

CRAIN'S

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Korean retailer follows Russian steps

WHO.A.U. takes storefront on West 34th Street shopping corridor.

By Adrienne Pasquarelli

The large retail space left behind by now-bankrupt Russian child fashion designer Kira Plastinina is paving the way for a Korean apparel company's entry into the New York market. WHO.A.U. California Dream recently signed a 10-year lease for its U.S. flagship—12,000 square feet, split evenly between the ground and basement levels at 22 W. 34th St., between Fifth and Sixth avenues. The asking rent for the ground floor portion was around \$400 a square foot. The asking rents on that block of West 34th Street have declined 35% over the past year, according to the Real Estate Board of New York.

Billed as a cross between preppy teen retailer Abercrombie & Fitch and its surf-inspired Hollister stores, WHO.A.U.—which stands for Who Are You—already has mall outposts in Connecticut and New Jersey. The West 34th Street store, which is expected to open by April, will be part of a Big Apple expansion slated to eventually include Broadway in SoHo.

“West 34th Street offered them not only the neighbors that they like, but also being between Macy's and the Empire State Building was a home run,” said Faith Hope Consolo, the Prudential Douglas Elliman broker who represented the tenant, along with colleague Joseph Aquino.

WHO.A.U. is filling in one of the sole remaining vacancies on the West 34th Street strip, following in the footsteps of Aéropostale and Geox, which both took space there earlier this year.

Landlord Solil Management Corp. was represented in-house.

Property Details

- **Tenant name:** WHO.A.U. California Dream
- **Street address:** 22 W. 34th St.
- **Square feet:** 12,000
- **Asking rent:** \$400 per sq ft.
- **Lease length:** 10 years
- **Market:** Midtown South
- **Submarket:** Chelsea
- **Borough:** Manhattan
- **Brokerage firm:** Landlord Solil Management Corp.
- **Tenant broker:** Faith Hope Consolo and Joseph Aquino
- **Tenant broker firm:** Prudential Douglas Elliman