

# THE NORTH FACE

Ansonia Building, Upper Broadway, New York, NY



DESIGN: **JGA, Inc.**, Southfield, MI  
 CHAIRMAN: **Ken Nisch**  
 CREATIVE DIRECTOR: **Michael Curtis**  
 PROJECT MANAGER: **George Vojnovski**

For The North Face:  
 VP RETAIL: **Sandy Wail**  
 DIR. OF OPERATIONS & FINANCE: **Jim Thomsen**  
 SR. MANAGER OF STORE DESIGN & VM: **David Curtis**

PHOTOGRAPHY: **Laszlo Regos Photography**, Berkley, MI

The grand, century-old Ansonia building still reigns triumphant on Broadway on Manhattan's Upper West Side. Instead of being a bystander to the new, vibrant retail energy erupting about it—it has welcomed that energy into its bosom. The North Face now occupies two floors of the Ansonia building and the space features a double-high atrium, an abundance of exterior windows through which daylight spills and “interesting architectural details that become an exercise in urban archeology.”

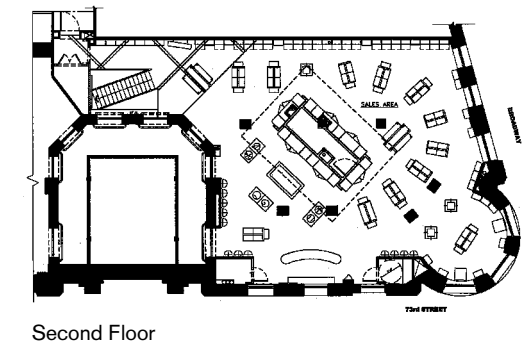
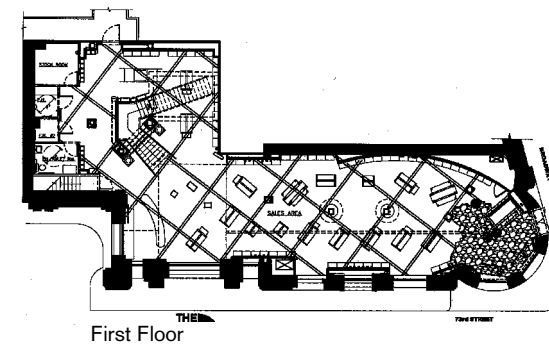
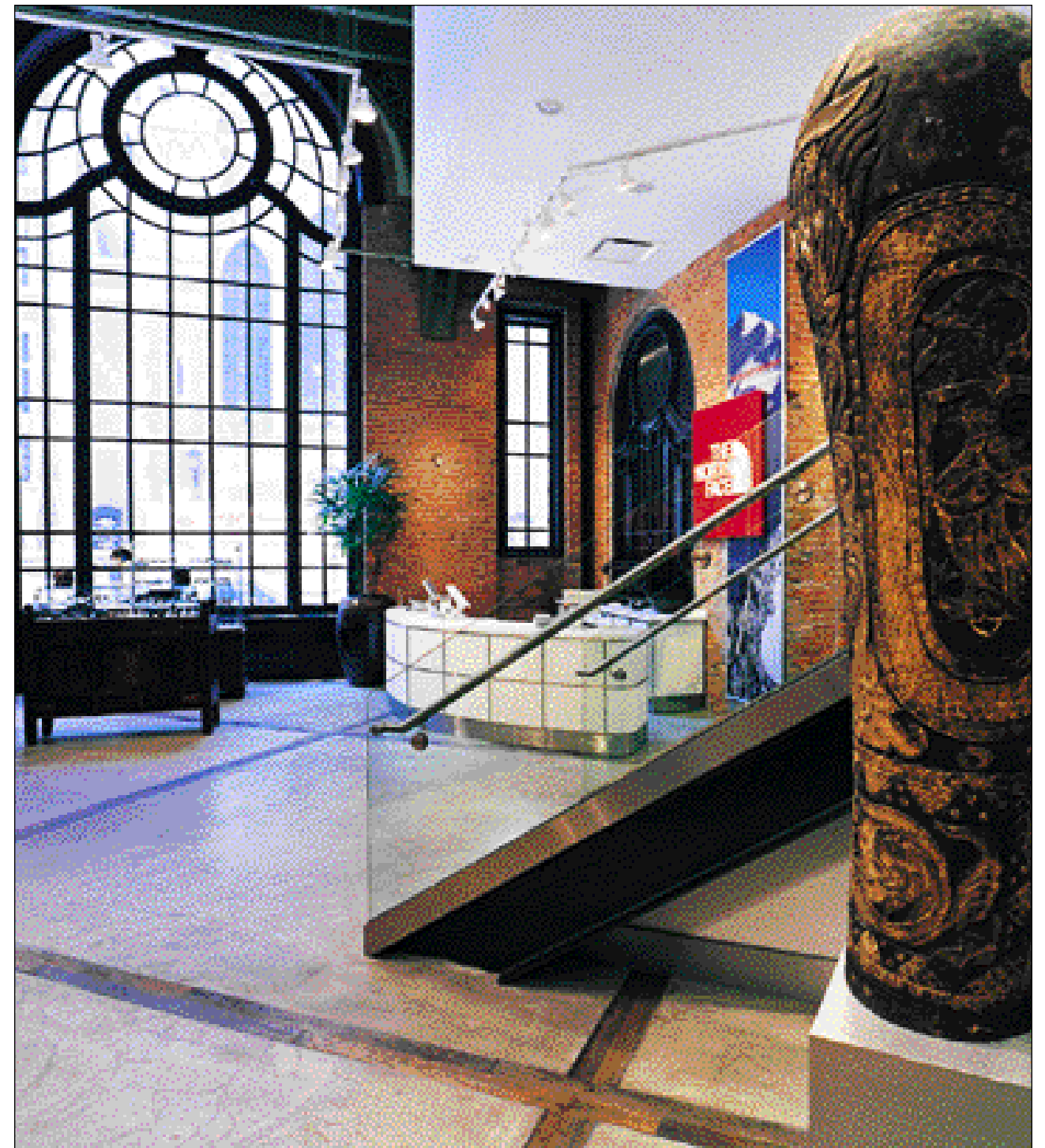
Shoppers enter through a rotunda-like corner entrance. “Created through a series of over-scaled glazed archways which, combined with rustic split stone floors, handcrafted glass with a cascading waterfall, and cultural artifacts makes for a dramatic transition from the noise and chaos of the street” to this unique retail setting. The white plastered walls, stainless steel and backlit glass contrast with the 100 year old brick architectural details, the cast iron window frames and the antique glass.

The prime objective for JGA, Inc.,



the architectural design firm, was to introduce The North Face, a division of VF Inc., to this neighborhood and “to celebrate the brand’s commitment to exploration through the creation of a new design standard in outdoor

retailing.” This was accomplished with innovative fixturing, an exciting architectural environment and “provocative communication.” With finishes and materials used to further accentuate the contrast between the





old and the new, and the rough and the smooth, the designers highlighted the characteristics of The North Face's technical brand versus the natural environment in which it is used. Unique display, stock and information systems showcase the technical features and benefits of the product through graphic and color impact on the product. These appear to highlight the sales area and serve as an activity hub to the surrounding apparel areas.

A sculptured staircase connects the two levels of the store. Near the staircase is a double height atrium that features an exposed exterior wall and this makes this space "a dramatic connection between the past and the future—the building's history and its current occupant." In this "unexpected urban oasis," the stairway leads to a bright, open and airy second level of the exposed structure where shoppers will find outerwear and equipment. Like this space, the fitting rooms and service areas also benefit from the abundance of natural light.

Intertwined with modern elements and fixtures are authentic and multicultural artifacts from regions around the world where The North Face has sponsored expeditions. These include a monastery door from Nepal, a sofa with carved wooden horse heads from India, a Peruvian door table and a ceremonial gong from Thailand. To highlight both the architectural setting and the merchandise presentation, original steel supports of the building have been selectively exposed and the original windows on the north side have been fully restored. Also restored are the ribbed, stained-glass windows that dominate the rear of the store. All together The North Face is making the grand old lady Ansonia real proud—again.

