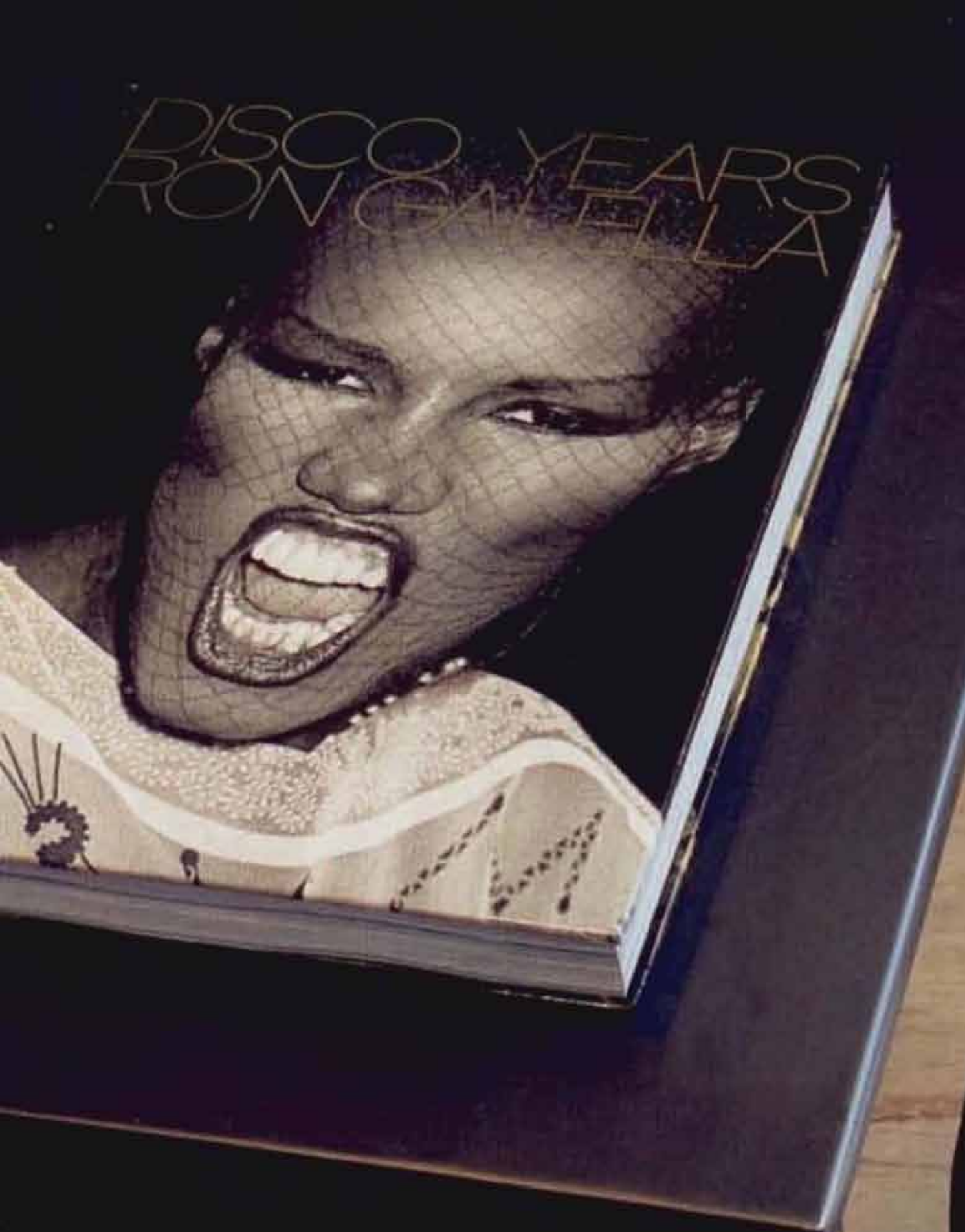


INTERIOR DESIGN®

The background of the cover is a vibrant, abstract composition. It features large, overlapping shapes in bright red, deep blue, and yellow, creating a sense of dynamic movement and depth. On the left side, a portion of a modern staircase is visible, characterized by dark steps and a sleek, metallic railing. The overall aesthetic is contemporary and artistic.

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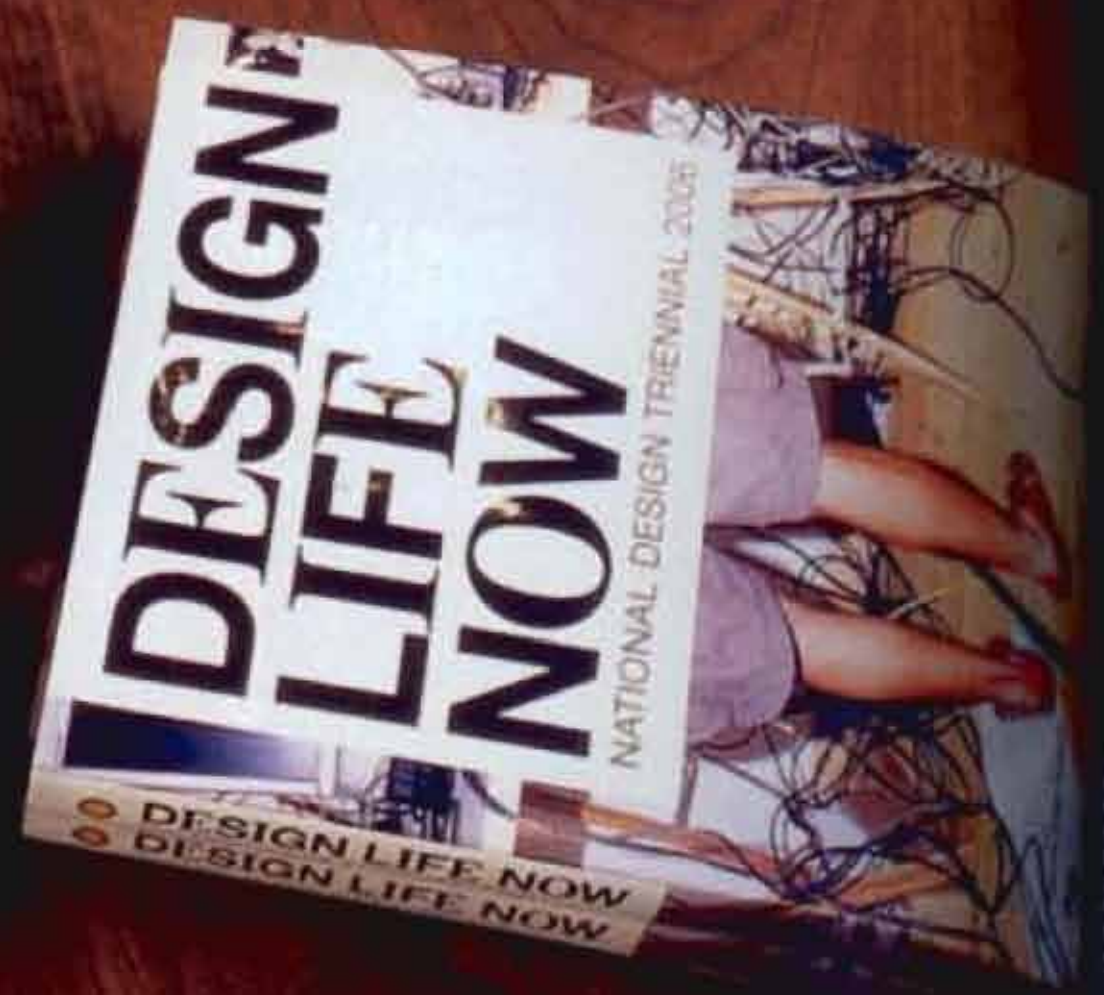
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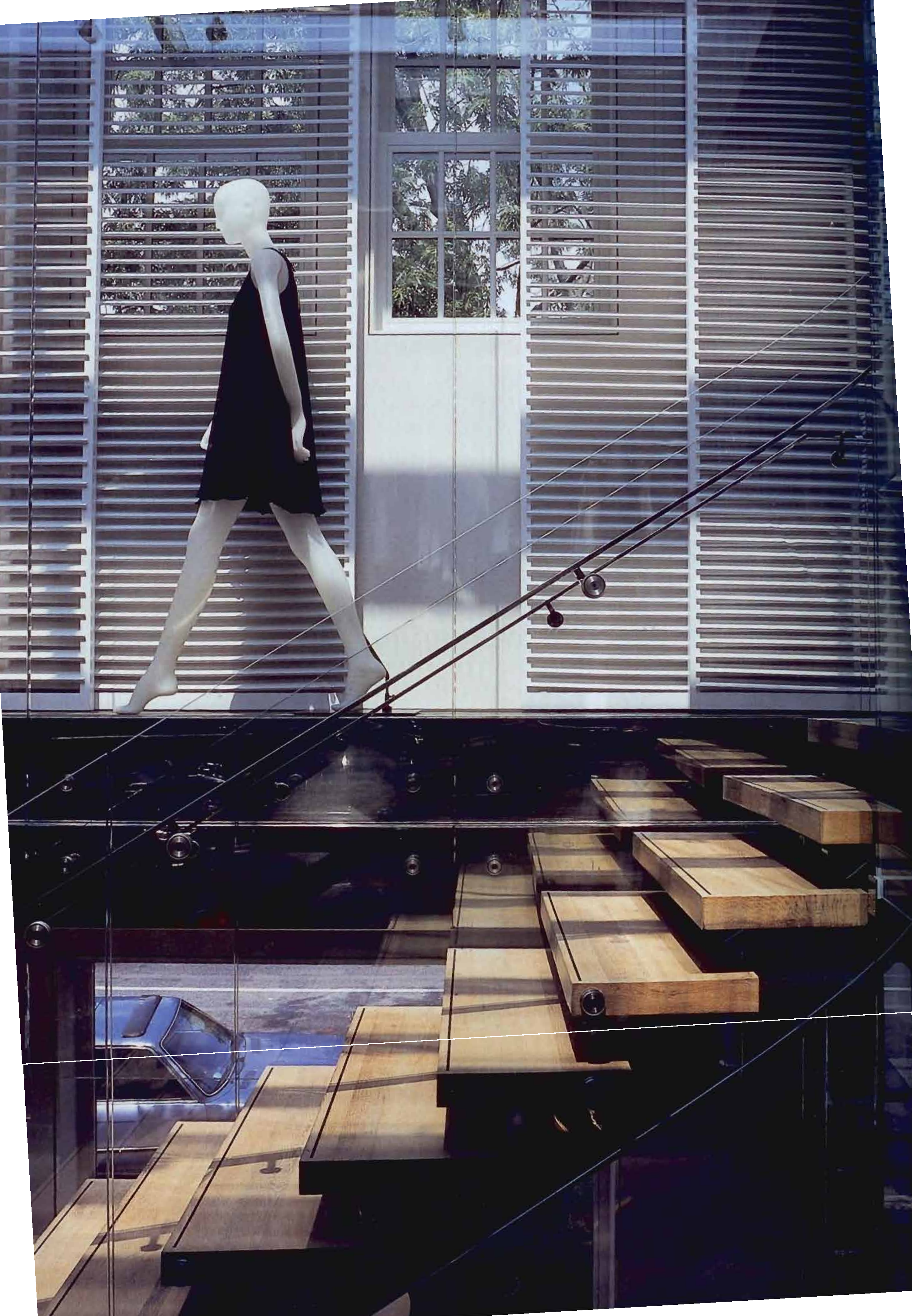
text: alejandro saralegui photography: adrian wilson

the fashion equation

Three stellar firms plus one East Hampton landmark—
they all add up to Elie Tahari's flagship









Enter any Elie Tahari shop or showroom, and you'll be welcomed by Granny Smith apples and roasted almonds heaped in a wooden bowl or two. At his new flagship in East Hampton, the snacks being offered up are no different, but the bowls are stainless-steel designs by Patricia Urquiola. And that's a small but telling example of Tahari's mandate to make the 5,000-square-foot space embody his fashion label's evolution from "office" to "resort." Customers should experience a pleasing familiarity, "as if they're shopping in a beach house," he explains. "We chose finishes and furnishings that are similar to those in my own house on the ocean in Sagaponack."

Apples and almonds aside, the flagship is more than twice the size of his first store here—an entire 1917 redbrick building on the main corner of East Hampton's retail center. Originally a post office, it later housed a collection of ground-level shops and second-floor offices. The recent transformation resulted from a three-part collaboration by Lissoni Associati, which had already completed Tahari boutiques in Atlanta, Boston, and Las Vegas; Highland Associates, the project's architect of record; and Amy Lau Design, responsible for the vintage furniture and lighting.

Interior Design Hall of Fame member Piero Lissoni and his partner, Nicoletta Canesi, took to the project with gusto. "I enjoy working with Elie, because he's crazy," Lissoni offers with a quick laugh. "Who else would let us destroy everything and start from scratch? We showed him one maquette, and he said, 'Go.'" The town of East Hampton, however, had other thoughts, insisting on a full restoration of the facade and the discreet placement of 50 tons of rooftop mechanicals. "This is adaptive reuse at its finest," Highland Associates principal Glenn Leitch says. The meticulous restoration of the exterior encompassed replacing the upper windows with double-hung versions, restoring the cornice and parapet coping, repointing the brickwork with sand-colored mortar, and removing nonfunctioning shutters.

These combined efforts yielded an exterior that looks as if it had been carefully attended to over the decades and an interior that's →

Previous spread, left: In menswear on the second floor at Elie Tahari in East Hampton, a 1947 table by Neil Morris stands next to a custom steel table by Lissoni Associati, which collaborated on the flagship with Highland Associates and Amy Lau Design. Flooring is 200-year-old reclaimed oak that has been sanded, stained, scraped, and waxed.

Previous spread, right: The staircase is enclosed in low-carbon glass. Handrails and rafters are mirror-polished stainless steel.

Opposite: The treads are stained oak.

Top: Amanda Levete's bench sits at the entry. *Bottom:* A pair of Poul Kjærholm chairs from 1963 furnish the shoe salon, which shares the glass box.





Top: In menswear, Arne Norell's 1950's chairs, an Italian 1960's cocktail table, and an Italian 1950's lamp gather on a custom rug in wool and silk. Behind, linen curtains conceal a fitting room. **Bottom:** Two Philippe Hiquily tables, 1965, appoint the upstairs landing. Here and throughout, clothing hangs on custom blackened-steel rails.

Opposite: Rainbows on the drapery of the women's fitting rooms are caused by the glass box. Outside the rooms, Vladimir Kagan's sofa and two French 1950's chairs surround Philippe Jean's table from the 1970's, while a French 1970's stainless-steel lamp rests on an MDF pedestal.

completely up-to-date. From the existing rabbit warren, Lissoni and Canesi created a double-height volume of column-free selling space, its most significant feature being a glass stair enclosure that slices through the two floors to culminate in a skylight. "The glass box modifies the rest of the interior in an architectural manner," Lissoni says. "It's like a building within a building. It has its own materials vocabulary, and there's an element of surprise like a jack-in-the-box."

Using low-carbon glass for its remarkable clarity and mirror-polished stainless steel for support and gleam, the architects created a giant prism. At times, the many panels of glass spread magical tiny rainbows through the store. "Elie is a fanatic about natural light," notes his wife, Rory, also the company's vice chairman and creative director. "He firmly believes that it stimulates you as a person." The immense amount of sunshine flooding down from the skylight is furthermore enhanced by metal-halide, LED, and T5 fluorescent fixtures, all frameless and quietly set into the ceilings.

The enclosure's integral shelves accommodate an array of handbags and belts. "The glass structure is like a museum for the accessories. There's no interference with the objects on display," Canesi says. "Of course, without a place to hide, we had to be very careful with the details." In plain view beneath the flying staircase's single stringer, she and Lissoni tucked the shoe salon.

In and outside the glass box, flooring is 200-year-old reclaimed oak. "This floor went through a 50-year life cycle in about five days," Leitch explains, describing the sanding, staining, scraping, and waxing that achieved a look straight out of a house on the dunes. Matte Venetian plaster on the walls and natural-colored linen for drapery and upholstery contribute to that desired beachy comfort. To conceal the too-high second-story windows and to modulate the daylight, the architects installed floor-to-ceiling →







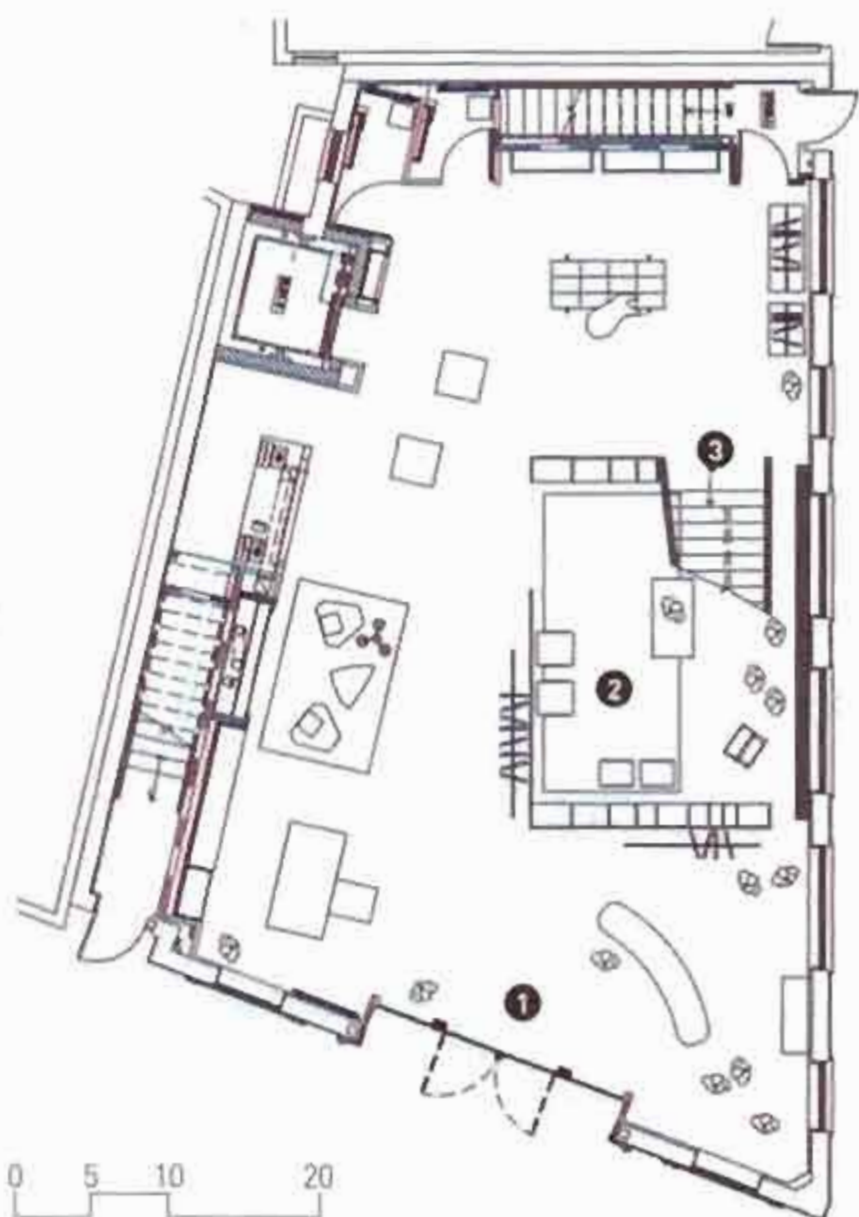


"The customer must be stimulated by sound, scent, touch, taste, and sight"



Left: A mannequin poses on the shoe salon's custom ottoman upholstered in linen. **Right:** Painted wooden shutters in four different widths slide on two parallel stainless-steel tracks.

- 1 ENTRY
- 2 SHOE SALON
- 3 STAIR



white-painted wooden shutters that run along two tracks. The beach-house aesthetic conveniently adheres to Tahari's retail philosophy, too: "The customer must be stimulated by sound, scent, touch, taste, and sight. All the senses need to be seduced."

Women's and men's clothing hangs from blackened-steel bars suspended from the ceiling. Handbags that aren't on the shelves of the glass box are displayed on a century-old English faux-bamboo library ladder, but most of the shop's museum-quality European and American furnishings are mid-century—and intended for sale. Amy Lau selected designers including Tapio Wirkkala, Poul Kjærholm, Hans Wegner, Bruno Mathsson, and Jacques Adnet. "Elie has a connoisseur's eye," Lau notes. "Everything has to be the best." And what if a customer were to scratch the mahogany top of a 1947 table or spill coffee on the linen upholstery of Vladimir Kagan's sofa? Tahari believes that the wear and tear only adds another layer of patina. ■

Go to [designwire](http://designwire.com) at WWW.INTERIORDESIGN.NET for an exclusive interview with Elie Tahari.

PROJECT ARCHITECT (HIGHLAND ASSOCIATES): ANTHONY CAPRIO. PROJECT TEAM (AMY LAU DESIGN): BACHMAN CLEM, SARAH EKMAN-LLOYD. PROJECT TEAM (LISSONI ASSOCIATES): MATTHIAS HICKL.

CUSTOM TREADS (STAIRWELL), CUSTOM SHUTTERS: CANUS CONSTRUCTION. BENCH (ENTRY): ESTABLISHED & SONS. STOOL (SHOES): THROUGH J.F. CHEN. CHAIR FABRIC: HOLLAND & SHERRY. CUSTOM CURTAINS (FITTING ROOMS): MICHAEL TAVANO DESIGN. CURTAIN FABRIC (FITTING ROOMS), PILLOW FABRIC (WOMEN'S): DONGHIA. SOFA (WOMEN'S): VLADIMIR KAGAN DESIGN GROUP THROUGH RALPH PUCCI INTERNATIONAL. CHRISTOPHER HYLAND (FABRIC). WALL COVERING (FITTING ROOMS): SCHUMACHER. CUSTOM SIGNAGE (EXTERIOR): LET THERE BE NEON. CUSTOM RUGS: REVIS STUDIO. FLOORING: WIDE PLANK INTERNATIONAL FLOORING; HAYWOOD-BERK FLOOR COMPANY (INSTALLATION). RECESSED CEILING FIXTURES: LITELAB CORP. CUSTOM WINDOWS: ARTISTIC DOORS & WINDOWS. UPHOLSTERING: MARTIN ALBERT INTERIORS. PLASTERWORK: CROYDON FINISHING. GLASSWORK: EMPIRE ARCHITECTURAL METAL & GLASS. BRICK RESTORATION: NAWKAW CORPORATION. LIGHTING CONSULTANT: GEORGE SEXTON ASSOCIATES. STRUCTURAL ENGINEER: THOMAS D. REILLY. CONSTRUCTION MANAGER: RICHTER-RATNER.

Top: The 1917 building was originally the East Hampton Post Office. **Bottom:** The glass shelves are supported by rods of mirror-polished stainless steel, invisibly bonded to the box with an adhesive activated by ultraviolet light.

Opposite: The skylight measures 20 by 28 feet.

