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Ministry of Design

Unifying presence in Kuala Lumpur's YTL HQ by Ministry of Design

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04 Mar 2021

This YTL Headquarters, located along Jalan Bukit Bintang, brings together for the first time the entire suite of YTL departments

The brief for MOD was to design the public areas shared by these departments, by unifying the ground floor lobby and levels eight to 10, and present a unified brand identity under one roof. As such, MOD sought to create a series of choreographed spatial experiences which aimed to balance YTL's future-forward attitude in embracing change.

There are two main public area zones, the ground floor lobby and three upper floors which feature the levels eight to 10, which host a collective of meeting zones, and a cafe.

At the ground floor, visitors are greeted by a vertically cavernous lobby which spans more than 25 m in height which is seven floors. The design challenge for MOD was how to enhance the majestic quality of the space, yet not dwarf the human scale and to provide a welcoming entrance. As such, the lobby is a study in proportion, of light control and a disciplined use of materials. The soaring space has been designed to capture the rays of light in the daytime, and to glow in the evening like a lantern.

MOD designed the marble-clad columns such that its rhythm becomes denser and more grounded at the bottom, then grows brighter closer to the top, thus giving the impression of ascending lightness.

MOD inserted horizontal striations and ridges using bronze accents, in the continuing pattern of white Bugatsa Marble, to provide visual relief rather than a continuous ascension to the top. A glittering art installation hovers like a cloud over a series of pavilion niches, which provide a sense of human scale in this vast space. MOD designed the seating areas as architectural pavilion niches rather than mere decorative benches. These seating areas provide iconic Barcelona Couches for visitors to sit on and admire the lobby's majestic cavernous quality, and the pavilion niches are also designed in the same restrained material palette, featuring bronze bead blast metal trims for consistency.

Visitors sign in at the reception desk before proceeding past the turnstiles, after which they would have indicated their intended floor number destination at the lift call button area before having even entered the lift lobby; incorporating a

“destination-dispatching” elevator system. Design-wise, while MOD wanted to keep the entrance experience entirely symmetrical from the drop-off to the lift car, there was an existing stair core which prevents this symmetry; in response, MOD created a bronze-clad “portal” to anchor the lift portal and draw visitors’ attention towards that lift lobby when they enter the main lobby. The lift lobby is accented with the same bronze metal as the main lobby for a consistently disciplined material palette.

Levels eight to 10 comprise a café, multiple types of open and closed meeting spaces and a 122 pax function room. This public zone is conceived to be an extension of the lobby area, and is conceptualised to be the point of interface between YTL staff and external visitors and consultants.

The “heart” of level eight is the grey granite café counter with bronze shelves and oak timber ceilings and walls. Serving up freshly baked confectionery, this café counter is designed with a rough-edged split-face granite on its vertical surfaces and a smooth black sesame polished granite for the horizontal counter.

To introduce connectivity between levels eight and nine, MOD introduced a void and a feature spiral stair, designing an arresting and dynamic cage-like stair with vertical rods made of powder coated bronze metal, sitting on a bed of black gravel. Visitors are meant to feel a sense of timeless elegance and beautifully crafted materiality whilst climbing the stairs, with one hand on the elegant leather handrails.

On all three levels eight, nine, and 10, MOD has created a myriad of meeting space types to suit a variety of small to large gatherings, private to non-private. These spaces range from casual communal tables, open discussion areas, hot-desk, banquette seating, booth seating areas, to semi-enclosed meeting rooms, acoustically private rooms, a VIP room and a large multi-function meeting area that can seat 122 persons.

These spaces are designed with a warm and sophisticated palette, featuring warm oak timber for the walls and ceilings, silver mink marble flooring, and black powder-coated metal trims for lighting fixtures. The café, banquette and booth seating are upholstered in German-based innovative fabric from Saum & Viebahn. The tables feature either striking black Nero Marquina marble or elegant white Calacatta marble. The enclosed meeting rooms feature handsome carpet flooring from the Net Effect Collection, elegant brown leather chairs and timber tables.

Key Facts

Brand:

Interior

Practice:

Ministry of Design

Project Category:

Colour in architecture

Best Use of Technology

Retail chain stores, department stores and supermarkets

Commercial

Retail

Location:

Malaysia

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