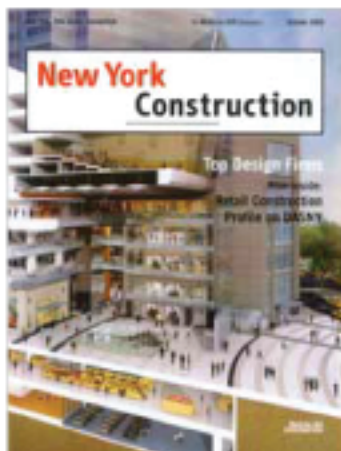


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Raising Shopping to New Heights

Luxury Re-Defined at The Shops
at Columbus Circle

By James Murdock



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The material selection, and the selection of restaurants and shops combine to make this new center a landmark in New York City. The Shops at Columbus Circle might not even need the surrounding neighborhood. It will in many ways be the true, active core of the Time Warner Center, a 2.8 million-sq-ft, \$1.7 billion mixed-use complex. The stores will draw traffic from office workers, condominium residents, hotel guests and patrons of Jazz @ Lincoln Center.

Although developers are typically warned against constructing vertical retail venues in Manhattan, a joint venture between The Related Cos. and Apollo Real Estate Advisors L.P. is betting that six levels of shops at the AOL Time Warner Center will be a success.

The developers have good reason to be confident. Responding to its unique urban context, the Time Warner Center's compelling interior architecture, designed by Ellus/Marfredi Architects Ltd., is likely to draw passersby into The Shops at Columbus Circle, a 350,000-sq-ft shopping complex containing 40 stores, five restaurants and a jazz club.

Like a European gallery, these retail

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elements curve through the AOL Time Warner Center's bottom stories, following the arc of Columbus Circle and linking the building's twin skyscrapers. At the heart of the Galleria, nestled between the towers, is a 75-ft. high lobby — dubbed the Great Room — that will open onto the street through a dramatic glass wall.

"The metaphor here was to bring you

"It doesn't close up at seven o'clock. It's more of a total place, enlivened at night by restaurants and a bar—there's also a gourmet supermarket—so it's a place where people go morning, noon and night."

from an outside experience to an inside experience in a seamless way," explained Kenneth Himmel, president of Related Urban Development L.L.C. Toward that end, materials and finishes throughout the Great Room will heighten this effect and help draw people further into the space.

Aluminum-leafed panels in the ceiling, for example, will appear cloudlike when lit by a battery of theater-quality lights. And patterns in the floor, made from the same stones used in the outdoor entrance plaza, will direct visitors to the escalator banks as a metaphoric continuation of the sidewalks on 59th Street.

"We're very excited about all the materials and the way we're using them," said Howard Elkus, principal of Elkus/Manfredi, who has designed other Galleria-like shopping complexes, such as Copley Place in Boston. "It's what you walk on, touch and feel that's often the measure of the attitude of a space."

The Shops at Columbus Circle is likely

to measure large. If nothing else, it will boast substantial retail variety. Although the tenant roster includes upscale stores such as Snaet Weitzman and Hugo Boss, it also includes neighborhood staples such as Whole Foods Market and The Equinox Health Club & Spa.

"You've got some interesting people-generators here," Himmel said. "People thought we were just going to go after

Center, a 2.8 million-sq.-ft., \$1.7 billion mixed-use complex. The stores will draw traffic from office workers, condominium residents, hotel guests and patrons of Jazz @ Lincoln Center.

"It doesn't close up at seven o'clock," observed Bruce Warwick, president of Columbus Centre L.L.C., the project's developer. "It's more of a total place, enlivened at night by restaurants and a bar—there's also a gourmet supermarket—so it's a place where people go morning, noon and night."

Detailing Bovis Lend Lease LMB Inc., general contractor for common areas in The Shops at Columbus Circle, is ensuring that materials come together to produce the intended effect. Several contractors, chief among them Structure-Tone Inc., New York City, are building the individual shops and restaurant interiors. The work is by no means easy.

For example, to install the Great Room's ceiling panels and apply 5.5-in. by 5.5-in. sections of aluminum leafing, Bovis hired Universal Builder Supply Inc. to build >>



The elements curve through the AOL Time Warner Center's bottom stories, following the arc of Columbus Circle and linking the building's twin skyscrapers. (Rendering courtesy of Neoscape. Photo by Bernstein Associates.)



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