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A new retail phenomenon pops up in Sydney

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The global phenomenon of pop-up stores is making its way to heart of Sydney.

Sydney designer Michael Bracewell is leading the charge with the launch of Penny Arcade by Bracewell - a temporary store at World Square that will showcase popular designers such as Cohen et Sabine, Valerie Tolosa, Shakuhatchi, Shano Joy, Bec and Bridge, Nina Maya and Woodford & Co.

The deal was negotiated through World Square's marketing agents CB Richard Ellis, as Sydney landlords and retailers increasingly embrace the pop up concept.

Pop ups have become a global phenomenon as retailers and landlords focus on new marketing and brand initiatives.

Essentially, a store will open for just a few days, weeks or month in a move designed to add extra vitality to a centre while giving retailers a low-cost and catchy opportunity to showcase their wares and trial a new retail location, without the heavy overheads of a long term lease commitment.

CBRE Associate Director Mr Mansell said the concept had become particularly popular among brands targeting the youth market, which liked the spontaneous nature of what was often regarded as a retail "event" - the idea of here now, gone tomorrow.

Retail analysts have dubbed the shoppers who flock to pop ups as "transumers", who enjoy transient, temporary shopping experiences.

While in most cases pop ups use existing retail space which is vacant, US retail brand Gap recently turned a school bus into a travelling pop-up store and did a "party tour" of the beaches from Los Angeles to New York. In another instance, rock band AC/DC exclusively used pop up stores in Los Angeles and New York to sell its latest album Black Ice.

While Sydney has been relatively slow to embrace the pop up trend, Mr Mansell said the current tougher market conditions were expected to lead to far greater activity.

Mr Mansell cited the early success of Penny Arcade by Bracewell as a bellwether for the market. Although not permanent, in the case of Bracewell the site appears at first glance to be a permanent store therefore not undermining the overall presentation of the centre. Bracewell is expected to trade for an initial period of six months.

"The benefit for retailers is they can trade in an up market shopping environment at a low upfront and ongoing cost while 'testing the market' The landlords benefit through avoiding vacancy /poor centre presentation while allowing tenants to try before they buy," Mr Mansell.

"They can do a funky fit out and be really creative with the space, without worrying about the overheads involved in a long term lease. At the same time, the pop up fills a vacancy for the landlord while they search for a more permanent tenant. In a shopping centre environment, the longer a retail space remains vacant, the more the perceived value of the space is reduced. By introducing pop ups, the landlord can give their centre a real point of difference."

Michael Bracewell said he had recognised the demand when he went to return some shoes to World Square store Hype DC.

"I was amazed at the traffic, and thought that with the centre of the CBD being Westfield-ised there was a real opportunity here. What we've created is not seasonal and it's not an outlet. It's new fashion which brings together a whole series of designers in a really creative space."

The store also showcases a mix of industrial and sixties furniture from Mr Bracewell's former Penny Arcade store in Surry Hills.

#### About CB Richard Ellis

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