

WWD

Fashion. Beauty. Business.



Hide and Seek

In the last few years the hubbub around stars departing The Mark and The Carlyle hotels for the Met Gala has almost become greater than that on the famed museum's steps as crowds pack the entrances to get a first glimpse – and photo – of what celebrities are wearing. How to keep it a secret? Ask Doechii, sort of seen here, who ingeniously surrounded herself with screens and topped them with umbrellas to maintain the mystery. Oh, and she wore Louis Vuitton designed by Pharrell Williams. *For more on the departures from the hotels, see pages 17 to 22.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY MASATO ONODA

EXCLUSIVE

Printemps on Wall Street Makes Change in Command



Laura Lendrum



Thierry Prevost

● Thierry Prevost will be the new CEO of Printemps America, succeeding Laura Lendrum who is becoming chairman of Printemps America's advisory board.

BY DAVID MOIN

After just six weeks since its opening on Wall Street, Printemps is making a change of command in the U.S., WWD has learned.

Thierry Prevost has been named chief executive officer of Printemps America, succeeding Laura Lendrum who is shifting to chairman of Printemps America's advisory board, a new role.

"Thanks to her visionary leadership, we have redefined the retail landscape for the 21st century, creating a unique experience that blends retail and hospitality. In her

new role as chairman of our advisory board, Laura will continue to bring her unique expertise to guide our growth and innovation in this dynamic market," said Jean-Marc Bellaïche, global CEO of the Paris-based Printemps Group, in a statement.

He said Printemps on Wall Street is "a testament to Laura's entrepreneurial spirit."

Asked how business is at Printemps on Wall Street so far, Lendrum told WWD, "Everything is going so well. We've had really strong foot traffic and are exceeding expectations in terms of performance. The feedback has been so strong." She also said that her shift into a different role at Printemps provides an opportunity to pursue new projects.

Four years ago, Lendrum was hired by Printemps in New York, becoming the luxury store's first employee. "Lendrum has played a pivotal role in creating a very innovative shopping experience that

emphasizes deep customer engagement and community building," Printemps said in its statement. Prior to her appointment, Lendrum was a consultant, and earlier was in charge of global markets and retail for Dean & DeLuca, and before that, was North American president at Saint Laurent, Gucci and Ralph Lauren.

Since its opening in late March at One Wall Street in Manhattan's financial district, Printemps has been the talk of the town, primarily because of its stunning architecture, fresco artwork, unique layout and emphasis on hospitality with three restaurants and two bars. The store also features the landmarked 1920s red and gold mosaic-tiled Red Room which houses footwear. That section of the store was formerly a bank.

The Paris-based Printemps' expansion to New York's financial district is a gamble since the neighborhood is not perceived as a destination for designer and luxury shopping, which hasn't exactly blossomed downtown. A Saks Fifth Avenue women's store and separate men's store, as well as Barneys New York, came and left, while 10 Corso Como did the same at the South Street Seaport. However, in the past decade there's been a modest buildup of luxury and designer stores with the openings of Tiffany & Co. and Hermès on Wall Street, and Elyse Walker and Thom Browne in TriBeCa. On the west side, Brookfield Place houses Gucci, Bottega Veneta, Louis Vuitton and Zegna.

"This has been the project of a lifetime, and I thank Jean-Marc and the Printemps board for giving me the freedom to create a vibrant ecosystem centered around joy and connection where clients immediately feel welcome and can find many ways to engage more deeply with Printemps," Lendrum said in a statement. "This has

always been the plan: for me to envision, conceptualize, and execute a new vision for retail, and then step back from the day-to-day once the project launched. I can't believe that after four years we are here, and I am so eager to see how the project evolves once Printemps New York has time with customers in the market."

Prevost has over 30 years of experience working with department stores in Europe, the Middle East and Asia. Most recently, he led the launch of Printemps Doha and served as general manager for the past four years. "His expertise is centered on enhancing the customer experience and developing bespoke journeys tailored to each market, all while driving profitability through effective management and brand strategy. Thierry's leadership will be critical in advancing the success of Printemps New York as it embraces its innovative approach to luxury retail," the company said.

"We are entering an exciting new chapter for Printemps New York, and I am committed to continuing to create a unique shopping experience that embodies the spirit of hospitality and community," said Prevost.

Bellaïche added: "Having worked with Thierry for the last four years, I am confident that he will continue to build on the success of Printemps New York. He will undoubtedly cultivate a culture of belonging for our new team members and push the boundaries of what is possible in retail, exploring endless opportunities for innovation and growth."

Founded in 1865 by Jules Jaluzot, the Printemps Group operates 20 department stores in France as well as nine Citadium stores, Place des Tendance, a fashion and beauty e-commerce site and Made in Design, an online store for designer furniture, lighting and decoration.

BUSINESS

Hermès Hikes Prices In the U.S.

● The French fashion house has raised prices on most goods including handbags and ready-to-wear in the U.S. to offset the Trump administration's tariffs.

BY RHONDA RICHFORD

PARIS — As the business world adjusts to the Trump administration's tariffs, Hermès International has followed through with the price increases promised during its most recent round of financial results.

Bernstein analysts examined prices on the brand's U.S. website across women's bags, jewelry, ready-to-wear, silks and accessories, watches, fragrances, makeup and home, concluding that prices have been bumped up an average of 4 to 5 percent across the board.

"These will likely cover for a worst-case scenario of 10 percent tariffs and compensate for the recent weakening of the U.S. dollar against the euro," Bernstein analyst Luca Solca wrote in a report this week.

Hermès' move follows Louis Vuitton raising its prices in the U.S. 3 to 4 percent in April.

Hermès can lean on its "undisputed" pricing power, according to Bernstein. The company has steadily increased prices each year, but it still hasn't dented customers' desire: Sales were up 17 percent for the fourth quarter of 2024 and continued to rise in the first quarter, up 10 percent year-over-year.

In fact, the company is trying to increase production capacity for its popular handbags by building four new factories over the next four years after it was hit by tight supply over the holiday period and start of the year in the U.S., despite price increases of about 6 to 7 percent last year.

Hermès chief executive officer Axel Dumas believes the company's reputation makes it a steady choice for customers in turbulent times. Speaking at the company's annual shareholders' meeting on April 30, he recalled the 2008 financial crisis as raising the brand's value. "There was a flight to quality," he said. "Hermès is the gold standard in a way."

Hermès is still "top-of-the-mind for consumers...particularly in China," the Bernstein report noted.

"I think it pays for a brand like Hermès to sit at the very top of consumer desirability. When consumers are more guarded, when they have second thoughts about spending money, when they cut their budgets — think of the Chinese, for example — Hermès is the very last brand they give up on," Solca told WWD.

"Almost all" pieces in the core categories of fashion and accessories have increased in price though handbags — including the Birkin, Kelly and Constance ranges — are not sold online. However, "we expect price

increases for these products to fall within a similar range," Solca said in the report.

The categories that were less or not affected were mostly in the home, fragrances and makeup categories.

"We do not expect Hermès to be completely immune to weakening demand — as its decision to absorb tariffs in perfume and beauty shows," he said.

Solca noted that these categories are the entry-level points for aspirational customers. "The fragrances and makeup categories represent Hermès' most accessible and hence most price sensitive categories," he said. Prices in these categories average in the high hundred, about \$169 to \$186. "Hermès has likely taken the decision to absorb tariffs on these products — they are still manufactured in France and Italy and are still subject to tariffs — in order to defend its

pricing balance."

Those categories are a smaller chunk of the Hermès business, only about 3.5 percent of its gross sales. In the first quarter, sales in the perfume and beauty category were down half a point to 129 million euros, while sales in the home and jewelry category were up 6.1 percent to 256 million euros.

On average, Hermès increased prices 5 percent in handbags, jewelry and women's silks — which includes its famous scarves. Women's ready-to-wear — a category that jumped 7.2 percent at constant currency in the last quarter, racking up 1.15 billion euros in sales — saw its prices increase by 4.2 percent.

Watches saw smaller price hikes of 3.4 percent, with the average timepiece ringing up at \$10,581. The category has been struggling, with sales down 10 percent in the first quarter.



Backstage at Hermès, fall 2025.

BEAUTY

Takeaways From Day One of The WWD Beauty CEO Summit

- Speakers included CEOs Kecia Steelman and Stéphane de La Faverie, Monday Haircare founder Jaimee Lupton and more.

BY NOOR LOBAD AND EMILY BURNS

On Wednesday, WWD Beauty Inc kicked off Day One of its 2025 Beauty CEO Summit at Casa Cipriani in New York City. Themed “The New Leadership Mandate: The Issues, The Innovations, The Insights,” the event brought together industry leaders to discuss pushing the boundaries of product and retail innovation; navigating the complex global environment, and keeping up with culture.

The day’s speakers included Ulta Beauty chief executive officer and president Kecia Steelman, The Estée Lauder Cos. CEO Stéphane de La Faverie, Monday Haircare founder Jaimee Lupton and more.

Here, the top 17 takeaways from the the first day:

When in Doubt, Double Down on Core Strengths: For Ulta Beauty CEO Steelman, driving emotional connectivity in stores via in-person activations has been the cornerstone of Ulta’s differentiation — and a key aspect of the Ulta Beauty Unleashed strategy she is pioneering as retailer competition stiffens.

Beauty Moves With Culture: “Beauty is extremely resilient,” de La Faverie said. “Beauty moves with culture, and culture moves constantly.”

Incrementality Is an Art: “Curate your collection so it’s a natural next step, consistently finding ways to add meaningful value to your customer’s lives,” said Cassandra Morales Thurston, founder and CEO of Kitsch, which is netting upward of

\$350 million in annual sales.

Dupes Present More Opportunity Than Meets the Eye: Contentious as they may be, dupes boost consumer engagement, research and product testing for products on all ends of the pricing spectrum, Circana’s Larissa Jensen said. Proprietary data from Circana and WWD shows price is important, but not the only motivator for buying dupes — in fact, 68 percent of consumers believe dupes have a similar quality to that of the original product, and 77 percent of consumers either have purchased or would consider purchasing a dupe.

Move Quick to Stay Relevant: “You need to move at the speed of light. You need to be at the front of cultural trends,” said Lupton, founder of Monday Haircare, Being Haircare and Daise Beauty.

Make Time to Daydream: Spanx and Sneex founder Sara Blakely has found that making time to daydream is an overlooked key to fostering not just ideas, but potentially the next million- or billion-dollar ideas — and she would know.

Beauty Goes Beyond Clinicals: For plastic surgeon and skin care brand founder Dr. Julius Few, the future of the category relies on raising the bar from just standard clinical studies to peer-reviewed publishing.

Content Never Sleeps: At Supergoop, content is 24/7, per CEO Lisa Sequino, as the sunscreen brand has a team in Asia creating overnight. She emphasized that the brand has increased its content by five times this year alone.

Staying Ahead of the Consumer’s Needs: “We ask ourself the question all the time: ‘Is there something that we

can do that the consumer can’t express or doesn’t know, and we can define or explore a possibility that’s not defined by them,” said Freddy Bharucha, president of personal care at Procter & Gamble.

Culture Is King: For Revlon CEO Michelle Peluso, as hard as adapting new tech tools and navigating macroeconomic factors may be, keeping up with culture — and cultivating a positive internal one — is even more so, but just as important. “I have spent my entire career [keeping up with] how technology changes things, and what I have learned is the tool piece is the very, very easy piece; data, standards, data governance — that’s harder — training, that stuff, that’s hard — and culture, really hard.”

Thriving in the Unknown: “This is a very uncertain time, and one of the hardest things for M&A and transactions is uncertainty. People really get nervous, they get ‘risky off’ is the term that people use,” said Venette Ho, managing director and head of beauty, personal care and wellness at Raymond James. “But at the end of the day, it’s an industry that really thrives on M&A.”

Tap Into Measured Magic: For all of the fun in escapist branding, all of the Willy Wonka-type products, the dirty little truth is that behind it all the scaffolding is actually very traditional and very boring in methodical and meticulous strategic marketing.

Make It Frictionless: Taylor Hamilton of Recom stressed the need to make the user journey as easy as possible along every step of the way.

Power Personalization With AI: With technology such as AI/AR continuing to expand in the beauty industry,



Ulta Beauty CEO Kecia Steelman at the 2025 WWD Beauty CEO Summit in conversation with senior beauty editor, Kathryn Hopkins.

Perfect Corp. has been a leader in this intersection for the past decade. Alice Chang of Perfect Corp. and Lynda Pak of Estée Lauder Cos. discussed how the two companies have worked closely together to provide customers with the ultimate experience, from mapping skin care concerns to makeup try-ons to shade matching — all to allow consumers to be their most beautiful selves.

Thinking About the Holistic Shopping Experience: Amazon’s Melis del Rey is embracing health as well as beauty in her role and it’s presenting new opportunities to innovate on behalf of consumers and programs, with one of the most exciting opportunities being around creating a holistic shopping experience.

Maximizing the Impact of Beauty Tech: “If you look at the impact of beauty tech across different brands, what you find is that there are some cases that it has a tremendously positive impact, and the biggest differentiator is not the brand category or market segment or even provider technology. The biggest differentiator is user experience,” said Parham Aarabi, CEO of Pre.

Put Authenticity Over Transactions: Beauty is a high touch category — brands are touching peoples’ skin and their hearts, making every interaction important. Brands fostering loyalty are putting authenticity over transactions, ensuring that the story they are telling makes an impact.

BEAUTY

Paris Hilton Reveals Parívie Skin Care Line



Paris Hilton Reveals Parívie Skin Care Line.

- The six-product collection was released Wednesday.

BY RYMA CHIKHOUNE

Paris Hilton has unveiled Parívie, a skin care line as part of her 11:11 Beauty venture. “I wanted to really create this product

line from the ground up, with all new formulas really backed by science with real results,” Hilton said.

The six-product collection, released Wednesday on parívie.com, was created in partnership with marketing agency Guthy-Renker and its longtime executive Alexandra Marsh — cofounder and chief executive officer of 11:11 Beauty.

Hilton, now 44 and a mother of two, said she felt motivated by her fans and a newfound awareness of ingredients.

“For so many years, people are always asking me about my skin care routine, what I use, advice,” Hilton continued. “So, I’m just always listening to all my fans and what they like, what they don’t like. And also, now just being a mom, my algorithm used to be all puppies, now it’s all babies and moms sharing advice. I’m more concerned than ever about what I put on my skin, and I was just horrified to read about so many toxic ingredients, and in some of my favorite products before that I had no idea about. That was super important to me, just making sure that each ingredient was incredible for your skin.”

Nearly three years in the making, the launch introduces a \$38 “That’s Radiant Daily Purifying Cleanser,” made with

salicylic acid, ceramides and rice extract; \$65 “That’s Smooth Skin-Perfecting Elixir,” using AHA fruit acids, arginine and beta-glucan; \$72 “That’s Firm Contouring Neck Treatment,” with a “skin-firming booster,” coffee extract and tremella fuciformis; \$64 “That’s Quenched Barrier Support Crème,” with hyaluronic acid, niacinamide and shea butter; \$85 “That’s Restored Overnight Repair Crème,” with glycerin, hyaluronic acid, essential fatty acids and a complex derived from tea tree oil, and \$125 “That’s Tight Plumping Vitality Serum,” with antioxidants, probiotic-fermented extracts, patented polypeptide (a blend of 13 amino acids) and squalene. The latter four products are also formulated with the brand’s “inPHinite YouthTechnology,” a bioactive complex made with peptides, antioxidants and probiotic-fermented extracts.

“It’s what we call our Benjamin Button serum,” Hilton laughed, referencing the fictional character who ages in reverse, as she described the bioactive complex. “It supports natural production of collagen and makes your skin smoother, more youthful looking, really reduces the appearance of dark spots, and makes your skin brighter and glowing. It has really powerful antioxidants in it, and just really defends the skin from all the environmental stressors and blue light. It helps boost renewal at a cellular level and fights major signs of aging. It’s really next level skin care.”

“We own all the formulas,” Marsh added. “All the products have a piece of Paris, and each and every one has been clinically tested.”

The pair said they collaborated closely, working with an East Coast lab, and aim to launch in retail next year.

“We really strategically wanted to focus on our own site, listen to our customer, listen to the community, and really build that core connection with them as a first pillar,” Marsh explained. “And then our plan is to launch with a strategic partner in retail probably a year out, so next fall of 26.”

Hilton, a multihyphenate talent, is a majority stakeholder in 11:11 Media (11:11 Beauty is a division), which she launched in 2021 with Bruce Gersh.

“This is a huge milestone for me, being a majority stakeholder for the first time,” she said. “I’ve been doing this for over two decades now, and I’ve sold billions of dollars of products for people, and most of these were licensing deals, very lucrative, but it’s not the same as really owning it.”

Hilton continues to stay busy. She recently launched her 30th fragrance at Ulta Beauty with Parlux, while in the studio recording her third album and getting ready to go on tour. She’s also working on the TV series adaptation of her 2023 book release, “Paris: The Memoir.” A24 bought the rights, with 11:11 Media producing alongside Dakota and Elle Fanning’s Lowellen Pictures and David Bernad’s Middle Child Pictures.

“We’re just finishing up all the scripts and everything right now,” Hilton said. “And it’s been bought by the best streamer, so that is getting developed now, and I’m so excited for my life story to be turned into a series.”

THE BOTTOM LINE

Saks Connections: Luxury Reset and Industry Shake-up

● Remaking luxury retail is one way to draw a crowd.

BY EVAN CLARK

Any good controversy has two, maybe three players squaring off, repositioning for a future that is usually coming much sooner than later.

And then there's a focal point – some kind of friction or worry – that animates it all, forcing a kind of forward momentum.

The state of Saks Global is not just a good controversy – it's a great one.

Instead of only a few players, there's a kaleidoscope of interests all coming together, looking to merge Saks and Neiman Marcus, build the future of luxury shopping, continue to ship their goods

– or just get out with a return on their investment.

At the center of it all are Saks' executive chairman Richard Baker and its chief executive officer Marc Metrick.

It was Baker who realized his years-long dream to buy Neiman's, closing a hard-fought \$2.7 billion deal last year. But it's Metrick who has the day-to-day responsibility for making it work. Their attempt to reset the luxury model has included longer payment terms for vendors, a new organizational structure with a commercial team instead of chief merchants, cost cutting and more.

Each step of the way there has been something noteworthy – a ton of angst, some strategic pivot, strange bedfellows or big-time money.

- Early investors like Insight Partners, who gave the company \$500 million in 2021 to establish a stand-alone Saks e-commerce business, needed to flex with the changing market and strategy.
- New investors and partners had to be brought onboard, including Amazon, which just launched a Saks e-commerce storefront.
- Brands that kept shipping to Saks even as past-due bills piled up needed to accept a delayed repayment schedule.
- Factors, like Hillidun's Gary Wassner, had to navigate between brands and the retailers, deciding which shipments to secure.
- The workforce at Saks and Neiman's weathered cuts and some store closures.

● And all the while competitors like LuxExperience, the new Mytheresa and Net-a-porter mashup, have been angling for advantage. Now it's the bondholders who have surged to the fore.

Even though it was just five months ago that Saks sold \$2.2 billion in bonds to finance the combination, the investors holding that debt are nervous, trading it for less than 58 cents on the dollar.

Metrick said the company has nearly \$400 million in liquidity.

But talk of liquidity is rarely all that reassuring and the market – made up of the hundreds of investors who now hold the bonds – is looking ahead to a roughly \$120 million interest payment due at the end of June. That comes on top of the bills to vendors for spring merchandise and the back payments to brands that are promised to start in July.

Bondholders are now waiting to see how the luxury reset will play out. They have plenty of company.

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



All storefronts, Mark Merrick and Gary Wassner photographs by Getty Images; Chanel by Dominique Matire; Prada by Giovanni Giannoni

FASHION

Paris Exhibition Fetes Couture Pioneer Charles Frederick Worth



A view of the "Worth: Inventing haute couture" exhibition at the Petit Palais.



An 1892 photograph of Charles Frederick Worth by Nadar.



Worth, court cloak worn by Franca Florio, 1902.



"Une soirée" by Jean Béraud, 1878.

- The retrospective at the Petit Palais museum celebrates the Gilded Age glamour of the founder of haute couture.

BY JOELLE DIDERICH

PARIS — Today's Met Gala stars have nothing on the grandes dames of the Gilded Age.

A new exhibition in Paris revives the glittering balls of the 19th century, which marked the birth of haute couture and the man credited as its founder: Charles Frederick Worth.

Spectacular gowns worn by style icons such as Countess Greffulhe, Lady Curzon and the Duchess of Devonshire are among the highlights of "Worth: Inventing haute couture," which opened on Wednesday at the Petit Palais museum here, marking the English designer's first major retrospective in France.

The soaring Belle Epoque building provides a fitting backdrop for the show, which features more than 400 works including 80 pieces of clothing, some so fragile that they will never be shown in public again, according to organizers.

"This exhibition recounts the fabulous destiny of the House of Worth over a hundred years, spanning three generations from the Second Empire to the Roaring '20s," said Annick Lemoine, chief curator and director of the Petit Palais.

"It's an extraordinary and exceptional exhibition because we had fabulous,

extraordinary loans from prestigious institutions around the world, but also from private collections," she added. "Some of these loans have been the subject of unique restoration campaigns."

Bustle dresses in rich silk damasks evoke the HBO series "The Gilded Age," featured in a clip that shows the character Bertha Russell, played by Carrie Coon, descending a grand staircase.

One of the star exhibits, known as the "Lily dress," was X-rayed by the experts at the Palais Galliera, the fashion museum of Paris, which partnered with the Petit Palais on the exhibition. They took it apart and put it back together after a painstaking restoration of its delicate ivory silk satin appliqués in the form of lilies.

Dated circa 1896, the gown was famously worn by Countess Greffulhe, who was Marcel Proust's inspiration for the Duchess of Guermantes in his saga "In Search of Lost Time."

"The 'Lily dress,' considered one of the jewels of our permanent collection, is being displayed on a mannequin here for the last time," noted Marine Kiesel, heritage curator, fashion department, 19th century at the Palais Galliera.

The fabrics, which are usually stored flat, can only be displayed upright for four months at a time and in this case, will likely be locked away forever.

Raphaëlle Martin-Pigalle, chief heritage curator, modern paintings department at the Petit Palais, said the documents on display were equally delicate. They

include order books, invoices, illustrated catalogues, books of silk fabric swatches and clippings from La Gazette du Bon Ton, the fashion magazine launched in 1912.

"Practically everything you see here will be put away for the next three or four years at least, if we can take them out again at all. It might be never," she said.

The Birth of Couture

The exhibits provide a fascinating glimpse behind the scenes of the couture house founded in 1858 as Worth & Bobergh, rechristened as Worth in 1870.

Spread over eight stories at 7 Rue de la Paix, it employed 1,200 people at its peak and set the template for the modern luxury industry, pioneering concepts like the star couturier, the designer label, seasonal collections and fashion shows.

Clad in a beret and velvet smock, Worth styled himself à la Rembrandt in photos by star portraitist Nadar, and personalized labels by using his handwritten signature. He quickly became the darling of European imperial courts, including Empress Eugénie, the wife of Napoleon III.

Rich with historical details like puff sleeves, ruffs and lace collars, his creations were immortalized in period paintings such as a towering portrait of New York social arbiter Mrs. Astor by Carolus-Duran, which was prominently displayed in the reception room of her Fifth Avenue mansion.

"At the time, it was truly a marker of material and social success to be portrayed in a dress by a famous couturier,"

Martin-Pigalle said.

The show chronicles the birth of Rue de la Paix as a luxury nexus, home to now-defunct houses like Paquin, Doucet and Doeuillet, but also jewelers like Cartier, which unofficially joined forces with Worth when Andrée Caroline Worth married Louis Cartier in 1898.

The show also features art works collected by Worth, including a marble bust by Marcello, the pseudonym of Swiss sculptor, painter and aristocrat Adèle d'Affry. "Marcello was a big client of Worth, so much so that she asked to be buried in one of his dresses," Martin-Pigalle said.

An Expensive Habit

Paintings from the era vividly depict the social events where women were expected to parade in a rotating wardrobe of tea gowns, opera coats and fancy dress, like the striking Queen of Palmyra costume that Louise, Duchess of Devonshire, commissioned for a ball given in honor of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897.

The highlight is a room housing exceptional creations including the court cloak with a sweeping train worn by Franca Florio, the wife of a Sicilian businessman and shipowner, when she was appointed lady-in-waiting to Italy's Queen Elena in 1902.

One thing that remains a mystery is the cost of the clothes.

"We haven't found a way to decipher the system of letters they used in the order books, which were used as a code to keep the prices secret but known to the house," confessed Kiesel. "What we do know is that it was exorbitant and that you could easily ruin a husband or lover by dressing at Worth."

Following the founder's death in 1895, the label was taken over by his sons Gaston and Jean-Philippe, who kept pace with changing trends by introducing more streamlined silhouettes.

Jean-Charles and Jacques, Gaston Worth's sons, further modernized the house in the 1920s with innovations like logo knits and collaborations with artists like Jean Dunand and Raoul Dufy. In 1924, it launched perfumes in glass bottles designed by René Lalique.

Sold to Paquin in 1954, Worth closed its doors in 1956. The exhibition doesn't delve into subsequent efforts to revive the house and its fragrances, which included a short-lived couture line, launched in 2010 and helmed by Italian designer Giovanni Bedin.

Five years in the making, the exhibition provides a snapshot of a defining era for French fashion.

"What we show — and it's the reason why the word 'inventing' is in the title of the exhibition — is the invention of a world and a system that shaped the image and the workings of couture, but also Parisian luxury and therefore French luxury and its global influence throughout the 20th century," Kiesel said.

Worth & Bobergh dress, circa 1866-68. Silk satin with lace and silk tulle.





Carine Roitfeld is collaborating with Dior and UBS House of Craft in a global series on couture.



Here and above: A Dior image photographed by Brigitte Niedermair.



FASHION

UBS House of Craft Collabs With Dior and Carine Roitfeld

• A multiday program will feature a series of intimate conversations and exclusive programming, as well as a photography exhibition by Brigitte Niedermair.

BY LISA LOCKWOOD

UBS House of Craft is collaborating with Dior and Carine Roitfeld to bring a global series dedicated to the artistry of couture.

The multiday program will be held from June 3 to 8 and will honor the pinnacle and evolution of fashion craftsmanship, bringing fashion and photography exhibits and a series of programming to Manhattan's Financial District.

Dior opened up its archive to Roitfeld, who curated looks for the UBS House of Craft across Dior's eight decades of leadership. She selected and styled looks from all seven of the house's creative directors: Christian Dior, Yves Saint Laurent, Marc Bohan, Gianfranco Ferré, John Galiano, Raf Simons and Maria Grazia Chiuri. Kim Jones for Dior Men will also be included.

In collaboration with photographer Brigitte Niedermair, the visual journey highlights each designer's perspective and impact on Dior's legacy.

Niedermair has a long-standing relationship with Dior, most recently photographing their 2025 cruise campaign. In 2022, a Dior coffee-table book offered an in-depth look at the decades-long relationship between Dior and Niedermair.

Roitfeld told WWD, "For the first time in Dior's history, all seven of its creative directors — eight, including Kim Jones — will be brought together in a single exhibition, and I was really lucky to have taken part in it. What resonates most with me in this exhibition is the image of Lindsey Wixson, wearing a blend of an archival Galiano dress and the iconic Bar jacket by Monsieur Dior. That perfect

fusion is the very definition of what fashion truly represents.

"I'm so proud to share this project that's at the heart of UBS House of Craft with Brigitte, an extraordinary artist who not only honors the legacy of the past but brings a visionary, modern perspective to everything she touches. I hope visitors will come away with a deeper understanding of the House of Dior, its exceptional craftsmanship, and the genius of the designers who have shaped its legacy."

House of Craft, which was launched last October, is a global initiative celebrating excellence in craft across diverse disciplines, from horology and fine wines to vintage cars, fashion and design. The initiative offers a rare and exclusive opportunity to engage with masters of craft. Through intimate events, behind-the-scenes experiences, exhibitions and master classes, UBS House of Craft looks to foster meaningful exchanges, inspiring collaborations and unique insights.

In an interview with John McDonald, group chief marketing officer and head, group brand and marketing innovation at UBS, he explained why the bank launched the craft concept. He noted that in April 2023, UBS sought to develop a new brand positioning following the acquisition of Credit Suisse, and after many months of testing and research they landed on this new Craft concept.

"Craft has become the lens through which we articulate who we are and what we do for clients," McDonald said. They launched their new campaign around the world in January 2024, and House of Craft was born "as a brand experience platform that could help bring to life with partners how craft is so influential in many other industries."

At first glance, he said, "People might wonder 'why is a bank talking about craft?' But it's us trying to tie together this story of expertise, passion, heritage and innovation and how that is so integral to a multitude of industries, some which are incredibly important to our clients," McDonald said.

He said UBS' clients are very passionate about art, couture and horology. "Being able to bring together our clients and the public to experience craft and talk about craft and to feel inspired by the many things you can achieve when you dedicate yourself to a craft, is something we feel really strongly about and excited about," McDonald said.

UBS launched a preview House of Craft last September in the horology space with Hodinkee "which was a massive success and got great feedback from clients and Hodinkee.

"What we're doing with Dior in June is a rollout of that concept," he said.

Roitfeld, the founder and editor in chief of CR Fashion Book and previously the editor in chief of Vogue Paris who has consulted for many leading fashion brands, is the curator of the experience. Niedermair has photographed 35 new shots featuring legacy and modern silhouettes, which has made Dior what it is over the last 80 years. They collaborated on the silhouettes, the gowns and the sketches that will also be highlighted at the event. "People will get an incredible insight into the craft of Dior and the legacy of the brand," McDonald said.

The event is also an ode to the deep fascination Christian Dior had with the city and its landscape, which was often reflected in his designs. The multiday event, which takes place at 28 Pine Street in New York, includes a two and a half-day preview for UBS clients from June 3 to 5 and a public event June 6 to 8.

The experience will showcase craft (gowns, photography exhibition and sketches), as well as talks from thought leaders and spokespeople from Dior. Several senior Dior executives will participate in sessions at the UBS House of Craft including Olivier Bialobos, chief communication and image officer, Christian Dior Couture and Parfums Christian Dior; Marisa Pucci, chief communications officer, Christian Dior

BUSINESS

Pandora CEO: Tariffs Will Force Mid-price Jewelers to Hike Prices



Tyla for Pandora.



Alexander Lacik

- Alexander Lacik said new U.S. import tariffs will impact jewelers that source and manufacture in Asia.

BY SAMANTHA CONTI

LONDON – Attention, American shoppers – it's time to stock up on charms, pearls, chains and bangles because if U.S. import tariffs rise this summer, mid-price jewelry is going to get more expensive.

"The reality is, I don't see a scenario where, if there is a 40 percent tariff imposed, people would not raise their prices," said Pandora's president and chief executive officer Alexander Lacik in an interview following the first-quarter results.

"Some companies would go bankrupt if they did not raise prices. I think everybody is going to move [on prices] ultimately, and there will be a major, major hike for the U.S. customer," he added.

With a third of its sales in the U.S. and its manufacturing base in Thailand, Pandora is in the eye of the storm – as are so many other contemporary jewelry companies that manufacture in Asia and sell in the U.S.

"India, Vietnam, Thailand and China are all places where jewelers like us, in the

mid-price segment, source pretty much all of their jewelry," he said.

He believes that tariffs will impact the U.S. consumer more than the jewelry companies themselves.

"If we imagine a situation where [U.S. President Donald Trump] is going to go through with these high tariffs, then the whole sea level rises. You could argue that the relative position between the jewelry brands will be maintained," he said.

In its latest results statement on Tuesday, Pandora said it was making contingency plans in the face of all the uncertainty, and would provide the markets with an update "as the potential impact on the 2025 guidance and 2026 targets becomes clearer."

Pandora added that it has accelerated certain cost measures, and is preparing to switch some sources of supply. As of early 2026, it will be ready to ship jewelry directly to Canada and Latin America rather than through Pandora's Baltimore, Md., distribution center.

Lacik said Pandora's size, geographic reach and healthy gross margin will give it flexibility if tariffs do come into effect.

"One of the strengths we have is that our gross margin is already operating at a very high level, higher than most of our

competitors. That means I have more [scope] to rejig my value equation," said Lacik, adding that Pandora's size – it operates in more than 70 countries, and had revenue of 31 billion Danish kroner, or \$4.31 billion, in 2024 – was an advantage.

In the first three months of 2025, sales rose 7 percent to 7.35 billion Danish kroner, or \$1.12 billion. Underlying growth was 6 percent, while new store openings bolstered sales by 4 percent.

The company also downgraded its guidance for the 2025 EBIT margin. It is now expecting EBIT, or earnings before interest and taxes, to be "around 24 percent" rather than "around 24.5 percent," reflecting the latest foreign exchange headwinds.

The downgrade excludes the impact of U.S. tariffs that could come into effect following Trump's 90-day pause.

Lacik said that because Pandora is a global company, it has options. It can hike prices in the U.S. only, or raise them by smaller amounts in various markets across the world. "I think we have to wait and see where these tariffs land, and we'll take it from there," he said.

Pandora offered up the details of two scenarios in its first-quarter statement.

If tariffs remain at their current level, 10

Charm bracelets from Pandora's anniversary collaboration with Disney.



percent on Thailand and 145 percent on China, Pandora will see an impact of 250 million Danish kroner, or \$38 million, in 2025, and annualized impact of 300 million Danish kroner, or \$46 million, from then on.

If the U.S. chooses to impose the new regime, tariffs will rise to 37 percent on imports from Thailand and remain at 145 percent for China. That would lead to a 500 million kroner, or \$76 million, impact in 2025, and an annualized impact thereafter of 900 million kroner, or \$137 million.

Pandora said that in both scenarios, it would consider further price increases. It already increased prices by 4 percent in April.

The company remains upbeat despite the uncertainty.

Pandora said that gifting, which represents around 60 percent of its business, "has historically proven resilient during periods of economic uncertainty. In challenging times, consumers tend to gravitate toward trusted, established brands – further reinforcing Pandora's position as a leader in accessible luxury."

The company also sought to reassure the markets, adding that "stress testing confirms that even in severe economic scenarios, Pandora will remain highly profitable and continue to generate excess cash which will be returned to shareholders. Pandora remains well-positioned to deliver sustainable value through a potentially volatile period."

For his part, Lacik said planning for tariff changes is all in a day's work. "This isn't the worst we've been through. I think that turning around Pandora was more challenging because we were trying to take one of the largest start-ups in the world and make it into a bit more mature enterprise. That was a much bigger task."

He added that the tariff drama is "unwelcome noise, but we can deal with it."

Pandora's shares closed up 1.7 percent at 998.80 kroner, or \$152.

BEAUTY

L'Oréal Names Chief Innovation and Prospective Officer

- Delphine Viguier-Hovasse has been appointed to the newly created position.

BY JENNIFER WEIL

Delphine Viguier-Hovasse has been appointed L'Oréal's chief innovation and prospective officer, a newly created position for the group.

The executive, who currently serves as global brand president of L'Oréal Paris, will start in the new position on July 1. She will report to Barbara Lavernos, L'Oréal deputy chief executive officer, in charge of research, innovation and technology. Viguier-Hovasse will also join the group's executive committee at that time.

"This new role builds on L'Oréal's long track record in innovation and has been established to further strengthen its leadership within the dynamic and fast-evolving beauty landscape," the company said in a statement released Wednesday.

"This position will oversee both the existing innovation teams and the strategic prospective department, to ensure a holistic and future-focused approach to beauty innovation."

Viguier-Hovasse, an engineer by training, joined L'Oréal in 1997. She became the first female head of L'Oréal Paris in 2019.

"Under her guidance, L'Oréal Paris has experienced impressive growth, solidifying its position as the world's leading beauty brand," L'Oréal said. "This success was fueled by her ability to bring new game-changing innovations to market – like *Elsève Glycolic Gloss* and *Panorama Mascara*, a testament to her product development abilities."

Viguier-Hovasse has during her tenure at the brand built and amplified activations and programs that inspire women's worth. That includes L'Oréal Paris' fashion show, dubbed *Le Défilé*, which takes place once yearly during Paris Fashion Week. The brand also annually is an official sponsor

of the Cannes Film Festival, where this year it is celebrating its fifth edition of the *Lights on Women's Worth Award*, which shines a light on women in film.

"Under her leadership, the brand has also strengthened its commitment to female empowerment, culminating in the brands *Stand-Up* program against street harassment, which has trained nearly 3 million people worldwide," L'Oréal said. "Delphine's leadership has not only driven business growth but also fostered a culture of excellence and inspired a new generation of talent within L'Oréal."

Nicolas Hieronimus, L'Oréal CEO, said of Viguier-Hovasse: "Her exceptional track record of innovation and her strategic vision make her ideally suited to elevate our company's innovation to new heights. I am sure that her forward-thinking approach and deep understanding of the evolving beauty landscape will help us writing the next chapter of the L'Oréal adventure."



Delphine Viguier-Hovasse

BUSINESS

Safilo Posts Q1 Growth Amid Supply Chain Diversification And Resilient European Market

● The Italian eyewear group's CEO Angelo Trocchia spoke of selective price adjustments in the U.S. with analysts.

BY LUISA ZARGANI

MILAN – Safilo returned to growth in the first quarter of the year and delivered an improvement in profits and margins.

Europe was the main positive driver, a market which chief executive officer Angelo Trocchia defined as the “most balanced and resilient growth engine, the region where our innovation and customer focus align most effectively,” and North America showed a recovery thanks to sport and prescription eyewear.

Smith, Carrera, David Beckham, Polaroid, Tommy Hilfiger, Carolina Herrera, Boss, Hugo and Marc Jacobs led the performance.

In the three months ended March 31, the Italian eyewear group registered a 3.1 percent increase in sales to 285.8 million euros, compared to 277.2 million euros in the same period last year.

Gross profit grew 4.1 percent to 173 million euros and adjusted earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization was up 7.3 percent to 34.3 million euros.

As reported, last year, Safilo revenues were impacted by the end of the license with Jimmy Choo and were down 3.1 percent to 993.2 million euros.

“The start of the year has confirmed our group's ability to perform with resilience and focus despite a market environment that remains uncertain and complex,” said Trocchia. “We enter 2025 with encouraging momentum. January in particular started on a solid note, with North America showing signs of renewed traction after a promising end of last year.” However, this momentum was tested as the quarter progressed, with geopolitical tensions “and above all, the escalating trading dynamics.”

As was to be expected, during a conference call with analysts on Wednesday at the end of trading in Milan, Trocchia and chief financial officer Michele Melotti were pummeled with questions about President Trump's tariffs and trade policies, which led the CEO to explain that mitigation measures included an acceleration of Safilo's supply chain diversification, and selective price adjustments in the U.S.

“As of the start of the second half, our sourcing from South East Asia will increase substantially, reducing the company reliance on China,” said Trocchia.

The goal is to bring China-sourced production “below 40 percent within the next 12 months. At the beginning of the year, the volume coming from China was around 70 percent, 10 percent from North America, 10 percent from Italy and 10 percent from South East Asia. Additionally, we are evaluating an expansion of our U.S. manufacturing footprint with the potential increase in

capacity at our existing facility in Utah. This move will support the growing demand for Smith goggles, while further strengthening domestic production capabilities. The factory is already there, so it's an issue of optimizing what we have, but there is no rush, we will see, depending on the events.”

As part of the the diversification of the supply footprint in Asia, key countries involved are Vietnam, Thailand, Philippines and Cambodia, said Trocchia. “There are no disadvantages, those countries are competitive. The work on the differentiation of the supply chain started some years ago and obviously now we are building and accelerating.”

Safilo is also currently limiting import “as much as possible, relying on the existing stock enough for four and five months. I don't see issues of availability of product in the second half.”

Consumer Sentiment

“In the current environment, visibility on the business remains limited, and particularly in North America, uncertainty continues to represent the key hurdle to market recovery, while we keep seeing a positive trend in Europe overall,” Trocchia continued.

He spoke of “two fundamental question marks – what's going to happen in terms of consumer demand, how is the consumer going to react to this level of uncertainty and to a certain level of inflation” in the U.S. “We see some tension in the consumer behavior in North America. There are two killers for consumer behavior. One is the uncertainty and the other is inflation, so I will not say that tariff is not our headache, but obviously the consumer behavior is something we need to really understand in the next months. The strength of the brand is a crucial element.”

Price Increases

Melotti said “we are planning to make some more targeted price adjustment. We are currently foreseeing the adjustment only in the U.S. market, so we are not planning an intervention in other geographies.”

“We've been talking about selective price increases on some categories; on some others we are ready but we will keep the maximum flexibility to understand what's going to happen on the tariffs and then eventually retune what our strategy is going to be.”

Markets

In the first quarter, sales in North America rose 3.8 percent to 118.8 million euros, boosted by the strong performance of Smith's winter sports products, which benefited from a favorable ski season. Tommy Hilfiger, Carrera, David Beckham, Carolina Herrera and Marc Jacobs were once again key growth drivers in the market.

Blenders “had a difficult quarter, still impacted by more promotional, competitive market environment in the entry price level. Blenders is not yet where it should be,” said Trocchia. As reported, the brand's Chase Fisher last month stepped down from his CEO role, succeeded by Jack Gray.

In Europe, revenues were up 2.9 percent to 128.9 million euros, where Tommy Hilfiger, Marc Jacobs and Boss delivered the strongest progress. Trading remained particularly dynamic in France and Eastern Europe. The independent opticians channel recorded solid growth also in Italy, Spain and Germany.

In Asia and Pacific, sales climbed 21.2 percent to 14.4 million euros, lifted by Carrera's good progression in Australia, thanks to effective co-branding initiatives, for example with cricketer champion Pat Cummins, and the rollout of the women's collection.

In the rest of the world, sales fell 7.4 percent to 23.7 million euros impacted by weakness in the Indian and Mexican markets, while the sales performance was positive in Middle Eastern markets and in Brazil.

Free cash flow reached 14.4 million euros, compared with 1.7 million euros in the first quarter last year, boosted by “a solid operating performance and effective management of working capital driven by inventory normalization,” said Melotti.

As of March 31, the group's net debt decreased to 68.4 million euros from 82.7 million euros at the end of December 2024.



Eyewear by David Beckham by Safilo.



Carolina Herrera

BUSINESS

Tory Burch Forms New Regional Leadership Group Under Thibault Villet

- The development of Tory Burch's international business has been a strategic priority for the company.

BY LISA LOCKWOOD

Tory Burch LLC has made three executive appointments on its executive team to form a new regional leadership group under Thibault Villet, who has expanded his responsibilities to include Europe and the Middle East as president, international director for APAC, Japan and EUME.

Paolo Zullo has been named president of Europe and the Middle East, overseeing the brand's retail, e-commerce and wholesale operations in the region, effective in July. Joshua Chen will join the company as president of China, succeeding Zullo. Chen will be responsible for the brand's operations on the mainland beginning June 30.

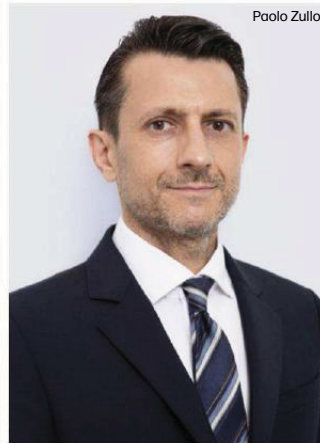
The executives, along with Edouard Roche, president of Japan, and Carol Chiu, senior vice president, general manager of Asia retail, will report to Villet. Villet will continue reporting to Pierre-Yves Roussel, chief executive officer of Tory Burch.

"Thibault is an exceptional leader, and I am very pleased to expand his scope to include Europe and the Middle East as we continue to scale the brand globally," said Roussel. "With his profound expertise in regional market dynamics, international business development and cross-cultural team management, Thibault is uniquely positioned to lead these critical regions toward continued success. I am also happy to recognize Paolo's success at our company with this promotion and to welcome Joshua to our team," he said.

Villet, who joined Tory Burch as president of APAC in December 2020, is a seasoned executive with extensive retail and digital



Thibault Villet



Paolo Zullo



Joshua Chen

experience in fashion and beauty across the APAC region. Since joining Burch, he has spearheaded numerous initiatives to strengthen the brand's market presence, build key partnerships and drive sustainable growth. He added Japan to his responsibilities in 2023. Prior to joining Tory Burch, Villet served as Asia president for One in Beauty, the entity combining the Revlon and Arden brands.

During his tenure at One in Beauty, Elizabeth Arden became the number-seven prestige brand on China's e-commerce platforms. He also led the digital transformation of the brand in the region. Earlier, he was chairman and cofounder of Mei.com, a leading Chinese luxury and fashion flash-sale retailer that was acquired by Alibaba in July 2015. Before that, Villet was the first Greater China president at

Coach and vice president of the Luxury Products Division for the L'Oréal Group in Japan and in China.

Villet said, "Tory Burch is a dynamic brand with limitless runway. It is my honor to partner with Pierre-Yves, Tory and team as we continue to strengthen our global market presence and drive sustainable growth. Paolo has been an excellent leader in China, and I am delighted to continue working with him in Europe and the Middle East and now with Joshua in China. They will be vital to our operations as we further advance our brand momentum in these important regions."

Since joining Tory Burch in September 2021, Zullo has been instrumental in expanding the brand's footprint on the mainland to 111 stores and travel retail locations, and growing its robust digital

presence across multiple e-commerce platforms, including toryburch.cn, Tmall, JD.com, and Douyin. Earlier, he held senior leadership roles at Givenchy and Ermenegildo Zegna. A Boston University graduate with an MBA from INSEAD, he will be based in Milan.

Chen joined Tory Burch from Loewe where he spent the past decade in positions of increasing responsibility, serving most recently as managing director for China. He is an accomplished leader with a successful track record in China's luxury sector. Prior to Loewe, he was a merchandiser for Louis Vuitton China. A graduate of the University of Texas, Austin, he holds dual MBA/MA degrees from the Wharton School and the Lauder Institute at the University of Pennsylvania. He will be based in Shanghai.

BUSINESS

QVC Group Sees Q1 Sales and Profits Tumble



Hilary Duff sells her home fragrance line, Below 60, on QVC.

- CEO David Rawlinson cites tariff volatility impacting shopping and linear television viewership shrinking.

BY DAVID MOIN

QVC Group is seeing sharp drops in its business as shoppers are spooked by tariffs and reducing their time spent watching linear television, where QVC sells its wares. On Wednesday, QVC Group reported

a first-quarter net loss of \$91 million, versus a net profit of \$8 million in the year-ago quarter.

For the three months ended March 31, operating income fell 90 percent to \$14 million from \$145 million in the year-ago period.

Total adjusted operating income before depreciation and amortization declined 32 percent to \$177 million from \$259 million. QVC Group believes adjusted OIBDA is an important indicator of the operational

strength and performance of its businesses. Recently, QVC has incurred restructuring and other charges, some related to technology changes and consolidations.

Revenue in the first quarter decreased 10 percent to \$2.1 billion from \$2.34 billion. The company cited a 10 percent decrease in units shipped, a 2 percent decline in average selling price, and lower shipping and handling revenue, partially offset by favorable returns. Sales declines were seen in all categories of merchandise.

In after-hours trading Wednesday afternoon, QVC's stock was down 28 percent to 14 cents.

"In the first quarter we faced a challenging market backdrop. While the impacts are being felt across retail, we are particularly challenged as linear television viewership continued to decline, and tariff volatility strongly impacted consumer sentiment in discretionary retail," David Rawlinson, president and chief executive officer of QVC Group, said in a statement. "We continue to execute on our long-term strategy and are working to remain agile as we navigate these current headwinds. In particular, we believe social shopping is a transformative opportunity and are moving quickly to be a leader here. QVC's agreement with TikTok is a first of its kind partnership for 24/7

content creation and is one example of the innovation we will continue to deploy to reinvent our business."

QVC Group is deepening its partnership with the TikTok social and e-commerce platform, which provides 24/7 shoppable livestream content and a larger swath of brands and products. The group will be creating TikTok-specific content out of dedicated studio space in Studio Park, the headquarters of QVC and HSN in West Chester, Pa., and nationwide with partnering TikTok creators. QVC initially launched on TikTok Shop in August 2024.

QVC Group's portfolio includes QVC, HSN, Frontgate, Ballard Designs, Garnet Hill and Grandin Road.

The company started the year by consolidating the U.S. operations of QVC and HSN, shutting down HSN's St. Petersburg, Fla., operations and consolidating them into QVC's Studio Park in West Chester, leading to approximately 900 job cuts. In a Securities and Exchange Commission filing, the company said it had around 17,000 employees globally, meaning around 5 percent of its workforce had been impacted by the cuts, though there could more cuts at the company's overseas operations. In February, the company changed its name to QVC Group from Qurate.

HOME DESIGN

Loro Piana, More Top Drivers of \$26.1M in EMV for Milan Design Week

● Insights by Karla Otto issued its second digital impact report for the event, showing that Loro Piana, Dimorestudio, Formafantasma, Prada, Cassina, OTW by Vans and set designer Es Devlin drove media value.

BY SOFIA CELESTE

MILAN – Helped by globally recognized artists, collaborations and activations by major fashion and footwear brands, Milan Design Week’s buzz on social media is on the rise. According to insights by Karla Otto released Wednesday, the world’s biggest luxury design event generated \$26.1 million in earned media value, up 24 percent year-over-year. Forty-eight fashion activations represented \$14.5 million, or 56 percent of that total.

The official Salone del Mobile trade show account contributed \$8.1 million in EMV, while its Fuorisalone counterpart generated \$5.6 million. Emerging designer collectives such as Alcova and Capsule Plaza saw their EMV decline 17 and 3 percent respectively, as visitors were drawn toward brand experiences like Loro Piana’s first-time collaboration with Milan-based design studio Dimoremilano. The report highlighted the throngs of visitors lined up to visit the retrospective installation by Dimoremilano founders Emiliano Salci and Britt Moran, who envisaged a fully furnished house inspired



A view of the Loro Piana installation with Dimoremilano.

by an apartment from the '70s and '80s. Together Loro Piana and Dimorestudio generated \$741,000 in EMV.

Milan- and Rotterdam-based design studio Formafantasma also topped charts with its two collaborations: the fourth iteration of the Prada Frames symposium exploring the complex relationship between the natural environment and the performance its designers Simone Farresin and Andrea Trimarchi created for design firm Cassina and which was set in Milan’s Teatro Lirico Giorgio Gaber. Vans unveiling of its new Old Skool 36 FM

silhouette with an immersive installation, dubbed “Checked Future: Frequency Manifest” by designer Willo Perron, also topped charts. OTW by Vans led gains with \$997,000 in EMV.

British set designer Es Devlin’s “Library of Light” installation that kicked off Salone del Mobile.Milano and Euroluce the biennale of light, was another main driver. The light display was showcased in the 17th-century Cortile d’Onore, which connects the Pinacoteca di Brera, the Braidense National Library and the Academy of Fine Arts. Devlin’s exhibit

generated \$667,000 in EMV.

The report also mentions Artemest, a digital platform that promotes and sells Italian arts, crafts and design. Artemest’s third edition of L’Appartamento, in which it enlisted its partners to create a dream house, took place in Milan’s Palazzo Donizetti. The 19th-century architectural landmark is located in Via Gaetano Donizetti 48 and is also the headquarters of fashion label Alberta Ferretti.

Milan Design Week took place April 7 to 13. While trade show Salone del Mobile. Milano saw its EMV rise, the number of visitors declined to 302,548 in 2025 from 370,824 in 2024. That number was impacted by the migration of key players like Molteni&C, in addition to B&B Italia, Maxalto and Roche Bobois showcasing in their showrooms in the center of Milan.

Insights by Karla Otto, which analyzes the performance of firms and cultural events outside the realm of its public relations portfolio, is curated by a team of in-house experts and functions in collaboration with partners like Lefty, a platform that helps brands optimize their influencer marketing programs. The first Milan Design Week insight report was released in 2024. Karla Otto contends that the reports maintain independence from its clients.

Insights by Karla Otto said its team tracked 97 brands and more than 50,000 influencers on Instagram who tagged a participating brand’s Instagram account in-post during Milan Design Week 2025. The tracking period started April 6 and ended April 16.

Top topics included U.S. President Donald Trump’s tariff policy’s impact on the design world. Top voices included Italian actor Simone Baldasseroni, identified as Biondo on Instagram, Milan-based creative Tamu McPherson, as well as designer Willo Perron.

HOME DESIGN

Fortuny Showcases Works by Pierre Sabatier, Harumi Klossowska de Rola

● The historic Fortuny Palazzina has been reimaged by interior designer Chahan Minassian in Brutalist glory.

BY SOFIA CELESTE

MILAN – The rarely seen home of the late American Elsie McNeill Lee, the Countess Gozzi, has opened its doors to the broader design community once again.

On Wednesday, Armenian Lebanese interior designer Chahan Minassian and Fortuny unveiled the second reimagining of the Fortuny Palazzina, situated adjacent to the secretive Fortuny textiles factory on the occasion of the Venice Architecture Biennale 2025.

Since the Venice Art Biennale of 2024, the countess’ former estate has partnered with Minassian’s Paris-based Chahan Gallery as its exclusive Venice location. It was the first time the grandiose town house was open to the broader design community with Minassian’s first tailor-made textile creations with the brand on display for all to see.

For the second edition, Minassian told WWD he embraced a Brutalist vibe, incorporating French sculptor Pierre Sabatier’s signature acid wall reliefs and artist and designer Harumi Klossowska de Rola’s animal sculptures, alongside furniture covered in Armonia, Minassian’s first textile capsule with Fortuny.

“To be in line with the new Architectural Biennale season, it was important for me to line up with an architectural scale interior design and curation. It’s also important to inspire our visitors and fans with a new and different installation,” Minassian told WWD, explaining that he has been a long time admirer of Sabatier’s walls and has amassed various pieces in his own personal collection.

The Armonia textile collection includes variations with names like Hexa and Delphia – the latter is named after the original Fortuny fabric Delphi, which was designed by Fortuny’s founder in the early 20th century and was originally named after the ancient Greek city where the temple and theater of Apollo are located.

In what Minassian calls his “embassy,” various rooms were curated with large Brutalist architectural panels by Sabatier, each one unique in terms of materials, textures and graphics. New works from Klossowska de Rola’s Animalier collection infused the Brutalist atmosphere with a human touch, Minassian said.

Fortuny, whose iconic dresses like the Delphos were covered by yesteryear icons like Isadora Duncan and Oona Chaplin, was founded in 1921 by artist and inventor Mariano Fortuny y Madrazo. His label continues to resonate worldwide for its innovative textiles and timeless designs that have been integrated into

the collections of modern-day designers like Rick Owens. Its legacy was revitalized by brothers Mickey and Maury Riad, the firm’s creative director and chief executive officer, respectively, who inherited the company from their father, Maged Riad, in 1998. Maged Riad acquired the firm from Countess Gozzi, the American interior designer whom Mariano Fortuny had designated as his single representative in the U.S. She died in 1994.

Minassian, who made Venice his home six years ago, represents the city’s ongoing cultural wave, ushering in new international residents to Venice’s shores, repopulating it with a dynamic residential cultural fabric. Since then, he’s injected his flair into Venetian jewels like Abbazia San Gregorio, a former Benedictine abbey and the home of Diane von Furstenburg in Palazzo Brandolini-Giustinian.

With strategic partnerships and

forward-looking projects, Fortuny is focused on international growth and launched its e-commerce business last year. “We’re ready for the next chapter. We are working on having more finished pieces that clients can purchase and we are growing our e-commerce availability. We want people to bring a piece of Venice home, using our fabrics to create items that have a purpose and help elevate people’s environment,” Mickey Riad said at the time, adding that the firm is constantly working on research and development of new techniques and materials.

Riad also said the firm is focused on turning the Palazzina into a hub for the broader design community. Visits to the ongoing exhibit titled “The Reimagining of the Palazzina” in collaboration with Minassian can be booked on the Fortuny website. The Venice Architecture Biennale will run from Saturday to Nov. 23.



Armenian Lebanese interior designer Chahan Minassian redesigns the Fortuny headquarters, this time with a wall relief by Pierre Sabatier and animal sculptures by Harumi Klossowska de Rola.

NEW THIS
WEEK

Read Now!

Trade Turbulence: U.S. Automotive Industry Braces for Tariff Fallout Amid Global Uncertainty

Experts warn of reciprocal measures from Europe as U.S. trade policies spark supply chain concerns and investment delays.

Read Now!

Unlock Retail Success with Barbara E. Kahn: Insights from 'The Shopping Revolution'

Discover how the Kahn Retailing Success Matrix can help shape the future of customer-centric retail strategies.

Listen Now!

The True Cost of Tariffs

IAN FREDERICKS, president and chief executive officer of Hilco Consumer-Retail, chats with Lauren Parker, director, Fairchild Studio, about the real cost of tariffs and who is going to be paying for them.



FASHION

Betsey Johnson, Bethann Hardison Honored at ACE Awards



Laverne Cox and Betsey Johnson

Johnson was given the Iconoclast Award, Hardison joined the Hall of Fame and New Balance and Stuart Weitzman were among the honorees as well.

BY JADEN THOMPSON

The Accessories Council hosted the 2025 ACE Awards at the Pierre Hotel in New York City on Tuesday, gathering the accessories community to celebrate the industry with a range of recognitions, from honoring Betsey Johnson with the inaugural Iconoclast Award to inducting diversity and inclusivity trailblazer Bethann Hardison into the Hall of Fame.

Laverne Cox was on hand to present Johnson with the Iconoclast Award, offering a rousing speech during which baskets of the designer's baguette purses were passed out.

"For decades, Betsey has created clothes

that don't whisper – they twirl, they shout, they cartwheel. And in doing so, she gave so many of us permission to take up space. To be loud, to be joyful," Cox said. "Long before fashion caught up to queerness, Betsey had already built a runway for it. She understood what it meant to stand outside the lines and turn that feeling into something sacred."

Cox, sporting a Betsey Johnson ensemble featuring a functional bedazzled phone purse from the brand, told WWD on the red carpet that she is inspired by the designer's sense of whimsy. "I grew up studying classical ballet, and so I grew up loving tutus and just being obsessed with them," she said. "And when I started dressing myself and going to thrift stores, I was rocking a lot of tutus, and then I discovered Betsey and that's a staple in her oeuvre. And the sense of whimsy and color and just being unconventional and not following trends, just knowing who you are."

Hardison, known as a trailblazing Black model who fought for greater racial



Bethann Hardison

representation in the fashion industry, as chronicled in the documentary "Invisible Beauty," was welcomed into the Hall of Fame. Her longtime friend Steven Kolb, chief executive officer of the CFDA, presented her with the honor, recalling on the red carpet and onstage how she eschewed a friend-to-friend phone call and wrote him a formal letter to address the lack of diversity in modeling, an act that underscored the gravitas of her mission.

"It's an honor to present the Hall of Fame of an award to someone who hasn't just shaped fashion, she's changed it," Kolb said on stage. "Bethann Hardison is a true force, from her groundbreaking work as one of the first Black models to her tireless advocacy for diversity and inclusion, Bethann has never followed the industry, she's led it – fearlessly and unapologetically."

Hardison said in her acceptance speech, "There's a great alignment for me: being brave and having fear. Sometimes the things I do are very fearful, but I'm brave enough to do it, and that's very important."

Jaden Smith took the stage to give New Balance, a brand he's partnered with since 2019, the Innovation Award. Fresh off of wearing an unreleased version of the 1906L, a sneaker-loafer, to the Met Gala, Smith said, "We all know New Balance for their iconic sneakers, but what makes them award-worthy isn't just the style or the shoe – it's how they're innovating for everyone by merging fashion, sport and design. And how they're driven by their entrepreneurial spirit while always striving to stay true to who they are. In a world that moves fast, New Balance moves with purpose, and because of that, they've not only elevated fashion, but lifted the entire industry."

Coach CEO and president Todd Kahn presented the Designer of the Year award to Reed Krakoff, who formerly held his positions at Coach in addition to working at Tiffany & Co., launching its own label and now serving as creative director at John Hardy.

Reflecting on his career, Krakoff said, "It's really an incredible gift I've been given to be part of this industry for 30 years now. And it's something that, at the end of all this, you really see that it is about not just the people on your team, but the people you encounter and the people you develop relationships with over the years."

Mark Consuelos presented the Brand Collaboration award to Stuart Weitzman, recalling his journey from repeatedly seeing the brand name on his credit card statements thanks to his wife Kelly Ripa to becoming the first men's ambassador for the luxury label.

Several brands celebrating milestones were recognized as Legacy honorees. Professional golfer Paris Hilinski, who honored Oakley for the brand's 50th anniversary, told WWD, "Oakley, to me, has been the most supportive brand I think I've ever worked with. They've really been supportive of me kind of taking a different path than the traditional professional golfer, and they really embrace who I am as a person, and I love that."

At other points in the night, Jon Zeiders accepted the Emerging Designer award for Staud, Debbi Hartley-Triesch accepted the Merchant of the Year award for Nordstrom and Laura Lendrum accepted the Retail Innovation award for Printemps. Additional Legacy honorees included Patricia Nash, Jennifer Fisher, Rebecca Minkoff, Tom Ford Eyewear, Farylrobin, VSP Vision and Bulova.

FASHION

Victor Alfaro Aims to Stop Auction of Photos

- The designer claimed that the personal belongings that are scheduled to be auctioned were stolen from a storage facility.

BY ROSEMARY FEITELBERG

Designer **Victor Alfaro** is trying to put the brakes on Roland Auctions' plans for a sale of photographs that were taken by and given to him by Bruce Weber.

Looking to shelve the May 31 scheduled auction, Alfaro said his attorney would be sending a cease-and-desist letter to the Glen Cove, N.Y.-based auction house Wednesday because "this is stolen property."

The Miami-based designer said he was notified a few months ago by the storage facility in Newark, N.J., that he was using that there had been a flood. "They said they had to open the units to see what the damage was, which was very bizarre," Alfaro said, adding that he was told the items had to be moved out. "We got rid of a lot of wet clothes and other stuff. But what was taken out and by who? I don't even know."

After starting his career in fashion, Alfaro has shifted his focus into interiors for hotels and private residences. His portfolio includes designing five venues for the Gansevoort Hotel Group.

The salvageable items from that unit were later moved to a Bronx, N.Y., storage facility and one of his assistants went with the moving company. While the items in the Newark facility had been there for seven years, Alfaro said he didn't even know what was there, but certain furniture that he thought should be there was not. "I don't know how this happened. It could have been the employees from the storage

A photo that is said to be from Bruce Weber's boxed set that was titled "The Twins From Madrid."



unit. There are all these graft-y people all over, or maybe [it was] the people, who transported it," Alfaro said.

Weber declined to comment through a spokesperson.

The designer said that "never in a million years" would he have expected there to be any interest in Christmas cards that were sent to him and other personal items. He also noted that some of the items in the Roland Auction sale were not correctly identified, including a portrait of him that was attributed to Weber but

was shot by Francesco Scavullo. Another personal photograph was taken by Karl Lagerfeld, not Bruce Weber, Alfaro said.

Bill Roland, co-owner of Roland Auctions, said that according to the consignor, who he knows and believes, he won the contents of the storage unit through an online auction and later drove to the New Jersey storage unit. "He has all of the receipts, the documentation that is necessary and videotape that he took when he opened the storage unit. He thought it hadn't been opened in years,

because there was five inches of dust over the padlocks. When he got inside, there were a lot of boxes with Victor Alfaro's name and a barcode. When he purchased the contents, the paperwork had 'formerly belonging to Victor Alfaro,'" the spokesperson said.

Earlier Wednesday the Roland Auctions spokesperson said the photographs and other personal items had been found in an abandoned storage unit that belonged to Alfaro in New Jersey earlier this year. A Long Island, N.Y.-based collector, whose identity is not being shared publicly, is behind the sale, the spokesperson said. Some of the images from the sale's nearly 50 lots had been posted and remained online as of Wednesday afternoon.

There were multiple black-and-white photos of bare-chested men including several nude ones of twin brothers Juan and Cesar Hortonedá. There was also a silver gelatin print of Naomi Campbell with a cell phone clasped to her ear that was taken for a 1995 issue of Vogue Italia that has a presale estimate between \$1,200 and \$2,000. Another print of a vintage Abercrombie & Fitch ad of a male model wearing briefs showing off his biceps in a muscleman shirt has a presale estimate of \$100.

Roland Auctions was amending the online descriptions of some of the images, including references to shoots in Montauk and Little Bear Ranch. A press release from the company that had been sent to WWD Monday referred to "private ranches" or "secluded outdoor settings described in lawsuits" without any substantiation. In 2021, Weber and six male models settled their legal battles over alleged sexual misconduct out of court.

EXCLUSIVE

Sirivannavari Opens Pop-up at Galeries Lafayette

The Sirivannavari window at Galeries Lafayette.



- The space offers the full range from the 20-year-old brand designed by Thai princess Sirivannavari Nariratana.

BY LILY TEMPLETON

Srivannavari, the high-end label founded by Thai princess Sirivannavari Nariratana, is landing at Galeries Lafayette Haussmann for a spring pop-up.

The 320-square-foot space, located on the second floor of the Parisian department store's main building, opened

Wednesday and runs through May 27.

It offers the brand's spring 2025 ready-to-wear, which takes its cues from the Italian Renaissance and luminaries such as Michelangelo and Botticelli for its sinuous curves, graphic lines and filmy transparencies. Complementing these looks are accessories ranging from handbags to footwear.

For the Thai royal, who holds a masters' degree in design from L'École de la Chambre Syndicale de la Couture Parisienne, now the Institut Français de la Mode, opening a pop-up in Paris is a

milestone she's long been dreaming of.

Although the brand was established in 2005 and made its first international foray with a pop-up at La Rinascente in 2016, it was four years ago that Nariratana truly put Paris in her sights.

"It is the Olympics for fashion and its biggest [arena] also," she told WWD in an exclusive interview. "Like sports, we had to train up for this."

The first order of business for the brand was bolstering its women's and menswear repertoire, developing two full-fledged collections a year for each. For fall 2023, it staged an intimate presentation during Paris Fashion Week, showcasing them alongside a compact offering of leather goods, eyewear and swimwear styles.

While Nariratana said she "puts the princess cap away" when working on the brand as its creative director and prefers the resulting designs do the talking, she's keenly aware of her status and the responsibilities that come with it.

Teaching is key for the Thai royal, who takes particular pride in sharing knowledge with classes ranging from first year of university to Ph.D. levels. In fact, "I prefer being called 'Professor' than princess," she said.

Like her grandmother, Queen Mother Sirikit, whose royal patronage focused on the preservation of the country's silk and traditional handwoven textiles, Nariratana too intends to leverage her position as a royal — and the Sirivannavari brand — to pave the way.

"I told my team [that] we bring all this knowledge from Europe but don't forget we have Thai knowledge also," she said. Thai silk, in particular, always appears in each collection, while traditional elements are infused as discreet touches such as draping.

More experimental directions also come into play, such as the use of ocean plastic, a blight Nariratana is keenly aware of as a diver.

It's a balance that has worked well for the brand.

Sales are in the high seven-figure range in euros and the company expects to grow 7 percent this year. It has caught the eye of a younger demographic and international clients are in the majority.

Headcount sits around 90, with a core design team of seven. That's without counting the embroidery department, which is connected to a school Nariratana dubbed "a mini Lesage" with a strong focus on transmission.

In Bangkok, the brand currently has two stores, in the Siam Paragon shopping complex and the travel retail hub King Power Rangnam, a downtown destination for duty-free shopping.

Plans for a third address in Emporium, a luxury mall in the Khlong Toei district, are underway.

Meanwhile, the Thai royal said a high jewelry line was in the works, slated to be unveiled in 2026. She is also weighing up an expansion into hospitality, with perhaps a café.



Gwyneth Paltrow



Cleansing balms by Goop Beauty.



Contour Stylus by Victoria Beckham Beauty.



Inside The Beautyaholic's Shop in Rome.

BEAUTY

Goop Beauty Lands In Italy, Courtesy of The Beautyaholic's Shop

● The niche retailer secured the exclusive for the Italian market, enriching its offering that is also to include Victoria Beckham Beauty later this month.

BY SANDRA SALIBIAN

MILAN - Gwyneth Paltrow's Goop Beauty brand is expanding in Italy.

After Goop's restructuring aimed at focusing on three growth pillars of fashion, beauty and food last year, its beauty business is officially launching in the Italian market on Thursday via an exclusive deal, for at least a year, with local niche retailer The Beautyaholic's Shop.

Launched in 2011 as an online platform and flanked by a brick-and-mortar location in Rome since 2016, the retailer founded by Paola Malaspina has built a cult, IYKYK-kind of following for its pioneering role in bringing a curated selection of high-end clean beauty brands in the country and Malaspina's talent in scouting indie names.

Goop Beauty's addition was a no-brainer. "We've been talking with them for quite some time. We were already the first to launch Juice Beauty here in 2017," Malaspina told WWD, referencing the time Paltrow served as creative director of makeup for the brand, appointed in 2015 after she invested in the company the previous year. As reported last month, Juice Beauty, which was founded in 2005 by Karen Behnke and among the first ones to capitalize on organic beauty and all things clean, is set to liquidate its assets.

"Maybe Juice Beauty was a little simpler in formulations, while Goop Beauty is evolving significantly under that aspect. And we have evolved as well in all things clean and especially in performance," continued Malaspina about the affinities between the brand and her company.

"We've been attuned in philosophy ever since, in terms of lifestyle and this [holistic] approach to beauty," she said, underscoring how Goop Beauty

only recently kicked off its international expansion, "so we waited a little bit for them." To be sure, the Italian launch is part of a bigger push that saw Goop Beauty hit the shelves of Oh My Cream locations in Europe.

Paltrow's label is to enrich The Beautyaholic's Shop's assortment of about 40 brands, which range from the likes of Augustinus Bader, Noble Panacea and Tata Harper Skincare to May Lindstrom Skin, Corpus Naturals, Raaie and Le Rub, to name a few. Goop Beauty's debut will be closely followed by the addition of the Victoria Beckham Beauty range starting May 19 as well.

"The approach in this case was different. It's a completely different brand - it comes from fashion and moves as a fashion company. They don't have a commercial [mentality] as a beauty one," said Malaspina about the operation that was three years in the making.

"They first launched beauty at their boutiques, then in some department stores and now there's a very selective journey to secure them. They are going for independent perfumeries," she said.

According to Malaspina, both brands' strategy of betting on the niche route rather than big chains operating locally hinges on their prioritizing an effective customer experience and ensuring their storytelling is delivered in the right way.

"Department stores might offer way more traffic, but 90 percent of those visitors are not interested in this kind of brand or simply there's no time to efficiently narrate what lies behind a product," said Malaspina. "In niche stores like ours there's a completely different attention to customers, in addition to a very curated selection of labels."

In the case of Malaspina's own company, she acknowledged her secret weapon to be integrity. She started her venture with a strict focus on beauty brands that had a clean and green ethos, but also ensuring a high performance.

"Along the road, we realized that some of the brands weren't that strong in the

latter, so we let them go and replaced them," she said. "And we could do that because we're independent. We can curate a selection in an ethical way... We may never make big money, as we carry only brands that fully convince us and not those that come with a higher margin of profit or want to take over our store's window, but that kind of credibility is strongly perceived by both customers and brands."

Malaspina is mindful when building assortments, too. For one, in the case of Goop Beauty, she focused more on bringing the skin care and body care products - like the 3x Retinol Regenerative Serum and Eye Lift Serum - to the store's shelves first, also to avoid overlaps in the makeup category with the likes of Victoria Beckham Beauty and Westman Atelier.

Even within the makeup segment, she underscored the differences between the two aforementioned brands. She enthused about the former's luxe take on makeup and "glamorous payoff" and highlighted the functional approach of the latter.

The founder was particularly proud of having secured Victoria Beckham Beauty's full assortment, including its collaboration with Augustinus Bader - already one of the bestselling brands at her store. To be sure, The Beautyaholic's Shop frequently has the exclusive on launches and special products by Augustinus Bader, so Malaspina sees this as a "full-circle moment."

Coming with Beckham's line are also its successful fragrances - a category Malaspina has recently deep-dived into with the addition of brands like Flora Danica and Marie Jeanne, and looking to exploring more going forward.

"It's extremely difficult to find fragrances in sync with our philosophy. I would love to expand in this segment - especially looking at its overall booming sales and growth rates - but coherency is everything also in this case and we can't just add brands that don't respect our philosophy," she said.

Another future driver might come from supplements, which the founder sees as a natural extension of her offering in sync with the store's holistic approach to beauty. She revealed plans to expand in the category were already in the pipeline last year but due to local bureaucracy woes and delays in the issuing of permits needed to sell the category, they have been postponed to next year.

Malaspina additionally eyes the

optimization of in-store services. The retailer is already known for hosting masterclasses and events with brands' founders - which further contribute to engage customers - but the goal is to implement also a permanent corner for facials and beauty treatments.

"It's part of a bigger strategy," said Malaspina. "Being independent is beautiful, but every step you take comes with a challenge," she said, addressing how she's considering to welcome investors to support her plans. "I want to keep my integrity but I'm also [disappointed] I can't develop what I have in mind," said Malaspina, pointing to the opening of other brick-and-mortar locations as per her clients' demands.

A five-minute walk from Rome's landmark Spanish Steps, the physical outpost of The Beautyaholic's Shop followed pilot projects across Italy and flanks the online store shipping across Europe. While the e-commerce has always been the main channel, Malaspina said that sales generated at the brick-and-mortar store had been growing double-digit every year since COVID-19 and exceeded the ones generated online last year.

Without disclosing specific sales figures, Malaspina said that the average ticket sales has increased online. Overall, skin care remains the key driver but "makeup also sells by itself." Brand-wise, she mentioned the likes of Augustinus Bader, Dr. Barbara Sturm and Westman Atelier among the most popular choices, as well as new additions like German brand Auteur.

As the retailer has evolved more and more in terms of exclusivity and higher positioning, the target evolved, as well. If skin care has always attracted a sophisticated, mature clientele with higher spending capacity, the introduction of makeup enabled the store to engage with knowledgeable younger customers, expanding the core customer base, now aged 35 to 55, with 30 percent made of international consumers.

A former manager in a telecommunication company, Malaspina has always been passionate about skin care and keen in discovering beauty brands during her travels around the world. After earning an MBA, she launched The Beautyaholic's Shop to bring such labels to the Italian market and with the mission to educate local beauty aficionados on clean labels and formulations.

WWDWeekend

TIME & TRAVEL ISSUE

FEATURING

Luxury watches & the best of Watches & Wonders.

The destinations & openings shaping London's ever-evolving luxury scene.

Statement accessories & the latest in beauty on the move.

The best in summer entertaining, beyond-the-beach getaways.



Filled with the must have luxuries of the season and distributed in the Hamptons & London. There's no better place to showcase your brand to a premium, global luxury audience this summer.

CLOSE **MAY 9** • MATERIALS **MAY 16** • PUBLISH **MAY 24**

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Jennifer Petersen, *Luxury Advertising Director*
jpetersen@fairchildfashion.com

TECHNOLOGY

LaQuan Smith Creates AI Atelier With Samsung

● The designer tells WWD about getting ready for the Met Gala and embracing technology for enhanced communication and efficiency in his work.

BY ALEXANDRA PASTORE

From influencing the Met Gala's theme in 2016 to receiving small nods throughout the years, technology continues to take a monumental role in fashion's busiest Monday of the year. And with AI engraving itself into every industry, it's no surprise that designers have tapped into its capabilities to elevate their Met Gala experiences.

In preparation for this year's Met Gala, LaQuan Smith has introduced the latest phase of his partnership with Samsung, his AI Atelier. As he celebrates all things Met Gala, Smith said he is excited to be partnering with Samsung again, acknowledging that for him, fashion is always in a new wave of expanding with technology.

Using the Samsung Galaxy S25 Ultra, the AI Atelier is a tech-powered creative studio designed to bring Smith's Met Gala visions to life, from sketching and finding design inspiration to more practical uses of AI like scheduling, messaging with muses/vendors/collaborators and searches.

In practice, the AI Atelier concept has made Met Gala prep more connected, seamless and efficient.

"I love being able to infuse [it] in my daily life and in my design aesthetics," said Smith. "Working with this incredible Samsung AI feature has just pretty much made my daily life an ease. For me with my fittings, then going to the gym, trying to get physically fit

and everything from scheduling meetings and connecting with my atelier and my team, and fabrics and beadwork overseas – all of those components and communication factors have been made easy for me to really micromanage."

The tools in his AI Atelier also lend to creativity. Smith called out the S Pen specifically for sketches.

"It gets me in a very creative space," said Smith. "The way that it generates a lot of my sketches and the drawing assistant has been very helpful. Even when it comes down to my photos, the way that I've been able to edit photos in postproduction by removing or adding things is great. I'm fascinated by those features and it's really helpful when I have fittings that I might want to post for social. It's the little things."

Notably, the event marks a significant moment for Smith's Lucid Dream sleepwear collection as pieces take their place as a part of the exhibition at the Met Gala Costume Institute. As reported by WWD, the looks were inspired by the innovative design and sleep insights of Samsung's Galaxy Ring.

Smith told WWD that he is "so excited to be exhibited in the Met," adding that it is "such a huge moment in time that we'll always look back on as such a huge historical landscape of culture that we are celebrating." Moreover, he said it is something that he is honored to be a part of. "A lot of what I do is deeply rooted in what my family taught me and things that I was surrounded by, so this particular Met feels very personal to me."

For his arrival at the steps of the Met, Smith shared that he is most excited about the muses that he brought. Ahead of the day, Smith said, that the muses he selected



LaQuan Smith and Yaya DaCosta

felt "so 'LaQuan Smith coded'."

"These women have been muses of mine since Day One, so they really do reflect this idea, this ideology, of unapologetic glamor on and off the red carpet," said Smith. "I'm just truly honored to be dressing the people that I'm dressing."

Following the Met Gala, LaQuan continued his celebration with Samsung at an exclusive Met Gala House Party, which invited guests to explore the world of Galaxy AI on their own. Interactive experiences included live content creation stations for a hands-on look at how Galaxy AI is reshaping style, self-expression and creative technology.

"Our tech keeps evolving, with the Galaxy S25 Ultra supercharged with Galaxy AI – giving creators the power to dream bigger,

push boundaries and turn bold visions into reality," said Olga Suvorova, vice president of mobile experience marketing at Samsung Electronics America. "Watching LaQuan Smith's Lucid Dream vision come alive, amplified by the Galaxy Ring, was pure magic. We're thrilled to keep building with LaQuan because together we're all about fearless self-expression and creativity with no limits."

In an official statement, Samsung said its participation and activations around the 2025 Met Gala speak to its long-standing commitment to fashion, with the understanding that technology and fashion go hand in hand. Samsung aims to continue to partner with like-minded designers and media organizations to inspire people to pursue creative passions.

BUSINESS

Golden State Valkyries Teams Up With Rakuten for Tunnel Looks

● The "Rakuten Arrivals" will celebrate the WNBA players' personal sense of style and support their favorite brands.

BY KANIKA TALWAR

The Golden State Valkyries and Rakuten have announced their partnership, making the cash back shopping platform a team founding partner and the official shopping

rewards partner of the Valkyries.

Rakuten will be the presenting partner of the player's walk-in "Arrivals," making it the brand's first space to create visibility for the player arrivals tunnel – which has become a major cultural moment within basketball.

Most notably, the "Rakuten Arrivals" will be a platform for the newly formed team players to express their sartorial style and support the brands and designers

they are most passionate about. And throughout the season, Rakuten will also offer Valkyries fans exclusive merchandise and cash back opportunities throughout the season.

Tuesday, the team held its first preseason game. The players made their big fashion debuts before hitting the court for the first time, with Kayla Thornton, Laeticia Amihere, Monique Billings and Tiffany Hayes showing off their style.

As the presenting sponsor of "Latest Looks," Rakuten is offering fans the opportunity to get 10 percent cash back when they buy the Valkyries team gear every game on Rakuten, both in-store and online. Later in the season, Rakuten and Valkyries are set to launch an inaugural gift with purchase program for fans to receive exclusive Valkyries merchandise created by Wild Collective.

"The energy our fans have brought from Day One has been incredible, and partnering with Rakuten lets us give them the access and experiences they deserve," said Jess Smith, president of Golden State Valkyries. "Our players bring so much personality and style to the game, and now fans will get to experience that up close through 'Rakuten Arrivals.' This

partnership celebrates what makes the WNBA special – incredible athletes who bring their authentic selves both on and off the court."

Moreover, the Rakuten partnership with the WNBA team will go beyond game day with a community-based platform called "Ascending Stars" to help early-career women in the Bay Area with leadership development and career advancement resources and a career development summit at the Chase Center. Every month, two program participants will be highlighted on the Valkyries social media platforms.

"Rakuten Arrivals" embodies the values we share with the Valkyries – strength, boldness and a commitment to building a more inclusive future," said Amit Patel, chief executive officer of Rakuten International. "Fashion and self-expression are powerful ways for fans to connect with the players they admire. Through this partnership, we're proud to elevate those moments while also offering fans a rewarding way to engage – with cash back when they shop the players' looks."

Rakuten joins the growing list of Valkyries' big-name founding partners and sponsors, including JPMorgan Chase, Sephora and United Airlines.

In another Rakuten news, the company is also hosting its Big Give Week promotion from Wednesday until Monday with hundreds of retailers in all categories, such as fashion, beauty, travel and other general spending with up to 15 percent off, ahead of the Memorial Day Weekend sales.

Monique Billings of the Valkyries Tuesday at the "Rakuten Arrivals" tunnel for the new partnership.





Rihanna, Priyanka Chopra Jonas And More at The Carlyle

Donatella Versace stopped to chat to Anne Hathaway and Wes Gordon, Gabrielle Union and Dwyane Wade readied to depart, and other moments inside the hotel on the night of the Met Gala.

BY KRISTEN TAUER PHOTOGRAPHS BY LANNA APISUKH AND STEVE EICHNER



Marc Jacobs



Gabrielle Union Wade and Dwyane Wade in Prada.



Anne Hathaway in Carolina Herrera with Wes Gordon.



Rihanna arriving at The Carlyle Hotel.

While all eyes were on who was leaving The Carlyle hotel on Monday evening, there was one very notable arrival headed in the other direction.

Rihanna, dressed casually, walked through the hotel's front revolving door just shy of 6 p.m., her entrance serving as an announcement for another arrival: she's pregnant with her and A\$AP Rocky's third child. Rocky, an official gala cohort duty, departed for the red carpet (solo) soon after.

The action had started shortly after 4

p.m., with Emma Chamberlain and gala cohort Colman Domingo kicking things off.

"You look great," said Ava DuVernay, hands akimbo framing her belted Prada gown, as she complimented Joey King, dressed in a custom green Miu Miu suit.

Gabrielle Union and Dwyane Wade were also dressed in Prada, and were ready to get the party started.

"Alllll night longggg, all night," Wade sang, offering up an a cappella rendition of Lionel Richie's song as he sipped Champagne next to wife Union. "This is

my last sip," Wade added, before handing off the glass as the smiling duo headed out to meet their car.

"I'll see you guys in there!" Gigi Hadid called out to the couple as she hurried past.

Shortly after, Simone Biles came through hand-in-hand with husband Jonathan Owens. "Bye, love you!" said the gymnast, blowing the lobby crowd a kiss.

Donatella Versace was headed in the opposite direction of Anne Hathaway and designer date Wes Gordon, but stopped to greet the actress with a double kiss.

"Donatella, do you know Wes?" asked Hathaway.

"It's an honor to meet you," Versace said, turning to Gordon. The Italian designer later returned through the lobby with her arm looped around the elbow of her own date, Chance the Rapper.

Hunter Schafer used the wait time to catch up with Justice Smith, Jennie and Hathaway, whose impending departure interrupted their convo. "I'll tell you about it later," said Hathaway. "It's never been better." ▶



Vera Wang and Donatella Versace



Gigi Hadid in Miu Miu.



Halle Berry in LaQuan Smith.



Keke Palmer in Vera Wang.



Dapper Dan in Dapper Dan Atelier.



Tracee Ellis Ross in Marc Jacobs.



Kendall Jenner in Torishéju.

The lobby swelled with bodies as stars queued up to leave, from Nick Jonas and Priyanka Chopra Jonas, to Halle Bailey with Coach designer Stuart Vevers, Kendall Jenner, Halle Berry, Quinta Brunson, Stormzy, Sadie Sink, Lupita Nyong'o and more.

Maluma carried a single pink rose as he sauntered through the lobby with Willy Chavarria. "I'm excited about Maluma's

look," said Chavarria, gesturing to the singer. "Look at this handsome man."

"We're excited to celebrate tonight," Maluma added, spinning his rose, color-matched to Chavarria's suit, between his fingers.

Other accessories in hand: a somewhat menacing cat clutch carried by singer Clairo and a martini (two olives) that left the hotel with Hailey Bieber. ▶



Chappell Roan in Paul Tazewell.



Nick Jonas in Bianca Saunders and Priyanka Chopra Jonas in Balmain.



A\$AP Rocky in custom AWGE.



Lupita Nyong'o in Chanel.



Joey King in Miu Miu.



Rosalía in Balmain with Olivier Rousteing



Miley Cyrus in Alaïa.

“Look how incredible she is!” said Olivier Rousteing, offering date Rosalía a round of applause as they headed out to meet their car. The designer had another compliment in store en route: “Guapo!” Rousteing called out to Spanish model Jon Kortajarena, who had been in the lobby patiently (so patiently!) waiting for his ride for over an hour.

“We are ready for you when you’re ready for us,” a handler told Natasha Lyonne, who

had been striking dramatic poses in her lilac Alexander McQueen gown just steps from the hotel’s revolving doors. “Adios,” she called, throwing the room a salute.

At 7:20, a swath of hot pink hurried up the lobby stairs and through the side door without stopping.

And with Chappell Roan, the departures had all left the building – well, almost all of them.

Rihanna was still upstairs. ■

WWD


Lisa, Rosé, Doechii and More Departures at The Mark Hotel

Rain did little to dampen celebrities' moods on their way to the Met Gala on Monday.

BY JAMES MANSO PHOTOGRAPHS BY MASATO ONODA



Tyia in Jacquemus.



Anna Sawal in Dior.



Tommy Hilfiger and Dee Ocleppo Hilfiger in Tommy Hilfiger.



Willy Chavarria in Willy Chavarria.

There was hardly rain to be had on anyone's parade departing from The Mark hotel for the 2025 Met Gala on Monday.

Sure, what began as a late and slow trickle of talent through the lobby — Usher, in fact, arrived as floors were still being mopped — soon became the usual cacophony of celebrities on one of fashion's biggest nights in New York.

Kicking off the departures was Jordan Roth who, by his own admission, took "tailoring to new heights" in LaQuan Smith accentuated in 10-inch heels, which warranted a slow descent down the lobby staircase. Shortly thereafter and much speedier came Pharrell Williams, who cochaired the event and breezed through straight to his car outside.

Next up was Willy Chavarria, who came down in his own "pachuco" look, a reference to dandyism from "Latinos and Black [people] in the '30s and '40s who dressed as a form of resistance," he said.

Then came the Boss crew, which included South Korean rapper S.Coups, Ashley Graham and Keith Powers, the latter of whom said it was his first Met Gala. "Everything there is such a mystery to me," he said, "but to be here for the first time, I'm most looking forward to whoever's performing." ▶



Sabrina Carpenter in Louis Vuitton.



Cynthia Erivo in Givenchy Couture and Sarah Burton.



Alton Mason in Boss.

Sam Smith and Christian Cowan came down ensemble, with jewelry that nodded to "a green carnation, which is an iconic queer symbol within tailoring," Cowan said, noting the look took about three months from sketch to the party.

Then came Imaan Hammam in Magda Butrym, who said the theme was especially poignant for her. "What excited me was to be in a room with so much beauty, so many inspirational people and to be there to celebrate Black culture, Black dandyism, and everyone who was there to express themselves in the best way," she said, before heading off on the arm of Stéphane de La Faverie, chief executive officer of the Estée Lauder Cos.

Jeremy Allen White then came down and camped out in a corner, while Cynthia Erivo joined Givenchy's Sarah Burton before shortly making their way to the exterior, undeterred by the showers. Sabrina Carpenter followed suit, quickly shuffling out in an ankle-length fur to conceal her red carpet garb.

The hum of chatter and air-kisses crescendoed when DoeChii, who was anticipating a white tent to conceal her Louis Vuitton tailoring, lost the element of surprise with an accidental elevator door opening.

She kept shouting, "I need more f-cking umbrellas," with a quick "who are these photographers?" to the press awaiting her on the ground floor. Quickly ensconced in the makeshift Velcro tent a crew of security guards ushered her into, she kept saying to "keep that f-king Velcro closed."

Clearly, the "Anxiety" singer was feeling the heat.

Quickly thereafter, Jeff Goldblum came out in Wales Bonner, noting the vintage buttons and Mongolian shearling on his coat — plus a Jacob & Co. watch paved all around the bracelet in emerald-cut diamonds, which complemented his ▶

Damson Idris in Tommy Hilfger, Caleb McLaughlin in Dior Men, LaKeith Stanfield in Ferragamo by Maximilian Davis.



Ashley Graham in Boss.



Paloma Elsesser in Ferragamo by Maximilian Davis and Charli XCX in Ann Demeulemeester



Khaby Lame in Boss.



Nicki Minaj in Thom Browne.



Christian Cowan and Sam Smith in Christian Cowan.

Kerry Washington and Jonathan Simkhai in Jonathan Simkhai.



Taraji P. Henson in Monse x Post-Imperial and LaKeith Stanfield in Ferragamo by Maximilian Davis.



Jeff Goldblum in Wales Boner and Monica Barbaro in Dior.

Jordan Roth in LaQuan Smith.



Gabriela Hearst and Chris Rock in Gabriela Hearst.



Jenna Ortega in Balmain.

sincere demeanor. “[Wales Bonner] came up and she fitted me, and she put all this effort in,” he said. “I got a little choked up when I thanked her.”

Charli XCX shuffled in just after the Swarovski crew, departing from her Brat era in a dark Ann Demeulemeester gown and hopping behind the concierge desk

for photo ops. Equally as playful was Sofia Richie Grainge, who was back after a few years off. “I prepared with a lot of good rest, and a lot of water, and then a shot of tequila,” she said.

Central Cee also took a more jovial tone, playing music from his speaker while the car queue intensified.

“Breathe, because it is mayhem, but enjoy yourself and just have fun,” said Taraji P. Henson as advice to first-time goers. “I always look forward to seeing what everyone wears.”

Last out the door were Nicki Minaj in Thom Browne and Tyla in Jacquemus, and Usher brought it full-circle with his departure in Ralph Lauren. ■

Fashion Scoops

I.N



K-Bling

Italian jeweler Damiani is doubling down on its celebrity lineup, naming a new male ambassador.

I.N, a member of K-pop sensation Stray Kids, has been named a global brand ambassador for the house and is to front its advertising campaign to be unveiled after the summer.

Born in Busan, South Korea, in 2001, Yang Jeong-in, known as I.N, is a member of K-Pop boy group Stray Kids. Trained at JYP Entertainment, I.N debuted as a vocalist with Stray Kids in 2018 with the EP "I Am Not."

"I am really excited to embark on this new adventure with Damiani, a company synonymous with creativity and passion — values with which I identify, as an artist and as a person," I.N said. "It is an honor for me to become a global ambassador of the maison's unique style and extraordinary excellence, which is expressed in the exquisite all-Italian craftsmanship."

In the role, I.N — who is also an ambassador for Bottega Veneta, as reported — joins Hollywood actress Jessica Chastain, who was named a Damiani ambassador last year and appeared in the brand's ad campaign.

The Stray Kids' member is not the first formal male ambassador for Damiani, which has a long track record of linking with male celebrities, most notably tapping Brad Pitt for its campaigns. In 2022 it named South Korean actor Son Suk-Ku an ambassador.

"I am delighted to welcome I.N into the

family. I am sure that he will interpret the essence of our creations with the flair that only a true artist like him possesses. This collaboration provides further confirmation of the positive outlook that we are experiencing not only in South Korea, but also on the world stage. Together, we will achieve important goals," said Guido Damiani, president of the Damiani Group, which comprises the Salvini and Bliss jewelry brands, as well as Calderoni, retailer Rocca and glassmaker Venini, in addition to the Damiani label.

Stray Kids set a new milestone by becoming the first act in the history of the Billboard 200 to debut at number one with their first six charting albums. I.N has cowritten and co-composed the tracks "Hug Me" and "Hallucination."

The group is currently on its third world tour, titled "DominA.TE," which drew around 400,000 people across eight recent performances in five Latin American cities. The tour has also spanned Asia and Oceania, and will land in Japan, North America, and Europe through July.

The storied Damiani high jewelry brand was founded in Valenza, Italy, in 1924 by Enrico Grassi Damiani and has gained praise from celebrities including Sharon Stone, Tilda Swinton, Sophia Loren, Gwyneth Paltrow, Isabella Rossellini, and Jennifer Aniston, among others. The brand marked its centennial last year with a roving exhibition of one-of-a-kind pieces titled "Damiani 100 x 100 Italiani." — MARTINO CARRERA

Tie-up

Two years ago, Brazilian designer Adriana Degreas partnered with Charlotte Olympia to create a collaborative, pin-up inspired swimwear collection that featured Lebanese jewelry designer and socialite Sabine Getty as their campaign face.

Degreas told WWD that following the campaign shoot, she found out that "Sabine had a desire to one day design a collection, so we decided to work on something special together."

That something special is a 27-piece Adriana Degreas x Sabine Getty collection of bold and luxe swim and resortwear, available on Moda Operandi starting Thursday.

"We first started discussing the collection in 2019, but with COVID-19 it got a bit on the side and we ended up changing the concept a couple of times, until we got the final version where we went for a bolder, glamorous concept, that was evolving throughout the years with Sabine's desires," Degreas said of the collaborative line, which was inspired by "strong women and old glamour."

The Adriana Degreas x Sabine Getty collection, priced \$320 to \$1,180 (with average prices at \$605), features 11 printed styles in bold animal prints, said to be inspired by the iconic '60s images of Veruschka von Lehndorff donning leopard prints. However, here the duo designed a tiger print in lieu of the spotted animalia motif, as seen on sleek one-piece swimsuits and a matching fluid set.



A look from Adriana Degreas x Sabine Getty's collaboration

The Ravello boat shoe.



"Glamorous yet very bold" Degreas said of the assortment, which also includes 16 sleek black and white fashions and reflects each of their signature looks, including Degreas' vintage-inspired silhouettes with unexpected twists and Getty's minimal yet elegant signature look.

"We always look to transcend the usual wear of the beachwear so we incorporated the choker in a sophisticated way into some bathing suits (and dresses) to give a stronger feel to it and also to wear from beach to bar," Degreas said of the influence of Getty's jewelry within the lineup. "We also work with a special jersey and pure silk to give movement and personality to the collection." — EMILY MERCER

On Your Feet

Fair Harbor is going into the shoe business.

Through a collaboration with Rothy's, which creates knit-to-shape shoes from recycled water bottles, the sustainable apparel brand will introduce a limited-edition men's capsule for summer. Both brands have a mission to turn post-consumer waste such as discarded water bottles into wardrobe staples.

The Fair Harbor x Rothy's capsule will include two shoes and one piece of swimwear. The shoe styles include the Ravello boat shoe that is being created using Rothy's proprietary knit-to-shape method and is made from 100 percent recycled materials. There's also a washable flip-flop made from recycled plastics as well as the Bayberry Trunk, Fair Harbor's bestselling swim trunk made from 11 recycled plastic bottles, which has been updated in an exclusive print for the collaboration.

"We're incredibly excited to announce our upcoming partnership with Rothy's — a collaboration rooted in a shared vision for sustainability and style," said Caroline Danehy, cofounder and chief brand officer of Fair Harbor. "This limited-edition collection celebrates our aligned missions to create products that not only look good, but do good too. Inspired by coastal classics, our design teams reimaged timeless staples with a modern, sustainable twist — including a heritage boat

shoe, flip-flop and sun-washed swim trunk."

"This collaboration was a natural fit — two brands with a shared commitment to ending plastic waste coming together with a common purpose," added Jamie Gersch, chief marketing officer of Rothy's. "Both Rothy's and Fair Harbor believe in reimagining what plastic can be: not disposable, but durable, purposeful, and full of potential. Made from recycled plastic bottles, this capsule is proof of what's possible when sustainability leads the way."

The boat shoe retails for \$159, the flip-flop for \$49 and the swim trunk for \$92. The capsule will be available for sale on the Fair Harbor and Rothy's websites and at the Rothy's stores beginning Thursday. — JEAN E. PALMIERI

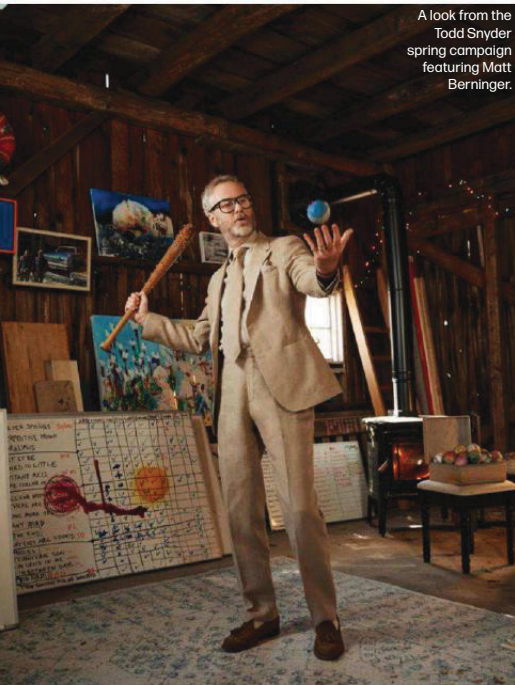
Latest Face

Todd Snyder likes to spread the wealth when it comes to the faces he features in his ad campaigns. In the past, he's worked with everyone from actors Sterling K. Brown and Matt Bomer to supermodel Naomi Campbell — wearing menswear, of course.

And now, he's tapped Matt Berninger, lead singer of The National, to star in his spring campaign, launching on Thursday.

The campaign was shot at Berninger's home as well as the Black Duck Café in Westport, Conn., where the singer is featured in pieces from Snyder's spring 2025 collection.

Snyder has previously ▶



A look from the Todd Snyder spring campaign featuring Matt Berninger.

dressed the rock band for its concert tours and Berninger has been a longtime fan of the Todd Snyder brand. Later this month, he will release his second solo album, "Get Sunk," and Snyder will dress him for its tour.

This is not the first time Snyder has worked with a musician. The designer recently collaborated with Bon Iver on the release of their album, "Sable Fable."

"There are a handful of musicians that are in heavy rotation when I'm designing one of my collections," Snyder said. "And since 2007 The National's music and Matt's voice have been part of that journey. Years later I was excited to learn that he was wearing our tailoring when he performed. We became friends, and we're now dressing him for his 'Get Sunk' tour. It all happened organically. I want to be supportive of my friend's new album and tour, just as he's been supportive of me by coming to our fall 2025 fashion show."

"I've always thought it was important to dress nice when you sing songs to people. Rock venues are churches. I dress for it," Berninger said. "A few years ago my National bandmate Scott Devendorf told me to check out Todd's stuff. I bought one suit and 10 pairs of socks. I rotated the socks but wore that suit every day for a month. Now I have 10 suits from Todd. Need more socks though."

The campaign will be posted on Snyder's social and web channels and will also be featured in the brand's print catalogue.

—J.E.P.

All About Voo

In Germany, most of the headlines you'll read about Benjamin Patch are about volleyball. Up until relatively recently, he was a professional volleyball player for one of Germany's top clubs, the Berlin Recycling Volleys.

In 2022, Patch quit the club to pursue his own creative interests. But now the ceramic artist-slash-dancer-slash-interior-architect-slash-founder of the Be.Assembly collective is back in the German capital, where he'll add another title to his portfolio.



Benjamin Patch

Patch has been appointed creative director at one of the city's favorite hipster shopping destinations, Voo Store in the Kreuzberg neighborhood.

"To be honest, this was more of a heartfelt decision than just a business one," Yasin Müjdeci, who founded the store in 2010, told WWD. "We truly feel that Ben is the right person for this role because he really understands what the Voo Store stands for." Voo stocks everything from high-end clothing to exclusive homewares from around Europe by the likes of Berlin design studio Sucuk und Bratwurst, Swedish bedding brand Magniberg and Parisian glass workshop La Soufflerie, among many others. Voo also just worked on its first collaboration with Puma and the shop's connected spaces include a deli and coffee shop, an art gallery and an "archive" selling vintage designer garments.

Müjdeci says that Voo plans to expand the concept to other countries soon although he was not able to divulge exactly when or where yet.

"It wouldn't feel right to give a specific figure at this point but what we can share is that we're dreaming big," he said. "While we're not ready to share a detailed roadmap, what we can say is that we're exploring opportunities in places where there's a natural harmony with the Voo spirit. [South] Korea, for example, holds a very special place in our hearts – we feel incredibly connected and at home there."

—CATHRIN SCHAER

New Mag

The cross-pollination between fashion, art, design and architecture is on a roll and Hearst Italia wants in.

The publishing house said Wednesday it is launching a new magazine called "About:" centered on architecture and to be published twice a year. The title is bilingual, with each issue coming in English and Italian.

The hard-copy glossy is to be flanked by a "multimedia global platform," Hearst Italia said, which includes a website and social media presence. Events are also part of the new magazine's offering, as is SuperAcademy, an educational platform for professionals.

The magazine bills itself "the global architecture platform" in reference to its community building ambition. An About: membership program is to be launched at a later stage.

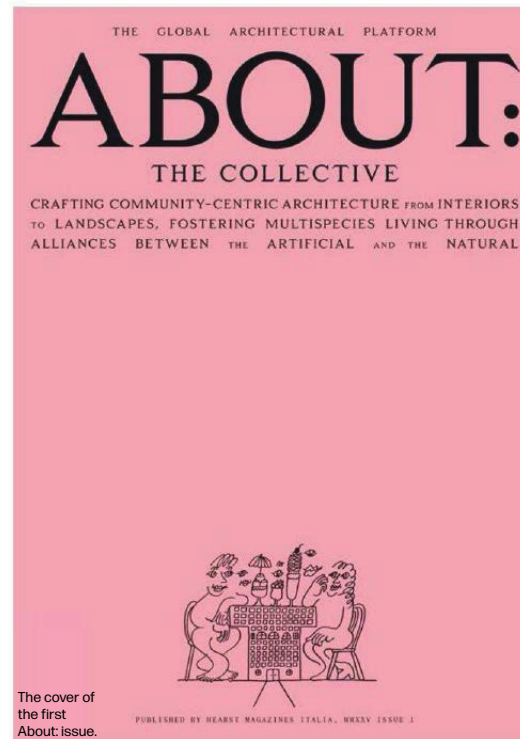
About: is part of the Hearst Global Design + Architecture division led by managing director Roberta Battocchio and comprising the Italian editions of Elle Decor and Marie Claire Maison.

"About: was born from the desire to give voice and tools to a community of professionals who, now more than ever, are seeking relevant content, an international perspective, and meaningful spaces for dialogue," said Battocchio.

"As players in the communication space, we firmly believe this project represents a new editorial model, an ecosystem of value... This initiative stems from a modern, forward-looking understanding of architecture, not merely as a design discipline, but as a cultural force with the power to shape lifestyles, drive sustainable development, and influence cities and the future of society," she added.

About: has named Elle Decor alum Alessandro Valenti as editor in chief. He will remain on board at the sister publication continuing in his role at the magazine's website, in addition to leading the About: rollout and development alongside deputy editor Giulia Ricci, who joined Hearst Italia last year.

The first About: issue, titled "The Collective," hits newsstands on Friday and is to be celebrated with a party on Wednesday in Venice, on the eve of the opening of the Venice Biennale of Architecture, running May 8 to Nov. 23. To mark the event and magazine's debut, the new Hearst Italia publication will distribute About: Journal, a leaflet-style guide to the



The cover of the first About: issue.

Biennale exhibition.

The seminal "The Collective" issue spans 260 pages, with a graphic project by British art director Kuchar Swara which sets the blueprint for the glossy. It is organized around four sections called Elements, Essays, Projects and Companies, focusing on architectural elements, reflections on the role of architecture in everyday life, design projects and design firms' solutions.

"About: seeks to explore the current state of architecture as a broad field where design entertains dialogues with other disciplines to shape the present and lay the groundwork for the future. [It's a view on] architecture that respects local contexts, moves beyond opportunistically global mechanisms, and is attuned to its relationship with other species and bodies of knowledge, all in service of designing with and for the Earth," Valenti offered. "That's why About: investigates topics, charts new maps, and traces projects, telling their stories through fresh narratives," he said.

The second issue of the magazine is scheduled for November. —M.C.

On Your Back

Under Armour has turned its innovation lens onto the ubiquitous backpack.

The Baltimore-based sports brand set out to redesign the accessory that has long been

maligned for the weight and strain placed on shoulders after a long day of carrying around laptops, books and other essentials.

Now, after three years of research and development, the company is introducing the No Weigh Backpack. The product features UA Suspension straps, a patent-pending innovation that stretches and contracts in response to a person's stride and shifting loads by redistributing weight across the shoulders and upper back. In third-party testing at an ergonomics laboratory, the newly designed system was found to reduce strain and minimize fatigue, Under Armour claimed.

"The athlete backpack is used more than almost anything else, but no one's truly rethought it until now," said Kyle Blakely, senior vice president of innovation, development and testing. "We treated it like a performance product, because that's what it really is."

"It doesn't just feel lighter – it moves with you," added Tobiah Taylor, director of accessories. "You're not fighting the bag anymore."

In addition to the new strap system, which includes adjusters and a floating sternum strap, the No Weigh Backpack offers breathable, moisture-wicking back panels, zippered pockets, ventilated compartments to keep sweaty gear away from other products, and offers an expandable 28-liter to 35-liter capacity.

Under Armour worked with young athletes in ►

Under Armour's new No Weigh Backpack.



Baltimore city schools to test the prototypes of the new backpack. Several of the students will be featured in the launch campaign, which dropped Wednesday.

The No Weigh Backpack retails for \$140 and is available to loyalty members now on the Under Armour website. It will be offered to the general public on Thursday.

The company said it plans to use the UA Suspension strap technology in other products in the future including duffels and travel bags.—J.E.P.

Bubbling Up

After Fendi, Hiroshi Fujiwara's Fragment, and Yayoi Kusama, Alexander Wang has become the latest brand to collaborate with Heytea, the Chinese bubble tea drink sensation.

Heytea's logo, which features a tea-drinking cartoon character in profile, was updated with an animated image of Alexander Wang, whose long black hair flows behind him as he sips tea in the brand's signature pose.

Two special drinks are served at the brand's 103 Grand Street flagship until May 31.

The specialty drinks include the Metabloom, which is made with superfoods like chia seeds, kale, yerba mate, and topped off with a smoky bubble, and a Heytea classic, the Black Grape Boom, which features fresh hand-peeled black grapes

and a jasmine green tea base.

A rivet-shaped tea canister and a black silicon tote bag will be offered as limited-edition merch on the side.

The collaboration is meant to convey both

Céline Assimon



brands' "love for bold, clean design," according to a Heytea spokesperson.

"It's a unique crossover between fashion and tea culture, especially in New York's vibrant, urban vibe. We hope it sparks inspiration, connects with new audiences, and shows how tea culture can be as bold and dynamic as fashion itself," the spokesperson added.

In 2023, Heytea entered the realm of luxury for the

first time via a collaboration with Fendi. A pop-up cafe within Beijing's Hutong alleyways further ignited internet fervor, which helped the brand garner over 1 million views on Xiaohongshu, or Rednote.

Before that, Heytea joined forces with Fragment, which was founded by the Japanese streetwear legend Hiroshi Fujiwara, on a merch collection during COVID-19 that was quickly sold out online.

Last year, Heytea collaborated with Yayoi Kusama and installed an air balloon version of Kusama's pumpkin sculpture, its largest to date, on the Bund in Shanghai.

Founded in 2012 in China's southern tech hub of Shenzhen, Heytea is widely lauded as the creator of a frothy cheese tea and fresh fruit tea.

Last year, Heytea began to expand abroad, opening stores in major fashion hubs such as Paris, London and New York. It now counts around 20 stores in the U.S. market.

Heytea's investors include L Catterton Asia, Dayone Capital, Siguler Guff, Silverhorn Investment Advisors, and more.

—DENNI HU

Joining Bonhams

Céline Assimon, the former chief executive officer of De Beers Jewellers, has been appointed chief commercial officer at Bonhams, the international auction house headquartered on New Bond Street, WWD has learned.

Her appointment was confirmed in a LinkedIn post on Wednesday morning.

"Excited to share that I have joined Bonhams as chief commercial officer. I am privileged to be a part of this international auction house, which was established in 1793 in London, and I look forward to contributing to its rich legacy. A big thank you to Chabi Priscilla Nouri and Hans-Kristian Høejsgaard for their [Nouri and Høejsgaard] trust," Assimon said in a post.

Bonhams, founded in 1793, is one of the four

original Georgian London auction houses. It is owned by Epiris, the U.K.-based private equity company, and has 14 salerooms across the globe, selling items in more than 60 collecting categories.

Assimon joined De Beers in 2020 and left at the end of February.

As reported, De Beers wished her "the very best for all future endeavors," and said a search is underway to recruit a successor.

The company said Assimon "successfully repositioned De Beers Jewellers as a design-led luxury brand through the expansion of our creative product portfolio in core collections and high jewelry."

It added that Assimon "built the jeweler's global brand presence through relationships with market leading partners and laid the groundwork for the launch of its Rue de la Paix flagship store in Paris later this year."

The brand is set to open the flagship in the fourth quarter in a building that has recently been renovated.

De Beers also credited Assimon with revamping the look and feel of the brand.

"Over the course of nearly five years, I have thoroughly enjoyed my role as the custodian of De Beers Jewellers," said Assimon, adding that she was particularly proud of the rebranding and upcoming ad campaign.

"Collaborating with my team to research and articulate its distinctive DNA has been a remarkable adventure. The blend of African heritage with a touch of London sophistication resonates deeply," she added.

—HIKMAT MOHAMMED ■



The Alexander Wang and Heytea collaboration includes a limited-edition silicon tote bag and a tea canister.