

# WWD

Fashion. Beauty. Business.

## When In Rome

Maria Grazia Chiuri's Dior cruise show in Rome was an ode to the city's enduring love affair with the silver screen. It was as cinematic as they come, combining a stunning setting, the 18th-century Villa Albani Torlonia, with her signature craftsmanship in a sequence of designs fit for a Renaissance princess, as seen here.

*For more, see pages 4 to 7.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY FRANCESCO ORMANDO



## ACCESSORIES

## Looming U.S. Tariffs Drove Swiss Watch Export Surge in April



Hublot Big Bang 20th anniversary Full Magic gold, limited to 100 pieces.

● Swiss watch exports surged 18.2 percent in April, driven by shipments to the U.S. in anticipation of tariffs while global markets showed mixed performance amid ongoing challenges for the industry.

BY LILY TEMPLETON

**PARIS** – Watchmakers and retailers are rushing to beat a looming, but moving, deadline for U.S. tariffs fueled timepiece exports in April.

A total of 1.3 million watches with a value of 2.45 billion Swiss francs left the country during the month, an 18.2 percent increase year-on-year, according to figures published Tuesday by the Federation of the Swiss Watch Industry.

The U.S. alone took a 33 percent share of the market, with exports leaping 149 percent to 851.9 million Swiss francs. That is equivalent to a fifth of last year's full-year exports to the country.

But the April boom does not signal the end of a turbulent period marked by shrinking markets across the board.

"The sharp rise in exports is more a reflection of a one-off response to an uncertain commercial situation than a genuine sign of a structural strengthening of demand," the industry body said.

"Without the U.S., the month result would have been a decline [in value] of 6.4

percent, again penalized by China and Hong Kong," territories that once occupied the top steps of the podium and have now sunk to fifth and sixth place respectively, it added.

On April 2, the U.S. announced 31 percent tariffs for goods made in Switzerland, although negotiations are ongoing and exports are currently subject to the global 10 percent rate.

Bar the American market, the rest of the world presented a mixed picture, similar to earlier months of 2025, with the U.K. and Japan showing slim, single-digit growth. Along with France, which rose nearly 5 percent, those were the only markets in the top 10 to grow in April.

China and Hong Kong tumbled 30.5 and 22.8 percent respectively, while Singapore sank 9.2 percent.

Results for April were "consistent with the Swiss Watch Federation's previous downbeat outlook comment that global Swiss watch exports should decline again in 2025 given no imminent turnaround in Chinese demand," said Thomas Chauvet, head of European equity research, luxury goods at Citi.

By materials, it seems the American consumer has a taste for steel, precious metal and bimetallic watches.

The federation pointed out that without the U.S., the total number of watches exported would have declined 5.7 percent, but did not specify the effect on value. As it stands, units exported to North America rose by 77 percent.

The dominant steel watch category drove the increase in volume with an 18.9 percent leap, with bimetallic and precious metal pieces also seeing a sharp uptick, albeit on far smaller unit numbers as a base.

In value, precious metal watches came first at 953 million Swiss francs and a 23.4 percent increase, followed by steel and bimetallic watches.

U.S. demand may not be the only factor contributing to the growth in value.

Bernstein's Luca Solca said that "beyond the tariff pull-forward, export values also reflect the impact of high gold price inflation," with the growth in gold-steel and precious metal pieces "indicating double-digit [year-on-year] export price inflation."

The "other materials" and "other metals" categories did not benefit from increased shipments to the U.S., shrinking in value and volume by high-single or mid-teen percentages.

The bell-shaped curve by price category continued, with the high end of the market of watches priced above 3,000 Swiss francs at export price growing 22.9 percent in value and almost 20 percent in volume, while entry-price pieces under 200 Swiss francs rose by a more modest 10.4 percent in value and 6.5 percent in number of units.

Meanwhile, the middle segment was mainly flat in volume, while value contracted for the 200-to-500 Swiss francs category while growing 5 percent for the 500-to-3,000 range.

"The data suggests that Swiss exports to the US in the [200-to-500 Swiss francs] range are a negligible portion of total global exports to this price range, while the U.S. remains a key market for exports priced below 300 and above 3,000 [Swiss francs]," said Solca. "We note that most smartwatches are priced in the 200 to 500 [Swiss francs] range."

## BUSINESS

## Hudson's Bay Signs Lease Deal With Chinese Billionaire

● Ruby Liu is seeking up to 28 Hudson's Bay leases to develop a "new, modern department store concept."

BY DAVID MOIN

**Hudson's Bay** has entered into a definitive agreement to sell up to 28 leases in Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia to Ruby Liu Commercial Investment Corp., a company operating shopping centers in Canada and Asia and controlled by billionaire Ruby Liu.

According to information from the Toronto-based Hudson's Bay, Liu intends to launch "a new modern department store concept" in Canada. She would, however, be unable to operate the stores under the Hudson's Bay banner considering earlier this month the intellectual property of Hudson's Bay was purchased by Canadian Tire Corp., one of Canada's largest retailers, unless some agreement was worked out. Canadian Tire spent 30 million Canadian dollars to own the time-honored HBC stripes and various company names, logos, designs, coat of arms and brand trademarks.

Hudson's Bay filed for creditor protection under the CCAA in March, citing over \$1.1 billion in debt. Despite

efforts to restructure, the company initiated full liquidation after failing to secure necessary financing.

Liu is the chairwoman of Central Walk, which develops and operates commercial real estate in Asia and Canada, including the Mayfair Shopping Centre in Victoria, and Tsawwassen Mills Outlet Shopping Mall and Woodgrove Centre in Nanaimo, British Columbia. Three of the leases sought by Liu are in those three shopping centers in Canada. The locations of the other leases as of yet have not been disclosed. Terms of the agreement were also not disclosed.

Liu has a reputation for bringing a variety of events and experiences to her company's mall properties, which offer more than just dining and shopping. She entered Canada's commercial real estate market five years ago by purchasing the Woodgrove Centre in Nanaimo. It is believed that the mall is up for sale.

In 2021, Liu purchased the Mayfair Shopping Centre in Victoria. A year later she bought Tsawwassen Mills mall in Vancouver.

Liu's pending acquisition of the leases is the result of a bidding process where the court determined that the transaction would be in the best interests of Hudson's Bay and its stakeholders and creditors. The company remains in discussions with

The Hudson's Bay flagship in Toronto.



other bidders regarding certain other lease locations.

The deal with Liu requires the approval of the court and the landlords. Currently, Hudson's Bay is liquidating all of its 80 stores, a process expected to be completed next month. The liquidations will cost approximately 8,000 workers in Canada their jobs.

Among Hudson's Bay's key locations are those in downtown Toronto on Queen Street; the Yorkdale Shopping Center in Toronto; the Hillcrest Mall in Richmond Hill,

Ontario; in downtown Montreal; in Laval and in Pointe-Claire, both cities in Quebec.

Hudson's Bay was part of the same retail group that was led by Richard Baker and owned Saks Fifth Avenue and Saks Off 5th. But when Saks purchased the Neiman Marcus Group in December in a \$2.7 billion deal, Hudson's Bay was separated from the operation. Baker's NRDC Equity Partners bought Hudson's Bay in 2008 for around \$1 billion from the widow of South Carolina industrialist Jerry Zucker, who bought Hudson's Bay two years before for \$1.1 billion.

## BUSINESS

# Brooks Brothers Returns to Downtown NYC With Global Flagship



The new Brooks Brothers global flagship at 195 Broadway in New York.

- The company's first store was on Catherine and Cherry Streets and opened in 1818.

BY JEAN E. PALMIERI

At 207 years old and the oldest retailer in the U.S., Brooks Brothers has long embraced its history. Now the company has returned to where it all began, unveiling a new global flagship in downtown Manhattan.

In 1818, 45-year-old Henry Sands Brooks opened a men's haberdashery, H. & D.H. Brooks & Co., in a small wooden storefront on the northeast corner of Catherine and Cherry streets, within blocks of the East River and the site of the future Brooklyn Bridge, which wouldn't be built for another 52 years. The business was later renamed Brooks Brothers in honor of his four sons.

For more than four decades, the company had operated a store in the Financial District at One Liberty Plaza, which had famously doubled as a makeshift morgue after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center. But that closed in 2018 when the building it was housed in was being renovated.

Now the brand is back downtown with a 10,000-square-foot, two-level space in the historic Western Union Telegraph Building at 195 Broadway. Also known as the AT&T

Building, the 29-story building was designed by architect William Welles Bosworth and constructed between 1912 and 1916. It is one of New York's first skyscrapers.

Because it's landmarked, Brooks Brothers was limited in what it could do with the main floor, which was at one point the lobby of the building. So the team got creative, incorporating the white marble Doric columns, bronze and alabaster chandeliers and high ceilings with their inlaid grid of coffers, or sunken panels, into the store design.

The main floor is dedicated to men's sportswear and womenswear, two growing segments of the business. Men's suits, shirts and the made-to-measure department are on the lower level, which was completely gutted and redesigned.

"This is the culmination of everything we've been working on," said Ken Ohashi, Brooks' chief executive officer. "In less than five years, we've been able to completely reinvent the business."

He said that after Brooks Brothers was purchased by Authentic Brands Group and SPARC for \$325 million in August 2020, he was unable to make a financially prudent deal with Brooks' former owner, Claudio Del Vecchio, to retain its longtime flagship on Madison Avenue and 44th Street. Del Vecchio owns the building at 346 Madison, which remains vacant.

Instead, Brooks doubled down on its other Midtown location in Rockefeller Center, which sources said is one of the company's most-productive stores with annual sales of more than \$10 million.

While Ohashi declined to provide numbers, he said the Rockefeller Center store was expanded two years ago to its current 4,500 square feet, and continues to be a strong performer.

"But we love downtown," he said. "It's close to where the original store was located and to Wall Street. It's also near the TriBeCa epicenter and the Financial District is becoming a hot residential spot."

The Financial District is also a popular tourist destination with the World Trade Center memorial and nearby Trinity Church where Alexander Hamilton is buried.

Michael Bastian, Brooks' creative director, added: "We started at Catherine and Cherry, and over the years we followed the critical mass of the working guy as he migrated uptown."

In addition to the Rockefeller Center unit, Brooks operates a store at 86th Street and Madison Avenue in Manhattan, which is slated for a facelift soon. All told, the company operates 141 stores in the U.S. and 334 globally.

The new flagship had a soft opening about a week ago and Ohashi said the sales are already strong. That comes without any official marketing and despite the scaffolding that obscures the main entrance on Broadway. The scaffolding is scheduled to be removed next month, the team said.

Even when the scaffolding is gone, Brooks will not be able to put its name on the exterior of the building because of its landmark status. Instead, its windows will have to tell a story, Ohashi said.

The company has more leeway on the interior. The rear of the main floor opens into the lobby and is directly across from a Nobu restaurant, where Ohashi will host a dinner and unveiling of the store to an intimate group on Wednesday night. There are two windows in that corridor which Brooks will use to display archival pieces. For the opening, one case is displaying a replica of the black greatcoat the company made for Abraham Lincoln's second inauguration that he was wearing the night he was assassinated. An antique mirror from the same time frame is also on display.

A second case speaks to the brand's own history with a silhouette of Henry Sands Brooks, the only remaining representation of the founder, along with photos of his four sons.

Ohashi said the new flagship is not the biggest store in the chain but is larger than most of the company's new units. "Our new stores are generally between 5,000 and 7,000 square feet," he said, adding that "historically, our stores have been too big."

But at 10,000 square feet, Brooks has the space to "tell the whole story," he said. "Half of the upstairs is women's, which has had

phenomenal growth this year." In addition to luxury sportswear and casual menswear, the upstairs offers a vintage area along with the only site in the U.S. where customers can buy pieces from Brooks' longtime collaboration with Junya Watanabe.

Downstairs is accessible by elevator or marble staircase and leads into what Ohashi described as a "men's moment." From suits and shirts to neckwear, the space offers a range of options for dressing up. The made-to-measure department offers some fabrics exclusive to the flagship, and ties have been "on fire" since the opening, Bastian said. In addition to servicing guys who are dressing up more again, at under \$100 neckties are a good gift for tourists to bring home, Ohashi said.

"We've been focusing on what people wear to work today," said Bastian. "We still have a very traditional person and sell a lot of suits, but they're wearing more luxury sportswear and we're moving with them."

Brooks Brothers shares 195 Broadway with Anthropologie and Ohashi said he'd like to partner with the retailer because that space offers one of its largest wedding shops and he envisions opportunities to collaborate.

Overall, Ohashi said business at Brooks Brothers continues to be strong. "We've had four years of consecutive comp gains," he said. "And the fourth quarter was incredible. Year-to-date, February was a little soft but we did well in March. The winners are spring fashions and women's."

Although womenswear is still a small business, representing just 12 percent of total sales, Ohashi believes it can continue to grow. "We're buying aggressively for it next year."

Earlier this year, Ohashi was also tasked with overseeing Eddie Bauer. The Seattle-based retailer is part of Catalyst Brands, which was created in January to oversee Authentic and SPARC's Lucky Brands, Aeropostale, Nautica and Brooks Brothers as well as J.C. Penney.

Ohashi said that after running Brooks for over four years, the company is at the point where it's more about "framework and good flow. We did the heavy lift over the past four years; now it's about micro-tweaks and doubling down on the luxury positioning we've created that has really helped the business."

He said Bastian was his first hire at Brooks after taking over as CEO and his updated, elevated designs and fabrications have led to more full-price sales, both in stores and online.

"We're still relatively reasonably priced," Ohashi said, pointing to the company non-iron, Supima cotton dress shirt for \$118 as an example. "It offers incredible value."

When Brooks Brothers was struggling and operating in Chapter 11 bankruptcy, the website was seen primarily as a vehicle for clearing merchandise. "It took a long time to get the full-price customer back," Ohashi said. "But year-to-date, our margins have been the best in five years."

"And our messaging is full price," Bastian added. "Brooks was flat when we bought it," Ohashi said. "It's important to get the vibe and the creative direction right, and I think we've done that."

As a result, Brooks is in expansion mode. Ohashi said the company is opening more stores in 2025 than it has in the past two decades. New locations still on tap for this year include Red Bank, N.J., and the Stanford/Palo Alto, Calif., area.

# The Reviews



## Dior CRUISE 2026

For Maria Grazia Chiuri, staging her Dior cruise show in Rome was a gamble: she hadn't presented a collection in her hometown in 10 years, ever since her *Mirabilia Romae* haute couture show as cocreative director of Valentino.

"For me, doing a project in Rome was obviously one of my desires, but also one of my fears, because 'Mirabilia' was such a high point," she said in a preview ahead of the Dior event on Tuesday night.

It turns out, there are enough marvels in Rome for several fashion extravaganzas. Chiuri put on a super-production worthy of the city's famed Cinecittà film studios in an equally cinematic setting, the Villa Albani Torlonia after dark.

Its central parterre was shrouded in artificial fog, with a smattering of real raindrops that started to fall just as the show was about to begin, but let up about halfway through.

The privately owned, 18th-century complex, home to a prestigious collection of Greek and Roman antiquities, is off the beaten track due to its byzantine admissions policy. Even art collector Jean Pigozzi had never managed to score an invitation.

"I have a house, and I live exactly 300 feet away from here, and every day, I walk in front of it. I said, 'How can I come in?' And they said, 'Oh, you can come in. It costs about 300 euros.' So I said, 'OK, well,

I'm gonna think about it.' And I was very kindly invited by Dior," he said.

Having befriended the owners, he hopes to eventually make it inside the villa, where the artworks are housed.

Chiuri channeled the venue's deep historical references with a sequence of outfits fit for a Renaissance princess. Diaphanous gowns, in a palette dominated by cream and white, alternated with sinuous crimson and black velvet column dresses and androgynous outerwear.

A black lace dress was topped with a heavy cream wool military-style coat with tails, while others came with a peaked trench cape, a shrug-sized motorcycle jacket or cream tailcoats with more than a hint of Marlene Dietrich.

For viewers joining online, the broadcast was bookended by a short film by Italian director Matteo Garrone, marking his third collaboration with the designer. In it, characters dressed in pale costumes roamed the grounds like ghostly apparitions. ▶



If some of them looked familiar, it's because Chiuri commissioned costume house Tirelli to reproduce some of its most famous creations, seen in films ranging from Luchino Visconti's "The Leopard" to Martin Scorsese's "The Age of Innocence."

"We wanted not only to experiment, but also with this lightness, to show that the construction behind a film costume is very close to haute couture," she said.

The collaboration was the starting point for her collection: an ode to Rome's enduring love affair with the silver screen. Including both ready-to-wear and haute couture looks, it took its cues from film heroines.

Silvana Mangano's aristocratic character in "Death in Venice" was echoed in a lace-encrusted shirtdress and dense crochet-style knits, while a beaded gown channeled gladiator attitude with a trompe-l'oeil chest motif and a long strip skirt.

"Cinema has done a lot to promote the image of Rome," Chiuri said. "For me, it was important not only to show my personal Rome, but also Rome as it has appeared in the movies."

In those classic films, the line between fantasy and reality is often tenuous: think of Anita Ekberg bathing in the Trevi fountain in "La Dolce Vita," or Marcello Mastroianni in the guise of an 18th-century nobleman haunting an ancient palazzo in "Ghosts of Rome."

Those blurred lines were on full display the day before the show, as extras in historical costume mingled outside the tent where models lined up in their show looks for a rehearsal. That there was a surreal tinge to the proceedings was fitting, given that Chiuri is starring in a peculiar fashion drama of her own.

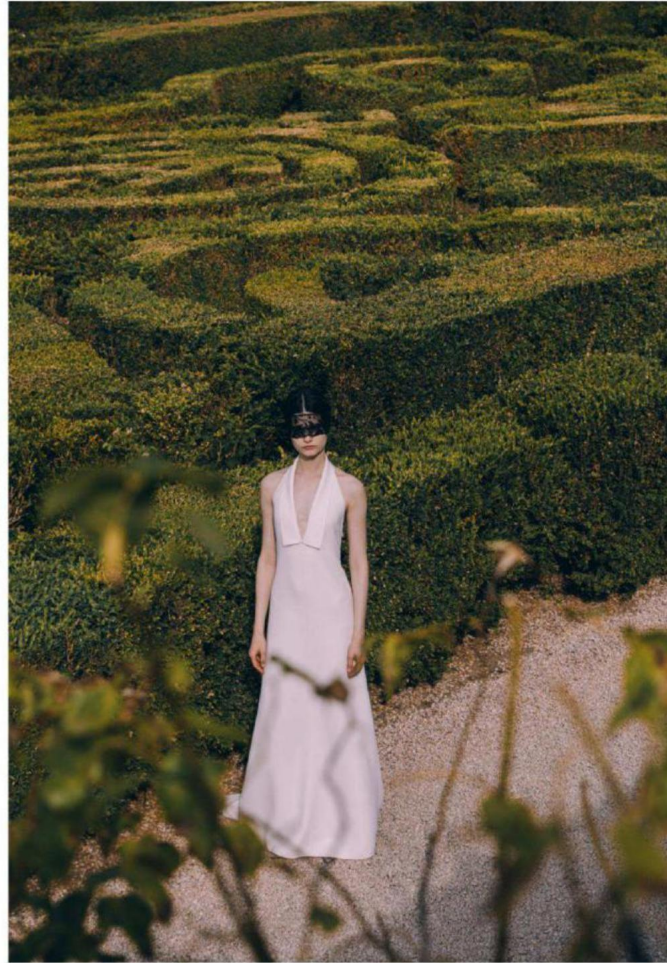
For months, speculation has swirled that she will be succeeded by Jonathan Anderson, who was confirmed last month as Dior's menswear designer and is tipped to take over the women's division as well. Tuesday's show was widely seen as her swansong.

While Dior officials remained tight-lipped, it was business as usual for the unflappable designer.

Explaining the decision to preempt the haute couture season, which traditionally unfurls in Paris in July, she said it was down to the similarity between costume design and the production of made-to-measure outfits for Dior's wealthiest clients.

"In fact, the dialogue that took place with Tirelli wasn't done by the ready-to-wear team, but by the haute couture team. They are two languages that are more similar," she argued.

The event coincided with the official



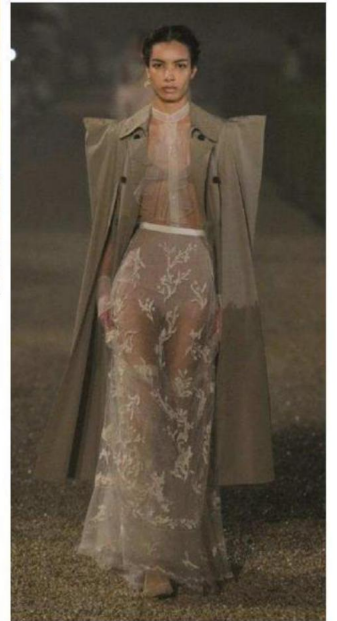
reopening of her passion project, the historic Teatro della Cometa, or Comet Theater, after a lengthy renovation. Ahead of the show, guests were treated to a teaser of the collection at the tiny horseshoe-shaped venue, in the shape of a stunning tableau vivant performed by actors in all-white ensembles.

Chiuri said it was inspired by the theater's founder, art patron Mimi Pecci Blunt, and her famous Bal Blanc in 1930. In photos by Man Ray, guests are seen artfully posing in white costumes. It's what prompted Chiuri to issue a dress code for her soirée: white for women, and black for men.

Guests including Natalie Portman, Camille Cottin and Rachel Brosnahan duly complied.

"I love a dress code and I think it makes everybody feel special. There is a sense of belonging and togetherness, you are part of a production, I suppose. It's like being part of a theatrical company, you are required to play a part," said Rosamund Pike.

"I get overwhelmed with choices," Alexandra Daddario concurred. "I'm an actress, I've learned fashion but that was not my expertise so for me, it's wonderful to have someone as talented as Maria Grazia and Dior choose something for me." ▶



# WWD

Fellow “White Lotus” star Sarah Catherine Hook soaked up the sea of monochrome outfits. “I didn’t know we were going to do all white and being here and seeing it, I think it’s elegant and perfect for a garden show. It’s kind of like a dream look, and I feel like a vintage princess,” she said.

Chiuri noted that Rome has always been a “Theatrum Mundi,” Latin for “Theater of the World.” Dior landed in the Eternal City alongside scores of Catholic faithful from across the planet celebrating a Jubilee year and a new pope.

Guests were treated to exclusive experiences, including a visit to the studio of artist Pietro Ruffo, who has collaborated with Chiuri on many of her shows; a visit to Tirelli, where seamstresses were busy running up new costumes, and a private visit to the Domus Aurea, the vast complex built by Emperor Nero.

It was another show of force from Dior, which ranked as the strongest luxury and premium brand in the most recent report on the world’s top 50 luxury and premium brands from consultancy Brand Finance – rising three positions from the previous year.

Under Chiuri, the brand’s revenues have tripled, but parent company LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton has disappointed markets in recent quarters with flagging sales amid a global slowdown in demand for luxury goods. It has appointed new creative directors at several of its marquee brands in a bid to pique consumer interest.

As the first female creative director of the French fashion house, Chiuri has displayed an unerring instinct for what women want. With this atmospheric pageant, she once again proved her knack for storytelling that translates into rich store displays.

While some of the craftsmanship got



swamped in the magnitude of the setting, fans of the designer will lap up the unabashed femininity of a slipdress with scalloped layers dusted with beads, or the majesty of a cape dripping in gold fringe.

If it does turn out to be the final clap of her nine-year tenure at Dior, Chiuri can pride herself on writing her own ending.

— *Joelle Diderich, with contributions from Luisa Zargani*



## Rosamund Pike, Natalie Portman Among Dior Cruise Guests

Alexandra Daddario, Sarah Catherine Hook and Ashley Park also attended the event at the 18th-century Villa Albani Torlonia in Rome.

BY LUISA ZARGANI PHOTOGRAPHS BY FEDERICO LOMARTIRE

**ROME** – Guests of the Dior 2026 cruise show made it through the step and repeat and the entrance of Villa Albani Torlonia just before it started raining on Tuesday evening, ominous black clouds in the background.

Abiding by the dress code – white for women and black for men – Natalie Portman made her way toward the

18th-century residence, whose spectacular gardens served as the stage for the fashion show.

Asked about her work as an audiobook narrator, for example on the “Wheel of Time” series by Robert Jordan, Rosamund Pike said smiling that “it’s a gift because you are alone, just with your imagination, which is a wonderful place to be and you

create everything. If you do an audiobook you have to do it so that the person you are reading to has to picture everything, so you have to know it deeply and imagine it first so that you can share your imagination with others.”

Spotted earlier in the day at the Teatro della Cometa, which Maria Grazia Chiuri has been restoring, Pike, who is a Dior brand ambassador, lit up and said “it’s a wonderful, very special project. Theaters are places of dreams and creativity and for Maria Grazia to see this one and restore it to its glory, hoping to bring all kinds of artists, productions and music, it’s very, very exciting. That would be my dream.”

The theater was on her mind because she said she loves a dress code as “it makes everybody feel special, there is a sense of belonging and togetherness, you are part of a production, I suppose. It’s like being part of a theatrical company, you are required to play a part.”

“I love a dress code, I get overwhelmed with choices,” concurred Alexandra Daddario. “I’m an actress, I’ve learned fashion but that was not my expertise. So for me it’s wonderful to have someone as talented as Maria Grazia and Dior choose something for me.”

From the first to the latest “White Lotus” seasons, Daddario and Sarah Catherine Hook commented on the series’ enduring

success.

Daddario did not envision how influential it would become. “I didn’t think much about it because we shot it during COVID, so we had other things on our minds but I’ve been doing this for a really long time and you just never know what’s going to happen, so it’s awesome. Sometimes you think something’s going to be huge and it’s not, but I knew we were making something special.”

Hook said she was “a fan of it right from the beginning as a viewer and it made so much sense to me. After the success of the first and second seasons and going into the third we all felt this type of pressure and we hoped and wanted the success to continue, but honestly it’s all Mike [White, its creator and director], if it’s in his hands, we are good. I feel very enriched by the whole experience and the location was stunning. I love Thailand and Asia.”

She gave a thumbs-up to the night’s dress code, too. “Oh my gosh, I love it, I didn’t know we were going to do all white and being here and seeing it, I think it’s elegant and perfect for a garden show. It’s kind of like a dream look, and I feel like a vintage princess,” she said, smiling.

“It’s timeless color, very much like Dior, and I think there’s a lot of ways and times that you can wear it, it’s fresh and I think it’s fabulous,” said Ashley Park.



Natalie Portman



Ashley Park and Alexandra Daddario

## FASHION

# Maria Grazia Chiuri on Her Restored Theater and Rome's Special Locations



The tableaux vivant inside the Teatro della Cometa.



Maria Grazia Chiuri and her daughter Rachele Regini.

● Ahead of the Dior cruise show in the Italian capital, the designer unveiled the newly restored Teatro della Cometa, a personal investment.

BY LUISA ZARGANI

**ROME** - Rome has famously been described as a stage, given its fascinating and storied backdrops for events, its history of open-air performances in the city's landmarks from the Colosseum to the Pantheon, and its ancient theaters. Now, Maria Grazia Chiuri has her own stage in the Italian capital, thanks to a personal investment by the designer and her family to restore a gem, the Teatro della Cometa.

"This is such a small tale that risked getting lost in a city that needs so much restoration, but I'm happy to reopen this theater and show the results of five years of works," said Chiuri, who inaugurated the theater ahead of the Dior cruise show here Tuesday.

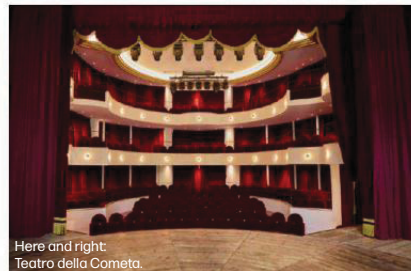
The artistic director of Dior's women's haute couture, ready-to-wear and accessories collections was clearly influenced by Countess Anna Laetitia Pecci Blunt, known as Mimi, who commissioned the theater in 1958.

"Her life was dedicated to art, and she herself was an artistic talent and a photographer," Chiuri told WWD.

"I wanted to celebrate how a woman of that generation was exceptional and inspiring," explained the designer, who has over the years has shined a light on several creatives, from Mickalene Thomas, Joana Vasconcelos and Judy Chicago to choreographer Sharon Eyal, among others. "It's more difficult for creative women to emerge in art, and I like to give different points of view, but this does not exclude men," she clarified.

Chiuri stumbled on sketches of the theater by Tommaso Buzzi, the 20th century architect who designed the venue and, among other projects, the multifaceted architectural complex and symbol of creative freedom La Sciarzuola, and was immediately intrigued.

"I was fascinated by how he had imagined this place, conceived as an intimate theater inspired by those of



Here and right: Teatro della Cometa.

ancient courts. It's small, but it has everything it needs, including a revolving stage and windows that look onto the stage and on the street, creating a connection with the city, which becomes almost a set for the theater," said Chiuri.

Described by architect and art historian Antonio Muñoz as "a jewel at the foot of the Capitoline Hill," since 1958 the Teatro della Cometa has hosted performances by Samuel Beckett, Eugène Ionesco, Arthur Kopit, and concerts by Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli, Milly, and Charles Trenet, until its closure in 1968 due to a fire.

It later reopened and then closed again during COVID-19 and Chiuri said the restoration with a new visual identity designed by Studio Sonnoli was "complex," as she wanted to "maintain the original spirit, keep all the main elements such as the chandeliers in the shape of stars and comets, brass doors, stage machinery and the structure, but still modernize it for efficiency."

A selection of archival material dedicated to the history and conception of the theater, curated by Maria Alicata with original drawings by Buzzi; period photographs of Pecci Blunt with friends including Jean Cocteau, Salvador Dalí, and Alberto Moravia; posters; letters; manuscripts; invitation; flyers, and publications are displayed throughout.

"Pecci Blunt lived between Rome, Paris, Tuscany and New York and she was in contact with the same creative entourage of Monsieur Dior," said Chiuri, citing a photo where the countess is seen wearing Dior with Cecil Beaton. "She was internationally recognized for her commitment to the promotion of culture and the arts."

In fact, in 1935 she founded the Galleria della Cometa, named after the heraldic emblem of the Pecci family, and in 1937 The Cometa Art Gallery opened in New York.

As a sign of continuity with the theater's strong multidisciplinary vocation, Chiuri sees the location as "a hub for avant-garde cultural innovation, from theatrical drama, to dance, music, performance, artist residencies, workshops and international showcases and festivals, and high-quality international proposals, promoting exchange and the fusion of cultures, becoming a reference point for a dynamic, and inclusive cultural system."

After, all, she added, Christian Dior "had also worked with the theater and ballets" over the years.

Chiuri's daughter Rachele Regini has been involved in the project and is the theater's head of the scientific committee, working with the curators and creating the calendar of activities and events.

"We want to approach theater as interdisciplinary. Teatro della Cometa is small, seating 230 guests, but the advantage is that you can experiment, it's not necessarily as complex as a bigger theater with 2,000 seats," said Chiuri.

Ahead of the Dior fashion show, the theater presented reenactments of the tableaux vivants imagined by Pecci Blunt for her soirées, along with others inspired by the famous photographs taken by Man Ray during the Bal Blanc she organized in 1930.

On the stage, amid the sets designed by Chiuri's longtime collaborator and artist Pietro Ruffo, the performers wore reinterpretations of period costumes curated by Maria Luisa Frisa and created in Rome's legendary costumer house Atelier

Tirelli by Chiuri. All in white, the performers portrayed Pierrot, the Joker and the Duke of Orleans, among others.

Chiuri enthused about working with Tirelli, a first for the designer, and the quality and the craft of its costumers. "It's the Oscars' atelier," she said, pointing to how it has contributed to 17 Academy Award wins for best costume design, from "The English Patient" to "Titanic." Among the 15,000 archival costumes are, for example, the dress worn by Maria Callas in Pier Paolo Pasolini's "Medea" and Winona Ryder's and Michelle Pfeiffer's gowns worn in Martin Scorsese's "The Age of Innocence."

As part of the experience in Rome, in addition to the theater, Dior organized private visits to Tirelli, to Ruffo's studio, where he showed several of his works created for the luxury brand with Chiuri, and the stunning Domus Aurea, the archeological complex originally built by Emperor Nero.

Asked how this tour of meaningful locations in Rome differed from the 10 venues Chiuri and Pierpaolo Piccioli chose in 2015 when they were co-creative directors of Valentino for the Mirabilia Romae exhibition marking their fall couture show back then, the designer paused for thought. "A new project in Rome was on my wish list, but it was also a challenge and not so easy because Mirabilia was magic, very successful and at the time it was very innovative. Now I wanted to offer a different view of Rome, more connected to cinema and theater. The movies have been a big promoter of the city, through neo-realism, for example. I felt it was important to tell a story that was not only personal but also through the city."

# The Reviews

## Roberto Cavalli RESORT 2026

That the Cavalli woman aims to stand out rather than blend in is a given. Yet the collection Fausto Puglisi created for resort 2026 still surprised and felt fresh with all its punchy colors, prints galore and sprinkle of golden sequins here and there, which offered a jolt of much-needed optimism and boldness in dark times.

As it often does, the Sicilian designer's globe-trotting lifestyle informed his work. A few months ago he traveled from Miami to Mexico City and, between the multicolored Art Deco scene of the former and exploring the latter's lively La Condesa district, he found plenty of inspiration.

"I felt good there, and [it happened] in a historic moment when probably being optimistic is the only thing we should do," he said, Zoom-ing from his sunny hometown, Messina. "Those working in this industry should make fashion comprehensible in a world that is more and more difficult to understand and getting darker and darker. So I liked the idea of delivering something that felt authentically mine but also a kind of evasion, also because this brand has always been about escapism."

Cue the vibrant colorblocking of the first part of the lineup, which recalled both Puglisi's former designs for his namesake label and Cavalli's early 2000s ones and was in full display in flouncy slipdresses in different lengths and pairing bright yellow or pistachio hues with laced inserts in popping fuchsia and red.

Ditto for jersey mini options stretching over the body worn with matching leggings, as well as sleek jacquard suiting and a daily look juxtaposing a relaxed double-faced caban jacket with a hot pink textured shirt and canary yellow pants.

Graphic silk shirts doubling as minidresses introduced the brand's signature animal patterns, which also stood out on poplin frocks with ruffled hems, sequined slipdresses and on a pair of cool stone-washed denim pants with a

distressed effect. The same treatment and experimental approach was applied to laminated suede pants.

Further adding to the visual flamboyance, a floral print bloomed on see-through shirts, flared pants and bias-cut dresses, while a tapestry-like take on the botanical theme also came in combination with leopard spots, as seen on a trenchcoat that surely won't go unnoticed — just like Cavalli's unapologetic muse. — *Sandra Salibian*

## Missoni RESORT 2026

As the youngsters would best put it: Let him cook. Alberto Caliri is a (fashion) chef that knows his way around the Missoni kitchen and the ingredients of its best recipes by heart.

The designer has been at the brand for two decades before being handed its creative direction first in 2021, and then again last year following Filippo Grazioli's two-year tenure.

In times when companies are chasing the surprise effect with new appointments at their creative helm, Caliri makes the case for continuity and consistency across womenswear, menswear and home lines. But that doesn't mean his work lacks novelty: The veteran designer is spearheading a subtle evolution at the storied house, which is no easy task. After all, how to sell a new Missoni piece to consumers who likely already have a fair share of zigzags and stripes sitting in their closets, passed down by mothers or borrowed from friends?

Apparently, by addressing that very familiar ritual. Rather than courting only new generations of customers, Caliri is looking at Missoni with a straightforward and cross-generational approach, hinged on quietly updating the fit and finishing of wardrobe archetypes and dusting off a certain bourgeois appeal rooted in the brand.

In the resort 2026 lineup, knitted polo shirts that could have belonged to a grandfather were retooled as minidresses,

appearing next to '60s-inspired dresses that channeled a youthful yet sophisticated mood. Easy and breezy ankle-length options added to the laid-back, polished attitude, which also ran through cashmere cardigans worked in a 3D technique, finer-gauge patterned knits and pleated skirts and dresses beaming with Lurex threads, or featuring tiny sequins embedded in their weft.

Even in its apparent simplicity, there were plenty of covetable items in this versatile collection, especially in those looks that veered the most from the house's signature patterns. A long-sleeve dress boasting an diagonal motif was very Missoni without the need for zigzags; the archival Oriental Garden print made for a refreshing addition on dresses and bowling shirts, while a knitted bomber jacket and matching shorts ensemble provided a modern suit that would appeal to young women and make their mothers wish to borrow from them for once. — *S.S.*

## Courrèges MEN'S SPRING 2026, WOMEN'S RESORT 2026

The streamlined designs of André Courrèges epitomized the Space Age aesthetic of the 1960s. But while his creations projected futuristic cool, his ambition was always more down to earth, according to Nicolas Di Felice, artistic director of the brand since 2020.

"People who believed that André wanted to design clothes to be worn in another galaxy were wrong," he said. "He wanted to dress people in the street and then and there, not at some point in the future."

Taking a cue from the brand's founder, Di Felice hit the pavements of Paris this season to get the pulse of the city. The verdict? "People want more comfort," he said.

A designer known for his technical approach to pattern-cutting and love of geometrical constructions, he kept it simple for his spring 2026 men's and women's



pre-collection, which consisted of elevated wardrobe essentials with a graphic punch.

Another thing he picked up on? The TikTok trend for mirror selfies in Paris (the Bucherer store on Boulevard des Capucines is a hot spot.) Di Felice had models photograph their own reflections in locations across town.

Women's looks skewed body conscious, with maxiskirts chopped short in front, A-line minis with buttoned slits, and a slinky polo shirt dress slashed open at the side.

"I took my cues from André. He talked a lot about freeing the body, about movement, in the '60s. Granted, his designs were not forgiving at all," Di Felice said. "It was interesting to ask, if we wanted to free the body today, would it be all about trapeze miniskirts? I don't think so."

Instead, he mixed in athleisure staples like leggings, cycling shorts and cutout bodysuits topped with generously proportioned unisex bomber jackets.

For men, elongated biker jackets and roomy polo tops were paired with curved baggy jeans, cropped short to show off sock boots. His trademark flared pants were set off with a simple white T-shirt, elevated with cap sleeves that nodded to an archival trapeze dress.

Further nods to the founder were sprinkled throughout the coed lineup: oversize buckles on the neckline of a houndstooth top; a safari jacket with a wide belt; ribbed knit gaiters worn with a short skirt, and an updated version of the brand's signature white go-go boot all drew their origins in archival designs.

Di Felice was particularly enamored of his technical knit slipper, inspired by a crochet ballerina style from the '70s. He pointed out that for the first time, the whole look book was styled with flat shoes.

"It's very different to put together looks that will be shot on the street instead of a set. It was a different approach that felt fun and exciting," he said. "My main wish from day one has always been to dress people in real life." — *Joelle Diderich*

Roberto Cavalli



Missoni



## ACCESSORIES

# Bulgari Teams With La Biennale di Venezia's International Art Exhibition

- The Roman jewelry house will support the next three editions of the Venice-based contemporary art event.

BY SANDRA SALIBIAN

**MILAN** – Bulgari has become the exclusive partner of the International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, one of the most prestigious and influential contemporary art showcases in the world.

In the role, the Roman jewelry house will support the next three editions of the Venice-based event, running in 2026, 2028 and 2030.

The collaboration was revealed on Tuesday, as part of the 2026 edition's official presentation at the Ca' Giustinian location in Venice.

Bulgari's chief executive officer Jean-Christophe Babin said the art event "embodies the courage to question, the vision to innovate, and the sensitivity to narrate the evolving spirit of our time."

"Becoming the exclusive partner of one of the world's most influential platforms for contemporary art powerfully reaffirms

Bulgari's enduring dedication to artistic excellence and creative expression," said Babin. "Venice holds profound symbolic meaning for our maison as a timeless crossroads where cultures have met for centuries, and where today, the dialogue between identity, heritage and modernity continues to flourish in extraordinary ways."

Titled "In Minor Keys," the upcoming 61st edition of the event will run from May 9 to Nov. 22 next year. Curated by the late Cameroonian-Swiss art curator Koyo Kouoh – who suddenly passed away earlier this month – the exhibition will be staged at the city's Giardini and Arsenale venues, as well as in various locations around the Lagoon, and will be an invitation to explore and embrace new ways of perception through slowness, introspection and attunement to the subtle rhythms of life.

In welcoming Bulgari as partner, La Biennale di Venezia's president Pietrangelo Buttafuoco underscored that "beauty is a responsibility to be valued, protected and sustained through critical thinking and research."

"Our collaboration begins under the



Matteo Morbidi, general director of Fondazione Bulgari, at the presentation of Biennale Arte 2026 in Venice.

sign of Koyo Kouoh's exhibition – a free, ironic and gracious thinker, dedicated to designing courageous and humane futures," said Buttafuoco.

Since 1895, La Biennale di Venezia made its mission to offer an international stage for the exploration and expression of contemporary artistic voices and aimed to challenge conventions and foster cultural dialogue across geographies, as proved by the number of participating countries, which rose from 59 in 1999 to 86 in 2024.

Bulgari was founded around the same time, in 1884. Through the years, the LVMH-owned brand has supported many cultural causes, involving both ancient and contemporary art, as proved by renovation works of ancient landmarks in Rome,

ranging from the Spanish Steps to the Baths of Caracalla.

The company's cultural, philanthropic and social commitment was further strengthened with the launch of Fondazione Bulgari last year, which embraces a plurality of areas and strives to create long-term value in the field of art and patronage, forging meaningful collaborations to nurture creativity and cultural legacy.

For example, through the foundation, the company has recently pledged 900,000 euros to support the doubling of the exhibition space of Museo del Novecento in Milan. Opened in 2010 and showcasing more than 300 artworks of the 20th and 21st centuries, the museum is expected to reveal its new spaces by mid-2027.

## LIFESTYLE

# Consortium Including Anne Hathaway Invests in Italy's SailGP Team

- The group of investors also includes Evan Yurman, president of the New York-based jewelry company David Yurman.

BY LUISA ZARGANI

**MILAN** - Fashion is increasingly committed to sports competitions, with Louis Vuitton as one major example as the official partner of Formula 1 and titular sponsor of the America's Cup.

The Italian SailGP team has revealed that it has secured new investors, and they span from Hollywood to Milan.

The Muse Sport consortium, led by Assia Grazioli Venier, cofounder of Muse, Gian Luca Passi de Preposulo and chief executive officer Jimmy Spithill, has acquired the Red Bull Italy SailGP Team. The consortium includes Anne Hathaway

and Italian actress Miriam Leone who, with Grazioli Venier, mark a first in the sector with a female-led ownership group eyeing the growing commercial viability of the mixed-gender championship.

"SailGP is far more than a sporting competition – it's a global platform for innovation, entertainment and hospitality," said Passi de Preposulo, chairman of the board. "We are building a team that reflects the future of sports business: technology-led, culturally impactful and environmentally responsible."

Passi de Preposulo started his career at Giorgio Armani, where from 2004 to 2012 he worked with Roberta Armani in global PR and entertainment. In 2013, he joined Moncler as director of events and entertainment. He remains an adviser of Moncler, which is led by chairman and CEO Remo Ruffini.

In 2011, he founded and launched Fio, the multi-awarded prosecco wine label from the Veneto region. The husband of Jessica Chastain, he moved to New York in 2015 and in 2022 launched the fund Festina Lente Partners SCSp, managed by Gruppo Azimut, focused on financial technology, food tech, marketplace, digital transformation and smart environment. A former athlete playing in the Benetton Rugby Treviso team and in Italy's national youth team, he approached sailing in the steps of his father and former regatta sailor Alberto Passi de Preposulo.

"The new Red Bull SailGP team embodies a powerful convergence of innovation, athletic excellence, and a deep commitment to inclusive leadership – particularly in advancing the role of women in high-performance sport," Hathaway said in a joint statement with her husband Adam Shulman, who is also an investor in the venture. "My deep and enduring love for Italy makes this opportunity especially meaningful, and I am so excited to have been invited to support a project that reflects both tradition and transformative vision."

Hathaway is a brand ambassador for Bulgari and has fronted campaigns for Versace, for example.

The group of investors also includes Evan Yurman, son of David Yurman cofounders David and Sybil Yurman and now president of the New York-based jewelry company; Alexander Gilkes, cofounder of venture studio Squared Circles; Julie Eddleman, global chief commercial officer at DoubleVerify and a former Google and Procter & Gamble executive; Heather Karatz; Pete del Grosso, MFO Certuity, and Dr. Jennifer Ashton.

SailGP was founded by Larry Ellison, cofounder of Oracle Corporation and twice winner of the America's Cup, and

Russell Coutts, Olympic gold medalist who skipped three America's Cup victories.

Roxel is the titular sponsor of the SailGP Championship, which sees national teams racing in identical high-tech, high-speed 50-foot foiling catamarans around the world at speeds approaching 60 miles per hour in a quest for a total prize money of \$12.8 million. The Italian team was formed in November last year.

The championship returns next month with the sixth stop of the 2025 season, the Mubadala New York Sail Grand Prix on June 7-8, before the European summer leg kicks off in Portsmouth, U.K., July 19-20.

The Australian Spithill is a former skipper and helmsman for BMW Oracle Racing, winning the America's Cup in 2010, defending the cup twice, both times against Emirates Team New Zealand, first successfully in 2013, and unsuccessfully in 2017.

In the 36th America's Cup, he was one of two helmsmen on the Luna Rossa Prada Pirelli boat, which won the Prada Cup and lost in the finals.

"Italy has an extraordinary sailing legacy, and our mission is to be a catalyst for its next phase," said Grazioli-Venier. "Muse Sport is honored to lead this pivotal moment for our sport. SailGP has massive commercial potential for global growth and impact that this ownership group will realize, leaning on elite leadership with strategic entrepreneurial capital. As someone deeply connected to Italian and sailing culture, it's an honor and a responsibility to help guide a team that embodies excellence, innovation, and true inclusivity."

Moving from fashion to sports, Francesco Francavilla was named head of marketing and communications of SailGP ITA.

He was previously global head of communications of the Alberta Ferretti and Pollini brands. Before that, he was global head of marketing and communications at Gruppo Antonioli's Dreamers Factory, where he managed all the communications activities for the Antonioli, Ann Demeulemeester and 44 Label Group brands, bringing his experiences at Renè Caovilla, Karla Otto and Dolce & Gabbana.





FSF has launched FSF University, a digital program to prepare for scholarships.

## BUSINESS

## Fashion Scholarship Fund Launches FSF University

- The program is delivered on Arizona State University's Canvas program.

BY LISA LOCKWOOD

The Fashion Scholarship Fund is increasing efforts to expand access to students from underrepresented backgrounds who may not attend one of the 75 accredited FSF member colleges and universities that help prepare students for the FSF's Case Study Application.

The initiative is FSF University, a free online learning platform designed to give every eligible student, regardless of school affiliation, the tools and support they need to complete an FSF Case Study and apply for the FSF Scholarship.

The competition is an opportunity for full-time undergraduate students in their sophomore, junior or senior year to receive a financial scholarship of \$10,000 to \$25,000 and fashion career support. Applicants should be interested in pursuing a career in fashion.

It has been found that FSF Scholarships, especially the Virgil Abloh

"Post-Modern" Scholarships, change scholars' career trajectories.

At this year's gala in April, the FSF awarded more than \$1.9 million in scholarships to 160 FSF Scholars, including the newest class of 60 Virgil Abloh "Post-Modern" Scholarship Fund Scholars (up from 30 last year), who attend a network of 75 colleges and universities across the country, all of whom were in attendance and had their work showcased at the event.

"FSF University exists to level the playing field," said Peter Arnold, executive director of the Fashion Scholarship Fund. "No matter where you're studying or what your background may be, this platform will guide you through the FSF Case Study process and equip you with the tools to succeed. We believe in your talent, and we believe in your future."

FSF University is a free, self-paced digital program delivered on Arizona State University's Canvas platform, FSF's official Learning Management System partner. Together, they have created a robust, accessible space where students can learn how to research, build and master their FSF Case Study and prepare for

scholarship success.

Students begin with three introductory modules, all available online now, then select an FSF discipline: design and product development, merchandising, marketing, or business strategy. The next four modules, released in early June, offer step-by-step guidance by creating a case study. All seven educational modules include video presentations, quizzes and assignments, to help students submit their best work.

Marie Colletta, head of education programs at FSF, said, "Through FSF University's seven on-demand modules, you'll learn everything you need – from choosing your discipline to researching, drafting and submitting your case study. The best part? You can work at your own pace, anytime, anywhere."

The program is open to any eligible student, including those at FSF member schools and those from schools outside the FSF network. If one is eligible to apply for the FSF Scholarship, one can apply.

Students will learn how to complete the FSF Case Study, which encompasses understanding the 2026 competition theme; how to select one's discipline; how to conduct research; how to structure and draft one's case study, and how to polish and submit one's final work. Students will also receive qualitative feedback from FSF adjunct faculty partners within 48 business hours of each assignment submission, helping students improve and refine their

ideas ahead of the competition deadline. Discussion boards and optional office hours are offered to provide additional support as students move through the course.

Eligible students can enroll in FSF's application portal, WizeHive, where they can access FSF's How to Apply guide. The program is self-paced but structured, with suggested weekly milestones to help students stay on track. Students are expected to dedicate about two to three hours per week over six to eight weeks.

Assignments must be submitted for feedback on FSF University as soon as completed and no later than Oct. 1, 2025 at 11:59 a.m., ET. Students must submit their final Case Study on FSF's WizeHive portal by Oct. 13, 2025 at 11:59 a.m., ET. Students who complete all modules will earn a certificate of completion of this year's case student theme, Fashion Crosses Industries.

"FSF University isn't just a course – it's a gateway to opportunity, mentorship and a future in fashion," said Farai Simoyi, head of the Virgil Abloh "Post-Modern" Scholarship Fund and Equity.

While FSF University isn't required, it's strongly encouraged, especially for students who don't have direct access to FSF educators, case study advisers or past scholars.

FSF is the foremost fashion-oriented education and workforce development nonprofit in the U.S. The FSF works directly with the country's most talented young students from diverse backgrounds and awards over \$1.9 million each year in scholarships helping students succeed in all sectors of the industry including design, merchandising, marketing analytics and business strategy. The FSF also provides scholars with a wide range of internship and career opportunities, mentorship, networking, professional development and access to the industry's most influential leaders and companies.

In 2020, Virgil Abloh partnered with the FSF to establish and administer the Post Modern Scholarship Fund to foster equity and inclusion across the fashion industry by providing scholarships funds, career support and mentoring to students who identify as Black or African American.

Over the past year, the FSF has launched initiatives such as the FSF Community Colleges Initiative, which identifies and supports students enrolled in two-year community colleges who aspire to careers in fashion and fashion-adjacent industries, and Bridge Fund Grants that support the FSF's mission to provide more scholarships and more career opportunities to talent who may not otherwise have a pathway into the industry.

## BUSINESS

## Moose Knuckles Taps Ellen Kinney as CEO

- Most recently she was president and CEO of A.L.C., the Los Angeles-based sportswear company.

BY LISA LOCKWOOD

Ellen Kinney has been named chief executive officer of Moose Knuckles, the global luxury outerwear brand.

Most recently, Kinney was president and CEO of Los Angeles-based A.L.C., where she drove expansive growth across direct-to-consumer and wholesale channels. Her earlier posts include CEO of Kendall + Kylie, executive vice president and chief merchant at Derek Lam International, and executive roles at Rebecca Taylor and Scoop.

"Moose Knuckles is a brand with

tremendous creative energy, global resonance and untapped potential," said Kinney. "I'm honored to take on this role and excited to work alongside such a talented team as we shape the next chapter of growth, innovation and cultural impact."

Victor Luis, chairman of Moose Knuckles, who was most recently CEO, said, "Ellen is a dynamic and proven leader with exceptional merchandising instincts and a deep understanding of premium consumer brands. Her ability to blend creativity with commercial strategy makes her the ideal CEO to lead Moose Knuckles through this continued phase of growth."

"Since Cathay Capital partnered with Moose Knuckles, the brand has leveraged its status as a bold Canadian icon to become a truly global name, embraced by consumers

who prize multicultural spirit, bold attitude, distinctive style and exceptional craftsmanship," said Jean-Marc Prunet, partner at Cathay Capital, which bought a stake in 2019. "Ellen combines exceptional talent with a sharp understanding of today's consumer, enabling her to make the brand even more desirable and culturally relevant. Her proven ability to scale premium fashion houses while honoring their DNA makes her the ideal leader to accelerate our geographic and consumer expansion."

Kinney will be based at Moose Knuckles' global headquarters in Montreal, overseeing all facets of brand operations, product development and international expansion, as the company continues to accelerate momentum across North America, Europe and Asia.

Ellen Kinney



## BUSINESS

## Italian Fashion Groups Unite to Combat Supply Chain Work Exploitation



Inside a textile plant.

- The memorandum of understanding in the works since June 2024 proposes the creation of a digital supply chain platform for transparency.

BY MARTINO CARRERA

**MILAN** - Italian authorities, fashion associations and trade unions are committed to fight wrongdoings in the apparel and accessories supply chain, tackling issues such as worker exploitation, undeclared work, tax evasion, and unfair contractual practices.

The Milan Prefecture, as well as Camera Nazionale Della Moda Italiana, Confindustria

Moda and Confindustria Accessori Moda, among other entities, signed a non-legally binding memorandum of understanding on Monday night, with an action plan to tackle the issue, after prosecutors uncovered abuse and sweatshop schemes tied to marquee brands.

As reported, subsidiaries of Dior, Giorgio Armani, Alviero

Martini, and most recently Valentino have been put under judicial administration for alleged worker exploitation at several Chinese-owned firms in Italy producing their luxury goods.

The Armani and Dior probes were fully resolved and the judicial administration procedures lifted, in February and earlier this month, respectively.

It is understood that the negotiations for the paper among the involved entities took almost a year, with preliminary discussion held as early as June 2024.

In the signed document reviewed by WWD, the Milan Prefecture proposes the creation of a digital supply chain platform that fashion companies can join on a voluntary basis with mandatory updates requested every six months.

Brands joining the platform are expected to encourage their suppliers to sign onto it, as well as impose compliance with labor, fiscal, health and safety laws and implement onboarding processes, ethical codes of conduct, audits and targeted staff training.

Supply chain players are invited to extend compliance clauses to subcontractors through cascading contracts and enforce scheduled and surprise audits.

Companies adhering to the platform – which is free of charge – are to receive a Fashion Sector Transparency Certificate, the so-called “green badge,” valid for six months and renewable. They will also have access to specific financial incentives from the Lombardy region.

Reiterating its commitment to safeguard Made in Italy know-how, Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana issued a statement saying it has “actively collaborated in drafting the memorandum of understanding... by contributing concrete proposals developed through the dialogue with brands, to ensure that the final text aligned as closely as possible with the interests of companies in the sector and the fashion industry as a whole.”

The Italian fashion governing body highlighted that the memorandum of understanding only partially fixes the issue since it has local jurisdiction, limited

to the Lombardy region, and “partial scope,” it said.

“A national law is needed... and it should introduce third-party certification of the production supply chain, granting a presumption of legality to certified companies based on independent criteria ensuring complete transparency. It is important to note that this supply chain, by its very nature, operates on a national and often international scale,” Camera della Moda said.

The association also expressed its reservations on the digital platform plan, highlighting the “necessary protection of the confidentiality and know-how of brands and clients, as well as the disclosure of related information and data.”

Per the memorandum, the platform is expected to ensure data security, confidentiality, and privacy compliance.

Raising similar concerns about data protection and adding that the platform’s adoption rates are directly connected to its user-friendliness, the newly minted president of Confindustria Moda Luca Sburlati, who is also chief executive officer of supply chain group Pattern, said that “although this agreement has been defined on a territorial basis, its national relevance is clear, both due to the nationwide representativeness of many of the signatory parties and the specific nature of fashion production supply chains, which transcend local, regional, and often even national boundaries.

“This highlights the need for a progressive and well-managed extension of the protocol’s applicability at least to the national level, in order to protect and support our supply chains,” he added.

## BUSINESS

## Nantucket Jeweler, Marissa Collections Face Legal Fight

- The Nantucket jewelry designer and store owner has taken legal action against the Palm Beach-based operation.

BY ROSEMARY FEITELBERG

**A Nantucket jewelry designer** and store owner is seeking a jury trial against Marissa Collections, a Palm Beach-based retail operation, after plans for a potential business partnership on Nantucket disbanded.

Katherine Jetter, designer and owner of The Vault Nantucket, claims that Marissa Collections used proprietary information that she had shared confidentially and contractually to map out plans for a Marissa Collections store, which is scheduled to open next month just steps from her own store, The Vault Nantucket.

Jetter filed a complaint on May 19 in Nantucket Superior Court against Boutique Tere Inc., which operates as Marissa Collections, alleging breach of contract, unfair and deceptive trade practices, tortious interference and other charges. Three executives at the company, Marissa Hartington, Burt Hartington and Jay Hartington are also named in the 119-page document. Jetter is seeking injunctive relief and damages on behalf of herself and her company, as well as legal fees.

Jetter started her namesake company, which includes accessories, in 2008, and she debuted a freestanding store on Nantucket in 2017. A Tuesday morning hearing for the preliminary injunction was canceled.

Both retailers sell high-end jewelry and accessories from other brands, as well as apparel. Jetter said that she learned of Marissa Collections’ plans for a store at 1 Cambridge Street on the Massachusetts

island on May 9 via an Instagram post. With a rendering of its new shingled location, the Florida company flagged its location and June 27 opening, as well as 13 brands it carries including Brunello Cuccinelli, Oscar de la Renta, Michael Kors Collection and Gianvito Rossi, among others. The post featured a bubblegum pink backdrop that is similar to the shade used on The Vault Nantucket’s site.

In a press release that was shared with WWD Tuesday, Marissa Collections said the Nantucket location will be a 700-square-foot summerlong pop-up that is being called Marissa’s Cottage. The Harry Heissmann-designed space will feature “residencies” and activations from Christy Lynn, Lela Rose, Tammy Fender, Holistic Skincare, Temperley London and others.

Jetter’s company offers her signature jewelry such as the \$29,800 Fiery Bird of Paradise ring, and a \$52,000 Paraiba tourmaline origami bangle. Located in the hub of the in-town shopping area, The Vault also offers other high-end items including Hoorsenbush’s \$1,045 sunglasses, a Silvia Furmanovich \$5,500 clutch and a Kwiat \$56,900 emerald-cut diamond ring. Its online apparel assortment is considerably more limited than Marissa Collections, which offers dozens of designer and other established brands.

Located 30 miles off the coast of Cape Cod, Nantucket is known for its cobblestoned streets and low-key shopping. Unlike the Hamptons, Palm Beach and other resort towns, where many luxury retailers and big-name designers have unveiled freestanding stores, Nantucket only has a few designer stores – a Polo Ralph Lauren outpost and Veronica Beard boutique.

Jay Hartington, chief executive officer of

Marissa Collections, declined to comment about the lawsuit Tuesday. He said via email that Marissa Collections is looking forward “to a successful summer season within the vibrant Nantucket community.”

The family-run company started in 1975 and now has three Florida stores – a 10,000-square-foot one in Old Naples, a location at The Royal Poinciana Plaza in Palm Beach and a resort outpost at The Ritz-Carlton in Naples.

Jetter had not responded to media requests Monday afternoon.

Jetter claims that Marissa Collections disregarded contractual obligations and used “confidential business information and trade secrets “as free market research in a territory that was otherwise unfamiliar to them.” Marissa Collections’ summer outpost on Nantucket will be located two-tenths of a mile from The Vault. A 2024 confidentiality and non-compete agreement was submitted with

last week’s filing, as was one from 2023.

Jetter claims that Marissa Collections’ CEO assured her that the company would never independently operate a store on Nantucket without her, since Nantucket was her “territory.” Jetter alleges that violates an agreement not to compete within a 50-mile radius.

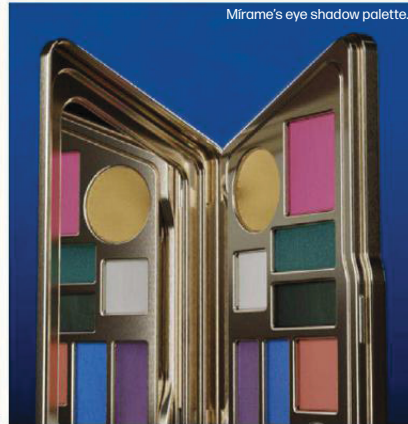
The Nantucket store owner said she provided proprietary information to the Florida company including “detailed sales data and forecasts, profit margin models and strategies, employee compensation details and seasonal revenue patterns,” among other market analyses. She alleged that the multi-location company and the Hartingtons kept that material for “improper use” and have refused to provide a certification of destruction of The Vault’s confidential information. In addition, Jetter alleged that the defendants had no intention of honoring their agreements or pursuing a transaction with The Vault.



The Marissa Collections store in Palm Beach.

## BEAUTY

# How Aora Is Making Plastic-free Clean Beauty Cool



is too small. No recycling facility will take something less than two-by-two."

That being said, he recognized that there were plastic-free offerings on the market, but he still found them unsatisfactory.

"The first step in going plastic-free is to make sure that we're not just going plastic-free to go plastic-free. I don't believe that sustainability sells. I know that's crazy. We all have read studies for the past 10 years that say that 85 percent of Gen Z will pay more for a sustainable product, but it's not true," he said.

"People pay more for a better product.... People started eating vegan burgers when Beyond [and] Impossible did it, not when they were dry lentil burgers 10 years ago. We need to make sustainability flavorful. Yes, there are lip glosses that are plastic-free, but those are the ones in cardboard."

Therefore he's taken a fresh approach to plastic-free that feels more similar to the luxury products on the market that do use plastic. Specifically, Aora's palettes are made 100 percent out of tin from the actual vessel to the mirror, which features a special coating that makes it reflect like a typical mirror.

"[The palettes] used to be a can of soup, and will be again, because tin is over 87 percent circular," he said.

The brand's Solid Lip Serum product is also made 100 percent out of aluminum down to the mechanism that rotates the bullet, making it fully recyclable. Meanwhile, the brand's lip liner features a 100 percent wood liner (sealed with an oily wax to protect it) and a 100 percent metal cap, whereas many on the market look like wood but are actually plastic.

Additionally, Tayara wanted to create a clean brand that was infused with fun. "I find [clean beauty] a tiny bit boring," he said. "Why does choosing clean mean letting go of colors or glitter or fun stuff or looks that are not just 'my skin, but better?'"

word ahora, meaning now.

"The change is now in an industry where, I was part of it, all we do is promise that by 2030 we are going to reduce our plastic footprint by 50 percent but you know what? We wanted to do it all now," said Tayara, who most recently worked as the senior vice president of marketing for Thayer's Natural Remedies at L'Oréal.

In addition, Aora is launching a new version of its Acariciame Solid Lip Serum, \$27, infused with five Mexican chiles to celebrate its entrance into the U.S. Ahead of this launch, Aora has teamed with nonprofit RePurpose Global so that for every purchase, the brand will recover nine times its weight in plastic from the ocean.

Tayara launched Aora in Mexico in November 2023 after years of frustration with how much plastic the beauty industry was using, most of which ends up in landfills even when recycled.

"The makeup industry, in particular, is disturbing when it comes to the amount of trash it is producing," he said, emphasizing that black packaging especially is typically not recycled. "It's not because the consumer is not recycling. It's because, by inception, by design, 95 percent of makeup is designed to not be recyclable. It

- The Mexico-based makeup brand is launching in the U.S. with a new chile-infused volumizing lip serum and more.

BY EMILY BURNS

**Plastic-free**, clean beauty just got sexy.

On Wednesday, Aora, a Mexico-born makeup brand founded by L'Oréal veteran Nour Tayara, is entering the United States with its bold plastic-free packaging and clean formulas. Industry sources estimate Aora could reach between \$2 million and \$5 million in its first year in the U.S., pending retail distribution – the team is currently in conversation with several retailers. For Tayara, the U.S. was a crucial market due to its maturity in the clean and sustainability space and because 32 percent of the population speaks Spanish.

The name Aora comes from the Spanish

## BEAUTY

## Glossier Is Landing in France, With Help From Sephora

- The brand is debuting at Sephora France on June 13.

BY JAMES MANSO

**Glossier and Sephora** are taking their partnership to a new market.

The beauty brand is entering Sephora France on June 13 in the retailer's app, and is debuting in-store and on Sephora.fr June 17, with skin care, makeup, body care and fragrances. It follows Glossier's 2023 Sephora debut in North America, and ensuing launches with the retailer in the U.K., Middle East and Mexico.

For Kyle Leahy, Glossier's chief executive officer, there were a few different prongs of her rationale behind the expansion.

"It is the nexus of a cultural perspective, a brand perspective and a business perspective," she said of her reasoning for launching in France. "Being at the epicenter of fashion, beauty, fragrance and culture, it's an important moment for us to bring our brand in its full glory and not just in a pop-up."

It was a natural next step following the success of the brand's Glossier You and successive expansions, You Rêve and You Doux, though Leahy expects the products' broader assortment to do well.

"The momentum we're seeing – leading the next-generation fragrances to activate our omnichannel model with a record-breaking launch – has unlocked global potential," said Leahy, adding that France is Glossier's fifth-highest market by social engagement.

"We're driven by our community," she said. "In France, there's incredible history and connectivity with the brand, and we have a highly engaged consumer base there."

The move comes after a few different activations in France, including a pop-up with Colette in 2017 and e-commerce capabilities servicing the country the following year. In the last few weeks, the brand also held a pop-up of its fragrances.

"We knew we had customer demand and we knew we had customer pull," Leahy said. "And in our conversations

with Sephora, we knew it was such an important market. It is one of their most dominant markets and they represent and dominate prestige beauty both in Paris and all over France."

The Sephora side saw a similar appetite for the brand. "We look at brand resonance, and we check if the products resonate with French consumers, and if the storytelling resonates with them. These are the criteria we look at for brands to enter the French market," said Juliette Caloin, Europe's vice president of merchandising at Sephora, who went on to note that the retailer is the leader in beauty retail in France, particularly in makeup. "The French consumers were waiting for Glossier at Sephora for many years."

To that end, Leahy noted that the brand's fragrance pop-up in Paris had 3,500 customers for just the weekend's duration. "We had some innovative AI technology that allowed you to pick up the bottle of perfume and would develop a bespoke poem," she said. "It was a modern experience we brought to bear in Paris a few weeks ago to prime the market."

All of Glossier's products will be merchandised together on a gondola, similar to other Sephora markets where the brand plays. "We operate like a lifestyle brand in beauty, and we've always

Aora's products use vibrant colors and unexpected finishes unlike many on the market. Plus, the packaging employs vibrant hues of neon orange, hot pink and cobalt blue.

Aside from his passion for sustainability and clean beauty, Tayara wanted to celebrate Mexico through the brand, something he has found lacking across the industry. One way of doing this is by adding Spanish to the packaging, which Tayara claims Aora is the only brand on the market in the U.S. to do so.

"We, unfortunately, are still in a world where premium beauty, luxury beauty, is still very much from the North," he said. "It's not just because of representing the South, but there's so many narratives, there's so many colors, there's so many designers, there's so much art, there's so much culture that have a place in the beauty industry overall."

Over the past year Mexico has become an increasingly popular market with a slew of brands like E.l.f and Estée Lauder Cos. expanding their footprints there. However, more recently a crop of brands created in Mexico are also now targeting the U.S. For Tayara, this move makes perfect sense.

"There's a zeitgeist happening," he said. "In the past four years, there's been double the amount of flights coming in and out of Mexico... Mexico [is] showing up in the world as a real appreciation for luxury, art, design. At the same time, [it] is a country where the economy is growing, so the market of Mexico as a beauty market is, people are investing here. People are bringing factories here, because Mexico is developing as a country itself, and then there is the Spanish language taking over the world."

As Aora enters the U.S., Tayara has tapped several cohorts to experience the brand and spread the word, including makeup artists, content creators and the conscious community (particularly when it comes to clean and sustainability). Additionally, Tayara has spoken on podcasts and at events and communicated with relevant nonprofits to further introduce the brand to the market.



merchandised across categories on our gondolas at Sephora," Leahy said. "Our fragrance continues to be on fire, and we continue to see incredible momentum around that, but we also see nice momentum in skin care and makeup, and we have ammunition across categories that will fuel growth in the market overall."

WWD

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EXCLUSIVE

# Kiehl's Is Back in the Locker Room With Life Time



- The brand is now the amenities partner of the luxury athletic country club at nine select locations throughout New York City, following its exit from Equinox last year.

BY EMILY BURNS

**Kiehl's is returning** to the locker room.

Wednesday, the brand is announcing its partnership with luxury athletic country club Life Time as its amenities partner. Kiehl's products will be available at nine select Life Time locations throughout New York City later this summer with the potential to expand to additional locations going forward. This news follows Kiehl's exit from Equinox last year, which caused

controversy among gym members on social media.

"It's a perfect match," said Kiehl's general manager John Reed of the Life Time partnership. "We often talk about the intersection between experience and efficacy is where Kiehl's is trying to win. If you map that to the way that somebody feels after a great workout at a Life Time, it's part of the ultimate experience. You need efficacious skin care. This is a person who's trying to get the best out of their life, get the best out of their wellness."

Ryan Brister, Life Time vice president, club operations, added: "This partnership reflects so much our commitment to delivering exceptional holistic wellness experiences. Part of our mission statement talks about experiences of uncompromising quality... It aligns with how we support our members' healthy way of life."

Specifically, the Life Time partner locations will carry Kiehl's Amino Acid Shampoo, Hair Conditioner Formula 133,

Bath and Shower Liquid Body Cleanser in Grapefruit and Creme de Corps.

Following Kiehl's exit from Equinox last year, many took to social media to complain about the change, particularly those in New York City. In planning this partnership, Brister and the Life Time team recognized how passionate New Yorkers were about the Kiehl's brand, making it a perfect fit.

"It's always been an amenity offering that has been on our radar," Brister said. "We do expect overwhelming positive feedback from our members once they realize that Kiehl's is coming in."

In terms of re-entering the fitness space, Reed said it wasn't a matter of if but when for Kiehl's.

"It was always a perfect fit to have Kiehl's in a premium fitness environment," he said. "[Life Time has] a very naturally high overlap between urban, high-end fitness centers and people that are extremely passionate about Kiehl's. Sometimes one leads to the other. Sometimes they discover at the fitness center and go on to become loyal consumers, or sometimes they're loyal consumers first, and they have that as their first preferred brand for hair care and skin care at the gym. As soon as we made the decision with Equinox that we wouldn't go forward, we started working on the new partnership."

Reed emphasized how Life Time's growth as a company and high-end approach to wellness particularly appealed to the company. Specifically, Life Time now has 180 locations across the U.S. and Canada, and its revenue was up 18 percent in the first quarter. The company calls itself an athletic country club, thanks to its array of offerings which can include fitness classes, personal training, pickleball courts, pools, saunas, the LifeCafe and more.

To inaugurate the news and notify Life Time members, there will be in-club digital

screen announcements, newsletter blasts and content creator partnerships.

"[It] will be an inescapable announcement," said Brister. "The world will know that Kiehl's is at Life Time."

Specifically, Kiehl's and Life Time have teamed up with reality TV star Brittany Cartwright, who recently went through a divorce, on a multifaceted and cheeky campaign. Leading up to the announcement, Cartwright has teased via Instagram stories that she is in a new relationship through several gym pics. Pop culture and celebrity gossip accounts Deuxmoi and Comments by Celebs will further amplify the top secret relationship by posting paparazzi photos of Cartwright entering a Life Time with a mystery man. Cartwright will then officially announce the new relationship, aka the Kiehl's and Life Time partnership, in a video on her feed. The breakup/new relationship concept is a nod to Kiehl's exit from Equinox and now re-entry into Life Time.

"We're going to basically create a whole content narrative... which is about moving on after a breakup," said Reed. "[Cartwright] had a breakup, and she's going to play into that real-life personal experience. She's going to talk about being in a new relationship and link it in with the new relationship that Kiehl's has with Life Time. We're trying to make it relatable and fun."

While Kiehl's will only be available in nine select locations around New York City to start, both partners emphasized that they intend to expand. Brister specifically said that they will look at the greater New York area and West Coast locations next, as well as opportunities to bring Kiehl's into its spa locations.

"One of our operating models at Life Time, courtesy of our founder and chief executive officer Bahram Akradi, is think big, start small, move fast," said Brister of these plans.

FASHION

## Dries Van Noten Has a New 'Personal Journey' in Venice

- The Belgian designer, who retired from the runway last year, has acquired the Palazzo Pisani Moretta, with plans to create a cultural venue around craft and art.

BY MILES SOCHA

**Belgian designer** Dries Van Noten has revealed an ambitious new "personal" project in his post-runway career: a project in Venice dedicated to craftsmanship and art.

He has acquired Palazzo Pisani Moretta, a 15th-century landmark on the Grand Canal that he has earmarked for an independent project spanning heritage, craftsmanship and cultural dialogue, according to a press release issued Monday.

"The project is about Venice, history, craft, culture and creating something contemporary with deep respect for what came before," Van Noten said in the release, noting that more details would be shared in early September.

Van Noten acquired the palazzo from Maurizio Sammartini and his sister Gerolama Sammartini.

Financial terms were not disclosed;

however, local daily *Il Gazzettino* pegged the historic building's value at 36 million euros.

"The Palazzo Pisani Moretta has always been a symbol of our family's deep connection to Venice, its history, and its craft," Maurizio Sammartini commented. "Restoring and protecting this incredible building has been a privilege, ensuring it remains a living part of the city's cultural fabric."

"I am confident that Dries and Patrick, with their respect for both tradition and innovation, will guide the palazzo into the future while preserving its storied past and I deeply thank them to have the courage to accept this challenging commitment for Venice," Sammartini added, referring to Van Noten's partner and creative wingman Patrick Vangheluwe.

Van Noten hinted he had extracurricular projects up his sleeves when he took his final runway bow last June, though he continues to consult on stores and beauty products with his namesake fashion house, owned by Spain's Puig.

"I have a lot of ideas and projects in my head, because I really want a lot of young people around me in my studio," he told WWD at the time.

According to the release, Van Noten's

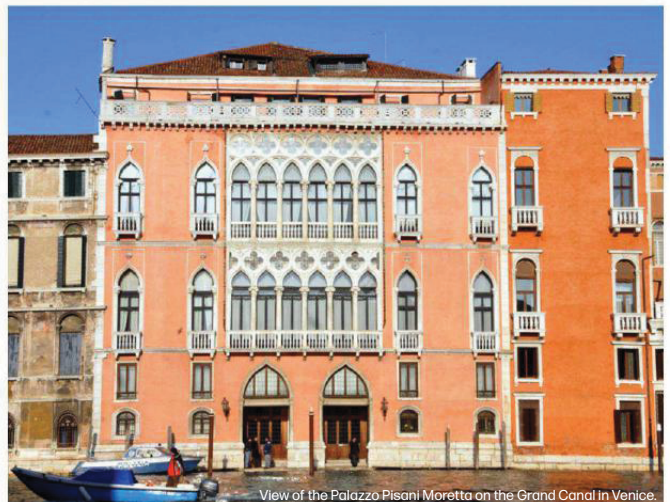
project at the historic landmark "will be shaped through ongoing dialogue between artists and artisans, and will include exhibitions and presentations, offering a platform for contemporary work and inviting the public into a place where heritage is respected and thoughtfully reimagined for future generations."

The Palazzo Pisani Moretta was built in a Gothic floral style — words which have a perfume of Van Noten's fashion sensibility

— and it was expanded by the family around 1730.

"The interiors were enriched with Baroque splendor by some of the most celebrated Venetian artists of the 18th century, including Giambattista Tiepolo, Jacopo Guarana, Gaspare Diziani, and Giuseppe Angeli," the release said.

The palazzo was restored in recent decades by Maurizio Sammartini, a descendant of the Pisani Moretta family.



View of the Palazzo Pisani Moretta on the Grand Canal in Venice.

# WWD

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## FOOTWEAR

# Adidas Says Cyberattack Targeted Customers' Personal Information

- Adidas said the cyberattack focused on personal information, and did not involve any financial data.

BY VICKI M. YOUNG

**Adidas is the latest** retailer to fall victim to a cyberattack.

The German sportswear brand said on Friday that an “unauthorized external party obtained certain consumer data through a third-party customer service provider.” The company said on its website that it immediately took steps to “contain the incident.” It also launched a comprehensive probe on the matter and is collaborating with leading information security experts.

Adidas emphasized that affected data “does not contain passwords, credit cards or any other payment-related information.” The accessed information was centered on contact information of consumers who had contacted the brand’s customer service help desk in the past. The company said it is in the process of notifying potentially impacted consumers, as well as appropriate data protection and law enforcement authorities.

“We remain fully committed to protecting the privacy and security of our consumers, and sincerely regret any inconvenience or concern caused by this incident,” the company said in a statement.

Adidas did not indicate the number of consumers who were potentially exposed to the cyberattack.

Data breaches have been around for



Theft of personal information is now the predominant cyber threat over payment card data.

years. The largest were the Yahoo data breaches in 2013 and 2014, involving more than 3 billion user accounts. In 2013, American mass discounter Target Corp. suffered a breach that compromised 40 million credit and debit card records – and 70 million customer records – when hackers gained access to the point-of-sale systems of one of the retailer’s vendors during the holiday season. It was a costly one for the discounter as it determined that the total cost of breach was \$202 million, including the \$18.5 million it paid in a multistate settlement and the loss of

sales as wary customers in the aftermath elected to shop elsewhere.

A cyberattack in 2023 involving personally identifiable information of customers impacted 35 million customers of apparel giant VF Corp. That same year, 10 million JD Sports customers had their information stolen, which included the last four digits of their credit cards that were used for payment.

Earlier this month, Harrods, Marks & Spencer and the Co-op Group in the U.K. have seen hackers targeting their online operations. Harrods took proactive steps

to keep certain systems safe, including restricting internet access at its sites. “We are really sorry that we’ve not been able to offer you the service you expect from M&S over the last week. We are working day and night to manage the current cyber incident and [to] get things back to normal for you as quickly as possible,” said Stuart Machin, Marks & Spencer’s chief executive officer, adding that stores were open heading into the bank holiday weekend on May 5.

Also in May, Dior confirmed it was impacted by a data breach involving its Chinese customer base. The LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton-owned brand discovered that on May 7, an unauthorized external individual had stolen certain customer data, but not any financial information such as bank account or payment card numbers. “The teams at Dior, supported by leading cybersecurity experts, continue to investigate and respond to the incident,” wrote a Dior spokesperson in an email.

A report from KnowBe4 in March said there is a 56 percent spike in retail cyberattacks driven by phishing and AI. “This puts retail in the top five industries targeted by cybercriminals,” the report said. It noted that the average cost of a single retail data breach “reached \$3.48 million in 2024,” representing an 18 percent increase from 2023.

The greatest threat now involves “credential harvesting,” where personal information is stolen. The report said credential harvesting is now the predominant threat, accounting for 38 percent of all compromised data in 2023, while payment card data theft fell to 25 percent. Stolen credentials are preferred because they provide immediate access to personal accounts, bypassing security measures. Retailers typically keep a record of their customers’ past purchasing information and tracking data on where packages are sent.

## FOOTWEAR

# Dr. Martens Names Paul Zadoff as President Of Americas Region

- Zadoff joins Dr. Martens from luxury eyewear brand Caddis.

BY STEPHEN GARNER

**Dr. Martens** has named former Nike executive Paul Zadoff as its new president of the Americas as the U.K.-based footwear company looks to continue rebuilding its business in the region.

According to the company, Zadoff will be responsible for leading the experienced regional team in driving the performance, growth and profitability of the Americas business.

He will join Dr. Martens’ global leadership team and will report to chief executive officer Ije Nwokorie. Zadoff will assume his new role at Dr. Martens at the beginning of June.

Nwokorie, who took the CEO helm in January, said in a statement that it is a “testament to the power” of Dr. Martens to attract someone of Zadoff’s caliber to join the team and to shape and execute the company’s regional strategy.

“His experience leading teams, working in partnership with wholesale customers, building omnichannel businesses and driving growth at some of the world’s most recognizable brands will be hugely valuable,” Nwokorie said. “I look forward

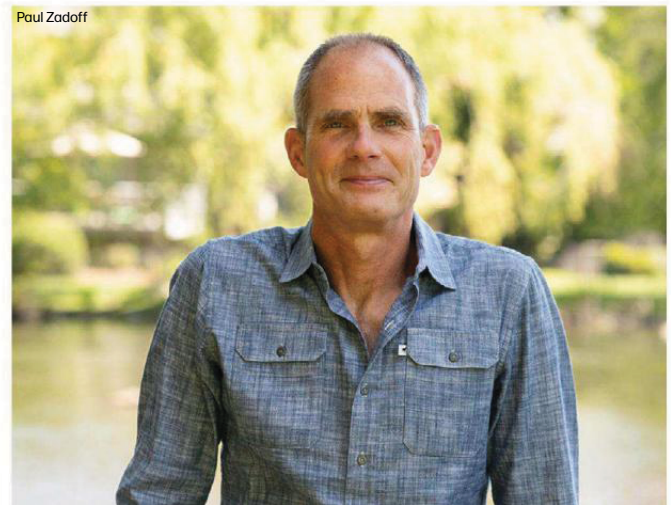
to working with Paul and have no doubt he will help to take our Americas business to another level.”

Zadoff joins Dr. Martens from luxury eyewear brand Caddis where he served as chief operating officer since 2022. Prior to that, he held executive roles at fitness company TRX Training, Patagonia and Levi Strauss & Co.

But most of his footwear experience came from Nike. Zadoff joined the Swoosh in 1990 and remained there until 2009. During his two-decade career at Nike, he held a range of global and regional leadership roles in sales, product and brand, culminating as managing director of Nike Pacific.

“I am a lifetime admirer of the craftsmanship of Dr. Martens’ products and the durability of this heritage brand in an ever-changing consumer landscape,” Zadoff added. “The brand already has a well-established footprint in the USA, but there is vast untapped potential ahead across the Americas. I am incredibly excited to join Ije and the team to lead the next chapter of the brand’s growth.”

The Dr. Martens business operates a regional model from three regions: Europe, Middle East and Africa (headquartered in London), Americas (headquartered in Portland) and Asia-Pacific (headquartered



in Hong Kong), with its head office in the U.K. In the Americas, the brand has been present in the USA since 1980 and today across the region it has 59 owned stores, with total regional sales accounting for nearly 40 percent of group revenue.

In its most recent trading statement, Nwokorie said the company has “made good progress” in its objective of turning around its U.S. performance.

Nwokorie’s confidence comes as the company has been revamping its strategy in the wake of declining wholesale sales, inventory and supply chain problems in the U.S. It has also been looking to keep a lid on costs.

The company has taken “swift action” to implement its savings plan, which is set to deliver 25 million pounds in fiscal 2026, at the top end of previous guidance, thanks to tight cost controls across the business.

Overall company revenue in the third quarter of fiscal 2025 rose 3 percent on a constant currency basis to 267 million pounds.

Looking ahead, the company said that its guidance and outlook for fiscal 2025 are unchanged and remain on track to achieve its objectives for the year, which include positive USA direct growth in the second half and net debt to decline to 310 million pounds from 330 million pounds.

## BUSINESS

# Jessica McCormack's New York Flagship Is Full of Character and Carats



Here and below: Inside Jessica McCormack's New York flagship.



The flagship is filled with unique wallpapers and artworks.

● The Madison Avenue store is part of the fine jeweler's growth ambitions.

BY HIKMAT MOHAMMED

**LONDON** — What sparkles come rain or shine?

For fine jeweler Jessica McCormack — who has just set up her first international outpost on Madison Avenue neighboring a string of luxury brands including Chanel, Boucheron, Pomellato and Bottega Veneta — it's diamonds.

The London-based designer has brought a taste of home to the store with oakwood furnishing and trims that can be found in her brand's flagship on Carlos Place, as well as artwork from her kitchen and store.

McCormack is ensuring everyone knows she's in town. There's allure and personality for any passerby — it's hard to miss the colorfully hand-painted mural of Madison Avenue with quirky floral and canine details.

"We're a small London brand, people don't know who we are in America compared to the 200-year-old brands — just the idea of somebody walking past our store, they need to be intrigued to look inside and think, 'wow, that's really

fun and joyful.' I sometimes walk around shops and it can all feel quite the same," she said in an interview.

"Having a look at a lot of the shops here [in New York], they look very corporate and it doesn't make me want to go in there," she added.

The only gray that McCormack has brought with her is perhaps the British weather, but other than that, everything follows a European sensibility. The store is in a Beaux-Arts building from 1879 with 3,200 square feet and two floors.

There's enough room for all of the diamonds to breathe and shine, from everyday diamond Gypset drops; the newly launched Fruit Salad collection to the 20-carat Ellipse Diamond Torque necklace.

The artwork covering the walls is expansive.

Valérie Belin's "Amazon Lily (with Garden Roses)" is one of the pieces that commands attention with its floral layers on a '50s-style model wearing a double strand of pearls. Other artwork include David Salle's line drawing using ink; Girolamo Marchesi da Cotignola's "The Visitation," depicting the meeting of the Virgin Mary and Elizabeth, mother of John the Baptist, during their pregnancies, and

sculptures and objects from Tanzania, Nigeria, Cameroon and Sierra Leone.

The touches of artwork and vintage furnishing are sentimental to McCormack, whose father was an antiques and art dealer. In one corner there's a beer stool that's actually a music box, while in another part of the store there's a Sabine Marcellis perspex mirror, which she also has in her London store.

Some of the pieces are even displayed on totems similar to the ones at Carlos Place.

"We'd come home and there'd be crazy things [my father bought] and then a few months later he'd sold it and there's a piece of furniture missing. He was always recreating spaces; it's not just about having expensive pieces, it's about the mix and the genre of how you collect things. I feel our style is quite unique and that's the same with the jewelry," said McCormack.

She follows the same approach when advising her clients by suggesting they shouldn't buy all their jewelry from one jeweler.

McCormack's infectious charisma makes her a natural shopkeeper and she enjoys interacting with her customers as it leads her designs.

"For me to know what women want

to buy and how they wear things, I have to do that physically. We have a great business online and it's super healthy and self-sufficient, but it's all about the feedback from the women buying these pieces," she said.

When designing jewelry, she asks herself questions such as "do I want to spend my money on this? Do I want to wear it all day? Is it comfortable? Does it bring me lifetime or multiple lifetimes of joy? If my children see me wearing something all the time, is that something that they will love as well?"

McCormack's diamonds are an investment and not a cheap one.

Her prices start at 1,625 pounds for a 0.20 carat diamond and white gold single Gypset hoop earring and can fetch into the millions for a 53-carat diamond button-back necklace.

In November last year, McCormack received new investment from Lingotto Horizon, which is owned by the Agnelli family's Exor holding.

The investment has been used to build out the Jessica McCormack retail portfolio. The brand also has a second store on Sloane Street in Knightsbridge and entered Harrods in September last year.

"We want to grow the brand, but we want to do this in a very careful and considered way. No one's on my back as CEO saying you've got to open 20 stores a year. We have a handful of stores, let's say less than 10 that we're planning for the foreseeable future," said the brand's chief executive officer Leonie Brantberg.

"We have our eyes on the U.S. as the next horizon, but it'll be really interesting to see what happens with Harrods, as we're seeing so many different clients from the Middle East, Asia and India, that we haven't really had [much contact with]. It'll be really interesting to take the market data from that and inform where we can go next," she added.

Americans make up about a third of Jessica McCormack's customer base and it's a market that cares about wearing diamonds, according to Brantberg.

"There's some really interesting demographics that are going on there. The great wealth transfer that's about to happen [for women with] over \$50 trillion going down generations. This historic percentage of women that are now going to inherit are crying out for women-led diamond jewelry brands," she explained.

The brand has also teamed up with a local atelier in New York City that have been trained by McCormack for repairs and alterations.

The U.K. still remains as the brand's biggest market because of its presence in the country.

Jessica McCormack is also launching into partnerships with Net-a-porter and Mytheresa on small pop-ups to test the waters for the larger European market.

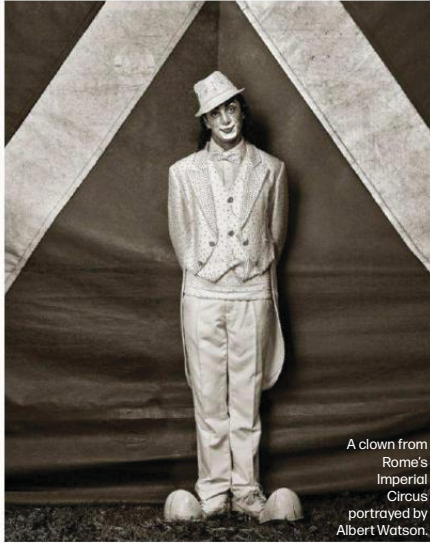
Brantberg wants to reach the right clientele.

"Ubiquity isn't always a great thing in hard luxury because if you're buying an engagement ring, you don't want to know that that ring is available in every like airport in the world," she said, adding that the brand's average transaction value is between 15,000 to 20,000 pounds with 50 percent of the purchases being made by women who are buying day diamonds for themselves.

In the last quarter, the brand's sales have grown in the triple digits and they have welcomed a "higher portion of new customers" according to Brantberg.

Jessica McCormack's Madison Avenue store is just one stop on the brand's deliberately curated Monopoly board.

# Fashion Scoops



A clown from Rome's Imperial Circus portrayed by Albert Watson.

## Special Show

Over the past five decades renowned photographer Albert Watson has had no shortage of blissful moments.

From portraying Alfred Hitchcock and Steve Jobs to taking beauty shots of Kate Moss, depicting Las Vegas landscapes and lensing fashion campaigns for the likes of Chanel, Prada and Levi's, his photographic career has brought him to many a place.

For his latest solo exhibition, the largest ever mounted in Italy, Watson trained his lens on an entirely different subject: Rome. He sought to decipher its complexity layered in history and global fascination.

"Roma Codex," which opens Thursday at the Palazzo Esposizioni Roma, gathers 200 large-scale black-and-white and color images by the famed photographer shot across two years spent wandering through Rome guided, he said, only by his instinct.

"I had to just experience Rome. I didn't want to approach it with preconceived ideas or the pressure of capturing what people expect to see. The city is overflowing with history, but I was interested in what happens in the spaces between the monuments, the energy of its streets, the faces, the movement," Watson told WWD.

"I'm Scottish, not Roman. That gave me a certain freedom. Like Robert Frank photographing America, I was discovering Rome on my own terms," he said.

Aiming to provide a

new perspective on the city, Watson subverted all hierarchies between different subjects.

All images — spread across the three main halls of the Roman exhibiting space — have the same scale and are not arranged in thematic order.

"Whether it's the Colosseum or a portrait of a young actor, they all occupy the same visual space. That balance was essential to me," Watson said. "I didn't want to organize the images thematically. I like chaos, a kind of controlled disorder. It mirrors how people consume images now. You go from a tsunami to a dog to a fashion photo in seconds on your feed," he added.

To be sure, interspersed amid cinematic views of the Colosseum, Ara Pacis and Villa Medici, among other landmarks, are portraits of personalities and people that are shaping the city's culture and everyday life.

They include Alda Fendi; Giancarlo Giammetti; Oscar-winning movie director Paolo Sorrentino; Italian actors Valeria Golino Riccardo Scamarcio, Kasia Smutniak, and Pierfrancesco Favino, as well as ballet dancers Roberto Bolle and Eleonora Abbagnato, and architects Massimiliano Fuksas and Doriana Mandrelli.

Shots inside the Rome Opera House's ballet school and underground clubs also contribute to trace Watson's view of the city.

"I didn't want to deliver a predictable portrait of the city. Romans already know the monuments. I wanted to show something else, something they maybe hadn't seen in quite that way," Watson said.

"I photographed where I

felt there was a story. For me, it was important that the monuments and the people carried the same weight... Rome presents itself to you, layer by layer, if you take the time to look," the photographer said.

The exhibition — curated by Clara Tosi Pamphili and promoted by the Assessorato alla Cultura di Roma Capitale and Azienda Speciale Palaexpo with help from Studio F.P. — runs through Aug. 3

— MARTINO CARRERA

## The Social Whirl

As June approaches, London's social calendar is getting busy again.

The Royal Academy of Arts on Wednesday announced the cochairs of this year's summer exhibition preview party: broadcaster Clara Amfo, actor Helena Bonham Carter, designer Rejina Pyo, sculptor Conrad Shawcross, and entrepreneur Hikari Yokoyama.

They will cohost the 257th edition of the ticketed early summer bash on June 10, inviting leading figures across art, design, fashion, culture, business and technology to have a first look and buy artworks from the exhibition. The summer exhibition will then open to the public from June 17 to Aug. 17.

Rebecca Salter, president of the Royal Academy of Arts, said the annual event is a celebration of contemporary art and architecture, and a vital platform and support for the artistic community. Funds raised from the party will directly support the exhibiting artists and the RA's charitable work, including training young artists at the Royal Academy Schools.

Pyo expressed her joy in cochairing the event, noting RA's legacy of nurturing



"Mug Shot, 1973," earthenware, found decals, found metal toy gun, found bullet, and Plexiglass by Howard Kottler.

creativity, while Yokoyama applauded the institution's continuous cultivation of a dynamic artistic community in London.

As the longest-running annual art exhibition in the world, mounted without interruption since 1769, this year's summer exhibition is themed around the concept of dialogues.

According to architect Farshid Moussavi, who coordinates the fair alongside the exhibition committee members Tom Emerson, Stephanie Macdonald, Vanessa Jackson, Christopher Le Brun, Sikelela Owen, Helen Sear, Caragh Thuring and Richard Wilson, the summer exhibition is dedicated to "art's capacity to forge dialogues and to afford us sensitivity towards societal concerns, such as ecology, survival, and living together.

"These dialogues can be between people of different races, genders, or cultures; between humans, all species, and the planet; or across different disciplines — art, science, politics, for example," Moussavi added.

The RA summer party has also traditionally been a playground for London's social elites to make bold fashion statements.

— TIANWEI ZHANG



Helena Bonham Carter

## Adler's First

The Museum of Arts and Design will be unveiling Jonathan Adler's first museum exhibition on Saturday.

Applly named "The Mad, MAD World of Jonathan Adler," the show will be on view for nearly a year — through April 2026.

The extended run is a celebration of 30 years of creativity for Adler, who graduated from Brown University. Visitors will find items that Adler has culled from MAD's archives including some finds that have not been shown publicly for decades and had inspired Adler when he was starting out as a potter. They will be juxtaposed with examples of his own work to illustrate how Adler was influenced by them.

Another creative influence on Adler's life is his husband Simon Doonan, who has his own artistic and creative following from his books and years of designing store window displays at Barneys New York, and has pitched in at MAD by mapping out the display. (Doonan worked for Diana Vreeland at the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute in the mid 1980s.) Just as Adler's work can be

classified into sections that are not exactly routine or expected. Ticket holders will wander past midcentury ceramics in "Authentica," eye-catching and cheerful forms in "Optimistica," Howard Kottler-created ceramic art in "Kottler," shiny metal worked pieces from different artists in "Metallica," more daring pieces in "Erotica," sculpture from the Funk Art Movement in "Funkiana,"

American flag-infused work from MAD artists in "Americalia" and nature-inspired creations in "Animalia."

Those who really want to get a clearer picture of how Adler goes about crafting the creations that are sold in his signature stores will be able to rest their eyes on an installation that is a replica of the Jonathan Adler pottery studio in SoHo. The craftsman unveiled that creative studio nearly three years ago just a few blocks away from where his first studio was housed.

In late December, Adler touched a different milestone. Consortium Brand Partners acquired the majority interest in the home decor, furniture, and lifestyle company alongside American Exchange Group, which is a strategic minority investor. Adler, who serves as chief creative officer of his namesake company, has more than 1,000 points of distribution globally. At MAD, shoppers will be able to find select items that are featured in the exhibit in its gift store.

Like many New York-made career highlights, Adler's opportunity with MAD stemmed from a dab of happenstance. The author, ceramicist and furniture maker was seated next to the museum's deputy director of curatorial affairs Elissa Auther at an event and the pair bonded over Adler's love of Kottler. To celebrate Adler's MAD opening, Anna Sui, Ruben Toledo and Wendy Goodman will be hosting a party Thursday night at the museum. As for Adler's advice for a hosting a dinner party, he told WWD in 2023, "Put on groovy tunes, invite interesting guests, and serve 'normal' food. No one wants a froth of this and a reduction of that."

— ROSEMARY FEITELBERG ▶



The brand's pop-up space at Harrods.

## L.A. in London

Cult Gaia has brought a bit of Los Angeles' sunny attitude and beachy aesthetic to Harrods with a pop-up that's open until Sunday.

The space showcases the brand's spring 2025 collection amid custom undulating sculptures created by design firm T\_\_M, a frequent brand collaborator.

"The space is inspired by the natural world, the curves of the coastline, the glow of the Mediterranean light, and the interplay between structure and softness," said Jasmin Larian Hekmat, founder of Cult Gaia.

"The sculptures are designed to evoke emotion and curiosity, drawing guests into a fully sensory journey. We wanted to create a dreamscape that encourages slowing down and absorbing beauty from every angle," she added.

Hekmat described the brand's customer base as "bold, artistic and unafraid of making a statement." She added that, so far, the pop-up's bestsellers include the beaded Taraji top, the Nyeria gown, and the Grape clutch.

The brand has been on a retail expansion kick for the past few years, rolling out stores across the U.S. and internationally in St. Barths, Saint-Tropez, and Mykonos. Though it has yet to open a storefront in the U.K., Hekmat teased that the brand could be setting up shop in London soon.

"London holds a very special place in my heart — its creative pulse and architectural beauty align perfectly with the Cult Gaia vision," she said. "When the time is right, we'll create a space that feels like a

living sculpture. It won't just be a store; it will be a fully immersive Gaia experience. Stay tuned."

— VIOLET GOLDSTONE

## Barker at The Beach

Last fall Hurley reached into the world of music for its first ambassador.

The brand, whose roots are in the water culture of Southern California, signed drummer and producer Travis Barker to be the face of a new surf capsule. Now the collection is making its debut.

The limited-edition capsule, which was designed in partnership with the musician, includes T-shirts and sweatshirts in a camo print, skull motifs, old English graphics and a checker print, along with classic chino pants, shorts and overalls. The punk-inspired surf and swim line features Hurley's

board short technology and there are also accessories including sunglasses, footwear and headwear.

Barker's association with Hurley goes back decades. When his band, Blink-182, was touring in the early 2000s, he wore Hurley Ts and lived the California coastal lifestyle that defined the time.

"This collaboration is special for us as it showcases the synergy between the spirit and excitement of Hurley in its early days with who we are now as an internationally established brand with the power to do something really loud and exciting," said Joey Gabbay, chief executive officer of Bluestar Alliance, Hurley's parent company. "Hurley has always believed that music and art are the common threads that bring us all together and having a legendary artist like Travis create custom designs and fits based on his own personal style sealed the deal for us. We strive for authenticity in everything we do, and this collaboration is a perfect symbol of that dedication."

Barker also appears in the campaign, which was shot in his recording studio and on the streets in California. The ads feature a variety of musical instruments, mixed with his personal collectibles including cars, bikes and motorcycles.

"This collection represents everything I love about the lifestyle I've carved out for myself," Barker said. "It's tattooed and poetic, chaotic and precise — a beautiful contradiction that just works. It's made for people like me, the punk kids, the surf community and the people who can't help but create. I love the freedom I was given with this

process and believe that really comes through in the product and designs."

The collection retails for \$50 to \$125 and is available on the Hurley website as well as at select retailers globally. — JEAN E. PALMIERI

## New Uniforms

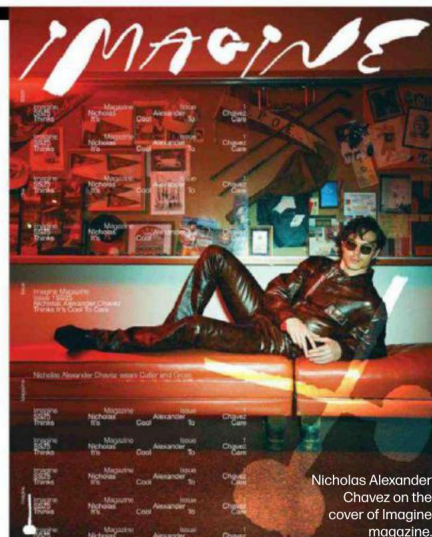
SoHo French restaurant Maison Close has tapped French fashion brand Cotte D'Armes by Clarence Ruth to design the uniforms for its staff.

The Maison Close x Cotte D'Armes by Clarence Ruth collaboration is intended to blend culinary excellence and craftsmanship that speaks to both companies. The uniforms are in ivory, navy and red with subtle denim details. The Maison Close emblem is incorporated onto the right sleeve of the garments and the Cotte D'Armes signature red label is on the left.

The waitstaff and managers will wear a tailored single-breasted jacket in ivory with navy striping on the interior and a denim panel on the back. The bartenders will wear a single-breasted ivory vest with functional pockets and adjustable drawstrings.

"At Maison Close, we believe that every detail contributes to the guest experience — including what our team wears," said Thelieu Probst and Thibaut Castet, owners of Maison Close. "This collaboration with Cotte D'Armes allowed us to bring the essence of French elegance into every thread, merging our passion for hospitality with a design vision that feels both timeless and bold."

"This collaboration is about storytelling through craftsmanship. By blending the structure of tailoring with the soul of denim,



Nicholas Alexander Chavez on the cover of Imagine magazine.

we've created garments that speak to heritage, movement, and modern luxury," said Clarence Ruth, Cotte D'Armes founder and designer. "Partnering with Maison Close gave us the perfect canvas to reimagine what a uniform can be."

Maison Close, which has become a darling of the fashion crowd, is located at 15 Watts Street in SoHo and serves lunch, dinner and weekend brunch six days a week. — J.E.P.

## Imagine That

Huw Gwyther, veteran fashion publisher and founder of independent titles Wonderland and Man About Town, on Wednesday officially launched his magazine project Imagine, a biannual title with a digital-first approach aimed at reflecting the zeitgeist of fashion, entertainment and pop culture.

The 292-page launch issue is edited by Gwyther and a new team with Olive Walton as editor in chief,

Justin Hamilton as fashion director, Kelly Cornwell as beauty director and Stuart Jackson as publisher. Omega, Cutler and Gross, and Jimmy Choo are key supporters of the issue.

"I love what I do, I'm still obsessed with popular culture, and I want to try to help inspire the next generation of creatives. That is a huge driving force behind the creation and naming of Imagine," said Gwyther.

"I've been obsessed with magazines since the age of 11 when my friend at school gave me a copy of Smash Hits with Kylie [Minogue] on the cover — it was love at first sight. I studied womenswear at Central Saint Martins, worked for Mario Testino in Paris, and then worked on V and the launch issue of VMan in New York, before launching my own endeavors. I feel that nobody else has my background, training, specific experience, or influences," he claimed.

The issue comes with multiple covers. Some of them — featuring American actor Jacob Lofland, "1923" star Michelle Randolph, and "Ash" leading actress Eliza González — are sold out during online preorders.

Other cover faces included "Emily in Paris" star Lucas Bravo, "Grotesquerie" lead Nicholas Alexander Chavez, British actress Mia Rodgers, "Heartstopper" actress Yasmin Finney, Dylan Llewellyn, Mia Rodgers and British boy band Dear Alice.

The magazine is being distributed online and via a select retail network with stockists including Magma, Dover Street Market, Charlotte Street Magazines, Shreeji Newsagents, Good News, Somerset House Shop and The Broken Arm.

Gwyther said the team at Imagine is also working on a new magazine for Topshop and Topman, which is now under the ownership of Asos. — T.Z.



Cotte D'Armes designed uniforms for the Maison Close restaurant.