

WWD

Fashion. Beauty. Business.

Reving Up Ralph

Patrice Louvet, CEO of Ralph Lauren, laid out the group's next three-year strategy that sticks to what's working now.

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All About Marie

Manolo Blahnik talks about his company's sponsorship of the Marie Antoinette exhibit at the V&A – and his fascination.

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Women in Power

A recap of the annual WWD x FN x Beauty Inc Women in Power summit addressing challenges facing female leaders.

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Getting Personal

Tory Burch brought the fun – and the personal – to sportswear this season with feminine styles that brimmed with personality and craft that stemmed from familial nostalgia, like this hand-seed beaded flying bird embroidered sweater, inspired by an antique chair tapestry of her mother's. *For more on New York Fashion Week, see pages 4 to 10.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY GIOVANNI GIANNONI

BUSINESS

Ralph Lauren's Next Strategic Plan: Driving the Brand Forward

● The company rang the bell on the New York Stock Exchange Tuesday.

BY EVAN CLARK

Jerry Garcia isn't the type of Americana typically embraced by Ralph Lauren Corp.

But when chief executive officer Patrice Louvet took the stage at the New York Stock Exchange for the company's investor day on Tuesday, he quoted a bit of the philosophy that guided the guitarist's band, the Grateful Dead.

"Why be the best when you can be the only?" said Louvet.

"We embody that spirit at Ralph Lauren," he said. "There aren't too many originals in the world. There aren't too many brands who can say they were the only one."

Over the past eight years, Louvet, a veteran of Procter & Gamble, has worked to make that as true for the company's business model as it is for the brand.

After helping to ring the exchange's opening bell, Louvet introduced Ralph Lauren's new strategic plan, bringing the company into the "Next Great Chapter: Drive."

The new three-year plan has more in common with the former strategy, "Next Great Chapter: Accelerate," than its name.

Ralph Lauren's three strategic growth drivers are staying the same, with the company continuing to focus on:

- Elevating and energizing its lifestyle brand.
- Driving core product categories, like polos, and expanding for more business in women's, outerwear and bags.
- Winning in key cities by scaling in the brand's 30 top cities, while also starting to develop the next 20 top cities.

If the goals haven't really changed, exactly how the company plans on reaching them is evolving.

But the event — from the live Polo Bear greeting investors coming into the exchange to the bales of hay used in product displays in the gilded conference room — underscored the fact that Ralph Lauren is a brand above all else.

"Ralph Lauren has never been about clothes," Louvet said. "He's inspired by possibility. By optimism. By a vision of a better life and helping others to see themselves in that vision and step fully into it. This isn't about selling clothes, it's about offering possibility. That is the foundation of our brand. It's luxury that welcomes you in and stays with you throughout your life."

Ralph Lauren, who is executive chairman and chief creative officer, was not at the meeting, but said in a statement that: "For nearly 60 years, we have stayed true to our vision of timeless style, authenticity, optimism and a life well-lived. As our teams carry this vision into the future, I am so proud of how they are working together."

When David Lauren was asked how the company would make sure his father's legacy endures, the chief branding and innovation officer said they were "practicing that right now."

Lauren said "there's a philosophy in our design that there's always a story" behind the creation of a product and that the company would "animate" and "amplify" the story.

And Louvet added that while brands sometimes bring in new lead designers who "bring in their own perspective... and sometimes that works and sometimes it



Patrice Louvet and David Lauren ring the opening bell at the New York Stock Exchange Tuesday.

doesn't," Ralph Lauren enjoys a certain clarity that helps keep the brand on track.

"Our responsibility is just to keep bringing it to life in a way that's interesting, that's fresh, but consistent," he said.

Consistency is just part of the company. In a preview of the strategy for WWD, Louvet described the strategic pillars as "evergreen."

"It's really about how do you bring it to life? How do you execute?" the CEO said. "The strategy is wonderful on paper, but ultimately it's about excellence and execution at every touch point. I think our teams have done that well around the world, and now we're going to focus on doing that."

And the company — which has already seen its stock rise over 70 percent during the past year and has a market capitalization of \$19 billion — is planning on seeing some results.

While Ralph Lauren continues to take a cautious stance on the back half of this fiscal year, the company expects to see revenues increase at a midsingle-digit compounded annual rate over the next three years, through fiscal 2028.

Operating margins are expected to expand 100 to 150 basis points by Fiscal 2028 in constant currency and capital expenditures are expected to equal 4 percent to 5 percent of the top line annually.

All together the company plans to shell out \$2 billion in cash dividends and share repurchases over the three years.

To get there, the company will be updating just how it pursues those ambitions.

At the meeting, Iris Langlois-Meurinne, chief marketing officer, said the brand was reimagining how it communicates with consumers, focusing on "entertaining and styling at scale."

"We don't infiltrate culture, we shape it," she said.

That runs the gamut from focusing on the human element through the company's long association with sporting events to jumping into the world of generative AI with the new "Ask Ralph" styling option on its app.

Women's — which became a \$2 billion business for Ralph Lauren last year — remains a high-potential category.

Halide Alagöz, chief product and merchandising officer, said the brand still had just 1 percent of the "highly fragmented" global premium market.

"Women are the powerhouse consumers of our brand," Alagöz said. "They are frequent shoppers, they are deeply engaged and they are less price sensitive and this creates enormous opportunities across our portfolio. We expect our high potential categories, including women's, to grow at an accelerated rate over the next three years and beyond, outpacing our total company growth."

To capture the opportunity she said the brand would use its consumer segmentation analysis to get "deeper insights" into consumers and then develop insights and a clear direction to engage her.

"We have then strategically aligned our brand portfolio to target each of these target consumers, or as we call them, the muses," she said.

That is just one part of the Ralph Lauren branding machine, which is also opening new stores in established markets like London and Paris, while looking to expand in new target cities, including Austin, Zurich and Vienna. On the operations side, the company is also planning on a new enterprise research planning system.

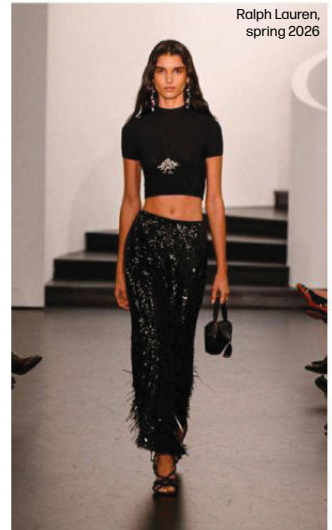
As the company continues to grow, it will make changes to meet the moment.

"I had a boss a long time ago who actually said that the organizational structure that has actually survived the longest over history is the amoeba," Louvet said in the preview. "And so we believe in the amoeba concept, which is you have to constantly evolve to make sure that you are set up to bring your strategy to life."

"This company looks different than it did three years ago, and I suspect three years from now it'll look different than it does today, but it'll stay true to our philosophy as a brand, our core values as a company and the culture that we've established," he said.

Notably, the preview made no mention of the supply chain or tariffs or anything even vaguely trade war-y.

When asked, Justin Picicci, chief financial



Ralph Lauren, spring 2026

officer, said the company was prepared.

"We have a range of proven tools in our toolkit to mitigate cost inflation tariffs and other pressures," Picicci said. "It starts with our supply chain, but we're diversified so that we don't have any one country of origin responsible for more than 20 percent of our sourcing, and most are in the single-digit percentage range."

"We also have really strong supplier relationships that we've sort of forged over the past decades, and they're working with us on this process," he said.

Louvet suggested the company was taking the challenge in stride.

"We don't feel like we need a major overhaul," the CEO said. "It's going to be volatile, but I think we're well positioned. There's a dynamic element to our operations in a way that we can adjust to the terrain, even if the terrain is a little bumpy, that has proven to be a real competitive advantage for us, and that will continue to be, and we work really hard to avoid surprises."

EYE

Marie Antoinette Returns With a V&A Show

Kirsten Dunst as Marie Antoinette in Sofia Coppola's 2006 film. The shoes are by Manolo Blahnik.



● The Manolo Blahnik-sponsored show opens Saturday, and features 250 objects and exceptional loans never seen before outside France and Versailles.

BY SAMANTHA CONTI

It's impossible to overestimate

Manolo Blahnik's enthusiasm for Marie Antoinette, which began at a young age, and has only grown stronger over the decades. As a child Blahnik listened to his mother read him Stefan Zweig's 1932 biography of France's much-maligned queen and while that may have been an unconventional choice, she was careful to skip over "all the horrible" parts, he recalled.

Over the years Blahnik has read even more about her, and engaged with the legacy of Marie Antoinette in myriad ways, including hand-making the extravagant pastel footwear for Sofia Coppola's 2006 film starring Kirsten Dunst, which was based on Antonia Fraser's 2001 biography of the queen.

Now he's going even deeper as the sole sponsor of "Marie Antoinette Style," Britain's first show about the French queen, which opens this month at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

For Blahnik, the sponsorship is more than just a show of support for his favorite historical figure. It's a long-overdue opportunity for "revenge. That is what makes me happy. People have really put Marie Antoinette where she belongs in the world. She was an incredible woman, who was very, very badly judged as frivolous and stupid," during her lifetime, said Blahnik in an interview.

Like Fraser and other writers over the past few decades, the V&A wants to stamp out the clichés that have persisted for centuries — that she was stupid, conniving, unusually extravagant and an unfaithful wife to King Louis XVI.

The world's largest museum of decorative arts and design is making its case by looking at Marie Antoinette's personal style, her forward-thinking ideas about fashion and her enduring influence on designers through the centuries.

The show, which runs from Saturday and until March 22, 2026, features 250 objects and exceptional loans never seen before outside Versailles and France.

It showcases personal items owned and worn by the ill-fated queen, including silk slippers, jewels from her private collection and the final note she wrote before

her appointment with the guillotine in October 1793.

The display also includes richly embellished fragments of court dress, accessories and intimate items from her toilette case. There are also personal effects such as the queen's dinner service from the Petit Trianon, the chateau on the grounds of Versailles where she gardened, spent time with her girlfriends, and escaped the rigor and pressure of court life.

The show has a contemporary bent, too, with a display of fashion from brands including Moschino, Dior, Chanel and Vivienne Westwood who were influenced by the queen's style. Costumes for the big screen are on display, including those from Coppola's Oscar-winning "Marie Antoinette." Blahnik's footwear for the film, and his working sketches, are also part of the show.

Sarah Grant, lead curator of the exhibition, said the museum wants to show that Marie Antoinette was "a fashion icon in her own time, and continues to have an influence on fashion and design" more than 230 years after her death.

"No other historical figure has had this continuous and lasting impact on fashion, nor has their physical appearance become a part of their own style to the degree that Marie Antoinette has. We tell the queen's own story, and consider which elements of her style resonate the most for contemporary audiences and creative industries, exploring how each successive generation has interpreted and used her style differently," added Grant.

Blahnik has always been moved by the queen's elegance, culture and grace under immense pressure. The daughter of a Habsburg emperor, she loved music, played a variety of instruments, and grew up in Vienna surrounded by the sounds of composers including Christoph Willibald Gluck, her music teacher, and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, her contemporary.

She introduced the French court to the composers of her youth, and they were impressed, at first. "The first time Gluck went to Paris, the French didn't like it. The second time, when Marie Antoinette was little bit older, he was an incredible success," said Blahnik, adding the queen's taste in music was spot-on. "We're still listening to Gluck today," he said.

He also admires her taste and style. Who wouldn't? Marie Antoinette was a forward-thinker, casting off her corset (in private) and opting for looser, less fussy silhouettes that would become all the rage post-revolution.

Although she was famous for her mile-high coiffures, the queen also wore her



One of Manolo Blahnik's sketches for the Marie Antoinette capsule collection which will land at stores in September.

hair short for a while, a style devised by her hairdresser Léonard Autié, who would also weave flowers through it. It was all part of the queen's back-to-nature aesthetic and semi-embrace of the Enlightenment ideals that were all the rage in late 18th century France.

Blahnik said the queen worked closely with her dressmaker Rose Bertin on her look, and often made changes to the designs. "She knew exactly what she wanted," he said.

To mark the opening of the show, Blahnik has designed a new capsule collection that will land in-store this month.

Some of the styles have French heels, their curvy shape inspired by King Louis XIV. Others have flowery, embroidered patterns that mimic the fabric on Marie Antoinette's furniture or "powder-puff pink" shades drawn from the queen's makeup and rose garden. Blahnik has included signature details from the era, such as box pleats and frayed silk edges.

Anyone slipping on those shoes will be stepping into history. Grant said Blahnik's designs capture "all the artistry, romance and intrigue of the 18th century in one small object."

She added that Blahnik's designs for the film are also a "poignant leitmotif" in Marie Antoinette's story, and highlight some of the most difficult moments of her life.

The young royal had to master the "Versailles glide" when she arrived at the French court, taking little steps in high court mules to make it look as if she was floating effortlessly across the floor. Blahnik also recreated the shoe "that supposedly fell from her foot in her final steps towards the scaffold," said Grant.

This show may tap into Blahnik's lifelong passion for the French queen, but the sponsorship is by no means a one-off. It's part of the Manolo Blahnik brand's wider strategy of support for the arts, including eponymous scholarships offered through University of the Arts London, and support of institutions such as the V&A and The Wallace Collection.

Kristina Blahnik, chief executive officer of Manolo Blahnik, believes the show is a golden opportunity to speak to "a society that is increasingly captured by veneers of history, not the depths of it. Manolo is very much creatively inspired and stimulated by the depths of history, and by the details, complexities and layers of it."

She added that the exhibition also offers Blahnik — the man and the brand

— the chance to show "how one person, and her style, has transcended multiple centuries and still is relevant to this day — in the arts, architecture, furniture, fashion and literature. That's why this exhibition is so wonderful, because it's not just about Marie Antoinette's life, but about how her aesthetics have shaped other creatives' identities."

The company plans to have lots of fun spinning all of the 18th century drama and culture into a series of events and moments. Team Blahnik is planning an archive presentation at the brand's Mayfair townhouse; a themed tea at the Hôtel de Crillon in Paris, where Marie Antoinette took piano lessons, during Paris Fashion Week next month, and a takeover of Burlington Arcade in London that began Monday.

Burlington Arcade is a full-on Marie Antoinette experience. At the Piccadilly entrance, Ladurée is showcasing its blue speckled Marie Antoinette macarons, made with black tea from China and India, rose petals, citrus and honey. The carpet and ornaments in the arcade reflect the theme, while the shoes from the new capsule are on show at Blahnik's shop, at the other end, near Burlington Gardens.

In the midst of it all, Blahnik continues to hit the books, travel and research his next collections. He's a fan of classical and neo-classical architecture "for the beautiful equilibrium in the forms," and draws inspiration from far and near, including the temples of Sicily and Greece and John Nash's spare, elegant buildings around Regent's Park in London.

He lives in Bath, a UNESCO World Heritage site, that's famous for its grand Georgian townhouses made from the local honey-toned limestone.

"In the next few years, I'm going to visit Greece — everywhere! And then, if I have the energy, Italy, and then Spain," said the designer, who was raised on La Palma, in the Canary Islands, where his family had a banana plantation.

With the Marie Antoinette show set to open, Blahnik is also at work on his next collection.

"It's still a jumble in my head, but I'll be looking at the future. I'm still trying to find out what the future is — but it won't be Courrèges or Cardin," said the designer, who's currently experimenting with metal and who'll no doubt be mining the past for his ideas.

Manolo Blahnik



WWD


The Reviews



Tory Burch

Tory Burch was thinking a lot about the idea of being a bit more undone this season. It stemmed from thinking about the complexity of women and their many different style facets, which she nailed through a more feminine lens of American sportswear that balanced ample precision with disruption.

"It's a little more personal. It's definitely more feminine, but mixing it with the sharpness of the tailoring," Burch said. The collection was filled with things the designer

loves, like embroidered silk sweaters inspired by samplers, here with touches of sentimentality: monogrammed embroideries of those on her design team. Classic crisp button downs and sharp piped blazer nodded directly to her father while wool and cashmere cardigans with hand-beaded flying bird embroideries stemmed from an antique chair tapestry of her mother's.

"There was something naive about [the embroideries] that I was really thinking about in the time we are in," Burch said of the crafted styles that nicely contrasted her slouchy prep polos with chewed-up



embroidered hems and eccentric tailored suiting – cool engineered crosshatch wool blazers and low-waisted trousers and pleated skirts galore.

The nostalgia of antiques also brought forth a vintage-meets-now feeling in her assortment of dresses that could easily bridge day to night, as seen through intricately hand seed beaded black dresses, pleated boatneck frocks in fil coupe duchess satin or silk organza with monogram and naive floral bouquet decoration and pretty 1950s-inspired kitten heeled pumps to match.

Ditto in sheer hand-pleated silk chiffon and lace drop-waist numbers that recalled nighties – perhaps Burch's woman wore them out of bed from the night before. It was the exact look she wanted to evoke with crushed matching skirt sets and a gold lame shirt worn with a prim, tailored baby blue Lurex jacquard skirt.

"The whole quiet luxury is [gone], so I'm excited about that because it gives us the opportunity to have fun and be in this concept of romance," Burch said. Her unexpected pop colors of blue and yellow certainly packed a fresh punch on waxed canvas skirts and double layered jackets, while pink and red monochrome belted viscose jersey dresses were both pretty and practical.

While the cool kookiness that has run through her recent collections took on a more subtle tone for spring, Burch's take on everyday sportswear remained vibrant, brimming with personality and craft.

– Emily Mercer






The Collections
New York

Luar

Over the past few years designer Raul Lopez has been studying the anthropology of the Dominican Republic – Luar is New York, but Lopez’s roots run deep to the island nation.

This season he turned his studies to the energy of Carnival – a key influence for many designers this season in various locales – and a tradition of costumes used as rebellion and satire against the island’s colonizers from Europe. His starting point came from taking to the streets, with a range of images of people he’d taken at the festival.

“It’s a cross-pollination between colonizers, enslaved and Indigenous, but at the end, everyone doing it for some type of joy,” he said of the collection he labeled “La Fantasia.”

Joy in the face of dark times can be seen

as an allegory to the times Lopez and his queer Black, Indigenous and people of color community find themselves in now. Other designers this week have stepped back from fashion as political messaging, but Lopez is standing 10 toes down with an audacious collection full of personal joy through ornamentation.

As ominous music came over the loudspeaker, out came sharp ideas in black velvet – a floor-grazing coat and a tailored blazer with punctuated shoulders – which represented the “colonizers,” he said of the tailoring, which also included a style in lavish laser-cut satin strips and feathers.

The joy began to seep out with Debra Shaw, model muse to Lee McQueen, who took to the runway in a molded black dress with zipper up the front like a scuba suit,

which encased her in sequins and feathers that leapt off the body.

The finesse of craft across his work was stunning. He looked to local artisans in the Dominican Republic to create the lineup of beading on tops, plastic strips made to look like fur and plumage shooting off garments and head pieces. “I’ve been

trying to do this for years,” he said of the local craftspeople. “To have them create all the bases [of garments] and to respect their work. My team could do this, but why would I not use the people who started these crafts?”

Jewelry, too, used Dominican amber and Larimar, a rare, naturally occurring blue pectolite mineral found exclusively in the Bahoruco Mountain Range of the Dominican Republic.

Color is something the designer said he doesn’t usually gravitate to, but it came on strong with a cobalt bustier top, and slinky pants with side zips, adorned with a massive coat made of gray plastic strips and a black feather headpiece.

Among all the dark celebration were pieces that highlighted Luar codes – bolder shoulder tops; oversize denim separates, or a cropped leather jacket with sculpted shoulders, exuding a baroque sense of power and polish and transforming the utilitarian leather into an emblem of decadence. And his bestselling handbags? They came aplenty, with new footwear ideas with feathers.

The New York shows this week had a lot of great clothes, but the season lacked a runway with a message and showmanship and Luar did just that. He creates for his community with sincerity – ask the crowds of people clamoring to get into the venue that saw a front row of Lourdes Leon and Solange Knowles. – *Thomas Waller*



Diotima

Rachel Scott has quickly become a star in New York fashion that continues to shine. In only four years since launching Diotima, the Jamaican American designer has won the CFDA Emerging Designer of the Year in 2023 and Womenswear Designer of the Year last year, which she is nominated for again in 2025. Two weeks ago, Scott was also named creative director of Proenza Schouler, where she'd been busy over the last few months collaborating and consulting with its design team for its spring presentation that displayed the beginning of what's to come with her debut show in February.

"I'm super happy to be there. The balance — I'm getting into my groove. Diotima is super small, and I was the only person on products up until I started consulting over there, before I was appointed. It's really forced me to put in some structure that I

couldn't have before because of resources," Scott said backstage of her debut runway show at Proenza Schouler.

It's allowed her to focus more on the creative. She's already captivated the industry with her unique approach to luxury craft and special point of view — the H&M-owned Cos donated its Greenpoint location, including power, front and back of house furnishings, internet and lighting to support her creativity, a strong signal of what supporting brands can look like. With spring 2026, Scott continued to surprise with exuberant, powerful clothes.

"I think it's a real continuation, at least emotionally, from last season. I was extremely angry in fall, and I'm still angry, but I think that it's manifesting in a completely different way," Scott said, explaining how being an emotional designer is one of the reasons she started her brand. "I've been thinking a lot about Carnival in the Caribbean in particular, but also in the

diaspora. It's a moment of resistance. It's rebellion against repressive forces in a very exuberant and sensual and subversive way."

She wasn't seeking to literally recreate the procession "because it's perfect and needs no updates," she said, but looked to its history as a starting point for exuberant colors and subversive, radical character archetypes.

Scott opened the show, titled "Bacchanal," with new sporty takes on her signature crystal mesh knits — drop crotch pants, hoods and new fully fashioned swimwear. She then dove into the sailor archetype, but in lieu of militant gear, there were great fluid duster and morning coats decorated with hand-melted paillettes and knit jersey styles with sailor collars and tubular chenille ribs. Each incorporated her sharp take on the famous cage bras that emphasized the bust, a décolletage-inspired detail also seen on square-toed shoes, a new category for the designer.

She layered the tailored lot with ample volume and color, as in button-ups inspired by the Baby Doll persona with bias fringed tunics with threaded peplums and shredded midi skirts in unexpected, vibrant grenadine red, guava pink, magenta and blue against storm gray, cumin brown, black and white, before closing the show with unrestrictive feather-like gowns that riffed on Dame Loren's pumped-up proportions with lightweight internal petticoat constructions (sans boning). The collection proved Scott is only leveling up with modern wearable fashion that projects a new type of power, craft and sexiness. — *Emily Mercer*

TWP

Trish Wescoat Pound returned to the runway on a sunny Monday afternoon with a wonderful spring collection that reflected her TWP brand's high-quality, attainable and sophisticated but easy ethos. The collection, shown at the lush Radio Park rooftop above Rockefeller Plaza, was filled with garden inspirations stemming from the designer's childhood hobby to her recent obsession of watching "Gardener's World" on BBC.

"I've been really into this idea of gardening in general, but I think it's more because I think gardening and fashion parallel each other a lot," she said. Shownotes, written by Lynn Yaeger, reflected this symbolism of seasonally planning and pruning. Ample parkas and rainwear, like a happy sunshine yellow water-resistant windbreaker, Gigi Burris garden hats, and rain boots and clogs designed in collaboration with Gardenheir offered functionality and style for those increasingly rainy spring days.

"The city drives me, but it doesn't feed me, so I've been wanting wide open spaces lately for some reason," Wescoat Pound added of the underlying message. She translated the sentiment into roomy trench coats, new open-work knits and laser-cut perforated leather layers (a great skirt in tobacco brown) that enabled the wearer, including the likes of Debra Shaw, Devyn Garcia, Guinevere van Seenus, Lineisy Montero and Karen Elson, to take in the breeze of the great outdoors.

The styles were layered with new takes on brand signatures of Japanese denim, in classic blue or new reactive dye; reworked shirting – one tied in the back like a trench – and broken up suits of slouchy yet clean trousers and double lapel blazers. Even her dressier looks, such as a fringed bugle bead dress and two chic white boatneck gowns, were grounded with collaborative Birkenstock footwear.

The ready-to-wear and debut of large handbags, in Italian leather and Belgian horsehair, continued to address the needs of the TWP woman, without sacrificing

quality or style. It's how the four-year-old label, backed by Andrew Rosen, is quickly turning into a powerhouse American sportswear brand.

"With us, one of the reasons we win is because we give quality at a really reasonable price. That's important to us, and it's hard doing that when you're making things in New York, but our business has been amazing. We've been very lucky, because we have great partners," Wescoat Pound said at a preview. She recalled a recent intimate trunkshow with a retail partner's top customers – not only did the brand exceed \$200,000 of sales in two days, but the creative director was hearing feedback from many shoppers that, "I used to buy [luxury European brands], and now I buy you," because of expensive prices that only continue to increase.

The brand has also seen success with its six retail stores in New York City, the Hamptons, Los Angeles, Dallas and Aspen and has its sights set on global expansion, starting with London, Rosen told WWD last fall. – *Emily Mercer*



 **The Collections**
New York





The
Collections
New York



Zankov

Zankov

Henry Zankov has gone from engaging his close circle of artist friends to more high-profile collaborations lately, designing homeware with pop star Troye Sivan and an exclusive capsule for Diane von Furstenberg.

People seem drawn to the vivid universe he's creating and it's easy to imagine all of the potential markets it could seep into beyond his knitwear roots, which Zankov proved once and for all Monday at his first seated runway show.

"It's really exciting," he said, beaming backstage after a standing ovation from the audience. Rattling off new categories, Zankov continued: "We've added evening in silk and tailoring... chiffon that's been washed. There's raw denim tailoring and coated utility cottons."

Free-spirits like Annie Ernaux, PJ Harvey and Zadie Smith were listed as muses in the collection notes, but colors, layers and embellishments had a louche 1970s attitude, not unlike Ms. von Furstenberg herself in the heady days of Studio 54.

"Whether it's musicians or artists or anyone who's creative, it's really about this woman who doesn't subscribe to a regular way of living," elaborated Zankov. She'll go bare-breasted underneath a lavender crinkle chiffon sweater one day and use a bandana as a makeshift bra tied over a rugby polo the next. There are no rules that inhibit her approach to dressing because "she moves through life with confidence."

Forward movement was the single dimension lacking in his standing presentations before and Zankov was clearly having fun with it here in the swishy car wash hems on perforated intarsia pants and bias gowns with thick stripes of violet, yellow, orange and blue that flapped like beach flags behind models as they strode past.

Fishnet tanks, iridescent sequins, sarongs and one fabulous anorak hoodie paired with shredded cotton board shorts notched up the nautical cool, as did Murano glass beaded belts and necklaces by Presley Oldham strung with shells.



Zankov

These were actually pill cases, Oldham pointed out, fitting given the whole display felt like a dose of medicine for weary mid-fashion week eyes.

Again, the idea to use them came from the magpie ways of the Zankov woman. As Oldham explained: "She's collecting all of these objects throughout her life, and whether they become jewelry or not, she needs a place to put them."

Whatever she's stashing, we'll gladly take another hit. — *Ari Stark*

Tanner Fletcher

The invitation to Tanner Richie and Fletcher Kasell's show arrived in the form of a colonial-style dollhouse door painted robin's egg blue with gold finishes. Like "Alice in Wonderland," you immediately wanted to crawl through it, to fall down their rabbit hole of fashion fantasy.

Just don't hit your head on the way down — ushers wearing branded hard hats and utility overalls seated guests at the Capitale on Bowery Tuesday, a prelude to Tanner Fletcher's homeware capsule launching on Etsy.

"We're very inspired by interiors, so this is a show we wanted to do since we started the brand," said Richie. "We've had this idea for years and years."

The idea was more performance. When the lights went up, we landed in Fletcher and Kasell's living room with chintz wallpaper and antique furniture (collecting is a passion for them). Putting runway decorum in

reverse, they came out first to set up their narrative about in-laws coming to town and the place being in awful disarray.

So off they went to the Etsy van nearby, unloading models one-by-one. With odds-and-ends handy, like a porcelain vase or a metal magazine stand, they quite literally "redecorated" the space before exiting backstage.

Lacy negligees, cutesy needlepoint and pointelle sweaters and camp shirts, one with layers drawn back to resemble curtains, were a few casual items they wore for "heavy lifting," styled just as Tanner Fletcher's cohort of queer Brooklynites would with jorts or briefs and boots.

Evening was where they truly shined, especially the sartorial men's suits in madras plaid or lavender sequin lace and cocktail shaker frocks with fanned-out bust lines.

More theatrical, a Dracula-looking figure holding a candelabra wore a ruffled pussy-bow blouse like the one Alan Cumming donned the night before at the Emmys, while a raven-haired debutante in a white cap-sleeve gown with rosettes was a dead ringer for Audrey Hepburn in "My Fair Lady."

The whole thing ended with Romilly Newman in a massive ball dress made of reproduction 18th-century floral taffeta. Dragging the matching drapes behind her, she managed to hang them up just in time for the whole family's arrival.

It was a big assignment for Tanner Fletcher's small brand, but they weren't late for their important date. — *A.S.*



Tanner Fletcher

Tanner Fletcher



Maria McManus

For her spring 2026 collection, Maria McManus's OG homage to sustainability and craftsmanship continued to shine. The collection featured a female-dominant collaboration with the leads of Agolde, Le Sundial and sculptural bags by Esha Soni, along with her long-standing beauty partnerships with Estée Lauder and Aveda.

In true form to the brand's identity, luxury begins with craft and McManus executes this in the collaboration with Agolde, which briefly previews what's expected to properly launch in Paris soon, said McManus.

As seen on the runway, there was a pale slouchy wide-leg trouser jean in a washed-out indigo made from regenerative cotton and biodegradable elastin with a blend of lyocell that's sourced from Agolde's own farms. She also honored the protection of traditional textile crafts like hand smocking, lace, crochet and macramé. A black handmade macramé dress that paraded the runway was made in collaboration with Bolivian artisans, who used organic Italian cotton with various macramé stitching, styled with Le Sundial black onyx lentil earrings. Pops of color like lilac, mauve-like, and a daring but subtle ruby red were seen throughout in a range of shirts and skirts, all made from organic cotton. To remain authentic to the brand's identity rooted in responsibility, McManus offered a collection that displayed the collaboration of strength among women and what they can offer the world in such difficult times. — *Kimberly Infante*



Maria McManus



Maria McManus



Batsheva

Go big or go home.

That was designer Batsheva Hay's mandate for spring 2026, in more ways than one: yes, the presentation felt like more of a bustling daytime party. But as her client grows up, she's tapping into looser shapes, and looking to interiors for inspiration.

"You're going to see a lot of seasonless pieces," Hay explained amid the milieu. "Actually some are going to be available now in my store, but quite a bit of it is going to be for spring."

Part of that, she reasoned, was the need from her community for more effortless wares. Don't let the plumage or bright colors fool you. "It's a big mash-up of feathers, upholstery fabric, a lot of floral prints and a lot of polka dots. It's a mash-up of what I really love," Hay said. After all, she ultimately designs for herself and her friends.

"I was a different woman when I started [the brand]," she said. "I was a new mom, and now, so many things have changed. I've spent a lot more time at home. I was the on-the-go woman in my 30s, and now, between COVID-19 and all of that, I'm home more. I'm still designing for myself and my friends and other people who inspire me."

The garments, mostly in printed cotton, "have silhouettes that are a bit larger," Hay said. "When I started the brand, it was all nipped-waist and puffed shoulders. Now, I'm in my looser phase in my life."

In contrast to those upholstery fabrics, Hay is most eager to bring the polka dots to market. "There's something so neutral about it," she said, gesturing to a crimson polka-dot prairie frock. The pattern also



Batsheva

showed up on a peplum button-up, styled against striped boxer-style shorts, and other tiered floor-length gowns with wide necklines. After all, she said, "I'm still playing with prints and shapes."

— *James Manso*



Batsheva

Dennis Basso

"You're not going to the supermarket or anything," Dennis Basso said in reference to his spring 2026 collection. "Dennis Basso is about occasion, and it's occasion-looking clothing."

He's still injecting it with a cross-generational approach, though, particularly as it pertains to styling. The designer also infused the roundup of slinky silk dresses and breezy chiffons with a few of his QVC pieces, such as a sequined white tank under a skirt, or a column gown under a white ribbon bolero.

For Basso, that's how he sees women dressing.

"We're dressing the grandmother who thinks she's 60, the 60-year-old who thinks she's 40, and the daughter, too," he said. "This represents the modern woman. She's high-low, mixing it up, wearing a great dress from Dennis Basso with a denim jacket."

"The inspiration was thinking about the strong American woman," Basso explained. "There are so many women today who juggle their mothers, their wives, their boyfriends, their girlfriends, they have husbands, they have children, and they have big careers. And they're going out."

Basso is bullish on a few key styles, such as the pale lime hand-pleated chiffon dresses, which he rendered in a few different silhouettes to complement a variety of ages. "I tried to bring things that are going through the decades, and these say 'young, flowing, easy-going summer,' without saying 'big, botanical floral,'" he explained. "Even though these are, no doubt, statement dresses."

Of course, he's still big on black-and-white, seen in paired separates with pants from his QVC range, or the laser-cut Russian broadtail suit, the skirt of which had a hemline abbreviated above the knee. "It has to be strong, fashionable, but not necessarily edgy," Basso said. "It's about being modern, but still, my collection reflects a bit of a classic feeling."

—James Manso

Marina Moscone

Marina Moscone isn't fixing what's not broken.

During a preview for spring 2026, the designer said suiting, bias-cut slipdresses and an emphasis on tailoring throughout was working for her clientele — and she wouldn't be messing with it. "I stay with the four or five brand codes," she said. "I don't depart."

With that in mind, though, a fresh color palette and a new take on texture anchored the mainstays in the now. "I thought about this collection not in terms of esoteric inspirations, but much more how it fits in the world of Marina Moscone," she said, pointing to layers of sheer mist green over anemone on a few pieces. "There's a lightness, softness and airiness when you come in to see this," she said. In front of a twisted jersey dress, "you'll see this ultra-gathering, which is a bit new for us."

The magic was in the styling: a sheer black dress over a sequined skirt, for example, which also got a wine red iteration. "We do some kind of bordeaux every season. This is more like a Rosso Levante," she said.

Though she's found her strong suit in tailoring, Moscone's spring-forward take still felt new: cinching a tuxedo jacket with a belt, for example, similar in shape to the ankle-length belted black coat in the lineup.

Moscone showed the collection in a pop-up space on Wooster Street in New York — a seasonal pop-up — and she's also priming the brand for a more permanent take to retail.

"This is where we wanted our first store to be. This is a temporary store, but we



Dennis Basso

Marina Moscone




The
Collections
New York

want our first permanent store to be in New York," she said. "I'm very married to the quality of this collection, I don't ever compromise quality. When this sits on a hanger, it needs to look alive. If a woman comes in and tries on a jacket, if it's two sizes too big or two sizes too small, it should still look great." —J.M.

N. Hoolywood MEN'S

Daisuke Obana went on safari for his spring collection. But rather than designing a collection only for the bush, he created a lineup that would work just as well in a bustling city.

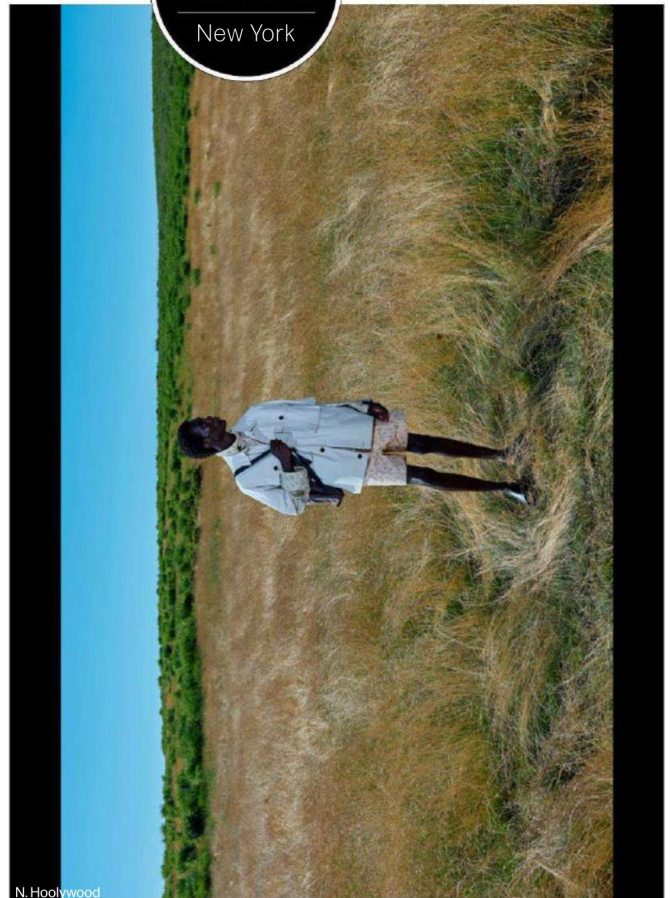
The impetus for N. Hoolywood's Compile collection was creative director Obana's first trip to South Africa — a visit that had a profound effect on him.

"Africa was very different from what I had imagined," he said. "It was a comfortable, livable, and highly developed metropolitan place, which was a real surprise. That's why instead of creating a typical 'safari look,' I focused on designs that blended safari details into urban activewear and fabrics."

This morphing of "formal and dresswear into contemporary, easy clothing," showed up in updated versions of safari jackets and workwear-inspired pieces in functional fabrics updated with classic details. Wide-leg pants, flowy shorts, vests and tank tops in both solids and prints complemented the double-breasted blazers paired with shorts to soften the look. There were also jeans and denim jackets as well as a green plaid coat that blended into the African grasses.

In addition to solid khaki and white tones, Obana included a couple of eye-catching graphic prints reminiscent of paw marks and zebra stripes that provided a pop to the overall offering.

"We created designs centered on fabrics inspired by African textiles, original prints applied to the latest synthetic materials, and camouflage patterns made from



N. Hoolywood

animal motifs, all fused with sportswear cuts," he explained. "These elements were also strongly incorporated into tailoring, which is another key point this season."

Even though it's been nearly 25 years

since Obana created N. Hoolywood, the Tokyo-based designer proved once again that he's still a master at re-interpreting classic American fashion with a distinctly Japanese twist. —Jean E. Palmieri

BEAUTY

The Best of Beauty at New York Fashion Week

Breaking down the standout beauty moments at the spring 2026 shows.

BY NOOR LOBAD, EMILY BURNS, KALEIGH WERNER AND JAMES MANSO

It was the halfway mark of New York fashion Week and the vibes were high – in more ways than one – backstage at Kim Shui’s spring 2026 show, 102 floors up at the World Trade Center.

“It feels like you own New York City up here – it’s electric,” said MAC Cosmetics director of makeup artistry, Romero Jennings, who’s at work on a smoky-eyed, glass-skin “renaissance goddess” look for the show. “Everything in the world feels just a little gray, so we’re being as creative as we can.”

Indeed, the backstage energy at the spring 2026 shows brought a liveliness

that went beyond the usual hubbub of getting ready while polishing off Pura Vida takeaway in the wee hours before showtime.

“Christian [Siriano] is always trying to tease me like, ‘girl, hurry up – I can do that quicker than you,’” said hairstylist Lacy Redway, using TRESemmé to craft the “liquid wave” gelled buns at Siriano’s show at Macy’s Herald Square. “But we’re in good shape.” (As if on cue, a playful “are we?” could be heard as Siriano emerged from rehearsal.)

Among the standout beauty themes this season included statement hair – from the

unruly to the ultra-ornate – extra-long nails, body paint and beyond.

“In the state of the world that we’re in right now, subtlety is not necessary. I want to feel something,” said MAC artist Andrew Dahling – a fashion week newcomer known for his statement looks with Chappell Roan – backstage at Luar’s spring 2026 presentation, where he crafted sequin- and aluminum-foil adorned makeup.

The sentiment was shared, albeit to varying degrees of commitment, across the shows. Here, WWD’s six top beauty trends of the New York Fashion Week spring 2026 ready-to-wear presentations.



Diotima



Theophilus

A FLASH OF LASH

Lashes were on the fringe this season.

At Eckhaus Latta, makeup artist Isamaya Ffrench teamed up with Lashify on a look featuring sheer white lashes that created a ghost-like effect.

“From afar, everyone’s eyes are glowing,” Ffrench said, describing the look as “ethereal.” “They’re so sheer, they integrate with the natural lash, so it creates a beautiful ombre lash.”

At Collina Strada, the lashes, also courtesy of Lashify, were equally unique with vibrant colors, including hot pink and lime green, and a standout shape.

“The fibers are angled, so rather than all the fibers going straight up, they’re angled to the side,” said Lashify head of education Jillian Medics. “It’s going to elongate and pull in the eye.”

Ffrench added: “Everybody has a beautiful little piece of colored wing at the end of their lash that [either] looks great with the color combination or is a bit of a contrast [to what they are wearing].”

At Luar, Dahling glued elongated lash extensions to the waterline to look like eccentric eyewear. Inspiration was taken from the Taino culture in the Dominican Republic, where the brand’s creative director, Raul Lopez, is from.

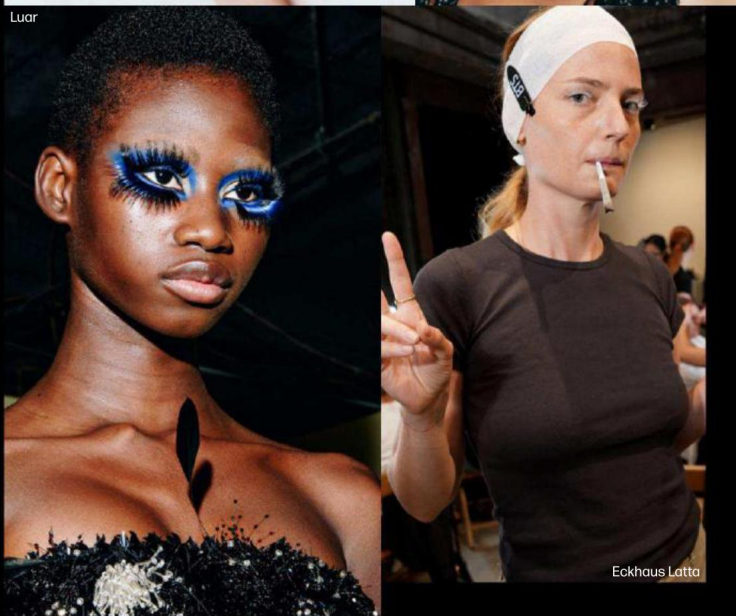
“I took a lot of inspiration from the masks and the regalia and the costumes that they have in Carnival, and looked at some motifs, some styles, and just the way they decorate themselves and dress themselves,” Dahling said.



Luar



Here and left: Collina Strada



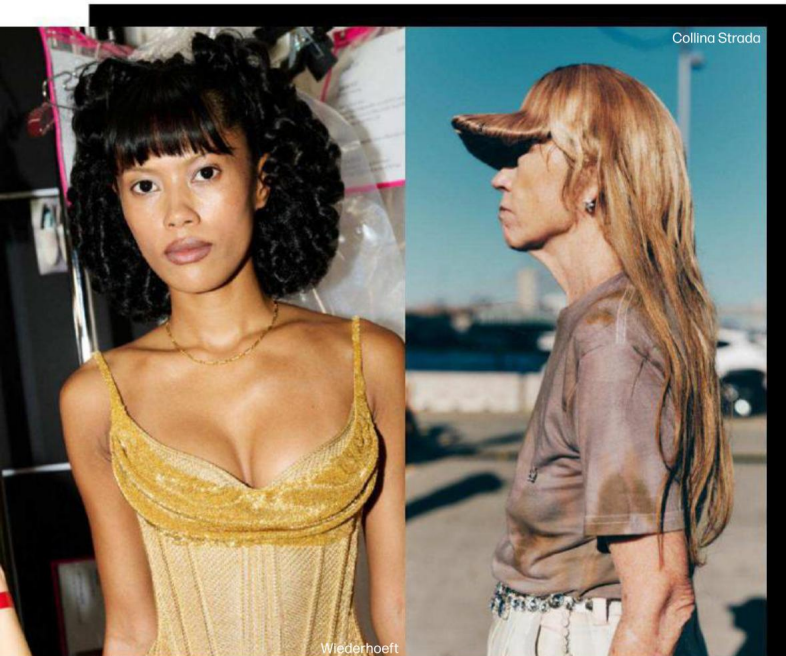
Eckhaus Latta

PAINT ME LIKE ONE OF YOUR FASHION GIRLS

At Theophilus, models got a full-body treatment, ranging from zebra-printed hair to full-body makeup. Most notably, that included painted-on streaks fanning out from under a model’s bedazzled briefs, and also got iterations on other looks’ backs, legs and torsos.

At Diotima, Oribe hairstylist Joey George and Addiction Tokyo global creative director Kanako Takase teamed a look that involved fresh faces, low buns and a delicate smattering of white paint along the hairline and forehead.

“The Diotima woman is a very sexy woman. She is absolutely a party girl that also runs a business, and she’s going to work with a little bit of residual from the night before. And that’s OK,” George said.



Collina Strada

Wiederhoeft



Kim Shui

Luar

THE MANE THING

Also at Kim Shui, the 2026 party-girl agenda was in full swing, courtesy of hairstylist Jaylin Seng.

"Bad choices make good stories, and we want that girl," said Seng, who used Redken products to achieve a young-wild-and-free curl look inspired by the natural textures of Diana Ross' and Shui's own locks.

"You know how you'd use a curling iron if you didn't know how to use a curling iron? It's that. We want her to feel real. What would she do if she was sitting in front of the mirror, getting ready to go out and the Uber was here? That's the look," he said.

At Anna Sui, Garren took cues from Sui's own references of Georgia O'Keeffe and 20th-century artist colonies for a just-done-enough bohemian 'do. "The point is that those artists looked so easy — they

had this angst where they came from when they were all coiffed. The Gibson hairstyle was moving over and they were letting their hair down," said Garren, who used R+Co Bleu on the models.

"You get the natural qualities of long hair, but roughness from being in the desert," he said. "They all have a bit of a Gibson on top, but it's all released on the bottom."

At Wiederhoeft, Oribe offered 21st-century interpretations of mid-18th-century hair trends — a "Bridgerton" siren, if you will — folding in heads of untamable curls and micro bangs between ringlet bun poufs.

Meanwhile at Collina Strada, stylist Mustafa Yanaz brought new meaning to "helmet hair" with caps and beanies made, literally, of hair. The inspiration came directly from Collina

Strada founder and creative director Hillary Taymour, who somewhat jokingly mentioned the idea to Yanaz two months before the show.

"It's a personal thing," Yanaz said. "When I see a New Yorker, I see them with a hat, New Balances and baggy pants."

The hats, which were anchored with pins and Bumble & bumble's Spray de Mode Hairspray, came in neutral tones, as well as a shade of hot pink.

Hair-like helmets also made an appearance at Luar, where models dressed in golden caps made from spiraling braids courtesy of TRESemmé.

The manes didn't stop there. Feathers appeared in two styles, the "Regal Feather" and the "Feathertail," both of which featured quills protruding the back of buns and behind ears like Peacock trains.

NAIL TALK

Intricate nails were a key moment this season, from mismatched, chrome-finished sets at Christian Cowan ("they're super duper maje," said Cowan of the looks, crafted in partnership with Sally Beauty and Dashing Diva) to "K"-embossed claws at Kim Shui and quill talons at Luar.

"Anyone who comes from a Spanish household will understand that nails are a thing and always have been," said Cowan, adding that the Easter-egg quality of nails on the runway is part of their appeal. "I always like hidden details."

Backstage at Luar, one model described her blue-feathered talons, then wrapped around a can of Coca-Cola, as markers of a "fantasy world." The square-shaped tips were done by local artist Naomi Yasuda and also appeared in glossy black, red, nude, yellow and metallic.

Meanwhile at Kim Shui, Butterfly-wing and fishnet-patterned designs, topped with sparkling "K" charms at random, were the M.O., courtesy of Kijibae and nail artist Sojin Oh.



Luar



MANNEQUIN SKIN

Hair may have gone big this season, but skin went simple, and purposely so.

"Because of AI, everyone's obsessed with skin," said Jennings at Kim Shui, using MAC's Lightstruck Liquid Highlighter in shade Double-Gleam to cast an all-over facial glow. "It's about creating this futuristic, filtered-looking complexion," he continued, adding that the eye makeup, by contrast, featured smokey gray and black hues. "Part of the makeup is destroyed and part of the makeup is clean goddess."

Clean, pared-back bases were also in full force at Sandy Liang, where Stila Cosmetics makeup artist Charlie Riddle brought the designer's vision of a downtown Chinese grandmother to life through minimal product use.

"No foundation, a little bit of concealer, just polished," Riddle said. "I wanted to really separate it and kind of have a little anime but the ready to wear version of the everyday."

Underneath the Stila Cosmetics Pixel Perfect Concealer was Beauty of Joseon's TikTok-viral sunscreen. Sandy Liang has worked with the brand before, fronting its tinted SPF ahead of Beauty of Joseon's Sephora foray this summer. Testament to the ongoing K-beauty boom, Riddle also used lash extensions from South Korea in lieu of mascara.

A glass-skin renaissance also took center stage at Wiederhoeft. Using MAC Studio Fix Foundation Fluid and a new Skinfinish highlighter powder, lead artist Sharryn Hinchliffe let the complexion do the talking.

"I wanted to keep it kind of perfectly-imperfect. It's a real skin focus," said Hinchliffe, crediting Skinfinish as the star product. "You can see the innovation. It's 85 percent skin care, and it's got no background. The pigment and pearl is suspended and it reflects and refracts the light so beautifully."

To achieve "mannequin skin," a new iteration of the glass skin aesthetic, Hinchliffe recommended keeping the base matte and adding Skinfinish on the high points of the face. ■



Wiederhoeft

Kim Shui



Sandy Liang

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SOURCE: MRI SIMMONS COMSCORE FEB/MARCH 2025



BEAUTY

Martha Stewart Talks Rereleasing First Book, Launching Skin Care Brand and Longevity

● The media icon gave audience members a bit of advice: “Take a deep breath. Take a glass of Zubrówka vodka. Put a big slice of orange in it...and go on with the day lady.”

BY EMILY BURNS

Martha Stewart is reissuing her first book “Entertaining,” first published in 1982, and it’s no wonder why.

At 84 years old, Stewart has remained a media icon, publishing more than 100 books, leading television shows and running a lifestyle-centric media empire. While she’s been in the public eye for many years, Stewart has remained relevant, even winning share with younger generations – Martha Stewart aesthetic was one of the largest trends on Pinterest with searches up 2,889 percent.

During WWD x FN x Beauty Inc’s annual Women in Power event, Stewart took to the stage with Beauty Inc editor in chief Jenny B. Fine to discuss how she’s maintained such a successful career, her latest skin care venture Elm Biosciences and her advice to all women chasing progress.

For Stewart, her longevity, of course, started with great genes. Her mother lived until 94 and her grandfather lived to 99.

Stewart also attributes her success to her devotion to living well, both in her career and in her personal life. When asked about her approach to longevity, Stewart said “I have devoted the last 40 or 50 years to the subject of good living.”

Now, she’s more dedicated to good living than ever before.

“We’re trying to see how we can successfully age and cope with the fact that more than 50 percent of Americans are going to be over the age of 65 in a couple more years, so we have to learn how to grow old gracefully,” Stewart said.

Aside from focusing on her health, from her daily green juices to regular Pilates, Stewart has also found a way to maintain her cool factor in the media over the years, appealing to a range of generations.

“I’m a very curious person, and I spend a lot of time thinking about what’s cool right now. When I befriended Snoop Dogg for example, it was cool, and yet he was cool, and I became cool,” she said. “Our demographics expanded exponentially because my friends wanted to know about him. His friends certainly wanted to know about me, and it’s continued.”

Aside from her friendship with Snoop Dogg, Stewart said participating in the “Comedy Central Roast of Justin Bieber” in 2015 earned her a lot of credit with younger generations. The release of her

documentary “Martha” on Netflix one year ago also introduced her to younger consumers, leading to the rerelease of her first book “Entertaining.” Stewart said hundreds of millions of people had watched the documentary, per Netflix.

“[Viewers] would realize that there was something there about good living and beautiful living and eating well and cooking well and doing all the homely things. They started to ask their moms for ‘Entertaining’ and mom said, ‘No, you can’t have it,’” Stewart said, noting this led to the demand for the rerelease.

While her mission for good living has remained timeless and still inspires consumers today, Stewart further attributed her longevity to her cohort of friends who are younger than her.

Stewart also discussed her recent foray into skin care alongside Dr. Dhaval Bhanusali with Elm Biosciences, a streamlined approach to the category. Currently, Elm Biosciences only has two products: A30 Elemental Serum, \$135, and Inner Dose The Daily Skin Supplement, \$50. Per Stewart, a third product is coming soon.

“So many different products come my way, and I thought ‘If I find the right person, maybe I can come up with something that one product or two products or three products will work,’” she said. “We have finally come up with

what we think...works. When you apply [the serum], it’s cool. When you wake up, your face is taught. It does all the things that you hope something will do.”

As with all of her ventures, Stewart is being very strategic about Elm Biosciences, particularly when it comes to new products. The assortment will remain streamlined.

“I don’t want to do a glut...I get confused,” Stewart said.

While Stewart has been able to create an empire as a female entrepreneur, she emphasized the importance of passion and commitment to a specific mission, particularly when building a new company and trying to raise money as a woman.

“[If] you have a plan, and you have a well designed business plan, you can find the right place to take it and hopefully get support,” she said, adding that her latest ventures also include consulting for a variety of brands, including a home organization app that employs AI.

Given her packed schedule, when asked about how she juggles it all, Stewart said she doesn’t believe in “balance.” So when asked about her advice for attendees striving for progress, Stewart closed out her talk saying: “Take a deep breath. Take a glass of Zubrówka vodka. Put a big slice of orange in it...and go on with the day lady.”

WOMEN IN POWER RECAP

WWD

FASHION

Carolina Cucinelli on Preserving Brunello Cucinelli's Legacy

- Cucinelli spoke about having an impact on the next generation and how the company makes clothes that will last for a long time.

BY LISA LOCKWOOD

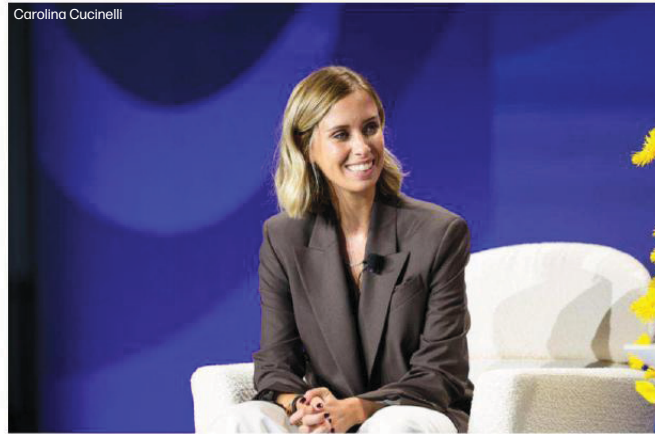
Carolina Cucinelli, vice president and co-creative director of Brunello Cucinelli, spoke about what makes the Italian luxury company unique in a fast-paced industry.

Speaking with Kathy G. Lee, deputy editor of WWD, Cucinelli said she started to work in the company as a tailor in 2010 although during her childhood, she thought of doing something with art. In the first two years, she spent her time at the machine, and then she joined the production and design team. It was a chance to see every division of the company. "It was a beautiful time to spend time with my father, Brunello, and my sister," she said.

Founded in 1978, the company has grown into a multibillion-dollar company. Cucinelli oversees brand image, communications, accessories, red carpet collections and digital strategy.

"It's a journey, it's not always easy to work with your family. It's very important to find the right balance....My sister is very focused on the design....I'm a little more artistic," she said.

As a highly creative person, she was asked how she found and developed her own voice. "The first years I spent the time just to listen, to listen to my father and



people around me and try to understand the point of evolution," she said. She said she tried to bring something that's hers to the company. After 10 years, she started to evolve the vision, the philosophy and the story they wanted to tell.

Based in the countryside of Umbria, the company is 68 percent women, and many are artisans. They start at 8 a.m., and they have a lunch break from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m., and at 5:30 p.m., everybody goes home and takes time for their family. "It's very important to create a great balance," she said.

Cucinelli said they look for gentle

growth. For the six months ended June 30, the company's net profit climbed 16 percent to more than 76.7 million euros. Revenues rose 10.2 percent to 684.1 million euros, compared with 620.6 million euros in the same period last year. She said the idea is to grow 10 percent every year. After the pandemic it was a difficult moment for everyone, and they tried to support their employees with salary.

Every single item is made in Umbria. They work with 8,000 artisans every day, and everything is made by hand with the best quality materials.

Cucinelli's focus has been to attract

the next generation of customers to the company and embrace technology. In 2017, they started to sell online and work with social media. They tried to tell their story in a different way. "We have this little hamlet, Solomeo, where 800 people live," she said. The company has a Brunello Cucinelli school, which is a specialized school in Solomeo, Italy, dedicated to preserving and teaching traditional Italian craftsmanship to pass on to future generations. It also serves as a center for culture and art within the Fortum of the Arts, alongside a library, amphitheater, and theater.

"It's very important to have an impact on the next generation," she said. At the school, they work in the company for six hours, and at the end of their schooling, they can work at the company.

She noted that the family has a foundation that supports art and culture, the public school and hospital, and the restoration of important monuments in Italy and outside Italy.

Cucinelli was asked how she resists chasing the business and the fast pace, and how they stay true to the essence of the brand. "You are encouraged to buy less but buy better," she said. She believes in buying things you can use and pass to another generation at some point.

As for her thoughts on power dressing, and how does that apply to women?

"Of course, business is very masculine. I started in the company at 19 years old and the daughter of Mr. Brunello and I had a baby quite young. When you sit at the table and you find many men, they look at you like you're a baby and they don't trust you. At the beginning it was very sad for me. But you need to push and focus, and everyone of us has the chance to show to the people what we are."

Asked what she wears when she wants to feel confident? "A suit, always," she said.

WELLNESS

Tracy Anderson Discusses Her Wellness Empire

- The trainer talked about building the Tracy Anderson Method and launching sustainable equipment – and led attendees through a movement practice.

BY EMILY BURNS

From celeb-loved boutique fitness classes to sustainable fitness equipment, Tracy Anderson does it all.

At the annual WWD x FN x Beauty Inc Women in Power event, honoree Tracy Anderson closed out the day of programming by joining Beauty Inc editor in chief Jenny B. Fine on stage for a conversation with Anderson's Pomeranian June in tow.

To kickstart the conversation, Anderson discussed the wellness empire she has created, which all started with the Tracy Anderson Method, a choreographed workout that she created more than 35,000 different movement sequences for, which can be done at her many studios or on her digital platform.

"[It's] a movement language that is designed to bring us closer to our human nature," she said.

Anderson, whose clientele includes stars like Gwyneth Paltrow, Jennifer Lopez and Kate Hudson, created the custom method more than 25 years after testing how certain types of movement impacted women of different bodies. While the

method remains at the core of Anderson's ecosystem, she didn't stop there. She has gone on to launch a magazine, activewear and sustainable equipment, all while maintaining the integrity of her original and cult-followed method.

"As women, we're unique in that we can nurture a lot. We can nurture everything that we care about, so first and foremost, I'm a student, and my time alone to learn is the most important thing," she said. "There's never a world in which I'm going to create a clothing line and give time to create a clothing line or doing something that I consider to be fun, if I haven't tended to my serious mission. The learning and the creation of movement practice is what is protected."

While the world of fitness has been driven by trends from Pilates to hot girl walks, Anderson said her steadfast commitment to her method has driven its longevity.

"I attribute the longevity to the fact that what I do is very truthful, and when you experience the truth of yourself and what you're capable of doing, and you feel what that feels like, it's undeniable," she said.

After discussing her career trajectory and breaking up with the concept of "celebrity trainer" in order to become a "female wellness pioneer," Anderson went on to present one of her greatest passion projects – the Tracy Anderson HeartStone, \$299, a set of 2.8 pound weights that feature a rose quartz stone. According to Anderson, the weights were developed to activate the insula, the part of the brain that "helps you



be present in your body."

"I wanted desperately for people today to be able to put their phones down. I needed to engineer something where...this doesn't feel like picking up anything else," Anderson said. "When you put it in your hands, immediately in your palms, you should feel a sense of groundedness."

Anderson went on to lead attendees through a moment of movement featuring the HeartStones, which everyone had at their table, to a Bon Iver song – the goal: to truly be able to listen to the body.

After guiding the group, Anderson thanked everyone: "Thank you for helping me make weird seem normal."

BUSINESS

Collaboration's The Secret Sauce to Revitalizing J.Crew

● J.Crew CEO Libby Wadle and creative director Olympia Gayot attribute ongoing dialogues and daily collaboration in balancing creativity with commercial success.

BY VICKI M. YOUNG

For any brand to succeed, it needs to balance artistic creativity with commercial success and J.Crew Group accomplishes that through collaborative teamwork.

Olympia Gayot, creative director and head of design, J.Crew women's and kids, and Libby Wadle, chief executive officer of J.Crew Group, emphasized the importance of constant communication and collaboration, from the day-to-day responsibilities to the longer-range strategic planning inherent in the business. The two spoke with WWD deputy editor Kathy G. Lee on "Building an Iconic American Brand" at the fifth annual WWD x FN x Beauty Inc Women in Power event Sept. 8 at The Glasshouse in New York City.

"First and foremost, I think what I knew J.Crew did at its best was more about creativity first and storytelling, and that was always our differentiator," Wadle said. "Also, just putting product first and really

identifying other signature, iconic items and leaning into those things."

Wadle also spoke about how new ownership in 2020 after the firm's bankruptcy provided a "clean slate" for the brand. The CEO's history with the brand includes having her "dog-eared" catalogue with her at college, as well as buying her first interview suit at J.Crew.

As for balancing creativity with the commercial element, Wadle said: "We think about it a lot. We talk about it a lot, and we have to do it right because we both want to deliver a business while we're here, and we want the brand to be really successful."

Wadle also has some distinct view points about the role of the customer. "Everyone talks about putting the customer at the center of things...I think what's important for us is to remember the customer shouldn't always tell you what to do. You need a layer to inspire a customer and to move her forward, to move him forward," she said. "We're here to deliver something beautiful and inspiring."

Discussions on product offerings have included looking at a style for men's, such as the rollneck sweater, and imagining what it should look like on women. She also spoke about bringing back the catalogue, a key part of the storytelling process.

Gayot said that as the designer, she's involved in the design process from



concept to every single step after that, including working on the catalogue. The foundation for the brand was already in place, she said, noting that attention to quality, style and storytelling helped put all the pieces together.

"You have to embrace what exists already and really hero it because that's what everybody loves about it," Gayot said.

The chief women's designer said J.Crew already had "brand codes" that were important, such as leather and straw and other durables. With many legacy items similar to what's on the runway today, she began exploring how to make something from before that was "looking a little snoozy" and modernizing it so it "explodes" as a category. One example was bags.

"We designed 100 different bags, and some were colored, some had pearls, and some were super classic. And it started [with] seeing something that's basic, exploding it, and getting it really exciting for your customer," Gayot explained.

The head designer also pointed out a factoid that has given her and Wadle the advantage in moving the brand forward into the new era — they are also J.Crew customers, as well as students of the brand.

As for art versus commerce, that's where a constant flow of dialogue between the two remains important. "It's a constant dialogue about what I want to do, if she thinks its right, how I react to it...We're always trying to move the customer forward and provide inspiration and excitement," Gayot said. "But we're also having conversations about what we need, what they [the customers] need, and what they want."

"Libby is very passionate. She's great to shop with. She likes to try new things," Gayot said. "She's just really bold in that she goes for it."

"That kind of 'What do you think?' collaboration is how the two can 'balance beautiful commercial pieces and then some exciting pieces to get customers engage,'" Gayot said.

FASHION

Driving Brand Evolution

● Hali Borenstein, Gaëlle Drevet and Sheila Harrington discussed key pillars of a strong business like brand DNA, quality product and implementing feedback from customers and sales associates.

BY EMILY BURNS

Quality product and a strong brand DNA are king.

At the annual WWD x FN x Beauty Inc Women in Power summit, Hali Borenstein, chief executive officer at Reformation, Gaëlle Drevet, founder of The Frankie Shop, and Sheila Harrington, global chief executive officer at Urban Outfitters and Free People Groups, sat down with Emily Mercer, senior market editor at WWD, to discuss how to drive brand evolution.

When it comes to building a lasting brand, all three executives agreed quality product always comes first.

"Regardless of what's going on in the world around you, customers strive for amazing product," Borenstein said.

Drevet added: "If you don't have a good product, you don't have a business."

That being said, with new trends popping up every day, the trio emphasized the importance of strong brand DNA to build an authentic and loyal customer community.

"The best brands are living and breathing and evolving with their



customers, responsive to the times around them," Borenstein said. "The problem — or the risk — with that is, at times, you can kind of lose sight of who you are as a brand when you're just following what's going on with the trends around you. We've built a strategy of different values in which we focus on that will help us continue to evolve while staying true to ourselves."

"You need to find your niche. You need to have something to say. You need to have something to offer," Drevet said.

She also emphasized the importance of

storytelling with product, which for The Frankie Shop is often best done through the brand's visuals.

"A product can magically turn into some crazy bestseller just with one photo," Drevet said. "That's why fashion and visuals are very interconnected."

For Harrington, maintaining a strong brand DNA and know-how of when to hop on a trend, listening to the customer and the sales associates is crucial.

"A pillar that has been core to us is... curiosity around the consumer, asking

always, 'What can we do better? How do we service you better?' and being able to answer that strongly," she said. "Our associates spend so much time talking to the customer and hearing from them that sometimes I forget to walk away from the reporting or the digital data that we're getting and actually be in a store talking to the customer and the people that service them best. I always walk away with so much inspiration and a to do list that is even longer [when I do]."

The trio, who emphasized the importance of building out a global team to ensure there's a diverse group of voices representing the brand, further discussed taking and implementing feedback, whether it be from customers or sales associates.

"When I took this role, it was 2020, an interesting time to take a fashion CEO job," Borenstein said. "I had this idea that I was supposed to have all the answers, and then quickly I realized great leaders don't have all the answers, but what we do is we listen. We listen incredibly intently to all the cues around us, be it the marketplace, our customer and our incredible team. You put all of this together, and you can come up with special, new ideas that will drive directions that will be differentiated for your business."

With tariffs and fears of economic downturn, the group advised attendees on how to face challenging times as a leader.

"We've all had to be really much more resilient over the last couple of years, and our consumers have learned to be really resilient," Borenstein said. "What we can do is know what's in our control and focus on that, because it's very clear right now, we cannot control everything going on."

FASHION

Carhartt's Focus on Skilled Workers Has Brought Enhanced Visibility

● Chief brand officer Susan Hennike said the company studies its blue-collar customers to ensure its product and marketing hit home.

BY JEAN E. PALMIERI

Carhartt is laser focused on its core consumer: the skilled worker. And everything it does – from product creation to messaging – is designed to speak to that person.

In a presentation at WWD x FN x Beauty Inc 2025 Women in Power event, Susan Hennike, chief brand officer for Carhartt, said building consumer connections and elevating stories that mean something to that target customer creates an impact “far beyond just the bottom line.”

Hennike said that today’s fashion executives are faced with a wide range of challenges and there’s always “the pressure to produce that next sale. But we can’t lose focus on our existing core consumers.”

She said that for the past decade, she has been saying that by “trying to be everything to everyone, you’ll be nothing to [anyone]. That is why, over the past couple of years at Carhartt, we have strengthened our focus on our target consumers – skilled

tradespeople who want durable, quality gear that they can trust. We’ve listened to them to better understand their needs with such intent and intensity.”

When Carhartt is doing market research for its upcoming seasonal collections, she said, “we don’t go trend shopping in the streets in New York, we actually go and visit the job sites. We visit welders, electricians, farmers. Our target consumers are the salt of the earth. They’re mostly blue collar. They have pride in their work, a love for the outdoors, and deep connections with their family and friends. They stick to what they know and the brand that they trust.”

And this strategy is working. Hennike said over the past four years, the company has seen an uptick of 14 points in its overall awareness number and an 8 percent increase in the number of people considering trying Carhartt.

“This shows that we are engaging potential new consumers, building their interest in positioning Carhartt as a leading solution for when they are ready to buy,” she said.

This was also the impetus of the company’s new marketing campaign: Made Possible.

“Many jobs today use traditional hands-on skills with technology. You can be

a robotics technician in the skilled trades, or solar powered systems installer,” she said. “Demand for skilled tradespeople is truly growing, and we want to make people aware of it. Their jobs are vital to our economy and society, and career opportunities are expanding, but yet we face a labor gap of up to 1 million jobs in the skilled trades, and that gap would exceed 2 million by 2030.”

So the Made Possible campaign “celebrates” these careers and the people who aspire to them, she said. “It’s a reminder that great brands don’t just sell products, they honor the peoples’ values and the stories behind the work – always keeping the consumer top of mind.”

Communicating this message internally requires leadership skills, she said. Being a successful leader, Hennike said, requires “courage and vision. It’s about rising up to challenges head on and building trust around you for those who follow.” Building teams with a collaborative spirit and “valuing every voice” can create solutions that inspire change.

Hennike quoted Jack Welch, the former chief executive officer of GE, where she had her first job out of college, who said: “Before you’re a leader, success is about growing yourself. When you become a



leader, success is all about growing others. That experience at GE taught me lessons about adaptability, navigating change and finding opportunity.”

She summed it up this way: “The world demands leaders who can unlock potential in themselves, in the people that they work for, and these great brands that they build. It’s not by playing it safe, but by embracing bold possibilities in the face of uncertainty.”

BUSINESS

How Brands Can Thrive in Today's Digital-first Media Landscape

● The Weber Shandwick Collective’s Karen Pugliese discussed how blending human creativity and AI is helping brands expand their reach through cultural relevancy in a saturated media landscape.

BY KANIK TALWAR

In today’s fast-paced and digital-first media era, focusing on community and cultural relevancy is key to brands earning their place in the media landscape.

In a conversation presented by The Weber Shandwick Collective, Karen Pugliese, its global president, sat down with Amanda Smith, chief executive officer of Fairchild Media Group, to discuss how brands can find their place among a crowded media ecosystem.

Pugliese shared at the 2025 WWD x FN x Beauty Inc Women in Power summit that her career journey started as a journalist, then transitioned into public relations. Her roles at the company since 2009 have included working in P&L, new business acquisition, chief of staff and chief growth officer. She was appointed global president last December.

Over the course of her career, Pugliese said she was fortunate to be mentored by women leaders in editing, publishing, CEOs and more. She said women are the drivers and doers of the world and they deserve to be the designers and the dreamers. Her advice for her fellow women leaders is: “Don’t just make the

company run, run the company.”

The Weber Shandwick Collective has utilized what it dubs “cultural choreography,” which is the intersection of earned, paid and owned media, to help brands earn their place in the cultural landscape.

“We’re no longer just talking about demographics and audiences,” Pugliese said. “We’re talking about communities. What are their passions? What are their values? What do they care about? And the minute we can tap into that – we can have way more interesting conversations.”

Pugliese said AI is still in its early stages. By using both human creativity and AI, Pugliese sees that its impact will see the

two come together to scale, provoke and spark conversation.

But she noted that original thoughts and understanding nuance such as humor and emotion will not change anytime soon – “creativity is what we do as humans.” She’s betting on human creativity to continue to be a driving force.

Through predictive analytics, The Weber Shandwick Collective uses AI-driven models to accelerate paid media and create lasting impact.

“What we’re able to bring through all of our data through the insights, through the analytics is an understanding of how different stakeholders are going to react to a campaign,” Pugliese continued. “If

you’re going to roll out a new campaign, you might feel like you have a tremendous understanding about how the target consumer is going to react.”

Moreover, the data models the agency uses give its clients insight into how their employees, investors, activist investors, boards and more will react. She said this allows them to predict these reactions and campaigns going into the market with accuracy.

One example of this is Kellanova’s Pop-Tarts. Pugliese shared that the brand wanted to transition from being seen as a breakfast food to an afternoon snack and engage with Gen Z. With Pop-Tarts’ college football sponsorship, they went directly to the community to find out what mattered to them most: nostalgia and the macabre. Thus they created a Pop-Tarts mascot, which was eaten afterward.

“I knew it was a hit, not because the client said so but because all my kids and their friends were engaging with it. They were going wild and it was one of the biggest viral sensations of 2024.”

The company won the Cannes Golden Lion in the experiential category, which a PR firm had never done before. Steve Cahillane, the CEO of Kellanova, later told Pugliese that it was one of the best marketing moves he’d ever seen. Beyond its widespread cultural impact, the brand sold 21 million more Pop-Tarts.

When looking at cultural behavioral shifts in the landscape Pugliese is most excited about, she believes that Gen Z will be the ones to save the world.

“What I have observed is that they are adaptable, they’re entrepreneurial and they’re earnest in a way that’s endearing. They also love to create and be a part of things. And when you look at Gen Z, you say to yourself they have the smarts and the savvy to actually change the future and how businesses and brands interact. They will do good,” Pugliese concluded.



BEAUTY

Estée Lauder and Amazon on How Their Strategic Partnership Came to Be

- The two companies redefined the online luxury beauty shopping experience, paving the way for future digital-first strategies.

BY KATHRYN HOPKINS

When the Estée Lauder Cos. launched Clinique on Amazon in March 2024, it marked a significant change in the way prestige beauty viewed Amazon, and the beauty company now has a total of 11 brands on the platform in the U.S., in addition to an international push.

At the WWD x FN x Beauty Inc Women in Power conference, the two women who brokered that partnership revealed the details of how it came to be.

"It feels very natural now. It's been a phenomenal 18 months. But going back, it wasn't quite intuitive. There was a time when Amazon and the Estée Lauder Cos. stood at the opposite ends of the table and that was no secret," said Melis del Rey, general manager of health and beauty at Amazon U.S. Stores.

"But what was really incredible in my experience is that we literally came together and we had the opportunity to listen," she continued. "There was a lot of listening, understanding our differences and really in a trusting way embracing those differences as well, and through that process, we found that actually our differences can be collectively our strength, which led to this really amazing partnership."

On negotiating directly with Amber English, president, digital and online, the Americas, at the Estée Lauder Cos., over lunch, she added: "We put all our cards on the table, and we talked very candidly and openly. I don't know whether this is a woman's leadership style or it's just you



and I, but we connected so well. It was really helpful to build a strong partnership from Day One"

For her part, English said: "The way I describe it is we had an adult conversation. Sometimes when you get two big companies and it's 'here's my terms, here's this term.' And before Estée Lauder, I spent 14 years at Amazon so I empathized, and I knew the areas that Amazon was going to hold core to, who they were – the consumer always. And then it was really helpful to have the relationship with Melis to say, 'here's what's important to us, and here's what's important to our brands and that's going to be a deal breaker, and that might feel silly, but it's really important for our brand narrative.'"

She acknowledged that to say they shook hands at lunch and the deal was

done would be an oversimplification, but it did help lay the groundwork: "There was a huge amount of the establishment of the relationship and where we landed came from us just saying, 'Hey, this is going to be hard for me, do you think you can get them there, let me act as a bridge on that topic.'"

"We both had to lean in and show some cards that I think in a normal negotiation someone would have said, 'Oh, you showed your cards too early.' And it was like, 'yes, but I trust her, and I know that she has just as much vested interest in this as we do.'"

Key to this partnership was Amazon building features to tell the story of the Estée Lauder Cos.' brands on its platform. Clinique, for example, was able to develop a Skin Analysis tool for its Amazon storefront to coincide with

the launch. The interactive questionnaire in Amazon Premium Beauty custom-fit a skin care regimen for Clinique's consumers.

"What we had to do is after we listened to their requirements, was go back and say, 'OK, how do we innovate, how do we think about the shopping experience, use the power of technology and develop features that truly capture the consumers' not just minds but hearts at the same time,'" recounted del Rey. "Because this is an area where we needed to elevate. We've created a new brand store experience. Our detail page experience was overhauled. We've actually worked with specific features, which was around enabling skin care diagnostics and shopping or finding the right shape or foundation. So really being true to the customer needs and using technology."

For English, the media part was also a big attraction. "The thing that people sometimes miss with understanding Amazon is it's easy to understand the commerce part of it, but it's a massive media platform. The new customer acquisition is really interesting, but allowing us to have a safe and also sort of self-guided way to talk about our brand and our brand narrative is something that I don't think a lot of people harness."

This sentiment was shared by Stéphane de La Faverie, president and chief executive officer of the Estée Lauder Cos.

"We are very pleased with our progress with Amazon," said de La Faverie during an earnings call last month. "Clinique was the first brand to launch, Aveda and Origins were the last ones to launch. Clinique continues to be very, very strong, which tells us that we've been able to not just attract new consumers, but also reengage with lapsed consumers. Over the past 12 months, Amazon not only is adding new consumers for us, but is also acting a little bit as a megaphone to our total business because Amazon is not only a commerce platform, but is also the majority of the beauty search that is happening in the market."

BEAUTY

Why Beauty Marketplaces Matter

- By evolving in step with beauty trends rather than just reacting to them, marketplaces like Amazon are becoming increasingly valuable for brands.

BY NOOR LOBAD

Beauty marketplaces appear to be making a comeback, and for good reason.

Led by Amazon, online, multivendor platforms have seen momentum as new brands hop on the Amazon bandwagon each month, and retailers like Walmart and Ulta Beauty increasingly build out marketplaces of their own to compete.

"The consumer journey has shifted in a short amount of time – consumers are now telling us where they want to shop, and we should be leaning in," said Market Defense's chief engagement officer Vanessa Kuykendall, in conversation with Dime Beauty chief executive officer Cyndi Isgrig and WWD senior beauty editor Kathryn Hopkins at the 2025 WWD x FN x Beauty Inc Women in Power Conference.

"Speed matters – if a consumer sees a trend on TikTok, they can go right to a marketplace and pick up that product. They don't need to wait for a [retail] buyer to respond to a trend," she continued.

Dime Beauty, which was founded in 2018 and offers skin care, body care and fragrance, sold strictly direct-to-consumer prior to launching on Amazon. Now also at Ulta, the brand has found that "our Amazon shopper loves fragrance – we see that play out more than via other channels," Isgrig said.

She added that there is a clear pipeline between social media virality and Amazon performance, with one viral TikTok video last September driving a 500 percent increase in Amazon search volume and a 5,000 percent increase in its ranking on Amazon search in the months that followed.

Other viral trends are reflected in what's performing on Amazon, from men's pheromone fragrances to Arab-inspired perfumes and beyond. "The number-one Arab fragrance brand on Amazon has zero retail penetration in the U.S. – its momentum is completely influencer-driven," said Kuykendall, adding that even brands that haven't directly gone viral can harness marketplace data to figure out how they can be part of the conversation.

"What we're seeing now is that the consumer is not shopping in silos. They're not focused on channels as much as they are focused on brands," said Kuykendall, adding of Walmart's increasing marketplace bet: "One in four Walmart beauty customers are Millennials, so they

certainly have the audience – but can they bring the assortment and the premium experience? That remains to be seen."

A longtime beauty veteran – she began her career years ago working at a MAC Cosmetics counter – Kuykendall also shared how the category has become a source of empowerment for her following

her breast cancer diagnosis last year.

"What gave me a sense of control and dignity was leaning into products. I can't do anything about my diagnosis, but I can use moisturizer with silicone to help my scars go away faster; I can use self-tanner to make them less visible," Kuykendall said. "We're in an industry where the market does benefit if we don't feel good about ourselves. We can flip that – consumers can't control how people see them, but we can be part of how they use beauty products to control how they feel about themselves."





Trinny Woodall

BEAUTY

Trinny Woodall on How She Made It

● The Trinny London founder recounts her journey, from selling socks and hosting a TV show to beauty brand founder.

BY KATHRYN HOPKINS

From cutting meat at a delicatessen to selling socks to trading commodities to hosting a hit style show in the U.K. to

beauty entrepreneur in her 60s, Trinny Woodall has seemingly seen – and done – it all.

“My first career was age 15, cutting meat in a delicatessen. Then I did a business called Sock It to You, selling socks on trade floors. Then I actually traded commodities. Absolutely hated it. Ninety-five percent men. And then I went to rehab at 26, came out, thought what on earth do I want to do because I want to do

something I love and wake up and have a passion for. I had always made over my girlfriends, so that actually became my career in different forms,” she said at the WWD x FN x Beauty Inc Women in Power conference in a conversation with Beauty Inc editor in chief Jenny B. Fine.

“To begin with, I did a column in a paper called The [Daily] Telegraph in the U.K. From that I did a TV show called ‘What Not to Wear’ for 10 years.”

It was when she was taking that show around the world that she noticed how women felt at different stages in their lives was universal, which inspired her to start the beauty brand Trinny London.

“We all have, to a greater or lesser extent, some body dysmorphia, or we might have a real protection over our hair, but we’re interested to think what can we do to feel better?” she said. “Trinny London is not a beauty brand. It’s a brand that helps women shift how they feel. And we happen to sell beauty.”

She believes her secret sauce is being “utterly candid” with the consumer: “For many years, I grew up in a place of beauty, where it was aspiration, airbrushing and buying into a dream. That’s the amazing thing about beauty, but also it’s something that intimidates women too. So it’s how do we get the balance?”

It turned out the answer was on Facebook.

“When I was just beginning to start this business, this community started on Facebook, and they called themselves the Trinny Tribe, and they’re now about 250,000 people, and we have about 1.8 million customers around the world, and about 75 percent are online. But the community is very, very strong, and it’s this sort of beating heart, because if you have a community that organically starts separate from your business, they’re your biggest champion and your harshest critic and your best knowledge. If you don’t fundamentally understand how your customer is feeling at this time, at this place, you will not be selling them the right things. You won’t be talking to them

in the right way. You won’t be evolving with what is happening.”

However, despite the Trinny Tribe and her high profile in the U.K., when it came to raising funds, it was not an easy feat, meeting with 250 investors before she had success. Plus, some did not see the cross-generational appeal of the business but only wanted to invest if she focused on Gen Z.

“There’s moments, whether you’re going to seek funding, or whether you’re going to your boss and saying, ‘I’m worth considering for this role’ where you’ve got to have that meeting, leave the room and think, what do I take on board?” she said, adding “I’d spent 15 years traveling the world, meeting 6,000 women and making them over. So I felt OK, I think I know that better than the 35-year-old guy in the VC fund, but that was a huge challenge.”

Fast forward to 2025 and the business is growing rapidly, with Woodall expanding into the U.S. After a pop-up in New York City, the brand just opened a temporary location in Boston.

“What I love about retail is we get to meet our customer. In Boston, we’re on Newbury Street in this fantastic location. I don’t believe in a huge investment in a store. I get Ikea units. I cover them in mirrors. We have beautiful packaging, and we make it feel fabulous. I don’t want to make a \$300,000 investment in something to be up for six months.”

Asked how her leadership style has evolved as the business has grown, she said it was a learning curve. After starting a business in 1999 with perhaps too qualified people who resisted her strategy, Woodall now has hire much of her 300-person team fresh out of college.

“I thought they’re so talented, and they ended up running elements of our business. And then in year three, I slowly hired an exec team, and now we have a great person who’s our CMO. We have a great person from retail, from ops, from tech. And so that team is at the right stage of the business for the business now to propel to its next stage of growth.”

BEAUTY

Noella Gabriel Discusses Her Career Trajectory

● The Elemis cofounder said the brand isn’t about launching new products, it’s about providing education on skin health and offering consumers a moment to breathe.

BY EMILY BURNS

For Elemis cofounder Noella Gabriel, the journey all started with breathing.

During the annual WWD x FN x Beauty Inc Women in Power event, Gabriel joined Beauty Inc editor in chief Jenny B. Fine in a conversation about her career trajectory, tapping into wellness before it was cool, the importance of skin health and building a lasting, impactful brand.

Growing up, Gabriel was on track to have a career as a professional singer. However, after losing both of her parents suddenly at the age of 20, she was forced to pivot. In looking for the next step, Gabriel always came back to the concept of breathing, something ingrained in her from her musical training.

“It was a very interesting journey, that whole classical singing journey, because when you learn to sing, the first 18 months is all about breathing,” Gabriel said. “They believe that the breath sings a voice. They

believe [you need to] get out of the way of the breath and let it flow and let your body soften and let magic happen....There was a curiosity around that subject that had never left to this day. It’s no accident that every Elemis treatment starts with abdominal breathing.”

Prior to Elemis, Gabriel, after pivoting from her singing career, started her first venture in the wellness world alongside her sister. It was a health food shop, way ahead of its time, called Acorn. From there, Gabriel was always learning, training in nutrition, skin care and aromatherapy, which ultimately led her to run the beauty department at Harvey Nichols. While her career was thriving, Gabriel, one fateful Thursday evening, took a phone call from an investor that led to her taking a pay cut to get involved in a small venture now known as the iconic beauty brand Elemis.

“It wasn’t about the money,” she said. “It was about finding something that I could put all of that skill set into and lead in that creative space.”

At the time, Gabriel was also introduced to the many benefits of essential oils for aches, pains, stress, detoxification and more. This concept, then novel but now popular within the wellness world, inspired the initial mission for Elemis.

“For me, that was the beginning of

starting, just planting the seed of doing skincare very differently,” Gabriel said. “This is going to be a lifestyle brand that we’re really going to listen. We want to listen to you as a brand. We want to spend time with you, engage with you.”

She continued: “We launched a big concept, and we were very bold. [Some] may say we were naive and we were young, but for me, a lifestyle brand means that I believe every one of you, and this is scary, your skin today reflects the choices you made yesterday...but if you engage with

us as a brand today, I can help you change your skin tomorrow.”

Over the years, Elemis has gained viral status for many of its products, most notably its Pro-Collagen Cleansing Balm, \$72. Gabriel attributes much of the brand’s success to her alignment with her cofounders.

“We have one common denominator across all three of us,” she said. “There is zero compromise. Whatever we’re doing, it’s zero compromise. If we’re innovating, we’re innovating the best.”



Noella Gabriel

BEAUTY

When Dealmaking Looks Different

● Jefferies' Sasha Radic and The Equity Studio's Anna Sweeting discuss how women in business can best attract – and skillfully negotiate – deals.

BY NOOR LOBAD

The way Anna Sweeting, founder of the U.K.-based investment firm The Equity Studio, sees it: “Money is power, and we shouldn’t be shy to talk about that.”

So she said at the 2025 WWD x FN x Beauty Inc Women in Power conference, in conversation with Jefferies’ managing director of beauty and wellness investment banking, Sasha Radic, moderated by WWD senior beauty editor Kathryn Hopkins.

“Women dominate consumption from a purchase-decision perspective; we make up 80 percent of creators with more than 50,000 followers on social media platforms, and we are going to be dominating social commerce,” she continued.

And yet, “the [gender] disparity in funding is still present at the very start.”

Indeed, while women founders have historically received a fraction of the funding of their male counterparts, the landscape today looks increasingly precarious. In 2024, Pitchbook reported the share of total VC deal value for start-ups with a female cofounder

dipped for the first time since 2020.

“While women get very little funding, they are exceptional operators. They are exceptionally successful when they do get capital – more successful, even, than men,” said Radic, adding, “what has given me a little bit of optimism is the success [women founders] have been having at exit.”

In 2014, just 1 percent of IPOs were led by women, a figure that rose to 9 percent in 2024. The importance of knowing how to navigate and strike a deal, however, comes into play long before an IPO.

“Selling a company is extremely personal,” Radic said. “Think of a negotiation as a problem-solving opportunity – what do you want from a value perspective? What levers are you willing to trade? How can you think creatively around finding solutions to transactional problems?”

Added Sweeting: “When you’re starting out, you can think you need to be very bullish and strong, and actually, you don’t need to be the loudest in the room. Being precise, having conviction in what you’re saying and listening deeply – you can learn a lot more from what’s not said than what people are saying. We must not be afraid to do things a big differently.”

Money must be paired with mentorship in order to be effective, though.

“That [combination] is where the



change really happens,” Sweeting said. “Once women are funded, they can go far – but if women don’t get that start they need, they’re more likely to stop whereas men may continue. And I think that’s where mentorship comes in – knowing you’re not alone and that others have been through this, can make a difference.”

As for what’s drawing investors today, “financial foundations are more important

than ever,” said Sweeting, adding that businesses with “slow, intentional growth rather than fast growth,” are the kinds piquing interest now.

“The market has opened up – the transactions that are getting done are for companies that are extremely profitable, have a clear position in the market and are category leaders in their space,” said Radic, adding she is expecting to see “a lot of activity” through 2026.

FOOTWEAR

Marina Larroudé Talks Brand Building And ‘Having It All’

● The cofounder of Larroudé talked about career tipping points at WWD x FN x Beauty Inc. Women in Power.

BY JADEN THOMPSON

Marina Larroudé – who made the leap from editor to retail fashion director to brand founder – made the most of every career experience.

“From Style.com I went to Teen Vogue and was fashion director there, and then I was fashion director at Barneys, which helped me tremendously in learning how to do content and better understand the [retail] landscape in America,” the designer recalled at the WWD x FN x Beauty Inc Women in Power forum on Sept. 8.

The experience she gained along the way was crucial when Larroudé launched her eponymous footwear brand alongside her husband Ricardo in 2020 – right in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal was to create luxury shoes for women at a more accessible price point than what is typically offered in the high-end market. She built the company from the ground up, experimenting with new business models and transitioning to a direct-to-demand strategy.

In addition to disrupting the marketplace with accessible price points, Larroudé differentiated itself with unique details, like matching insoles on her shoes. The brand also chose to create its own lasts rather than use existing creations in the marketplace.

“I try on all the prototypes. I need to

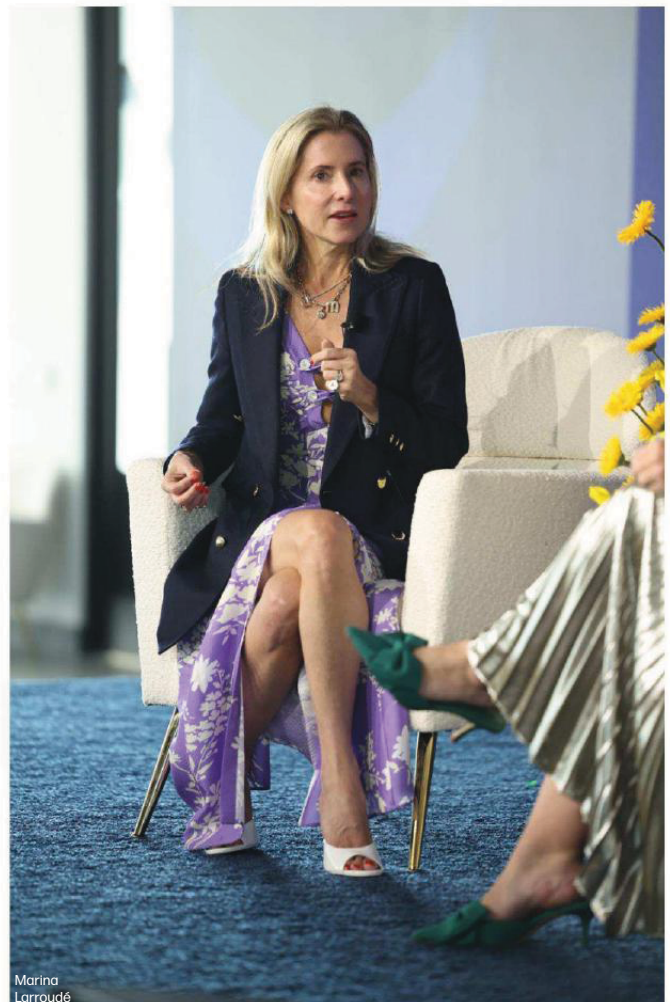
make sure the shoe is very comfortable. Because otherwise I get a return, and it’s not going to work. I tell the design team, I don’t care how beautiful it is if a woman cannot walk three blocks in them. So comfort and quality has always been a key focus for us. And then we can market it in a fun way,” she said.

When it comes to facing career challenges, Larroudé emphasized the importance of always evolving. She cited the launch of a pre-order system last December, an innovation in response to a shortage of units on Black Friday.

“We’re always adjusting and doing something differently,” Larroudé explained. “Whenever we were hit with the tariffs, we [decided to take] a look at the Brazilian market since we are already [making our shoes there]. And then that grew our business. So I always see a challenge as an opportunity.”

As she advanced in her career and became a mother, Larroudé found inspiration in the mentors around her. “If they can do it all, I can do it all,” Larroudé said. “I saw [my former boss] Amy Astley. She is an amazing editor in chief, she has two children and she’s kind to everyone. Everyone really respects her. So I think that’s my motto, show up every day and do those things.”

Looking back, the designer said she wished she had started her own venture earlier. Her advice to others entering the workforce? “Build a foundation. Build a network. Meet new people. Learn a lot throughout.”



Marina Larroudé

WOMEN IN POWER RECAP

WWD

BUSINESS

WNBA, Coach Partnership Lifts Women's Sports

● The brand signed a multiyear deal to be the handbag sponsor of the league and also features its players in its campaigns.

BY JEAN E. PALMIERI

Partnering with luxury brands can help elevate women's sports to a whole new level.

That was the message delivered by the WNBA and Coach during a session at the Women in Power event.

This spring, Coach signed on to be the official handbag sponsor of the women's basketball league, a multi-year deal that included the brand's participation in the WNBA Draft, on its "orange carpet," and spotlighting some of its athletes including Paige Bueckers in its marketing campaigns.

Coach's embrace of women's sports marks just one of the milestones the league has achieved in recent years. Colie Edison, chief growth officer of the WNBA, said interest in the sport has grown exponentially, attracting interest from big companies.

"Historically, women's sports were really trapped in this vicious flywheel," she said. "We didn't have good broadcast windows. And when you don't have good broadcast windows, it's really hard to bring in the fans, and when you're not bringing in those audiences, advertisers are very hesitant to come in."

But that's no longer the case, she said. Google was among the first to work with the league five years ago, paying for WNBA games to be broadcast on ESPN. "That was huge for us, because we were finally able

to show what talent we have to as many people as possible," Edison said.

This year, the WNBA attracted nearly 800,000 viewers, a 21 percent increase from the prior year and that was on top of a 170 percent jump in viewership from 2023 to 2024.

Even so, Edison said, sponsors from outside the sports world were hard to come by.

Enter Coach.

Joon Silverstein, chief marketing officer for Coach, said the company was attracted to the "new generation of athletes who are breaking through," along with the "new generation of viewers who are changing the nature of fandom. They're looking at female athletes, not just as players, but as cultural icons," which presents "an amazing opportunity for brands – in fashion as well as beauty and other spaces."

And it's showing up on the bottom line. Edison said the WNBA has found every dollar spent supporting the league translates into a \$7 return. "Our fans are more likely to support brands that support the WNBA."

For Coach, Silverstein said the company is "seeing massive growth in all our sports metrics," including impact value, search value and other social engagement. And this partnership with the WNBA also helps support the larger mission at the company, which is "hardwiring purpose into a growth model," she said. "For us, it really is about amplifying purpose, but in ways that are engaging audiences and driving our long-term performance goals."

Edison said that the WNBA "sits at the intersection of sports, culture and lifestyle, and that can brought to life through



Colie Edison



Joon Silverstein

the lens of fashion. You may have been following us because you're a die-hard basketball fan, or a Caitlin Clark fan and you followed her journey through the NCAA, or you are a Coach fan. For us, it just extends our relevancy and solidifies our players, not just as these elite athletes, but as style and cultural icons."

The WNBA's tunnel walks have been transformed into "runway walks," with players' "self-expression coming to life, whether in really awesome streetwear or the highest end of luxury fashion," Edison said. "It's all about being authentic and intentional."

The league is made up of 80 percent women of color and many identify as LBG/TQ, so for a brand like Coach to "amplify

their stories through the power of its brand relevancy," is invaluable, she believes.

Silverstein added: "These are athletes who are challenging norms about what it means to be a female athlete. And that inspires all of us – not just the athletes among us, but all of us who are trying to do many things."

And it may ultimately impact the world as a whole. Edison said 94 percent of women in the C-suite played organized sports, and over 50 percent played at the collegiate level. However, girls drop out of sports at twice the rate of boys by the time they're 14. But if a young girl can see Paige Bueckers "decked out in a gorgeous Coach outfit," it can give them the confidence to continue, she believes.

FOOTWEAR

Inside New Balance's Proven Formula For Reimagining Sport for Women

● New Balance executive Melissa Worth told the audience at the WWD x FN x Beauty Inc Women in Power event that "authenticity" is key to storytelling.

BY VICKI M. YOUNG

The women's business is a key component of New Balance Athletics Inc.'s strategy for growth.

"Not long ago, our consumer was older, male. We knew that as a brand, if we were to grow, we had to get younger and we had to get more female, so we started being very deliberate about some of the investments that we were making as a brand," said Melissa Worth, the brand's senior vice president, Americas. Worth was interviewed by Footwear News executive editor Katie Abel on "Winning Her Trust: How New Balance Reimagined Sport for the Female Consumer" at the Women in Power Summit Sept. 8.

The brand began working with female long-distance runners, and then kicked it up with investments in track, with high profile Olympians Gabby Thomas and Sydney McLaughlin. "As we made these investments through these athletes, we were really able to start to tell their stories," Worth said, adding that the company favors long-term partnerships over sponsorships.

"The partnership that we have with



Melissa Worth

any one of our ambassadors, including our female athletes, really means it's a set of shared values. And it's not just something that is transactional, but [that] we're also in it for the long run," the sneaker executive said. The strategy includes looking at how to build out both the athletes' stories and that for the New Balance brand, and then at how to "grow those to life." That formula is "where we get a lot of authenticity, and that comes across," Worth said.

One example is tennis star Coco Gauff and her signature shoe, which has a marketing campaign that includes her grandmother's voice-over. Marketing

efforts also include Gauff greeting kids who otherwise might not have had the opportunity of meeting her at tennis courts in Atlanta.

"It goes back to that [authenticity, where we] try to tell a story in terms of what the brand wants to tell...if something is too polished or too staged, the consumer really recognizes it," Worth said.

Understanding where an athlete's passions lie is a part of the storytelling. WNBA sensation Cameron Brink's passions are mentorship, her basketball camp in Oregon and interest around fashion and culture. "We did a whole thing with her at Paris Fashion Week (in February), where

we combined basketball and fashion together and shared this long-form content of her at Paris Fashion Week," Worth noted, adding that those types of initiatives "really resonate with the consumer."

Worth said New Balance's products include a wide range of sizes and noted the items are specifically designed for women. A multisport research lab at its Boston headquarters allows athletes to test product and provide feedback for improvement so they are better able to perform in them.

New Balance also provides an internal associate resource group for its women employees. The brand has partnered with Women Unlimited Inc. (now rebranded to AscentPoint Leadership) through New Balance's RISE (Reimagining Industry to Support Equality) program to support its Tier One suppliers. The goal is to impact over 100,000 women by 2027 in the brand's supply chain with up-skilling and development skills. New Balance also partners with the State Department's Global Sports Mentoring Program.

She said that Gen Z comprises about one-third of her team and that they "are looking for a platform to be heard and to be seen." Worth noted that the biggest lesson the younger generation has taught her has been the ability to listen.

And for women to succeed, that means elevating them so they stay in their positions instead of choosing to leave. That requires creating conditions for them to be successful, such as providing flexible work to balance child care with self care.

Worth said her advice to 21-year-old self would be to be "grateful for where I am and where I am able to grow. I would tell myself I would need to network more. I am a very introverted person, [and there's] so much we can learn from each other."

FOOTWEAR

Wolverine's Susie Kuhn's Leadership Lessons From 28 Years in Retail

● Wolverine's Active Group president Susie Kuhn's career lessons range from always learning to adding value to every job she's had.

BY VICKI M. YOUNG

For women who want to succeed in business, Wolverine Worldwide's Active Group president Susie Kuhn said they should never stop learning – and she also underscored the significance of adding value to every job role.

Kuhn spoke on “Leading Across Cultures, Channel & Change” at the fifth annual WWD x FN x Beauty Inc. Women in Power event Sept. 8.

Kuhn's career in retail includes seven corporations, four countries, six job functions and 21 different managers over the course of 28 years. “I would write my résumé every single year, not because I'm looking for a job...but because it helps me remember that every year is just another year of learning,” she said.

She began her fashion career as a buyer at Lucy.com, Adidas America and the May Co. It was at the department store retailer where Kuhn said she learned the most about retail concepts and its divisions. Her move to Target was where she was exposed to analytics and systems within merchandising. Kuhn then went to Nike, where she picked up different skills from multiple job functions, including marketplace merchandising, direct-to-consumer, and running her first P&L

statement, all of which met the “goals” she set for herself. Her last stint was as a vice president of Converse China in Shanghai.

“I made the hard choice to leave and it was very deliberate,” she said of ending her 15-year stint at Nike. Kuhn explained that she couldn't get close to the capital-decision-making jobs, and that it would take too many years to get there in what was a “male-dominated environment.”

Next was Urban Outfitters, where she got exposure to the board of directors and top-level strategy. “The one North Star I always have in my career that I tell all of you to do is every role you take, make sure you add value at the same level that you're getting value,” she advised. While at Urban, Kuhn explored different business models, including working on the subscription-based model Nuuly.

Kuhn landed at Foot Locker in February 2020 when she became president Europe, Middle East and Africa and general manager of Foot Locker Europe. During that chapter, she managed a \$2 billion business with over 10,000 employees and 700 stores in 21 countries. Unaware that the COVID-19 pandemic was just around the corner, Kuhn said that experience taught her how to cope with crisis management at a high, complex level. She also found herself unexpectedly out of a job in 2023, and took time off to evaluate her next step before joining Wolverine in October 2024.

In her self-evaluation, Kuhn said she has three core strengths: curiosity,



Susie Kuhn

self-awareness and boldness. “I've never been afraid to say, ‘Yes, I'd like to be a CEO one day.’ That's kind of served me well in some places; in other cases, not so much,” she said.

And she's developed some critical skills along the way. “I really learned about career management and how to build an incredible network of people around me, especially my peer group,” she said.

Kuhn added that she's also learned how to not take feedback too personally, and strives to turn it into action. “I have never changed who I am, but I've always done behavior modification to make sure that I'm the most effective I can be anywhere,” she told the audience.

She was drawn to her role at Wolverine for a number of reasons. The company,

which owns Merrell, Saucony, Chaco and Wolverine, among other brands, has an extensive portfolio that “[speaks] to what consumers are doing today,” she said. “I can see growth behind every one of our brands.”

A big plus for Kuhn is that Chris Hufnagel, the company's CEO, has a strong vision. And for the first time in her career, she's not in a “role as an anchor of tokenism,” the executive said, adding that the board is 45 percent female, and the leadership team is 65 percent women.

Kuhn said she tells her story to younger women, and hopes that they have a slightly easier path to success. But even if they don't, she reminded the crowd that the “one thing women all have in common is resiliency.”

BUSINESS

Google's Kellie Fitzgerald on How AI Connects to Retail

● Fitzgerald was part of the lineup at the WWD x FN x Beauty Inc Women in Power forum in NYC.

BY JADEN THOMPSON

Kellie Fitzgerald, managing director of retail at Google, took to the stage at the WWD x FN x Beauty Inc Women in Power forum on Sept. 8 to address a quandary: Why do so many women feel stuck right now? One big reason: the frenetic pace of change.

“Women make up 43 percent of the global work force and hold merely 31 percent of the leadership positions,” Fitzgerald shared. “This disparity isn't new, but the rate of change is.”

While there was a steady increase of women occupying leadership roles from 2015-2022, Fitzgerald explained that the share of women in such positions increased less than half a percent in the last two years.

Meanwhile, artificial intelligence is rapidly shifting and becoming more prevalent. To emphasize how quickly it's being integrated into our lives, Fitzgerald noted that she didn't mention AI at all when she first spoke at the Women in Power event three years ago – but now it's predicted by analysts that at least 15 percent of everyday business decisions will be made by AI agents by 2028.

Fitzgerald explained how these tools can be harnessed to help retailers and consumers.

“I'm particularly delighted by all the change we have access to right now on our phones,” she said. “The AI that's being used by consumers. AI that grants a wish. This is the stuff that I spend time showing retailers, and brainstorming with them on how to use it to grow loyalty, brand awareness and drive more sales.”

Fitzgerald outlined three of her favorite examples of this. Google's visual search and circle to search tools allow users to find products featured in an image, like a

pair of boots. More than 100 billion visual searches have happened this year, the Google executive noted.

Another example she mentioned is a virtual try-on tool in which customers can view an image of themselves wearing a product they're interested in – this increases the likelihood they purchase the item and significantly reduces return rates.

Lastly, Fitzgerald showed a still photo of herself standing in front of a Monet painting – this picture had been transformed into a six-second video with the help of a prompt in less than two

minutes. She expressed excitement about how the tool can be used for marketing and creative versioning.

Fitzgerald shared what she's gleaned about AI through her work: “In my short time working with AI and helping retail clients put it to use, I've learned that the single most impactful thing to activate AI is the prompt. Take Gemini, our virtual assistant – like many AI tools, it starts with a prompt. And the value one gets back from Gemini is directly proportional to the quality of the question.”

She provided an example in which a generic search for shopping was compared to a detailed, specific prompt which yielded better, more tailored options. Fitzgerald also explained how a detailed prompt also helped her come up with a “career inventory” which can help her ascertain if a job opportunity meets her personal goals.

Fitzgerald concluded her speech with an emphasis on the importance of asking questions.

“In this moment of incredible change, there is no such thing as having all the answers. So I free you of this burden. It is an unrealistic expectation and a waste of our collective time and energy. Why don't we instead pour our energy into asking more questions and asking better questions ... that will help us and others get unstuck and participate fully in the progress and excitement of this moment.”



Kellie Fitzgerald

Betting on AI in Turbulent Times

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE has become one of the biggest buzzwords in the business technology space, but not all AI solutions are created equal. As companies pump more funds into automation, machine learning and more, they want to ensure they are getting the biggest bang for their buck—particularly in today’s uncertain market. While they may not be as flashy as robots in a warehouse or personified chatbots, backend use cases of AI often do heavy lifting in improving efficiency and providing cost savings. This panel will look at how digitalization is shaping supply chains amid sourcing disruption, how to tailor solutions to solve specific problems and how companies are evaluating their technology spend.

SPEAKERS



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Founder & Chief Executive Officer
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EXCLUSIVE

Mariska Hargitay Joins the Cetaphil Family

- The "Law and Order: SVU" actress is the face of the brand's new Skin Activator Hydrating & Firming line.

BY NOOR LOBAD

Mariska Hargitay, fresh off a directorial debut for her recent "My Mom Jayne" documentary, is adding yet another title under her belt.

The actress has joined Cetaphil as the face of the brand's three-piece Skin Activator Hydrating & Firming line, which debuts Wednesday. Priced from \$10 for the Hydrating & Firming Neck, Chest and Face Cream to \$17 for an all-over cream and a separate lotion formula, the range aims to address the appearance of fine lines and crepey skin.

"I have always been a basics kind of girl," said Hargitay, who is best known for her role as Olivia Benson in the long-running TV drama "Law and Order: SVU," of her skin care routine. "I have sensitive skin, and Cetaphil has always been a brand and a product that makes me feel taken care of."

Beyond her personal connection to Cetaphil, what's "most exciting" to Hargitay about the collection is the technology behind the products. Developed by Alan Widgerow, chief science officer at Cetaphil parent company Galderma, the line taps micro-doses of mandelic acid and centella asiatica in an aim to "wake up" senescent, or dormant, cells, which proliferate during the aging process.

"We found that if we combine these two known active constituents but in micro-doses, they had a very unexpected combined effect," said Widgerow, adding that while mandelic acid is known as an exfoliator, in lower doses it can "reenergize and reactivate cells."

The launch is a meaningful one for

Cetaphil, for whom Millennial and Gen X-plus consumers comprise roughly 50 percent of its consumer base. "We're seeing Gen X women drive a major cultural conversation right now, and it's not about antiaging, it's about reclaiming what aging means," said Tara Loftis, global president of skin care and Cetaphil at Galderma.

In tapping Hargitay, who Loftis described as a "national treasure," Cetaphil is looking to drive that conversation further.

"I'm rocking a red lip, a sexy trench – it's utterly unexpected," Hargitay said of the campaign. "But that's also what I'm about, is, don't put me in a box, right? Because you have no idea what I'm capable of."

The launch marks the first for Cetaphil, at least post-2024 rebrand, which targets a demographic other than Gen Z. Last year the brand tapped TikTok influencer Katie Fang to boost its profile with its Gentle Exfoliating collection launch, which was Cetaphil's "highest-performing launch of the last five years," Loftis said.

With the Skin Activator collection, Cetaphil looks to lean further into the science-driven M.O. of Galderma, which grew 9.8 percent in net revenues in 2024 to an estimated \$1.3 billion, per the 2024 WWD Beauty Inc Top 100 list.

"Skin care has never been more competitive or more saturated than it is now, and while it's fairly easy to create a brand that looks cool and gift it to the right influencers, what's more scarce is powerful science, and so that's what we're tripling down on," Loftis said. "Our focus is on amplifying our science across our product, across our digital campaigns, and across every tenet of our marketing."

Added Hargitay: "It's exciting to be this age and be unapologetic and to invite

Mariska Hargitay fronts the Cetaphil Skin Activator Hydrating & Firming line.



other women into that space – to step into our beauty, into our power."

The actress-turned-director has felt this power of late in more ways than one. "My Mom Jayne," which explored the life of Hargitay's late mother, Jayne Mansfield, was the second documentary film she's developed (she also coproduced the 2017 HBO Max documentary "I am Evidence"), and she has more up her sleeve.

"I have quite an appetite," Hargitay said of what she's envisioning in terms of future projects. "It's sort of interesting because you do one project and it sparks this bubbling-up of creativity, because it's almost like now you have more space. New things are coming that, before, I may have been too afraid to tackle, but now I go, 'well, let me just try and see what happens.'"

BEAUTY

Olivia Dean on Joining Burberry Beauty

- The North London-born musician is the face of Burberry Beauty's Her fragrance.

BY HIKMAT MOHAMMED

LONDON – Burberry Beauty's Her fragrance has found its next face in the British musician Olivia Dean.

The 26-year-old will star in the brand's beauty campaign scheduled for January 2026.

"It's a brand that I've always been a fan of and I can't really believe it," said Dean in an interview at Claridge's hotel.

"It's all first [doing something like this]. Burberry at its core is a quintessentially British brand. It's both iconic and sophisticated, but feels really fresh right now, which is something I'm striving for in my brand and artistry – a modern timelessness."

Burberry Beauty's Her fragrance also has strong links to London, which Dean found an emotional connection with as her hometown.

"Burberry is so rooted in London and it feels like a perfect match," she added.

The fragrance is described as "Effortlessly stylish, energetic, optimistic, adventurous and bold – the spirit of Her, captured in London – a beautiful, bustling, creative metropolis, eclectic and full of

life" on the brand's website.

Dean recalls growing up with Burberry's signature checks plastered around the city.

"My first visceral memory of Burberry is going to the [fall 2024 show] and Naomi Campbell walked out, I just remember just being like, 'Oh my god, this is the most beautiful woman I've ever seen.' She had this long, gorgeous weave and I had full body goosebumps," she adds.

The musician's interest in fashion and

beauty has been a gradual development throughout her career.

Being on stage, she feels glamour is an integral part of showmanship. "Sometimes [fashion and beauty] can feel quite unattainable. When I was younger, I was way more into my music and instruments. Now, I feel like beauty, fashion and music go completely hand in hand," Dean said.

The Supremes, Diana Ross, the Motown

era and '60s fashion have informed her sense of style.

"[I like to] have fun and play with clothes – especially on stage. [I want to] bring glamour – if people are coming to a show, I want them to feel like it's a show," Dean said.

She works with the stylist Simone Beyene and for her "Across the Atlantic" tour across North America she wore pieces from Louis Vuitton, Alexander McQueen, Erdem, Coperni and Jimmy Choo.

In the music video for her third single "Man I Need" from her upcoming album "The Art of Loving," out on Sept. 26, she wears a slipdress from Conner Ives with tassels with Manolo Blahnik heels and Cartier jewelry.

Dean's sophomore album is an exploration of love and what it means.

"It's a response to Bell Hooks' 'All About Love' and thinking about love as a practice rather than a feeling and how it's impacted me in the last two years.

[I] ended up coming to the conclusion that separately from romantic love, love exists in so many parts of your life – you don't need to put all the focus in one place, love can be in friendships and in yourself. It's an album about healing and my take on love and what it's taught me," she said.

Love is a subject that Dean continues to be fascinated by.



BUSINESS

Shein Launches Xcelerator Program; 22 Industry Organizations Hit Back



People walking past the booth of fast-fashion e-commerce company Shein during the China International Supply Chain Expo in Beijing on Dec. 1, 2023.

● French retailer Pimkie will enter a joint venture for a Shein line, while 22 fashion industry federations called for immediate changes to import rules for Chinese ultra-fast-fashion players.

BY RHONDA RICHFORD

PARIS — Chinese fast-fashion platform Shein has officially launched its Xcelerator program in France, the U.K. and China, with French high-street brand Pimkie among its first partners.

The program is structured as a joint venture, and aims to help both legacy fashion brands and emerging designers scale digitally and expand internationally while maintaining control over their IP.

Pimkie chief executive officer Salih Halassi said the partnership is part of his recovery strategy aimed at returning the brand to profitability by 2026. The company currently generates 150 million euros in annual revenue, with less than 5 percent coming from digital sales. His target is to grow to 300 million euros by 2028, with 100 million euros of that from digital channels, primarily via the partnership with Shein, although its local French website will remain.

Pimkie was previously owned by the Mulliez family group, which sold the brand to turnaround firm Lee Cooper International in 2023. The company has undergone a significant restructuring since then, including store closures and job cuts.

The Shein partnership is part of a shift toward reinvigorating its French design and retail base, he said. “We see this as a significant opportunity to grow our digital business and reach international markets,” said Halassi, citing the U.S., Canada and Brazil as target markets. “We are not scaling back our physical retail network — in fact, we opened 20 new stores this year and plan more in 2026.”

Under the joint venture with Shein, dedicated Pimkie collections will be developed for sale via Shein’s platform. These collections will “exist as a separate fashion universe,” said Shein director of exterior relations Quentin Ruffat. They will be distinct from Pimkie’s in-store line.

“Our in-store prices are significantly higher than what we’ll have on Shein’s website for Pimkie products. That’s because of the supply chain costs involved in physical retail, which force us to have higher prices there. There will be two price levels but on two different collections. It’s not the same product sold at two different

prices; it’s two distinct products with different prices,” Halassi explained.

The Shein line will not be advertised in Pimkie physical stores, and vice versa, Halassi said. This dual-channel arrangement reflects Pimkie’s strategy to broaden its product assortment online, with up to 3,000 stock keeping units expected via Shein compared to 500 styles currently in its physical stores.

The partnership is also intended to protect jobs in France, Halassi said, and will create up to 50 new design roles domestically.

European Industry Calls for Tariffs, Taxes And End to Import Rules

European groups responded harshly to the news, with a pre-planned announcement from 22 fashion industry and textile organizations signing a declaration calling on the European Union to move quickly on legislation to curb Shein’s move into the bloc.

The European federations said that ultra-fast-fashion players Shein and Temu already account for 5 percent of sales in Europe, and 20 percent of online sales. The Chinese giants sent 4.5 billion parcels to Europe in 2024.

“The impact is very clear — the direct drop in production and sales in Europe,” said France’s Textiles Industry Union president Olivier Ducatillon, announcing the declaration at the Premiere Vision trade show in Paris. “Every single step of the [industry] has been impacted. There are a lot of companies in France, industrial companies, who are in danger because of

this fast fashion....Enough is enough.”

The federations said that the ultra-fast-fashion groups break a number of laws in Europe, including avoiding taxes and cheating on custom duties, as well as violating intellectual property rights.

“The business model they have cannot fit with the vision we have of the environment of our society. What they produce is not used. What they produce goes directly into the trash. It promotes bingeing as a consumption of fashion,” said Pierre-François Le Louët, copresident of the French Union of Fashion & Clothing Industries.

Mario Jorge Machado, president of the European apparel and textile lobbying group Euratex said the Chinese giant’s low-price model is only made possible by flouting EU environmental and tax rules to externalize costs. “Those companies today have a certain advantage — they put the cost on the planet, not cost on product,” he said. It also leaves European brands, which are subject to upcoming eco-fees per garment, stuck with the bill for recycling the imported products.

His organization is lobbying for “a level playing field” for European companies who pay taxes and fees in the bloc.

Ducatillon described the agreement with Pimkie and the promotion of Lhomme as a smokescreen to make the company appear supportive of the textiles and fashion industry, while simultaneously cannibalizing it.

While Pimkie framed the joint venture as a supporting their business recovery after shuttering stores in 2023 citing a precipitous fall in foot traffic, Shein has overall harmed high street brands, he asserted on stage. Other brands that are in a bind will soon join out of “desperation,” the panelists predicted.

Ducatillon and Le Louët both cited the U.S. tariffs and the elimination of the de minimis rule in the U.S. as sparking a new crisis — with packages imported to Europe up 28 percent since implementation as Chinese firms turn their focus to alternative markets — as well as an example of what regulations could do.

They called for a tax on small parcels to finance customs controls, of about 20 to 25 euros, as well as an abolition of the exemption for small parcels under 150 euros — similar to removing the de minimis rule in the U.S.

However the panel was pessimistic about the time frame for change, considering the EU’s bureaucratic structure. The

bloc’s parliament is not set to move on these rules until 2028, which could push implementation as far as 2035. “By that time we’ll all be dead,” Ducatillon said.

Euratex said it will work aggressively to press the issue with European lawmakers, and the groups said that member states are prepared to move individually to set laws in their own countries, similar to one that has already been passed in France.

Such a move, while necessary, would create a regulatory headache for any brands doing business in Europe.

Shein Cites U.K.’s Missguided as Success Story

Shein said the Xcelerator program differs from its broader marketplace operations in that participants receive support across production, logistics, merchandising and global distribution, alongside data insights and technology infrastructure in a “suite of services” on offer to brands.

The model draws on the pilot program that has been in development since 2023, which saw Shein collaborate with legacy brand Missguided, which generated 230 million euros in revenue over two years, Ruffat said.

“It was so successful that we partnered with its founder, Nitin Passi, who created a new group called Sumwon Studios,” Ruffat said. “This partnership merges Sumwon’s creativity and brand-building expertise with Shein’s [direct-to-consumer] services, logistics, on-demand production and global online platform to support rapid growth.”

In total, around 20 brands have participated in Shein Xcelerator pilot stage, generating more than 340 million euros in sales, Ruffat said.

Shein’s Xcelerator will also work with indie designers to help them launch lines. First out of the gate is Mathilde Lhomme, who will launch her brand Overblushhh on Shein before the end of the year.

“This is really a dream come true for any young designer — to launch their own brand with this level of support,” she said.

“With the launch of Shein Xcelerator in France, we are helping to showcase French fashion brands by building bridges between them and the 160 countries where we operate. This initiative illustrates the complementarity between online fashion players like Shein and traditional fashion brands. We are proud that an iconic brand like Pimkie and a talented designer like Mathilde Lhomme are inaugurating this program alongside us,” added Shein executive chair Donald Tang.

While Shein and its competitor Temu face regulatory scrutiny in France and Europe, including the application import duties in an effort to balance the pricing of its mail-order clothing against high-street stores, Ruffat declined to comment on any pending legislation.



Federation representatives at Premiere Vision announcement.

FASHION

Former Asos Buyer MP Debates Cultural Contribution of LFW

● Rosie Wrighting said she believes the industry needs working-class voices and applauded British Fashion Council CEO Laura Weir's effort to provide support to emerging talent.

BY TIANWEI ZHANG

LONDON – Two days before the first London Fashion Week under British Fashion Council chief executive officer Laura Weir kicks off, a first-of-its-kind debate about its cultural contribution took place at Parliament.

Organized by former Asos buyer Rosie Wrighting, the Labour Member of Parliament for Kettering, the debate was aimed at spotlighting fashion's role in shaping the U.K.'s global cultural influence, its economic value, and the opportunities and challenges facing designers and businesses in Britain.

Weir attended the debate alongside several other industry figures to show support for the upcoming London Fashion Week and the British fashion sector.

During her opening remarks, Wrighting said the thought of a career in fashion gave her drive and determination that shaped the rest of her life, from working on the shop floor at a Topshop store in Kettering to pursuing a buyer position at Asos.

"That belief that creativity can be a path forward is something that London Fashion Week represents to me and thousands of young people across the country who see that opportunity to be a part of something bigger," said Wrighting.



Backstage at Burberry, fall 2025.

But she worries that fashion is no longer accessible to young people today who are not from privileged backgrounds.

"We have to make sure that fashion remains a viable career for young people, particularly those who are outside of London and in working-class communities. And that means making it easier for designers and brands to scale up their businesses without being forced to sell early or relocate abroad," she said.

"It means providing stronger financial education and mentoring for young creatives, so that talent is matched with tools to build sustainable businesses, and it means tackling unfair payment practices because too many freelancers, small brands and suppliers wait months to be paid, making it impossible for them to grow or sometimes even survive," Wrighting added.

The former fashion buyer then stressed the crucial role the British Fashion Council has been playing in promoting British designers.

"I couldn't talk about the British Fashion Council without mentioning decisions made by the new chief executive officer, Laura Weir, who is here in the gallery today, leveling the playing field for independent designers and small brands that have been priced out of participating in recent years," said Wrighting.

"Her choice to extend the Newgen program for three years and expand scholarship funding and mentoring for fashion students will directly benefit children who grew up in situations like me," she continued.

Wrighting believes these initiatives will support working-class creatives in the space and influence an industry that is better off

with working-class voices within it.

"The variety of voices that have made fashion week what it is, an opportunity to bring together different cultures and lived experiences, especially in a week when London has faced division on our streets. Fashion week shows off British values, culture, and inclusivity at its best, and at a time like this, that should be celebrated," she said.

Slated for Friday to Sept. 22, the spring 2026 edition of the London shows was hailed as the beginning of "a bold new era" by Weir, as this edition will have 18 percent more designers showing on schedule, signaling a designer-first approach to the 41-year-old London Fashion Week that is "ambitious, purposeful and rooted in the creative energy of London."

The five-day event will see runway regulars, including Burberry, Erdem, Simone Rocha, Roksanda, Richard Quinn, Emilia Wickstead, Labrum London and Harris Reed, continue to hold the fort for the city's fashion industry. JW Anderson will host an event in partnership with the BFC on Saturday to celebrate the relaunch of the brand.

Emerging brands, including Chopova Lowena, Priya Ahluwalia, Marques' Almeida, and Patrick McDowell, this year's winner of the Queen Elizabeth II Award for British Design, will make their runway returns this season, while buzzy names like Conner Ives, Paolo Carzana and Lulu Kennedy's emerging talent support platform Fashion East will continue to show on schedule as well.

Newcomers to the runway showcase this fall include Dreaming Eli, Kseniaschnaider, Kyle Ho, Lucia Safdie, Rory William Docherty and adaptive label Unhidden.

Designers in the BFC Newgen program will show on schedule both physically and digitally, with ones to watch including Aaron Esh, Derrick, Johanna Parv, Karoine Vitto, Louther, Oscar Ouyang, Steve O Smith, Tolu Coker and Aletta, the young brand founded by Freddy Comes and Matt Empringham.

BUSINESS

Prada Turns Shanghai Rong Zhai Into a Cinematic Bazaar

● The immersive experience will include an open-air market, film screenings, a film-themed mansion tour and Galleria bag-focused retail offerings.

BY DENNI HU

Turning its storied mansion of Rong Zhai into an immersive stage and weekend market, Prada will be hosting the second iteration of "Prada Galleria Invites," a celebration of its iconic Galleria bag and its latest campaign created by the breakthrough director Yorgos Lanthimos.

Running from Friday to Sunday, the brand's four story Rong Zhai, a restored historical mansion blending Art Deco and Chinese motifs in downtown Shanghai, will be transformed into a cinematic villa, where visitors can sign up for a tour that unveils the building's many encounters with the film world.

For example, Rong Zhai was used as a filming location for Chinese director Cheng Er's 2023 spy thriller "Hidden Blade," which starred the legendary actor Tony

Leung and C-pop idol Wang Yibo. Under the creative direction of Wang Kar-wai, Mi Shang, Prada's first stand-alone dining space that lives on the first floor of Rong Zhai, features interiors that echo an iconic dining scene from "In the Mood for Love."

As a part of the exhibition program, Prada commissioned Shanghai Theatre Academy's noted professor Shi Chuan to pen an article that further delve into Rong Zhai's ties to the world of film – a thoughtful offering for the local cinephiles.

At Mi Shang, guests can enjoy seasonal cuisine and signature cocktails, along with a limited-edition Galleria-inspired menu crafted by head chef Riccardo La Perna, available through Oct. 8.

As for Rong Zhai's sprawling garden, it will be transformed into an open-air market fair with a curated selection of vinyl records, books, games, floral bouquets and more.

The multisensory experience will also feature open-air screenings at night, titles include Yorgos Lanthimos' "The Lobster," Chen Kaige's "Farewell My Concubine" and Jan Némec's "Diamonds of the Night."



Prada Rong Zhai in downtown Shanghai.

As one of Prada's bestsellers, the Prada Galleria bag is crafted via an intricate hot-pressing process, while raw edges are smoothed and hand-painted to match. During the bazaar, Italian craftsmen will be on site to offer live demonstration of the production process, facilitate Galleria personalization orders and offer leather care services.

The bazaar, open to the public on Saturday and Sunday, is already available for booking on the brand's WeChat Mini Program. The 100 renminbi, or \$14, ticket doubles as a redeemable voucher for goods at the open-air market.

The program runs daily from 5 to 10 p.m., with outdoors screenings starting at 7 p.m. During the event, the bistro and café section at Mi Shang Prada Rong Zhai will welcome participants exclusively from 3 to 10 p.m.

The latest iteration of Prada's Galleria campaign stars Oscar-nominated actress

Scarlett Johansson, a regular of Prada Galleria campaigns, and was directed by Lanthimos, marking the first time the pair work together on a project.

Titled "Ritual Identities," the 2025 short movie leans on the surreal and symbolism-rich oeuvre of Lanthimos who captures the actress impersonating three different characters within archetypal settings of contemporary life.

The video campaign – which is flanked by imagery captured by Lanthimos, also an accomplished photographer – marks the first time the Greek director, producer and screenwriter collaborates with Prada.

"Prada Galleria Invites" was first launched last year at Rong Zhai in a similar format. In 2023, Rong Zhai launched its first weekend market that ran in parallel with the exhibition "Human Brains: Preserving the Brain – Forum on Neurodegenerative Diseases."

Guests were able to do their weekend grocery run at Prada Rong Zhai and browse a selection of vinyl, books and ceramics from Prada's chosen vendors. Seasonal flowers and potted plants, organic granola, fruits and vegetables, all wrapped in Prada's green and white wrapping paper and logos, quickly sold out.

Prada's two-day event garnered more than 870,000 mentions on Xiaohongshu, the popular social commerce platform.

FASHION

Helen Marten Mines Radical Optimism at Art Basel Paris



Here and below: Stills from the video installations in Helen Marten's "30 Blizzards," on show at the Art Basel Paris Public Program.

● Miu Miu's artist collaborator discusses with WWD her upcoming exhibition "30 Blizzards," on show at the Art Basel Paris Public Program from Oct. 22 to 26.

BY MARTINO CARRERA

MILAN – Miuccia Prada's interest in women's, and more generally, humans' lives and condition has been integral to her work at the Prada and Miu Miu brands for decades.

An art enthusiast and patron of the arts with her husband Patrizio Bartelli through their Fondazione Prada art institution, the Italian designer has increasingly leveraged Miu Miu as a platform for in-depth cultural exploration.

As the official partner of Art Basel Paris' Public Program for the second year, the brand will bring "30 Blizzards," a new project by British artist Helen Marten, to the modern and contemporary art show.

The exhibit – a combination of sculpture, video installations, libretto and movement, all of which contribute to shaping the message equally – champions "radical human optimism," Marten told WWD.

"I think the fundamental implication of making art, and specially making art that asserts itself to require an audience is embracing a voice of explicit care, or a voice that sort of speaks suggestively to empowerment through dialog and conversation," she said.

"We do live in an incredibly violent and polarized world. There's absolutely no denying that it's very difficult, and the wonder of artmaking is, hopefully, that it engenders a space where radical and important conversation can be had about what that means and how to act with an ethical voice, or within an atmosphere of care. I think care is a very important word, and we're very afraid often to use it," she said.

The exhibit has been a few months in the making, with early contacts between Prada and the Turner Prize-winning Marten occurring last March. However, the artist – who has always been fascinated by both the aesthetics and political qualities of fashion – had been following the



designer's work for quite some time.

"There are so few sorts of visionaries whose generosity, whose intellectual content, whose championing of female, marginalized voices, is quite so prolific and generous as Mrs. Prada's [and that] straddles both the technological progress, the social mobility of fashion and clothing across something that collaborates in a deeply intellectual way with arts or literature or film," continued Marten.

"30 Blizzards" is a multilayered and multipronged, non-linear work that is not necessarily intended for straightforward deciphering. It reflects Marten's intention to trigger different emotions and interpretations in the audience, as well as reflect the unique life experiences of each individual.

"This entire project has so many different overlapping facets, so many sort of material conditions, so many existential emotions, and so many different narrative archetypes that are all deeply sort of interlocked and contingent on one another," she said.

The exhibit's title may suggest Marten is addressing the current social, cultural and geopolitical turmoil, when in fact it's a reflection of the frenzied and multifaceted emotional dimension of human beings.

Blizzard, she said, is a graphically and onomatopoeically pleasant word, but it also references a weather condition that is "temperamental. It is a word that is full of



portent, full of mystery, full of possibility for, you know, darkness in a way, but most fundamentally, the word blizzard is a metaphorical reference to human beings and their sort of changeable emotional temperament," Marten explained.

The number 30 is not only an overt reference to the 30 performers in the exhibit, but also a key to unlocking the show's underlying message. "It's the interpretive tool for the wider logic of the project," the artist explained. In numerology, 30 symbolizes infinity and the exhibition is conceived as a continuum, to be experienced as a whole but also in tidbits, without losing the overall messaging, she said.

"30 Blizzards" marks the first show where Marten is exploring performance, a two-hour choreography of bodies, conceived in collaboration with theater and opera director Fabio Cherstich and composer Beatrice Dillon.

The exhibition is physically structured around five diptychs, each on a podium, juxtaposing five sculptures and five video installations. The five podiums are scattered in linear succession across the Palais d'Iéna, the headquarters of France's Economic, Social and Environmental Council and the usual venue of Miu Miu runway shows. The space is looped by a moving industrial distribution track loaded with boxes, books, speakers and clothing, among other objects.

Each video-sculpture pair references a chronological moment of life, from childhood to adulthood and older age, as well as the archetypal experiences connected to each, including parenthood, sexuality, interiority, and loss.

While the sculptures are agglomerates and amalgams of ordinary objects, the videos

are short vignettes, narrative monologues from the point of view of the timeline's protagonists: the child, the parent, the lover, the patient, the widow. They are played one at a time, voiced by women, but Marten said the show is not confined to the exploration of the feminine world.

"I'm not using female experience in this sense of like a binary position, but more like a metaphor. This project is about human beings," she said.

"The libretto is written almost like an amorphous strip, so that you can experience its full arc, but you're also invited to move fluidly within it. So, you can enter at the beginning. You can enter at the end; you can enter just as a crescendo is happening. And no matter where you enter, you still feel like you're experiencing a full narrative of the piece," Marten said.

"There's never a sort of ending point, you know, it's one kind of continual cycle of information."

The videos' voiceovers are overlapped by what the artist called a "flock" of 30 performers – a diverse group, "very fluid and nonlinear," she said, that includes men, women, non-binary characters, people from all walks of life – moving freely through the space, gesturing, voicing or singing refrains, individually or in chorus. Each performer is assigned a character or trope. Some embody weather phenomena, others animals or celestial moods.

"We are creating a city in a way or the idea of a town, whereby each of the fundamental components of that city are represented by one of the 30 characters," Marten explained. "There are archetypes in the sense of characters that you might recognize from a more literary context, like the mother or the baker or the delivery driver. And then there are more metaphysical qualities, like magic, and of course, there's weatherscapes like snow or rain."

The exhibition has to be experienced without seeking a closed-loop narrative to walk home with.

"It's this sort of continual arc of experience, really, so that there isn't an explicit story, it's more a sort of set of observations, I would say, collective watching in a way, to sort of understand the material, atomic qualities of the world around us," she said.

A graduate of London's Central Saint Martins and Oxford University, the Macclesfield, U.K.-born Marten has built a prolific art career across multiple media, spanning sculpture, painting, drawing, video and writing, which landed her collective exhibits at major cultural institutions worldwide, including The Museum of Modern Art and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York and the Tate in London.

"I think fundamentally, the things I return to over and over again are... text and image, the two ever fundamental building blocks of where I start with my work," Marten said. "Semiotic expression, or realms of sort of deviancy that exist outside of classic binary normative language, is something that I'm really interested in," the artist noted.

The exhibit will be on show between Oct. 22 and 26 at the Palais d'Iéna, with two talks planned for the first day.

For its inaugural participation at the Art Basel Paris Public Program last year, Miu Miu unveiled "Tales & Tellers," billed as an intersection between "fashion, cinema and art" conceived by interdisciplinary artist Goshka Macuga and convened by Elvira Dyangani Ose, director of MACBA, the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona.

FASHION

The Knot Predicts More Expensive Weddings

- Most likely to benefit are photographers, florists, videographers, jewelers, beauty, attire, stationery, entertainment and decor.

BY LISA LOCKWOOD

The engagement of Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce is anticipated to increase the spend on weddings over the next two years, according to a survey by The Knot, dubbing it “The Swiftification of Weddings.”

The Knot anticipates a \$400 million estimated bump in U.S. wedding-adjacent event spend over the next two years, including an estimated \$220 million net new spend on bridal showers, bachelor/bachelorette parties and rehearsal dinners and an estimated \$180 million net new spend on honeymoons.

As Swift’s engagement and wedding unfold publicly, roughly 50 percent of wedding pros believe it could impact their business. The Knot predicts the vendor categories most likely to benefit are jewelers, photographers, videographers, florists, beauty, attire, stationery, entertainment and decor.

Some 25 percent of couples typically hire professionals for engagements, and The Knot anticipates this number to increase meaningfully to drive an estimated \$120 million bump in spend on professionals like proposal/engagement photographers and florists over the next two years.

For their engagement, Kelce gave Swift an old mine brilliant-cut diamond designed by local New York City jeweler

Kindred Lubeck of Artifex Fine Jewelry, whose entire inventory is now sold out. It is estimated that there will be a \$350 million bump in spend on wedding jewelry in the U.S. alone over the next two years.

Some 85 percent of couples are currently opting for diamond engagement rings, according to The Knot 2025 Real Weddings Study, which could increase even further with the Taylor Swift Effect.

Swift’s striped dress from Ralph Lauren that she was wearing during her engagement sold out the same day the announcement went up on Instagram, as reported. Certain rental marketplaces like Pickle have seen an increased interest in Ralph Lauren pieces from shoppers.

The Knot anticipates a \$160 million estimated bump in wedding gifting from guests and a \$300 million estimated bump for local non-wedding tourism, such as retail and restaurants.

It has been rumored that Swift and Kelce will host their wedding at her “Holiday House” in Rhode Island.

The Knot predicts a \$200 million estimated bump on U.S. wedding attire purchases over the next two years including wedding dresses, wedding party attire, groom/groomsmen attire as well as bridal stylists to help mimic outfits.

The Knot also believes there will be a \$160 million estimated bump on U.S. wedding floral purchases over the next two years as couples try to match and align with the garden aesthetic from Swift’s engagement proposal and eventual wedding. The Knot saw a 70 percent increase in searches for “garden” on The Knot Vendor Marketplace

Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce



the week of Swift’s engagement (versus the prior week), which took place in Kelce’s backyard of his Leawood, Kan., estate.

The Knot said their report is a prediction only, based on a set of assumptions. They said Swift and Kelce could elope or throw a destination wedding abroad. The

Knot Worldwide analyzed its own on site behavioral data between Aug. 19 and Sept. 8, as well as surveyed its U.S. audience of pre-engaged and engaged couples, along with wedding professionals to get a pulse on anticipated changes and their potential impact.

FASHION

Aerin Collaborates With Knatchbull on Limited-edition Capsule

- At the heart of the collaboration is a reinterpretation of Knatchbull’s signature travel jacket.

BY LISA LOCKWOOD

Aerin, the luxury lifestyle and beauty brand founded by Aerin Lauder, is collaborating on a limited-edition collection with the tailoring house Knatchbull, founded by Daisy Knatchbull. The capsule will be available Thursday.

Knatchbull was founded on the traditions of Savile Row tailoring, with a flagship on Savile Row and a growing presence through global trunk shows, digital platforms and digital events. The brand dresses royalty, Hollywood stars and business figures. It was the first Savile Row tailor to attain B Corp certification. Aerin was founded in 2012 and curates collections in beauty, fashion accessories and home decor. The brand has retail stores in Palm Beach, Southampton and Pacific Palisades, Calif.

The Aerin x Knatchbull seven-piece capsule of cashmere and outerwear blends the heritage of British tailoring with the ease and elegance of American style. At the center of the collaboration is a reinterpretation of Knatchbull’s signature travel jacket – an item loved by Lauder for its versatility and understated sophistication.

“I have always admired Daisy’s sensibility. This jacket has been a staple in my wardrobe for many years. It is the perfect piece to take you from city to country, day to night. It is an honor to collaborate with Knatchbull and design a collection that reflects the effortless, iconic style of both brands,” said Lauder.

For the collaboration, Knatchbull and Lauder reimagined the travel jacket in three iterations: Chocolate brown suede, brown wool-cashmere herringbone and navy wool-cashmere herringbone. The capsule also features a knitted cashmere vest in four hues: stone, caramel, chocolate and denim blue.

The capsule retails from \$695 to \$2,995.

“This partnership is a natural meeting of timeless heritage and contemporary refinement,” said Daisy Knatchbull, founder and chief executive officer of her brand. “Aerin and I have built a genuine friendship over the years – bonding over our mutual appreciation of craftsmanship, quality and beautiful design. What began as bespoke travel jackets for Aerin’s busy lifestyle has evolved organically into this capsule: a celebration of female creativity, confidence and effortlessness.”

Starting Thursday, the collaboration will be available in Aerin stores and aerin.com as well as at Knatchbull’s showroom and knatchbull.com.

Aerin Lauder and Daisy Knatchbull





Charles Melton, Elle Fanning, and Stuart Vevers.



Storm Reid



Dara Allen



Coach and Perfect Magazine Keep the Party Going

The brand, which debuted its new collection earlier in the day, hosted an after party at The Twenty Two hotel on Monday night.

BY KRISTEN TAUER PHOTOGRAPHS BY LANNA APISUKH



Honey Dijon

During fashion week, not everyone can make it to the show. But the after party? Consider them there.

On Monday night, Coach and Perfect magazine hosted a joint party at Cafe Zaffri inside private members club The Twenty Two. Stuart Vevers, who debuted his latest runway collection for the brand earlier in the day, was sequestered in the back in a booth with Perfect founder Katie Grand, along with Elle Fanning and Charles Melton — both Coach ambassadors who had sat front row at the show hours earlier — as DJ Honeybee kicked off the evening's vibe. Other front row faces stopping by to congratulate Vevers on his show included singer Soyeon, Storm Reid, GloRilla and Jayson Tatum.

Baskets of Coach x Perfect cobranded disposable cameras were set out around the room, and guests were seen taking selfies throughout the night. Shortly after 10 p.m., Adam Lambert strolled across the room, followed closely behind by Sam Smith with boyfriend Christian Cowan, fresh from his own runway show this past weekend, and a small entourage.

Kaytranada, perennially fashion's favorite DJ for an after party, stepped up to the decks later in the night. The fashion week finish line was in sight, but the night was still young, and the crowd showed no signs of slowing down.



Sam Smith

Fashion Scoops



Bergdorf Goodman

Looking West

Loro Piana is planning a project with Bergdorf Goodman in New York with a window and facade installation running Oct. 17 to Nov. 3.

The project marks a long-standing relationship between the Italian luxury brand and the storied American retailer. Loro Piana entered the U.S. in the '60s by exporting fabrics, but in 1994 the company opened a showroom and office space in a town house in New York on 61st Street between Park Avenue and Madison Avenue and it gradually started to sell clothes, becoming the brand's first retail presence. The first official store would only open four years later in Milan, on Via Montenapoleone.

The windows, conceived and created by Loro Piana, will be infused with a refined Art Deco feel, and the facade of Bergdorf Goodman's women's store will be animated in an unexpected way.

A series of exclusive products will also debut at the store, including the prelaunch of the holiday 2025 collection, and signature products in exclusive fabrics and leathers. Loro Piana will offer the opportunity to personalize the Grande Unita scarf in cashmere and the Unito blanket.

Previously, coinciding with its centenary, Loro Piana for the first time staged a takeover of Harrods for the holiday season, running from Nov. 7, 2024, to Jan. 2, 2025.

The installations were set up on the facade of Harrods' Brompton Road side and in its 36 windows with various animations that also celebrated the brand's 100-year history.

In the U.S., Loro Piana

last year opened a Los Angeles flagship on Rodeo Drive with a striking facade featuring glazed ceramic tiles made by a Tuscan company, inspired by the soft, undulating texture of the brand's fabrics. The tiles in varying hues of the brand's signature kummel color change depending on the light.

Loro Piana has gone through an executive change. In March, parent LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton named the brand's then-chief executive officer Damien Bertrand as deputy CEO of Louis Vuitton.

Bertrand was succeeded by Frédéric Arnault, who previously held the role of CEO of LVMH Watches, which comprises Tag Heuer, Hublot and Zenith.

Arnault is the second youngest of LVMH chairman and CEO Bernard Arnault's five children.

— LUISA ZARGANI

Tory's Tribe

Early Monday evening, Tory Burch debuted her spring 2026 runway collection inside the lobby of One Hanson Place, a landmarked space located across the street from the Atlantic Terminal Mall and Barclays Center in downtown Brooklyn. As sunlight beamed through the room's Rene Chambellan metal window silhouettes, celebrity guests including Naomi Watts, Emma Roberts, Ciara, Jessica Alba, Tessa Thompson, Mary Beth Barone, Suni Lee, Janicza Bravo and more made their way to their front-row seats, stopping for photos along the way.

"I'm the biggest Tory fan, and everything she does is elevated and beautiful," said "SNL" star

Chloe Fineman, dressed in a cranberry top and skirt that she first saw during the designer's last runway show. "And just fell in love with it, so I'm excited to fall in love with her new collection," she added.

Fineman has had a busy fashion week, attending shows for Michael Kors and Khaite, and hosting a party for her collaboration with Mother. "Just getting to see all my friends," Fineman said of the week's highlights. "And certainly Martha Stewart coming to my Mother party was not on my bingo card."

For actress Avantika, this fashion week has involved an element of balance.

"This fashion week I'm filming actually for a new show with Mindy Kaling, who's also here tonight," said the actress, who shot her first fashion campaign when she was a teenager for Tory Burch. "I've been super busy, and so I wanted to be really intentional with the shows that I went to. Tory Burch was at the top of that list," she added. "It's so full circle to be able to sit at her show today, after having done a campaign so many years ago."

She described the plot of her current project, "Not Suitable for Work," as "five twentysomething-year-olds in Murray Hill, navigating career and love in New York. I play a celebrity fashion stylist assistant," Avantika said. "She's very much a fashion girl, and she loves Tory Burch — and so do I."

Jeremy O. Harris, who sat with Burch at her Met Gala table earlier this year, was attending the designer's runway show shortly after premiering his new film "Sacrifice" at the Toronto International Film Festival, which costars Charl' XCX.

"We got some really lovely reviews, and I'm really excited because I think we're announcing our sale this week, which is really awesome," Harris said. "I'm also really excited about the play that I'm producing Off-Broadway right now called 'Prince Faggot.' I really, really love it — and my new play, 'Spirit of the People,' is coming this season, so everyone look out for it."

— KRISTEN TAUER

New Role

Tod's Group has appointed Marco Felci chief executive officer, Americas.

He succeeds Roberto Lorenzini, who, as reported, is stepping down in mutual agreement with the owners of the Italian group, the



Marco Felci

Della Valle family.

Felci joins Tod's from Dolce & Gabbana, where he held the role of executive vice president, commercial.

Felci brings to the Italian group more than 20 years of experience in the luxury and fashion industry, with a strong focus on the American market.

He began his career at Hermès in Italy before moving to the United States, where he held senior leadership roles at Loro Piana, Lanvin and Versace, and later served as CEO Americas at Etro.

"I am truly honored to join Tod's Group, a company that represents Italian excellence and craftsmanship worldwide," said Felci in a statement. "I look forward to working closely with the team to further strengthen the Group's presence and growth in the Americas, building on the strong foundation already in place."

Lorenzini joined the group in January 2012, overseeing the Tod's, Roger Vivier and Fay brands and succeeding Marco Giacometti, who was appointed global manager of e-commerce for Tod's Group.

As per the latest figures available, before the group delisted from the Italian Stock Exchange, in 2023 revenues in the Americas amounted to 85 million euros, up 3.5 percent on 2022. This represented 7.6 percent of total sales of 1.12 billion euros.

In September last year, John Galantic, previously president and chief operating officer of Chanel Inc., was named Tod's Group CEO.

Diego Della Valle, who held this role before, remained chairman and his brother Andrea vice chairman. — L.Z.

Breaking Ground

Sprayground has officially landed in the U.K. with plans for a runway show on Thursday and a capsule collection of jazzy backpacks, totes and travel accessories created with London Fashion Week.

The 10-piece, limited-edition London Fashion Week capsule is exclusive to Harrods, and will be available for two weeks starting Tuesday.

Sprayground's full, seasonal collection will launch in the U.K. later this year and be stocked at around 50 stores, including Harvey Nichols. Sprayground, which soft-launched in the U.K. late last year, sells in more than 90 countries, and has 105 monobrand stores in China.

The new capsule includes statement bags and travel pieces with the brand's Pop Art-inspired designs, color blocking and futuristic metallic accents.

The brand's signature shark-mouth design has been reimagined in high-shine finishes, and there are also graffiti-inspired prints splashed across vegan leather and ▶

A Sprayground tote for London Fashion Week.



Mindy Kaling and Avantika Vandanapu



Fran Horowitz

technical fabrics. In a nod to fashion week, some of the prints feature buttons, fabric swatches and drafts of invitations, while one bag has a zipper that resembles a tape measure.

David BenDavid, Sprayground's founder and chief creative director, said he set out to create a collection "that embodies the spirit of London — bold, unapologetic and always ahead of the curve. These pieces are more than accessories; they're wearable art that fuse luxury with edge."

Sprayground, which is marking its 15-year anniversary in 2025, is showing in London by invitation as part of the British Fashion Council's international designer program. It has previously shown in New York and Milan.

BenDavid said he plans to showcase 47 couture looks inspired by his bag designs. He's made them using upcycled fabrics and new patterns. Some are 3D, while others are abstract.

His fall 2025 collection featured 450 prints, patterns and techniques, he said.

The show will also offer a first look at exclusive licensed collaborations, including a preview of Sprayground's upcoming partnerships with Porsche and the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation. Sprayground also has upcoming collaborations with companies including Lamborghini, he said.

—SAMANTHA CONTI

Retail Visionary

Fran Horowitz, the chief executive officer of Abercrombie & Fitch Co. and the architect of the specialty retailer's dramatic and sustained

turnaround, will receive the National Retail Federation's "Visionary Award" at the 11th annual NRF Foundation Honors dinner on Jan. 11, 2026, in New York City.

"Fran Horowitz recognizes the value of building authentic, customer-centric retail brands — a vision that has transformed Abercrombie & Fitch Co.," NRF president and CEO Matthew Shay said in a statement. "Abercrombie & Fitch and Hollister remain iconic names at the heart of retail, and under Fran's leadership and direction, the company continues to grow and thrive."

Horowitz has served as CEO of Abercrombie & Fitch Co. since 2017. She joined the company in 2014 as president of its Hollister brand and was promoted to president and chief merchandising officer for Abercrombie & Fitch Co. in 2015. Prior to joining the company, Horowitz served as brand president at Ann Taylor Loft, executive vice president at Express Inc. and held merchandising roles at Bloomingdale's.

Under her leadership, the success of A&F can be attributed to a number of factors, including an increased focus on listening to its customers, strong product acceptance, strong social media, and rationalizing and improving the store fleet.

"Our incredible team at Abercrombie & Fitch Co. has executed one of the most successful turnarounds in retail, and leading this work has been the highlight of my career," Horowitz said in a statement. "From our iconic global brands, to our operating model, to our company's culture, we've reexamined and rebuilt every aspect of our business, all while leading with purpose and keeping

our customer at the center of every decision. I'm beyond proud of our global team for all they do to drive our business forward and it is an honor for NRF to recognize A&F Co.'s remarkable achievements."

Horowitz will also be in a fireside chat with Shay on Jan. 12 at the NRF's annual convention and trade expo called "Retail's Big Show" in New York City.

Previous recipients of The Visionary award include designer Tommy Hilfiger, Ed Stack, Marvin Ellison, Brian Cornell, Michelle Gass, Mark Parker, Doug McMillon and Chip Bergh. The NRF Foundation promotes retail as a career and provides resources and scholarships to help those seeking careers in the industry. — DAVID MOIN

Choo at The Bar

Jimmy Choo's creative director Sandra Chai wants everyone to meet her at the The Dover, a New York-style bar and restaurant that serves Italian dishes in Mayfair.

On Monday evening, her wishes came true and actors Kim Cattrall, Charithra Chandran, Daryl McCormack, Betty Bachz and Guy Remmers showed up at The Dover, aptly located on Dover Street.



A marketing piece for Fanatics Real Vintage.

Champagne and dirty martinis were being served at the entrance with specially designed caps for guests to wear or take away after they left.

Burrata, heritage tomatoes and raw spicy tuna made their way around the tables and juxtaposed with the sleek wooden paneling and heavy velvet drapery designed by Milanese designers Quincoces & Drago.

For the main course, plates of Dover sole and rib eye were shared among guests with sides of broccoli and French fries in brown paper pockets that featured the logos of Jimmy Choo and The Dover.

Guests mingled and swapped seats throughout the night.

Cattrall was seated next to designer Conner Ives, who

has become a friend and collaborator of Jimmy Choo. He will be showing his spring 2026 show on Monday.

Other guests in attendance included Jessica Plummer, Nadine Leopold, Grace Carter, Bel Priestley, Imani-Lara Lansiquot, Rina Lipa, Lola Bute and Maxim Magnus.

Earlier this month, Sydney Sweeney was back as the face of Jimmy Choo's fall 2025 advertising campaign.

The "Euphoria" actor poses against a backdrop of an intimate photo shoot set with lighting equipment and a director's chair visible in the campaign while wearing the brand's Tylor 60 heeled loafers, Isa 80 and Scarlett 95 pumps, and carrying the Bar Hobo bag in a zebra print.

—HIKMAT MOHAMMED

Vintage Fan

Count Fanatics as the latest company to get into the vintage game.

On Wednesday morning, the digital sports platform will launch Fanatics Real Vintage, a new, authentic, vintage sportswear collection that will offer a rotating assortment of rare, decades-old, one-of-one pieces. The items are not reproduced replicas — they're hand-selected, one-of-a-kind original pieces from vintage and traditional brands such as Salem Sportswear, Lee Sports, Nutmeg Mills, Russell Athletic, Majestic, Reebok, Adidas and Nike.

Fanatics is working with Springy, a Los Angeles-based company that specializes in online vintage apparel, to source and authenticate all pieces in the Fanatics Real Vintage assortment.

The focus of the collection will include many garments from the 1990s and 2000s from players such as Michael Jordan, Tom Brady, Joe Montana and Magic Johnson. One such garment, a Jordan and Johnson graphic T-shirt, illustrating Jordan's first NBA Finals win and Johnson's last appearance, will be available to shop when the collection drops.

All told, the initial launch will feature thousands of products including T-shirts, sweatshirts, hoodies and other pieces from major leagues and properties including the NFL, NCAA, NBA, MLB and NHL. Prices will range from \$35 to \$250.

Fanatics is the leading sports merchandising platform, and over the years, it has expanded into other categories including collectibles, betting and gaming, trading cards and events. Last year, it launched Fanatics Fest, a popular three-day festival that blends sports, culture and collectors. And last month, it launched Fanatics Advertising to oversee the advertising and brand partnerships across the company's entire portfolio.

—JEAN E. PALMIERI ■



Kim Cattrall and Jimmy Choo's Sandra Chai.