



*For Immediate Release*

## Exploring Branding and Retail Identity, Woodbury University Interior Architecture Students Collaborate With March Studio and Tadashi Shoji for Glendale Galleria Experimental Concept Store

***Student-Inspired Concepts to Showcase Installations  
Made from Repurposed, Off-the-Shelf Materials***



LOS ANGELES (March 29, 2016) – In a bid to examine – and perhaps help to redefine – the boundaries between branding and retail identity, students from [Woodbury University's](http://www.woodbury.edu) School of Architecture are collaborating with architects at March Studio ([www.marchstudio.com](http://www.marchstudio.com)) and fashion house Tadashi Shoji (<http://www.tadashishoji.com/>) on a series of branded installations for an experimental, short-term Concept Store at the Glendale Galleria mall.

Woodbury Interior Architecture students have teamed with adjunct faculty Lara Hoad, AIA LEED AP, Design Director at March Studio, and Todd A, Erlandson, AIA LEED AP, principal architect at March Studio, together with Tadashi Shoji for the project, in which student-inspired concepts will showcase installations made from off-the-shelf, and re-purposed

materials, contrasting with the fine detail and craftsmanship of Tadashi Shoji's dress designs. Among the participating students: Ahmed Abuzaid, Hadeel Alhamed, Rawan Almajed, Sabreen Al-Shawwa, Zachary Cohen, Imelda Daniel, Shahrzad Khezri, Jean Marquez, Shamane Morejon, Marion Ponce, Grace Scaglione, Nicholas Traver and Tatev Zohrabyan. The store is scheduled to open early May.

"This is a true collaboration involving the architect, the client and students," said Lara Hoad, Design Director, March Studio. "Branding, long associated as a marketing strategy, has taken on issues of creating individual and company identities. This project will investigate how interior architecture can inform and shape branded retail experience."

Working with founder and chief designer, Tadashi Shoji, students will start with an in-depth look at the brand, using research from both internal and external sources to produce branded objects. From that point, students will gain an understanding of the concept of "brand," and its manifestations in the cultural and physical environments, by designing, in collaboration with the Tadashi team, a series of branded installations for the 2,200 square-foot Tadashi Shoji concept retail store in Glendale.

Taking inspiration from the installations, and considering a potential future brand extension for Tadashi Shoji, the students will eventually develop a full branded experience, which will aim to convey a new spatial identity for the brand in the built environment and has potential to expand beyond the program of retail design.

"The intention of the studio is to go beyond the reading of a brand as logo, to experiencing it through a multi-dimensional retail environment," said Todd Erlandson, principal architect at March Studio. "The studio will also use brand influence in the development of strong architectural projects that embody and express brand value and fulfill the aspirational lifestyles of consumers."

As reported in *WWD*, "[Shoji] is experimenting with a concept store model... with shorter-term leases than his flagship boutiques. The first, in the Glendale Galleria mall... will have more of an art installation vibe meant to enrich the customer experience... Designed by March Studio... the concept shops are designed with input from architecture students at Woodbury University and feature out-of-the-box elements like a wall made from reclaimed windows and doors and window displays featuring ... footage of Shoji's latest New York Fashion Week runway show."

Tadashi Shoji and March Studio have had a creative collaboration since 2002, when the firm first designed Shoji's house in Pasadena and his headquarters in Los Angeles. Since then, the firm has been instrumental in the conception of Tadashi Shoji's West Coast boutiques, including South Coast Plaza in Costa Mesa and soon-to-be-open Fashion Show Mall in Las Vegas, as well as his first boutique in the Middle East, which opened in February in Doha, Qatar.

**About Woodbury University**

Founded in 1884, Woodbury University is one of the oldest institutions of higher education in Southern California. With campuses in Burbank/Los Angeles and San Diego, the university offers bachelor's degrees from the School of Architecture, School of Business, School of Media, Culture & Design, and College of Transdisciplinarity, along with a Master of Business Administration, Master of Arts in Media for Social Justice, Master of Architecture (MArch), Master of Interior Architecture (MIA), Master of Science in Architecture (MSArch), Master of Leadership, and Master of Arts in Media for Social Justice. The San Diego campus offers Bachelor of Architecture and Master of Architecture, Master of Interior Architecture and Master of Landscape Architecture degrees, as well as an MSArch degree with a concentration in Real Estate Development and Landscape + Urbanism. Woodbury ranks 15th among the nation's "25 Colleges That Add the Most Value," according to *Money Magazine* and is a 2014-2015 College of Distinction. Visit [woodbury.edu](http://woodbury.edu) for more information.

### **About Tadashi Shoji**

Tadashi Shoji is the founder and chief designer of the Tadashi Shoji Collection. Born and raised in Sendai, Japan, he began painting and drawing from a young age and eventually moved to Tokyo, where he studied fine art. His talent was soon recognized and he was recommended for an apprenticeship with Japan's leading contemporary artist, Jiro Takamatsu, who is credited with paving the way for the modern art movement in Japan during the sixties. In 2007, Tadashi launched the Tadashi Shoji Runway Collection for Fall 2007 during New York Fashion Week to rave reviews. By featuring the utmost in luxury and elegance, the much-anticipated collection continues to elevate and hone the brand's image in the marketplace. His designs have won a loyal following from well dressed women worldwide, including a wide range of celebrities and influential figures such as First Lady Michelle Obama, Octavia Spencer, Janelle Monae, Ciara, Mindy Kaling, Britney Spears and Nina Dobrev, to name a few.

### **About March Studio**

March Studio, a collaboration of architects and creative brand strategists, was formed in 1998 in Santa Monica, California by Todd Erlandson, AIA LEED AP and Sherry Hoffman MBA, joined by Creative Director Lara Hoad in 2003. March Studio's constant vision and passion, in both their teaching and their practice, is to combine the principles of good design with the best practices in marketing to create *branded architecture with purpose*. The result is something boldly innovative: beautiful, functional buildings and spaces that tell their clients' stories, by capturing the essence of who they truly are. Your Space. Your Story. March Studio has won numerous awards; including, Emerging Talent, The Monterey Design Conference 2005, NEW BLOOD; NEXT GEN, A+D Museum, Los Angeles 2006, as well as project specific AIA/LA Design Awards. Clients include Vice Media, HBO Films, UCLA, Caltech University, Fred Segal Beauty, Amtrak, Universal Studios and Tadashi Shoji.

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