



## "Spot-on" for high fashion sneakers

D.A.T.E flagship store: a white cube in the alleys of Milan

Client: D.A.T.E flagship store Milan  
Architecture: Filippo Santoni, Serena Santini  
Lighting design: "Santini Santoni"  
Photography: Moritz Hillebrand, Zurich  
Place: Milan  
Country: Italy

The address is both concept and inspiration. ERCO's new "Spot-on" series begins with an elegant flagship store designed by the Zurich architects Filippo Santoni and Serena Santini for the new Italian sneaker label D.A.T.E.. Located in the narrow alleys of Milan's Brera district, home to Italy's design scene, where urban life flourishes in restaurants, bars, cafés and galleries, and where the international creative world meets every year on the occasion of the furniture fair.

Invitingly open

"We wanted to create a scenography in which spatial architecture and lighting combine with the historical urban architecture," is how Filippo Santoni explains the design concept for the linear 40m<sup>2</sup> sales space, formerly a butcher's shop and now invitingly opening up to Via Ponte Vetro via its large window front. "The store is intended to function as a public place without a visible threshold to the outside world."

The hip world of sneakers presents itself with cool understatement, clear and straightforward, as in a white cube. The only decor is shelf cubes in clear primary colours, an elaborately structured mirror wall, a continuously installed concrete plinth that can be used as either seating or exhibition area, and the sneakers themselves. Since the retail space is relatively small, "Santini Santoni" designed a lighting concept that draws all attention to the products. Without visible light sources, a warm, shadowless, bright spatial atmosphere is created which corresponds to the highly minimalist interior and emphasises accents.

## **"The right light in the right place"**

The two young architects, who became acquainted at the renowned Swiss Accademia di Architettura di Mendrisio and set up their own offices in Zurich three years ago, see modern lighting design as "the right light in the right place". Lighting adopts a central role especially in retail applications says Filippo Santoni, who grew up in Florence and from this city also knows the four founders of the D.A.T.E. sneaker label. "We're all the best of friends."

Santini Santoni

In the front area of the flagship store the three metre high original ceiling was suspended downwards using a thin plasterboard ceiling, so that all cables could be concealed in the intermediate gap. Above the load-bearing wooden beams, fine wave-shaped strips are installed which accommodate the individual track. A total of 15 Oseris spotlights, which can be aligned quickly and precisely via the semi-spherical hinge, characterise the friendly, bright atmosphere in the store. A further four spotlights ideally accentuate the display in the shop window.

## **Anything but static**

"The interior should be flexible and easy to convert and rebuild," explains Filippo Santoni. Simple and quick adjustability of the light sources was therefore a prerequisite. Luminaires for track are the ideal solution here for flexibly adapting light to the prevailing room situation and constantly changing products. In the rear area of the

store, where a window front opens onto Milan's typical courtyards and its so-called "Case di ringhiera", they adopted a different lighting approach, also in order to visually divide the room. Starpoint directional spotlights were installed directly in the ceiling. These are "small and adaptable" according to the architects, and are characterised by a very good quality of light. The compact spotlight, whose light beam can be flexibly aligned, offers a wide diversity for various applications thanks to its six different light distributions.

The two architects "Santini Santoni" define their design approach as "identifying contemporary responses to everyday needs and implementing these with simple means and clear concepts". With their intelligently thought-out design of the Milan D.A.T.E. store they have succeeded with casual ease, and simultaneously in a boldly experimental way, in creating a winning contemporary showroom for high-fashion streetwear. The "Spot-on" jury was impressed by how the designers implemented a creative and highly nuanced lighting concept in a compact space, which cleverly structures and divides the room visually and sets concise accents upon the merchandise.

It is project successes like these for which ERCO's new "Spot-on" programme is keen to provide a media stage. Creative lighting concepts from young designers are presented at regular intervals – whether small or large projects or lighting for indoors or outdoors.

[www.erco.com/spot-on](http://www.erco.com/spot-on)





Serena Santini



Filippo Santoni