

# FRAME

THE GREAT INDOORS

N°110 MAY — JUN 2016

## Brands *on* Show

From *in store* to *on stage*

### Frame in Milan

Design for a  
phygital world

### Eight Ways to Diversify Retail

Content over  
commerce

### Store Displays

Mannequins,  
shelves, lights



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Once a year, the interior of the boutique-cum-gallery run by Beirut-based fashion foundation Starch is designed by a different studio.



See Elie Metni's system in action with the digital magazine

Photos Charbel Saade

# Foster Talent

Offering young fashion designers the opportunity to 'take over' its boutique temporarily, **Starch** provides a **platform** for kick-starting creative careers.



For Starch, Elie Metni stacked 70 modular stools to create a temporary installation for displaying collections by Lebanese fashion designers; the configuration changes as customers buy clothing and stools and new collections are presented.

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'I think store designs should get simpler as products become more complex,' says Elie Metni, whose super-simple shop interior for Beirut-based fashion foundation Starch is nearing its expiration date at the time of writing. Every year the nonprofit helps launch four to six Lebanese fashion designers by guiding them in the production of a collection, from conception through marketing. Meanwhile, Starch

rotates their debut collections through its boutique-cum-gallery, the interior of which is realized each spring by a different studio.

The 2014-2015 interior featured a regular monolithic grid of ceiling and wall hooks and bespoke light fixtures, all of it – furniture, lighting and overall interior design – the work of local architects Ghaith&Jad (*Frame* 109, p. 068). This spring's shop will be the creation of Vladimir Kurumilian. Between the two, the 2015-2016 Starch Boutique was fashioned by Metni, a former Herzog & de Meuron staffer who is currently completing a degree in architecture at the University of Balamand. Beneath a large neon ceiling lamp – flat, square and suspended – is Metni's freestanding display unit, which is reflected blurrily in a painted copper wall that divides the room diagonally. Allowing for the presentation of garments on hangers and shelves, the modular installation is made from 70 identical beechwood Emma

stools that are slotted together by means of metal connecting strips. Metni's purpose-made stools and their connectors provide his micro-architectural assemblage with structure and ornament. Visitors invited to buy clothing and stools as the months pass and various collections are shown gradually reduce the number of stools and alter the layout. Apparel by the next fashion designer whose pieces appear in the boutique is influenced, therefore, by a modified configuration comprising fewer stools.

As a fan of temporary retail spaces, Metni hopes they become more popular. He believes they are more agile in articulating a fresh aspect of a brand while also retaining its essential character. 'An indirect collaboration happens among all the disciplines that make and present the product together, giving the visitor a new experience,' he says, 'a new way to interact with both product and brand.' — SM [starchfoundation.org](http://starchfoundation.org)