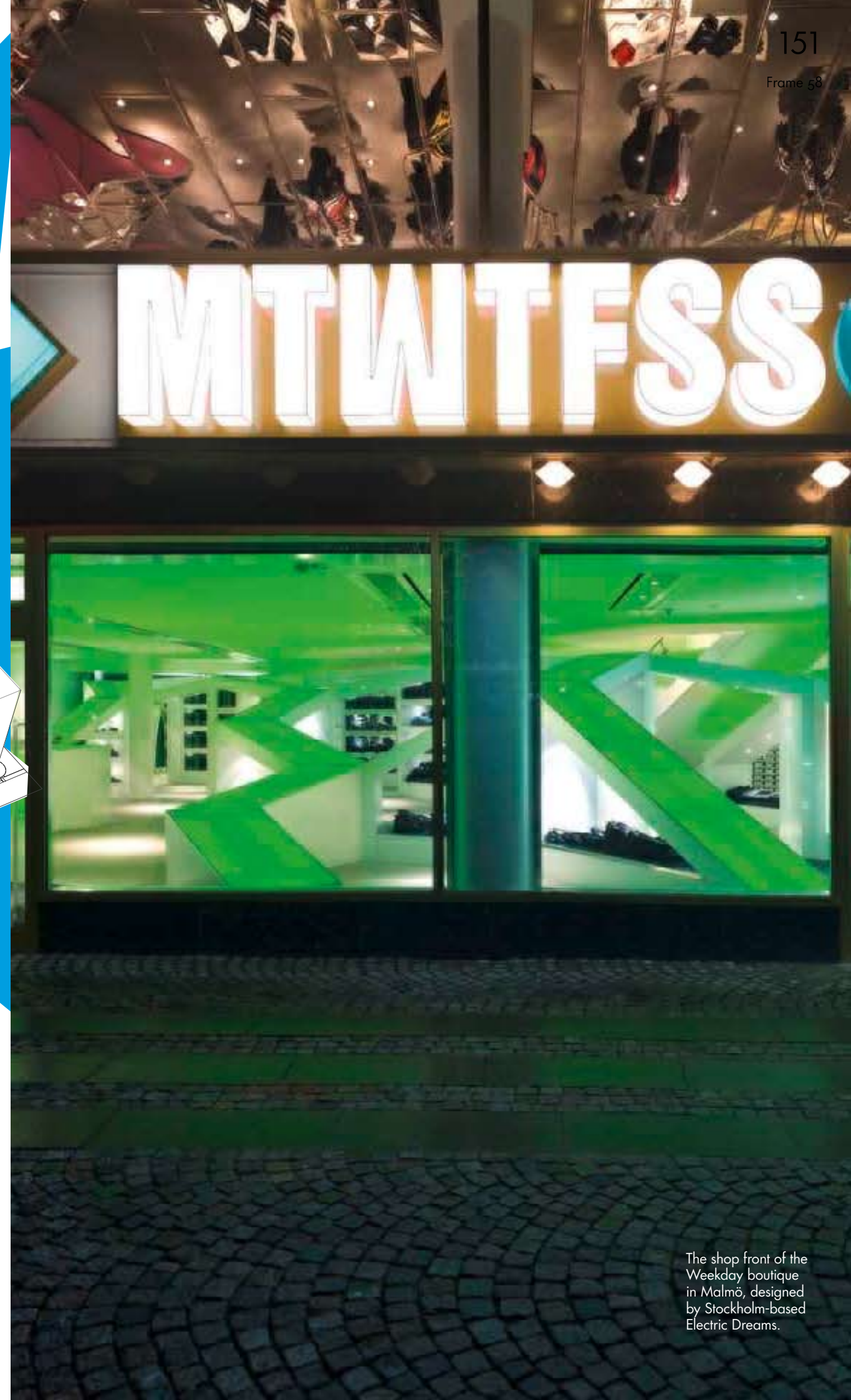




WEEKENDS

Axonometric showing the how the ground floor of the Weekday boutique is broken down into pockets of space.



The shop front of the Weekday boutique in Malmö, designed by Stockholm-based Electric Dreams.

Daydreams

Enter the Weekday boutique in Malmö by Electric Dreams and roam a kaleidoscopic maze replete with ramps, pathways and endless angles.

Words Julie Ralphs
Photos Fredrik Sweger

The first thing that strikes you about Weekday, a new boutique in the Swedish town of Malmö, is that it's impossible to ignore. From the outside looking in, you spot illuminated green ramps positioned to lure visitors along various pathways through the shop. The interior – by Swedish outfit Electric Dreams – allows numerous windows of opportunity for shoppers to do what they do best: shop. Of course, green is fresh and clean, and in this case it's a subliminal signal to explore each floor.

'We wanted to create a nonlinear flow, an unusual way to move through the store, a unique journey from jeans to fitting room to checkout – a route with no obvious A to B,' says Catharina Frankander, who together with Joel Degermark formed Electric Dreams last November. Both Swedish, they became flatmates in London, where Catharina studied architecture at the Architectural Association and Joel studied product design at the Royal College of Art. Joel's felt-tip approach to the design of products on paper perfectly partners Catharina's digital 3D insight into interior concepts with impact. Earlier this year, Degermark exhibited his Cluster Lamp for Moooi at the Salone del Mobile in Milan. Together, they've designed three Monki stores in which Sweden meets Japan in a new line of fashions for girls. They set out to provide Weekday, also known as MTWTFSS, with a mazelike interior. According to Degermark, they wanted the shop to greet visitors with 'a kind of spatial confusion'.

Entering the ground floor, you face green-lit ramps that bear an abstract resemblance to the roots of a tree. A white honeycomb grid serves as both a room divider and a display unit for jeans and sneakers, while offering angular options for finding your way to the luminous stairway. Upstairs, you pause for an interlude at a white wall embedded with rectangular green niches that offer an array of shoes, second-hand bags, jeans and the like. Stationed at another white wall featuring round black speakers is a DJ, obviously on hand for no other reason than to create an ambience for your listening pleasure. It's time to contemplate the idea of trying on the clothes.



Rendering and study model showing how the green roots divide the retail area into distinct pockets.



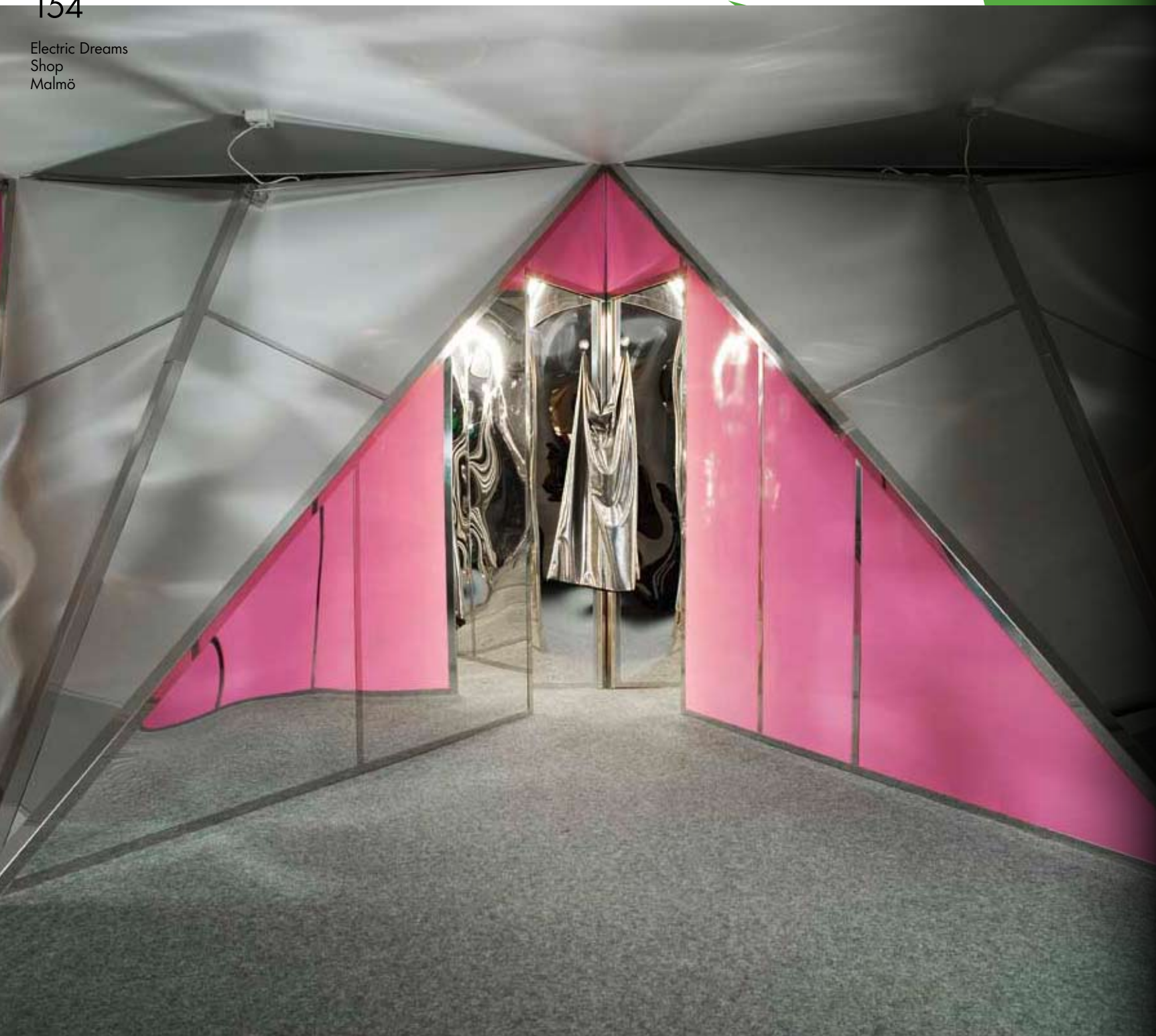
Rectangular openings of different sizes punched into the wall at the top of the stairs

house sneakers, jeans, bags and other merchandise. The floor is finished in grey felt.

Retail spaces on the ground floor are framed by a distorted honeycomb grid of partitions made of acrylic panels and lacquered MDF. The floor is made of untreated concrete.



Green is fresh and clean, and in this case it's a subliminal signal to explore each floor



A dominant shade of green gives way to vivid pink, a colour that marks the prismatic entrance to the fitting rooms. Materials: acrylic mirror and mirror glass.

To do so, you follow the pathway to pink, which appears in a pyramidal equation of plastic panels and prisms. It's the very inviting entry to Weekday's fitting rooms. Inside each pyramid are multifaceted mirrors that invite you to be mesmerized – by yourself. Frankander and Degermark confess to using a touch of disco and a 'trippy kaleidoscopic effect' that gives the customer about 15 different views of how good she looks in those jeans. Adding irony to the in-shop imagery is another path – in the form of shoes arranged in a row along the floor and up the wall (a visual intermission I found both existential and amusing).

Along the windows facing the street is a row of tables, each in the shape of a letter spelling the word *Weekday*, which reads properly in the reflective ceiling. The rest of the floor is filled with clusters of clothing in colour-coordinated ensembles on giant metal hangers suspended from the ceiling at various heights. This display represents the branches of the symbolic tree whose roots drew you into the shop. Although it's arguably a more approachable way to display clothing than many methods used in conventional boutiques, the garments tend to look messy. The space contains the clothes but fails to frame them. Here, the sharp, clean lines that directed you to this destination have gone walkies. Having said that, I must add that the concept isn't based on one theme echoed throughout, but on one landscape leading to another. And that's refreshing. But I can't help wishing that I could see this 1000-m2 space, currently filled with lots of clothes and loyal customers, as an empty shell in which it would be easier to perceive how all the angles, edges and orchestrated chaos come together.

'There's no obvious A to B'

Catharina Frankander

Cheap Monday's owner, Örjan Andersson, wanted this interior to signal a new direction for his brand. After years of being Lee's 'denim missionary' for Sweden, Andersson set up the price-friendly Cheap Monday brand and opened his first shop, Weekend. His jeans – originally given to customers as freebies – are now sold in 40 cities around the world. The shop in Malmö is Andersson's fifth. According to Degermark, most stores have fixed structures, which is something he and his colleague wanted to challenge. 'Instead of starting with the exterior walls,' explains Frankander, 'we started in the middle and worked outwards.'

Weekday wants to customize your experience of each shop. The speaker and shoe walls are brand constants; the rest is a blank canvas. The intention is to let the interior evolve and change over time, thus saving the store – and the brand – from repetition without having it lose its identity. For the target group of teens and twenty-somethings, change is the name of the game. And so are games themselves: Electric Dreams' original inspiration for the green grid was an old platform for computer games.



Sounds and steps: big black round speakers are embedded into a wall clad with lacquered steel sheeting, while a line of shoes marches up another.

