



Pics: Peter Murdock

Watches of Switzerland USA

London-based design consultancy Capelo has collaborated with New York's MNA to design the new flagship store for Watches of Switzerland. Located on 60 Greene Street, the location is in the heart of the fashionable Soho district of New York City. Central to the project was the lighting solution, which Capelo and MNA developed alongside Lighting Workshop. Established in 1924, the Watches of Switzerland Group is the largest luxury watch and jewellery retailer in the UK; the Greene Street store is its first showroom in New York City, and only the second in its new USA portfolio. The brief given to the design team was to create a showroom that was synonymous with the luxury of the premium watch brands, while also reflecting the character of the Soho District, and the fabric of the historic 1880s cast-iron building in which it is housed. The store brings a welcome addition to the New York retail landscape, featuring an in-house cocktail bar, a curated library of watch books and an evolving collection of photographic artwork alongside the shopping experience. With more than 8,300sqft of retail space spread across two floors, the boutique has a stylish

palette of materials, including exposed brickwork and polished plaster walls, oak floors and tin tile ceilings. Together with a carefully considered lighting scheme, this creates an elegant backdrop for the products on display, while remaining sympathetic to the character of Soho. Linear LEDs from Optic Arts highlight the 30ft wide street frontage, while Amerlux track-mounted narrow beam LEDs located within an architectural pocket behind the façade provide accent light to the storefront window displays. Generous twelve-foot ceilings house recessed twin narrow-beam LED adjustable spotlights from Lucent, which create a comfortable lighting backdrop. Original cast-iron columns, featuring decorative capitals, are lit by MP Lighting's recessed narrow-beam uplights, which highlight the column detail. Inside the store, freestanding display cases feature stem and arm mounted continuous rectangular LED adjustable case lights, courtesy of XAL, that provide an added sparkle to the merchandise. A feature digital, library and accessories wall draws attention to the blackened steel and oak staircase, encouraging the customer to



venture down to the lower-ground level. A linear LED strip from Optic Arts, surface mounted within the architectural detail, creates an unobtrusive lighting effect to the stairs, adding a subtle visual interest. Contrasting with the ground-floor retail space, a cocktail bar - designed in partnership with Death & Co., one of New York's most influential cocktail lounges - provides the focal point to the lower-ground floor. It's oak and marble counter, with brass and woven leather details, adding sophistication and complementing the high-end customer experience. Lee Broom pendant lamps and a decorative tin tile ceiling add to the period feel, while recessed pinhole dimmable LED downlights with a narrow aperture, provided by Lucent, are located above the bar. These work with the decorative pendants to highlight the glasses, bottles and the bar counter. Windows behind the bar feature a linear LED grazing strip, courtesy of Edge Lighting, which adds visual brightness, highlighting the translucence of the windows. Intended as a respite for shoppers and a gathering place for enthusiasts and the local community alike, the bar offers cocktails crafted exclusively for Watches of Switzerland clients. However, for the more literary-minded guest, an intimate library/bookshop, curated by Esquire Fashion Director and noted watch enthusiast Nick Sullivan includes a range of books, from biographies to anthologies to luxe coffee table favourites. Bookshelf display cases are framed by light from recessed adjustable linear LEDs from XAL, while surface mounted LED strips light the bookshelves.

Within the central section of the lower-ground floor, accent light is provided by Amerlux's track-mounted narrow-beam LEDs, while their unobtrusive monopoint LEDs are carefully positioned between the exposed beams, adding a sense of drama to the scene. Elsewhere, a dedicated service and repairs consultation area provides direct access to Watches of Switzerland's expert watchmakers. Here, track mounted LEDs from Lucent provide subtle, ambient light to ensure a comfortable environment. "Our Watches of Switzerland Soho flagship is a special achievement for us on many levels," said Brian Duffy, CEO of the Watches of Switzerland Group. "From our choice of location, to the design and architectural detailing in the store, to our exceptional products, partners and the talented team we've assembled - it all comes together to make this an experience unlike any other in the watch industry today. This is an important first step in what promises to be an exciting journey as we expand into the US market." Lynda Murray, of Capelo, added: "With all needs catered for, the customer's visit will benefit from carefully considered, luxury store design and the exceptional level of customer experience for which Watches of Switzerland is renowned."

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