

WWD

Fashion. Beauty. Business.



Red All Over

Chanel stuck to familiar territory as it waits to write a new chapter with incoming creative director Matthieu Blazy. The studio team doubled down on house codes with layered looks, like this all-red ensemble that offered a fresh take on the tweed suit, with a matching jacket, wrap skirt and flared pants. *For more on the Paris shows, see pages 6 to 11.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY KUBA DABROWSKI

BUSINESS

Recession and Tariff Worries Rile Retail Stocks Again

● Fashion shares continued to fall as the S&P 500 dropped by more than 10 percent since its February high, putting the market into a correction.

BY EVAN CLARK

Wall Street continued to lose ground on Tuesday as President Donald Trump ratcheted up his trade war with Canada – bringing fashion and retail stocks along for the ride.

Some big retailers were caught up in their own affairs as well as the market selloff.

Kohl's Corp. led the industry down, falling 24.1 percent to \$9.15 after issuing a weak outlook for 2025. And Dick's Sporting Goods Inc. projected its comparable sales growth would slow to 1 to 3 percent this year from 5.2 percent last year and saw its stock drop 5.7 percent to \$198.97.

But many other companies seemed to simply get caught up in worries over consumer confidence, a sales slowdown in February and a wave of uncertainty around exactly what Trump will do next and whether it might lead to a recession.

The decliners included Guess Inc., down 9.6 percent to \$10.19; Mytheresa, 6.8 percent to \$8.83; Columbia Sportswear Co., 5.5 percent to \$80.52; American Eagle Outfitters Inc., 5 percent to \$11.49, and Lululemon Athletica Inc., 4.3 percent to \$319.42.

On Tuesday, Trump posted to social media that he would double tariffs on Canadian steel and aluminum to 50 percent after the country levied a 25 percent duty on electricity coming into the U.S.

The tit-for-tat was tinged with a certain yearning for U.S. territorial expansion that the market is still trying to gauge.

"The only thing that makes sense is for Canada to become our cherished Fifty First State. This would make all Tariffs, and everything else, totally disappear,"

said Trump, adding "your brilliant anthem, 'O Canada,' will continue to play, but now representing a GREAT and POWERFUL STATE within the greatest Nation that the World has ever seen!"

That comes on top of still-brewing trade wars with Mexico and China, while just about any other country could come next.

Along with Trump's much more assertive approach to executive power and deep cuts to the federal bureaucracy led by Elon Musk, the trade wars have added up to more than a usual dose of uncertainty.

Trump over the weekend declined to rule out a recession as he puts his vision for the country into place.

When asked about a recession by reporters on Air Force One on Sunday, Trump replied: "Who knows? All I know is this: We're going to take in hundreds of billions of dollars in tariffs, and we're going to become so rich, you're not going to know where to spend all that money. I'm telling you, you just watch. We're going to have jobs. We're going to have open factories. It's going to be great."

That future – if it's even possible – is going to take some time. In the meanwhile, retailers and investors are mulling over the sluggish first quarter and sentiment is changing fast.

John Kernan, a retail analyst at TD Securities, said in a research note: "We haven't seen a sector narrative flip like this since COVID-[19] hit in March '20,"

Despite the market's general bearishness – the S&P 500 entered into correction territory and is down 10.3 percent from its February high – Kernan called out some mitigating factors for retail.

"Weather turned and the consumer froze in February – literally and figuratively," the analyst said.

While Kernan acknowledged that's hard to explain after such a strong holiday season, he pointed out that February is a small month for retail and that spring weather, Easter and tax refunds will help.



Shopping in New York.

"Inventory levels are in good condition vs. top-line trends if data improves into April," he said. "We see significant deflation in cotton costs, freight costs, gas prices and diesel costs. Foreign exchange headwinds have lessened over the past

30 days with the euro, British pound, and yen strengthening materially relative to the U.S. dollar."

But even with Kernan's admittedly "glass half full" take, there's no telling what comes next out of Washington.

BUSINESS

Stitch Fix Shares Soar as The Styling Service Ups Its Outlook



Matt Baer

● The digital fashion company's losses narrowed as sales came in better than expected.

BY EVAN CLARK

It was a gloomy day on Wall Street with the S&P 500 entering correction territory, but digital styling service Stitch Fix Inc. was a ray of light.

Shares of Stitch Fix jumped 19.6 percent to \$5.06 in after-hours trading on Tuesday on the company's fiscal second-quarter report, which showed smaller losses, better-than-expected sales and a stronger outlook.

Net losses narrowed to \$6.5 million from \$35.5 million a year earlier. Adjusted earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization tallied \$15.9 million with a margin of 5.1 percent.

Revenues for the quarter ended Feb. 1 slipped 5.5 percent to \$312.1 million – better than the \$298 million in sales analysts forecast, according to Yahoo Finance. The top line held up better than

the company's active client count, which decreased 15.5 percent from a year earlier to \$2.4 million.

That put revenues per active client at \$537 in the quarter, a gain of 4.3 percent from a year earlier and a step in the right direction for the company, which is in the midst of a turnaround.

Matt Baer, chief executive officer of Stitch Fix, said: "Our clients are responding to the improvements we've made to our experience, including the increased newness in our assortment, expanded Fix flexibility, and investments in stronger client-stylist relationships. We are encouraged by our progress and remain focused on successfully executing our strategy so we can realize our vision to be the most client-centric and personalized shopping experience."

Accordingly, Stitch Fix upped its outlook for the full fiscal year. It now expects adjusted EBITDA of \$40 million to \$47 million, above the \$25 million to \$36 million forecast in December. And revenues are now slated to hit \$1.225 billion to \$1.24 billion, instead of the \$1.14 billion to \$1.18 billion previously projected.

Stitch Fix ended the quarter with \$229.8 million of cash on hand and no debt, giving the company some extra to maneuver in what has rapidly become a tough climate for fashion retailers.



A Kohl's department store.



Ashley Buchanan

BUSINESS

Kohl's CEO Details Turnaround Plan

- Ashley Buchanan outlines a turnaround strategy and key areas of the business to focus on.

BY DAVID MOIN

Ashley Buchanan, the new chief executive officer of Kohl's Corp., started to lay out his private label-centric plans to help the retailer climb out of its hole on Tuesday — while delivering fourth-quarter results that showed just how much work lies ahead.

The retailer issued a dour fourth-quarter report marked by a 74 percent drop in net income, which fell to \$48 million from \$186 million in the year-ago period.

Net sales in the quarter ended Feb. 1 fell 9.4 percent to \$5.2 billion, with an extra week in the year-ago quarter making results look worse than they would have otherwise. Comparable sales, which adjust for calendar changes, decreased 6.7 percent.

This year, Kohl's is projecting a 5 to 7 percent sales decline, with a 4 to 6 percent comp sales decrease.

The dismal forecast and fourth-quarter results dragged Kohl's stock price down 24 percent to \$9.15 in trading on Tuesday.

Looking ahead, Buchanan told analysts and investors on a conference call that Kohl's private brands provide quality, value and exclusivity, and resonate with core customers.

"We have an opportunity to reengage this customer by unlocking the full potential of our proprietary brands," he said, citing Sonoma for apparel and FLX for activewear as two of the company's best private brands. "Strengthening our proprietary brand offering is key to our success."

Restoring discontinued categories and deals on coupons, is also part of the program for private brands going forward. The company will also be refocusing its attention on fine jewelry and petites.

Among other initiatives, Buchanan intends to:

- Reestablish Kohl's as a leader in value and elevating promotions and "great" prices.
- Continue to prioritize Sephora, home decor and impulse areas where growth opportunities are seen.
- Simplify over-complex promotions and coupons by reducing the number of brands listed as excluded.
- Provide a more consistent experience at stores and online in part by keeping high-volume items in-stock.
- Reducing costs.

"Over the past few years, we have implemented a significant amount of change across our assortment, value strategies and store experience to attract new customers. While the intention of this strategy to engage a new customer has been important, it has also caused friction with our core customer," Buchanan said Tuesday, in what was his first quarterly conference call since he became Kohl's CEO in January. "We need to reprioritize our initiatives to deliver on these key tenants to better serve all of our customers, both new and existing."

A turnaround of the business while "very achievable is going to take some time," said Buchanan, adding that Kohl's inventory through the third quarter has been largely bought already.

"There's a lot of things around how we operate the store from a cost perspective, how we do promotions, how we [handle] our summer pricing and the proprietary mix are more short term [fixes]," he said. "The longer-term piece around the value proposition and how we go to market, we're still developing. It's a long lead time business, and so it takes a little bit of time to turn the ship."

The turnaround effort, he said, will

focus on "a curated, more balanced assortment that fulfills needs across all our customers, reestablishing Kohl's as a leader in value and quality and delivering a frictionless shopping experience....Our focus has been heavily weighted on new products to attract new customers, and we have de-emphasized the products and categories that our core customers love." Getting specific, Kohl's, he said, lost traction in fine jewelry, petites and proprietary brands.

"We will also continue to prioritize our key growth categories that are resonating with our customers, including Sephora, home decor and impulse.

"The things I laid out, they're really short term and tactical. In that sense, I'm still creating the long-term strategy and the greater value proposition," Buchanan said.

Kohl's also reported that it has decided to reduce its quarterly dividend to 12.5 cents a share, from 50 cents a share, to increase the cash balance and invest in designated growth areas. The next dividend will be paid on April 2.

Last quarter, digital sales were generally weak, as were sales of home-related goods like floor care, bedding and kitchen electric appliances. On the other hand, fragrance, bath and body, skin care, gift sets, bridge and fashion jewelry, fashion accessories, home decor and impulse did well. Fresh receipts of private brand merchandise lifted the apparel businesses.

In January, the Menomonee Falls, Wisc.-based retailer announced the closing of its San Bernardino, Calif., e-commerce fulfillment center and 27 stores. Operating since 2010, the San Bernardino facility will shut down in May when the lease expires. According to the company, Kohl's has expanded its capacity to fulfill customer orders from store locations and will no longer need the e-commerce fulfillment center.

Buchanan said there are very few stores in the chain that are not profitable, though he added "if you look inside the box [at] how we allocate space among categories, on products and adjacencies, I think we've lost a little bit of discipline, and there's a lot of opportunity. A simple thing done recently, before I got here, is realigning casual pants next to the dress pants, and you saw an increase. It's just how the traditional customer shops."

A few years ago, Kohl's started opening smaller units in the 33,000- to 55,000-square-foot range, compared to the standard 80,000-square-foot format. Buchanan said the smaller units have been doing "pretty well," adding the downsized format is "still a work in progress. There's a lot of opportunity," on how the buildout is approached and what the return on investment is, the CEO said. "We're still learning. But our workhorse is still 80,000 square feet and it's a highly productive prototype."

Capital expenditures this year will be between \$400 million to \$425 million, and will include investments to complete the rollout of Sephora shops inside Kohl's stores, expand impulse queuing fixtures and omnichannel enhancements. Additionally, two smaller stores will open in the first quarter.

In his prepared statement, Buchanan said, "Kohl's is built on a strong foundation that includes operating more than 1,100 conveniently located stores nationwide, serving over 60 million customers, with 30 million of those customers being Kohl's Loyalty Members. Kohl's has a tremendous opportunity to build on our strengths, address key areas of opportunity and better serve our customers every day.

"We have identified key areas of focus and are taking action in 2025 to reposition Kohl's for future success," Buchanan added. "Our customers expect great product, great value and a great experience from Kohl's. I am confident that the areas we identified will deliver on what customers want and expect from Kohl's."

Buchanan became Kohl's CEO after serving the same role at Michael's. The last two CEOs of Kohl's, Tom Kingsley and Michelle Gass were unsuccessful in their efforts to turnaround the business despite years of merchandise and store changes. Consequently, Kohl's has been losing market share to stronger competitors including Walmart, Amazon and TJ Maxx.

For all of 2024, net income was \$109 million, or 98 cents per diluted share, and adjusted net income totaled \$167 million, or \$1.50 per adjusted diluted share. This compares to net income of \$317 million, or \$2.85 per diluted share in the prior year.

Net sales decreased 7.2 percent year-over-year, to \$15.4 billion. Fiscal 2023 included net sales of approximately \$164 million from the 53rd week. Comp sales decreased 6.5 percent for the year.

BUSINESS

Mango Reports Heady 2024 Growth

● CEO Tony Ruiz stated that the company is investing "to take Mango to a new level of growth."

BY DAVID MOIN

Mango's heavy investments in expansion are paying off.

The Barcelona-based global fashion chain generated 3.34 billion euros in volume for the year ended Dec. 31, a 7.6 percent increase from 2023.

Earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization in 2024 increased 19 percent to 636 million euros, while net profit rose 27 percent to 219 million euros.

Mango invested 219 million euros in its expansion efforts last year, out of the 600 million euros foreseen through 2026.

Toni Ruiz, chairman and chief executive officer of Mango, said in a statement that the results "demonstrate the attractiveness of our value proposition and the soundness of our business model."

"We have invested strongly in improving our store network with numerous openings and refurbishments, and in technology, logistics and the new Mango campus," Ruiz said. "We are in the best moment of our history and we are investing to take Mango to a new level of growth."

The new, 1 million-square-foot campus in

Palau-Solità i Plegamans, on the outskirts of Barcelona, includes offices, the design department and the renovated factory. It was conceived as a research, development and innovation center and is designed to promote interaction between employees, spurring creativity with open spaces and a blend of digital and physical elements.

Mango said that its women's business remained a "pillar" last year, representing 79 percent of the turnover. The company also said that men's, kids and teens also performed strongly, accounting for the remaining 21 percent of the volume. The brand is known for its casual, colorful Mediterranean-influenced collection in moderate to better prices.

Last year, Mango opened more than 260 stores, achieving more than half of its targeted 500 store openings by 2026. At the end of 2024, the company had nearly 2,850 stores operating in about 120 markets around the world.

The U.S. is Mango's primary growth market. In 2024, the company exceeded its goal of reaching 40 company-owned stores in the U.S. with initial openings in Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and Washington, D.C., as well as new doors in California, including the first Mango in San Diego.

In 2025, Mango plans to further increase its U.S. presence by opening 20 more stores, bringing the total to about

Mango used AI to generate an ad campaign, model and all.



65 company-owned units nationally. Growth will focus on the Sun Belt and the Northeast. The first Washington state store will be in Bellevue Square in the Greater Seattle area. The first Illinois store will be in Chicago on Michigan Avenue, and the first Nevada store will be in Las Vegas in the Fashion Show shopping center. Mango also plans to open its first stores in Connecticut, Arizona, Ohio, Oregon and Louisiana and will increase its presence in California, with a focus on the San Francisco area, and in Texas, with a store in the Houston Galleria.

Mango has also zeroed in on New York City for growth. A 13,000-square-foot store at 1976 Broadway, situated between 66th and 67th Streets, is expected to open sometime this summer, marking the company's fourth store in Manhattan.

In other 2024 statistics, Mango's brick-and-mortar operations accounted for nearly 2.2 billion euros, while online sales

reached nearly 1.1 billion euros.

Mango's international business accounted for 78 percent of the volume, with the highest turnover seen in Spain, France, Turkey, Germany and the U.S., followed by Italy, the U.K. and Portugal.

To support the growth, the company indicated that it increased its workforce by more than 900 employees last year to more than 16,400.

The company also said it was progressing in its goal to use 100 percent lower environmental impact fibers by 2030 – it is already already at 72 percent.

Mango expects to surpass \$4 billion in annual euros in 2026.

Ruiz added the title of chairman last January following the death of Mango's founder Isak Andic who in December 2024 was killed in a spelunking accident in a cave of the Montserrat mountain range in Catalonia, Spain, during an excursion with his family.

BUSINESS

CEO Dan Finley Shakes Up Boohoo, Changes Name to Debenhams Group

● The new chief wants to replicate his success turning around Debenhams within the wider group, which owns brands including Karen Millen, PrettyLittleThing and BoohooMan.

BY SAMANTHA COINT

LONDON – Boohoo Group is changing its name and rebooting its business model in an increasingly difficult environment for online retail at every level of the market.

Group chief executive officer Dan Finley has only been in the role for a few months, but on Tuesday he unveiled a mega-shakeup aimed at replicating his success turning around Debenhams, which Boohoo acquired out of administration in 2021.

Boohoo purchased the Debenhams business, but not the nationwide chain of physical stores, and said the multibrand platform is now generating GMV of 654

million pounds, and net sales of 205 million pounds with a 12 percent EBITDA margin.

Debenhams also owns the fashion labels Wallis, Burton, MissPap, Coast, Oasis, Dorothy Perkins and Warehouse, which Finley said are thriving, with a combined 7 percent EBITDA margin.

Finley said Tuesday that Boohoo will be renamed Debenhams Group with immediate effect and the plan is to transform it into a multibrand platform, with a "stock-lite and capital-lite" approach.

"The successful turnaround of Debenhams is our blueprint for the wider turnaround of the group. The turnaround of our youth brands is underway and will take time. I have inherited significant challenges. I can see their future potential as they evolve into fashion-led marketplaces and adopt a leaner operating model," he said.

The youth brands include Boohoo, PrettyLittleThing and BoohooMan, which have a combined GMV of more than 1.5 billion pounds.

Finley said recent trading has been

tough, and the plan is to "right size" stock levels by discounting heavily and realigning market spend.

Going forward, he said, those brands will operate as "fashion-led marketplaces with a strong consumer proposition."

He argued the move will increase the group's share of wallet and reduce future stock holding requirements which, in turn, will drive higher profitability and cash generation.

Finley added: "We go forward as Debenhams Group. This is a defining moment in our journey, reflective of our new strategy, new leadership and new beginnings. It will be a leaner, faster and more technologically advanced business. I am confident our best days are ahead of us, and I am excited for our future."

Finley also updated on other group divisions. Karen Millen has been transformed into a digital first, premium brand with GMV of 157 million pounds.

"The future growth potential [of Karen Millen] is significant as it evolves into a premium lifestyle destination, accelerated through a marketplace [model] including pre-loved luxury, licensing and international expansion," he said.

As part of the re-boot, the group has also made some operational changes, shutting its U.S. distribution center, selling its London offices, and reducing headcount and the overall cost base.

On Tuesday, the group also updated on trading for the full year to 2025. GMV returns were down 10 percent year-on-year, despite "very strong" performance

at Debenhams.

Revenue was 1.22 billion pounds, down 16 percent year-on-year. Adjusted EBITDA is set to be 40 million pounds. Full-year results will be reported later in the spring.

According to the company, exceptional one-off costs for fiscal 2025 will include those related to the closure of the U.S. distribution center, redundancy costs associated with headcount reduction, and a one-off non-cash cost of around 40 million pounds for the writedown of surplus stock in the youth brands division.

The company clarified that the company will operate under the name of Debenhams Group with immediate effect. The name change will be voted on by shareholders during a general meeting set for March 28 in London.

Some say the rebranding, and new business model, are bound to fail due to the dominance of Shein.

Chloe Collins, head of apparel at Global Data, the London-based consultancy, said the rebrand highlights "how much the youth fast-fashion brands [at Boohoo] continue to struggle. This is mostly due to the meteoric rise of Shein, as its ultra-low prices and swift reaction to trends have made it almost impossible for fellow fast-fashion brands to keep up. Young shoppers are also pivoting more toward the resale market, as well as smaller capsule wardrobes."

Collins added that the business model switch makes sense because "marketplaces continue to outperform [at retail] thanks to their wide range of brands and agile online operations." She said that a Boohoo marketplace model is unlikely to work, however, "given the waning desirability of these brands and Shein's marketplace ambitions."

It appears the move didn't impress investors much, either. The share price closed down 4.61 percent at 0.26 pounds.

The turnaround at Debenhams has been a success and the new CEO plans to use the same playbook for parent Boohoo Group.





BUSINESS

Safilo Management Touts Resilience in Complex 2024

- The Italian eyewear group registered solid growth in Europe and challenges in North America last year, while it expanded its owned brand portfolio.

BY LUISA ZARGANI

MILAN – Growth in Europe last year helped balance the challenges seen in North America and Safilo Group touted a stronger, more stable and balanced portfolio as it reported strong growth at Carrera, David Beckham, Tommy Hilfiger and Carolina Herrera.

In the 12 months ended Dec. 31, revenues amounted to 993.2 million euros, down 3.1 percent compared with 1.02 billion euros in 2023. The decrease was attributed to the end of the license with Jimmy Choo, which went on to ink a 10-year agreement with EssilorLuxottica. Net of this, sales were slightly positive, driven by the solidity of the European market, while business in North America was penalized by an election year and the climate of uncertainty that affected business and consumer confidence.

The global performance improved in the fourth quarter as sales decreased 1.6 percent to 235.8 million euros. Net of Jimmy Choo, revenues were up 2 percent in the period.

Group net profit amounted to 34.2 million euros, more than doubling from 14 million euros in 2023 mainly due to the effect of the valuation of the option liability on minority interests.

"[The year] 2024 was a year marked by a complex macroeconomic context, which affected business and consumer confidence, influencing demand dynamics in various sectors, including eyewear," said chief executive officer Angelo Trocchia during a conference call with analysts at the end of trading in Milan on Tuesday. "In the face of market challenges, we proved our resilience and adaptability, consolidating our competitive edge through dynamic brand portfolio management and targeted investments. Our steadfast dedication to the quality of services offered to our customers and consumers remains the cornerstone of our strategy."

He touted the "decisive action on the levers within our control," which led to improvements in gross industrial margin nearing 60 percent of sales, and an

adjusted EBITDA margin that increased to 9.4 percent.

Chief financial officer Michele Melotti said that prescription frames outperformed sunglasses in the year.

"Looking to 2025, the complexity of the macroeconomic and geopolitical landscape, and the related increasing challenges, will continue to impact the markets in which we operate, making it particularly difficult to predict business trends in the coming months," said Trocchia. "In this context, we remain focused on strengthening our partnerships, maintaining agility and operational flexibility, with the goal of seizing opportunities to return to revenue growth. Our commitment to continuous margin improvement and consistent cash generation remains steadfast."

Adjusted earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization totaled 93 million euros, up 1.1 percent on 2023 and improving by 40 basis points to 9.4 percent of revenues.

The adjusted operating profit totaled 52.6 million euros, up 6.1 percent compared with 2023.

The improvement in margins was attributed to higher industrial efficiency achieved with the reorganization completed in 2023, and the positive price/mix effect on sales recorded throughout the year.

Marc Jacobs, Dsquared2, Etro, Isabel Marant, Missoni, Moschino and Stuart Weitzman are among the brands also produced under license by Safilo. In addition to Carrera and Smith, Safilo owns

the Polaroid, Blenders, Privé Revaux and Seventh Street brands. In January, Polaroid signed a global partnership with the ATP tennis tour. Trocchia said that 2024 was "a phenomenal year" for the David Beckham eyewear and a first monobrand store is in the pipeline in Mykonos, Greece. This is not owned by Safilo, noted Trocchia, and there are no plans for Safilo to expand in retail.

With the perpetual license of Eyewear by David Beckham inked last year, the group's owned brands represented around 50 percent of total sales.

In January, the company announced the renewal of the Dsquared2 and Under Armour licenses. With the renewals that took place last year, with Moschino and Missoni for example, Safilo has "secured 80 percent of our licensed portfolio to 2030," said Trocchia.

In 2024, sales in North America amounted to 428.7 million euros, a decrease of 5.3 percent compared with 2023. Smith's performance was impacted by an unfavorable environment for the sports sector, with a delayed start to the ski season and sunglasses sales remaining largely weak due to cautious purchasing behavior from key wholesale channels.

The prescription frames business continued to show solid growth, supporting brands with greater exposure to this category. Blenders showed a lackluster performance in the last quarter, while Smith continued to progress in the direct-to-consumer channel and saw a

recovery in physical stores, supported by a strong start to the 2025 ski season and a favorable comparison base. Trocchia said that Carrera's performance last year was "a standout" and that the U.S. has become the brand's first market, adding that the women's segment was "incredibly successful" and it remains "a major focus" in 2025.

Asked about U.S. tariffs, Melotti said "we are closely monitoring" the situation. "We have been diversifying our supply chain out of China so we are better positioned. It's a work in progress and we have to see how things settle, it's premature to quantify the impact."

Responding to a question about current trading in the U.S., Trocchia said that January and February have shown "positive signs," as did the last quarter last year, but admitted there is a "level of uncertainty now that is making consumers more nervous."

In 2024, sales in Europe edged up 0.6 percent to 414.2 million euros, with France standing out as one of the most dynamic markets, and the Italian market also performed well, while Central and Eastern European markets continued to see strong growth, with Poland and Turkey showing particularly positive results and Germany benefiting from the solid performance of the internet pure players category. Among the group's product categories, prescription frames continued to outperform sunglasses, demand for which in Europe was partly influenced by adverse weather conditions in May and June.

Sales in Asia-Pacific decreased 2.3 percent to 58.6 million euros, with China standing out as the main positive driver. In particular, Tommy Hilfiger, Ports and Polaroid drove growth, consolidating their position and contributing positively to the performance of the area. The year was more complex in the Southeast Asian markets, where the contraction in sales at distributors affected overall performance. In the last quarter, sales in Asia-Pacific were up 14.4 percent driven by the recovery of the Chinese market and the positive reception of the new collections presented at the Beijing eyewear fair.

Sales in the Rest of the World decreased 8.3 percent to 91.8 million euros, impacted by a slowdown in Latin America mainly due to weakness in the travel retail channel. Brazil, however, showed signs of recovery, particularly in the last quarter, thanks to greater stability in domestic demand.

The free cash flow was positive and amounted to 16.7 million euros, compared with 29.1 million euros in 2023. In 2024, cash flow for investments grew to 48.9 million euros, mainly due to Safilo's investment to acquire the perpetual license for Eyewear by David Beckham – a figure that was not disclosed.

Net debt, which also takes into account the completion of the share buyback program for 11.8 million euros, remained stable at 82.7 million euros.



The Reviews

Chanel

As it kicked off the final day of Paris Fashion Week, Chanel had an advantage over last season: After months of speculation, the house in December named Matthieu Blazy artistic director of fashion activities. The 40-year-old designer is due to join the brand next month and

will show his first collection in October.

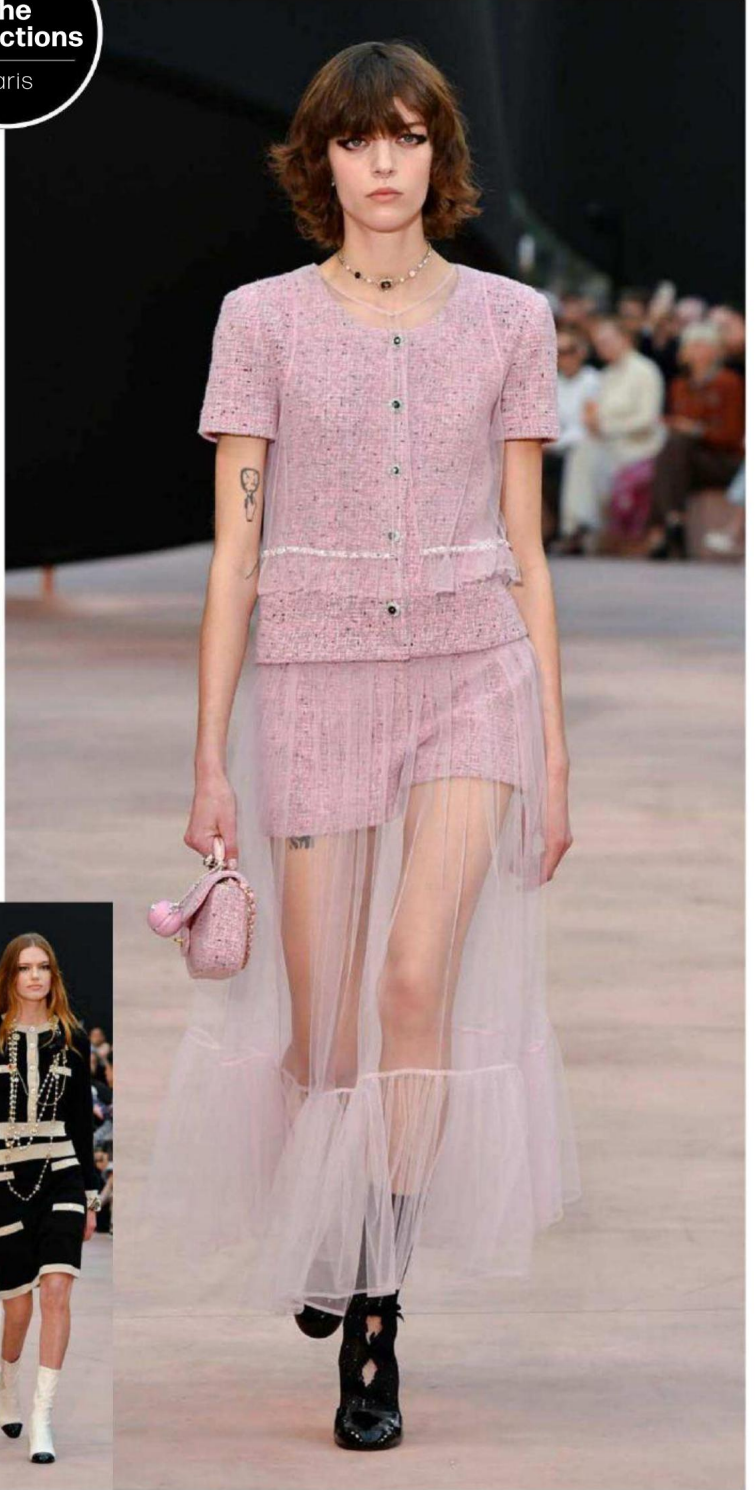
Ending the suspense did not make the job easier for the in-house team charged with delivering another placeholder collection. They dutifully zeroed in on a theme, which unfurled from the boxed satin bow sent with the show invitation to the set: a monumental black ribbon that spiraled toward the roof of the Grand Palais. ▶




The Collections
Paris




The
Collections
Paris



Backstage photograph by Kubo Dabrowski; Runway by Dominique Matre



Matte satin ribbon trimmed a military-inspired anthracite tweed jacket, while pretty bows secured the balloon sleeves on a sheer black organza tunic top. A trio of dresses came in a fluttering ribbon print tracing the brand's signature interlocking Cs, while cartoony bow cutouts were edged with pearls on a black sweater and skirt.

So far, so predictable. More intriguing was the idea of using the bombastic backdrop as a foil for plays on scale, proportion and optical effects.

Layers of illusion tulle formed ghostly outlines on tweed suits, including a pink short-sleeved jacket and shorts overlaid with a sheer ankle-length skirt.

Allover looks played with superpositions of the same fabric, to Surrealist effect. For instance, a cherry red tweed was used for a jacket, wrap skirt and flared pants – as

well as the matching boater hat, gloves, handbag and boots.

Some of the visual gags came straight from the playbook of the house's late creative director Karl Lagerfeld, who was a genius at channeling the pop culture zeitgeist.

A white minaudière was shrunk to the size of an egg, while pearl necklaces were blown up and worn as crossbody bags. Giant pearls also appeared as heels on boots that were sure to become instant collectors' items.

Meanwhile, a duo of reverse monochrome twinsets seemed tailor made for superfans Snehal and Jyoti Babani, the Indian sisters who attended the show in their signature matching outfits.

But the lineup took a dowdy turn with variations on Pierrot smocks and baggy sweater dresses. The sack constructions

were jarring in a season when designers have been obsessed with sex, from the pole dancers at Stella McCartney to the prosthetic breasts at Duran Lantink.

Judging from the VICs in attendance, there is a market for comfort dressing with an upscale twist, but catering to existing clients is not enough. Brands need fresh blood to survive and thrive.

Chanel's recent collections lack the spark of unexpected connections that comes with an outside eye. Think of Blazy's swansong campaign for Bottega Veneta, which paired \$8,400 woven leather Andiamo bags with animated stuffed animal beanbags and the soundtrack from "Beverly Hills, 90210."

With luck, that type of creative alchemy will coax the Chanel woman out of her shell. — Joelle Diderich

Miu Miu

The fashion show off the runway always rivals that on it at the Miu Miu show, where somewhat famous celebrities, influencers and genuine fans seem to engage in Miu Miu cosplay.

On Tuesday afternoon, the front row had a cowgirl in a bathing suit, many schoolgirl-types in pleated skirts, knee socks and loafers, and a baby bombshell searching for her seat wearing little else but the baby bloomers and knee socks from the spring collection.

"It puts me in touch with my inner child," was how one VIP put it when asked why she likes the brand. And that's why Miu Miu has the youth vote.

This season, Miuccia Prada added another archetype to her repertoire, a throwback lady, complete with beauty shop hair, brooches and bullet bras, which shaped the bustline under tight sweaters. Yes, bullet bras, the relic of the 1950s that exaggerated the bust and the hourglass figure, resurrected in the 1980s by Madonna, Jean Paul Gaultier and others.

Some may question why we'd want to go back there in a political climate that has women's rights under threat, but there has been recent next-gen interest in more ladylike vintage clothing, including knee-length skirts, skirt suits and clip-on earrings, to say nothing of the tradwife trend. One designer I interviewed this week threw up her hands and said, "All my kids wear is vintage." So there.

And judging from the success of Miu Miu's "It" accessories from recent collections – including the micro mini schoolgirl skirt, the tube top, the open-toed socks and distressed moccasins that

have helped propel the brand's astounding financial growth – those bras are going to sell like gangbusters and be all over the front row next season.

"We need femininity in this difficult time to lift us up," Prada said backstage, likening the environment to wartime, with a wink perhaps to Dior's New Look.

The show did make a modern statement in how it broadly defined femininity, freed from gender, with a cast from across the spectrum, and a few familiar faces like Gigi Hadid and Sarah Paulson.

The set was pared back to citron moire walls and the soundtrack unapologetically "elevator music," Prada said. To that, her throwback ladies walked out in mannish wool coats that were intentionally a bit off, cut to fit the curves with pointed folds at the bust, or with swan tail hems, carrying handbags in the crooks of their arms.

Satin lingerie dresses with straps sliding off the shoulders, prim suits, tight sweaters and pencil skirts, fur stoles with pockets to tuck the hands into and high-heels worn with knee socks came out in Prada's famous pretty-ugly color combos of mustard, ultraviolet, apricot, acid green, powder pink and camel.

She also brought in some familiar pieces from the recent Miu Miu playbook, like great looking aged leather jackets, sport-inspired pullovers with zippers cocked to the side, and really covetable tracksuits, worn with arms-full of gold bracelets. Also in the accessories department were cloche hats, new buckled sneakers and cute new socks covered in scattered crystals.

It was a vibe, a vintage one, yes, but that's what the kids are wearing. So why not give them something new that looks like it? – *Booth Moore*



The Collections

Paris





Zimmermann



Zimmermann

Zimmermann

The front row at the Zimmermann show in Paris was a sea of pastel chiffon. Rose Byrne came in a white tunic embroidered with a radiating sun, while Katie Holmes opted for a pale yellow cargo jacket and pants.

More peach-colored looks came wafting down the runway. The Australian brand's fall collection had an earthy palette that seemed color-coordinated with the mosaic tile floor of the ornate Petit Palais.

Nicky Zimmermann was inspired by the cult film "Picnic at Hanging Rock," which celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. "I've watched it and watched it and watched it, and it still just stands up. It's so beautiful and eerie and mysterious," she said during a preview.

The outfits touched upon the various moods of the story, which follows a group of Victorian schoolgirls who go missing on an excursion into the outback. Satin robes, lace and crochet blouses with bell sleeves, and floaty tent dresses captured the romantic and ethereal mood of the opening scenes.

Progressively, darker undertones emerged: snake prints jostled with the mineral tones of the Australian bush. A full-skirted dress with ruffled sleeves was rendered in indigo denim with cutouts at the hip, while Mongolian shearling jackets were tossed over olive silk harem pants or a bronze leather riding skirt.

Though its roots are in swim and resortwear, Zimmermann is known for its elaborately embellished runway looks, which are eagerly awaited by clients each season. Highlights included a cream chiffon layered dress embroidered with vintage Valentine's Day cards.

"It's so important for us to do these pieces that are just unashamedly feminine," Zimmermann said, pointing out the delicate stitching. "Every single one is different. We did tiny, weeny little love hearts all the way around the edge."

The boho-chic aesthetic is riding high thanks to the revival of Chloé, but Zimmermann has a secret sauce: its hand-drawn prints, which this season included a watercolor map of Mount Macedon, where Peter Weir's movie is set. And if anyone's still lost, bags came with a useful reminder: a charm in the shape of a kangaroo. — Joelle Diderich



Rokh


The Collections
Paris

Rokh

For designer Rok Hwang, taking a sculptural approach isn't about creating sharp-edged monoliths but about following the human hand's shaping of material. A point of reference he named was renowned British studio potter Lucie Rie.

"It kind of resonates with the idea of hand touch and a very poetic kind of construction that really assembles the collection," he said backstage. "This is heavy construction but at the same time, we are breaking it."

If that sounded abstract, think of them as a building, like the under-renovation Parisian townhouse in which Hwang staged his show, which had "a beautiful historical kind of appeal but it's been stripped down."

Owing to the London-based designer's proclivity for collecting vintage, he revisited archetypal garments, balancing rigorous cuts with dramatic draped elements. There were showpieces to be sure, but it was precisely dosed and telegraphed a softer, more feminine energy even in more quotidian options.

The best examples were a double-breasted coat with a square neckline, little high-necked blouses that could be unzipped vertically and horizontally, and a trench-polka dot dress hybrid.

Here and there were also examples of textile manipulations, with tightly packed hand-shredded ruffles painstakingly assembled over the surface of a coat.

Elsewhere, he used deconstruction as a way to build new wear options in puffy coats, zippered blouses and even knit sweaters with a detachable lower hem. It played well with his modular concept, with bubble skirts unfolding into sleeker variations thanks to ring clasps.

Equally handsome and modular were his menswear silhouettes, a category that now amounts to around 20 percent of the business and growing, Hwang said. They cemented the impression of a brand that is keeping its eye solidly on real-world appeal. — Lily Templeton



Rokh

Pierre Cardin

Pierre Cardin often talked about designing clothes for space.

"In 2069, we will all walk on the moon or Mars wearing my 'Cosmocorps' ensembles. Women will wear Plexiglas cloche hats and tube clothing, men will be wearing elliptical pants and kinetic tunics," he once said.

His great-nephew and heir Rodrigo Basilicati-Cardin is committed to making that dream a reality.

Last fall, he revealed the house had teamed with the European Space Agency to design the suits that astronauts will use for training at the new Luna simulation facility in Cologne, Germany, to prepare for future missions to the moon.

Having staged fashion shows at a space center in Kourou, French Guiana, and in front of a replica Ariane 5 rocket near Paris, the brand unveiled its fall collection at the foot of the mirrored geodesic dome at the French capital's Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie museum.

Models emerged in brightly colored tubular down jackets and A-line dresses with circular appliques inspired by the moon. Shiny bodysuits were paired with two-tone capes or bold geometric vests, while a sienna red jumpsuit with vinyl porthole pockets came with a round neckline like those on real spacesuits.

The brand used a mix of deadstock fabrics from its archives and cutting-edge materials like sea wool, which is crafted from discarded oyster shells and recycled plastic bottles. If some of the outfits felt like high school science projects, the stiffer technical fabrics were used to sculptural

effect on looks like a light gray jumpsuit with a raised neckline.

Even as fellow Space Age labels Courrèges and Rabanne have undergone sweeping makeovers, Cardin is hanging tight in the space couture segment. While some of its offerings looked dated, the futuristic eyewear suggested that license, at least, holds untapped potential. You don't need to wait until 2069 to wear the cool visor shades with a silver helmet attached – elliptical pants optional. – *Joelle Diderich*

Kiko Kostadinov

Laura and Deanna Fanning took over Brasserie Mollard by Saint-Lazare train station, one of the oldest family-run restaurants in Paris, for a fall collection inspired by the life of Vali Myers, an Australian dancer who was a part of the city's burgeoning bohemian movement in the 1950s.

Myers' eccentric, sometimes androgynous style inspired them to spin the collection toward a playful and free-spirit direction, juxtaposing retro feminine shapes and tomboy charm. They also looked at the women in the black-and-white images of Ed Van Der Elksen's "Love of the Left Bank" circa 1956.

"The way the women put the clothes together felt very fresh to our eyes, even though they were 75 years old. They were on an adventure to discover themselves and realize that they could do anything they wanted. We feel like it's something that perhaps today is missing," the Fanning sisters said.

They integrated sheer fabric into their signature DIY hybrid creation process for the first time with new propositions like a torso-baring, underwear illusion bodysuit with a wide kimono-style belt, and a wool slipdress with netting detail and sheer hem. There were also tailoring pieces offered in pastel with drawstring waists and ties wrapped into collars, and delicious alpaca blend coats.

"We thought about the stiffness of women's clothes in that era, and how we could distort those. Like in a lot of the pieces that we've done, we tried to break the tailoring fabric with crinoline or something that feels like a soft jersey. The knitwear has points. We started with the bullet bra and thought about how the points of that could become full garments. And that's how the striped knitwear came about," the duo explained.

The show also debuted a new sneaker model with Asics featuring a split toe and sinuous pattern. – *Tianwei Zhang*

Shiatzy Chen

Shiatzy Chen dedicated her fall 2025 collection to Miao embroidery, one of China's intangible cultural heritages commonly found in the mountainous region of Guizhou province.

Twenty giant posters covered the walls of the venue inside Palais de Tokyo, depicting Miao mythological tales, such as the love story between the butterfly and the phoenix, that can be traced back to the Neolithic era.

The designer expressed these colorful,

primitive iconographies with Miao embroidery techniques in her signature elevated, East-meets-West fashion. She worked with seven Miao artisans, fusing 10 different styles of embroidery across the collection, adding thoughtful details to an overall modern proposition. Embroidered ribbon trims added color to elegant tweed sets, and auspicious motifs helped add a dash of playfulness to the formal attire.

According to Chen, compared to the sophisticated Suzhou-style embroidery she has played with for decades, Miao embroidery is more untamed, robust and carefree.

The Miao people are master silversmiths, too. Chen reinterpreted the metal connection with metal studs on leather bib tops, quilted jackets, and the collar of a mandarin jacket. She also showed 10 one-off handbags, each depicting the beauty of one of the Miao embroidery styles.

The designer said she is committed to preserving China's vanishing traditional crafts. She has been training workers in her factories, and she hopes that they can eventually return to their hometowns and open their workshops and become the guardians of the intangible cultural heritage.

Among them, one embroiderer has already successfully returned to Guizhou to open her workshop and contributed to the fall collection.

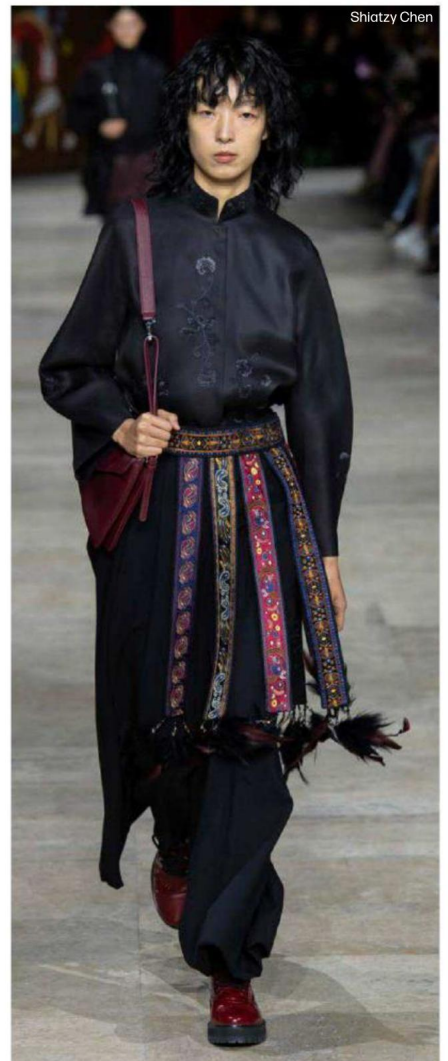
"I hope that there will be more such embroiderers in the future, driving more people to join this cause. I hope that through this show, we can show the unique allure of Chinese traditional crafts to the world," said Chen. – *T.Z.*



Pierre Cardin



Kiko Kostadinov



Shiatzy Chen


The
Collections
Paris




The Collections
 Paris

Christian Wijnants



Atlein



Ottolinger

Christian Wijnants

"I want the clothes really to be protective and give you comfort, especially in these tough and uncertain times," Christian Wijnants said.

So he upped the cocooning quotient in his elegant, versatile lineup, chockablock with soft, plush fabrics – even for shoes and clutches – rounded silhouettes and draping.

The collection was made up of wardrobe essentials, which can be mixed and matched, often with pieces that may be wrapped around the body or left floating. Many looks integrated scarves that wafted gently. They also came worn like a cape or poncho.

Mixed in were some tailored pieces with sharp, padded shoulders for a stronger silhouette. Even knitwear came with power shoulders.

"It gives this attitude," said Wijnants, who cherry-picked finely textured fabrics, such as silk wool, hand-stitched spun silk, twill silk, a linen-wool blend, and hand washed and creased organza.

The color palette was soft for fall, including silver, light mint, oatmeal and raspberry. The designer always creates the prints for his textiles.

"This time, I want them to be abstract

and more like spatters and stains," said Wijnants, who experimented by spraying on bleach to get a natural, organic effect.

One dusky rose-colored dress was spangled with long rolled organza fringes to help create movement. An olive green woolen bib underlay a matching scarf-cape and roomy trousers.

"In general, I wanted it very pure, minimal, cuddly, soft," he said, of the collection. Mission accomplished.

— Jennifer Weil

Atlein

Sculptural forms influenced Antonin Tron for Atlein's fall collection, ranging from the Venus figurines from the Paleolithic era, which some archaeologists now suggest as signs of early matriarchal societies and goddess-led pantheons, to the works of Romanian artist Constantin Brâncuși and Madame Grès.

The French designer's throughline for the season was "developing the Atlein vocabulary beyond dresses," he said backstage after the show. To that end, he developed outerwear even further, which grew to include floor-grazing peacoats, a long teddy coat, padded satin numbers with shawl collars or sack-back blouses.

Their lush hands echoed the supple fluidity of his signature viscose jersey and

sheer draped silhouettes, in which he played with asymmetric draping and gathers that further highlighted feminine curves.

Daywear was another proposition he was keen to develop, not only to address the 9-to-5 crowd but also as a way to make his designs more suited to a range of body types and proportions, he added. That didn't mean compromising on his sensual, draped works.

Cases in point: a trio of draped sheer silhouettes, at first glance gowns, turned out to be body suits with long mermaid skirts. Other options included leggings, fluid sheer shirts and tailored trousers cut generously on the leg.

While evening dresses continue to be the majority of Tron's nine-year-old label, such sculptural separates cemented an impression of growing maturity and broadening audience. — Lily Templeton

Ottolinger

At Ottolinger, Christa Bösch and Cosima Gadiet were thinking about performance.

Not of the stronger, better, faster type, but the one that we put on every day from morning to night, a show that starts at home in underwear.

"Then you throw on something because you go out to get groceries so it's not so great but everything is performance in

life," said Bösch. "We all have to perform a certain way."

Furthering their reflection on "how we are perceived and how we want to be perceived," the soundtrack to the show was the inner dialogue of a model, written by Los Angeles-based artist, writer and theater director Calla Henkel.

The Berlin-based pair's lineup was a smorgasbord of options going through to night, with plenty of party dresses to boot. But it wasn't just clothing they challenged, with the additions of pads that made hips bulge here, padded out a shoulder there.

These elements further tweaked standouts such as tailored jackets pulled tight across the waist to create a basque; a biker blouson cut from felted wool bonded with scuba fabric; dresses with a deconstructed mesh print, or overdyed jeans with pockets pulled down to reveal the original denim as an accent.

Throughout, Bösch and Gadiet worked with shapewear fabric, worn layered and deconstructed in Ottolinger-typical ways as tops, bodysuits and leggings that bared slivers of collarbones and midribs.

Among them was a teaser for a collaboration, the duo said, although they demurred on naming a brand. For those who had their eyes peeled, labels for Kim Kardashian's Skims could be spotted throughout, however. — L.T.

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*Head, North American
Business Development*
REJU



INKTA APTER
*Director, Material
Sustainability & Integrity*
EILEEN FISHER



MELISSA BASTOS
*Director, Corporate
Strategy & Insights*
COTTON INCORPORATED



MICHELLE GABRIELE
Program Director
IENYC



TODD KAHN
*Chief Executive Officer
& Brand President*
COACH



RACHEL KIBBE
Founder & Chief Executive Officer
CIRCULAR SERVICES GROUP AND
AMERICAN CIRCULAR TEXTILES



KIM KITCHINGS
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PARTNERS



BUSINESS

Dick's Issues Weaker Guidance After Record Holiday Season

A Dick's House of Sport store.



- The sports retailer will be adding House of Sport, Field House and Golf Galaxy Performance Centers to its roster of stores this year.

BY JEAN E. PALMIERI

Dick's Sporting Goods posted the best holiday season in its history, but in light of the “dynamic macroeconomic environment,” issued what was seen as tepid guidance for this year.

On Tuesday morning, the Pittsburgh-based sporting goods retailer reported a 6.4 percent gain in comparable-store sales in the fourth quarter, exceeding analyst expectations of below 3 percent, and net income of \$300 million, up 1 percent from the \$296 million in the same period last year. Total sales in the period ended Feb. 28 were \$3.89 billion.

However, looking ahead to this fiscal year, Dick's is projecting full-year comparable sales growth to be in the range of 1 percent to 3 percent and earnings per diluted share to be in the range of \$13.80 to \$14.40. Analyst estimates are for comparable sales of 2.5 percent and earnings per share of \$14.86, according to CNBC. The company's stock closed down 5.7 percent, or \$12.06, to \$198.96 on Tuesday.

For the year, comparable-store sales rose 5.2 percent, driven by growth in average ticket sales and transactions, the company said, and total sales were up

3.5 percent to \$13.4 billion from around \$13 billion last year. Earnings per diluted share were \$14.05, up 15 percent from the \$12.18 reported in fiscal year 2023 and net income rose 11 percent to \$1.2 billion from \$1 billion the prior year.

As a result of the strong showing, the company said it plans to open about 16 additional House of Sport locations and 18 Dick's Field House locations in 2025. Last year, the retailer opened seven House of Sport locations, bringing the total to 19, and 15 Field House stores. That smaller-size concept now has 26 locations around the country. The goal is to have 75 to 100 House of Sport units by 2027, the company said on its earnings call Tuesday morning. The company also said 70 percent of the new locations will be reimaged or relocations of existing units.

In addition, 14 Golf Galaxy Performance Center locations are also expected to open this year.

“The convergence of sport and culture in our country has never been stronger, and with a series of major sporting events set to take place in the U.S., this momentum is only expected to grow through 2030 and beyond,” said executive chairman Ed Stack. “As a company rooted in sport, Dick's is uniquely positioned to seize this opportunity, and we are making strategic investments in real estate, in-store enhancements and digital experiences to further expand our market share.”

Lauren Hobart, president and chief

executive officer, added: “For 2025, our outlook reflects strong confidence in our strategies and operational strength while acknowledging the dynamic microeconomic environment. With this in mind, we expect to drive continued comp growth, strategic expansion of our square footage and improved gross margin. Leaning into our strategic pillars, we are investing in three exciting growth areas, each with significant potential: repositioning our real estate and store portfolio; driving continued strong growth in footwear, and accelerating our e-commerce business. With a clear strategy, a disciplined approach and a commitment to innovation, we are well-positioned to drive sustained sales and profitability growth over the long-term and seize the significant market share opportunity ahead of us.”

In a call with analysts Tuesday morning, Hobart said the company is the largest omnichannel sports retailer in the U.S. with a market share of just under 9 percent of the \$140 billion sports industry. She said with the “excitement around women's sports,” the upcoming FIFA World Cup, L.A. Olympics and Rugby World Cup, all of which will be on U.S. soil, “the convergence of sports and culture has never been stronger. We're a nation obsessed with sport and no one is better positioned to harness this opportunity than Dick's Sporting Goods.”

Turning to categories, Hobart said

“Sporting goods were a solid gifting category this year, but consumers also came to Dick's in larger numbers for everyday apparel and footwear.”

NEIL SAUNDERS, GlobalData

“footwear is the engine that pulls the train,” and premium assortments are now available in about 90 percent of all stores. Footwear now represents 28 percent of total sales.

E-commerce is also seen as a growth engine, she said, adding that the company will invest aggressively in technology and marketing as well as a focus on the Dick's app to continue to drive sales through this channel.

She also cited the “long-term growth opportunities” of the company's GameChanger and Dick's Media Network. GameChanger is a livestream sports app for youth sports that Dick's bought in 2016. It exceeded \$100 million in revenue in 2024 and projections are for it to hit \$150 million this year.

While the company's projections did not meet expectations, Neil Saunders, managing director of GlobalData, wasn't too concerned.

He said Dick's “was a magnet over the holiday period and did exceptionally well across gifting and self-purchase categories. Sporting goods were a solid gifting category this year, but consumers also came to Dick's in larger numbers for everyday apparel and footwear. This is part of a trend that has been in play for a while, which is enabling Dick's to take share from mainstream apparel retailers, but it seemed to accelerate over the holiday quarter.”

He said that a decade ago, consumers would visit Dick's strictly for sports-related merchandise but its recent focus on apparel and a wider brand assortment has helped draw more customers, particularly to its experiential House of Sport concept as well as its smaller, refurbished Field House stores.

“It is also helping to future-proof Dick's at a time when some other retailers are failing to invest in their physical real estate,” he wrote. “And this is one of the reasons why Dick's is pulling customers away from more traditional channels like department stores and from mass merchants such as Target. This dynamic will become increasingly important in a market where organic spending growth is slimmer.”

And while the company is projecting a slowdown in growth, “Dick's will be adding to a very successful run and will be doing so in a somewhat slower trading environment. That is far from a terrible outcome,” he believes. “Indeed, it underlines the fact that Dick's continues to win market share. In our view, it will remain a winner.”

FASHION

(RED) Seeks to Recapture the Attention of the Fashion Industry



Laura Brown

● Laura Brown, chair of the (RED) Creative Council, aims to bring the organization, which raises money for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, back to the forefront of global culture and impact.

BY LISA LOCKWOOD

(RED), which was founded in 2006 by Bono and Bobby Shriver to raise money for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, looks to rev up the fashion crowd again.

The charity and its partners have generated over \$785 million for the Global Fund, helping more than 325 million people. (RED) has been financing programs that deliver prevention, testing, treatment, counseling and care services to people impacted by HIV in sub-Saharan Africa.

The mission began with a bang at the intersection of fashion and rock 'n' roll. Shoppers could choose to purchase an Apple (product) Red item or wear a look from (RED)'s Gap collection, modeled in an historic campaign by Christy Turlington, Anne Hathaway, Mary J. Blige, and John Legend, among others.

At the time of (RED)'s founding, lack of access to HIV treatment meant the virus was needlessly killing millions of people every year. According to (RED), in 2025, there's a very real threat of this happening again. With the current cuts and freezes to U.S. foreign aid, critical life-saving programs are shutting down.

Laura Brown, founder of LB Media and the former editor in chief of InStyle, was brought in as chair of (RED) Creative Council last year. She is spearheading the charity's efforts to propel itself back into the fashion conversation and is working with brands to ensure (RED)'s mission is at the cultural forefront.

"Fashion's greatest power is creating desire. (RED)'s greatest power is saving

lives. The unifying of the two will once again bring (RED) back to the forefront of global culture and impact, when vulnerable people across the globe need us more than ever," said Brown.

Brown has been getting brands on board, such as South Africa-based designer and LVMH Prize winner Thebe Magugu, who is offering his Heirloom shirt, pants and tote as part of a (RED) capsule collection.

For Valentine's Day 2025, jewelry and accessories designer Roxanne Assoulin offered a limited edition (RED) Puffy Heart Necklace, and eyewear brand Ahlem released limited-edition sunglasses. Nomasei, the Paris-based shoe atelier, offered their signature Taxi Sandal (RED), while Savas, the menswear designer that combines the best of old-world craft with innovation in leather and suede, offered a (RED) collection featuring T-shirts, boots and bomber jackets.

Of the (RED) products, Magugu's custom tote bag retails for \$247, custom shirt is \$530.42, and custom trousers are \$453.46. Forty percent of every purchase goes to (RED). Ahlem's sunglasses retail for \$650, with 40 percent going to (RED). Nomasei's loafer retails for \$510, with 20 percent going to (RED), while Assoulin's Puffy Heart necklace retails for \$125, with 30 percent going to (RED). Savas' T-shirt retails for \$195, the bomber is \$4,500 and the men's and women's boots are each \$825, with 15 percent of proceeds going to (RED).

Previous (RED) partners included Zimmermann, which offered a (RED) Summer Set featuring a tote and pareo, and Veronica Beard, who released a special (RED) T-shirt.

The (RED) Creative Council includes designers Magugu and Sindiso Khumalo, stylist Karla Welch, photographers AB+DM as well as Inez & Vinoodh, supermodel Iman and costume designer Arianne Phillips, among other leaders across the creative industries.

In 2026, Brown and Iman will chair the



The Savas collection of (RED) T-shirt, boots and bomber jacket.

"Discover(RED) Fashion Prize," to identify, fund and bring global retail opportunities for up to 10 emerging designers from across Africa. With signature items and/or capsule collections created by each, 50 percent of net profits will go back to each designer to foster sustainable business models, with the remaining 50 percent donated to the Global Fund to finance life-saving programs in sub-Saharan Africa. Curators include Cynthia Erivo, Kiernan Shipka, Karabo Poppy Moletsane, alongside Magugu and Khumalo.

Bono, cofounder of (RED), said, "It was artists, playwrights and other creators who led the fight against AIDS in the '80s - and we need that kind of creative, disruptive thinking today more than ever. AIDS is now a preventable, treatable disease... a huge victory, but until that's the case for everyone, everywhere there is a lot more work to do."

Jennifer Lotito, president and chief operating officer of (RED), said, "As the world increasingly understands the grim realities of what the closure of life-saving programs means to those affected by HIV, the attention these fashion brands can command and create will be critical to keeping this issue front and center."

In a Zoom interview, Brown explained how she first got involved in (RED). "I first met Bono and Ali Hewson [Bono's wife, businesswoman and activist] and they had the fashion brand Edun. I loved them, and this brand was incredible and ethical and ahead of its time and we became friends. Over the years, I would just go to (RED) things and I went to cocktail parties and a fundraiser. (RED) has a spectacular mission that I grew up with. I had a lot of imprinting on me about (RED) from when I was younger."

She said she got to know the (RED) team and she became almost like unwanted chief marketing officer. "I had all these ideas. 'You know what you should do,'" She said about a year-and-a-half ago, she was honored to chair this inaugural Creative Council. She said the charity is 20 years old. "In the U.S., the idea of vulnerability to HIV is kind of in the rearview window. It was a privilege to have that. Then COVID came along and occupied a giant amount of real estate in people's minds and souls."

With (RED), we wanted to "work to bring the brilliance of (RED) back into the frontal lobe. One of the fastest ways to bring attention to good and fun and brilliant

work is through fashion," said Brown.

When she enlisted the Creative Council, she came up with a diverse group of designers, actors, photographers and social media experts. "Everybody has on-demand roles, and what brings them all together is deep interest and care for this mission," said Brown. "We're taking their characteristic skill sets and status to be helpful and to help people be well."

She said next year will be the 20th anniversary of (RED) and it's been active the whole time with its retail partners. "When (RED) first launched it was the Gap campaign that enlisted all these spectacular people with these T-shirts for this mission, and this whole ensemble. That's what we're working towards, to get a group of people to care about a group of people," she said.

She said the focus of the Global Fund is mostly Africa, where there's a need. Brown said she's gone out to brands she knows in the fashion industry. "And they've all said 'yes,'" she said. The designer of the brand gets to decide what they desire to make. For example, Assoulin wanted to make a red heart necklace. "Everything that is made is very close to the character of the brand. No one has said 'no' yet. I want to start with people I know," said Brown.

All the products are sold via (RED) or the brand's own platform. (RED) was named for the color of emergency.

She said the Assoulin and Nomasei items sold out. Their next partner is La Double J, which is coming out with its product in the summer.

"There is now a huge risk to HIV programs, which the U.S. has moved on from. It's a really tenuous time," she said. "I've been reassured by the fact if the [presidential] administration takes away, people who care will supplement. That's how it's always been. That's why there are philanthropists and why people support these missions," said Brown.

Turning to the Discover(RED) Fashion Prize, she said, "It is insane there is no globally famous African designer." They want to find five to 10 designers, and they would choose the finalists. "The idea is the people who receive the grant - it could be someone who makes T-shirts, it could be someone who makes a full ready-to-wear collection, it doesn't matter. It matters if they're good," said Brown.

"We want to be able to work with fashion on the continent. We're so curious to find these young designers as we are here. I think African style is the greatest style in the world. Anything we can do to have that permeate the global business will make the whole thing much more interesting," said Brown.

She recalled it all started with Gap 20 years ago. She looks to support this mission "that was always urgent and is now urgent and at risk. It's some of the most fulfilling work I've ever done," said Brown.



The Nomasei (RED) shoes.



Here and below: Serena Williams with her daughters, Olympia, 7, and Adira, 18 months, in the campaign for Serena Williams x Janie and Jack.

FASHION

Serena Williams Designs Collection for Janie and Jack

- Williams is photographed in the ad campaign with her two daughters, Olympia and Adira.

BY LISA LOCKWOOD

Tennis champion Serena Williams has designed a limited-edition collection for Janie and Jack, the childrenswear manufacturer, for spring 2025.

The collection's campaign also marks a milestone for Williams since she appears alongside both her daughters, Olympia, 7, and Adira Ohanian, 18 months, in their first campaign together. (Williams is married to Reddit cofounder Alexis Ohanian.)

The spring collection is designed for children up to 12 years old. It features resort-ready apparel, swimwear and accessories in bold colors and ombre designs. The collection also includes two coordinated mommy-and-me styles and a re-creation of Williams' childhood tennis look.

"As a longtime fan of Janie and Jack, I'm thrilled to bring this collection to life alongside my girls," Williams said. "Every piece is designed to celebrate family, style and the special moments we share together. I poured so much love into this collection and can't wait for families everywhere to experience it."

Asked how the partnership came about, Williams told WWD, "Quite frankly, I'm always there. My agent called me and asked, 'What do you think about Janie and Jack?' I always post pictures of my kids and they're always in Janie and Jack. Maybe I posted a picture and they saw it, and we've been trying to do something together. When I had Adira, this was a perfect time to do something."

"I love them [Janie and Jack]. They're at my local mall. I like to go there and shop. It was very authentic and very normal," she said in a Zoom interview.

As reported, The Gap sold off Janie and Jack in 2021 to brand investment platform Go Global Retail for an undisclosed sum. The Gap had acquired Janie and Jack

in 2019 for \$35 million during parent company Gymboree's bankruptcy.

For Williams, the design process was fairly easy. "Janie and Jack did everything. They made these great mood boards to choose from. As a designer, there's always a lot of stuff to do. They gave me all the mood boards, so I didn't have to do it. That was amazing. We had meetings, 'What am I thinking about florals, and what am I thinking about colors? etc.'"

"Our initial call was, 'Are we really going to do this? This is crazy.' It was so authentically us on both sides. And my girls love the products," Williams said.

Williams said she wasn't looking to bring a different aesthetic to the brand, since she already likes what they're doing. "I don't know if I want to do anything different because they do everything right. I feel that's the reason why I like them because they bring so much joy and fun, just colorful and whimsical things in their stores. I wouldn't want to do anything different from that. I just wanted to add to that. It's almost like a fairy tale through clothing."

Parnell Eagle, president and chief commercial officer of Janie and Jack, said, "Serena has been our dream partner since the moment she became a mother. We were so excited when we first saw her dress Olympia in Janie and Jack at Wimbledon. Her vision and creativity brought a fresh perspective to every design, resulting in a collection that exudes her iconic style and celebrates family bonds. It's been a privilege to work alongside Serena, and we're excited to offer families timeless pieces that inspire connection and special moments together."

"The collaboration is more than just fashion — it's a celebration of storytelling through style. Serena infused this collection with creativity and heart, making each piece both iconic and deeply personal. We hope these designs inspire families to create their own unforgettable moments, wrapped in love and purpose," Eagle said.

Williams' collection includes 35 styles, retailing from \$18.50 to \$175.

Discussing some of her favorite pieces, Williams said she was inspired by an outfit she wore as a kid, which was a skirt and top to play tennis. "We were really inspired by that iconic piece and bringing a different version of it to life. We used it as an inspiration as we looked at designs," she said.

Williams said she's never designed kids' clothing before. "I was really nervous about it. They have a wonderful team and they have a wonderful designer who was able to help me through that process. And it was cool. I've designed adult clothes and sportswear, but I've never done this," she said.

Williams studied fashion design at the Art Institute of Fort Lauderdale from 2000 to 2003 and launched S by Serena, her first independent clothing collection of dresses and tops, in 2018. In 2023, Williams

became the first athlete to receive the CFDA Fashion Icon Award.

As for whether Olympia had a say in the designs, Williams said, "I actually asked her. There were some choices. When we were narrowing down the collection, I actually asked her which one she liked better. Thankfully it was the same one I liked better."

Another look she's excited about is an asymmetrical dress with rosettes. "I love pink and it was an opportunity to explore that in a big way. We played around in this collection with a lot of pinks," Williams said.

Each item reflects Williams' personal style, with functional designs, fresh textures and fabrics inspired by sunny getaways.

She said her youngest daughter likes to go in her own closet and pick out her own clothes. "Olympia did the same thing. She [Adira] will pull it off the hanger because we keep her hangers really low for her. Honestly it's too cute," she said.

Williams said she's excited about the fashion shoot that she and her girls did in Miami. The campaign captures joyful family moments in a vibrant, resort-inspired setting.

"I can't wait for those pictures to come out. I just want to frame them all, and put them in my house," she said. While the girls were outfitted in Janie and Jack, Williams said they made some Janie and Jack looks for her, and she wore some non-branded things. Some of the looks were mommy-and-me pieces.

Regarded as one of the greatest tennis players of all time, Williams was ranked world number one in singles by the Women's Tennis Association for 319 weeks. She has won 23 Grand Slam women's singles titles, the most in the Open Era, and the second most of all time. Williams was a trailblazer on the tennis court with her aggressive playing style and her standout, brightly colored tennis outfits, including tutus, catsuits and neon skirts. She retired from her professional tennis career in 2022.

Speaking about her post-tennis life, Williams said, "I just work on VC and my beauty brand. That's kind of what I do nowadays." Williams started Serena Ventures in 2017, a venture capital fund that supports underrepresented founders, and launched her own beauty brand, Wyn Beauty, a vegan, cruelty-free makeup line, last April at Ulta and ulta.com.

While she may have said goodbye to professional tennis, it's still a part of her life.

Asked if Olympia is working on her tennis game, Williams said, "She is. She likes it." Williams said she doesn't have the patience and has hired a pro to teach her.

Would she encourage her daughter to pursue a professional career in tennis?

"Of course, that would be so legendary. I would love that. I don't know if she would do it [but] that would be amazing."



Serena Williams has designed a collection for Janie and Jack.



EXCLUSIVE

Social Wellness Club Remedy Place Is Headed to Boston

● The new Seaport location is the largest and most social, according to founder Dr. Jonathan Leary.

BY EMILY BURNS

Remedy Place is heading to Boston.

Later this month, the social wellness club founded by Dr. Jonathan Leary will open in the Seaport neighborhood in Boston. At over 10,000 square feet, it is the largest by more than 30 percent and the most social club with multiperson saunas, movement classes, IV suites and more – this marks Remedy's fourth location after West Hollywood and Flatiron and SoHo in New York City.

So why Boston?

"I grew up in Rhode Island and I'm just dying to get something close to home, but also I really hit it off with [Jeremy Sclar] the owner of WS Development. He's just this visionary, and he built this whole entire area of the city from scratch," Leary said. "Also, Boston is a very sophisticated town, from the advancements in health care all the way to the top Ivy League schools."

In addition, the clientele is exactly whom Leary has been targeting with Remedy Place since the beginning.

"They're young professionals. They work really hard, and they're go-getters on top of being super active [with] running communities and cycling communities," he said, adding that the clubs see a pretty even split between men and women, most in their 30s and 40s. "It's mind blowing here that there really isn't that much self care."

Leary is on a mission to remedy this with the brand new spot.

Given the amount of space, Leary was able to create an entirely new experience

for Remedy goes. For starters, the location has 20-foot ceilings, is all housed on one floor and offers guests the option of treatment suites with and without views – half of the club is all glass overlooking the park and city landscape.

Furthermore, with each new location, Leary always aims to make it even more social. Boston is no exception. For the first time, the company is unveiling a contrast suite with a 10-person communal sauna, steam room and three ice baths. It can be booked for large groups or by small groups and individuals looking to meet new people.

"We don't want to be like a bathhouse and super crowded, but most of our guests and members love that they have privacy for them and their friends or their partner," Leary said, noting that many are also looking for an intimate environment to meet like-minded individuals. "What better way to do so than this really sexy, intimate communal contrast suite that has it all?"

In addition to Remedy's classic offerings, like ice baths, breathwork sessions, saunas, IV drips, AI-powered massages and hyperbaric chambers, the Boston location will unveil a foam bathing sauna experience.

"We're the only place in the country [that has it]. It's foam bathing, where, for up to six guests, we use this patented foam technology that distributes nutrients through the skin," said Leary. "This whole entire room fills up to your neck... At the end, there's a whole rain experience [and] everything flushes away."

The location will also feature other exclusives including Pilates and yoga classes and a high-humidity, low-temperature sauna. To further enhance its cult-followed ice bath classes – Remedy devotees are eager to be members of the "six-minute club" (those able to remain in



Here and below: Remedy Place Boston.



the 39 degree water for six minutes) – the Boston club includes heated stone beds where attendees lay during the pre-plunge breathwork portion.

Aside from all of the actual treatments, there are other moments of surprise-and-delight throughout the club, including Remedy's bottle service of ultra-luxurious water curated by a water sommelier.

The Boston location follows Remedy's recent SoHo opening which, according to Leary, has exceeded expectations in terms

of reservations and memberships. Following this opening at the end of the month, expansion is on the horizon, though Leary is tight-lipped about where exactly is next.

"Our clientele all travel to the same spots, and initially we want to target those main areas while throwing in some surprise clubs," he said, noting that developers reach out often regarding potential new locations. "The goal for me is to have 15 to 20 clubs before I transition to a new version of our brick-and-mortar."

BEAUTY

TikTok Star Mikayla Nogueira to Launch Beauty Brand



Mikayla Nogueira

● The makeup prep brand, Point of View, has backing from Imaginary Ventures.

BY KATHRYN HOPKINS

TikTok star Mikayla Nogueira is launching a beauty brand, backed by Imaginary Ventures.

Point of View Beauty is a makeup prep brand that will launch direct-to-consumer

on March 26 with five products: Drench It, a hydrating priming milk infused with 60 percent fermented rice water and Biopptide Complex, \$34; Drip It, a serum powered by MegaMirrored Molecular Complex, \$36; Whip It, a moisturizer with BarrierBolster Technology, \$38; Glaze It, a tack primer, \$28, and Amp It, a lip treatment with Elastin Glow Technology, \$22.

"I was approached two years ago with an opportunity to create a brand from

my personal journey," Nogueira, who has amassed 16.3 million followers on TikTok since joining the platform in 2020, told WWD. "For me, that first came about when I was working in Ulta Beauty. I saw the same things every day from customers. They would come into the store, and they would always ask similar questions along the lines of, 'why does my makeup never look good, and why doesn't my makeup look like yours?' The answer that I always came back with was, 'well, what are you doing to prep your skin for makeup?' And they would follow that with, 'well, I don't know what that is.'"

She would then guide them through the aisles, handing them products from around five different brands to curate a skin prep routine, which in turn proved to be the impetus for her brand.

"There is no single brand that is curated specifically for makeup that is able to be layered so beautifully that the products are essentially meant for each other. That is how I created this line," she said. "The five products we're launching with were specifically designed together on purpose, because they're meant to work together. I wanted to come up with the solution to this question that I was asked every shift."

The products were made in Korea, with Nogueira traveling there to work directly with the labs.

"I've had such an admiration and obsession with Korean skin care I just knew right away I needed to go to Korea to make these products, especially given

the textures and how unique they are," she said. "I actually had the opportunity to go to the labs where our products are made, and work with the chemists and tell them exactly what my vision was. They needed to be lightweight. They needed to be layerable. Pilling was something I wanted to avoid. I cannot tell you how many samples we went through to get to that point, because pilling is super common, especially when you're layering products."

Nogueira has been working on the brand with Ani Hadjinian, cofounder and chief executive officer, who previously worked at Augustinus Bader, Tom Ford and Bobbi Brown, among others.

Hadjinian was attracted by Nogueira's cross-generational interest. "She spans across these six generational gaps because she connects to people on this human level."

While Imaginary Ventures, led by Natalie Massenet and Nick Brown, plays across all stages, it is rare that they are there from the very beginning. It has previously invested in the likes of Westman Atelier, Skims and Glossier.

"We got to know Mikayla well in advance of partnering with her on this venture. We wanted to develop a relationship with her, because she was such a prolific content creator," said Kelly Dill, a partner at Imaginary. "It's special to come in this early and I think it's a real testament to our belief in the vision of Mikayla and Ani."

Terms of the investment were not disclosed.

BUSINESS

Pamela Lopez Retires From Nordstrom

● She had been with the Seattle-based retailer for more than 26 years.

BY LISA LOCKWOOD

Pamela Lopez, director of brand public relations at Nordstrom, has retired from the Seattle-based retailer. Her last day was Monday.

Lopez had been with Nordstrom for more than 26 years in a variety of posts including fashion PR director, fashion trend forecaster, brand team and managing director, content.

"My team's real focus was to bring the [Nordstrom] brand to life through all our brand launches and media coverage. We worked really closely with our social teams," said Lopez, who had been in her most recent role for seven years.

One of the biggest highlights was opening Nordstrom's New York flagship, she said. "That was a multiyear focus. The groundbreaking alone was a big celebration for us leading up to the store opening in 2019. Then we had to close the store due to the pandemic," Lopez said. She said Nordstrom stores were closed

from three to six months, depending on each city's jurisdiction.

"I was reassigned during that time to focus on COVID-19 communications within the company. On a strange level, that was a career highlight to protect our employees and making sure we were communicating about every reported COVID case in the company. It was an intense job but also shows how Nordstrom is so focused on our people."

Lopez said she also loved working with Olivia Kim, vice president of creative projects and home, and recently did a story with WWD about Catherine Bloom, one of the top personal shoppers in the country, joining Nordstrom as director of luxury styling. "I'm really curious to see how that impacts the company. We're giving her her own store. We're converting our Nordstrom Local on Melrose Avenue in L.A. to a Catherine Bloom for Nordstrom," Lopez said.

As for her plans, Lopez said she intends to focus on her family and especially help out her parents. "I'm excited to do yoga and go on an annual girls' trip to Hawaii. I'm excited to go buy flowers in the morning at Pike Place Market like people do. I want to try and bake focaccia. I'm also

excited to dabble in consulting. I've already heard from a few people," Lopez said.

In her most recent role, Lopez oversaw a team of eight people. She reported to Nordstrom's executive vice president and chief marketing officer Deniz Anders, who will be hiring her successor.

Asked how she enjoyed working for the Nordstroms, Lopez said, "I think the Nordstroms truly lead by example. They're the strongest merchants, and they really care about people."

She recalled doing store openings around the country. "We're now in every major market, but at the time, we weren't. We always did a media blitz. We'd go in and talk to the local media and educate them about Nordstrom if they never heard of Nordstrom. Some people would ask, 'What's the difference between Nordstrom and the Dillard's we already have?' It really truly is, the difference is the people. It's such a people place."

Lopez moved to Seattle in 1997 to take a job as a shopping editor at Microsoft after working in New York at magazines such as *Vogue* and *Esquire*, as well as PR firm, KCD "where I learned everything I know." She said she was at KCD when cofounders



Kezia Keeble, John Duka and Paul Cavaco were all there. "I learned everything from Ed Filipowski," she added.

Lopez left Microsoft to join Nordstrom in 1998. "Believe it or not, nordstrom.com didn't exist. I joined Nordstrom through their e-comm business as a content director. It was very cool to work on a start-up, if you can believe nordstrom.com was a start-up back then," Lopez said.

FASHION

Fashion Show at Ski Resort During Ramadan Stirs Debate

● Shivan & Narresh's cofounders discussed the backlash that they are facing and their original intentions.

BY ROSEMARY FEITELBERG

The Shivan & Narresh cofounders, whose recent fashion show at a ski resort in India during Ramadan sparked controversy and public debate, discussed the aftermath they are now dealing with.

The designers faced criticism from some government and religious officials, consumers and others, after the slopeside runway show at the Gulmarg Ski Resort on Friday. The pushback was due to the event being held during Ramadan and for featuring what some considered to be inappropriate clothing – bikini tops and a few other body-baring styles paired with their skiwear. To try to tamp down the backlash, cofounders Shivan Bhatiya and Narresh Kukreja issued an apology on X and removed any imagery from the show or references to it from their social media channels.

Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar year, is a holy month of fasting and spiritual reflection for the Muslim world. In India, this year's annual observance of Ramadan started on March 2 and it is expected to end on March 30 or March 31. (It is contingent on the sighting of one crescent moon to the next.)

The public outcry from such leaders as chief minister Omar Abdullah has also led to an official investigation. Abdullah had not acknowledged a media request on Tuesday. Bhatiya and Kukreja said they had provided the permits and other related information for the inquiry.

In a post on X on Monday, Sarah Hayat Shah, state spokesperson for the Jammu Kashmir National Conference, said the show was not organized by the government and no government money



A model walks the runway with designers Narresh Kukreja and Shivan Bhatiya at the Lakme Fashion Week in 2012.

or infrastructure was used for it. The situation has reportedly resulted in "heated discussions" in the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly. (Located in the northern part of the Indian subcontinent, Jammu and Kashmir had special status under Article 370 of the Indian constitution until that was revoked in 2019.) The controversy about the show has also sparked a public debate about fashion, and cultural and religious sensitivities.

Reached in New Delhi Tuesday, Shivan & Narresh's cofounders described the situation as "an oversight" on their part. They said they had invited nearly 100 guests – members of the media, influencers and clients – to the Gulmarg Ski Resort for a four-day celebration of their company's 15-year anniversary. Started as a luxury swimwear brand, Shivan & Narresh added skiwear five years ago, but Friday's fashion show was the first one to feature its skiwear. Kukreja said, "Clearly, it was a sound show. But it was unfortunate that the religious sentiment was completely an oversight on

our part," he said. "It was obviously held during the holy month of Ramadan so we have to do what is needed."

Asked if he or Kukreja observes Ramadan, Bhatiya said, "We are not Muslim. We do not observe it. We are Hindu. But the show was in a region that is heavily Muslim dominated....It didn't cross our minds honestly."

Kukreja said, "It was organized in the spirit of celebrating creativity. We were celebrating 15 years of being in the fashion business. We've been known for [designs for] summer holidays. We now wanted to do something iconic to celebrate our company's milestone, so we thought we'd do a presentation in a ski resort, marking our foray into winter holidays, ski and an apres-ski line with the [fashion] show."

Shivan & Narresh had "completely bought out" the Gulmarg Ski Resort from the owner in its entirety for four days of skiing, picnic lunches, snowmobiling, the fashion show and other activities for the guests, who were flown in for "the experiential trip," Kukreja said. "They were in-the-know. It's not as though

anybody was unaware of the facts."

A media request to the Gulmarg Ski Resort was not returned.

The luxury label spent approximately \$1,500 per person for the nearly 100 guests. "Our idea was to put Gulmarg on the tourist map. When you see the show, it looks like it could be anywhere in the world. We worked very hard for the past four months to make the show happen," said Kukreja, adding that the publicity plan for Gulmarg "backfired."

Acknowledging the "public outrage," Kukreja said he "personally does not like to be involved with anything that is political. We are running an honest business. The idea is to push the envelope, push the envelope to where society is headed. The segment of people that we cater to is very, very small and that includes Indians, who have settled all over the world."

Shivan & Narresh generates nearly \$45 million in annual sales, according to industry sources. With an online store and five freestanding stores, the luxury swimwear and skiwear brand aims to expand into other categories and regions including the U.S.

Asked about the negativity on social media, Kukreja said, "Yes, this has been a day. But there's also been a lot of support. It's healthy at the moment and we have not got any personal craziness yet."

He added, "I don't see what we have done was terribly wrong. It was a completely private event for only our guests. Unfortunately, the location was something that was an oversight on our part, [given that Gulmarg is in a region where Ramadan is largely observed]."

After one of the models was questioned by a stranger for eating peanuts on the street in Gulmarg during the fasting hours of Ramadan, the model responded that he was not observing the fast, according to Kukreja. "We were also taken aback [by that]," he said.

The founders said they have never promoted their luxury swimwear as "overly sexy." Despite the controversy, the latest skiwear collection will be shipped in November as planned to coincide with the start of the ski season. "That's when the rest of the country is looking to buy skiwear from us," they said.

Jenny Packham

Jenny Packham is on a Napoleonic streak, and can't seem to get enough of the long lines and neoclassical-inspired silhouettes of the era.

For pre-fall, she looked at post-Revolutionary France – and 1990s minimalism – and she continued in that vein for this latest outing, looking at Napoleonic France and taking the 19th century socialite Juliette Récamier as her muse.

Récamier was famous for her literary and political salons, and sense of style. She inspired many painters, including Jacques-Louis David, who depicted her lying on a style of chaise longue, now known as a recamier.

"I liked her style and personality," said Packham, adding that she set out to create strong, elegant "power play" clothing.

Her collection of eveningwear was spare, elegant and befitting a Roman, or Napoleonic, empress.

A strapless, columnar dress hit the floor in a shower of silver and gold sequins, while other gowns came with long billowy capes, military-style metallic embellishment on the shoulders or shiny fringes on the sleeves, a nod to France's first emperor, Napoleon.

There was more military flair in the shape of slim black gowns with gold embroidery that resembled bracelets on the sleeves, or medallion designs scattered across the front. One dress with long sleeves and a high neck was paved in gold sequins – for iconic women only.

Packham said that sales of cocktail dresses are "storming ahead" and she delivered more than ever this season.

They, too, had military rigor and shine. There were T-shirt and A-line dresses awash with silver and gold spangles and fringe, and a royal blue style with a tiered skirt shot through with silvery thread. Every last one deserved a salute. – *Samantha Conti*



Jenny Packham



Jenny Packham

POP CULTURE

Ralph Pucci Event Raises \$500,000 for Jazz House Kids

- Five-time Grammy winner Angélique Kidjo sang for a crowd of 175 that included the Talking Heads' David Byrne.

BY DAVID MOIN

"I've been a fan of Angélique's for over 20 years," said Ralph Pucci, of the Ralph Pucci International gallery for luxury home furnishings, lighting and art.

He was referring to Angélique Kidjo, the five-time Grammy winner described by Time Magazine as "Africa's premier diva" and by the BBC as among Africa's 50 most iconic figures.

On Thursday evening, Pucci transformed his sprawling Manhattan gallery on 18th Street into a jazz club with an open bar, Le Kool Champagne by Kool and the Gang and a crowd of 175 raising more than \$500,000 to support the Jazz House Kids music education and performance program.

But the main event was a rousing performance by singer Kidjo who joyously danced and pranced across Pucci's makeshift stage and got the crowd clapping, swaying and singing along to "Once in a Lifetime" by the Talking Heads as its lead singer and songwriter, David Byrne, was seated front row. Kidjo also sang "Redemption Song" by Bob Marley, and her own song, "Sunlight to My Soul,"



Angélique Kidjo performing with bassist Christian McBride at the Jazz House Kids benefit at Ralph Pucci International.

demonstrating her virtuosity. On some of her numbers, she was accompanied by the Jazz House Kids ensembles and the school's 30-piece choir.

"Angélique is the epitome of that world beat music," which blends traditional and pop music from different nations, said Pucci. "That's why David Byrne was there. He's integrated all that music for the Talking Heads."

Kidjo's performance mixed rhythm and

blues, jazz, soul and reggae, and in between numbers, she conversed with virtuoso bassist and composer Christian McBride, who is married to Melissa Walker, president and founder of Jazz House Kids. For each annual Pucci jazz night, always a fundraiser for Jazz House Kids, McBride accompanies and interviews a different music great.

Last year, he was on stage with Sting, and in past years he's been joined by Gregory Porter, Wynton Marsalis, Diana



Melissa Walker and David Byrne

Krall, Laurie Anderson, John Pizzarelli, Esperanza Spalding and Norah Jones.

McBride got Kidjo talking about her philosophy of life and opening up about growing up in Benin, West Africa in a family with 10 children, including her nine brothers.

"We were not rich. But even when you have very little, there is always someone who has less than you," she said. "We loved to open up our own to people and serve food. Food is socially a sign of welcoming...How you interact with people is what makes you a human being. To love somebody, you have to love yourself so much you have plenty to give. Hatred is easier, but we always have a choice."

McBride described her as "a force of nature, like a human tornado who swoops everybody up with her energy."

And Pucci added: "I have been a fan of Angélique's for over 20 years. I would play her music in the gallery all the time. Each year, we have a very different program and a very different performer. That's what makes the night so interesting and magical."

Princess Diana wearing a Catherine Walker suit with anchor-embossed buttons at the inauguration of the P&O Cruise Liner, Royal Princess, in 1984.



LIFESTYLE

How to Dress Like A British Royal

● A new exhibition at Kensington Palace looks to decode royal dressing over the past centuries by examining designs, details and the making of a soft power look.

BY SAMANTHA CONTI

LONDON – For hundreds of years, members of Britain’s royal family have been telegraphing messages, subtle and not, with their clothing, from the little anchors on the buttons of a red Catherine Walker suit to the delicate mauve brushstrokes on a long “half mourning” gown and the zipper fly on a pair of tartan trousers.

Members of the royal family have also set trends with their clothing, from the soft tailoring adopted by the Duke of Windsor after World War I to the bodice of a cotton Liberty dress that was expanded as the young Princess Elizabeth grew from a child into a teenager, to the Indian-inspired embroidery on a cape that belonged to Queen Victoria.

That meaningful clothing – and so much more – is on display in a new show at Kensington Palace called “Dress Codes,” which opens Thursday and runs until Nov. 30.

The 34 pieces in the show were drawn from an archive of more than 10,000 items in the Royal Ceremonial Dress Collection, which is housed at Hampton Court Palace. They may be few, but those pieces speak volumes about history, psychology and semantics, and are a testament to soft power dressing.

“One of the key things about royal dressing is that while it may look glamorous, it’s clothing that’s doing a job. It isn’t like normal dressing,” said Matthew Storey, curator at Historic Royal Palaces, who put the show together.

“Members of the royal family have events and duties and they represent Britain abroad,” he added, pointing to the long, red beaded Bruce Oldfield dress that Princess Diana wore for a royal tour to Saudi Arabia in 1986.

“This design would have been carefully considered, taking into account the country’s climate and culture, and occasion for wearing it,” said Storey, who – cleverly – displayed the sparkling dress next to a weathered Harris Tweed jacket from the ‘70s that Diana would have worn for countryside pursuits when she was younger.

The worn-in jacket has the name “Althorp,” the name of Diana’s family’s ancestral home, stitched into the inside, giving the jacket an aristocratic allure and the sort of luxury label that money can’t buy. Shown together, the red dress and olive coat telegraph sophistication, respect – and absolute privilege.

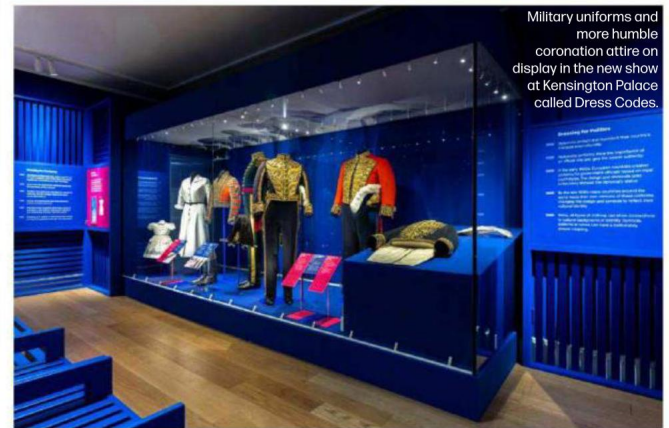
Other codes are more subtle. The anchor-embossed buttons of the Catherine Walker suit are so small that only those standing close to Diana would have noticed them. Yet they signaled a sense of duty and respect for the occasion, Diana’s inauguration of the P&O Cruise Liner, Royal Princess, in 1984.

Some of the clothing sparked a trend. The show also highlights the desire of the Duke of Windsor (the short-lived King Edward VIII) to cast off more formal attire and “dress soft” after World War I, adding a zipper to a pair of formal tartan trousers, and having other trousers made in America because he liked the fit better.

“He deliberately breaks away from the more formal and uncomfortable clothing of the older generation with a philosophy he calls ‘dress soft.’ He loved soft, country fabrics like the beautiful tweed suit from 1932 that’s in the exhibition, which is the epitome of his style. It has this lovely, soft English drape,” Storey said.



The red Catherine Walker suit with anchor buttons and green velvet dress, also by Catherine Walker. Diana wore the green velvet dress for a photo shoot with Mario Testino for Vanity Fair in 1997.



Military uniforms and more humble coronation attire on display in the new show at Kensington Palace called Dress Codes.



Queen Victoria’s mauve and white “half mourning” dress, and a cape with embroidery that nodded to her passion for Indian culture.



The Liberty print dresses that Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret wore as children. The bodice of Princess Elizabeth’s dress was altered multiple times over the years as she grew.

repeating micro-print that reads “Elizabeth Regina 1953.”

“I didn’t want just to show the clothing worn by royals or courtiers,” said Storey, adding that he was also interested in decoding the outfits of ordinary people and the messages they were sending – of respect, patriotism and honor.

Storey didn’t work alone. He put the show together with help from the youth groups that regularly work with Kensington Palace. They helped him to shortlist the looks that made it into the exhibition.

“I really wanted to know what the next generation considered interesting in the Royal Ceremonial Dress Collection,” Storey said. Those youths, aged 14 to 17, also chose the music for the exhibition, and worked with Storey and his team to create new designs that riffed on the clothing in the show.

Those designs are on display as part of the exhibition and include draped tartan trousers with punk flair in the spirit of Westwood; a snappy Chanel-meets-Queen Victoria black and white gown with camellia details, and a green velvet gown with a gold turban that riffs on the Catherine Walker design on display, all proof that the soft power dressing never dies.

“He pushed the boundaries with clothing that was absolutely according to his personal taste, and he does have a profound effect on taste,” said Storey, adding the duke also popularized “country” fabrics and Fair Isle sweaters.

The show looks beyond the royals to the way the courtiers, staff and members of the public dress when they are engaging with, or honoring, the royals.

On display is the black dress, cape and hat that Vivienne Westwood wore for her investiture as a dame at Buckingham Palace. The look takes in military tradition, Queen Victoria’s penchant for black, and Westwood’s inner – and outer – punk in the form of two small silver horns she wore on her head.

Other clothing includes the sweet cotton dresses worn by ordinary women and girls to mark Queen Elizabeth’s coronation in 1953. A toddler’s crisp cotton dress is covered with little toy soldiers, drums and crowns, while the woman’s outfit has a

Outside View

BUSINESS

Could Luxury Help Lead a Moral Renaissance in the U.S.?

● Laurence Lim details the deep cracks in luxury's core promise and how the industry can rebuild starting in the U.S.

BY LAURENCE LIM

Luxury brands searching for Eldorado as growth stalls in China are looking toward the U.S. — home to the world's wealthiest and nearly crisis-proof elite.

But navigating the American luxury landscape could prove more complex than breaking into what was once seen as “terra incognita” in China for fashion's European brands.

That's because the current luxury crisis goes beyond any economic downturn in China and exposes deeper cracks in the industry's core promise.

Luxury's Existential Crisis

In societies where inequality is soaring, materialism increasingly questioned and younger generations prioritize values over status, luxury must be redefined.

Years of relentless price hikes have frustrated consumers, yes, but the real challenge runs deeper: What is the value of luxury today?

The next generation of buyers isn't chasing status symbols — they're searching for escapism, belonging, meaning and spirituality. This shift is accelerating in the U.S., where political polarization has turned consumption into a reflection of personal values and identity.

It is a transformation being amplified by demographics.

By 2026, Millennials and Gen Z, who lean toward progressive ideals, will represent 75 percent of luxury buyers.

With the U.S. set to become a majority-minority nation by 2045 and nearly 30 percent of Gen Z identifying as LGBTQA+ — no matter who is in the White House currently — brands that fail to embrace diversity risk losing cultural relevance and consumer loyalty. Only a sincere and tangible commitment to values can reconcile luxury's tension between a pure logic of distinction and new consumer ideals.

The Societal Reaction

Consumption is inherently political in the U.S.

A staggering 83 percent of Millennials prefer brands aligned with their values. As government policies on diversity, equity, inclusion and sustainability are rolled back, celebrities are stepping in.

Kendrick Lamar's Super Bowl halftime show, with Samuel L. Jackson as Uncle Sam and an all-Black dance troupe in red, white and blue, dramatized America's fragmentation. And when Selena Gomez came to tears condemning the deportation of undocumented immigrants, she sparked national debate.

In a different setting, the 2025 Met Gala's tribute to Black Dandyism reinforces how high fashion has become a platform for social discourse, especially since the industry is still lacking diversity in creative leadership.

And consumers are also protesting with

Laurence Lim



their wallets.

Tesla shares have dropped significantly, reflecting, in part, worries about a consumer backlash to Elon Musk's efforts to take a chainsaw to the federal government with the backing of President Donald Trump. Stickers like “Not a fascist supporter, just a Tesla driver” highlight how quickly luxury brands can fall out of favor.

Once a symbol of innovation, Tesla now faces protests and vandalism, driven by Musk's divisive rhetoric.

A Hush in the Luxury World

While some big businesses and billionaires have sought to forge ties with the Trump world — LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton titan Bernard Arnault attended the inauguration — luxury fashion has largely remained silent.

This includes on issues the industry has in the past addressed passionately, like diversity, equity and inclusion.

Meanwhile, beauty retailers like Ulta Beauty, Sephora, Sally Beauty and E.L.F. have reaffirmed their commitments — with Sephora maintaining the Fifteen Percent Pledge, dedicating 15 percent of shelf space to Black-owned brands.

Hispanic consumers now drive 17 percent of beauty spending, while Black Americans account for 12.5 percent, proving that diversity is not just a social issue but a business imperative.

Symbolic gestures are no longer enough in this climate.

Brands must embed their values at the core of their identity. E.I.F., led by an Indian American chairman, boasts a leadership team that is 75 percent women and 40 percent people of color, making diversity integral to its DNA.

Some brands are taking bolder steps. Jaguar's rebranding campaign, “Copy Nothing,” embraced inclusivity, high fashion and queer aesthetics, breaking from its conservative roots. Despite alienating some older consumers, the campaign garnered 160 million YouTube views, successfully positioning Jaguar for a younger, progressive market. Ethical audacity, it seems, is essential for reconnecting with the youth.

On the Necessary Moral Elevation of Luxury

Beyond business strategy, embracing diversity and inclusion can reignite creativity and reshape luxury's cultural

relevance.

Pharrell Williams' leadership at Louis Vuitton epitomizes this evolution. His fusion of Americana, Black culture, Native American influences and Japanese underground style offers a fresh, hybridized perspective, making luxury feel relevant to younger audiences.

That's more than a creative revival — it's the kind of moral elevation that can restore luxury's soul. The scope of ethical responsibility is expanding and now encompasses data privacy, AI ethics, neurodiversity, mental health and intergenerational equity.

For luxury brands, values must become an inherent and consistent part of their identity — to become the core value of future luxury.

The political chaos today is a wake-up call for European luxury brands to make sure they are recognizing cultural diversity as a core value — and a rare chance to be on the right side of history.

Laurence Lim is the founder and managing director of Cherry Blossoms Intercultural Branding, an intercultural branding agency based in Hong Kong and New York City.

BUSINESS

Majority of Americans Fear Cybersecurity Risks in Online Banking

Amid the closure of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, increasing reliance on digital banking poses both opportunities and cybersecurity challenges for U.S. consumers.

BY ARTHUR ZACZKIEWICZ

Researchers from CardRates.com polled more than 1,000 U.S. consumers about online banking and found that 84 percent of respondents said they are worried about cybersecurity.

The research follows the recent closure of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau by the Trump administration. The CFPB was created after the 2008 financial crisis to protect consumers from “deceptive and unfair” financial practices.

“As these shifts continue to shape the financial landscape, understanding public

sentiment is more important than ever,” said authors of the CardRates.com report.

The research showed that 86 percent of Americans “believe online banking is the future of personal finance; however, 84 percent say cybersecurity in banking is a major concern,” the report stated. Other key findings included that 52 percent of those polled said they “believe online-only banks have stronger cybersecurity than traditional banks” while 67 percent of Americans polled said they feel comfortable using AI-powered tools in banking.

The report also noted that only 29 percent of Gen Z and 33 percent of Millennials visit a bank branch in person once a year or less. The report also revealed the top ways those surveyed secure their banking accounts, which include using two-factor authentication, monitoring accounts for suspicious activity and avoiding public Wi-Fi for banking. Other findings include that 44 percent of respondents said they use online banking



Hacker working on a computer.

apps daily and 18 percent said they exclusively use online-only banks. Fifty-two percent of those surveyed said online-only banks have stronger cybersecurity than traditional banks.

Regarding the threat environment, data breaches can result from user errors, such as sharing passwords, clicking on malicious links or falling for phishing scams. Fraudulent activities can often be traced back to insiders who abuse their access to sensitive information and systems.

There are also regulatory and security challenges. Some financial institutions still rely on outdated fraud detection systems, making them vulnerable to modern, sophisticated cyber-attacks. And

regulatory environments across countries vary and can be complex, making compliance challenging and sometimes leading to gaps that can be exploited.

Bobbi Rebell, CFP and personal finance expert at CardRates.com, said cybersecurity breaches are costly and inconvenient for consumers. “Taking steps like using two-factor authentication, taking the time to monitor your accounts for fraud as well as avoiding public Wi-Fi, do take a bit more effort,” Rebell said. “But we should remember that the bad guys also will have to make that extra effort as well and may choose easier targets. Anything that makes it even just a little tougher for criminals is going to be worth the extra effort.”

BUSINESS

Diane von Furstenberg Hosts Empowering Women’s Day Event

Cindi Leiva, Tina Brown, Ms. Tina Knowles and Diane von Furstenberg.

DIANE VON FURSTENBERG



DVF partnered with YouTube for a day of conversations featuring Sophia Bush, Aurora James and Ms. Tina Knowles, among others.

BY ALEXANDRA PASTORE

To mark International Women’s Day, Diane von Furstenberg hosted her annual InCharge celebration in partnership with YouTube. Led by YouTube creator Cleo Abram at YouTube’s NYC space at Pier 57, Furstenberg began the day of conversation by saying, “Kindness is a currency. Generosity is an investment.”

Following in the legacy of DVF’s International Women’s Day events, “InCharge & The Power of Kindness” brought together women across industries to discuss issues in a series of panels and performances. The audience was taken through the InCharge platforms (Connect,

Expand, Inspire and Advocate) to take the conversation a step further this year in exploring their relationship with the power of kindness.

The day’s first panel called “Being InCharge Is Owning Who We Are,” featured actress and activist Sophia Bush and Aurora James, founder of Brother Vellies. The conversation took a deep dive into how to make morals and money meet and what it means to be in charge while highlighting the collective power of women in business and society. Both women emphasized the importance of community and empathy.

“I think it’s pretty clear that women have been amassing power, that we know we’re stronger together, that we are opening businesses in record numbers,” said Bush. “We are investing in each other. We’re changing the way money moves in the world. We’re voting to protect women’s bodily autonomy in record numbers as well [...] I don’t think they were prepared

for our collective power, and so I think that they’re really doing everything they can now to rip it apart.”

As the conversation moved into the continued fight against inequity, James advised others to not “lose sight of your own communities, because that’s really where the power can happen.”

Empathy continues to be a big part of James’ playbook as she creates economic change with the 15 Percent Pledge. She added that “being able to talk in numbers is a big part of it as well, because a lot of people, they can’t do it unless they can track it.”

“I think one of the reasons the pledge was so successful is because we were able to put data to a really complicated emotional feeling that corporations have also really been struggling with,” said James. “It’s always hard negotiating with people who just are marrying one track about things and I think in this climate, it’s especially tough, you know. But I’ve also always said, like stumbling is evidence of momentum.”

Later in the day Alicia Menendez, cohost of MSNBC’s “The Weekend,” moderated a panel called “The Multiplier Effect.” Speakers included Shiza Shahid, cofounder of Our Place, Malala Fund and Now Ventures; Nelle Miller, co-chief executive officer of the New York Region, J.P. Morgan Private Bank; and YouTube creator Kinigra Deon. The discussion looked to explore the power of women’s leadership in action and how innovation, finance, storytelling and entrepreneurship have been used to drive economic growth.

The conversation highlighted the challenges of securing venture capital as a woman with less than 2 percent of venture capital currently going to women. The group also shared the importance of

consistent effort and diverse leadership in building successful businesses.

Shahid shared that she was rejected in many investor meetings when starting Our Place and that one reason for it may have been her business’ mission. “When we went into meetings with investors, we got over 100 ‘Nos,’ and that was for many reasons. We all know the stats, less than 2 percent of venture capital goes to women. That capital itself goes to women who have more access. So there were many reasons why we got rejected, including being seen as niche.”

In addition to businesses being rejected for being seen as niche, Menendez added that there is also a piece where women are pushed toward nonprofit spaces.

“We push women towards this idea that somehow wanting to make money is not evident or is not in the best interest of everyone,” said Menendez. “Once you have capital, you can choose how you have a powerful thing. And that is why I’m interested in, given I am in media, and we sort of enter this like a centrifugal conversation, we talk about why we don’t have more creators of color, why our stories are not accurately represented, and part of that is the ownership question.”

Miller said that there is a clear element of curiosity when she looks at how both Deon and Shahid started their businesses which she has seen in meetings with many successful founders throughout her career. She championed their “founders’ gut.”

Furstenberg ended the day with a panel called “Redesigning Our Lives: Masters of Bold Reinvention,” with Tina Brown, Ms. Tina Knowles and Cindi Leiva, chief executive officer of The Meteor. The group shared stories of embracing uncertainty and discussed how they have redefined what it means to be a matriarch.

Looking at what she has taught her daughters, Knowles said that among the most important lessons is that family comes first, to be strong in hard times and to always be true to yourself. Furstenberg said, “you are the children you have,” adding “I guess you’re pretty good,” at Knowles.



Taylor Iman Jones Illuminates In New Theatrical Project

The actress stars in "The Jonathan Larson Project," a new musical featuring unknown music by the "Rent" creator.

BY KRISTEN TAUER



Andy Mientus, Lauren Marcus, Taylor Iman Jones, Adam Chanler-Berat and Jason Tam.

For its off-Broadway debut, "The Jonathan Larson Project" went back to its roots: the East Village.

The new musical has officially opened at the Orpheum Theatre in New York, just a few blocks north of where Larson first staged his career-defining musical "Rent." Although Larson died suddenly at the age of 35, on the eve of the show's first off-Broadway performance, the writer left behind a cannon of creative output. Some of that lesser-known work arrives onstage courtesy of the "The Jonathan Larson Project."

The intimate – and at times nostalgic – production pays homage to Larson's legacy, which was heavily influenced by his experience living in downtown New York. But while "The Jonathan Larson Project" tips its hat to Larson's best known works, including "Tick, Tick...Boom!," the intention was to showcase the writer's range.

"As much as he obviously loved writing musicals, he also wanted to write songs for the radio," says Taylor Iman Jones, who stars as part of the five-person cast. Her first major solo in the show is a '90s-coded pop number, performed as a music video shoot. "He had some songs labeled: 'Whitney Houston songs,' aspirationally," she adds. "And so this is one that is written to be just a one-off radio hit wonder."

The new musical started out as a cabaret-style performance at Broadway haunt 54 Below, produced by programming director Jennifer Ashley Tepper. The fully staged off-Broadway production features one-off songs, mini-musical revues and excerpts, performed in alternating solos and several ensemble pieces.

The production benefits from Larson's self-archival tendencies: the show opens with video footage from the '90s, and includes scrappy songs that were likely never meant for the main stage, but provide insight into his creative process. Although the show lacks a central narrative storyline, the thread, of course, is Larson, and the central themes found throughout his work: the tension between art and commerce, friendship, addiction, politics and sexuality.

"We always ask ourselves, 'What would Jonathan think? Would he be into it? Do we think he would like this?'" Jones says of the musical's North Star. "And, obviously, he's not here to answer those questions, but he gave us plenty of evidence and plenty of material to know what he did like and what he was working toward," she adds. "And so we just do our best to bring those to reality in the best way that we can."

For Jones, who is from the Bay area and began acting as a preteen, "Rent" was an early introduction to the world of musical



Taylor Iman Jones

theater. "It's one of the first musicals I ever became obsessed with and ever knew front to back," she says. After high school, she starred in a location production as exotic dancer Mimi, the show's lead.

"Rent has been very important to me, not only as a musical and showing me what musicals can be, but also as a theater performer," she says. "Mimi, but 'Rent' and ergo Jonathan Larson, has always been super important to my foundation."

After several years of starring in regional theater on the West Coast, Jones decided to move to New York in 2016. "I'd kind of

exhausted the theater scene in San Francisco. And then I knew it was time to either put up or shut up, and just see what happens." Since landing in New York, she's starred in the Broadway musical "Six," originated the role of Andy Sachs for the 2022 world premiere of "The Devil Wears Prada" musical in Chicago and, most recently, starred in the musical adaptation of "Empire Records" for its world premiere last fall.

"The Jonathan Larson Project" opened on Monday, and is currently slated for a limited 16-week run. Reflecting on her intentions for the musical moving into

performance post-opening, Jones reiterated the idea of highlighting the breadth of Larson's work for old and new fans alike.

"We don't get to have him with us now. Who knows what else he could have written by this point," Jones says. "And so not only do I want to honor that legacy, but it's nice to remind artists that there's so much more to ourselves – it's not just the big things you put out; you never know what's going to be the thing that maybe makes you your big hit," she adds.

"He didn't even get to experience his big hit, but look how incredible his legacy is."

Fashion Scoops



Dakota Fanning at the Chanel show in Paris on Tuesday.

Going For Gold

The Olympics may have happened last summer in Paris, but Dakota Fanning is still going for gold. The actress selected a fully gilded suit decorated with stars and a rhinestone belt for the Tuesday morning show at Paris Fashion Week. It was a little bit country, a little bit rock 'n' roll – and 100 percent Chanel.

She's a bit of a Chanel regular, having hit shows in Dubai, Singapore and Dallas, but it was her first time in Paris. She was a fan of the bows that were a major theme of the show.

Fanning recently completed the series "All Her Fault" with Sarah Snook before the holidays. There are two directors for the series, but it felt very cinematic, she said.

The actress previously directed a short film, and hopes to get behind the camera again someday – if her nerves can handle it.

"I've always wanted to direct something, but I found the experience so stressful," she said. "As an actor, the director is the person you always ask all the questions to, and then when you become that person, it was like, 'Oh my god.' I felt an anxiety that I don't feel when I'm acting."

Any project will have to be compelling to get her to step into that role. "It just made me realize that I'll know, if and when that time comes, that it'll be something that I have to do. But I would like to check

that off the list."

In the interim she is working on producing projects with her sister Elle Fanning through their own Lewellen Pictures production company.

Riley Keough was ready for the day, up so early that it wasn't even bright yet. "Jet lag is real," she said of waking at 3 a.m. She got ready with WWD just before the show.

She missed two flights leaving Los Angeles and had to transfer in London in order to make it on time for the show. The Chanel ambassador would actually be experiencing her first front row at the Grand Palais – last season she performed while swinging inside a cage.

Keough wore a pleated white pant and cropped silk jacket with a black embroidered vest. The actress will temporarily be relocating to Dunkirk, France. She will start shooting a film in the northern city in two weeks.

Whitney Peak's denim was embroidered with Chanel and little hearts, her favorite detail being the Chanel double C button.

She also declared herself a bow fan, fond of the little detail. "And this show was bow down. There were bows everywhere," she said. Peak coveted a pair of shoes in the show, and said she hopes that she can grab herself a pair.

"Maybe if I'm a good girl they will let me try them on," she said.

But her upcoming film is about a bad girl, a bank robber to be precise.

"From bank robbing to the Chanel show – how crazy is my life?" she said. The film is titled "4 Kids Walk Into a Bank" and costars Talla Ryder, Teresa Palmer, Deacon Phillippe and Liam Neeson.

"It was a lot of fun, not to give too much away, but we dressed up in costumes with the bank heist. I've never done anything like that. I wouldn't know what it would be like to do. It was so much fun," she said.

Next up will be her first play this summer at the Williamstown Theater. While the work has not been revealed yet, she will have a monthlong run.

"I mean, I'm excited. I love a challenge. I'm warming up new muscles for sure," she said about hitting the boards every night.

Naomi Campbell was feeling bright and springy in a lavender minidress. The brand ambassador also praised the bow theme of the collection, so much so she wore one high up in her hair.

She is working with the Thai government's National Soft Power Development Committee to promote the fashion industry there and nurture local talent. One key tenet of the plan is to help train Thai models as well as promote them with international exposure.

It's an initiative she takes very seriously. "I just had a conversation yesterday [to ensure] that the models are treated correctly, that they're not just brought in for a season and then sent back. Because I'm understanding there's major repercussions for that psychologically to these girls, and we don't want that," she said. "We want to make sure that the safety nets are in place."

Campbell said she enjoys working with a new generation of models, and added that she is always friendly with new faces. "When I'm in a lineup, when I don't know the young girls, I just go and introduce myself. I love to hear what they have to say about life. I'm curious like that," she said.

Simone Ashley selected a sparkly Chanel two-piece, with a midriff-baring crop top. "I wouldn't say I usually wear sparkles. But I just thought, going to Paris, going to see a Chanel show – why not?"

She said her favorite look was a double denim two-piece.

Ashley has been in the studio working on music, a new creative outlet for her.

"I've been putting my head down, working away on that and I'm so excited

ON THIS DAY

Makeup artist Tom Pecheux's ethos of never sacrificing beauty for creativity served him well when creating runway to real-life ready products for his partnership with Estée Lauder, like the perfect orange eyeliner, as seen in WWD on March 12, 2011.

– Jasper Brown



to be able to speak more about it in the future," she said, hinting that both producing and singing are in the works.

She's also in the upcoming "F1" movie starring Brad Pitt. Ashley doesn't drive in the film, though, leaving the speed for Pitt and costar Damson Idris. That film will be released in June, the perfect timing to be in the running for France's biggest race of all: the Cannes Film Festival.

– RHONDA RICHFORD

Special Location

For Achilles Ion Gabriel, walking into CamperLab's new store in Paris' Marais feels like coming home.

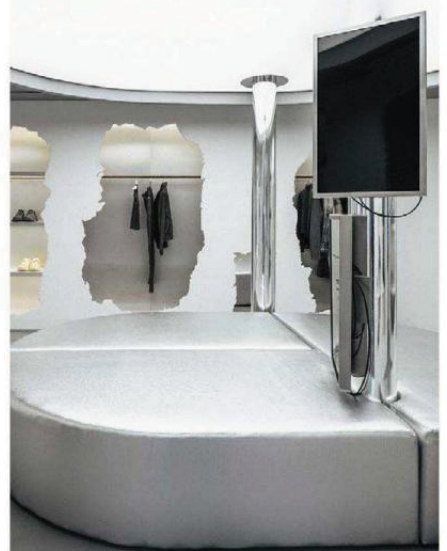
The Finnish designer, who became creative director of CamperLab in 2019 and took the reins of the entire Camper brand a year later, recalled that his first office in Paris, early in his career, was just steps away from the new store on Rue Debelleyme.

"The location is super special for me," he said Monday during a preview ahead of an evening launch event during Paris Fashion Week.

Ion Gabriel has been developing CamperLab – a younger, more experimental range by the Spanish label – with an expanded collection of genderless footwear and a new ready-to-wear push. Accessories are also a growing category, and for spring 2025, the brand launched sunglasses.

The boutique, located in the former Camper store space, was designed by

The modern design features broken concrete walls that frame the product.



Harry Nuriev, founder and creative director of Crosby Studios. The architect took a sleek raw concept and added unique industrial touches.

"Harry knows that I love not perfect things, so that's why we have broken walls," Ion Gabriel said. "I wanted to have the product on display, but I didn't want it to scream. I wanted it to be a little hidden."

The designer has evolved the shoe collection during the past five years, and among the key styles on display in the store are the brand's futuristic sneakers, which feature textured panels that swirl around a breathable mesh design with contrast edges on the laces.

Elsewhere in the

collection, Ion Gabriel took inspiration from a traditional wooden clog for new loafer, sandal and sneaker designs. "I like to morph a lot of different things. It doesn't have to be so literal," said the designer, who launched a namesake collection last year at Pitti Uomo.

In tandem with the store opening, CamperLab debuted a new stand-alone website on Monday, in collaboration with Giga Design Studio.

Looking ahead, the designer is planning a full Paris Fashion Week presentation in June, when he will reveal more of his vision for the growing ready-to-wear line.

– KATIE ABEL ▶



The "Imperfectly Perfect" exhibition by Rebecca Moses at Ralph Pucci International.

Moses' Moment

The National Arts Club is known to attract a fashionable and artistically inclined crowd, and Friday night was no exception.

Fashion designer and artist Rebecca Moses joined the Council of Fashion Designers of America's Marc Karimzadeh for a conversation about her career in the historic club. The CFDA's Steven Kolb and Lisa Smilor were also on hand, as well as other style-minded guests like Deborah Moses, Nicole Fischelis, Freddie Leiba, Dustin Pittman, Nancy Chilton, Yeohlee Teng, John Bartlett and Anthony Galante.

The self-described bohemian is known for her whimsical fashion illustrations, vibrant portraits celebrating women, imperfectly perfect mannequins, her own fashion collections and as former head designer of the Italian ready-to-wear brand Genny. Last fall Moses' creativity took her in another direction — a wallpaper collaboration with Momentum Textiles and Wallcovering.

The event's location, which overlooks Gramercy Park, is historic in its own right. The NAC is housed in the Samuel Tilden Mansion, a Victorian Gothic building that is a national historic landmark. In 1898, the author, poet and New

York Times' literary and art critic Charles De Kay set out to create a hub for the arts in New York City. With Louis Comfort Tiffany, the architect and sculptor Charles Rollinson Lamb and some of New York's other leading artists and patrons, they imagined the NAC as a gathering place for all types of artists and art lovers. When its original 34th Street location became too small, the financier and philanthropist Spencer Trask helped the club acquire the Samuel Tilden Mansion for a new base.

Moses shared highlights from her decades-long career in fashion. Asked on Monday what stood out to her about Moses' talk, Karimzadeh said via email Monday, "From leaving high school a year early to work to sharing fabric orders with Michael Kors to make minimums and succeeding Gianni Versace at Genny in Milan, Rebecca's professional and personal trajectory is nothing short of inspiring. Among her gems of wisdom were: 'The road to success is never a straight one, and we must all take risks; don't get hooked on the fame but cultivate your craft and discover the undiscovered magic within you; challenges, failures and losses encourage you to dig deeper.' Her words resonate well within and outside the confines of fashion."

Another fashionable

crowd is expected at the NAC on March 21, when Ruben Toledo will be honored with the club's Medal of Honor.

— ROSEMARY FEITELBERG

Looking To Munch

Rejina Pyo has partnered with Oslo's Munch Museum on an Edvard Munch-inspired capsule ahead of the "Edvard Munch Portraits" exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery, which opens on Thursday.

The collection includes silk scarves, jewelry and a cast iron mirror, featuring colorful prints and graphic shapes the London-based designer said were inspired by a trawl through the Munch museum's archive and a visit to Munch's studio in Oslo.

"His expressive lines and depth, particularly in his woodcuts, inspired the cutout motifs in the jewelry and scarves," Pyo said. "The mirror itself is a portrait mirror, playing on the theme of portraits seen in exhibitions like the National Portrait Gallery, while also reflecting Munch's emotive portrayal of the human form."

Patterned scarves, featuring painterly swirls of reds, blues and yellows, spring from Munch's vivid color palette, while chain-link-esque jewelry captures the emotive, fluid quality of his brushstrokes.

Pyo said the museum reached out to collaborate shortly after her "As She Is" exhibition in October at the Soho Revue Gallery.

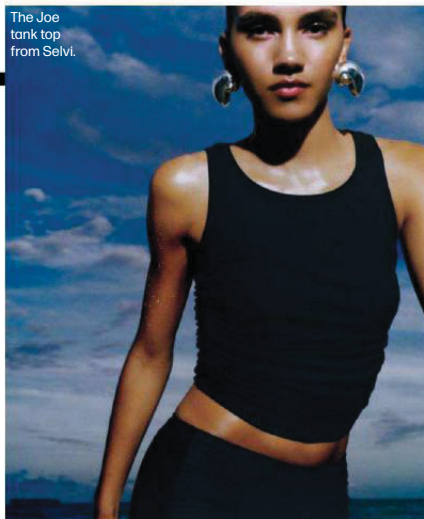
In celebration of the brand's 10-year anniversary, Pyo chose works from 19 artists that explored the subject of womanhood. Her own artwork was on display, too, a factor that Pyo said was foundational for the collaboration: "They were a fan of the brand and saw the potential for a collaboration, particularly after recognizing my passion for art and my work as a painter."

"This exciting collaboration with Rejina Pyo breathes new life into Munch's legacy and offers a fresh, contemporary perspective on his enduring influence on contemporary artists and designers," added Tone Hansen, director of the Munch Museum.

The collection is available from Wednesday at the National Portrait Gallery, Rejina Pyo's Soho store, and the Munch Museum. — VIOLET GOLDSTONE

New Line

Alexandra Benezra had wanted her own fashion label since the age of 16, and now, at 32, she's realizing



The Joe tank top from Selvi.

that dream and readying Selvi, a contemporary fashion brand that will debut on Friday.

The founder of ASB PR, a boutique communications agency, Benezra said she wants to sort out the challenging part of getting dressed, and focus on basics such as simple white trousers, long black dresses and tank tops.

"I'm addicted to shopping, but I always find myself coming back to the basics — I'm always accessorizing them," she said in an interview.

"When you're outside the fashion world, it's easy to think that the only [route] to having a brand is to become a designer. Once I fell into the industry, I came to realize that you can be a creative person in many different ways," she added.

The brand is launching with 15 pieces, and each one takes its name from Benezra's list of baby names — she currently has two young daughters.

The pieces range from \$55 for a ruched tank top, known as Joe, to \$179 for an Esme A-line skirt and \$228 for a sleeveless turtleneck dress with pleating called the Dylan.

"I wanted prices that everyone could buy into, but at the same time I didn't want to compromise on the quality of the fabrics," Benezra said.

The name of the brand is an ode to her mother's maiden name, who she considers her style inspiration.

"We actually wear a lot of the same things. This has caused fights, when she's worn something I've just bought," she said.

Feeling comfortable in the pieces was Benezra's number-one goal. The tank tops are ruched on the side to hide any "uncomfortable body parts on a day you're not feeling yourself," while the dresses and trousers have been designed with all body parts in mind.

At 5 feet, 2 inches, Benezra deliberately created sizing that was a reflection of real women. "I did three rounds of

fabric sampling and I tested them out by wearing them before putting anything into production," she said.

All of the pieces are made in Colombia, where she has people working on the ground.

She's started slowly, producing 385 units in total, but said she's ready to put her foot on the gas once things start selling.

She plans to expand Selvi's categories by venturing into childrenswear, and will continue to run her communications business separately. She said she plans to "take her time" with Selvi as "nobody builds a brand overnight."

— HIKMAT MOHAMMED

Moving Spots

The Madison Avenue store reshuffle continues this week with a new flagship from Gianvito Rossi.

Originally located at 963 Madison Avenue, Rossi moved his Upper East Side shop 11 blocks down the street to a space at 729 Madison Avenue on the corner of East 64th Street.

Spanning two levels, the company said the boutique "marks a crucial milestone in the Italian Maison's relationship with the city," after growing a loyal following among New Yorkers. The boutique follows previous openings for the company in South Coast Plaza, Bal Harbour,

Bloomingdale's in New York and the Crystal Palace shops in Las Vegas.

"We are very excited to open our new Madison Avenue flagship," Rossi told FN. "The boutique's modern design reestablishes our Maison's standard of luxury and craftsmanship. It is the perfect place to display our shoes and welcome our clients to celebrate this next chapter!"

First impressions of the new store can be seen from the outside floor-to-ceiling window, where passersby can see the distinctive Cipria pink interior welcoming them inside.

Once inside, visitors are welcomed into an intimate ambience that nods to the brand's Milan flagship boutique. Interiors are characterized by soft velvet and sinuous curves that are balanced with ribbed surfaces and marble niches, the company noted.

As for the boutique's offering, the store display shines a spotlight on Rossi's signature styles, including the Gianvito pump and the new spring 2025 collection.

Rossi founded his namesake brand in 2006 in San Mauro Pascoli, Italy, after spending years studying shoemaking under his footwear-guru father Sergio Rossi. Best known for his sophisticated heels and the signature muted shade of powder pink of their interior soles, the shoe designer sold a controlling stake in the company to Compagnie Financière Richemont in 2023. Financial terms of the deal were not disclosed but Rossi retains a stake in the firm.

The deal further encouraged Rossi to expand the distribution footprint with store openings, as well as widen the product assortment.

Last year, Rossi's signature Portofino sandal turned 10, marked with the launch of a special anniversary collection. Inspired by the colors of the Italian jet-set destination the sandal is named after, the colorful limited-edition range was available in two heights. — STEPHEN GARNER ■



A scarf from the capsule.

"Imperfectly Perfect" exhibition, photography by Thomas Iannaccone



Inside Gianvito Rossi's new New York boutique.