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WWD

Fashion. Beauty. Business.

Waiting and Watching

Retailers and brands are analyzing the Trump administration's tariffs – and anxiously waiting to see how they actually play out.

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Creative Push

"Creative director" has become fashion's favorite job title, with a host of brands and fashion chains now tapping their own to up their games.

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Pucci in Portofino

The Italian brand showed its spring 2025 collection in a former abbey on the Italian coast, an ideal location for its jet-set image.

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SALONE DEL MOBILE PREVIEW

Vuitton's Growing Home

The Louis Vuitton Home Collections that include five product categories will be unveiled during Milan Design Week and at the renovated Via Montenapoleone flagship. The French luxury brand worked with some of the most highly regarded designers and here is a first look at the collection, presented at the stately Palazzo Serbelloni. *For more on this and what's ahead at Salone del Mobile, see pages 11 to 33.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY DANIELE MANGO

BUSINESS

Retailers Rush to the Tariff War Room, But Wait to See What Comes Next



Donald Trump

- Brands and retailers are standing pat for now, watching to see how President Donald Trump's trade war plays out.

BY EVAN CLARK AND JEAN PALMIERI

President Donald Trump's "Liberation Day" tariffs have sent fashion's C-suites to the war room.

Right now leaders are still planning, taking the lay of the land, exploring their options and rerunning their numbers.

But if Trump's dramatic bid to remake global trade sticks for any length of time – adding a 34 percent tariff on goods made in China, a 46 percent levy on Vietnam and more – there are few business plans in retail and fashion that won't have to be thrown out.

Luxury goods might fare better than more price-sensitive products, but a fallout in the economy would hit everyone.

And so Wall Street tanked for a second straight day on Friday, sending the S&P 500 down 6 percent to 5,074.08 – forcing the market down 21.2 percent in just six weeks.

The megacap consumer stocks – Amazon.com, Alibaba, Procter & Gamble Co. and Walmart Inc. – collectively lost more than \$161 billion in market capitalization on Friday.

Hopes that Trump could cut a deal with Vietnam, which proposed bringing their own tariffs on U.S. goods down to zero, helped Nike Inc. and Lululemon Athletica recoup some of their losses from Thursday.

But plenty of others fell further. TJX Cos. Inc., Simon Property Group Inc. and Estée Lauder Cos. Inc. gave up a total of \$7.9 billion in the market.

As action-oriented as retailers' high-powered C-suites tend to be, consultant Sonia Lapinsky, a managing director at AlixPartners, said chief executive officers

need to sit on their hands a little while longer and see what happens next.

"They shouldn't be reacting and doing things just yet, but they better be doing some scenario planning," Lapinsky said. "They better figure out what their options are and what they could do depending what happens. This is major. This is not the 5 percent to 10 percent [tariff increase] that we were talking about before.

"No way we think we can just pass all the price along" to shoppers, she said. "That's not going to happen at a point where consumer confidence is at the lowest in 12 years. Many retailers we're talking to have had their worst months in February and March than in many years."

Instead, retailers need to get a real feel for the market right now so when they do start to adjust, they can move with some surety.

"We need a tariff war room," Lapinsky said. "We need a command center where the data is available and we start to build real projections on real data and are ready to make these decisions when we have to make these decisions."

When retailers do move, Lapinsky said they're likely to start to cancel and delay orders from vendors as they look at "their entire margin profile."

Brian Ehrig, a partner in Kearney's consumer practice, said the industry was in a state of "shock and awe" on Friday.

"You can't just lift a factory out of Cambodia because you don't like the tariffs, because you've got to find somewhere else that can make it, you've got to qualify them. We can't forget that they also need to take care of human rights and all these other things. Half a year is probably the best case to reposition something.

"But would you even want to do that right now before the inevitable – at least what I think is the inevitable – bilateral negotiations happen?" he said.

Companies are also going to have to start listen more closely when Trump talks.

"One of the things that we've been encouraging clients to do since Trump won the election is to take seriously what he has to say about foreign policy," Ehrig said. "He's told us what he planned to do, and he's pretty faithfully, whether you like it or not, he's executing against that plan."

Fashion players all along the supply chain are going to have to figure out where they fit in that plan and how they will work together as it and the economy evolves.

While there already have been a lot of price increases in luxury – with pushback from consumers in some cases – retailers think prices could still go higher without any resistance from customers.

One CEO said that while the European luxury brands face a new 20 percent tariff, not as much of it will pass through as some think.

Instead of importing a \$1,000 handbag and paying an additional \$200 at the border, leading to a \$2,400 retail price, brands are bringing the bag in at \$800, paying \$160 extra and transferring it to their U.S. subsidiary at something closer to \$1,100.

That would equal a \$2,200 retail price.

"You're probably going to end up with a 10 percent price increase," the CEO predicted of luxury goods made in Europe. "If you look at retail prices over the last couple of years, they've gone up 10 percent a year. If everything else was equal, you're not looking at the luxury consumer even really flinching.

"The bigger problem for that business right now is the market itself and the uncertainty and the fact that this is an actual trade war," with China now retaliating with a new tariff on U.S. goods.

Even so, that won't be true for everybody and tension in the system will only grow as both supply and demand get

disrupted at the same time.

"Brands will have to absorb the tariff costs for the next three to six months," said Gary Wassner, who as CEO of Hilldun Corp. helps finance orders designers send to retailers. "Those goods have already been sold to the retailers but not yet delivered to the brands. Their only option is to go back to their suppliers and bargain with them.

"The problem is that presidential policy is so unpredictable," he said. "There is a bit of wait and see. But everyone must weigh their options should this trade war linger on. The uncertainty is not healthy for the economy. Everyone is in a frenzy. If consumers pull back on spending out of fear and uncertainty, retail will suffer, which will impact how fast they pay vendors. The brands will suffer the most. We will see quite a few failing."

For now, both retailers and vendors seem watchful, careful not to make any big moves that can't be undone.

"We're being told it's business as usual from the big brands," said Bob Mitchell, co-CEO of Mitchells Stores. "We haven't seen any reactionary moves. It's just too early. Brands are all still honoring their pricing."

Tariffs aside, prices inched up some 3 to 5 percent over the past few seasons without customer backlash.

Besides the tariffs themselves, there's the impact that such a broad-based change in trade policy will hurt the economy.

But what is concerning to both him and his vendors now is the impact of tariffs on the macro economy. "If it puts us into a recession, people will buy less," Mitchell said.

Ken Giddon of Rothmans in New York agreed.

"Consumer confidence and what they feel about their lives is more important than tariffs," Giddon said, adding that 8 percent of wealth "evaporated in two days. That's a bigger deal than 10 to 20 percent tariffs."

Even so, tariffs still bite and Giddon said 95 percent of his assortment is imported. He has spoken to a few vendors and the consensus is that if the tariffs stick, hopefully the costs can be split.

Giddon said he'll decide on a "case-by-case basis," however, if he'll play ball with the vendors. "No one is stepping up for me when I have problems, but we'll see."

The wave of tariffs is big enough to get almost everyone soaking wet and it could also bring partners closer together.

Carolyn D'Angelo, who oversees the Nicole Miller brand as senior managing director of brand operations at Gordon Brothers, doesn't have the burden of producing apparel, but has to work with the licensees who do.

"They're the ones that are figuring out, 'How am I going to make this product, keep the integrity of the product, keep the design of the product, keep the look, feel, but offer a really good value to the consumer?'" D'Angelo said. "It's working really closely hand in hand with them. We don't exist without our licensees or our retail partners. So we are doing a lot of listening. We are doing a lot of meetings with our licensees to figure out how all three can win in this.

"It's the brand owner, it's the license state, and it's the retailers," she said. "The three of us really have to be working together because we all need that end consumer to buy our product."



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FASHION

Why 'Creative Director' Is Fashion's Favorite Job Title



A\$AP Rocky, in Ray-Ban, is the eyewear brand's first creative director.

- A host of fashion chains and brands recently named their first creative director in a bid to burnish their style credentials.

BY MILES SOCHA
WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM LILY TEMPLETON

Fashion's great game of musical chairs at Europe's big luxury houses is fueling an obsession with creative directors on social media, rife with memes about who's getting hired and fired — or should be.

Now high-street chains, retailers and specialty fashion brands are getting swept up in the fray, with many recently naming their first creative director in a bid to burnish their style credentials, ramp up storytelling and forge a stronger vision of the brand image and communications.

Among those that have taken the plunge are Iro, Ray-Ban, Eddie Bauer, Etam, ThreadBeast, Mithridate, La Martina, Begg x Co, Harvey Nichols, EBIT and Russell & Bromley.

"You can sum it up under marketing: There's a big elevation trend in the industry — to become a bit buzzier, a bit more relevant," said Achim Berg, founder of Frankfurt-based FashionSights, an independent corporate think tank. "People love to present themselves in a bigger way and this is reflected in the role of a creative director."

Headhunters and other experts agree there's plenty of upside when mid-tier or premium brands name a creative director, especially amid a slowdown in luxury due partly to widespread price increases that HSBC has dubbed "greedflation."

"These brands have a real opportunity, when luxury starts softening, to create a real point of view," said Karen Harvey, founder and chief executive officer of an eponymous consulting and search firm in New York. "What comes with that is the need to really refine DNA, refine their creative point of view, and make a strong

connection with the audience."

Berg, a former management consultant at McKinsey & Co., noted that most fashion brands of any scale already have designers, merchants and product chiefs leading the creative charge.

However, today brands must do constant storytelling to engage consumers, hence "it is not un-clever to personalize this and put someone at the forefront," he said.

Harvey agreed, noting most fashion companies shelter strong heads of design.

"A creative director brings something else — training in brand codes and DNA and connecting the dots between the brand and the product, the brand and the audience and bringing an elevated perspective," she said in an interview. "I think a brand is going to hit its ceiling when the focus has been purely on clothes."

In most cases, brands tapped senior fashion designers for their first creative director — Iro nabbing someone who designed for houses including Lanvin, Rabanne and Dior, La Martina tapping a chief brand strategist from Tod's — though Ray-Ban went for American rapper A\$AP Rocky.

There are potential pitfalls, observers agreed.

First, hiring a creative director introduces a new hierarchy into an organization that may have been more democratic in the product creation perspective, Harvey said. Power held by retail, merchandising and marketing executives may diminish, or at least must be shared with the new creative leader.

In addition, there is always the risk of poor casting.

"A year after somebody's come in and started putting their hand on things, if it doesn't check in the first two or three collections, it's hard to wind back," Harvey said. "If they take the collection too far away from what the consumer is used to, they could be unintentionally walking the consumer away from the brand, so I think they have to be careful."

Looks from La Martina's fall 2025 collection.



Mathias Ohrel, founder of m-O, a Paris-based recruitment firm in the luxury sector, said elevating the product and the content is what drives brands to recruit their first creative director.

Last October, John Skelton, a British retail executive perhaps best known as founder of London retailer LN-CC, was named cultural and creative director of EBIT, a clothing brand that aims to spark conversations about mental health.

"It's very unusual, and his title is cultural and creative director, plus the discussion on mental health that he's going to drive is very original," Ohrel commented. "But it illustrates this idea that you need to be more singular on the market....Now, it's all about editorialization of everything. The objective is to enhance communication, image, positioning and the editorialization of content."

In Ohrel's view, "when you hire a creative director, you don't replace the designers who create the product, but you create a new layer of coherence."

He cautioned that introducing a creative director can be a "shock" for an organization.

"It is difficult for the existing teams. Some of them may have been working in the company for 20 years, and all the sudden, they are more remote from the vision than they used to be," Ohrel said. "So it's very much a management challenge for a creative director to be able to rally the company around his or her vision."

A pyramidal structure, wherein ideas trickle down from haute couture or runway collections, is typical in the luxury sector, but unfamiliar in high-street chains or mid-tier brands. "The power in these companies was always more into merchandising and buying than the creative vision," Ohrel said.

So when does a fashion chain, retailer or mid-price brand need to hire a creative director?

According to Harvey, it's a matter of ambition, and wishing to stand out from the crowd.

"For brands to really get engagement, they need something more than clothes," she said. "You have a few options: collaborations, bringing on a creative director or launching subbrands to address certain markets."

"Typically, a CEO alone, a merchant alone or a CMO alone without a very focused vision, can't execute the kind of engagement," Harvey said, noting that the strategy must be comprehensive, stretching from social media to the retail experience.

FirstSights' Berg also mentioned celebrity affiliations as another possible path to

elevation. But bringing on a creative director "signals a new beginning. It provides a new story, hopefully generating some interest from fashion people."

The mechanism is similar to what Europe's big heritage houses have done in recent decades: bringing in a strong visionary to give the brand meaning, a look and a silhouette, Berg said.

Mary Gallagher, senior consultant at Find executive consulting, noted that collaborations between marquee designers and the high street — Karl Lagerfeld and H&M were the pioneers in 2004 — have yielded to fast-fashion giants hiring luxury veterans as full-time creative directors: Clare Waight Keller for Uniqlo C and Christophe Lemaire for Uniqlo U; Zac Posen for Gap; Vanessa Seward for Begg x Co. and, most recently, & Other Stories, which said its newly appointed chief

creative officer Jonathan Saunders would be "shaping how the brand evolves and expresses itself across all touchpoints."

"So far, consumers of these brands are excited and engaged. If the brand is playing the long game, it could be a win-win," Gallagher said in an interview.

In her view, the optimal set-up for success is "for the creative director to have excellent ancillary support and to keep close to the business side, but for the business side to stay in its lane creatively — not commercially — and allow time for things to develop."

Gallagher also gave a thumbs-up to fashion chains or retailers bringing on a creative director, who can "enhance the tone, vision and design aesthetic, mixing archives, if they exist, trends and innovation."

"Bringing in a creative director signals the brand wants to distinguish itself from the competition or it may want to reposition itself, its house codes and DNA," she said. "Beyond actual design, so much of what any creative director does is make choices. Even if they're not designing for the avant-garde or luxury, a creative director of a high-street brand is steering and curating the quality of the offer."

Asked if consumers are aware and interested in the creative personalities behind the fashions they buy, Gallagher noted that the "press, content creators, social media and others are keeping a scorecard of these changes, so for the general public there's a trickle-down effect of interest if there's an actual 'name' designing clothes for the high street."

To be sure, a designer's fame tends to multiply quickly once named to a big brand. Argentinian designer Adrian Apollaza, who worked in the studios of Loewe and Chloé, had 15,000 followers on Instagram before he joined Moschino as creative director in January 2024, and nearly 70,000 today, for example.

ListenFirst, the social analytics company, detected an 18 percent increase in fashion creative director conversations in 2024 versus 2023.

According to fashion historian and writer Tony Glenville, the term creative director emerged around the late '70s, at the same time as creative consultants and fashion forecasting.

"It was the boom time for fashion and huge quantities of product," he said. "As brands became huge and global, they needed roles to keep everyone on message."

Today, creative director and artistic director are sometimes used interchangeably, though the latter title is more common in watches and jewelry.



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WWD

The Reviews



Emilio Pucci

PORTOFINO, Italy – Stocks globally may be tanking and the fashion industry may be coming to terms with the new wave of Trump tariffs, but leave it to Pucci and artistic director Camille Miceli to bring a whiff of much-needed respite with her joyful and colorful designs.

Miceli chose the stunning La Cervara, a former abbey on the coastal road to Portofino, for her spring 2025 show. First erected in the 12th century, the abbey complex is a designated National Monument of Italy, with a breathtaking view of the Tigullio Gulf, an Italian Renaissance-style garden that directly faces the sea and a wisteria pergola. Miceli timed the show for around 230 guests shortly before sunset, leading to numerous Instagrammable moments.

It was the ideal setting for her fashion show, centered on the Marmo, a marble-like print she revived since her first collection in 2022, and inspired by the reflection of the sun onto the sea.

This season, the print was revisited in soft sorbet and powder pink hues, winding around black waves on flowing silk pants and shirts. It was also reproduced through printed sequins or metal eyelets and through black and white sea shells, hand-stitched by the Pucci artisans – still at work backstage, sewing one shell at a time on a blouse top or a fringed skirt. In fact, for this collection Miceli raised the bar on craftsmanship, for a sophisticated lineup that featured more black than in past lineups. Pucci's signature prints were recurring, but at times merely details on the hem of a sleeve of a little black dress or appearing through the fringes of a dress or a cape.

The Stella print, an homage to the moon and the stars, and the Maddalena, or

"gocciolone," reminiscent of an expanded drop, defined by sleek and graphic curves, appeared on a caftan or a minidress.

Iride and Orchidee were also signature prints that Miceli revisited. "I change the colors but never the names," said the designer, who always pays tribute to founder Emilio Pucci.

Miceli said she wanted her designs to look airy, with fluid shapes, and she worked with "disproportions," narrower skirts under larger "balloon" blouses in poplin cotton. "I like the idea of the trompe-l'oeil; they look like two pieces, but it's actually one dress," she said.

She also created silver bijoux that looked like tattoos on the skin, reproducing the marble print. "I remember how Karl [Lagerfeld] said that when you wear Pucci, it's as if you have a tattoo," remarked Miceli. The laces of the sandals also wove around the models' legs, looking like tattoos. ▶



Miceli staged her first runway show for Pucci in Florence in 2023, following up with Rome last year. Before that, she opted for multiday lifestyle “experiences” in such jet-set destinations as Capri and Saint Moritz – resort towns that, like Portofino, have attracted European aristocracy and the international jet-set since the 1950s.

Asked about this location, Miceli said she had wanted to stage a show in a home “for some time” – although the estate, now privately owned, is not your average abode. “I know this was an abbey, but for me, I see it as the house of the Pucci woman. The gardens, the view, what more do you want? And I love the small stones of the black and white floor.” Indeed, while reminiscent of the marble print, she said she does not design her collections with a location in mind.

Reflecting on the changing habits of consumers, Miceli said “we are very lucky because things are going very well – knock on wood – and I think women come to Pucci because when they wear the brand they want to feel special, they don’t want to be part of a uniform crowd, and this is increasingly so compared with the past. And also because Pucci is synonymous with joy and femininity.”

America continues to be a very strong market for Pucci, which will open a store in Houston this month. The Portofino boutique was just redesigned with the help of architect Pierre Passebón.

Keeping prices in check and in line with the brand is also key for Miceli, targeting different women – which was reflected both in the casting that also included the

likes of Kristen McMenamy, Karen Elson and Naomi Campbell, who closed the show – and in the pool of young influencers dancing in their seats to the the soundtrack by Nada.

“I like how Pucci has a very clear identity,” said Pierre-Emmanuel Angeloglou, who was named deputy chief executive officer of Christian Dior Couture last month. (Pucci is controlled by LVMH Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessy). “The challenge is to always

bring novelty to the brand respecting its identity, maintaining its lightness, accessibility, joy, and sophisticated femininity that I find beautiful. And Camille transmits a laid back attitude and an energy that is contagious.”

The executive, speaking ahead of the show, also talked about the see now, buy now format for Pucci, “fitting for the brand, which has its own visibility outside the fashion weeks’ schedule. And how perfect to be able to show when the days get sunnier, in a beautiful location and you can choose to wear these [summery] clothes right away.”

Marisa Berenson also enthused about the show, “beautiful and brilliant. Camille is so talented and creative, she

modernized the brand but kept the Pucci DNA.” She was also happy about returning to Portofino. “It brings back so many wonderful memories for me; I’ve been here many times in the past when I was young,” she mused. Wearing a stunning necklace in mother-of-pearl and crystals, she said it was part of her own namesake jewelry line. “I live in Marrakech now so I make them there. I regenerate there, when I have a little corner of paradise but then I love being out in the world,” she said.

Berenson next week will be in Milan as Michela Bruni Reichlin will be selling her jewelry in her showroom on Via Montenapoleone. She is also in the middle of filming between Paris and the south of France a movie she described as a “psychological investigation.”

– Luisa Zargani

BUSINESS

Guess Explores WHP Buyout Amid Tariff and Market Challenges



Iris Law for Guess Jeans.

- The denim brand said it directly produces and distributes \$200 million worth of goods that would be subject to higher U.S. tariffs.

BY EVAN CLARK

Guess Inc. is evolving, through the tariff storm and more.

The denim brand's fourth quarter came in stronger than analysts forecast and the company laid out a series of initiatives to reorient operations – from shuttering 20 North American stores to looking for a

partner to take on its business in China.

Fourth-quarter revenues increased 5 percent to \$932 million while adjusted earnings per share fell 26.4 percent to \$1.48, but were still better than the \$1.37 analysts forecast, according to FactSet.

But there's plenty more change and potential change on the horizon.

Guess said a special committee of its board has retained investment bank Solomon Partners and law firm Willkie Farr & Gallagher as it evaluated a buyout offer from brand management company WHP Global.

Last month, WHP offered to pay \$13 a

share to investors other than cofounders Paul and Maurice Marciano and chief executive officer Carlos Alberini. That sets up a scenario where WHP would own the intellectual property while the Marcianos and Alberini take on the operating portion of the company, a source told WWD.

But no matter who owns the business, Guess is going to have to figure out how to operate in a world with higher duties.

Guess forecast sales would rise 3.9 percent to 6.2 percent this year, but that projection didn't account for any impact from President Donald Trump's towering "Liberation Day" tariffs set to reorder the

global sourcing landscape.

On a call with analysts, Alberini painted a picture of a company that is well-balanced and ready to push ahead.

"We operate a very diversified business model geographically," Alberini told analysts on the call. "Roughly 75 percent of our business is conducted outside of the U.S. and therefore, not subject to increased tariffs."

"With respect to the remaining 25 percent, our estimate of the cost of the products that we directly produce and distribute in the U.S. is roughly \$200 million," he said. "About one-third of this total relates to Rag & Bone, which attracts a more affluent customer, which gives us greater flexibility and pricing power. The remaining two-thirds of that relates to the gift business in the U.S., where we have a substantial outlet business."

"Based on the nature of the products that we carry in our outlet assortment, we feel there are significant opportunities to counter source these products in markets, especially in Latin America, where the tariffs announced tend to be more moderate," he said.

Guess would ultimately feel the pinch no matter who is making the goods and bringing them in as any price increase will ripple up to the company one way or another.

In addition to changing up where it makes products, Guess is looking to change where it directly sells goods.

Alberini said the company's business in Greater China would lose about \$20 million this year.

"In spite of how challenging this market has been for us over the years, we continue to believe that there is an opportunity for the Guess brand in Greater China as our brand awareness is high, and the market is very large and compelling," he said. "We plan to turn this business over to a third party to run it. We have already met several potential candidates for consideration. We expect for this transition to be completed before the end of this year, which should contribute to a significant improvement in our profitability in fiscal year 2027 and beyond."

ACCESSORIES

Under New Ownership, David Webb Enters Next Chapter

- The heritage jewelry brand has been acquired by Boston-based Middle West Partners.

BY JAMES MANSO

David Webb is under new ownership – and has a new chief executive officer as well.

The heritage jewelry brand has been acquired by Middle West Partners, the Boston-based private equity firm, and has named James Weiss its new CEO. Weiss has been an adviser to the brand since 2017, is an investor at Redstone Road, and previously spent time at Palantir Technologies and Bain & Company.

In an exclusive interview with WWD, Weiss declined to specify terms of the deal or the company's annual revenue.

He did say, though, that the brand was "bigger than the business."

"Our job as stewards of this house is to do no harm, and to make sure that the work we're doing is to provide a strong foundation for this business to be able to grow, create an extraordinary culture so we can attract the best talent," he said.

The house was founded by David Webb in 1948. In 2010, it was bought following Chapter 11 bankruptcy proceedings by Mark Emanuel, Sima Ghadaman and Robert Sadian.

"Middle West Partners doesn't have a specific sunset for their fund, so they are unusually well suited to the long-term stewardship of a luxury house," Weiss said of the new ownership.

Weiss sees a plethora of opportunities for the brand, from retail expansion to finding new ways to attract like-minded clientele.

"The David Webb customer, primarily women, we talk about as being one who is self-possessed. This is someone who can and will wear David Webb jewelry wherever and whenever she wants," Weiss said. "Our job is to make sure that we are where our customers are."

From a retail perspective, that means deepening its footprint in the U.S., which currently entails boutiques in New York and Los Angeles. David Webb also has a door in Doha, and the brand has "a real love for the Middle East," Weiss said.

That doesn't mean he's not measured in his approach. "When you're making extraordinary creations and providing high luxury experiences, expanding by 10 or 20 stores a year – even if there were demand for that – would probably be irresponsible," he said.

Weiss doesn't think about new customers in terms of demographics, reasoning that the core customer ranges

in age. "In luxury, people immediately ask how you're going to get a younger customer. I'm not thinking about age per se, I'm thinking about psychographic and who the David Webb woman is. We've found that we have women of all ages.

"What I do know is there are a lot of women who either don't know about David Webb, or may have forgotten about the brand. We want to reach more of those," he continued. "The most important white space is a higher market share within that psychographic. Our share is still low compared to the opportunity."

From a product perspective, Weiss acknowledged that the brand's prices range from four figures to seven, but his core operates in the \$25,000 to \$125,000 range.

"David Webb is known for bold designs, intricate hammering work, the use of rock crystal and the unusual opaque and semitransparent stones, as well as semiprecious stones. We will look to the brand to continue to innovate while focusing on that design vocabulary," he said. "We're figuring out where the innovation opportunities will come from and how we will evolve."

In terms of marketing the brand's next chapter, "the playbook evolves every day," Weiss said. "It's about making sure you reach a special customer, often who

is very, very hard to reach and for whom traditional media is probably not efficient. I'm thinking about events, collaborations, and making sure we support creative directors and the creative expression of David Webb."

A David Webb bracelet.



ACCESSORIES

Alice + Olivia Reintroduces Handbags

- The limited-edition capsule launched Friday at Alice + Olivia's stores.

BY LISA LOCKWOOD

Stacey Bendet, founder and chief executive officer of Alice + Olivia, welcomed guests into her Upper West Side apartment Thursday night to celebrate the reintroduction of her artful handbag collection.

Bendet said she stopped designing handbags during the pandemic and decided to bring them back this year. "Every luxury handbag is \$7,000, and I wanted to do handbags that are a little piece of art but in the contemporary price point. You can buy a bag to go with your outfit, and it doesn't have to be a life decision," said Bendet, whose bags retail from \$350 to \$650.

Calling the bags "fun and whimsical," Bendet said they feature embellishments such as bows, high-shine pearls, embroidery and paillettes. On Friday, the handbags were released in all 32 Alice + Olivia stores in the U.S. and a select number of international doors. Alice + Olivia has 33 international stores.

"My whole thing was the art of the bag. These are little pieces of art," said Bendet, wearing a long red dress and carrying a matching red Semira Bow Clutch.

The evening, aptly titled, "The art of the handbag," featured handbags treated as true objects d'art. They were elegantly framed and displayed among pieces from Bendet's personal art collection, blurring the line between fashion and fine art.

The limited-edition handbag capsule features four statement-making silhouettes

inspired by the brand's spring 2025 "Hotel Imagination" collection. Each bag, that doubles as jewelry, is made to pair back with looks from the season.

Among the bags are the Alicia Shoulder Bag, retailing for \$650, which is crafted from a luxe mix of leather and embroidered cotton. The flap silhouette is sized to hold one's essentials. The Semira Bow Clutch, for example, retails for \$550, and comes in butter, bright ruby and pink bloom. The clutch is crafted of vegan leather and is finished with an oversize fabric bow. There is also the Blaire Reversible tote for \$350 that is cut from a coated cotton canvas which is patterned with both a blue toile and a toss of blue flowers. And, the Kayla Embellished Clutch, retailing for \$595, is a silver box bag covered in high-shine pearls.

During the evening, guests participated in a series of interactive moments centered around the essentials found in a handbag such as personalized lip gloss charms on U Beauty's glosses, handkerchief embroidery using the same luxe fabric as the collection and custom-bedazzled Touchland hand sanitizers.

A big moment occurred when they cut the cake which was an exact replica of the Samira Bow Bag.

"Stacey is one of my best friends. I'm so happy she is back doing handbags again," said Nicky Hilton-Rothschild, who was among the guests. "I've collected them and have one from the Basquiat collection she did. I love her designs."

Other guests included Jessica Wang, Emily Rockefeller, Francesco and Alba Clemente, Steven Kolb, Gillian Hearst, Priya Shulka, Rickie De Sole and Janelle Lloyd.

Emily Rockefeller, Jessica Wang, Nicky Hilton and Stacey Bendet.



FASHION

3.1 Phillip Lim Launches Collection Inspired by 'The White Lotus'

- The brand and the Tourism Authority of Thailand will also introduce an ad campaign highlighting the beauty and culture of Thailand.

BY LISA LOCKWOOD

The **Tourism Authority** of Thailand hopes people will want to visit the country following Sunday night's third season finale of the HBO original series, "The White Lotus."

The Tourism Authority of Thailand has partnered with 3.1 Phillip Lim to launch its 2025 flagship campaign, "Blooming Lotus: 3.1 Phillip Lim x Amazing Thailand," inspired by the HBO original series. The campaign will highlight Thailand's fashion, culture and creativity.

As the centerpiece of this collaboration, TAT and 3.1 Phillip Lim have created a limited-edition collection inspired by Thailand's beauty, as showcased in the TV series. The exclusive lineup captures the essence of Thailand through a curated selection of pieces, including a ribbed tank, capri pants, a T-shirt, a bomber jacket, tote bags, a duffel travel bag and a cap — each designed to reflect Thailand's vibrant culture. The collection will launch April 24 on 31philliplim.com and thailandinsider.com/bloominglotus.



An ad image from "Blooming Lotus: 3.1 Phillip Lim x Amazing Thailand" campaign.

Prices range from \$195 for the T-shirt to \$450 for the duffel bag to \$895 for the bomber jacket with the Lotus emblem.

The third season of "The White Lotus" was filmed in Bangkok, Phuket and Koh Samui, and primarily took place at the Four Seasons Resort Koh Samui, a five-star hotel on the island's northeastern coast.

3.1 Phillip Lim is planning a launch event at its New York store on April 24 to

celebrate the collaboration.

"Launching the event in New York is just the beginning," said Chompu Marusachot, director of TAT New York. "We are incredibly excited to partner with 3.1 Phillip Lim as our design partner and Goway Travel as our tour operator for our flagship campaign. This collaboration is a powerful fusion of fashion and travel, highlighting Thailand's vibrant creativity

and inspiring travelers to explore the country in a new way."

"At 3.1 Phillip Lim, we have always celebrated culture, craftsmanship and storytelling through fashion," said Wen Zhou, cofounder and chief executive officer of 3.1 Phillip Lim. "The collaboration with the Tourism Authority of Thailand is a tribute to Thailand's breathtaking beauty and rich heritage, which is magnificently showcased in 'The White Lotus' season three. Through this limited-edition collection, we are capturing the spirit of this magical place in the 3.1 Phillip Lim way — an essential wardrobe of well-crafted pieces for the curious adventurer as she sets off to explore the world."

With travel in mind, the limited-edition pieces are designed for visiting Thailand's vibrant temples, walking through the country's night markets, or exploring its bustling streets and serene landscapes. In addition, Goway Travel will offer a selection of "must-do" experiences in Thailand, allowing travelers to book their ideal Thailand journey.

"Thailand is renowned for its world-class wellness and spa offerings, available in nearly every major destination nationwide," said Anoma Vongyai, director of TAT Chicago. "This campaign will also highlight those experiences — the health benefits of delicious Thai cuisine, the rejuvenation of traditional massages or the ancient healing techniques that promote overall well-being."

TAT will also host a wellness and yoga event in Toronto, highlighting Thailand's wellness tourism. This event will introduce guests to Thailand's holistic travel experiences and demonstrate the collection's versatility.

BUSINESS

Fusalp Targets U.S. Expansion Despite Tariffs, Eyes Lifestyle Branding

● The brand will relocate its Manhattan flagship to SoHo in September as it continues its plans for more openings in the next two years.

BY RHONDA RICHFORD

PARIS – French legacy skiwear brand Fusalp has its sights set on U.S. expansion, despite the 20 percent levy on European Union goods announced Wednesday.

“The U.S. is and remains a priority market for Fusalp. The announcement is, of course, something we are taking into account – but it doesn’t change our ambition,” chief executive officer Pascal Conte-Jodra told WWD.

“We deeply believe in the potential of the American market, both in retail and e-commerce, as well as through our wholesale partners. This context only reinforces the need to be even more strategic and agile. We have a long-term vision, and that vision remains unchanged.”

Conte-Jodra stepped into the CEO role in September with the ambition to grow Fusalp’s retail footprint in the U.S. to between five and eight stores in the next two years. Los Angeles and Chicago are potential locations.

The expansion plans follow the successful opening of three flagships in the U.S. in 2022, planting its flag in New York City as well as the ski resorts of Aspen and Vail, Colo.

While the company has grown in all markets, the strength of the U.S. plays out in the numbers.

The company’s revenue has steadily climbed from 40 million euros in 2022 to what it expects to be “around 63 million” for the 2024 fiscal year, which will end May 31, said copresident and co-owner Sophie Lacoste, with like-for-like growth of 10 percent in that time period.

“Like-for-like growth is very important to us because we are independent, so we really need to make a sustainable, strong company. We don’t have a group to back us up,” said Lacoste.

First the brand will move its New York City retail location from Madison Avenue to SoHo in September. The new location will be a better fit as Fusalp continues to expand its sport-oriented technical and ready-to-wear.

The SoHo location is expected to draw a better mix of locals and tourists, and should raise the visibility of the Fusalp name among sportier brands. “While where we were at Madison, it was more a

destination venue,” Conte-Jodra said.

A “well-known architect” is working on the design, which will tweak the brand positioning slightly, but the look will mostly be in line with the Paris flagship opened in September 2023.

“[The U.S.] is a very, very demanding clientele, but also very inclined to like new brands,” said Lacoste. “It’s the kind of people who really dress themselves in the full look and really get tempted.”

Thus far the U.S. has been lucrative on a per-customer basis, too. “When they shop our stores, they want the pants, sweater, jacket, everything – while in France it is one piece,” he said, noting the different consumption patterns between the U.S. and Europe.

They are digging through the data from e-commerce sales to identify key markets. Moving forward in the U.S., Fusalp will emphasize new communications.

“In terms of image and content, we’ll be doing things slightly different. We will be showcasing the brand, its values, the product, a full, very rich universe, which has been here for 73 years,” to position Fusalp as an aspirational lifestyle brand beyond the world of the slopes.

The “transformation of the communication aspect” will start to roll out in the coming weeks. Already the brand has changed the way it generates content and created an increased focus on social marketing.

“We are switching our gears a bit in where we are aiming to create a full Fusalp universe in terms of brand identity, in terms of positivity, in terms of image. You will see the impact starting with the spring [collection] where you will see the atmosphere, the people and the product,” he said.

The company will also invest in installations and activations, including an exhibition at the Saint-Gervais Biennale in June.

Conte-Jodra also has his eye on what he calls “paving the silk road” by expanding throughout the Asia Pacific region.

The brand entered the South Korean market seven years ago with the creation of a direct subsidiary, and now has five department store doors. It’s looking to grow the region with new partners, expanding retail in Japan and China from its wholesale base.

“We aim, of course, to grow but to grow reasonably, and we are trying to identify the proper partners that can sustain our growth with us,” he said of APAC aims.

China is “an untapped market” that Conte-Jodra sees as one of the brand’s medium- to long-term targets.

Though its home country of France is still its power base, it accounts for about 60 percent of sales in 2024, down from 80 percent two years ago. Conte-Jodra expects that trend to continue, even as it grows in France, as the mix will shift toward new markets.

In Europe, that means focusing on fashion capitals and key cities. To that end, Fusalp will open a stand-alone store in Madrid and a second London location later this year.

In Madrid Fusalp previously worked with a retail partner. The sales success led

A look from Fusalp spring 2025.



to the decision to open its own outpost. “It’s really a lifestyle brand that people wear...they really tend to buy a lot, so it’s not always linked to the weather of the place,” he said.

One key initiative has been completely revamping e-commerce due to the lack of historical and customer data. With those gaps filled, the company is better positioned to target its customer, a demographic of about 35 to 45 years old.

The newly revamped site is more immersive and filled with editorial and film content, and behind the scenes the team has beefed up the customer service capabilities to include features like person-to-person WhatsApp messaging.

If current sales trends continue, e-commerce is set to double “within the next four to five years.”

With fashion brands from Balenciaga to Zara getting in on the skiwear game, Fusalp is happy to have its 70-year lead.

“It’s competition and a trend, but that means as well that it’s comforting because it’s a core root of Fusalp. That means we are here not only as a pioneer, but a leader in our segment, in skiwear,” he said. “That means we are in a good segment that everyone wants to get in, and of course there is a lot of traction in that segment.”

With climate change impacting snowpack at several resorts, the Fusalp team is aware there may be challenges in the skiwear segment in the future. The current mix is about 50-50 ski to ready-to-wear.

“We need to reinvent ourselves,” said Lacoste. That means introducing more urban warrior and everyday outdoor pieces, more midseason pieces as well as “expanding a full set of product categories to secure less seasonal activity.”

Read: more sporty slimline parkas that can be slipped over a suit for a bike ride home, for example.

The challenge is to “be a little bit more agile, and how can we be faster just to keep up with the trends as maybe more of a fashion brand, without having the ambition to be as fast as a quick ready-to-wear” label, and to “break the seasonality pattern,” said Conte-Jodra.

Added Lacoste, who purchased the brand a decade ago with her brother Philippe and former CEO Alexandre Fauvet: “It’s a rich brand with strong roots, but it goes into the future,” she said. “We speak about art of movement. It’s here to empower you to move. And it also comes with very long-lasting value.”



Pascal Conte-Jodra

SALONE DEL MOBILE PREVIEW **WWD**

Salut, Salone!

Salone del Mobile begins Monday and the streets of Milan and its fairgrounds will be packed with activations, installations, events and parties throughout the week celebrating the latest in design, including many fashion brands showing off their new interiors collections, like that from Louis Vuitton seen here. It all makes you want to redo every room.

For more, see pages 11 to 33.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DANIELE MANGO

WWD SALONE DEL MOBILE PREVIEW

Contract and Hospitality To Buoy Luxury Furniture

Amid a tough era, furniture and lighting companies are arming up for an uncertain 2025. BY SOFIA CELESTE

Blisscape sofa by Ludovica Serafini+Roberto Palomba for Poltrona Frau.



Claudio Feltrin



MILAN — Design furniture and decor are performing better than luxury cars and fine art, but still lagging just the same. U.S. President Donald Trump's decision last week to apply 20 percent tariffs on imports from Europe served up another blow to furniture and lighting firms here.

In 2024, the high-quality design furniture and homeware segment experienced a modest slowdown within the global luxury market, with projected declines of 2 percent at current exchange rates and 1 percent at constant rates compared to 2023, said Claudia D'Arpizio, senior partner and global head of fashion and luxury at Bain & Company.

"Despite this short-term dip, the category remains resilient in a broader context, showing a strong recovery of 20 to 22 percent versus pre-pandemic levels in 2019," she said, adding that the category is trailing experience-driven sectors such as gourmet food and fine dining, luxury cruises, and private jets and yachts, all of which are seeing significant year-over-year growth.

"This suggests that while consumers may be slightly pulling back on high-end home investments in the short term, the long-term appetite for well-crafted, design-led homeware remains robust, underscoring its importance as a foundational pillar of the luxury landscape," D'Arpizio added, reflecting on 2025 as major design firms here gear up to showcase their latest collections at Salone del Mobile.Milano which kicks off Tuesday and runs until April 13.

In addition to a spending slowdown worldwide and a rocky housing market in Italy, the U.S. and China, Italian firms, which represent the backbone of the European design industry, are bracing themselves for Trump's trade policy. On March 12, the U.S. placed a 25 percent tariffs on all imports of steel and aluminum-related products, including those from the European Union. On Wednesday, he took it a step further and hit the EU with a 20 percent tariff on all imports.

In a statement on Wednesday, Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni said she was still working to prevent a trade war.

"The introduction of tariffs by the United States against the European Union is a measure that I consider wrong and that does not benefit any of the parties involved," the premier's office said in a statement.

Dario Rinero, CEO of furniture firm



Maserati's first furniture collaboration with Giorgetti, photographed at Villa Il Girasole in Marcellise, Verona, Italy.

Haworth Lifestyle group echoed this. "I honestly think that that it's still open. It's still under negotiation. He [Trump] finished the speech saying, in the case of Europe we still need to see," Rinero said.

Regarding the wider Italian furniture market and Italy as a trade partner, Rinero thinks that the trade relationship with the U.S. had been a fair playing field. "In our case...talking about reciprocity, we don't have any duties, any tariffs in Europe for American furniture."

ISTAT, Italy's national statistics bureau, said last month that the country's reliance on exports could spell trouble amid the trade war, despite warm relations between right-wing politicians Trump and Meloni.

"In recent years, in particular, Italy has oriented its export flows toward non-EU markets, especially the United States," the report said, adding that 10 percent of all Italy's exports were sold to the U.S. market, most of them machinery, pharmaceutical products, cars, trucks and beverages.

Italy's trade surplus with the U.S. reached about 35 billion euros in 2024, ISTAT said.

In 2024, turnover of Italy's wood furnishing sector slipped 2.9 percent to 51.7 billion euros, dragged down by domestic sales, which represented more than 62 percent of the total. Exports fell 2.1 percent and account for 38 percent of all of Italy's wood furnishing sales, according to Federlegno Arredo.

"It's clear that, at the moment, Europe is definitely in a phase of slowdown, or at least not growing, with a few rare exceptions. The United States is a consolidated, stable market that still has a

positive outlook, where the question mark about tariffs is an open issue," said Salone del Mobile.Milano president Maria Porro.

"Our hope is that the worst-case scenario is avoided...in which both economies pay the price," said Claudio Feltrin, president of FederlegnoArredo, the Italian federation of woodworking and furniture industries.

In 2024, Molteni Group bucked the trend, expecting to report a rise in revenue to 520 million euros from 470 million euros in 2023, as it opened new stores worldwide. Molteni Group planned 18 openings total for 2025, including Sao Paulo; Mumbai; Mexico City; Riyadh; Sydney; Auckland; Chengdu, and Bangkok. It opened two stores in Russia — one in Moscow and one in St. Petersburg — through a retail partner in 2024.

Despite the obstacles, Molteni Group chief executive officer Marco Piscitelli said that resilience is key. "As we all do, I hope the [Ukraine] war ends, not just from an economic point of view but for the view on war itself. Just like I hope that American duties are a temporary hurdle and that they don't affect all the work that has been done [to grow] in our second market, that is the United States," he said.

BoffiDePadova CEO and president Roberto Gavazzi, who just cut the ribbon on the firm's New York City flagship, said it books one third of its sales in the U.S. market. Earlier this year, he told WWD that, while tariffs are an inconvenience, he thinks his peers are well poised to weather the storm. "I think that the slightly higher end of the market will have an easier time defending itself from duties," he said.

2025 Outlook

Poltrona Frau's CEO Nicola Coropolis said the Tolentino-based firm also plans to open 18 stores in 2025. Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur opened in January, São Paulo in February and other cities are on the horizon like Sydney and San Francisco, with three new openings in India.

Coropolis said sales dipped slightly by a few single digits in 2024 following 2023, which was its best year ever. Looking ahead to 2025, January and February showed robust order intake especially of its contract business.

"What was really very dynamic was the contract business, and our custom interiors business unit with lots of prestigious projects," he said.

Analysts at TD Cowen said that 2025 began slowly due to macroeconomic uncertainty, adverse weather, and declining consumer confidence, despite some positive indicators like increased tax refunds and lower mortgage rates.

Orbital Design Collective CEO Alexander Zschokke said 2025 performance was promising despite uncertainty. The group, which was acquired by the Alpha private equity fund in 2018, is home to upscale Italian furnishings brands Calligaris, and Ditre Italia and lighting brand Luceplan, in addition to newerv brands like Connubia and Fatboy. Fatboy, for example, which was acquired in 2021, was founded in 2002 in the Netherlands and was known for its signature oversized bean bag designed by Finnish interior architect Jukka Setälä.

"Geopolitical uncertainties and the lingering fear of a recession have dampened consumer confidence in purchasing durable goods and investing in their homes. Nevertheless, we've noticed a growing interest in the sector from emerging markets, which offers optimism for the future," Zschokke said.

D'Arpizio is confident in the sector's resilience overall, pegging growth at 5 to 7 percent between 2024 and 2030, reaching a market value of 65 billion to 75 billion euros by 2030, boosted by firms' strong focus on experientiality, which is fueling the expansion of luxury projects, along with rising investments in high-end design that are helping to raise consumer awareness and expectations.

"Additionally, the growing brandization of luxury design is enhancing differentiation and brand value, while expansion into underpenetrated regions such as Asia Pacific, the Middle East, and the U.S. is accelerating market growth. These developments are underpinned by enduring structural trends, pointing to a sustained transformation of the luxury landscape," she said.

Contract, Hospitality Are Key to Growth

Luxury European design firms are primed for growth in places like Riyadh, where contract business is on the rise as its hospitality industry booms. Molteni&C, BoffiDePadova and Giorgetti will all open later this year. Fendi Casa opened there in October, while Roche Bobois, a French family business, was a pioneer in the region, opening in 2007, and it now has stores in both Jeddah and Riyadh.

Overall, hospitality and contract business is booming worldwide, after being dormant throughout the entirety of the COVID-19 pandemic.

For Giorgetti, which said its revenues were stable in 2024 versus 2025, its hospitality and contract businesses are also expected to be main drivers in 2025. "Contract at the moment is performing very well. We see significant growth in the hospitality world combined with the good performance of some historic customers in the retail world. I expect single digit growth in the Giorgetti B2C world for 2025 and I expect a slightly more marked growth for the B2B world."

Salone del Mobile.Milano's First Female President Adapting Amid Tough Times

Maria Porro is steering the sector through a tough economy and is set to open a Saudi edition of the fair in fall 2026. BY SOFIA CELESTE



Maria Porro

MILAN – In 1961, 13 furniture firm executives founded what is now known as Salone del Mobile.Milano, by far the world's biggest high-end design trade show.

One of those founding fathers was Carlo Porro, grandfather of Maria Porro, who at 38 years old is now Salone del Mobile.Milano's first female president. When she's not organizing the event that attracts more than 300,000 visitors each year, she's also the mother of three children and the current marketing and communications director of the Brianza-based family-run furniture firm her great-grandfather Giulio started with his brother Stefano in 1925.

Tasked with exporting the fair abroad, she's most recently traveled with Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni to Saudi Arabia, where she signed a memorandum of understanding with the Saudi Arabian Architecture and Culture Commission, paving the way for a Saudi edition of Salone del Mobile.Milano. A teaser of the Saudi fair will take place in fall 2025, while the actual fair is expected to bow in fall 2026.

Since being appointed president in 2021 at the height of the pandemic, she's dealt with a few other blows, including firms opting to show in their new showrooms rather than at the fairgrounds: Design Holding's Maxalto, French luxury player Roche Bobois and Luxury Living brands Luxence and Versace Home are among the companies that have opted to turn the focus to their Milan showrooms and flagships and other central venues. Molteni&C's main collections will be shown in its brand new Via Manzoni showroom, just for this year,

according to sources. Other founding firms like Visionnaire said they are committed to Salone for the long term.

According to its list of exhibitors, Natuzzi, one of Italy's biggest furniture companies by revenue, will showcase again at the fair. Historic brands like Memphis, Meritalia e Gufram under Italian Radical Design group and Poltronova came back in 2024 after being absent for years. Newcomers include Dutch furniture firm Moooi and U.K.-based luxury bed-maker Vispring. Moooi is slated to open its first Milan showroom this year. This year's fair will also see the return of crystal design firm Swarovski.

"So, the trend is toward a more international fair, even in its exhibitors. There are many high-level companies, both premium and important brands, that didn't participate before but are participating this year," Porro told WWD, adding that this year will see 168 first-time exhibitors at Salone del Mobile.Milano, 68 percent of which are from abroad. The fair will also have 91 returning exhibitors, of which 55 percent are from abroad.

After the post-pandemic boom, turnover of Italy's wood furnishing sector slipped 8.1 percent in 2023 to 52.6 billion euros. In 2024, it slid further 2.9 percent to 51.7 billion euros, dragged down by domestic sales, which represented more than 62 percent of the total. Exports fell 2.1 percent and account for 38 percent of all of Italy's wood furnishing sales, according to Federlegno Arredo the Italian Federation of the Woodworking and furniture industries. Its

president Claudio Feltrin, decried Trump's 20 percent tariffs on European imports would be penalizing for both the U.S. and Italy. "Our hope is that the worst-case scenario is avoided," he said Thursday.

"It's clear that, at the moment, Europe is definitely in a phase of slowdown, or at least not growing, with a few rare exceptions. The United States is a consolidated, stable market that still has a positive outlook, where the question mark about tariffs is an open issue, but it's a very important market because there are cities and states that still don't have furniture distribution, so there is still a lot to build there," she said, adding that China is slowly recovering and Southeast Asia is experiencing a new spring.

Reigniting consumer confidence in Italian furniture and design is a challenge many design firms here face, as they chart the ongoing era of uncertainty, exacerbated by ongoing wars and high inflation. But Porro said the Gulf region is primed for more growth.

"The Gulf area and especially Saudi Arabia is especially promising. These countries are still constructing new cities and for this reason furniture companies are very important to these areas. There is a complete lack of production and industry there, so they really need everything, right?" she enthused adding that these grand scale projects need the kind of 360-degree outfitting that Salone exhibitors can provide – from flooring to surfaces. The other region that poses serious opportunities for Salone del Mobile.Milano and its constituents is India, where renowned designers, architects and interior designers are taking part in global projects.

"Will there be an event in India? We'll see. We're not ready to talk about this but it's definitely a geographic area we are looking at right now for its market potential," she said, commenting on the uptick of its presence, for example, in New Delhi, organized within the framework of the prestigious India Art Fair and welcomed to the Italian Cultural Institute. Salone del Mobile.Milano is currently focused on bringing interesting Indian exhibitors and interior designers and operators to the fair in Milan.

While Porro and her team hosted events in New York, Hong Kong and Shanghai last year, the last foreign edition of the fair took place at the Shanghai Exhibition Center before the COVID-19 pandemic and was envisaged as a showcase for Made in Italy

products and the Italian way of living in Shanghai. It remains to be seen whether organizers will see the fair return to China.

In addition to global expansion, Porro has been focused on infusing the Milan fair with an unmissable "wow" factor. Last year she and her team convinced late film director David Lynch to unveil one of his last works at Salone del Mobile.Milano. "Interiors by David Lynch. A Thinking Room" was designed by Lynch and his team and incorporated a narration and reflection on the production of interiors.

Porro, who studied scenography, said the fair has renewed its commitment to linking the worlds of design with that of film like never before. To usher in the 63rd edition of Salone del Mobile.Milano and the 32nd edition of the EuroLucce light exhibition, running Tuesday to April 13, organizers tapped Academy Award-winning director Paolo Sorrentino to design a site-specific installation to greet visitors in pavilions 22 and 24. Named "La Dolce Attesa [The Sweet Wait]," it is shaping up to be a timeless "waiting" area created with set designer Margherita Palli and centered around the idea of "meeting one's destiny."

With the same sense of elan, American director Robert Wilson is expected to unveil a showcase within the Museo della Pietà at Milan's Sforzesco castle that will incorporate dance, painting, design, movement, lights and drama and express his own "vision" of the power of one of Michelangelo's last works: the Pietà Rondanini.

British contemporary artist and designer Es Devlin will kick off celebrations with a showcase of her mastery of light staged in the 17th century Cortile d'Onore, which connects the Pinacoteca di Brera, the Braidenese National Library and the Academy of Fine Arts.

Porro doesn't want to just excite visitors – she wants to give them a really good reason to visit Milan and come back again.

"It is one of the most important works of art we have in Italy, and very few people see it," she said of the Pietà Rondanini. "To show how design and the design of light and space can create more attention to something that exists, and to enhance it more, I think it is a way of producing content, telling a story, because the quality of the project must also play a role in spaces," she said of the abundance of unsung treasures Milan has to offer. "And this is the goal: to help these 370,000 visitors find the roast, not just the smoke. Hello, this is Italy. Yes!"

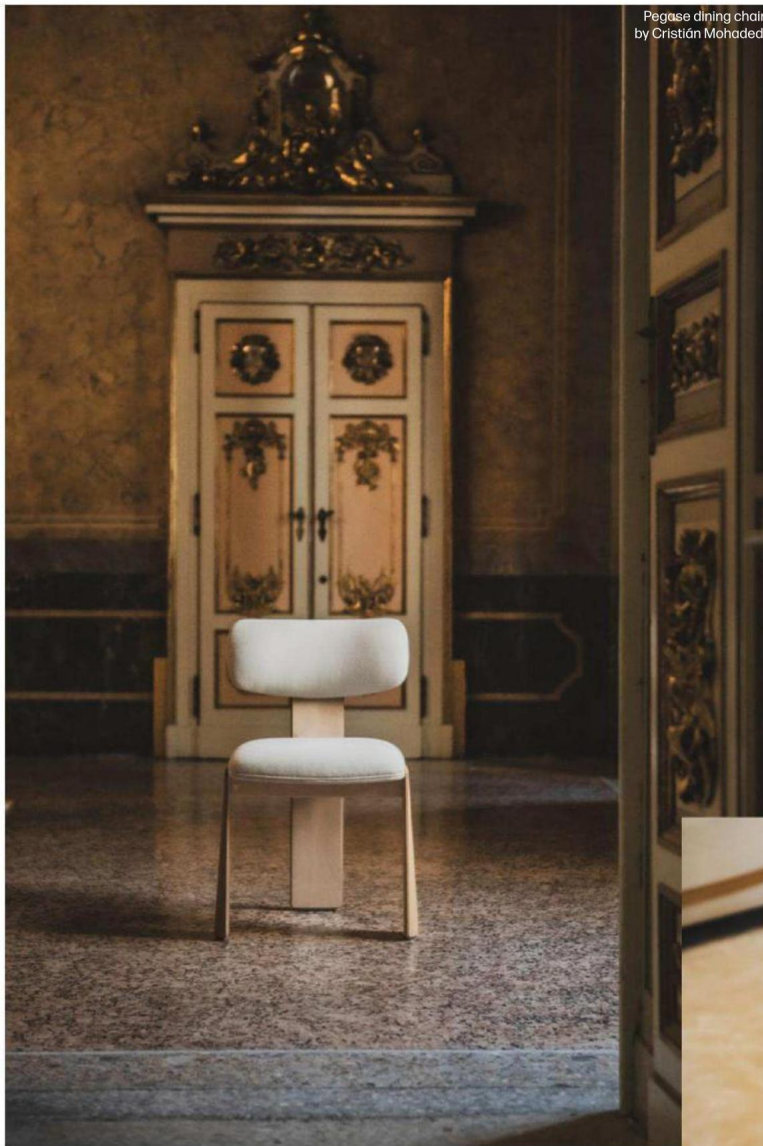


Salone del Mobile.Milano

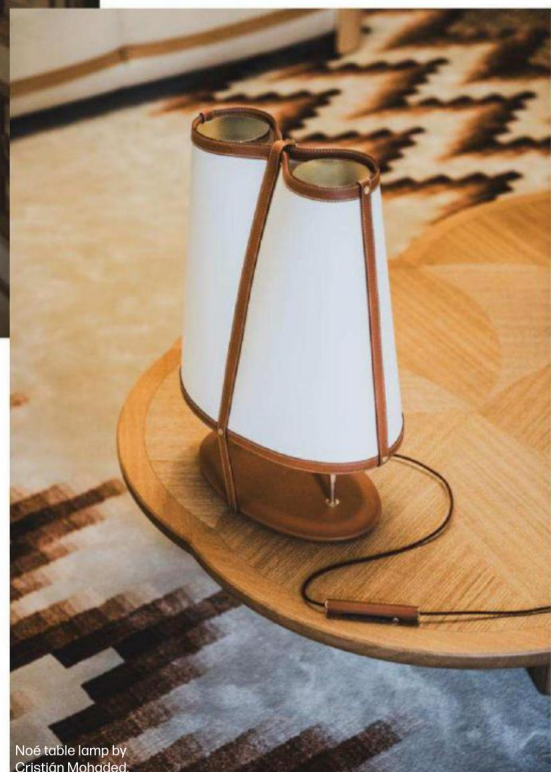
WWD SALONE DEL MOBILE PREVIEW

Louis Vuitton Expands With Launch of Home Collection

The collection is based around five pillars: furniture and lighting; decoration, which includes objects and textiles; tableware; Objets Nomades, and gaming pieces. BY **LUISA ZARGANI** PHOTOGRAPHS BY **DANIELE MANGO**



Pegase dining chair
by Cristián Mohaded.



Plaid from
the Tribute
Collection to
Charlotte
Perrand.

Noé table lamp by
Cristián Mohaded.

MILAN – From its signature Louis Vuitton 1885 Bed Trunk to its Hemingway Library Trunk designed in 1927 by Gaston-Louis Vuitton for Ernest Hemingway as a travel library, the exchange between the French luxury brand and the world of design has been constant and ever-expanding.

The brand is now writing a new chapter in the realm of design and decoration through the launch of the Louis Vuitton Home Collections, a comprehensive line that includes five product categories: Objets Nomades; the new Signature Collection of furniture and lighting; Decoration, which includes objects and textiles; Tableware, and Exceptional Gaming.

The home collections will be unveiled at Milan's Neoclassical Palazzo Serbelloni and open to the public for the duration of city's Design Week and Salone del Mobile, running from Tuesday to April 13. The

newly renovated Via Montenapoleone flagship is the first Louis Vuitton store in the world to carry the home collections.

"We first launched Objets Nomades in 2012, working with some of the best designers in the world, and we are now extending our home collection as a sign that we are a brand of culture, we don't only sell products," said the brand's chairman and chief executive officer Pietro Beccari. "We affirmed this for example with our New York store on 57th Street – we tell stories with historical memorabilia, books, vintage furniture, dining and artworks. We are part of people's lives in different forms. In Milan, also with our newly restored flagship on Via Montenapoleone, we want to convey this message, that we are a lifestyle brand and we want to be more in contact with people through different channels and ways to speak to them." ▶

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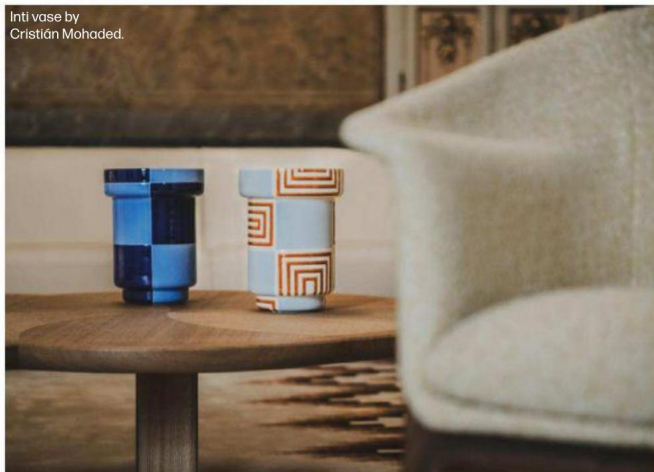
WWD SALONE DEL MOBILE PREVIEW



Vertigo coffee table by LV Studio.



Cushion from the Tribute Collection to Fortunato Depero.



Inti vase by Cristián Mohaded.



Petalo bowl by Patricia Urquiola and Valse table lamp by Atelier Biagetti.



Perfecto dining chair by Patrick Jouin.

Since 2012, other designers that have worked on Objets Nomades range from Urquiola and Atelier Biagetti to India Mahdavi, Andrew Kudless, Tokujin Yoshioka, Frank Chou, Nendo and Marcel Wanders Studio, to name a few. The collections have been shown in Milan and at Design Miami, where they were first introduced.

Games and More

As part of the games, the brand is launching a pinball machine inspired by the world of men's creative director Pharrell Williams and his fall 2025 show. That concept sets the tone for this range, which also includes a game table for lovers of chess or mahjong. Along the same lines, Estúdio Campana reinterpreted table football with a surrealist take inspired by the aquatic world.

"From Gaston-Louis Vuitton who started with his jouets [toys], there is a playful, fun element that is part of the brand and that I think people can like and it should be emphasized," Beccari said.

Decoration and Tableware

As part of the home decoration and textiles, Urquiola conceived catch-all trays in her unique range of hues, as well as vases inspired by her Palaver chair, one of the signature Objets Nomades.

Spanish designer Jaime Hayon created an array of leather and ceramic objects.

There are also textile creations by Zanelatto/Bortotto and Mohaded, who designed plaids and cushions with graphic signatures inspired by the Damier and the house's initials, combined with intense color variations. The rugs were inspired by the clay mountains of his native Argentina, as well as the glaciers of southern Argentina. A series of vases and table centerpieces with chromatic and geometric variations completes the range.

The deep black color of the coiling collection by the Japanese designer Nendo on the Limoges porcelain is adorned with numerous variations of the Monogram, flowers and lozenges.

The ceramics are produced by Bernardaud, which was founded in Limoges in 1863.

Other porcelain designs include the Splendor and Constellation lines, released in late 2024 – as well as the Capri collection inspired by the Italian Riviera.

Depero is also represented by a collection of colorful tableware emblematic of his avant-garde graphic style and fantastical bestiary. ■

To celebrate the launch, Louis Vuitton is paying tribute to the Italian graphic and Futurist artist Fortunato Depero, and to French architect and designer Charlotte Perriand with new collections of wool and cashmere plaids and cushions inspired by their archival designs. Louis Vuitton and its namesake foundation in Paris staged a major exhibition in 2019 celebrating Perriand's career.

Also, La Maison au Bord de l'Eau designed in 1934 by Perriand will be showcased in the courtyard of Palazzo Serbelloni during Design Week. Conceived to be assembled and dismantled as a form of holiday lodging, 81 years later Louis Vuitton is recreating it with pieces she designed, following the original blueprints. Louis Vuitton previously displayed it in 2015 and Beccari underscored its importance for the brand.

The Designers

The Louis Vuitton Signature collection is a new furniture and lighting offer characterized by the brand's signature details and codes. It comprises modular sofas and chairs, sideboards and tables, made with luxury fabrics and precious woods, onyx and marquetry.

Louis Vuitton worked with a selected group of designers for the collection.

French designer Patrick Jouin conceived an armchair nestled within a zippered leather cladding and accessorized with a golden padlock similar to a travel trunk – a clear reference to the brand's heritage.

In keeping with his Argentinian origins, Cristián Mohaded expressed ethnic inspirations and through signature stitching, graphics or details of trunk-making craftsmanship, his pieces are subtly punctuated with the Louis Vuitton codes.

Patricia Urquiola presented a cocooning new armchair and various decorative objects, and Atelier Biagetti, founded by Alberto Biagetti and Laura Baldassari, a new lamp that emphasizes the designers' expertise with leather.

Asked about choosing the designers the brand works with, Beccari enthused about the longtime relationships established so far, while leaving a door open to other talents. "Excellence, sophistication and avant-garde design are the common thread between the designers and architects and Louis Vuitton," he said.

All products are made in Italy and France through a network of suppliers and the collections will only be sold in Louis Vuitton's stores.

On whether Louis Vuitton could also enter hospitality, Beccari said, "We don't put limits to our future ambitions, we take steps in new territories, we give ourselves the time. We just launched our cosmetics and we did it taking our time. The same has to be done with home to become a successful business."

Objets Nomades

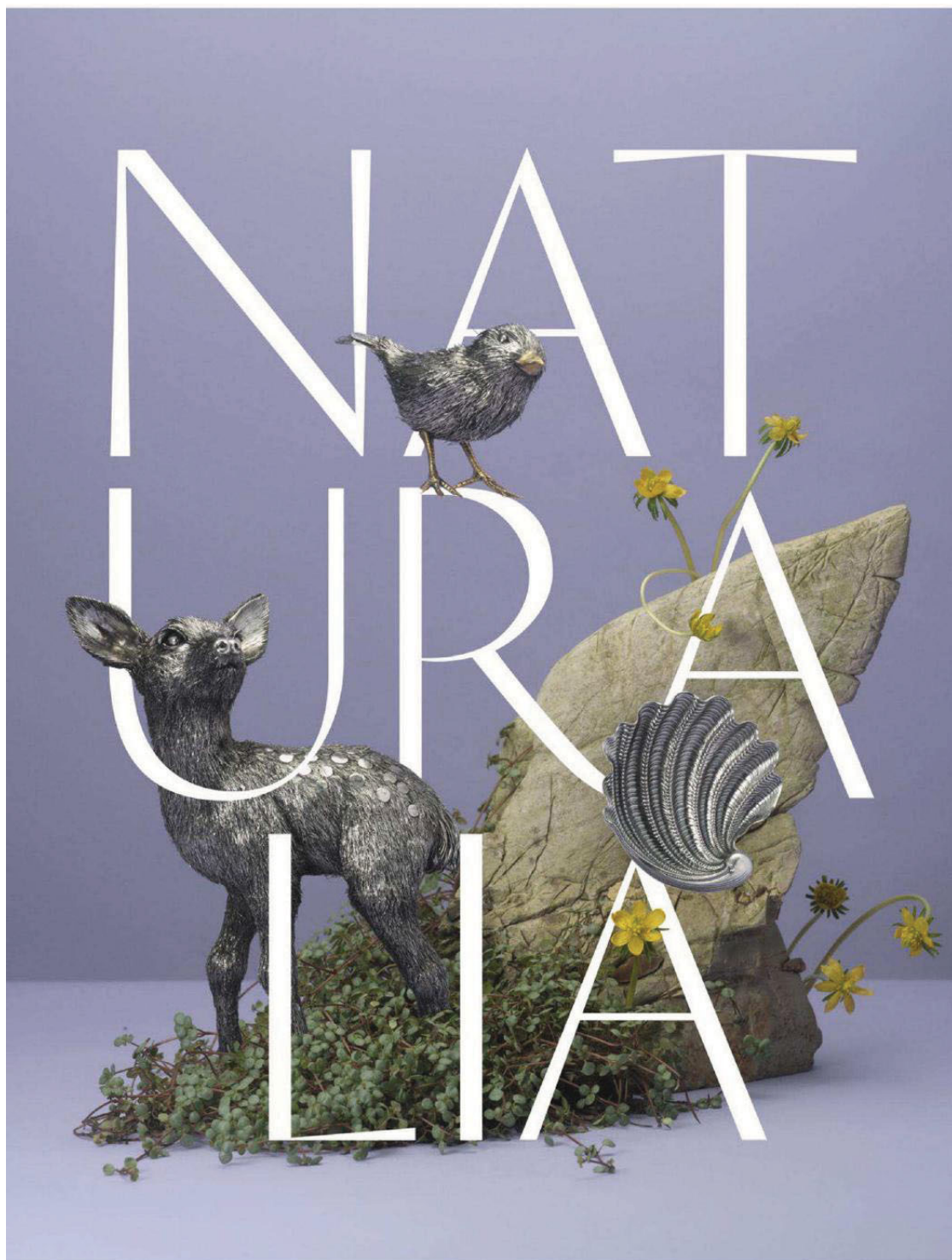
With Objets Nomades this year, Louis Vuitton is introducing the Kaleidoscope cabinet by Estúdio Campana, crafted in eight colors, each released as a one-off. At Milan Design Week, it will be displayed in its blue version. Two new pieces join the Cocoon Couture series, the Boitata and the Uirapurú, to be released for the occasion as one-offs.

Estúdio Campana, founded by Humberto Campana in 1984 with his late brother Fernando, has been a design partner of Louis Vuitton since 2012, and is behind some of the most iconic designer pieces that have marked the history of the Objets Nomades collection – from the Cocoon seat to the Maracatu suspension element.



BUCCELLATI

MILANO DAL 1919

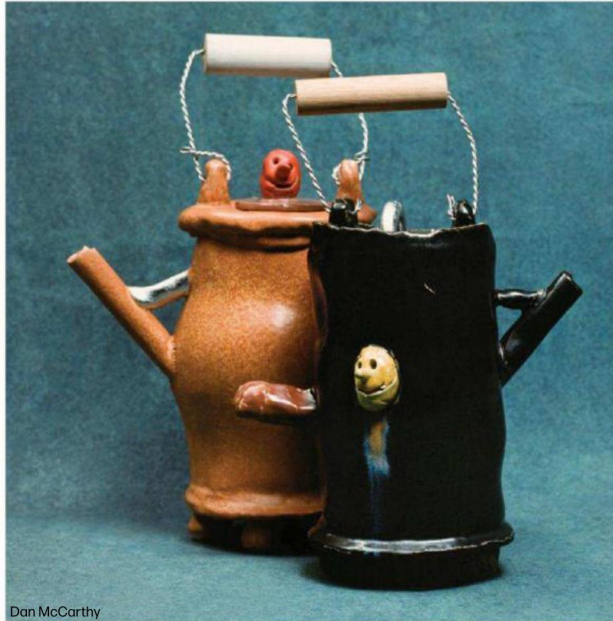


A Buccellati Exhibition
8—13 April Via Brisa 5, Milan

WWD SALONE DEL MOBILE PREVIEW

Loewe Is Everyone's Cup of Tea With Latest Project

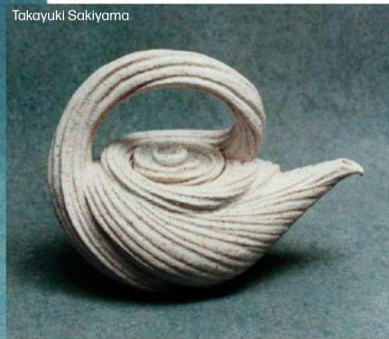
The brand is presenting a collection of crafty teapots developed by 25 artists, designers and architects, ranging from David Chipperfield to Patricia Urquiola. BY SANDRA SALIBIAN



Dan McCarthy



Patricia Urquiola



Takayuki Sakiyama



Tommaso Corvi-Mora

MILAN - A German saying that goes “Abwarten und Tee Trinken” and literally translates as “wait and drink tea” fits well with the transitional moment Loewe is experiencing, as well as its latest project to be unveiled at Salone del Mobile this week.

While the brand is gearing up to open a new chapter on Monday under the creative direction of Proenza Schouler's duo Jack McCollough and Lazaro Hernandez - who are succeeding Jonathan Anderson's successful 11 year-tenure at the Spanish house - it is also to stage its ninth presentation at the buzzy design week here.

This time, the label will showcase a collection of crafty teapots developed by 25 well-known artists, designers and architects. To be exhibited at Palazzo Citterio from Tuesday to April 13, the items will spotlight different takes on the everyday object, casting an arty and experimental light on its familiar shape.

European talents involved in the project include Spain's Patricia Urquiola and Laia Arqueros; architect David Chipperfield, painter Rose Wylie and artists Sam Bakewell and Edmund de Waal, all hailing from the U.K.; German artist Rosemarie Trockel, and Italian artist and gallerist Tommaso Corvi-Mora.

These are in addition to American artists Dan McCarthy and Walter Price, as well as Damascus-born Lebanese artist Simone Fattal and South African ceramic artist Madoda Fani.

Loewe also commissioned pieces from numerous Asian talents, including architect Wang Shu, ceramic artist Lu Bin, and artists Chen Min and Deng Xiping from China; South Korea's architect Minsuk Cho and ceramic artists Inchin Lee and Jane Yang-D'Haene; Japan's designer Naoto Fukasawa, sculptor Masaomi Yasunaga, ceramists Shozo Michikawa, Akio Niisato, and Takayuki Sakiyama, and Kyoto-based ceramic studio Suna Fujita, which has collaborated with the brand in the past.

Each artist has reimagined the teapot's distinctive elements such as the spout and handle by playing with scale and proportions, and experimenting with different glazes, finishes and textures, even when working with traditional mediums like porcelain and ceramic.



Deng Xiping

For example, shallow perforations that enable light to piece through define Niisato's teapot, while 3D flowers adorn Fukasawa's interpretation. Woven leather handles top both Fattal and Michikawa's teapots, while Chipperfield opted for a copper handle for its glazed cobalt blue design.

Embracing two different styles, both Bin and Fani chose to leave their teapots unglazed, with the porosity of the surface allowing the flavors of the tea to seep into the clay.

Highlights include Urquiola's abstract and dégradé pink-hued take on the object; Xiping's elongated teapot, with its handle and spout positioned on a diagonal; Trockel's extra-minimal version; Fujita's animal-shaped iteration, and Corvi-Mora's colorful and totem-like interpretation.

Other standouts range from Wylie's take riffing on British Royal Albert china tea sets to Price's teapot ironically coming with a broken handle, Yang-D'Haene's version charmingly wrapped in frayed ribbons of clay and Sakiyama's appearing to beautifully swirl upward from a continuous piece of clay.

These arty pieces will add to teapots Loewe produced in collaboration with Spanish artisans using Galician clay in either a raw finish or with a choice of silver or gold glazes, which take inspiration from the handcrafted ceramic tiles adorning the Casa Loewe store facades.

Flanking the range, a selection of homewares produced by Loewe will also be offered during Salone del Mobile, encompassing coasters made from woven leather, fun tea cosies and a selection of cute leather charms in the shape of tea bags, chamomile, strawberries and bergamot flowers.

In collaboration with Kaikado - the Japanese producers of tinplate “chazutsu” established in Kyoto in 1875 - the brand also developed a series of tin-plated tea caddies, whose lids have been embellished with rabbits, flowers and mice in brass and leather. The caddies are available in three sizes, with the largest one paired with a leather case, too.

Also specifically created for the Milan event, a special edition of an Earl Grey tea candle that combines black tea and



Jane Yang-D'Haene

bergamot oil will come in a lusterware terracotta vessel, brush-painted with iridescent pigment enriched with real gold.

As for the actual tea, the blend “Fiore Saporì” created with Postcard Teas and mixing black tea leaves from India, French lemon verbena, Moroccan roses, Croatian chamomile and Italian bergamot oil will be available to purchase from Monday exclusively at Postcard Teas' website and its store in London.

The “Loewe Teapots” project will mark the fashion house's ninth showcase at the annual Milan design event, which offers the company the opportunity to further experiment with craftsmanship and creativity across various categories. Previous iterations centered on tapestries, explored weaving techniques and basketry and even reimagined stick chairs or, most recently, lamps.

Celebrating its commitment to craft and its 179 years of history, Loewe just unveiled the Japanese leg of the “Crafted World” show that debuted in Shanghai last year.



CANALI

Inner Beauty

WWD SALONE DEL MOBILE PREVIEW

Brioni, Lalique Unveil Design Collector's Item: Dualité, Crystal Edition Perfume

In a limited-edition release of 18, the flacons are crafted using the ancient lost-wax technique. BY LUISA ZARGANI



Brioni's Dualité, Crystal Edition perfume.

MILAN – In the year of its 80th anniversary, Brioni during Milan Design Week will unveil a limited edition of 18 signed crystal flacons with Lalique, each housing a parfum essence.

Named Dualité, Crystal Edition perfume, the artistic and collector's object was four years in the making, brought to life by Brioni's design director Norbert Stumpf and Lalique artistic and creative director Marc Larminaux. The Extrait de Parfum was created by master perfumer Michel Almairac.

The flacon's octagonal prism is an homage to Brioni's eight decades, and its smooth angular lines contrast with an eruption of crystal shards within it created through an ancient technique called lost-wax or *cire perdue*. It was revived for

this project as the intricate and detailed sculptures within the flacon can only be crafted by using this technique. The silver hue of the fragrance enhances the contrast with the crystal.

First explored by René Lalique around 1893, the complex *cire perdue* method has been passed down to Lalique's master-glassmakers in their original workshop located in Wingen-sur-Moder, a village in the Alsace region of France.

"We really wanted to create something very special, because we are celebrating our 80th anniversary, and this is really a symbol of our craftsmanship, in the pursuit of excellence, which is very similar to our tailoring and I think with Lalique, we share the same codes," said Stumpf.

Lalique has been Brioni's fragrance

licensee since 2019 and it has developed five other scents for the Kering-owned brand.

"We are mesmerized by what's possible with Lalique, and we have a very similar design aesthetic and vision, we are always trying to make something very pure and of exceptional luxury. In terms of the crystal, it's so transparent that you can see all the workmanship that goes inside it. Also, I'm always looking for precious materials and rare techniques that human hands can make," Stumpf said.

The designer also sees "the shape of a shoulder" in the crystal bottle, "slim on the bottom, and it goes up to almost like a shoulder of a perfect suit."

Stumpf said Milan Design Week was "the perfect time" to unveil the project because of the centrality of the city for design during



The making of Brioni's Dualité, Crystal Edition perfume.

this period. "This is really more of an artistic sculpture," he contended.

The crystal is housed in a pure white alabaster stone casing that can transform into a pedestal, reminiscent of a Roman column, creating an art installation, with the empty flacon weighing almost 6 kilos as the alabaster box. Hence the retail price of 40,000 euros.

"It's a very difficult process to make this bottle, because of the lost wax process. It's always kind of a miracle when we get a good piece out of the mold. We have to create the wax piece then we cover it with plaster and make it melt in the first furnace so that when the wax disappears, it's lost, gone. And you have this plaster mold with an empty space left inside," explained Larminaux.

The plaster is filled with the crystal, and the mold spends a bit more than a week in a closed furnace. "You have to be gentle with the temperatures, up and down slowly to avoid any thermal shock, hoping that the crystal has properly spread into the mold. You see how complex the shape is inside the bottle with this explosion of shards, so you have a big chance to get it wrong. Then you break the mold, and you just cross fingers, hoping that everything went the way it should, and that you don't have fragilities like bubbles or what we call calcine, which means kind of tiny, little broken parts that you wouldn't even notice, and that would break later on," said Larminaux.

The stopper is also made in this way for continuity. Because of this treatment, filling the flacon properly is also a task.

The fragrance begins with an abstract ozonic accord, heightened by the bright, crisp bite of green apple. As the scent unfolds, a more delicate heart reveals the sweetness of violet blended with Ambroxan, adding a velvety, warm texture. Nestled within is the opulent and very rare iris butter – crafted through a seven-year process: three years of cultivation, three years of curing, and more than a year to extract the butter and process it. "We were looking for a very rare ingredient for a very unique scent," said Stumpf.

The aromatic presence of cedarwood is combined with moss while dry amber concludes the composition.

"I always love to keep all these techniques alive, and modernize them, showing them to the world. I think it's really important. And for our 80th anniversary, we want to push further in this kind of slow, luxury direction," said Stumpf. "I think that's what people really want to see nowadays, this authenticity of craft that you cannot fake. It's years of experience of craftsmen who do this."



IL BISONTE

IN FLORENCE SINCE 1970

WWD SALONE DEL MOBILE PREVIEW



Christian Pellizzari

Christian Pellizzari On How Design Changed His Life

From Design Miami Paris to floors of Printemps New York, the fashion designer talks about how he rose on the global collectable scene as a Venetian glass lighting artist. BY SOFIA CELESTE

MILAN — “I changed my life without wanting to. It happened in a very natural and very fast way,” Christian Pellizzari said of his crossover from fashion to design.

The Castelfranco Veneto-born fashion designer who was supported by Giorgio Armani in 2014 to show in his eponymous theater, discovered his flair for designing glass creations during the COVID-19 pandemic, while updating his own home. Over a short span of just four years, he’s become one of the most talked-about lighting designers, godmothered into the elite design network by Milan pillar Nina Yashar.

In January, Yashar herself climbed to a snowy hilltop in the Swiss Alps to pose with Pellizzari’s gigantic Frosted Mirror Syriacus, a serpent-like flora/fauna element aglow in the freshly fallen snow outside the Hotel Waldhaus. The stunning lighting fixtures became the centerpiece for the February edition of design fair Nomad Saint Moritz. This all after making a splash in 2024 at PAD London, Design Miami in Paris and Salon New York, as well as having his works exhibited in the prestigious Nilufar windows in Milan’s Via della Spiga during the Salone del Mobile.

For Design Week, kicking off here Monday, he will unveil Rye Ergot at Nilufar with a series of Murano glass sculptures inspired by the rye plant — a mysterious symbol in folklore and mysticism, revered for its hallucinogenic properties and its historical association with visions and spiritual awakenings. These delicate glass

pieces seem to levitate, conjuring dreamlike imagery that transport the viewer into a sensory realm, he explained, likening the concept to an acid trip. “I’ve never tried LSD,” he swore, but his latest work speaks to what he imagines it could be.

Pellizzari’s otherworldly objects were originally discovered by Nomad cofounder Nicolas Bellavance-Lecompte who convinced him that he had collectible art potential after seeing one of his serpent-like creations. “I completely stopped doing fashion, because everything happened without wanting to, in the sense that I was doing a project for my house with glass... at Nomad, that’s where it all started. I showcased my first project and I sold it and I immediately started getting commissions,” he said nonchalantly. At Nomad Capri, one of the first post-COVID-19 events, he encountered Yashar who invited him to travel to Art D’Egypt in Cairo to interact with some of her upscale clients.

It was then that he decided to ditch fashion for good.

“I went to Cairo and I did two other big installations and also there we immediately started selling and from there I started to have a lot of requests for custom-made projects and so I found myself that at a certain point I was no longer fashionable but I worked with glass,” he said.

The other serendipitous moment happened when he met the master Venetian artisan, who today blows the glass for all of Pellizzari’s creations. Pellizzari arrives with the sketches and



Pellizzari’s glass designs for the new Printemps in New York City.



A Design Miami Paris showcase by Nilufar, with Christian Pellizzari lighting.

works on the shape and the colors, and he shapes the metal by hand and creates the designs and the composition. “I am really putting my hands on these projects.”

Pellizzari’s designs have one common fil-routine. So far, he’s embraced an overarching Garden of Eden theme, temptation in paradise flora and fauna, based on his love for genetic variation and exotic flowers. As a boy growing up in the Veneto region, he said he’s always been “fascinated by glass.”

Back in 2014, Pellizzari was an emerging fashion designer pinpointed by Giorgio Armani to show in his eponymous theater that propelled talents including Andrea Pompilio and Stella Jean. And for almost a decade, he was known on the scene for his contemporary, sporty fashions that were eclectic but never over the top.

Before exerting his talents in design, he said he struggled like most independent fashions to propel his fashion during the pandemic, keeping up with manufacturing and booking orders.

What he likes about design versus fashion is that it’s more manual.

“I have always liked to work with my hands, play with electricity, with light. It’s something I’ve done since I was a child.”

Pellizzari’s story, while impressive, wouldn’t be the first surprising tale of a fashion designer who has forayed into the world of design, starting from the Art Deco heyday when Paul Poiret had his Martine furniture atelier, followed by Pierre Cardin and later Rick Owens. Before his death, Virgil Abloh had created some key designs for the home, including utensils for Alessi and chairs for Cassina, and in a way, his pupil Samuel Ross, who studied graphic design, is picking up where Abloh left off. Ross started an industrial design studio, Samuel Ross & Associates (known simply as SRA), and continues to operate within the fields of interior installation, architecture, furniture design and even

sound design.

This design season, at Nilufar’s Viale Lancetti space, Pellizzari’s work will be showcased within the second chapter of Yashar’s Amber Echoes, alongside the copper and brass sculptures of Israeli-born, New York City-based artist and designer Shlomo Harush. Of his collectible appeal that has resonated worldwide, Yashar explained that Pellizzari’s work is characterized by bold artisan craftsmanship.

“His artworks are incredibly successful because they bring a fresh and innovative aesthetic to the market — something truly unprecedented. Each piece carries a high level of craftsmanship... There is a refined yet bold design vision behind his work, one that embraces a touch of baroque beauty while celebrating artistry and sophistication,” Yashar told WWD, adding that the 43-year-old’s potential was visible from his early work in fashion, which he started professionally in 2010.

“His approach to design allowed him to fully unleash his artistic potential, refining his ability to translate vision into form. His background in fashion definitely sharpened his instinct for materiality, composition, inspiration and detail, all of which now play a crucial role in his sculptural creations,” she said.

Since leaving the fashion world behind, Pellizzari said the rewards have been both emotional and financial, driven by his Egyptian and Middle Eastern clientele. And with Yashar, he has projects on the horizon from New York to France. His whimsical lighting sculptures are also part of the Art Deco interior design of the newly opened Printemps in New York City on Wall Street. Like his art, his new professional identity has evolved in unexpected forms, he said.

“There are some people who identify me as a lighting designer, some who define me as a designer. Some identify me as an artist. I love the idea.”



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HERNO

WWD SALONE DEL MOBILE PREVIEW

Poltrona Frau 2025 collection with lamps designed by digital artist Six N. Five.



Moonbeam designed by Six N. Five for Poltrona Frau.



Poltrona Frau Infuses Digital Art Into Luxury Furniture

The historic Italian furniture-maker becomes the first big firm to turn a digitally designed art collection into physical pieces with Six N. Five. **BY SOFIA CELESTE**

MILAN – Famous for old-school designs like Gio Ponti's famous Chesterfield chair and Renzo Frau's classic Chesterfield, Poltrona Frau has become the first major furniture company to turn digital art into commercial ready pieces for the home.

The historic Italian design furniture brand told WWD it has made two lamps with Ezequiel Pini, the Argentinian artist who goes by the stage name Six N. Five.

For design week here that kicks off Monday, Tolentino-based Poltrona Frau will introduce designs created with 3D technology, derived from dreamlike worlds made with Pini's modern aesthetic.

Six N. Five's digital art was transformed into physical pieces, including two lighting fixtures, with Poltrona Frau guiding the engineering process. The Moonbeam Lamp inspired by solar eclipses is a piece that transitions from warm to cold light and is embellished with either Pelle Frau leather or brass elements overlapping a pearl-white satin glass to create a crescent-moon pearl white satin glass. The Foliage Lamp is a tree-shaped sculpture with brass leaves upholstered in Pelle Frau leather, providing calming, ambient lighting. The Memoria Rug was also designed by Six N. Five and crafted with a pattern that illustrates the sun reflecting on water.

Chief executive officer Nicola Coropulis said the firm has been committed to forming new collaborations and developing a design-forward vision. In 2024, the firm joined forces with U.K.-based interiors and fashion designer Faye Toogood for the Squash collection and Draga & Aurel for the ultra plush Parka sofa for Poltrona Frau.

Coropulis said the 2022 collaboration with another Argentinian Spanish was a precursor into the digital art world. At the time, the company asked visual artist Felipe Pantone to reinterpret its signature Archibald armchair in a limited-edition drop of 110 pieces. Originally designed by

Jean-Marie Massaud in 2009, for the occasion, the minimal frame of the furniture was jazzed up with an eccentric, pixelated graphic in vibrant colors splashed on the new Pelle Frau Impact Less leather.

Pini, who is a regular in the NFT world, is known for his award-winning worldly renderings of objets, spaces and homes. An early adopter of blockchain technology, his studio has worked in advertising, editorial and on video commissions.

A big test was how Pini interacted with the Tolentino factory in Le Marche, Italy. "For the task of designing a product for Poltrona Frau that person has to physically visit our place in Tolentino because you have to really breathe the air there and perceive the spirit," Coropulis said, explaining that some designers perceive the factory as an "old, dusty princess." Once they arrive, they are able to see the innovation, research, and its role in creating interiors for luxury cars. "Poltrona Frau's true spirit lies in the dedication of its people, who bring its vision to life daily."

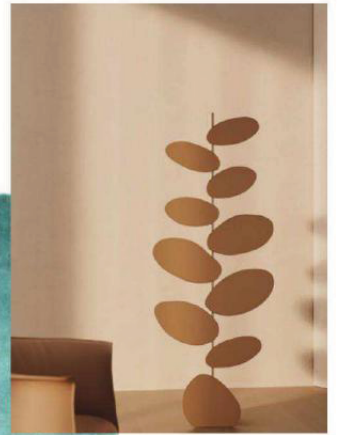
Pini, who set out to capture the magic of the eclipse, said that the manufacturing team helped him make his dreamlike creations concrete and durable.

"One of the biggest challenges was balancing my personal style, at times surreal, with the reality that these pieces had to appeal to a wider audience. I'm used to working in a digital world without limitations, but this time I had to take into account aspects such as manufacturability, durability and comfort," he told WWD.

The company, which was founded in Turin, Italy, in 1912 said it is focused on diversifying into new product categories like wardrobes and closets to offer a more comprehensive brand experience. Lighting remains a small but growing segment, accounting for around 5 percent of the company's business. About one third of its business is generated from the transport industry.



Memoria Rug was also designed by Six N. Five.



Six N. Five's Foliage lamp for Poltrona Frau.

become an actual piece of furniture in 2019, a feat that few digital designers have achieved. In addition, Pollen evolved into the Pollination of Hortensia carpets for Dutch lifestyle brand Moooi, launched during Milan Design Week 2023.

With a firm focus on the future of transport, Coropulis stressed the importance of embracing technology rather than fearing it. "Artificial intelligence, for example, can really help creativity. I am not saying that it

can replace human activity but it can be huge help. This is one of the key strategic issues we have to tackle," he said.

Elsewhere, Poltrona Frau will celebrate a series of new editions like the Blisscape, a new sofa designed by Ludovica Serafini+Roberto Palomba, as well as the 60th anniversary of Gio Ponti's Dezza armchair. It will also introduce the Dress Cove Night System created by Buenos Aires-born designer Dante Bonucelli, enhancing the brand's complete home offerings.

Over the past century, Poltrona Frau has created luxe interiors for the best auto names in the business: Ferrari, Lamborghini, McLaren and Jaguar Land Rover among them. With its first foreign acquisition, it bought a majority stake in the U.K.'s KJ Ryan Ltd., a leader in the bespoke luxury car business.

Pini isn't the first digital artist to make a splash into the designer world. Fellow Argentinian Andrés Reisinger, who is famous for works like "Pollen" and "The Shipping," saw his Hortensia armchair



Fairchild Studio: Can you discuss the importance of material and light in the design philosophy of the ONDA collection and how these elements contribute to the sensory experience of the end user?

E.C.: This project has transformed classically shaped elements into fluid, dynamic surfaces that interact with light and space in a completely new way, offering a unique sensory experience that transcends the static nature of traditional furniture.

As I mentioned, the inspiration comes from the low, flowing ripples shaped by the sandy seabeds along the eastern coasts of our peninsula. This softness, this natural rhythm is what we sought to capture and translate into a collection that goes beyond mere functionality, bringing with it a sense of pure emotion. Because at its core, design is just that: a narrative, a feeling, an invitation to experience space in a new way.

The sculpted forms of ONDA transform matter into movement, giving life to a collection where light and spatial perception become an integral part of the design. Glass surfaces, traversed by gentle waves, evoke the depth of water and its ever-changing reflections, offering a constantly evolving visual expression.

Elevating Home Design: Emanuel Colombini on Febal Casa's Collaboration With Zaha Hadid Architects

Colombini Group President discusses the ONDA collection, blending **NATURE-INSPIRED INNOVATION**, high-end craftsmanship and a global vision for redefining living spaces.

HOW DO YOU TRANSFORM furniture into art while addressing the evolving needs of a sophisticated global market? Emanuel Colombini, president and chief design officer of the Colombini Group, shares insights into Febal Casa's groundbreaking collaboration with the renowned Zaha Hadid Architects. At the heart of this partnership lies the ONDA collection – a stunning fusion of architectural innovation and nature-inspired design that captures the rhythmic beauty of the Adriatic.

From redefining manufacturing excellence to shaping sensory experiences, Colombini charts the strategic and creative journey behind the collection and reveals how such collaborations set the tone for Febal Casa's future in the international market.

Fairchild Studio: How does the collaboration with Zaha Hadid Architects align with Febal Casa's long-term strategic goals and how do you envision it influencing the company's direction in the international market?

Emanuel Colombini: The collaboration with Zaha Hadid Architects fits perfectly within our long-term vision, which is to establish Febal Casa as a global benchmark in high-end furniture. Working with a firm of such caliber has strengthened our identity, bringing a distinctive architectural approach into our production process while making it scalable on an international level.

The ONDA project is a tangible expression of this synergy. More than just a design concept, it showcases Febal Casa's ability to anticipate industry trends by focusing on innovation, manufacturing excellence and a strategic vision with the potential to make a meaningful impact on the global market.

Fairchild Studio: The ONDA collection emphasizes a blend of nature and design. How did this concept originate, and what were the key challenges in transforming this idea into tangible products?

E.C.: Our design approach, meticulous in detail and rooted in functionality, came together with the vision of Zaha Hadid Architects, a firm renowned for translating the fluidity of nature into organic, dynamic forms. It's where two worlds come together: the precision of design, and architecture that transcends static boundaries.

Nature is our primary inspiration. The wave that inspired this project is that of the Adriatic, characterized by a fluid, continuous motion shaped by the contours of the seabed. We wanted to capture this essence and translate it into a design element capable of evoking harmony, elegance and a sense of well-being within living spaces.

This inspiration emerges in a collection that introduces a new stylistic dimension, where every line is designed to convey balance and sophistication. With the ONDA collection, designed by Zaha Hadid Architects, Febal Casa thus



Emanuel Colombini, president and chief design officer

Fairchild Studio: Looking toward the future, how does Febal Casa plan to innovate while maintaining the balance between aesthetic appeal and functional utility in its offerings? What role will partnerships like the one with Zaha Hadid Architects play in these developments?

E.C.: Febal Casa has always worked with a clear vision: design, innovation and craftsmanship.

Collaborating with internationally renowned architectural firms allows us to take this approach even further, blending our culture of precision and attention to detail with a design language that, as in this case, draws inspiration from the organic beauty of nature.

Partnerships of this caliber are incredibly important to us and are made possible by the perfect balance between cutting-edge research and manufacturing excellence. Our industrial expertise allows us to optimise even the most complex designs, preserving their integrity while effectively adapting them to the demands of international markets. 🌐

To learn more about Febal Casa [CLICK HERE](#).

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



reimagines home design, infusing everyday living with the beauty of movement and the dynamic nature of form.

Fairchild Studio: In terms of design and functionality, how does the ONDA collection address the evolving needs and preferences of your target market?

E.C.: Design is never an end in itself. Now more than ever, design must go beyond aesthetics, creating products that resonate emotionally and respond to an increasingly global and sophisticated market.

This project is a perfect synthesis of design and industry. Our production capacity is what transforms an iconic piece into a product ready for the global market, optimised to interact with a holistic approach to spatial design, without foregoing the identity of the original concept.

Thanks to innovation and our expertise, ONDA is the perfect balance between form and function, between vision and tangible results.

WWD SALONE DEL MOBILE PREVIEW

WWD's Ultimate Guide to Milan Design Week 2025

This design season is full of surprise debuts, landmark anniversaries and an uptick in collaborations between the creative arenas of music, art and fashion like never before. BY SOFIA CELESTE

MILAN – The bond between design, fashion, art and music is evolving in unexpected ways. This year, Milan Design Week 2025 will run from Monday to April 13 and the calendar is effervescent with events and projects that will help shape the future of the industry, in ways that may surprise you.

Running alongside Salone del Mobile. Milano, the design event will kick off with a celebration of light to usher in Euroluca, the biennale of light. English set designer Es Devlin will kick off festivities with an installation in the courtyard of Milan's Pinacoteca and Robert Wilson will stage a music and light spectacular around one of Michelangelo's final works, the Rondanini Pietà.

As hundreds of thousands of international tastemakers from around the world get ready to descend on Milan, WWD has put together an insider guide for tackling the world's biggest design event of the year, with more to come.

Ranieri's Francesco Meda and David Lopez Quincoces Headline Alcova
Ranieri sets Milan Design Week 2025 afire with "Under the Volcano," a multisensory journey that dives deep into the raw potential of nature's untamable phenomenon. Staged in the SNIA Factory – a defunct industrial landmark turned into an intriguing backdrop – the installation embraces the prowess that emerges by imbuing design and music. The rugged nature of algorithmically eroded rocks dreamed up by Italian artist Quayola and an electrifying soundscape by violinist Rodrigo D'Erasmus will come together with the striking architectural influences envisaged by Francesco Meda and David Lopez Quincoces, Ranieri's creative directors.

Dimorestudio Teams Up With Antique Japanese Textile-maker Hosoo and Osanna Visconti

Heritage and innovation collide in Dimorestudio's latest collaboration. Japan's fabled textile firm Hosoo unveils the "Hemispheres Collection" during Milan Design Week 2025, a momentous exploration of Japanese tradition and Italian savoir faire, in collaboration with Britt Moran and Emiliano Salci's Dimorestudio. Known for their ability to resurrect the past with an edgy yet poetic aesthetic, the Dimorestudio design duo has transformed over 20,000 obi patterns from Hosoo's historical archives into 33 breathtaking fabrics that echo modern sophistication. Hosoo was founded in 1688 in Kyoto, the epicenter of the ancient Nishijin textile tradition. Debuting with designer Osanna Visconti, who designed the Magnolia and Bamboo bronze furniture collections of which part are upholstered with Hemispheres Collection textiles in her atelier in Milan's evocative Cinque Vie district, this collection is all about dialogue – between eras, cultures and the raw poetry of craft.

The result? An infusion of tradition, artistry and a fresh aesthetic language – one that reimagines Japanese heritage through a distinctly global lens.

Kelly Wearstler's Collaboration With The Rug Company
Los Angeles-based interior designer Kelly Wearstler has been busy lately. Last year, she lent her aesthetic to a roster of heritage companies like



"Under the Volcano" by Ranieri.



Yves Salomon Editions

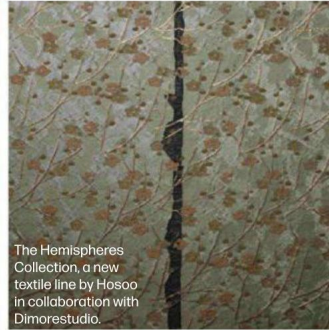
French silver and tableware maker Christofle, Genoa-based home accessories firm Giobagnara and, in 2023, she launched two collections with Belgian design brand Serax. This season, she comes to Milan with Crescendo, a collaboration with U.K.-based The Rug Company. Within the collection are six designs, each in two colorways, blending geometric precision with the fluidity of organic forms.

Expertly hand-knotted by The Rug Company's master artisans in Nepal, the rugs are woven from a striking mix of natural materials – silk, wool, nettle and linen – layered using traditional techniques that deliver jaw-dropping texture and a sculptural quality. Bold yet refined, Crescendo celebrates the role of craft in modern design.

Yves Salomon Editions Expands
After debuting his first furniture at Milan Design Week 2024 with Chapo Creations, Yves Salomon is back. This time, the French fashion designer will showcase an expanded collection of 18 pieces, a full furniture line called Yves Salomon Editions.

Playful and poetic, the collection will take center stage in the courtyard on Milan's via Santo Spirito 7, radiating French designer Pierre Marie's signature eclectic aesthetic through seats, cushions, blankets, stools and even a lamp.

Drawing on the deep-rooted connection



The Hemispheres Collection, a new textile line by Hosoo in collaboration with Dimorestudio.



Tara Bernerd x Medea 1905



Tara Bernerd collaboration with Frette.

between sheepskin and humankind throughout history, the collection unfolds across two enchanting themes: La Prairie and Le Firmament. La Prairie evokes a dreamy meadow filled with geometric blooms and bows, while Le Firmament explores the heavens, the celestial Western stars, illustrated with beads and swirling paisley patterns. At its heart of this new collection are two sculptural shearing seats, upholstered entirely in Spanish merino. These pieces are a nod to fantastical creations throughout time, including the experimental genius of late Italian designer Gaetano Pesce.

Tara Bernerd's Disrupting Architecture Collaboration With Frette and Silhouette for Medea 1905
With a dash of Deco and a touch of Modernism, British designer Tara Bernerd is gearing up to make a splash at Milan Design Week with not one but two collaborations. Her contemporary post vision will come to life through a landmark collaboration with storied linens firm Frette and luxury furniture firm Medea



Kelly Wearstler

Filippo Arnaboldi and Tara Bernerd



1905. Drawing inspiration from a rich collision of architectural eras, the capsule collection with Frette features luxurious cashmere and wool throws and cushions that feel as versatile as they are timeless. "I wanted

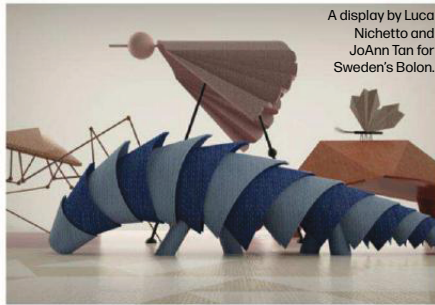
to create versatile pieces that could transform a space – whether a New York apartment, a Cotswold cottage, or a beach house in Bali," said Bernerd, who is known for her interiors projects within luxury hotels like the Four Seasons Fort Lauderdale and the Hari, Hong Kong.

Born out of a friendship between Bernerd and Frette chief executive officer Filippo Arnaboldi, the project is a testament to their shared belief in design's ability to shape mood and ambiance. "You can change the entire feel of a room with a throw or a set of cushions," enthused Bernerd. The collection "Silhouette" for Medea 1905 grew from her relationship with family-owned Brianza cabinetmakers Luigi and Andrea Tagliabue. Together, they've crafted a capsule collection defined by noble materials like walnut and oak, antique brass accents, fluted glass and surfaces of onyx and marble. Both collections will debut at Frette's Via Manzoni showroom during Milan Design Week and will be showcased at the Fiera Milano during Salone del Mobile 2025. ▶

SALONE DEL MOBILE PREVIEW **WWD**



Faye Toogood



A display by Luca Nichetto and JoAnn Tan for Sweden's Bolon.

touch, Toogood will unveil Rose, a limited-edition series inspired by archival designs, while also curating the exhibition space to bring Noritake's traditional craftsmanship into dialogue with modern vision.

Luca Nichetto and JoAnn Tan for Sweden's Bolon JoAnn Tan, the installation artist known for her awe-inspiring animal scenes has teamed up with famed Sweden-Venice-based multidisciplinary designer Luca Nichetto. Titled "Exodus" and set against the backdrop of Tan's new Milan atelier on Viale Lombardia 56, the two are set to unveil a striking display of anthropomorphic creatures for Swedish flooring brand Bolon.

Bolon specializes in climate-neutral flooring and rugs and is headquartered in Ulricehamn, Sweden. Under the leadership of sisters Annica and Marie Eklund, the third-generation family business has transformed from a traditional weaving mill into an international design brand that now boasts clients like Armani, Google, Four Seasons Hotels and Chanel.

Sisters Marie and Annica Eklund, the third-generation leaders behind the family-owned brand, say the coming together of creative minds "combine bold innovation and craftsmanship to explore the possibilities of Bolon's material, transforming it into something unexpectedly extraordinary."

Pierre Frey Debuts Its Furniture Collection in Milan After showcasing its first furniture collection during Paris

Design Week in January, historic French home textiles maker Pierre Frey is ready to show Milan that it's serious about growing this latest facet of its business. During Milan Design Week, it will launch Marta with American-born designer and sculptor Gregory Beson, who launched his studio practice in 2018 in New York City.

The furniture collection, which explores the interaction between wood and upholstery, is a varied mix that consists of poufs, chairs and benches, and will be unveiled at the Pierre Frey showroom on Via Fatebene Fratelli 3.

Daive Dolcini Tribute to Bruno Munari x Amini Italian artist and graphic designer Bruno Munari is having a moment right now. In 1925, at the age of 18, he came to Milan to work with his uncle and became a proponent of the Futurist movement led by Filippo Tommaso Marinetti. Exactly 100 years later, designer and wood specialist David Dolcini and Somaglia, Italy-based Amini Carpets will unveil a tribute to his life. Named "A Journey Into Fantasy", the exhibit explores the work of the contemporary aesthete. For Dolcini, whose studio collaborates with companies like Luceplan, Porada, Bric's and Panasonic, Munari's legacy has been a guide throughout his own career. "I have learned from his books, his projects, and his ability to combine rigor with freedom. For this reason, my approach to the exhibition setup follows his method, characterized by lightness and a touch of irony," he said.

Two rug collections will be staged inside the Amini showroom on Via Borgogna 7, and will illustrate Munari's playful spirit: *Viaggio nella Fantasia* (Journey Into Fantasy) and *Macchine Inutili* (Useless Machines). ■



Pierre Frey's collaboration with American-born designer and sculptor Gregory Beson.



Faye Toogood for Noritake To mark its 120th anniversary last year, Japanese tableware brand Noritake introduced Noritake Design Collection, a collaborative initiative led by its chief creative director Yuichiro Hori, consisting of a series of projects with a global roster of contemporary designers, starting with Yabu Pushelberg. At Milan Design Week, the Japanese house will push the envelope even further. At the Alcova showcase in the town of Varedo, the company will unveil its latest collection with British designer Faye Toogood, who made waves last year with her Squash collection for Poltrona Frau. Adding her distinct folk-meets-modernist

Molteni Group Sees Opportunities In the High Seas

Having expanded its retail network worldwide, Molteni Group's CEO discusses the opportunities in the developing world of luxury nautical vessels. BY SOFIA CELESTE

MILAN – Molteni&C has just furnished private residences on two vessels for Explora Journeys, the luxury lifestyle brand of shipping and cruise ship company MSC Group. Expected to be unveiled by the end of the year are the Ocean Penthouses, Ocean Residences and Owner's Residence on board of Explora 1, the first of up to six luxury ships.

Not every furniture company is poised to outfit ships, but Molteni&C has customized models like the Walter and Margou armchairs by Flemish architect and creative director Vincent Van Duysen, and the Chelsea and Devon seatings, the D.552.2 and Palinfasca chairs, designed by the late Italian designers Rodolfo Dordoni, Gio Ponti and Luca Meda, respectively, for ocean travel.

In an interview with WWD, Molteni Group chief executive officer Marco Piscitelli said hospitality and the nautical sector represent lucrative areas of growth for the Gussano-based company, which was founded by Angelo and Giuseppina Molteni in 1934. The firm is now being run by Piscitelli, together with the founders' descendants.

"The world of luxury this year has seen a slowdown and the only sectors that have performed positively have been precisely

those of hospitality and cruises in addition to cosmetics," Piscitelli said.

Despite the ongoing market correction, after the post-pandemic boom, Molteni Group's sales are expected to have risen 10 percent to 520 million euros in 2024, making it one of Italy's biggest luxury furniture makers by revenues.

Molteni Group has worked with Italian shipyard Fincantieri, one of the world's largest, for 30 years. Through Fincantieri, it has worked on 6,000 passenger ships for Costa and Carnival cruises. It has also developed luxury charter vacations like the The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection and The Four Seasons Yacht, which like Explora Journeys are in sync with its own luxury DNA.

The nautical sector is on the rise, despite the economic slowdown. Its sales have been buoyed by bespoke yachts. Sales of the Italian yacht sector, the biggest in the world, rose 13.6 percent to 8.33 billion euros in 2023, according to the Yachting in Figures report produced by the Italian Marine Industry Association's Market Intelligence and Research Department that was released at the end of September.

Shipbuilder Azimut|Benetti Group, which was ranked as the number-one firm in the world according to length built by



Molteni&C furnishings for Explora Journeys.

Boat International, noted a boom in orders. In October, the Avigliana, Italy-based company said it has a solid backlog for boats that have yet to be built, up to 2029 for some Benetti models, with 40 percent of its clientele hailing from Europe, followed by the Americas at 37 percent and the Middle East and North Africa at a total of 23 percent.

Similarly, Ameglia, Italy-based Sanlorenzo, the second-ranked builder by length, under art director Piero Lissoni since 2018, said it closed the first half of 2024 with revenues up 6.9 percent. In its most recent financial report released Sept. 9, the firm said it sees sustainable growth over time. Its main geographic drivers were similar, with the Middle East and North Africa region sales up 142 percent, the Americas up 9.2 percent and Asia Pacific up 20.9 percent.

In 2024, Molteni Group bucked the trend, expecting to report a rise in revenue

of 520 million euros in revenue up from 470 million euro in revenue in 2023, as it opened new stores worldwide. Molteni Group planned 18 openings total for 2025, including São Paulo; Mumbai; Mexico City; Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; Sydney; Auckland, New Zealand; Chengdu, China; and Bangkok. It opened two stores in Russia – one in Moscow and one in St. Petersburg – through a retail partner in 2024.

Molteni Group, which owns luxury furniture and design firm Molteni&C as well as partitions and office furniture firm Citterio and workspace solutions firm UniFor, said it booked about 50 percent of its sales through its retail channel and 50 percent through contract, the latter being a main driver for luxury furniture peers in 2024 and into 2025. "We have this multichannel business now that has been tested for many years of innate ability to operate in a synergic way on many markets, on many different channels," Piscitelli said.

WWD SALONE DEL MOBILE PREVIEW

Key Differences Between Creative Direction in Design versus Fashion

Top furniture and decor experts weigh in on the frenetic creative shuffle taking the fashion industry by storm. BY SOFIA CELESTE

MILAN – Is it better to have a sole captain of the ship, even for a moment, or a tight group of friends involved in decisionmaking?

Akin to fashion, the design industry has been pondering this question for some time.

According to curator Federica Sala, the most distinct difference between the creative direction in design and fashion is that “fashion is centered around one single person, while design is more of a team effort.”

Sala, who has envisaged and staged exhibits for some of the biggest names in both fashion and design, likened the work of an art director of a design house to a coach of a soccer team. Furthermore, she pointed out that the famous design furniture firms today were started by businesspeople. The teams of Cassina and B&B Italia, two of Italy’s most recognizable companies, for example, were built by their founders, entrepreneurs Cesare and Umberto Cassina and Piero Ambrogio Busnelli, respectively.

“Fashion was started by creative figures like Giorgio Armani, Valentino Garavani, Domenico Dolce and Stefano Gabbana, some of whom sewed their collections with their own hands before becoming colossal figures. Design companies were born from producers and businesspeople,” she said, adding that these origins have very much dictated how we view creative leadership in those two fields.

Poltrona Frau on Strategic Control

At Poltrona Frau, for example, the company’s management is in control not only of its financial success but also of its design heritage and future.

“The real issue is how you create this consistency in a way that the brand communicates to its clients. And this, to a certain extent, is much closer to what the fashion brands are doing.” Poltrona Frau chief executive officer Nicola Coropulis said, adding that the designer changes recently in fashion have been “hysterical.” Given the speed at which they change direction and the money exhausted on contractual changes, “it’s not infusing any

real value into the brands they represent,” Coropulis contended.

“Maybe we should ask ourselves why Hermès doesn’t have an overall creative director and this is the most credible brand,” argued Coropulis, adding that the real challenge is finding consistency in the communication, pinpointing the most strategic physical and digital distribution channels and spaces, and conveying emotion, among other things.

In fashion, designers are chosen to manage the pressure involved in creating an identity through the many collections each major brand issues each year – which now include a variety of seasons like pre-collections and cruise. In the case of design, however, bygone designers like Gio Ponti and Ray and Charles Eames continue to drive sales and therefore reedit and reissues, which cost less to make, and also alleviate the pressure of always having to create a sense of newness.

Another key difference is art directors in the design world can branch out and work for several brands, and so can the furniture designers they work with.

Piero Lissoni: Art Direction Is Crucial

Italian architect Piero Lissoni, known for his grand projects around the world including the Dorothea hotel complex in Budapest, and the Hotel Aka in New York City and Alexandria, Va., is currently the art director of Italian furniture and design brands Alpi, BoffilDe Padova, Living Divani, Lualdi, Porro and Sanlorenzo, a maker of made-to-measure yachts. He’s a firm believer that art direction is crucial to a brand’s future, coherence and style ideology.

Piero Lissoni



“The art director of a company is like the conductor of an orchestra, and I have to choose the best players I can find on the market. I’m not interested in whether the projects are large or small, but in being able to bring players into the company to carry out the projects, obviously always in coordination with the company itself,” he said, adding that no project is too large or too small. Last year he designed the Toka candle for Wa:it, an Italian clean beauty brand featuring natural skin care products, fragrances and incense with a Japanese ethos.

Why does this model work?

Lissoni attributes its effectiveness to the strong figures within design firms, many of which are family-run and built on the industrial heritage native to northern Italy. “It’s crucial to have a very solid relationship with the person who is the true driver of the company. Without being able to engage in constructive dialogue and to cross swords on a daily basis, it’s impossible for an art director to succeed,” he said.



Francesco Meda and David Lopez Quincoces

Francesco Meda: Nurturing Creativity and Growing Together

Younger names like Francesco Meda and David Lopez Quincoces serve as art directors at three firms: one with Ranieri, a quarry based near Mt. Vesuvius that now makes furniture and objects with volcanic rock; Fast, an outdoor furniture company, and Acerbis, an Italian brand known for its experimental designs.

“All of these brands have their purpose. Ranieri is unique, Acerbis has a vast archive to work with and Fast is an outdoor furniture company...We’re able to lend a strong identity to these three companies,” Meda told WWD. At the moment, the duo is able to unleash their own experimental creative spirit with like-minded brands. At the same time, Meda and Quincoces have secured a plethora of design gigs with major companies around the world for single pieces.

Nemo Group's Federico Palazzari: The Importance of Friends

For entrepreneur and former corporate lawyer Federico Palazzari, design has the advantage of avoiding the big, messy break-ups in fashion. “It costs a lot of money to get out of these [fashion] contracts. It’s a nightmare,” he contended.

Palazzari, who turned Nemo lighting into Nemo Group when he brought FontanaArte and Driade together, believes that the company’s ethos is firmly established under the daring, explorative spirit of fictional character Captain Nemo for which it was named. Palazzari forged a partnership with Israeli designer Ron Gilad after taking him out on his boat. Gilad learned how to swim for the first time that same day.

“We do not believe in creative directors. We believe in creative friends, which is something different. With these designers and architects it can be long or short love stories,” he said.

You bump into people, you discover someone and you can start again, without big drama, he explained, referring to Nemo’s latest model Dori, a brand new lamp with emerging designer, the Tel Aviv-based Alon Rotman, who graduated in industrial design in 2021 from the Shenkar School of Design. ▶

Alon Rotman



Federica Sala



Poltrona Frau Archibald Denim Edition

SALONE DEL MOBILE PREVIEW **WWD**

Luca Nichetto: How Less Is Sometimes More

Luca Nichetto's multidisciplinary studio based in Venice and Stockholm has worked with a variety of brands, among them Hermès, porcelain-maker Ginori1735 and Venetian glass-maker Barovier&Toso. One of the key differences is pay.

"Fashion is another story: Art directors there often earn enough to focus entirely on one brand, becoming almost like an internal staff. But the irony is that when they move to the next brand, their visual language moves with them and suddenly two supposedly different brands start looking like distant cousins," he said.

Design is no stranger to frenzy, he added, noting that creatives in design often juggle multiple clients and tend to bring along the same core team of graphic designers, stylists, and photographers. "So similar aesthetics [in design] start popping up everywhere" too, Nichetto said.

"I've come to the conclusion that art direction means going deep, not wide. Focusing on one single brand lets you get under the skin of it, whether that means honoring a rich history or helping define a new one. Then step by step you can build a real identity that doesn't feel borrowed or recycled."

Molteni Group: Family Ties

This is the case for Molteni Group. Its flagship brand is Molteni&C and its direction is spearheaded by Flemish designer Vincent Van Duysen, who works closely with the Molteni family members, who manage the company with CEO Marco Piscitelli.

"It has been a win-win because he became an amazing art director, and we became a company with a very clear, distinct vision with a very readable language that is clear, coherent," Piscitelli said.

"Molteni&C has been working with Van Duysen for years and since then, he's infused his timeless zen throughout Molteni&C's collections and stores. We were looking for a person who could bring

us rigor, discipline, attention [and] coherence. These are all abilities that Van Duysen has, skills that he has and that he expresses through his work as an architect and designer," Piscitelli said, adding that the Molteni family members also have very clear ideas, which helps maintain continuity.

Yabu Pushelberg on Avoiding Ubiquity

Nobody knows what it's like to work with both fashion and design more than New York- and Toronto-based studio Yabu Pushelberg, whose creativity gave birth to Paris' La Samaritaine shopping landmark and Tokyo's Aman Residences.

"From our perspective, that constant rotation of voices [in fashion] can spark fresh ideas and reinvigorate a brand. At the same time, it challenges designers to adapt quickly and deliver something truly

memorable. It's fast-paced, exhilarating, and a bit daunting, which is exactly why it inspires us," said the firm, founded by Canadians George Yabu and Glenn Pushelberg.

One critique of the current state of design is that the circle of designers within furniture and home has become "overly concentrated."

"Too few individuals are leading too many brands and, as a result, everything starts to feel the same. There's no real differentiation between brands anymore, and that's a problem," Yabu said.

Pushelberg added that too many brands are led by the same voices. "You start to see beautiful but interchangeable products. Modular sofas and wall systems — they're technically sound, but they lack a clear idea. The work looks good, but it doesn't move things forward," Pushelberg contended.

Fashion and Design: Cross-pollinating

At the end of the day, fashion designers have also been enticed by design brands and the freedom they promise, despite the challenges and lower pay.

About a century ago, and during the Art Deco heyday, fashion designer Paul Poiret founded his Martine furniture atelier.

Careers like his paved the way for Pierre Cardin and later Rick Owens to contribute to both fashion and design. Before his death, Virgil Abloh had created some key designs for the home, including utensils for Alessi and chairs for Cassina, and in a way, his pupil Samuel Ross, who studied graphic design, is picking up where Abloh left off. Ross started an industrial design studio, Samuel Ross & Associates (known simply as SRA), and continues to operate within the fields of interior installation, architecture, furniture design and even sound design.

Indie homeware brand RedDUO's founders Fabiola Di Virgilio and Andrea Rosso both have fashion backgrounds. Rosso is the son of Renzo Rosso and currently serves as a creative consultant for Diesel Living and is sustainability ambassador for Diesel's parent OTB Group. In the past, Di Virgilio, who studied architecture, designed for Temperley London and Costume National.

"Fashion is almost too fast, and design is very slow but it's starting to catch up. As the sector gets more saturated, designers are starting to work for many different brands at the same time," Di Virgilio said of the frenetic nature of design to which he has become accustomed.

The two worlds are moving at different speeds but fashion is starting to realize it has to slow down while design on the other hand is picking up the pace, driven by an upswing in design events worldwide.

"Even though we always say that they are two different worlds, fashion and design are more united than ever. And a lot of creative directors in fashion work really well with interior designers," Rosso said, adding that the fundamental values behind the craftsmanship that goes into fashion prepare its creatives to foray into the arena of furniture and interiors. "There is a lot of cross-pollination," he said.

After all, the design field needs to usher in the unexpected, too, Pushelberg said.

"What's really needed are fresh perspectives, creative people who know how to conceptualize art direction, physical environments and experiences. Many of them are now backed by fashion experts who are doing interesting things. It's about bringing in a fresh perspective not just to shake things up, but to reestablish identity," he said. ■



Glenn Pushelberg and George Yabu



Samuel Ross with his Formation 02 design for Kohler.



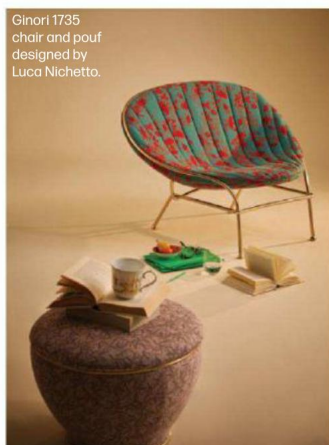
Luca Nichetto



Vincent Van Duysen poses beside his reimagined Palinfrasca chair for Molteni&C, which was originally designed by Luca Meda.



Fabiola Di Virgilio and Andrea Rosso



Ginori 1735 chair and pouf designed by Luca Nichetto.

Samuel Ross with his Formation 02 design for Kohler; Vicki Hafenstein; Fabiola Di Virgilio and Andrea Rosso of RedDUO, an independent homeware brand; Alessandro Simonetti

WWD SALONE DEL MOBILE PREVIEW

Milan Design Week Highlights From Fashion, Beauty Brands

It's design's big moment but fashion and beauty brands are not standing still, leveraging the buzzy week to explore collaborations, drop new products and launch activations across the city.

BY MARTINO CARRERA, SANDRA SALIBIAN AND ANDREA ONATE

Hermès' glasses, part of the 2025 Maison collection.



The "Carrousel" collection Charlotte Chesnais designed with Christofle.



MILAN – It's the jolliest – and buzziest – week of the year. As Milan turns into the epicenter of all-things design, fashion and beauty brands are leveraging the moment to get their slice of visibility via collaborations, special projects, product launches and activations.

Here's a roundup of what brands are up to this week:

Hermès Hermès is again showcasing its latest home decor collection with an installation at Milan's La Pelota venue, an interplay of light and shape with suspended structures encasing the new objects and projecting a radiant glow on the floor. Conceived by the French luxury house's artistic director of the maison collections Charlotte Macaux Perelman, together with Alexis Fabry, the installation spotlights additions to Hermès' ever-expanding home pieces, including tall glasses with rich-hued color blocks by the brand's design studio and a cashmere plaid with geometric patterns designed by Sudanese but Paris-based artist Amer Musa, known for his abstract oil pastels and markers paintings embedding simple geometric shapes.

Jil Sander x Thonet Jil Sander might have left her fashion days behind, but this week she's marking her first foray into the world of furniture design via a tie-up with storied German manufacturer Thonet GmbH.

With the JS.Thonet collection, she has taken on famous tubular designs from the late '20s and put her own stamp on them. In her two lines, dubbed "Serious" and "Nordic," Sander reinterpreted Marcel Breuer's iconic S 64 cantilever chair, adding an extra touch of elegance with high-gloss lacquered wood details, refined tubular steel frames and seats and backrests made of Viennese canework or leather in a nuanced color palette. The collection also includes a matching side table, the B 97 design from 1933.

"I wasn't interested in completely redesigning these classics. It was more about taking them to the next level," said

A chair from the JS.Thonet collection's Serious line.



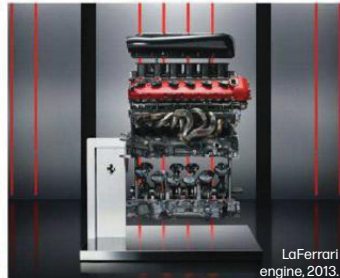
The case of the "Carrousel" collection.

Sander. "My goal was to take the S 64 as Breuer meant it to be and bring it into the here and now. The chair's design and fundamental structure have stood the test of time and deserve contemporary recognition," she added, revealing that for her interpretation she drew inspiration from different places, from the finish of a Steinway grand piano to the leather upholstery of an English car.

Ferrari In tandem with Milan Design Week, Ferrari is releasing the latest in its Collectible collection of memorabilia and scale models, focusing on the race cars' key components, which it bills not just as echos of the automotive brand's legacy but also design objects in their own right.

"While conceiving the new Collectibles series, we wanted to consider our background as designers at the Ferrari Design Center, not only in the field of design but also in architecture," said Flavio Manzoni, Ferrari's chief design officer. "We drew on all the experience of minimalism and the research aimed at dematerializing as much as possible every element that is not strictly necessary. The use of transparent materials and the employment of structural elements... gives an effect of suspension and lightness to the object, allowing it to be contemplated in the essence of its form, encouraging interaction with the user and the surrounding environment," he said.

The series includes the "Tipo 048B Formula One" engine with which Ferrari scored its ninth Constructors' World Championship in 1999; the camshaft from the single-seater Formula One Ferrari F2003-GA car that won the team seven race times and two World Championship



LaFerrari engine, 2013.

MCM x Pet Therapy



titles, among other achievements, as well as a conrod and piston from a 2011 Ferrari F150^o Italia driven by Fernando Alonso, among others.

Jimmy Choo Halfway between art and design, luxury footwear brand Jimmy Choo is teaming with Harry Nuriev, the founder and creative director of architecture and design firm Crosby Studio, to reinvent its Milan flagship's ground floor. A striking glass structure is to take center place in the boutique, serving as a display for a range of archival shoe designs – and some 3D printed replicas – as a reflection on the evolution of creativity over time.

"The concept plays with the idea of timelessness... a study that underscores the art form of our creations over the years to be spotlighted," said Sandra Choi, creative director of Jimmy Choo. Nuriev said that the installation "takes a commercial store and turns it into a temporary exhibition, a space that would exist for just one week but leave a lasting impression."

Christofle x Charlotte Chesnais

Charlotte Chesnais' golden touch can turn even cutlery into a work of art. The jewelry designer has been tapped by Christofle to develop "Carrousel," a new flatware collection and case that was two years in the making.

In sync with Chesnais' sinuous and sculptural creations, the curvy designs feature an open, teardrop shape on the base. The line includes 24 pieces including forks, knife and spoons in two sizes, available in silver-plated metal, as well as in a bicolor version partially gilded with 18-karat gold upon special request.

Also coming with a bicolor finishing and a walnut wood panel inside, the case could easily double as a decorative object itself.

"The aesthetic of Carrousel is coherent with everything I have created since launching my label in 2015," said Chesnais. "It has been a longtime dream to create a



Sandra Choi and Harry Nuriev

The Jolly Rabbit fragrance by MCM.



cutlery collection, to learn a savoir-faire that was similar but different from my own. The distinctive shape of the case and the way it holds the set represent my approach to merging sculptural ideas with purposeful and personal objects. Like jewelry, these are pieces that can accompany you through life – while also being present through countless moments that people share together."

MCM x Pet Therapy Cuteness alert: MCM and Pet Therapy – the design brand Atelier Biagetti's Alberto Biagetti and Laura Baldassari co-created with their 11-year-old daughter Altea – will debut a new collaboration of sculptural, pet-friendly poufs shaped like cats and dogs. Crafted in MCM Visetos and durable outdoor fabric, the fun pieces intended for both humans and their furry companions will be celebrated with an immersive installation at Giardino delle Arti.

The Atelier Biagetti duo said they aimed for designs that are not about sophistication but simplicity and recognition in a quest to express and reconnect with the sense of wonder that children hold. Hence, the line of puffy indoor-outdoor poufs crafted from upcycled MCM materials and oversized cat sculptures from Pet Therapy's collection serving as decorative objects.

Open to the public throughout the week, the installation will come with palm tree lights, vibrant textures and three wooden houses where different experiences will be offered to visitors every day, ranging from pet Pilates to dog training. Guests will also have the chance to smell MCM's newly launched pet-inspired fragrance collection, developed with Interparfums Inc.

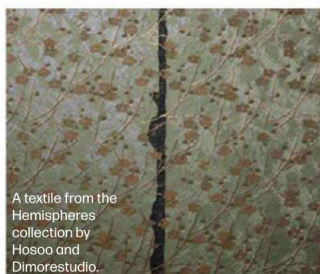
Each coming in a glass bottle topped by a different animal, the six scents created by Dsm-Firmenich perfumers address different characters, from the strong Mighty Bear and its woody juice to the citrusy Jolly Rabbit and Zen Elephant's chypre and leathery notes. ▶

SALONE DEL MOBILE PREVIEW **WWD**

The Valextra Vocabolario's Costa 70 + Zaven suitcase and Iside bag.



An illustration of the installation at the Vhernier boutique.

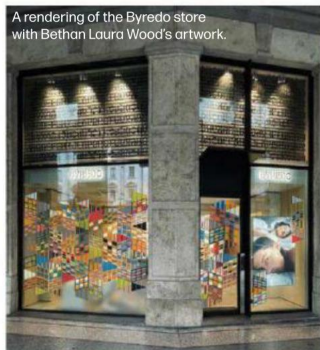


A textile from the Hemispheres collection by Hosoo and Dimorestudio.

Acqua di Parma's new fragrance Buongiorno and a piece by Antonio Fratantoni.



A rendering of the Byredo store with Bethan Laura Wood's artwork.



Valextra Valextra has conscripted Venice-based multidisciplinary studio Zaven for the second iteration of its "Valextra Vocabolario" project aimed at shining a design-driven light on its codes and heritage. Zaven's Enrica Cavarzan and Marco Zavagno developed the Costa 70 + Zaven suitcase, which, despite its name, contains abstract objects to be assembled, like Lego bricks, into a decorative sculpture. The versatility of the elements allows different owners to shape the final objects in a number of ways. A life-size reproduction of the sculpture is to take over Valextra's Via Manzoni flagship during Milan Design Week.

"Responsive and thought-provoking design has been at the core of Valextra's



The 10 Corso Como store's facade.



An Il Bisonte placemat, part of the 2025 home collection.



Elie Saab's Golden home fragrance by Culti Milano.



A teaser of "The Second Skin," Aesop's installation during Milan Design Week.

DNA since 1937 and Zaven mirrors our own passion in realizing objects of pleasure and excellence in a restrained way with this exceptional reinvention of an archival icon. A dynamic, artistic piece that blends sculpture with architectural design and movement," said the brand's chief executive officer Xavier Rougeaux.

Marking the project, Valextra is debuting numbered and limited-edition iterations of its Iside and Milano bags, with a palladium handle featuring green and pink molded resin inserts and a special closure crafted from the same material, respectively.

10 Corso Como A pioneer retailer in combining fashion, design and art, 10 Corso Como is unveiling a full schedule of

events and activations for Salone del Mobile. On the retail front, in addition to the ongoing Maison Margiela x Gentle Monster's pop-up, the Italian retailer is welcoming Yohji Yamamoto for a residency, taking over the store's street-facing pop-up space through April 22 to unveil a selection of his women's, men's and Discord spring 2025 collection.

Meanwhile, a trifecta of jewelry brands are shedding light on their creative process, from niche Italian label Aliita mounting the conceptual exhibition "From Dream to Reality" which unpacks the creative process behind the creation of any object, from the idea development to sketching and manufacturing, to Amsterdam-based fellow jeweler Bibi Van Der Velden debuting an installation to spotlight her latest artworks-turned-jewels and the Japanese brand Shihara by designer Yuta Ishihara, which is installing a pop-up

inside 10 Corso Como and debuting a collaboration with designer Michael Anastassiades.

On the art and design front, four exhibitions are spotlighting the works of several designers, including the Belgium-based Arno Declercq, Italy's collective Imperfettolab, and London-based studio Layer, helmed by Benjamin Hubert. The latter showcase, called 101010, is a display of new pieces developed for MDF Italia, Andreu World, Ræburn, Muuto, Orrefors, Kvadrat and Bitossi. On the mezzanine, Japanese artist Mika Ninagawa will showcase the results of a partnership with fashion brand Antepirma to reinterpret the latter's signature Wirebag in six embroidered variants.

Vhernier Known for its bold sculptural designs, Italian jeweler Vhernier will unveil its new collection called "Mon Jeu Maxi [My Maxi Game]" with an installation at the brand's boutique in Via Montenapoleone, 21. The installation will feature five works of the Milanese artist Mauro Mori: two marble sculptures, a screen and two wood panels, and it is curated by Galerie Negroportes, led by Sophia Negroportes. The new collection features earrings, bracelets, rings and necklaces made in ebony, rose gold and diamond pavé modules.

Il Bisonte Florentine leather-goods brand Il Bisonte is having its third gig in home decor hinged on the use of its signature vegetable-tanned leather. The lineup includes a cubic pouf, Casentino wool blanket with leather trims and matching set of cushions, as well as a wabi sabi-inspired reversible placemat made of raffia and striped cotton canvas.

Teasing an upcoming home-leaning collaboration, the brand is celebrating the launch with an in-store cocktail hosted by Fernando Aciar, the New York-based designer and chef behind the Fefostudio multidisciplinary firm. Aciar will design an edit of home objects for the brand to be unveiled during New York Design Week in May. "Il Bisonte's philosophy aligns perfectly with my approach as both a craftsman and designer. In my studio, preserving and honoring traditional craftsmanship and its most authentic techniques... is essential," Aciar said.

Hosoo x Dimorestudio Hosoo, the Kyoto-based historic maker of kimono textiles, has further strengthened its ties with Italian design. After the collaboration with Michele De Lucchi and his multidisciplinary studio AMDL Circle last year, the Japanese silk specialist has joined forces with famed studio Dimorestudio for its new "Hemispheres" collection.

This includes 33 textiles inspired by more than 20,000 traditional obi patterns passed down through generations by the Hosoo family, founders and current custodians of the company's heritage. Originally preserved as uncolored sketches and untouched for centuries, these patterns depicting flowers, bamboo or abstract motifs were reimaged by Dimorestudio in delicate hues, ranging from muted gray shades and sepia tones to smoky blues and desaturated greens.

The collection will be showcased in the refined Milanese house of artisan and artist Osanna Visconti, flanking her new collection of furniture crafted in natural bronze and inspired by the life cycle of the magnolia flower. Pieces like the Crinkle stool and Magnolia sofa will be upholstered with Hemispheres fabrics and add to items such as the Bambù cabinet and the Campanula lamp.

Culti Milano x Elie Saab It's no secret that Elie Saab is betting big on its design and hospitality extensions. In addition to presenting its new collection of 10 furniture pieces, this week the brand will unveil a 4,843-square-foot showroom dedicated to the home category as well as debut "Golden," its first home fragrance. Developed in collaboration with Culti Milano, the diffuser and matching perfumed candle come in geometric green glass cases and are scented with a citrusy blend of orange, tangerine and ginger with cedarwood, in a nod to the roots of the Lebanese designer.

Acqua di Parma To mark the launch of its new fragrance "Buongiorno," Acqua di Parma collaborated with Sicilian artisan Antonio Fratantoni. His mood-boosting ceramic sculptures in the shape of the sun nod to the name of the scent and sense of positivity and lightheartedness it intends to evoke.

They will be exhibited at the brand's store nestled in the Golden Triangle as part of the "Sunrise in the Orchard" installation. Upon registration online, visitors can also have a guided experience and olfactory tour of the brand's offering and Fratantoni's work.

Byredo & Bethan Laura Wood Byredo is bringing a touch of color and exuberance to the city with a little help of internationally acclaimed English artist and designer Bethan Laura Wood. The creative's bold and vibrant work will cast a new light on familiar urban spots, as the parties will take over a newsstand and cargo bike in the arty Brera district, in addition to Byredo's flagship in Milan.

Aesop Aesop returns as official partner of Milan Design Week, staging an installation inside the sacristy of the Chiesa del Carmine church located in the arty Brera district and a few steps from one of its four stores in the city, specifically the first it opened in 2015.

Dubbed "The Second Skin," the installation will be an ode to skin and feature the brand's Eleos Aromatique hand balm as an integral part of the structure. As part of the experience, visitors will discover a short video centered on a dance performance choreographed by Nayoung Kim, a key member of Tanztheater Wuppertal Pina Bausch since 1996 who has performed in 24 of Bausch's groundbreaking works. ▶

WWD SALONE DEL MOBILE PREVIEW

Marimekko Marimekko is presenting a playful bedroom-themed installation and capsule collection in collaboration with New York-based artist and creative Laila Gohar. The installation will center around a grand-sized bed showcased in the foyer of Teatro Litta and bedroom-themed items featuring Marimekko's archival stripes by artist Maija Isola.

For the occasion, Gohar visited Marimekko's pattern archive in Helsinki, showcasing more than 3,500 prints. The capsule features crisp cotton pajama sets, sleeping masks and bedding, as well as ceramics and more, all in vivid tones of sky blues, citrus yellows, rich plum and berry reds.

"The starting point for the collection was Laila's quote – if it's ironed, you can wear it out – which led us to design pajama sets that can be worn in and out of the bedroom, complemented by an entire collection of bedroom-themed items in archival Marimekko stripes," said the brand's creative director Rebekka Bay.

Jean-Charles de Castelbajac & Maison Pierre Frey Maison Pierre Frey is partnering with designer Jean-Charles de Castelbajac for the "Game of love" installation at Salone del Mobile. The new Pierre Frey furniture collections designed by Axel de Beaufort, Elisabetta Freda, Gregory Beson and Oleg Pugachev are showcased on a stage that recalls a medieval festival with a monumental marquee amid banners and grand crests. Outside the installation, collages and cut-outs feature the anagram LOVE/VOLE along with objects and animals drawn in the style of a contemporary toile de Jouy.

"This tent is like a chapter in a new story: my encounter, filled with meaning and a passion for beauty, with Maison Pierre Frey, which has always embodied for me the excellence of French craftsmanship," said the designer.

Taller Marmo & Natalia Criado Taller Marmo's founders Riccardo Audisio and Yago Goicoechea never shy away from a little celebration. Their brand has earned a loyal following with its high-octane occasion wear and fringe and feathers galore, so it was only natural that their project for Salone del Mobile was imbued with the same festive energy. The duo joined forces with designer Natalia Criado on a cocktail set of two margarita glasses and an ice bucket inspired by their party dresses. The pieces come with fancy fringing, adding dynamism to Criado's designs, which are known minimal lines and her signature use of lapis lazuli beads.

Maccapani Margherita Maccapani Missoni is expanding the reach of its Maccapani brand. For the first time, she ventures into the world of furniture with a project that reflects her curatorial vision and love for antiques. During Milan Design Week, she will unveil "MaccaFinds: Airbrushed," a range of vintage furniture reimaged through the art of airbrushing. Showcased at the historic Milan antique shop Maddalena Tabasso Antichità, each piece was reinterpreted by a local artist known for customizing motorcycles and helmets.

The collection features 12 pieces sourced from antique markets and personal spaces belonging to the designer. Items include a dresser, a glass cabinet, three coffee tables, three stools, and two metal lamps – each turned into a one-of-a-kind creation.

Scarosso x Toilet Paper If you're looking for comfy shoes to wear from one event to another, look no further: building on its strong streak of collaborations, Italian footwear company Scarosso has teamed with Toilet Paper, the cult art magazine and creative studio founded by Maurizio Cattelan and Pierpaolo Ferrari.

Marimekko capsule collection by Laila Gohar.



Launching online on Monday and to be celebrated with an event at Toilet Paper's headquarters in Milan on Thursday, the unisex line reinterprets the classic penny loafer with a playful touch thanks to the surreal and Pop motifs affiliated to Toilet Paper. These include golden trumpets and multicolored snakes as an all-over motif on shiny black leather loafers, as well as a red-lipped mouth and an eye wrapped in rose petals adorning bi-colored versions.

A contrasting lining, an electric blue shoe box and pink dustbag printed with Toilet Paper's imagery of fingers and lipsticks add to the bold capsule collection, which retails between \$505 and \$555.

Boyy x Mary Lennox Hip accessories label Boyy has joined forces with Berlin-based botanical design studio Mary Lennox to launch a bag dedicated to carrying flower bouquets. Named "The Gazette," the style is made of newspaper-printed calfskin adorned with photographic images produced by the two parties – and a group of bugs which unknowingly go about their business within the print. The limited-edition design will launch this week exclusively at Boyy's flagship in central Milan with an in-store activation and installation by Studio Mary Lennox.

Caruso and Vitale Barberis Canonico for Nous Aiming to safeguard the Made in Italy know-how and shape the next generation of craftspeople, luxury menswear brand Caruso and textile specialist Vitale Barberis Canonico are supporting Nous, a mentorship program led by architect and designer Guido Pagani dedicated to young design talents. Four architects will be guided through the creation of design objects linked to sartorial elegance. Marking the occasion, Caruso has tailored the uniform of the four mentored talents, a Saharan jacket crafted from Vitale Barberis Canonico's Super 120's wool.

Genny Fans of the romantic ethos imbued in Genny's fashion creations could soon decorate their home accordingly. The brand's creative director Sara Cavazza Facchini has teamed with Illulian, the Milan-based, family-run luxury rug company which makes its products in the Himalayas, for a rug bearing a floral pattern dubbed "the orchids' garden." The Nepal-made baby pink circular rug featuring a giant orchid flower at the center will be available at Genny boutiques and on a made-to-order basis.

North Sails North Sails is partnering with artist Marco Oggian for an exclusive capsule collection dubbed "Born to sail, forced to dock." The collection comprises menswear, including the brand's signature sailor jacket, a T-shirt and a baseball cap. To mark the collaboration, a large-scale installation recalling a paper boat will be staged in Milan's City Life neighborhood. Stretching eight meters in height and 10 meters in length, it will be entirely made of recycled nylon, the material from which the spinner, large and triangular sails are made. ▶



Natalia Criado x Taller Marmo



Penny loafers from the Scarosso and Toilet Paper collaboration.

A Caruso Saharan jacket crafted from a Vitale Barberis Canonico fabric.



The Genny by Illulian rug.



Drawings by Jean-Charles de Castelbajac for the Maison Pierre Frey installation.



A piece from "MaccaFinds: Airbrushed."



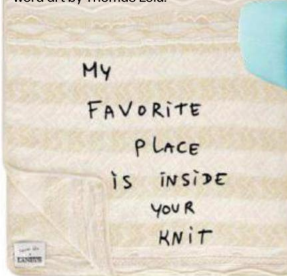
The Gazette bag by Boyy and Studio Mary Lennox.



The sweater from the North Sails and Marco Oggian collaboration

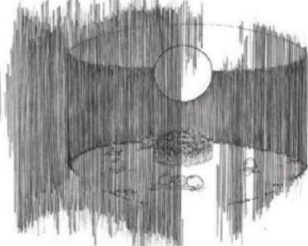
SALONE DEL MOBILE PREVIEW **WWD**

The Laneus blanket featuring word art by Thomas Lélou.

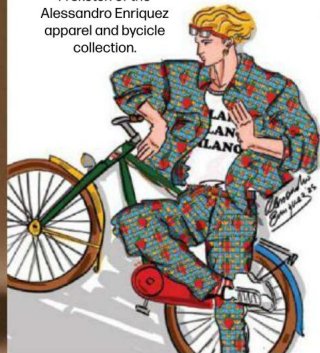


The Ditte Italia x Moorer "Melville" sofa.

A rendering of the Mission Aldebaran installation by Marc-Antoine Barrois and Antoine Bouillot.



A sketch of the Alessandro Enriquez apparel and bicycle collection.

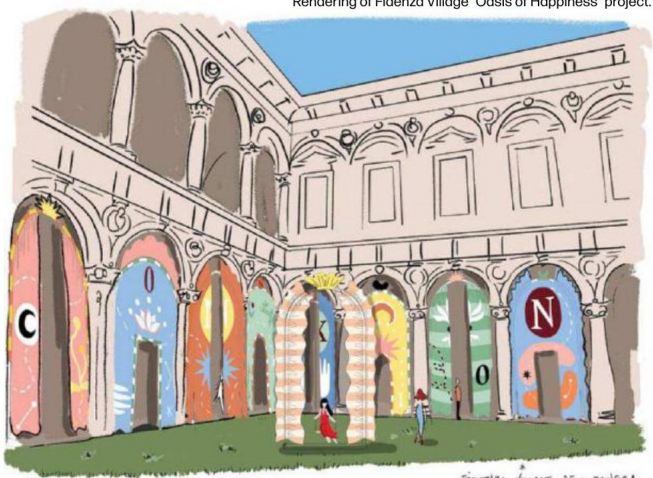


The convertible pool table by Rubinacci and 11 Ravens.



A chair from the Vowels x Waka Waka furniture collection.

Rendering of Fidenza Village "Oasis of Happiness" project.



FIDENZA VILLAGE 25 = PANICCA -

Sara Ricciardi Studio x Borbonese Golden Harvest vase.



Laneus Knitwear specialist Laneus is venturing into home decor, tapping into youngsters' appetite for word art. The result of a partnership with French artist Thomas Lélou, known for his handwritten aphorisms, the three-piece capsule collection comprises a pouf, cushion and blanket crafted from neutral-hued jacquards and bearing catchphrases including "my favorite place is inside your knit," a pun on Laneus' hero item. Unveiled at the company showroom in Milan with a live artistic performance by Lélou, the collaboration includes a limited edition of three silk-screen prints of his word art on canvas.

Moorer True to its ethos as a "designwear brand," furnishing company Ditte Italia has enlisted outerwear specialist Moorer to debut reinterpretations of its signature Melville sofa designed by Patrick Norguet. Crafted from Sea Island cotton in four tropical shades, including turquoise and deep blue, the sofa features the signature mother-of-pearl oversized button on the side and cushions. The collaboration marks Ditte Italia's latest linkup with fashion brands. Last year it teamed with silk specialist Mantero 1902 for a range of pillows.

Marc-Antoine Barrois x Antoine Bouillot Parisian couturier Marc-Antoine Barrois will debut his newest fragrance Aldebaran with a large-scale installation conceived in collaboration with French multidisciplinary artist, designer and architect Antoine Bouillot.

Dubbed "Mission Aldebaran," the immersive installation will be staged at Milan's Salone dei Tessuti venue from Tuesday to Sunday. Visitors will be invited to enter a mirrored cube to find themselves within a dense forest of ropes shrouded in darkness and silence. Compelled to navigate

through the obscurity, they will emerge into a bright clearing at the heart of the exhibition, as Barrois and Bouillot aimed to offer an interpretation of optimism and hope amid challenging times.

The installation will feature Aldebaran-infused paper-crafted tuberose flowers – in a nod to the fragrance's main note – as well as Barrois and Bouillot's first furniture collaboration, which marks the former's debut in design. The limited-edition collection will feature wooden stools and benches crowned with sculptural stones inspired by pebbles, which will be available to purchase at the Marc-Antoine Barrois stores in Paris and London and through the StudioTwentySeven galleries in New York and Miami.

Rubinacci & 11 Ravens Storied Neapolitan tailoring house Rubinacci is joining the Salone del Mobile craze, launching a limited-edition collection with 11 Ravens. Just don't think of sofas and beds, but more of a convertible pool table and cue rack as key pieces to add to homes, according to creative director Luca Rubinacci. He said he wanted to create "an object of desire," drawing from his personal experiences to craft "an elegant product of infinite quality."

The collection offers a sophisticated take on game tables, weaving together fabrics from Loro Piana's finest materials into 11 Ravens' designs. For one, the pool table – which turns into a dining one – features a navy cloth and hand-inlaid brass windrose rail sights, inspired by Rubinacci's cashmere blazer lined with an antique map of the sea, while the cue rack incorporates herringbone beige wool, evoking the classic raglan coat. Different sizes, woods and finishes are available to tailor the pieces to customers' demands.

Vowels Japanese brand Vowels and its creative director Yuki Yagi are making their

debut at Milan Design Week in collaboration with Los Angeles-based studio Waka Waka, helmed by Shin Okuda. "Furniture felt like a natural extension of Vowels because, just as our pieces are designed to fit seamlessly into any wardrobe, Shin's designs effortlessly complement any living space. Similar to fashion, there's no room for compromise in creating furniture," said Yuki.

Okuda designed a custom chair and a stool for the fashion brand. Both crafted from birch plywood, they echo each other in the use of cylinder dowels connecting the legs of the chair and the two side panels in the stool. The exhibition of the pieces is to be held at Spazio Maiocchi as part of the collective Capsule Plaza display.

Sara Ricciardi Studio x Borbonese Heritage Italian brand Borbonese in collaboration with Sara Ricciardi Studio is hosting in its headquarters the "Together we are gold" installation with a botanical-inspired concept evoking the harvest season. The installation unfolds around the Golden Harvest vase, presented in a limited and numbered edition of 21 pieces, crafted from natural terracotta in collaboration with Manifattura Rometti and with intricate woven cotton details from Antica Passamanerie Massia 1843.

The vase originates from the symbol of the "all round" bag, interconnected circles representing unity and presenting leather circles held together by knotted ropes. During the presentation at the third floor of the building, an ancient bread banquet will be set up in collaboration with nutritionist and chef Ester Azzola.

Alessandro Enriquez Bubbly designer Alessandro Enriquez is paying homage to the Milan places that have marked his life

and career trajectory with a multipronged project that encompasses mobility, design, fashion and hospitality. Partnering with D-House Laboratorio Urbano, which is part of manufacturing group Pattern, as well as fashion print specialist Kornit Digital, Enriquez has created a range of new prints – from hearts and strawberries, to vintage cycling-inspired motifs and stars – splashed on a lineup of bicycles developed with Milan-based category specialist Silvestrini, as well as on apparel and home decor items.

Marking the unveiling of the three product categories part of the project, the Sicilian, but Milan-based designer is taking over the storied Cuchi pastry shop, Neapolitan eatery CreDa, cocktail bar Eppol, Radisson Collection Hotel Palazzo Touring Club, as well as his own design studio. "This project is not about fashion, but about ways of living... I wanted to talk about my city, Milan, as I see it through my point of view: colorful and brimming with love," Enriquez said.

Fidenza Village Fidenza Village will launch the "Oasis of Happiness" project by artistic duo Pangea's Colombine Jubert and Laëtitia Rouget. The installation will be showcased as part of the "Interni creation" exhibition at the Università degli Studi di Milano Statale and will recall its main theme of action and reaction with a moving structure, activated by the air. It will include eight symbolic doors, inspired by the arches of the 16th-century gallery of the university, that allow visitors to go from one space to another and from one state of mind to another. After Milan Design Week, from April 25, the installation will be moved to Fidenza Village, where it will be presented with interactive elements. ■

PARTIES

Inside the National Design Awards

● The Cooper Hewitt, a Smithsonian Institution entity, celebrated the 25th anniversary of its annual gala in New York City.

BY ROSEMARY FEITELBERG

“Tariffs,” groaned one of the guests at Thursday night’s “House Party” for the Cooper Hewitt’s National Design Award winners, as he rolled his eyes and threw his head back for effect.

The impact of U.S. President Donald Trump’s reciprocal tariffs, his executive ordered-budget cuts at the Smithsonian Institution and the administration’s ongoing reductions in the arts and the humanities were some of the topics that were being hashed over at the Upper East Side museum. The Cooper Hewitt, which is part of the Smithsonian, was celebrating the 25th anniversary of its National Design Awards. Some of the winners – present and past – rely on federal grants and/or small business loans to fund their work, as well as support from federal arts agencies, which are facing slashes by the Elon Musk-led Department of Government Efficiency.

Diversity, equity and inclusion, company frameworks that some designers prioritize, are also being scaled back under Trump. Last month the president signed an executive order that will impact funding for museums and programs at the Smithsonian Institution that have “promoted narratives that portray American and Western values as inherently harmful and oppressive.” The administration is looking to make significant staff cuts at the National Endowment for the Humanities and possibly six grants.

Launched under former President George W. Bush’s administration in 2000, there was a time when National Design Award winners were celebrated at a White House luncheon that was hosted by the first lady. The awards still aim to increase national awareness about the impact of design in everyday life. This year’s winners were Kim Hastreiter, Design Visionary; ilumiNACIÓN by Resilient Power Puerto Rico, Climate Action; Nu Goteh, Emerging Designer; Michael Maltzan Architecture, Architecture; Matt Willey, Communication Design; Emerging Objects, Digital Design; Melitta Baumeister, Fashion Design; Little Wing Lee, Interior Design; Terremoto, Landscape Architecture, and, Jules Sherman, Product Design. Sherman, who specializes in pediatric medical devices, said she recently learned that her salary has been halved, but she has three grants pending. She also teaches at the University of Maryland and may pick up some freelancing – having designed consumer products for Target and others before getting into the medical field.

Like any good house party, as many high schoolers can attest, the scene was a little chaotic, noisy and free flowing, in more ways than one. Many of the artistically dressed guests clustered outdoors on the terrace and in the garden, where the bar was seven people deep at one point. Others huddled in conversation in the Great Hall and in what was once the library of Andrew Carnegie’s uptown manse.

One creative and former National Design Award winner, who has a work visa to be in the U.S., criticized the Trump administration, but declined to comment, due to his residency. “It’s scary,” he said.

Two industrial designers also declined to comment publicly about the ongoing arts-related cuts, aside from airing their disbelief, which one said could turn to anger.



American Modern Opera Company's Davone Tines performs at the 2025 National Design Awards event.



Melitta Baumeister and Michal Plata of Melitta Baumeister.

The 2025 Fashion Award winner Melitta Baumeister could be found quietly chatting in the Cooper Hewitt’s conservatory with a handful of friends, who were dressed in her architectural designs. The German-born, New York-based designer said the recognition by such a prestigious institution gives her confidence that design matters. Baumeister said, “Now even moreso, design has so much impact on people and on our daily lives. You have a voice with design. It’s even more important to speak through design about the worries that people have, and things that affect them with whatever is going on.”

Although she has an artist green card for 10 years, she said, “That’s also not forever.”

While fashion is often a reflection of the times we live in as well, Baumeister said this might not be the time to be too loud. Recalling how she was envisioning the future with her collection 10 years ago, that is no longer the case, she said.



Lauren Amos holding her extended cutlery and wearing a gown by Melitta Baumeister.

“I feel as though now we don’t want to necessarily see a future. It feels more [about] resistance in a way, or having to do with some sort of protection.”

Her friend Lauren Amos, who hosted a table for the pre-party dinner for honorees, agreed. Baumeister created an elaborate silver polyurethane gown for Amos that included a matching clutch with extended cutlery so she could eat without being fenced in by her oversize sleeves. “The seats were placed so tightly that she had to sit further away so it was very helpful,” Baumeister laughed, adding that the vinyl gown was also “wipeable,” which was needed when some soup was spilled.

As the owner of the luxury boutique Antidote, Amos was more serious discussing how the tariffs will hike up prices, but she too was resolved. “Fashion is pretty hopeful at times like this,” she said. “I’ve also figured out how to use fashion as a tool. I can push people away with it or use it to bring people in with it.”

Gesturing toward her gown, she said, “Even this is nice, because nobody has come up to me tonight to try to hug me. I’m serious. Earlier tonight I went to see a friend in the hospital, who is dying of pancreatic cancer. I was just feeling a little uncomfortable in my body.”

Given that, Amos would have preferred to stay in, but the dress and the attention it attracted from strangers brought her into a better space and changed her attitude. “It was almost like a performance piece,” Amos said.

Little Wing Lee first connected with the Smithsonian as an exhibition designer for the National Museum of African American History and Culture, which has attracted more than 10 million visitors. While the Cooper Hewitt’s honor is “a real recognition of her hard work, taste and commitment to community,” she spoke of the importance of supporting federal workers and the need to keep beauty alive.

“The cuts to the Smithsonian are heartbreaking, but I don’t think that will deter the will of designers and our creativity. We’re used to solving problems. Our country is in a real crisis, so we will come together to rally to find some solutions.”

This year’s emerging designer is Nu Goteh, who is the cofounder of Deem Journal, said he is focused on what his designs enable. “Deem Journal is all about how design shows up, and questioning who gets to be a designer. Do you design as a means of empowering and inspiring people to create the conditions that form them?” he said.

As for the event’s significance in this current political climate, Goteh said, “The best design doesn’t require funding. The best design comes from human need and human connection. Even with the cuts, design will continue to thrive, because people have the need to be able to thrive. That is the orientation of design. There’s a level of optimism that goes into design. Communities will still find ways to move themselves toward survival.”

SPEAKER SPOTLIGHT

The New Leadership Mandate

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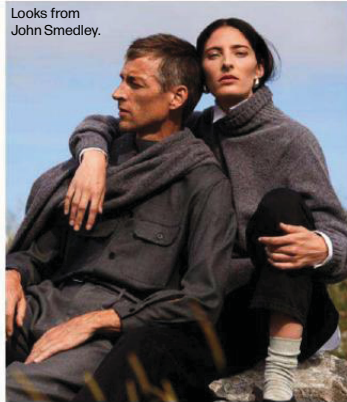
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MEN'S

John Smedley's New Chief Prepares To Take the Brand to New Heights



Jess McGuire Dudley



Looks from John Smedley.

● Jess McGuire Dudley, the first female to hold that position, succeeds Smedley family member Ian Maclean who has become executive chairman.

BY HIKMAT MOHAMMED

LONDON – John Smedley, the 241-year-old British brand that specializes in knitwear, is finally ready to make some noise.

The brand has named Jess McGuire Dudley as its new managing director, taking over from Ian Maclean, a member of the Smedley family, who will be stepping into an executive chairman's role after 25 years with the business.

And Dudley has a lot of big ideas up her sleeves.

Dudley has been with the company for 11 years, climbing the ranks from head of marketing and merchandising to, most

recently, deputy managing director, where she oversaw e-commerce, retail, licensing, buying and merchandising.

Her role breaks from tradition since she comes from a creative background and is also the brand's first female managing director.

"We're working on a revised strategy at the moment, which will launch later this year. As managing director, I will be leading the business and covering all departments," she said in an interview.

Part of her plan is to encourage more young people to work for the brand.

"I'm setting up a John Smedley talent bank to support the younger generations of employees and really find ways to bring them up through the business and to make us a more attractive employer of choice," Dudley said.

One example is a position the company had been hoping to fill for more than two years: a wash and dye house manager.

"That's not enticing to any graduate," she said. "When I looked into the role, it's a bridge between design and yarn." She changed the name of the job to technical colorist and within six weeks, it was filled.

Dudley will be seeking to touch other parts of the thriving business as well – starting with wool. The business has made multimillion-pound investments into all of its artisans and machinery in order to "protect the skills," but is not getting the credit she believes it deserves.

"I really want to put us back on the map as having British manufacturing of British wool in one place. I don't think we've been as good as other brands about showcasing that to the world," she said.

As reported, the brand celebrated 110 years of trade in Japan last year with a limited-edition collection.

John Smedley manufactured outside of its Derbyshire headquarters in the U.K. for the first time by producing the range in Japan as a nod to the country's artisans.

The 10-piece collection includes soft tailored jackets and trousers in dark shades of brown, olive and navy; white and blue striped shirts; classically cut outerwear; dense white T-shirts, and a utilitarian take on coordinates.

Dudley said the diversification of the product range has been received positively and John Smedley will continue to expand its categories as she seeks to draw more people to engage with the brand.

One way of doing that is by enhancing the experience in its retail stores. During her tenure with the company, Dudley has opened 11 John Smedley stores in Japan and two in London. "We're looking at making our retail stores and e-commerce more enticing," she said.

The brand has hinted at further store

openings later this year and some in 2026, but Dudley is currently "invested in making sure we offer the best customer experience" in the current retail locations rather than opening new stores. The company currently operates 13 stores.

According to the brand, since assuming the position of deputy managing director in 2022, Dudley has already had a major impact on the business. She's improved global sales across e-commerce by 80 percent and retail by 6 percent. The private company did not disclose any sales figures.

Dudley said that the U.K., Japan and Italy are John Smedley's biggest markets with a "strong menswear presence" across the three countries. "When I joined the company over 10 years ago, it was 70 percent womenswear and 50 percent menswear in Japan," she said, noting that the number has changed to be more even now.

Historically, the brand has had a dedicated menswear following. The footwear designer Manolo Blahnik only wears John Smedley white rollnecks. "We take an order of 120 of them at a time," Dudley said. Another fan is the British artist David Hockney, who favors the brand's Finchley polo shirt with a thick collar and long cuffs.

"We find that men come into the shop and they ask for a particular style shirt they like and take seven of them in different colors," Dudley said.

But, in recent years, there's been a greater crossover between the brand's younger customers, who are shopping both men's and womenswear. It's one of the reasons that Dudley has introduced a unisex range into the brand in 2015.

"We had Paul Mescal wearing one of our women's cardigans. Knitwear itself just has no gender, really," she said.

At the same time, the brand is also working on broadening its consumer base beyond its luxury clientele to further extend its reach. In February, John Smedley launched a diffusion line, JS by John Smedley, which is sold exclusively at John Lewis, that retails for \$56 to \$239, below the average of \$305 in its core line.

MEN'S

Fashion Island Celebrates Luxury Menswear in the California Riviera

● The open-air luxury shopping plaza is hosting a menswear showcase April 30.

BY CHARLIE CARBALLO

Open-air luxury shopping plaza Fashion Island will celebrate its menswear business with an upcoming fashion showcase slated for April 30.

The Newport Beach, Calif.-based property will preview unseen collections and host activations from new and longtime tenants, including Chanel-owned resortwear brand Orlebar Brown, Australian men's brand Joe Bananas and independent men's retailer Garys.

The event aims to amplify its support for its retailers in the category.

"Fashion Island is Orange County's premier coastal destination for style exploration," said Gerard Widder, vice president and general manager, Fashion Island. "Our curated mix of heritage and emerging brands, world-class home design galleries, and stylish, one-of-a-kind boutiques is always evolving with the latest concepts."

The brands benefit from its unique locale at Newport Center, a business, shopping and entertainment district

overlooking Newport Harbor, where everyone from C-suite executives to tourists come together to dress for the occasion – the California Riviera lifestyle, the center believes.

Joe Bananas expanded its Australian roots to the U.S. with a store on Madison Avenue in New York in 2018, and headed to Fashion Island in 2023, finding the consumers to be a "natural fit with our Australian viewpoint," said Evan Sturrock, owner and creative director.

"For the upcoming menswear event, we are excited to showcase how we merge classic style with creative and artistic vision, offering our clientele a new perspective on the possibilities for men – classic doesn't need to be dull or boring," Sturrock explained. "We're also looking forward to engaging with customers and building lasting relationships through immersive, one-on-one interactions that highlight the Aussie character and hospitality we are so proud to represent with our brand."

The shopping plaza, which opened in 1967, has had a history of introducing luxury fashion to affluent Newport Beach customers, and some of its brands have also evolved in tandem.

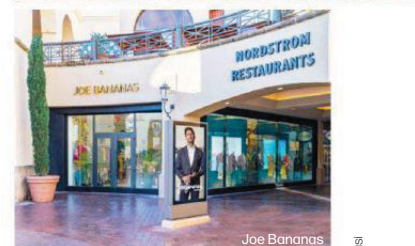
Garys, which opened in 1978 with a

3,500-square-foot shop that has since expanded to over 12,000 square feet, has served the posh enclave with a large roster of niche and heritage brands for nearly 50 years.

"Garys aims to lead the conversation around modern menswear by emphasizing the importance of tailored clothing and personal style. During the upcoming event, we plan to showcase one of our favorite brands – Eleventy, allowing attendees to experience the Italian craftsmanship and modern take on men's fashion," said owner John Braeger. "We hope to inspire a new generation of men to embrace tailored fashion as a reflection of their identity and lifestyle," he said, adding, "Events like this menswear celebration allow us to engage directly with clients, reinforcing our brand values and fostering an ongoing dialogue about style and fashion evolution."

Fashion Island's men's retail portfolio, which includes Bonobos, Indochino, Rodd & Gunn, SuitSupply and Todd Snyder, welcomed its newest tenant last year with Orlebar Brown's arrival.

"Fashion Island is our third store in California, with two more to come in the next year, but what attracted us to Fashion



Island goes far beyond numbers – it is a completely unique experience with grand boulevards, striking architecture that transports you to the south of Italy or France at the height of summer," said Trevor Hardy, chief marketing officer. "A magical mix that somehow makes shopping become a vacation. And that's why it is an ideal home for Orlebar Brown as we encourage men to dress up for downtime."

MENTALITIES

FASHION

Market Moments

A snapshot of the industry's latest launches, collaborations and up-and-coming designers.



Nate Burleson

Father's Day Lunch Honorees Set

The honorees for this year's Father's Day Lunch are set.

The three men – Don Hendricks, chief executive officer of Belk; Nate Burleson, cohost of "CBS Mornings" and analyst for "The NFL Today," and Marc D'Amelio, a digital creator and entrepreneur – will receive awards for their parenting skills at the 83rd annual Father of the Year Awards.

The honorees are selected for their ability to successfully balance influential careers while remaining dedicated to their families and communities.

The luncheon will be held on June 12 at 583 Park Avenue and will benefit Big Brothers Big Sisters of America.

The host this year will be Gayle King, who works with Burleson as a cohost of "CBS Mornings" and also serves as editor at large of Oprah Daily.

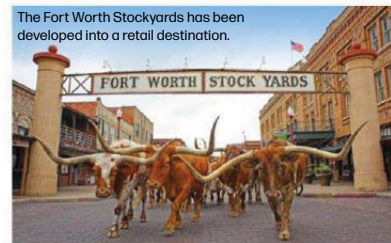
The event will also honor one All Star Dad who will be chosen from online video submissions from family members, friends and community leaders. That father will be revealed at the event.

"We are proud to honor this incredible

group of fathers who are also among the leaders in their respective industries," said Michael Haskell, president and CEO of The Father's Day/Mother's Day Council Inc. "Each of these honorees exemplifies the values of dedication, leadership and generosity – not only achieving professional excellence but also making a profound impact through philanthropy and mentorship. We look forward to celebrating their accomplishments and the important role that fathers play in shaping strong families and communities."

Over the years, The National Father's Day/Mother's Day Council has donated more than \$36 million to family-related charities nationwide. Past honorees have included Presidents Joe Biden, George W. Bush, Bill Clinton, John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan; Generals Douglas MacArthur, Colin Powell and Norman Schwarzkopf; retailer Terry J. Lundgren; sports stars Arthur Ashe, Jim Kelly and Michael "Coach K" Krzyzewski, and media executives Tim Russert and Harry Smith.

– JEAN E. PALMIERI



The Fort Worth Stockyards has been developed into a retail destination.

Pendleton, Will Leather Goods to Open In Fort Worth Stockyards

The Fort Worth Stockyards is adding to its retail roster.

Pendleton Woolen Mills and Will Leather Goods have both committed to open their Texas flagships in the historic district.

Will Leather Goods, which has operated a pop-up location in the Stockyards since November 2024, is converting the space into a permanent store that is expected to open in June of this year.

"We couldn't be more excited to be a part of the Fort Worth Stockyards, a place that champions our core values," said William Adler, chief executive officer of Will Leather Goods, which offers handcrafted leather bags, accessories and lifestyle goods.

In addition, the 150-year-old Pendleton Woolen Mills will open its first Texas store in the district in May.

"We are confident that the Fort Worth Stockyards is the right place for our very first Texas location," said Peggy Denfeld, director of retail leasing and finance for Pendleton Woolen Mills. "We are impressed by the district's growth and vibrancy and look forward to being a part of its continued success."

Fort Worth Stockyards is operated by Stockyards Heritage Development Co., a partnership between Majestic Realty Co. and Hickman Investments. The project's first phase, Mule Alley, broke ground in the fall of 2018 and included the renovation of the destination's historic, 108-year-old horse and mule barns into a street of shops, restaurants, offices spaces and one of the state's top-ranked hotels, Hotel Drover. Among the retailers who call the area home are Boot Barn, Cavender's, King Ranch Saddle Shop, Lucchese, Maverick Fine Western Wear and M.L. Leddy's. – J.E.P

Palace Reinterprets Dr. Martens 1461

British cult skateboarding brand Palace is giving Dr. Martens' signature model 1461 a spin for the two's inaugural collaboration.

Dropping on Friday, the capsule sees Palace reimagining the style with a gold bottle cap lace charm inspired by the 1988 trend of attaching Grolsch swing-top bottle caps to 1461 shoes. The trend was started by Matt Gross, the singer from Bros, best known for the hit "When Will I Be Famous."

The cobranded style is made with vintage smooth leather and is available in three colorways: black, cherry red and woodland camo.

The upper is set on a lugged outsole with Dr. Martens' traditional yellow welt stitch. The style is finished with a special-edition heel loop, which, for the first time in Dr. Martens' history, removes the AirWair text and replaces it with Palace.

The drop will be launched with a short film themed around waiting and featuring



Visual for Palace x Dr. Martens inaugural collaboration.

punk poet John Cooper Clark, Palace skaters Charlie Birch and Lucien Clarke, actor Serena Motola, and a dog.

Palace has been going strong with an impressive lineup of collaborations for 2025. Last week, it reunited with C.P. Company for a third collaboration, hinged on the reinterpretation of the latter's signature sportswear codes through a cool skateboarder's lens. In February, it teamed with fellow British streetwear brand

Maharishi for a capsule that fuses skate and street culture with utilitarian fashion.

The brand also opened a second location in Seoul in the same month. Designed in collaboration with multidisciplinary designer Steve Oh, the new space is housed in the Mapo-gu area and designed as a recreation and celebration of Southbank: the London riverside skate spot that was the birthplace of Palace. – TIANWEI ZHANG

Theo James Stars in Church's Spring Campaign



Here and right: Theo James for Church's.

Theo James is quickly becoming the poster boy for the English gentleman look.

The British actor is starring in Church's spring 2025 campaign, playing a modern Englishman in relaxed tailoring and various footwear styles, from a suede loafer to an Oxford brogue.

James is the star of Netflix's "The Gentlemen," playing Edward "Eddie" Horniman, the new 10th Duke of Halstead, who overnight goes from being a United Nations peacekeeping officer to a duke to a gentleman gangster, swapping his camouflage uniform and plaid shirts for fisherman jackets, car coats and sharp smoking suits.

In the Church's campaign, titled "Stage Craft," the actor takes on a similar role – each character is dictated by the type of shoes he's wearing in the black-and-white

images shot by English-born photographer Phil Poynter.

When he's wearing the Chetwynd Contour brogue, he's a sleek, self-assured man on set, while the Maesteg penny loafer adds a somewhat romantic touch to James' character.

The English gentleman has been a recurring motif throughout Church's campaigns. In June 2024, the brand launched its global advertising campaign under the creative direction of David James and lensed by Poynter. The location was St. Giles House, the family home of the Earl of Shaftesbury located in East Dorset, England.

Similarly, British actor Harry Lawtey took on the persona of an English gentleman in Church's 50th anniversary campaign for the Shannon derby in October last year.

The campaign was shot in the 18th-century

country house West Wycombe House in Buckinghamshire, which is famous as the setting for Stanley Kubrick's "A Clockwork Orange" and Marek Kaniwvska's 1984 film "Another Country" starring Rupert Everett and Colin Firth. – HIKMAT MOHAMMED



BEAUTY

Can Hailey Bieber Break Beauty's M&A Slowdown?

- Industry sources weigh in on Rhode's viability as an acquirable asset.

BY JAMES MANSO AND KATHRYN HOPKINS

Can Hailey Bieber break the beauty M&A curse?

Sources have confirmed to WWD that her beauty brand Rhode has hired J.P. Morgan and Moelis to jointly explore deal options at a valuation of \$1 billion, after a bevy of brands entered the market in the last year that never culminated in deals. Rhode's sales are understood to be around \$200 million.

Neither Rhode, J.P. Morgan nor Moelis could be reached for comment by press time.

News of the deal raised eyebrows among industry sources with knowledge of the brand's financials.

One industry source said that while the target would be a strategic buyer, that could be difficult given that the business is currently all online, despite speculation that it is gearing up to go with a retailer.

"They're too risk-averse, particularly in this environment," another source said of potential strategic buyers. "The market is just too uncertain to write that big of a check."

Even if Rhode does soon reveal an exclusive partnership with a major retailer, investors are jittery about acquiring brands tied to one celebrity and one retailer, as it is often believed to be a risky strategy, multiple sources said.

The news comes at a time when significant transactions have been few and far between. Among the brands that reportedly came to market in the last 12 months but are yet to score a deal are Rare Beauty, Makeup by Mario, Merit, Kosas, Byoma and Jane Iredale, among others.

"Nobody paid \$1 billion for Rare Beauty, nobody paid \$1 billion for Makeup by Mario," said one source, citing the lagging M&A market and broader economic

pressures. "Why would they pay that for Rhode? It doesn't even have distribution."

While one source posited that it would make sense for acquirers to snap up the brand before it enters retail – and then reap the rewards as owners – broader market trends point away from that scenario.

"The brand has approached the scale where the universe of potential buyers is getting smaller and smaller," said the source. "And [Makeup by Mario, Rare Beauty and Rhode] are too young, too big, too dependent on their founders – there's too much risk. The buyers that are relevant are exactly the buyers that wouldn't touch this."

Skin care, which Rhode launched with before expanding into color cosmetics and accessories, is also seeing a slowdown in the U.S., though Rhode falls in the "masstige" price range that is still growing, as reported.

And though Rhode is understood to be lining up specialty retail partnerships in key markets globally (speculation has swirled for months about an impending deal with Sephora in North America), the logistics alone could hamper brand leadership.

"It's not just shipping products to Sephora or flying Hailey around. People think getting into Sephora is a big win, but can they support that?" one source said.

Despite the marketing prowess of Rhode's founder, both potential buyers and retail partners are beginning to see social media savvy as a con, not a pro.

"Brands are being told to dial that back," said a source. "Don't get hooked on virality, because you can't anniversary those sales numbers. That's not viewed favorably. It drives traffic, sure, but you don't want massive spikes."

Rhode also pumps money into marketing beyond the fame of Bieber, tapping talent for campaigns ranging from Claudia Schiffer and Paloma Elsesser to Matilda Djerf.

Despite that, the business is assumed to be profitable, with one source estimating



Hailey Bieber for Rhode's summer lip treatment campaign.

the cost of goods at around 15 percent and referencing the brand's ownership of its own margins, since it sells directly.

"That would give Hailey about \$170 million to spend on marketing, people and logistics," the source hypothesized. "It's a lot of dollars to play with. My guess is she's profitable and, by the way, if she's not, then they're definitely not getting this deal done."

On the bright side, the market has begun to thaw for smaller deals. Skims,

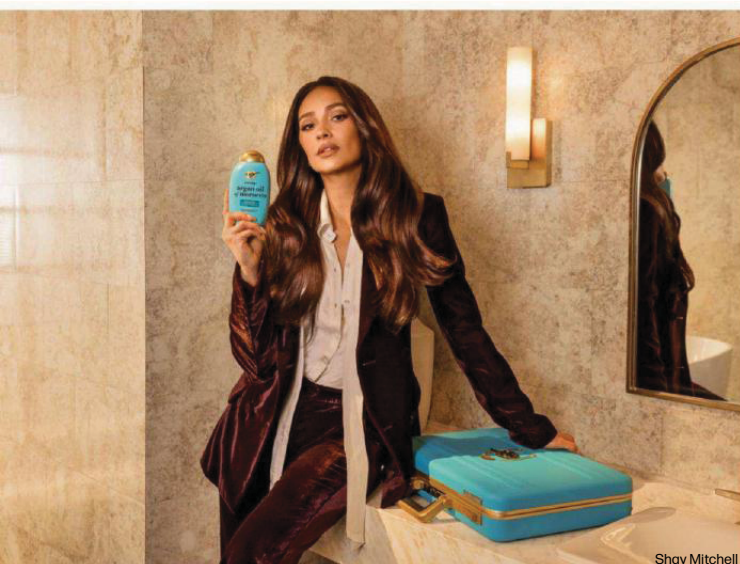
Kim Kardashian's shapewear and apparel company, has acquired Skkn by Kim from Kim Kardashian and Coty Inc.

Coty acquired 20 percent of KKW Beauty for \$200 million in 2021. Now that stake will belong to Skims, while Kardashian's 80 percent holding will also be transferred to Skims.

Unilever also acquired British sustainable deodorant brand Wild. While it did not reveal the price paid, it has been reported that it sold for 230 million pounds.

BEAUTY

OGX Taps Shay Mitchell as Brand Ambassador



Shay Mitchell

- The actress and entrepreneur will appear in the brand's first TV commercial.

BY KATHRYN HOPKINS

Fresh from tapping Tate McRae and Nicola Coughlan for Neutrogena, another Kenvue brand is getting some star power.

Hair care brand OGX has named "Pretty Little Liars" actress and Béis entrepreneur Shay Mitchell its new brand ambassador.

She will appear in the brand's first TV commercial as "The Fixer" character of the Hair Damage Unit, alongside trichologist and beauty expert Abbey Yung, highlighting the toll of excessive heat, color and styling damage on hair.

The campaign is for the OGX Bond Protein Repair line – a damage repair system that addresses the need for damage protection to strengthen hair. Formulated with a patented bond-building protein, the line includes the new OGX Bond Protein Repair 450°F Heat Protect Spray. There will also be an accompanying social media content series.

"This is a big brand, so I was looking

for an ambassador who was confident, bold, knows how to protect her hair, but is authentic and relatable," Andrew Stanleick, president, skin health and beauty, North America and EMEA at Kenvue, said in an interview.

"Shay's got over 36 million followers on Instagram, 7.5 million on TikTok, and she has global reach. I knew she was popular in North America and Canada, but actually she tested really well in Europe and the U.K. and Asia. She's also got a great hair story. She's always traveling. She's always filming. Her hair is always exposed to heat and styling damage. So she was really the perfect candidate for the campaign role."

"My life is busy, and my hair goes through a lot," Mitchell said. "OGX products keep my hair healthy, shiny and protected."

As for why a TV campaign, Stanleick said it was about scaling globally. "What TV still gives us is just enormous reach. There's much more room to grow share and, moreover, geographically. We're really going to double down on OGX, because like Neutrogena and Aveeno, they really bring to life my vision of Kenvue beauty, which is truly democratizing beauty."

BUSINESS

Paolina Russo Capsule Hits Dover Street Market

Paolina Russo Dover Street Market pop-up, empowered by FabriX.

- The custom pieces were first designed for and worn by K-pop sensation NJZ, formerly known as NewJeans, in 2024.

BY TIANWEI ZHANG

LONDON – Fresh off a high-energy tour to ComplexCon Hong Kong, Paolina Russo is giving its second Dover Street Market pop-up an interactive spin.

Empowered by FabriX, a Hong Kong government-backed digital fashion initiative, the brand on Thursday debuted a capsule collection of six looks, both physically and digitally, exclusive to Dover Street Market in the U.K.

The custom pieces were first designed for and worn by K-pop sensation NJZ, formerly known as NewJeans, at the Tokyo Dome concert in 2024 before the popular South Korean girl group got entangled in a legal dispute with its management firm, Ador. Last month, NJZ said it would pause all activities for the foreseeable future.

With FabriX's AR try-on technology, NJZ fans and DSM shoppers can virtually experience Paolina Russo's designs before making a purchase decision. The interactive element extends beyond the store, as customers can download their AR portraits to share across social platforms.

Paolina Russo is no stranger to digital fashion, having teamed with digital fashion platform Sknups to translate three key looks of its fall 2023 collection for Roblox last year.

The pop-up marks Paolina Russo's third collaboration with FabriX, having created a digital look based on its main collection – an oversize sunset tie-dye hoodie and a pair of jeans in a similar treatment – for the spring 2025 edition of Paris Fashion Week and a black version of the NJZ look exclusive to ComplexCon Hong Kong.

"We have been together with FabriX for two weeks now. We started in Hong Kong, and now we moved the AR concept to London. It's been a nice journey together. And it's nice to do with DSM. Everything they do is very future-thinking, and there's so much appreciation for emerging talents and new ideas," said Paolina Russo and



Lucile Guilnard and Paolina Russo

Lucile Guilnard, cofounders of the brand. Shin Wong, founder of FabriX, said Paolina Russo's Dover Street Market pop-up represents a fusion of high fashion and innovative technology.

"By bringing our AR try-on experience to this prestigious location, we're fundamentally changing how consumers interact with designer collections and addressing critical production challenges faced by independent designers," she said.

"Our technology creates a win-win scenario. Shoppers enjoy a frictionless, interactive experience, while designers benefit too. Though not available at this pop-up, our preorder service – successfully demonstrated at ComplexCon Hong Kong 2025 – will soon allow labels like Paolina Russo to produce exactly what sells, reducing waste and costs while preserving creative vision," Wong added.

FabriX was founded in 2022 with the mission to "weave a new reality for fashion" and to introduce the next generation of local creative talents to global fashion audiences. It offers support to designers through all stages of the digital design journey from sketch, design and 3D digital production to listing on global digital fashion marketplaces.

The initiative is being presented by the Hong Kong-based creative hub PMQ, a not-for-profit social enterprise. PMQ has 100 million Hong Kong dollars, or almost \$13 million, in funding from the Musketeers Education and Culture Charitable Foundation, while Create Hong Kong, of the Government of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, serves as the lead sponsor.

BUSINESS

Moose Knuckles Names Mia Wang Head of Asia-Pacific

- Wang was previously the cofounder and CEO of Maia Active, known as the Chinese version of Lululemon.

BY DENNI HU

Moose Knuckles, the Canadian luxury outerwear brand, has named Mia Wang chief executive officer, Asia-Pacific, effective immediately.

Wang succeeds Eric Tosello, who held the title of executive vice president of Asia-Pacific for the last three years.

"Mia brings a rare combination of entrepreneurial grit, digital fluency, and cultural insight, making her uniquely equipped to shape our presence across the region. Her leadership will be crucial in crafting a resonant, modern expression

of our brand that speaks to the next generation of consumers in Asia and beyond," said Victor Luis, chairman of Moose Knuckles.

"At Cathay Capital, we believe in the power of bold leadership. Mia's entrepreneurial track record and deep cultural fluency make her the right leader to unlock the next chapter of growth for Moose Knuckles in Asia," said Jean-Marc Prunet, partner at Cathay Capital, the brand's majority shareholder.

"Mia represents the new generation of leadership that understands both global brand building and the intricacies of the Asian market. Her appointment marks a major step in strengthening Moose Knuckles' position in the region," added Gao Dekang, chairman of Bosideng, which holds a minority stake in the company.

Wang was previously the cofounder and CEO of Maia Active, an athleisure brand known as the Chinese version of Lululemon. Under her helm, Maia Active scaled rapidly online and in brick-and-mortar.

In 2023, the Chinese sportswear giant Anta Group acquired a 75.13 percent stake in Maia Active and later named Zhao Guangxu its CEO.

A graduate of Ohio State University, Wang began her career in New York as a merchant at Victoria's Secret. She later returned to China as one of the first employees at Xiaohongshu, the popular social-commerce platform.

Moose Knuckles entered the Chinese market in 2019 after raising capital from Cathay Capital, a Paris-based private equity firm. The same year, the Montreal-based outerwear brand opened its first retail outlet at Beijing's SKP-S department store.

In 2024, Bosideng became a strategic partner in Moose Knuckles, acquiring more than 30 percent of the Canadian company for an undisclosed amount.



Mia Wang

CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Inflation Reshapes Office Supplies Market in 2024

- Research from Circana shows office supply sales declined 5 percent amid price sensitivity.

BY ARTHUR ZACZKIEWICZ

Research from Circana provides further evidence that inflationary pricing is negatively impacting consumer spending. Aside from apparel and groceries, Circana's latest data on U.S. office supplies sales

(across physical and digital retail channels) came in at \$11.5 billion in 2024, which represents a decline of 5 percent compared to the prior year. The firm also noted that total unit demand dropped 2 percent.

However, sales may be stronger this year.

"With persistent inflation impacting consumer spending on retail goods, the outlook for 2025 remains challenged, but increasingly stable with a projected 2 percent decline in 2025 and expected industry flattening through 2027," the authors of the latest Future of Office Supplies report said.

Echoing other research report findings, Circana said consumers remained price conscious in 2024, "prioritizing essential product categories, seeking out discounts and increasingly choosing private label brands."

Regarding private label, a recent global survey of consumers from EY found an increasing adoption of private label products among those polled, as they are turning to store brands as a cheaper alternative. Of those polled, 67 percent said private label "satisfies their needs just as well as branded products," the report stated, while also noting

that 30 percent of respondents "say they no longer consider brands at all when making purchasing decisions."

Staples and Amazon both offer a broad assortment of private-label office supplies.

The Circana report also found that at the retail level, "sales continued to migrate online with e-commerce accounting for 24 percent of total office supplies revenue, an increase over 2023." The authors of the report said traditional brick-and-mortar sales softened in 2024, declining 6 percent, "reinforcing the need for retailers and brands to adjust to evolving shopping behaviors."

"The market faced headwinds in 2024, and 2025 has already presented a new set of challenges for consumers," said Ben Arnold, industry adviser, office supplies at Circana. "We expect consumers to remain value-focused in their shopping behaviors this year, but brands that optimize pricing, promotions and assortment will be better positioned as the market stabilizes."

Circana said, although most categories saw declines in 2024, "certain segments like self-stick notes, encased pencils and color markers are expected to show modest growth in 2025. The back-to-school season will remain a key sales period, with early promotions and discount strategies playing a crucial role in capturing demand," adding that 35 percent of total office supplies dollars in 2025 "will be spent during the third-quarter back-to-school period and that revenue will decline less than 2 percent compared to [third quarter] 2024."

Arnold said the office supplies industry "is adjusting to long-term shifts in how and where people work, learn and create. Retailers and manufacturers that take a proactive approach to digital transformation and consumer engagement, with an eye on maximizing the critical back-to-school shopping season, will be best positioned for success."



Revenue and unit sales were soft in 2024.

TECHNOLOGY

Revolve Group Partners With Affirm

- The retailer is introducing buy now, pay later to its e-commerce and mobile app within the U.S. – and later in the U.K. and Canada.

BY KANIKA TALWAR

Affirm announced on Wednesday a new partnership with Revolve Clothing Group to use in the U.S. – the buy now, pay later fintech company will allow consumers to use Affirm to purchase from Revolve's collections of apparel, footwear, accessories and beauty on Revolve's website and mobile app.

Affirm now joins similar BNPL Klarna on Revolve, as part of the company's efforts to give its customers a simple and transparent way to pay over time.

In the upcoming days, Revolve's U.S. customers can select Affirm when they make their purchases at checkout to complete an eligibility check each time. If approved, customers will then be directed to choose from customized biweekly or monthly payment plan options, with as low as 0 percent APR. After its launch for the U.S. market, Affirm is set to expand to Revolve customers within the U.K. and Canada.

"At Revolve, we're committed to curating a shopping experience that's seamless, inspiring and tailored to our

customers' needs," said Mike Karanikolas, cofounder and co-chief executive officer at Revolve Group. "Shopping should be effortless and payment flexibility is a key part of our premium experience. Affirm stood out for its transparent approach, customized and flexible options, and proven ability to build trust with millions of loyal shoppers. With Affirm, our customers will have clarity and control at checkout – making it easier to get the styles they love, on their terms."

Affirm reported that from October 2024 to December 2024, sales through Affirm for apparel and accessories rose 25 percent year-over-year – highlighting the demand amongst customers who are looking for flexible payment options through BNPL.

In the past six months, more than 55 new fashion merchants have partnered with Affirm – and now include Revolve. The company has previously integrated at checkout at The RealReal, Canada Goose, Net-a-porter, Adidas, StockX, StitchFix and recently renewed with Shopify as part of its



Revolve joins the more than 55 new fashion retailers as part of Affirm's growing global arsenal of e-commerce integrations.

growing arsenal of e-commerce platforms with plans to grow into other markets beyond the U.S., Canada and the U.K.

"By uniting emerging labels, top designers and in-house brands, Revolve is creating a smarter way to shop – and with Affirm, a smarter way to pay. Unlike most credit cards and other pay-over-time

options, Affirm never charges late fees, hidden fees or compound interest. As shoppers refresh their wardrobes for the warmer months, Affirm provides Revolve customers with the confidence to secure the styles they love with flexible payment options," said Pat Suh, senior vice president of revenue at Affirm.



SHARE YOUR FEEDBACK

Dear Valued WWD Reader,

As a valued member of the WWD community, we invite you to participate in our survey, which aims to gather insights from executives on the impact of foreign policy—specifically tariffs—on apparel, luxury goods, footwear, beauty, and accessories. We're also interested in understanding how customer behaviors and industry uncertainties are influencing decision-making, and the strategies executives are employing to navigate these market shifts.

While participation in this survey is entirely optional, we highly encourage you to take part in this valuable opportunity to share your perspectives. Your insights will help shape a better understanding of these important industry trends.

As a token of our appreciation for your feedback, WWD is offering a chance to win one \$250 American Express gift card. [Click here for official rules.](#)

Thank you in advance for your time and feedback!

Warm regards,

The WWD Team

[TAKE THE SURVEY](#)

WWD


Chloë Sevigny, Iris Law and More Celebrate Magda Butrym and H&M Collab

The party was at a former bank in Brooklyn, with performances by Kelela and Charlotte Lawrence.

BY LEIGH NORDSTROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY LEXIE MORELAND



Chloë Sevigny and Magda Butrym



Iris Law and Nara Smith



Soo Joo



Irina Shayk

“What is this?” Irina Shayk asked the woman at her side, motioning to the giant baby-pink-draped structure in the room’s center. She had to circle the entity to fully experience what it, in fact, was – a large blooming rose, constructed from lots of pink fabric.

The flower – and pink – was the guest of honor at the celebration for Magda Butrym and H&M’s collaboration, held Thursday in a former bank near Barclays Center in Brooklyn. Guests including Chloë Sevigny, Iris Law, Gabbriette, Amelia Gray, Valentina Sampaio and Nara Smith were decked out in the line, in shades of black, red and pink.

The sound of a lone vocalist performing what felt like choir music drafted over the room, as influencers staged photoshoots throughout. Waiters offered a pink gin cocktail called a “lover’s club” and a take on a Paloma and, in addition to the giant rose, a looming Champagne tower served as Instagram backdrop inspiration.

The party featured performances by



Kelela

Charlotte Lawrence and Kelela, who each sang originals and covers, and a DJ set by Soo Joo.

Kelela opted for a black dress from the collab with shoulder pads, a rosette detail, some cleavage and ruching. She prefers to match her onstage style to the venue whenever possible.



Amelia Gray and Gabbriette

“It depends on the vibe. There’s sometimes when I perform in the club, and I want to look like I’m a cyclist. And if I’m performing in a place like this, I want a gown,” she

said from her green room before taking the stage. “I feel like the look is meant to match the space and the environment and the context. Rather than like, ‘I like to wear this consistently.’ For touring, I obviously like to be comfortable and not constrained. But also at the same time, a really good silhouette because you’re not going to

be able to see the detail in something. So when I’m picking clothes for the stage, I’m thinking about what it looks like from far away and also what it looks like when you are just being lit from behind.”

Lawrence was sparkling like a disco ball in a silver sequined high-neck gown.

“I saw the look book first, and I loved this immediately,” Lawrence said of the look. “With all the lights [onstage] I was like, ‘I want to be glittering like a freaking disco ball.’”

“It’s spring break this episode and I play one of three best friends going on spring break on this cruise ship and we get up to horrible naughtiness,” she said. “It was so much fun.”

Fashion Scoops



Cordelia de Castellane and Aerin Lauder

Flower Power

As Trump's tariffs sent the global fashion industry into a tailspin on Thursday, a scene of Franco-American camaraderie and grace played out at the Bristol in Paris as Aerin Lauder and Cordelia de Castellane joined forces to toast each other's new book about flowers.

One long table stretched the length of the hotel's ornate, oval-shaped Salon Castellane — more about that later — tall white candles illuminating topiaries and white tulips, irises and jasmine gathered into silver vases of various heights.

Giambattista Valli, Elie Top, Emmanuel Perrotin, Ségolène Gallienne, Géraldine Guyot, Chloé Bolloré and India Mahdavi were among those who hunted for their name cards amid the dense Dior tableware settings, only to discover their first names embroidered on small calico pillows placed on each chair.

They oohed and awed over a flower-flecked meal prepared by de Castellane's eldest son, chef Stanislas Lanvin.

Valli, just back from India, was sporting a new lariat necklace dangling a purple spinel as he settled into conversation with Lauder, and marveled at how many women were toting his squishy Airbag bag.

De Castellane, an interior designer and creative director for Dior Maison and Baby Dior, said she and Lauder decided it would be better to join forces to promote each other's book "rather than be one after the other, like two competitors," she said.

Alas, Lauder will host de

Castellane at an event in New York on April 21, when the beauty executive and lifestyle guru can take command of the table decorations.

"I leave her free for all in New York, and she left me do whatever I want here in Paris," de Castellane said, citing Bunny Mellon and her own garden as inspirations for dressing the table in green and white and the first blooms of the season.

As for the name of the room, de Castellane explained that her family once owned the historic building, "but we were not good in business."

"We lost all, the castles and everything, and then we needed to work very hard," she said with a laugh.

Titled "Flower Couture: Living With Flowers," de Castellane's Rizzoli book will come out April 15 in the U.S., and it is sure to induce intense garden, table, pantry and cushion envy.

Ditto Lauder's Rizzoli book, "Living With Flowers," which came out last month and details how flowers have manifested in her day-to-day life, home, and lifestyle brand Aerin.

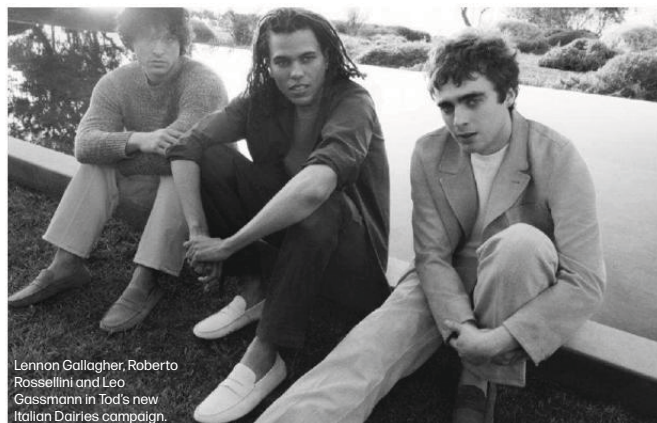
— MILES SOCHA

Next Gen

Tod's new Italian Diaries campaign brings together a class of young talents with well-known names — Ella Bleu Travolta, Lennon Gallagher, Stella Banderas, Roberto Rossellini and Leo Gassmann — to celebrate the heritage brand's classic Gommino loafer.

Shot by photographer Oliver Hadlee Peach at Villa Talama, nestled in the landscapes of Tuscany, the campaign brings together five up-and-coming talents from various creative industries: music, fashion, film and TV. The new initiative represents a new chapter for the brand, whose images have previously used models and brand ambassadors to front seasonal messaging.

According to Italian brand, the campaign encapsulates the spirit of Italian lifestyle, joy of life, conviviality and relaxed elegance with each talent's individual styles merging with Tod's heritage to showcase how the iconic Gommino remains a timeless, yet ever-evolving, symbol of elegance and craftsmanship.



Lennon Gallagher, Roberto Rossellini and Leo Gassmann in Tod's new Italian Diaries campaign.

Uni's custom hand soaps for Mr. Chow.



"I truly feel honored to be part of this timeless and iconic story that will continue to be such a huge part of lifestyle and fashion for years and years to come," actress and singer Ella Bleu Travolta said in a statement.

The visuals unfold through a mix of black-and-white portraits and colorful still-life images that emphasize the footwear's rich textures. Alongside the images, a series of short videos give a glimpse into the life of each talent, which debut Monday with a mix of outdoor advertising and on Tod's social channels.

"To me, the Gommino is a perfect representation of Italian design, luxurious and functional. It's timeless.

It's a privilege to be part of the Tod's legacy," said the musician Lennon Gallagher, who was a fixture during the fall 2025 collections.

Tod's Gommino is deeply embedded in the brand's DNA, a link to its long history of Italian craftsmanship and leatherwork. It features a signature rubber pebble sole, available in suede or calf leather, in natural hues as well as a palette of bold colors such as yellow, light blue and orange.

"Being a part of this campaign felt like stepping into a legacy that has defined Italian style style for so long but at the same time feels cool, relevant and modern," writer and director Stella Banderas said.

— THOMAS WALLER

Mr. Chow Special

Chicken satay, Mr. Chow noodles, lychee martinis — and now, hand soap.

In a sense, Mr. Chow is adding a custom hand soap to its menu, with a little help from refillable beauty brand Uni, which has created a new limited-edition soap for the hospitality heavyweight's bathrooms.

The custom scent entails notes of neroli, lavender and sandalwood, alongside skin care ingredients aloe vera and kakadu plum with

the brand's proprietary Uni Marine Complex for moisture.

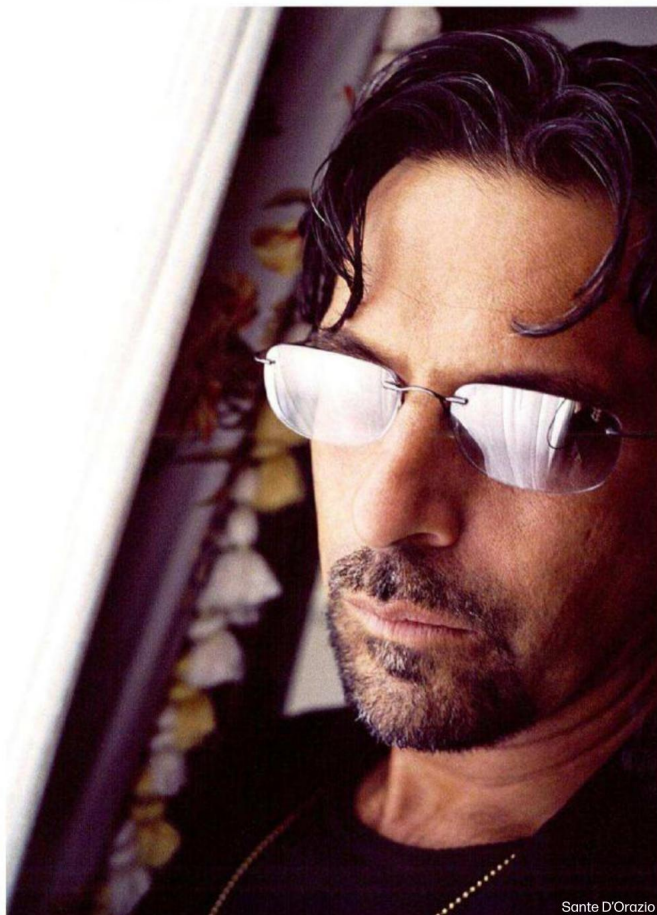
"From their sustainably sourced ingredients to their impeccably designed packaging, Uni's brand philosophy immediately resonated with me," said China Chow, daughter of the restaurant's founder. "I have since become a devoted advocate of their products."

Uni founder Alexandra Keating, who also recently partnered with SoulCycle, said she thinks about it "as who the Uni customer is. I built this brand on me and my life, and very much in the things I'm interested. I go to SoulCycle, and I go to Mr. Chow."

The brand, which launched at Mecca recently in Australia, sold out at the retailer "very quickly," Keating said. "It's a really competitive market."

The collaboration is part of Keating's broader efforts to tackle premium body care in a "fashion- and culture-forward way," she said. "I like to build these brand moments and stories with partners we align with in a bigger way. I think the trickle-down effect will be certain restaurants buying stock."

Ultimately, it's also an exposure play. "When people are exposed to the quality of the product, they'll graduate to being ▶



Sante D'Orazio

customers," Keating said. "The collaborations are a bit of a Pandora's box, you'd be surprised. Everyone wants a hand soap, and you'll see more from us." — JAMES MANSO

Photo Diary

In a more than 30-year career, Sante D'Orazio has photographed supermodels such as Kate Moss, Cindy Crawford, Heidi Klum and Naomi Campbell, as well as pop culture icons like Drew Barrymore, Keanu Reeves, Pamela Anderson and Janet Jackson. Now he is giving readers an inside look at his provocative work in a new book entitled, "A Shot in the Dark," which comes out Sept. 23 from Blackstone Publishing.

In the book, the 69-year-old D'Orazio tells how he fought his way to the top while navigating a life of sex, drugs, hustlers and panic attacks. He weaves together a vivid story of the Italian neighborhood in Brooklyn, N.Y., where he grew up, raised by both an immigrant community and his artistic immigrant mother who helped inspire his own creative pursuits. The book often details in a humorous way how his upbringing affected his many relationships — both romantically and professionally.

"I came into writing

my memoir by way of obstacles," D'Orazio said. "The type that life throws at you in the most unexpected times. When spine and knee surgeries made creating my work impossible, I found myself sitting and laying around, forgetting what a natural storyteller I was while entertaining my friends my entire life."

D'Orazio said he began by writing short stories with pen to paper, filling them away loosely in a box, and a year later, he discovered it was his memoir.

The book became the story of his life in the arts and the healing it brought to him "because not everything is as rosy as it

appears. It's that contrast that makes for great dynamics in every art form, but, most of all, in our lives," D'Orazio said.

— LISA LOCKWOOD

Nigo's Night

"We're going to follow the yellow G-Wagons."

A tuxedoed attendant directed guests as they stepped out of a freight elevator — which doubled as a step and repeat — and into the underground garage of the Mercedes-Benz Manhattan dealership on New York's west side. On Thursday night, the

newly renovated car flagship teamed up with Moncler Genius to host an immersive launch party for their co-branded collaboration designed by Nigo, which includes a clothing capsule collection and limited-edition car.

The road was paved with the sound of old school hip-hop as the yellow-lit concrete space opened up into a tailgating-style cocktail hour. The trunks of various vintage Mercedes car models were popped to reveal silver trays of cocktail glassware, as waiters circulated mixed drinks around the room. The lineup of G-Wagons were mostly kept under wraps, although the doors to one car were open, an invitation for guests including Joey Bada\$\$, Peyton List, Kaws, Dustin Yellin, Tobe Nwigwe, Bloody Osiris, Alton Mason, and recent New York Jets quarterback signee Justin Fields to climb inside for photo ops.

Many in the crowd were dressed in pieces from the new Moncler x Mercedes-Benz by Nigo collaboration, which includes varsity jackets, hoodies, checked shirts, and a signature Moncler puffer adorned with the Mercedes-Benz logo. The collection, which has officially launched in boutiques, is featured in a campaign photographed by Thibaut Grevet.

Upstairs on the ground floor, guests took in Nigo's limited-edition Mercedes-Benz Project G-Class Past II Future model en route to their dinner seats. The SUV, stationed underneath a flashing video screen, features a Moncler-coded quilted puffer roof and tartan seats. The floor model boasted another classic car accessory: an orange NYC parking ticket tucked into the windshield, bearing Nigo's signature and the address of Moncler's SoHo boutique as the envelope's return address.



The space is approximately 3,896 square feet, and houses a wide range of products.

Nigo, who was MIA during cocktail hour, materialized at the long dinner table adorned with sleek Moncler flourishes and jerrycan flower vases. The car theme continued throughout dinner, as servers dressed in mechanic jumpsuits delivered courses prepared by the Pharrell-affiliated restaurant Nami Nori. — KRISTEN TAUER

On Grows

On is making good on its commitment to grow its direct-to-consumer presence in London, opening its third store in London's Battersea Power Station.

"Our expanding retail presence in London reflects our commitment to creating spaces that connect with local communities," said Bianca Pestalozzi, On's General Manager for the Europe, Middle East and Africa region.

The industrial space, a mixture of steel, concrete and exposed brick, houses the brand's wide range of sportswear, which includes footwear, apparel and accessories fit for high-performance activities like running, training and tennis. It will also host community-oriented events such as a weekly evening run club and morning movement sessions.

"This new store is more

than just a place to shop — it's a place where our community can explore what On is all about," added Pestalozzi.

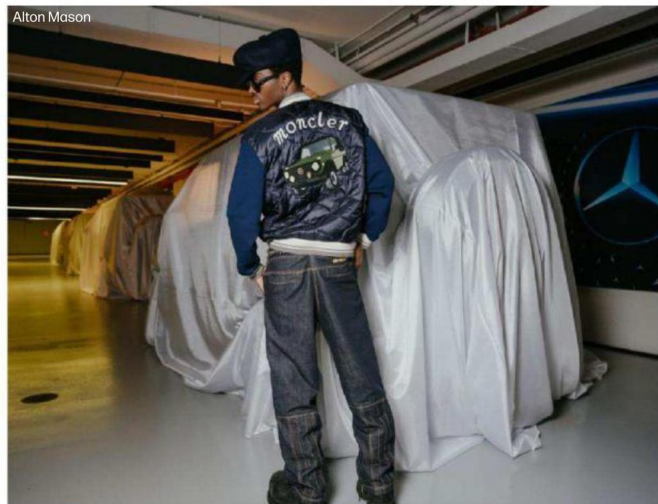
The new storefront comes on the heels of On's momentum in 2024. For the fourth quarter ended Dec. 31, the Zurich-based sports brand posted net income of 89.5 million Swiss francs, against a loss of 26.8 million Swiss francs in the same year-ago period.

For 2024, the brand said net income rose 204.5 percent to 242.3 million Swiss francs, on a net sales increase of 29.4 percent to 2.32 billion Swiss francs. This week, On announced that it would move to a single chief executive officer structure, with Martin Hoffmann, co-CEO and CFO, becoming the brand's sole CEO on July 1. Co-CEO Marc Maurer will exit the company.

Launched in 2010 and publicly traded in New York since 2021, the company said last year that it aimed to have 20 stores in Europe by 2026.

London has been a hot market for athletic brands. This week, Puma revealed that it would open a flagship on Oxford Street, marking its first-ever European flagship. In January, Hoka popped up in East London with a London-specific concept.

— VIOLET GOLDSTONE ■



Alton Mason