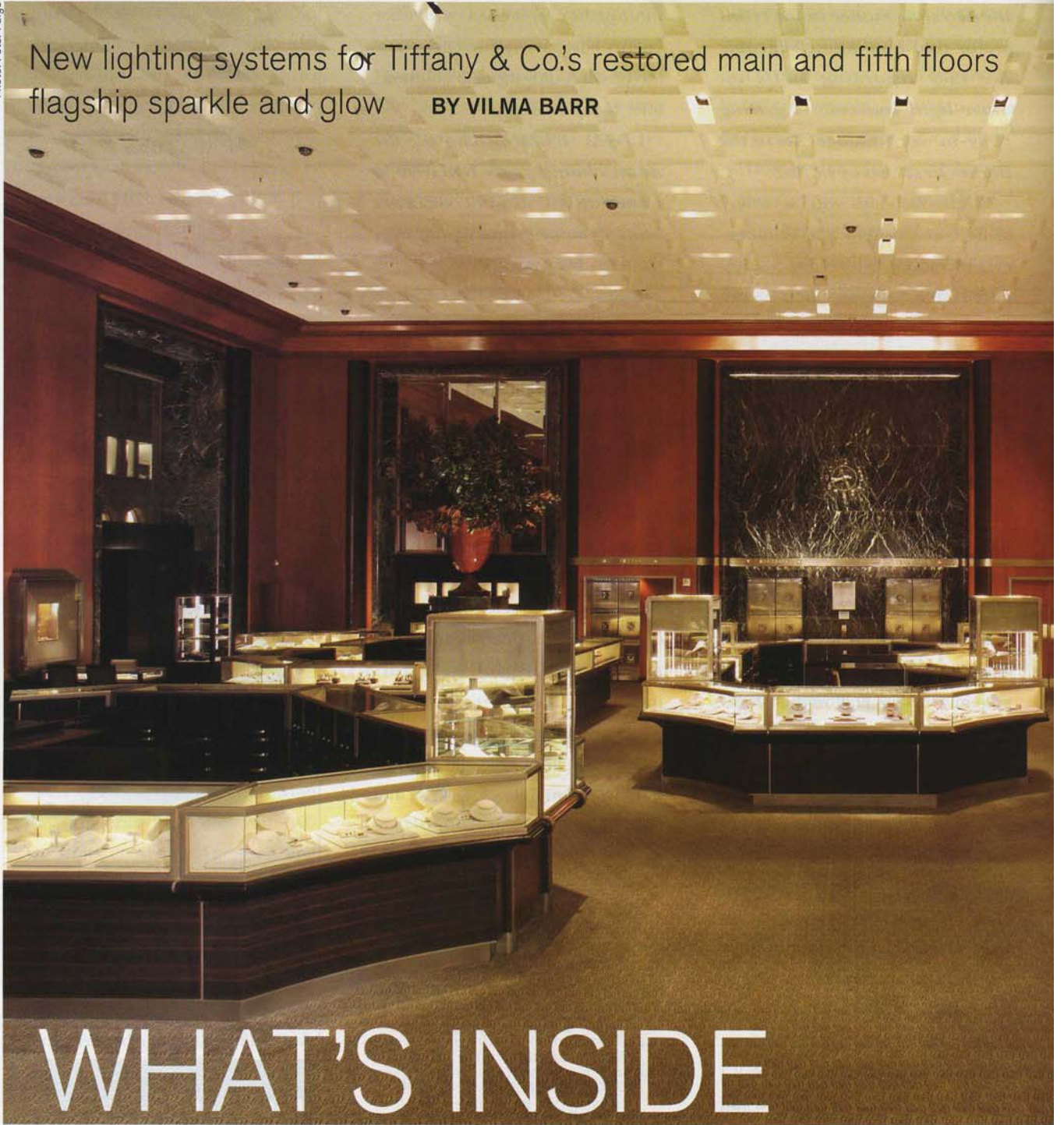


PROJECT

Photo: Peter Paige

New lighting systems for Tiffany & Co.'s restored main and fifth floors
flagship sparkle and glow **BY VILMA BARR**



WHAT'S INSIDE THE BLUE

make its landmark New York



A column-free design on the first floor is beneficial, but the presence of asbestos meant the original ceiling structure couldn't be changed. As a result new fixtures had to fit existing openings.

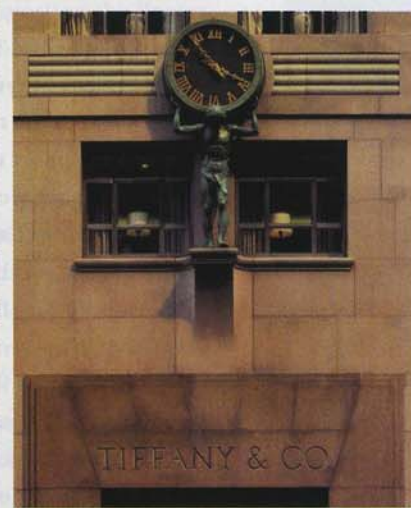


Photo: Elliott Kaufman

Tiffany & Co.'s Moderne-classic six-level building on the southeast corner of Fifth Avenue and 57th Street has been purveying fine jewels and gifts in signature blue boxes for 67 of the company's 160-year history. Above the main entrance is the 9-ft-tall, bronze-sheathed statue of Atlas supporting a clock on his shoulders, originally crafted in 1855 for the first downtown Tiffany store. It is now an iconic symbol seen on Tiffany façades around the world.

In 1940, the entire cost of the building was \$1 million, which paid for all interior and exterior materials, building systems (including air conditioning), construction and fees. Built in the architectural style categorized as Moderne or American Art Deco, the multi-pane windows of the steel-frame masonry building that were popular in the mid-20th century era were retained. One of the first events at the then-new Tiffany store was the display of the company's exclusive creations that were shown in the House of Jewels pavilion at the 1959-40 New York World's Fair.

With the opening on Labor Day 2006 of the 8,000-sq ft main floor, the last phase of a five-year, top-to-bottom re-design and restoration of the building's interior was completed. There had been interim upgrades, but no formal large-scale effort to restore the original luster and beauty to the building's interior. The store's non-selling fifth floor, on which had been located the president's office and boardroom, was completely redesigned. The office and conference room were restored, and two flexible multi-use spaces were created that can

be used for company events or internal meetings.

The new storewide lighting plan that accents the product collections and enhances the entire interior environment was created by Cooley Monato Studio, New York City, in conjunction with Tiffany's in-house planning and design group led by Philip Bottega, the firm's vice president for real estate services worldwide.

THE MAIN FLOOR

Bottega says of the first floor that the overall goal was to respect its architectural integrity. "It was treated more

BOX?



In this showcase displaying unique jewels, LED accent lights emphasize the sparkle of the stones and dramatize the design of each displayed piece.

Photo: Eaim Uhlina

as a restoration than a renovation. We wanted to recall the main floor's image when the store opened in 1940. The program involved upgraded building systems, a reconfigured traffic pattern and installation of display fixtures that attract today's customer," Bottega says. "We took advantage of the column-free design by Cross & Cross, the original architects. It was quite an engineering feat for that time period."

A new first-floor layout improves traffic flow to better accommodate the store's visitors (7,000 on an average day) making their way around the main floor or on their way to other floors. A new revolving door on the Fifth Avenue entrance was installed. Aisles were made wider, including the main east/west aisle and the cross aisle leading from the 57th Street entry.

For Emily Monaco, who had been working on Tiffany facilities globally for the last seven years, working on the redesign of the main floor—one of the world's most famous selling environments—"was like creating lighting for a sacred site. The lighting system hadn't been fully modernized since the store opened," she points

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out. A system of trusses located within an interstitial space between the main floor and the mezzanine is the structural support method employed by Cross & Cross to give the space a clear span.

Monaco's initial site inspection required her to analyze the in-place lighting system from the catwalk between the trusses. "I could see that not all lighting fixture openings were identical in size," she says. "Because of asbestos, the original ceiling structure couldn't be changed for us to install new fixtures that required modifications to the ceiling openings. In addition, the fixtures had to be as low-profile as possible."

The solution was to custom-design a two-piece lighting fixture using 59-W PAR lamps that can be adjusted to highlight the different types of products or a special display. The housing-less double-socket and ballast assembly detaches from the main mounting frame for easier maintenance with barrier-free top access. Merchandise within the showcases sparkles under a 120-footcandle brightness level, beamed from the 25-ft-high ceiling.

New showcase interior lighting is provided by an LED system. Monaco reports that a new heat removal element developed by the LED resource, Optolum/SGF Associates, employs a heat-transferring tape located between the LED board and aluminum housing that allows the showcase system to run cooler. Additional lighting is supplied by T5 fluorescent lamps, placed out of the customer's line of sight, as are the LEDs. Showcase interiors are lined with fabrics that take advantage of the white light of LEDs. Eggshell velvet was selected as the basic background material. To accent fine diamond displays, mauve silk shantung is a subtle and elegant change of pace.

The new lighting brings out the warmth of the macassar and ebonized sycamore woods used for the new sculptural showcases, as well as the teak wood wall panels, says Bottega. This set of panels, along with the distinctive green and black marble panels, were restored to their original texture by cleaning and hand polishing. Uplighting gives added visual dimension to the display vitrines, the towers supporting the flower-filled, pedestal-mounted urns and for the ceiling pockets along the perimeter of the space, around the mirrors and over the elevators.

TAKE THE FIFTH

Up until its current metamorphosis into a handsome, multi-purpose space and support areas, the 10,000-sq ft fifth floor had a varied past. Although it housed the chairman's office and a conference room, it also served as a receiving and shipping center and storage area. When the third floor silver department underwent renovation, it moved up to the fifth floor for 18 months until the completion of that phase of the overall building improvement program.

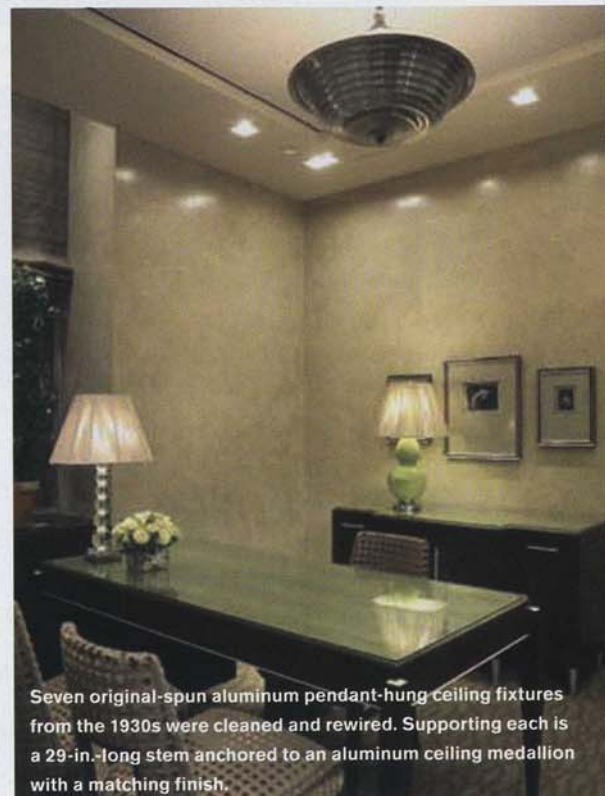
Broader utilization of fifth-floor spaces had a place in the master planning and construction schedule since it was first drawn up in 1999. "As on the building's other floors, it was a complete renovation," says Lawrence Palfini, vice president of global construction and property management for Tiffany. "Each area was taken down to the original steel."

The floor allotment for the fifth level devotes nearly half of the usable floor area (4,800 sq ft) to a multi-purpose space that can further be divided into two sections. Here, for the first time in recent history, Tiffany's management



On the fifth floor, MR16 lamps accent wall art while 26-W fluorescent fixtures provide ambient light in public gathering and circulation areas.

Photo: Peter Paige



Seven original-spun aluminum pendant-hung ceiling fixtures from the 1930s were cleaned and rewired. Supporting each is a 29-in.-long stem anchored to an aluminum ceiling medallion with a matching finish.

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PROJECT

implemented a program to have available a technologically upgraded, attractively appointed meeting and conference center. It can be reserved for Tiffany functions, such as new product introductions where temporary displays are illuminated from outlets installed throughout the floor, as well as from ceiling accent lights.

"Our first challenge in lighting this space was energy efficiency," says Giselle Mercado, associate for Cooley Monato Studio. The prefabricated coffered ceiling is composed of gypsum-reinforced fiberglass tiles with openings to install 60-W, 130-volt A-lamps and 20-W MR16 accent lights. A prototype section was produced for the designer's coordination to make sure that the specified fixture apertures were in line with the ceiling's geometric tile pattern, identical to the ceiling pattern used on the second floor renovation.


MR16 lamps accent wall art, while 3000K, 26-W compact fluorescent fixtures provide ambient light in the public gathering and circulation areas. Within the perimeter cove are 25-W and 32-W T8 fluorescent lamps with energy-saving ballasts. Semi-transparent Roman blinds serve as adjustable coverings on the six-over-six windows on the two façades that face 57th Street and Fifth Avenue. Here, behind a wood cornice, halogen lamps are mounted on-center above each set of three glass panes. Their downward beams across the face of the fabric shades create a subtle link with the interior architecture and wall finish materials.

FIXTURE FIX-UP

Seven original-spun aluminum pendant-hung ceiling fixtures that embody the sleek, streamlined detailing and profiles of late 1930s' product design styling were cleaned and rewired. "The original design incorporated an air diffuser and the electrical lighting elements in one design," Bottega explains. The 8-in.-deep tapered shade measures 26 in. across the top. Supporting each fixture is a 29-in.-long stem anchored to an aluminum ceiling medallion with a matching finish.

For cleaning and rewiring, the fixtures were taken down and sent to an outside specialist for refurbishing. "They were basically in very good condition," says Palfini, who added that a light polishing buffed up the aluminum's satin finish. The Green Room (formerly the chairman's office) now has three pendant fixtures,

as does the dining/conference room. A single fixture is mounted in the private sales office. Mercado points out that five of the pendants have downlight components. The fixtures were retrofitted with 60-W, 130-volt lamps for lower energy consumption and extended life.

Turner Construction Co., which built the original building for Tiffany & Co., was the contractor for the renovation and restoration. Many of the as-built plans were available for reference. (The original drawings for the pendant fixtures, however, could not be located.) In selling areas, Bottega and other members of the Tiffany design team worked closely with the merchandise managers to make sure that the assortment would fit into the new cases and layout. "Throughout the program," Bottega says, "the historical references were maintained and the grandeur of the architecture was enhanced. Lighting plays an important part in uniting the products both with their individual display surroundings and with the selling floor's interior environment." 

About the Author: Vilma Barr is a regular features contributor to *LD+A* and a contributing editor on retail store design and lighting to several magazines published in the U.S. and overseas. She is manager of Barr Publicity & Editorial Services, Philadelphia, an editorial and promotional consulting firm. Ms. Barr has written, co-authored or edited 15 books on retailing and design.



About the Designers: Emily H. Monato, Member IESNA (1989), became a member of the design staff in the New York office of Renee Cooley Lighting Design in 1992. The following year, she was made a principal in the firm, renamed Cooley Monato Studio (CoMoS), where she is involved in project design and management, marketing and computerized illuminance analysis. She is an associate member of the International Association of Lighting Designers (IALD), and a member of the Designers Lighting Forum (DLF). She lectures on lighting design in the New York area and nationally.



Giselle Mercado, Member IESNA (2001), an associate at CoMoS, has been with the firm for six years. A native of Bogotá, Colombia, she earned a Master of Arts degree in Lighting Design from Parsons School of Design. She is a DLF member, and for the IESNA, she chairs the Student Design Competition Committee for the New York Section. In addition to developing lighting programs for Tiffany & Co. stores, she has been involved in the firm's award-winning CoMoS projects for Le Meridien Hotel, Minneapolis, and Amore Pacific, New York.



Philip Bottega, AIA, vice president of real estate services for Tiffany & Co. worldwide, is responsible for architecture, interior design, construction and property management. He joined Tiffany & Co. in 1988 and was director of facilities and then vice president of store planning and facilities before being named to his current position. He is a member of the Institute of Store Planners and the International Facilities Management Association.