



JOHN RYAN'S **STORE OF THE WEEK**

La Rinascente Milan, Italy

When it comes to windows things are usually simple. The shopper stands in front of the glass and stares in. Sometimes the window may be boxed-in, at others the retailer affords the onlooker the luxury of staring beyond the immediate few feet that comprise the display scheme and peering into the shop interior beyond.

And that, for the most part, is the visual choice given to shoppers when they happen to pass a shop. Occasionally there are exceptions and at present the windows that front Italian department store retailer La Rinascente's Milan flagship show that the normal *modus operandi* can be circumnavigated.

Shoppers wandering past this store are presented with windows that reach beyond the glass and out into the street that faces the city's cathedral. The idea has been created by fashion duo Dolce & Gabbana and consists of a series of trees that appear to be growing in large pots inside the windows. The branches seem to come through the glass and into the open air. The effect is



impressive – sufficiently so for crowds of passers-by to be taking 'selfies' in front of the various windows in which the displays have been installed.

This is an inside-out window treatment of the kind that demonstrates that physical barriers needn't present quite the sort of

impediment that many visual merchants seem to think they do. And perhaps rather more to the point, these are windows in a very grand department store that make shoppers stop and take a look; surely the purpose of any self-respecting visual merchandise scheme.

La Rinascente in Milan has been undergoing a revamp and this is part of that initiative, serving as a strong introduction to the interior.



For more images of
La Rinascente visit the
website at retail-week.com/sotw