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The industry's vibrant new voice

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Under the surface

you can leave behind the traditional feeling you have when you are inside a building and move to a feeling of 'being outside.' Alan Dean, divisional director of Isocrete says: 'Specifiers want to see a fully-functional floor that can stand up to all a busy retail environment can throw at it. They also want to see flooring finishes with the necessary flair to capture the imagination and make their own style statement.'

UK pub chain Pitcher & Piano has taken a step forward and installed bar tops, made from recycled bottles in two of its London premises. Eight Inch produced the bar tops for the two pubs, which are based in Fulham and Islington. Eight Inch is a design and manufacturing company supported by London Remade, which promotes sustainability through good design and the use of the award-winning TTURA composite material. TTURA constitutes 85 per cent recycled bottle bank glass. Hugh Carr-Harris, chief executive of London Remade, believes: 'Recycled products can often provide a more stylish and durable alternative. By using this product, Pitcher & Piano are not only helping to increase demand for recycled products, but are supporting the growing recycled design sector within London.'

'With the redesign of Pitcher & Piano, we

wanted to create a design that provided the right sort of feel to develop our lunch time business but also look great at night,' says Mike Dowell, bar manager at the Islington premises. 'With much more emphasis on the bar, we needed to find a material which met the design criteria and was durable and easy for our bar staff to keep clean.' The bar tops were specially designed and hand made, and the recycled glass content used was equivalent to 800 wine bottles.


TTURA has taken more than four years of research by Gary Nicholson, who headed the research team with Professor Jim Rhoddis while working for Sheffield Hallam University. 'At the end of the day we could sell it simply as a beautiful material; the environmental and physical properties are just the icing on the cake,' says Nicholson.

Armourcoat Polished Plasters has completed a number of projects recently, including the Donna Karan flagship store in New York. Armourcoat's black and white polished plaster is an integral part of the overall design of the store, and has been elevated into an architectural feature in its own right. An imperial-looking black finish has been used as a backdrop on two large feature walls. Armourcoat gives a very monolithic feel with no joints, and so works

well in the overall design. It is very versatile and reliable in terms of its aesthetics and works well in a variety of contexts, whether as a major wall statement or as a detail,' says architect Dominic Kozerski.

Nigel Tresise of architects Cochrane McGregor, specified Armourcoat in two and three-dimensional effects for the Jimmy Choo Shoes store near Sloane Square, London. Three-dimensional display shelves, with integral uplighters, were produced in polished plaster, creating the appearance that the floors, walls and shelves all merge into one, as if sculptured from a single block. Tresise says: 'I set out to avoid paint but wanted to maintain the existing colour scheme while upgrading to a high quality finish. The shoes need to be displayed in an environment that does not over power them. Rather than using tiles or stone, I was keen on an applied finish like Armourcoat, which would reflect the high quality of the shoes and also complement the natural limestone flooring.'

Rubber appears to be a popular choice for retail environments, as it has the ability to withstand enormous loads with ease. Freudenberg has transformed rubber into extreme wear-resistant floorcoverings, which are dirt repellent, easy to clean, resistant to cigarette burns and offer a high level of



Previous page: Donna Karan NY featuring Armourcoat surfaces Left: Pitcher & Piano in Islington, featuring bar tops from Eight Inch.