



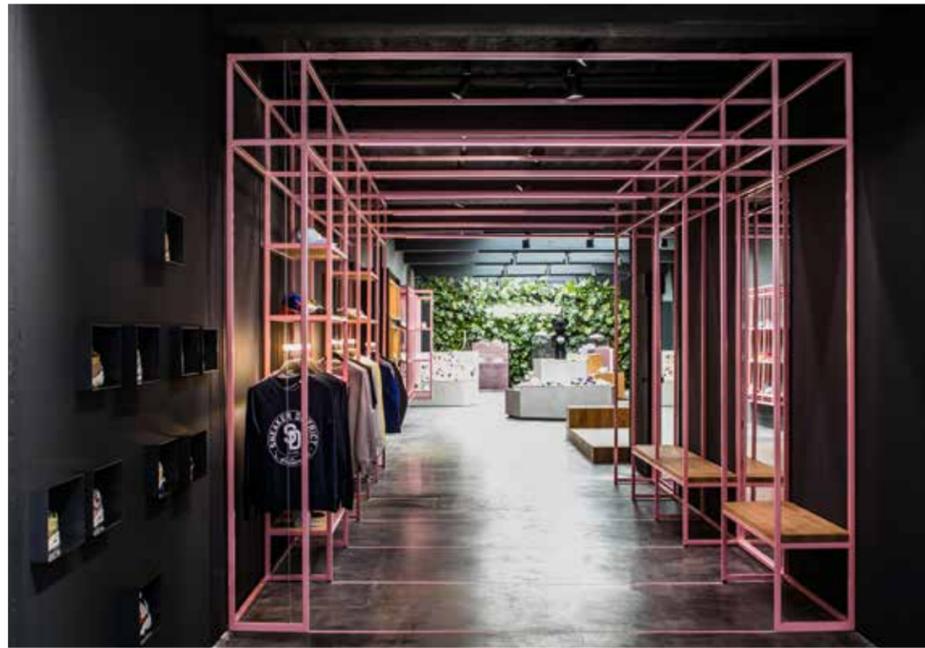
# POWER SHOP 6

Retail Design Now

FRAME

# Barde + vanVoltt

## SNEAKER DISTRICT



Thomas de Bruyne

### BARDE + VANVOLT T designs an art gallery-like meeting point for a new generation of sneaker aficionados

BELOW A steel powder-coated pink tunnel with illuminated by LED strips guides customers through the store, connecting the entrance with the back.

RIGHT The store front's flexible displays consist of concrete podiums topped with marble – a hint to Nike's Elephant Print – as well as metal rod mesh and mirrored plinths. A vertical garden forms the backdrop to this space, which is lit by factory skylights.

ANTWERP – Amsterdam-based designers Barde + vanVoltt envisioned the 200-m<sup>2</sup> flagship for Sneaker District as a gathering place for the hardcore sneakerhead. The store foregrounds skate culture's evolving fashion agenda 'where sneakers are replacing Louboutins', as the team puts it.

Designed for one of the biggest online retailers in Europe, the main goal of the brand's second physical store isn't to increase sales (although iPads in a custom oak cabinet allow customers to check and order stock online). Instead, the client wanted to provide a space for visitors to enjoy a shared culture, with sneakers at the centre. It is only fitting, then, that the store's front can be easily converted to an open space for events or brand collaborations and features concealed LED lighting for a nightclubbing experience, as well as a hang-out nook that can be turned into a stage for musicians after office hours.

'In search for materials we were inspired by sneaker design, the neighbourhood and how sneakers are made,' the designers say. A charcoal grey facade and a storefront filled with an antique pink cabinet reference the surrounding Kloosterstraat antiques district. What is more, the bright pink mesh displays and cabinets hints at the mesh used for the toes of sneakers.

