

WWD

Fashion. Beauty. Business.



Done Deal
Mytheresa completed its acquisition of Yoox Net-a-porter at last with ambitions to become a 4 billion euro business. **Page 2**



Key Investor
Xcel Brands has brought in Shanghai-based United Trademark Group as a strategic investor to help grow internationally. **Page 3**



New Owner
Badgley Mischka has been acquired in a joint venture and the founding designers are said to have exited the brand. **Page 22**

TOP

10

It's Reigning Men

While not quite as long of a season as the women's shows, the men's fall 2025 collections still had their fair share of drama, with a few missing names, one high-profile farewell and designs that proved menswear is in a period of transition, with a return to traditionalism and reinterpretations of '80s and '90s styles. Amid all that, there were standouts and WWD picked the top 10. *For more, see pages 6 to 15.*

MEN'S COLLECTIONS

BUSINESS

Zegna Offsets Wholesale Declines

- The group expects to raise prices in the U.S. come fall to balance the tariffs being imposed on imports by the Trump administration.

BY LUISA ZARGANI

MILAN – The Zegna and Tom Ford Fashion brands, a strong direct-to-consumer business, and a solid performance in the Americas helped offset a decline in the first quarter of the year at Ermenegildo Zegna Group's wholesale business – a strategy orchestrated particularly for the Thom Browne brand.

Group revenues in the first three months ended March 31 amounted to 458.8 million euros, a 1 percent decline compared with 463.1 million euros in the same period last year.

"We are encouraged by these early positive results but also mindful of

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BUSINESS

Kering CEO Vows to Turn Gucci Around Swiftly

- François-Henri Pinault also shared his disappointment with the company's ailing share price. "We're obviously not satisfied at all, far from it," he said.

BY MILES SOCHA

Shares in Kering dipped 1 percent on Thursday, a day after the French luxury group reported a 14 percent decline in first-quarter revenues, and a 25 percent drop at its star brand Gucci.

Also on Thursday, at Kering's annual shareholders' meeting, chairman and chief executive officer François-Henri Pinault flashed a line chart showing how company's shares have roughly halved in value over the past year.

"It's a significant drop, and I know how disappointed you are and what it means for you in financial terms. We're obviously not satisfied at all – far from it," he said toward the end of a 90-minute presentation by various Kering executives, including Marie-Claire Daveu, chief sustainability and institutional affairs officer.

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BUSINESS

Mytheresa Finalizes YNAP Acquisition



Michael Kliger

- Mytheresa has ambitions to become a 4-billion-euro business and will begin trading under the new "LUXE" ticker next month.

BY SAMANTHA CONTI

LONDON – Mytheresa has finalized its deal to acquire Yoox Net-a-porter, creating an online mega-group with the aim of becoming a 4-billion-euro business.

On Thursday, Mytheresa confirmed that it purchased 100 percent of YNAP from Richemont through the subsidiary Richemont Italia Holding SpA following

approvals from all the relevant regulatory authorities.

As YNAP's sole shareholder, Mytheresa plans to consolidate the company under the MYT Netherlands Parent B.V. umbrella.

As reported, the new parent company will be renamed LuxExperience B.V. and will continue to be listed on the New York Stock Exchange with the trade name "LuxExperience," and a new ticker symbol of "LUXE" effective May 1.

The deal saw Richemont receive 49,741,342 shares in Mytheresa, representing 33 percent of the company's fully diluted share capital, post-issuance, of the consideration shares.

Martin Beer



In exchange, Mytheresa acquired all shares of YNAP and a net cash position of 555 million euros, with no financial debt.

Nora Aufreiter, chair of the supervisory board of MYT Netherlands Parent B.V., called the acquisition a "milestone" in the history of the Munich-based company.

"Our company will become a group that includes some of the best retail banners in digital luxury. We will use our proven strength to execute on our strategic plans and create even more value for our shareholders, brand partners, customers and employees.

"We are confident that in the course of the integration and restructuring we will become one of the strongest and most resilient global players in the digital luxury sector," she said.

As reported, the retail brands Mytheresa, Net-a-porter and Mr Porter will operate alongside one another with "differentiated and complementary profiles." The off-season businesses Yoox and The Outnet will be run separately.

Mytheresa said the three flagship brands will be strengthened by "significant synergies that will be achieved primarily through a shared infrastructure and technology platform as well as operational efficiency improvements."

The off-price division will be separated from the luxury division "to enable a much simpler and more efficient operating model under the new roof."

Mytheresa added that YNAP's white label service business will be discontinued as soon as the Richemont maisons' online stores, which are currently powered by YNAP, have been migrated to their own chosen platforms.

As reported, Michael Kliger will become chief executive officer and managing director of the wider group while still running the Mytheresa business.

Martin Beer, chief financial officer of Mytheresa, will become CFO and managing director of the new group.

Earlier this month, Beer said the acquisition of YNAP fulfills Mytheresa's ambition to build a leading online luxury group worth around 3 billion euros in gross merchandise value per annum.

Beer added that in the medium term, the goal for LuxExperience will be to grow to a 4-billion-euro business in gross merchandise value terms.

As reported, the restructuring is expected to take 24 to 36 months and will be funded with a net cash position of 555 million euros. "We will fully leverage Mytheresa's operational excellence, proprietary technology and proven ability to execute large-scale projects," Beer said.

BUSINESS

Louis Vuitton Bumps Up Bag Prices in the U.S.



J-Hope of BTS in a recent campaign for Louis Vuitton's Keepall bag.

- Luxury analysts calculated the average increase at 4 percent, though some styles were unaffected.

BY MILES SOCHA

Amid the upheaval of the Trump administration's tariffs, Louis Vuitton handbags just became more expensive in the U.S.

Luxury analysts at Bernstein and Barclays flagged that the French luxury brand has bumped up prices by roughly 4 percent on us.louisvuitton.com.

"This price increase likely comes as a response to the recent introduction of a 10 percent tariff in the U.S. The price increase ranged from +7 percent for some bags like the NeoNoe to 1 percent for products like the Twist or Keepall," Barclays analyst Carole Madjo wrote in a research note Thursday.

However, it is understood Vuitton

typically institutes price increases around this time of the year.

Madjo noted her team also detected price bumps of 3 percent in Japan and 2 percent in France.

Luca Solca, analyst at Bernstein, noted that prices were unchanged for CarryAll, Biker, All In and Graceful handbag ranges, suggesting these products may be produced in the U.S., where Vuitton operates three leather goods production sites in Texas and California.

In his view, Vuitton's average price increase of 3.6 percent "seems more than enough to cover even the worst-case scenario of 20 percent tariffs on EU exports from the U.S."

What's more, "these price increases provide a case in point: the first level impact of tariffs will be negligible," according to Solca, arguing that megabrands like Vuitton in particular "remain highly desirable and command clear pricing power."

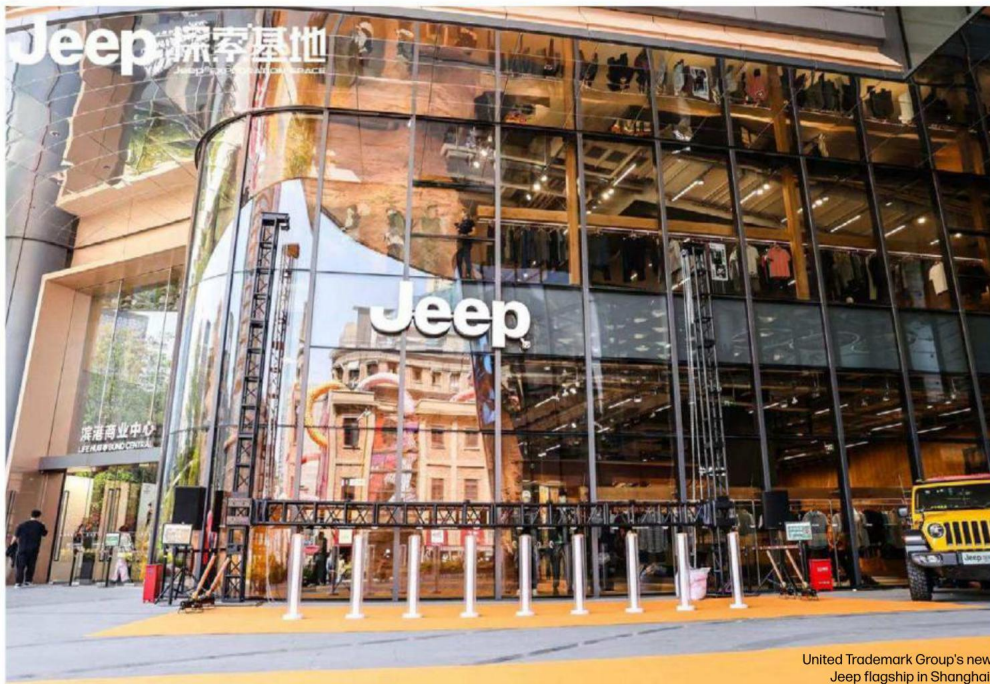
In addition, given that tariffs are also applied to "industrial first cost," Bernstein expects price increases on luxury goods to be "well below the 10 percent headline number, falling within the 5 to 7 percent like-for-like price inflation the industry has seen over the past 50 years."

Analysts are more concerned about the wider impact of tariffs on consumer sentiment, financial markets and currencies.

Last week, Hermès International said it would increase prices across various product lines in the U.S. effective May 1 to offset the tariff impact, as reported.



Louis Vuitton's NeoNoe handbag.



United Trademark Group's new Jeep flagship in Shanghai.

EXCLUSIVE

Xcel Brands Brings in Chinese Strategic Partner

- The \$9 million deal with United Trademark Group could lead to brand acquisitions by the partners.

BY DAVID MOIN

Xcel Brands, seeking to extend its reach globally, has brought in Shanghai-based United Trademark Group as a strategic investor.

UTG, a brand development and licensing company producing a range of products, has invested \$9 million in Xcel, WWD has learned.

"We have been looking for a strategic alliance to make Xcel Brands global," said Robert W. D'Loren, chairman and chief executive officer of Xcel, which specializes in building influencer brands through livestreaming and social commerce.

"This transaction brings together two leaders in brand management, supply chain management, licensing and video and social commerce to create what we hope is a global powerhouse," D'Loren said. "They have distribution in Europe, Middle East and Asia, and that's something we've been missing. For us, this is strategically very important."

Investors liked the deal and traded shares of Xcel up 31.6 percent to \$3 on Thursday, leaving the company with a market capitalization of \$7.1 million.

The CEO said the partnership "positions us nicely as we continue to announce more of these creator-type brands."

UTG's investment helped Xcel refinance debt and provides some working capital. The investor was also given warrants at different strike prices. Asked if the \$9 million investment is a preliminary one by UTG, D'Loren replied, "The thought is for UTG to grow with us."

Xcel owns the Halston, Judith Ripka and C. Wonder brands, as well as the Tower Hill by Christie Brinkley cobranded collaboration. Xcel also

holds noncontrolling interests in the Isaac Mizrahi brand and Orme Live, the short-form video marketplace for social shopping. And it owns and manages the Longaberger brand through its controlling interest in Longaberger Licensing LLC.

"This week, we passed 40 million social media followers across our portfolio," D'Loren said. "We believe we will very shortly [exceed] 50 million social media followers across our portfolio brands, which now include categories from fashion to home to kitchen to pets and all of the classifications and categories that go with those broad industry segments. Our goal now is to get the portfolio by the end of 2026 to 100 million followers."

The family-owned UTG is involved in design, manufacturing, distribution and retail and works to connect consumers with brands through emerging media, social platforms, retail technology, influencer collaborations and "experiential" retail. The company manufactures jewelry, accessories, pet products and other categories of merchandise.

"In the future, by having UTG as a partner, if there's something that we believe is a good acquisition opportunity, I think together, it becomes a lot easier for us," D'Loren said.

UTG, a \$2 billion company, has a master license for Jeep in China and operates about 1,000 Jeep stores selling Jeep performance wear, casualwear and other Jeep products, but not Jeep vehicles. A 8,600-square-foot Jeep flagship recently opened in Shanghai.

The company also owns the Roberta Di Camerino women's fashion, accessories and footwear brand sold in Italy and China, has an emoji license and is eager to acquire brands. "We want to be more of an owner," said George Liu, cofounder of the 15-year-old UTG.

Asked what attracted UTG to Xcel, Liu said, "What really excited us is the synergy."

Liu also said they have a shared passion for social commerce, which is much bigger in China than it is in the U.S.

He also said Xcel can build its business by having the benefit of UTG's supply chain expertise. "We think Bob is a pioneer in the industry," Liu added.

UTG's goals in the short-term is to help Xcel optimize its supply chain, grow the business it has with its existing brands and build its cash flow. In the medium term, Liu sees the possibility of UTG and Xcel acquiring brands together. Roberta Di Camerino is the only brand UTG currently owns.

"We are excited to work with Xcel Brands," said Alex Wang, cofounder and chairman of UTG, in a statement. "By combining their expertise in social commerce and our shared vision and commitment to product and innovation, we look forward to building the next generation of great brands."

"There is tremendous synergy between our companies' goals, missions and visions for the future of the global consumer sector," Wang said. "With UTG's global expertise and our shared commitment to innovation, brand building and leveraging pioneering new technologies, we see great opportunities on the horizon and look forward to unlocking new possibilities together." Consensus, an investment bank focused on the consumer products sector, advised UTG on the Xcel transaction.

Xcel recently announced a flurry of launches, including:

- "Trust-Respect-Love by Cesar Millan," a collection including pet essentials, toys, training tools and accessories. The brand is scheduled to launch spring 2026. Millan is a dog behaviorist, best-selling author and television celebrity.
- A bakeware and cooking brand with renowned baker, chef and author Gemma Stafford, marking Stafford's first venture into developing her own

product line. The line is scheduled to launch spring 2026.

- A food and kitchenware brand with Latina home and lifestyle creator Jenny Martinez, launching this fall. She is a national best selling cookbook author and creator of Happy Bellies by Jenny social media brand.

With Xcel importing much product from overseas, including Turkey, Pakistan and China, D'Loren addressed the issue of tariffs, saying: "We think over the short run, we're going to see some price increases. Some of the increases will be borne by the factories, some by the retailers, some by the consumer, some by the wholesalers. In our case, with some of our brands, we have enough inventory already in warehouses for the rest of the year, so we're actually in good shape, particularly with jewelry inventory. What's in our warehouses suddenly became more valuable. But we do now need to start to address spring of '26. Retailers have things on hold until we all get some clarity."

Asked to what degree Xcel brands are exposed to China, D'Loren said: "Not very. QVC [an important sales channel for Xcel] has done a good job with their private label programs over the last two to three years to reduce concentrations in their supply chain in China, so I think they'll manage through it as well." Xcel doesn't itself produce products. It works with licensees or through retailers.

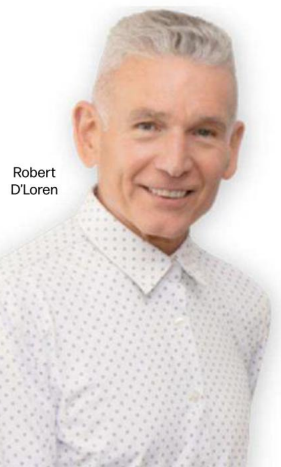
D'Loren believes that over the next 90 to 120 days: "We're going to see a lot of different [tariff] deals being made around the world. China is a little more complicated, but China and the U.S. are, in my opinion, too important to each other for this not to get resolved in some satisfactory way."

Xcel has been showing some improvement in its profitability, despite revenue declines. Total revenue for the nine months ended Sept. 30 fell 54 percent to \$7.1 million from a year earlier. This decline, the company said, was predominantly driven by the decrease in net product sales due to the company's discontinuation of its wholesale businesses as part of its "Project Fundamentals" plan in 2023.

The net loss for the nine-month period was \$15.3 million compared with a net loss of \$14.3 million for the prior year period. The current nine-month period includes significant one-off non-cash items, including a \$3.8 million gain on the divestiture of the Lori Goldstein brand, a \$3.5 million charge related to the exit and sublease of the company's prior office space and a \$6.3 million charge related to the sale of a majority stake in the Isaac Mizrahi brand to WHP Global.

Adjusted losses before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization totaled \$2.7 million for the nine-month period, compared with losses of \$4.6 million a year earlier.

Xcel is expected to report its fourth quarter results next week.



Robert D'Loren

BEAUTY

Procter & Gamble Cuts Full-year Forecast

- Citing tariff impacts and slowing sales, the company signaled potential price hikes.

BY KATHRYN HOPKINS

Procter & Gamble lowered its full-year forecast on the back of lower sales and sky-high tariffs on China. It also indicated that it would likely raise prices.

The Cincinnati, Ohio-based consumer products group, which makes Pampers, Tide, Olay and SKII, among other brands, now expects sales for fiscal 2025 to be flat. It previously forecast growth of between 2 and 4 percent.

Chief financial officer Andre Schulten said: "Our approach in the face of this near-term volatility is to protect our investment in our long-term health of our brands, innovation and demand creation. We are adjusting our fiscal year guidance in accordance with this approach."

On tariffs, he told analysts that while China accounts for just over 10 percent of the group's imports, the size of the tariff rate makes the cost impact more substantial.

At the beginning of the month, U.S. President Donald Trump unveiled

sweeping punitive tariffs on around 60 countries, sending the markets into a tailspin. While he soon stepped back, authorizing a 90-day pause – "and a substantially lowered reciprocal tariff during this period" of 10 percent, he upped import duties on China-made goods to as high as 145 percent. Beijing responded with 125 percent on U.S. goods.

"We'll be looking for every opportunity to mitigate the impacts, including sourcing flexibility and productivity improvements," Schulten said. "We also need to consider some level of consumer pricing in affected categories and markets."

For third quarter fiscal year 2025, net sales fell 2 percent to \$19.8 billion versus the prior year. Analysts had penciled in \$20.1 billion. Organic sales, which excludes the impacts of foreign exchange and acquisitions and divestitures, increased 1 percent versus the prior year.

A breakdown on that headline sales number showed that beauty segment organic sales increased 2 percent versus a year ago.

Within that, hair care sales were unchanged as increased pricing in Latin America and North America was

Olay



offset by volume declines, primarily in Greater China. Skin care organic sales, meanwhile, declined low-single digits due to volume declines and unfavorable geographic mix. In the grooming segment, organic sales increased 3 percent versus year ago.

On a geographical basis, organic sales in North America grew 1 percent, below the 4 percent growth trend over the last five quarters, driven by weaker consumer demand.

Europe-focused market organic sales were up 1 percent, with the company singling out France as a "significant headwind" with organic sales down in the high teens in the quarter versus a base period that grew 20 percent.

Greater China organic sales declined 2 percent, which Schulten described as "a modest step up on the path back to growth in the region."

BEAUTY

Coty to Cut 700 Jobs Amid Strategic Overhaul

- The beauty company revisits pandemic-era "All-in to Win" strategy to streamline operations and drive growth.

BY KATHRYN HOPKINS

Coty Inc., the beauty company behind the likes of Covergirl, Kylie Cosmetics and Lancaster, among many others, is cutting up to 700 jobs as it revisits a strategy launched during the pandemic.

"We are committed to building a stronger, more resilient Coty that is well-positioned for sustainable growth. When we first announced our All-in to Win program in FY20, at the peak of COVID disruptions, our goal was to boost our margin profile and brand reinvestment firepower through a significantly lower fixed cost structure, supply chain simplification, procurement savings and strategic revenue management initiatives," said Sue Nabi, chief executive officer of Coty.

"With the cyclical and structural changes in the beauty industry and the global economy in recent years, including the rapid acceleration of e-commerce, the consolidation of retail channels and customers, and the new ways of consumer brand discovery, Coty must once again adapt and evolve."

This will include streamlining the organizational structure across key markets to unlock operational efficiencies, making support functions more efficient, boosting innovation impact and reducing non-people fixed costs across all areas of spend.

The program is expected to generate annual fixed cost savings of about \$130 million before taxes, while the onetime cash costs associated with the program are expected to be about \$80 million.

Coty estimates this initiative to impact about 700 positions.

Its net revenue declined 3 percent to \$1.66 billion in the fiscal second quarter ended Dec. 31 as the fragrance effect that boosted Coty for the past year was not enough to offset a trio of weak demand in Asia, FX headwinds and a slowing mass market from weighing on sales.

In March, Skims, Kim Kardashian's shapewear and apparel company, acquired Skkn by Kim from Kim Kardashian and Coty Inc. Coty acquired 20 percent of KKW Beauty, for \$200 million in 2021. Now that stake will belong to Skims, while Kardashian's 80 percent stake will also be transferred to Skims.

Coty isn't the only beauty company cutting jobs. The Estée Lauder Cos. is reducing its workforce by as much as 7,000 positions.

Infiniment Coty Paris products.



Fernando Fernandez



Priya Nair

BEAUTY

Unilever Sees Growth in Q1

- CEO Fernando Fernandez described the first-quarter performance as "resilient" and said the macroeconomic environment remains uncertain.

BY SAMANTHA CONTI

LONDON – Unilever's beauty and well-being brands, led by Dove, drove growth in a lackluster first quarter marked by macroeconomic uncertainty and management upheaval that saw Fernando Fernandez replace Hein Schumacher as chief executive officer.

Sales dipped 0.9 percent to 14.8 billion euros in the three months to March 31, but grew 3 percent on an underlying basis. The company said the decline was due chiefly to disposals, but also to a shaky environment for consumers worldwide.

In his debut quarterly update, Fernandez described the first-quarter performance as "resilient" and said growth came from Unilever's "increasingly premium and innovation-led portfolio in developed markets."

He flagged "heightened global macroeconomic uncertainty," and said there were "interventions in place" in some emerging markets to step up growth.

Fernandez, formerly Unilever's chief financial officer who took the helm in February following Schumacher's ousting, said the quality of the company's innovation program, "the strong investment behind our brands and our improving competitiveness give us confidence we will deliver on our full-year plans."

Unilever, he said, is on track to deliver 3 to 5 percent underlying sales growth in 2025, due to product innovation and "expected improvements in Indonesia and China in the second half resulting from the decisive actions we have taken in both markets."

He's also anticipating a "modest improvement" in underlying operating margin for the full year, versus 18.4 percent in 2024, and said the direct impact of U.S. tariffs on profitability is expected to be "limited and manageable."

In the first three months, Unilever's "power brands," which cut across all product categories, grew 3 percent.

Strong performers included Dove, Unilever's largest brand, which grew more than 8 percent in the first three months. Other top brands were Vaseline, Liquid I.V. and Magnum, which will be part of the new ice cream division that's set to be listed on the stock exchanges in Amsterdam, London and New York later this year.

The beauty and well-being and personal care divisions grew 4.1 percent and 5.1 percent, respectively, on an underlying basis, and outstripped home care and foods.

In beauty and well-being, Vaseline

and Dove grew in the double-digits, supported by the rollouts of Vaseline's Pro Derma Ceramide range and Dove's body serums across the Americas. Liquid I.V. and Nutrafal also delivered double-digit growth, according to Unilever.

Prestige beauty declined low-single digits reflecting the slowdown in the beauty market. Hourglass and Tata continued to grow in the double-digits, while Paula's Choice and Dermalogica declined. The premium biotech hair care brand K18 saw strong double-digit growth although sales were only consolidated in February.

In personal care, Dove, which represents around 40 percent of the division's turnover, grew in the high-single digits. Unilever said growth was driven by the "continued success and rollout of Dove's serum shower collection and whole-body deodorants, and supported by its Super Bowl advertising campaign."

Analysts were lukewarm about the quarterly numbers, as was the market. Unilever's shares closed down 0.3 percent at 48 pounds on Thursday.

RBC Capital Markets said the outperformance of personal care and ice cream was offset by a miss in the home care division, bringing group growth overall "in line with expectations."

The bank said it expects growth to "moderately step up" in the second quarter and is forecasting a 3.6 percent rise versus a company-compiled consensus of 3.8 percent.

RBC noted that the beauty and well-being, and personal care divisions continued to do well, despite the weakness in prestige beauty, and while the performance in home care was affected by de-stocking in Brazil and a tough comparable in North America.

Jefferies said the 3 percent underlying sales growth "will be a relief for some, despite reports of deteriorating trends earlier in the year." The bank also noted Unilever's "cautious tone" regarding the sequential acceleration in sales in the second quarter.

BUSINESS

Miu Miu Opens 'Home' Flagship at SKP Wuhan



Miu Miu's latest flagship at SKP Wuhan.

- The stand-alone store spans around 5,200 square feet and three stories.

BY DENNI HU

Miu Miu has opened its first flagship in central China's largest city of Wuhan, located within the newly opened SKP Department Store.

The stand-alone store, which sits along SKP Wuhan's outdoors retail promenade K Avenue, spans around 5,200 square feet and three stories.

Conceived as a reflection of the Miu Miu "home" concept, the store's facade showcases pale brickwork and large windows that invite passersby to peek into its intricately curated interior.

"Each floor reveals a different world,

echoing the brand's distinctive vision," Miu Miu said in a statement.

The first and second floors of the store are home to Miu Miu's full range of collections, including ready-to-wear, handbags, accessories and footwear, while the third floor offers the brand's most exclusive products within a private lounge setting, which leads to two private salons.

Miu Miu's first store in Wuhan opened 10 years ago at the storied Wuhan International Plaza shopping mall. The brand counts a total of 24 doors in mainland China.

Miu Miu and SKP celebrated the grand opening on Wednesday with a lion and dragon performance, a Taoist ritual meant to bestow good fortune on the new store.

SKP Wuhan is the fourth location of the established Beijing department store franchise, which opened last summer.

K Avenue, a riverside corridor that includes 44 properties, has been repurposed by SKP for brand takeovers that extend for about 1.5 kilometers. The SKP section takes up about one-third of the commercial thoroughfare known as "Han Street."

"The architecture and landscaping were created so that the flagships could ultimately control their own image, amassing in a dense, diverse and rich concentration of branded styles, yet all set within the subtle and expansive guidelines of the SKP branded retail experience," Torquil

McIntosh, cofounder of Sybarite, the London architectural firm and longtime collaborator of SKP, said at the time of the opening.

So far luxury players such as Bottega Veneta, Loewe, Ralph Lauren, Burberry, Coach, Moncler, Balenciaga, Gucci, Prada and more have unveiled stand-alone structures at K Avenue. Imposing hoardings for Louis Vuitton and Dior stand shoulder to shoulder next to the SKP main building, which looks like a radiating lantern from afar.

Bucking the luxury slump, Miu Miu is forging ahead with retail expansion in China. After SKP Wuhan, the brand is slated to open a ground floor shop at MixC Xi'an, a high-end shopping mall that made its debut last December.

In the latest fourth quarter, Miu Miu surpassed the 1 billion-euro mark in revenues. In China, the brand has maintained its "heavyweight position," recording significant growth on Chinese social media platforms, including Weibo and Xiaohongshu, according to Bernstein.

Bernstein said that Miu Miu and Ralph Lauren were two of the hottest brands mentioned on the ground during the bank's retail checks this April.

"Both Ralph Lauren and Miu Miu have captured a wave of demand for a quieter, preppier and intellectual look amongst younger Chinese consumers," Bernstein said in the report.

BUSINESS

Vuori Expands London Retail Operations With King's Road Opening

- The Encinitas, Calif.-based brand is valued at \$5.5 billion and its west London opening comes a little more than six months after it opened the company's first international flagship on Regent Street.

BY HIKMAT MOHAMMED

LONDON – Barely more than six months after Vuori opened its first international flagship on Regent Street in London, the Encinitas, Calif.-based brand is already ramping up its retail operations.

Vuori has opened its third store in London on the King's Road in Chelsea. The brand first opened its doors to London in 2022 with a store in Covent Garden.

"Our overarching strategy for Vuori's international expansion is to build density. We look for markets, like London, where we can form clusters of stores, build a first-rate team, and connect in a meaningful way with the local community. London is the center of the retail world for Europe, and we see an opportunity for a substantial retail business here," Andy Lawrence, senior vice president of international at Vuori, said in an interview.

He added that the brand has been very selective about its locations.

"King's Road has been a key target from the beginning, and we finally found a space (in partnership with Cadogan) that we think is perfect for the brand. In all

three stores, we cater both our assortment and our community experience to the local clientele, and the tourists that frequent each store," said Lawrence.

Vuori is expecting to benefit from tourist traffic, but is counting on local clientele to represent the bulk of sales at the store.

Chelsea is an affluent neighborhood with a demographic that's more conscious of fitness with new Pilates studios opening almost every month.

"We're thus very focused on building a store design that speaks to the Chelsea customer, participating in local events, and creating an ongoing cadence of interesting local community events," said Lawrence.

The brand celebrated its new store by hosting a run club with British TV personality Spencer Matthews, who shot to fame in 2011 with the reality TV series "Made in Chelsea," which followed a circle of affluent young people living in west London.

Classical Pilates instructor Ashlea McKee will be teaching a Pilates class with a focus on Vuori's BlissBlend Form collection, which has been "designed for high intensity training," according to Lawrence.

Events and activations will be a recurring element across the brand's U.K. and U.S. stores.

As reported, Vuori received an \$825 million investment led by General Atlantic and Stripes, two global growth investors, along with a collection of other investors that now values the company at \$5.5 billion.

The investment, structured as a secondary tender offer, is more than



Vuori's store on the King's Road.

twice the \$400 million Vuori received in 2021 from institutional investor SoftBank Vision Fund 2, which had skyrocketed the company's valuation to \$4 billion.

Lawrence added that the brand "cannot share any specific performance metrics, but we can say that we are exceeding our expectations across both our retail and online business, and we are looking forward to continuing to scale in the market."

The U.K. has become a competitive market for premium athleisure clothing

with brands such as Gymshark, Alo Yoga, Lululemon and On Running opening all across London.

"We have a very loyal customer base, and we remain relentlessly focused on delivering them premium performance apparel that blends technical innovation with an effortless California-inspired aesthetic," said Lawrence.

Vuori is investing in fabric innovation such as BlissBlend and DreamKnit, which are among favorites with U.K. customers.

TOP 10 MEN'S COLLECTIONS

The men's fall collections had their fair share of drama in terms of absences and departures, but there were standouts that showed how menswear is in a period of transition with a return to traditionalism.

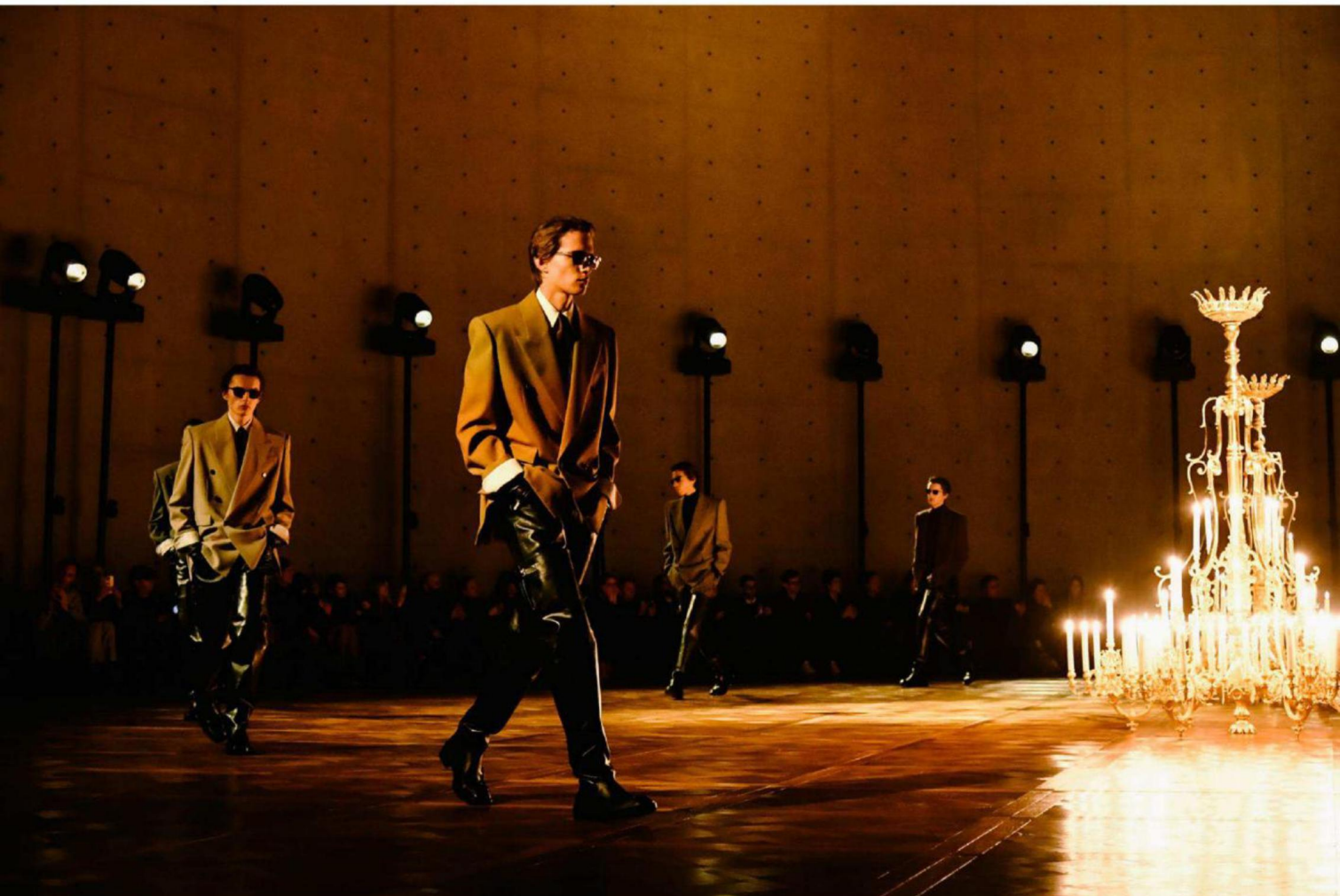


10 AMIRI

"If you're wondering who the Amiri man is, look no further than Jeff Goldblum at the Golden Globes. His aqua blazer with crystal stripes had it all: Hollywood glitz with old-school swagger.

"Mike Amiri's fall show coasted on that carefree mood, pre-wildfires, with a lush set styled like a speakeasy, with cognac-colored walls and round tables dotted with lamps running down the middle (preshow refreshments included espresso martinis)."

— JOELLE DIDERICH



9 SAINT LAURENT

“In the vein of those ‘impossible conversation’ books and exhibitions, designer Anthony Vaccarello asked himself: What if Yves Saint Laurent met Robert Mapplethorpe? (A 1983 YSL men’s campaign featuring the American photographer sparked the idea.)

“Vaccarello was unable to verify any encounter between the two men, but he plowed ahead and imagined they had one to create his fall 2025 Saint Laurent menswear collection, which hinged on handsome, double-breasted tailoring and dollops of subversion, including black leather thigh boots for every model, even those already wearing leather pants.”

— MILES SOCHA

8 TODD SNYDER

“For this season’s show at the Academy Mansion on the Upper East Side, Snyder reimagined the space as ‘an old French boarding school that we turned into a rave,’ he said during a preview. The inspiration for the collection started with a neighborhood in France: Saint-Germain in the 1980s, and the music, nightlife, artists – and uniforms – that defined the area.

“All of these archetypes would feel comfortable donning the pieces in Snyder’s fall collection, which offered traditional silhouettes – heavy on tailored clothing. Silhouettes were also updated and were oversize without being balloon-like, giving the tailored pieces a modern twist.”

– JEAN E. PALMIERI





7 LOUIS VUITTON

“The collection [Pharrell Williams and Nigo] unveiled Tuesday in a mirrored box in a courtyard of the Louvre museum honored that history explicitly, through the circular set modeled after a clothing vault filled with archival designs, and implicitly, via a collection peppered with references and winks to the past.

“While a cherry blossom pink varsity jacket and leopard-patterned jeans channeled the bubblegum aesthetic of Williams’ N.E.R.D. era, the overall feeling was of streetwear keeping pace with a more mature, sophisticated customer – though entering the show was as bruising as a mosh pit.”

– JOELLE DIDERICH

6 RICK OWENS

“Was it the blaring Bowie anthem ‘Heroes,’ or the sheer beauty of his clothes – especially the dramatic, stand-up-collar coats, and the otherworldly Eiffel Tower silhouette that emerged below the ribcage – that unleashed such a powerful emotional charge?”

“It was also moving to see Owens conscript not only his regular beanpole models, but also more mature men with thick midriffs, who looked terrific in boxier woolen coats streaked with industrial zippers.”

– MILES SOCHA



5 COMME DES GARÇONS HOMME PLUS

“Approached backstage after her tender, nearly heartbreaking Comme des Garçons Homme Plus show on Friday night, Rei Kawakubo delivered the blunt title of her collection, and her current state of mind: ‘To hell with war.’

“Kawakubo brought everything together in a way few designers can, and this thought-provoking collection will linger in minds for some time.”

— MILES SOCHA





4 EMPORIO ARMANI

“Giorgio Armani titled his fall Emporio Armani collection ‘Seductive,’ and the designer enticed with generous proportions; plush fabrics galore, including crushed velvet for pants; shots of metallic in knitwear, and generous helpings of animal prints, on shoes, hats and little furry jackets.

“It added up to a strong and compelling show, perhaps a little flashier than is customary at Armani, but proof that Milan’s fashion maestro still has guts, and new things to say at age 90.”

— MILES SOCHA



3 WILLY CHAVARRIA

“Willy Chavarria made a flamboyant debut at Paris Men’s Fashion Week – with a little help from his friends.

The coed display, which marked the 10th anniversary of the brand, featured live performances by J Balvin and Dorian Wood, while models included singer Becky G, rapper Tokischa and reggaeton star Ozuna alongside a diverse cast of the designer’s longtime muses.

“Chavarria celebrated Chicano style with elevated versions of workwear jackets, flannel shirts and chinos in oversize constructions and fine fabrics. T-shirt graphics were peppered with commentaries on community and identity.”

– JOELLE DIDERICH

2 ZEGNA

“[Alessandro] Sartori has a painter’s eye when it comes to the color palette, which didn’t disappoint for fall with shades of juniper, beaver, terra-cotta, mountain lily and berry red.

“Actor John Turturro walked the show wearing a brown monochromatic pants-and-sweater combo under a roomy coat with a furry collar bringing the point home: Sartori evolved the brand’s aesthetic with a wearable, beautiful collection that worked across generations.”

— LUISA ZARGANI





1 DIOR

“Kim Jones presented his fall collection for Dior in a black tent framing a white Busby Berkeley-style stairway. The clinically bare setting highlighted fabric and construction, the very fundamentals that set luxury clothing apart from mass-produced garments.

“To call the designs sparse would be misleading, but compared to last season’s craft-intensive outing, these monochromatic ensembles were sober at first glance. Take his Neo-like opening look: a monastic black coat worn as a long skirt.”

— JOELLE DIDERICH

BUSINESS

Lilly Pulitzer Teams With Saint James



Here and right: Some looks from the Lilly Pulitzer x Saint James capsule.



● The limited-edition capsule collection marks Lilly Pulitzer's first international collaboration.

BY LISA LOCKWOOD

Lilly Pulitzer will introduce its first international collaboration with French brand Saint James.

Called Lilly Pulitzer x Saint James, the capsule collection merges French coastal fashion with the sun-soaked spirit of resortwear.

The 10-piece, limited-edition collection is inspired by both the French Riviera and Palm Beach, Fla. It features 10 crafted pieces, each made in France by Saint James, featuring Saint James' iconic Breton stripes and Lilly Pulitzer's signature prints. The collaboration introduces two exclusive colorways: Azure and Rose Soleil.

"This collaboration marks an exciting moment for Lilly as we launch abroad for the first time bringing together the glamour of the French Riviera and Lilly's legendary prints," said Mira Fain, chief creative officer at Lilly Pulitzer. "The collection reimagines nautical style with a fresh, Lilly twist, delivering striking pieces that are both classic and unapologetically bold. It is a celebration of the unmistakable spirit of both iconic brands," she said.

Lilly Pulitzer x Saint James will be available to shop on Wednesday from the Lilly Pulitzer website, Lilly Pulitzer stores across the U.S. and select Saint James stores worldwide.

Prices range from \$129 to \$289.

"This unique and colorful collection celebrates the mystique of the French Riviera, blending Lilly's iconic hand-painted prints with our signature French coastal style, said Luc Lesénécal, chief executive officer of Saint James. "Together we have created an elevated, fresh and vibrant collection that perfectly captures the essence of the season."

Saint James, which was founded in Normandy, France, in 1889, has been making nautical-inspired apparel for more than a century. Originally known for outfitting Breton fishermen with durable wool sweaters, the brand became popular or its signature striped shirt, coastal fashion and effortless French style.

As reported, Saint James will open its first pop-up at the new Printemps in New York City on May 15 and remain for one month.

Lilly Pulitzer started her eponymous company in 1959 with a juice stand in Palm Beach. In need of an everyday uniform, Pulitzer asked her dressmaker for something to camouflage splashes of citrus juice. The result was a comfortable sleeveless shift made of colorful printed cotton. Today, the brand is well known for its imaginative prints and lively colors.

EXCLUSIVE

Drake Unveils His First Eau de Parfum

● Called Summer Mink, the scent follows successful launches in perfume oils and candles.

BY JAMES MANSO

Drake's world is about to get a lot more fragrant.

The multi-hyphenate's fragrance brand, Better World Fragrance House, is launching Summer Mink on Friday. It's the brand's first eau de parfum, following the launch of a range of candles and a perfume oil of hero scent Carby Musk. Priced at \$148, the scent will later debut across Ulta Beauty's full fleet and online.

Drake, and his team, did not take the category expansion lightly. "We've been going through scents for this for quite some time," said Matte Babel, chief brand officer of Drake's DreamCrew brand. "When you launch your first fragrance, there's a ton of pressure on what it is, what it's going to smell like, and all eyes are on that category because it makes up the bulk of the business."

The brand started with Drake tapping

Michael Carby for his own personal scent, Carby Musk, which later culminated in the candle range and a licensing deal with Parlux in 2023. Since then, Better World Fragrance House has expanded into retail, and Parlux president Lori Singer is seeking to keep momentum high.

"We're building a brand through Better World Fragrance House that really is all types of fragrance and scent. It's built on storytelling, craft, design, connection, aesthetic and of course, sales and scale," Singer said. "The brand is now stepping into the world with prestige fragrance with its first eau de parfum. It marks this evolution from scented space to creating this deeply personal, wearable expression."

Though neither commented on sales, industry sources expect Summer Mink to top \$60 million in sales for its first year on the market. The decision to break into a new format, Singer said, came from the brand's founder.

"That centered on Drake. Carby Musk was so special, but he felt he envisioned that in its purest form as an oil," she said. As it pertains to Summer Mink, "He felt

there was an opportunity for something bigger, bolder and statement-making."

"Everything about the brand, we like to say, is about the beauty of juxtaposition, whether it's the name, the scent or the bottle," Singer added.

The scent highlights top notes of Italian citrus and sage, features mid-notes of jasmine sambac and dries down to base notes of vetiver and creamy musk.

"Summer Mink was inspired by a yin-yang principle of fusing warm, creamy base notes with cold spices and sparkling citrus," said Carby, who also nosed Summer Mink, in a statement. The bottle, designed by Jon DiNapoli, was also meant to highlight the same juxtaposition between softer organic forms on a more angular, modernist base.

The differentiation factor drove much of the product's design, and though the launch is a significant move for the brand, Babel doesn't expect any other major launches in the immediate future. "Images and products no longer make the profound statement that they used to, a lot of the time," he said. "You can overwhelm consumers with too many offerings. The more I look at what's happening, we appreciate curation. Our mandate is to create historical fragrances that people can fall in love with and easily identify."

When Better World Fragrance House's candles launched with Ulta, there was a heavy experiential component to the launch, including pop-ups and oversized

candles outside of doors in key markets. For Summer Mink, it will entail a 360-degree marketing campaign, Singer said, spanning both the physical and the digital.

"We know our guests always want to refresh their scent wardrobes for the new season, and Summer Mink thoughtfully combines preferences and multiple scent families in an innovative and unique way," said Linda Suliafu, Ulta's vice president of fragrance merchandising, who added that it would be the first celebrity-founded men's fragrance in Ulta's history.

Better World Fragrance House's Summer Mink eau de parfum.



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EXCLUSIVE

Tania Bulhões Acquires Production Facility Near Limoges

● The luxury tableware and fragrance brand said the new unit will boost its porcelain production as it opens its first corner in Le Bon Marché in Paris.

BY SOFIA CELESTE

MILAN – With its Brazilian artistic flair and international growth ambitions, luxury tableware and fragrance brand Tania Bulhões has its eye on conquering the European market in more ways than one.

On Thursday, the company told WWD that it made its second acquisition, a production facility, in France's porcelain producing area of Limoges. The new unit is located in the commune of Saint-Yrieix-la-Perche, where Kaolin, the clay used to make the region's world-famous porcelain, was discovered in the 1760s.

Between 2021 to 2023, the luxury brand raised 100 million Brazilian dollars, about \$16 million U.S., through private equity, opened 30 Tania Bulhões stores bringing the total to 40, all in Brazil, and acquired

Royal Limoges, the oldest porcelain factory still in operation in Limoges. Tania Bulhões had been collaborating with Royal Limoges for 25 years prior to the 2023 acquisition, which, it said, made it the first non-European entity to buy into the historic artisan heartland.

This new facility will focus primarily on white porcelain production, enhancing the brand's manufacturing capabilities with advanced technology.

"Although we have new technology, we do many tests and take very good care in producing the finest and purest white porcelain following Limoges porcelain-making traditions. The production will be a mix of automation and handcrafted work. Having the machinery is not enough, you have to put the effort and experience to guarantee the best porcelain ever," said Frederick Parlon, who is the director of Royal Limoges, regarding the new white porcelain production unit.

The acquisition coincides with Tania Bulhões' official French debut on Thursday with a corner on the first floor of Le Bon Marché Rive Gauche in Paris. It is also part of the official programming of the "Year

of Brazil" in France, a cultural initiative between the two governments. At the opening of the new corner, she will present her limited-edition Plaza Athénée collection, which first debuted April 3 during an exclusive VIP dinner at the five-star hotel by Brazilian chef Alberto Landgraf.

"My bond with France goes back many, many years. It's a country I adore, where I've been producing porcelain for over 20 years at the Royal Limoges factory....It was a huge pleasure to create this collection, as I was the first artist ever invited to design tableware for the Plaza Athénée," Bulhões told WWD.

Overall, Tania Bulhões' lineup includes tabletop, glassware, decorative pieces and home scents, including the more expensive Limoges porcelain collections as well as seasonal porcelain collections produced by manufacturers around the world.

In São Paulo, where it is based, the company's flagship is situated in a 23,000-square-foot French-inspired maison with tablescapes, sensorial spaces, art, an homage to Limoges porcelain, and a company-owned restaurant serving Brazilian French fusion cuisine.



Tania Bulhões Plaza Athénée collection.

Last year Tania Bulhões opened a chic showroom in Manhattan's A+D building, with the aim to build a U.S. wholesale business. Anticipating greater demand for their products, the company said it was also in the throes of building its first factory in Brazil, located in Uberaba, a small city where Tania was born and raised. The complex should be finished by the end of next year or early 2026, it said at the time.

Bulhões founded her namesake brand in 1989 in Uberaba and opened her first store in São Paulo in 1991. She is the majority stakeholder, serves as creative director and is an artist working closely with the product development team. Before launching her brand she had a little school in her home town where she taught porcelain and ceramics painting.

HOME DESIGN

Art Deco Turns 100

● Exhibitions worldwide will commemorate the centennial of Art Deco on Monday.

BY SOFIA CELESTE

MILAN – An emblem of the Roaring '20s, Art Deco remains one of the most revolutionary design movements of all time.

Distinguished for its engine-inspired motifs like zigzag and sunrays and use of steel and aluminum, Art Deco was embraced globally after its debut at the 1925 Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes, or International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts, in Paris. In the U.S. the modernist style was celebrated well into the '40s and inspired iconic New York City landmarks like the Waldorf Astoria and the Chrysler and Empire State Buildings.

Monday marks 100 years to the day since the Art Deco made its debut onto the global scene. Explore WWD's list of celebratory events:

Ruhlmann Decorator

MUSÉE DES ARTS DÉCORATIFS, PARIS
Visionary Jacques-Émile Ruhlmann pioneered the pavilion at the 1925 Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes, which gave birth to the term Art Deco. His ability to elevate neo-classical into modern proportions and his detailed work in the homes of the upper echelons of Parisian society, epitomize what we know today as Art Deco. Paris' Musée des Arts Décoratifs offers a rare glimpse into Ruhlmann's work as a decorator. More than a century later, the public is privy to a rare glimpse of his artistic vision through the 26 sketchbooks his widow left to the institution in 1959 and projects with Desfossez & Karth and the French Wallpaper Society. A few



Ruhlmann Pavilion by Jacques-Émile Ruhlmann at the 1925 Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes.



Gio Ponti

rare models designed by Ruhlmann for these two workshops and more will be on display until June 1.
Musée des Arts Décoratifs
107, rue de Rivoli
<https://madparis.fr>

Art Deco, Triumph della Modernità (A Triumph of Modernity)

PALAZZO REALE, MILAN

Art Deco arrived later to Italy, but the movement had a massive impact on the decorative arts and the design industry of which Italy is currently the backbone. The Art Deco exhibition at Palazzo Reale in Milan is showcasing a vast array of objects and images that illustrate the prowess of Italian and European decorative arts of that era. Curated by Valerio Terraroli, the display includes glassworks, porcelain and majolica, textiles, furniture, jewelry, as well as fine art pieces such as paintings, sculptures, drawings, and advertising posters. The exhibit highlights the contributions of Italian icons like Gio Ponti, particularly during his tenure as art director for Richard-Ginori (known today as Ginori 1735). It also brings to the fore creations by glass artist Vittorio



A look inside the historic Red Room inside Printemps Paris's first store in New York City, opening on Wall Street.

Zecchin, master cabinetmaker Ettore Zaccari and goldsmith Alfredo Ravasco.

Art Deco at Palazzo Reale will be on display until June 29. *Piazza del Duomo, 12*
<https://www.palazzorealemilano.it>

Exploring New York City's Downtown Deco Treasures

The Art Deco Society of New York City has planned a series of tours that uncover the Art Deco renaissance that flourished in the U.S. after the Paris' International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts. Among them: American Radiator, Chrysler, Chanin, Daily News buildings, as well as Radio City Music Hall and Rockefeller Center.

Led by architectural historian Anthony W. Robins, a tour on Monday will explore Lower Manhattan's Deco towers that have long made the fabled skyline a symbol of the world's first modern metropolis. Among them, One Wall Street, a Deco masterpiece which houses Hildreth Meière's recently restored and reimaged "Red Room" which was once the banking hall of the Irving Trust and Bank Company and is now part of Printemps Paris' first New York City location. artdeco.org



A Poiret illustration by Georges Lepape.

Art Deco and Fashion

MITSUBISHI ICHIGOKAN MUSEUM, TOKYO
Art Deco had a powerful impact on fashion and coincided with female suffrage around the world, particularly the U.K. and the U.S. after World War I.

Capturing the essence of female emancipation through fashion is Toyko's Mitsubishi Ichigokan, a museum designed in 1894 by the English architect Josiah Conder at the invitation of the Japanese government not long after the country had ended a long period of national seclusion.

The exhibit highlights how the decorative arts directly shaped lifestyle design and "mode," or fashionable clothing of the time. Shortly after its dawn, dresses produced by Paris' leading fashion houses, such as Poiret, Chanel and Lanvin, were envisaged with the same geometric, linear designs and intricate decorations that were characteristic of the revolutionary movement. "It was a new, contemporary style that was popular among active, free-spirited women who were free from old conventions," the museum said. The exhibit runs until Jan. 26. *Mitsubishi Ichigokan Museum*
2 Chome-6-2 Marunouchi, Chiyoda City, Tokyo 100-0005, Japan

Kering CEO Vows To Turn Gucci Around Swiftly

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Pinault allowed that anemic demand for luxury goods and weak consumer sentiment, particularly in Asia, weighed on Kering's fortunes in 2024.

"But this decline primarily reflects our underperformance, particularly at Gucci, our leading brand," he said. "And let me tell you that the entire team around me is fully mobilized to ensure that we return to the results we can legitimately claim.

"The international context is of course very turbulent, but that does not scare us. Our top priority is to turn around Gucci in a sustainable and profitable manner, in the interest of all our stakeholders, and first and foremost, you, our shareholders. This is the commitment I make to you today," he added.

It was his turn to trumpet how much faith he has in Gucci's new artistic director, Demna, who will pick up the reins at the ailing Italian megabrand in early July, after parading a final couture collection

for Balenciaga, which he's revved up with supersized tailoring, chunky sneakers, logo tracksuits and drop-shoulder hoodies since arriving at the French house in 2015.

"Demna is one of the most influential and talented designers of his generation," Pinault said, while acknowledging that his appointment was looked on dimly by investors and luxury analysts.

He argued that Gucci's new chapter under Demna "promises renewed energy, a strong cultural impact, and above all, a reaffirmed authority on fashion. Demna will deploy his creative talent within the framework of the house's codes."

Beyond Gucci, he said, "our ambition is clear: to lead the transformations of our brands and reaffirm our position in luxury, while remaining true to what makes us unique."

During a conference call Wednesday to elaborate on first-quarter results, Francesca Belletini, Kering's deputy CEO in charge of

brand development, divulged that Demna would give the first "hint" of his vision in September.

Separately on Thursday, a Gucci spokeswoman confirmed to WWD that Gucci by Demna would be unveiled during Milan Fashion Week, scheduled for Sept. 23 to 29, although the format and exact date have yet to be defined.

Belletini reiterated to shareholders how Gucci is finding green shoots in new handbag ranges including Emblem and Blondie, even as the brand suffers from low traffic and a "heavy drag" from carryover styles. "Capitalizing on novelties" was her main rallying cry, also touting Saint Laurent's upscale Y bag and refreshed Sac du Jour model.

During a question-and-answer session, shareholders grumbled about everything from the falling share price and feeble dividend of 6 euros versus 14 euros in 2023 to the complicated WiFi login process and historic lack of shareholder gifts. (For the record, each exited with an item from Italian porcelain house Ginori 1735.)

The meeting was also disrupted by shouting PETA activists – one dressed in a snakeskin-print catsuit – demanding Kering stop using exotic skins. They were spirited away by members of the sizable security team at the gathering.

In a research note Thursday, Deutsche Bank lowered Kering's full-year earnings per share forecast by 13 percent "given the [first quarter] miss and more cautious outlook for [first half] from management."

François-Henri Pinault



BUSINESS

Gabriela Hearst, Willy Chavarria, Padma Lakshmi Cohost ACLU Event

● Wednesday night's event kicked off the group's "Creatives for Freedom" initiative at The Standard, East Village in New York City.

BY ROSEMARY FEITELBERG

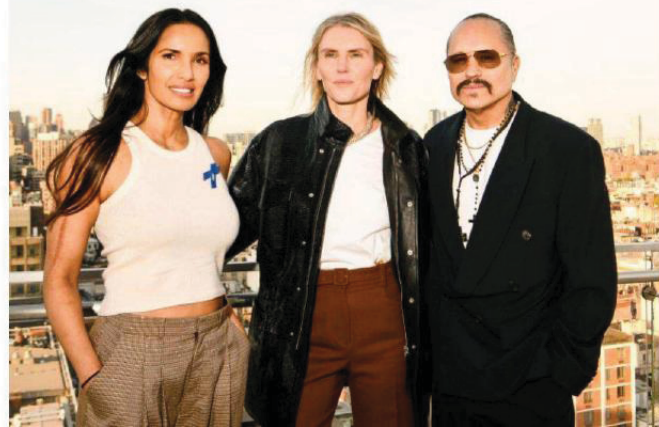
Gabriela Hearst, Willy Chavarria and Padma Lakshmi helped the American Civil Liberties Union launch its "Creatives for Freedom" initiative Wednesday night at The Standard, East Village.

The organization's aim is to bring together leaders in fashion, film, television, social media, music, comedy and advocacy to draw attention to critical issues facing democracy. The crowd in the Cooper Square hotel's penthouse included designers Jameel Mohammed, Kim Shui and Kingsley Gbadegesin, actors Alan Cumming, Busy Phillips and Danaï Gurira, rapper Joey Bada\$\$, artist Dustin Yellen, model Ella Snyder, as well as others like Glenda Bailey and Julie Gilhart.

Hearst, Chavarria and Lakshmi cohosted the event with the ACLU's deputy executive director for strategy and culture AJ Hikes, and its national legal director Cecillia Wang spoke of the group's ongoing efforts to protect and advance fundamental freedoms.

As an ACLU member since 2017, Hearst said it's important to remember that it is a nonpartisan 105-year-old organization that "is here to defend our rights and the Constitution." The designer said that when Trump's second administration started in a "dramatic, vicious and targeted way," she inquired about doing more. Hearst spoke of Steven Spielberg's upcoming series on Netflix about the ACLU, and her \$250,000 donation to the organization. "Anyone who wants to match is welcome to. If you

Padma Lakshmi, Gabriela Hearst, and Willy Chavarria.



can't, come with whatever you can. Come with your work, your brain, your heart – everything is welcome," she said.

Chavarria, a Mexican American, spoke of having the good fortune of having been born and raised by a humble, good and working family in an immigrant community in California. "I'm also of the LGBTQ persuasion, which means that every ounce of blood in my body is really built to fight against the oppression that we are seeing right now that is stronger than ever," he said. "All of the creatives in this room can have such incredible impact and contact with people both emotionally and spiritually. Through our art and the way we communicate, we can really make people feel and think differently about what's going on. It's important that we do

that especially at a time when so many brands, TV series and whatever are just ignoring what's going on."

Encouraging attendees to use messaging about the current situation through the beauty of fashion, makeup, music or other disciplines, Chavarria said, "We are the ones who are probably best poised to get people to really see what's going on. We need to protect people, the institutions and the organizations that are under attack. Our ability to contribute to and guide unique and powerful cultural and topical conversations is more necessary now than ever before."

The author and Emmy-nominated TV host Lakshmi, who is also the ACLU artist ambassador for immigrants' and women's rights, said, "Democracy is really being

threatened at every turn whether it is bodily autonomy, LGBTQ rights, equal rights, or First Amendment rights. There is no frontier of our society or culture that is not under attack."

Hikes spoke of the ACLU's "millions of supporters around the country," and its legal arguments in the Supreme Court with "equal rights for all" being its guiding principles. Hikes and other supporters talked about the group's priorities that were designated more than a year ago – immigration, reproductive freedom, trans justice, and "free speech – always free speech." With 350 litigators nationwide, Hikes said, "Even with that kind of force, we are still David to the government's Goliath."

During Trump's first administration, the ACLU took 434 legal actions and, thus far, into his second administration, more than 100 legal actions have been taken. Wang highlighted how the ACLU helped four theater groups take legal action in a Rhode Island federal court to challenge the National Endowment for the Arts from requiring that grantees' projects not promote gender ideology, per a Trump executive order.

After the panel discussion, one of the ACLU's more seasoned supporters, Terry McDonnell, spoke of his commitment. Having supported the ACLU since he was 25, the media executive, literary editor and author said that was due to how, "They echo that great thinking about 'I could agree with you, or disagree with you, or hate whatever you think, but I will die to protect your right to think that.' I hope they're still doing that. It's a First Amendment thing foremost. I'm totally in support of that."

Referring to "the long and broad menu" that the ACLU presents to people, McDonnell said he would like to see that expand. As for the event's strong turnout, his wife Stacey Hadash said, "I think people are really frustrated, sad, angry and feeling all different emotions. And they don't know what to do or how to organize. One of the messages that came out tonight was, 'Check us out. Do anything. Anything that you do with us is worthwhile, and that can make you feel better.'"

Zegna Offsets Wholesale Declines

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the recent geopolitical and economic uncertainties," chairman and chief executive officer Gildo Zegna, who did not participate in a call with analysts on Thursday about the results, said in a statement. "And while we have not observed significant changes in customers' behavior across our brands, we remain vigilant, agile and focused on our strategic priorities knowing that what truly matters is the strength of our brands and our unwavering commitment to staying close to our customers."

By brand, Zegna sales rose 3.6 percent to 293 million euros, driven by double-digit growth in the DTC channel, particularly in the Americas and the Europe, Middle East and Africa region.

Thom Browne revenues fell 18.9 percent to 64.2 million euros, impacted by the streamlining of its wholesale channel.

For the year, wholesale is expected to be down 25 to 30 percent, "as we are mindful of protecting the brand," said Gianluca Tagliabue, the group's chief financial and chief operating officer, during the call.

Tom Ford Fashion sales gained 3.8 percent to 67.4 million euros, boosted by 10 percent growth in DTC "demonstrating improving momentum, especially in the U.S. and Europe and supported by the positive reception of Haider Ackermann's first fashion show in March, which had a halo effect that drove additional traffic to stores and supported demand especially in the womenswear collection," said Paola Durante, chief of external relations.

While "no revolution" is taking place in the brand's pricing architecture, "higher ticket items" are expected at Tom Ford Fashion, she said responding to an analyst. Ackermann was named creative director of the brand last September, succeeding Peter Hawkings. He showed his first women's and men's collections for the brand for fall 2025 in March during Paris Fashion Week.

Sales of the textile division fell 10 percent to 29.9 million euros, reflecting a reduction in orders from brands outside the group.

In the first quarter, the Europe, Middle East and Africa region recorded group revenues of 154.1 million euros, slipping 1.6 percent and accounting for 34 percent of the total, boosted by double-digit growth at Zegna and Tom Ford Fashion.

Sales in the Americas amounted to 125 million euros, up 9.5 percent and representing 27 percent of the total,

Backstage at Zegna men's, fall 2025.



boosted by strong double-digit growth at Zegna, particularly in the U.S. The region, said Durante, was "the best" for all three brands, followed by Asia-Pacific. Japan and Singapore were particularly strong in the quarter, she said. Thom Browne is opening a store on Melrose Avenue in Los Angeles this week, Tagliabue said.

Responding to a question, he said no changes in the performance in America and "no areas of softness" had been seen since the end of the first quarter. "On the contrary, there have been improvements." He cited New York as the "epicenter of big numbers" in the U.S., but also ticked off Florida and Southern California as drivers.

Asked about U.S. President Donald Trump's 10 percent tariffs for goods imported into the U.S., Tagliabue said "we will take all the necessary actions to protect our EBIT [earnings before interest and taxes]," which will lead to a mid-single-digit increase in prices in the U.S., adjusting with the fall collections. "We are not moving manufacturing activities to the U.S., it's not feasible, and we are not changing our sourcing strategy, mostly in Italy," the executive said.

"We are taking advantage of a window [before the tariffs are implemented] to push deliveries by early July," he said when asked about the fall Ackermann collection for Tom Ford Fashion, which will be delivered starting at the end of May.

Revenues in the Greater China region decreased 11.6 percent to 123.3 million euros, representing 27 percent of the total, reflecting the soft consumer environment affecting all three brands, in Hong Kong in particular.

Durante said the outlook for Greater China remains "prudent," but that the "initial actions [taken by the group] are 'paying off, especially for Zegna. We are positioned to be ready [in a recovery] but the region will still be negative in the year, while softer negative, less steep."

In the first quarter, sales in the rest of Asia-Pacific were up 6.5 percent to 55.9 million euros, boosted by solid growth in



Tom Ford, fall 2025

revenues.

Zegna's DTC revenues amounted to 250.8 million euros, up 4.7 percent, largely driven by solid growth from existing stores. The Greater China region remained negative, in line with the trend from the last quarter of 2024. As of March 31, Zegna had 283 directly operated stores, with two net openings in the quarter, including in Riyadh Solitaire, Saudi Arabia.

Thom Browne DTC revenues totaled 46.3 million euros, up 3.5 percent on the same period last year, boosted by new store openings and by solid double-digit growth in Japan and South Korea. There are 117 Thom Browne directly operated stores, and one store opened in the quarter in Palm Beach, Fla.

Tom Ford Fashion DTC revenues totaled 48.1 million euros, a 10 percent gain driven by solid growth across all regions. At the end of March, the brand had 65 directly operated stores, with one opening in the quarter in Puerto Banus, Marbella, Spain.

In the first quarter, wholesale branded revenues totaled 79.5 million euros, compared to 99.1 million euros in the same period last year, a 19.8 percent decline.

Zegna's wholesale revenues were down 2.6 percent to 42.1 million euros, impacted by the decision to convert some wholesale shops-in-shop into retail concessions, for example at Saks and Harry Rosen, among others.

Thom Browne wholesale revenues fell 48 percent to 17.9 million euros, reflecting the streamlining of the channel, a different timing of deliveries and wholesale shops-in-shop conversions into retail concessions.

Tom Ford Fashion wholesale revenues decreased 8.9 percent to 19.4 million euros, also reflecting the conversion of shops-in-shop into retail concessions and cautious spring 2025 orders, the last season before the launch of Ackermann's collections for fall 2025.

Tagliabue said Zegna and Tom Ford's wholesale sales would remain negative in the year, but that from 2026 the channel would "not be a major driving factor."



Thom Browne, resort 2025

SJ DENIM

SOURCING JOURNAL

THE SUMMER ISSUE



The SJ Denim Summer Issue delves into the complexities of “Made in USA” denim, exploring how trade wars, rising costs and labor shortages are challenging its production.

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FASHION

Badgley Mischka Is Acquired in a New Joint Venture

- Founders Mark Badgley and James Mischka are said to have exited the company they started in 1988.

BY ROSEMARY FEITELBERG

Established Incorporated has set up a strategic joint venture with ACI Licensing to acquire and manage four well-known lifestyle brands – Badgley Mischka, Rachel Rachel Roy, C&C California and Kay Unger Design.

Financial terms of the deal are not being revealed, according to ACI Licensing's cofounder and co-chief chief executive officer Andy Cohan. The projected volume for the new entity was also not disclosed, he said.

As part of the deal, the Houston-based Established will maintain 51 percent of the ownership and ACI Licensing will hold 49 percent of the joint venture. The move expands Established's portfolio beyond the electronics sector and into fashion. The quartet of American labels offer apparel, accessories, footwear and home furnishings.

The joint venture has secured complete ownership of the Badgley Mischka, C&C California, and Kay Unger intellectual property, and a 71 percent stake in the Rachel Rachel Roy brand. ACI Licensing had acquired C&C California in 2016, and Kay Unger in 2017 and linked up with Rachel Rachel Roy around 2019, Cohan said. Under the new setup, those three companies and Rachel Rachel Roy are housed together.

ACI, which is headquartered in Los Angeles and has offices in New York, will continue to oversee the day-to-day operations of the portfolio and maintain existing relationships with manufacturers and retailers.

Badgley Mischka's cofounders and designers Mark Badgley and James Mischka are said to have exited the company that they started in New York City 37 years ago. They declined to comment Thursday.

Although the two designers are not affiliated with the new venture, they will continue to appear on HSN through their affiliation with the Badgley Mischka dress licensee MJCLK, Cohan said. (MJCLK was founded in 2008 by the designers and

Christine Currence, Lara Pirovato and Kimberly Lee-Siu as apparel licensee for the Badgley Mischka brand.)

After a humble start in 1988, the duo built up their namesake company by dressing celebrities like Viola Davis, Elizabeth Hurley, Ashley Judd and Helen Mirren for red carpet appearances. Over time, they added multiple licenses including dresses, bridal, shoes, sportswear, swimwear, eyewear, watches and furniture among others. Badgley Mischka is believed to have had more than 40 licenses before this month's acquisition.

The duo met as seniors at Parsons in New York City and quickly became a couple. Like other students at the school, they were assigned professional critics. Badgley's were Calvin Klein and Giorgio di Sant'Angelo, and Mischka's were Jeffrey Banks and Willi Smith. After graduation, they worked independently for other companies before starting their own label. Mischka was hired by Smith for his WilliWear label. After a one-day stint at Arnold Scaasi, Badgley worked for Jackie Rogers and later for Donna Karan.

When they launched their own company, they funded it with money that they borrowed from their families. Instead of going the sportswear route, they focused on the tony social set and created cocktail dresses and evening looks for what John B. Fairchild dubbed "Nouvelle Society."

Badgley Mischka has changed hands previously a few times. In 1993, Escada became Badgley Mischka's parent company. More than a decade later, in 2004, the Iconix Brand Group bought the New York-based company from Escada. In 2016, together with their longtime footwear licensee, Titan Industries Inc., which is headed by Joe Ouaknine, and MJCLK, the designers bought back the company from Iconix Brand Group.

Rachel Roy started her namesake company in 2004 and offers ready-to-wear and accessories. A member of the Council of Fashion Designers of America, Roy has served as creative director of her label. She has also helped groom new talent in various capacities and is an adviser to the national nonprofit World of Children that supports underprivileged children. Roy's daughter

with Damon Dash, Ava Dash, is an aspiring model and a cast member of Bravo's new show "Next Gen NYC."

Cohan said that Roy and "her family," as well as Unger, remain at their respective companies. Neither Roy nor Unger responded immediately to media requests Thursday.

Unger has been a stalwart in New York's fashion industry for more than 40 years as a designer, entrepreneur and philanthropist. She also serves as a trustee of The New School and chair emerita of Parsons School of Design, her alma mater. Unger has been a member of the Parsons School of Design's board of governors since 2006.

Started in 2002, C&C California plays up 1970s-style relaxed West Coast looks. Founders Cheyann Benedict and Claire Stansfield were inspired by the 1970s surf culture and celebrities from that era like the actresses Raquel Welch and Natalie Wood. The brand got a major boost a year later, after the talk show host Oprah Winfrey featured its super soft T-shirts as one of her "Favorite Things" on-air. As brand awareness increased, C&C California attracted other luminaries like Kate Hudson, Sienna Miller, Rachel Bilson and Nicole Richie.

The ultracausal brand took a more classic turn after it was acquired by Liz Claiborne in 2005. Cashmere sweaters were among the styles that were later added to the mix. In 2008, Perry Ellis International had acquired the brand

from Liz Claiborne. Five years later the company introduced a signature sport collection. ACI Licensing first connected with C&C California in 2015 through an acquisition, and then added six new licenses for the brand. Many more have since been added.

In a statement, Established's chief executive officer Hall O'Donnell said, "By leveraging our expertise in brand revitalization alongside ACI Licensing's deep industry knowledge in lifestyle manufacturing and licensing, we are positioned to maximize the growth potential of these well-known brands."



Badgley Mischka, fall 2025

BUSINESS

Tommy Hilfiger's \$51M Payday Is Proof of His Negotiating Savvy

- Parent company PVH Corp. bought out a chunk of its future payment obligations to the designer last year.

BY EVAN CLARK

Tommy Hilfiger has a knack for coming out on top – and designers looking to cash out on the brands they built should take note.

Hilfiger is not only one of the highest-profile names in fashion, but thanks to some savvy negotiating along the way, he's also among the highest paid.

Last year the brand's corporate parent, PVH Corp., logged pre-tax costs of \$50.7 million to cover "a portion of future payments to Mr. Hilfiger," according to a regulatory filing. The company has worked to get ahead of what's due to the designer

before, logging \$82.9 million in costs for a similar cash payment in 2017.

That \$133.6 million snapshot isn't executive compensation in the traditional sense. Hilfiger doesn't get paid a salary or bonus and he doesn't receive equity awards at PVH, according to a source.

Instead he is paid a portion of sales under a private agreement, the details of which have not been disclosed.

Basing pay on sales is a potentially very good deal – if one can get it.

Hilfiger connected his compensation to the brand's sales early on. When the brand was its own public company, the designer had a lifetime agreement that paid him the equivalent of 1.5 percent of any sales over \$48 million as well as a base salary of \$900,000, according to the company's 1997 annual report.

In 2006, when Apax Partners was in the process of buying the company, Hilfiger signed a new lifetime deal that paid him \$14.5 million in cash annually for three years, and a minimum of \$14.5 million for the fourth year, according to another regulatory filing. Then he was due to receive "a cash amount based on worldwide sales and licensing revenues of the company and its subsidiaries."

The percentage was not disclosed, but Apax, which bought the company for \$1.6 billion, flipped it to PVH for \$3 billion in 2010.

The contract has been amended again under PVH, at least to allow the company to buy out a portion of future payments to Hilfiger.

Whatever the current deal is, the latest payments to Hilfiger prove that it pays out handsomely.



Tommy Hilfiger



Business Insights

TECHNOLOGY

Phia to Answers Top Consumer Question: 'Should I Buy This?'

● The free AI-powered iOS app, which helps consumers evaluate prices, has already secured investors including Kris Jenner and Desiree Gruber.

BY ALEXANDRA PASTORE

Phoebe Gates and Sophia Kianni, former roommates at Stanford University and cohosts of "The Burnouts" podcast, have officially launched Phia, a free iOS app that helps consumers evaluate prices before they purchase. The goal of the venture is to help shoppers make better informed decisions, comparing prices of new and secondhand items.

Gates and Kianni explained that as fashion lovers, they have been frustrated by how hard it is to find "the right item at the best price." These searches often include endless scrolling, searching and manually comparing across sometimes dozens of sites. Recognizing the white space in traditional e-commerce, the duo created their own solution as a free iOS app.

Powered by AI and built by an in-house team of engineers with experience

at leading tech companies including Pinterest, Meta, Amazon and Millennium, the Phia app is designed to save shoppers time and money while promoting sustainability and transparency while pushing the industry forward.

"We, like so many consumers, want to shop smarter and make the most of our money," Kianni said. "Great secondhand options exist, but they're scattered across hundreds of websites – and no one has time to search them all. Our patented model solves that pain point by delivering instant price insights to help consumers make smarter, faster decisions with their money."

Phia utilizes a database of 250 million secondhand items and is available on more than 40,000 retail and secondhand shopping sites. Users will tap the Should I Buy This? button while browsing on Safari with Phia's browser extension. The consumer will then see an instant price check showing if the price of an item is high, typical or fair. If the item is marked as being "overpriced," Phia will provide exact matches and similar alternatives at better prices.

The app collects data from resale partners including The RealReal, Vestiaire Collective, ThredUp, StockX, eBay and

Poshmark. Phia also works across brands from Nike to Louis Vuitton to personalize user results based on size, preference and shopping behavior that can be saved on a profile. Users can favorite items, build collections and track prices.

Notably, the solution has already struck a chord and has secured investors, including Kris Jenner, who was a featured guest on a recent episode of "The Burnouts," and Desiree Gruber, among others.

"For all its growth, e-commerce hasn't meaningfully evolved to reflect how consumers actually make decisions," Gates said. "Shoppers are navigating an overwhelming number of options across retail and resale, often without the tools to confidently assess value. With Phia, we've built an AI-powered platform that brings clarity to that process – personalizing insights in real time so users can make smarter decisions instantly. It's about delivering the right answer, at the right moment, in just one click."

Kianni told WWD that what excites her most about bringing Phia to life is solving a problem everyone is facing: "finding the best deal without wasting hours comparing prices across countless sites. Thanks to Phia, discovering the perfect item at the perfect price has never been easier."



Street Style at Shanghai Fashion Week 2025.

Gates added that looking ahead the Phia team will "plan to focus on the growth of our product, and what got us to this point – listening to the feedback of our users. We'll continue to build out individualized experiences through the app to keep evolving Phia as the go-to shopping assistant."

Phia is now available for users on iOS and Chrome.

BUSINESS

Thierry Lasry and AriZona Blend Style In Limited Collab

● The limited-edition sunglasses collection will retail for \$99, playing on the beverage's infamous, affordable price point.

BY ALEXANDRA PASTORE

At a time when consumers are elevating quality while questioning luxury purchases, beloved beverage brand AriZona and luxury eyewear brand Thierry Lasry have announced a collaboration that has it all.

AriZona announced on Thursday that it has teamed up with Thierry Lasry on a limited-edition collection inspired by the brand's iconic can. The collaboration brings together bold aesthetics and futuristic design while tapping into a bit of nostalgia and acknowledging the importance of approachability.

The collection will retail for \$99, with the price point playing on AriZona's consistent, affordable price of 99 cents.

While the collection is not the first collaboration for the Thierry Lasry brand, it marks the first foray into a luxury collaboration for AriZona and was prompted by Wesley Vultaggio, chief creative officer of AriZona. The executive proposed the challenge of creating sunglasses with a \$99 price point in mind for Thierry Lasry – a mark well below the designer's expected range – that would

feel luxurious and approachable to the consumer.

"That price point is always really important to us," Vultaggio said. "AriZona has always stood for premium quality at a fair price – 99 cents. It's about democratizing luxury, just like AriZona has done with beverages for decades. We wanted to bring that same mindset to fashion."

Lasry told WWD that the concept "was a welcome challenge to design and produce sunglasses that would remain true to the Thierry Lasry level of craftsmanship and style, yet with a much lower price point, as I knew it would allow the brand to reach a wider audience with a love of fashion. I loved the idea of exploring a way to reach their audience without making compromises."

Vultaggio and Lasry told WWD that the collaboration felt personal. Vultaggio shared that he has been wearing the designer's frames for years while Lasry reflected that growing up in the '80s and '90s the AriZona aesthetic is in his DNA. And having become a U.S. citizen just last year, Lasry said, it was "very exciting to collaborate with such an iconic American brand."

"One day while walking in Soho I stopped into his store and pitched the idea of working together to his shop associate," Vultaggio said. "I quickly got a hold of Thierry directly and we immediately connected over a mutual love for craftsmanship and creativity. I've always admired his work; the attention to detail, the boldness, the way he plays with color and form. He totally got the vibe: expressive, iconic and unapologetically cool. This collab felt natural. We wanted to merge our worlds – his luxury eyewear sensibility with our bold, accessible energy."

The result is a complete embracing of

the challenge that marries luxury with approachability. In part, Lasry explained a shift from traditional handcrafted acetate to molded nylon was the key. The process was more industrialized than the designer's regular collection but maintained a level of sophistication with hand painting done in Italy. The collection includes nine matte, futuristic shield sunglasses in AriZona's color palate with varied lenses. The styles are crafted and hand-painted in Italy and showcase both brand names.

Lasry said that the collection created "something futuristic, sporty and colorful that speaks to the ethos of both brands. AriZona is a brand that knows who it is and hasn't wavered in its commitment to its consumers. I respect that. I've done a lot of collaborations over the years and it always starts with an authentic connection."

Vultaggio called the collection the "perfect fusion of our world's style, individuality and a shared obsession with bold design." He noted that the AriZona brand has always been about standing out with its bright cans and bold flavors but that "beneath all that color is a legacy of doing things the right way: high quality, strong values, and always putting the consumer first."

And that's where approachability comes in. "We're not trying to be exclusive – we're trying to be inclusive. When you take that DNA and pair it with someone like Thierry, who represents the highest level of eyewear artistry, it creates this amazing convergence of luxury and everyday cool," Vultaggio said.

The collection will become available on May 1 in New York at a three-day AriZona x Thierry Lasry pop-up at 216 Lafayette Street. Consumers will then be able to shop the collection starting May 5 online and in select stores.



AriZona x Thierry Lasry collaboration.



From the Gridiron to the Country Charts

The singer and former football player Tucker Wetmore has notched a double-platinum single and an ACM nomination.

BY JEAN E. PALMIERI PHOTOGRAPH BY GEORGE CHINSEE

Tucker Wetmore is still a little astonished by his success.

Since bursting onto the country music scene last year, the 25-year-old from Kalama, Wash., has amassed 1.3 million followers on TikTok and 573,000 on Instagram, hit the top of the charts with his single “Wind Up Missin’ You” – which was just certified double platinum – toured across the U.S. as well as overseas, and secured a nomination for New Male Artist at the Academy of Country Music Awards slated for May 8.

And on Friday, Wetmore will release his first full-length album, “What Not To,” which will feature his other platinum single, “Wine Into Whiskey,” as well as his most recent drops, “3, 2, 1” and “Casino.”

“I still wake up every day, mind blown that I’m doing the things that I’m doing,” he said. “I woke up today and I get to do what I love, and I’m gonna wake up tomorrow – hopefully, God willing – and

do what I love. I’m very blessed.”

But music wasn’t always his chosen path. Although he grew up surrounded by all types of music, from gospel and reggae to soft rock, and learned to play the piano, guitar and trumpet, it was sports that called his name – especially football. But after blowing out his left knee twice followed by his right playing ball in college in Montana, it was time to reassess.

“I remember sitting on the field right after the last one happened and that was my sign. I knew I needed to move back home. I didn’t know what I was going to do and, if I’m being honest, I was pretty lost.”

But that was before his mother got involved. “I remember sitting my mom down and saying, ‘I don’t know what I’m doing with my life.’ She said, ‘When was the last time you sat in front of piano or picked up a guitar?’”

He wrote his first song that night, which

opened the floodgates and led him on the road to Music City. “It was terrible, but I was hooked,” he said.

“I moved to Nashville in 2020 without knowing anybody,” he continued. “I signed a publishing deal in 2022 and then I wrote pretty much every day for three years, sometimes two or three songs a day. We finally got to a spot where we said, ‘Let’s start teasing some stuff.’ And then ‘Wine Into Whiskey’ happened. It took off on social media and right after that, ‘Wind Up Missin’ You’ came out and that blew up even more than ‘Wine.’”

He signed his record deal with UMG Nashville and Back Blocks Music last May, and he was on his way.

He released an EP last October, “Waves on a Sunset,” that featured both hit songs as well as six others. The work was designed to whet the appetite of his fans and support his tour.

“I had two or three songs out and we sold out an entire headline tour,” he said. “But we needed songs to create a set. You can’t just play three songs and leave.”

“What Not To” features 19 songs, including the two hits, as well as a couple of others from the EP. Wetmore said he was actually hoping to release a full-length album last year, but admitted: “It just wasn’t ready – and I wasn’t ready. There was still a lot of developing that had to happen before the album came out, so I’m pretty happy we waited.”

Although the album is lengthy for a debut work, Wetmore believes every cut is necessary to tell a complete story. “It was initially supposed to be fewer songs, but we had a pile of around 100 songs – I’ve been writing every day for the last four years of my life. But once we really narrowed it down to what I wanted to say and the overall theme, it kind of got easy. It just happened to be 19, but I feel like that’s the perfect amount for what I’m trying to accomplish.”

He said the 19 cuts will allow his fans an inside glimpse at his life. “This is my chance to scratch the surface of telling my story,” he said.

That story involves a lot of whiskey – the spirit is mentioned in nearly every track – as well as his penchant for blonds and his fondness for casinos. But the most personal song is the title track, which is about a guy who has met the girl of his dreams and is hoping for the house with the white picket fence and a yard full of kids. But he’s scared. As the lyrics say: “The thing I want is what I never had... what if I wind up being exactly what you were? When it gets hard, how do I not leave? How do I do ‘em better than you did me? I gotta admit I don’t know what to do, but thanks to you, I know what not to.”

“I was kind of hesitant to make the title of the album because it’s a very deep song,” he said. “It’s talking about the things that I don’t really talk about often, but that’s why I write songs, so I don’t really have to talk about them. What that song is saying is it’s like learning from doing the wrong things, or seeing other people do the things that they shouldn’t. I feel like life is just living and learning, and we’re all just doing that every single day. That’s pretty much what this album is talking about – my experiences and how I’ve grown from them. My intention was to create an album that meant something more than just a bunch of songs.”

That may be one reason he received the ACM nod, which is also a mindblower for him. “That’s such an honor,” he said. “Not to just attend the ACMs, but to be recognized by your peers and the people in the community that you look up to. In the last six months, I’ve really felt the love of Nashville that everybody always talked about. Nashville’s just family. No matter what happens that night, I’m just going to sit there with the biggest smile on my face.”

And he’ll also get the chance to showcase his style. He wore a Todd Snyder suit to the Country Music Association Awards last year and was wearing the designer’s sweater with brown Wrangler jeans, Tony Lama caiman boots and an Embry Outdoors ball cap during his New York visit. He said he will be working with Embry on a special hat collection later this year. “I like the stories that hats tell,” he said.

For more formal occasions, he’ll wear a cowboy hat but if he’s not walking a red carpet, he pretty much lives in Wranglers, “and I probably have 45 pairs of boots,” he said. “But if you were to ask me my preference, I’d rather be walking around barefoot.”



Tucker Wetmore



Sasha Calle on Her Ride to Hollywood

Calle stars alongside Jacob Elordi, Daisy Edgar-Jones, Will Poulter and Diego Calva in the new movie "On Swift Horses."

BY LEIGH NORDSTROM PHOTOGRAPH BY LEXIE MORELAND



Sasha Calle

When Sasha Calle was 18, she bought herself a plane ticket to Los Angeles and moved from South Florida with the dream of becoming an actor. The now 29-year-old is days away from the theatrical release of her star-studded film "On Swift Horses," cementing her as a must-see rising talent.

"It's a trip," she says in a moment of reflection.

Calle stars in "On Swift Horses" as Sandra, alongside Jacob Elordi, Daisy Edgar-Jones, Will Poulter and Diego Calva. The story follows Muriel and Lee (Edgar-Jones and Poulter), a married couple who settle in California following the Korean War. Lee's brother, played by Elordi, enters the picture, creating a slew of drama, all while Muriel begins her own self-discovery and develops feelings for a neighbor, Sandra.

The role was one Calle wanted so desperately that she didn't allow herself to think about it too much.

"I have this thing with auditions that's kind of like a boomerang: I just kind of throw it, and if it's meant to come back,

then I catch it, and this one was one of those that came back," she says.

Though the script went through various changes beyond what Calle first read, her love for Muriel and Sandra's relationship is what kept her invested.

"It's a queer film set in the '40s and a time of oppression and a time where it was dangerous to be yourself. It was dangerous to love someone that looked like you or had the same parts as you," Calle says. "And I find that these stories are so important to tell, and sadly, they're still relevant today. But I really hope that people can watch the movie and feel seen, because I definitely felt that with Sandra. I think I knew that that's why I needed to play her, because I just felt her so close to me.

"She's a strong gay woman who loves women, and she loves music, and she feels like she's in her body and she's proud of who she is," Calle adds. "What's not to love?"

As a musician herself, Calle got into character through sharing songs back and

forth with Edgar-Jones, as well as with director Daniel Minahan. While Minahan's choices were time period specific, such as "Kisses Sweeter Than Wine" by Jimmie Rodgers, Calle and Edgar-Jones focused more on feeling.

"Daisy was really lovely in just creating a friendship with me, because I think that's required. You're connecting with someone. You're falling in love with someone on the screen, so having comfortability is the hope," Calle says. "We both love music a lot, and we made a joint playlist as we were filming and that was something that tied us as humans, and I think also tied our characters."

Calle previously was best known for playing Supergirl in the 2023 movie "The Flash." As a teenager in South Florida, the daughter of a single mom, Calle initially focused on music, "my divine force."

"I never had money to really pay for any classes or training, and I lived in a place where arts weren't really [a focus]. I just didn't have the resources to do what I loved," she says.

She applied to the American Musical and Dramatic Academy in L.A. for college and initially was rejected.

"I was heartbroken. I called the college and spent an hour talking to them about how they needed to let me in," she says. "At the time, I was raising my little brother with my mom, I was working the same job as my mom, and I just felt in my chest that I needed to create art, and I just needed somebody to believe in me and I needed to learn."

Calle would eventually land herself a spot at AMDA, from which she graduated in 2017. Ahead, she stars in the upcoming crime thriller "Rip" with Matt Damon, Ben Affleck, Steven Yeun and Teyana Taylor, and is currently filming the second season of the Colin Farrell-led series "Sugar." The show is filming around L.A., and a recent day on the job took her back to a street right near AMDA.

"It was one of those moments of 'Wow, 11 years ago, you were just starting in this college and you had no idea, and you only just wished,'" she says.

WWD

Fashion Scoops



Ella Bleu Travolta and Fiona Palomo

Family Affair

"The shoes were the first solid thing that we were going with, this color," said actress Ella Bleu Travolta of her look for the day.

She had on Tod's Gommino loafers – naturally, as the face of the footwear. She opted for the "driving" style in brown patent leather, paired with a brown tunic-cut leather dress and trousers.

"We tried on a few things, and this was the last thing we tried on," she went on, with her dog by her side. "I bring him everywhere."

The Italian brand hosted a luncheon in its Rodeo Drive boutique in Beverly Hills on Wednesday in celebration of the shoe – launched at the end of the 1970s, with a sole covered in 133 rubber pebbles – and Travolta's new campaign.

"It honestly just felt like we were all hanging out, and they were there capturing it," she said of the campaign, shot by photographer Oliver Hadlee Pearch in Tuscany alongside four other young talents – Lennon Gallagher, Stella Banderas, Roberto Rossellini and Leo Gassmann. All have familiar last names; Travolta, who turned 25 this month, is the daughter of John Travolta and Kelly Preston.

"Everyone who was in the shoot was so sweet," she continued. "We all became very fast friends. I felt like we were on a movie set. It was such a big production, but it also felt so intimate. It was just a lot of fun."

Tod's brought a taste of Italy to the store's third-floor terrace, serving up a lunch of endive salad with

shaved parmesan and pomegranates, paccheri al pomodoro and Basque cheesecake.

"I'll need a nap after this," guests echoed, under an overcast sky.

The event brought out a slew of rising actresses, including Fiona Palomo; Larsen Thompson; Harlow Olivia, daughter of Patricia Arquette; Olivia Holt; María Gabriela de Faria; Amiah Miller, as well as singer Claire Khodara and Art Production Fund's Casey Fremont.

Next, Travolta will appear in a film with her father, she said: "It's a very personal project. I can't say too, too much about it, but it's a project I did with my dad. It's very personal, very beautiful. It's something that he's been wanting to do for a really long time, and it's finally done. It's actually interesting, because it's very close to home. It has a lot to do with our family, and our family is a part of it, even my aunts and uncles. It's really cool. I'm really excited about it. It's coming out this year I think."

—RYMA CHIKHOUNE

Bailey On Show

David Bailey is the fifth photographer to be getting a Spanish retrospective at the Marta Ortega Pérez Foundation, otherwise known as MOP Foundation in the city of A Coruña.

The British photographer's exhibition "David Bailey's Changing Fashion" will open on June 28 with more than 140 photographs, including portraits of Mick Jagger, Jean Shrimpton, Cecil Beaton, Rudolf Nureyev and the notorious London gangsters Ronnie and Reggie Kray.

"Without question, David Bailey is a master of a visual language that is uniquely his own. From the early days, he consistently backed his own vision, breaking the rules of fashion photography and inventing new ones at will. No one moved with greater ease through the worlds of '60s music, fashion and style," Pérez said.

"I am thrilled that with



Jean Shrimpton, 1965

this exhibition, we have been able, once again, to champion world-class photography at our space in A Coruña. This exhibition captures a fleeting golden moment that utterly changed the history of style, photography and culture," she added.

At the MOP Foundation, Pérez is honing a collection of exhibitions dedicated to fashion image makers. The foundation has already hosted exhibitions on Peter Lindbergh and Steven Meisel.

Irving Penn's shocking and elegant photographs are on display at MOP as it nears its end on May 1.

"Irving Penn: Centennial" showcases 175 works by the American photographer, from celebrity portraits, abstract nudes, compositions of flowers and more.

In 2023, the foundation announced the opening of "Helmut Newton – Fact & Fiction," an exhibit curated by Philippe Garner, Matthias Harder and Tim Jefferies in collaboration with the Helmut Newton Foundation celebrating the life and work of photographer Helmut Newton.

—HIKMAT MOHAMMED

Chance Encounters

As part of the ongoing celebration of its Chance Eau Splendide's launch on April 15, Chanel held an intimate gathering Thursday evening in Paris' Soho House to air the video "Taking A Chance in Music."

Singers Solange Knowles, Neneh Cherry, Yukimi and Angèle, who is ambassador of Eau Splendide, discussed subjects such as chance and jazz in a clip to be shown on media platforms and YouTube.

"It was clear from Day One that working with Chanel, they wanted to go on a musical odyssey, which is what we've done," said Dave Holt, publisher and chief creative officer of Wax Poetics, which made the video with the French luxury house. "They wanted to illustrate how creative lives have to take a chance."

The shooting of the roundtable discussion took place on a bitter day in Paris. (The proceedings were also captured in a mini Wax Poetics magazine.)

"I've always found connection with the idea of waiting for a sign and understanding why things happen they way they



Yukimi, Angèle, Solange Knowles and Neneh Cherry.

do," said Angèle, in the spot's opening, which also has toggling images of Paris. "There's something about stepping out of your comfort zone, the feeling of not knowing what will happen, but trusting that it will lead you to something."

"Paris has always been a place of hidden gems, with stories waiting to unfold, a place where art and creativity is constantly in the air," she continued.

Olivier Poige, Chanel's in-house perfumer-creator, likened music and perfume. "Somehow, it expresses something intimate, as well," he said. "There is something that translates from you. We are very poor in words, when you speak about perfume. There are none that really express the reality of it. We use a lot of words from music: We speak about notes, about accords – I think you could even speak about the tonality of a perfume. There is something that we cannot express, and I like that."

Knowles shared about being courageous when she recorded her first record at age 14. "Sonically I listen back to it, and it's much more experimental and adventurous as I think it was packaged to be," she said. "There were some brave moments there. I also feel like as a teenager, you're writing from such a raw and honest place that I feel like lyrically I still haven't upped a lot of things that I said. There's poetry in everything I said."

"Music's a very powerful medium," Cherry continued. "I had a little radio on in the hotel room that was set on a jazz station for effect as you walk in the room. I just left it there and a Dinah Washington song came on. I love her so much – I was just lying there, kind of bleeding a little bit from my heart. Just feeling and thinking, I guess leading to this conversation we're going to have [about] the language of music...the feelings that music and sound evokes. It's beyond language."

Knowles said: "It carries smell, it carries sight." She called it "such an incredible

gift and tool that we have to be transporters of time and space in that way."

Taking a chance for Yukimi is "leaning into life. What I think of is having your eyes closed and jumping back and waiting for something to catch you."

She added it's about "having some kind of a faith in that something will catch you, and that there is some kind of a plan there."

Chanel didn't stop there with its global rollout of the Chance Eau Splendide.

It made sure to take its new fragrance to the streets of Shoreditch in east London. The brand painted a small vicinity in the fragrance's lilac shade from Shoreditch House all the way to Chance Street, where a pop-up will take place from Friday to May 25.

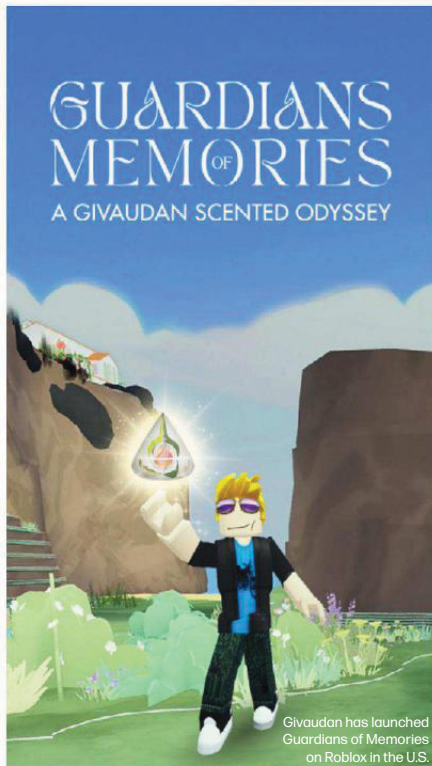
The pop-up space has been painted in a Pop Art-inspired mural with the fragrance bottle and the slogan "Take your chance!"

Inside there were nods to Gabrielle "Coco" Chanel's superstition with a small box that mimicked the cap of the fragrance, which is based on a dice with each side opening up to a mystical message such as "Chance is a remarkable twist of fate."

Other rooms included fun games, such as an ATM-like machine that printed small swatches of the fragrance onto a sample card; a lottery machine that contained prizes such as a poster, mirror or samples; a labyrinth table game and a bar that lets visitors smell all the other iterations of Chance, from Chance Eau Fraîche, Chance Eau Tendre to Chance Eau Vive.

The pop-up ends with a small store allowing visitors to purchase Chance Eau Splendide and to also get a taste of a complimentary candy floss inspired by the purple hue of the fragrance. The pop-up will also be offering beauty services on site including Chance-inspired makeup looks.

On May 1, visitors can book in for a Chance Street soirée with a live DJ, cocktails and canapés. —JENNIFER WEIL AND H.M.



Givaudan has launched Guardians of Memories on Roblox in the U.S.

Follow Your Nose

To raise awareness of perfume creation among Gens Z and Alpha, Givaudan on Thursday launched its game, Guardians of Memories, on Roblox in the U.S.

The Swiss fragrance and flavors supplier's game is interactive and educational, allowing players to experiment with perfume ingredients and composition. The premise is that inhabitants in a made-up land lost their memory and fragrance is their only means to regain it. A mysterious fog circulating devours everything it touches and is a danger to the creatures living in this eye-catching world saturated in color.

Fragrance's invisibility makes it less selfie- and screen-friendly than other beauty product categories, so makers look for ways to build up knowledge of it online, especially among the younger set making up consumers of tomorrow.

Givaudan launched Guardians of Memories in France on Jan. 29, and so far it has garnered 53,000 visitors, while 471 people have made it a favorite.

Guardians of Memories' scented Odyssey introduces players to olfactive ingredients; cute, gentle, bobble-headed characters each with different characteristics; quests; fragrance recipes; formulations, and tutorials.

"In alignment with our 2025 global digital strategy,

houses at the heart of the experience, transforming each perfume creation into more than just a product."

Guardians of Memories was also created with Givaudan's external partners Digitali and Novelab.

Roblox is the largest gaming platform worldwide, with 90 million daily players. —J.W.

Being Mindful

Selena Gomez's Rare Beauty is hosting its fourth annual Mental Health Summit on May 1 in Los Angeles.

"When I launched Rare Beauty, I wanted to create a brand with a greater meaning and a vision to create a welcoming community that could shape positive conversations around self-acceptance and mental health," Gomez, founder of Rare Beauty and the Rare Impact Fund, told WWD in an exclusive statement.

"Seeing the impact of initiatives like our Mental Health Summit, which is bringing that vision to life, makes me incredibly proud of the community we've created," she went on.

More than \$20 million has been collected to date for the Rare Impact Fund, the brand's nonprofit affiliate working to expand mental health awareness. With 1 percent of all Rare Beauty sales going to the Rare Impact Fund, the initiative supports 30 mental health organizations in five continents, reaching an annual average of 1.9 million young people. The goal is to raise \$100 million.

This year's summit, being held in downtown L.A., is a one-day event that plans to welcome about 175 guests for interactive conversations around self-acceptance and mental health (similar to the 2024 summit, which was hosted in New York). The lineup includes a closing fireside chat with Jay Shetty, the British life coach and podcaster.

It was in September 2020 that Gomez launched Rare Beauty, though the idea for the brand took shape pre-pandemic, alongside her team that includes chief executive



An image from Ba&sh's Mini Me campaign.

officer Scott Friedman; chief digital officer Mehdi Mehdi; chief product development officer Joyce Kim; chief marketing officer Katie Welch; chief sales officer Kim Magee, and chief impact officer and president of the Rare Impact Fund Elyse Cohen.

"Mental health has emerged as a prominent concern for Gen Z so we are proud to provide a platform like the Rare Beauty Mental Health Summit to address youth mental health," said Cohen in a statement. "With this event, our goal is to unite young people from across the globe with some of the most influential voices in mental health and education for a day dedicated to encouraging open discussions and reducing the stigma associated with mental health." —R.C.

Mini Line

Ba&sh, the French contemporary firm, launched a Mini Me collection of childrenswear on Wednesday.

The brand's campaign is fronted by German model and Ibiza-based muse, Vanessa Breuer with her three daughters. They model iconic pieces from the Ba&sh main collection reimagined in limited-edition mini versions. The capsule is timed to Mother's Day and is a celebration of all mothers.

The seven-piece collection includes the Ba&sh hoodie, the Gaspard cardigan, boho-print dresses and mini suede cowboy boots, the Cara Boot, reworked for little girls. The Cara Boot is being released in a limited digital-only edition, available online in four sizes — 28, 30, 32 and 34. The Cara Boot retails for \$215 for children. The Mini Me capsule will be available in all Ba&sh boutiques and online.

According to Wang, who has made a name for herself in Paris by bringing Chinese traditional culture into the contemporary wardrobe, the car took three years to make, and she wanted the model to reflect the feeling of breaking the boundaries between East and West, and genders, as she has done on the runway since 2016.

"The idea of a shirt exists in both Chinese and Western culture. It's a gender- and time-transcending wardrobe staple. To me, there is no better way to approach an item with infinite possibilities through a deconstructed lens," Wang said.

As for the color of the car, the designer said she borrowed this concept of blank-leaving, commonly used in Chinese paintings, similar to minimalism's less-is-more ethos.

Following the debut in the garden of a Western-style mansion in downtown Shanghai, the custom A7 model will go on display at the Shanghai International Automobile Industry Exhibition from Friday. Wang is Audi's first Asian fashion designer collaborator in its 116-year history.

After that, the custom model will tour major cities across China to showcase Audi's ambition in forging a closer tie with the nation's fashion-forward audience.

In addition to the car, Wang has designed a limited-edition four-piece apparel and accessory capsule for Audi. It includes a white shirt with patterns inspired by Audi's signature honeycomb grille, a 3D printed bag, a bolo tie, and a keychain.

The Audi collaboration marks Wang's latest achievement in the realm of brand partnership, having launched a sold-out co-designed capsule with Chinese star Victor Ma and Japanese American musician Caelan Moriarty at ComplexCon Hong Kong last month.

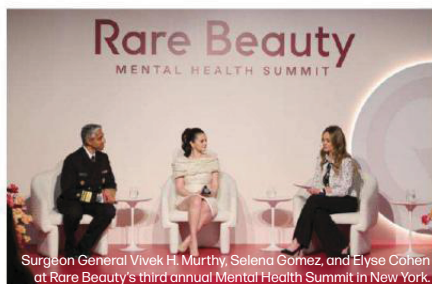
In May, the designer will travel to Japan for a pop-up at the Hankyu Department Store in Osaka as part of a Sino-Japanese strategic partnership led by the Shanghai Fashion Designer Association and the Council of Fashion Designers Tokyo. —TIANWEI ZHANG

Edgy Drive

Chinese fashion designer Feng Chen Wang on Thursday unveiled a custom design of Audi's five-door lift back model A7L as part of her debut collaboration with the German luxury automobile-maker.

The car, in white, is fitted with embossed exteriors showing deconstructed shirt parts, including a front gathering detail from 18th-century shirting, detachable shirt collars and cuff details from the 19th century, knots and neck details from Chinese shirts, and shirts adorned with Audi's signature honeycomb front grille motifs.

Feng Chen Wang with a custom Audi A7 designed by her.



Surgeon General Vivek H. Murthy, Selena Gomez, and Elyse Cohen at Rare Beauty's third annual Mental Health Summit in New York.