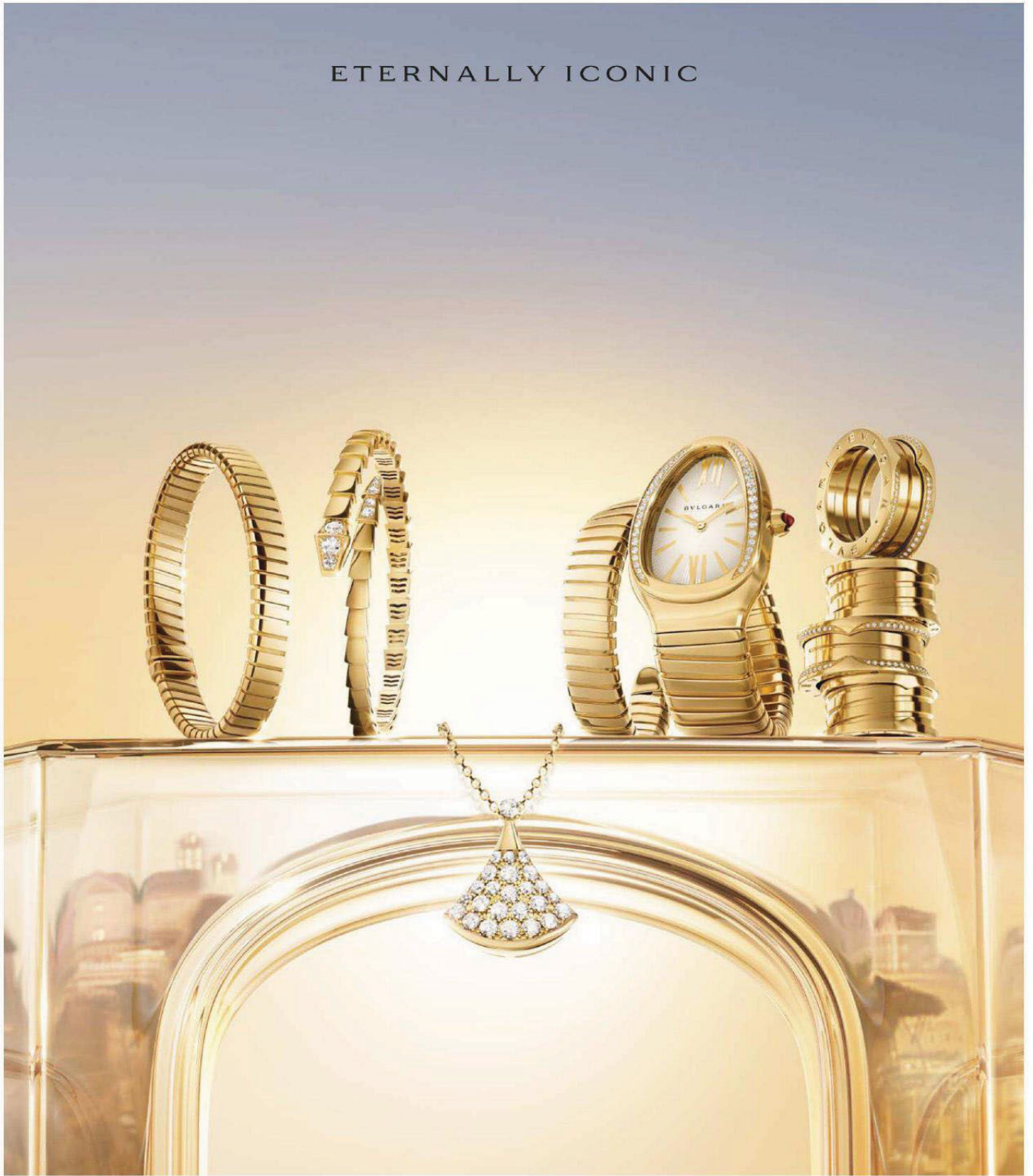


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Fashion. Beauty. Business.

'Turning Point'?

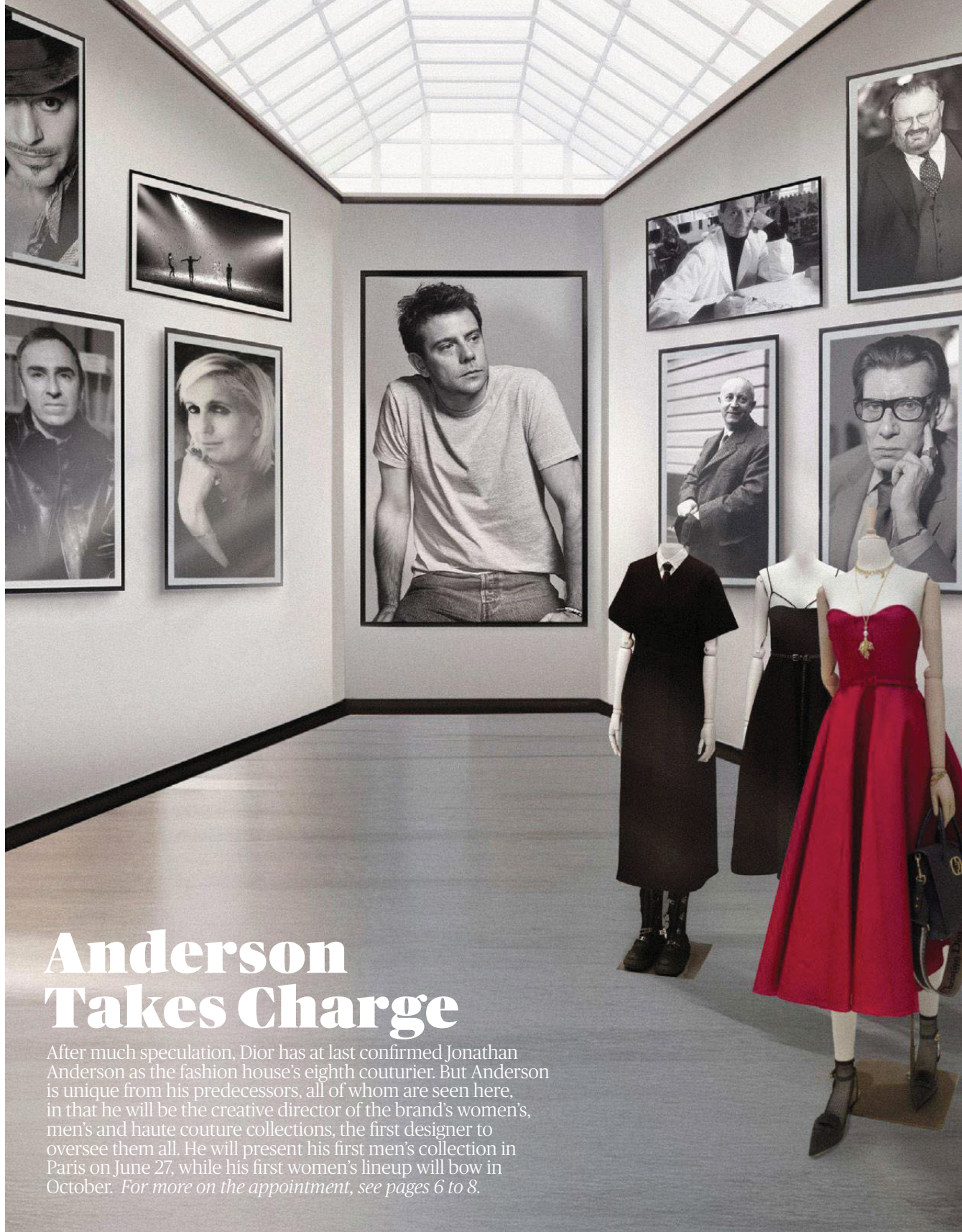
Saks Global CEO Marc Metrick said the retailer "has cleared the path for growth" with a new credit agreement in hand and 2024 figures unveiled. **Page 2**

New Project

Matthew A. Williams will debut an eponymous women's and men's brand during Paris Men's Fashion Week later this month. **Page 18**

Riyadh Summit

WWD x Fashion Futures hosted a Global Fashion & Beauty Summit in the Saudi capital with international and local designers and executives. **Pages 10 to 16**



Anderson Takes Charge

After much speculation, Dior has at last confirmed Jonathan Anderson as the fashion house's eighth couturier. But Anderson is unique from his predecessors, all of whom are seen here, in that he will be the creative director of the brand's women's, men's and haute couture collections, the first designer to oversee them all. He will present his first men's collection in Paris on June 27, while his first women's lineup will bow in October. *For more on the appointment, see pages 6 to 8.*



Marc Metrick

BUSINESS

Saks Global Hits 'Turning Point,' According to CEO Marc Metrick

- With a new credit agreement in hand and 2024 results in the books, Metrick told WWD, "We cleared the air and we've cleared the path for growth."

BY EVAN CLARK

Marc Metrick sees bright skies ahead for Saks Global.

Of course, he would. As chief executive officer of the still-new combination of Saks and Neiman Marcus with plans to "reset" luxury retailing, he has a big stake in that future.

But since Saks bought Neiman's in a \$2.7 billion deal two days before Christmas, the narrative around the company has been less about reinvention than it has been about finances – from when it will pay vendors and how quickly it can cut costs to the rapid decline in its bond price and the race to shore up its liquidity.

Now, with financial results for 2024 in the books and some new financing coming into place, Metrick is hoping to put some of the balance sheet minutia aside and be more of the visionary CEO.

"Today is the turning point," Metrick told WWD in an exclusive interview on Friday following a conference call with bondholders covering year-end results. "We cleared the air and we've cleared the path for growth. Saks is on very good footing, well underway on repairing and strengthening our brand partnerships, rebuilding trust with our brands. The balance sheet is now something that people should not worry about. There's

\$700 million of liquidity."

Just how much brands and bondholders and other investors will worry about the balance sheet now remains to be seen. The story at Saks has changed before, with dreams of a transformed luxury landscape chased by financial strain.

But investors seemed to take heart. According to FINRA, Saks' bonds were going for more than 47 cents on the dollar on Friday. That's still low, but up significantly from under 39 cents earlier in the week.

And certainly some of the burden has been relieved.

Saks has a \$120 million bond interest payment due next month, another \$120 million payment due in December and promises to make \$275 million in back payments to vendors to stack up against that \$700 million.

Half of the liquidity comes from \$350 million in financing Saks secured late Thursday. The package included a \$300 million FILO facility that was carved out of Saks' asset backed lending facility as well as a \$50 million secured term loan, both from SLR Credit Solutions.

"Saks is in it and we're going to do something great," Metrick said. "The most important thing to me is reestablishing the credibility that we have with our partners and [realizing] synergies well ahead of plan."

The company plans to cut \$600 million out of its annual cost base over the next five years by trimming down as Neiman's is integrated into Saks. That's \$100 million more than initially envisioned. By the end of the year, Saks plans to have cut costs by a run-rate of \$285 million.

Metrick is out on the highwire, looking to perform one more trick.

Already Saks pulled off what many thought was impossible, fulfilling a long-held dream of executive chairman Richard Baker's, the force behind the company. Without enough cash to pay vendors and with sales in decline, Saks managed to raise enough debt to buy the much stronger Neiman's.

The company now has total borrowings of \$4.3 billion, including \$1 billion drawn from an asset-backed lending facility, \$2.2 billion in bonds due in 2029 and a \$1.3 billion non-recourse mortgage on the Saks Fifth Avenue Manhattan flagship.

Now, it's cutting costs and updating its business model so it can afford that debt and fulfill the dream of a new luxury retail landscape.

Fortune is said to favor the bold and Metrick and Baker are certainly that.

But to work, their plans will have to be backed up by a growing business.

Some of Saks' allies are already feeling better.

Gary Wassner, CEO of Hildun Corp., was continued to support Saks as one of the few factors willing to finance shipments of goods to the company.

"I am approving orders with much more sureness," Wassner said. "With the cost-cutting measures they're putting into effect, and the synergies between the now-merged entities that are already impacting them positively, they now have more of a runway to achieve the full savings and efficiencies that they initially predicted would greatly improve their cash flow and profitability.

"We should all want Saks Global to succeed," he said. "No one benefits if it fails. It dominates the U.S. luxury and designer market. The merged companies got off to a rough start, for sure. And everyone felt the stress, and many suffered from the situation. Now it's up to management to take advantage of their positioning, rebuild confidence in the market, and start making money."

For the year ended Feb. 1, Saks said revenues totaled \$3.8 billion. That included about \$432 million in sales from Neiman Marcus Group, which was acquired on Dec. 23.

The "credit group" – the company's main business, including Saks Fifth Avenue, Neiman Marcus, Bergdorf Goodman and

the Saks Off 5th brick-and-mortar stores, which are all financed collectively – produced sales of \$3.5 billion for the year.

Incorporating Neiman's business for the whole year, sales fell 10 percent to \$7.3 billion. Gross profit margins for the main business stood at 41 percent on a combined basis in 2024, an improvement of 80 basis points that was driven by lower markdowns and more concession sales.

While cutting price markdowns is a continual goal for retailers, Saks got there in the wrong way.

The company's slow – or non-existent – payments cut off the flow of goods to its stores and website, which according to one source, did not receive \$650 million worth of inventory that it otherwise would have last year.

Going forward, Saks does not intend to keep leaning into concessions, but plans keep migrating toward a new approach.

"We're looking to reinvent the model," Metrick said. "It's not concession. It's not wholesale. What's the new model look like? The brands are excited to do that. Obviously for us, we have to figure out what's the best model for us to have all the data control, the customer experience, all that."

Saks made one key change right away and extended payment terms to vendors to 90 days from 30 days.

While that change, coming after years of slow payment from Saks, caused an uproar when it was rolled out in February, it also helped the company play catch-up with its suppliers.

The longer terms essentially gave Saks a \$600 million boost – \$400 million of which went to pay off past-due bills while the other \$200 million was included with working capital, a source said.

Now the company is said to owe \$275 million to vendors from past shipments and plans to start paying that down over a year of monthly installments, starting in July. (There have been reports that Saks owed \$1.3 billion in back bills last summer, but a source said that was the company's total payables at the time).

Saks said that its inventory flow was now "steadily improving" and that that led to a pick-up in sales later in the first quarter. The trend is expected to "normalize through summer and into its fall inventory build."

Selling, general and administrative expenses came in at 42 percent of revenues last year, an increase of about 30 basis points, primarily due to the legacy Saks operations.

All that boiled down to adjusted losses before interest, taxes and depreciation of \$102 million, which included \$42 million in earnings from Neiman's during the last six weeks of the year.

On a combined basis, adjusted EBITDA totaled \$161 million for the year, with Neiman's profits covering up for Saks' business' deficit.

Saks snagged Neiman's. Now, Metrick has to make the whole thing work.

The transformation at Saks has included a new storefront on Amazon.





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BUSINESS

Chalhoub Group Reports Middle East Luxury Sales Grow to \$12.8B

- Michael Chalhoub shares his outlook on the region's defiant growth and the company's strategy to reach \$15 billion by 2027.

BY RITU UPADHYAY

DUBAI – The Gulf region saw 6 percent growth in luxury sales to \$12.8 billion last year, in sharp contrast to global markets, which saw a 2 percent decline.

New market data released by Chalhoub Group reveals the region's luxury ecosystem is one of the strongest globally, powered by the beauty segment's explosive growth, sustained tourist spending, and aggressive retail expansion that defied the headwinds hammering luxury markets from New York to Shanghai.

"The Gulf region's outperformance is not just a short-term rebound but the result of several structural tailwinds that we believe are sustainable," said Michael Chalhoub, who took over as the company's chief executive officer in January. He sat down with WWD to detail the findings of its report "GCC Personal Luxury 2024: Unstoppable" and break down the sharp eight-point performance gap between the region and the rest of the world.

Beauty Boom Drives Category Growth

Within the region's luxury landscape, beauty emerged as the standout performer with 12 percent growth, led specifically by skin care's 17 percent surge. Asian beauty brands in the region grew 26 percent annually from 2022 to 2024 – far outpacing Western markets, which rose 15 percent, according to the report. These numbers drive business strategy.

"We're aiming at accelerating skin care growth in the region, particularly through high-potential segments like wellness and Asian beauty," Chalhoub explained.

The company is doubling down on localized social and influencer marketing, noting that over 90 percent of Gen Z consumers in the Gulf region use Instagram, YouTube, or TikTok in their skin care journey. "We are working closely with global partners to tailor brand strategies to local market dynamics and to co-develop go-to-market approaches that ensure price consistency and an optimized channel mix across our 6,000-plus point of sale network."

Saudi Arabia: The Strategic Priority

While beauty drives the growth narrative, luxury fashion brands – Louis Vuitton, Dior, Hermès, Chanel, and Loro Piana – represent over half of the fashion market in the Gulf states.

Perhaps nowhere are Chalhoub's strategic ambitions more evident than in Saudi Arabia, which currently represents only 18 percent of the regional luxury market but saw double-digit growth in 2024.

"Saudi Arabia represents one of the most exciting frontiers for luxury globally, driven by a young, digitally engaged population, deep national pride, and a rapidly evolving cultural and retail landscape," Chalhoub said. "It is a market where authenticity matters. With most of the population made up of Saudi nationals, we focus on co-creating culturally resonant experiences and championing local creativity."

Chalhoub's incubator Fashion Lab supported 10 homegrown Saudi brands in 2024 through partnership with the Saudi Fashion Commission's 100 Brands initiative. The company has scaled its Saudi workforce to nearly 5,000 team members, 70 percent of whom are women.

Retail real estate has also matured with the opening of flagship projects like Solitaire Mall, exemplifying a shift toward immersive, experience-led retail ecosystems. "We are starting to see the results of our investments in Saudi Arabia over the past few years, with this exciting double-digit growth, but there is room for more," he said.

Digital Transformation and Reinvention Strategy

While the Gulf region's e-commerce penetration lags global averages at 13 percent versus 20 percent, it's growing rapidly at 13 percent annually and represents Chalhoub's primary growth vector.

"To support rapid growth and omnichannel expectations, we are investing heavily in infrastructure and innovation," said Chalhoub. A new logistics hub will significantly enhance last-mile delivery capabilities.

The company is also implementing AI and automation while maintaining "white glove services," doubling down on their micro-fulfillment center strategy to bring two-hour delivery to Dubai and Riyadh.

Chalhoub's technology commitment extends to rolling out more artificial intelligence initiatives. "We've hired a



head of AI and put in place an AI strategy with nine specific areas where we want to use AI for the group. We're launching a proprietary Gen AI tool to support customer service," he revealed.

Tourism Dynamics Drive Growth

The regional luxury market's resilience partly stems from evolving tourism patterns. Russian tourists remain the top luxury spenders in the UAE as economic sanctions have restricted their European travel options, while regional consumers have dramatically shifted their spending patterns since COVID-19.

"Regional tourism is also a big part of the UAE luxury sector," added Chalhoub.

Before the pandemic, nearly 66 percent of Gulf nationals shopped for luxury fashion abroad, mostly in Europe. Now, two-thirds prefer regional shopping due to improved pricing and luxury experiences.

"To meet those needs of luxury globetrotters, we are building elevated end-to-end customer journeys both offline and online," explained Chalhoub, pointing to initiatives like the Elite Styling Lounge in Dubai Mall, which offers curated private shopping experiences.

The company works closely with brand partners to merchandise collections based on location, with Dubai Mall – which welcomed 111 million visitors in 2024 – receiving different assortments than other locations to cater to tourists versus local consumers.

Looking Ahead to 2027

With the Gulf region's personal luxury market projected to reach \$15 billion by 2027, Chalhoub Group's roadmap includes continued retail expansion with eight new luxury malls planned in Saudi Arabia and the UAE, new category development in wellness and Asian beauty, and accelerated e-commerce growth.

The challenge lies in maintaining regional dominance and successfully expanding.

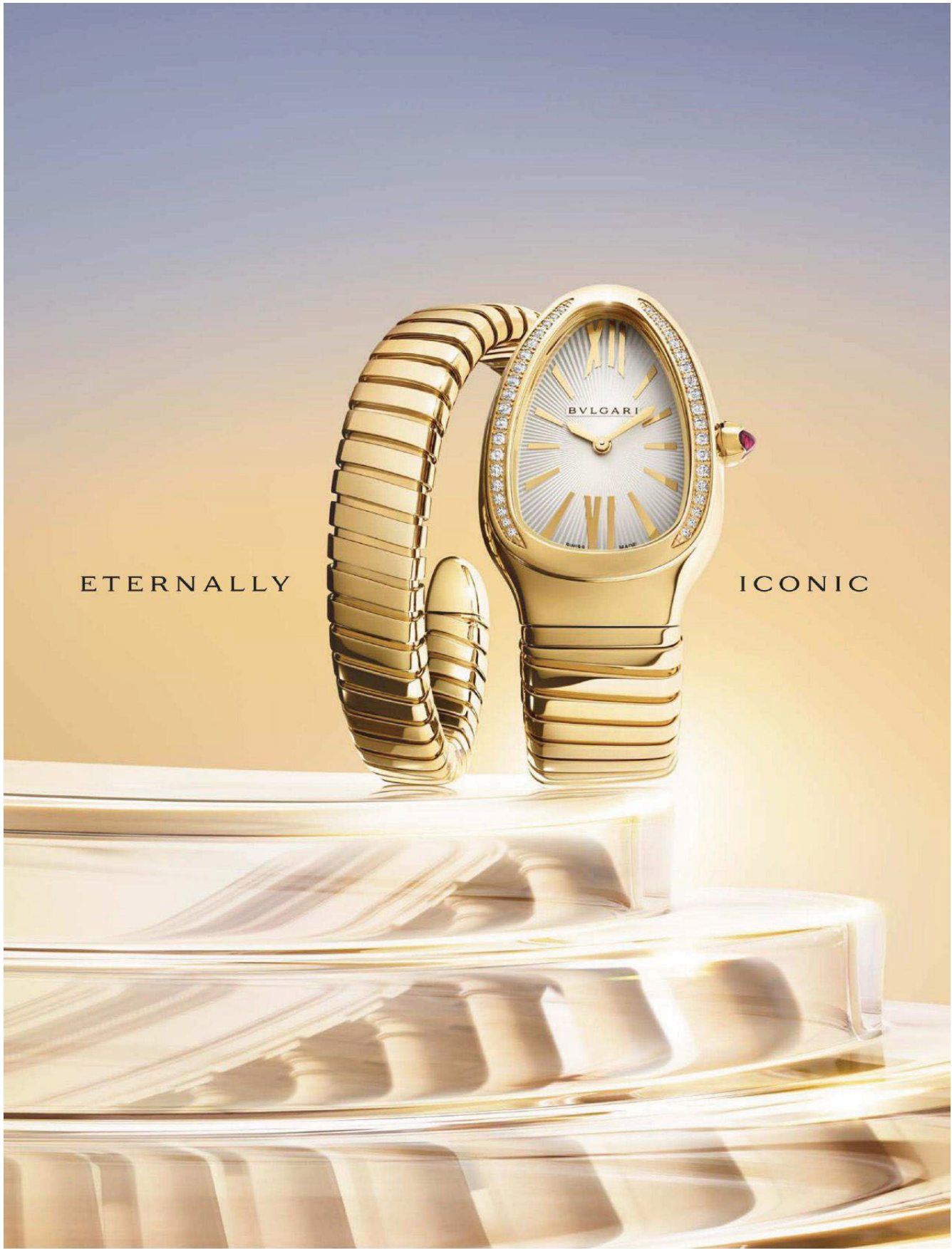
"We have continued to strengthen our regional leadership through new joint ventures, store openings and driving growth through e-commerce," Chalhoub said. "We need to disrupt ourselves before we get disrupted. We constantly try to reinvent ourselves, to reinvent our customer journey, to reinvent our staff needs and skill sets."

Chalhoub also shared the group is planning international expansion to markets beyond the Middle East as a geographic diversification strategy. They are strengthening their Latin American presence through Saint-Honoré, where they've invested for nearly a decade, as well as a planned opening in the U.S.

"We view international development as a strategic diversification for our group, which is currently concentrated in the Middle East. This step is an essential move to reduce our reliance on one single region," he explained.



Chalhoub tests out a skin assessment tool at The Skincare Edition, a consumer facing event the company hosted in Riyadh last October.



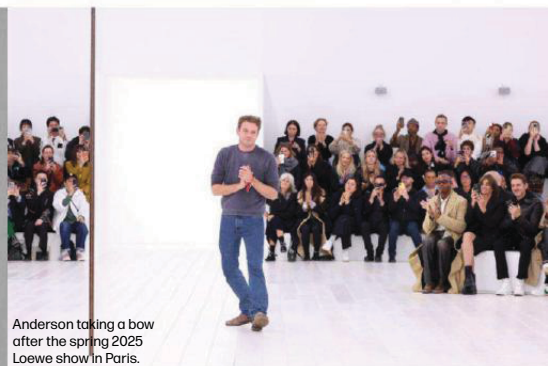
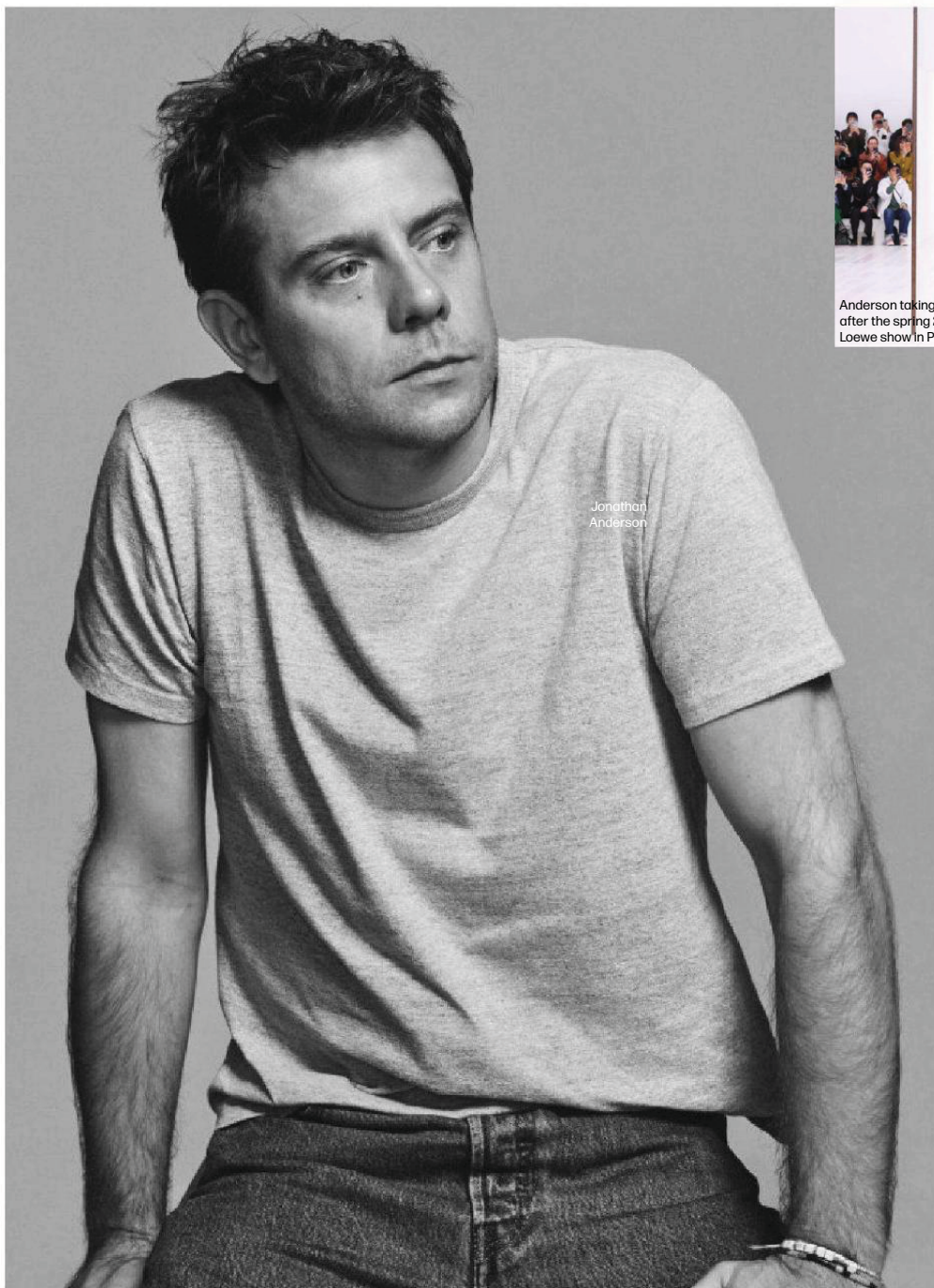
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Anderson taking a bow after the spring 2025 Loewe show in Paris.

"My father was also very involved in the decision, of course, and we think he's the most talented designer of his generation," she said, flashing a big smile.

In a statement, Bernard Arnault, chairman and CEO of LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton, Dior's parent, concurred: "Jonathan Anderson is one of the greatest creative talents of his generation. His incomparable artistic signature will be a crucial asset in writing the next chapter of the history of the house of Dior."

For his part, Anderson said, "I am incredibly honored to be given the opportunity to unite Dior's women's, men's and couture collections under a single, cohesive vision. My instinct is to be led by the house's empathetic spirit, established by Dior himself.

"I look forward to working alongside its legendary ateliers to craft the next chapter of this incredible story. I would like to express my sincere thanks to Bernard Arnault and Delphine Arnault for their trust and loyalty over the years," he added.

Anderson has been widely seen as the heir apparent at Dior for months, with a slow-drip news flow about his exit from Loewe after an acclaimed 11-year tenure, the appointment of Proenza Schouler founders Jack McCollough and Lazaro Hernandez as his successors – and the surprise announcement in April by Bernard Arnault at LVMH's shareholders' meeting that Anderson had succeeded Kim Jones in Dior's men's department.

In the interview, Delphine Arnault acknowledged that putting Anderson at the helm of the women's and men's universes – with the exception of fine jewelry, helmed by Victoire de Castellane since 1998 – is unprecedented.

"What's particularly interesting with Jonathan is that he's going to do men and women, so it's going to bring a lot of coherence and consistency in the products, the communication and the windows," she said. "It's going to be interesting to see what dialogue there is between men and women."

Christian Dior Monsieur was introduced in 1970, and dedicated designers for that department have included Dominique Morlotti in the '80s, Patrick Lavoix in the '90s, and since 2000, Hedi Slimane, Kris Van Assche and Jones.

Arnault acknowledged the workload at Dior today is enormous, with men's and women's rtw shows, pre-collections, an annual destination cruise show, and haute couture displays in January and July. (She confirmed Dior would sit out haute couture week in July, since Chiuri included high-fashion looks in the cruise collection.)

Arnault pointed out that Anderson long straddled men's and women's at Loewe and his signature brand, gaining experience working across both categories and ultimately orchestrating sizable teams.

"He's also going to have an amazing team at Dior. We have amazing ateliers for haute couture, for ready-to-wear, for menswear, too," she said. "We also have great studios with teams that are really, really strong." ▶

FASHION

Jonathan Anderson Is Dior's 8th Couturier

- The Northern Irish designer is to show his first women's collection during Paris Fashion Week in October. His men's debut is scheduled for June 27.

BY MILES SOCHA

In a widely expected appointment at one of France's biggest and most storied fashion houses, Jonathan Anderson has been named Dior's creative director

of women's, men's and haute couture collections.

The Northern Irish designer, 40, becomes Dior's eighth couturier, and is to show his first women's ready-to-wear collection during Paris Fashion Week in October, following his June 27 debut with Dior menswear.

He succeeds Italian designer Maria Grazia Chiuri, who joined as Dior's artistic director of women's haute couture, rtw and accessory collections in 2016,

making feminism and female creativity a prominent narrative during her tenure. Her cruise 2026 show in Rome, which blended rtw and haute couture looks, was her swan song, and her departure was confirmed last Thursday.

"It's the role of the CEO to know when to make a creative change, and we thought that this was the right moment," Delphine Arnault, chairman and chief executive officer of Christian Dior Couture, said in an interview at her Paris office.

That said, “he’s coming to Dior with some key people, key talents that he worked with in the past, that he trusts a lot and that are going to help him in this journey. I’m excited to see his vision.”

While Arnault didn’t mention any names, among those Anderson brought to Dior is Pol Anglada, who lists himself on LinkedIn as a senior designer at Dior since February. He was previously head designer of women’s rtw at Loewe.

Sounding relaxed and confident, Arnault kicked off a 30-minute conversation with high praise for Chiuri, whose engaging narratives, graceful designs and merchandising prowess quadrupled the size of Dior, according to HSBC estimates.

“I have only admiration and respect, for she’s done amazing things for our brand. She stayed nine years, and the growth of the company has been very important under her creative direction,” said Arnault, who was dressed in the dark tailoring favored by Chiuri. “She’s an extraordinary designer. She’s very close to her teams, and manages them super well. I really thank her for everything that she’s done.”

Meanwhile, Anderson’s star has been steadily rising at LVMH with his innovative and sure-handed rejuvenation of Loewe, which was founded in 1846.

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.

Arnault vividly recalled her first encounter with Anderson, then in his mid-20s. She climbed four flights of stairs to visit the apartment near Gare du Nord that he had rented to display his signature JW Anderson collection. The brand was attracting attention with provocative and androgynous designs, such as frilly Bermuda shorts and bandeau tops for men.

“It was a long time ago, yet he had the same personality as today, and a very clear vision. He was very articulate, and really impressive for his young age,” she marveled.

LVMH acted swiftly and in 2013 acquired a 46 percent stake in London-based JW Anderson, also appointing the designer as the new creative director of Loewe, one among a vast stable of fashion and leather goods brands.

“It always takes a little bit of time when you have a new designer to understand what his vision is, and to see what they’re going to do with the brand,” she commented.

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

Arnault said Anderson made Loewe more relevant, urgent and modern, turning out signature leather goods like the Flamenco and the Puzzle bags. Puzzle is

celebrating its 10th anniversary this month with a host of reeditions. He also made the brand synonymous with savoir-faire with the establishment of the Loewe Foundation Craft Prize, which crowned Kunimasa Aoki as its 10th winner last week.

Arnault confessed to intense curiosity about how Anderson will interpret the legacy of Dior, whose founder ignited postwar Paris with his extravagant, full-skirted New Look and whose brief career ended with his death in 1957.

Asked if an aesthetic disruption looms, given Anderson’s penchant for experimental, conceptual and surrealist-tinged designs at his own brand and at Loewe, Arnault said, “it’s going to be an evolution.”

“He’s at Dior, and Dior has a lot of codes and history that he should work with. He’s spent a lot of time in the archives and I’m excited to see what particular moments of the long history of Dior he’s most passionate about,” she said. “It’s going to be a surprise for you, for me, for all of us!”

“He’s going to chart his own path, of course, with his sensibilities, emotions and his creativity.”

Anderson’s women’s show at Dior also will come amid an unprecedented number of designer debuts for spring 2026 with Chanel, Gucci, Balenciaga, Loewe, Jil Sander, Bottega Veneta, Versace, Bally, Mugler and Jean Paul Gaultier all under new creative leadership.

Asked if she had any theories about the unprecedented number of designer changes, Arnault offered: “Fashion is about evolution and cycles.”

Past successors to founder Christian Dior include Yves Saint Laurent, Marc Bohan, Gianfranco Ferré, John Galiano, Raf Simons and Chiuri.

Saint Laurent logged the shortest tenure, only two years, and Bohan the longest, spanning three decades. Ferré helmed the house for seven years, Galiano 15 years, Simons three-and-a-half years and Chiuri nine years.

Incidentally, Ferré, Galiano and Simons all had signature fashion houses, which they juggled with their Dior responsibilities during their tenures.

JW Anderson is expected to pivot from a four-times-a-year runway player into a more curated, lifestyle-focused retail proposition. The designer has been putting teasers on his personal Instagram account, with “local craft” a key tag line.

That Dior signed on Anderson suggests the house is ready for another shift in fashion direction, given his predilection for often blunt, art-influenced designs and intensive craft.

The French house has had dalliances with architectural grandeur by Ferré, retro-tinged glamor under Galiano, minimalism under Simons, and customer-friendly classicism with Chiuri. ▶

Delphine Arnault



Loewe, spring 2022



Loewe's Immersive
'Crafted World' exhibition.

Anderson created fashion fireworks via emphatic, sharply executed design ideas, both for Loewe and his JW Anderson brand, which has a slightly younger, more irreverent spirit.

Simmering under the surface of both brands were references to art and surrealism, plus sly commentary about the perils of technology, social media and our estrangement from nature.

Born in Northern Ireland in 1984, Anderson studied menswear at the London College of Fashion, graduating in 2005 and going on to work in visual merchandising at Prada under Manuela Pavesi. He consulted for several brands before launching JW Anderson in 2008.

His designs earned him a heap of industry awards, including the 2022 WWD Honor for Womenswear Designer of the Year, International Designer of the Year Award at the 2023 CFDA Fashion Awards, the Neiman Marcus Award for Creative Impact in the Field of Fashion in 2023 and Designer of the Year at the British Fashion Awards in 2023 and 2024.

Arnault said she's "very optimistic" about the future with Anderson fully on board.

"Dior is a brand that has a huge potential. There is much more that can be done, and I'm very optimistic with Jonathan and with his vision to develop Dior and to make it even more desirable," she said.

The executive highlighted some parallels between Anderson and founder Christian Dior.

"Mr. Dior loved art, and had his own gallery before he created the fashion house. And Jonathan loves art and is very passionate about art and young artists," she said. "He also loves gardens. As you know, Mr. Dior was also so passionate about flowers, about gardens."

Indeed, artworks often figure as integral elements of Anderson's runway sets at Loewe, whether a tiny bird on the top of a pole, the centerpiece of his spring 2025 women's show, or crumbling cubes of confetti for fall 2023.

Floral prints figured in gossamer dresses at that spring 2025 show, and a flower shop was among unexpected features of

Loewe's Madrid flagship when it opened in 2016.

Arnault revealed another common trait between Christian Dior and Anderson: "They're both very superstitious," she said with a laugh.

She also marveled at Anderson's unique point of view on fashion, lauding his interest in young talents. He eagerly accepted her invitation to become a jury member for the LVMH Prize for Young Designers when he was still a similar age of the contenders.

"His perspective on fashion and what's happening at the moment is always very interesting," Arnault said. "He questions everything. And he really thinks out of the box on many subjects. It's always interesting to ask him his opinion about what's happening in fashion, because he has a way of thinking that is always inspiring. He always comes up with new ideas."

Anderson arrives at Dior at a challenging time for luxury brands, but at a fashion house that has been fortifying management ranks as it grows in scale and complexity.

Earlier this year Pierre-Emmanuel Angeloglou was appointed deputy CEO of Christian Dior Couture. He was briefly CEO of Fendi in Rome and managing director of LVMH Fashion Group after logging several years as executive vice president in charge of the men's division and women's accessories at Vuitton, where he worked alongside Arnault, who moved to the helm of Dior in 2023.

In the interview, Arnault also highlighted key appointments late last year to further reinforce Dior's quality standards, craftsmanship and exceptional savoir-faire.

Giorgio Triano joined the brand as chief industrial officer in January after a long career at Italian eyewear giant EssilorLuxottica (previously Luxottica), while Nicolas Carré moved over from Vuitton to become Dior's industrial director for leather goods, shoes and fashion jewelry.

Meanwhile, she described the mood in the house as ebullient.

After months of speculation that he was headed to the house, Anderson started

Backstage,
Loewe
spring 2023.



working on menswear at Dior in February, and it was widely anticipated both inside and outside the company that he might take on a bigger role.

"Internally, yes, people are super excited. It brought a lot of energy,"

she said. "His way of working is very inclusive....He explains his vision, and it's not like he's speaking only to two people. He's speaking to the whole team. I think that's a very modern way of working, and that motivates the teams." ■

BEAUTY

Typology Enters Hospitality With MGallery Collection

Typology amenities for MGallery Collection.



- The eco-conscious, direct-to-consumer French beauty brand is also launching hair care in the U.S.

BY JENNIFER WEIL

PARIS — Typology, the eco-conscious, direct-to-consumer French beauty brand, is entering hospitality for the first time, with amenities launching in more than 30 MGallery Collection luxury boutique hotels by yearend around the world.

This comes at a time when the boundary between beauty and hospitality keeps blurring, as each takes on more lifestyle and experiential attributes.

Typology's products have minimalist formulas, with sustainably sourced ingredients that are up to 98 percent natural.

Five Typology amenities products were created for MGallery, including a shower gel, shampoo, conditioner, hand soap and body lotion. Each product has antioxidant properties, vitamin E and camellia extracts, plus no PEGs, sulfates or silicone. They are certified vegan and gluten-free, while soaps are RSPO-certified.

The products will first appear in the Domaine de la Reine Margot Paris Issy hotel location, followed by rollouts in Albania and Biarritz, France, this summer.

Since the beginning of 2025, MGallery has opened three new locations.

"As we are in this momentum, we want to have a very few but really curated partnerships," said Xavier Royaux, chief marketing officer of MGallery Collection, adding such tie-ins are about strong brand fit. "We have the same approach

on wellness and beauty. We are about quiet luxury. But for us, it goes really far beyond that. It's about long-term vision and commitments."

Ning Li, a digital entrepreneur, launched Typology in early 2019. The B-Corp company has always had a strong commitment to planet Earth.

"One of the weaknesses as a DTC brand is when people want to experience their products, they don't have a place to go to," said Li, who explained a typical response for many digital players has been to open many stores or sell through brick-and-mortar partners. "That seems to be the classic playbook now."

Li considers Typology, six years after launch, to be still at the beginning of its journey.

"We don't want our brand to be sold at places where we don't have total control of the shopping experience," he said. "So far, we remain very much on our DTC route."

"When the partnership opportunity came up, it appeared to me as a very good way to have curated places — but not necessarily shopping destinations — where people can experience our products in a different way, as a complement to our online experience rather than as a distraction to our brand-building exercise," continued Li.

He said that since Typology is a small, French indie brand, partnering with MGallery, which has a global footprint and a local boutique hotel feel, made for a good brand fit. The main goal of this partnership is to deepen the brand connection with consumers, rather than to build sales.

Today, Typology is mainly present in the United States, its largest market; France, where the brand has one corner, in Printemps Haussmann; Germany; the

United Kingdom, and Japan.

"MGallery will bring us to even more international destinations," said Li.

For its launch in February 2019, Typology raised a \$10 million seed round of funding with Alven, Marc Simoncini, Xavier Niel and Firstminute Capital. Li is Typology's majority shareholder.

He would not discuss numbers, but said the brand's sales momentum has been strong: growing by triple digits in the first couple of years, then more recently by high double digits.

Today, Typology has a broad skin care offering, making up 98 percent of the line, from face moisturizer to serum and cleansing lotion. Adjacent categories include tinted skin care — serum and cream — which is a very popular category for the brand, and scalp treatment.

"[It's] an extension of skin care knowledge to the hair," said Li. Typology hair care, also with shampoo, serums and a hair mask, will launch in the U.S. in June. There, the brand's product prices range from about \$20 to \$60.

Typology today has about 100 stock keeping units. Its bestseller by far is the 9-Ingredient Face Moisturizer. By comparison to our moisturizers are formulated with 20 to 50 ingredients.

"The ethos of Typology has always been to remove all the non-essential ingredients, but to keep the highest concentration of active ingredients," said Li. For packaging the goal is to remove all composite materials, so as to have mono-materials that are both recyclable and recycled.

Li had previously founded MyFab and Made.com.

MGallery, part of the Accor Group, has more than 120 boutique hotels around the globe.

ACCESSORIES

Trove's Jen Rubio Acquires Independent Retailer The Seven

- Jen Rubio, cofounder of Away, is also backing Camille Zarsky in a design venture rooted in fine jewelry with expansion into adjacent categories.

BY THOMAS WALLER

Trove, the New York-based fine jewelry store, known for its uniquely crafted jewelry boxes, has acquired The Seven, the West Village multibrand boutique known for its jewelry curation, founded by Camille Zarsky.

Trove was founded by Melbourne-based designer Hannah Ward in 2020 and opened its first U.S. flagship in New York in 2024. That same year, Jen Rubio, cofounder and former chief executive officer of luggage brand Away, joined Ward as strategic business partner and investor to support the U.S. expansion. Since then, the jewelry box creator has expanded into fine jewelry with an artist-in-residence program, initially with high jeweler Fernando Jorge, and continues to grow the category adding Sophie Bille Brahe, Beck, Howl, and more.

"Camille and I knew of each other for a while through the jewelry world, and properly connected in New York a few months ahead of Trove's opening," explained Rubio — who acquired a

majority stake in Trove in January with Ward stepping away from day-to-day operations — of her connection to The Seven's Zarsky. "From our first conversation, it was clear we shared a deep respect for craftsmanship and a belief in curating with integrity and emotion. We kept returning to the idea that there's space for something more personal and boundary-pushing in fine jewelry, so this partnership happened very naturally."

Zarsky says the two entrepreneurs were building different but aligned visions, "when we finally sat down together, it felt less like a meeting and more like a creative exchange. We talked about where the market is headed, where it's too safe, and what women like us are truly looking for. It was energizing, and quickly obvious that we wanted to build something together."

When she joined Trove as an investor, Rubio saw a brand that could evolve "into a broader platform for design, curation and creative incubation." The acquisition of The Seven, she added, is a strategic and creative decision that helps accelerate that. "I've always admired what Camille built with The Seven — it's more than a store; it's a sensibility," Rubio said.

In a short time, The Seven has gained momentum with its tightly edited selection of independent fine jewelry brands

led by Zarsky's strategy of focusing on storytelling and one-of-a-kind pieces.

As part of the merger, The Seven's Bleeker Street storefront will close in July, though a curated presence will continue in New York through the fall. Zarsky will join Trove as an adviser, contributing to the brand's creative direction and growth. "Winding down The Seven's storefront will give me the freedom to be even more creative and daring with future projects," Zarsky explained of the move.

One such project: Rubio is backing Zarsky in a forthcoming design venture "rooted in fine jewelry but [expanding] into adjacent categories," Zarsky explained.

"We're still finalizing details, but it will be an extension of the values that Camille and I share — elevated design, emotional storytelling, and intentional luxury," Rubio said. "It won't be just about products; it's about building a world."

"One of the biggest lessons I've learned is the power of clarity: on values, vision and pace," Rubio said from her time scaling Away. "I'm bringing that same intentionality to this partnership. As we partner with Camille, we're being deliberate: protecting the magic while providing the right foundation for growth."

When asked how they plan to differentiate their new venture in an



Camille Zarsky and Jen Rubio

increasingly competitive luxury retail market, Zarsky said she is not about chasing trends. "I want to create something rooted in permanence, not seasonality. We're thinking about longevity, rarity and emotional connection."

"Joining forces with Trove allows me to scale the spirit of The Seven while being part of something bigger," Zarsky continued. "I'm especially excited to collaborate with and learn from Jen, whose vision and experience as a builder are incredibly inspiring. There's so much more we can do together."

FASHION

Zegna's Alessandro Sartori Champions Timeless Design Over Trend-chasing

Alessandro Sartori in conversation with James Fallon in Riyadh.



● At WWD X Fashion Future's Global Fashion & Beauty Summit in Riyadh, in partnership with Mercedes-Benz and Chalhoub Group, artistic director Alessandro Sartori discussed the brand's upcoming Dubai fashion show and called the Middle East "the new center of the world."

BY RITU UPADHYAY

While many luxury brands were chasing the latest trends, Alessandro Sartori made a radical decision at Zegna: "stop changing."

The artistic director's counterintuitive strategy has transformed the Italian house from a traditional seasonal fashion player into a champion of what he calls "elevated workwear" – garments that look effortless but are constructed with the same 72-hour bespoke techniques used for the brand's finest suiting.

Speaking at the WWD Global Fashion & Beauty Summit in Riyadh, Sartori outlined his philosophy and the brand's strategic shift away from seasonal reinvention during a conversation with James Fallon, WWD's chief content officer. The following day, Sartori was honored with WWD's International Designer of the Year award, presented in the Saudi capital.

"We felt the need to redefine tailoring and to redefine what was men's fashion in the luxury segment," Sartori explained. "So we have decided to enter into a different paradigm. Instead of changing every season the trend and mostly working on the idea that it was important to change, we reversed the equation and we

thought it was important not to change."

This philosophical shift became particularly pronounced during the pandemic, when Sartori and his team recognized that customers were seeking something more meaningful than seasonal novelty. Rather than expanding their creative territory, they chose to "close the perimeter," as he described it. "Within the borders, we are going deeper."

The result is what Sartori calls "elevated workwear" – garments that appear uncomplicated from the outside but are technically sophisticated underneath. The brand now creates looks that pair overshirts with pants, short coats with pants, and outerwear with pants, sold as separates but designed to work cohesively as suiting.

Central to this approach is Zegna's manufacturing heritage. The company operates five wool mills producing everything from classic fabrics to jersey, silk for outerwear, and jacquard weaves. Even pieces that might be categorized as sportswear are constructed using the same meticulous techniques employed in the brand's bespoke suiting.

"Every ready-to-wear jacket is 10 hours of make. Made-to-measure is 14. Bespoke is 72 hours," Sartori noted, explaining the three levels of Zegna's production. "Even if they are defined as a sportswear garment, they are tailor-made in the same place where we do the made-to-measure and bespoke suits."

Initially, the brand's pattern makers were skeptical of applying bespoke construction techniques to casual pieces. "They were watching me like I was crazy. I'm sure when I left the door behind me, they were discussing, 'we don't want this guy anymore,'" Sartori recalled with a laugh. "But after a few months, they were in love with the work."

The pandemic also accelerated Zegna's transformation from product-focused selling to customer experience. Sartori shared an anecdote about a virtual styling session during COVID-19 lockdowns, where he guided a customer through his own wardrobe via video call, ultimately recommending a completely different purchase than what the client initially wanted.

"We try to transform the salespeople into stylists, and we have at least one very good stylist, more than one, in every store," he explained. This personalized approach extends to Zegna's "villa" concept – immersive retail experiences that recreate the atmosphere of the brand's alpine headquarters.

Taking the Villa Concept to Dubai

The brand is planning an ambitious Dubai activation that exemplifies this approach. It will stage its first show outside of Italy in the emirate on June 11. Alongside that, they plan to offer a specialized customer experience. "In Dubai, we'll have a fashion show in an amazing place, and just behind the stage of the show, we build the villa with huge spaces offering one exclusive collection," Sartori revealed.

The five-day experience will include private viewings of the fashion show for VIP clients and more than 100 customers, each with individual appointments.

Sartori revealed that Zegna's Dubai Mall location is the brand's number-one store globally, underscoring the Middle East's importance as a luxury market and the success of their experiential retail approach.

"There is a big difference, I think, between costly and expensive, and customers are valuing these very much," Sartori observed. "If a garment has a lot of

work they're willing to pay. If a garment or a product is just expensive, we found that customers don't pay anymore."

This emphasis on craft over flash aligns with what many have termed the "quiet luxury" trend, though Sartori suggested such movements reflect deeper structural changes in the luxury market. "The higher you go, the more stable you have to stay," he noted. "Customers today are walking with you. There is a journey between you and them, and you need to show that you believe in what you do."

Reflecting on the rapidly growing Middle Eastern market, Sartori expressed enthusiasm about the region's potential. "It is exactly when everything is changing that you can change. And I know that many, many companies are suffering, but also there are many brands that are investing, and there are a lot of new possibilities and this region has huge possibilities."

The artistic director emphasized authenticity as crucial for brand building. "The more you are real, unique, honest and intellectually true, the more they feel it," he said.

Looking ahead, Sartori believes the principles guiding Zegna's evolution – craftsmanship, timelessness and genuine customer relationships – will become increasingly important as luxury consumers seek lasting value over temporary satisfaction.

"Today they invest in one product – one bag, one shoe, one jacket, one dress – because they feel that product is good for them for a period, and eventually you can also share that product, like a long time ago, inside your family," he concluded. "It's very, very important to give to a product that value and not to design to destroy what you did."

GLOBAL FASHION & BEAUTY SUMMIT **WWD**

BEAUTY

Arab Beauty Brands are Ready to Go Global

● Yara Alnamlah and Sara Alrashed, founders of Moonglaze and Asteri Beauty, respectively, talked growth plans and the future of “A-beauty.”

BY NOOR LOBAD

The “A-beauty” movement is ready for its global spotlight.

Short for “Arab beauty,” the space has seen sizable momentum in recent years across the Middle East, and now, its most prominent players are gearing up to go even wider.

At the 2025 WWD Global Fashion & Beauty Summit in Riyadh, Yara Alnamlah, who is a Riyadh-based makeup artist with more than 1.5 million Instagram followers and the founder of cosmetics brand Moonglaze, took to the stage alongside Asteri Beauty founder Sara Alrashed to share their respective visions for growth and A-beauty’s global promise.

“Arab beauty is confident; it’s expressive, bold – it’s about embracing your features,” said Alnamlah, who also helms lifestyle holding company When Minds Meet, during a panel moderated by WWD Middle East bureau chief Ritu Upadhyay. Alnamlah’s line Moonglaze takes its name from the Arabic word for moon, “qamar,” which is often used as a term of endearment to call someone beautiful.

“That [name] reflects our vision of glowing not just as an external feeling, but

more of an internal feeling,” continued Alnamlah, whose line includes blush and highlighter sticks priced under \$40. “The way we represent Arab beauty is by allowing people to embrace and enhance their individual identities – we don’t believe everyone should be the same.”

Alrashed, who launched Asteri in 2023 and has since opened 10 stand-alone stores in malls across Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain and other countries, shares a similar ethos.

“I wanted to create a brand that spoke to the modern Arab woman – growing up here, we never saw a brand that was made to speak to us, to suit our skin types, skin textures – even the climate here. That’s what I wanted to build: something that speaks to our culture, but also holds up to a global standard,” Alrashed said.

Asteri, which bills itself as “desert-proof” beauty, offers a range of high-performance mascaras, blushes, setting sprays and lip products. Like Moonglaze, the brand integrates nods to Arab culture – which Alrashed noted is more diverse than people often assume – into its identity.

“Arabs are multiracial – you have a lot of different-looking people here, so Asteri is all about inclusivity,” she said, adding that she often looks to her own Saudi heritage, too, for inspiration. “We draw from old rituals and local ingredients, for instance moringa oil, date seed oil...the packaging is all inspired by the diversity of nature in Saudi, as are our store designs, which vary by region.

“We have a lot of layers to our



storytelling; our motto, ‘sisters under the stars,’ is engraved in Arabic calligraphy on all of our products. All of our lipstick shades are named after powerful Arab women.”

Alrashed, whose core customer fits into the 18 to 40 age range, opened her 10th Asteri store last month in Riyadh, and is planning to expand both internationally and into a new category – skin care – in the next year.

International expansion is an area where Moonglaze also is focusing its efforts. The company became the first Saudi beauty brand to launch at Selfridges in the U.K. last December, selling out at the retailer shortly after. “It was a surreal moment,” Alnamlah said. “To see Moonglaze on the shelves of one of the world’s most iconic retailers – it was more than a launch. It was a recognition of Saudi creativity and



innovation on a global stage. It proved that we’re not just niche – we’re needed.”

Reaching even more markets and customers by showcasing the versatility of A-beauty and its core tenets is a key priority for Alnamlah.

“It can be hard to prove ourselves out there – to push for locations, to compete with other big brands, but there’s also a lot of pride,” said Alnamlah, adding that a focus on crafting quality products offers leverage. “People who come into a store and know that this is a Saudi brand, want to buy it – just because it’s Saudi. Saudi’s are well-educated, they’re conscious consumers, and they like to experience – whether through e-commerce or physical shops – a brand’s concept, textures, feel, storytelling – they like to create community.”

BEAUTY

Kimberly Villatoro on Patrick Ta Beauty’s TikTok Success, Global Growth Opportunities



● The Middle East is emerging as a standout market for the six-year-old makeup brand, shared the chief executive officer.

BY RITU UPADHYAY

Six years after launching with an unconventional body glow product, Patrick Ta Beauty has emerged as one of Sephora’s fastest-growing brands, with the Middle East now accounting for more than one-third of its global sales and serving as a blueprint for worldwide expansion. Chief executive officer Kimberly Villatoro

revealed the striking international performance metrics during WWD’s Global Fashion & Beauty Summit in Riyadh, where she spoke with WWD executive beauty editor Jenny B. Fine about the brand’s evolution from a digitally native start-up to global beauty contender.

“Thirty-five percent of our global sales from our website come from the Middle East,” Villatoro disclosed, a figure that has surprised even company executives since launching worldwide shipping last year. More telling still, the average order size in the region exceeds orders from anywhere else in the world by more than 70 percent, with blush and tools leading sales.

The Middle East success story reflects a broader international appetite for Patrick Ta’s artistry. Seventy percent of the celebrity makeup artist’s social media followers are based outside of the U.S., with particularly strong communities in Latin America and the Middle East providing a strategic road map for the brand’s next phase of growth.

TikTok Technique Transforms Category

Patrick Ta Beauty’s meteoric rise has been propelled by social media virality, particularly on TikTok, where the brand’s dual blush product became a

cultural phenomenon after Ta shared his counterintuitive application technique. The method – applying powder blush first, then layering cream on top – defied conventional wisdom but delivered Ta’s signature “lit from within” glow.

“That first video caught fire and went absolutely viral,” Villatoro explained, noting how the technique video drove unprecedented traffic to Sephora and ultimately catapulted the brand to the number-one blush position at the beauty retailer.

The viral moment exemplifies how Patrick Ta Beauty has leveraged its founder’s 13-year career working with A-list celebrities including Salma Hayek, Halle Berry, and most recently, collaborating with clients at the Cannes Film Festival. This celebrity network, combined with authentic social media presence, has made the brand one of Sephora’s fastest-growing names, holding top-five rankings in four subcategories across North America.

Customer satisfaction metrics reinforce the brand’s quality positioning, with products averaging 4.75 stars across all categories – a critical factor as consumers become increasingly selective about beauty purchases in the current economic climate.

Experiential Strategy Addresses Digital Challenge

Despite thriving as a digitally native brand, Villatoro identified a key strategic challenge: translating online success into meaningful real-world connections. The brand’s recent “House of Glow” pop-up experience in Los Angeles provided a proof of concept for this transition. The two-day activation drew more than 2,000 visitors, with lines of 1,500 people forming on the opening day. Rather than focusing on transactions, the brand prioritized experience, offering custom products and one-on-one interactions with Ta himself,

who personally met every attendee.

“We weren’t selling a single item at that pop up,” Villatoro emphasized. “Instead, what we wanted to do was give people an experience, and give people really custom products that were going to be really memorable.”

The success has prompted discussions about scaling similar experiences globally, potentially including masterclasses that showcase Ta’s artistry techniques – events he has conducted internationally but never in his home U.S. market.

International Recognition And Future Vision

Following the summit, Patrick Ta received WWD’s International Beauty Innovator of the Year award in Riyadh, accepting via video from Cannes where he was working with Halle Berry.

“As a makeup artist that has been working over 13 years in the industry, having a brand that represents and champions confidence, creativity and authenticity truly means so much to me. I am so proud to have such an amazing community that has supported me on this journey,” Ta told the audience.

As Patrick Ta Beauty plots its global expansion, the strategy will prioritize markets showing natural brand affinity, guided by social media analytics and direct-to-consumer demand patterns. The brand’s unapologetically luxurious positioning appears particularly well-suited for markets that embrace glamour and makeup ritual, with the Middle East serving as validation for this premium approach.

The brand has significant growth runway, with 30 percent of makeup categories still unexplored. Villatoro emphasized the company’s intentional approach to expansion, ensuring each new category launch reflects Ta’s distinctive artistry rather than chasing market trends.

WWD GLOBAL FASHION & BEAUTY SUMMIT

BEAUTY

Frédéric Fekkai on How Constant Curiosity Has Driven His Success

● The hair care founder discussed his career, from starting his brand, selling it and ultimately buying it back to always seeking the next innovation.

BY EMILY BURNS

For Frédéric Fekkai, curiosity has been the key to success – curiosity and a passion for hair.

At WWD's Global Fashion & Beauty Summit, Fekkai joined Beauty Inc editor in chief Jenny B. Fine to discuss his career, from launching his brand to selling it to buying it back and more. While his name is synonymous with hair, Fekkai didn't actually start out in the industry.

"I didn't know anything about hair or beauty when I grew up," he said. "I was studying law. I was doing some modeling on the side to earn some money, and met an amazing talent who was an incredible makeup artist and hair stylist on a shoot. She invited me to work with her, and I did it as like an internship. I liked it very much, and I think the job liked me too."

From there, Fekkai's path in the industry was set and he went on to open his first salon in New York City, which was like a roadmap for eventually starting a brand.

"The salon was a lab," Fekkai said. "That's where you hear their needs, and it's also where you experience how to use product and educate them, as well as being educated

ourselves. It was a great exchange."

This experience allowed Fekkai to identify areas of opportunity in the category.

"For everyone who is an entrepreneur, the key is not to do the 101 typical thing. It's about finding the out-of-the-box idea that resonates," he said. "When I entered the business of hair care, [it] was a commodity. The products were owned by the big five big groups. I wanted to deliver a different experience to the customer, and created the first luxury hair care brand based on skinification, based on the science and technology that skin care had."

While Fekkai sold his brand, his passion and curiosity for the category as an entrepreneur ultimately drove him to buy it back in 2018.

"When the occasion came back to buy the brand, I said, 'My god, this is a great opportunity,' because I didn't finish my chapter when I when sold it," said Fekkai. "The science, the access of ingredients is greater today because of AI, because of all this, I said, 'My god, this is the moment to go and really be relevant again with innovation.'"

Fekkai went on to point out key areas of innovation that have been driving the prestige hair care category, such as bonding treatments, peptides, scalp treatments and hair loss solutions. He emphasized that interest in these sorts of multistep regimens became especially



Frédéric Fekkai

popular during the pandemic and have continued to be mainstays in consumers' routines.

"It has done an incredible effect on brands to actually innovate and create new product," Fekkai said.

He also emphasized the importance of luxury and sensorial experiences, something he has prioritized in his fragrance brand Bastide.

Aside from innovation and quality products, there are other ways Fekkai has found that are crucial to win the market, including an authentic digital strategy and global expansion driven by market analysis.

"You need to really study every region. If you go in the Middle East, for instance, it's maybe partnering with somebody who has [studied] the market, who knows the market and that you can focus not only your marketing but your product innovation, your assortment of product

for the clientele in that region," he said. "You need almost a new product in every region."

While Fekkai has these strategies in place, his curiosity has always been his guiding light.

"I love the idea of of creating. I love the idea of being innovative. I love the idea of discovering," he said. "I'm a curious guy, so I love that curiosity has helped me all along the journey."

Fekkai closed his conversation by providing the audience with a few more pieces of wisdom.

"First is to have a great idea and to be authentic, to be genuine, but also to surround yourself with incredible talent that are aligned with your vision," he said. "The third one, which is the most difficult one, is to be financed very well, and that means finding the right financial partner that is aligned for your journey, if it's long term or short term."

BEAUTY

Inside Asian Beauty's Next Chapter



Andrea Fetzter

● Chalhoub Group's Andrea Fetzter on what's next for the Asian beauty scene as it continues to gain global acclaim.

BY NOOR LOBAD

Asian beauty brands, trends and practices may already feel ultra-prominent, but they're only getting bigger. The Asian beauty movement, which is

generally defined by three region-specific subcategories: K-beauty (Korean beauty), C-beauty (Chinese beauty) and J-beauty (Japanese beauty), is gaining increasing global acclaim, simultaneously influencing ingredient and formula trends across the industry.

"Asian brands have made their way from TikTok to people's bathroom shelves to the top of Amazon's bestseller charts," said Andrea Fetzter, vice president, strategy at

Chalhoub Group, at the 2025 WWD Global Fashion & Beauty Summit in Riyadh.

While there are specific trends within the movement – for instance, cleansing oils and glass skin – Fetzter emphasized that these frontiers of Asian beauty themselves are more than trends.

"Previously when we talked about Asian beauty, the [conversation] was that of a wave in which brands come and go. What we're seeing today is that these brands are going global – they're evaluating their retail strategies, evolving their positioning and how they speak to customers," she said.

In the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) region, which is composed of six Middle Eastern countries including Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait and more, the Asian beauty market grew at a 26 percent compound annual growth rate between 2022 and 2024, greater than the 15 percent growth seen in Western markets during the same period.

With that being said, Asian beauty's penetration in the GCC market is only 3 percent, versus 8 percent globally, indicating more room for growth in the Middle East.

Presently, "this growth is coming from skin care," Fetzter said, adding that K-beauty is the greatest driver of this skin care momentum. C-beauty's influence is strongest in color cosmetics, though it is responsible for some skin care growth, too, while J-beauty growth is more evenly balanced across skin, makeup and hair care. There are several country-specific

trends of note. In Saudi Arabia, makeup sales comprise one-third of the Asian beauty market, outpacing others in the GCC region, where skin care otherwise dominates across the board.

As far as how Asian beauty brands successfully go global, "for K-beauty, it's all about innovation in product formulation – think jelly textures, fermented ingredients, youth-driven marketing," said Fetzter. "J-beauty is very different; it's more refined. It's where tradition meets high-end; trust-building happens offline instead of online, and the customer is slightly more sophisticated, middle-aged...price positioning is on the higher side.

"In C-beauty, everything is about speed and scale. These are brands that are born in e-commerce and are really just looking for the next trend. Social commerce has a huge impact, their consumer is results-oriented, in their early 20s and can't wait to see the next trend."

While 10-plus-step skin care routines have long dominated in Asian markets, there is a shift toward more hybrid products, Fetzter said, which aligns well with the average Saudi Arabia-based consumer's skin care routine, which hovers around an average 4.8 products.

Increasingly, Gen Z consumers in the GCC region are integrating K-beauty brands into their routines, with Chalhoub Group finding three K-beauty brands – Beauty of Joseon, Mixsoon and Laneige – ranking among the cohort's top 10 favorites.

"There is super high awareness for these products, and it's also translating to purchase intent," Fetzter said, adding, "The GCC is a very fruitful region for Asian beauty."

FASHION

Lorenzo Serafini on Honoring Alberta Ferretti's Legacy



Lorenzo Serafini with James Fallon.

- The designer spoke of giving the gift of comfort to women, while at the same time helping them feel feminine and sensual, and expressed how blessed he feels to do the job he's always wanted to do.

BY LUISA ZARGANI

Designer Alberta Ferretti in October last year selected Lorenzo Serafini to carry on her namesake brand after revealing her decision to step down.

She expressed her confidence in Serafini, who joined Aeffe, which also controls the Moschino and Pollini brands, as creative designer of the Philosophy line in 2014. The designer unveiled his first collection for the Alberta Ferretti brand in Milan last February and during the 2025 WWD Global Fashion & Beauty Summit in Riyadh, in conversation with James Fallon, chief content officer of WWD and Fairchild Media Group, he spoke about staying true to one's vision, giving the gift of comfort to women, while at the same time helping them feel feminine and sensual, and expressing how blessed he feels to be able to do the job he's always wanted to do.

Here, an edited version of their conversation.

WWD: How did you get into fashion and why?

Lorenzo Serafini: Well, actually, it's always been my dream. Since I was a child, there was no plan B for me.

I remember how I was intrigued by my mom's magazines and since I was at a very, very young age, about 15, I started collecting issues of W, Vogue, Harper's Bazaar, and from those pages, I started feeding my reality of fashion, my understanding of my future, I just wanted to be part of this world. After I graduated from high school I moved to Milano and I started at fashion school. And then I won a fashion competition in Italy, and the first prize was an internship at Blumarine, a fashion brand that actually was quite big back then in the mid-'90s. I started in 1996 as an intern, spending almost four years and a half there. Then I moved to Roberto Cavalli, and it was an amazing experience, because it was the brand's heyday, expanding all over as fast as possible and it was a place where everything was possible. Roberto was really a pioneer, encouraging you to do whatever you wanted, whatever you had in mind. There

were no limits to creativity. If I think of it now, it was like staying on another planet, I have to say, compared to now.

WWD: It was planet Cavalli.

L.S.: Yes, absolutely, it was planet Cavalli. Everything was possible. And I have to say that he taught me how to dream big, so I have to cherish those years for the rest of my life, it was almost like a family affair there. It was really like a small group of a family, and we were sharing holidays, hours and hours and hours at the studio. There were no limits in anything. You started very late in the morning, and you finished very late in the evening, it was not at all the typical nine-to-five job.

WWD: And then you went to Dolce & Gabbana.

L.S.: Yes, after 10 years. They were looking for a person who could look after the D&G line, men's and womenswear and accessories. It was quite a big, big job, I have to say. Then they decided after one year and a half [after his arrival] to shut down the line, and I joined them in the ready-to-wear Dolce & Gabbana line almost like a director of studio for the ladies.

WWD: What's interesting is that Blumarine, Roberto Cavalli, Dolce & Gabbana are all three very flamboyant fashion labels. Then you joined Aeffe and Philosophy, which is, shall we say, much more understated and still a women's brand, but not the same. How did you shift?

L.S.: I always, always enjoyed doing my job, so for me, it was not at all a big deal if I had to work with Stefano [Gabbana] or with Mrs. [Anna] Molinari, or with Roberto. For me it was actually rather kind of a blessing, honestly, to be able to work with such inspiring persons and to be able to be part of that world. I never felt the will of showing my ego or my person as a frontman. I always enjoyed where I was and actually the most difficult part of the job was to go solo, to go like a frontman and showing myself. It was quite a violent experience the very first time. But then if you consider that you don't have to ask anything anymore to anyone, "can I do this and can I do that?" You discover freedom in creativity, it's priceless. It's really what a creative person may ask for. And I have to say that when I joined the group [Aeffe], they gave me carte blanche. They didn't ever [interfere] with my creative process, and I have to thank them for this.

WWD: Was it hard to define your own signature then, in your own way?

L.S.: No, it was not. It came very naturally. It was like something that you discover that sometimes you don't even have to think about, it's just by instinct that you go and you start choosing the thing you like, the shape you love, the women that you want to talk to, and it's a very organic process.

WWD: Obviously, you said you learned a lot from Roberto Cavalli and Stefano and Domenico [Dolce] at Dolce & Gabbana. Was there something specific you learned from Mrs. Ferretti in that process?

L.S.: Alberta is a super strong woman. She established her career and her factory back in the '80s, in a world shaped by men and by a very specific type of fashion done by men that was completely different. When she came, she tried to speak for someone different, and started to not be overly sexy. She started a dialogue between women that didn't want to show their sexuality. She encouraged women to embrace their femininity in a softer way. If I look back in time, this was still her best advice.

WWD: You are working in a womenswear brand founded by a woman at a company mainly staffed by women. Does that influence your design process?

L.S.: For me, it's very important to be surrounded by women because you can understand better their needs, what they love and why they love it. So it's like a never-ending source of inspiration, for sure.

WWD: But where does it start? Where does the design process for you start? Does it start from the fabric?

L.S.: It's always a different process, it's never the same. Sometimes it starts from the fabrics that tell you the shape, or some other times it can be a shape that makes you think of a specific fabric. And then it could be like a vintage piece. It could be like you go for a research trip, or you go in your own archive. For me, it's never the same rule. What's interesting in this business is that it allows you to have your own rules.

WWD: Was it intimidating going from the Philosophy brand to now the main Alberta Ferretti brand?

L.S.: No, not really, because the values that we were sharing with Mrs. Alberta were almost very similar, like the respect for women, a soft femininity, and a more sensual approach to fashion, rather than sexual.

WWD: But the system's never been faster in terms of fashion, creativity, etc. Is that the main challenge for you? Just the speed, because it's not two seasons a year anymore, it's 18 or however many collections you're doing?

L.S.: Yes, speed is a quite an issue nowadays. I can say that since I started, things have changed not twice, like 20 times, maybe. But this is for me the toughest time that I've lived in, because you are not allowed to take risks anymore. They expect from you instant results, instant success. And sometimes this kind of fastness doesn't allow you to think too much about what you really like, what you love, what you would love to say to all the women that you are talking to. Yes, sometimes, for sure, the speed of this

business is becoming very challenging, at least for my process.

WWD: There are a lot of fashion brands starting in the Middle East, Riyadh and Saudi particularly. Do you feel that's the main challenge that young designers face as well?

L.S.: Probably for a young designer that hasn't experienced a different way, it's not a big deal. Maybe they started in the fastest way possible. And can you actually say it was better before or not? And there are advantages compared to when I started, so it's really hard to say if there is a right way.

WWD: But where do you think fashion is headed today? I mean, there have been a lot of creative changes, obviously, we'll see a lot of them in September at the shows. Just what is driving all this?

L.S.: Well, for sure, finance is driving everyone. We're here for money at the end, but it's sad actually. You can't reduce everything to money, you have to do something that you really believe in, and something you think has a meaning to the people you are talking to, so fashion should be more caring about the audience, instead of giving them a slow-living product [but rather] a much more long-term product.

WWD: Is that the woman you think of as the Alberta Ferretti woman?

L.S.: Since I started, the very first collection at Alberta, I didn't want to follow any trend. I didn't want to end in the trap of a seasonal trend. I wanted to build a much more timeless image, as it was for Alberta, she's always been very true to herself. She's never changed her style that much. She's always been really like that type of woman. And for me, it's such a precious lesson. Once you have your own vision, nowadays it's so important to follow your path, because there are so many designers speaking their voices, and there are so many good ones as well. Once you have your own vision, you have to stick to it and be true to that vision. It's the only way today you have, to make you be recognized and to make your audience fall in love with you.

WWD: How do you turn out the noise, though? The noise of being trendy, the noise of what everybody else is doing. I mean, maintaining your own vision is not always easy.

L.S.: Because you can actually get boring. So that's the other part of the coin. Of course, you have to stay curious about what's going on around you for sure, and adapt to your own vision. That's actually not a specific recipe, you have to always follow your instinct and go for that.

WWD: But you mentioned earlier to stick to your vision. How do you as a designer develop the confidence to do so? Is that experience or what?

L.S.: To me, it's instinct. You can get experience through your career, because you start learning how to build a jacket, how to cut a dress, how to cut on the bias. But again, what makes the difference between every single designer and every single career that a designer can have, it's their own instinct, actually some kind of a primal survival instinct that makes you choose something different from all the rest.

WWD: Is there something you want to do that you haven't yet been able to do as a designer?

L.S.: I have to say that I feel blessed, season after season that I can still do what I love is the best thing that I could actually imagine for my life. I'm so glad that I can do this job, and I hope I will be doing it for a long time.

WWD GLOBAL FASHION & BEAUTY SUMMIT

BEAUTY

Circana's Global Vantage Point On Fashion and Beauty, Explained

- Circana's senior vice president Larissa Jensen dove into trends driving apparel and beauty in key markets.

BY JAMES MANSO

How are fashion and beauty faring in 2025?

If Circana's presentation at the WWD Global Fashion & Beauty Summit is any indication, it's a bit of a mixed bag – though beauty, Circana senior vice president Larissa Jensen's specialty, is more resilient.

"Our agenda is to cover high-level global beauty results," Jensen said, with a focus on North America, South America, Europe and China. "Beauty has been growing for the past four years, and this is unprecedented."

Jensen noted that prestige beauty is growing faster in North America and Europe than the mass channel in the industry, and that in South America, the mass market dominates. "But overall, prestige is where a lot of the growth has been coming from in the beauty industry, even though the mass market is bigger," she said.

In North America, prestige beauty is up 7 percent, which is actually a deceleration from the prior year. In South America, it varies a bit more by country. "There's very, very strong growth there," Jensen said. "In Argentina, there's triple-digit growth, but inflation is driving a lot of that."

Well-being, as it turns out, is universal



in its resonance. "It plays out across the beauty industry in each category," Jensen said. "Fragrance is very important in Europe, and China has a much bigger skin care market."

Smaller pieces of the pie are actually growing faster than larger ones. "Hair is where a lot of the growth is happening," she said.

The rise in well-being has also created a new type of consumer behavior. "Around the world, the consumer has very high levels of stress, and this is no matter where you are. It's given rise to something we've been calling 'the joy economy.' Beauty is a big piece of that, but there are other

industries that can participate in the joy economy as well."

Seventy-eight percent of consumers in the U.S., Jensen said, practice self care; 77 percent are focusing on social and mental well-being. Half of consumers practice skin care as part of a broader wellness routine, in addition to using fragrance and hair products.

"There's the tangible, physical well-being categories like sun care and skin care," Jensen said. "Then there's the 'mental wellness' categories like fragrance and makeup."

Sun protection is driving sales in Europe – 65 percent of consumers there look for

products with SPF – while self tanning is taking off in Latin America. In the U.S., chemical sunscreens make up more sales, while mineral sunscreens are growing faster.

In China, dermatological brands are growing faster than traditional prestige ones in antiaging moisturizers and eye care, despite broader softness in that market, Jensen said.

Though fragrance is booming globally, Jensen still sees opportunities in new formats and juices, such as alcohol-free formats. "In Europe, we're watching the skinification of fragrance," she said.

AdvertisementsScroll to continue reading In makeup, the traditional pillars of the category – lip color and face foundation – have lower growth than emerging ones. "What's driving growth here are things like tinted moisturizers, lip balms, oils, not the traditional products," Jensen said.

Globally, "75 percent of women say they would prefer to feel good over looking good," Jensen said. "As an industry, it's about how we can make that connection with her that can help to bring and continue the resilience we've seen over time."

Across fashion and beauty in the U.S., beauty grew 4 percent in the last 12 months to reach \$121 billion. Fragrance is the strongest performer, albeit the smallest, and slowdowns in skin and makeup are driving the overall deceleration. "Apparel is about double the size of beauty, but it's down 2 percent," Jensen said.

Jensen attributed that decline to consumer sentiment. "About half of consumers in the U.S. expect tariffs are going to impact their spending in 2025, and this is going to affect every industry, but for apparel it's a more important dynamic to watch," she said. "Two-thirds of U.S. consumers reported they would trade down, delay or skip apparel purchases if tariffs increase their prices."

BUSINESS

Human Connections Are Key to a Thriving Business

- "You need to make sure that you can see the passion in the founder's eyes," said Montse Suarez, founder of Iris Ventures.

BY SAMANTHA CONTI

Human connection is the key to business success, according to Montse Suarez, the founder of Iris Ventures, which invests in customer-centric brands that aim to solve consumers' problems and help them lead healthier, happier lives.

Although Suarez and her team sift through thousands of potential investments, and have a strict set of requirements about how and where they put their money, they put just as much emphasis on passion as on profitability.

"You have to be quite thorough when it comes to looking at investment opportunities, and we always start with the founder. We need to connect with the founder, and their story, just as consumers connect with products, services and stories," said Suarez.

"That connection needs to be completely authentic because building a business is not a sprint, it's a marathon, and you need to make sure that you can see the passion in the founder's eyes," she added.

Suarez believes the right human dynamic can drive a business to great heights, especially when the investor and founder have complementary skills and experience.

She said that for founders looking for investment, "it's important to get the right

partner, someone who has done it before, who knows what not to do, as well as what to do," Suarez said, adding that the road to financial success is long – and intense.

Potential investors need to have the "financial firepower to be able to accompany you, not only through one round of fundraising, but perhaps a couple of rounds to get the business to a point where it can be self-funded," she added.

Even when it's forging bonds with a founder, Iris never loses sight of the end consumer.

"We put the consumer at the core of everything as we try to understand the cultural shifts, and [the brands] want to back in the long term," said Suarez.

"That consumer is looking for newness, and I think there is a lot of emotional white space, where the consumers' needs and desires are not being met. That's where we're really focusing when it comes to identifying the next generation of brands," she added.

An example of that investigative approach is Iris' investment in Artemest, a platform that promotes Italian craftsmanship, showcasing the skills of more than 1,400 artisans to 71 countries around the world.

Before Artemest came along, some artisanal businesses – marble designers, ceramicists, carpenters, textile and lighting designers – were at risk of closing because they didn't have the tools to promote themselves or a critical mass of clients.

Artemest, which was founded by Marco Credendino and Ippolita Rostagno, gave

them a world stage.

Although anyone can buy homeware from Artemest, the business is chiefly business-to-business and the team works with interior designers on large-scale residential and commercial projects worldwide. Artemest has offices in the U.S., Europe and Dubai, and the teams are constantly interfacing with the Italian artisans, the interior designers, and the end customer.

Catalina Ruiz Urquiola, vice president of Artemest Middle East, who joined Suarez said customization – and personalization – is a big part of business in the region.

"This client really, really loves our ability to work with the Italian craftsmen directly. It means our product offering is very different to a lot of the other luxury brands in our space. We really work on helping an interior designer execute their vision," she said.

"Customers are asking for dining tables for 25 people – minimum – so having the ability to customize everything is a strong part of what we do," she added.

Urquiola said there is also increased demand for "interesting materials," not just in the Middle East but globally. "Whenever an artisan works with something out of the ordinary, people gravitate towards that. We have these Gaetano Pesce vases, which are actually made out of silicone rubber, but they look like glass," she said.

In other cases, clients are seeking inspiration – and comfort. Urquiola said that, due to lockdown, "wellness at home" has become a big trend in interiors, materials and fabrics.

"Sometimes we're working on projects with offices that no longer look like offices. The lines of what a traditional office looks like are blurring. In Dubai, in particular,



we have so many offices that look more like spas. Well-being is certainly the intention behind certain designs.

"Then you have lighting, you have sound, and the mix of materials that go into every aspect of well-being that designers need to look into if they want to stay relevant," said Urquiola, who's ready to deliver on clients' increasingly complex demands.

BEAUTY

Glow Recipe's Social Strategy Has Been Driving Organic Growth

● Cofounder Christine Chang revealed how the brand navigates platform-specific content and addressed the "Sephora kids" phenomenon.

BY RITU UPADHYAY

While most beauty brands struggle with rising social media advertising costs and navigating the emerging Gen Alpha consumer base, Glow Recipe has found success through a fundamentally different approach.

Speaking at the WWD Global Fashion and Beauty Summit, cofounder and co-chief executive officer Christine Chang revealed the organic social strategies and thoughtful Gen Alpha insights that have propelled the indie skin care brand to become one of Sephora's largest independently owned brands – and also earning the company WWD's International Beauty Brand of the Year award in presented in Riyadh last week.

"Our approach has never really been ad driven," Chang told Jenny B. Fine, executive editor of beauty, WWD, explaining how the brand has built a global community through platform-specific content strategies while meaningfully engaging with younger consumers entering the beauty space.

Mastering Social Strategy by Platform

Chang provided detailed insights into how Glow Recipe approaches each social platform differently, a strategy that has proven crucial to the brand's organic growth. "Every social platform is a little bit different," she explained. "Instagram is still a little bit more of the curation, the lifestyle, the business card of the brand, if you will, where you can have these direct

conversations with the customer."

In contrast, Chang described TikTok as "more of that immediate, real-time conversation with your best friend," requiring the brand to tailor content accordingly. This platform-specific approach has allowed Glow Recipe to build authentic relationships rather than relying heavily on paid advertising.

"Our approach has never really been ad-driven. Ads are part of an overarching strategy," Chang noted. Instead, the brand focuses on skin care education, ingredient education, and ASMR-style sensorial content that showcases product textures beyond just efficacy claims.

The strategy extends globally, with Chang revealing that social conversations have become surprisingly universal. "When we launched at Sephora Brazil, all of the Brazilian influencers we met were intimately familiar with all of the TikTok trends that are on my FYP," she said. "We were able to share that same language, and I think it's very much the case here in the Middle East as well."

This global social connectivity has enabled innovative approaches like Glow Recipe's "Glow Conference," modeled after Apple's product announcements. The event featured simultaneous viewing parties across key markets including the U.K., Dubai, Southeast Asia, and Mexico, generating 23,000 comments during the live stream.

Navigating the Gen Alpha Beauty Boom

Perhaps no topic in beauty generates more discussion than the "Sephora kids" phenomenon, and Chang offered nuanced insights into how brands should approach Gen Alpha consumers. "The Sephora kids slash Gen Alpha phenomena was a

very, very involved conversation," she acknowledged.

Chang, who shared she is a mother to a middle schooler, brought personal perspective to the debate. "I understand why Gen Alpha is seeking out skin concerns, because if you're wearing an SPF daily to protect your skin, then you have to cleanse it off, and after cleansing, you should moisturize and replenish that moisture. So that alone is already a routine."

Rather than targeting specific age groups, Glow Recipe maintains that "skin care is created via concerns and benefits and ingredients versus by age." However, Chang emphasized the responsibility brands have in providing appropriate guidance. "I think it's our job as brands to make sure that we're educating that it's clear which products are and aren't appropriate for that age group."

The brand has responded practically to this demographic shift by launching SPF products tested for ages 3 and up, allowing entire families to use the same products. "Both products were tested for three years and up so that the whole family could use this SPF product," Chang explained of their sunscreen stick and Dew Shield launches.

"This customer is here to stay," Chang acknowledged about Gen Alpha. "I think it's the brand's role to make sure that we're providing the right transparency and ingredients."

Community-driven Growth Strategy

Chang detailed Glow Recipe's tiered community approach, emphasizing how the brand started as "a community of two," just the cofounders, before expanding to include micro and macro influencers. The brand's Global Gang ambassador program connects with 300

ambassadors worldwide through direct Zoom sessions with the founders, product previews and exclusive launches.

"We have to think about a tiered strategy, because a macro influencer is very different from a micro influencer and how we engage," Chang explained. This community-first approach has proven particularly effective on social commerce platforms like TikTok Shop, where the brand recently launched with trial-size product kits to drive both platform engagement and conversion to traditional retailers like Sephora.

Chang also addressed the evolution of beauty retail, noting how "customers no longer go to department stores, per se, for a prestige experience. Prestige can be found throughout multichannel, TikTok Shop, Amazon, all of these other channels." This shift has reinforced Glow Recipe's positioning as an "entry-level prestige brand" focused on accessibility and approachability.

The brand's venture into social commerce through TikTok Shop exemplifies this omnichannel approach. Chang revealed that by launching trial-size kits rather than full-size products, they saw "a couple thousand of those kits in a very short period of time," demonstrating the platform's power for driving trial and eventual conversion across channels.

Chang's emphasis on authentic, platform-specific content over paid advertising reflects a broader shift in consumer expectations. And the company's thoughtful approach to Gen Alpha consumers – focusing on education and age-appropriate products rather than avoidance – is a measured response to this demographic reality.

For fellow founders, Chang stressed the importance of maintaining core brand values while remaining agile. "I think that's a huge strength that indie brands have. Our team is also very mindful, and that allows us to take risks in a way a bigger brand might not be able to."

Chang concluded, staying true to your "North Star" while adapting to platform changes and demographic shifts remains the key to long-term success in beauty.

Christine Chang
with Jenny B. Fine.



WWD GLOBAL FASHION & BEAUTY SUMMIT

FASHION

Matteo Tamburini on Redefining Italian Luxury for a Global Audience



- The Tod's creative director explained his approach to global design and why "Made in Italy is not a label, but a mindset."

BY RITU UPADHYAY

Matteo Tamburini is rejecting the concept of designing differently for different markets.

"I don't design for specific markets," the Tod's creative director said at WWD's Global Fashion & Beauty Summit in Riyadh. "I design with an idea, a feeling I want to translate into the collection. The beauty is in creating something that can speak to people across different cultures."

It's a bold stance in a fashion industry increasingly focused on regional customization and market-specific

strategies. But for Tamburini, this universal approach represents the future of luxury – one where "Made in Italy is not a label, but a mindset" and where the goal is creating pieces that "can speak to people across different cultures" without compromising creative integrity.

The strategy appears to be working: Tod's was awarded WWD's International Brand of the Year award in Riyadh.

A Foundation Built On Storytelling

Tamburini's design sensibility was forged in his mother's theatrical costume atelier in a small Italian town. "I grew up in an atelier where my mother created theatrical costumes," he said. "As a child, I was constantly surrounded by fabrics, patterns, and the transformative power of clothing. I learned how clothes can actually create a

character, how they can tell a story beyond mere fabric and stitching."

This theatrical foundation continues to inform his work at Tod's, where every collection becomes a narrative exercise in balancing heritage with contemporary relevance. It's a perspective that sets him apart in an industry often focused on surface-level trends.

Having worked across both French and Italian fashion houses, Tamburini brings a unique comparative perspective to his role. "French brands are more structured, more organized in pushing creativity," he explained. "Italian brands are more instinctive, more connected to lifestyle."

This distinction has become central to his strategy at Tod's, where he leverages Italy's innate connection to living beautifully rather than simply creating beautiful objects.

His approach involves what he calls "Italianism" – a contemporary interpretation of Italian luxury that feels both rooted and revolutionary.

"I'm trying to speak about Italianism, but in a contemporary, up-to-date way," he said. "It's about creating something familiar yet surprising – changing textures, proportions and combinations to keep the essence alive."

Quiet Luxury, Loud Impact

As the fashion industry grapples with the "quiet luxury" phenomenon, Tamburini offers a nuanced perspective. "What we do might look quiet, but it's not as quiet as it seems," he said. "For me, it's not a trend – it's about creating minimal things, beautifully executed."

This philosophy positions Tod's beyond fleeting movements, focusing instead on enduring quality and subtle distinction.

Central to Tamburini's design

philosophy is the concept of "easiness and desirability." He envisions his customer as someone who "travels the world, moves with ease, and isn't strictly following trends." This translates into collections that transcend seasonal whims, instead offering timeless pieces with modern sensibilities. This universal approach has proven particularly relevant as luxury consumers become increasingly global in their outlook and lifestyle.

Tamburini draws inspiration from unexpected sources, with David Bowie serving as a key creative touchstone. "I always have specific icons in mind," he shared, "not just his on-stage persona, but that off-stage nonchalant easiness – someone who works around stereotypes in fascinating ways."

Tamburini's approach to creative direction is very hands-on, including with production. "I'm often in the factories, working closely with the team," he said. "I'm not a designer who sits in an ivory tower. Exchanging ideas, making people feel involved – that's crucial to the creative process." This collaborative spirit extends to his approach with both men's and women's collections, which he sees as part of a cohesive narrative rather than separate entities.

Wisdom for the Next Generation

In an era of instant gratification, Tamburini advocates for patience and depth. His advice to emerging designers reflects his own measured approach: "Stay curious. Speak less and listen more. Don't rush – good design comes with time. We're in an era of instant gratification, but true creativity requires patience and depth."

As Tod's continues its evolution under Tamburini's creative direction, the brand's International Brand of the Year recognition from WWD validates his approach to honoring Italian heritage while embracing global sensibilities. "Every collection is a journey," he reflected. "It's about creating sparks of desire, connecting with people through design that feels both familiar and exciting."

BUSINESS

Istituto Marangoni Riyadh Shares Academic Offer of Saudi Campus

- School and education director Anna Zinola explained the g-local strategy behind Istituto Marangoni's first outpost in Saudi Arabia, opening in August.

BY MARTINO CARRERA

A **g-local approach** is to inform the academic offering of fashion and design school Istituto Marangoni's first outpost in Saudi Arabia, not unlike its other 10 campuses where education is tailored to the location, student audience and local creative industry.

The educational institution is opening its doors in Riyadh in August, becoming the first international fashion school with a permanent campus in the Kingdom. The first enrolled cohort will include about 55 students.

"We turn 90 years this year and we have campuses all around the world. Riyadh is the number 11. What we do in each campus is putting together the heritage of the place with the global trends," said Anna Zinola,

school and education director at Istituto Marangoni Riyadh during the 2025 WWD Global Fashion & Beauty Summit.

"Our offer is tailor-made on needs of the students and of the companies as well. We want to fill this gap," she explained.

The school will offer six, three-year-long, undergraduate specialized programs including Fashion Design and Accessories, Fashion Communication and Image, Fashion Management, Digital Communication and Media, Fashion Product, and Fragrances and Cosmetics Management.

These are validated by Saudi Arabia's Technical and Vocational Training Corporation and form the core curriculum, developed specifically to address gaps in the region's fashion workforce while meeting international education benchmarks.

In addition to diploma programs, the school will offer one-year and semester-long upskilling courses for industry professionals, addressing the needs of the current workforce alongside preparing future talent.

Per the school's approach, each class will include about 15 students to ensure better instruction.

Mindful of younger generations' frequent career shifts, Zinola said the school's curriculum is designed to equip students for multiple career changes with both technical and adaptive skills.

"We want to give the right tools to these young, talented, passionate Saudis... in terms of both hard skill and soft skill. It means, for example, all the digital tools like 3D clothing or how to design a collection, but even how to manage the social media content, or how to read a financial plan,"

Zinola said. "Fashion is design, is creativity, but you should take care of the financial element in the management of the company. Creativity is super important, but unfortunately, it's not enough."

The Istituto Marangoni campus will be located in the new Riyadh Creative District at KAFD, part of a government strategy to build cultural and business sectors that diversify the economy beyond oil revenues.

The school's commitment to nurture homegrown fashion talent is tied to ensuring high employment rates.

"All around the world the employment rate [of Istituto Marangoni's graduates] is 91 percent within the first year, and we have even a lot of entrepreneurs. What we want to do here is support both employment and entrepreneurship," Zinola said.

The final year of Istituto Marangoni Riyadh's three-year courses will entail



Anna Zinola with Ritu Upadhyay, Middle East bureau chief, WWD.

industry projects, internships, and active collaboration with companies that are custom-selected for each student – taking into account both parties' needs and skills – to ensure job market alignment.

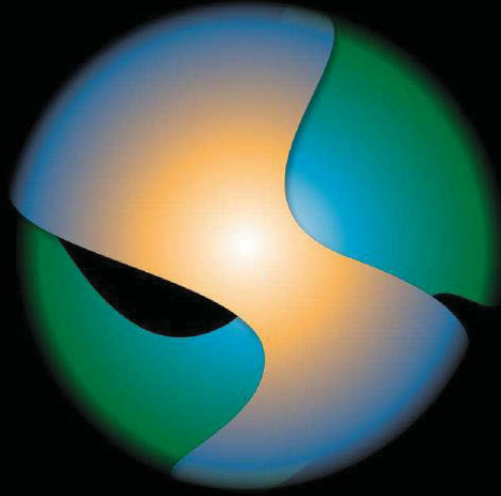
Acknowledging an ebullient entrepreneurial spirit among the youth in the Kingdom with a strong female component, too, Zinola said that the school's ultimate goal is to foster those creative and business seeds.

"I think that we are aligned with Saudi Vision 2030 [the government program for economic, cultural and social diversification] and we want to support young talent here, these very talented young generations of Saudis," she said. "That's exactly what I see as a success. My success is the success of this generation as they grow up."

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FASHION

Matthew M. Williams Has A New Clothing Project

- The namesake collection is making its debut at the Seiya Nakamura showroom in Paris during men's fashion week.

BY MILES SOCHA

Matthew M. Williams will debut a new namesake, independent clothing project in Paris during men's fashion week later this month, WWD has learned.

The collection for men and women – reflecting the American designer's exacting, product-based approach, and a focus on craft – will be sold at the Seiya Nakamura showroom in Paris from June 26 until July 1. Paris Fashion Week, showcasing spring 2026 collections, kicks off June 24 and wraps on June 29.

It is understood Williams is funding the new venture, and working with favorite suppliers from across his 20 years in the business, including a denim mill in Japan, an American jersey specialist, and a Spanish maker of handmade shoes.

The designer is probably best known for his three-year stint as the creative director of Givenchy, and as cofounder of 1017 Alyx 9SM. Established in 2015, that coed label is known for its industrial-tinged and utilitarian allure, and

collaborations with the likes of Nike, Moncler and Audemars Piguet.

In late 2023, just as Williams was winding up his tenure at Givenchy, Hong Kong entrepreneur Adrian Cheng took a majority stake in 1017 Alyx 9SM. It last presented a collection to the press in June 2024.

Contacted by WWD, Williams confirmed his new clothing project, but declined further comment.

Born in Chicago and raised amid the vibrant skate culture in Pismo Beach, Calif., Williams is a self-taught designer. He started his career in fashion production, making a name for himself working as creative director for Lady Gaga.

Williams is widely seen as a driven, versatile fashion talent with a sharp vision, strong cultural and artistic connections, and formidable technical chops. Shunning seasonal themes or narratives, he designs according to garment archetypes with an intense focus on fabrication and finishing, prizing "soul" in garments and accessories.

His eponymous brand will be in good company at the Seiya Nakamura showroom, which will also showcase Craig Green, Taiga Takahashi, Arpa Studio, Amomento, Song for the Mute, Khoki and Edward Cuming.



Matthew M. Williams at the studio of artist John Chamberlain.



Phoenix, Jesper and Peg Parnevik in pieces from the Gap x Malbon collection.

FASHION

Gap Collaborates With Malbon on Golf-inspired Collection

- A campaign featuring former PGA champ Jesper Parnevik and his children will accompany the launch.

BY JEAN E. PALMIERI

Malbon Golf has partnered with a slew of companies in recent years. Now the buzzy brand can add Gap to that list.

On Friday, the two will unveil a limited-edition collection and campaign that blends Malbon's signature golf aesthetic with Gap's preppy-inspired basics.

The 33-piece Gap x Malbon collection of men's and women's apparel features a custom PAR logo along with a play on Gap's arch logo on a variety of fleece, knits and accessories in stripes, plaids and herringbone patterns.

"Malbon has fostered a vibrant culture around the game of golf, allowing us to engage a new customer and bring together our two communities in a fresh way," said Mark Breitbard, president and chief executive officer of Gap brand. "Our collaboration with Malbon represents the unique intersection of fashion, sports and culture, offering a new opportunity for self-expression, on or off the golf course, through the lens of beloved Gap icons."

"We grew up with Gap, so the opportunity to collaborate and bridge golf culture with Gap's heritage is incredibly exciting," said Erica and Stephen Malbon, the married couple that founded Malbon in 2017. "Gap defines what an American brand can look like – it's where fashion and functionality collide – so we are thrilled that each and every piece reflects,

authentically, the DNA of both brands."

To promote the collection, the companies created a Generation Golf campaign shot by Duncan Wolfe. The campaign features five-time PGA tour winner Jesper Parnevik alongside his children, Peg and Phoenix Parnevik. Malbon has worked with Parnevik in the past, notably in 2022 when the former Swedish golfer and his daughter were the faces of its Yacht Collection, a seasonal lifestyle line for golf enthusiasts. Parnevik also serves as an ambassador of the brand.

In the Gap x Malbon campaign images, Jesper Parnevik wears a linen-cotton bomber jacket with matching pleated baggy shorts and baseball hat; a utility vest with pleated baggy pants, and a heavyweight French terry logo hoodie. Peg Parnevik wears a cropped polo sweater with a linen-cotton plaid pleated mini skirt and a cable-knit sweater and heavyweight quarter-zip pullover, while Phoenix Parnevik dons a striped polo shirt, polo sweater and graphic T-shirt.

The collection will retail for \$18 to \$138 and be available beginning at noon on Friday online and in select Gap stores in the U.S. including units in Los Angeles, New Jersey, Dallas, Miami and New York City. It will also be available online in Japan.

In the past few years Malbon has partnered with a variety of companies including Nike, Dockers, Spyder, New Balance, Budweiser and Wheels Up. Gap is in the midst of a reinvention under CEO Richard Dickson and has collaborated with Palace, Cult Gaia and Döen. It also recently unveiled GapStudio, a new elevated line designed by Zac Posen, who serves as the retailer's creative director.

MEN'S

Stefano Ricci Travels to India With Steve McCurry for Spring 2026



Here, below and right: The Stefano Ricci spring 2026 collection and campaign shot by Steve McCurry.



- The Florentine brand explored the land of kings and maharajas with the famed American photojournalist best known for his work with National Geographic.

BY MARTINO CARRERA

MILAN — Talk about a wardrobe befitting a maharaja.

In keeping with its world trip concept, dubbed “SR Explorer,” Italian sartorial brand Stefano Ricci traveled for its spring 2026 collection to India — “the cradle of the human race,” as Mark Twain put it.

Over 10 days in the Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh regions, the Florentine label explored the Mughal capital of Agra with the Taj Mahal, as well as Jaipur, Udaipur and Jodhpur, bringing along master photographer Steve McCurry, who has trained his lens on the Indian subcontinent for almost five decades,

providing memorable pictures.

Some of them were recreated for the Stefano Ricci images — half campaign and half travel diary — including the famous shot amid the maze-like streets of the painterly blue city of Jodhpur showing red sari-wearing women and a sitting man with a red turban.

The 2025 version features a Stefano Ricci model donning a cream-white relaxed suit crafted from Alpha yarn, a precious wool exclusively used by Stefano Ricci.

“It was a journey of discovery into the heart of India, [which is] suspended in time, where imperial palaces, untamed nature, silk and spice markets, and cenotaphs are imbued with a deep spirituality,” said the brand’s creative director Filippo Ricci during an unveiling at Milan’s Piccolo Teatro of a short movie captured during the trip.

“An ancestral calling, drawing a parallel between the Renaissance in Florence, the cradle of knowledge, and the ancient Mughal capitals. This mission was not

without a few surprises, which made it all the more remarkable,” he said, referencing, for example, the blissful moment McCurry met with the subject of his famous shot “Boy in Mid-Flight,” captured in Jodhpur in 2007.

A few outfits in the Stefano Ricci spring lineup took direct cues from the rich nuances, opulent dressing and architecture of India.

For one, the evening pink blazer, slightly elongated and styled with pristine white sartorial pants, referenced the color of Jaipur’s Hawa Mahal landmark, known as the “palace of winds.” The smooth velvet tuxedos with silk trims and Indian-style, stand-up collars and long gold silk jacket, paired with white trousers, nodded to the country’s fashion sensibility.

Elsewhere, soft and lightweight tailoring with narrow pants done in neutral and earthy tones, field jackets with mandarin collars and horn buttons, and silk printed shirts conjured a dandy-on-a-mission vibe. The brand also provided its luxurious take on sweatsuits, paired with leather trainers.

Interspersed in the collection were show-stoppers such as the red nubuck leather bikers and marble-toned Himalaya crocodile duffel bags and briefcases with a velvety finish.

The collection will also be showcased at the upcoming edition of Pitti Uomo, running June 17 to 20.

Adding a social responsibility component to the Indian trip, Stefano Ricci has forged ties with India’s Centre for Wildlife Studies to support the conservation of tigers in their natural habitat, as part of its ongoing commitment to supporting local communities wherever it hosts an SR Explorer mission.

“We are especially pleased to have entered this partnership with Dr. Krithi Karanth, an internationally respected figure known for the rigor and impact of her conservation projects. Our contribution will help support studies on human-wildlife conflict in local communities,” said chief executive officer

Niccolò Ricci on the stage of the Piccolo Teatro.

For its collections, the brand has so far visited Peru; Luxor, Egypt; Iceland; the Galápagos Islands; Mongolia, and Cambodia. Also for the latter trip it had conscripted McCurry.

India was not a random choice, as the country contributes to 4 percent of sales, the CEO of the family-owned company said. Part of that comes from its boutiques in Mumbai and New Delhi, but a significant portion is tied to the brand’s links with notable Indian customers, including the Ambani family.

Overall, Stefano Ricci, founded in 1972, logged sales of 233 million euros in 2024, flat versus 2023.

“In a time of considerable uncertainty such as the one we are currently experiencing, we remain confident thanks to a general performance that is broadly in line with the previous year’s results,” Niccolò Ricci said. Sales from directly operated stores in the first four months of 2025 showed a 3 percent gain, although overall sales slipped 3 percent in the same period, compared to 2024.

The brand operates 82 stores globally — including upcoming openings in Almaty in Kazakhstan, and Rome and Porto Cervo in Italy — and it’s certainly not skimping on retail investments.

“We’ve inherited this long-term vision from our father. He and my mother have always triggered us to raise the bar higher,” he said.

“The company continues to invest, particularly in the U.S. where, following last December’s opening in Houston, we will inaugurate a new boutique in Washington D.C. this September. At the same time, we have recently opened our boutique in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, a further expression of our ambitions in Southeast Asia,” Niccolò Ricci explained.

The brand has also recently cut the ribbon to a new state-of-the-art logistics facility in Florence and relocated its tailoring atelier from the original site in the city center to Caldine, a small town close to Fiesole located six miles outside Florence.

Reflecting its links to its territory, last month, the brand signed a cultural patronage agreement with the Uffizi Galleries, becoming the main sponsor for the removal of the construction crane that has been standing outside the prestigious cultural institution for over 20 years. Stefano Ricci will also fund the revamp of the museum’s courtyard.



MEN'S

'Mountainhead' Is 'Succession' – But With Stealthier Costumes



"Mountainhead" is a film about a group of billionaire friends who get together against the backdrop of a rolling international crisis.



"Mountainhead" from Jesse Armstrong, the creator of "Succession."

● Jesse Armstrong, the creator of "Succession," is borrowing from the lives of tech savants for his new film with a helping hand from costume designer Susan Lyall.

BY HIKMAT MOHAMMED

LONDON — Jesse Armstrong, the creator of "Succession," is well versed in the lives of the extremely rich. And it shows in his new HBO film "Mountainhead," another anthropology of wealth centered around four male friends stranded in a snowstorm against the backdrop of an ongoing financial crisis.

In typical Armstrong fashion, the characters are dressed in mostly beige or monochrome colors without a logo in sight — a signifier that for the rich, quiet luxury never dies.

"Their wealth is from their intellectual property and business acumen. It's not

inherited necessarily. All of these people have had privilege of some sort, but they might have just been people who were really clever and came and figured something out," said costume designer Susan Lyall, who stayed far away from the usual suspects of quiet luxury such as Loro Piana and Brunello Cucinelli for these characters.

She helped the cast find their footing in the right footwear, from Steve Carell as Randall in his Zegna zipper boots and Hoka trainers; Cory Michael Smith as Venis in his Salmon x Kith sneakers; Ramy Youssef as Jeff in Arc'teryx lace-up boots and Aether trainers, and Jason Schwartzman as Hugo Van Yalk in On trainers, ankle-length Uggs and Birkenstocks.

Each character is loosely based on the life of a billionaire savant, the same way that Armstrong's "Succession" was a fictionalized account of Rupert Murdoch's life.

Armstrong gave Lyall an extensive file that included books, interviews,

in the Armstrong palette of neutrals.

The sweater quickly became an important part of "Mountainhead," partly because it was an easy way for Armstrong to identify Carell and also because it adds to the character's fixation on Roman history. The word cognomen is a third name, or nickname, given to an ancient Roman citizen, usually passed down from father to son.

Lyall initially tried to put Carell in a coat with the sweater, but the idea was rejected by Armstrong.

"These people are so rich they go from their office to a car to a plane to another car. It's that level of wealth and wealthy people often don't have coats on," she explained.

The process of preparing the costumes for "Mountainhead" was different from what Lyall or any costume designer is used to — there was no scouring or thrifting involved. Everything was box fresh and clean without being flashy. So instead, she shopped at Bergdorf Goodman, Saks, Todd Snyder, Nordstrom and Re:Al, a store in TriBeCa.

For Youssef's character, she reached out to the London-based jewelry brand Jagga to make custom bracelets for him based on images of Dorsey.

In working on a male-dominated film, Lyall embraced the challenge.

"I like to dress men more because I find the conventions are just more limited. And in a weird way, I like the parameters of the universe of men's clothing — it's limiting, but then you sort of hone in a little closer to what you want," she said, adding that it was why she also enjoyed costuming the historical legal drama "The Trial of the Chicago 7."

Through the years, a lot of her work has centered around real people. In "Molly's Game," starring Jessica Chastain as Molly Bloom, who was dubbed the "Poker Princess" in the early 2000s, she had more than 92 costume changes for the actress.

"In my interview with Jesse [Armstrong], we spoke about 'Molly's Game' because the characters in 'Mountainhead' are a pastiche of tech bros and venture capitalists. Some of the players in 'Molly's Game' were inspired by someone in real life, but we

didn't recreate them verbatim," she said. The characters that Lyall works on have a humanity to them — they're not ideas plucked from Hollywood film scripts.

One reason she became a costume designer was because of the "Cinderella" film from 1965.

"When the mice and the birds are helping make her dress, they're singing the song that says: 'There's nothing to it, really' and you just put a ribbon on it. I'm pretty sure that was one really lasting image for me," she said.

Another film she loves is "Smithereens" from the early '80s for its "natural look."

"We overdo a lot of things now, but the British film industry doesn't overdo it," said Lyall, pointing to her work on "Luther: The Fallen Sun," which was shot in London in 2022. "I found with the hair, makeup and costumes — everything had a more natural look to it — the shirts are wrinkled, not everyone has their lipstick on and their hair is messy like it should be. That is something I really appreciate about the British film industry."

In the stealth wealth world of "Mountainhead," Lyall manages to make the characters aspirational without losing their nerdy edge, proving that not all tech moguls wear a menagerie of sheep, goats, bovines and vicuñas.

Stealth wealth in Jesse Armstrong's "Mountainhead."



podcasts, images and other documents for her to study people such as Peter Thiel, the former chief executive officer of PayPal; David O. Sacks, an investor in internet technology firms; Jack Dorsey, the cofounder of Twitter, now X, and Jason Calacanis, an entrepreneur, angel investor and one of the hosts of the business and technology podcast "All-In" that Sacks is also on. She dove deep into the podcast and even took some notes.

"The clothing never really gets mentioned, but it's the implication of their character," she explained. "It was a very good source of research for me. One of the hosts, Chamath Palihapitiya, went to the inauguration of President Donald Trump and he showed pictures of all the things he wore. I couldn't believe it. He had a Loro Piana jacket here and a Brunello Cucinelli there — he obviously really knew his stuff," Lyall added.

But with the characters of "Mountainhead," it's less about being fashion-forward.

Armstrong instructed the costume designer that he wanted Carell's character to "push the boundaries slightly beyond the comfort level to raise a little bit of an eyebrow." Case in point, he wears a red block sweater from the Japanese brand Cognomen in the film — a color that's not

[CULTURE CORNER]

Ralph Macchio on His Journey From Child Actor to 'Karate Kid' Legend



Ralph Macchio

● The latest film in the franchise that also spawned Netflix's popular "Cobra Kai" series opened Friday.

BY JEAN E. PALMIERI
PHOTOGRAPH BY LANNA APISUKH

Ralph Macchio was just 21 when he scored the role of Daniel LaRusso in "The Karate Kid." Now at 63, he's reprising that role one more time in "Karate Kid: Legends," which debuted on the big screen on Friday.

"It feels like a lifetime ago, but also yesterday, because of the relevance," he said during an interview at Sony Pictures' New York headquarters the day after the film's premiere.

Despite the success of "The Karate Kid" franchise — three sequels, and a spin-off, "Cobra Kai," on YouTube and Netflix that ran for six seasons — Macchio still has a hard time wrapping his head around his

character's longevity.

"I would love to say it was always part of my vision to be back on the big screen 41 years later with a new kid and be the number-one Netflix show for a couple of years," he said. "But I don't think anyone could have predicted that."

In his self-deprecating manner, Macchio attributed the series' success in large part to the screenwriters, directors and his original costar, Pat Morita, who played Mr. Miyagi, LaRusso's mentor. Morita died in 2005.

"I recognized at the time that the late, great Pat Morita, as Mr. Miyagi, and myself, had a kind of ease of working with each other," he said. "It just felt kind of magical when I saw it on the screen. The chemistry is just off the charts. He was so easy to work with and we were just in the skins of those characters. It was like the perfect glove fit."

Growing up in Huntington, N.Y., Macchio probably never envisioned the kind of success he's achieved. He started dancing at the age of 3, was discovered at

16 and snagged his first key role in the television series "Eight Is Enough" in 1980. That lasted one season. "Nine was too many," he said with a laugh.

From there, he got the role of Johnny Cade in the 1983 film, "The Outsiders," before signing on for "The Karate Kid" the next year, playing a high school student who was bullied until he learns karate from Miyagi.

"When I look back, that was the otherworldly blessing of this franchise," he said. "Even at the premiere of 'Karate Kid: Legends,' the audience was up on their feet, and they had a blast. It was like reliving that for a new kid, a new story. But none of that exists without the origin of that relatable story that was larger than life and became an inspiration for generations."

In "Legends," a kung fu prodigy, Li Fong, played by Ben Wang, attracts the attention of a local karate champion and embarks on a journey to enter the ultimate karate competition. In the film, he's aided by his kung fu teacher Mr. Han, played by Jackie Chan, and LaRusso.

For Macchio, he's hoping the new film will be a smash, of course, but what's more important is that he "protects the character and the franchise. We always have to remember the fans that got us here and what they've been in love with for 40 years even though we're telling a new, fresh story."

Macchio admitted that making the film without Morita was bittersweet, but it also opened the door to working with the legendary Chan.

"Jackie Chan is Jackie Chan," he said. "We just love him. He's funny — he's the youngest kid on the set at 71. His enthusiasm is contagious."

Although Morita is gone, he and Macchio will always be joined, not only by "The Karate Kid" films but also their adjacent stars on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Macchio received his star in November of last year.

"That was amazing because I had my family there," he said of his wife of 38 years, Phyllis, and their two children. "I ended my speech that day remembering my son, who had found a bunch of teen magazines, saying to his older sister: 'Dad was huge, and we missed the whole thing.' But there they were. I was getting the Hollywood star, I was in the 'Cobra Kai' series, I just finished filming 'Karate Kid: Legends,' I had just done a Coldplay video in Australia that came out of nowhere. It was just this massive resurgence, and they didn't miss it. That was kind of wonderful."

And having his star next to Morita's was also wonderful. "It just makes all the

sense in the world," he said. "Regardless of all the other work I've done — be it 'My Cousin Vinny,' 'The Outsiders,' my theater work, other television, 'The Karate Kid' is a landmark piece of pop culture. And it's pretty good, one-stop shopping for 'The Karate Kid' fans."

So is this the last "Karate Kid" film or are there others in his future? "Is it 'Karate Kid: The Final Reckoning,'" he said with a smile, referencing the last "Mission Impossible" film that was just released. "We'll have to see how the movie does," he said. "If it's successful, I'm sure the studio would relook at it. But whether Daniel LaRusso fits...we'll see."

Much like his character, Macchio's personal style has also evolved over the years since he first started acting. For his WWD interview, as well as a "Good Morning America" appearance, he wore a patterned Paisley & Gray suit with a black button-down shirt, black loafers and an Omega watch that he dressed down with black jeans for other promotional appearances.

"I've never been a big fashion guy, but I'm really appreciating it and venturing out more," he said. Following his appearance on GMA, he said he was flattered that the show's cohost Michael Strahan weighed in on his outfit. "Strahan is a fashion guy, and at the end of the interview, he said, 'Love the suit, by the way.' I texted my wife: 'Strahan loved the suit.'"

It's a far cry from 1984 when Macchio said he opted for "whatever The Gap had, whatever was comfortable: a hat, sweats. I still wear sweats a lot. I have 'Cobra Kai' sweats that some of the cast gave me and those are my go-to every morning. But now, my wife and kids will pick out something because they know I'll just wear a black T-shirt and hoodie."

He recalls sporting a jacket with a bold feather-inspired print for the premiere of "Cobra Kai" Season Six. He said he opted for the piece because the pattern reminded him of crane feathers and referenced the crane kick LaRusso has famously perfected over the years. "I play around with stuff like that. And last night, I wore a bright blue, double-breasted suit with checkered threading. I thought it looked smart and kind of rich. So that's where I'm starting to venture out."

Although he's in his early 60s, Macchio is still in shape, thanks to his continuing practice of karate. "I just got my black belt in Okinawan Goju-ryu-style karate so this is the first movie I've done where I was an actual black belt."

So what's next for the actor now that both "Karate Kid" and "Cobra Kai" have ended? Macchio isn't sure.

"Depending on how you look at it, it could be scary, terrifying or comforting. So I'll try to lean into 'comforting' and create my own opportunities." That could involve working on "something smaller that doesn't require the pressure of being in a franchise," doing more directing or even writing a children's book, he said. His memoir, "Waxing On: The Karate Kid and Me," that he penned "without a ghostwriter," he said proudly, in 2022, was a New York Times bestseller.

"I think it could be fun to explore something with humor," he said. "I love sarcasm and enjoy that I have that Larry David part of my personality that people don't know. So maybe there's a way to explore that, but I don't know. I haven't done a deep dive yet."

EXCLUSIVE

HigherDose Launches 3-in-1 Sculpting Body Recovery Device

- The device employs a gua sha-like metal tool, red light and microcurrent to support the lymphatic system, fascia and muscle.

BY EMILY BURNS

HigherDose's latest device has arrived.

The brand, known for its red light technology, topicals, supplements and other tools, on Monday is revealing the launch of its Microcurrent Body Sculptor, available in a set for \$399. The set, which is now available for preorder and will begin shipping on June 30, includes the Microcurrent Sculptor, Transdermal Magnesium Spray and Sculpting Activator Gel. Industry sources estimate HigherDose will sell more than 5,000 devices in the first seven months reaching \$1.5 million in revenue – this number is expected to grow 20 to 25 percent year-over-year over the next two to three years.

According to the team, its Microcurrent Body Sculptor is a first-of-its-kind recovery device, combining three technologies in one: a metal gua sha-like tool, red light and microcurrent, which together could support lymphatic drainage and circulation, detoxification, body sculpting, skin tightening and overall skin health and appearance.

"We wanted to create a tool that was really good at recovering the body. The body has three very important layers: muscle, fascia and lymphatic," said HigherDose cofounder and co-chief

executive officer Lauren Berlinger. "We felt like there were tools out there that addressed one or the other, whether it be lymphatic or muscle, but none that were really targeting all three."

As lymphatic drainage has become a popular topic, thanks to massages, supplements and devices, Berlinger predicts fascia, which is a connective tissue that runs throughout the entire body, will follow suit.

"When the fascia is stuck, it could cause pain, stiffness, inflammation, and your fascia directly speaks to your nervous system," she said, adding that fascia often stiffens due to stress.

While stagnant lymph can lead to puffiness due to built-up fluid, tense fascia can lead to knots, difficulty moving and overall tightness. When the fascia, lymphatic system and muscles are all functioning properly, the body should feel looser and be able to recover quicker.

In addition to addressing three areas in one, this is the first time HigherDose has tapped into microcurrent with four levels of the technology. According to Berlinger, the device, which is only meant to be used on the body, is so powerful that it equates to an electrical muscle stimulation workout, where electrodes are utilized to send pulses to the body to stimulate muscles. Therefore she said this tool could be used before a workout to ensure certain muscles are firing.

Along with the muscle and fascia work, HigherDose's hero red light supports the skin's and body's cellular function. The



HigherDose Microcurrent Body Sculptor

device specifically employs 14 dual-chip LED lights of both red light and near infrared light.

The device is meant to be used in conjunction with the Sculpting Activator Gel and Transdermal Magnesium Spray. Specifically, the Sculpting Activator Gel works as a conductor for the microcurrent to deeply penetrate and activate the muscles but also features ingredients like copper peptides, which are light-activating so they may enhance the efficacy of red light. When used in conjunction with the Transdermal Magnesium Spray, the magnesium, which can aid recovery, support detoxification and relax tense muscles, is also driven deeper into the skin.

"The combination of the tool, the technologies, the Activator Gel and the Transdermal Mag is the ultimate recovery solution," said Berlinger. "It's the best of

both worlds. This is the future of how to take care of those important layers of the body, so you're feeling the best."

As the HigherDose team looks to the future, red light remains its hero technology. The brand will be launching its next device featuring red light in September.

"We believe everyone should be doing red light therapy," Berlinger said. "We need to be doing red light for recovery. It's not only great for beauty. It's not only good for the mitochondria, but also for your circadian rhythm. With all the constant stress of today's day and age, making these technologies more accessible to people has always been a thing that we want to focus on... We're going to be coming out with more and more red light, because it is the future. At some point, I truly believe that everyone will have some sort of red light in their house in the near future."

BEAUTY

Poiret Beauté Debuts in the U.S. at Violet Grey

- In 2015, South Korean luxury conglomerate Shinsegae International acquired the Poiret trademark and created a range of beauty products.

BY KATHRYN HOPKINS

Poiret Beauté is coming to the U.S. via Violet Grey.

While the name Poiret may not be familiar to all, the House of Paul Poiret was a Parisian fashion house that operated from 1903 to 1929 and Paul Poiret is widely recognized as the designer who dismissed the use of petticoats and corsets in women's fashion. Instead, his interest in Eastern arts and cultures saw him opt for looser and draped silhouettes that were characterized by dramatic colors and bold patterns.

Throughout the 20 years of the House of Poiret, Poiret developed fragrances and pressed powders, in addition to fashion and furniture.

Now, the launch Monday marks the first time the skin care products will be available in the U.S.

"Poiret was a brand that I discovered as part of my engagement with Shinsegae International. What I found when I went to Seoul the first time a year and a half ago is they had created this brand in resurrecting the House of Poiret about a decade ago,"



Poiret Beauté

said John Demsey, chairman and senior brand adviser to Poiret. "There was an incredible backstory and piece of equity here that deserved to be a global beauty play based on the spirit of fashion heritage and the pioneering liberation of women and the embrace of the best of the West

and the best of the East that goes back to the turn of the 19th century."

Together with Cassandra Grey, founder of Violet Grey, he selected several stock keeping units to launch in the luxe retailer.

Among the products is the two-step cleansing ritual with La Crème

Démaquillante, \$130, a makeup-melting balm, followed by Savon Pour Le Visage, \$115, a proprietary hard glycerine soap.

Other products include Absolift Crème, \$510, Absolift Emulsion, \$365, Absolift Serum des Yeux, \$375, Absolift Lotion, \$190, and Infusion D'Énergie, \$245.

The same seeds, plants and ingredients such as bamboo root, ginseng, and white rose root that were in the early 20th century Poiret products are also at the center of its advanced formulations launching Monday.

Grey said: "The Violet Code ensures that we offer a curation that is truly the best in beauty; these two ranges, especially the cleansers, have been a best-kept secret for a while now. The formulations are innovative but also feel and look good – held in a chic vase, they are really perfect for our customer who loves to travel."

As previously reported by WWD, in 2024 Cassandra Grey acquired Violet Grey back from Coupang-owned Farfetch, with help from private equity veteran Sherif Guirgis, who is helming the company as chairman, chief executive officer and co-owner. It recently soft-opened a flagship on Madison Avenue in New York complete with a Poiret chaise longue.

"It's very fun and a treat to be able to be the first to introduce this to our customers," continued Grey.

FASHION

Jonathan Adler and Friends Celebrate New Exhibition at MAD

● “The Mad MAD World of Jonathan Adler” runs through April 2026.

BY ROSEMARY FEITELBERG

As well-wishers wound their way through the crowd at the Museum of Arts and Design Thursday night to congratulate Jonathan Adler on his first museum exhibition, he said lightheartedly, “This sometimes feels like attending your own funeral.”

Looking around the gallery, designer Anna Sui put it another way. “Everything you look at makes you smile.”

She and fellow guests like Veronica Webb, Ruben Toledo, John Bartlett and Beth Rudin DeWoody were joined by influencers like Katie Sturino and Moti Anhari. Thursday’s attendees were the first to see the exhibition, but others will have plenty of time to take it in. “The Mad MAD World of Jonathan Adler” runs through April 2026. Adler’s husband Simon Doonan helped to map out the show.

However, “light and frothy” as the fashion world can be, the ceramicist,

furniture designer and author said culling the exhibition has been “a deep experience. Understanding what I’ve been up to for the past 40 years and seeing my work juxtaposed next to the work that has inspired me has been like a deep therapy session and an autobiography. It has given me a chance to try to understand what I’ve been up to for all this time.”

Liz Lange recalled meeting Adler as a freshman at Brown University, where a mutual friend brought him over to her dorm room to meet. “We kind of became instant besties, and we have been ever since,” she said.

To be surrounded by Adler’s work in a museum is “phenomenal,” she said. “I knew Jonathan when he rented space in a shared studio, and just had a wheel and no business. To see this is an incredible journey not just as a creative person but also as a businessperson. So many people have one side of their brain or other, but Johnny really has both.”

Lange, who had a signature company and now owns the brand Fig, initially bonded with Adler, after graduating from the Ivy



Jonathan Adler at MAD.

League school and starting their respective businesses. Adler’s business is currently valued at \$150 million. Consortium Brands Partners acquired a majority stake in Adler’s company in late December. Amidst all the good cheer, the potter admitted he was eager to get back to the wheel.

Amy Fine Collins recalled meeting Adler when he was starting out creating tchotchkes. Never imagining then that he

would build such an empire, become a decorator and more, she mused how his work could have taken over MAD instead of being housed on one floor. “He really underplays what his success has been,” Collins said. “He also embraced kitsch in a fearless way. And he and Simon have one of the most successful marriages that I’ve ever seen even though they like to call each other rude names. It’s part of their schtick.”

FASHION

Fashion Insiders Meet With Susie Wiles at the White House



Fashion insiders visited the White House on May 29.

● The CFDA’s Steven Kolb, the AAFA’s Stephen Lamar and Condé Nast’s chief content officer Anna Wintour traveled to Washington, D.C., for Thursday’s meeting.

BY ROSEMARY FEITELBERG

The American Apparel and Footwear Association’s president and chief executive officer Stephen Lamar offered some insight Friday into the White House meeting that

he, Condé Nast’s chief content officer Anna Wintour, and the Council of Fashion Designers of America’s CEO Steven Kolb had with Chief of Staff Susie Wiles.

The trio met with Wiles on Thursday to not just make a case for the impact that President Donald Trump’s tariffs are having on the fashion industry. Lamar said Friday that they met on behalf of the American fashion industry, which supports 10 million American jobs, and has for many years paid high tariffs compared to the rest of the economy. Their goal was to talk about “balanced trade and how best to maintain

those jobs in the U.S., and preserve American prosperity,” according to Lamar.

A media request to Wiles was not immediately acknowledged Friday.

A few fashion designers who are members of the CFDA, and other fashion insiders, said they learned of Thursday’s meeting after the fact.

The AAFA spokesperson declined to say how long the parties met at the White House and whether another meeting has been scheduled.

Visitors to the AAFA’s site are offered “a little context” about the trade war via

“Fashion Tariffs 101,” including that the U.S. apparel, footwear and accessories industry directly employs 3.5 million. The average effective tariff rate on both footwear and apparel is more than five times higher than on all other U.S. imports. In addition, fashion’s share of total U.S. imports is about 5 percent while fashion’s share of total duties is more than 25 percent. The AAFA site also notes the “burden borne” by women due to a “pink tariff,” due to the U.S. tariff rates on women’s clothes and shoes being about 3 percent higher on average than tariffs on men’s clothes and shoes.

“Trump’s tariffs” were a hot-button topic among executives at the AAFA Executive Summit in Washington, D.C., in March. Lamar told attendees at that time that there is a need to “harness the tariff conversation so it becomes more about creating negotiating outcomes around which smart sourcing and responsible manufacturing can occur.”

Although Kolb, Lamar and Wintour appear to be the first U.S. fashion industry representatives to make a collective appeal to one of Trump’s Cabinet members in person, other fashion executives and designers made a joint effort to try to reach the administration about tariff relief in April. More than 2,300 representatives from the bridal industry had signed a petition seeking exemption from the reciprocal tariffs as of April 7. And three bridal manufacturers, who requested anonymity, put forward an appeal that was hand-delivered to Trump’s daughter-in-law Lara at that time. Approximately 90 percent of formalwear garments are produced in Asia, including China.

The visit by Kolb, Lamar and Wintour comes in the wake of other appeals directly to Trump by even more senior industry executives. Bernard Arnault and his son Alexandre met with Trump in the Oval Office a few weeks ago, while Johann Rupert, head of Compagnie Financiere Richemont, was among the South African delegation that had a tempestuous meeting with the president last week.

ACCESSORIES

Weekend Max Mara Debuts Spanish Heritage Pasticcino Bags

- With a two-day event in Granada, the brand unveiled its latest chapter collection of the tour.

BY ANDREA ORNATE

Weekend Max Mara's Pasticcino Bag has landed in Spain, with Granada as the chosen city to celebrate the fourth chapter of its global tour, which kicked off in 2022.

The Pasticcino Bag Spanish Heritage collection pays tribute to the long-standing tradition of leather craftsmanship and the ancient technique of "damascening," a technique in which gold and silver are inlaid into engraved steel.

The Pasticcino pouch, named after the Italian word for "small pastry," was first introduced in 2016 and quickly became a signature piece of the brand.

This latest launch includes Pasticcino bags made from embossed leather by the leather technician Rafael Varo Atalaya, who brings over 30 years of experience to this craft and is the founder of leather specialist Cueros Ghadamés.

The bags are crafted from premium leather, milled for extra softness, and

undergo a customized processing method rooted in century-old Cordovan artisanship, which includes the use of wooden plates with exclusive motifs created by the artist.

Every piece is manually colored and swabbed ensuring their uniqueness. The color palette goes from rich coffee brown, khaki and olive to deep Cordoba blue, warm cuoio tan, and black.

Here and right: Weekend Max Mara's Spanish Heritage Pasticcino bag.



Manufacturas Anframa, a historic atelier located in Toledo that is renowned for its mastery of metalwork since 1970, was entrusted with decorating the sphere closures using the "damascene" technique. Each sphere undergoes a multistep finishing process, featuring delicate inlay work followed by a two-step gold decoration. This process involves applying different tones of gold to create

a unique depth of nuance. Ultimately, they are sealed with a protective lacquer, ensuring their brilliance over time.

The latest Pasticcino bag collection is lined with abstract florals, graphic patterns, or painterly horse prints and comes with a red dustbag as a tribute to the typical color of Spain.

Set to be unveiled for the fall 2025 season, the bags retail at \$1,240.

Following previous stops in Venice, Kyoto, and Paris, the brand organized a two-day event that drew the likes of actresses Nicole Wallace and Valentina Romani, and included a visit to a traditional artisanal workshop, a tour of the Alhambra palace and fortress, and a flamenco class.



ACCESSORIES

EssilorLuxottica Invests in Med-tech, Inks Agreement to Buy Optegra



Ray-Ban's Aviator sunglasses.

- The agreement with private equity MidEuropa will allow the eyewear group to enhance its capabilities in comprehensive eye care, advanced diagnostics, and surgical treatments.

BY LUISA ZARGANI

MILAN – EssilorLuxottica is making another acquisition in the med-tech segment.

The eyewear giant said Friday it has entered into an agreement with European private equity investor MidEuropa to buy

ophthalmology platform Optegra, which operates in the U.K., Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia and the Netherlands.

Francesco Milleri, chairman and chief executive officer, and Paul du Saillant, deputy CEO at EssilorLuxottica, said in a joint statement that with this acquisition, the company is "stepping into a new frontier – one where comprehensive eye care, advanced diagnostics, therapeutic interventions and surgical treatments come together in one seamless platform."

EssilorLuxottica, they said, has "the strategic assets to fuel this vision: an extensive distribution network with new clinical approaches, a smart eyewear offering with health care potential,

and diagnostic capabilities that will be able to detect conditions ranging from neurodegenerative diseases to cardiovascular dysfunction."

This is a further step into EssilorLuxottica's med-tech strategy. In addition to frames and lenses, the group's offer today includes AI-powered innovative technologies, wearables, medical instruments and science-backed eye care solutions.

"Optegra and its experienced doctors will bring new medical capabilities to our group, enabling us to address patients' needs with the most advanced vision care technologies and treatments in one trusted system that will anchor our med-tech aspirations. Powered by our growing AI and big data capabilities, we will be able to broaden our impact and deliver the most personalized and seamless patient journey," concluded Milleri and du Saillant.

The Optegra group, under the Optegra, Lexum and Iris brands, operates an extensive network of over 70 eye hospitals and diagnostic facilities across Europe.

The treatments and procedures supported by AI in pre- and post-op stages include sight-saving cataract surgery, age-related macular degeneration and glaucoma treatments, refractive lens replacement and laser eye surgery, serving both publicly reimbursed and private-pay patients.

Dr. Peter Byloos, CEO of Optegra Eye Health Care, touted EssilorLuxottica's leadership and said the partnership "not only accelerates our growth potential but also enhances our ability to deliver advanced, digital and integrated eye care solutions to all our patients."

EssilorLuxottica was assisted by

Rothschild & Co in the transaction, which is expected to close later in 2025 pending regulatory approvals.

Robert Knorr, managing partner at MidEuropa said that, after accelerating Optegra's expansion, opening new clinics, and invested in its "its digitalization, implementation of AI technologies, and broader mission to expand access to high-quality eye care," he believes EssilorLuxottica "is the ideal partner to lead Optegra into its next phase of growth and innovation."

EssilorLuxottica has been ramping up its tech capabilities through several acquisitions.

After introducing last year its Nuance Audio brand, a convergence of eyewear and hearing aid devices, the group in January took over Pulse Audition, a French start-up that specializes in AI-powered noise reduction and voice sound enhancement to scale up its Nuance Audio's technology.

The group established the dedicated Super Audio division in the summer of 2022 and finalized the acquisition six months later of Israeli company Nuance Hearing.

In mid-December, it revealed the acquisition of the Italy-based Espansione Group, which specializes in the design and manufacturing of noninvasive medical devices, protected by international patents for the diagnosis and treatment of dry-eye, ocular surface and retinal diseases. This followed the deal last July to acquire an 80 percent stake in Heidelberg Engineering, a German company that is a specialist in diagnostic solutions, digital surgical technologies and health care IT for clinical ophthalmology.

EssilorLuxottica in 2024 reported revenues of 26.5 billion euros. In addition to its own brands ranging from Ray-Ban and Oakley to Persol, the group produces and distributes eyewear for brands spanning from Giorgio Armani, Brunello Cucinelli and Burberry to Chanel, Michael Kors, Moncler, Prada and Ralph Lauren to name a few.

The background of the entire page is a close-up, shallow depth-of-field photograph of numerous blue, glossy spheres. The spheres are arranged in a way that creates a sense of depth, with some in sharp focus in the foreground and others blurred in the background. The lighting is soft, highlighting the reflective surfaces of the spheres.

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BUSINESS

Anisa Kumar on Tariffs, Trade and Optimizing Post-purchase Strategies

- The CEO of Narvar shares insights into what is happening in retail now as tariffs impact more than just rising prices.

BY ALEXANDRA PASTORE

Anisa Kumar, chief executive officer of Narvar, the post-purchase intelligence platform provider, is looking at the full picture, tackling every step in the consumer journey as retailers strategize on how to maintain customer loyalty.

With consumer stress already high and tariffs expected to raise prices on already stretched-thin budgets, retailers are under pressure to consider every part of their operations. Timely, clear post-purchase communication is key to maintaining consumer loyalty and ultimately beating the competition. It's important, said Kumar, to build trust and increase conversion all at once.

Here, Kumar shares her insights on optimizing operations, post-purchase communication and how retailers should be investing to protect their margins without sacrificing customer loyalty.

WWD: How are tariffs affecting retail right now, beyond just product pricing?

Anisa Kumar: Tariffs are doing far more than raising prices – they're exposing pressure points across the entire retail operating model. Inventory isn't moving as planned, sourcing strategies are shifting, and fulfillment windows are harder to control. Supply chains are still in flux, and in that uncertainty, P&Ls are being scrutinized for every possible opportunity to protect margin.

In recent conversations I've had with retail leaders, there's been a clear shift: more operators are treating post-purchase as a strategic lever. When returns are rerouted efficiently or converted into exchanges, they help reduce the need for additional buys and free up working capital at a time when inventory dollars need to stretch further.

Post-purchase can no longer be an operational afterthought. It's a critical lever for margin protection. In a market where predictability is limited, it's one of the most dependable ways to regain control over cost and inventory flow.

WWD: Narvar works with many leading retailers – what operational adjustments are you seeing retailers make in response to tariffs and trade volatility?

A.K.: With tariffs taking a bigger bite out of P&Ls, retailers are under pressure to optimize every part of their operations. Every dollar counts. That's making precision – not just speed – the new north star across retail supply chains.

From how quickly you ship, to how you handle returns, to how effectively you shut down fraud, every decision now has to be data-informed and margin-conscious. It's no longer about rushing every package out the door – it's about making smart trade-offs that protect profit while meeting customer expectations.

That's where we come in. Our platform uses machine learning to power personalized, location-aware delivery

estimates that align fulfillment speed with actual needs. This not only builds trust with shoppers but also helps retailers trim transportation costs and reduce the risk of unnecessary returns. In a time when even a few percentage points can make or break a quarter, that kind of precision is a true competitive advantage.

At Narvar, we're helping retailers move away from over-promise and overspend toward accurate, confidence-building delivery windows. That shift from blanket urgency to strategic optimization is one of the most meaningful operational unlocks I'm seeing right now.

WWD: How are shifting sourcing and customs delays impacting fulfillment strategies? What should retailers be doing now to prepare?

A.K.: Sourcing and customs delays are extending lead times and making fulfillment timelines harder to predict, especially for cross-border inventory. In response, more brands are investing in real-time visibility and regionalizing fulfillment to stay closer to demand. But beyond rerouting goods, what matters most is optimizing estimated delivery dates – not every item needs to be shipped at the same time to every customer. By surfacing accurate, personalized delivery windows early and often, brands can protect the P&L, build trust and increase conversion all at once.

Consumers don't expect perfection, but they do expect transparency. And right now, the retailers best positioned to protect loyalty are the ones treating delivery communication as a core part of their fulfillment strategy.

WWD: What role does post-purchase communication play in retaining customer trust during this kind of economic uncertainty?

A.K.: In today's environment, clear and timely post-purchase communication is non-negotiable. With so much variability in fulfillment and delivery, keeping consumers informed is one of the most powerful ways to build trust and loyalty.

We're seeing that proactive updates throughout the journey reduce support calls, but more importantly, they reinforce confidence. When consumers know what to expect, they stay engaged. And when conditions change, that transparency helps maintain the relationship.

It's not just a service touch point; it's a brand promise delivered in real-time. And in a climate of constant change, it's one of

the most effective tools retailers have to protect loyalty and performance.

WWD: Where should retailers be investing right now to protect their margins without sacrificing customer loyalty?

A.K.: Post-purchase has become one of the most overlooked drivers of margin pressure and one of the most immediate opportunities for impact. As consumers grow more price-sensitive, brands will see a rise in both return volume and fraudulent activity.

Return rates continue to climb, with our data showing that 39 percent of consumers

now return items monthly. And more concerning, 52 percent of consumers have admitted to engaging in return fraud at least once, ranging from wardrobing to false claims about delivery. These behaviors can quietly erode profitability if not addressed with the right mix of policy and precision.

This is a moment for retailers to take a more nuanced approach: identifying patterns, rewarding high-trust consumers and designing workflows that protect revenue without compromising the customer experience. As tariffs and external costs mount, few areas offer more untapped value than post-purchase optimization.



Anisa Kumar



Rachel Antonoff Manifests Summertime With Club Ra Party

The designer celebrated her summer collection with a beach-y party poolside at Margaritaville in Times Square.

BY KRISTEN TAUER PHOTOGRAPHS BY LEXIE MORELAND



Presley Oldham, Chris Laker, Jacqueline Novak, B.J. Novak and Rachel Antonoff.



Busy Philipps



Peter Som



Gillian Jacobs



Fred Hechinger, Celeste Yim, Jack Antonoff, and Claud.



Tanner Richie, Presley Oldham, and Fletcher Kasell.



Blu Tiger



Cat Cohen

It had to be Margaritaville.

"I mean, how do we not end up here more often?" said Rachel Antonoff from the sixth floor of the Jimmy Buffet-coded hotel in Times Square. On Thursday night, Margaritaville was the home to Club Ra, a poolside celebration of the designer's summer collection. The Malibu rum drinks were plentiful, the piles of pink sand underneath the beach chairs were pristine, and coolers full of sunscreen were stocked and bountiful. The only thing missing was the sunshine.

"Our collection was themed 'Club Ra,' and it was supposed to be reminiscent of Sandals or Club Med — just sort of tacky, fun, singles resorts," added Antonoff. "And when we were trying to figure out how to do a party that would encompass it, we were like: it has to be Margaritaville. And then, because my team and I really should be Bar Mitvah planners, we went crazy on the theme."

There were plenty of travel-themed party souvenirs, in the form of cheeky

commemorative T-shirts, Away luggage tags, Vacation brand sunscreen, and pregnancy tests courtesy of First Response. (Leftover tests were slated for donation to a local shelter.) Giant photo cutout boards depicted carefree boardwalk scenes, and Peter Som took the opportunity to slot himself as the face of a mermaid being pulled by a tandem bike.

"Oh, margaritas! Want a margarita?" exclaimed Busy Philipps to her friend, excited to be presented with a tray of beverages upon her arrival.

Guests had colorful drinks in hand all around the pool, as trays of shell-shaped jello shots made the rounds. Jack Antonoff was huddled underneath a fringed pink-and-white umbrella with father Rick Antonoff, actor Fred Hechinger, SNL writer Celeste Yim and singer Claud, who stars in the "Re-Cast Antonoffs" summer campaign. Gillian Jacobs, another campaign star, was also mingling throughout the evening with other guests including Micaela Diamond, Ali Stroker,

B.J. Novak, "SNL" writer/performer Martin Herlihy, Cat Cohen and more.

It might have been overcast, but the party vibe throughout the evening was pure summertime.

"Hopefully getting in the pool," said Presley Oldham, when asked what he was looking forward to in the warm months ahead. While Antonoff was excited for outdoor dining with her dog, designers Tanner Richie and Fletcher Kasell were looking forward to taking a trip to their hometowns in Minnesota and Wisconsin in July.

"It's just the perfect place to be in the summer. It's not too hot," said Kasell. "Leaving New York: I feel like that's the secret. And working on our patio."

"I feel like I'm excited for it to be nice, just so our plants can do better," added Richie. "Because right now they're not doing so well."

Blu DeTiger and Rex DeTiger were

on DJ-duty early in the evening, playing nostalgic summertime hits as video clips — including an ad for Sandals resorts — were projected on the brick wall behind them.

"We're influencing, I apologize," said one guest, busy posing for a selfie with two friends in front of the pink lifeguard stand. They were less than a foot from the pool's edge, and the situation was getting precarious as the crowd inched closer in anticipation of a synchronized swimming performance by the Aqualillies.

"Someone's falling in tonight," remarked a girl nearby.

She wasn't wrong: pretty soon, the music switched to Ella Fitzgerald's "Puttin' on the Ritz," and a lineup of dancers in vintage swim caps and Rachel Antonoff swimsuits strutted their way into the pool.

Fashion Scoops



Tawan Vihokratana

Thai Tactics

Loewe has signed on Thai actor Tawan Vihokratana, nickname Tay, as its newest brand ambassador.

Foreshadowing his new relationship with the Spanish fashion house, Vihokratana attended Loewe's fall 2025 presentation in Paris, and took in its "Crafted World" exhibition in Shanghai.

"Collaborating closely with the brand has deepened my admiration for its artistry and inspired new paths of self-expression," Vihokratana said in a statement shared first with WWD. "I've come to truly value the essence of art and craft that defines Loewe, and I'm excited to continue this meaningful journey as brand ambassador."

A model and TV host, too, Vihokratana is probably best known for his breakthrough performance in "Kiss: The Series" — which spawned spinoffs "Kiss Me Again" and "Dark Blue Kiss" — and the Thai adaptation of "Cherry Magic: The Series."

He is also a host of popular television shows including "School Rangers" and "TayNew Meal Date." In 2020, he received the Maya Award for Best Official Soundtrack, and he was also distinguished with a Kazz Award for Rising Male Star of 2023, and the Japan Expo Actor Award this year.

He will be seen next in the television series "A Dog and a Plane," and a Thai adaptation of "Scarlet Heart," according to Loewe, which is owned by French luxury giant LVMH Moët

Hennessy Louis Vuitton.

Loewe's other current brand ambassadors are Giselle, Minsi Ko and Yang Mi.

Asian celebrities drove 86 percent of all celebrity-generated attention during Paris Fashion Week last March and sparked "massive conversation conversations across the region," according to Launchmetrics.

— MILES SOCHA

Venice in New York

Roberto Coin brought a taste of Venice to New York Thursday night, hosting

an event at Cipriani Wall Street to reveal Dakota Johnson as global brand ambassador. Coin is known for his lavish events in the floating city, including a fantastical masquerade ball last October at the Palazzo Pisani Moretta.

He brought a taste of that romantic magic Stateside Thursday night as guests were greeted with gold leaf masks upon entry. A group of violinists in 18th-century costume — brought over from Italy just for the festivities — set the mood with a serenade.

"Dakota, you are really special to us, we are very proud," Coin said, bringing

the actress up to the stage to cheers from the crowd.

"I'm so honored to be a part of this campaign. To know you, your family, it's just beautiful," she said, wearing a one-of-a-kind white golf diamond blue sapphire necklace from Coin's high jewelry collection. "And I get to wear things like this."

Coin was born in Venice and the city is his forever muse. "It is a city which is a museum," he said with a smile. "If you want to fall in love, go back to Venice." He added that the brand came to New York to celebrate because "America has been very kind to us, it's our best market."

Guests included editors, stylists, influencers, executives and friends of the brand, all gathered to celebrate a new chapter for Roberto Coin while enjoying the immersive experience with a mix of Italian cuisine. Throughout the evening guests enjoyed a first look at the brand's new imagery featuring Johnson.

Starting this month and running through May 2027, Johnson will appear in a global campaign photographed by Craig McDean wearing pieces from the brand's key collections: Love in Verona, Venetian Princess, Navarra, Obelisco, Tiaré and Cobra. Rounding out the new role, the actress will make global appearances and participate in creative initiatives, helping to share the Roberto Coin story.

— THOMAS WALLER

Daniel Lee



Show Time

Daniel Lee, chief creative officer at Burberry, will judge this year's BA fashion show at Central Saint Martins on June 4.

He will select the winner of the L'Oréal Professionnel Young Talent Award alongside veteran fashion PR Mandi Lennard, Sarah Gresty, course leader of BA Fashion at Central Saint Martins, and Rubie Costin of L'Oréal Professionnel.

Previous winners of the award include Grace Wales Bonner, Goom Heo, Yuhang Wang, Paolina Russo, Fredrik Tjærandsen, Eden Tan and Patrick Garvey.

"It is an honor to be asked to judge CSM's BA Fashion Show this year. The fashion industry owes a lot to CSM, and I am grateful to have passed through its doors. It's exciting to be able to show support to the new generation of creatives who are about to begin

their own journeys into the world of fashion," said Lee, who was taught by Gresty when he studied knitwear.

Upon finishing the BA course, Lee later moved on to the MA Fashion course at the school under the late fashion professor Louise Wilson.

Gresty said Lee, as a CSM alum, understands the BA Fashion ethos.

"BA Fashion lives in an art school. It is a unique fashion course. We aim to nurture, challenge and celebrate brilliant, diverse talents and ensure our graduates change how we think — not only about fashion but everything it can and should be — a platform for expression, inclusivity and change. Many of the most influential voices in fashion have come through this course. Lee is one of them, and we're so happy to have him home," added Gresty.

— TIANWEI ZHANG ▶

Roberto Coin with newly announced global brand ambassador Dakota Johnson at an event in NYC.



George Cortina, Maggie Rogers and Del Water Gap.



Thom Touches Down

It's a homecoming for Thom Browne in Los Angeles.

"Today couldn't get much better," said the American designer, calling from his new West Coast flagship at Melrose Place on Thursday. "A beautiful day here in California."

He lived in L.A. for four-and-a-half years in the '90s. "They were formative," he went on. "So, it's nice to come back, and I have so many really good friends that I get to see. Friends that I've known for, gosh, almost 30 years."

Longtime friends including editor Lisa Love, who cohosted a dinner at Chateau Marmont later that evening. Among the guests were Leighton Meester — the first celebrity to wear Thom Browne women's on the red carpet (at the Gotham Awards in 2010) — along with filmmakers Barry Jenkins, Lulu Wang, Baz Luhrmann and Janicza Bravo, as well as actors Ke Huy Quan, Yara Shahidi, Teyana Taylor and Manny Jacinto.

"I was trying to figure things out," Browne said of L.A.'s impact. "I was in my late 20s, early 30s. Those were the years that I met really interesting people and through their influence, maybe, saw the world differently and opened my eyes to being able to do different things. It's where the idea of design, or the potential of doing something in design, really started. It was those years that really are the reason why I started the collection back in 2003."

He's come a long way since then, counting more than 100 stores globally to date. L.A. was always in the works, he said. "It just needed to be the right space, needed to be the right time. Now's the time."

Melrose Place, he added, "feels like a really special,

small, little enclave in the middle of West Hollywood."

Spanning about 2,000 square feet — at 8408 Melrose Place (between A.P.C. and forthcoming Khaite) — the store features an ivy-covered facade and a mid-century modern design that embodies Browne's signature retail aesthetic. Consistent with his other boutiques, the space's interior incorporates marble and terrazzo, paired with furnishings by celebrated artists like French Art Deco pioneer Jacques Adnet, American designer Edward Wormley and American woodworker and architect George Nakashima.

"They all really represent localized versions of my initial store back in 2006...in TriBeCa," Browne explained. "Initially, they were based on a midcentury Midwestern bank. I wanted them to feel not like a true retail space. But, over the years, they've evolved into being more retail feeling and more retail working."

Browne has recently expressed a desire to make his brand more accessible to a broader audience. "It's really just people seeing exactly what I do, because I have always offered a very

wide range of things."

His elevated take on preppy Americana extends beyond suiting, though tailoring remains central to his brand DNA. Showcasing menswear, womenswear and accessories, the collections found in-store emphasize structured silhouettes while incorporating lighter fabrications for the Southern California climate.

"I do want people to come to my stores for what I do best, and what I do best is leaning into tailoring," Browne said.

He brought his design touch to the dinner at Chateau, held in famed room 64. Two long tables were lined with white flowers and candles, adorned with grosgrain ribbon.

The night also brought out actors Manny Jacinto, Mia Maestro, Lorraine Nicholson, McKenna Grace and Mason Thames, as well as some names in music and art, with singer-songwriters Sky Ferreira and Maggie Rogers; musician Del Water Gap; artists Kohshin Finley, Alex Israel and Ariana Papademetropoulos; model-photographer Jacob Bixenman; stylist

Brad Goreski, and content creator Madeline Argy.

Was Browne planning on sticking around L.A.?

"I'm leaving tomorrow," he laughed. "It's dinner and out." — RYMA CHIKHOUNE

High Honor

A range of fashion entrepreneurs and executives have been bestowed with the "Cavaliere del Lavoro," or "Knight of Labour," honor in Italy.

They include Prada Group's chairman and executive director Patrizio Bertelli; Francesco Milleri, chairman and chief executive officer of EssilorLuxottica; Alfonso Dolce, chairman and CEO of Dolce & Gabbana; Maria Giovanna Paone, chairwoman and co-CEO of Kiton's parent company Ciro Paone, as well as Salvatore Ferragamo chairman Leonardo Ferragamo. The latter was recognized for his hospitality business, as president of the Lungarno Collection luxury hotel chain.

Also in the fashion and design categories, the honor was bestowed upon Anna Beatrice Ferrino, CEO of the namesake textile company, and Federica Minozzi, CEO of tile-maker Iris Ceramica Group.

Established in 1901 by King Vittorio Emanuele III, the title is one of the highest recognitions bestowed by the president of the Italian Republic, currently Sergio Mattarella, and recognizes 25 Italian entrepreneurs who have distinguished themselves in different sectors of the economy and contributed to social development, employment, technology and the growth of Made in Italy.

In receiving the honor, the cohort follows in the footsteps of other fashion industry personalities including Pietro Beccari, chairman and CEO of Louis Vuitton; Ferruccio Ferragamo; Remo Ruffini, chairman and CEO of

Dianna Singh



Moncler; Federico Marchetti; Gildo Zegna, chairman and CEO of the Ermenegildo Zegna Group; Rosita Missoni; Claudio Marenzi, president and CEO of Herno; Roberto Colombo, president of Lanificio Luigi Colombo, a producer of cashmere and high-quality fibers, and Alberto Barberis Canonico, CEO of the Italian high-end woolen mill Vitale Barberis Canonico, established in 1936 on the outskirts of Biella, among others.

— MARTINO CARRERA

From Beauty To Fashion

A veteran beauty editor is getting into the fashion game.

Dianna Singh, a longtime beauty editor — who is currently Allure's features director — has found a breezy side hustle in her eponymous line of caftans, which soft-launched on the brand's website Wednesday. Prices range from \$165 to \$228.

For Singh, who had always kicked around the idea of starting a fashion brand, liked the universality of the garment and decided

to make her own in the self-funded venture, which took about a year of active work and years of ideation prior.

"I've been a beauty editor for a decade, but I went to the Fashion Institute of Technology and my first internship was in the fashion closet at Glamour," she said. "The beauty industry found me, and I loved how celebratory and approachable it was. I've always had this question in the back of my mind of whether or not I could make a fashion brand that felt like a beauty brand, fostering connection in the way that beauty does."

Singh debuted with eight looks, and citing both the wearability of the garment and its size-inclusivity, is sensing an appetite for more.

"I've witnessed the drop-style approach with beauty brands, to varying success," Singh said. "I'm getting a lot of requests for matching children's caftans, as well as for men's."

"I'm also applying the beauty brand model to fashion in terms of crowdsourcing. I was secretly wearing early production samples on my own Instagram, and was noting which colors people liked more. I got more comments on one with bows than one without," Singh said. "I've been inspired by brands like Glossier and Saie — they're both creating better products because of it and building community at the same time."

Singh is taking a measured approach to the brand's future in retail. "I'd love to do trunk shows, I'd love to go on a road show, we're also looking at beautiful boutique hotels," she said. "Connecting with people on a personal level is so important. There are preconceived notions of muumuus and caftans as garments for older people, and once you see the motion and how it's styled, that's the secret sauce."

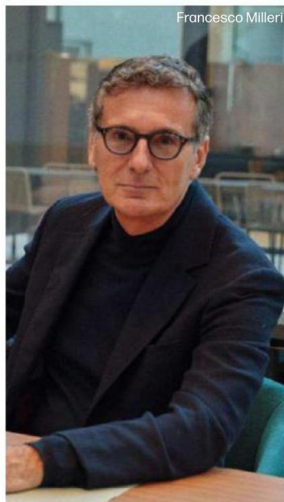
— JAMES MANSO



Patrizio Bertelli



Maria Giovanna Paone



Francesco Milleri