

Founded in 2003, SSENSE is a Canadian online fashion platform and clothing e-tailer with a global presence. The company started online and decided to open a series of physical locations. The Montreal space serves as the pilot for the store concept designed in 2015. The resulting project sets new precedents in retailing. It is not a conventional shop, but rather a cultural, social and retail venue, manifesting in physical form the diverse nature of its digital foundation. Customers can experience the space, meet, try on and wear the goods that they have preselected online, and participate in cultural programming related to fashion and the arts.

The project involves the renovation of a derelict mid-nineteenth century building on the Rue Saint-Sulpice in Vieux-Montréal, the oldest district in Montreal. The historic brick and stone façades have been preserved and restored while a new five-storey building has been inserted within. This insertion provides structural stability for the old building shell. Minimising the structural elements, the concrete cores create two main rooms on each level that provide a simple space suitable for hosting a range of conceived programs. A double-height entrance lobby can be found on the ground floor and a glazed rooftop café on the top floor.

The new structure is made entirely of black sandblasted concrete, cast in-situ, and provides a permanent setting for the display elements that are conceived as lightweight structures supported by floor-to-ceiling steel cables. The latter can easily be installed and dismantled, communicating a sense of impermanence, in line with the concept of rapid change and evolving needs.

Project start	2015
Construction start	2016
Completion date	2018
Gross floor area	1,270m <sup>2</sup>
Client	SSENSE, Les Investissements Atallah, Inc.
Architect	David Chipperfield Architects Milan
Principal	David Chipperfield
Design and Managing	
Director	Giuseppi Zampieri
Associate Director	Giuseppe Sirica
Project Architects	Pietro Bagnoli, Adolfo Berardozzi, Claudia Faust
Team	Corrado Bongiorno, Filippo Carcano, Francesca Carino, Carlo Federico Cattò, Fabiano Cocozza, Paolo Dell'Elce, Anna Frigerio, Nicola Guercilena, Tsukasa Goto, Maris Kojuharov, Cristina Massocchi, Eugenio Matteazzi, Sofia Nobis, Filippo Serra, Letizia Somenzi, Pietro Torricini
Local Architect	Aedifica Inc.
Structural Engineer	Latéral
MEP Engineer and LEED Consultant	BPA, Bouthillette Parizeau Inc.
Acoustic Consultant	Acentech Inc.
Lighting Consultant	Artemide Spa.
General Contractor	Le Group Decarel Inc.
Concrete Supplier	Lafarge Holcim
Pre-cast concrete furniture Supplier	Il Cantiere Srl.
Leather Supplier	Cuciflex srl.
Metal works and Display System Supplier	Les Matrices Carritec Inc.
Photography	Simon Menges and Dominik Hodel for SSENSE

