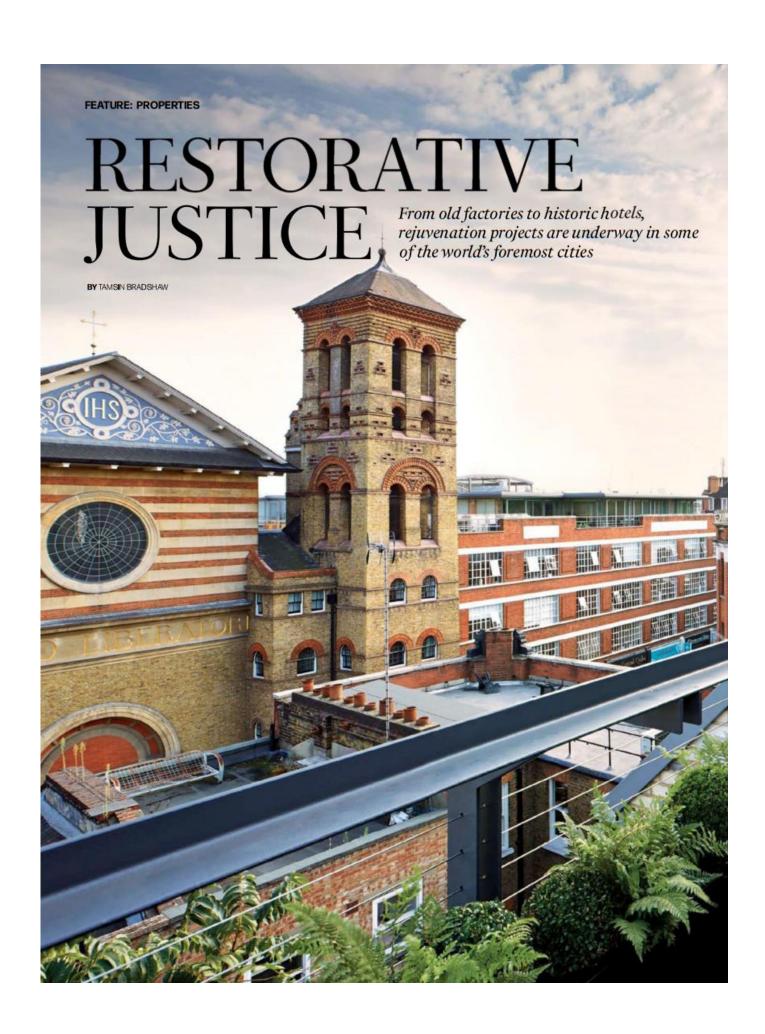
## HONG KONG TATLER HONG KONG TATLER STATES

The insider's guide to luxurious living



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## **BURNHAM BUILDING AND** MILLENNIUM TOWER, BOSTON

illiam Filene's Sons department store was once regarded as "the shopping mecca of the northeast [United States]," says Baumert. His firm, Millennium Partners, is the luxury, mixed-use property developer behind the revitalised Burnham Building and the adjacent Millennium Tower in Boston. "Ask anyone who lives in Boston, and they'll have a story to tell you about Filene's," he adds.

Chicago architect Daniel Hudson Burnham was responsible for the art deco structure that housed Filene's. The 1912 building was his only creation in Boston, making it even more special-no wonder it made the National Register of Historic Places. It was also positioned at the heart of the city, but this area-and the building itself-fell into disrepair in 2000, when the store went bankrupt and merged with Macy's.

Another developer bought it, beginning redevelopment work by knocking down the building while keeping the façade, which was the only part they were obliged by the Landmark Commission to maintain. The developers had to abandon plans in the financial crisis, and it was at that point that Millennium Partners took the site on.

Under Millennium Partners, the US\$630 million project will combine retail space and offices spread across the revitalised 1912 Burnham Building and Millennium Tower, which will also be home to 442 luxury residences that all benefit from five-star concierge services.

"It takes care of an area that the city so wants to restore, and that's had a rough 10 years," says Baumert of the project. As a result, he says, "there's no project in the history of the city that has been more anticipated."

## THIS PAGE

(From top) Burnham Building (forefront) and the Millennium Tower at dusk; commercial and retail space occupies the lower floors of the tower's 442 storeys

## PROJECTS IN THE PIPELINE

Clearly there's a movement afoot: the list of heritage buildings taking on new guises is a long one. "This is definitely a growing trend, particularly in London, which has some outstanding heritage buildings. The success of projects like The Lancasters, 3-10 Grosvenor Crescent and Cornwall Terrace has paved the way for other heritage buildings to be successfully redeveloped," says Grace Leo, vice president of Reignwood Investments UK. "There is also a strong trend towards converting old buildings from commercial use to residential, which is ensuring that their preservation is more financially viable."

In the United States, Millennium Partners is also working on 700-706 Mission Street in San Francisco. It is rehabilitating the 1903-built Aronson Building with the help of Handel Architects, and building a residential tower on the adjacent site. The 10-storey Aronson Building will house retail space and the Mexican Museum.

Some see the addition of shiny new structures to heritage sites as a negative, but perhaps this is what it takes to make them relevant in the 21st century. This way, at least these sites are being preserved in some shape or form for future generations, rather than torn down.