «riffing off the existing infrastructure», the loft was stripped down to its structural elements, letting these define the backdrop for the product. The idea seemed equally valid from the environmental point of view, as it helped minimize the amount of the new material to be used in the project. Further on, the decision to use the materials as efficiently and simply as possible, has led to seeing the product itself as yet another given material: «Sneakers, t-shirts and caps are inherently colourful and tactile. We used them as the foreground in the space. They are treated almost as architectural elements. The wall of sneakers comes right out to the street creating a perspective of colour from the front to the back.» The facade was designed to become an absence of the facade, presenting the product almost immediately to the street. Two large pivot doors in transparent glass define the exterior enclosure, which is recessed back from the street to create an open frame between the inside and the outside. Full width doors make it possible to literally open the entire opening in good weather. Custom doorplates incorporate basketball leather and rubber, which is also the material for the cash registers and scanning stations, and well as the bench. All of the functional objects are treated in the same materials as the basketball — the functional object in the game. A custom backboard with a hoop doubles as a projection screen during store hours. In after hours, the owners, staff and friends play on the court, continuing the cycle of appropriation.

