



AFTER

CRATE & BARREL FLATIRON

PROJECT SCOPE: Retailer Crate & Barrel (Northbrook, Ill.) made headlines last year by restoring a former New York department store built in 1868 through a comprehensive renovation. A large opening needed to be added along with an expansive staircase and elevator to improve the traffic flow between levels. Updated lighting, finishes, flooring and brickwork were all incorporated. Ulti-

mately, the project strove to create a design-centric store within a flagship. “The new [strategy] is far more open and approachable than previous iterations of store design,” Nick Effler, Senior Director of Architecture, Crate & Barrel says. “We focused on category clarification within the greater, unified materiality and fixture suite. The resulting presentation is nimble and succinct.”

CONVERSION: Specialty Store, Sales Area Over 10,000 SQ. FT.

SUBMITTED BY: Crate & Barrel - Architecture

NOTABLE CONTRIBUTORS: Perkins Eastman Architects, DPC

PHOTOGRAPHY: Crate & Barrel, Northbrook, Ill.

cast iron, masonry and vaulted ceilings, the basement was reconstituted into a merchandise gallery. “The challenges of the project were a social exercise that required a unique and diverse set of internal dialogues to navigate,” Effler says.

UNIQUE FEATURES: The space is anchored by the staircase that allows ease of customer flow. The columns on the ground level were left as-is, and restoration work was done on the ground level façade to match and retain existing molding profiles. The monolithic glass rail allows natural light to flow down to the lower level. On the lower level is the Crate & Kids section, where a hand-painted mural complements the hot air balloon-shaped lighting fixtures to create an inviting, family-friendly area. “The store is wholly a statement about who Crate & Barrel is now and how focused we are on our customer,” says Effler. “Every inch was considered to level up the experience.”



BEFORE

UNIQUE CHALLENGES:

The vast majority of the existing building’s mechanical, electrical and plumbing infrastructure either had to be removed, relocated or upgraded. The staircase took up a large portion of the sales floor, so an opening was added to maximize space. The lower-level basement was a daunting restoration, according to Effler. By incorporating