

WWD

Fashion. Beauty. Business.

The Bottom Line

An analysis of Prada's \$1.4 billion deal to buy Versace – and how it got done despite the chaos in the stock market.

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Shein's IPO Path

While it has received U.K. regulatory approval, Shein's IPO faces several major hurdles – especially the U.S.-China trade war.

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All About Watches

Retailers praised Watches and Wonders fair in Geneva, and the latest styles of the leading high-end watch players.

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Tiffany Alla Grande

Tiffany & Co. opened its largest store in Europe during Milan Design Week, which is also the flagship that displays its biggest selection of archival pieces. Located in the Neoclassical Palazzo Taverna on Via Montenapoleone, it is, in the words of president and CEO Anthony Ledru, "a cultural hub" and not just a store, with artworks by the likes of Julian Schnabel, Daniel Arsham, Michelangelo Pistoletto and Urs Fischer. As they say, go big or go home.

For more on the store, see pages 4 and 5.

PHOTOGRAPH BY GIOVANNI GIANNONI

THE BOTTOM LINE

How Prada and Versace Overcame Market Chaos to Reach a \$1.4B Deal



Versace in SoHo.

- Versace has at least a couple things Prada wants and Capri needed to make something happen.

BY EVAN CLARK

Where there's a will, there's a way.

That's the message from Prada and Versace to fashion's dealmaking market.

Even with a partial truce in U.S. President Donald Trump's trade war with almost everybody, the battle rages on with China – and both sides have ratcheted tariffs up to levels that promise to cripple trade between the world's two largest economies.

Goods from China, which makes 36 percent of the apparel imported to the U.S., are now subject to a new 145 percent tariff at the border, erasing profit margins and threatening much higher prices for consumers.

The two-sided shock, hitting both supply and demand, has investment bankers and would-be buyers stepping way back to see what happens next, a series of strategic adjustments or a global meltdown.

Then the market will re-weigh their dealmaking opportunities as the smoke clears.

But even in a broken acquisition market, some deals will still get done.

Witness Versace.

Capri Holdings inked a \$1.4 billion agreement to sell the Italian luxury brand to Prada, yes. But there was a lot more “need” than “want” in the sale.

As one fashion dealmaker put it, “They just needed to do something, anything and this was doable.”

John Idol, Capri chairman and chief executive officer, bought Versace for \$2.1 billion at the end of 2018 and routinely touted the brand's potential to drive sales of “at least \$2 billion” over time. But the top line just barely cracked \$1 billion last fiscal year.

Capri is selling Versace at a roughly \$745 million discount on its own acquisition price – leaving the company deep in the hole as the brand has produced a total of only \$323 million in operating income during its six-plus years at the company.

But the deal was done because it has its benefits for both Capri and Prada.

Simeon Siegel, an analyst at BMO, said the transaction will allow Capri to pay down some of its \$3.1 billion in total debt, flipping the company from one of fashion's “worst net leverage ratios to one of the best.”

“Clearly the focus – and questions – will now turn to whether [Capri's Michael Kors and Jimmy Choo businesses] can be turned, and we understand the skepticism, but we also believe the cash infusion and inflection from net debt to net cash is not yet being reflected in shares and represents a compelling opportunity,” Siegel said.

While shares of Capri shot up in anticipation of the deal, the stock inched up just 0.1 percent to \$14.63 on Friday, leaving the company with market capitalization of just \$1.7 billion.

This is really Plan C for Capri.

Plan A was to take a group of three founder-led luxury brands and drive consistent growth and profit.

Plan B was to sell the company to Tapestry Inc. for \$57 a share, but that was blocked by the U.S. government.

Now Plan C seems to be to sell Versace and, if possible, Jimmy Choo and then rework Michael Kors, either as a standalone public brand or away from the glare of Wall Street as a private company.

It could turn into something of a fire sale.

Oliver Chen, an analyst at TD Securities, said the Versace deal implies an enterprise value to sales ratio of 1.57 times on the brand – well below the luxury average of three-times.

“Versace is an iconic lifestyle brand, yet needs more consistency in terms of price points, channel harmonization, and has untapped potential with respect to accessories and men's,” Chen said. “Prada will likely need to be patient and need to diagnose, develop and execute a refined plan.”

While there seems to have been some last-minute doubts on the part of Prada and some negotiating on price, it was a deal that ultimately made enough sense to sign on the dotted line.



Versace, fall 2025

And that could be because Versace can help Prada on a few different fronts.

The deal brings not just another well-known Italian brand to the group, but a network of 227 stores, some of which could be repurposed to expand Prada's hot Miu Miu business.

“Prada took the risk because they want to solidify their presence as the luxury giant in Italy,” said attorney Clara Feldman, chair of the luxury brands practice at Blank Rome, who works on many real estate transactions. “I think it was a great marriage for the two brands.”

And despite all the upset in financial markets and worries – even panic in some quarters – about tariffs, Feldman said the market for high-end real estate is still going strong.

“It's similar to COVID-19,” she said. “We have to deal with it. We might have

some struggles, but my advice is to grab the market, grab the real estate. Start developing the brand and I think you'll shine in the end. We're gonna rebound and everyone wants to be in the hot markets – California, New York, Texas.

“We're full steam ahead,” Feldman said on Friday. “The CEOs are like, ‘We want this deal. We don't wanna lose the space because there's five others in line if we don't take it.’”

From that perspective, the timing of the crisis might have been just right for Prada's acquisition of Versace.

“They got it at a discount, which doesn't happen in luxury,” Feldman said.

The Bottom Line is a business analysis column written by Evan Clark, deputy managing editor, who has covered the fashion industry since 2000. It appears periodically.

BUSINESS

Shein's IPO Valuation Hinges on Trump's De Minimis Ban on China



President Donald Trump signed two trade-related executive orders at the White House Rose Garden.

- Meanwhile, the U.K. is looking to cozy up to the China-focused firm with an IPO approval.

BY TIANWEI ZHANG
WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM
KATE NISHIMURA AND EVAN CLARK

LONDON — Shein's pursuit of a London IPO got a green light from the U.K.'s financial watchdog Financial Conduct Authority on Friday.

First reported by Reuters, citing sources familiar with the matter, the IPO would mark a major step in helping Shein build credibility and demonstrate a commitment to transparency, particularly in light of ongoing concerns around supply chain ethics, sustainability and the safety of shopping with Chinese marketplaces.

Shein declined to comment Friday.

However, it remains unclear when the IPO will happen, as it is still waiting for approvals from Chinese regulators, such as the China Securities Regulatory Commission and the State Council.

The IPO valuation also hinges on how it deals with the escalating trade war between the Trump administration and China.

In addition to slapping a whopping 145 percent tariff on imported goods from China, Trump last week signed an executive order ending de minimis for shipments from China and Hong Kong, effective May 2.

A bipartisan basis often referred to as a "loophole," de minimis allows shipments bound for American businesses and consumers valued under \$800 to enter the U.S. free of duty and taxes.

It forms the cornerstone of crossborder businesses like Shein, Temu and Amazon, which ship goods from overseas directly to consumers. Removing de minimis would do harm to Shein's profitability and market share in the U.S.

The U.S. is Shein's largest market, according to data from Reuters, making up more than 28 percent of its sales volume, and the majority of the Shein packages are de minimis.

In 2024, de minimis trade has ballooned to nearly 4 million packages each day, reaching nearly 1.4 billion the whole year. At least half of those duty-free parcels came from China.

The de minimis exception has been thrust into the spotlight with the explosion of firms like Shein and Temu. Both Republican and Democrat lawmakers have been calling for its elimination for years, saying that it gives Chinese corporations a leg up to the

detriment of American manufacturers.

When the executive order goes into effect, de minimis packages from China will be subject to an informal entry process, and each package that travels to the U.S. via international post will now be subject to a tariff rate of 120 percent or \$100, a rate that will increase to \$200 after June 1.

John Mercer, head of research and retail analyst at Coresight Research, believes Shein, as well as Temu, will lose the advantage conferred by de minimis exemptions on U.S. import duties.

"This change would exert upward pressure on Shein and Temu pricing. However, we think it is neither a 'killer blow' to these cross-border players in the U.S. market nor a completely unanticipated outcome. We expect these platforms to continue to be price-aggressive," Mercer said.

He thinks platforms like Shein have greater resilience due to a diversification of their businesses over time, including

through onshore and nearshore distribution, an onboarding of local sellers, and a move toward a third-party marketplace model.

"Moreover, in a context where the wider mass market will face additional tariff costs, we expect rock-bottom retail companies to be able to increase prices and remain rock bottom of the market. While these changes will pressure profitability at cross-border players, we do not anticipate that the narrative of competitive threats from Shein and Temu will fundamentally change," Mercer added.

Felicia Pullam, former executive director of the Office of Trade Relations at the U.S. Customs and Border Protection, agreed that e-commerce and low-value packages won't go away with the end of the de minimis exemption.

She also thinks that major e-commerce companies are super sophisticated and some of them can move very quickly. "The highest profile companies have the resources to adjust their systems, and they are also incentivized to comply voluntarily," Pullam added.

Last month, the Agence France-Presse reported that Donald Tang, Shein's executive chairman, said the company would work to provide the best possible experience for its customers despite trade uncertainty and noted that Shein's business model has helped it successfully navigate other unexpected global trade disruptions, like the COVID-19 pandemic.

While the U.S. and China are clashing over trade, the U.K. is looking to cozy up to Chinese firms following Finance Minister Rachel Reeves' visit to China in January, where she met Chinese vice-premier He Lifeng in Beijing, discussing trade and investment opportunities as part of efforts to grow the U.K. economy.

Following the talks, where both nations agreed to deepen cooperation in trade, financial services, investment and climate issues, Reeves went home with a deal that

would see Beijing investing 600 million pounds in the U.K. over the next five years.

One thing worth noting is that Reeves' China visit took place days after Yanan Zhu, Shein's general counsel for Europe, the Middle East and Africa, faced a string of sensitive questions during a bruising hearing in the U.K., prompting one committee member, the Liberal Democrat MP Charlie Maynard, to accuse her of "willful ignorance" and describe her testimony as "very unhelpful."

Greg Zakowicz, senior e-commerce expert at email marketing firm Omniscend, said Shein's FCA approval is a significant moment for the wider e-commerce landscape in the U.K.

"Our data consistently shows that Shein has been successful at winning over British consumers, with over two-fifths saying they have shopped with the e-commerce giant," Zakowicz added.

According to data compiled by Omniscend, British shoppers are placing greater emphasis on value. Some 60 percent of U.K. consumers surveyed by Omniscend said they have shopped on Chinese marketplaces like Shein and Temu in the past year, despite only 4 percent saying they fully trust these platforms.

While Shein is headquartered in Singapore, the majority of its operations sit within China. Over the years, Shein has been accused of skirting U.S. tariffs, employing forced laborers in China, illegally using Xinjiang cotton in its products, and copying others' designs, all of which it denies.

In its bid to seek a public listing in London, the company has been trying to show that it is an ethical operator.

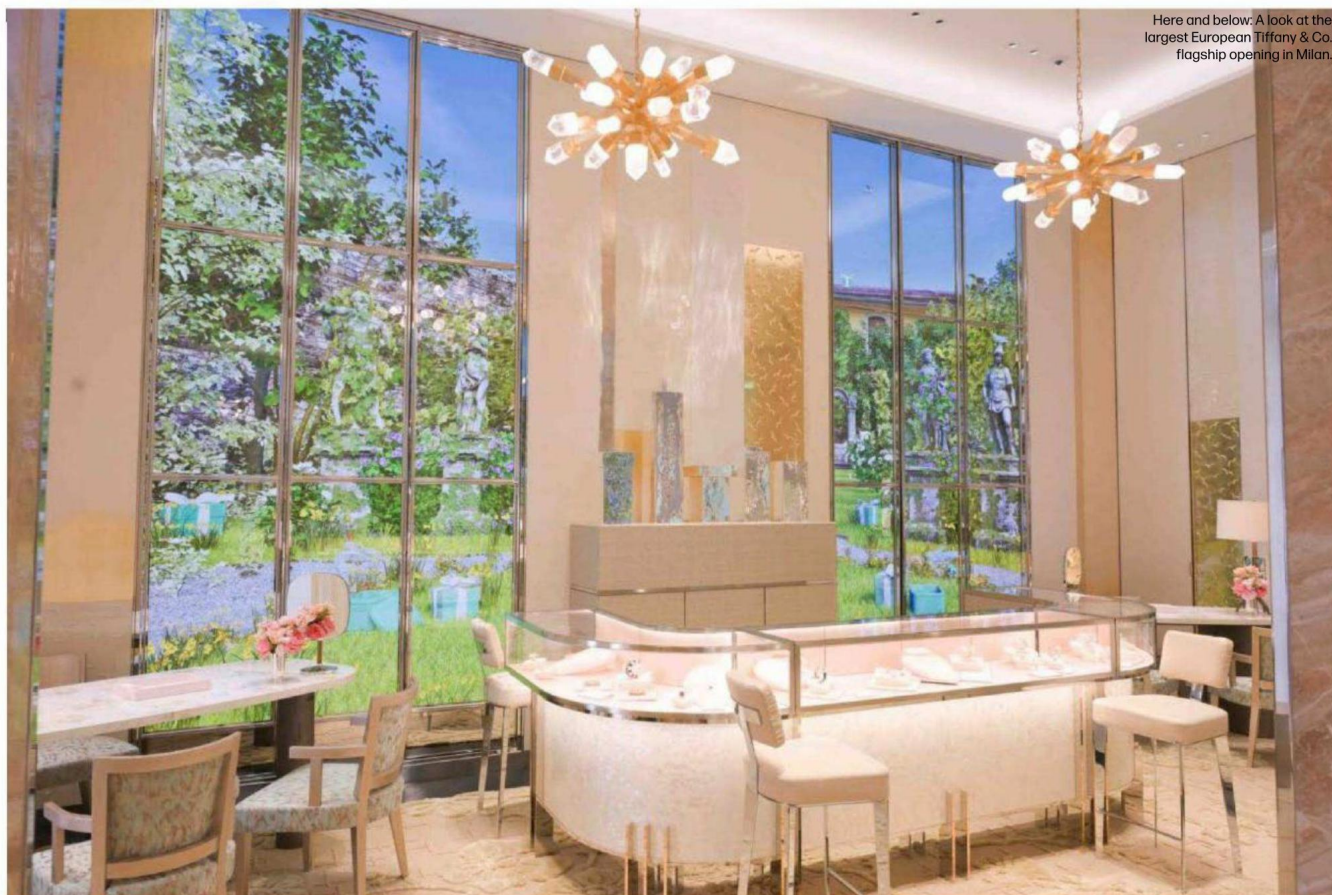
Shein's Tang told WWD last year that Shein wants to comply with international laws and become a more transparent company. Being a publicly traded company, he said, is the way to foster that.

Shein had originally tried to list on the New York Stock Exchange, but its bid was blocked by U.S. lawmakers in 2023. It later pivoted to London.

Seeking to improve its public image and shine a light on all the positive work it has been doing, Shein last July unveiled plans to pump 250 million euros into European fashion's circular economy and back the sector's budding entrepreneurs, artists and artisans.

Courtney Hodgson, Tillie Amarte, Courtney Smith, Arabella Chi, Olivia Hawkins, Cally Jane, Charlotte Kamale and Kady McDermott attended the Shein VIP party during ParkLife Festival last year at Heaton Park in Manchester, England.





Here and below: A look at the largest European Tiffany & Co. flagship opening in Milan.

ACCESSORIES

Tiffany & Co. Opens Largest European Flagship

- Located on Via Montenapoleone in Milan, the striking new store by Peter Marino showcases Tiffany's largest selection of archival pieces, blending art, craftsmanship and nearly two centuries of history.

BY LUISA ZARGANI
PHOTOGRAPHS BY GIOVANNI GIANNONI

MILAN – Tiffany & Co. inaugurated its largest store in Europe here during Milan Design Week – which is also the flagship that displays the largest selection of exceptional archival pieces from the brand.

Located in the Neoclassical Palazzo Taverna built in 1835 on Via Montenapoleone, the striking store was designed by Peter Marino and opened after more than two-and-a-half years of works.

References to Milan stand in the first entrance hall, with CGI images on screens that project pictures of Leonardo Da Vinci's vineyard in the storied Casa degli Atellani – reportedly acquired by LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton chief Bernard Arnault, and of the Via Palestro garden. Tiffany's signature Birds on a Rock are superimposed, “flying around joyfully carrying precious jewels,” mused Anthony Ledru, president and chief executive officer of Tiffany & Co., of the fairytale scenes.

A New Beginning

Tiffany's previous store in Via della Spiga has closed and Ledru suggested people



“forget any other store we had in the past in Milano, because this is a real new departure. I don't want to be negative about what we've done in the past, but I believe it's a new beginning. It's the first time we're in Montenapoleone and we had a bit of luck finding the right location.”

Three LVMH brands now occupy Palazzo Taverna, as Tiffany is adjacent to the newly inaugurated Louis Vuitton and Bulgari flagships.

“The timing is right, it's a city that's growing really fast right now, we are seeing it with lots of tourism and locals, and we



have the proper venue and the proper volume. That's why we're here,” Ledru said.

He underscored that, with Marino, “there are no guidelines, and that's where you get the best. There's discussions, there's debate, but I believe it's one of the stores where his creativity is reaching the maximum.”

Tiffany also plans to open a store in Milan's luxury shopping arcade Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II by the end of the year, located between Loro Piana and Dior.

On Via Montenapoleone, the store's façade features arched windows crafted by skilled Murano glassmaker Venini.



Recreated from an original design by Gio Ponti, these lunettes feature an intricate shape reminiscent of the iconic stained-glass creations of Louis Comfort Tiffany.

The facade also includes window displays inspired by Michelangelo Pistoletto.

Ledru views the store as a “cultural hub,” underscoring Tiffany's and Milan's “longstanding connection to the art world. Here, you discover the archives, the craftsmanship through the jewelry and art. It's a cultural destination where you can appreciate beautiful jewelry, but not just jewelry. Selling is a consequence.”

The store spans almost 13,000 square feet, but the size is “not what we care about,” contended Ledru, “because we believe we managed to create a succession of stories and rooms. Every single room has a focal point.” ▶

These include a Michelangelo Pistoletto work titled "Color and Light"; a historical clock from the late 19th century previously in Grand Central Terminal in New York; a broderie reproducing every single piece of the Jean Schlumberger collection, such as the Trophee de Vaillance brooch, a gift to Diana Vreeland, or the Bird on the Rock brooch, and the Urs Fischer work reproducing all the signature creations by Tiffany, such as Elsa Peretti's Open Heart design.

A skylight and a sculptural staircase with frosted steps designed by Hugh Dutton help amplify the proportions of the space.

In the patio by the bar, the "Stratified Venus of Arles" statue cloaked in silver and bronze by Daniel Arsham, who also conceived a similar artwork for Tiffany's New York Landmark store, stands at the foot of the staircase leading to the first and second floors.

The only Tiffany store in Europe to carry and have a dedicated room for the home collection, it is striking with a Julian Schnabel painting dedicated to Italy and a table and chairs designed by the artist. In the same area are Gaetano Pesce and Gio Ponti chairs, and Bella Silva ceramics.

Peter Marino's Take

"This 18th century building was so very Milanese - I loved it and created a Holly Golightly staircase in the courtyard as a totally lighthearted modern intervention," said Marino.

Asked about how the artworks were chosen, he said he followed "the works of mirror reflecting the brilliance of sparkling diamonds (Michelangelo Pistoletto, Anish Kapoor, Stine Bidstrup); the color of the

famous Tiffany blue box (YZ Kami, Johan Creten, André Dubreuil, Claudia Wieser); the totally glamorous factor of the brand (Warhol, Picasso, Vik Muniz), and total 'in the moment' of our lives (Urs Fischer, Sterling Ruby)."

As for the message Marino wants to convey to those who enter the flagship, he said "I'd like you to be inspired to buy a piece of jewelry and come out looking either like Audrey Hepburn or George Peppard!"

Archival Pieces

Ledru proudly touted the unique, sizable archival pieces in the Milan store, 40 items "from every single key moment" of Tiffany's history, ranging from a dazzling brooch gifted by Richard Burton to Elizabeth Taylor, or the pocket watch given to the captain who rescued several Titanic passengers, and a watch from the World's Fair in 1939, jewels from Liza Minnelli and Sophia Loren, and original glass lamps by Louis Comfort Tiffany.

"We want the archives to be part of the store and of the discovery," Ledru said. "What this store allows us to do is really to go from storytelling to story living. It's life. It's a bit like a live concert versus watching TV. Visiting a store really connects you emotionally with the brand like no other channel."

While leveraging almost two centuries of history, Ledru said that "unfortunately, or I would say fortunately, very few people and not enough people know about it. I'm not saying we're going to keep exactly the same [archival pieces]. They may rotate after six months, nine months, 12 months, but we believe that it's part of the strength and the depth of the brand. And we have one of the

largest collection of archives globally. Who would know that we ever did this?" he said pointing to little gold makeup compacts, one shaped as the face of a feline.

The store responds to Tiffany's "goal to dream and go through the past to understand the brand, the richness that very few people really know, or not enough people. That's why we brought all these archival pieces, because I think it creates, automatically, legitimacy, connection to the past, and hopefully the understanding of why we do what we do today," he continued.

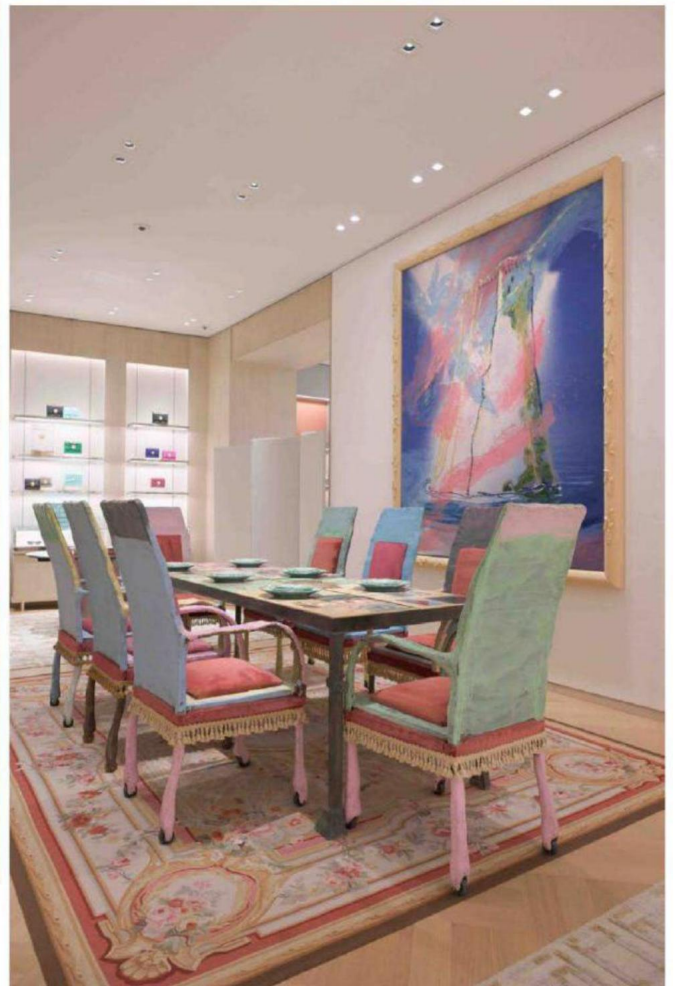
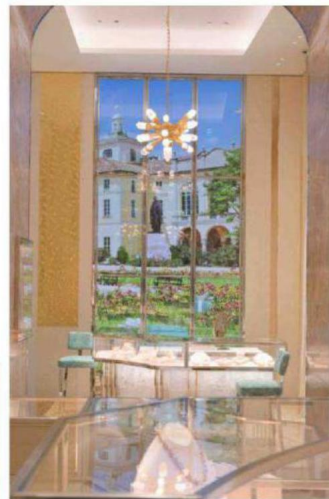
Asked about the Italians' perception of Tiffany, Ledru said they are familiar with the brand, its signature azure color, its diamonds and how it is "very strong in terms of gifting. I think they're going to hopefully discover or rediscover Tiffany as one of the greatest jewelers of all times, because we have these 200 years of patrimony and history behind us, and

the purpose is really to share the history like we never, ever did before. We'd be almost a permanent exhibition in Milan. Somehow, every artwork that we have has a link to Tiffany. It's contextual, it's not just a big museum with art. It's a museum that even the artwork serves to tell the Tiffany story in a non-literal way."

The store carries a wide range of Tiffany jewels, from engagement rings to the Knot, the T and Lock, to name a few, as well as high jewelry, watches and an array of diamond jewelry, and features rooms dedicated to Elsa Peretti and Paloma Picasso as well as two private salons for special clients and areas for customization and repair. ■



Here and right: A look at the largest European Tiffany & Co. flagship opening in Milan.



BUSINESS

Optimism and Resilience Prevail At Watches and Wonders

● Despite looming tariffs and continuing macroeconomic challenges, retailers were impressed by innovative designs, immersive experiences - and the industry's resilience.

BY LILY TEMPLETON

GENEVA – Although the watchmaking industry remains shaken and stirred by the whirlwind of U.S. President Donald Trump's new tariffs policies, resilience and cautious optimism prevailed among retailers at the 2025 edition of Watches and Wonders.

"I think [that] due to the economic and political turmoil, it's going to choppy but overall good," said Jonathan Zadok, partner at Zadok Jewelers.

That said, "no one likes uncertainty. A big question is how quickly the tariff situation can get worked out," he continued. "Hopefully it won't take long."

But even with their possible impact, Roberto Chiappelloni, owner of U.S.-based Manfredi Jewels, felt confident that interest in fine timepieces would remain strong in the American market - and the rest of the world. "We placed orders as business as usual," he told WWD.

And brands rose to the occasion. "This year was expected to be a quiet one," said Carla Chalouhi, president and chief executive officer of Paris-based multibrand retailer Arije. "Instead, we were pleasantly surprised by some exquisite pieces that truly stood out from the crowd and broke new ground."

The kaleidoscopic offering of timepieces left the impression of "a return to core values: tradition and material excellence, balanced with the steady march of innovation," said David Hurley, deputy CEO of Watches of Switzerland.

"While the global landscape remains challenging, the watch industry is showing resilience with strong releases and a renewed sense of optimism," said Harrods' buying director of fine jewelry and watches Beth Hannaway. "With a mix of technical breakthroughs and thoughtful design evolution, the high-end watch industry feels well-positioned for a dynamic and successful year ahead."

Here, retailers' views on the latest edition of Watches and Wonders.

The Tag Heuer booth.



Carla Chalouhi

president and CEO, Arije

Overall impression: This year was expected to be a quiet one. Instead, we were pleasantly surprised by some exquisite pieces that truly stood out from the crowd and broke new ground.

Best booth: Tudor, with its immersive Formula 1 experience and nostalgic touch through its vintage arcade setup. The interactive, game-inspired concept was a hit - we all played along.

Best moment: Bumping into Roger Federer at the same time as crossing paths with Rolex's top management.

Top watches: Rolex's Land-Dweller, inspired by the legendary Oysterquartz model; Cartier's Tank à Guichets, a bold new interpretation of the iconic Tank; Bulgari's Octo Finissimo Tourbillon, mastering the art of ultra-thin movements; Vacheron Constantin's

Traditionnelle Calendrier Complet Openface, a new showcase of the brand's art of watchmaking, and Jaeger-LeCoultre's vintage rose gold Reverso, exuding a timeless appeal that captivates connoisseurs of vintage treasures. And we cannot not mention Tudor's Black Bay 58 with its new all-burgundy look - a bold statement that proclaims, "après la vie en rose, la vie en rouge."

Budgets: We do have a set budget, aligned with our expansion goals and buying strategy. However, as usual, it is the collections and our "coups de coeur" that make the final call.

What resonates best with your customers? Our customers seek to be informed, guided and cared for. They are drawn to the richness of a multibrand universe, where diverse offerings meet curated excellence. Ultimately, they are in search of "the" piece that feels uniquely theirs. Because in the end, it is all about finding "the right piece for the right wrist."

Your outlook for 2025: To keep moving forward, on and on, no matter what.

Beth Hannaway

buying director, fine jewelry and watches, Harrods

Overall impression: 2025's Watches and Wonders exudes a renewed celebratory spirit for fine watchmaking, marking a stark contrast to last year's more subdued atmosphere. Anniversaries abounded across the fair, adding a sense of heritage and continuity, while an overarching feeling of optimism and excitement signals a strong resurgence for the industry, despite the global outlook.

Best booth: Bulgari's booth stole the show, making a bold statement on their first appearance at the fair. Their booth



Parmigiani
Fleurier
Toric
Quantum
Perpetual
Morning
Blue



Roger Federer wears the Rolex Land-Dweller 40 in a white Rolesor version.

was a stunning celebration of Italian spirit, exuding elegance, creativity and a deep connection to the brand's Roman heritage. The space showcased an extensive collection of high jewelry watches, demonstrating Bulgari's mastery in blending horology with haute jewelry. At the heart of the display was their latest groundbreaking achievement - the brand's 10th world record-breaking watch - cementing Bulgari's status as a true innovator in ultra-thin watchmaking and technical excellence. **Best moment:** Being back in Geneva again, discovering all the latest watch novelties - you can't beat the buzz of the first day. ▶

Top watches: Vacheron Constantin QP Retrograde Date Openface; IWC Schaffhausen - Black Ceramic Ingénieur; Cartier Tank à Guichets and Rolex Land-Dweller.

New talent: Czapek stood out among the independents at Watches and Wonders 2025, impressing with its blend of heritage craftsmanship and contemporary style. The standout was the Antarctique Tourbillon in a striking Glacier Blue color, which caught the eye with its cool, refined look. The watch perfectly balances elegance and sportiness, with an open tourbillon adding just the right touch of watchmaking magic.

What resonates best with your customers? Our customers are drawn to pieces that hold lasting value and significance. Future heirlooms, watches with timeless appeal and exceptional craftsmanship, are always in demand. Innovation also plays a key role, whether through groundbreaking materials, movement advancements, or fresh design concepts. Strong additions to their collections, particularly those that complement or elevate what they already own, are a major focus. Limited editions generate excitement, offering exclusivity and a sense of rarity. And, of course, the hottest novelties of the year, whether a bold new design or a reimagined classic, always capture attention.

Your outlook for 2025: Positive overall. While the global landscape remains challenging, the watch industry is showing resilience with strong releases and a renewed sense of optimism. Brands are leaning into innovation, heritage, and exclusivity, creating excitement among collectors and enthusiasts. With a mix of technical breakthroughs and thoughtful design evolution, the high-end watch industry feels well-positioned for a dynamic and successful year ahead.

David Hurley

deputy CEO, Watches of Switzerland

Overall impression: At this year's Watches and Wonders Geneva we saw a return to core values: tradition and material excellence, balanced with the steady march of innovation. The fair offered no shortage of novelties, but it also reflected elements of popular culture – case in point, the growing love affair between watchmaking and Formula 1.

There was also a return to precious metals – not just as accents, but as statements. Many brands showcased full gold cases and bracelets that exuded confidence and old-world glamour. That felt like a distinct shift from the steel minimalism that has been so dominant in recent years. Platinum, which is really the IYKYK metal, stepped into the spotlight with its unmistakable weight, rarity and a touch of gravitas. This is horology at its most tactile and unapologetically luxurious.

Best booth and moment: If watchmaking is theater, then the booths at Watches and Wonders were the stage sets. Both IWC Schaffhausen and Tag Heuer went sleek and cinematic, leaning into their F1 identities. IWC teased the upcoming Brad Pitt Formula 1 film while Tag incorporated actual race cars and a simulator into its booth experience. The message? Storytelling now extends far beyond the watch – its lifestyle, culture and cinematic experience.

Top watches: Cartier presented refined evolutions of its Tank and Santos lines, showing how modernity can be a whisper, not a shout. Jaeger-LeCoultre's Reverso looked incredible in gold with a Milanese strap, as did several of the new complications, while Patek Philippe gave its Calatrava fresh momentum through subtle design evolution. Rolex's Oyster Perpetual maintained its icon

status through restraint and excellence with sublime new dial colors. We were impressed with Parmigiani, which introduced "Cermet," a proprietary ceramic-titanium hybrid material that blends aerospace tech with haute horlogerie finesse.

New talent: We are big fans of H. Moser, which continued its stone dial experimentation, pushing the conversation around color and design.

Roberto Chiappelloni

owner, Manfredi Jewels

Overall impression: This year's show was well organized and ran like clockwork. Things are logically laid out, clean and transportation is super-efficient. It is a pleasant experience, although as always our schedules are filled to the brim. As usual, we missed the Swatch Group offerings.

Best booth: Van Cleef & Arpels is the most beautiful while Ulysse Nardin is the most interactive.

Best moment: Seeing the wonderful Michel Parmigiani at his booth.

Top watches: Hermès Arceau Le Temps Voyageur Dual Time Zone; Parmigiani Toric Quantième Perpetual Platinum Morning Blue; the offerings from Vacheron Constantin celebrating their 270th anniversary, and Zenith celebrating their 160th anniversary were impressive – my favorite for Vacheron was the Traditionnelle Complete Calendar Openface and for Zenith the G.F.J. Caliber 135, both limited editions; and the Rolex Land-Dweller.

New talent: We were introduced to Lederer this year and were totally in awe of his amazing mechanical wonders.

Budgets: We had a healthy open to buy coming into the show and while all the news of some serious tariffs broke this week, it did not change our comfort or interest in placing orders.

What resonates best with your customers? Having always been supporters of the independents, our collectors are always excited to see what new discoveries we make in Geneva. Of course, we and our

clients are always looking forward to what Rolex releases, and that amazing brand certainly did not disappoint.

Your outlook for 2025: While there is a lot of turmoil caused by the tariff possible effects, we feel confident that the interest and love for fine timepieces is strong in the U.S., and from what we have seen at the show, across the rest of the world as well. We placed orders as business as usual.

Kate Oldham

general merchandise manager, beauty and jewelry, Saks Fifth Avenue

Overall impression: There was an abundance of newness and innovation from the brands at this year's show. Watches and Wonders is evolving each year, and for the first time Bulgari was welcomed to the venue.

Best booth: Hermès had one of the most creative booths at this year's show. Dedicated to the suspension of time, the booth displayed vignettes portraying urban landscapes, creating a sense of calmness in a dynamic setting. The use of color, innovative designs and merchandise presentation made the booth feel unique and impressive – like nothing we have seen before.

Best moment: It's always exciting to see some of our customers' favorite brands unveil fresh designs at Watches and Wonders, and this year was no exception. We're thrilled with the abundance of newness we saw, and it's safe to say there is a lot for customers to be enthusiastic about, from design to function, in the world of watches and timepieces.

Top watches: Piaget Sixtine watch; Bulgari Serpenti Aeterna watch; Chopard's collection of 12 L'Heure du Diamant cocktail watches; the 33mm Chanel J12 Bleu with the sapphire indicators, and Hermès Arceau Le Temps Voyageur.

What resonates best with your customers? Our customers are shopping for special edition, unique and one-of-a-kind items. We tend to see them gravitating towards pieces with interesting dials. ▶



Cartier
Tank à
Guichets



The Bulgari
record-breaking
Octo Finissimo
Ultra Tourbillon
watch.



Piaget
Sixtie

Ulysse Nardin
Diver Air

a significant milestone for Rolex as it is its first new sportive model since a couple of years – and for the first time a high-frequency caliber.

Top watches: Rolex Land-Dweller, Piaget Sixtie, Cartier Tank à Guichets, Chanel J12 Bleu and Tag Heuer Formula 1 Solargraph.

Budgets: We for sure anticipate our [open to buy] in consequence. Some OTBs are used beforehand, and others during the event.

What resonates best with your customers? Smaller case diameters; some pastel dials; a taste for iconic or archive pieces.

Your outlook for 2025: The market polarization between [entry-level] and high-end exclusive products will continue. We are prudent on market perspectives for 2025 due to the unpredictable context.

Fabrizio Giaccon

sales and marketing director, Rocca

Overall impression: There were lots of good vibes and positive feelings from both brands and clients, with very nice innovative launches.

Best booth: Cartier

Top watches: The Oyster Perpetual Cosmograph Daytona with a light blue dial; the Cartier Tank à Guichets; the Bulgari Octo Finissimo Ultra Tourbillon; the Panerai Luminor Perpetual Calendar, and the Vacheron Constantin Les Cabinotiers Solaria Ultra Grand Complication.

New talent: Interesting pieces at H. Moser & Cie, Laurent Ferrier and Kross Studio.

Budgets: Most of our budget was already allocated per brand, per boutique.

Your outlook for 2025: We are “carefully optimistic,” focusing on key projects and top brands.

Jonathan Zadok

partner, Zadok Jewelers

Overall impression: It was good.

Best booth: I think the coolest booth was Panerai. They had a massive fish tank inside and the ceiling and walls felt like you were in a fish tank.

Best moment: Seeing Rolex come out with the Land Dweller. It isn't often you get to see a whole new line from Rolex, especially something that is so perfectly designed.

Top watches: Jaeger-LeCoultre Reverso Tribute Géographique, Rolex Daytona with the meteorite dial, Cartier Tank à Guichets, Tudor Black Bay 68, Vacheron Constantin Traditionnelle Open Face Retrograde Perpetual and Ulysse Nardin Diver Air.

New talent: I think Nomos is coming out with some really nice stuff, especially the new world timer.

Budgets: I didn't expect to see so much good stuff. I was pleasantly surprised that most brands kept their new offerings pretty tight and the majority of them were really salable. We always have a large open to buy because we feel that we aren't doing our clients a good service if we don't bring home amazing options for them. That being said, we don't always use it because there isn't always so much good stuff.

What resonates best with your customers? I think clients want something where they feel good about what they're buying. Whether it's from a company that stands for something, watches that have history or are attached to history somehow. I think they want to feel that there's passion behind the brand which reflects in their products.

Your outlook for 2025: I think due to the economic and political turmoil, it's going to be choppy but overall good. No one likes uncertainty. A big question is how quickly the tariff situation can get worked out. Hopefully it won't take long. ■



Your outlook for 2025: Looking ahead, we are feeling inspired by the newness and creativity we saw this year at Watches and Wonders, including a wide selection of exquisite watches for customers who appreciate beautifully embellished jewel timepieces, as well as those seeking more intricate complications.

Tatiana Birkelund

vice president, general business manager, beauty, jewelry and home, Neiman Marcus

Overall impression: Bustling, high-energy and seamlessly organized, this edition showcased remarkable innovation. Watches and Wonders has masterfully created an immersive marketplace for merchants, press and the public alike.

Best booth: Chopard transported visitors to an old-world estate, anchored by a breathtaking orchid chandelier. This year's 1965 to 1978 retrospective highlighted the brand's pioneering spirit in jewelry watch design, while celebrating timeless craftsmanship and innovation. The elegant shapes and gemstone dials remain as

relevant today as ever.

Best moment: Chanel's Bleu timepiece launch made a striking impression with its perfect matte finish. While Chanel's haute horlogerie always captivates, this year's standout pieces were the Lipstick Secret Watch and the enamel “nail polish” five-piece boxed collection. The brand showed the intersection of fashion and watches at its best.

Top watches: Piaget Sixtie collection; Chopard Platinum Alpine Eagle and L'Heure du Diamant collection; Chanel's Première Galon bangle watch; Hermès Suspended Time collection, and Bulgari Phoenix Gemstone & Paraiba secret watch cuff.

New talent: Neiman Marcus continues to embrace watches as jewelry. From brooches to necklaces to bangles, our client loves timepieces that seamlessly blend function with fashion.

What resonates best with your customers? Our Neiman Marcus customer loves a wrist that sparkles, gravitating toward diamond and gemstone bezels, dials and bracelets. They also enjoy color, making the vibrant shades of blue throughout the show a standout. Precious

gemstone dials – especially mesmerizing opals and dazzling rainbow high jewelry timepieces – stole the spotlight.

Your outlook for 2025: After exploring the best of Watches and Wonders, our Neiman Marcus team is confident our curation of timepieces will captivate both our discerning fashion clients and dedicated collectors.

Stéphanie Hernandez

buying and marketing director of the watches and jewelry division, Galeries Lafayette

Overall impression: Watches and Wonders is the annual unmissable watches event. This edition reinforces its leading position: This year stands out by its latest novelties, anniversary celebrations, comebacks and technical achievements. In this context of uncertainty, competition intensifies on entry and middle market watches.

Best booth: Panerai booth and its immersive diving experience.

Best moment: The discovery of the new Rolex Land Dweller. This new watch marks

BUSINESS

Mytheresa Set to Finalize Purchase of YNAP on April 23



A look from a Mytheresa's tailoring campaign that launched earlier this year.

- Mytheresa has received the green light from all regulatory authorities and has named a new management team for the group ahead of the deal's close.

BY SAMANTHA CONTI

LONDON – Mytheresa will complete its purchase of Yoox Net-a-porter from Richemont on April 23 after clearing its final regulatory hurdle from the European Commission.

The European Commission was the last regulatory body to green light the deal, which will see Mytheresa buy 100 percent of YNAP in its bid to build a leading, global, multibrand digital luxury group.

After the deal is finalized the parent company will be called LuxExperience B.V. and its ticker will be changed to "LUXE" on the New York Stock Exchange.

Mytheresa will still exist as a retail brand within the group and trade alongside Net-a-porter and Mr Porter. Yoox and The Outnet will be run separately from the full-price businesses.

The group, and the retail brands, will also have new management teams. Michael Kliger will become group CEO and managing director, while Heather Kamnitsky will become CEO of Net-a-porter. Toby Bateman will return to Mr Porter, this time as CEO.

Kliger, chief executive officer of Mytheresa, said: "Today marks a significant milestone in our success story as we enter a new and exciting phase for both Mytheresa and all YNAP brands, which is expected to create significant value for our customers, brand partners and shareholders. We are truly excited to have received all required regulatory clearances to finalize the acquisition of Yoox Net-a-porter."

He added: "We will become one of the leading global, digital luxury platforms for true luxury enthusiasts through having multiple, highly distinguished storefronts, all under the umbrella of LuxExperience. We will generate significant synergies by using a joint back-of-house platform, but most importantly because we will have one of the most relevant overall value propositions for global luxury shoppers and brands."

Martin Beer, chief financial officer of Mytheresa, said the YNAP acquisition "fulfills Mytheresa's ambition to build a leading online luxury group worth around 3 billion euros in gross merchandise value per annum."

He added that in the medium term, the goal for LuxExperience will be to grow to a 4 billion euros GMV per annum business with an adjusted EBITDA margin of more than 8 percent.

Beer added that while the consolidation of YNAP will initially dilute the EBITDA margin at group level "we are uniquely prepared to achieve a fundamental transformation and return the YNAP businesses to profitability."

The restructuring, he added, is expected to take 24 to 36 months, and is "well-funded with a net cash position of 555 million euros at closing. We will fully leverage Mytheresa's operational excellence, proprietary technology and proven ability to execute large-scale projects."

Johann Rupert, chairman of Richemont, said: "We look forward to LuxExperience's future success, as the receipt of this clearance paves the way for both the Mytheresa and YNAP teams, their brand partners and customers alike to fully benefit from the enhanced value propositions and expanded global reach offered by the combined businesses."

At the close of the transaction, Mytheresa will issue new shares to Richemont representing 33 percent of Mytheresa's fully diluted share capital after the issuance of the consideration shares.

At the same time, Richemont will sell YNAP with a cash position of 555 million euros and no financial debt to Mytheresa, which will become YNAP's sole shareholder.

Richemont will also provide a six-year, 100 million euros revolving credit facility to YNAP. Upon transaction closing, Burkhardt Grund, chief financial officer of Richemont, will join the Mytheresa supervisory board.

The company added that Mytheresa, Net-a-porter and Mr Porter will continue to offer "differentiated, but complementary, multibrand offering for luxury customers. The three individual store brands will maintain their own brand identities while sharing central infrastructure resources jointly."

The off-price division will be separated from the luxury division "for a much simpler and more efficient operating model," Mytheresa said.

Mytheresa has also announced management changes at group and brand level, with Kliger taking on the top group role and continuing as CEO of the Mytheresa business for the time being. Martin Beer will become chief financial officer and managing director of the group.

As CEO of Net-a-porter, Kamnitsky will be responsible for "defining and driving a re-energized customer proposition across the globe, as well as simplifying the organizational structures. She joined Mytheresa in 2021 as president North America and led and oversaw all client-facing activities in the U.S. and Canada, "driving tremendous growth for Mytheresa in this major market of luxury consumption."

For Bateman, the new CEO job at Mr Porter is a homecoming, of sorts. From 2010 to 2020, he helped to oversee the growth at the brand, rising to become managing director in 2015. Mytheresa described him as a "global pioneer of the online menswear fashion business," having positioned Mr Porter as an authorized, online retailer for many high-end watch brands. He also launched the business's own label brand "Mr P."

Mirko Nobili has been promoted to CEO of Yoox, having most recently served as chief operating officer of YNAP. He joined YNAP in 2020 as global operations director. Earlier in his career he spent seven years at Burberry, where he held top roles in beauty supply chain, transformation and global customer fulfillment.

Sabah Naqushbandi, will continue in her role as managing director of The Outnet, overseeing buying, merchandising, creative, and marketing. She has been spearheading the brand's ongoing transformation by sharpening its value proposition and reinforcing its unique portfolio of previous-season luxury fashion.

FASHION

Coach to Become Official Luxury Handbag of the WNBA

- The brand will also partner with the league at key events during the season including All-Star Weekend.

BY JEAN E. PALMIERI

Count Coach as the latest player to team with the WNBA.

The fashion brand has signed on to become the official luxury handbag partner of the league. This multiyear collaboration will kick off on Draft Night on Monday at The Shed in New York City with the WNBA Draft Orange Carpet presented by Coach.

As part of this deal, Coach will highlight the stories of five draftees who are considered to be redefining the game and are leaders both on and off the court. They are Paige Bueckers (University of Connecticut), Hailey Van Lith (Texas

Christian University), Aneesh Morrow (Louisiana State University), Kiki Iriafien (University of South California) and Sonia Citron (Notre Dame).

In addition, throughout the season the company will participate in key WNBA events such as the All-Star Game, and it will also serve as the presenting sponsor of WNBA Pride, a platform the league launched in 2014 that champions the LGBTQIA+ community.

"This partnership with the WNBA is more than just a venture into sports; it is a powerful alignment of brand missions," said Todd Kahn, chief executive officer of Coach. "By investing in this collaboration, Coach is committed to supporting the transformative power of women's professional sports and the influential role these athletes play in society. Together, we look forward to creating meaningful experiences that resonate deeply with fans

and consumers alike."

He added that the partnership is intended to "empower athletes and fans alike to express themselves in authentic ways. By supporting these remarkable athletes, we are reinforcing our commitment to inspire confidence in the pursuit of self-expression. To have the draft in our own backyard at The Shed at Hudson Yards, has the excitement of a home game and I am looking forward to the upcoming season."

Colie Edison, WNBA's chief growth officer, added: "WNBA players are at the forefront of expressing their own style and individuality and this new partnership inspires fans to do the same. We look forward to joining forces with Coach to inspire fans everywhere to embrace individuality, especially around some of our most anticipated tentpole moments, including the WNBA Draft Orange Carpet and WNBA Pride presented by Coach."

"Coach and the WNBA share a belief in the power of self-expression," said Coach's chief marketing officer Joon Silverstein. "We're excited to partner with this league, an organization that uniquely champions individuality, and to support these



courageous athletes who are breaking molds both on and off the court, inspiring our audiences to embrace the many possibilities of who they are and who they can be."

Several fashion brands including Skims and Sephora have signed WNBA players as ambassadors, and luxury brands such as Prada, Louis Vuitton and Gucci have dressed the players in the past for their red-carpet events.

FASHION

Mike Jeffries' Lawyers Say He Can't Stand Trial

- The attorneys claim the former Abercrombie & Fitch CEO has signs of dementia.

BY ROSEMARY FEITELBERG

Attorneys for former Abercrombie & Fitch chief executive officer Mike Jeffries claim he has signs of dementia and is unfit to stand trial in his federal sex trafficking trial.

The judge overseeing his case has consented that Jeffries should go into the Bureau of Prisons custody for a four-month evaluation, as requested by his lawyers.

It was not known Friday which facility Jeffries will self-surrender to the attorney general's custody.

Jeffries, who worked at the Columbus, Ohio-based sportswear retailer from 1992 to 2014, was indicted last fall for one count of sex trafficking and 15 counts of interstate prostitution. He is accused of orchestrating an international sex operation with his partner Matthew Smith and an alleged middleman James Jacobson. Smith and Jacobson face the same charges as Jeffries.

All three men have pleaded not guilty. Jeffries was placed under house arrest after posting \$10 million in bail.

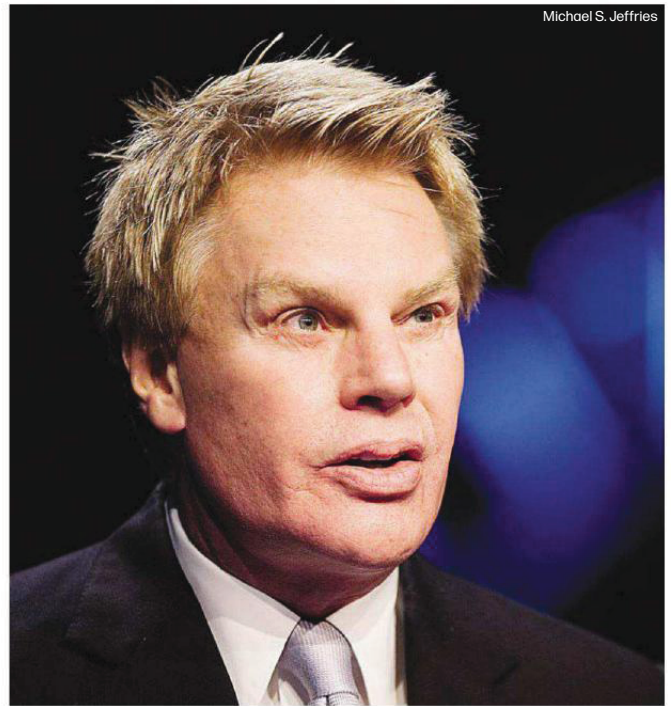
Jeffries, Smith and Jacobson are accused of having used a combination of force, fraud and coercion to traffic men while operating a prostitution ring between December 2008 and 2015. Some of the accusers have said that they were drugged and forced to have sex. Others claimed they had attended events at five-star locations under the false promise that it could lead to modeling opportunities.

In Thursday's filing, attorneys for Jeffries said that four doctors have evaluated Jeffries and determined that he is "incompetent to proceed to trial. Due to the progressive and incurable nature of his major neurocognitive disorder, Mr. Jeffries will not regain his competency and cannot be restored to competency in the future."

In December, Jeffries' legal team filed an unopposed motion to determine competency to stand trial. Following forensic psychiatric and neuropsychological evaluation, and a forensic and neuropsychological evaluation of Jeffries (done by two different doctors), he meets the criteria for Alzheimer's disease, Lewy Body disease and the residual effects of a traumatic brain injury, according to the filing. A second doctor concluded that "his cognitive impairment is severe enough to qualify for a more commonly used diagnostic term – dementia."

An attorney for the John Does in the case against Jeffries, Brad Edwards of Edwards Henderson, did not respond immediately to a media request Friday. A spokesperson for Abercrombie & Fitch declined to comment. One of Jeffries' attorneys, Brian Bieber of Gray Robinson, had not immediately acknowledged a media request early Friday afternoon.

Last month new accusations against Jeffries surfaced. Brandon Steele and Joseph Sterling alleged to have been "assaulted on multiple occasions, after being pressured to take illegal narcotics and forced to endure penis injections at Abercrombie-themed" events, where they were given Abercrombie & Fitch clothes



Michael S. Jeffries

to wear, according to the BBC. Separately, Jared Scotto, an associate attorney at Weitz & Luxenberg, said he is representing 12 men, who had worked for Abercrombie

& Fitch, and is speaking with other individuals about their allegations against Jeffries. Scotto could not be reached immediately for comment Friday.



Here and right:
Looks from
Alamelu.



FASHION

Alamelu Looks to Make Inroads in U.S.

- The brand's latest collection features sharp, sculpted blazers, bomber jackets, high-waisted trousers, tailored coats, sheer blouses, bias-cut dresses and statement overcoats.

BY LISA LOCKWOOD
PHOTOGRAPHS BY GEORGE CHINSEE

Alamelu, a new Indian luxury ready-to-wear house, is looking to make inroads into the U.S.

Launched in Bangalore, India in 2024, the brand was picked up by Printemps in France and many other multibrand stores in France, and is looking to establish a foothold in the American market.

Alamelu was launched by creative director Radharaman Hari Kothandaraman whose family has been in the textile business for 600 years. Kothandaraman has been in business 20 years making clothing under the Advaya label exclusively for the Indian market. He owns his own factories in Bangalore.

He described his new women's luxury collection as "not minimal," but with a very clean aesthetic. "It's for the modern woman who wants to pair things herself. It's a collection of separates that are chic, classic, with attention to detail and very textile driven," he said.

Alamelu is named after his great-grandmother, which in Indian means "goddess of wealth," but not just money, but

wellness, progeny and happiness, he said. His design approach is architectural and precise in its construction.

The fall collection, which has 60 pieces, features sharp, sculpted blazers, bomber jackets, high-waisted trousers and tailored coats, along with sheer blouses layered under textured ensembles. There are also bias-cut dresses, statement overcoats and refined separates. The collection transitions easily from day to evening. Many of the looks are 100 percent silk, along with wool-silks, silk-blended jacquards, finely textured wool-silks and sheer weaves.

The company, which showed privately in New York on Wednesday and Thursday at the Mark Hotel, held a small cocktail party to view the collection for stylists and industry friends Tuesday night, hosted by fashion consultant Fern Mallis.

Alamelu plans to show spring 2026 in late June/early July in Paris and will show another spring 2026 capsule in Paris in September. Kothandaraman said the woman who wears Alamelu is independent and quietly confident.

"The inspiration for launching Alamelu came from my deep desire to showcase the richness of India's textile legacy through a modern design language. One of the core objectives of our brand is to create a global design label rooted in India offering a vocabulary that feels distinctly contemporary yet classic," Kothandaraman said.

BEAUTY

Gaetano Pesce's Amouage Collab Spotlighted at Milan Design Week

● The off-the-radar showcase highlighted one of the Italian design genius' last works before he passed away last year.

BY SANDRA SALIBIAN

MILAN – The colorful, thought-provoking legacy of late Italian architect and design genius Gaetano Pesce is a gift that keeps on giving.

If the 400 resin chairs Pesce designed in 2022 for Matthieu Blazy's sophomore show for Bottega Veneta catapulted him back under the global spotlight and made his work resonate with a new generation of fashion and design enthusiasts, an off-the-radar showcase during Milan Design Week shed light on a work Pesce developed before passing away last year at age 84, one that intertwined his vibrant, experimental practice with the world of perfumery, instead.

Displayed at the Antonia Jannone Gallery here as part of a focused exhibition centered on his work as architect through sketches and renderings, the Oman collection of colorful chairs was developed with Omani luxury fragrance house Amouage.

At a cocktail on Thursday, the brand's chief creative officer Renaud Salmon recalled how the partnership began three years ago, when he sent a package of Omani frankincense resin to the designer.

"I was a big fan of his work for a while, but we didn't know each other," Salmon said. "Basically at some point I realized that I'm working with resin in my perfumes and he's working with resin in design. So I thought that maybe he doesn't even know my resin, and that's when I sent him five kilograms of frankincense and wrote a nice letter. I was not expecting any answer, but to my surprise, he answered [saying] 'What a beautiful story. I want to know more about it.'"

The two connected over the phone, before Pesce went M.I.A. for two months, Salmon said. Suddenly, he got an invitation to join the designer in New York, where Pesce was based and first moved to in 1980, after having lived in Venice, London, Helsinki, Finland, and Paris. Here Salmon was presented with "tons of ideas about actually using the frankincense as part of design objects. And this is where I discovered his whole universe."

The collaborative bond grew stronger throughout the months. It peaked in invitation 2023, when Salmon invited Pesce to what would become a revelatory trip to the frankincense trees valley of Wadi Dawkah, a UNESCO World Heritage site in Oman.

"We didn't know that it would be the last trip of Gaetano," Salmon said. "I recall Gaetano in his wheelchair in the middle of the desert, looking at the frankincense tree. It was really strong. That's when I understood that the project was more than a design one."

Salmon recounted a specific anecdote that changed his own perspective on the collaboration. "They let us stay there for a few minutes just to contemplate the trees and [Pesce] asked me: 'Why is the tree on the left different than the one on the right?' I said: 'Gaetano, I have no idea.' And he told me: 'I think because they are like human beings,'" said Salmon, underscoring that the project's focus pivoted from design to concepts like diversity and "living together



Late Italian designer Gaetano Pesce at Wadi Dawkah.



A detail from the Gaetano Pesce and Amouage collaboration.

in harmony with nature but also with other human beings."

"That's what I loved about Gaetano, he was always telling me: 'Renaud, I could make a chair that is very comfortable for people to sit down, but if that chair does not talk to the people and doesn't carry a message, it's a missed opportunity.... Imagine: what if a chair would give you a smile every day? Wouldn't that be beautiful?'" Salmon continued.

The conversation led Salmon to reconsider his own role at-large, too. "As a creator of fragrances, I would actually limit my role to creating things that smell really good," he said. "For me, the biggest lesson [learned with this collaboration] is really not to hide yourself, not to forget your responsibility as an artist behind the commercial aspect of what you do," he said about the importance of leveraging Amouage as a platform to convey the spirit of Oman and its values of generosity and hospitality on top of creating products that can be successful.

As Pesce returned to New York, he enlarged the focus from the resin to the tree itself, reprising its stylized shape in the designs. During the casting of the pieces, he also experimented for the first time with the combination of two polyurethanes – a resin and a gum – to strike the right balance between rigidity and elasticity.

In particular, three designs are displayed at the Antonia Jannone Gallery, each embodying a different phase of the creative process.

The "Oman Chair" is the first in order,

introducing the chairback's supporting structure referencing the tree's gnarled branches. The second piece is a variation on the design that pushes the concept further through the addition of the natural frankincense resin embedded in the chair's structure.

Although it doesn't feature the natural resin, the third piece, dubbed "Oman Throne," is a tribute to the majestic shape of the tree and expresses Pesce's daring and non-conformist approach to design with its imposing, gravity-defying proportions.

Beside the eccentric shape, all pieces stand out for Pesce's mood-boosting use of color, blending vibrant primary hues and bringing complementary nuances to life via transparency.

"Every single chair is a unique piece, and actually that was part of the philosophy of Gaetano: He was always including in his projects the idea that a production process can trigger differences between objects," Salmon said.

At the moment there are around 20 pieces, some part of Salmon's own collection and others available to purchase. A couple might remain in the hands of Pesce's team, who is currently establishing a foundation dedicated to the late designer, Salmon teased.

A sneak peek of the collaborative project was revealed at Art Basel Miami 2023, where objects like the "Oman Cabinet" were first presented. Other items were also exhibited in Pesce's posthumous show at the Pinacoteca Ambrosiana during Milan Design Week last year.



Chairs from the Gaetano Pesce and Amouage collaboration.

"The project felt like it ended abruptly, but actually the good thing is that [Pesce] was able to complete it. And his legacy will live forever, because now it becomes the visual identity of Wadi Dawkah, too," said Salmon, referencing the logo the designer created for the site. This is in the shape of a drop, containing the stylized frankincense tree and featuring Pesce's signature cheerful smile and eye motifs.

With frankincense being a key ingredient of most of its fragrances, Amouage is a patron of the Wadi Dawkah site. Salmon said the long-term vision in such a role is going beyond merely sourcing and enhancing the material in the brand's scents but to turn these processes into fully traceable, ethical and sustainable, as well as open the access to the ingredient to other perfume houses.

"It's a pretty unique approach in the industry, quite collaborative. And why do we do that? Because we think about Oman first. We want to develop the industry here," Salmon said. He underscored how the company aims to make sure the ingredient remains accessible also in terms of prices and continues to support the local population by ensuring that revenues from its business go directly in the hands of harvesters, without intermediaries.

As reported, Amouage recently took a minority investment from the L'Oréal Group, which will support further development while preserving its independent vision. The company reported a 30 percent increase in sales for 2024, with annual retail sales now exceeding \$260 million – about 2.5 times the growth rate of the global perfume market.

The brand has 17 standalone stores across in Oman, the UAE, the U.S., China and Malaysia, and is distributed in more than 1,000 doors among department stores, perfumeries and airports. This year, Amouage plans to open new flagship boutiques in Rome, Riyadh and Singapore, in addition to expanding its headquarters and manufacturing facilities in Muscat.

BEAUTY

Piper Sandler Survey Shows What Teen Girls Want

● While the growth of the overall beauty category may be tempering, Piper Sandler's biannual survey indicates spend is soaring not just among teen girls – but boys, too.

BY NOOR LOBAD

Teen beauty spend is up – and not by a little.

Findings from Piper Sandler's biannual Taking Stock With Teens survey indicate female teen beauty spend reached double-digit growth of 10 percent year-over-year, with all categories seeing increases except for hair, which remained relatively flat. The report surveyed 6,455 teens across 43 states in the U.S.

Fragrance was the fastest-growing category among the cohort (reflective of its standing overall, too), with fragrance spend up 22 percent year-over-year among girls and up 44 percent among teen boys. This comes as men's fragrances continue to outpace women's in sales growth, according to Circana, and younger male entrants take increased interest in designer scents, dupes and viral oud-y brands like Lattafa and Rayhaan, which are standouts of TikTok Shop's burgeoning fragrance business.

Fifty-three percent of teen boys and 78 percent of teen girls surveyed reported wearing fragrance every day, up from 43 percent and 66 percent in 2023. Boys are spending more on fragrances, though, with their fragrance spend reaching an average \$127 annually (up from \$88 last spring) and teen girl spend at \$107 (versus \$87 last spring).

Teen girls' favorite fragrance brands, spring 2025, per Piper Sandler

1. Bath & Body Works: 20 percent
2. Sol de Janeiro: 18 percent
3. Victoria's Secret: 10 percent
4. Dior: 4 percent
5. Billie Eilish: 4 percent



Jean Paul Gaultier ranked as the number-one fragrance brand among teen boys surveyed.

6. Valentino Beauty: 4 percent
7. Carolina Herrera: 3 percent
8. Ariana Grande: 3 percent
9. YSL Beauty: 3 percent
10. Burberry: 3 percent

Teen boys' favorite fragrance brands, spring 2025:

1. Jean Paul Gaultier: 11 percent
2. Versace: 10 percent
3. Dior: 9 percent
4. YSL Beauty: 8 percent
5. Valentino Beauty: 6 percent
6. Giorgio Armani: 4 percent
7. Ralph Lauren: 4 percent
8. Paco Rabanne: 3 percent
9. Azzaro: 3 percent
10. Dolce & Gabbana: 3 percent

This teen perfume boom has also propelled Bath & Body Works to the number-three retailer position among teen girls – it previously didn't crack the top five – with 7 percent share, beating out Target, Amazon and Walmart, and tracking behind Ulta Beauty, which has a 26 percent, and Sephora, 38 percent.

Since overtaking Ulta as female teens' number-one beauty destination in the survey's fall 2023 iteration, Sephora has maintained its position, even gaining two share points this spring. Ulta and Target



CeraVe is the number-one skin care brand among teens overall, and among teen boys in particular.

on the other hand continued to cede share as the beauty retailer race for young consumers' loyalty intensifies.

For the first time, Piper Sandler surveyed teen boys on their favorite beauty shopping destinations, too, and their preferences look different.

Teen boys' favorite beauty shopping destinations, spring 2025

1. Amazon: 29 percent
2. Sephora: 10 percent
3. Macy's: 8 percent
4. Target: 8 percent
5. Ulta: 7 percent
6. Walmart: 7 percent
7. Bath & Body Works: 3 percent
8. Fragrancenet.com: 2 percent
9. Dillard's: 2 percent
10. Jomashop: 2 percent

On a brand level, Amika was the number-one hair care brand at 9 percent share; E.l.f. Cosmetics was on top in makeup at 35 percent, and CeraVe was number one in skin care at 32 percent. CeraVe was also the top skin care brand among teen boys, specifically.

The top four cosmetics brands among teens surveyed have remained the same for the past two years – those being E.l.f. Cosmetics, Selena Gomez's Rare Beauty, Maybelline New York and Charlotte Tilbury, in that order – though meaningful motion can be seen further on in the ranking.

This spring, Hourglass Cosmetics, Tower 28 and One/Size by Patrick Starr all entered the top 20 for the first time, while MAC Cosmetics fell out of the top 20 after steadily dropping in rank over the last few years.

In skin care, Shiseido-owned Drunk

Elephant – formerly the seeming brand of choice for so-called “Sephora kids” – fell out of the top 10 among teen girls for the first time in years, coming in at 11th, while Hailey Bieber's Rhode entered the top 20 for the first time at number 14. Interestingly, viral K-beauty indie Anua rose to number 13 after first cracking the top 20 last fall. Known for its heartleaf-infused oil cleansers and toners, the brand is a sensation on TikTok, and was snapped up by Ulta in January for its first U.S. retail foray.

Teen girls' favorite skin care brands in spring 2025

1. CeraVe: 32 percent
2. The Ordinary: 11 percent
3. La Roche-Posay: 8 percent
4. Cetaphil: 4 percent
5. Glow Recipe: 4 percent
6. E.l.f. Skin: 3 percent
7. Bubble: 3 percent
8. Neutrogena: 3 percent
9. PanOxyl: 2 percent
10. Good Molecules: 2 percent

Teen boys' favorite skin care brands in spring 2025:

1. CeraVe: 52 percent
2. Cetaphil: 5 percent
3. Dove: 4 percent
4. Neutrogena: 3 percent
5. La Roche-Posay: 3 percent
6. Native: 2 percent
7. The Ordinary: 2 percent
8. Old Spice: 1 percent
9. Proactiv: 1 percent
10. Dr. Squatch: 1 percent

In hair, Native – which entered hair care in 2021 – was the number-one brand among teen boys at 12 percent of share, while Dove came in second at 10 percent. Mass-market curly and natural hair care brands like SheaMoisture, Camille Rose and Cantu Beauty ranked fifth, sixth and seventh, respectively. Among teen girls, Not Your Mother's took the number-two spot following Amika, holding onto the rank since last fall, while Garnier, Tresemme and Dae Hair all gained share within the top 20.

Across the 6,455 teens surveyed, 54 percent were female; 45 percent were male, and 1 percent were nonbinary. The average age was 16.2 years old, and 37 percent of participants were employed part-time.

EXCLUSIVE

Sandbridge Capital Ups Stake in Dedcool

● The fragrance brand founded by Carina Chaz has grown 600 percent while maintaining profitability since Sandbridge's initial infusion.

BY JAMES MANSO

An early investor in Dedcool has upped its stake in the fragrance brand.

Sandbridge Capital, which also backs Everist, Madison Reed and U Beauty, has taken on a more significant minority position in Dedcool, the functional fragrance brand.

Terms of the deal were not disclosed, though industry sources expect the brand to reach between \$25 million and \$30 million in net sales in 2025.

Founder Carina Chaz has been an early arriver to then-microtrends that have since become key drivers of both her business and the category overall, which is the fastest-growing one in the U.S. prestige market, such as rethought formats and functional benefits.

“For us, the importance was to reshape the scent experience,” she said. “We want

to allow consumers to build off of their individuality with our scent ranges and create these self expressions through daily touchpoints.”

In that vein, Chaz has expanded the brand beyond personal fragrance to encompass laundry detergent and pet products, as well as buzzy collaborations like one with Procter & Gamble-owned hair brand Ouai.

“We have a head start on all the things in this diverse category,” Chaz continued. “I wanted to see my fragrances lived throughout my life, and it's representative of how we consume [scents].”

Sandbridge quietly took a small stake in the brand after Chaz met Ken Suslow, founder and managing partner of the firm, in late 2022.

“We have this much more significant capital raise because they've seen the momentum, the growth, and taking that initial small investment and stayed profitable while growing 600 percent since then,” Chaz said.

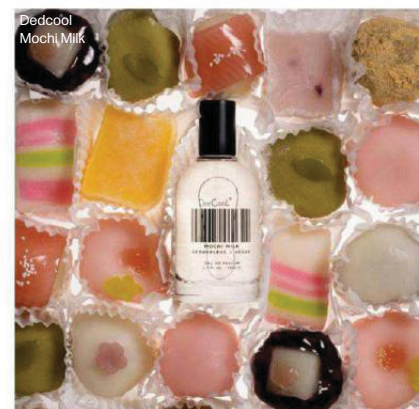
Added Suslow, “Carina is already well along in building a compellingly special brand – one that innovates its way across

fragrance and other CPG categories that have long been starved of modernity and newness – artfully infusing the bespoke creativity that has fast become Dedcool's much beloved calling card. I could not be more enthused to continue supporting Carina and her stellar Dedcool team along their amazing brand journey – the best is so clearly still yet to come as Dedcool's runaway multichannel growth continues unabated.”

Sephora carries the brand, where Chaz has seen success, as well as on the brand's own website. Its newest fragrance, Mochi Milk, is on its way to hero product status, despite only launching April 2.

“When we talk about being a digitally native brand, I understand that comes from both digital [sales] and the halo building that's working in our community,” Chaz said, which jibes with how the infusion will best serve the brand's growth.

“It's about telling this story, growing awareness, and we do that with collaborations, online and with Sephora. That way, we continuously pulse within the digital landscape and that translates across Sephora as well,” she said.



The brand's biggest awareness boost, though, comes from word-of-mouth. “Our secret sauce is ultimately allowing consumers to drench their life in a signature scent,” she said. Elsewhere, the brand will introduce some branding tweaks at the end of the year, as well as growing the team.

“We're really focusing on Sephora,” Chaz said. “We're ensuring that everything comes out of Dedcool has quality and value, and then focusing on newness, new eyeballs and retention.”

EXCLUSIVE

Macy's Partners With YSL Beauty for Flower Show



Macy's is celebrating the 50th year of its annual Flower Show.



A view of the Macy's Flower Show at Macy's Herald Square on March 24, 2024, in New York City.

● This year's event will run from April 27 through May 18.

BY EMILY BURNS

Macy's annual Flower Show is back and bigger than ever.

This year, to celebrate its 50th anniversary, the Macy's Flower Show is making a splash with its largest and longest event to date, complete with an installation throughout the Herald Square location, brand collaborations, limited-edition products, its Bouquet of Deals sales event and a partnership with YSL Beauty. The event, which historically ran for two weeks, will go on for three weeks this year from April 27 through May 18.

"We have about a million people that go through the Flower Show. We just felt so much demand," said Sharon Otterman, Macy's chief marketing officer.

This year's theme is "Surrealist Garden," which will be reflected by oversize florals and hydrangeas for clouds. To create the show, the retailer partnered with ManscapersNY for the landscaping and The Bouqs Co. for the fresh flowers.

While Macy's normally puts on the show a bit earlier on the first day of spring, this year the Flower Show team, which also coordinates the Thanksgiving Day Parade and 4th of July Fireworks, opted to push it back slightly to coincide with Mother's Day.

"We purposely moved it this year so we can really help our customers with gifting for Mother's Day," Otterman said.

"In addition to it being bigger, [it's immersive]. There's not only things to see, there's things to do. There's 8,000 plants and 45,000 stems. We actually have 45 different varieties of flowers," Otterman said. "It will be fun, because we'll be refreshing the flowers. It's a fun challenge to be able to do that."

This year, the retailer, known as the

fragrance destination, has partnered with YSL Beauty for the event.

"We have the same ambition in mind. We both want to be part of culture," Otterman said. "This [has been] a tradition for so long for New Yorkers, and YSL is in the culture business as well. So much of their fragrance and their brand also stems from being in the floral area. They appreciate flowers. They appreciate the significance."

YSL Beauty's U.S. general manager Juliette Ferret added: "We wanted to take the opportunity to partner further with Macy's. We started last year during the Thanksgiving parade. We had a big takeover of the windows during the holidays [and]...the Flower Show is more than a retail event. It's a cultural moment."

At Macy's Herald Square, guests will walk through an immersive experience called "YSL Beauty: Art of Flowers," which will highlight three of the brand's signature fragrances, including the new, alcohol-free Libre L'eau Nue, Libre and Myslf. The notes of each will be mimicked through the themed floral displays.

"This experience enables us to bring to life our fragrances in a very daring, artistic, visual statement," Ferret said. "It's not only about visibility, it's about vibrancy, so being present to make [the guest] feel and live our fragrances."

In addition to the partnership with YSL, Macy's will be rolling out limited-edition, themed merchandise across home, sleep and jewelry, as well as several other collaborations for the event. With Lego, the retailer will showcase installations and on select days offer customers the opportunity to build their own bouquets from Lego bricks. There will be collaborative products with brands like Kendra Scott, MarieBelle and Lovery. At the pop up, guests can also test YSL Beauty products, including the newest Loveslime Plumping Lip Oil Gloss, receive a bouquet of lilies and get fragrance bottles engraved.

With the Flower Show pushed back later this year, the team is hopeful it will coincide with some spring sunshine, which seems to be delayed thanks to an onslaught of dreary days in New York City.

"I keep saying April showers are going to bring May flowers," Otterman joked.

Perhaps some Macy's flowers as well.

BEAUTY

Skorr Skin Plots Retail Moves With Moda Operandi

● The brand was founded by Dr. Anetta Reszko late last year and is planning further product expansions as well.

BY JAMES MANSO

A new dermatologist-founded skin care brand is entering retail.

Skorr Skin, the device and topicals brand founded by New York dermatologist Dr. Anetta Reszko, is launching on Moda Operandi on Monday. The assortment entails its hero six-in-one device, Skorr Glow, as well as a range of complementary serums and a cleansing brush. Prices range from \$129 for certain serums to \$685 for the Skorr Glow device.

The retail expansion comes several months after the brand softly launched in late 2024. Reszko said the move was born out of shared target demographics. The core consumer is "like that of the Moda Operandi clientele," she said. "They're savvy, educated people who are well traveled and know beauty. They want to feel their best and they invest in themselves."

Skorr Skin is heavy on science, given the knowledge level of the consumers Reszko

is pursuing.

"I'm a doctor with a PhD in biochemistry, which always gives me credibility with my patients," she said. "This line is science-backed with the maximum levels of activity. My website is all about that science. I don't want it to be overwhelming, but if people are interested in learning, they can even read scientific papers as reference there, and I have data on the energy level of the

devices, for example."

The appetite is there. Reszko said she gained north of 10,000 Instagram followers on the brand's Instagram account organically.

"This device addresses all different levels of the skin: microelectroporation creates channels in the skin for products to penetrate, radio frequency works on the collagen and elastin in the dermis, and

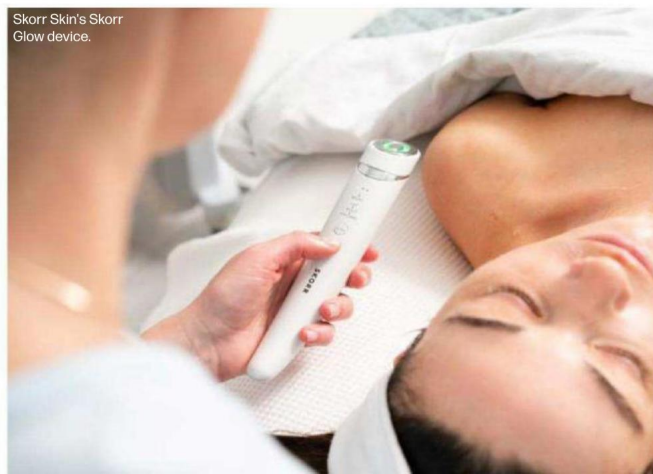
microcurrent stimulates the underlying muscle," she said of the device.

Reszko is focused on Moda Operandi for retail, but is expanding the product suite to entail more topicals as well as a hair device. She didn't comment on sales, but industry sources estimate the brand to reach around \$2 million in net sales for its first year.

Skorr Glow also incorporates sonic vibrations and LED multiwave phototherapy. It has four protocols, called Boost, Lift, Build and Eye & Lip, each of which has a cocktail of modalities suited by benefit.

"The market is filled with devices, but I don't think a lot of them are at the level our client is," said Jessica Matlin, director of beauty and home, Moda Operandi, who noted that devices are among the retailer's top-selling segments in beauty. The vertical overall grew double-digits last year, she said.

Matlin expects Skorr Glow's multifunctional appeal to differentiate it from others on the market. "Our clients are efficient, and I was excited by the idea of one streamlined device that does all of these things," Matlin said. "It's still a luxury price point, but a fraction of the price of some others."



Skorr Skin's Skorr Glow device.

EXCLUSIVE

Merit Enters French Market With a Je Ne Sais Quoi Beauty Approach



Merit, the clean beauty brand is launching into France.

Philippe Pinatel



- Even though France is home to the biggest beauty brands that are backed by fashion houses, Merit is chasing a different type of consumer that's more intentional and less fussed about makeup.

BY HIKMAT MOHAMMED

LONDON – The minimalist beauty brand Merit was always bound to end up in France since its inception in 2021, but like its products, it's been taking its time and

laying low.

This week the brand will enter the French market through its direct-to-consumer channel and it will include Merit's full range of makeup, skin care and fragrance.

It's a growing step for the brand which has already entered North America, the U.K. and Australia.

"There is an influence of French beauty on the brand, it's timeless chic. Sometimes people think we're a French brand, which we're not, but we've had quite a lot of demand from the French consumer to launch Merit in France," said Philippe Pinatel, chief executive officer at Merit, in an interview.

"I think we're going to learn a lot about international deployment by launching in France," he added.

Merit will be ramping up its consumer facing activities in France to test the waters for its expansion with a wholesaler. When the brand launched in the U.K., it took them two years of studying the market until partnering with Sephora.

Pinatel is confident the French market will respond positively to the brand.

Merit hosted a dinner during Paris Fashion Week to soft launch the products in the region with an audience of tastemakers in the beauty and fashion industry.

"They all felt that there is a white space for an effortless and minimal beauty brand in the market," Pinatel said.

Even though France is home to the biggest beauty brands that also dabble in fashion, Merit is chasing a different type of consumer.

"We're different from other brands because we're not led by a personality that's either a celebrity or makeup artist. We're addressing a group of consumers who are less engaged with the market," Pinatel said.

According to the brand, more than 50 percent of Merit's website visitors are between the ages of 25 to 45, while those over the age of 55 make up just under 25 percent.

The average Merit customer is spending more than \$100 on three to four products.

The brand's pricing ranges from \$18 for a mini-size Instant Glow Serum to \$92 for a 30ml of the Retrospect fragrance, but a majority of the products sit between \$20 to \$40.

"We price our products by minus 30 percent of what luxury brands are charging in order to allow our customers to be able to buy several products and complete their routine," said Pinatel, reiterating that Merit is a routine-based brand for busy women who want to spend five minutes getting ready.

Pinatel hopes that launching in France will be a leeway to opening across Europe and it will replicate the same level of success it has had in the U.K.

"We are getting very close to the double-digit million dollars in the U.K., we are growing very fast," he said.

Merit reached a net revenue of more than \$100 million in 2024 and in 2023 the brand made \$100 million in retail sales.

The brand has found a sweet spot of success by partnering with Sephora in its other regions.

Pinatel said that the brand doesn't have any plans of entering any other retailers to expand its presence.

"Our [business] model is to be direct-to-consumer led and to have one retail partner for each market. Beauty is still an offline category, therefore stores are still very important. Only 25 percent of the market is online and 75 percent is offline, that's why retail," he said.

The possibility of opening a stand-alone Merit store is something that has crossed Pinatel's mind, but it's a move that will happen "where it makes sense."

"In the Middle East or Asia, it's very frequent to have a brand store, but for the U.K. or North America consumer, it's not a must," Pinatel said.

The brand has no plans of opening in the Middle East or Asia as of right now.

"We are not racing to grow the brand. We are very intentional in how we grow," Pinatel said.

Pinatel has been in his role for more than a year now, he previously spent six years at MAC Cosmetics, where he was global president for four years and global general manager for two years.

Pinatel has worked in China, South Korea, England, Germany and France.

"I am a different boss in America than I have been every time before in my career. The type of leadership you develop in France is very top to bottom and hierarchical. In America, you cannot work this way – you have to change and be about leadership and developing a vision with empowerment and [also] coaching the team," he said.

BUSINESS

LIM Fashion Education Foundation Honors Sam Edelman, Amanda Smith

- The industry notables are being celebrated at an April 29 event in Rockefeller Center.

BY ARTHUR ZACZKIEWICZ

The LIM Fashion Education Foundation, or LIM FEF, is honoring two fashion industry leaders – Amanda Smith, chief executive officer of Fairchild Media Group, and Sam Edelman, founder and creative director of his eponymous brand. Both are receiving LIM FEF Fashion Forward Awards.

The executives will be recognized during a special cocktail event and silent auction to be held on April 29 at 6:30 p.m. at Todd Snyder's store in Rockefeller Center. "Smith and Edelman are being recognized for their commitment to mentoring and empowering students at LIM College who represent the next generation of leaders in the business of fashion and lifestyle," the foundation said in a statement.

"It is with great excitement and gratitude that we honor Amanda and Sam with this year's Fashion Forward Awards," said Arnold Cohen, president of the LIM FEF board of directors. "Both are not only incredibly accomplished in the fashion and

media industries, but they are also deeply committed to empowering students and LIM FEF's mission of awarding scholarships and supporting educational initiatives that benefit LIM College students in need."

Cohen said the foundation's ultimate goal "is that these scholarship recipients will emerge as powerful leaders, global visionaries and successful entrepreneurs in the fashion business."

Smith oversees FMG's global strategic vision across Women's Wear Daily, Footwear News, Beauty Inc and Sourcing Journal. "With over two decades of experience in luxury, retail, fashion and beauty, she is known for driving operational transformation and audience growth," the foundation stated. "Smith has successfully launched new products, integrated brands within the FMG portfolio, and is committed to advancing women in the fashion and beauty industries."

Most recently, Smith has provided considerable support for LIM students via her involvement in the school's annual fashion show. She also has hosted students for on-site visits at FMG's offices.

The foundation noted that Edelman – who was honored with FN's 2023 Lifetime

Achievement Award alongside his wife Libby – "has had a profound impact on contemporary footwear, launching divisions for Esprit and Ralph Lauren, and cofounding Kenneth Cole. His brands – Sam & Libby, Sam Edelman and Circus NY

– reflect his vision for modern American elegance with creativity and innovation."

LIM FEF said Edelman is committed to shaping future talent through his internship program and LIM Master Classes. He was also the commencement speaker for LIM's Class of 2024, where he received an honorary doctorate.

To purchase tickets or sponsor the April 29 event, visit the foundation's website at limfef.org. In addition to ticket sales and auction items, funds will be raised for scholarships. A portion of sales at Todd Snyder that evening will be donated to LIM FEF.



ACCESSORIES

Van Cleef & Arpels Puts London Under a Spell of Dance

● Serge Laurent, Van Cleef & Arpels' dance and culture program director, curated an eclectic dance festival.

BY HIKMAT MOHAMMED

LONDON – This spring London was plastered with dance with tube stations and billboards advertising Van Cleef & Arpels dance festival “Dance Reflections.”

The citywide event ran from March 12 to April 8 and once again reunited London's dance communities including the Royal Ballet and Opera, the Southbank Centre, Sadler's Wells in Angel and Stratford and the Tate Modern museum.

Over 28 days, there were a total of 15 shows, 16 workshops, 150 dancers involved and one conference – yet there wasn't a single piece of jewelry from Van Cleef & Arpels in sight.

“Dance, for a very long time, has been a source of inspiration for the maison. The idea was to give back to the art form as an appreciation of what they've got from it in return,” said Serge Laurent, Van Cleef & Arpels' dance and culture program director, in an interview.

The dance festival has toured Los Angeles, New York, Hong Kong and Kyoto.

The London iteration of “Dance Reflections” marks the festival's second welcome in the city. The first premiered in 2022 after it was postponed in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“What we want to do with ‘Dance Reflections’ is to share our vision of dance on a global approach. I don't create a specific program for each city,” Laurent said.

He's curated an eclectic mix of performances featuring traditional and contemporary dance.

(L) Horde worked with the Ballet National de Marseille on “Age of Content,” drew on the “internet's aesthetic facets of distraction, accumulation and collage, and, moving from the strange familiarity of a GTA character to a TikTok dance mash-up, the group uses choreographic art as a tool

to give critical distance,” according to Van Cleef & Arpels.

Ballet de Lyon presented “Merce Cunningham Forever,” some of the choreographer's most renowned work, from “Beach Birds” to “Biped.”

Choreographer Robyn Orlin's dance piece took a more political stand with “We Wear Our Wheels With Pride” about the rickshaw drivers of South Africa's past.

To close the festival, the Royal Ballet and Opera presented “Balanchine: Three Signature Works.” The dance compiles three of the choreographer George Balanchine's pieces, from “Serenade,” his first ballet created in the U.S., followed by “Prodigal Son” and “Symphony in C.”

In the '60s, the choreographer created “Jewels,” a three piece dance collection that's generally considered among his best work that were inspired by the rubies, diamonds and emeralds in the Van Cleef & Arpels windows on New York's Fifth Avenue that he would often walk past.

The dance festival is as much a nod to the impact dance has had on the French luxury jeweler as it is an education in the art form. From the beginning, Laurent has based “Dance Reflections” on “creation, transmission and education.”

In bringing together institutions such as the Royal Ballet and Opera, the Southbank Centre, Sadler's Wells and the Tate Modern together was a big deal for him as it opened dance to a larger crowd.

Spreading the gospel of dance is what attracted Laurent to his current position at Van Cleef & Arpels. He was previously a curator of live performances at the Pompidou Center in Paris.

Richemont's chief executive officer, Nicolas Bos reached out to Laurent when he was still CEO of Van Cleef & Arpels and told him that the maison wanted to “emphasize our commitment to the field of dance.”

“I found the corporate social responsibility very generous and it's a very American approach of giving back to the community. I found it really touching, especially as a French man, who is used to public funding [when it comes to the

Reece Clarke, Mariánela Nuñez, Olivia Cowley in “Symphony in C.”



arts],” Laurent said.

In three years, the Van Cleef & Arpels network of dance has worked with 16 different countries and more than 60 different dance institutions.

Catherine Rénier, Van Cleef & Arpels' CEO, said that just “like the way our craftsmen exercise their expert skills in our workshops, dance is an art of movement that requires great precision in gestures.”

She added that she has “many affinities with the choreographic universe and I am particularly touched by the history of the maison with dance. Nevertheless, my knowledge of contemporary dance [could still improve], [but] like the values of transmission and education that we wish to promote through this support program, I am ultimately part of the public that we hope to reach and educate.”

Laurent revealed that public funding for the arts in France has been shrinking as of recently and urges other corporate businesses to think about their initiatives.

“At ‘Dance Reflections,’ we're not hiring

the artists to put on an event to promote our collections. Our idea is to support the art form itself,” he said.

In February, American dance historian Jennifer Homans was named as the inaugural Van Cleef & Arpels chair at New York University, where she will be teaching the history of dance.

Education remains a top priority and passion project for Laurent in his role as curator at the 129-year-old brand.

The jeweler already supports a residency program for dancers in New York, Hong Kong and Japan that Laurent wants to develop furthermore.

After London, he will be taking “Dance Reflections” to Seoul.

For Laurent, the dance festival is deeply emotional and its name “Dance Reflections” may baffle those whose first language is English.

“For the French, it's a very clear title because dance reflects people. It's not only an intellectual reflection, but it's a mirror,” he said.

Lucy Markovic photograph by Dominique Maitre

OBITUARY

Croatian Australian Model Lucy Markovic, 27

● The “Australia's Next Top Model” alum enjoyed a brief career working for, among others, Versace, Givenchy, Giorgio Armani and Victoria Beckham.

BY PATTY HUNTINGTON

\SYDNEY – The fashion industry is mourning the death of 27-year-old Croatian Australian model Lucy Markovic, who died Friday following complications of a brain arteriovenous malformation.

A serious condition where abnormal blood vessels in the brain become tangled, AVM can potentially cause bleeding or brain damage. Last month – in a since deleted, but widely reported Instagram post – Markovic told her social media audience that she required surgery on April 2 for an AVM “the size of a golf ball.”

Markovic had a brief career, first rising to prominence in Australia in 2015 as a 17-year-old from Queensland's Gold

Coast who placed runner-up in the ninth season of reality TV show “Australia's Next Top Model.” In May 2016 she made her Australian Fashion Week debut at the resort 2017 collections showcase.

She made her international debut at the spring 2023 shows, booking exclusives for Versace and Givenchy, in later seasons walking for, among others, Dolce & Gabbana, Bally, Brandon Maxwell and Dion Lee. Her advertising campaigns included Versace, Victoria Beckham Holiday and Emporio Armani.

She was a particular favorite of the Armani group, walking in six of its shows including for Emporio Armani, Giorgio Armani and Armani Privé. Editorial work included Italy's Grey magazine; Vogue Hong Kong, Singapore and Korea; W; Vanity Fair Italia; Harper's Bazaar Arabia; Numéro Netherlands, and Australia's Side-Note.

Donatella Versace led the tributes to Markovic on her Instagram Stories, posting photos of her in Versace's fall 2023 show and the Versace spring 2023 campaign.

Versace added, “I am so sorry to hear the news about @lucymarkovic. Rest in peace beautiful girl.”

“Today, we lost a star,” posted Markovic's Australian mother agency Kult Australia. “We are deeply saddened by the passing of Lucy. She was radiant, warm and a beautiful soul. We will cherish being part of her journey.”

Elite Model Management in New York posted a three-tilde tribute. “Modeling was one of Lucy's dreams, and we are deeply honored to have been part of that journey with her,” the agency wrote. “She brought elegance, strength, and beauty to her work. But more than that, she brought herself – her warmth, her laughter, her light.”

Markovic is also being mourned by the Australian sporting community, the Gold Coast Knights Football Club joining in the tributes on its Instagram and Facebook pages by posting a photo of a teenage Markovic in club uniform surrounded by her former teammates.

“It is with the deepest and most profound sadness that we share with the Knights family the passing of Lucy Markovic, a former junior player of the club and much loved member of the Gold Coast Croatian community,” the club wrote.

The club said its senior men's and women's teams would mark a minute of silence for Markovic.



Lucy Markovic modeling Givenchy.

BUSINESS

Moleskine: It's More Than Just Notebooks

- The Milan-based brand also offers bags, writing implements, operates cafés and partners with everyone from “Peanuts” to NASA.

BY JEAN E. PALMIERI

Moleskine is staying the course despite a change in the C-suite.

Last month, the Milan-based Moleskine Srl elevated Christophe Archaimbault to global chief executive officer of the company, succeeding Daniela Riccardi who retired. And Ward Simmons, who had previously served as senior vice president of marketing, was named president of the Americas.

In an interview at the company's New York City headquarters, they stressed that the plan is to essentially follow the strategy laid out in 2020 by Riccardi and Archaimbault, who had just joined Moleskine from Diesel – with a few tweaks.

“The market today is different,” Archaimbault said, “so this is the start of a second chapter of a story that was written five years ago.”

Since half of all purchases of the company's journals and related products are bought as gifts, Moleskine will be leaning more into that part of the business, he said. In addition, the company will focus more on brand building and touting its rich heritage rather than just promoting its products.

“Our focus on premium products hasn't changed,” he said, “just the way we deliver them.”

Archaimbault said even though Moleskine is based in Milan, the company looks at each market as unique and it operates 10 offices around the world to ensure that the sales, marketing and financing are distinct to each region.

Today, North America represents 40 percent of Moleskine's global sales, which he declined to provide as a private company. Europe represents another 40 percent and Asia the remainder. The five markets where the company sees the most growth are the U.S., Japan, China, France and the U.K. “That's where we're focusing our investment.”

But other regions are also getting some attention, they said, including Canada. Although that country represents less than 5 percent of the total North American business, the plan is to add freestanding stores and open an e-commerce operation. “There are a lot of opportunities in Canada,” Simmons said. “It's an untapped market.”

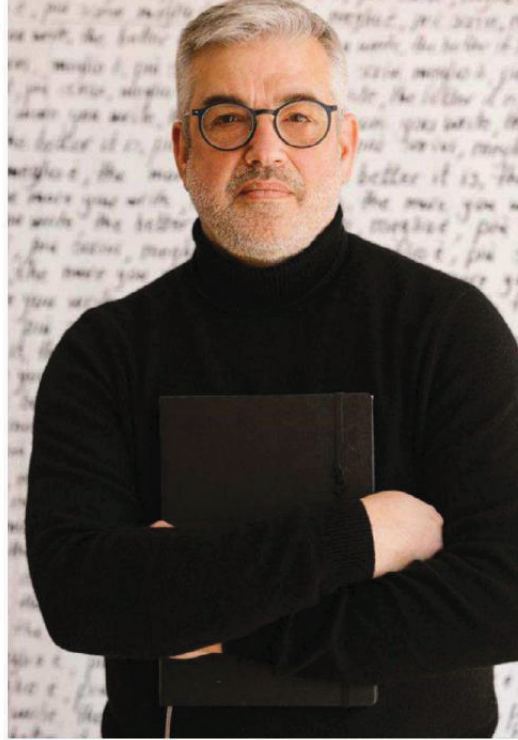
Mexico and Latin America also represent growth vehicles, they believe. Right now, Moleskine is carried in established department stores and independent retailers in those regions, but the goal is to open e-commerce and grow the direct business there as well with Rio de Janeiro and Mexico City on their radar as possible store locations.

Globally, Moleskine is sold in some 29,000 doors around the world, including 60 of its own stores. Archaimbault said none of the company's competitors operate their own stores, so having a retail footprint is seen as a point of differentiation. The plan, he said, is to grow the number of Moleskine stores to 150 over the next five years.

In the U.S., there are 11 stores, Simmons said, five in New York City alone, and the plan is to more than double the number in America to 30. A unit at the Boston Seaport is slated to open in November.

Archaimbault said Moleskine is sold in several “subchannels,” his word of choice for its wholesale locations. That includes stationary stores, travel retailers, university

Christophe Archaimbault



The Moleskine cafe in the Geneva airport.



The large classic notebooks are the bestseller at Moleskine.

shops, museums and bookstores such as Barnes & Noble and The Strand. “That's the right audience for Moleskine,” he said.

The brand is also carried in Bloomingdale's and is launching in Nordstrom this spring. Its core product is also sold at Target and on Amazon as a way to service students for their back-to-school needs.

At the Milan headquarters, Simmons said, Moleskine has a Gen Z board from around the world that was founded three years ago to provide insight on young people and how to best address them.

Archaimbault said students aside, the target customer is between 30 and 40, affluent, urban and creative, with a strong interest in art. Seventy percent are professionals and 60 percent are women. For the younger people, Moleskine offers special discounts and internships to students to attract them to the brand and hopefully keep them for life.

Whether for students or older people, Moleskine's top seller continues to be its large notebooks – plain, dotted or ruled – with a black cover.

Moleskine traces its roots to France in the 19th century when artists and authors such as Van Gogh, Picasso and Hemingway bought pocket-sized notebooks, or “carnets” with leather or oilskin covers, from local stationery stores to jot down thoughts and sketches. The name Moleskine is attributed to the British writer Bruce Chatwin who described the Parisian notebooks as “carnets moleskines,” a reference to their black oilskin covers. Although they had essentially disappeared from the scene, in 1997, Maria Sebregondi brought the notebooks back to life and created the Moleskine brand.

Today, Moleskine is owned by D'leteren Group, a family-owned Belgian investment firm that acquired the company in 2016 and took it private.

Although the digital age has dramatically impacted the craft of writing, Archaimbault said business is actually up over last year and he views the digital era



Moleskine Smart converts writing to digital content.

as an opportunity rather than a threat. Writing, he believes, is the best way to digest information, can reduce anxiety and serve as an antidote to today's overflow of information. “Writing can improve your communication skills,” he said, pointing to Sweden and other countries which are returning to using pen and paper.

Sweden's National Agency for Education reported that students using textbooks, paper, pens and pencils in school showed better comprehension than those using digital texts and their schools reverted this year to their former learning method.

Even so, Moleskine hasn't completely disavowed the digital world and in 2022 created Moleskine Smart, which blends the two. A Smart pen is connected via bluetooth to a Moleskine Notes app and links to a Smart Notebook, which enables words and drawings to be transformed into digital documents.

Archaimbault said an updated app will be launching in July that will include AI features as well. And while he acknowledges that writing will never replace digital information, “we need to find the right balance.”

Beyond notebooks, Moleskine also offers other products that are related to writing such as pens and pencils, bags and even eyewear, all of which are “directly connected to notebooks,” he said. Twenty percent of

the business are ancillary products and bags are half of that, Archaimbault said.

“In our five-year plan, growth will come from that category,” he said. The company offers backpacks and device bags in three collections: Classic; Legendary, which is made from recycled materials, and Precious & Ethical, its most elevated offering made from premium materials. “We look at bags as a driver of growth. We'll be expanding our Legendary collection starting this summer.”

Moleskine also sells Redo backpacks as part of its sustainability efforts. These are upcycled bags made in Northern Italy by disadvantaged workers, Simmons said, adding that the brand sells about 200 in the U.S. and 1,000 worldwide annually.

In addition, the company operates a café at the airport in Geneva selling food and notebooks, and will be opening others in Paris and Hong Kong. There are also plans to partner with cafes for a similar experience in the U.S. and Canada.

“It's a way to keep customers in there longer,” Simmons said. “It drives sales and is an experience.”

With its core notebooks and planners, Moleskine creates limited-edition collections such as a Harry Potter-themed or the Year of the Snake or Sakura collections. There are also I Love NY books and notebooks for the White House Historical Association.

Strategic partnerships are a key part of the business, Simmons said. Moleskine works with artists to create special notebooks tied to various events and special occasions such as Mother's Day and has also teamed with cultural moments such as the “Wicked” movie, “The Outsiders” on Broadway and the 50th anniversary of “Saturday Night Live.” “Anything that has to do with pen and paper,” Simmons said.

A “Peanuts” 75th anniversary collection is coming in May, and this August, Moleskine will issue a NASA-themed capsule.

MENTALITIES

MEN'S

Merz b. Schwanen Proves More Than Just a T-shirt Brand

- The German label is expanding into new categories and is ready to scale its operations.

BY HIKMAT MOHAMMED

LONDON – Merz b. Schwanen, the German apparel brand that shot to fame with its white T-shirts worn by Jeremy Allen White in the series “The Bear,” is taking steps to consolidate the business with a sentimental touch.

Gitta and Peter Plotnicki, the husband-and-wife owners of the brand, have bought the factory that produces their 215-style T-shirts using a special loopwheeled machine from the 20th century. The factory in Germany is the same one that Merz b. Schwanen has been using for 14 years and it's where they discovered the machine that created the Ts that have become their signature.

The factory dates to 1911 when the original Merz b. Schwanen label was founded, but in later decades it was gathering dust before being rediscovered by the couple at a flea market in 2010.

“It's very important that we can show ourselves as a brand with a factory,” said Peter Plotnicki.

The brand is in possession of 36 loopwheel machines, which are rare to find and even more difficult to fix or find parts for. And they also have between 30 and 35 malfunctioning loopwheeler machines.

“The machines are so unique and old – to have them repaired is extremely expensive, but that still requires special parts being made for them,” said Gitta Plotnicki, adding that the only other place the machines are available is in Japan.

Each machine takes approximately 25 minutes to produce a loopwheeled T-shirt, but heavy and dense fabrics can take longer.

Merz b. Schwanen also works with a factory in Portugal that produces its non-loopwheeled designs.

“We've been traveling back and forth to Portugal for 20 years – it's a place that we know quite well after many years of experience as freelance designers in our past life,” said Gitta Plotnicki.

“We wanted to stay in Europe as it's closer and there are more sustainable production practices in Portugal, which is something that wasn't that common eight years ago. We wanted to ensure that everything was environmentally friendly and well made – Portugal has EU regulations,” she added.

The Plotnickis, who are textile aficionados, said for Merz b. Schwanen's spring 2026 collection they will be introducing a T-shirt where the yarn is made on a machine a little younger than the loopwheel machine, and for their fall 2026 collection, they're using a weaving machine so old that it's listed with the building it's in.

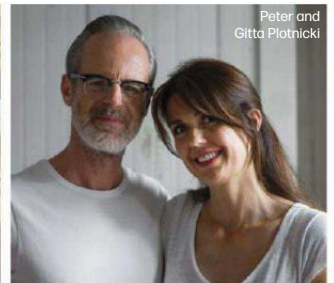
“We are expanding our collections and introducing new categories,” said Peter Plotnicki, referring to the expansion of Merz b. Schwanen beyond the white T-shirts and “The Bear.” The brand also offers knitwear, shirts, jackets, pants, sweatpants, dresses and skirts with no more than six styles offered in each category in some cases.

“After so much press about the 215 T-shirt, we wanted to showcase that we're capable of doing other things and that we're not lazy – we're not going to rest and go to the beach because of the success of the one T-shirt,” said Gitta Plotnicki.

Venturing into new categories has also impressed the Merz b. Schwanen retailers. The brand is stocked at more than 100 stores worldwide, including in Australia, France, Italy, Japan, Ukraine to the U.S. and U.K.



The Merz b. Schwanen loopwheeler machine.



Peter and Gitta Plotnicki

“We're both designers. We're not numbers-driven economic people. We love creating textiles and fabrics,” said Gitta Plotnicki.

That's not to say the duo doesn't have its business hats on.

Merz b. Schwanen opened its New York City shop on Canal Street in March last year and the store has exceeded expectations. “It was an amazing year,” Gitta Plotnicki said. “We learned so much from our customers by spending time on the shop floor. We learned the differences between the customers in our Berlin and New York store.” They also found that more customers were coming into the New York store asking for women's styles, which were slightly cropped or crocheted.

Peter Plotnicki said this year the brand will be focusing on getting its infrastructure and processes in better shape to be prepared for a larger wholesale



Merz b. Schwanen

push next year. “In the U.K., we would really like to work with a department store – we're currently working with Nordstrom in the U.S.,” he added.

The big focus remains on the U.S. market, which has reacted positively to the brand, so it's no surprise that the Plotnickis said the idea of another store opening is flying around in their heads – they don't know where yet, but they wouldn't be opposed to the idea of a storefront on the West Coast.

MEN'S

This Lover Boy's Costumes Never Lose Style

- Romeo's tunics and bodices from the ballet production of “Romeo and Juliet” are still romantic.

BY HIKMAT MOHAMMED

LONDON – Since the publication of “Romeo and Juliet” 428 years ago by William Shakespeare, a handful of handsome leading men have taken on the role of the lover boy on stage and screen, from Leslie Howard in 1936 and Leonard Whiting in 1968 to Leonardo DiCaprio in 1996 and Orlando Bloom in 2013.

At the Royal Ballet and Opera in London, however, it's a more recurring role that's staged every three years with a longer lineup of principal dancers taking on the role of Romeo: there's Reece Clarke, Marcelino Sambé, Matthew Ball, William Bracewell and Steven McRae.

The Romeos may change, but the costumes remain the same as they were in the '60s when Greek painter and stage designer Nicholas Georgiadis designed them.

“There's a whole costume and workroom revival team who take really good care of the fabrics and preserve them because none of the fabrics are in production anymore,” said Clarke, who

will be playing Romeo on May 10 and 26.

His costumes include a shiny blue bodice with voluminous sleeves, a faint floral print and gold decorative trimmings; a cream bodice with a regalia print in gold thread, puffed sleeves and detachable green sleeves; a silk white billowy tunic with elongated cuffs and little tassel details, and a silk burnt orange cape that Romeo uses to pounce across the stage whenever he's entering or exiting.

“It's crazy to think that I'm wearing the original tunic that ballet dancers I've

looked up to such as Jonathan Cope and Roberto Bolle have worn,” said Clarke, who remembers the awe he felt the first time he tried them on.

The bodices have had to be adjusted for the dancer's towering figure of 6 feet, 2 inches by opening the back or elongating the shoulders.

Even though the costumes reflect the sartorial codes of the 14th century, a majority of the pieces that Georgiadis made complement the choreography.

“When I'm running, the fabrics fold and make these beautiful shapes – wearing [the tunics] on stage is so freeing,” Clarke said. That's in sharp contrast to the Batman-like capes that sweep across the stage and that he jokingly refers to as his dancing partner after Juliet.

“Dealing with the cape is the thing

I'm most stressed about – it's huge and weighted. There are a few moments where Romeo is busy in his world, falling in love and he's got to swoosh the cape over his shoulders,” said Clarke, noting that there have been instances during rehearsals where the cape has become uncontrollable.

But he knows the costume adds key details to the characters' personalities – Romeo's friend Mercutio wears bright oranges to reflect his wit, while Tybalt is usually in deep reds that signify his hot headed temper and passionate nature.

“Romeo's got the beautiful blues with the gold details, which shows his romantic side,” Clarke said.

It's not the dancer's first time in such grand costumes on stage. He has played the lead role in “Manon” that was originally choreographed by Kenneth MacMillan, which Georgiadis also did the costumes for.

Interestingly, the costumes that Georgiadis designed in the '60s and '70s are not a far reach from what was on the men's spring 2025 runways. At Hermès, Véronique Nichanian described her collection as “gentle,” “sweet” and “poetic,” and the color palette came straight from the shorelines and landscapes of so many Mediterranean resorts.

Similarly, at Moschino, models channeled Romeo's lovesick character with polo shirts cut out to reveal a red heart tattoo or oversize, unbuttoned shirts with rolled up sleeves. And KidSuper's Colm Dillane and Di Petsa's Dimitra Petsa incorporated white shirts with lace or ruffled details that would fit perfectly into Romeo's Shakespearean wardrobe.



Reece Clarke as Romeo in “Romeo and Juliet.”

MEN'S

Reshoring's Reality? The Infrastructure 'Simply Does Not Exist Here,' One Denimhead Says

● Standard & Strange's Jeremy Smith shares lessons learned on the infinite regress argument for nearshoring against America's inhospitable climate.

BY ALEXANDRA HARRELL

This menswear mecca has something strange – perhaps more singular than standard – to share with the denim market and apparel retail sector at large: experience with Trump's taste for trade wars.

For context, Standard & Strange's journey began in 2012 with a 200-square-foot shop in an Oakland, Calif., back alley. This is where founders Jeremy Smith and Neil Berrett were producing merino wool cycling jerseys for their line of biking apparel. Upon grasping the breadth of the market's gap for "rugged basics and quality jeans," however, the two switched gears to tap into this – presumably – more lucrative vertical.

"We've grown quite a bit since then," the cofounders said of the brand's bootstrap founding to current global online presence. "We still believe in and stand for the same ideals as when we started: great products set in an inclusive environment."

The indie retailer has since become a bicoastal menswear mecca, continuing its focus on U.S.-made goods and rare brands out of Japan and Europe across three brick-and-mortar stores. As Smith previously spent 20 years in technology before textiles, the retailer reflected on some lessons learned last time Americans were "getting yippy."

"The idea of 'we should make stuff in the USA' is sound; unionized factory jobs created a strong middle class," Smith told WWD's sister publication *SJ Denim*. "I grew up in a mill town – paper and steel – and, while most people weren't affluent, most were comfortable and economically secure."

Saving a retrospective on the benefits of equipping large swaths of skilled laborers with adequate infrastructure for a rainy day, Smith walked back his early days in the apparel industry. He hoped their brand, Cedar Cycling, could function as a tried-and-true, Made in USA operation but hit sourcing blocks once beyond sewing.

"Our wool blend started in Australia," he said. "Then to [South] Korea for spinning, then Thailand for knitting and dyeing, with [additional elements] from Japan."

Though the exact breakdown of just how many brands, exactly, are exclusively sold in the U.S. by Standard & Strange, many of those brands only have one or two other stockists in the country outside of the brand's three brick-and-mortar outposts.

Those shops – in West Berkeley, Calif., Santa Fe, N.M., and New York City – already run quite lean, Smith said, on the topic of any potential operational adjustments that Liberation Day may render relevant.

"We're always looking for ways to lower fixed costs without damaging customer

experience, but there's a finite limit to how much we can carve out," Smith said. As it stands, the bicoastal brand will continue business as usual, including working with vendors to "share the costs imposed by these unfair tariffs."

His reasoning for why these blocks were, simply, not solvable was "not particularly sophisticated" at the time. This was informed by Smith's salad days in the electric scooter sector's C-suite, running Unagi's global logistics from 2017-21.

With that former viewpoint in mind, Smith believed that "USA factories are cleaner, safer and come with better pay." He said this is "not always true," however, as the garment work sector's global nuances are not black and white. Case in point? Earning minimum wage is not always the equivalent of a living wage.

"Shorter supply chains are better for the environment," the next creed reads. This too, Smith said, is complicated.

"Spending years on the road visiting factories, learning how things are made, setting up a factory," Smith continued. "All of that taught me that, no, there's not a simple answer to where we should make things."

To quote an essay published by Temple University Press in 2005, the

San Francisco Bay Area provides a good case study on industrial decentralization. In 1998, meanwhile, Karen Chapple's "Economic Development for a Bipolar Industry" looked at endogenous economic development in practice using the case of apparel manufacturing in San Francisco.

The sewing factories Smith used around the Bay area, too, are gone and not coming back.

"The owners retired; their children have gone onto other careers," he added. While there are fabrics made in the States from USA-sourced fibers, Smith said, they're usually of the Berry Amendment variety or very expensive. As a result, he said, many Made in USA brands sew imported textiles using imported machines. To have a true Made in USA clothing industry, per Smith, the sector needs significant scale across the supply chain – something that cannot be fostered quickly. Presumably, all the required equipment would have to be imported, which is now "prohibitively expensive."

"We could go on to build our own machines but then we need the electronics – the boards, the chips, so on," Smith said. "You can see how this turns into turtles all the way down very quickly."

Take, for example, the apparel manufacturer TAL. With Southeast Asian factories, the Hong Kong-based company can "turn out a woven button up shirt in 12 minutes for an extremely good price," primarily driven by the amount of automation TAL has invested in, Smith said. He noted it's "entirely possible" to do this here, though securing equipment alone isn't enough.

"We need the skilled labor and production management infrastructure that simply does not exist here," Smith said.

To that end, he highlighted a few success stories in reshoring. Los Angeles label Buck Mason, for example, bought a 150-year-old knitting mill in Pennsylvania in July 2023 to produce Made in USA garments, according to an article published by *Primer Magazine* he had read. However, as the magazine

mentions, the resulting T-shirts are \$45 – a price Smith agreed is "a hard sell to the average American."

Smith said he found similar patterns when trying to counter-source or reshore electric scooter production during his Unagi Scooters stint.

"The timelines and costs were overwhelming," Smith said of the struggling start-up. Its access to components and subassemblies was "extremely difficult." However, Unagi's China-based factory was in the "center of an industrial ecosystem" and thus able to swap suppliers with greater haste than most.

At the time, there were "huge" tariffs on Chinese goods, per Smith, putting Silicon Valley's motorized darling in the crosshairs of the first Trump administration's trade war.

The resulting 25 percent tariffs – which threatened to "hobble" the nascent mode of hyper-local transportation – went into effect after Unagi was up and running, so the scooter start-up hadn't placed some \$16 billion worth of Chinese e-bikes, give or take, into its financial model.

As such, Smith investigated counter-sourcing, a notably tricky endeavor on the low-start-up level, "without much luck." His extensive research on final assembly in the USA "turned out to be more expensive than just paying the tariffs," he found.

"After reading all of the relevant Harmonized Tariff Schedule codes, I eventually found a loophole that got us through until the bicycle industry successfully lobbied to remove tariffs on e-bikes," Smith said, noting Lime and Bird were able to use their scale and finances to get electric scooters included in that category.

"To summarize the feasibility problem: Without massive government intervention and funding, we cannot build the infrastructure needed to on-shore everything," Smith said. "With the new tariffs at their current levels, we, effectively, need to start from scratch to build the tools to build tools to build products. It's a decades-long process."

Standard & Strange's Mulberry Street shop in Manhattan's Nolita neighborhood.





- MAY 7-8** WWD Beauty CEO Summit / **NYC**
- JUN 2** FN 80th Anniversary / **NYC**
- JUN 5** WWD Culture Club / **LONDON**
- SEP 8** FMG Women In Power Forum / **NYC**
- SEP** Beauty Inc Power Brands Celebration / **NYC**
- SEP 25** SJ Fall Summit / **NYC**
- OCT** WWD LA Beauty Forum / **LA**
- OCT 28-29** WWD Apparel & Retail CEO Summit & WWD Honors / **NYC**
- NOV** WWD Fashion Loves Food Gala / **MILAN**
- NOV** SJ Sustainability LA / **LA**
- NOV** Catalyst & Beauty Inc Awards / **NYC**
- DEC 3** Footwear News Achievement Awards / **NYC**

ALL DATES AND DETAILS SUBJECT TO CHANGE



A worker produces shirts on an assembly line at a garment factory in China.



Hoaran Li and Siying Qu during the Private Policy Fashion Show during Los Angeles Fashion Week in 2024.

BUSINESS

How Emerging Brands Are Assessing Tariffs on China

- Some have been hit with steep trade discount requests from American retailers, while others said they will continue to manufacture in China, citing quality and efficiency supremacy.

BY TIANWEI ZHANG
WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM DENNI HU

LONDON – It's not just the mega players feeling the burn from U.S. President Donald Trump's unpredictable tariffs policy, which now slaps a whopping 145 percent duty on Chinese imported goods after rounds of escalations and retaliations since April 2.

Emerging designer brands, many of which rely on Chinese manufacturing to supply U.S. retailers, fear they might have to say goodbye to their American business altogether if the situation doesn't improve. So far there appears to be no sign of a cessation in the trade war as China on Thursday boosted its tariffs on imports from the U.S. to 125 percent.

Speaking on the condition of anonymity, a designer who has shown regularly during Shanghai Fashion Week said the brand was immediately served with steep, nonnegotiable trade discount requests by three of its American retail partners.

"They placed big orders, but I am afraid I have to terminate the business with them. If I agree to their trade discount, turning no profit would have been the best scenario," the designer said.

John Mercer, head of research and retail analyst at Coresight Research, said suppliers should expect to see more requests from U.S. brands and retailers for them to absorb some of the added costs.

However, he noted that with tariffs now at 100-plus percent, full absorption of the cost of tariffs by manufacturers is not feasible.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, in 2023 the U.S. imported more than 80 percent of clothing items offered by American retailers from

key low-cost manufacturing hubs like Bangladesh, China and Vietnam. In 2022, Chinese goods made up 26.1 percent of the U.S.' total apparel and textile imports and 43.6 percent of total footwear imports.

Mercer believes the tariffs will lead to higher prices for consumers and fashion brands looking to move sourcing and re-engineer products. They already are pressing suppliers to absorb some of the additional cost, and looking for cost-savings in operations, which means retail and brand companies in the U.S. could turn to layoffs.

"Assuming 100-plus percent tariffs remain in place for imports into the U.S. from China, we expect to see a sustained shift of manufacturing away from China, which is one of the intentions in the tariffs. Also, assuming the tariffs remain, we expect to see a greater focus on supplying non-U.S. markets among China-based suppliers," Mercer said.

A new survey conducted by ResumeTemplates confirmed that hiring freezes, delayed raises and layoffs rank among the top corporate responses from 735 import-reliant U.S. companies following the tariffs announcement.

In the survey, 18 percent said they plan to move manufacturing back to the U.S.

Siying Qu, cofounder of the New York- and Shanghai-based decade-old label Private Policy, said she is monitoring the tariff policy changes almost by the hour.

"Truthfully, we won't fully understand or calculate the impact of the new tariff until our next shipments go out. Our business is split roughly 50/50 between the U.S. and China – not just in sales but across branding, culture and public relations. Private Policy has always positioned itself as a bridge between the two countries, and now we're feeling that bridge being pulled apart," she added.

The Parsons-trained designer, who resides in New York, said designers in the city are starting to gather and talk through this together.

"We don't want to sit in silence and cry alone. This is a time for community. But

let's be honest: How are emerging brands supposed to respond to such a sudden, market-shaking change? We all need time to process. Some are considering raising prices or cutting production to absorb the hit, but it's clear we're all bracing for impact. Wholesalers are also sending notices out to figure out the change together. It will be impossible for brands to absorb the drastic rise in tariff alone," she added.

She feared that a 145 percent tariff could make current business models unsustainable, especially for brands that have built their production structure around cross-border collaboration. The brand's other cofounder, Hoaran Li, moved back to China during the pandemic to work closer with manufacturers.

"Shifting manufacturing to the U.S. could mean a major setback in restructure and lack of choices. There are certainly brands committed to being made entirely in the U.S., but even they often rely on trims, fabrics, and materials sourced from overseas," Qu said.

Designer Negin Izad, founder of the 14-year-old sustainable, size-inclusive fashion label Noctex, argued from personal experience that even if China-made products end up costing a similar amount to American-made ones, fashion manufacturing is not returning to America.

"My company's clothes were all made in North America, actually made in Los Angeles, up until last year when we moved everything overseas. A lot of our cost per piece of things they made in the States and things that we made in China, at the end, with a landed cost, weren't super different, but the quality was extremely different," she said.

"We have virtually no issues with quality control with our factories in China, but ultimately, in the U.S., even the best production runs and their quality control, we would go through and find errors, and ultimately, the factories didn't care," she added.

"My favorite part was one guy after he sewed a sample wrong. I said: 'This is the third sample, and we're paying for it,

and it's not sewn up to my tech pack.' He took the sample, threw it across the room, and said: 'You know what? If you want something different, go to China.'

"I am physically in China right now. I took myself to China to find better vendors, to find people that are more professional, to understand that ultimately we just want to get work done in order to get the best item out to our consumers," continued Izad, who has now relocated to Guangzhou to work closely with local factories.

She believes that the American factories are not built to the same standards. In China, there are entire towns dedicated to just one type of product and machines dedicated to making certain products. In comparison, Izad thinks America is decades behind in technology terms and in training skilled workers to deliver the same product at the same quality.

"People don't want to work in these factories. The lifestyle and the pay and everything that it offers at the American wage system, it doesn't work. To see these tariffs coming in and people not understanding how it's quite literally impossible to build these kinds of manufacturing systems in America is disheartening," she told WWD.

Asked how she plans to deal with the ongoing trade war, Izad said: "With how the Trump administration is operating, I don't think anything is permanent. So, I don't think making long-term decisions is the correct move. But right now, I plan to work with the factories here and ask them to split the shipments so we don't have to take on sudden costs."

A recent report from Reuters mirrored Izad's concern over American fashion manufacturing. The report claimed that Louis Vuitton has faced a host of problems with its six-year-old factory in rural Texas.

The report said Vuitton has struggled due to a lack of skilled leather workers able to produce at the brand's quality standards, and errors made during the cutting, preparation, and assembly process led to the waste of as many as 40 percent of the leather hides, according to former workers.

Still, some Chinese fashion players see the American market as a key source of growth, such as Meilleur Moment, a minimalist fashion label from the Hangzhou-based apparel giant Eifini Group, which boasts more than 4,000 points of sale across China.

As the group's international-facing brand, Meilleur Moment has opened stores in Paris and Singapore and is looking to enter the U.S. market by the end of April with the official launch of a brick-and-mortar presence on 257 Elizabeth St. in New York's SoHo.

"We're still in the process of evaluating all of our options and determining what will be the best approach for us at this time. As we prepare to officially open our first U.S. store, our mission remains clear: to bring exceptional quality materials and thoughtfully crafted products to our customers at an accessible price point," a representative from Meilleur Moment told WWD.

FASHION

Taking a Closer Look at the Met's 'Superfine: Tailoring Black Style'

● The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute opens the Louis Vuitton-sponsored show on May 10.

BY ROSEMARY FEITELBERG

In advance of next month's unveiling of "Superfine: Tailoring Black Style" at the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute, the catalogue for the exhibition gives readers much to consider. The exhibition opens on May 10 and will run through Oct. 26 at the Upper East Side museum.

Barnard College chair of African Studies Monica L. Miller, who is the show's guest curator, explores how the evolution of dandy style inspired contemporary views of Black masculinity that uses the power of clothing as a means of self expression. Miller drew upon her research in literature, history, visual culture, performance studies, and fashion and dress to plan for the show. It will offer a cultural and historical examination of Black style from the 18th century to the present through the exploration of dandyism.

To that end, in her essay for the catalogue, Miller covers a variety of subjects, such as Zoot suits, Cab Calloway's style, funeral attire worn by residents of Chicago's South Side, the importance of self-fashioning figuratively and literally, and the Black American expressive culture. Miller worked on the catalogue with the Costume Institute's chief curator in charge Andrew Bolton, and his colleagues William

DeGregorio and Amanda Garfinkel.

"Superfine: Tailoring Black Style" is inspired by Miller's 2009 book "Slaves to Fashion: Black Dandyism and the Styling of Black Diasporic Identity." In the catalogue, Miller wrote that if "Superfine: Tailoring Black Style" communicates any one thing, she hopes that "it visualizes through fashion, clothing and dress the liberating quality of the imagination, the profundity and joy, [that] the self-making process enable by cutting 'no indifferent appearance.'"

Spanning three centuries of Black culture, the catalogue, like the exhibition, delves into the Harlem Renaissance, the Civil Rights movement and imposed uniforms that were once worn by servants and enslaved people. Both the show and the catalogue are organized by 12 characteristics – Ownership, Presence, Distinction, Disguise, Freedom, Champion, Respectability, Jook, Heritage, Beauty, Cool and Cosmopolitan – and highlight examples.

A full-page photo of a Brooks Brother livery coat, 1863-64, is opposite "Dandies on Display: Livery, Luxury and the Enslaved Body" by Jonathan Michael Square. That text explains how clothing was far from a trivial matter for enslaved individuals. In the 18th and 19th centuries, liveries were "more than just uniforms, they were visual representations of the power and social standing of the families who owned them."

In an essay titled "Win Win," Andre 3000 wrote of his years of self-styling, drawing and designing clothes and costumes for his stage performances and how he started

working with the Benjamin Bixy brand in 2006. The singer and songwriter wrote, "These would be some of the best times of my life. Even considering the hardships and lessons learned, I would do it all over again. And I will."

Photographer Tyler Mitchell's "Portrait of the Modern Dandy" includes imagery and an essay. He wrote about how he realized "this project had to go beyond documenting mannequins. It needed to capture the humanity, pride, playfulness and intentional wit that define dandyism." Insights from artists, curators and other creatives like Ude and André Leon Talley are featured in the catalogue.

In its photographs, the book has combinations like a 1946 black-and-white image of two Howard University students by Alfred Eisenstadt opposite a mannequin wearing an ensemble from Polo Ralph Lauren, Ralph Lauren Purple label's "Morehouse College" line 2019-22. There is also Thomas Hoepker's 1966 portrait of the Muhammad Ali standing shoeless while being fitted for a suit by a tailor, as a second man in a three-piece suit looks on, in London. That image is positioned opposite a photo of a pair of white satin Everlast boxing shorts that Ali wore in 1972.

Brands featured in the photos include Louis Vuitton, Telfar, Who Decides War, Juicy Couture, Dapper Dan Labrum London, Ozwald Boateng, Botter and Grace Wales Bonner's

take on Adidas Originals. There's also a sponsor's statement from Louis Vuitton that references how the alliance expands on "the legacy ignited by Virgil Abloh" during his time at the luxury house between 2018 and 2022.

This year's Met Gala co-chairs with Condé Nast's Anna Wintour are actor Colman Domingo, Formula 1 racer Lewis Hamilton, musician A\$AP Rocky and singer, songwriter and Louis Vuitton's men's creative director Pharrell Williams, as well as the honorary co-chair L.A. Lakers player LeBron James.

The cover of the "Superfine: Tailoring Black Style" catalogue.

Superfine
TAILORING
BLACK STYLE



Alexandre Vauthier in January 2023.

Alexandre Vauthier photograph by Dominique Matthe

FASHION

Alexandre Vauthier Has Been Ousted From Namesake Brand

● The designer has lodged a complaint with French labor courts to contest his dismissal and remains a minority shareholder of the Revolve-owned label.

BY LILY TEMPLETON

PARIS — Alexandre Vauthier is no longer the creative force behind his namesake brand.

Confirming a previous WWD report on Tuesday, the designer said Friday he'd been ousted as artistic director of the 16-year-old label, acquired out of administration by U.S.-based retailer Revolve last year.

"L.A. Rive Droite, the acquisition vehicle of Alexandre Vauthier SARL mainly held by Revolve Group Inc., has dismissed Mr. Alexandre Vauthier from his position as artistic director of the couture house," said the statement first shared with WWD.

He "remains a minority shareholder of L.A. Rive Droite but has no longer any operational or artistic role" and has initiated a procedure to contest his dismissal with French labor courts.

Revolve declined to comment while the Alexandre Vauthier brand did not

immediately return emails.

The French fashion brand, which offered couture and ready-to-wear, defaulted in November 2023 after being hit by slow payments from retailers, political and economic uncertainty, and lingering effects from the COVID-19 pandemic.

It subsequently filed for court protection with the Paris commercial court in February 2024, subsequently going into receivership that month, seeking buyers.

Revolve purchased the company in June through L.A. Rive Droite, a French joint stock company. Vauthier transferred all intellectual properties and rights relating to the business in return for a 20 percent stake and voting rights in that company.

In its annual report filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission in February, Revolve indicated that the total acquisition cost of the purchase was \$500,000 "and primarily related to legal fees."

The brand sat out the spring and fall couture seasons in 2024 before returning off-schedule during Paris Couture Week in January.

A revamped e-commerce site under the moniker "Vauthier Paris" with a new logo offers spring 2025 ready-to-wear, with oblique references to a namesake designer.

BUSINESS

Hanky Panky's Sabrina Cherubini On Prioritizing Life and Career



Looks from Hanky Panky.

- The Hanky Panky senior vice president talks about inspiring female founders, tapping into AI and elevating wellness.

BY ALEXANDRA PASTORE

Sabrina Cherubini, senior vice president of brand and digital at Hanky Panky, leads with collaboration and inspiration.

Having spent years growing global brand revenue across fast-growing start-ups and a few U.S. Fortune 500 companies at leading advertising firms, Cherubini joined the premium intimates label with a vast knowledge for executing strong consumer-centric strategies. This expertise won her a place in *The Lead 60* of top brands in marketing innovation in 2023 and *Leaders to Watch* in 2024 from CommerceNext.

Importantly, Cherubini told WWD she passes her expertise on to her team. Motivating, inspiring and mentoring is a large priority and an area where she excels greatly as she guides her team at Hanky Panky.

To find her own inspiration, Cherubini looks to female entrepreneurs, goes deep into fandom with her teenagers and prioritizes wellness during her day.

Here, Cherubini talks to WWD about bringing it all together – what inspires her at work and in life, her best career advice and the technology she's excited to see.

WWD: Looking throughout your career, what is a project/launch/

product that you are most proud of?

Sabrina Cherubini: Luckily, I've had several, but I will focus on the most recent one. I strongly believe customers should be at the center of any company. Not just reading reviews but truly trying your best to understand them. In fashion, and even in intimates, many are focused on making women look beautiful/sexy to someone else. I think, working for a trusted brand like Hanky Panky, it is crucial to go beyond this and understand all the versions of women and how they want to feel.

We identified that one out of three women in the U.S. experiences daily leakage after their first child. We surveyed them and they told us about the taboos surrounding this real pain point and the lack of offerings for feminine daily protection beyond panty liners. We decided to solve this for them by powering our iconic Signature Lace® thongs and panties with Saalt's patented leakproof technology. We launched Hanky Panky+ and we sold, in the first four days, what we thought we would sell in four to six months. We will continue to uplift all women, and it feels good to fill a void in the marketplace and make such an impact in women's lives.

WWD: What is a retail/tech trend that you're excited to see coming to life right now?

S.C.: I can't not mention AI here. At Hanky Panky, we have always been one of the first brands to test what we believe can either bring operational efficiency or create a

their own preference, their own shape, and they are on the move, not standing still; it is not only math-related. I would love to leverage AI to make it a pleasant shopping experience for all the versions of us.

WWD: What inspires you?

S.C.: Female entrepreneurs. Women who believe in their vision and in themselves enough to start their own company. I know many of them and I always try to support them as I know how challenging entrepreneurship can be, especially for women. That's one of the reasons I joined Hanky Panky to lead their direct-to-consumer and marketing growth – founded by two women in 1977, how bold is that?

WWD: What does having a work/life balance mean to you?

S.C.: For me, it is all about knowing myself and listening to my body and feelings. When I start feeling overwhelmed or stressed, I immediately slow down for a few hours or sometimes, a few days. I am someone who can be at 120 percent most of the time, but I learned it was also OK to power down to 80 percent sometimes and come back more creative, strategic or innovative.

I also spend time with friends, laugh with my husband and two teens (teens can be a lot of fun), or just go walk my dog.

WWD: What does that look like? What is a wellness routine must for you?

S.C.: A little more than a year ago, I realized I had to prioritize myself and stop finding excuses to justify not working out. I was a gymnast when I was younger and put aside sports somewhere in my 20s. But two decades later, I decided to change it, to prioritize working out like I would do for an important work meeting. So, it has been more than a year now that I work out 3 to 4 times a week. I have never felt better. At least since my 20s!

WWD: What entertainment has your attention right now?

S.C.: I am reading "The Outsiders" as a promise to my 12-year-old daughter. She studied it in class and said it changed her life. Since then, she read it twice, watched the 1983 movie seven times, and we went to see the musical on Broadway. I want to understand how this book had such an impact on her. I always pick my books, movies and podcasts based on someone I trust sharing how it impacted them.

And of course, how could I not watch "The White Lotus"?

WWD: What is the best advice you would give someone starting out in their career today?

S.C.: Be curious and build your network. Curious because everything is changing so quickly. In marketing and digital, in customer behaviors, and in retail, it became critical to stay curious, be out there, learn from others and experiment.

Network-building because it will be everything for the future executive you might become. My network is composed of other women in leadership roles with whom I can be vulnerable with, marketing and digital leaders with whom we compare notes, exchange learnings, and of course, all those who became friends along the way.



better relationship with our customers. We use AI in all departments I oversee.

What I look forward to is for AI to become more of a "pilot," a decision-making partner based on what and how women want to shop.

WWD: What is your ideal shopping retail experience?

S.C.: Imagine if we could make it more joyful for women to find the right bra? Sixty-eight percent of women don't like shopping for bras – the industry has not changed much since 1933 in how we measure and fit bras. But women have

FN80

THE MILESTONE ISSUE

THIS JUNE, FOOTWEAR NEWS celebrates its landmark 80th anniversary with a larger-than-life special issue honoring eight decades of visionary founders, iconic brands and pivotal moments, along with a forecast of the innovation, creativity and leadership driving footwear into the future.



Put your brand message at the center of the global footwear conversation and connect directly to the industry's most influential decision-making audience in FN's anniversary issue, now.

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WWD



Lisa, Cardi B, Lil Wayne Attend Revolve Festival Weekend 1 of Coachella

Alix Earle, Tyga, Wiz Khalifa, Teyana Taylor, Normani, Cara Delevingne, Becky G and Julia Fox were among the guests.

BY RYMA CHIKHOUNE



Lisa



Julia Fox



Teyana Taylor



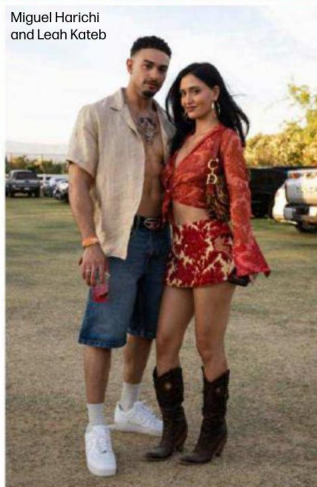
Jordan Chiles



Aimee Aguilar and Wiz Khalifa



Cardi B



Miguel Harichi and Leah Kateb



Alix Earle

Revolve Festival, now in its eighth year, continues to be a hot ticket during Coachella's party-filled first weekend.

It was the biggest celebrity draw, held on Saturday at an 80,000-square-foot outdoor venue in Thermal, Calif., bringing out Cardi B, Lil Wayne, Tyga — all three of whom performed — Lisa, Wiz Khalifa, Teyana Taylor, Normani, Chris Brown, Cara Delevingne, Taylor Hill, Shanina Shaik, Becky G, Dwyane Wade, Alex Consani and Julia Fox.

Revolve's Michael Mente and Raissa Gerona mingled about, also joined by Emma Roberts, Victor Cruz, Karrueche Tran and adored "Love Island" couple Leah Kateb and Miguel Harichi. There were a slew of rising young actors and singers, including Ariana Greenblatt, Liza Soberano, Madison Pettis, Ashlee Keating, Princess Sab Zada, Maggie Lindemann and Neela Jolene. And, as always, the roster of influencers was stacked, with Alix Earle and NFL boyfriend Braxton Berrios; sisters Dixie and Charli D'Amelio; Josh Richards; Gabriela Moura; Griffin Johnson; Blake Gray; Landon Barker; Ellie Thumann; Gabriela Moura; Tara Mirshokraei; Luana Barron, and Nicole Williams English.

Olympic gymnast Jordan Chiles was nearly unrecognizable at first glance, sporting a head-turning look in a bikini and baggy, unbuckled denim shorts with

a cowboy hat, oversized sunglasses and Timberlands.

"Congrats on everything," Richie Shazam told her. "You're killing it." Chiles, part of the gold medal-winning team at the 2024 Summer Olympics, has been growing a following. "Thank you," she beamed.

Heidi Montag, too, has been building buzz with her career renaissance — after going viral for "I'll Do It" 15 years after its release and hitting number one on iTunes. She channeled boho-meets-rodéo in a crochet top and denim-leather trousers, arriving to the photo op with husband Spencer Pratt. Fans have been supporting the couple after the two lost their Palisades home in the L.A. fires. They were in high spirits in the desert as they posed for

the flashes, with Montag fresh off her performance at Kourtney Kardashian's Camp Poosh earlier in the day.

Camp Poosh arrived just in time for Cardi B's set, who sang hit after hit while surrounded by twerking dancers, in a custom look by Revolve Atelier: a skin-tight baby blue ensemble with a top with a plunging neckline, leggings, a leather jacket and feathered boots.

"We just wanted to be a little bit light, a little bit colorful, a little bit fun," she said of the design, backstage moments after stepping off stage. "I didn't want to give too perform-y, but I didn't want to give too dressed — I wanted to be comfortable, because I knew I came here to shake some ass," she smiled, with her candid and genuine nature.

"I want my clothes to fit everybody perfectly," she went on, describing her upcoming brand partnership with Revolve. "You know how everybody got their favorite tank top, they have their favorite shirt, they have their favorite blazer, they have their favorite pants, they have their

favorite jeans? I want to have that product. You know what I'm saying? Of course I want to have a lot of cute things and fashion things, but I want that basic product that everybody wears every single day."

She's dropping her next album announcement "pretty soon," she revealed. "I cannot wait...it's like a big nut for me. I just cannot wait to bust it."

A tour is coming — though not this year. But she's started prepping, and once the album is out, she'll have more time to focus on training and building stamina, she said. "I feel like I've been a little bit stiff lately. I've been a little bit out of rhythm. So I cannot wait to get back and start rehearsing, start getting more flexible. I've been working out, but I want to be more flexible and perform better."

She moved just fine at Revolve Fest, shaking her body as the crowd went wild. She ended her set with the hit song that started it all, "Bodak Yellow."

"You had a good time?" she asked to cheers. "I'll see ya later. Where the after party at?"



Martin Scorsese, Robert De Niro Attend First Family Dinner

The evening served as a tribute to Tony Bennett's legacy and support of youth arts education.

BY KRISTEN TAUER PHOTOGRAPHS BY NINA WESTERVEL

Martin Scorsese and Robert De Niro



Karen Ho, Steve Buscemi, and Marisa Tomei



Jillian Hervey



Jeremy O. Harris and Rosie Perez



Kelsey Lu



Cat Cohen



Sophia Lillis



On Thursday night, Exploring the Arts hosted its first Family Dinner fundraiser, a tribute to founder Tony Bennett's legacy and fundraiser for the organization that provides arts education to underserved schools in New York.

The evening, hosted at the Angel Orensanz Foundation on the Lower East Side, kicked off with a lively performance by bandleader and trumpeter Brian Newman as guests congregated on the venue's balcony level for cocktail hour. Photographs of musical icons, many of them Bennett collaborators, lined the walls as part of a silent auction to benefit ETA programming.

Guests included Robert De Niro, Martin Scorsese, Marisa Tomei, Jeremy O. Harris, Sophia Lillis, Janicza Bravo and more, who heeded the dress code "dress to express" to varying degrees.

Jillian Hervey, of musical duo Lion

Babe, donned a short silver sequin minidress and feathery shrug. "Our job is to turn the party up after the whole gala," Hervey said during cocktail hour. She and partner Lucas Goodman were tapped to perform at the offsite after party by Bennett's granddaughter Kelsey Bennett.

"I love jazz; I love Tony's voice. We actually got to perform for him when he was still with us not too long ago for another art gala," Hervey said. "We love being advocates for the arts. It's a nice full-circle moment to honor him, because he was such a lovely man. Such an important force of nature as a vocalist."

"We're here to continue Tony's legacy in providing for the students of Exploring the Arts so they can fulfill their dreams," said Kelsey Bennett as guests found their seats. Throughout dinner, Bennett's friends and admirers took the stage to offer a tribute to the late musician and read excerpts

from his book "Just Getting Started."

"One of the things I've loved about Tony, besides his immense talent as a singer and interpreter for song, [is] he loved being a mentor," said actor Steve Buscemi. "And he just knew how important it is to help the next generation, the same way that he was helped."

Rosie Perez shared her personal connection to Bennett's song "I Left My Heart in San Francisco," which her father would play for her as a way to connect whenever she visited him in Puerto Rico. "I cofounded a charity - I stepped down because it's really hard, so please give a lot of money tonight," said

between dinner courses and more readings from Bennett's book. Marking the evening's midpoint, Scorsese led the room in offering a Champagne toast to Bennett's influence.

"Music gave Tony something precious, and he gave the best of himself to that music," Scorsese said. "He wanted to provide the same possible opportunities for young people to open them up to new possibilities, to really find new worlds through art. That's what Exploring the Arts is all about. I'm sure he would've been so thankful and relieved to know that the work of Exploring the Arts was going on after his passing."

reminding the crowd of the evening's primary purpose: supporting youth arts education. The evening featured musical performances by ETA students

WWD


Celebs Fete the Launch of Christian Louboutin Eyewear

Wearing sunglasses indoors was welcomed at the launch party for Christian Louboutin eyewear.

BY LEIGH NORDSTROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN NACION



Diane Kruger and Olivia Palermo



Sai De Silva

"This is my first time playing in sunglasses," pianist Chloe Flower told the room after playing her first song. "I can't see anybody but it's great to be here."

If there ever were an occasion to wear shades inside while at the piano, Thursday night's party was the time. The Nines was cleared out and taken over by Christian Louboutin to celebrate their foray into eyewear. Diane Kruger, Francesca Scorsese, Olivia Palermo, Darren Barnet, Jeremy Pope, Law Roach, Sai De Silva and more turned out for the occasion, which featured a special performance by Flower.

With its red walls, The Nines was a fitting venue for the infamous red-soled shoe brand to throw a party. Guests sipped passion fruit and tequila cocktails while mingling about. After performing several "popsicle" songs – that is pop meets classical – Flower took to a small back banquet to chat.

"Comfort is always really important normally, but not when I perform. Louboutin somehow matches everything," she said. "I constantly am in weird scenarios where I'm dressing according to what they need. Louboutin is always very feminine. I love the design."

Having released three new singles, Flower will drop her newest album on May 2. Being a role model for women in classical music remains a focus of her career, she said.

"Growing up in classical music, I had never been given a piece of music to learn that wasn't written by a man. From two years old until 25," she said. "I didn't know that I could compose until I was in my 20s because it wasn't an option. I think for me that's why promoting women in music and really just being able to bring classical music to a wider audience [is so important]."



The scene at the Christian Louboutin Eyewear launch event.



Jeremy Pope



Darren Barnet



Chloe Flower



Inside 'Cosmic Splendor' With Van Cleef & Arpels

The exhibition features more than 60 pieces of fine jewelry inspired by space and celestial bodies. BY KRISTEN TAUER

As Blue Origin's New Shepard rocket is readying to take an all-female crew including Lauren Sanchez, Katy Perry and Gayle King to space on Monday, the American Natural History Museum is highlighting the celestial back on earth. The New York museum unveiled its new exhibition "Cosmic Splendor: Jewelry From the Collections of Van Cleef & Arpels" on Friday, which highlights jewelry designs inspired by space throughout the decades.

"It's a very cheerful exhibition," says Alexandrine Maviel Sonet, patrimony and exhibitions director of Van Cleef & Arpels, praising the exhibition's cinematic staging with mirrors, starry lighting and soundtrack. "It really brings us to the Space Age, this time where everyone was so enthusiastic about space."

"Cosmic Splendor" follows Van Cleef's previous 2023-24 exhibition with the museum, "Garden of Green," which featured jewelry with green gemstones including emeralds, malachite and jade. "[The museum] knew that we were at the time working on a planetary precious object, and they said, well, maybe we could do something around cosmos and planets," Sonet says.

During the opening week of "Cosmic Splendor," Van Cleef & Arpels will present its newest "Extraordinary Object" within the exhibit, a jeweled Planétarium automata that presents a scaled model of our solar system. The brand is also the exclusive corporate sponsor for an upcoming show at the museum's Hayden Planetarium.

"Cosmic Splendor" features more than 60 pieces from the Van Cleef



"Cosmic Splendor: Jewelry from the Collections of Van Cleef & Arpels" at the American Natural History Museum.

Patrimonial collection in addition to more contemporary pieces lent by private collectors. Jewelry is showcased across seven different display themes, including pieces inspired by the moon, the sun, zodiac, stars, galaxies, planets and celestial movement. There are jeweled brooches inspired by galaxies and shooting stars, a necklace tribute to Jules Verne's novel "From Earth to the Moon," timepieces inspired by planetary systems, and pendants reflecting zodiac signs.

"It's also for us a discovery about our own collection. We realized that indeed we have stars-, moon- and sun-inspired creations that had been made since the

very beginning of the maison." Sonet says of collaborating with exhibition curator Kate Kiseeva, assistant curator in the museum's Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences, Division of Physical Sciences. "In 1907, we have one piece that was called 'The Star.' So it's really interesting to see that this thematic was deeply rooted in our maison."

The Van Cleef team discovered space-inspired pieces throughout the decades, with a plethora from the Space Age of the 1950s and '60s. The exhibition includes a 1969 gold textured Moon pendant, which includes a ruby cabochon that marks the landing spot for the Apollo 11 mission; a

variation was gifted to the astronauts upon returning to Earth.

"Cosmic Splendor: Jewelry from the Collections of Van Cleef & Arpels" will be on view through Jan. 4, located inside the Melissa and Keith Meister Gallery within the Museum's Allison and Roberto Mignone Hall of Gems and Minerals.

"The museum put pictures of the galaxies that inspired the creations, and you see how deep the studio drawings went," says Sonet, highlighting the research that informed many of the designs. "I hope that the visitor will feel that really in-depth work that is done for the high jewelry collection."



Watch with pink gold, agate, sugillite, turquoise, serpentine, chloromelanite and jasper from the Van Cleef & Arpels Collection.

Lunar pendant with yellow gold and ruby.

CJ Hendry Looks to Jeff Koons for Latest Immersive Installation

The artist has unveiled "Keff Joons," a New York exhibition that invites visitors to climb into a colorful display of giant inflated "balloons."

BY KRISTEN TAUER



Here, above and right: "Keff Joons" by CJ Hendry.



The morning before the public debut of CJ Hendry's newest art installation, "Keff Joons," a woman was trying to decide whether to traverse to the highest point of the giant sculpture. "I'm going into the yellow fruit loop," she finally decided, eyeing a lower level of the immersive

exhibition, a colorful jumble of inflated balloon-like structures.

"That's always the surprise, to see it interacted with," Hendry says of the final element of her exhibitions: audience participation. "So it's really nice to see people jumping on it and climbing atop it."

Known for creating large-scale exhibitions that utilize unexpected materials, Hendry's latest was inspired by iconic pop artist Jeff Koons' giant balloon dog sculptures. "I was trying to make a balloon dog and just couldn't," Hendry says. "And then I made these random knots. I'm like, 'oh yeah, this works.' And then I just wanted to keep playing with that idea."

Visitors to the exhibition, located in a warehouse space in Brooklyn's DUMBO neighborhood and open through April 20, are given a pair of orange sticky socks to climb into the sculpture; the experience is akin to a grown-up bounce house meets whimsical playground structure.

"What I always found really striking about Jeff Koons' big steel structures was that I have seen imagery of him sitting on his balloon dogs," Hendry adds. "I was like, wouldn't that be fun? And to be able to make these big knots and replicate that imagery of him sitting on these big steel structures – but, you know, us sitting on these knots."

The room also features a smaller, non-scalable balloon knot sculpture, as

well as framed photorealistic illustrations of balloon configurations and limited "lenticular" editions of her drawings.

"I always start with drawings and then build the exhibition, and then editions linked to the drawings in some way," says Hendry, who launched her career by sharing her illustrations on social media in the mid-2010s. For visitors who aren't in the market to purchase an original piece of artwork, a merch stand offers them hats, T-shirts, a coloring book and package of twistable balloons at more affordable price points.

"Keff Joons" follows recent exhibitions including a market of sequin patches and viral "Flower Market" collaboration with Cleu de Peu, which drew so much demand and foot traffic to its original location on Roosevelt Island last fall that the artist was forced to relocate it to a warehouse in Industry City overnight. Later this year, Hendry will bring Flower Market 2.0 to Rock Center, with a totally new assortment of plush flowers.

Will "Keff Joons" draw similar lines? Touching on the popular nature of her work, Hendry brushes past the topic of queues.

"We just build something and then if people come, great," she says. "Lines are not the definition of if it's successful or not," the artist adds. "I just put out into the world what I want to put out, and then the rest is what will happen."

Fashion Scoops



Rick Owens,
men's spring 2025



Anoushka
Borghesi

Alexandre Samson, head of collections, serves as scientific curator.

Milan's La Triennale museum staged a retrospective about Owens' career in 2017 titled "Subhuman Inhuman Superhuman."
— MILES SOCHA

Armani Promotion

Anoushka Borghesi, the longtime right-hand communication woman to Giorgio Armani, has been promoted to the role of global communication director, a new title, the company said Friday.

In her role she will continue to report directly to Armani and oversee the press and PR department for the Italian luxury group. Her title was previously head of media and PR.

Borghesi joined Giorgio Armani SpA in 2010. She was promoted to head of media and PR in 2013.

Before moving to Italy, Borghesi — who was born in London to an Italian father and a German mother — started her career in fashion communications at Saint Laurent in London

rising through the ranks to the role of communications director, Europe in 2009, the year she relocated to Paris. The communication executive holds a degree in international management from the London European School of Economics.

In 2025, the Giorgio Armani company marks its 50th anniversary in business. In addition to the namesake brand, the company operates the Emporio Armani and A|X Armani Exchange brands. It also boasts a home décor and interiors collection under the Armani/Casa moniker, as well as hospitality projects such as the Armani Hotel, with units in Milan and Dubai, in addition to Diriyah, Saudi Arabia, the latter to be completed in 2026.
— MARTINO CARRERA

Vuitton Fans

Louis Vuitton introduced its LV Sneakerina, a hybrid footwear design, at a cocktail party in Santa Monica at members club San Vicente Bungalows.

A mix of music artists, actors and celebrity stylists turned up, including rock band Haim; "Bridgerton" actress Phoebe Dynevor; model and actress Devon Ross; actress-singer Ryan Destiny; Colombian-American actress Sasha Calle; singer-songwriter Charlotte Lawrence; actress Lizzy Greene; actress Lorraine Nicholson, daughter of Jack Nicholson; models and influencers Reign Judge, Soukeyna Diouf and Emma Brooks McAllister; model Lily Chee; stylist Elizabeth Stewart; stylist and manager-producer Jeanne Yang of Anonymous Content, and costume designer and stylist Jacqui Getty. All were clad in head-to-toe looks from the French house.

The LV Sneakerina, available online for \$975,

is in stores now. It's a sleek silhouette, blending a ballet flat with contemporary sportswear. The design features a lightweight interior and flexible bend, created with movement in mind, and styles come in eight colorways that include green, fuchsia, beige — all three crafted from lambskin with trim in suede calf leather — as well as a metallic grained calf leather and a satin style showcasing the house's familiar monogram canvas.

Louis Vuitton recently expanded in lifestyle with the launch of a home collection in Milan, with furniture and lighting; decoration, which includes objects and textiles; tableware; Objets Nomades, and gaming pieces.

And last month, the luxury brand showed Takashi Murakami works at Art Basel Hong Kong, which offered a look at the reedition of the seminal collaboration between Louis Vuitton and the celebrated Japanese artist.
— RYMA CHIKHOUNE

Value Conscious

Shein has revealed its own version of Lyst's hottest brands and items ranking.

On Monday, the Singapore-based, China-focused fashion retailer, which inched one step closer to a London IPO last Friday after getting a green light from the U.K.'s financial watchdog Financial Conduct Authority, lifted the lid on customer spending habits for the first time, unveiling its top-selling items in the U.K. from the first quarter of 2025, and said it will publish trends data on a quarterly basis from now on.

Top sellers from January to March included an 118-pound faux fur coat by Anewsta, black trousers, black knee-high boots, and leopard print jeans.

Black, white and beige were the most purchased colors, while the bestselling brands were loungewear and sleepwear brands

and its in-house labels, including Shein Underwear & Sleepwear, Shein EZwear, and Shein Lune.

Shihong Liu, director of Europe Markets at Shein, said consumers in the U.K. are grappling with a tough economic environment, which isn't stopping them from shopping but is driving their fashion choices toward more timeless options.

"We are seeing our customers gravitate towards a mix of cozy and classic pieces, choosing muted colors that are easy to style on a day-to-day basis," said Liu, who joined Shein from Uber last year.

Shein's quarterly findings dovetail with a recent online survey by The Harris Poll, commissioned by Shein, that 61 percent of the surveyed Britons said inflation is the issue that will affect them the most in 2025.

Some 80 percent of them said product quality is the most important consideration when selecting a retailer, and 92 percent believe clothes don't have to be expensive to offer them long-lasting value.

As spring blossoms in the U.K., Liu said demand for more colorful choices is on the rise, with apricot and pink emerging as the next top colors.

"Although the squeeze on people's wallets is showing no sign of abating, it's clear that sunny getaways are still on people's minds — online searches for holiday outfits and bikinis both picked up in March. The overall most popular clothing item in the quarter was a pair of white crochet shorts, and sandals have been the bestselling shoe of the year so far," he added.

According to data compiled by email marketing firm Omnisend, Shein has been successful at winning over British consumers, who are placing greater emphasis on value.

Some 60 percent of U.K. consumers surveyed by Omnisend said they have shopped on Chinese marketplaces like Shein and Temu in the past year.
— TIANWEI ZHANG ▶

All About Rick

A recreation of the California bedroom he shared with his wife Michèle Lamy — plus 30 brutalist cement sculptures — are all part of a large-scale Rick Owens exhibition opening at the Palais Galliera on June 28.

On Friday, the Paris fashion museum shared details of the show, titled "Temple of Love," which will cover the American designer's entire career and extend to the facade of the building and its garden, with statues wrapped in a fabric embroidered with sequins. This confirms a report in WWD on Feb. 7 that an exhibition was in the works.

Owens is serving as artistic director of the show, which Palais Galliera describes as "unprecedented" in scale and scope.

"It is a meditation on love, beauty and diversity, presented in a monumental setting," it said.

The retrospective is to feature more than 100 fashion silhouettes, in addition to personal documents, videos, installations and works by Gustave Moreau, Joseph

Beuys and Steven Parrino.

Owens began his fashion career as a pattern-cutter in Los Angeles before launching his label in 1994, taking inspiration from underground culture and 1930s glamour.

Over his long and fruitful career, he has drawn on a "wide range of references," according to the museum, listing as examples Joris-Karl Huysmans, contemporary art and early Hollywood films, including the biblical epics by Cecil B. DeMille that inspired his epic spring 2025 menswear show.

The showcase is also to focus on "the central role" played by Lamy, "whose presence is felt throughout the exhibition," according to the museum.

Owens moved himself and his business to Paris in 2003, where his shows have become a highlight of Paris Fashion Week. He once showcased his women's collection on American college step teams, and casually exposed male models' genitalia in a 2015 show that earned the nickname "Free Willy."

Miren Arzalluz, honorary director of the Palais Galliera, serves as general curator of "Rick Owens: Temple of Love," while



Danielle Haim, Este Haim, and Alana Haim.



Shein has revealed its top-selling items in the U.K. from the first quarter of 2025.



Prada takes over the Saks Fifth Avenue flagship windows with its "Days of Summer" collection.

In The Window

The Saks Fifth Avenue flagship has dedicated six of its Fifth Avenue windows to Prada's Days of Summer collection through April 27.

A summer-inspired concept takes center stage in the windows, with the floors and the backdrop bringing to life a seascape that looks to extend into the horizon. The space features boats in a variety of vibrant tones displayed throughout, showcasing the various product categories from the collection. The playful sequence looks to create a surreal and tranquil atmosphere in contrast to the hustle and bustle of the city.

The ready-to-wear selection evokes the mood of summer in marinere and floral prints, knitwear and denim. Light cotton shirts and dresses are layered over delicate lingerie and bikinis in stretch poplin, while tailoring in kid mohair and wool silk is deconstructed and draped over the body.

The accessories selection offers crochet styles, handwoven with rope detailing, as well as a new iteration of the iconic Prada Galleria.

The collection became available as an early release on saks.com and at Saks Fifth Avenue stores in New York, Boston and Greenwich, Conn. on Thursday.

—LISA LOCKWOOD

India Bound

L52 Communications, which specializes in fashion, luxury, design and lifestyle, has spotted opportunity in the fast-growing Indian market and plans to open an office in Mumbai, the country's media and financial capital.

The agency, which is

based in London and has an office in New York, will be among the first international fashion and luxury PRs to plant a flag in the market, where fashion sales are growing in the double-digits fueled by thriving industries such as tech, health care, sports and entertainment.

Adam Shapiro founded L52 in 2016, and built up a client roster that includes Fendi, Gabriela Hearst, Jacquemus, Loro Piana, Miu Miu, Etro and Totême. He believes that with a slowdown in demand in more mature markets, "smart brands are looking at India, and Indian brands are keen to access global markets. There's a huge opportunity for us."

Galleries Lafayette is set to open stores in Mumbai and Delhi over the next two years, while 10 Corso Como plans to plant its flag in Delhi later this year with local partners.

As reported, Saks Global has signed a franchising agreement with Reliance Industries Limited, the giant Mumbai-based conglomerate, to open Saks Fifth Avenue and Saks Off 5th stores in the country.

In 2025, India's fashion market is projected to grow between 12 and 17 percent, while The Reserve Bank of India expects luxury sales to surge between 6.5 and 7 percent year-on-year, driven by a population of nearly 1.5 billion and a growing middle class.

Shapiro decided to open in Mumbai because it's the country's media capital, and because he has strong ties to the city, India's second largest urban center after Delhi.

Shapiro's husband was born and raised in Mumbai, "and through my time spent there, I've developed a deep appreciation for how fashion, artisanship and hospitality are central to the country's culture," he said. L52 Mumbai will be

led by Anupam Sehgal, a marketing and communications expert with experience across luxury, fashion and consumer industries in India. L52's plan is to focus on strategic partnerships, VIC engagement and leverage regional expertise.

Sehgal, whose title is vice president, said "L52 Mumbai will act as a trusted partner, guiding global brands into this market while also supporting Indian designers looking to expand internationally. Our approach is tailored, leveraging local insights and global expertise to create meaningful impact."

Sehgal's background includes roles at Nykaa Fashion, Porsche, Lamborghini and Samsonite. He led the relaunch of Fila in India, and brought The Hollywood Reporter and Esquire to the region.

He believes the appetite for luxury fashion is growing, and that "old money is mingling with new money" in the region. In Mumbai, there's also lots of red carpet action, while Indian film, fashion and style has a powerful influence on consumer markets in the Middle East and Southeast Asia.

L52 Mumbai also plans to offer tailored services including wholesale introductions, "VIC clienteling, strategic partnerships, regional strategy and high-impact brand activations," according to Shapiro.

To mark its launch, L52 will host an industry showcase in Mumbai on May 15, with plans to bring together international and Indian brands and guests from media, fashion, luxury and Bollywood.

—SAMANTHA CONTI

Tough Tour

In the sport of peeking behind the hedges, Montecito, Calif., is right up

there with the Hamptons and Palm Beach, Fla. Twice a year its famed public garden Lotusland makes it possible to do so through its "Gardens in Paradise" fundraiser tour. Unlike most garden tours that are ramping up this spring, it takes more strategy than simply buying a ticket to score one of 30 slots — the upcoming April 16 tour themed "Montecito Estates" quickly sold out at \$2,000 a person. It helps to become a garden member for first dibs, or even better, an annual sponsor for guaranteed inclusion on back-to-back tours.

"It's important for us to get creative with outings by providing remarkable experiences that you can't really buy," said director of development Patricia Sadeghian, of the mystery about Montecito. "There is so much competition to raise funds."

Clever resources align with the ethos of Lotusland founder, owner and head gardener Madama Ganna Walska, who bought the historic Cuesta Linda



Anupam Sehgal will lead L52 in India.

estate in 1941 after a stage career, married six times and penned the autobiography "Always Room at the Top." Originally envisioning a Tibetan retreat on its 37 acres, she caught the plant collecting bug severely enough to sell her custom Cartier jewelry for garden acquisitions, like endangered cycads that are thought to be extinct in the wild today. Lining Lotusland's paths, glistening chunks of blue slag glass from recycled water bottles became her preferred gemstones.

"Some of the gardens we visit are directly inspired by Lotusland, while others reflect its spirit in more personal, imaginative ways," said chief executive officer Rebecca Anderson, of scouting two to three stops per tour that aren't disclosed pre-purchase.

"They're always exceptional and include at least one surprise destination."

The previous tour in November featured

landscape architect and California-based Arcadia Studio founding principal Derrik Eichelberger, who showed off his firm's restoration of the turn-of-the-century Val Verde estate. Eichelberger also took the guests to an 1895 estate attributed to Gilded Age architect Stanford White and recently renovated by architect Gil Schafer, designer Michelle Holland and Arcadia Studio.

Tours always include an al fresco, multicourse meal, with Duo Hospitality and SAMsARA wines on board for April; attendees will also receive a special presentation by author Douglas Woods with a complimentary signed copy of his new book "Santa Barbara: At Home in Paradise," published by Rizzoli and featuring Lotusland.

Fall's event on Nov. 5 travels beyond Montecito this time to Santa Ynez Valley.

—REBECCA KLEINMAN ■



A view of Lotusland.