



Production Designer - Dan Betteridge

Art Director - Viktor Andreev

Set Decorator - Natalia Todorova

John Lewis “ Supporting Statement

Introduction

John Lewis Seasonal Ads are always one of those that you look forward to and this was no exception. It was a lovely chance to design another commercial for a product that I have always had a genuine soft spot for.

Design

100 years into 90 seconds..... it is quite a lot of story to tell (in not very many frames per period ...) The sets were designed to convey the history and progression of the windows and the place that John Lewis has in the British Public's lives in a script that was non-linear in its storyline and edit; each specific period therefore needed to be able to be recognised and acknowledged in a very definite and rapid fashion.

After extensive research through books, period magazines, online (of course) and visits to the John Lewis Archive we decided that we would lean into some of the archetypal references of each era. Using this reasoning, we would be able to be rooted in the reality but to also enhance the readability of the shop windows from that particular decade and to make the transitions clearer whilst ensuring a sense of travel through the eras. We also decided to bring a more modern aesthetic to some of the displays for today's audience to help with this.

The Practicality and the Challenges

Although the original brief was not centred on the Oxford Street store in particular we decided to base the majority of the sets within the iconic frontage to give a continuity for the larger part of the spot in the architecture, to make it relevant to the current generation and also so we could focus on how the interior store displays have changed within that space.

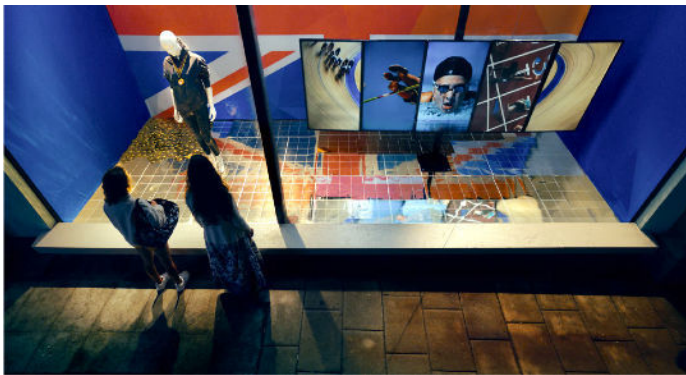
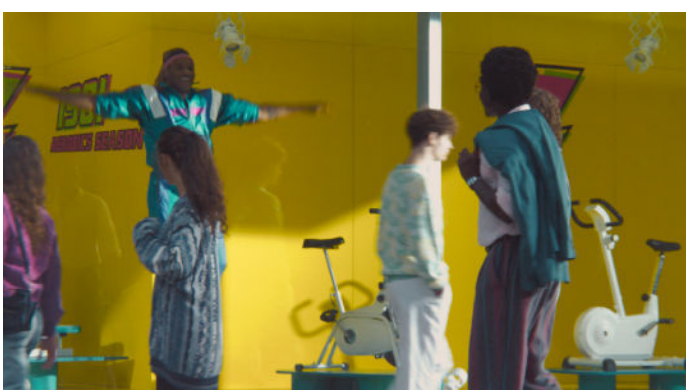
There were various iterations of the store from its inception; the original facade from the 1900's, the temporary one of the 1950's after it was razed to the ground during the Blitz, and the one that still stands today. Constructed on several locations within the backlot at Nu Boyana we cut away some of the more traditional existing shopfronts so we could install large glass windows into these spaces to provide clear staging for the interiors. This involved a large amount of structural engineering and retrofitting into the existing facades, as we had to of course support the upper parts of the buildings) and subsequent and continuing adjustments to the sets as discoveries were made the deeper we went into the previous set construction alterations.

One particular challenge over the very tight shooting schedule was detailing the precise angles and lenses to enable us to turnaround the 4 different eras that we were required to shoot each day without ending up in the frame of the element that we were currently shooting whilst we were re-dressing and rebuilding the sets/laying snow etc. This involved very careful planning of the lenses and angles as even a little drift or alteration would have played havoc with the schedule.

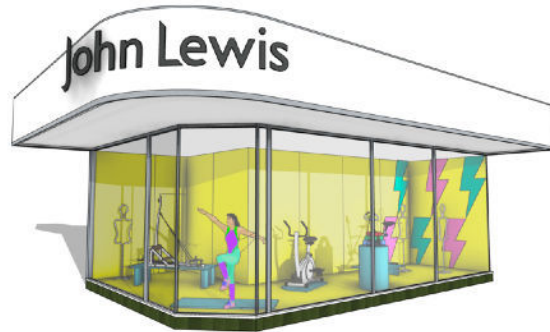
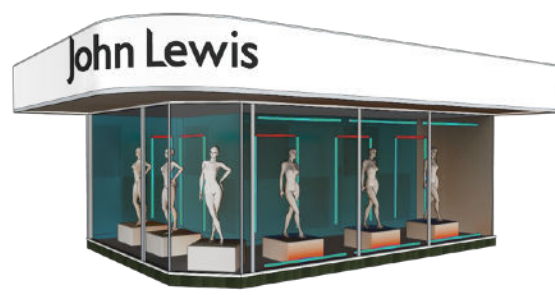
It was a pleasure to have worked on this and with the fantastic team in Sofia and to delve into the history of John Lewis



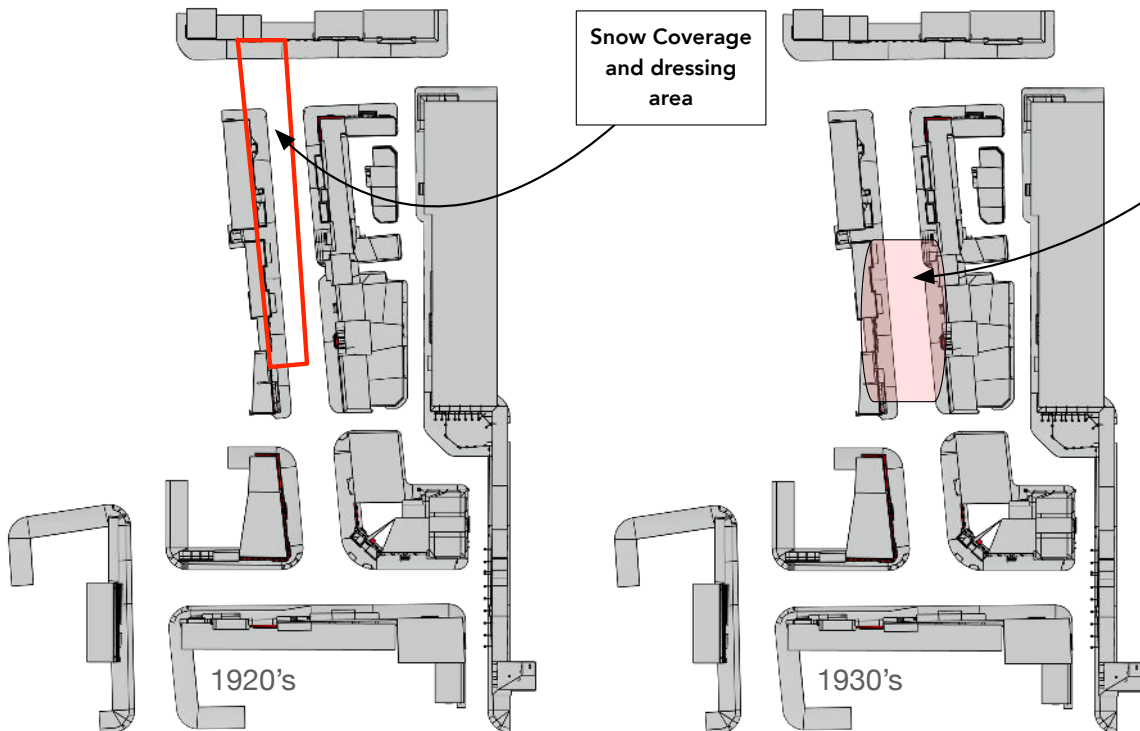
Example of Period Window Reference



Frames from the Final Commercial



Basic Storefront No.1
constructed within the Backlot



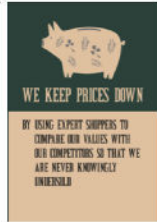
Red Indicates Structural Framing constraints of current building, DO NOT Cut





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Production Designer: Dan Rommidge - Surface Ltd.

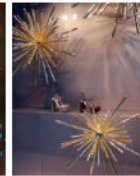
1950s

JL



1950s

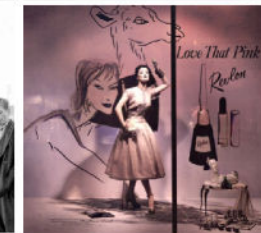
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Production Designer: Dan Rommidge - Surface Ltd.

Scene

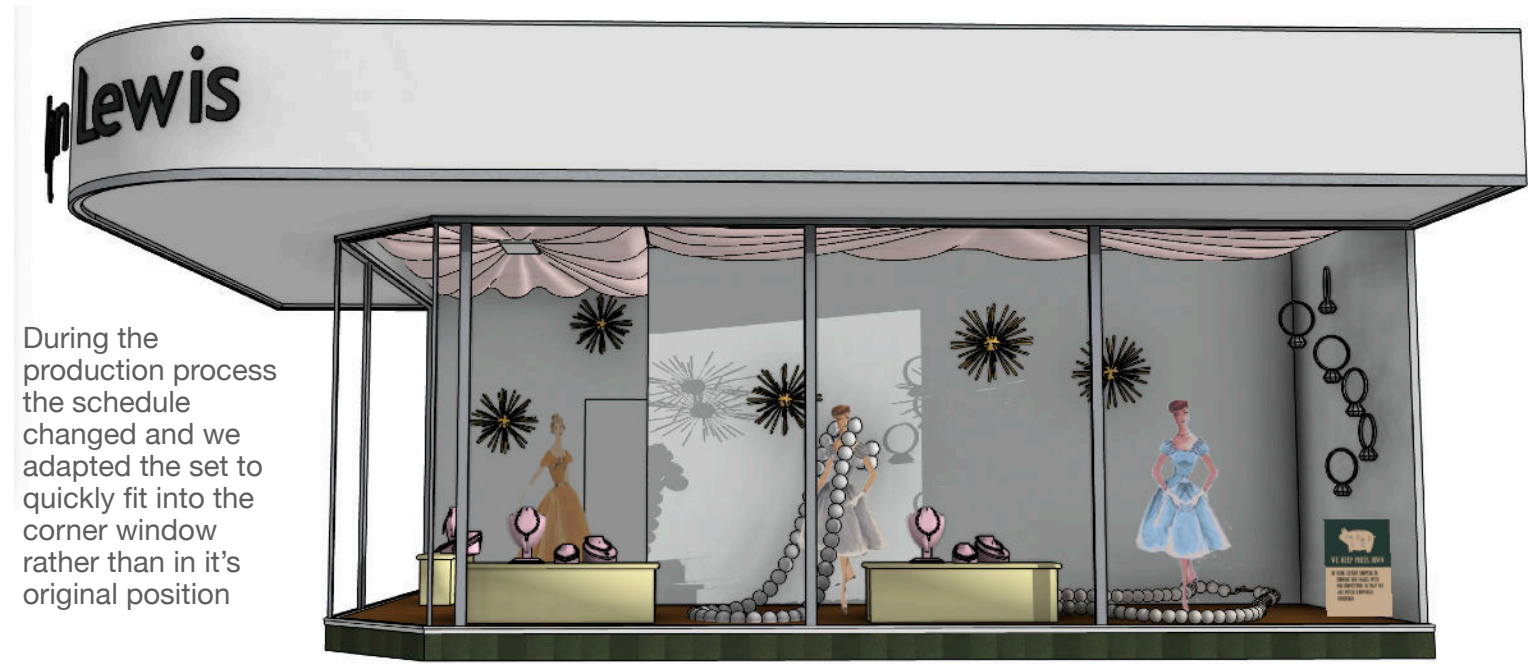
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1950s Window Display - two words

JL

Examples of Moodboards (1950's Era Only)



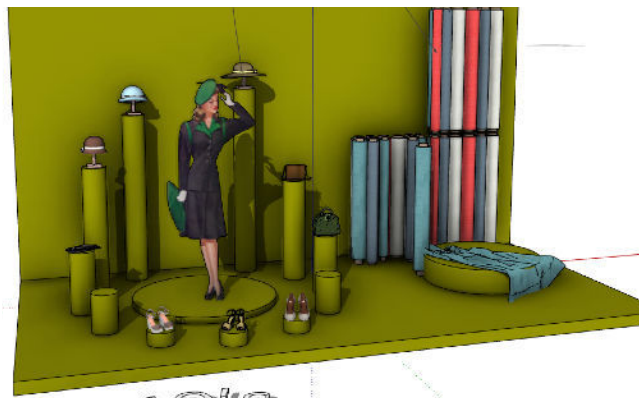
During the production process the schedule changed and we adapted the set to quickly fit into the corner window rather than in it's original position



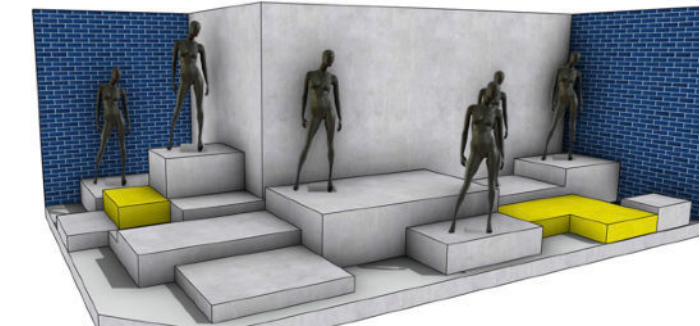
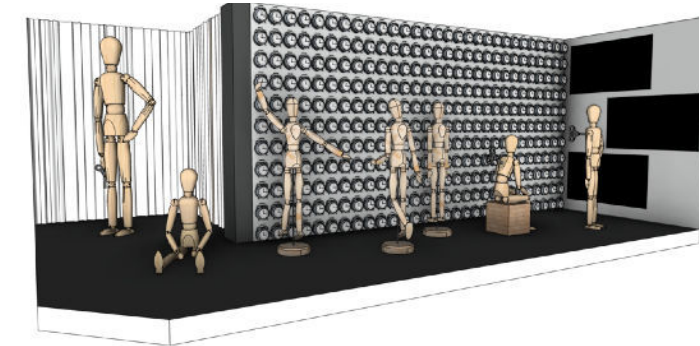
Example of 1950's store design with options in both set locations



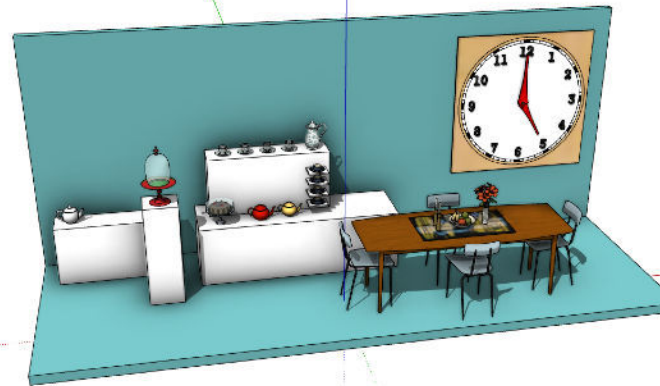
1960's



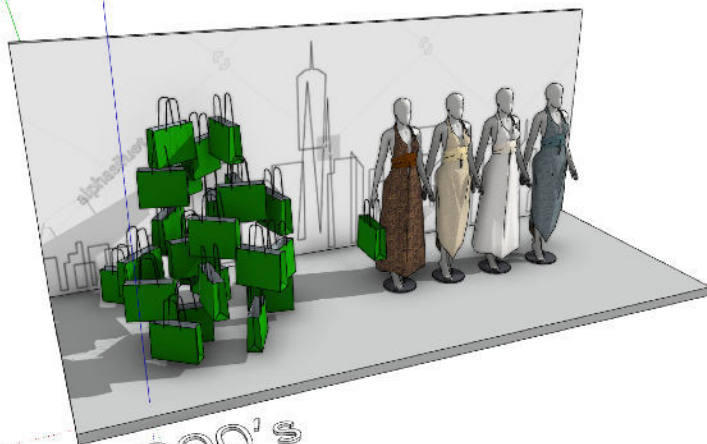
1940's



1990's



1950's



2000's



1930's

As mentioned at the beginning, we shot this in Sofia with the team from B2Y and as always it was a pleasure working with them. The Art, Construction and Set Dec Crew were fantastic and took all the back and forth in their stride with absolute good humour and professionalism. I feel very lucky to be able to be able to create projects such as this with such great people.