

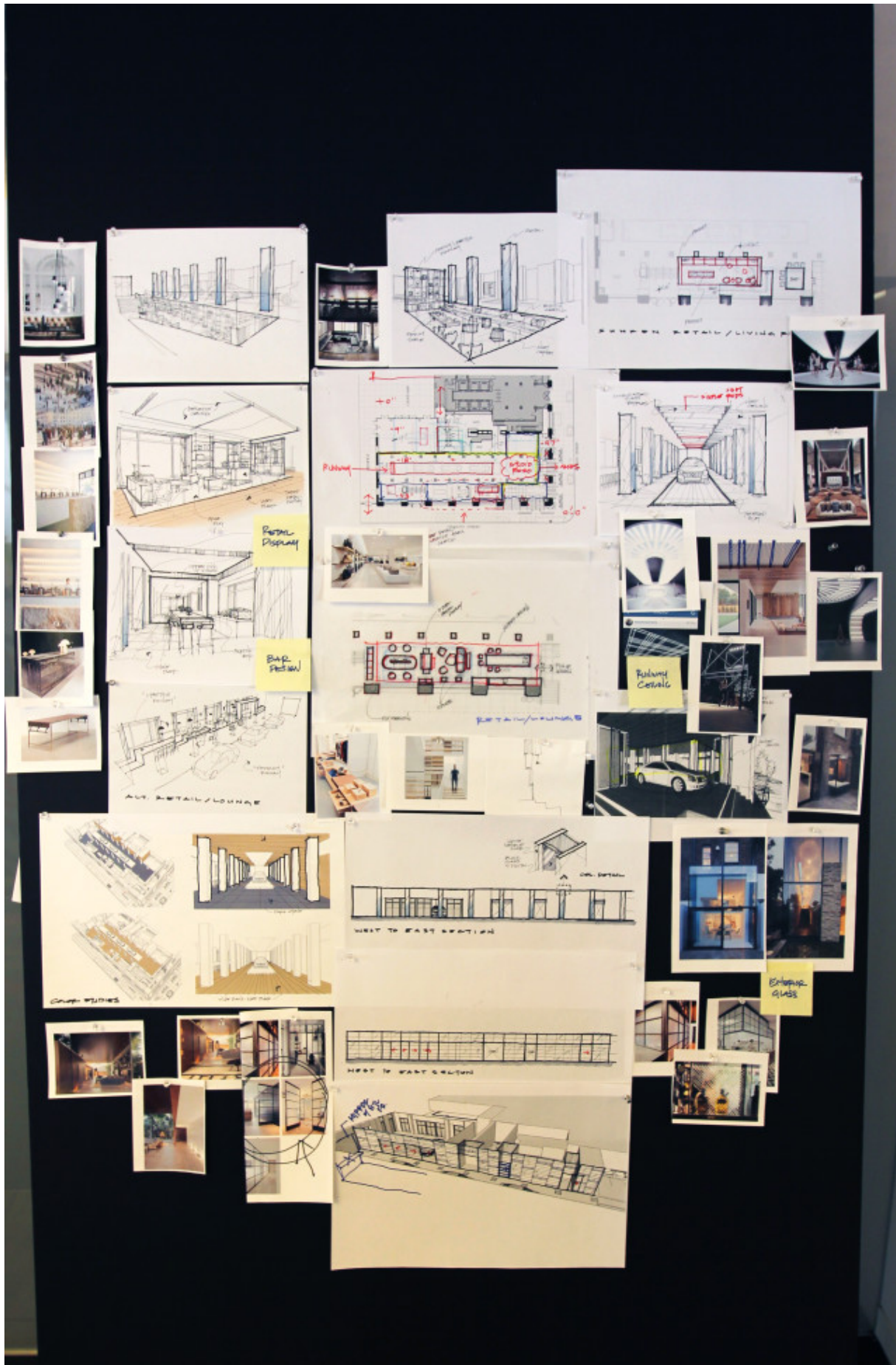
## The 'auto'crat who is blending, coffee, art and fashion

**Author :** Dale Buss

**Date :** May 22, 2016



**brandchannel** spoke with **Ellinghaus** for more insights on the thinking behind **Cadillac** House, from the drawing board (below) to the looming opening and beyond, and how it serves as a proof point and laboratory for its global brand platform, “Dare Greatly”:



**bc:** Uwe, why open a brand experience center for Cadillac? Certainly this isn't a new idea, even among premium auto brands, and other brands such as Under Armour are [opening](#) one.



**Uwe Ellinghaus:** Sure, we're not the only **brand** with a **brand** experience center. But we're not trying only to create a "**Cadillac** world" with a physical manifestation of our brand identity—but to create a reason to come to **Cadillac**. And we're totally aware that a mere showroom with cars wouldn't do the job in New York. Not even the most exciting **digital** content would really bring people to the **Cadillac** House. We really think we need a carefully curated program that goes all over the place, over the course of a year, to give people a reason to come.

That is why you can't compare **Cadillac** House to **brand** experience centers that some of our competitors have erected in London and elsewhere, because they, by and large, feature their cars and technology, and a lot of the content is **digital**. But they aren't curated programs.

The target audience for us is highly **brand**-skeptical. If they realize a **brand** doesn't have a point of view or isn't serious about making itself part of the worlds of art, fashion and design, we will fail in our mission. It's an important milestone—and a proof point for "Dare Greatly"—that with **Cadillac** House we once again go a step further than our competitors do.



**bc:** How does Cadillac House underscore your brand, especially with your target audience of cultural creatives?

**Ellinghaus:** We want to demonstrate how serious we are about building a contemporary auto luxury **brand** and that we go our own way, and walk the talk, and actually “dare greatly.” And there’s a certain amount of risk involved in this. It’s not easy to find your way in the art and fashion scene in New York, but [we] have very good partners in the entire space, and that helps a lot. Also, Visionaire and the Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA) see that our approach is long-term—we don’t just want to attach our logo anywhere.

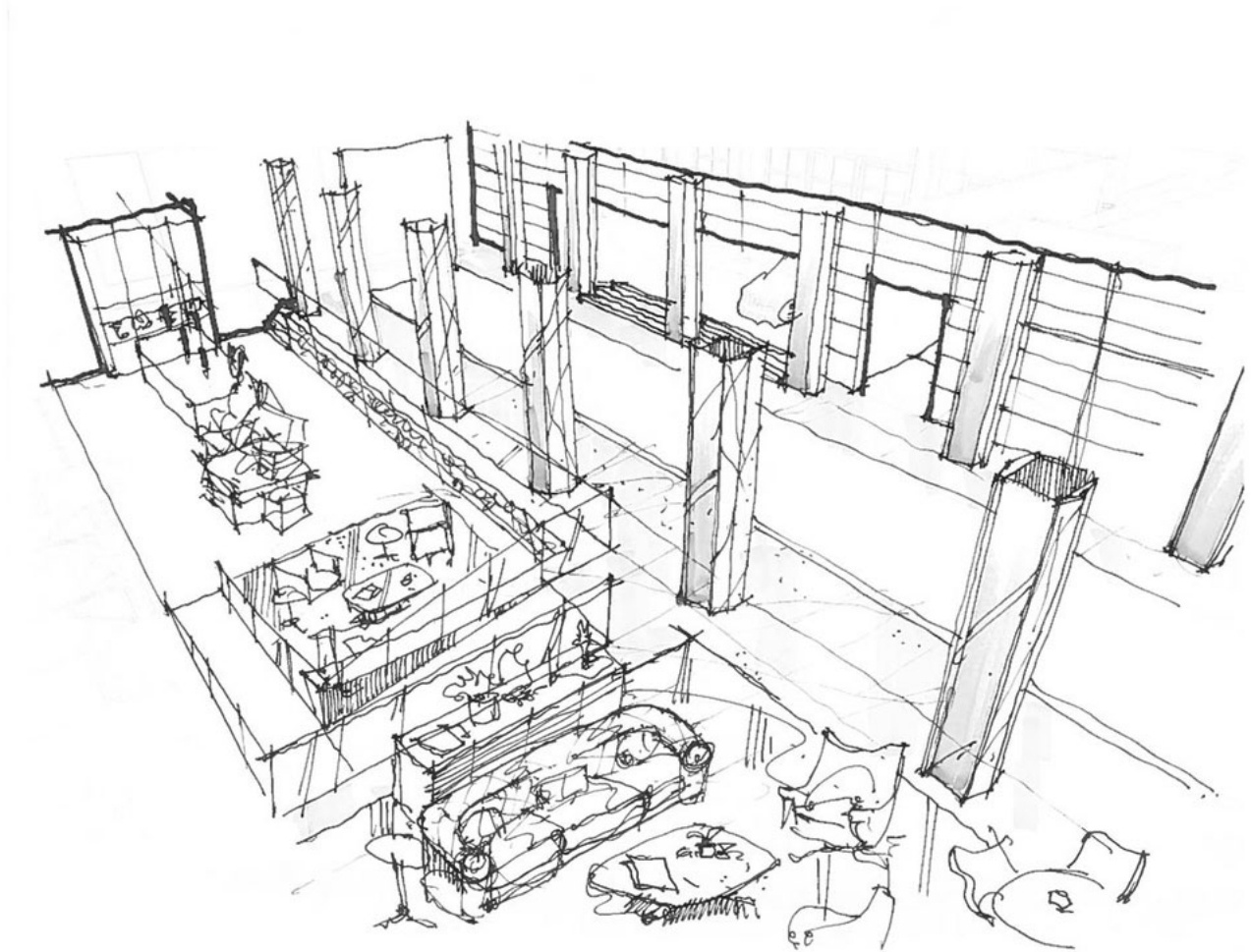
So in that regard, we have a level of goodwill in the creative scene in New York, and an absolutely cool place in an iconic location, with the hope that even busy New Yorkers—who normally look nowhere and never stop—will stop by and maybe come regularly, provided the territorial elements remain interesting. I have no doubt they will.





**bc:** What other manifestations are we going to see of “Dare Greatly” in the months ahead?

**Ellinghaus:** We will work with people we’ve already featured in the campaign, such as a collaboration with [Jason Wu](#) (following last year’s [capsule collection](#) with Nick Wooster). But I don’t want us to limit ourselves to one, two or three widely recognized spokespersons. Other brands do that. Our target group is educated and self-confident, and I don’t think they will change their perceptions of the **Cadillac** brand if we’re in league with whatever celebrity it might be.



**bc:** Are you getting what you hoped for a year or so after you left Detroit for New York, which was certainly a daring move?

**Ellinghaus:** It's difficult to judge. As far as motivation in my new team is concerned, I couldn't have wished for a better result. I hired world-class talent that, fortunately, believed in the **Cadillac** mission—and New York helped a lot to attract them. But we can only keep them passionate and motivated if they realize we walk the talk.



**bc:** How important are the upcoming launch campaigns for CT6 and XT5?

**Ellinghaus:** We are very optimistic about both CT6 and XT5. We have huge numbers of hand-raisers (expressing interest in purchasing). The public interest in CT6 is absolutely amazing and dealers are telling me they are seeing clientele in their showrooms who they haven't seen over the past decade—people who want or need cars larger than our ATS or CTS and now are coming back to **Cadillac**.

*Below, check out digital mock-ups of the Cadillac House experience:*

<https://youtu.be/XL9GPmC0V2Q>

<https://youtu.be/ss55ZnqwZv4>

<https://youtu.be/HGbr5thFQkA>

*All images & videos copyright Gensler.*

//