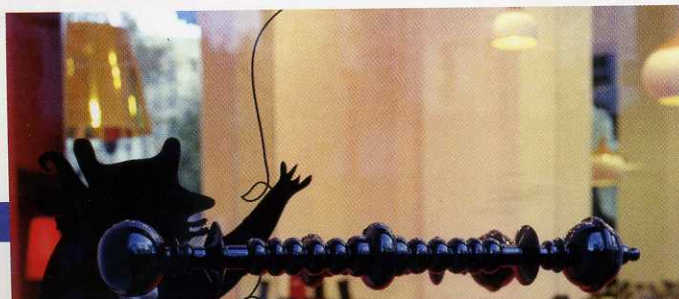


# STOMPING GROU

CAMPER STORE, BARCELONA

JAIME HAYON







Creative difference is practically a byword for Camper. If the brand's experimental bent isn't immediately evident from its product catalogues, it certainly will be when you visit one of its gleaming new boutiques. A family business with outlets on every continent, the Spanish shoemaker has, over its 30-odd years, quite naturally nurtured a family of another kind... one made up of youthful artists, architects and designers. Recently, Camper commissioned Jaime Hayon, the Campana Brothers and Alfredo Haberli to separately recast the Camper store into one that embodies bucketloads of individualism and iconoclasm – Camper's value-system in essence. Not surprisingly, Camper Together, as the project is known, has quite deliberately resulted in a suite of stores with little semblance of unity... bar the odd Camper sign.

Given his penchant for dreaming up fantastically whimsical products and installations, maverick Hayon must have had a field day with this brief. True to form, the Spanish industrial designer stirred up some fanfare in the international press with his first Camper Together store, in London, not least because all Camper products there are neatly arranged on his trademark tables, like food at a buffet. The accolades (and notoriety) garnered by the designer's first attempt spawned a sister Camper Together boutique in Barcelona (incidentally Hayon's first gig on home ground). A loyal replica of the London store, the Spanish sequel, which opened last December, is a shop-cum-Hayon gallery in a mere 50sq m space. Shoes are densely packed atop Hayon white wood tables, which are characterised by an assortment of odd-shaped legs, and are lit from above by specially handcrafted terracotta lamps that allude to household objects. In the manner of an atelier, the designer's mind condenses on the giant storefront windows in the form of concept drawings and doodles. The cash-wrap counter, normally not a point of interest, takes the form of a dais for athletics medallists. And throughout, brilliant red – Camper's signature colour – is generously splashed. Though this is a small space with a fair deal going on within, one doesn't feel Hayon's exhibitionist streak in any way detracts from the product or the brand. Still, the artist's energy, so palpable here, certainly gives shoppers a whole lot more than they bargained for.

