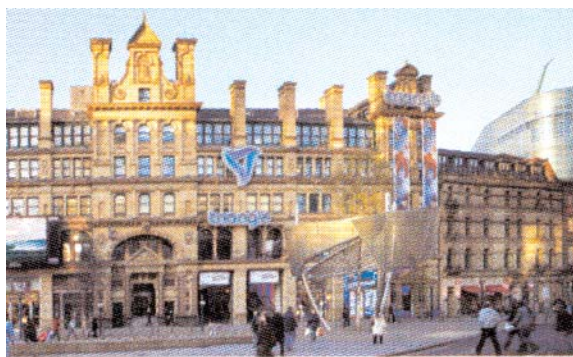


SHOPPING CENTERS

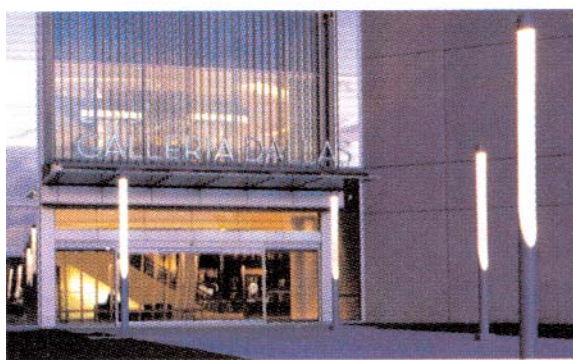
Cultural Icons

Having assumed many identities during the 20th century, from strip center to mega-mall to festival marketplace, the shopping center reflects the values of those who shop there.



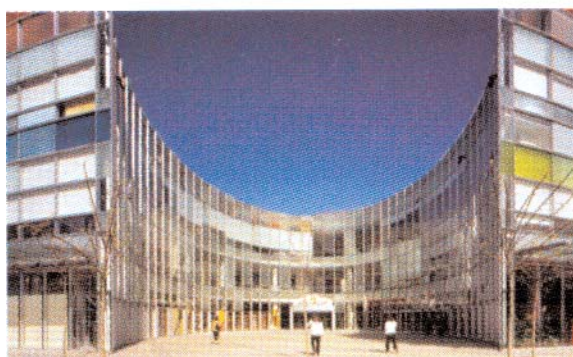
TRIANGLE SHOPPING CENTRE
Manchester, England

The U.K. and Hong Kong-based firm Benoy creates a modern shopping center inside a 1903 corn exchange, making sure it spills onto the sidewalk and engages its urban neighbors.



GALLERIA DALLAS
Dallas, Texas

A major interior renovation by SMWM and new landscaping by Hargreaves Associates help revive the fortunes of a mall that had once been a regional trendsetter.



ABERDEEN CENTRE
Richmond, B.C., Canada

In a Vancouver suburb with a large Asian population, this retail-and-residential complex designed by Bing Thom Architects caters to its local customers as it applies lessons from a global market.

By Clifford A. Pearson

You are where you shop. Every teenager knows that. Whether we admit it or not, our choice of shopping venues says a great deal about who we are—providing important clues to our income, age, place of residence, lifestyle, and personal aspirations. So it's no wonder that shopping centers loom large in our emotional landscapes and have played prominent roles in movies like *Fast Times at Ridgemont High* and *Dawn of the Dead*. They are also cultural markers, identifying particular milestones on the road of modern development. Drive out to the American heartland—to Lake Forest, Illinois, for instance, where you'll find Market Square, which began in 1916 and is now listed on The National Register of Historic Places as the first planned shopping district in the United States. Keep going and you'll hit Country Club Plaza in Kansas City, Missouri, which opened in 1922. It was developed by J.C. Nichols as an automobile-focused retail complex and was one of the first places to be called a "shopping center." In fact, you could chart the course of urban development in the 20th century by mapping the growth and changing character of shopping centers: the move to the suburbs, the supersizing of the mall, the rise of discount outlets, the festival marketplace's attempt to bring people back downtown, and the recent emergence of "lifestyle centers," which try to combine the DNA of both Main Street and the mall.

Once firmly identified with the United States, the shopping center has spread around the globe, embraced by billions as an icon of affluence. Beijing now boasts the world's largest, the Golden Resources Shopping Mall, which at 7.3 million square feet is 3.1 million square feet bigger than the Mall of America, in Bloomington, Minnesota, formerly the largest. In his article on the Aberdeen Centre outside of Vancouver, Trevor Boddy calls it "the first of the new, globalized shopping malls to be built [in North America]." What had been an American export is now being imported from abroad, complete with foreign flavors and appeal. Although set in the suburbs, the Aberdeen Centre—designed by Bing Thom Architects—engages its context with a pair of public outdoor spaces, includes a 120-unit condo tower, and will connect to a new rapid-transit line being built for the 2010 Winter Olympics. So this mall is planting urban genes in the body of a suburb. In Manchester, England, the Triangle Shopping Centre is also playing a transformative role, supporting the revival of the city's downtown in the aftermath of a 1996 terrorist bombing. At the Galleria in Dallas, the firm SMWM shows how architecture and \$70 million can help an aging mall get its mojo back.

You are where you shop. And that applies to entire societies, as well as individuals. ■

For more information on these projects, go to Building Types Study at archrecord.construction.com.

ONE: TRIANGLE SHOPPING CENTRE

Manchester, England

Benoy takes a historic corn exchange building damaged by a terrorist bomb and turns it into a 21st-century shopping center.

By Clifford A. Pearson

Architect: Benoy—David Coyne, executive director; Peter Challoner, senior architectural technician

Client: Milligan RRI

Engineers: Faber Maunsell (structural; mechanical/electrical); Midas Technologies (sky bar)

Consultants: Design Intervention (feature lighting); Mel Chantrey (sculptures)

General contractor: Dean and Bowes

Size: 150,000 square feet

Cost: \$7.8 million (entrance and refurbishment); \$1.8 million (sky bar)

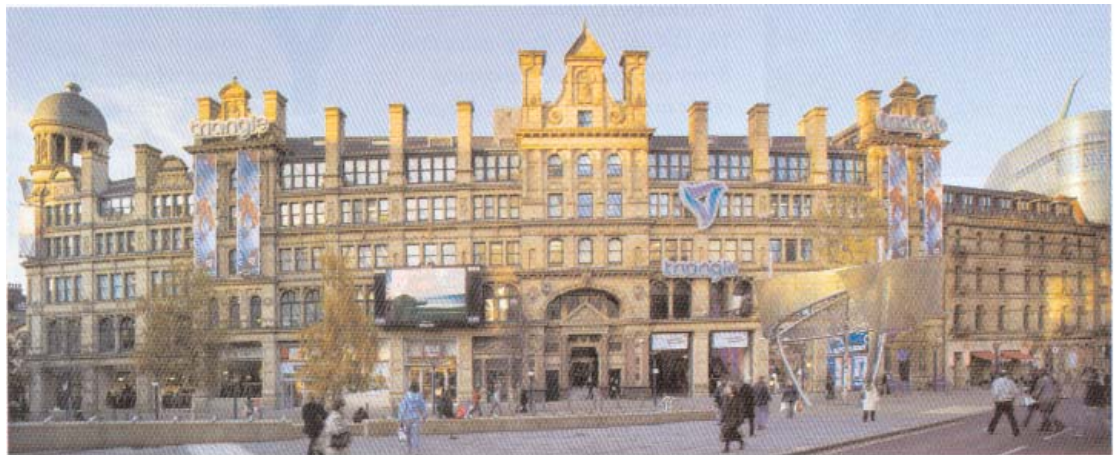
Completion date: March 2005

Sources

Perforated stainless-steel sheets on sky bar: Nova

Plasterboard and metal-stud system: British Gypsum

For more information on this project, go to Building Types Study at archrecord.construction.com.



On June 15, 1996, a bomb set by the Irish Republican Army ripped through the center of Manchester, England, injuring more than 200 people and causing extensive damage. During the following nine years, the government and private developers rebuilt the area, using a master plan designed by EDAW. One of the final pieces in this urban jigsaw puzzle was the renovation of the 1903 Corn Exchange Building, which had incurred only superficial damage from the bomb but had become a retailing anachronism. Originally a market-style trading hall, the corn exchange had evolved into an emporium of natural and “alternative” foods and “New Age” products by the 1980s.

Program

The property’s owner, Milligan RRI, hired the large U.K. and Hong Kong-based design firm Benoy to convert the corn exchange into a

modern shopping center, accommodating a new mix of tenants and a contemporary design for all the public spaces and graphics. The owner also wanted the complex, which it renamed the Triangle Shopping Centre, to better connect with its urban context, specifically Exchange Square to the south and Victoria Station to the north.

Solution

Because the Corn Exchange Building was landmarked, Benoy could make only minor changes to its exterior. The designers added new signage, including vertical banners and a large LED display screen, which would be programmed by the BBC to present cultural and sporting events. “The owner wanted the center to have a stronger presence on



Sculptures by Mel Chantrey help announce new entries on the north (above) and the south, facing Exchange Square (top). Hovering on three legs, the sky bar acts as an icon for the center (opposite).



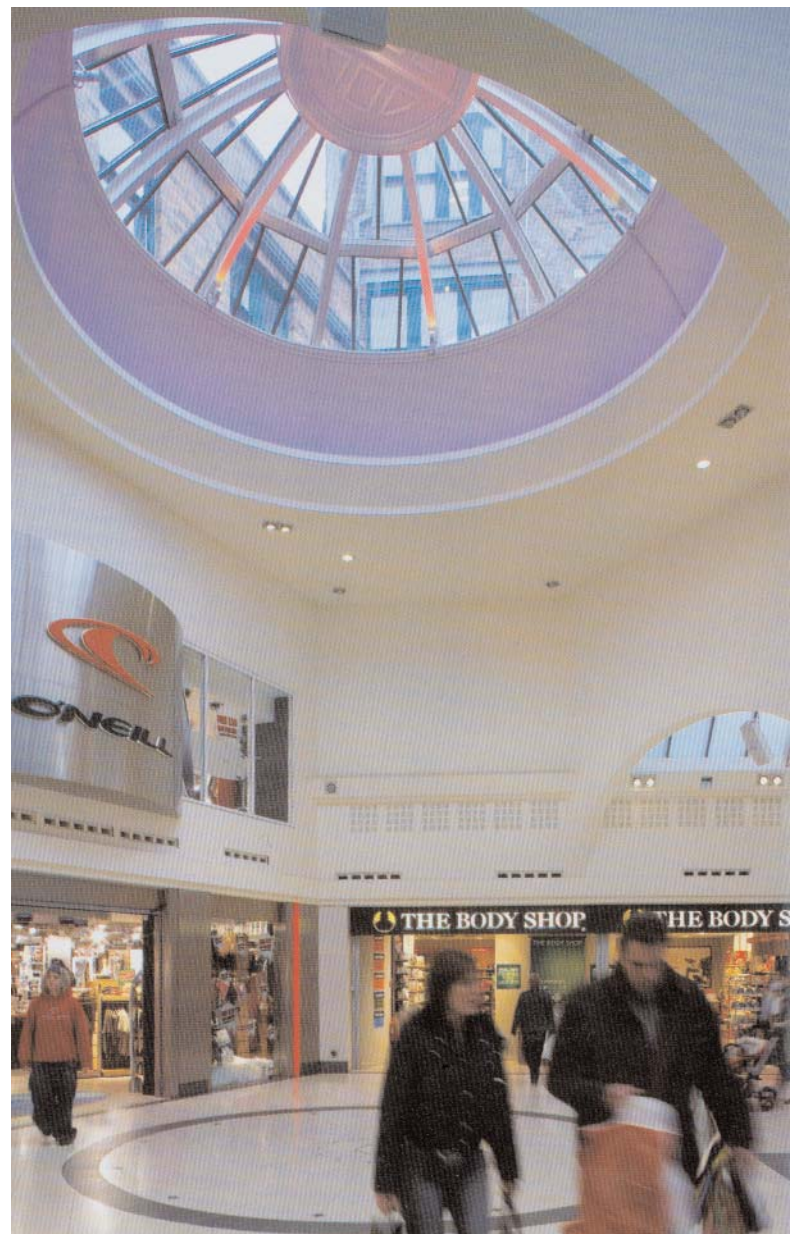


SECOND FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR

1. Shopping center lobby
2. Office lobby
3. Retail
4. Sky bar
5. Cathedral



The architects cleaned up the existing structure's glazed vaulting and domes (top right) and wove new materials, such as stainless steel and glass, into the historic building (right).





The sky bar was built in a factory, then reassembled inside the shopping center at night. It houses a coffee retailer, which has done a booming business at this location.

Exchange Square," says David Coyne, executive director of Benoy, "so we developed a design where the new interior would spill out onto the square." To do that, the architects inserted a modern, two-story-high entrance where a store had been, and converted the old, stepped entryway into the main access point for offices that sit above the three floors of shopping space. Then they added another new entrance on the

north, creating a strong circulation route from Victoria Station through the mall and out to Exchange Square. To emphasize this axis and alert people that something new was going on inside the old building, the architects worked with artist Mel Chantrey to create sculptures at the new entrances that use the same materials—steel and perforated metal—as those in the revamped shopping center.

Inside the building, Benoy reworked the floor plates and circulation to create a tri-level shopping center with 150,000 square feet that takes full advantage of the old building's glazed vaulting. As a

"jewel in the crown," the architects designed a podlike "sky bar" that rests on three legs and has the look of a lunar landing vehicle. In fact, the sky bar did land from elsewhere, having been built in a factory, then reassembled over an eight-week period inside the mall at night when the shops were closed. "We needed to create a visual icon, but one that wouldn't overwhelm everything else," says Coyne of the sky bar.

Commentary

Although the new BBC display screen and some of the graphic elements on the exterior of the building seem to be more tacked on than

integrated with the historic envelope, the Triangle Shopping Centre has a stronger relationship with its urban neighbors than its predecessor did. Pedestrians now flow through and around the building and hang out at the rebuilt Exchange Square (designed by landscape architect Martha Schwartz). Inside, the shopping center copies many of the slick moves—glass balustrades, stainless-steel trim, and polished-stone floors—found in malls all over the world. But the new elements enliven the old architecture, and the sky bar provides just the right kind of wow to make this mall more fun than most others. ■

TWO: GALLERIA DALLAS

Dallas, Texas

SMWM and Omniplan renovate an aging diva of a mall, using contemporary materials and light-filled spaces to give her renewed life.

By David Dillon

Architect: SMWM—Cathy Simon, FAIA, design principal; David Bacon, Alice Benecke, Jennifer Brodie, Dan Cheetham, AIA, Jackie Lange, AIA, Lamberto Moris, FAIA, Dean Nakabayashi, Gregg Novicoff, AIA, Matthew Peak, Tiffany Scharpf, Kat Sheldon, Pietro Silva, Eric Staten, Amanda Williams, design team

Architect of record: Omniplan

Client: UBS Asset Management

Engineers: Thornton-Tomasetti (structural); Arjo (mechanical)

Consultants: Hargreaves Associates (landscape); T. Kondos Associates (lighting)

Construction manager: Wolf Group

General contractor: VCC

Size: 250,000 gross square feet

Cost: \$35 million (interiors); \$70 million (including landscaping, design, graphics, and furniture)

Completion date: November 2005

Sources

Paint: Benjamin Moore

Laminates/veneers: Briggs Veneers; General Woods & Veneers

Flooring: ASN Natural Stone

Carpet: Milliken

Lighting fixtures: Modular; Kurt Versen; Prudential; Linear Lighting; LSI; ETC; Winona; Pablo Pardo

Railing: South West Metalsmiths

For more information on this project, go to Building Types Study at archrecord.construction.com.

The Dallas Galleria opened in 1982 at the conjunction of a tollway and an interstate, a textbook definition of a 100 percent location. For 20 years it was a money machine for developer Gerald Hines—an instant satellite city containing a hotel, office towers, movie theaters, and a glass-vaulted shopping mall with a skating rink, food court, jogging track, and other trendy amenities. It was more coherent and architecturally sophisticated than its Houston prototype, which Hines opened in 1970. (Both malls were inspired by the 19th-century Galleria in Milan, Italy.) It also happened to be the luxury mall closest to Dallas's affluent northern suburbs.

But with the emergence of new retail concepts such as power centers and lifestyle centers, and major upgrades to competing malls, including the premiere NorthPark Center, the Galleria lost its cachet. Sales slumped, name retailers left, and the entire project suddenly looked passé. USB Realty eventually bought it from Hines, in 2002, and embarked on a \$70 million renovation to get it back in the regional retail game.

Program

"When we compared it to newer malls in Dallas, it looked so tired," recalls Cathy Simon of SMWM, who collaborated with Hargreaves

Contributing editor David Dillon divides his time between Dallas and Amherst, Mass.

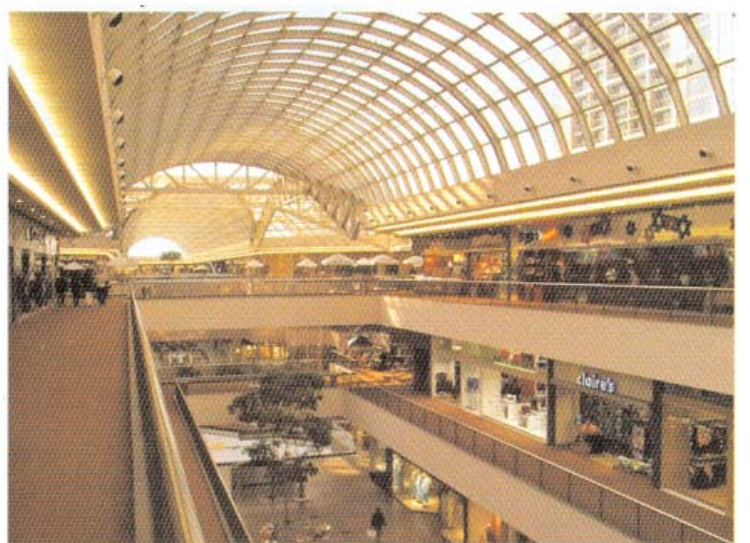


Associates and Omniplan of Dallas on the turnaround. "It had old ficus trees, lots of boring pink and brown granite, and no sense of place."

Tired doesn't begin to describe the situation. Circulation was poor, the mix of stores perplexing (bou-

tiques and kids' stores side by side), and there were no public spaces where shoppers could take a break from nonstop consumption. Current research shows that more shoppers go to a mall to browse and watch the passing parade than to visit a specific store or make a specific purchase. But the Galleria had no idling places except those around the ice rink—a signature feature carried over from Houston—and even they had dark spots and dead ends.

"We were aware of what was going on at NorthPark and elsewhere,"



says Omniplan's Tipton Housewright, "and felt that in order to attract high-end tenants, we needed to create an indoor version of Rodeo Drive."

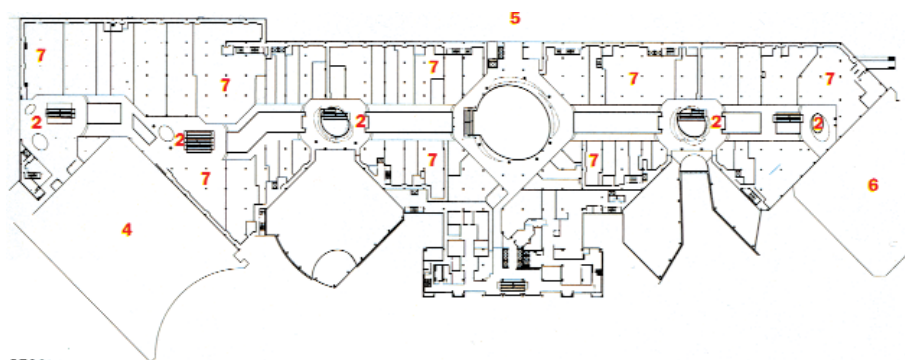
The architects' first big move was to

Solution

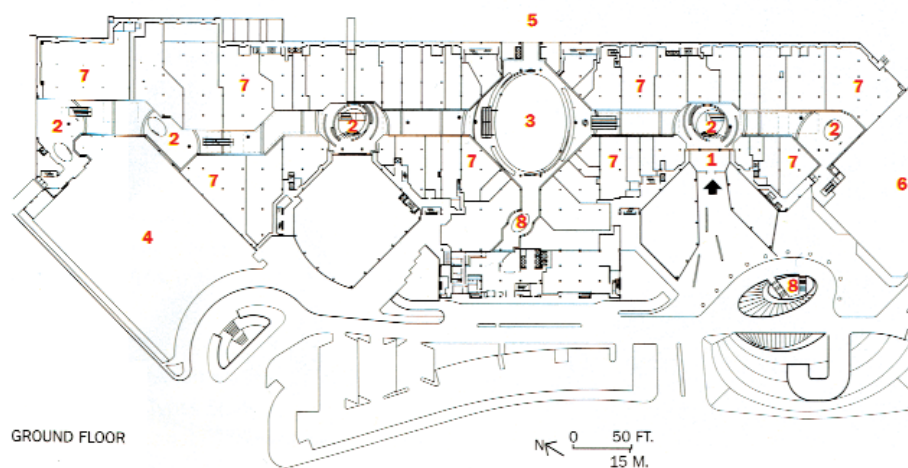
The architects' first big move was to

The architects created a new main entrance for the mall (opposite, top) and renovated 250,000 gross square feet inside the complex. In the 20 years after it opened in 1982 and before it was renovated, the mall had gotten worn and tired (opposite, bottom). The revived interior (right) features new finishes, a scissors escalator, and palm trees suspended at the third floor.





SECOND FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR

1. Main entry foyer
2. Activity node
3. Skating rink
4. Saks Fifth Avenue
5. Macy's
6. Banana Republic
7. Retail
8. Fountain

The new scissors escalator helps circulation in the three-level mall, while a reconfigured skating rink offers more space for people to gather (above).

convert the ground floor into an urban street by removing the ficus trees and planters, adding limestone paving and contemporary lighting, and creating small plazas with benches and sculpture at key points along the mall's 960-foot-long spine. The effect was to turn a nondescript concourse into a chic shopping promenade featuring upscale retailers. Mid-price stores moved to the second level, and family stores to the third.

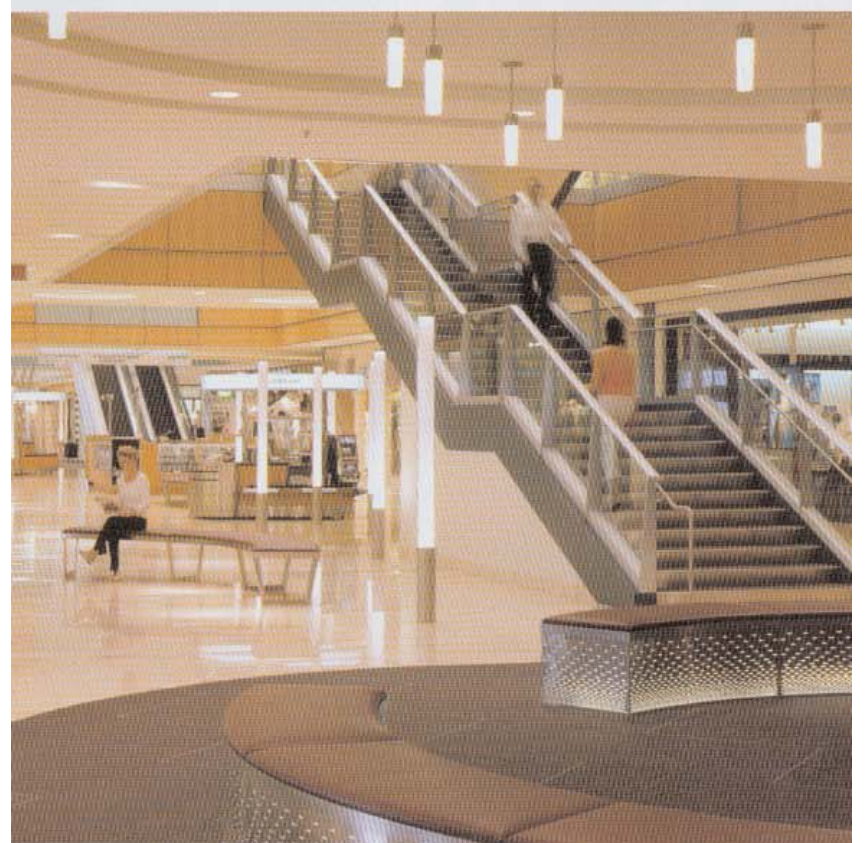
To improve vertical circulation, a tough issue in three-level malls, the architects added a sleek scissor escalator at center court, next to the ice rink, which they made smaller and more elliptical to improve flow around it. They made other key nodes more elliptical as well, and refaced balconies and walkways in green glass and Australian eucalyptus to create a richer and more fluid design.

The Galleria's monumental glass vaults, static and diagrammatic versions of Milan's stunning original, presented another problem. To cope with it, Hargreaves suspended embalmed palm trees—as in “real but dead”—from planters on the third level, where they become vertical sculptures that help tie the vast space together while serving as ironic metaphors for the trees that were removed below. Curved and folded-fabric sculptures by French artist Daniel Graffin float overhead, celebrating the light filtering through the vaults. Several of these pieces hang above a new children's play area, another of the attractions designed to keep parents and kids shopping till they drop.

Commentary

The Dallas Galleria renovation is more cosmetic than structural. The basic building section remains unchanged, but the new materials, lighting, and public amenities add up to a more urbane and sophisticated shopping experience. It is still a mall, but one no longer teetering on the brink. Sales have improved, new tenants have arrived, and the overall atmosphere is more inviting. If the Galleria has been reconfigured rather than reinvented, it is no longer stuck in a time warp. ■

The architects turned the ground floor into an indoor street with a series of “activity nodes” that allow shoppers to take a break and relax (above). Throughout the mall, new furniture, contemporary lighting, and elegant materials have given the complex new life (right).



THREE: ABERDEEN CENTRE

Richmond, British Columbia, Canada

Bing Thom Architects designs a mixed-use complex that is helping a suburb become more of an urban kind of place.

By Trevor Boddy

Architect: Bing Thom Architects—Bing Thom, Luciano Zago, Allan Alomes, Brian Billingsley, Eric Boelling, John Camfield, Yi Mei Chan, Chris Doray, Stephanie Forsythe, Michael Heeney, Shinobu Homma, Marcos Hui, Stanton Hung, Eileen Keenan, Arno Matis, Michael Motlagh, Robert Sandilands, Michael Wong, Tony Yip, Francis Yan

Owner: Fairchild Developments

Engineers: Bush, Bohlman (structural); Keen (mechanical); RA Duff (electrical); MPT (civil)

Consultants: Fred Liu (landscape); Illuminating Concepts (lighting)

Construction manager: Dominion Construction

Size: 400,000 square feet (retail); 300,000 square feet (parking)

Cost: \$62 million

Completion date: February 2004

Sources

Glass and skylights: Advanced Glazing Systems

Curtain wall: Vanceva Glazing Loadings

Floor and wall tile: Savoia Canada

Paints and stains: Zolatone

For more information on this project, go to Building Types Study at archrecord.construction.com.

As many of us learned from studying the works of Aldo Rossi, never count a building typology dead. I remember being thrilled by Rossi and Carlo Aymonino's massive Gallarate housing project outside Milan when it opened in 1974 for its updating of Trajan's market in Rome and the continuous arcades found in Italy's Veneto. With the rise of big-box stores and so-called power centers, and the drift of chain stores back to urban streets, there has been speculation in North America that shopping malls are a dying breed. But simultaneously, the rest of the world has shown increasing zest for malls, with the most impressive examples now found in South America, the Middle East, and East Asia.

Bing Thom's Aberdeen Centre for Vancouver's heavily Asian suburb of Richmond is the first of the new, globalized shopping malls to be built on this continent. It is a truly 21st-century reinvigoration of the type, with a layout that ignores the tired bipolar model that places the super-market at one end, the anchor department store at the other, and double-loaded rows of shops in-between. With its smartly detailed, colored-glass walls, the sinuous Aberdeen Centre breaks all the conventions of shopping-mall design: It has an innovative layout, an unconventional leasing strategy, shopping

Trevor Boddy is a Vancouver-based critic and urbanist.



floors that are vertically stacked with multilevel parking to one side, a 120-unit condo tower right over the mall, and a net-to-gross ratio that's low due to all the space devoted to public amenities. The design may also point to something many cities talk about these days, but few have accomplished: the urbanization and densification of postwar suburbs.

Program

Aberdeen represents the vision of its owner, Hong Kong-born media entrepreneur Thomas Fung. Educated at the University of British Columbia and N.Y.U., Fung produced and wrote a number of Chinese-language kung-fu and comedy movies, then settled in Vancouver to manage his otherwise Hong Kong-based family's real estate and media empire, including Fairchild Group, North America's largest

Chinese-language TV, radio, and Internet operation.

Built in the early 1980s, the original Fung-owned Aberdeen Mall was underperforming economically two decades later and had become difficult to manage (its movie theater and arcade attracted local gangs). To revive the property, Fung engaged a fellow Hong Konger-gone-Canadian, Bing Thom, who had emerged from the shadow of his former employer, Arthur Erickson, to become Vancouver's most progressive city builder. Seeking a wider customer base for the mall, Fung took Thom's radical advice to demolish the existing shopping center and build a new, 562,000-square-foot retail-residential-entertainment complex on its site, renamed Aberdeen Centre in English. Aberdeen refers to Richmond's equivalent in Hong Kong—an upscale suburb. But the

The architects worked with Molo Design to develop a color palette for the building's curtain wall (right two and below). Colored-glass panels come in opaque, translucent, and transparent versions and can be changed over time. A deeply recessed courtyard (far right and opposite) provides access to produce stalls and restaurants.



mall's more important and all-new Chinese name doesn't refer to location at all; its ideograms translate as "Timely" and "Trendy Place."

Solution

As the project moved through design and construction, Fung rethought the mall's retail mix. He renewed none of his former retail tenants, instead lining up leading-edge Asian retailers, such as Thailand's answer to IKEA and one of Korea's leading clothing stores. Then he secured the North American master franchise for Daiso, the Japanese equivalent of Wal-Mart.

Thom's curvilinear design responds to siting considerations, such as a realigned public street on the east side of the property that traces a large arc accommodating the mall's enlarged footprint. With a new rail line set to open for Vancouver's 2010 Winter Olympic Games and a transit station planned just north of the site, Thom placed condominium apartments closest to the rail connection. While cars pull into a garage on the west side of the complex, pedestrians can enter from the north, east, and southeast.

Inside the mall, Thom arranged stores mostly along single-loaded pathways, creating a more open and spacious environment for shoppers. The curving circulation routes also improve sight lines so storefronts are easy to find. Daylight is an obsession in Thom's design:



1. Fountain court
2. Retail
3. Food market
4. Courtyard
5. Parking
6. Residential lobby
7. Food court
8. Apartment



GROUND FLOOR



THIRD FLOOR



Retail floor trays step back in section to deepen penetration, while 20 light cannons inspired by Corbu's La Tourette brighten the generous public spaces without hitting storefronts with direct sunlight.

The architect's use of colored glass for the project's curtain wall establishes a strong visual identity for the building. Thom worked with Stephanie Forsythe of Molo Design to distill a palette of colors that picks up hues from the mainly Asian strip malls in the area. Using full-scale mock-ups of the curtain wall, Thom's team developed a range of opaque, transparent, and translucent panels for each color, so that exterior walls can be periodically modified to meet the changing needs of the retailers behind them. The random checkerboard patterning of the panels makes future changes less apparent. The architects designed window mullion caps so their bull-nose profile curves inward and can be fastened on the back, allowing flat-plate glass to be used even for tight curves. Project architect Luciano Zago says, "The benefit of this detail is the perception of curving surfaces but the economics of faceted glass."

Because both owner and designer were committed to increasing Richmond's public space, Thom created a pair of public outdoor plazas—a deeply recessed market

Curving pathways and generous public spaces create an open, light-filled setting for the mall's retail outlets.

court ringed by produce stalls and restaurants near the west end of the main elevation, and a smaller piazzeta under a giant, disklike roof shielding the main entrance to the complex. The disk's clear span, which stretches nearly a city block, caps the central atrium (Richmond's largest interior space) and is heavily programmed with entertainment functions. The disk's continuously curved plaster soffit serves as both a clerestory reflecting surface and a screen on which images can be projected. Look up there and you'll find animated views of clouds and stars—both the astronomical variety and the kings of Canto-Pop.

Commentary

A show-biz client and a know-biz architect combined strengths at Aberdeen Centre to create a mall that poses an elegant counter-argument to the shopworn clichés and bottom-line formulas that almost killed this building type. With single-family bungalows from the 1960s across the street, Aberdeen Centre engages the landscape of suburbia while enlivening it with a sensitively scaled but densely packed program of uses. The light-rail line now under construction next door will link Aberdeen to Vancouver's airport and downtown. And with a speed-skating oval for the 2010 Olympics rising just a few blocks away, Aberdeen may prove the germ to a retail, entertainment, and residential hub that could render this suburb a lot more urban.