

# WWD

Fashion. Beauty. Business.



## Price Pressure

Hermès said it is eyeing potential price increases in the U.S. to compensate for any tariffs.

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## Beautiful Quarter

L'Oréal's sales rose in the quarter despite a weaker U.S. environment and geopolitical tensions.

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## Better Time

Swiss watch sales rebounded in March as the declines in China slowed and the U.S. remained buoyant.

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# Ralph's Fine Romance

"She's a confident woman who dresses for herself and her mood. She isn't bound by any rules when it comes to dressing," Ralph Lauren said of his strong fall collection. As seen here in WWD's exclusive preview, the luxe runway collection was filled with a strong mix of edgier, Edwardian-infused fashions and moodier, romantic takes on heritage brand codes. *For more on the show and front row, see pages 4 to 7.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY LEXIE MORELAND

## FASHION

# Anderson to Unveil First Dior Men's Show in June

- Bernard Arnault announced the appointment of Jonathan Anderson as creative director at Dior Men at LVMH's annual shareholders' meeting.

BY MILES SOCHA

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM LILY TEMPLETON

**PARIS** – Bernard Arnault surprised the fashion world – and apparently everybody at LVMH – by announcing to shareholders Thursday that star designer Jonathan Anderson has succeeded Kim Jones as Dior's menswear designer and will present his first collection for the French house in June.

It brought a jolt of excitement to the French group's annual general meeting, where the business titan also piled pressure on Brussels to negotiate a solution to the escalating trade tensions between Europe and the U.S. fanned by the Trump administration's tariff policy.

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## BUSINESS

# Unpacking Saks Global's 'Reset' Plan

- CEO Marc Metrick discusses progress on the Saks and Neiman Marcus integration at Saks Global, what lies ahead there, and dealing with issues surrounding vendors, tariffs and macro uncertainties.

BY DAVID MOIN

**In February**, Saks Global said it had a master plan to "reset" the luxury experience, but offered few specifics.

What it did lay out were a new policy to start paying vendors on a 90-day schedule and intentions to make good on past-due bills in monthly installments. While the payment plan didn't go over well, it did give brands some sense of relief that they would finally get their money and that, at least many of them, would have a future with the retailer.

Now that future is starting to come into sharper focus.

In an exclusive interview with WWD on Thursday, Saks Global chief executive officer Marc Metrick spelled out much of what's been happening behind the scenes to make the integration of Neiman Marcus Group into Saks Global work, and "reset" the luxury experience.

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BUSINESS

# Hermès Preps for Potential Price Rise in the U.S.

● Sales at the French luxury house were slower but steady in the first quarter, up 7.2 percent to 4.13 billion euros.

BY RHONDA RICHFORD

**PARIS** — U.S. buyers, get your Birkins — at least before May 1.

As tariffs take hold in the U.S. with a blanket levy for all imported goods imposed from April 5, Hermès International will up its prices to correspond with the 10 percent tax starting May 1.

“The increase of price will be across all the different métiers,” said head of investor relations Carole Dupont-Pietri in a conference call with analysts on Thursday morning.

The percent price rise will only apply to the U.S. market. “It’s aimed at offsetting the increase in tariffs that only applies to the American market, so there won’t be price increases in the other regions,” she said.

The 10 percent will be applied to the transfer price and result in various retail price bumps, depending on product category. “We are calculating things,” said Hermès executive vice president of finance Eric du Halgouët.

“The tariff levels have not been set in stone...We remain cautious,” said du Halgouët added, alluding to the 90-day reprieve on the proposed 25 percent rate. He hedged on whether prices would increase further if the 25 percent rate goes into effect in July.

“In absolute terms Hermès delivered a robust sales print at plus 7 percent, but it is low by its own high standards and is a slight miss to the investor bar,” said Deutsch

Bank analyst Adam Cochrane in a note.

The slight miss sent shares down 3.2 percent by market close, given that Hermès has largely exceeded analysts’ expectations in the past.

Ahead of the tariffs, company sales were strong in the U.S. in the first quarter, up 11 percent at constant exchange. Hermès said there was particularly “solid momentum” in March as tariff uncertainty gripped the markets.

Du Halgouët indicated that number was slower than expected due to “climate events,” including the fires in Los Angeles, which saw the closure of Hermès’ Beverly Hills and Topanga stores, as well as the blizzard in Florida. Both events occurred in January, when the company was also impacted by tight stock in the U.S. after a booming holiday period.

He noted an acceleration in March in the U.S. and that continued to climb in the first two weeks of April, despite the downturn in consumer sentiment and economic uncertainty. Sales were up following stock replenishment even as it implemented a 6 percent price increase, indicating Hermès believes its ultra-wealthy client base can weather the coming tariff storm.

Bernstein analyst Luca Solca believes that Hermès’ brand value is strong enough to withstand any additional increases.

“I think this is the course of actions most brands will take. It seems the most rational approach to adjust to the new environment,” he told WWD. With its France-based production, Hermès is slightly more exposed than rival Louis Vuitton, which produces some products in the U.S.

But an increase should not dent its desirability. “I don’t see a reputational risk

for the brand,” he added.

Looking at the fourth quarter, Hermès registered slowing but steady growth at 7.2 percent at constant exchange rates to 4.13 billion euros. The numbers fell slightly short of analysts’ expectations, which had pegged sales at 8 percent to 4.2 billion euros in the quarter.

Company sales were up 9 percent with currency fluctuations taken into account, which boosted the company’s bottom line by 49 million euros in revenue.

While Hermès has outpaced its French luxury rivals such as LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton, which reported first-quarter sales down 2 percent on Monday, it marks a deceleration from the fourth quarter, when Hermès’ sales grew 18 percent.

The result “confirms a slower consumer demand environment,” Solca added in a note.

Du Halgouët emphasized that sales boosts in “mature markets” such as the U.S., Europe and Japan were driven by volume increases — not price jumps — and loyal clients.

Sales in Europe, excluding France, were up 13 percent, while sales in Japan rose 17 percent at constant currency.

“It’s worth highlighting this, because in these complicated times, local customer bases play a very important role for the growth of the group,” du Halgouët said. “It’s only in China where things are a bit more complicated.”

Despite what he categorized as a “very good” Chinese New Year on par with last year’s holiday sales, Hermès sales were up just 1 percent on continued consumer weakness.

Macao and Hong Kong have been impacted by a downturn of local tourists,

with fewer continental Chinese traveling in the region, and those that do staying on the mainland and shopping in Shenzhen.

Du Halgouët said that while the real estate market remains stagnant and exports are “facing difficulty” in the face of U.S. tariffs, he sees a ray of hope. “When it comes to consumption, the Chinese government has implemented a number of policies which we believe will be positive,” he said.

Du Halgouët was referring to China’s ambitious plan to “vigorously boost consumption” by adjusting the minimum wage to promote income growth, as well as bring in subsidies for young families and promoting new sectors such as AI and sports tourism. Those plans were announced in March.

“Consumption is the third pillar of China’s economy, and it seems to be about to look much better,” he added.

Hermès will promote alternative categories including jewelry and ready-to-wear in an effort “to allow us to keep revenue levels at where they were last year,” du Halgouët said. He added the company has not seen any changes in consumer sentiment toward Hermès products due to the proliferation of “dupes” that have been popular on TikTok and Douyin.

In its home country of France, Hermès sales gained 14 percent in the first quarter, which the company chalked up to “sustained local demand and dynamic tourist flows.” The Saut Hermès horse jumping competition, held at the Grand Palais in Paris on March 25, brought clients out in droves. Customers from the U.S. and the Middle East were the biggest buyers.

Sales within the Middle East region also continued to gain momentum, up 14 percent at constant currency, while Japan saw sales jump 17 percent in the quarter, driven by local clients.

For the leather goods division, sales at constant currency increased 10 percent, boosted by the new bag designs Médor and Mousqueton, while sales of Hermès ready-to-wear continued to be a dark horse in the house, up 7 percent in the quarter.

Silk and textiles, which includes Hermès’ famous scarves, were up 5 percent, while jewelry gained 6 percent.

Sales in the fragrance and beauty division were flat, despite the addition of a new fragrance and a new lipstick line, including limited-edition shades.

Watches were the weakest link, with the category down a sharp 10 percent in the quarter, despite the introduction of two new models during the Watches and Wonders in Geneva, and updated version of its classic H08.

Hermès is continuing its factory expansion and will open three new production facilities in France over the next three years. It’s looking to hire about 1,500 new employees.

Du Halgouët struck a steady-as-she-goes tone, saying: “We’re growing across all regions and in these uncertain times, the loyalty of our customer base is crucial. [It’s] likewise, for the quality of our products and the commitment of our teams that allow us to prepare for economic and geopolitical uncertainties with some confidence.”

The call was “reassuring,” Barclay’s analyst Carole Madjo said in a note. “Overall, management struck a confident tone.”

“In a complex geopolitical and economic context, the house is strengthening its fundamentals more than ever,” Hermès chief executive officer Axel Dumas said in a statement.

“In the medium-term, despite the economic, geopolitical and monetary uncertainties around the world, the group confirms an ambitious goal for revenue growth at constant exchange rates,” the company added.

## BEAUTY

# L'Oréal Q1 Sales Rise 4.4% Amid Mounting Economic and Geopolitical Tensions



Nicolas Hieronimus



L'Oréal Paris EverPure Glossing Shampoo and Conditioner.

- The world's largest beauty company noted the U.S. was more challenging than expected, while China fared slightly better than foreseen.

BY JENNIFER WEIL

**PARIS** - L'Oréal's first-quarter 2025 sales growth beat expectations against a volatile backdrop.

"Globally, it's been a real rollercoaster of economic and geopolitical challenges with daily announcements," said Nicolas Hieronimus, L'Oréal chief executive officer, during a call with financial analysts and journalists after the market close Thursday evening.

He noted a mixed effect during the three months ended March 31, including the U.S. being more challenging than expected, while China was slightly better than foreseen.

"Europe was, once again, our single best growth contributor," said Hieronimus. "Emerging markets remained dynamic."

The maker of Lancôme, Kiehl's and Garnier products' sales in the period reached 11.73 billion euros, up 4.4 percent in reported terms and 3.5 percent on a like-for-like basis, in line with L'Oréal's projections.

The world's largest beauty company's sales increase was boosted by the net impact of IT-related inventory-building between 2024 and 2025, which translated into 100 million euros - or 2 percent growth.

VisibleAlpha consensus, cited by Jefferies,

had expected L'Oréal's first-quarter sales to rise 1.1 percent in organic terms. The bank in a note called the turnout a "helpful beat in light of anxieties."

Fragrances, with mid-teen sales gains, and hair care, with mid-to-high single-digit sales growth, remained L'Oréal's best-performing categories across all geographies in the quarter.

"Our makeup stimulus plan is starting to bear fruit in a market that's unfortunately subdued," said Hieronimus, describing the phenomenon is true in both mass and luxury. "Beside our obsession with growth, one of our key priorities is to manage our P&L in order to mitigate the impact of tariff hikes and - it goes without saying - that our truly global manufacturing footprint and our very healthy gross margin positions us relatively well versus our peers."

"We will, of course, continue to put the right fuel behind our 37 global brands to further reinforce our global leadership," he said.

L'Oréal looks to be in a strong position to weather the mounting storm whipped up by U.S. import tariffs.

"L'Oréal's U.S. business is relatively resilient to potential U.S. tariffs, with five factories in the U.S. and with a majority sold in the U.S. being made locally," wrote Jeremy Fialko, head of consumer staples research, Europe, in a note.

A bit shy of 50 percent of L'Oréal's products are manufactured in the U.S., including most of the Consumer Products division's.

The L'Oréal Luxe and Dermatological

Beauty divisions' products are imported from the European Union, where about 30 percent of the group's manufacturing takes place. Such products are well-positioned to cushion the tariffs' impact due to their high margins, according to Fialko.

"They also have some products manufactured in Mexico and Canada," he continued. "Therefore, by far the biggest risk comes from any consumer hesitancy linked to the tariffs or a squeeze on income resulting from price rises elsewhere. That said, L'Oréal may benefit should peers have to price more aggressively to offset the tariff hit."

Hieronimus said if the tariffs do go into effect there are several ways for them to be mitigated.

"One is price increases, because it's on categories that are in the luxury sector, you have a bit more pricing power," he explained, adding L'Oréal had built inventory for several of its brands and that the group can relocate some of its production, since it has factories in every region of the world. "But we don't want to take any measures on something that might be temporary, so we are watching carefully what's happening and trying to figure out what will be the end game."

Hieronimus said that if tariffs are confirmed they will mainly impact L'Oréal's margin in the second half of the year.

Meanwhile, the company's travel-retail Asia business remains highly negative in sell-out, both on the duty-free island of Hainan,

China, and in South Korea.

"The downtown stores in travel really have lost traction with the healthy reduction of daigous, and it's more airports [around] the world that are driving the growth of travel retail," said Hieronimus.

The executive had earlier this year forecast the global beauty market will grow at the low end of 4 percent to 4.5 percent in 2025, and said as of now there were no hard facts that would make him change that prediction.

L'Oréal estimated that during the first quarter the beauty market increased by about 2 percent.

"Europe is still holding quite well overall, with the exception of France," said Hieronimus, who explained Southern and Eastern Europe remain quite dynamic.

The executive remains confident in L'Oréal's ability to continue outperforming the worldwide beauty market in 2025 and to achieve again growth in sales and profits.

"We expect growth to accelerate progressively," Hieronimus said.



# The Reviews



## Ralph Lauren

Ralph Lauren returned to Manhattan on Thursday for his fall 2025 collection runway show, departing from his usual nighttime extravaganzas to present the Edwardian-infused lineup midday inside the grandiose, new Jack Shainman Gallery flagship in TriBeCa.

While spring was all about the designer's family of brands, his 104th women's show homed in on the luxe expression of Ralph Lauren Collection, complete with a star-studded front row including the likes of Anne Hathaway, Michelle Williams, Sarah Catherine Hook, Sadie Sink, Naomi Watts, Julia Louis Dreyfus, Ariana Debose, Andra Day, Kasey Musgraves, Ryan Destiny and Eiza Gonzalez.

"There's a certain moodiness to this collection and I thought it would be nice to show the collection during the day with good light to convey the juxtapositions you see in this collection," the iconic American designer told WWD of fall's "Modern Romantics" inspiration.

"She's a confident woman who dresses for herself and her mood. She isn't bound by any rules when it comes to dressing," he said, evidenced by his plays of masculine and feminine with the rugged and refined, heightened with heirloom level craft and heritage brand codes. ▶

"The Ralph Lauren woman doesn't fit into just one box – she is multifaceted. She's whimsical and dresses based on how she feels and where she's going. I just want to make pieces that women can wear in their everyday lives, something that makes them feel confident," Lauren said of his wide offering.

This sensibility started with daywear, opening with an Edwardian frilled white shirt, fastened with an ornate brooch and styled with a vintage-inspired, hand-distressed brown leather jacket; black cardigan, and tailored balloon pants (a signature bottom of the season) tucked into leather boots.

He continued to push this strong, youthful edge with darker, Gothic romanticism throughout the latter half of the show, styling the ruffled tops with many looks, including a hand-distressed leather boiler suit, sharp riding coats and great leather tailoring, which followed an array of new takes on brand signatures such as roomy frocks, sportswear and leather outerwear.

In between were standout styles that evoked an appealing lived-in, vintage feel through hand-done techniques, as seen through an airbrushed corded paisley belted blazer and softly pleated maxi skirt and must-have leather and suede degrade aviator jacket, crafted via a hand-brushed treatment, making each piece one of a kind. ▶





Lauren said holding shows remains important to him, as “every collection has a story that allows me to build a setting and bring the collection to life, like a movie,” he said. “It’s dreamy and hopefully inspiring for the Ralph Lauren woman. She can aspire to be anyone she wishes to be through my clothes and staging a show is my way of storytelling.”

His strong, romantic cinematic lineup continued to be enriched with craft, as seen through a laser-cut leather bustier jacket and Victorian beaded version; intriguing crinoline lace dresses, and head-turning, sensual halter gowns cut for the modern Hollywood siren.

“Last year was an incredible year for the brand with our two runway shows – first at my office at 650 [Madison Avenue] and then in the Hamptons – as well as the Olympics, Wimbledon, etc. But I am always looking to the future, and we have a lot of exciting things happening in 2025,” Lauren said.

He’s off to a strong start. – *Emily Mercer*

Photographs by Mosaic Onoda



PEOPLE

# Star-studded Front Row At Ralph Lauren Fall 2025



Anne Hathaway, Michelle Williams, and Naomi Watts.



Julia Louis-Dreyfus



Ella Hunt and Ryan Destiny

● Anne Hathaway, Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Michelle Williams, Eiza Gonzalez, Naomi Watts and more were in attendance.

BY LEIGH NORDSTROM  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY LEXIE MORELAND

After decamping for the Hamptons in September, Ralph Lauren kept it closer to home for his fall 2025 show, taking over the Jack Shainman Gallery in lower Manhattan on Thursday afternoon.

The guest list was typically star-studded: Anne Hathaway, Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Michelle Williams, Naomi Watts, Ariana DeBose, Eiza Gonzalez, Sadie Sink, Sarah Catherine Hook, Andra Day, Kacey Musgraves, Ella Hunt, Ryan Destiny, Chase Sui Wonders, Julia Schlaepfer and more.

Williams, who stars in the new series "Dying for Sex," was taking in the show alongside longtime stylist, Kate Young.

"After this many years, it's not that traditional anymore," Young said of their working relationship. "We text all the time. It's way more fluid than a normal [thing] where I call in clothes and we have a fitting. With 'Dying for Sex,' it was really great because I got screeners ahead of time, which that's unusual. People don't usually do that." "It made [us want] to make it a little bit more on topic," Williams added.

"There was the idea that there would be some little bit of kink here and there," Young said. "She wore an over-the-knee Chloé boot and the Proenza dress [she wore] had a leather belt."

"This is just so classic Ralph Lauren," Gonzalez said of her menswear-inspired look. "I tried a couple of things and I do tend to gravitate towards the cowboy style because it really resonates with me — I'm a girl from the border, I'm from Mexico, so it's home, but this just felt right for New York and this collection."

Gonzalez is in a menswear phase right now, partially inspired by her work with director Guy Ritchie.

"For me, there's nothing more classical than a Guy Ritchie look, and it tends to be quite menswear," she said. "And it happens that the next two projects that



Eiza González



Sadie Sink and Sarah Catherine Hook



Kacey Musgraves, David Lauren, and Lauren Bush.



Ariana DeBose

I'm doing with him are all menswear. So I guess it's the right suit for me."

"This is my necktie debut," Hook said of her blazer, dress and tie look. "It feels meant to be."

The actress, who portrayed Piper on "The White Lotus," has been nonstop since

the show aired its Season Three finale.

"It depends on where I am. When I'm in New York and L.A. it's a different story," she said of getting attention when out and about.

While in New York, the Alabama native makes it a priority to see her "White

Lotus" brothers Sam Nivola and Patrick Schwarzenegger.

"Anytime we're in the same place, we try to see each other. I'm turning 30 next Monday and I'm having a little birthday gathering, so a few of my 'White Lotus' family members will be there," she said. "I'm really excited."

## ACCESSORIES

## Swiss Watch Exports Return to Growth

- Exports in the month rose 1.5 percent in value to 2.1 billion Swiss francs, but the quarter was still down year-over-year.

BY LILY TEMPLETON

**PARIS** – Is it the inflection point for Swiss watches?

Exports in March grew by 1.5 percent in value to 2.1 billion Swiss francs despite a 4.8 percent slump in volume, according to figures released by the Federation of the Swiss Watch Industry on Thursday.

This amounted to a first quarter that shrank 1.1 percent against the same period in 2024, and down almost 6 percent against 2023.

A Bernstein research note pointed out an upwards trend, with 0.6 percent growth since January and a 7.5 percent increase from February.

Driving the growth in the month was the U.S., as the top market for Swiss watch exports, which leapt 13.7 percent. Japan, still in second place, rose 1.1 percent while the U.K., now in the leading trio, grew 10.6 percent.

In fourth and fifth place respectively, Hong Kong and China were neck-and-neck. Both markets were down more than 11 percent but for the mainland, it was a marked slowing of its decline.

In figures published earlier this month by ING, China's gross domestic product rose 5.4 percent year-on-year in the first quarter. Separately, the country's National Bureau of Statistics said its economy had expanded by 1.2 percent on a quarter-to-quarter basis.

In materials, steel watches led the charge, growing 4.2 percent in volume and 5 percent in value.

Meanwhile, other material categories all shrank in volume. Precious metal timepieces, the second-largest category, recorded a 1.9 percent increase in value, hinting at a potential impact from surging gold prices.

By price category, all segments were down in volume, with the troubled 200-to-500 Swiss francs sector showing the biggest decline at 17.5 percent.

In value, pricier timekeepers, starting at 500 francs and including the above-3,000 high-end segment, showed a cumulated 1.9 percent increase, which blunted the decline of the lower-end of the market.

But it may be too soon to pop the Champagne, as the sector girds in the face of the Trump administration stop-and-go approach to tariffs.

There is the prospect of a 31 percent levy on Swiss products imported to the U.S., announced on April 2. Execution of tariffs for all countries except China has since

been suspended by Trump for 90 days, leaving Switzerland with the 10 percent rate applied globally that kicked in on April 5.

Bernstein senior analyst Luca Solca said "a path to a cyclical recovery now looks increasingly uncertain."

The uptick in exports to the U.S. may have stemmed from companies anticipating the Trump administration's tariffs policy. The April 2 announcement has introduced global macroeconomic uncertainty.

"We believe this uncertainty will weigh on a recovery, not only from the first order impact of tariffs on Swiss exports into the U.S. but also on the ripple effect on global currencies and consumer feeling," he said.

Solca expected the most desirable brands, which include Rolex and Cartier, to remain top-of-mind while other brands "will need to work harder to recapture consumer attention."

March's export figures come as luxury groups have started to report their first-quarter sales.

Sales were flat at the watches and jewelry unit of LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton, although the group highlighted "good progress on strategic priorities." Tag Heuer returned as official timekeeper for Formula 1 in January, as part of a global 10-year deal with LVMH.

At Hermès, watchmaking saw a 10

Bulgari 2025 Octo Finissimo Ultra Tourbillon



percent decline for the quarter, with the company citing "a still challenging context" while highlighting new launches including iterations on the popular H08 line and its Watches and Wonders novelties Le Temps Suspendu Arceau and Hermès Cut designs.

Compagnie Financière Richemont, which owns Cartier and watchmakers including Jaeger-LeCoultre, Panerai and Vacheron Constantin, will report earnings on May 16 for its fiscal year 2025 that ended on March 31.

## SUSTAINABILITY

## Vestiaire Collective Campaign Targets Fast-fashion Waste

Vestiaire Collective's latest campaign against fast fashion.



- The luxury resale platform has been lobbying the French government to pass the anti-fast fashion bill due for a vote on June 3.

BY RHONDA RICHFORD

**PARIS** – Luxury resale platform Vestiaire Collective is wrapping up its three-year campaign to tackle textile waste, which has included a ban on fast-fashion brands.

In November 2023, Vestiaire blacklisted 30 fashion brands including H&M, Mango, Uniqlo and Zara from being bought, sold or listed on its platform, and continued adding brands such ultra-fast-fashion players Temu and Shein.

The company embarked on an influencer education campaign in November 2024 to help change the narrative around popular social media "hauls," call attention to marketing tactics and nudge consumer behavior.

The latest images show piles of fast fashion in front of residences in London, Paris and New York, as well as the U.S. Capitol and the French Senate.

"This goes to people's doorstep to say, 'This is an emergency, and we cannot avoid the issue anymore.' Before we used to say the problem is in the Global South – it's out of sight," said Vestiaire Collective's chief impact officer Dounia Wone. "Now, it's in front of them."

Seeing clothing waste piled in front of home front doors highlights the problem of textile disposal, especially in Europe.

EU regulations that went into effect on Jan. 1 requiring clothing to be sorted and recycled separately has left many countries scrambling for solutions for tons of textile waste.

The Vestiaire campaign also calls out fast-fashion brands for their "accessible luxury" positioning – such as high-profile

campaigns and partnerships taking the codes of historical houses while still keeping their labor and overproduction practices the same.

Vestiaire Collective's latest campaign comes as it has thrown its support behind France's Anti-Fast Fashion Bill, which was passed by the country's assembly on March 14, 2024, and is due for a vote in the senate.

The bill had been in limbo for some time. It is now scheduled for a vote on June 3.

When the bill suddenly disappeared from the senate schedule last December, Vestiaire Collective cofounder and president Fanny Moizant led a campaign across media to call attention to the missing bill, particularly after former interior minister Christophe Castaner took a position at Shein.

The proposed legislation could impose fines of up to 10 euros per garment by 2030, plus ban advertising or require a disclaimer, and put curbs on influencers. Passage of such a law in France, which was a pioneer on Extended Producer Responsibility requirements, is largely seen to be a testing ground for wider European Union regulation down the line.

To drive home the issue, a dozen environmental groups working together as the "Stop Fast-Fashion Coalition" dumped mountains of clothing waste outside the senate building last month, an image that is echoed in Vestiaire's campaign.

Last year the company released eye-catching images of world landmarks including the Eiffel Tower, Buckingham Palace and Times Square covered in clothing waste to highlight the growing problem of fashion waste that sees 92 million tons of textiles tossed each year.

The campaign was designed to spur consumers to think about the long-term effects of their buying.



# Tree Hut's Evolution From TikTok Darling To Skin Care Staple

The family-owned and operated **FEEL-GOOD**, self care brand shares insights into caring for the community that has driven its success.

**F**EW BRANDS have mastered the art of social media quite like Tree Hut. A phenomenon of its own right, the fun-loving self care brand has been dubbed a TikTok darling, thriving under the direction of its loyal community who share passion for Tree Hut's "feel-good glow" that comes in an array of exciting colors and scents.

Importantly, however, this rise to meteoric TikTok notoriety goes far beyond eye-catching, colorful products and instead is propelled by a dedication to positive messaging and community communication.

From its launch in 2002, Tree Hut has maintained that self care should be accessible and easy – the brand's founder set out to create high-quality skin and body care in the U.S. that would turn even a quick shower into a sensory escape. This message has resonated strongly with many and built an organic community of dedicated consumers for the last two decades and it is this storytelling that the brand credits to separating Tree Hut from the seemingly endless beauty brands that can be found across social media today.

As social media has grown, the brand's authentic, feel-good messaging was primed for the organic conversations that quickly took off. Social media users began posting about using Tree Hut products, like the popular body scrubs, to elevate daily rituals, sharing which scents they were trying and a love for the exceptional formulas and ingredients.

During the pandemic, as TikTok exploded, Tree Hut continued to fit naturally into the conversation of self care, gaining many viral moments and ongoing engagement with an expanding community.

In an exclusive interview, Luis Garcia, chief marketing officer of Tree Hut, speaks to Fairchild Studio about the evolution of Tree Hut's social community, staying ahead of the competition and future plans to make feeling good and having fun part of every consumer's daily routine.

**Fairchild Studio: Tree Hut exemplifies building up its consumers, how does that relate to the brand's overall mission?**

**Luis Garcia:** Our mission at Tree Hut is to make self care an uncompromising experience – one that is both indulgent and effective. We are committed to crafting high-quality accessible beauty products that delight the senses, elevate daily rituals, and bring joy to every



◀ **Luis Garcia,** chief marketing officer of Tree Hut.

routine. With exceptional formulations and feel-good ingredients, we ensure that everyone can experience self care that truly nourishes.

As a family-owned and operated brand, we've grown alongside an incredible organic community that has embraced our products, shared their love on social media, and spread the word. Thanks to that passion, Tree Hut continues to thrive, bringing that 'feel-good glow' from head to toe to more people every day.

**Fairchild Studio: How has social media informed the Tree Hut brand?**

**L.G.:** Tree Hut is a social media-first brand. We grew in this environment and we know that caring for our community has driven our success. We have a full social media team that is constantly caring for our community's asks and engaging and delighting them as much as possible.

Whether it's connecting with our community, working with influencers, collecting real-time feedback or sharing new product/brand news, social media has been a game-changer. We first focused on Instagram and started seeing a following, leading to us breaking through on TikTok with our "goop drop" videos and then being a big part of the "everything shower" movement. Showing the textures and



colors of our products kept consumers excited and wanting more.

Our passionate community has turned everyday self care into a viral conversation, with organic excitement driving trends across TikTok, Instagram, and beyond. This constant ability to stay in touch with our fans and new users alike allows us to create products that truly resonate.

**Fairchild Studio: How is Tree Hut staying ahead of the competition?**

**L.G.:** Delighting our consumers is something we always strive to do. We really lean on our community and want to make sure they are always at the core of the business. We want to keep making products that are interesting and even better than the collection before.

We hear our fans are hungry for more forms and different scents, additional opportunities to meet the brand in person in various cities and we want to deliver the best we can. By continuously evolving, embracing digital-first storytelling, and staying deeply connected with our audience, we ensure that Tree Hut isn't just keeping up – we're setting the standard for self care that's as fun as it is effective.

**Fairchild Studio: How does Tree Hut encourage its community to "have fun with daily routine"?**

**L.G.:** We try to keep our content entertaining and educational. Our mood is "fun and enjoyable." We want to encourage the discovery of scents and products that can add a splash of fun to consumers' daily routines.

Our products are collectible and the Tree Hut community has shown off how they mix and match scents and forms to create an "everything shower" for every mood, time of year, etc. We want self care to be an enjoyable experience, and with the different products we create and scents we launch, we hope it brings a relaxing and fun moment to each day.

**Fairchild Studio: What's next for Tree Hut?**

**L.G.:** We're continuing to grow each year and have bigger and better product launches, activations and brand news on the horizon. Our goal is to keep making the products that our consumers love, expand collections and product forms and keep self care fun and accessible.

There are so many things going on in the world right now, but if we can provide an experience of self care, even for a moment, and brighten someone's day – our job is done! 🌿

To read the full interview visit [www.wwd.com](http://www.wwd.com)

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



## BUSINESS

# BasicNet Names Alessandro And Lorenzo Boglione Co-CEOs



Lorenzo and Alessandro Boglione

"Today marks the very successful conclusion of Federico Trono's two terms as CEO. His contribution has been crucial to the development and growth of our group, as well as strategic in ensuring a solid operational transition to the two new CEOs," Marco Boglione said in a statement. "We extend our heartfelt thanks to Federico Trono, certain that he will continue to make valuable contributions through the strategic positions he will continue to hold within the group," he said.

Speaking to WWD about the appointment, Lorenzo Boglione said: "We are

giving ourself a mandate, because we are ultimately the expression of the company's majority shareholder [the Boglione family with 37.42 percent of shares] and our goal is to keep on the growth trajectory that it has pursued so far."

"It's by definition a huge responsibility," echoed Alessandro Boglione. "But not unlike the past six years, flanking the former CEO. The role is slightly changing but the responsibility is the same, the industrial plan is in strong continuity," he said.

Lorenzo and Alessandro Boglione first joined BasicNet in 2010 and 2012, respectively, both as interns. They rose through different roles of increased managerial responsibility until they were appointed BasicNet vice presidents in 2022.

"Our mandate is to bring forward the vision that has shaped the company

so far, trying to make it contemporary and applicable to today's business and market," Lorenzo Boglione said. "Everything the company stands for today is the result of our father's work. We will remain a brand management platform... despite the complexity ahead which will trigger the company to shift its model and organization," he added.

BasicNet was founded by Marco Boglione, who conceived the group in 1994 as a marketplace and publicly listed it on the Milan Stock Exchange in 1999. BasicNet owns the Superga, Robe di Kappa, Kappa, Sebago, Jesus Jeans, K-Way, Sabelt and Briko brands.

Stemming from the storied traditional clothing company Maglificio Calzificio Torinese, which was founded in 1916, BasicNet doesn't produce or distribute the collections of its brands. Billing itself as a "fully web-integrated company" through a digitally advanced platform, it acts as a marketplace where manufacturers and distributors meet to do business.

In particular, BasicNet, headquartered in Turin, designs and develops its labels' collections, signs licensing agreements with international producers and distributors, which receive from BasicNet all they need to manufacture and sell the products, from research and development to global marketing.

"We believe we have already proven internally and externally we have implemented some of the company's values... including preserving the management of and relationship with human resources, which have defined the company's history and our presence here, in increasing managerial roles, for the past 10-plus years," Alessandro Boglione said.

"In addition to external challenges that we've become used to face with little notice," he said, mentioning U.S.

President Trump's tariffs and the China slowdown, "there are also a lot of internal challenges with our wonderful brands, which are all enjoying a great momentum in their trajectory, albeit different from one another," he said, mentioning, for example, K-Way.

As reported, Permira Growth Opportunities II, a fund managed by global investment firm Permira, acquired a 40 percent stake in the French premium outerwear brand K-Way from BasicNet, which holds the remaining 60 percent stake.

The generational handover news comes as BasicNet is said to be inching closer to a deal with Kickoff, a group helmed by Simona Barbieri and Tiziano Sgarbi, to acquire Sundek, the beachwear brand founded in 1958 in San Francisco and synonymous with surf culture.

In the interview with WWD, Lorenzo Boglione set the record straight saying: "it's a company and people we know well, but what's been written is completely detached from reality. There are no negotiations, no talks underway, and we're certainly not close to signing any agreement. There's nothing remotely comparable to what's been reported. We maintain a relationship with them, as we do with other players in our industry."

Media reports on Thursday suggested a deal was imminent.

As reported, BasicNet logged consolidated 2024 revenues of 409.2 million euros, up 3.1 percent from 396.8 million euros in 2023.

This included direct sales of 346.8 million euros, up 4.2 percent on 2023, and royalties from commercial and production licensees of 60.9 million euros, a 2.2 percent decrease.

In 2024, group earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization totaled 61.1 million euros, up 5.1 percent on 58.1 million euros in 2023, despite increased investments in sponsorships and communication and human resources, reflecting the group's commitment to develop the brands.

The company distributed dividends of 7.5 million euros last year, and acquired treasury shares for 14.4 million euros.

- The sons of the company's founder and president Marco Boglione are succeeding Federico Trono.

BY MARTINO CARRERA

**MILAN** – The Italian BasicNet, parent to K-Way, Superga and Sebago, among other fashion companies, has set in motion its succession plan – and it's all in the family.

The publicly listed company said Thursday that Alessandro and Lorenzo Boglione, sons of BasicNet founder and president Marco Boglione, have been appointed co-chief executive officers of the group.

They succeed Federico Trono, who has held the title since 2019. He is to take on the role of CEO of BasicNet-owned Kappa.

## EXCLUSIVE

# Capezio Brand Sold

- The dance brand is being acquired by Argand Partners private equity firm.

BY JEAN E. PALMIERI

**Capezio is changing hands** after more than a century of family ownership.

On Thursday, Argand Partners LP, a New York-based middle-market private equity firm, revealed its acquisition of Ballet Makers Inc., the parent company of the venerable dance brand.

Terms of the transaction were not disclosed.

Founded in 1887, Capezio designs and manufactures premium and highly technical footwear, apparel, and accessories that support dancers and athletes of all ages. Headquartered in Totowa, N.J., the company has been owned by the Terlizzi family for nearly 140 years.

Under the terms of the deal, the family will retain an ownership stake and a number of key family members, including chief executive officer Michael Terlizzi, will remain with the company.

"Capezio has built an incredible brand heritage, reflecting a unique understanding of dance market trends, and a true appreciation of its core

customers," Argand said. "Capezio is regarded for authenticity, quality, superior craftsmanship and classic design of its products. The company has established itself as a top player across its key business segments and serves a loyal customer base in North America, with a growing presence in Europe, Australia, Brazil and Asia."

Under its new ownership, Argand said it will "accelerate" Capezio's growth while remaining true to its heritage. Plans call for developing new products, creating collaborations and licensing deals with strategic partners and continuing to build deep connections within the dance community. "We believe this strategy will not only maintain the longstanding family legacy and company culture, but will also modernize the company in order to achieve long-term growth," Argand said.

"Argand and its advisers have built a strong relationship with our management team over several months and we are delighted to formalize their partnership to build off of over 140 years of commitment to the dance community," said Terlizzi, who is the fifth generation of the family to work in the business. "The Argand team brings a complementary skillset to our business and our team is excited to be part

of the Argand portfolio."

Joyce Schnoedl, partner at Argand Partners, added: "We are delighted to invest in this iconic brand that has, since its inception, helped to instill a love of dance and appreciation of the art among dancers across the world. As a dancer myself and consumer of the Capezio brand for several decades, I have a deep personal connection and commitment to the company. We look forward to supporting Capezio's next phase of growth."

Tom Nastos, a longtime fashion executive and adviser to Argand in the transaction, said: "Capezio is a renowned brand with a rich history of excellence in dance and performance products. Under Argand's stewardship, we are committed to upholding this legacy while introducing innovative products to expand Capezio's offerings. Our goal is to blend tradition with innovation, ensuring that Capezio continues to be an iconic brand in the industry and respected by performers worldwide."

Jeremiah Wanzell of Growth Mindset Advisors introduced the deal to Argand and the Meriwether Group acted as the sell-side adviser to Capezio.

Argand, which has offices in San Francisco and Miami

in addition to New York, invests in companies that are leaders in niche markets in the U.S. and globally. Its current portfolio includes Brittons, a woven carpet brand; Oase, a water design systems and technology company; Midwest Can, a manufacturer of portable fuel containers; Cherry, a keyboard switch technology firm for gaming and computing, and others. This is its first move into apparel and footwear.

A look from Capezio.



## BUSINESS

## ACBC, Sustainable Footwear And Consultancy Company, Sells Majority Stake

- Gyrus Capital is taking over the Italian company to accelerate its sustainability mission.

BY MARTINO CARRERA

**MILAN** – Italian sustainable shoe brand and consultancy ACBC – known for its modular sneakers engineered with a zipper system that ties together the sole to several variants of the upper part – has found an investor.

The company said Thursday that it has sold a majority stake to Gyrus Capital, a European investment firm operating in the health care and sustainability sectors.

Financial details of the deal – expected to close in the second quarter of the year – were not disclosed.

ACBC cofounders Gio Giacobbe and Edoardo Iannuzzi will remain on board as minority investors and in their executive roles of chief executive officer and chief innovation officer, respectively.

A Circular Science Company and B Corp enterprise, since 2020 and 2021, respectively, ACBC had carved a three-pronged business model in the years since its founding in 2018.

In 2023, the most recent financial figures available, ACBC's overall business generated sales of 15 million euros.

Sustainability consultancy operations for fashion brands represented about 50 percent of yearly sales, the Made in ACBC third-party manufacturing business amounted to 45 percent of revenues, while the remainder was generated by the owned shoe brand's operations.

It is understood that the latter division is to be wound down, although the company did not elaborate further when asked about it.

Signaling an acceleration in its sustainability consultancy business, last year ACBC linked with RTG Consulting Group on a strategic partnership to set up operations in Asia, providing the clients of the Singapore-, Shanghai- and Paris-based firm with eco-leaning advisory.

"ACBC is a clear industry leader, combining visionary leadership, deep technical expertise, and a strong commitment to transformation," said Raffaele Magliocca, principal at Gyrus Capital. "We are excited and proud to partner with such a driven and talented team, and we believe ACBC is



uniquely positioned to shape the future of sustainable innovation and drive the circular transition across the fashion sector and beyond," he offered.

Based in Geneva, Switzerland, Gyrus Capital invests in businesses with a strong sustainability commitment through transactions in the 50 million to 500 million range. ACBC marks the firm's first investment in the fashion sector.

"This partnership with Gyrus Capital is a defining moment for ACBC," said CEO Giacobbe. "We are proud to join forces with a firm that shares our values and long-term vision. Their international experience and focus on people, services, and sustainability will be key in scaling our impact and accelerating the shift

towards more responsible and forward-thinking fashion and lifestyle industries," he offered.

ACBC has evolved from a start-up relying on capital increases, including Kickstarter crowdfunding, to a self-sufficient business over the past four years.

"This new investment marks a pivotal milestone in ACBC's development, empowering the company to accelerate its growth trajectory through a combination of organic expansion and targeted acquisitions. The focus remains on diversifying the service offering and expanding in new markets, driving continuous innovation, and reinforcing ACBC's position as a global leader in sustainability," the company said in a statement.

## FASHION

## Brioni, Bergdorf Celebrate Brand's 80th Anniversary

- Norbert Stumpf, the luxury house's creative director, visited New York to unveil the line and greet customers.

BY JEAN E. PALMIERI

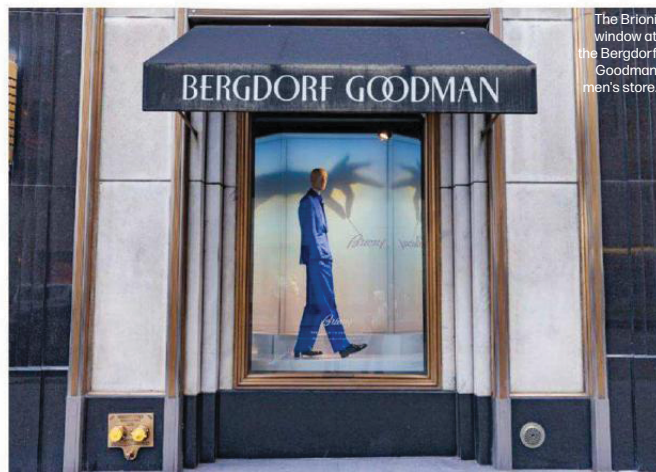
**Brioni brought its 80th anniversary** celebration to New York City on Wednesday with creative director Norbert Stumpf making a special trip to Bergdorf Goodman to unveil a capsule designed exclusively for the retailer to honor its milestone birthday. The store also devoted four windows on Fifth Avenue to the collection, which will remain through April 30.

The special capsule, which consists of eight looks, is called Sala Bianca, a nod to another milestone in Brioni's history. "Brioni in 1952 organized the first men's catwalk show – before, it was only women," Stumpf said. That show was held in Florence in the Sala Bianca, which means white room.

But while there are neutrals in the collection, there are also some eye-popping bold blue and green shades.

"It's a celebration as well," Stumpf explained. "And color is very emotional for me. It gives you that extra kick and I think it's also deeply embedded in Brioni."

He said when the company was created back in the 1950s, "it was considered elegant for men to wear black, navy, ivory or sometimes deep green dinner jackets. But Brioni would use canary yellow or orange or couture fabrics. So these kind of colors are actually part of our heritage. It's kind of daring, and you have to make sure



the colors are not overpowering, but when you wear them, it gives you an extra lift."

Yumi Shin, chief merchandising officer of Bergdorf's, said the store's men's customer is not afraid of color. "But it's not just the color, it's also the fit that our customer loves," she said. "It's not super traditional. It's a bit more relaxed in the shoulder and it's become a much more modern take on traditional."

Stumpf said as a designer, he strives to create a garment that not only feels light but also allows for movement. "You put it on and forget about it," he said. "Our clients are very busy and working a lot so

they appreciate that very much."

Among the key pieces in the Sala Bianca collection are a lightweight Soffio Jacket, the Travel Jacket with 13 tailored pockets and the modern Journey Trousers, all of which reflect a blend of heritage and modernity.

Stumpf acknowledged that designing based on archival pieces while striving to make them relevant for today's customer is no easy task. "I feel you have to take the essence of the archive, but never repeat it. And that is really important. Just taking a garment out of the archive and redoing it is not something I do very often."

Instead, he studies the history of the

garments and then creates modern interpretations by updating fabrics and silhouettes. As an example, he pointed to the bright blue suit that is made from a silk moire women's fabric from Como. "Nowadays, the silk moires are not even made in silk anymore. Mostly of the time they're viscose and they're printed. But ours is made using the old techniques."

Although Brioni is still best known as a men's brand, the company introduced womenswear in the winter of 2022 as a capsule of "five looks embedded into the men's collection," he said. Today, that has turned into a stand-alone collection of more than 20 pieces, and it has developed a following. Shin said Bergdorf also carries the women's line and it is "doing very well."

"It really started out as a masculine wardrobe for women, which is kind of our base ground," Stumpf said. "And then we have seasonal updates in terms of colors or different fabrics. The design starts out with a lot of details, and then we take them off and take them off so it looks like a garment that has always existed. It's not a museum piece. It's something you can wear on a day-to-day basis."

To celebrate the launch of the Sala Bianca capsule, Brioni hosted an intimate cocktail party at Goodman's Bar inside the Bergdorf's men's store for customers and friends of the house who enjoyed cocktails such as Tuscan Gin Tonic and Brioni Negroni and canapés inspired by traditional Roman cuisine served on Ginori 1735 ceramics.

Stumpf, who said he visits New York a couple of times a year, said he was only staying two days on this trip. But while here, he planned to soak in the atmosphere. "I just walk down the streets. I'm always an observer of people." He also planned to visit art galleries, look at stores and visit with clients. "I love to know what people are thinking and doing which creates inspiration for me to try and come up with something good for Brioni," he said.

## HOME DESIGN

# Milan Design Week Trend Report: Poetic Lines



Aline Asmar d'Amman at Galleria Rossana Orlandi.



Marble stonework by Elisa Ossino for Salvatori.



XC Milano by Parasite 2.0.



Gulla Jónsdóttir at Luuldi.



Knoll's Biboni sofa.



Lauren Rottet for Atelier Vierkant.

● Countercurrent to the striking silhouettes and strict angles that once defined the modern furniture and decor industry, contemporary design is speaking a softer language.

BY SOFIA CELESTE

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY ANDREA ONATE

**MILAN** – “The Power of Tenderness,” the name of a dreamy installation by Aline Asmar d'Amman at Milan Galleria Rossana Orlandi, set the tone for Milan Design Week. “Tenderness isn't a sign of weakness, you know. It's a sign of strength,” the Paris-based architect told WWD during a VIP dinner hosted with the doyenne of design Rosanna Orlandi.

The Lebanese-born visionary who was “bathed” in the poetry of 13th-century poet Rumi as a child most recently made waves for the Middle East's first five-star train. And with Asmar d'Amman's collectible furniture pieces here, it was evident that poetry remains very much at the heart of her work. Calling for softness through the poetry of design, bookends made of fragmented stone (part of her Béton Littéraire collection of bookshelves) struck a nostalgic chord. The lush Georgia lounge sofa and chairs called to mind life's delights, while the pink and onyx tables highlighted nature's enduring strength.

In and around the Salone del Mobile. Milano trade show and Milan Design Week that closed here Sunday, firms small and large challenged common modern design norms once dominated by strict geometries and bold colors. Without sacrificing quality and durability, brands issued a new message – a heartfelt homage to the world's natural wonders, drawing us ever closer to Mother Nature, her phenomena and nuances.

WWD compiled a list of designs that have enduring, poetic power:

### Elisa Ossino's Nereo for Salvatori

The art of sculpting marble into light forms dates back to ancient Rome and was perfected in divine glory by Renaissance and Baroque legends Michelangelo Buonarroti and Gianlorenzo Bernini. This season, Sicilian architect and designer Elisa Ossino unveiled Nereo, her new bathroom collection for stone specialist Salvatori. Interpreted natural stone through soft, majestic forms, sculpting marble into soothing shapes is still an artistic feat centuries later.

“Nereo takes its name from the Nereids, sea nymphs believed to live underwater. I wanted to create a bathroom for Salvatori where natural stone – such a precious material – was treated with both softness and grandeur, in bold forms and generous proportions, with a sensitivity that enhances the natural essence of the stone,” Ossino explained.

Available in a diverse array of marble including Bianco Carrara and Gris du Marais, its gentle curves call to mind wind and water's effect on nature over time.

### Knoll's Biboni

Like a warm embrace, the anthropomorphic shape of Knoll's Biboni sofa is defined by plush scallops and folds.

“It incorporates curvature that for us is quite friendly and also there's a certain organicism, but it's not in your face,” architect and designer Mark Lee told WWD at the Knoll stand during the Salone del Mobile. Milano trade show. Lee designed the marshmallow-looking sofa with Sharon Johnston who said the Biboni “wants to be a good friend.” Inspired by Eileen Gray's Bibendum chair, designed in 1929 originating from the character created by Michelin to sell tires, the Biboni, covered in bouclé, has evolved this concept into a contemporary world seeking comfort away from the freneticism of everyday life. Biboni is a salute to the Michelin Man and his chubby folds, like his elbow. “It's a portmanteau of two words. One is Bibendum and the other is macaroni, which stands for elbow pasta.”

### Lauren Rottet for Atelier Vierkant and Turri

Celebrated architect, interior and furniture designer Lauren Rottet of Rottet Studio worked with Belgian firm Atelier Vierkant to create twin Split Face ceramic planters that combine sculptural form with natural shapes and hues. Known for her hospitality projects like St. Regis to Goldman Sachs and Viking Cruises, Rottet's clients' designs include a vast array of more than 50 hotels, restaurants, office buildings and luxury private residences across the world. This time she reminded the design set that she has a flair for the smaller details. In the heart of the upscale Quadrilatero district, she unveiled two larger-than-life, 7-foot planters in rounded forms and made with textured clay. Contemporized ever so slightly with gold reflective glaze the pieces were artfully arranged in the courtyard of Italian furniture firm Turri. Elsewhere, Rottet and Turri teamed up for a furniture collection of fresh pieces during Milan Design Week that ran the gamut from a sleek new desk to nostalgic lighting.



Giopato & Coombes' frosted Bolle lighting.

### Giopato & Coombes

At the heart of the Cinque Vie neighborhood in Milan, Veneto-based firm Giopato & Coombes unfurled a sensory experience that showcased its expertise in creating technical objects that reflect organic shapes. Founded in 2014 in Treviso, a city in the Veneto region, the firm specializes in sculpted pieces. Its frosted Bolle (Italian for bubbles) mimics soft puffy clouds passing by in the sky and was showcased alongside its Scarabei (Italian for beetle) lighting, a profound investigation of living organisms, carefully sculpted to reflect natural propagation.

### Gulla Jónsdóttir's Ring Handle for Luuldi

Icelandic-born Gulla Jónsdóttir is known in the global design world for creating unexpected and poetic modern architecture and interior spaces. Eight years after she hit the Milan design scene with the sinuous Petal Chair, a sentimental salute to nature's wonders, the Los Angeles-based designer made it back to Milan with another visionary design. This time she transformed an everyday piece like a door handle into a memorable experience, modeled in organic harmony. The Ring, made in collaboration with Italian firm Luuldi, was directly inspired by her collectible jewelry pieces. “It's a curve that echoes the fluidity of nature. I aim to turn everyday elements into sculptural



Rising Sun lamp.

pieces,” she said, adding that Ring is part of her own personal expression. From entryways that invite touch to handles that feel like pieces of jewelry for a space, her designs seamlessly blend the worlds of architecture and art.

### Rising Sun by Hechizoo, Nilufar

The Rising Sun suspension lamp covered in a weave of bronze and stainless steel threads lit the ephemeral vibe at Nilufar gallery on Via della Spiga aglow. Made by Hechizoo, a luxury textile atelier founded by self-taught weaver Jorge Lizarazo in 2000 in Bogotá, Colombia, its tubular form imbues contemporary and natural elements while its subtle shimmer emits calming light.

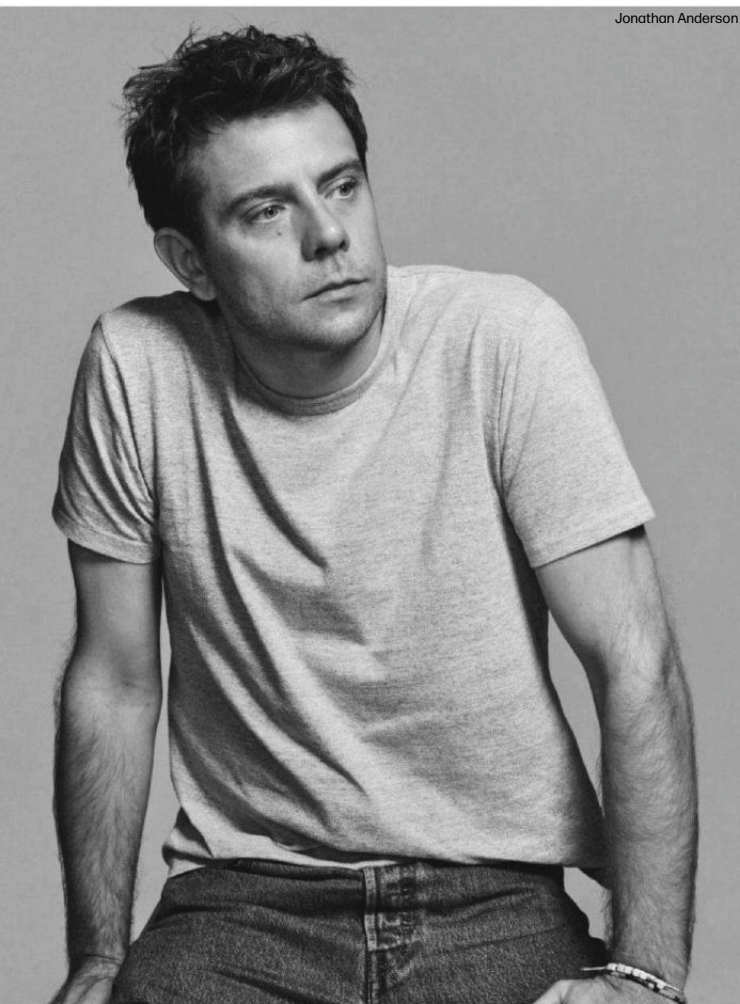
### Parasite 2.0's Poetic Brutalism

Combining elements from the urban and primal worlds, Milan-based architecture and design studio Parasite 2.0 showed the international crowd that the two can harmoniously coexist. During Milan Design Week, they teamed up with family-run marble and stone specialist Bianco67 for an unexpected collection: XC Milano. The capsule was designed specifically for Milanese hotspot Sandi, a restaurant located on Via Francesco Hayez, 13, situated on the north side of the city. An array of candle holders, vases, and side tables were crafted using reclaimed marble and stone and characterized by an innovative dry-joint system, that allows for the objects to be combined or juxtaposed in surprising ways.

The XC Milano collection follows the success of previous Parasite 2.0 capsule collections, including XC Objects and XC Miami which were showcased at Alcovia Miami during Art Basel Miami 2025.

# Anderson to Unveil First Dior Men's Show in June

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



Jonathan Anderson

Arnault, chairman and chief executive officer of LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton, dropped the Dior bombshell in response to a question from a shareholder about the succession plan following the resignation last January of Jones, the British designer who logged an eventful seven-year tenure at the French house.

It marked the first time LVMH made it official that Anderson has a new role in the group since the Northern Irish designer stepped down from Loewe last month after an acclaimed 11-year tenure.

Dior hastily issued a one-line press release saying Anderson was working on its spring 2026 men's collection, which would be presented on June 27 at 2:30 p.m. during Paris Fashion Week. It also distributed a new official portrait of Anderson by photographer David Sims.

At the meeting, Arnault did not elaborate, despite widespread speculation Anderson is also poised to eventually take over the women's department at Dior, currently led by Italian designer Maria Grazia Chiuri.

During the meeting, which fell during a bruising week for LVMH after a 2 percent dip in first-quarter revenues sent its shares in a tailspin, Arnault also gave shoutouts to the group's new designer recruits in

2024: Sarah Burton at Givenchy, Michael Rider at Celine, and Proenza Schouler founders Lazzaro Hernandez and Jack McCullough at Loewe.

He also mentioned Chiuri and the pre-fall 2025 collection she just paraded in Kyoto, plus Nicolas Ghesquière and Pharrell Williams, artistic director of women's and men's collections at Louis Vuitton respectively, plus Victoire de Castellane, Dior's longtime designer of fine jewelry collections, touting "sensational" sales of her most recent high jewelry offering shown in Florence.

Europe's luxury groups have been under pressure from investors and equity analysts to kickstart business with new creativity as the boom in business in the post-COVID-19 period has fizzled.

Chanel, Gucci, Maison Margiela, Lanvin, Bottega Veneta, Versace, Tom Ford, Dries Van Noten, Mugler, Bally, Jil Sander and Jean Paul Gaultier are among houses that named new creative directors in the past year.

Anderson transformed Loewe from a small, reputable Spanish leather house into a vibrant global luxury brand steeped in contemporary culture.

His daring designs – and intense focus on craftsmanship – helped catapult the scale of the Loewe business, with revenues

multiplying by more than seven times over his tenure to approach 2 billion euros, market sources estimate.

Contacted by WWD, Dior declined further comment on what Anderson has up his sleeve.

News of Anderson's position confirms previous WWD reports that he had begun working on the Dior men's spring 2026 collection.

Chiuri has helmed the brand's womenswear collections since 2016. She is due to parade Dior's cruise 2026 collection on May 27 in Rome.

Thursday's shareholders' meeting was dedicated mostly to LVMH's 2024 results, though Arnault spoke frankly about how the first quarter of 2025 started off well, but took a turn for the worse in March as Trump's tariffs began roiling stock markets and spooking consumers worldwide.

"That said, we remain optimistic, and we are continuing our investments," Arnault said, sounding relaxed and speaking off the cuff. "We are continuing to master manufacturing, which is still something essential, and we are sticking to our values."

He touted the importance of creativity, "which is at the heart of everything we do," and the entrepreneurial spirit he encourages at LVMH.

Arnault also stressed that "the pursuit of the best quality, the highest quality, is at the heart of our success."

His passion for products was evident: He appointed his seat at the podium desk with Louis Vuitton's Montgolfière Aéro that was developed with clock specialist L'Épée 1839, which the group acquired last year. At one point, he instructed LVMH's new chief financial officer Cécile Cabanis to hold aloft the jewel-like timekeeping device, modeled after a hot air balloon and the size of a small table lamp. (The limited-edition item sold for 55,000 euros.)

The luxury titan also boasted about the quality of Vuitton's mechanical watches, the dynamism of Dior makeup and its Sauvage fragrance, still number one in the world, and lavish flagships for Vuitton and Tiffany in Milan, which opened earlier this month.

He then spoke of two "phenomena" that give him hope for the future of LVMH's business, despite the current geopolitical and economic turmoil.

The first is the rising standard of living and wealth creation occurring all over the world, which is expanding the number of people who can consume luxury goods.

"This should normally – despite ups and downs depending on the economic circumstances – continue, so there is every reason to be convinced, as I am, that the extraordinary power of attraction of our brands will continue," he said.

The second phenomenon, "which is more unfavorable, is the one we are currently observing: inflation and its consequence, which is a rise in interest rates."

Arnault explained that this mostly impacts the "aspirational" customer base, which serves to clarify LVMH's objective to continue prioritizing high-quality products over volume.

"The larger the company, the more it needs to work with influential customers to continue to grow," he said. "We still prioritize the growth of our most elevated products, even if it means growing a little slower...Ultimately, what matters is having the greatest desirability for the long term."

"Maybe we'll have a little less growth,"



Louis Vuitton Montgolfière Aéro clock.

he continued. "OK, that doesn't bother me at all, as long as we make the best products."

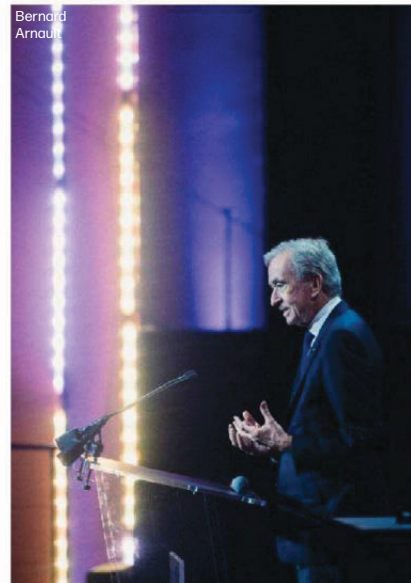
Asked about looming tariffs, Arnault stressed that it was essential to "recreate a climate of trust, trade and reciprocal relations" with the U.S., which accounted for 25 percent of LVMH's 2024 sales. "I don't know if we'll succeed, but I hope."

He allowed that if Europe's luxury sector ends up with high customs duties, LVMH may be "forced to increase our American production, inevitably to avoid customs and all that."

Louis Vuitton counts three U.S. sites for leather goods production, which provide roughly one-third of local needs and can ramp up capacity, as reported. Jeweler Tiffany & Co. also manages to supply most of its American stores with its U.S. production.

"If Europe doesn't negotiate intelligently, they will have this consequence in many companies," he said. "I have already heard several companies are considering increasing their capacities in the United States, but we mustn't say that it's the companies' fault. It will be Brussels' fault if that were to happen."

Shareholders were proposed a dividend of 13 euros per share, on par with 2023.



Bernard Arnault

# Unpacking Saks Global's 'Reset' Plan

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The Saks Fifth Avenue flagship in Manhattan.



That's a tall order.

It's been little over three months since the \$2.7 billion acquisition of the Neiman Marcus Group by Saks Global was finalized, so Metrick was prepared to shed more light on his vision for the company and progress made on the integration, as well as the longer-term strategy. Around the time that Saks Global was close to completing the deal, the company came out with a new strategic vision. It's called "The Art of You" and is intended to ground the company on efforts and initiatives largely geared toward greater luxury consumer centricity, marrying art and science, and personalization.

Metric made it clear that integrating the luxury retailers is a work in progress, and issues of the past, specifically vis-a-vis vendors, are not yet completely behind the company or fully resolved, though he also indicated that the ire stemming from months and months of delinquent payments has subsided, and that dealings with brands have been moving in a positive direction.

Efforts at "resetting" the luxury customer experience, Metrick said, center around intensifying personalization and bolstering customer service, and involve several operational aspects and integrations, such as inventory sharing between Saks and Neiman's which is currently being tested in one market, enriched data, deeper customer insights and smoother interactions with consumers, and utilizing AI to a greater degree.

Metric did mention that further cost-cutting and staff reductions will occur, removing redundancies between Saks and Neiman's, attaining greater efficiencies in logistics and other areas, and ultimately achieving better profitability.

Store closures will happen but Metrick sees just under 10 locations going dark.

Saks in Palm Beach, Fla., is closing very soon, and some other closings could happen where Saks and Neiman's have stores in the same center. The historic Neiman Marcus flagship in downtown Dallas was about to close for good at the end of March, but an 11th-hour arrangement was reached between Dallas city officials and Saks Global to keep the store open at least through the end of this year, as a plan for rejuvenating the store is formulated, possibly involving redeveloping the site, to keep the store operating permanently. Neiman Marcus has 36 stores; Saks Fifth Avenue operates 38, and Bergdorf Goodman operates a men's store and a women's store, but the company lists it as one location.

Saks Global is seeking to reduce annual costs by approximately \$500 million over the next few years.

Regarding upcoming cuts, "There's more that's going to happen," Metrick acknowledged. "I admit this is a vulnerability for me. It's the hardest part. In a large-scale transformation like this, there's going to be continued rationalization around the redundancies of work that gets done, whether it's legal, human resources, other things. A lot of that work has been done already.

"But there's a lot of cost synergy and redundancies that have nothing to do with labor," Metrick added. "That part of the project is going very, very well."

As an example, he cited discontinuing operations at a third-party fulfillment center in Middletown, Pa., helping the company save money and add some staff to its center in Pottsville, Pa. Saks did recently close an owned center in Tennessee. Metrick declined to cite how many employees were affected there, but sources put the headcount at about 500. ▶

Marc Metrick



Saks Global now has a single management structure with new leaders – mostly pulled from Saks Fifth Avenue while several top Neiman's executives were let go. Some senior positions and titles the industry hasn't seen before have been created and some fewer traditional roles have been cut. The company, with volume of approximately \$10 billion, has no chief merchants.

Before the deal, Saks stores and saks.com were re-engineered into separate companies, in part as a way to raise money, invest in more advanced technologies and talent and improve web experiences, but they've since been recombined. Saks Off 5th underwent the same back-and-forth.

Saks Global's "luxury reset" is occurring in a most difficult climate for change. There is the specter of higher tariffs and rising prices on products. There's widespread fears of a recession this year. And the luxury sector has been soft for the past year and likely to get softer as consumers squirrel away their savings and spend less on discretionary goods. Saks and Neiman Marcus both saw negative sales trends last year.

Still, Metrick expressed confidence that Saks Global will navigate through the challenges. "We're a pretty well battle-tested team," Metrick said, when asked if he's concerned about the macro environment, let alone Saks' own issues.

"In my experience, and I've been at Saks since 1995, I've seen a lot of this. You've got to control what you control. You've got to take care of your people. You've got to take care of your brand partners. You got to take care of your customer. We picked a really good time to have some cost synergies and to be able to strengthen our balance sheet and strengthen our business so we can withstand this. Certainly we're expecting a little bit of turbulence for the next few months. In the back half, it may level off a bit, but we are certainly expecting it to be more challenging than originally thought."

On tariffs, he said: "I think you're going to see increases somewhere in the 10 percent range on luxury goods and in some areas like the contemporary zone, you might even see higher price increases coming through depending on the degree of exposure to China. But the European luxury brands, I think you're going to see

[price increases] somewhere in that 8 to 12 percent range."

President Donald Trump hit the European Union and most of the rest of the world with tariffs of 10 percent, but it's possible brands and designers absorb some of the costs, work with their American subsidiaries and find other ways to minimize the impact of tariffs. Those tariffs could also go higher, pressuring the system all the more.

Vendors are less on edge since Saks announced its new payment plan but are in a wait-and-see mode, hoping that Saks makes good on its promise to be forthcoming with payments on a regular basis. Many brands held back shipments, but since the payment plan was announced in mid-February, at least according to Metrick, the flow of inventory has improved. Aside from paying vendors 90 days after receipt of goods, Saks said the plan is to make good on past due payments beginning July, and in equal 12-month installments. Vendors tend to send shipments to Saks Global more or less on a monthly basis, on average.

On issues with vendors, "Nothing is behind us, but I think we are on a path towards repairing and rebuilding our credibility and relationships with our partners," the CEO told WWD. "March, for example, is when a lot of spring goods comes in. The inventory flow is approaching 2023 levels and it's way better than 2024. You're starting to see it. It's a pulse. It's turning, and there's momentum, though there's a lot of work to do. We have got to rebuild trust. We've got to work with our brand partners. We want to grow and we've got to show up."

Regarding integrations between Saks and Neiman's, Metrick said the company is in the process of re-platforming Neiman Marcus customer data into Saks' systems, creating "one incredibly deep and rich database." He said Saks Global has "sophisticated models" using about 250 data points to build "customer DNA" to inform how the

Saks Fifth Avenue in Beverly Hills.



company interacts with the shopper, be it via email, on social media, online, and through other channels and ways.

Based on its enriched data, the Saks home page is now hyper personalized, through a project called Perso-Lab. So if you log onto saks.com, "it's edited just for you," Metrick said, providing information on new product arrivals, styles in your size, products and brands new to you that based on the data, you might be inclined to check out.

"Data is the most important currency in this next generation of AI and the next push," Metrick said. "It's not about computing power. It's not about how many engineers you have. It's about your data and how organized, how deep, and how well it's architected. So as we bring in the new data, we're enriching what we already know about the consumer and can even better inform their experience."

Saks Global plans to replatform

neimans.com and the bergdorfgoodman.com experiences onto Salesforce.

"Once we do that, we can use the same architecture to make all of those experiences fully personalized," Metrick said. That's expected to happen over the next 18 to 24 months, he noted. Salesforce, along with Amazon, Authentic Brands Group, and G-III helped finance the Saks takeover of the Neiman Marcus Group. Saks also secured a \$2.2 billion bond.

Salesforce quickly installed Agentforce last summer. It's AI-enabled but with a bigger brain than a chatbot and with greater ability to adapt and assist customers with problems and provides answers to questions such as returns, order status and passwords. It knows customers and product policies, and learns more as it continues to take in data. As a byproduct, Agentforce helps lower the volume of shoppers making phone calls to workers at call centers.

Metrick also said the company is piloting synthetic voice, which mimics a human voice, so eventually the goal is to be able to talk to an Agentforce that isn't human, yet they're fully informed, Metrick said. It's an alternative to messaging back and forth via chatbot. "We're training this technology to understand voice inflection and word choice, so it can even understand how angry the customer is, or what mood they're in. It's pretty unbelievable," Metrick said.

In Los Angeles, on Wilshire Boulevard, the company has begun sharing inventory between the Saks and Neiman's stores, enabling associates to pull merchandise from either store, quickly. Metrick said this was a test, though he added: "The goal here is to eventually have this everywhere. This is going to be great for the brands and great for the customer. This is going to drive a lot of growth. And this is going to drive a lot of interaction with brands in the markets."

Metrick did seem inclined to pursue the marketplace channel, for both Saks and Neiman's. At Saks, he said, "It's early days," for the marketplace format. "It's not as high of an index as you think. But it's a model worth exploring and understanding," Metrick said. "Neiman's doesn't have the technology. They don't have the capability to do it yet. They will when we platform them onto Salesforce," Metrick added.

Retailers based on portfolios of brands that try to cut cost and drive efficiencies have – from Gap Inc. to Limited Brands – found their merchandise or marketing starting to look too similar. Metrick seemed aware of the possible pitfall. "Homogenization is the enemy of luxury at scale, and I've said that before, but that's a big one for me. We cannot let these two brands become similar." ■

"Nothing is behind us, but I think we are on a path towards repairing and rebuilding our credibility and relationships with our partners."

MARC METRICK



Neiman Marcus in Fort Worth, Texas.

## BUSINESS

# Retail's Crossroads: Plotting A Course to Redefine Success



Current market conditions are forcing retailers to rethink their number of units.

- Amid inflation, tariffs, shifting consumer behaviors and supply chain upheavals, landlords and retailers are turning challenges into opportunities for reinvention and resilience.

BY ARTHUR ZACZKIEWICZ

The retail industry finds itself at a critical inflection point as it grapples with a global trade war, inflationary pressures, shifting consumer behaviors, supply chain disruptions and the aftershocks of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Yet, amid these significant challenges lie opportunities for reinvention, strategic adaptation and innovation – both for landlords and retailers alike. From redefining space utilization to capitalizing on the rise of off-price retail, industry leaders are finding creative solutions to weather these economic storms, according to executives from Hilco Global.

## Inflation and Consumer Behavior: The Ripple Effect on Retail Real Estate

As retailers and brands try to figure out and manage the impact of a day-to-day changing global trade war, they've been dealing a persistent and nagging problem for businesses and consumers alike: inflation.

For retail real estate, the effects of inflation have been far-reaching, straining both tenant operations and consumer spending patterns. According to Dan O'Brien, executive vice president and partner at Hilco Real Estate, inflation has negatively impacted retailers' top and bottom lines, creating significant distress for those already facing operational challenges. Overexpansion post-COVID-19 and underperforming brick-and-mortar locations have made many retailers reevaluate their real estate portfolios, leading to store closures and cautious approaches to expansion.

Landlords, too, are feeling the pressure.

While some are adjusting lease terms to retain tenants or maintain occupancy, others are hesitating, weighing their options until distress becomes unavoidable. For landlords with high-quality "A" class commercial properties, long-term deals with creditworthy tenants have been the preferred strategy, providing stability amid market chaos. However, where securing such agreements proves elusive, flexible and innovative lease structures are becoming increasingly vital. Variable rent deals, shorter-term leases and even property conversions to residential or hospitality use are emerging as creative ways to hedge against inflationary risks.

## Diversification of Space Utilization: Beyond Traditional Retail

Post-COVID-19, the retail real estate landscape has seen an ongoing diversification of tenants and space usage. "We're seeing shifts away from traditional retail concepts as health and wellness services, education centers, dining establishments and even e-commerce fulfillment centers take over once-retail-dominated spaces," O'Brien said, adding that vacant department stores and large anchor spaces, in particular, are being transformed, with landlords backfilling these properties with tenants from non-retail sectors, such as logistics centers, trade schools and medical service providers.

Dining and quick-service restaurant concepts have also risen to prominence, as delivery services and changing consumer dining habits redefine what retail spaces can offer. This shift underscores a growing emphasis on experience-driven and service-oriented tenants who can complement the broader retail ecosystem.

## Resilience Amid Bankruptcy Reshuffles

Meanwhile, retail bankruptcies, while devastating for some, are creating opportunities for others. According to Raymundo Armendariz, chief operating

officer of Hilco Consumer Retail, the wave of closures – from department stores to mid-tier chains – has opened up opportunities for off-price and discount retailers. Brands such as T.J. Maxx, Burlington and Ross Stores are capitalizing on this moment, expanding their footprints by taking advantage of below-market-rate leases and acquiring surplus inventory from faltering competitors. These off-price retailers thrive by offering a sense of discovery and budget-friendly price points, proving particularly enticing in today's inflationary environment.

This dynamic has positioned the off-price sector as a beacon of resilience and adaptability. Unlike their e-commerce-reliant counterparts, these retailers continue doubling down on the in-store experience – a move that aligns consumer needs with a penchant for value-driven shopping.

## Navigating Supply Chain Challenges with Nearshoring and Technology

Supply chain complexities remain a persistent challenge for retailers. Inventory surpluses and rising tariff costs have forced businesses to negotiate tough trade-offs. As Armendariz noted, in the pre-tariff chaos period, the vulnerability of global supply chains had already accelerated interest in nearshoring – relocating production closer to demand centers in Mexico, Central America and South America. And the reason was that nearshoring not only reduces delivery timelines, but also enhances flexibility for inventory management at a time when agility is critical.

While investments in nearshoring may be on hold until trade war settles out, investments in technology will likely continue as it reshapes the retail landscape. Advanced predictive analytics, artificial intelligence and inventory optimization tools enable retailers to manage resources more effectively, streamline operations and engage consumers with precision. In an era defined by fluctuating demand and financial pressure, these innovations are no longer optional; they've become essential, the Hilco executives said.

## Adapting to Evolving Consumer Dynamics

Consumer behavior is also shifting, with the rise of the resale market introducing both challenges and opportunities for traditional retailers. Platforms such as ThredUp, Poshmark and The RealReal are appealing to consumers seeking both affordability and sustainability. This trend underscores the importance of experience, affordability and value as drivers of customer loyalty. Retailers unable to adapt risk losing ground to these emerging competitors, particularly in the fashion and luxury goods sectors.

Another noticeable and recent shift, according to consumer data from Klaviyo, a marketing automation platform provider, reveals an expected decline in consumer spending across all verticals, "with more than a third [of respondents] planning to buy now before prices go up."

Due to tariffs, inflation and other factors, 83 percent of those polled said they expect to pull back on spending in the coming weeks. Authors of the report said consumers polled have "a different theory

about what the impact of tariffs will be, but 35 percent plan to buy now before prices go up" and 25 percent of respondents said they "are waiting to see if prices actually increase." Of those polled, 28 percent said they plan to wait "and potentially switch to cheaper alternatives."

The report's authors said the impact of reduced spending "is being seen across every vertical – likely due to recent periods of high inflation plus tariff conversations." The data revealed that 61 percent of respondents say they plan to cut down their spending at restaurants, followed by 47 percent on clothing/accessories and 41 percent on travel/hotels. "The good news is more than a quarter (28 percent) plan to remain loyal to their preferred brands, but they expect transparency and meaningful benefits in return," the report stated.

"The best way to keep respondents loyal are frequent discounts or promotional offers (54 percent), better prices (33 percent) and consistent product quality (37 percent)," the report's authors said, adding that the two biggest communication asks for brands right now "are transparent pricing updates and clear info about delays or supply chain issues."

Jake Cohen, head of industry and insights at Klaviyo, said consumers aren't just price-conscious right now. "They're turning to brands they trust first, and they're looking for guidance," Cohen said. "Brands need to use this moment in time to connect with their customers and start a two-way dialogue. Be transparent about pricing and supply chain challenges and find meaningful ways to reward customer loyalty. For many brands, this could be a big opportunity to build stronger and more authentic relationships with their customer base that can convert later down the line."

## Reimagining Retail for the Future

Amid the disruption and changes in consumer behavior, retail real estate players need to adapt, which O'Brien said is the key to thriving. Whether it's landlords investing in property upgrades to attract high-end tenants or retailers expanding into discount and off-price sectors, the industry is recalibrating its strategies for future resilience. As O'Brien noted, maintaining tenant retention and optimizing space usage remain top priorities, while investments in technology and diversification of tenant mixes offer long-term stability.

On the retailer side, as Armendariz highlights, embracing agility – through nearshoring, tech adoption and reimagined inventory management – is critical to navigating these turbulent times. The sector is poised not merely to recover, but to redefine success in an age of constant disruption.

As the retail industry stands at a pivotal juncture where adaptability and innovation are no longer optional, but essential, retailers, brands and landlords need to rethink traditional models of doing business. From landlords diversifying space utilization to retailers embracing technology, nearshoring and off-price expansions, key leaders need to transform distress into opportunity.

Consumer loyalty will likely favor those who prioritize transparency, affordability and meaningful engagement. As the sector recalibrates, the focus on resilience and reinvention will hopefully pave the way for sustainable growth in a rapidly evolving landscape. Retail's future may not lie in returning to its past, but in embracing a more agile, experience-driven and value-oriented paradigm. It may have no other choice.

# SJ DENIM

SOURCING JOURNAL

THE SUMMER ISSUE



The SJ Denim Summer Issue delves into the complexities of “*Made in USA*” denim, exploring how trade wars, rising costs and labor shortages are challenging its production.

#### ALSO IN THE ISSUE

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**A check in with men’s denim brands for the latest trends in fits and washes**

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**Meet the vintage retailers who are preserving denim’s rich heritage through their carefully curated collections**

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**The brands supporting LGBTQ+ organizations during Pride Month and beyond.**

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**The fabric report—spotlighting the important dye and fiber innovations shaping Fall/Winter 2026-2027 denim**

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Align your brand with the trends and voices driving denim forward.

#### CONTACT

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Here, right and below:  
Maren Morris getting  
ready for Coachella 2025.



# Backstage With Maren Morris At Coachella

The singer-songwriter was getting ready to perform with Zedd on Sunday night. BY RYMA CHIKHOUNE PHOTOGRAPHS BY LEXIE MORELAND

The genre-blending style of Grammy-winning American singer-songwriter Maren Morris was on full display at Coachella this year.

On Sunday, she joined German DJ and producer Zedd on stage at the music festival for their 2018 hit “The Middle” – a high-energy pop anthem driven by a pulsing beat and infectious hook, anchored by Morris’ soulful, emotive vocals. The day before, she stepped into golden hour alongside conductor Gustavo Dudamel and the Los Angeles Philharmonic to sing her double-platinum breakout, “My Church,” backed by a gospel choir.

“I was nervous just because it’s such a different thing than I’m used to, that many players in the orchestra,” she said, in her tour bus backstage as she was getting ready to perform with Zedd. “But, I mean, I felt so held by all of the talent on that stage and the gospel choir. I didn’t feel lonely. Sometimes as an artist, you’re just kind of up there on your own, and that was just such a wall of emotion and sound behind me, so, I just felt really protected.”

She wore a metallic gold Paco Rabanne number for the occasion, glowing with the sunset. She works with stylist Dani Michelle.

“Yesterday was very ethereal,” she said of the look. “Hair was very bombshell. And I just wanted to feel goddess-like. Today feels like the evil twin,” she joked to laughs. She was surrounded by her glam team who were making last-minute touch-ups, with Kristine Studden on makeup and Amanda Lee on hair.

“Sex hair,” Morris said of her long, wavy locks – courtesy of Priscilla Valles’ extensions and Matt Rez behind the collar.

But first came the dress, which inspired the dark shadow and nude, glossy lips for night two: archival Alexander Wang.

“I just put it on, and I felt like, ‘This feels like a moment with Zedd,’” she went on. Black and sheer, it featured dramatic fringe detailing that added movement on stage.

“It’s the last night of the weekend,” she continued. “I’m excited to dance around the stage tonight, and I don’t know, I just felt sexy and comfortable in it. Hopefully it won’t fall,” she said, as the dress was being adjusted.

Morris, now 35, was only 10 when she started singing in country bars, growing up in Arlington, Texas. She wrote, played guitar, and at the age of 15, released her first studio record, “Walk On,” through indie label Mozzi Blozzi.

But years of performing from such a young age took its toll, prompting her move to Nashville for a new chapter. There, she wrote songs for music artists like Kelly Clarkson and Tim McGraw – but “My Church” she kept for herself, self-releasing it on Spotify, which changed the course of her life. Blending country, gospel and soul influences, the song became an instant success and ultimately helped her land a deal with Columbia Nashville records.

Then came “Hero” in 2016, her major-label debut album. With “My Church” as the lead single, it reached number one on the Billboard country chart and number five on Billboard 200. It also brought her four Grammy nominations a year later, taking home “Best Country Solo Performance.” Tracks like “80s Mercedes” brought in pop and R&B sounds, while



others like “Rich” had hip-hop-inspired cadences.

Now she’s in her next era – shaped by her personal life, following a divorce and coming out as bisexual. Her newest record “Dreamsicle,” out May 9, brought her a sense of peace, helping her ease anxieties she had been facing.

“[I was] all over the place, per usual,” she said, reflecting on her mental state during the making of the project. “Just all the feelings of breakup aftermath, holding down the fort for myself and my son, and picking the pieces back up, and learning to see the humor in things again and, yeah, just

rebuilding.” She’s a mom to a 5-year-old, who she shares with ex-husband Ryan Hurd.

“It’s more producers on this record than I’ve had previously,” she revealed, “but it’s all still very me. It’s ambitious and emotional. It’s honest work.”

Her next single, “Bed No Breakfast,” is out Friday.

“[It’s] my cheeky little song about wanting personal space after personal closeness,” she later told press. “It’s about a right to your own comforts on your own terms, even while having some good-natured fun with somebody. Drunk girls don’t cry. They kick you out.”

# WWD Weekend

COMING THIS SUMMER, the WWD Weekend Time & Travel Issue is your ultimate guide to luxury, travel, and time well spent. From high-end watches and statement accessories to the latest in beauty on the move, this issue explores the season's most coveted trends. We'll dive into London's ever-evolving luxury scene, from must-visit destinations to the newest openings shaping the city's style landscape. Plus, we'll spotlight the best in summer entertaining, beyond-the-beach getaways, and the latest innovations from Watches & Wonders. As summer kicks off, the issue will be distributed in the Hamptons and London, offering a prime platform to showcase your brand to a global, style-driven audience.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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# TIME & TRAVEL ISSUE



CLOSE MAY 9 • MATERIALS MAY 16 • PUBLISH MAY 24 • DISTRIBUTION LONDON + HAMPTONS

# WWD

# Fashion Scoops

A larger-than-life Zendaya stars in Louis Vuitton's resort 2025 campaign.



## Big Time

Larger-than-life celebrity reaches a new zenith in Louis Vuitton's resort 2025 campaign, where a Godzilla-scale Zendaya lords over idyllic Italian beach scapes.

The images break in select print titles on Sunday, and will be broadcast on Vuitton's social-media channels from May 16.

Photographers Inez Van Lamsweerde and Vinoodh Matadin captured Zendaya, who is posed "amidst cinematic scenes from the Italian Riviera," according to Vuitton, which is leaving some mystery as to how the actress was superimposed on a sandy beach appointed with lounge chairs and beach umbrellas — all dwarfed by her endless legs and her leather and wicker Capucines bag.

In one scene, she wears a short LBD with an open back and embroidery details with barely there leather tong sandals, her toes almost touching the tantalizing blue water.

Lina Kutsovskaya of creative agency BeGood Studios is credited with art direction, Law Roach for styling, Ursula Stephen for hair and Ernesto Casillas for makeup.

"Zendaya portrays the desire for travel that makes the resort collection so true to the spirit of Louis Vuitton," according to the brand.

Nicolas Ghesquière, Vuitton's artistic director of women's collections, unveiled the resort 2025 collection last May at Barcelona's Park Güell, the fairy-tale gardens designed by modernist architect Antoni Gaudí.

Zendaya, best known for "Euphoria," "Dune" and "Challengers," became a Vuitton ambassador in 2023, first appearing in a

campaign for its bestselling Capucines handbag.

More recently she was the face for two drops of the reedition of Vuitton's collaboration with Japanese artist Takashi Murakami, which introduced the multicolored monogram to new generations — or for those who missed the original 2003 tie-up.

— MILES SOCHA

## They Love L.A.

Khaite is coming to Los Angeles. And it's not alone.

The New York-based luxury fashion company, founded in 2016 by Catherine Holstein, is taking over the former Gucci Salon store on Melrose Place. And just next door, Thom Browne — replacing By Far — is marking a third location in California on Melrose Place after opening in Costa Mesa at South Coast Plaza and San Francisco.

Khaite, which opened in Dallas in September, officially landed on the West Coast at South Coast Plaza last month and is expanding to L.A. at 8409 Melrose Avenue.

A couple of blocks away, Jacquemus is also making its West Coast debut this year. The French brand, created by Simon Porte Jacquemus in 2009, is hosting a cocktail event in celebration of the news next week. Located at 8804 Melrose Avenue, it's in a 4,000-square-foot building that previously housed a Fwrd pop-up. Sitting on the corner of Robertson Boulevard, it's across from Cecconi's and near John Elliott, Chrome Hearts, A Bathing Ape and Acne Studios by the Melrose Triangle.

Staud will be just steps away from Jacquemus at 8816 Melrose Avenue, taking over Eskandar in a more than 1,000-square-foot space. It's an expansion for Staud creative director and L.A. native Sarah Staudinger, who opened her first store in L.A. on Melrose Place.

Guess also is coming to Melrose. It's hard to miss its giant barricade, showcasing denim jeans on the corner of San Vicente Boulevard. The brand, headed up by Nicolai Marciano, has existing locations nearby in Beverly Hills on North

Khaite's new store in Dallas.



Beverly Drive and Westfield Century City mall.

French-based Casablanca is also coming to L.A., recently announcing the opening of its first U.S. store at 469 North Canon Drive in Beverly Hills in July. — RYMA CHIKHOUNE

## Down The Road

Luxury brands are flocking to New Bond Street and Rimowa is adding to the shifts.

The German luxury luggage brand opened its new store on the street after relocating from down the road.

The new space spans across five floors with a dedicated area for client care that includes repairs such as telescopic handle adjustments, zipper changes, and access to replacement wheels, locks and handles.

A lifetime guarantee on suitcases was introduced by the brand in 2022.

The New Bond Street store space has a high-tech meets handmade aesthetic with the use of metal, terrazzo, glass and wood.

The store stocks all of Rimowa's luggage lines, which have been presented in a gallery-like display.

To celebrate the opening of the London store, the brand has produced a limited-edition version of the Original Cabin Silver

featuring an oversized monogram and laser-etched store coordinates. The monogram is in a green shade that's inspired by the city's greenery and parks.

As reported, Europe's big luxury names are playing the long game on New Bond Street, stockpiling their cash and preparing to pounce on an ever-dwindling number of prime retail properties with flagship potential, according to real estate experts.

Prada Holdings' 250 million pounds planned purchase of the Miu Miu site at 150 New Bond Street is the latest power move in a race to buy real estate that began more than a decade ago in London, and other key international shopping cities.

Over the past 10 years, LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton, Richemont, Kering and Swatch Group have all bought at least one property on Bond Street, but they're hungry for more. — HIKMAT MOHAMMED

## Reva's Return

After making an appearance at the designer's spring 2025 runway show in New York last fall, Tory Burch is bringing back her iconic Reva ballet flat to retail.

According to the American designer, she has tapped Ssense to reintroduce the famed shoe

style that took over the 2000s, as well as serve as the brand's exclusive North American retail partner for her spring 2025 runway collection.

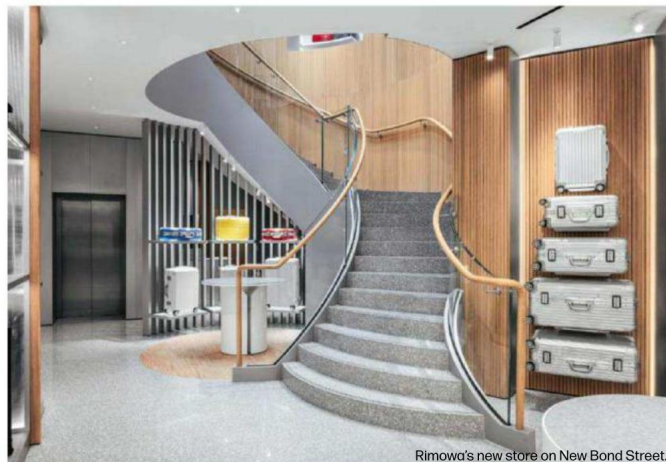
Originally designed in 2006 with the help of the late Vince Camuto — and named for Burch's mother — the medallion-clad Reva became synonymous with early 2000s style, worn by celebrities and young professionals navigating the city.

In the first two years on the market, Burch sold 250,000 pairs, retailing them for \$195. By 2013, more than 5 million Revas had sold.

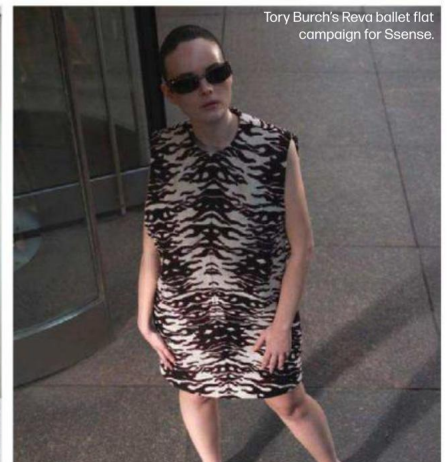
"I never thought I'd be famous for a shoe," my mother, Reva, said when our ballet debuted in 2006. Now it's back. I love you, mom. You are divine and sublime," Burch wrote in her show notes in September.

The Reva ballet flat has not been available in recent years — until now. The spring 2025 style has been relaunched with some modern updates, too, including a sharper silhouette and knife-beveled hardware. Along with the slipper, Burch also designed a slip-on Reva ballet mule in glossy patent leather.

"The ballerina trend has blown up the last few years and we've seen big success in the product category," Brigitte Chartrand, vice president of womenswear ►



Rimowa's new store on New Bond Street.



Tory Burch's Reva ballet flat campaign for Ssense.



The Feed x Minnow tote bag.

buying and 'everything else' for Ssense, said in a statement. "We're always looking for ways to meet demand while applying our unique point of view and adding a fresh perspective to big trends, and Tory bringing back the iconic Reva flat in a really modern way – for example, styling it with judo pants on the runway, and adopting a new mule-style – does exactly that."

Chartrand added that when she met Burch last year, she was "blown away" by her collaborative nature and humble leadership. "I saw firsthand her ability to absorb creativity around her and truly consider who the 'Tory girl' is while developing the spring 2025

collection," the executive said.

To mark the launch, John Yuyi photographed Margeaux Labat, Micaela Wittman and Renée Bellerive passing through the revolving door of a New York skyscraper in a new campaign. In motion and occasionally obscured through the glass, the model's styled their Revas with low-slung trousers, sequined swimsuits and sheer knits from Tory Burch's spring 2025 collection.

The Tory Burch Reva ballet flat, which retails for \$348, and the Reva ballet mule, which retails for \$268, is now available globally on Ssense.com. —STEPHEN GARNER

## For Moms

Minnow, a family lifestyle brand, has partnered with Feed, the mission-driven line of bags founded by Lauren Bush Lauren. They have created The Mother Bag, a limited-edition tote designed for moms and those on the go, that also gives back.

The blue-and-white gingham tote is available only on Minnow and Feed's websites, retailing for \$125. With every purchase, 10 school meals are donated to children in need, staying true to Feed's impactful mission.

"We've absolutely loved partnering with Feed to bring this special limited-edition summer carryall to

life. As a brand founded by a fellow mom, we understand the need for something timeless and functional to carry you through every family adventure. What makes the 'mother bag' even more meaningful is knowing that each one helps provide school meals to children in need – a mission we're so proud to support alongside Feed," said Morgan Smith, founder and chief executive officer of Minnow.

Lauren Bush Lauren, CEO and cofounder of Feed Projects, said, "It has been so fun to work with the Minnow team to create the perfect limited-edition summer carryall bag in their iconic gingham print. As a mom, I know how much stuff we need to tote around for all the fun adventures with our kiddos, so this bag will definitely be my go-to this summer. And of course, true to the Feed model, each bag will help provide school meals to kids." —LISA LOCKWOOD

## Active Model

Elite World Group, the fashion talent management network, is getting active and into fashion collections.

The company on Thursday unveiled a partnership with Italian sportswear and activewear brand Freddy, which it characterized as a licensing agreement to develop apparel and fashion pieces.

The first joint effort is a capsule comprising women's and men's ready-to-wear aimed at an active – as well as casual – lifestyle.

"With Freddy x Elite, we give tangible form to our vision: bringing excellence and innovation together in far-reaching projects," said Paolo Barbieri, chief executive officer of Elite World Group. "We are proud to bring Elite's distinctive elegance into the dynamic world of sports and streetwear. That's why we chose Freddy – an iconic Italian brand known for its ability to combine design, functionality and artisanal attention to detail."

The capsule includes a female seamless jumpsuit crafted using the patented WR.UP technology that enhances the body shape in movement, as well as an off-white tracksuit with black details and "Freddy Elite" branding splashed on the loose, cropped sweatshirt. In the men's offering, the Freddy x Elite lineup includes a blue hooded tracksuit as well as a black casual outfit, both with off-white details.

Unisex pieces such as a T-shirt and sweater, in addition to a tote bag

Alexandra Cunningham Cameron



and socks, round off the collection.

"This collaboration represents the natural evolution of a path that has always seen Freddy as a pioneer in merging style and performance," said Carlo Freddi, founder and president of the Italian brand. "Elite is a symbol of excellence in the fashion world, and we are proud to bring our Made in Italy expertise to a collection that celebrates movement as an expression of personality and talent."

The Freddy x Elite capsule collection dropped on Thursday exclusively on the fashion brand's e-commerce. —MARTINO CARRERA

## Home Run

Cultured Magazine, the independent art, design and architecture magazine that broke onto the scene in 2012, is gearing up to launch its first volume of Cultured at Home. Slated for October, the new annual design-focused print edition will be guest edited by Alexandra Cunningham Cameron, curator of contemporary design at the Cooper-Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum.

Cultured's founder Sarah Harrelson said the home version will capture the art of domestic life, where design shapes culture.

"Cultured has always considered the art and objects we live with to be central to one's point of view. With this new annual publication, we will further highlight the creatives who power the world, looking deeply at the environments they create for themselves," she remarked in a press statement sent to WWD Thursday.

The first issue will be distributed at art and design fairs, including Design Miami/ Paris and Salon Art + Design, as well as in galleries, design

showrooms and luxury hotels. Cultured has also planned a series of events to celebrate the issue, including private dinners at featured homes in New York, Miami and Los Angeles, panel discussions targeting industry VIPs and more.

Cunningham Cameron said the aim is to put forth a new perspective. "Approaching domestic life as a site for acting out, shaped by evolving aesthetics, reinvention and the interplay of history and progress, we will bring together an expansive mix of interiors, exteriors, objects and design ideas redefining our time," she said.

Contributors of the first edition include designers such as Adam Charlapp Hyman, Sam Chermayeff and Carlos Soto; Apartamento cofounder Omar Sosa Bartolome, and design director Erin Knutson alongside critical voices in contemporary art MoMA's Ruba Katrib and Jarrett Earnest.

An appetite for personalized interiors, heightened by the COVID-19 pandemic, has led to the launch of several new home publications. On Wednesday, The Grand Tourist with Dan Rubinstein podcast announced it will unveil its first print publication. Salone del Mobile.Milano, which closed Sunday, saw the debut of the first issue of Foster, launched under the Phoenix publishing house. Spearheaded by former Marie Claire Maison Italia editor in chief and local personality Csaba dalla Zorza, Foster's content is centered on all things lifestyle, with curated sections stretching from design to food, from fashion to travels. In 2023, Grazia U.K. announced the launch of Grazia Casa, following a marked uptick in interiors content online at graziadaily.co.uk. —SOFIA CELESTE ■



The Freddy x Elite capsule collection.