

WWD

Fashion. Beauty. Business.



The Bottom Line
On-again, off-again tariffs, a stock market in turmoil – what is the consumer mindset amid all of this?
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Tiffany Treasures
Tiffany & Co. has unveiled its latest high jewelry collection, Sea of Wonder, inspired by maritime life.
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Draft Day
The NFL Draft takes place Thursday, and star college athletes are preparing to show off their fashion style.
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TOP 10 COLLECTIONS

The Final Countdown

It's been a long – very long – fall 2025 season, with runway shows continuing even into April with a few resort collections. But that two-and-a-half months of shows produced some captivating standouts – that is, when the industry's heads weren't spinning with the whirlwind of designer changes, both those that happened and those expected to. *For more on the top 10 collections, see pages 8 to 17.*

BUSINESS

Kering Reports 14% Sales Decrease

- Gucci, down 24 percent in the three-month period, is awaiting Balenciaga fashion star Demna to rev up creativity.

BY MILES SOCHA

Gucci's new creative director Demna is expected to deliver the first "hint" of his vision for the ailing Italian megabrand this September, Kering executive Francesca Belletini said Wednesday night.

Speaking to analysts after the French luxury group missed low expectations and reported a 14 percent drop in first-quarter revenues to 3.88 billion euros, she also made clear that the Georgian designer, who is moving over from sister brand Balenciaga in early July, will not pursue a scorched-earth policy on existing product lines, despite his past penchant for dystopian aesthetics.

"Demna is going to build on the vision of the brand. He's going to bring desirability

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BUSINESS

Saks Global Is Resetting Buying Team

- As part of the integration of Neiman Marcus and Saks Fifth Avenue, there is now one team that oversees both luxury retailers.

BY DAVID MOIN

Saks Global, continuing to integrate Saks Fifth Avenue and Neiman Marcus operations and reduce headcount, has formed a "commercial team" of senior-level merchants and fashion executives, WWD has learned.

Executives said the new organization "transforms" the buying approach whereby there is now one team of buyers with non-traditional titles serving both Neiman Marcus and Saks Fifth Avenue, blending talent from both retail nameplates.

Among the changes disclosed to WWD on Wednesday, five executives have been named senior vice presidents of brand partnerships and buying. They are:

- Tatiana Birkelund, for beauty, home and jewelry. She was previously vice president, general business manager over beauty and jewelry at the Neiman Marcus Group.

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THE BOTTOM LINE

The 'Resilient Consumer' Is Now Just 'Coping' in Donald Trump's Trade War

- The world is changing so quickly today that the fashion industry just might need some new buzzwords.

BY EVAN CLARK

President Donald Trump's trade war might just be a shock big enough that fashion's chief executive officers are going to need some new buzzwords.

"Cautiously optimistic" just might not work anymore.

CEOs have been using that one for decades. But all that tempered optimism, more often than not, flowed from what has been repeatedly referred to as the "resilient consumer."

The resilient consumer has become an article of faith in retail. Americans especially are going to spend, as if it's almost their reason for being, completing the circle in a consumer-heavy culture.

But there are limits.

And Trump's trade war, launched into an economy that was already showing signs of strain, might just have found a limit hard enough to break that faith in the consumer and necessitate a new buzzword.

"I'm not sure I would call the consumer fully resilient anymore," said Katie Thomas, who leads the Kearney Consumer Institute and puts together its Consumer Stress Index.

Instead she suggested something new – "The coping consumer." That's something of a rhetorical step down from "resilient," suggesting more a consumer who is standing their ground, but is struggling to do so. Consumers are being careful with their money, and aware that they might have to start cutting back.

One of the many stated goals of Trump's trade war is to bring manufacturing back to the U.S. But most experts see supply chains that are hard to move and labor mismatches that would put companies that rely on imports out of business and ultimately raise prices for consumers.

Thomas has a nuanced view of the shopping psyche today. It's not quite as dire as the mainstream readings of consumer confidence, including the University of Michigan's Surveys of Consumers, which is down 30 percent since December, with last month's decline described by the university as "pervasive and unanimous across age, income, education, geographic region, and political affiliation."

A more-targeted dive into the consumer mindset reveals something a little different, according to Thomas.

"It's no secret that most consumers are feeling a general level of stress and uncertainty around the economy – just more uncertainty than anything, just not knowing what's going to happen, not knowing how it will impact them directly," she said. "If you ask them more personalized questions about their own individual situation, they're not actually feeling quite as stressed yet."

At least so far, consumers aren't directly seeing a threat to their job or or changes in stores.

Kearney's research shows consumers feel about the same amount of agita that

they did a year ago.

The pressure is just coming from different places.

"We're seeing it kind of shift around from cost of living into trade and geopolitical concerns," she said. "But we also continue to see that they're not feeling it on a personal basis yet."

The unemployment rate is still low at 4.2 percent and payrolls expanded by 228,000 in March, just before the trade war started in earnest. Over the past five years the Consumer Price Index has shown a 23.8 percent increase in prices across the economy. Average weekly wages, meanwhile, have still risen just a bit faster, gaining 25.6 percent to \$1,231.

That has helped consumers hold their own.

All of which leaves the consumer – and the fashion world – in a kind of limbo, waiting for the next shoe to drop.

Trump's trade policies have already forced changes that will be felt by consumers soon.

In the case of Shein and Temu shoppers, very soon.

Fast fashion's e-commerce giants both said they would start to raise prices next week now that a duty-free loophole for goods valued at under \$800 is closing. That will hit the younger shopper keen to snatch up some inexpensive fashion quickly.

Trump's 145 percent tariffs on goods from China will take longer to work its way through the system, but will be felt much more widely since the country accounts for a third of all U.S. apparel imports.

That's a point that Doug McMillon, chief executive officer of Walmart Inc.,

and Brian Cornell, CEO of Target Inc., no doubt made when they and other retail executives met with Trump in the Oval Office this week. Both Walmart and Target import goods from China, using the country's manufacturing expertise and low costs to appeal to U.S. value shoppers.

There were signs on Tuesday that Trump was wavering and could cut those tariffs. But even at a third of their current levels, the levies would have a major impact.

No one really knows what will come out of the trade war – and that's a problem.

"If you look at the human psychology component of it, it's the unknown. It's the fear, it's the concern not knowing what's going to come next," said Marcie Merriman, cultural insights and customer strategy leader at Ernst & Young. "Over the last five years that's got pretty well ingrained into our heads. What's going to come next? When's the next shoe going to fall? If we look at the overall psychology of people and the fear, the concern, the preparation for the unknown, that has become habit."

Merriman said qualitative research

shows that people are being more hesitant to make shopping decisions.

"That happened before the economy took a shift," she said. "The habits have already been there and this is just impacting the way that they're thinking about it."

The challenge, well, one of the many challenges for retailers and brands, is to learn how to rely less on historical data – what sales were last week or last year – and focus in on consumers while planning for the future.

"Because things continue to change and we can't get to that point of consistency, the importance of really talking with the customers, of really understanding where the mindsets are – much more broadly beyond just shopping in your store – is critical," she said.

"So how are they changing other behaviors? How are they changing other things? Are they going out to eat less? Are they getting their nails done less?"

These are the "weak" signals from consumers who are not so much resilient anymore, but are now just coping.

If the fashion industry is going to work back up the ladder itself – from coping to resilient and maybe even to robust – it's going to have to do it all.

It's going to have to listen to both the weak and strong signals from consumers, figure out their supply chain, bolster their balance sheets and be ready to react and move quickly.

The "resilient consumer" might be on the way out, but a corporate structure built on "agility" is still in its prime.

The Bottom Line is a business analysis column written by Evan Clark, deputy managing editor, who has covered the fashion industry since 2000. It appears periodically.

"It's no secret that most consumers are feeling a general level of stress and uncertainty around the economy – just more uncertainty than anything, just not knowing what's going to happen, not knowing how it will impact them directly."

KATIE THOMAS, Kearney Consumer Institute

Shoppers are feeling more anxious.



BUSINESS

Levi's Shareholders Reject Proposal to End DEI

● They voted overwhelmingly against a proposal to eliminate DEI programs, reaffirming the company's commitment to diversity and inclusion.

BY EVAN CLARK

Levi Strauss & Co. is used to being a bit of a social lightning rod, having been early to support same-sex marriage, speak out on gun violence and institute paid family leave.

So it's little surprise that the battle over diversity, equity and inclusion – a cause supercharged by U.S. President Donald Trump's efforts to dismantle DEI in the government – landed at its annual meeting.

The National Center for Public Policy Research, a conservative think tank, formerly submitted a proposal to shareholders calling for the company to “consider abolishing its DEI program, policies, department and goals.”

Shareholders have apparently considered the topic enough.

Investors holding less than 1 percent of Levi's shares voted in favor of the proposal, according to a company spokesman.

Levi's board advised shareholders to vote against the proposal.

That has shareholders aligned behind the board, which advised against the proposal, indicating “we believe in the strong business case for a diverse and inclusive workforce.”

Michelle Gass, president and chief executive officer of Levi's, told WWD earlier this year: “We've been committed to diversity and inclusion for literally decades, and it's the core to who we are. So our commitment remains unchanged. We will do what's right for our people, for our business. And at the end of the day, building a diverse and inclusive workplace helps us deliver stronger results.”

David Jedrzejek, senior vice president and general counsel, confirmed at the virtual annual meeting that Levi's did not

use quotas or discriminatory policies in its recruitment or promotions.

Stefan Padfield, executive director of the National Center's Free Enterprise Project, made his case at the meeting, arguing that DEI programs risk illegal discrimination.

“Rather than promote unity, DEI programs can set the very individuals they claim to be helping up for failure and stigma,” Padfield said. “Imagine what corporations could accomplish if they stop dividing us on the basis of race and sex and instead focused on raising the floor for all Americans in areas such as education, which are at the root of the pipeline problems driving our demographic inequalities.”

DEI programs were broadly embraced by corporate America, especially with the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement following the murder of George Floyd at the hands of police in 2020.

Just as politics whipsawed with the reelection of Trump, many companies also modulated their approach.

The shareholder proposal noted that “Alphabet and Meta cut DEI staff and DEI-related investments; and Microsoft and Zoom laid off their entire DEI teams.”

But Padfield acknowledged he likely had a losing battle at Levi's, preempting the loss by addressing what he called a “deceptive narrative...that low vote counts for proposals such as this one means shareholders legitimately support DEI.”

“The majority of votes are controlled by institutions and individuals who are subject to conflicts of interest,” Padfield said, pointing to asset managers who have funds focused on environmental, social and governance issues and proxy advisers who consult companies on ESG.

“The proper headline should perhaps read something like, ‘No Trustworthy Shareholders Voted for DEI,’” he said.

That claim could not be substantiated, but failed to recognize that Levi's and the vast majority of its shareholders are on the same page when it comes to DEI.

A Levi's Pride campaign for Outright Action International highlights the brand's advocacy.



BEAUTY

L'Oréal-backed Chinese Fund Invests in Foundation Brand

● Known for its “shapewear” foundation, First Cover's bestseller is Cozy Lifting Foundation.

BY DENNI HU

A campaign featuring First Cover's Cozy Lifting Foundation.



Cathy Consumer Co-Creation Fund, a Chinese investment vehicle co-established by L'Oréal, Kerying, Cathy Capital and Pernod Ricard, has made its first color cosmetics investment with First Cover, a brand focused on foundation products.

Billed as the maker of China's first

functional foundation brand, the Shanghai-based company was founded by Wang Yuying in late 2024.

Known for its “shapewear” foundation – adopting the idea of the body-sculpting garment for the face – the brand's bestseller is the 199 renminbi, or \$27.21, Cozy Lifting Foundation that comes in two shades.

By working with Vitalab, the Italian active ingredients supplier, the foundation incorporates plant-based extracts typically found in skin care, such as acemella oleracea and avena sativa.

According to Qingyan Intelligence's data, the product has sold more than 100,000 bottles after its initial launch four months ago.

A serial beauty entrepreneur, Wang spent time at L'Oréal, Estée Lauder and the Guangzhou-based beauty group Marubi before launching First Cover.

L'Oréal said the company remains a limited partner of Cathy Co-Creation Fund and declined to comment, according to a local spokesperson.

According to Qichacha, a Chinese company information provider, Cathy

Consumer Co-Creation Fund now holds 10.8 percent stake in Wujixing, First Cover's parent company.

In January, MPCi, the China unit of the American venture capital firm Matrix Partners, revealed that it had completed a 100 million renminbi, or \$13.7 million, round of angel investment in First Cover last September, becoming its earliest institutional backer.

“China's homegrown public beauty companies are beginning to enter the stage of building a multibrand group. The overall competitive landscape is still in its early stages, leaving room for innovative companies,” Frankie Li, MPCi's investment vice president, said in a company WeChat post.

“Foundation and base makeup products, as well as skin care products, represent an area of growth and an ideal sector to gain consumer loyalty. Compared to color cosmetics, fragrance and personal care, the base makeup category enjoys higher repurchase rates, is less swayed by trends and can produce greater brand value,” Li added.

Launched in 2021, the Cathy Consumer Co-Creation Fund focuses on incubating early-stage Chinese companies with high-growth potential in the consumer goods and retail sectors.

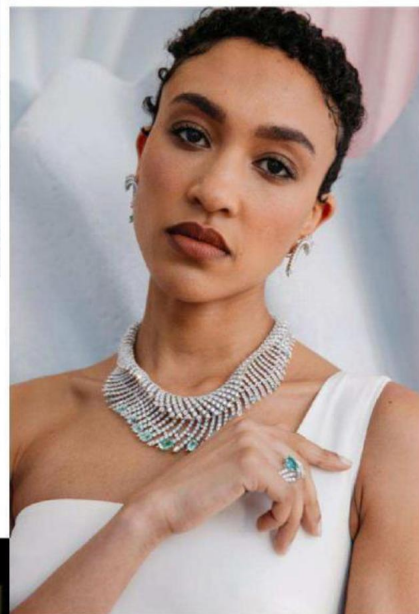
The joint fund has also invested in the Chinese niche fragrance brand Documents and the Chinese aromatherapy skin care brand AromeManpo.



Nathalie Verdeille, chief artistic officer, jewelry and high jewelry with models in her Blue Book 2025: Sea of Wonder high jewelry collection.



Necklace in platinum and 18-karat yellow gold with blue zircons of more than 83 total carats, sapphires, moonstones and diamonds, part of Blue Book 2025: Sea of Wonder.



EXCLUSIVE

Tiffany & Co. Debuts Blue Book Collection

● Nathalie Verdeille's latest high jewelry collection themed around marine life is connected to the legacy of Jean Schlumberger.

BY THOMAS WALLER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY LEXIE MORELAND

Tiffany & Co. has returned to where it all began, debuting the next chapter of high jewelry with Blue Book 2025: Sea of Wonder in New York City with several days of events that crescendo with a gala at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Created by chief artistic director of jewelry and high jewelry Nathalie Verdeille, Sea of Wonder is a direct link to the archive of Jean Schlumberger – Tiffany's much-loved and influential creator known for his fantastical designs. Verdeille reinterpreted his marine life masterpieces in the latest collection, embarking on a new journey under the ocean with creations punctuated with technical feats, one-of-a-kind gemstones and a touch of dreamy surrealism. "Everything started in Manhattan for us," explained president and chief executive officer Anthony Ledru during an exclusive preview of the collection.

Blue Book collections stretch back to Tiffany's beginning at the end of the 18th century and are firmly planted in the house's heritage. For decades the brand showed in Manhattan, but over the past few years, it has taken the collection on the road to Shanghai, Miami and Los Angeles.

"To do Blue Book again in New York, it goes back to tradition," Ledru said, pointing to Tiffany & Co.'s sweet spot – in line with



Here and above: Pieces from Blue Book 2025: Sea of Wonder high jewelry.

the jewelry houses of Europe – of the brand's deep patrimony, but with a uniquely American point of view. And in modern terms, New York is the brand's number-one market for high jewelry in volume and number of clients, Ledru reported.

Last year when bringing Blue Book to Los Angeles, Ledru noted to WWD that high jewelry was "recession proof." Much has changed for the global economy since then with the uncertainty of the Trump administration and its stop-and-go tariffs. Last week LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton's chief financial officer Cécile Cabanis reported that sales were flat at the watches and jewelry unit of the group, which includes Tiffany & Co.

"I think, of course, it's an uncertain world right now," Ledru said, adding, however, that Tiffany has seen growth in the first quarter. The CEO explained the pool of high jewelry clients is small, "maybe 10,000 active clients" worldwide for all high jewelry brands. But demand exceeds availability.

"You're in the world of scarcity and unique," he said, elaborating that the brand's top clients want to know what is coming as soon as possible to secure the best pieces. "It's a different world. That's why I believe it is resilient," he said.

A prime example: in the lead up to the Sea of Wonder debut: a select group of very important clients were given a

preview so they could reserve pieces from the collection ahead of its launch. And several did.

Over the past few years, the high jewelry category has come out of the discreet shadows with archive pieces creating content booms on red carpets. Today the category is extremely competitive, with brands not only showing high jewelry in Paris during the haute couture season but also hosting far off destination debuts with social media strategies.

Under Ledru, Tiffany is polishing the brand by linking its legacy to the now. At the 2025 Oscars, best actress winner Mikey Madison wore a Tiffany Archive platinum and diamond necklace. High jewelry and archival creations have become the lodestar for jewelry brands.

"We're 100 percent on that," the CEO said of the diving force of patrimony at Tiffany & Co., pointing to the recently opened Milan boutique, where 48 pieces of the brand's archival jewelry were showcased. "Of course you cannot buy archive, but I think it creates storytelling," he said.

It's here – referencing the past, to push forward – where Verdeille began with Sea of Wonder. A little more than three years at the creative helm, she has channeled sea life before with Blue Book 2023: Out of the Blue. "It was really more contemplation, admission, respect," she said of her debut collection and early days at the brand. Now she has a deeper understanding of the house and Schlumberger's work. ▶



Anthony Ledru



Here and below: Pieces from Blue Book 2025: Sea of Wonder high jewelry.

“Before you join the brand you discover it [Schlumberger’s work]. But when you meet the pieces for the first time, it’s very different, you win maturity, confidence,” she said.

Her latest collection sees her creativity blossom with unique ideas and newness. “We have a good moment to take the risk,” she said. “Now we understand, we respect and we developed a freedom to really follow the story to bring all the strength of the Tiffany brand.”

The collection breaks out in suites with Wave, Ocean Flora, Urchin, Starfish, Seahorse and Sea Turtle. “It was all the magic of the light, of the wave, the movement, the delicateness,” Verdeille said of a green and blue cuprian elbaite tourmaline necklace with delicate articulating fonds from the Wave suite. It embraces the power of water, laying on the décolletage with a spiral shape.

The blue inked gemstone reminded her of the shimmering of light, a “luminescence.” Verdeille proudly took a moment to admire the back of the piece, explaining that she was taught to consider both sides of the complicated design to show the level of craftsmanship.

Across the collection are a mix of brooches and pins: sea turtles with diamonds; a starfish with rubies, with each point curved as if the ocean is washing over it, a static piece with a trompe-l’oeil nod to movement.

Brooches and pins she says is an overture to a male customer – Robert Downey Jr. wore an archival Schlumberger brooch to the 2025 Oscars. She loves to play with the tension between feminine and masculine in her work, but she supports anyone wearing pieces as they see fit. “That’s modern,” she said.

A high jewelry collection can take two to three years for her to develop from her original impulses, locating gemstones and then mastering technics. “We can make a miracle, but it’s better to take the time,” she said of her process. There are many incredible stones, but one ultimate standout is a custom cushion-cut, 16.5 D carat, internally flawless type IIA diamond in a ring, part of the Ocean Flora suite.

Throughout her work the exceptional nature of the stones is heightened, in the Urchin suite she developed a new technique for setting the stone with a rope of gold that “dances around” it. The suite uses pailonné enameling, one of the oldest techniques in fine jewelry, thought



fashionable during the Renaissance. Schlumberger breathed new life into the technique in the 1960s.

The old-world method requires skill and extreme precision – rather than applying the enamel directly onto a metal, they encapsulate thin curved silver leaves between them “bringing volume and texture to the piece, but also new shades of color,” she said. Like in the sea, where light passes through the water to ricochet off the pearly hues of the shells, here the light penetrates the colored enamel, reflected on delicate silver leaves.

Within the Seahorse suite is a stone not often seen in high jewelry, blue zircon. Unconventional, it lends a specific and electric glow with a high refraction index that is unlike any other colored gemstone.

She chose it because its crisp brilliance contrasts against the carved moonstones on a necklace. “You can see the transparencies, it was to remind me of the shell,” she said.

The Landmark, the Fifth Avenue epicenter of Tiffany & Co., has a multilevel buildout showcasing the new collection with archival pieces for private clients and media to enjoy. After its New York debut, the collection will travel to Hong Kong, where the next chapter will be revealed with Wave 2, then Paris and Tokyo in July. The collection goes on to Bangkok in August and lands in Milan in September for the launch of Wave 3.

Back in Manhattan, Friday night’s Tiffany & Co. gala in the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s American Wing to fete the new collection will include a range

of house ambassadors, clients and guests, with models wearing the pieces throughout the evening. “The Met will be very contextual,” the CEO said. “It’s completely linked to Tiffany. We have mutual passion for the city.”

Ledru went on to say that Tiffany “is very clear about where we want to go. It’s all about heritage. We looked at the past. We did that with Alexandre [Arnault, former vice president of product and communications] for the last three to four years. It takes time to align the engines. There was 20 to 30 years that were phenomenal for Tiffany. The 1960s to 1980s. And the reason why is the design was extraordinary.

“Everything that we’re doing today is around that,” he said. ■



Malaki Starks of the University of Georgia is having a custom suit made for the draft.

MEN'S

Fashion Expected to Star in NFL Draft

- The top prospects, whether attending in person or watching at home, will all be dressed to impress.

BY JEAN E. PALMIERI

Whether on the field or on social media, the top college football players do everything they can to attract the attention of the National Football League in hopes of being selected by their dream team to embark on a professional career on the gridiron.

That same determination to stand out also shows in their fashion choices. With the NFL draft kicking off — pun intended — Thursday night, many of the prospects will be decked out in designer brands or custom pieces with distinct details and accessories selected to highlight their individual style.

Although not every prospect plans to attend the event in Green Bay, Wis., in person, even those who will be watching from home will be dressed to the nines. The NFL sends crews to the homes and watch parties of the athletes to capture the moment when a player's name is called and his family and friends react.

"The NFL draft has always been a fun fashion moment," said Kyle Smith, who serves as the league's first fashion editor. Even when the prospects wore "giant suits that were too long with five buttons," they were trying to make a statement. But it now has become a "big red-carpet moment as the players lean into fashion to build their personal brands."

For the NFL draft, which is "one of the biggest nights of their lives," he said, many of the players select custom linings or other details that speak to the special moments in their careers. "They wear their lives in their jackets."

Although Smith doesn't work directly with the prospects at this point in their careers, he said he has noticed a difference

of late in the crop of rookies when they join the NFL.

"We've definitely seen a shift in players when they enter the league," he said. "They have a real sense of style. And they start cultivating that in college."

So when they do join the NFL, they're already well versed in how to express their individuality — which they're not shy about showing off. "The league is made up of really cool young men," Smith said. "They all wear helmets and uniforms on the field, but this current generation of athletes understands fashion is a great tool to use if they want to make a personal statement."

Malaki Starks, a 21-year-old safety for the Georgia Bulldogs, plans to attend the draft in person to see where he may wind up playing. Reports indicate that Starks, who is expected to be a first-round pick, might be selected by the Baltimore Ravens or Miami Dolphins.

"It's been a crazy journey," he said. "I have no idea what's going to happen or where I'm going to go. I just want a shot."

He said he's got four classes and an internship left to complete before he gets his degree in sports management and consumer economics from the University of Georgia, but his focus this week is on the NFL.

For the big night, Starks turned to Brian Alexander Bespoke to make him a custom suit in his favorite color: pink. He'll pair it with the white shoes his fiancée got him for his first football game as well as a diamond brooch to honor a cousin who recently passed away, he said.

Starks, who is now working with Klutch Sports Group, said some of his teammates used Brian Alexander as well to create their distinct looks for the draft.

At 6 feet, 1 inch and just over 200 pounds, Starks said he's "bigger than the average person, but most of the time I don't get a lot of custom." Instead, he's generally able to wear off-the-rack pieces.

He admitted when he started college,

he "wasn't very fashionable," but it didn't take him long to learn from the other players and up his game. "And I'm still learning," he said, pointing to Tykee Smith of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers as someone whose style he admires. "It's not crazy stuff but I watch what he wears."

When he's not dressing to be photographed, Starks said his style is "really chill," and he leans toward shorts, sweatpants, "Nike stuff" and "comfortable clothes."

Starks has already signed deals with Beats by Dre and other companies, and while he's thankful for the NIL ruling by the NCAA in 2021 that allows college

athletes to profit from the use of their names, Starks hasn't let this newfound windfall change him dramatically.

"If you use it in the correct way, it's a blessing," he said.

Another player who is expected to be among the first-round draft picks is Jaxson Dart, a quarterback for Ole Miss, who is rumored to be among the players the Pittsburgh Steelers are interested in selecting.

Unlike Starks, Dart has decided to stay home rather than attend the draft in person, although he did visit Green Bay earlier in the week to enjoy some of the pre-event activities.

"They only give you 10 tickets and I have a big family and a lot of people who have been in my corner," he said, and he wants to be with them on his big night.

While he may not walk the red carpet in Wisconsin, he's still planning to pull out all the stops when it comes to his outfit, sporting a Louis Vuitton overshirt with a zipper in black that he'll pair with "cool accessories."

He said this is the first time he's wearing Vuitton, but he's partial to designer clothes. However, they have to pass the mom test — his mother is instrumental in helping her son find the right outfits to wear for his tunnel walks and other events. "My mom loves fashion," he said.

At Ole Miss, the players strut the Walk of Champions two hours prior to every game through The Grove, a famous tailgating area on campus, before going to the locker room. Dart has embraced the opportunity to show off his style during these walks.

"Some coaches say you have to wear a suit or a sport coat, but our coach [Lane Kiffin] said we can wear anything we want. There are no rules, so that makes it fun."

Dart describes his style as "very diverse," often opting for oversize "disruptive" pieces. But he's also known to wear more traditional outfits as well.

Like Starks, his ability to cash in on NIL deals has also "been a big help," he said. "It means financially, my parents are not as responsible for me anymore."

Although he hasn't lined up any designer brands yet, he does have a deal with Nicholas Air, which gives him access to a fleet of private jets. "It's a unique and cool experience," he said.

Ditto for his participation in the draft. "This is what I always expected for my future," he said. "I anticipate things working out and being about to live out a childhood dream."



Malaki Starks is not afraid to wear bold colors.



Jaxson Dart livens up a navy suit with colorful furnishings and shoes.

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L'Oréal USA



Heela Yang
Sol de Janeiro

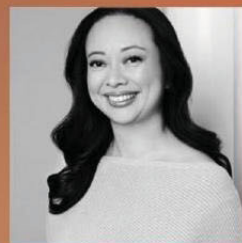


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Unilever

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WWD

TOP 10 COLLECTIONS

From the blockbuster debut of Sarah Burton at Givenchy to provocative newcomer Duran Lantink's collection, WWD editors ranked the top 10 ready-to-wear shows of fall 2025.

10

LOUIS VUITTON

"Everyone has some memories of train stations and platforms: sweet hellos, difficult goodbyes, brain-numbing commutes, heading home for the holidays – or for the 0.01 percent, a sumptuous voyage on the Orient Express. Nicolas Ghesquière folded some of those – plus movie references galore, Agatha Christie whodunits included – into his frisky fall collection for Louis Vuitton, an eclectic display of characters on all kinds of journeys, not forgetting the service crew members in their very '80s uniforms."

– MILES SOCHA



9

**DURAN
LANTINK**

“By this time during Fashion Month, it’s easy to get glassy-eyed at the same-same coming down the runway. Then along comes Duran Lantink to shock the system and make you smile. The Dutch designer’s fall 2025 ‘Duranimal’ collection did that and more, flying the flag for creative freedom even as he nudged into more commercial territory.”

— BOOTH MOORE

ALEXANDER MCQUEEN

“A year after his rocky debut, things are looking up for creative director Seán McGirr at Alexander McQueen, whose strong, salable fall 2025 collection should continue to build momentum for the luxury house with a rebel heart.”

— BOOTH MOORE





Photograph by Masato Onoda

7

RALPH LAUREN

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

— EMILY MERCER

FENDI

6

“Fendi is turning 100, just as the stigma of wearing real fur seems to be subsiding. Charged with creating the fall 2025 collection that kicks off the brand’s centennial year, Silvia Venturini Fendi opted to create many coats that resemble fox, mink and sable – all realized with shearling. Still, the designer did not stray from opulence, parading what is sure to be one of the most luxurious runway collections of the Milan season.” – MILES SOCHA



“Cowboy core is still riding high. Having plied Western chic this time last year, Schiaparelli creative director Daniel Roseberry put a raw spin on the trend this season with hand-tooled leather handbags, chunky shearling jackets and big buckle belts worn three at a time.”

— JOELLE DIDERICH



SCHIAPARELLI

**DIOR**

“Corsets and crinolines were two big trends to come out of the Paris couture shows in January, sparking debate about how relevant these historic styles are to 21st-century wardrobes. [Maria Grazia] Chiuri made sure that the clothes in this confident collection never felt restrictive, thanks to modular constructions and lightweight materials.”

— JOELLE DIDERICH

3 GIORGIO ARMANI

“It should come as no surprise that in such a big anniversary year, the fall collection was Armani-core, brimming with the silhouettes, colors and tailoring that made him famous and beloved of that first generation of women who couldn’t get enough of all that low-key power dressing.”

—SAMANTHA CONTI



“This season marked Alaïa’s first time on the official ready-to-wear calendar, albeit with its oddball seasonal nomenclature, summer-fall, and with [Pieter] Mulier in an experimental mood. Fabric donuts were the main feature of this daring collection: framing faces, ringing shoulders and hugging hips like life buoys, from which fell the most seductive skirts imaginable.”

— MILES SOCHA



ALAÏA

“Making her debut at the storied French house after spending her entire fashion career at Alexander McQueen, [Sarah] Burton nailed it with an exhilarating display of new silhouettes, including dramatic hourglass coats and jackets, geometric baby dolls and austere gowns whereby a triangle or square of leather descends from the throat.”

— MILES SOCHA



BUSINESS

Marimekko Draws Focus to U.S. Market



Two models in Marimekko designs.



Marimekko and Blue Bottle Coffee designs.

The 60-year-old Unikko print is being used on dresses and other products.



● Through collaborations with Crocs and Blue Bottle Coffee, the Finnish brand is targeting consumers in novel ways.

BY ROSEMARY FEITELBERG

Marimekko fans know they can wear the clothes and decorate their homes in the bold printed Finnish designs. But now they can immerse themselves in a Marimekko-adorned hotel room too.

Through the company's new collaboration with Blue Bottle Coffee, the company has helped to dress up a room at the Walker Hotel Tribeca in New York City. This is the latest of several initiatives that the Finnish brand has embarked on to attract new consumers.

The Helsinki-based company's 2024 sales increased by 5 percent to \$174.1 million, driven by retail sales and wholesale business in Asia-Pacific and Scandinavia. Marimekko is working to build up U.S. sales, which accounted for about 6 percent of last year's net sales. In January, the company revealed a distribution partnership in Canada with IA:MM Inc. to develop its business.

The company has about 170 stores worldwide. A few years ago Marimekko opened a Wooster Street store in New York, and is now focusing more on e-commerce and gearing up in the wholesale space, according to chief executive officer Tiina Alahuhta-Kasko. Finland is the brand's top market, followed by Asia-Pacific, and Scandinavia, central Europe and the U.S. are areas where the brand has also had a long presence.

With an archive of more than 3,500 prints, most of those prints are inspired by everyday moments and especially nature, since most Finnish families have lakefront summerhouses. In March, the company introduced a multicountry pop-up tour called "Field of Flowers," which features 25 new floral prints from five young designers. Marimekko is scouting a location for a flagship in Paris — one of 10 to 15 outposts that the company aims to unveil this year, Alahuhta-Kasko said. This summer the brand will also be scheduling private appointments in Paris, during men's fashion week there.

As an indication of the company's interest in "creative experiences," the company debuted 14 signature stores

and staged 20 pop-ups last year, she said. Having had a pop-up in Japan earlier this year, pop-ups continue to play an important role as "we scale up the brand," Alahuhta-Kasko said.

Marimekko debuted another limited-edition collaboration this week with Crocs. The colorful kicks are being sold via Crocs' e-commerce site, and at select Crocs stores and wholesale locations. Last month during Milan Design Week, the Finnish design house enlisted Laila Gohar to create an immersive experience and capsule collection that featured artist Maija Isola's Marimekko's bold stripes.

Just as more companies like Uniqlo, Dior, Prada and Ralph Lauren have ventured into cafés or dining, Marimekko has two cafés in Thailand. "It's such a natural context for us, as we are about lifestyle. People are also able to have a little taste of the Finnish culinary culture, and also enjoy the products through our tableware. It's also a very visual and Instagrammable experience," said Alahuhta-Kasko, adding that other café locations could follow.

Overnighters at the Walker Hotel Tribeca will find Marimekko's signature homeware

and Blue Bottle's signature serene coffee-infused aesthetic. Guests will find Marimekko's Piccolo sheets, Iso Unikko covers, soft cotton robes and towels. The 200-square-foot room in the downtown hotel will only be available for bookings from Friday to May 25.

The limited-edition collaboration can be seen in the fabric that is used for the room's bespoke curtains, head board and decorative pillows. When not lounging around, visitors will be able to perk up at the Blue Bottle coffee station that is equipped with cups and Craft Instant coffee. Marimekko's Syksy glassware and vases are also in the room, as well as the coffee table book "Marimekko: The Art of Printmaking."

The starting rate for a one-night stay is \$350, excluding taxes. Guests who check into the Marimekko x Blue Bottle guest rooms before May 25 will receive cards to redeem two Marimekko lattes at the Blue Bottle Coffee café at the Walker Hotel Tribeca. The company is not currently working on aligning with any other hotels.

Nearing her 20-year anniversary at Marimekko, Alahuhta-Kasko is right at home, having first interned there as a business school student and having drawn from that experience to write her master's about brand identity management. She said, "I really fell in love with the company and the creative culture. I felt like it was a house full of creative personalities. It also was a company, where it didn't matter how much experience you had. All that mattered was what kind of attitude and approach to learning that you had."

She added, "There's never a dull day. We very much feel that Marimekko represents this new idea of luxury. Rather than be a status symbol, people appreciate the high artistic integrity and the careful, thoughtful craftsmanship and find a personal connection. In this space, we have a wonderful, unique opportunity."

Kering Reports 14% Sales Decrease

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



François-Henri Pinault and Demna

and fashionability, but it's a build-up, not a cancellation," said Bellettini, deputy chief executive officer in charge of brand development.

Bellettini and Armelle Poulou, Kering's chief financial officer, were pummeled with questions about Gucci's near-term prospects, given that its first-quarter sales dropped 25 percent on a comparable basis, slightly worse than the last three months of the year. (The brand accounted for 63 percent of Kering's operating profit in 2024.)

While acknowledging that carryover styles were a heavy drag on Gucci's performance in the quarter, Bellettini touted that its new Emblem, B Bag and Softbit handbag lines were performing in a low-traffic environment "giving us a lot of confidence in the appeal of novelties."

She said Ophidia and Marmont lines would similarly be tweaked and improved in the near future, and "we are pushing even more on our supply chain to decrease the time to market for novelties. This is going to be the focus."

In the future, "Demna for sure will be reinterpreting the icons," Bellettini assured.

Since the designer was announced last month as the successor to Italian designer Sabato De Sarno, analysts had been fretting about the timing of Demna's first Gucci collection, given that he is only finishing up his Balenciaga tenure in July with a couture collection.

De Sarno exited Gucci last February after a two-year collaboration that failed to ignite sales. His collections were met with mixed reviews and his timeless take on signature pieces did not gain enough

traction at retail for a turnaround.

Bellettini skirted a direct question about who would succeed Demna as artistic director at Balenciaga, saying only that it would be announced "in due course," and that she is searching for a "high caliber" candidate who "can build on what has already been done very well at the brand and continue the success and continue to develop."

According to market sources, Balenciaga has held discussions with designers including Alaïa's buzzy creative director Pieter Mulier, and Kim Jones, who recently wound up eventful stints designing Dior menswear and Fendi's women's collections.

It is understood Balenciaga's business is evenly split between men's and women's, a rarity among Europe's large luxury players.



Backstage at Alexander McQueen, fall 2025.

Analysts expressed disappointment by the sales miss of 2 to 3 percentage points.

"We are likely to see further caution applied to Kering's full-year 2025 earnings estimates given company-specific issues compounded by a challenging luxury sector backdrop," RBC analyst Piral Dadhania said in a research note.

"This confirms our understanding that the Gucci revival has yet to appear and will likely face a more difficult context as luxury consumer demand softens," opined Bernstein's Luca Solca.

Citing an "environment harsher than anyone anticipated," Poulou said Kering is anticipating another double-digit revenue decline in the second quarter, though the second half of the year should be better than the first.

The numbers trailed the performance of Kering's larger luxury rivals LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton, which reported a 3 percent dip in first-quarter revenues to 20.31 billion euros, and Hermès International, which bucked the trend and delivered a 7.2 percent improvement to 4.13 billion euros.

Kering reported double-digit declines across all regions in the first quarter of the year, with Asia-Pacific down 25 percent, in line with the last three months of 2024, the company noted.

However, Western Europe and North America fell 13 percent, and Japan 11 percent, representing a sequential deceleration.

First-quarter sales at Bottega Veneta improved 4 percent, reflecting gains "across all product categories," and Kering Eyewear logged a 3 percent increase at comparable exchange rates. Meanwhile, Saint Laurent



A model wearing Gucci's pre-fall 2025 collection and the Softbit bag.

sank 9 percent and "other houses," which includes Balenciaga, McQueen, Pomellato and Brioni, declined 11 percent.

While "the performance of Balenciaga's leather goods was very solid," sales were down at McQueen, still finding its footing under designer Seán McGirr, Kering said.

Bellettini noted that despite the low-traffic environment, all brands are improving on average ticket price. However, to fuel first-time purchases, brands are also revamping key leather goods lines for more "aspirational customers," such as Saint Laurent's Loulou range, she added.

The group closed a total of 25 stores in the quarter — including 10 at Gucci and a "substantial streamlining" at McQueen — leaving it with a network of 1,788 locations. Retail accounts for 73 percent of group revenues, and these were down 16 percent in the period. Wholesale decreased 9 percent.

"As we had anticipated, Kering faced a difficult start to the year," François-Henri Pinault, Kering chairman and chief executive officer, said in a statement issued Wednesday after the close of trading on the Paris bourse.

"In this environment, we are fully focused on executing on our action plans to reach our strategic and financial objectives and strengthen the positioning of our houses on all our markets," Pinault said. "We are increasing our vigilance to weather the macroeconomic headwinds our industry faces, and I am convinced that we will come out stronger from the present situation."

Poulou told the call she saw no change in sales trends so far in the second quarter.

"The U.S. in [first quarter] was similar to [the fourth quarter]. We don't see any change in trends, but of course we remain vigilant," she said. "We remain extremely cautious."

Asked if Kering would pursue price increases to mitigate the impact of Trump administration tariffs, she said "we need more clarity" before acting and "we must consider consumer confidence in geo-pricing."

"Top-line recovery is our absolute priority," she stressed.



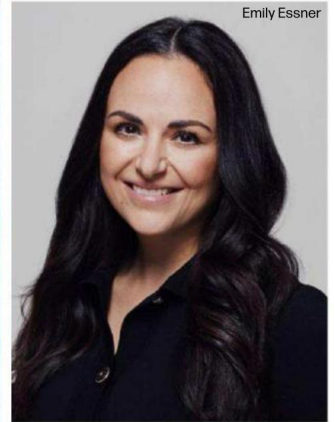
Francesca Bellettini

Saks Global Is Resetting Buying Team

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



Saks Fifth Avenue on Union Square in San Francisco is closing in May.



Emily Essner



Paolo Riva

- Will Cooper for women's shoes and accessories. He was senior vice president and general merchandise manager of women's designer ready-to-wear, shoes and handbags at Saks Fifth Avenue.
- Jodi Kahn for women's designer ready-to-wear. She was vice president of luxury fashion at the Neiman Marcus Group.
- Dayna Karafiol for women's apparel and children's. Karafiol was SVP, GMM for women's contemporary and modern apparel.
- Joo Woo for men's. Woo was vice president and GMM for men's and children's at the Neiman Marcus Group.

In other changes, Roopal Patel has become the senior vice president of the fashion office. She was senior vice president of the Saks Fifth Avenue fashion office. And Jeffrey Stauffer has become vice president of leased and marketplace manager. He was senior director of retail development at Neiman Marcus.

Recently, Marc Metrick became chief executive officer of the Saks Global Operating Group; Emily Essner became president and chief commercial officer, reporting to Metrick, and Paolo Riva was named chief brand partnerships and buying officer, reporting to Essner. The new SVPs for brand partnerships and buying report to Riva.

This week, Saks Global is letting 550 workers go, as reported first by WWD on Tuesday. Specifically, they focus on commercial, finance, operations, human resources, technology and transformation teams, as well as store teams that support Saks Fifth Avenue and Neiman Marcus.

Among the departures, sources said, are two highly respected, influential merchants: Kate Oldham, who was senior vice president and general merchandise manager of beauty, jewelry and home at Saks Fifth Avenue, and Louis DiGiacomo, senior vice president and general

merchandise manager of men's for Saks.

Geoffroy van Raemdonck, NMG's chief executive officer; Ryan Ross, president of Neiman's and head of NMG customer insights; Lana Todorovich, chief merchandising officer at Neiman's, and Katie Anderson, NMG's chief financial officer, were among those who left late last year.

Most of the 550 cuts came from Saks Global's corporate offices in Brookfield Place in lower Manhattan, Dallas and other locations, where a total of about 300 workers are being let go, the sources said. This latest downsizing at the corporate offices is in addition to the 5 percent corporate workforce reduction there disclosed in February. Another 500 jobs were also eliminated when Saks closed an owned fulfillment center in Tennessee recently.

Since Saks Fifth Avenue closed its deal to purchase the Neiman Marcus Group on Dec. 23, 2024, approximately 14 percent of Saks Global's U.S. corporate population has been let go.

As Saks Global intends to reduce annual costs by \$500 million over the next few years, additional staff reductions, as well as store closings, are expected.

The Saks Fifth Avenue store on Union Square in San Francisco will close on May 10. Last August, the store in an unprecedented maneuver switched to an appointment-only format. Due to crime, declining sales and shopper traffic in the city, many retailers have already closed shop there. Saks San Francisco and other stores including Neiman Marcus have been hit by snatch-and-grab robberies. "While we saw meaningful engagement and success through the appointment-only format, we have made this decision as part of our integration process as we focus on long-term growth," a Saks Global spokesperson said. "We look forward to serving the Bay Area community at Neiman Marcus San Francisco, Neiman Marcus Palo Alto, The Fifth Avenue Club Palo Alto, Saks,

com and NeimanMarcus.com."

This month, the Saks Fifth Avenue store on Worth Avenue in Palm Beach, Fla., closed. As Metrick told WWD in an interview last week, he sees only up to 10 Saks Global stores closing. On Wednesday, the company stated, "As we continue through the integration process and execute our vision for Saks Global, we are committed to honoring the individual DNA of the Saks Fifth Avenue and Neiman Marcus brands and preserving what makes them both exceptional. There is not a broader plan to consolidate in markets where both Saks Fifth Avenue and Neiman Marcus operate." In eight malls around the country, Saks and Neiman's both operate stores.

Regarding staff at Saks San Francisco, "Transfer opportunities to Neiman Marcus San Francisco will be offered where possible, and eligible colleagues will be offered appropriate separation packages."

Neiman Marcus has 36 stores; Saks Fifth Avenue operates 38, and Bergdorf Goodman operates a men's store and a women's store, but the company lists it as one location.

The formation of a single merchant team for both Saks and Neiman's means buyers will have greater responsibilities, challenges and orders to handle, but it also means that Saks Global has greater clout over vendors than Saks or Neiman's operating on their own did.

Commenting on Saks Global's new commercial team, Metrick in a statement Wednesday said, "We are taking further steps to shape the future of Saks Global and ensure that we are well-positioned for the transformation to come. With that, it's imperative that we have the right structure and team in place to capitalize on the opportunity ahead and drive our business forward. Any moments when our colleagues are impacted are the hardest, yet every decision is made with our overall strategy in mind – to truly redefine the way luxury consumers shop. While the changes today are part of our integration plans, we are

also navigating a complex macroeconomic environment. We remain confident that our financial position provides the necessary flexibility to manage the business through this dynamic environment. We're already seeing improvements in our inventory flow, approaching fiscal 2023 levels, as brand partner relationships get stronger through our commitment to grow alongside them."

"As the largest multi-brand retailer in the world, we are transforming our buying approach for Neiman Marcus and Saks Fifth Avenue," Essner added in her own statement. "I am confident that operating under a single leadership structure will enable us to create differentiated and durable partnerships with brands and drive our mutual growth. Together, we will be positioned to advance our shared ambition to deliver a true luxury experience to our customers. Our brand partnerships and buying team comprises some of the most talented leaders in our industry and I look forward to what they will accomplish for Saks Global and our brand partners."

While Saks and Neiman Marcus are being managed by one team, Bergdorf Goodman continues to be managed separately.

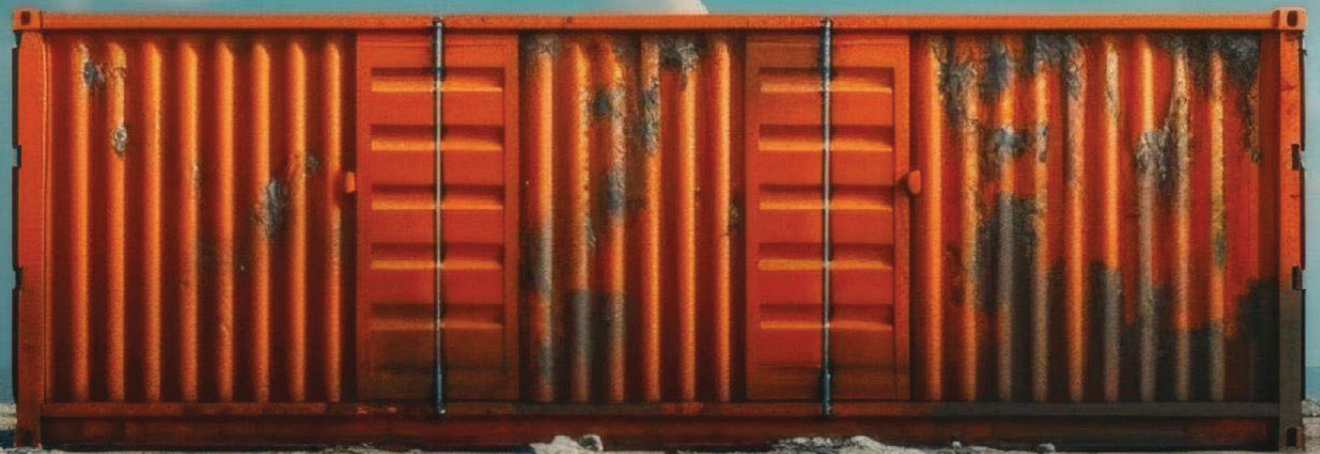
In February, Saks Global spelled out its new policy to start paying vendors on a 90-day schedule and make good on past-due bills in monthly installments starting in July. Saks Global's vendor matrix is being reduced by 25 percent as some vendors are deciding to stop selling the retailers and others are being dropped. The new 90-day schedule did not go over well with vendors, but it did give brands some sense of relief that they would finally get their money and that at least many of them would have a future with the retailer. They're in a wait-and-see mode.

FAIRCHILD STUDIO X ORACLE

INSIGHTS+IMPACT

SPECIAL REPORT

Reinventing Retail:
Navigating Tariffs, Technology and Trends
in Pricing and Allocation



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BUSINESS

Jiyongkim Launches First Flagship in Seoul

● The 2024 LVMH Prize semifinalist has opened a gallery-like space in a former residential building to display his “sun-bleached” menswear.

BY LEE HYO-WON

SEOUL – Visitors to the Jiyongkim flagship will feel like they are in an art gallery rather than shopping at a retail store. It’s in fact not so different, since each piece is one-of-a-kind.

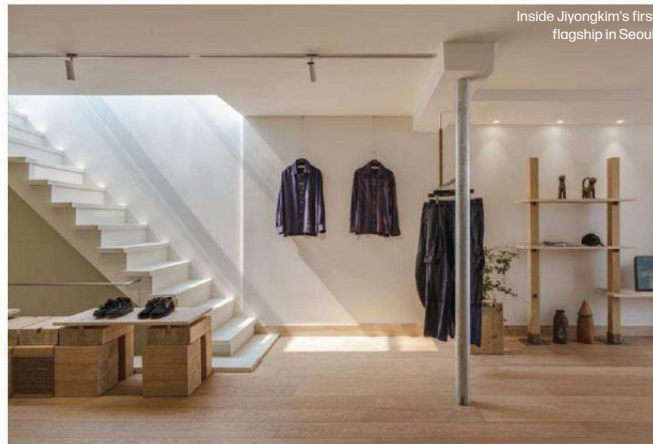
For the studious Jiyongkim fan, there’s also the opportunity to browse through the rest of the season’s collection by flipping through a thick, hardcover catalogue.

Jiyong Kim launched his eponymous brand only five years ago, but the South Korean designer has already gained a cult following with his signature fabrics that owe their unique patterns to being laid out under the sun.

A graduate of Central Saint Martins, Kim’s sun-bleached fashions were quickly picked up by the likes of GRS, Dover Street Market London, 10 Corso Como Seoul and Ssense.

In 2024, the menswear designer was a semifinalist of the LVMH Prize for Young Designers.

The main strip of Hannam-dong is known for its array of art galleries, trendy



Inside Jiyongkim's first flagship in Seoul.

restaurants and luxury flagships such as the Gucci Gaok. But Jiyongkim’s shop is deliberately tucked away on a quiet alleyway behind the Italian Embassy. The slim, white store is located within a rare set of town houses in the city.

“I didn’t want anything on the main street. I wanted it to be a quiet place for people who understand the brand to shop unbothered. I also hope it can be

purposely sought out by those who are curious to learn more about us,” Kim said.

“It takes painstaking effort to make our clothes, and there are so few of each piece available. It’s a brand that isn’t easy to explain. Our flagship is a place where we can tell our story more in-depth,” said the 35-year-old designer.

The retail space is airy and minimal, with just a folding screen and frame

featuring subtle cream and espresso sun-bleached swirls. A few stools, hangers and shelves display clothes and accessories, including the latest line of suede shoes made in collaboration with Clarks.

A couple of Jiyongkim x Super73 electric bikes are parked outside; and a wooden sculpture – which is in fact a beam from a traditional “hanok” house – beckons shoppers up to the second floor.

Windows from either end of the room as well as a skylight let in plenty of natural light, shifting the mood of the room according to the time of the day. Walls and windows are all lined with rails, while cloth covers walls and the ceiling.

The white cube interior design reflects Kim’s affinity for hosting exhibitions instead of fashion shows each season.

“We’ve held exhibitions each season, which is already seven or eight so far. They were held at stylish venues but everything was limited to the physical constraints of each one. Our small flagship is a gallery-like space that can represent Jiyongkim,” the designer said.

Kim said he worked with local architecture firm One-Afrt to design everything from the interior to the modular stools. It wasn’t easy, as the building had unconventional architectural features, owing to its origins as a private residence. To hide a chunky sash window usually found in homes, a folding screen was set in place.

“It’s an easily transformable space, so we hope to be able to introduce other brands as well here,” Kim said of his retail strategy.

FASHION

Scientists Discover a New Color ‘Olo’ With Lasers

● It could be a while before the ultra-saturated blue-green is used in fashion or consumer products.

BY ROSEMARY FEITELBERG

Although a team of California scientists have discovered what is being called a new color, it may be a while before it winds up in any consumer products.

Researchers at the University of California, Berkeley, used laser beams on five participants to stimulate cone-cells in their retinas, which led to sightings of the same ultra-saturated blue-green. Their findings were published last week in *Science Advances*. Ren Ng, a professor at the University of California, Berkeley, co-authored the study and participated in the experiment along with two of his colleagues. Each subject in the study has a laser beamed into one of their retinas, which have cone cells that control an individual’s perception of color.

Each participant had three cone cells “S,” “L” and “M,” which are sensitive to wavelengths of blue, red and green. Using a laser to stimulate M cone cells, which are sensitive to wavelengths of green, participants were said to have seen a color that had not been seen in natural vision.

Anyone who remembers the global online debate about the color of a dress in 2015 understands that colors can literally be in the eye of the beholder. Some saw the dress in question as white and gold, and others saw it as black and blue.

Ng acknowledged that human color vision is “highly adaptive and subjective.” He said, “In color vision science, we have to be very careful.”

For the olo study, to know that the subjects were truly seeing a blue-green that was more saturated than anything possible in the normal world, the

subjects had to directly compare olo against the most saturated natural teal. That was created with a laser in the teal wavelength. Olo looked much more saturated, according to Ng, who said that olo needed to be desaturated with white light before it could be matched to the natural teal.

Given that olo can now only be seen by directly stimulating thousands of cells in the retina, it will not be utilized in consumer products anytime soon. Ng said that it could not be produced as a paint or fabric, but it is theoretically possible to incorporate olo into display technology in the future.

Envisioning olo requires some imagination. Ng noted that the color in the large square that accompanies this article is meant to only give readers a sense of olo. He said, “But this is extremely pale and what distinguishes olo is how incredibly saturated it appears. If you could dial the saturation of the square that is shown here higher and higher, you could get to a blue-green that looks like peacock feathers. Beyond that, you would get to laser light at the teal wavelength. That is the definition of the most saturated teal one can see in the real world.”

“Olo is the color you get, if you could dial the saturation beyond. Directly compared to olo, laser teal pales in comparison. That may enable folks to imagine olo,” Ng said.

Leatrice Eiseman, executive director of the Pantone Color Institute, said that she has read about olo. But having not been one of the five people who viewed the actual color, she said it would be difficult to find the closest Pantone match. But she added, “As it is described, there is the possibility that it is close to a deeply saturated Pantone blue-green that is already in the system.”

Eiseman believes that talk about the possibility of a “new” color will cause a

It is impossible to see olo with the naked eye. Here, a very pale version.

lot of buzz on social media and via media outlets. That will bring attention to that blue-green color grouping such as a deep teal that already exists, according to Eiseman.

As of now, Ng’s team at the University of Berkeley is focused on the basic science and not on display technology commercialization. But one of the next things on the horizon in basic science is to see whether the human brain can perceive a dimension of color beyond the rainbow. He said, “If so, I suspect that would drive a lot of interest in trying to bring it into commercial display technology.”

The prospect of such limitless colors could bode well for designers, artists and consumers. Eiseman said, “People are always fascinated by that which can be imagined, but not actually seen.”

The public’s current zeal for space travel may be heightening interest in all things blue and teal. Eiseman said, “The olo type blue and blue-greens are very much connected to space travel, as those are the shadings that come into our consciousness when we think of outer terrestrial

distances. We can only imagine what lies out there in outer space and a ‘new’ color certainly fits into that mysterious realm.”

The same might be said of the vibrant green comet that is believed to have broken apart. Astronomers and amateur skywatchers had been anticipating seeing the Comet C/2025 F2 (SWAN), with their naked eyes light up the night sky later this month.

Regarding novel colors that could potentially appear in consumer products, Ng’s group at the University of California, Berkeley, is at work on another research project on tetrachromacy that is more relevant. Tetrachromacy is a rare ability that, according to a 2010 study, up to 12 percent of women worldwide have, due to having four types of cone cells in their retinas which allows them to distinguish hundreds of millions of colors. Most people have three types of cones and can tell apart several million types of colors. Their project, “Theory of Human Tetrachromatic Color Experience and Printing,” will explore how more of those colors might be put into practice.

SPEAKER SPOTLIGHT

The New Leadership Mandate

THE ISSUES
THE INNOVATORS
THE INSIGHTS



Larissa Jensen

*SVP, Global Beauty
Industry Advisor*

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SUITE TALK

Lauren Harwell Godfrey on Moving With Intention and Finding an Anchor in Rituals



Lauren Harwell Godfrey

● The founder of namesake jewelry brand Harwell Godfrey shares insights into how she brings intention to her life from design to wellness.

BY ALEXANDRA PASTORE

Self-taught jeweler, known for creating her whimsical namesake jewelry brand, Lauren Harwell Godfrey has a deep love of brand building, creating with intention and giving back to the world around her. She is inspired by stories and believes in the importance of building a foundation with intention.

From getting her start in the world of advertising – a 15-year career that included masterminding campaigns for brands including Adidas, Levi's and Ray-Ban – Godfrey's journey has made her an expert in brand building, which she has used to create jewelry she is passionate about. Inspired by a trip to the Tucson Gem Fair, Godfrey's self-taught technique created one-of-a-kind pieces that became her fine jewelry line first seen at Paris Fashion Week in 2018.

Now celebrating the one-year anniversary of her first Harwell Godfrey brick-and-mortar store, Godfrey talks to WWD about her advice for young professionals, finding balance and her ideal shopping experience.

WWD: What is the first thing you do in the morning?

Lauren Harwell Godfrey: If I'm home, the very first thing I do is wake up my son for cozy morning cuddles before the school routine kicks in. I travel a lot, so every day looks a little different depending on where I am in the world. When I'm home in California, I love to start the day with a hike

– there are trailheads right on my street.

My favorite morning caffeine fix is a spicy, hot chai. I buy it fresh in big containers from my local farmers market every week and try to make it last – I rarely succeed. However, when I'm traveling, I usually avoid chai because it's often too sweet – so I go for matcha or black tea instead.

WWD: What is a wellness routine must for you?

L.H.G.: For me, wellness is all about being intentional across every part of life – the physical, the mental and the spiritual. It's not about perfection or routine for routine's sake – it's about tuning in and making space for what I need at the moment.

Physically, I feel my best when I'm nourishing my body with good food and moving regularly. But because I travel often, staying consistent is a constant dance. I do my best to anchor myself with rituals, even if they're small – like a hike when I'm home or a grounding tea in the morning.

Mentally, sleep is everything. I'm more creative, more present, and just a better version of myself when I've had a full night's rest. Making time to laugh and connect with my friends and family is also huge for me – joy is a wellness practice too.

Spiritually, I'm always seeking. I'm not religious, but I do crave meaning and connection to something bigger. For me, that comes through creating – whether it's sketching a new piece or making a meal from scratch. Being in nature also brings me back to center. There's something about standing in a redwood forest or cooking with my hands that reminds me I'm part of a larger rhythm. That's the kind of wellness that fills me up from the inside out.



Harwell Godfrey jewelry.

WWD: What is the best advice you would give someone starting out in their career today?

L.H.G.: Build your foundation with intention, not urgency. In a world that glorifies speed – quick launches, fast growth, viral moments – it's easy to feel like you need to sprint right out of the gate. But fine jewelry isn't built for speed. It's built for longevity, for legacy.

Take the time to really understand your aesthetic, hone your craft and define what your work stands for. Get clear on your values. Ask yourself not just what you want to make, but why. That kind of clarity becomes your compass – and it's what allows your work to feel authentic, even as trends come and go.

It's tempting to mimic what's working for others, but the brands that truly resonate – the ones that last – are the ones that stay rooted in their own truth. When you build from that place, your work will speak for itself. It might take a little longer, but it will be worth it. Depth always outlasts momentum.

WWD: What does having a work/life balance mean to you?

L.H.G.: I'm a self-professed extroverted introvert, which basically means I love being around people – until I don't. Powering down usually looks like sleeping in, solo hikes or extra-long showers. I travel a lot, so I've learned how to find solitude in motion – whether that's quiet time in flight or wandering a new city on my own. My best ideas come when no one's asking me questions or expecting a reply – so hiking trails and shower tiles have seen the birth of a lot of creative concepts.

Looking throughout your career, what is a project/launch/product that you are most proud of?

L.H.G.: One of the projects I'm most proud of is my collaboration with Muzo – the legendary Colombian emerald mine known for its exceptional gemstones and its deep commitment to ethical, sustainable practices. When I was invited to design with their emeralds, I knew immediately that this collection needed to carry more than beauty. It needed to carry weight – culturally, spiritually and symbolically.

I called the collection "Cleopatra's Vault" – an ode to what Cleopatra might wear if she were alive today. I imagined her as the powerful, modern woman she was – regal, strategic, magnetic – and reinterpreted that essence through my lens. The designs are bold, symbolic and rich with geometry and color, meant to feel like contemporary relics: timeless, talismanic and full of meaning.

This was the first time I worked with stones of such rarity and significance, and it pushed me creatively.

WWD: What inspires you?

L.H.G.: I'm inspired by anything that blends beauty with meaning – ancient symbolism, global rituals, architecture and textiles. I'm endlessly drawn to the way shapes and stories have been used across cultures to communicate protection, power and identity. That thread runs through all of my work: I'm not just designing jewelry to be decorative – I'm creating pieces that are deeply intentional, talismanic and rich with story.

Travel has been one of my greatest sources of inspiration. Visiting places like Egypt, Morocco and India opened me up to the power of design as a cultural language. The geometry of Moroccan tilework, the spiritual carvings in Egyptian temples, the explosion of color and intricate patterns found everywhere in India – all of it left a lasting imprint on my creative lens. These experiences continue to shape how I think about form, symbolism and storytelling through jewelry.

Food and cooking are also essential to my creative life. I come from a culinary background, and that love for layering, balance and storytelling through ingredients has never left me. Just like in jewelry, the materials matter. I'm obsessed with quality – whether it's a perfectly ripe tomato or a responsibly sourced gemstone. It's all about honoring where things come from and allowing each element to shine in its own right. That kind of reverence – whether for a spice, a stone or a symbol – is what inspires me every single day.

What is your ideal shopping retail experience?

L.H.G.: For me, nothing beats an in-store experience with a great salesperson or stylist – someone you've built a relationship with over time. There's something so special about that personal connection: someone who truly gets your style, knows your taste and thinks of you when the exact right piece arrives.

That kind of intuition and trust just can't be replicated by AI. It's one of the reasons I opened my store in Marin County [California] – to create a space where that personal connection and thoughtful, human-centered service could truly thrive. It's been an incredible journey and I'm so grateful for the community that's made it possible.

I do shop online, of course – especially when I'm on the go – but it's never quite the same. There's a tactile joy in seeing things up close, trying them on and having a real conversation about what works for you. I haven't seen a virtual try-on or AI-powered suggestion that can compete with a seasoned, thoughtful human eye. Shopping, for me, is about feeling seen – and that's a very human experience.

When was the last time you treated yourself and what was it?

L.H.G.: I had a nice credit that was about to expire at Bergdorf Goodman, so I splurged on a Bottega Veneta mini Jodie bag. I knew I wanted metallic but couldn't decide between gold or silver – classic dilemma. I'm a devoted yellow-gold lover, but I've been mixing in white gold and platinum lately, so I went with silver. It hasn't arrived yet, but I can't wait to style it.



Jasmine Amy Rogers Brings Betty Boop to Life on Broadway

The young actress has earned rave reviews, and a Drama League Award nomination, for her portrayal of the iconic character in "Boop! The Musical." BY KRISTEN TAUER

For "Boop! The Musical" star Jasmine Amy Rogers, Betty Boop was "always in the background of my life somewhere," says the dynamic Broadway lead. "I always knew who she was because she's in our pop culture," she adds. "But I definitely didn't know her the way I do now."

Rogers explored almost a century of Betty Boop lexicon, from the character's catchphrases to signature poses and coquettish red-lipped pout, while working to bring the character to life onstage in "Boop! The Musical." The ubiquitous character, who first appeared in 1930, has gone through several cultural resurgences throughout the decades.

"I just fell in love with her so deeply because I think she is – at least for me, and I think for a lot of people – the embodiment of everything that a woman is capable of," says Rogers, who originated the role during the show's world debut in Chicago. "She believes in a strong right and wrong, and her moral compass is unwavering, and I love that about her. It encourages me to be brave in my daily life."

The musical opens with Betty Boop starring in her own fictionalized gray-toned world, frozen in time. Looking for a break from her unwavering fame, Betty travels (with the help of a gadget invented by supporting character Grampy) to the current day "real world" of New York City, landing in a technicolor Comic-Con where Betty Boop discovers that she is still popular there too, just as cosplay lore. In New York she quickly befriends a teen girl, stepping into the role of personal coach-slash-cheerleader.

The show, which features a splashy ensemble cast, opens with a large tap dance routine that almost stood in the way of Rogers getting the role – her first dance audition fell flat.

"The hardest thing going into it for me was the dance and the physicality," says the 25-year-old actress, who ended up getting a second shot at the part. "I was really intimidated for a while, but once I decided that I really wanted it, I just had to take it into gear. I went to tap classes and I just got myself back into shape to do what was being asked of me," she adds. "Betty is a cartoon, but she's also drawn in such a specific way. So the way she moves, the way she walks, the way she stands, it all matters. And that was something that was really, really nerve-wracking to me when I started out."

Less intimidating, but still nerve-racking, was the character's high-pitched voice, which has since become second-nature for Rogers. "When I was figuring it out, I was so nervous about it that I didn't wanna practice it even by myself at home because I was almost embarrassed," she says, adding that she leaned on her childhood aptitude for cartoon impersonations.

"It's always been ingrained in me to kind of be a character. I've spent most of my life being that cartoon character, and trying to cool it down to go through my everyday life so I'm not so out of whack," she says. "I think a lot of theater kids come from a place like that."



Jasmine Amy Rogers



Rogers onstage in "Boop! The Musical."

Rogers, who grew up in Texas, began dancing and singing at a young age, and fell in love with musical theater after auditioning for a local community theater performance of "Peter Pan."

"I ended up getting a role in Tiger Lily's

tribe, in the ensemble. But it was really an eye-opening moment for me where I was like, I'm getting to sing, I'm getting to dance, I'm getting to have fun," says Rogers. "I'm getting to do all these things that I really, really love, and I'm getting to do it on stage and I'm obsessed. From that moment on, I just was hooked on it. And I've been doing it since."

After high school, Rogers moved to New York to attend the Manhattan School of Music, and after graduation starred in several regional musical productions and

as Gretchen Weiners in a national tour of the "Mean Girls" musical in 2022.

With the "Boop!" opening night behind her – and Tonys Awards season still ahead – Rogers is looking forward to finding new aspects of Betty Boop to explore onstage, and continuing to connect with cross-generational audiences in what's already proved to be a life-changing role.

"[Betty] has changed the way that I move through the world," adds Rogers. "I'm just a little bit more of a positive person lately, because I'm so full of joy and love."



Backstage at The Roxy With Judeline

The music artist is redefining global pop with her genre- and language-blending sound.

BY RYMA CHIKHOUNE PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL BUCKNER



Here and below: Judeline backstage at The Roxy before her performance.



Judeline during soundcheck at The Roxy.



Judeline was born at the age of 14.

It's the stage name of Spanish singer-songwriter Lara Fernández Castrelo, who's now 22.

If she could do it over again, she'd rethink the handle, she admitted, backstage at The Roxy Theatre in West Hollywood, Calif. She was co-headlining a show with Mexican reggaeton artist El Malilla.

"I would change it if I could, but I can't," she laughed, in her dressing room.

Judeline is a reference to The Beatles song "Hey Jude," which her father often played growing up in Los Caños de Meca, a seaside town in the south of Spain.

"I was doing a random concert in my village, this summer local festival," she explained. "I thought, 'Oh, I need to make my Instagram profile as an artist profile.'"

The persona came to life then and there, and it stuck through the years.

She was drawn to music at a young age and began exploring lyrics and melodies when she was just 6. Her father, a musical influence, introduced her to the cuatro, a traditional Latin American string instrument. At 13, she was in a punk rock band, and at 17 she moved to Madrid to study at the Artistic Baccalaureate – but ultimately, it's where she kicked off her career and met early collaborators, a producer duo known as Mayo and Tuiste.

Together, with Drummie, Ralphie Choo and Rusowsky of the Madrid-based collective Rusia IDK, as well as American producer Rob Bisel, Judeline released

her first album: "Bodhiria." It came out in October 2024 after she signed with Interscope Records a year earlier.

"I really love to experiment," she said of her genre-bending music. "Bodhiria" fuses the traditional sounds of southern Spain with electronic production, while infusing flamenco and Arabic influences.

She's in an experimental phase right now, she added, as she's working on new music that will eventually form her sophomore album. Her latest drop, "Tú et Moi," incorporates French lyrics and features Brazil's Mc Morena.

"I was in Paris," she said of recording the track in February. "We literally did the whole song in five hours. It was very fast, very easy."

She wanted to incorporate Portuguese and reached out to Mc Morena, who's known for her Funk Carioca style.

"She jumped in and sent everything in five minutes, literally," Judeline went on. "It's a very sexual song. Her music, too, is very sexual."

"You and me, we're connected. It's you that I want, baby," Judeline whispers in the song in French in her soft and angelic voice.

"France is very close to Spain, and Portugal is right there, so we're all familiar with those languages," she said of singing in different tongues. "I really enjoy trying to speak in other languages in my songs, because it makes me feel different."

It's as if she's taking on a new character, she said. She's currently listening to

Brazilian, Arabic and North African music, she continued, including Warda, the Algerian singer. "I love it," she smiled. "I'm also listening to a lot of trap, a lot of Cumbia, Dominican music."

The mix has given her an original sound – one that's caught the attention of artists like Bad Bunny, Rosalía, who have publicly praised her music, and J Balvin, who took her on tour in Europe last year.

Now, she's marking her first U.S. tour, which kicked off at The Roxy the week between her Coachella sets on the Sonora stage.

"I was very nervous," she said of playing the music festival. "But because it was this intimate stage, I was less nervous. I felt like people were very cool with me. They were enjoying the concert. So, I'm very happy."

She's enjoyed her time in L.A., she said. "I really love this place."

She visited some tourist spots like the Hollywood Walk of Fame and the Griffith Observatory.

Any shopping? "There's shops we don't have in Spain," she said. "For example, I bought a whole Lululemon look. I love it. I'm very happy with my Lululemon," she giggled.

For the stage at The Roxy, she had on an ensemble by Nii Hai, a short white dress with a light brown fringed belt and matching knee-high boots. She's friends with the British designer Rosie Williams. "She made the heels shorter for me."

The fringe is key. "It gives a lot of movement to my body," she said. "It's very important for me to have movement in my hips."

Glam was kept simple, no eye shadow, just lots of mascara, blush and a hard-lined lip with gloss. "We wanted to keep it really natural," she said.

Fragrance is important to her. As a last step she put on Glossier's "You." "I didn't want to have a very strong one today."

Next, after a series of upcoming shows in Mexico and Peru, she's off to live in New York for a month. (She plays at Elsewhere in Brooklyn on May 15.) "Sometimes I feel like I know everybody in Madrid, so I kind of want to leave a little bit," she said. "Also, suddenly, I broke up with my boyfriend some months ago. We're very cool, but I think this is the right moment for me to be a little bit with myself and have this experience, this personal experience to be able to move to a city where I don't know anyone."

Her songwriting these days is deeply personal, she said. "Right now, I'm writing a lot about intimate things, things about myself, not really about love. I'm really exploring every single genre that I can do, and it's making me curious."

Fashion Scoops



Cate Blanchett

Summer Delight

Oscar-winning Australian actor, producer and humanitarian Cate Blanchett has been named the cohort of this year's Serpentine summer party, slated for June 24.

The "Blue Jasmine" star will be the sole artist cohort in the party's 25-year history. Last year, the midsummer bash was cohosted by Venus Williams, South Korean music artist Peggy Gou and British actress Gugu Mbatha-Raw.

This year's fundraising party will bring together Serpentine supporters alongside leading figures from art, culture, fashion, architecture, business and technology to marvel at the new Serpentine Pavilion — an elongated capsule-like form with a central court that aligns with Serpentine South's bell tower — called "A Capsule in Time" designed by Bangladeshi architect Marina Tabassum.

"Supporting our cultural institutions and their power to illuminate the world at large and our place within it is of paramount importance," said Blanchett, who became a house ambassador for Louis Vuitton in 2022.

"I'm honored to cochair the Serpentine party and its summer festivities where so many creative forms — architecture, performance,

music, science and digital narratives — intersect. To come together around a pavilion created by Tabassum, whose socially driven work particularly in her home country of Bangladesh to meet the challenges faced by Rohingya refugees, is an inspirational opportunity," added Blanchett.

Serpentine's chief executive officer Bettina Korek and artistic director Hans Ulrich Obrist said they are "deeply grateful for the opportunity to celebrate our community and artistic program with a true creative icon. We are looking forward to an unforgettable evening, where the elegance of a classic British garden party will meet the energy of a salon attended by global luminaries."

During the summer party, guests can experience highlights from Serpentine's summer program, including Italian artist Giuseppe Penone's exhibition "Thoughts in the Roots" at Serpentine South.

As with recent editions of the summer party, London-based emerging fashion designers will be invited to attend the event and dress their friends and muses.

At last year's party, some of the best-dressed guests wore special creations from young fashion talents.

Alexa Chung wore a bespoke emerald green silk gown by LVMH Prize winner Nensi Dojaka. The style,

which made its runway debut in Dojaka's fall 2023 collection in red, was inspired by the green dress Keira Knightley wore in the 2007 movie "Atonement."

Model Edie Campbell opted for a sheer tea green tulle dress by Molly Goddard. Jourdan Dunn channeled Greek goddess readiness in a body-hugging black-and-white dress from Nina Ricci, designed by Harris Reed. British actress Minnie Driver wore an embroidered Huishan Zhang red number.

— TIANWEI ZHANG

Full Circle

Mulberry is returning to its roots and is taking British model Erin O'Connor and artist Kesewa Aboah along with them.

The brand's new campaign was shot at The Rookery manufacturing hub in Somerset, which is one of two carbon-neutral factories belonging to Mulberry.

The campaign is an inside look of how the British brand makes its accessories, shot by photographer Felix Cooper, who has worked with Fendi and Graff.

As reported, Mulberry has been hit by a progressive slowdown in fashion and luxury spending over the past 18 months similar to its peers. It has also been impacted by the cancellation of tax-free shopping in the U.K., its home market, and a growing — and increasingly polished — handbag offer from high street and contemporary competitors.

In response to those headwinds, chief executive officer Andrea Baldo and the board have come up with a rejuvenation strategy called "Back to the Mulberry Spirit," which aims to restore it to profitability "through simplification, brand realignment and enhanced customer connection."

Baldo wants to restore Mulberry to the "culturally relevant British lifestyle brand" it once was, especially throughout the 2000s when Luella Bartley was creating "It" styles for the brand, and Stuart Vevers, and later Emma Hill, were at the creative helm.

Henrietta Gallina, director of the creative studio at Mulberry, said so much has transpired over the last few years "and we've had to engage in some profound introspection as we shape the future of Mulberry. What started out as necessary exercise, turned into a deep interrogation



Erin O'Connor for Mulberry.

and excavation to recover our spirit. "Back to the Mulberry Spirit" represents an unapologetic return to ourself, to realign with the values that have defined us and make us relevant for today. We're excited to return to our unique sweet-spot of playful ideas, craft, celebrating the best of modern British culture and, most importantly, making products that you fall in love with — and wear to death."

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— HIKMAT MOHAMMED

Dyngani Ose, director of MACBA, Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona.

Situated at the intersection between fashion, cinema and art, the project is inspired by and features the film commissions that comprise Miu Miu Women's Tales, and the artistic interventions from Miu Miu runway shows between spring 2022 and spring 2025.

Staged at the Terminal Warehouse, the project will be open to the public on May 10 and 11, with a private preview on May 9. The complete program and registration for "Tales & Tellers" will be available at miumiu.com starting May 2.

In October, Miu Miu unveiled "Tales & Tellers" at the Palais d'Iéna, the headquarters of France's Economic, Social and Environmental Council. The project linked with Prada's fascination with the lives of women and her launch in 2011 of Miu Miu Women's Tales, allowing female filmmakers to present their own views of the plurality of femininity.

Middle East Arrival

The Frankie Shop — the label popular with editors, influencers and style mavens from New York to Paris — has brought its minimalist aesthetic to Abu Dhabi's shores in a two-week pop-up.

The temporary retail space marks the brand's first physical footprint in the Middle East — a strategic milestone orchestrated through a collaboration with the Abu Dhabi Investment Office. To kick off the opening, a lineup of The Frankie Shop's celebrity clientele, including actress Kelly Rutherford, model Joan Smalls and fashion icon Farida Khelifa, descended upon the emirate.

Far from a typical pop-up, The Frankie Shop's temporary home in Abu Dhabi is a sleek concrete structure with dramatic light wells cutting through a modernist facade. Designed by L.A.-based creative agency Perron-Roettinger, it translates the brand's signature modern aesthetic into a three-dimensional experience that creates an Instagram-worthy backdrop. ▶

Second Chapter

The second iteration of "Tales & Tellers," envisaged by Miuccia Prada, will be presented to the public in New York on May 10 and 11 at the Terminal Warehouse at 261 Eleventh Avenue.

Under the direction of Prada, "Tales & Tellers" is an ever-evolving site-specific installation and performance, conceived once again by interdisciplinary artist Goshka Macuga and convened by Elvira

Miu Miu's second iteration of "Tales & Tellers" will take place in New York.



Gaëlle Drevet, founder of The Frankie Shop, created a collection of 50 designs specifically for the Abu Dhabi market which incorporates the signature power-shoulder silhouettes, refined textures, and chic day-to-night ensembles that have become the brand's calling card. "I try to incorporate tradition and modernity, which is kind of what the city is also trying to do," Drevet told WWD about the Abu Dhabi collection. "Middle Eastern women really appreciate fashion."

"Frankie is a confident woman on the go, using fashion as a tool without letting it define her," Drevet said, describing the Frankie woman. "She wants to reveal, but without revealing too much. She will use fashion, but fashion is not going to wear her."

Beyond fashion, the pop-up features a lineup of lifestyle and design collaborations, including 48 Collagen Café at The Frankie Coffee Shop, a special illustration by Tulip Hazbar paying tribute to Abu Dhabi, hanging palm tree carpets designed with regional creative Cheb Moha, and a selection of Karen Wazen sunglasses presented with customized pouches. "I didn't want to be like the Westerner just landing in Abu Dhabi," Drevet said. "It was important for me to showcase and give a platform to local talents."

The collaboration is part of Abu Dhabi's broader vision to affirm its place on the global luxury stage. "Abu Dhabi has long

embodied the values of refinement, culture, and elevated taste that define the world's leading luxury destinations," said Noura Al Foulathi, head of retail at the Abu Dhabi Investment Office. "We are not trying to catch up, we are already here. Now it's about showing the world what we have cultivated and where we are heading over the next 50 to 100 years."

"The essence of luxury has always been deeply rooted in Abu Dhabi; from our rich heritage to our refined aesthetic sensibilities," said Al Foulathi. "What makes this moment with The Frankie Shop so meaningful is not only that it marks their first presence in the region, but that they have created something truly bespoke for our community. Their willingness to go beyond crafting an exclusive collection just for Abu Dhabi reflects how global brands are recognizing the city as a key destination for elevated, world-class experiences and launching their exclusives."

In terms of expansion, Drevet said she is not quite looking at having a boutique in the region yet. "I want to remain a niche brand, but hopefully with global relevance. It's being the best-known secret." — RITU UPADHYAY

Special Art

To celebrate its 15th anniversary in Berlin, the private member's club Soho House decided to do a little redecorating. But this being Soho House —



A newly acquired work by Elmgreen & Dragset at Soho House Berlin.

the organization now has 44 different clubhouses in 18 countries; annual membership in the U.S. costs around \$5,000 — that didn't mean throwing a bit of paint around. It meant expanding and rearranging its own art collection in Berlin.

After around a year of curation and selection, the organization's art collection manager, Jack Lazenby, has added another 35 artworks to the Berlin acquisitions, bringing the total to 75 altogether. Soho House itself has around 10,000 artworks in all of its locations. The additions in the German capital include works by Olafur Eliasson, Elmgreen & Dragset and Sol Calero.

"Obviously we have art in all the houses but I think there's something special about the connection Soho

House Berlin has with the art world," said Kate Bryan, global director for art at Soho House, who was in Berlin to unveil the new collection and join selected artists at a private dinner. "I think that really comes down to the fact that when we first opened here, Berlin was just on fire. Everyone wanted to be exhibiting here, the contemporary art scene was booming."

Bryan recounted how, at the Berlin site's opening, the historic building wasn't ready even though the opening party, with international guests, was going ahead. The exterior was still covered in scaffolding and protective fabric.

"So Nick [Jones, the founder of Soho House] just thought, you know, to make an asset out of a problem,"

Bryan said. "He asked one of our colleagues to go and buy some spray cans. Not that any of the artists were urban artists. But they just flung the paint into the hands of people who were basically the who's who of the London art world at the time."

That's how Damien Hirst ended up painting a shark on the material on the scaffolding (he signed it too) and conceptual artist Sue Webster, whose work can be found in the Guggenheim Museum and the British Museum, wrote "Soho Haus" on another sheet. Both of those impromptu, irreverent "paintings" were kept and still hang in the lobby. They have been joined in the ground floor space by paintings from American performance artist Donna Huanca, who lives in Berlin, and an oil-on-jute painting by up-and-coming Berlin artist Sophie Reinhold.

Unfortunately for casual visitors, most of the other new artworks are on the members-only floors higher up in the eight-story building.

Berlin has changed a lot since Soho House opened here, Bryan conceded, when asked how the organization keeps its cachet after all these years.

"I was always really impressed by something Nick Jones said," she noted. "He said we must be careful not to try to be 'hot.' Because if you're, say, the hottest new restaurant in town, eventually you'll burn out. I think he was right. You can't really manufacture that [cachet] on an ongoing basis. So I think you just have to keep doing what you do, and as authentically as you can. And probably try to be a bit chill about it too," she concluded with a smile.

— CATHRIN SCHAER

Application Day

Emerging designers, take note.

Starting Monday, New York Men's Day will open applications for the spring 2026 season, slated for September during New York Fashion Week.

New York Men's Day, which will celebrate its 24th season this fall, will highlight men's and genderless designers at its showcase, generally held on the first day of New York Fashion Week. The showcase has historically featured between six and 12 designers at two sessions, split evenly between a morning and an afternoon session.

The event draws press, retailers, stylists and other fashion-industry insiders. And 85 percent of the costs of designers who are chosen to participate will be covered by New York Men's Day.

The New York Men's Day committee for this season includes stylist Memsor Kamarake, editor in chief of Complex Media Aria Hughes, editor in chief of Grazia USA Joseph Errico and Nordstrom's men's fashion and editorial director Jian DeLeon.

To apply to be considered for inclusion during New York Men's Day, interested designers can visit the event's website and fill out an application form. Applications will be accepted through May 30.

New York Men's Day was conceived and is executed by Agency PR, a New York-based marketing communications agency founded by Erin Hawker in 2010. — JEAN E. PALMIERI ■



Farida Kheifia, Joan Smalls, Gaëlle Drevet and Kelly Rutherford.



A Potts is one of the brands that has shown at New York Men's Day.