

IN-STORE

Selfridges welcomes all shapes and sizes with Body Studio launch

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Selfridges' The Body Studio

By FORREST CARDAMENIS

London department store Selfridges is showing its love for EveryBODY with the opening of a new wellness destination.

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The Body Studio is the largest department in the store at 37,000 square feet and will offer clothing and accessories that will satisfy women's demand for more sophisticated and inclusive bodywear. A consciously inclusive shopping destination will hold appeal for a broad base of consumers, particularly those who are younger and more health-conscious.

"Looking at how customers are shopping with us and their growing interest in all things health and well-being, we knew there was an opportunity to create a new kind of destination for women that would have mind and body wellness at its core and that would offer a truly integrated and holistic fashion offer across services, product and accessories related to the body," said Lydia Kang, head of fashion and trading - digital at [Selfridges](#).

"Women want to look and feel good when they shop for bodywear, whatever their shape. With the Body Studio we want to promote a strong and positive self-body image and ultimately we wanted to empower women within an area of fashion often associated with objectification."

Wellness for EveryBODY

As the fashion industry has come under increased scrutiny over the past several years for its narrow conceptions of a healthy and attractive beauty, several newer brands have taken advantage of the opportunity to make high quality clothing for women whose bodies did not conform to the industry's narrow standard. This, along with an accompanying health-conscious consumer mindset, has led Selfridges to create The Body Studio as an inclusive, body-positive department dedicated to a healthy lifestyle.



The Body Studio will be anchored by underwear and lingerie categories but will include all clothing worn directly on the skin sleepwear, loungewear, swimwear, sportswear and more. The changing rooms will feature three-way "total vision" mirrors, personal shopping service and appointments with Fit Experts.

The department will also feature two new retail concepts. Hemsley + Hemsley at Selfridges will have "The Art of Eating Well" authors Jasmine and Melissa Hemsley curating a nutritious and delicious all-day menu. Celebrity hairdresser Daniel Galvin will also be on hand.



Body Studio window

Online, consumers can explore the department's merchandise, make appointments and browse editorial. Currently, the site includes tips and an edit for running marathons in anticipation of the London Marathon and information on upcoming in-store events.

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The Hemsley sisters will be hosting a series of talks and debates, which consumers are encouraged to join via social media using #BodyTalk. Rhian Stephenson, CEO of Psychle, also answers questions in an online Q&A to build anticipation for Psychle's residency at The Body Studio April 11 through May 22.

For the advertising campaign, entitled EveryBODY, director and choreographer Wayne McGregor will shoot non-professional bodies of various sizes, body types and ethnicities. EveryBODY will also include a short film examining the relationship women have with their bodywear and a number of exclusive branded products.



Entrance to The Body Studio

Selfridges' Body Studio can be found online [here](#).

The value of values

Other recent Selfridges initiatives also show that the retailer places as much emphasis on its brand values as on its products.

The British retailer is also fashioning a brighter future by championing sustainable designers for its seminal talent platform, Bright Young Things.

Now in its fifth year, Bright Young Things, branded as Bright New Things for 2016, is investing in the future of fashion by highlighting United Kingdom-based talents and working with the Center for Sustainable Fashion to explore the apparel and accessories industry's "new standard." Increasingly, brands and retailers are being more transparent about the raw materials used, construction process and the overall impact products have on the environment ([see story](#)).

Other brands have also shown women that not fitting the model prototype does not make them less feminine.

Kering-owned fashion label Stella McCartney recently designed a new lingerie line supporting survivors of breast cancer.

Debuting right before Breast Cancer Awareness Month began on Oct. 1, a portion of the proceeds from a cheery pink lace bra will benefit the Linda McCartney Center in the United Kingdom and the National Breast Cancer Foundation in the United States and Australia. Breast cancer strikes close to home for designer Ms. McCartney, whose mother, Linda, passed away from the disease in 1998 ([see story](#)).

For Selfridges, identifying and serving untapped markets is a hallmark of great service.

"We are constantly looking at improving the way we interact with our customers, what product selection we offer them and what customer service we deliver to them," Ms. Kang said. "About two years ago we spotted a gap in the bodywear market which was growing but in very disparate ways no one had presented the category the way we do today.

"We've done a lot customer research and came to create what we believe is an extraordinary and exciting new fashion, accessories and service destination for women."