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Welcome to His World: Erdem Moralioglu Opens Shop in London

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by SARAH MOWER



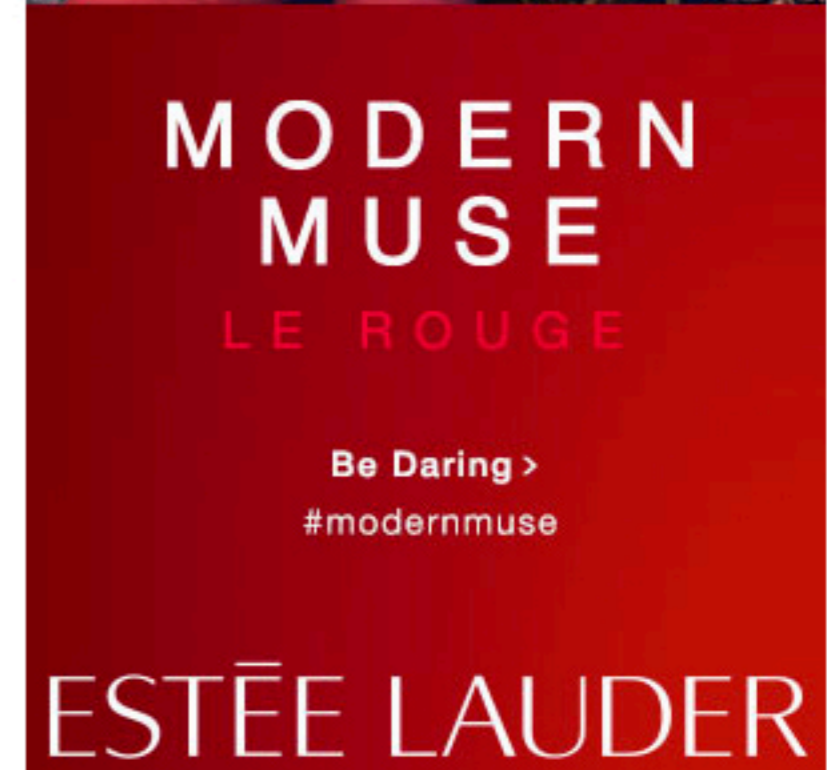
Photo: Courtesy of Erdem



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What is the actual point of a designer opening a store if it doesn't give you an entrée into their world? I always found myself secretly sighing about that in the dispiriting decade (or was it more like two and a half?) when the orthodoxy was minimalism and the high priests of retail purity dictated that all clothes must be sold in clinical white boxes. Well, those cold old days are well and truly done. Stroll along London's Mount Street and drop into Simone Rocha's just-open establishment, then make a left onto South Audley Street, where Erdem Moralioglu has his even more newly opened shop, and you will be embraced by two distinctly different atmospheres linked by the same spirit: almost homelike and bursting with character.

"I think," says Moralioglu, "it blurs the line between a shop and living space." The idea follows his feeling for fashion—that his elaborately decorative clothes are for keeps: "I always hope that when you buy a dress, you'd own it forever, and absorb it into your life. So I always wanted a store that would feel permanent, too." Handily, Moralioglu has an architect-designer, Philip Joseph of P Joseph, in the family to see the store through; they've recently renovated their home in East London together. "It's not meant to feel like a shop but more like furnished rooms," says Joseph. "Not like a 'shop-fit.'"

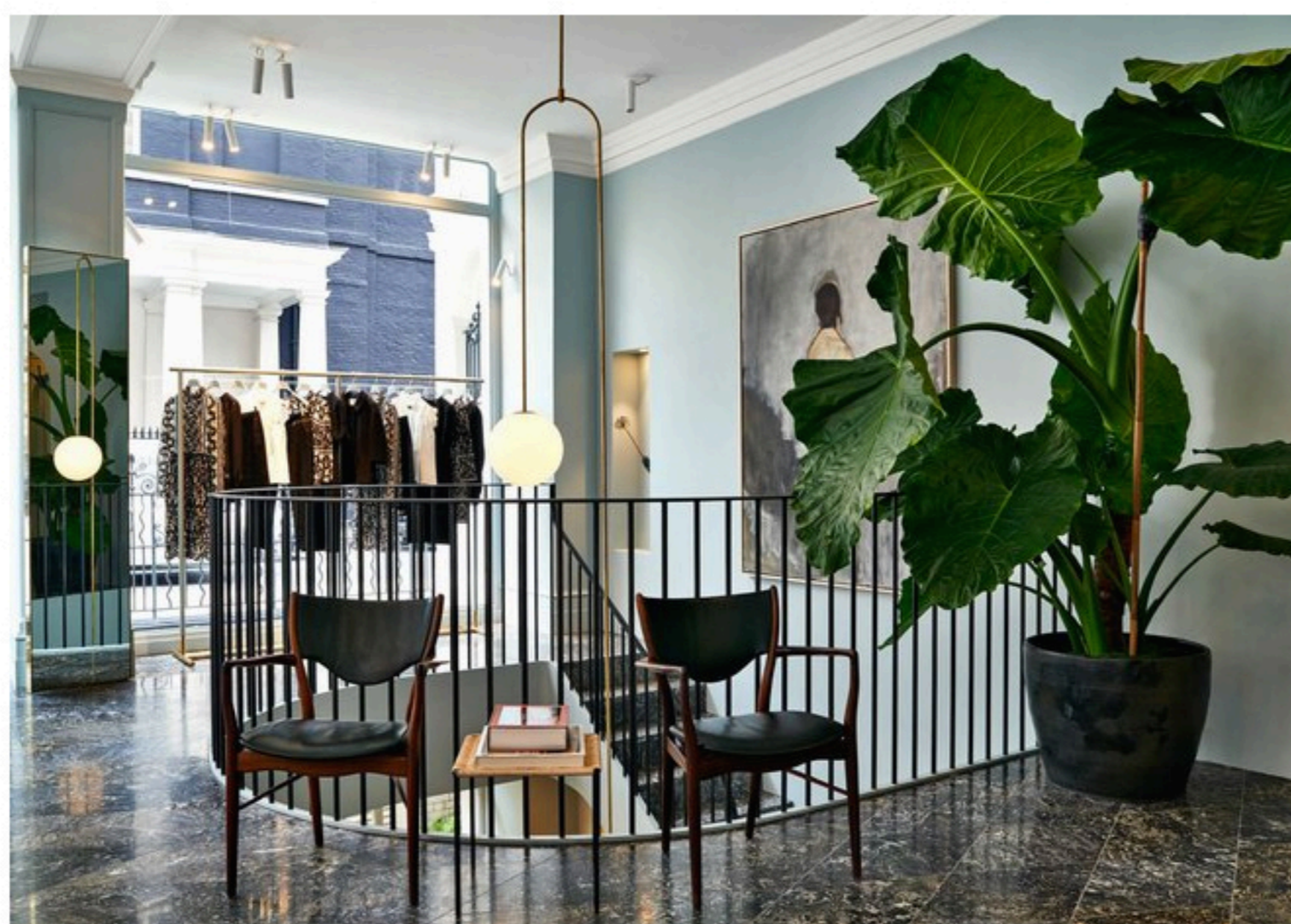


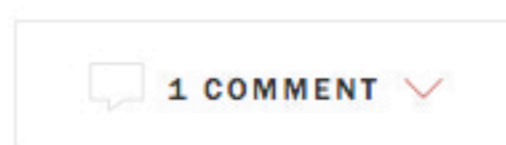
Photo: Courtesy of Erdem



Which is why the sensation of stepping over the mosaic threshold of the Erdem abode at 70 South Audley Street is the irresistible impulse to shut the door and move in. The details gradually sink in: the polished harlequin-patterned marble floor, huge exotic leafy plants, solid brass-edged mirrors, glowing globe light fittings, stacks of Erdem's own collection of photography and art books on the tables, and the drawings by Cocteau and Andy Warhol he's brought in from his own house.

A sweeping staircase leads to the basement floor, where the customer is faced with more temptation to settle in on a luxuriously comfortable, Victoriana emerald green velvet love seat while gazing onto the fern garden outside. Oh, and then there are clothes, too: all the dresses Erdem makes to populate a thousand parties. They're posh but personal, the epitome of youthful social ease. Which just about says it all about the designer himself. Welcome to his world.

In This Story: ERDEM, CITY DIRECTORY, LONDON



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