

# WWD

Fashion. Beauty. Business.

## Thom Times Two

Thom Browne has opened his first stores in New York in over a decade – and not one, but two units.

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## Ushering A Scent

Ralph Lauren is expanding its scent portfolio beyond Polo – with a little help from Usher.

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## Toy Story

GCDS has unveiled a collaboration with Polly Pocket that puts Milan in the consumer's pocket.

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# Power Pay

WWD's annual study of U.S. executive pay in fashion features 25 corporate bigwigs who made over \$10 million last year. *For more, see Pages 4 to 6.*

## BUSINESS

# Tapestry Expands Stake in Gen Phoenix

A Coach Classic bag using Gen Phoenix's new material.



- The Coach and Kate Spade parent now owns 9.9 percent of the recycled leather material specialist.

BY EVAN CLARK

**Tapestry Inc. is doubling down** on Gen Phoenix, which makes a recycled leather fiber material that the handbag giant sees

as both good for the customer and good for the planet.

Tapestry, which owns Coach and Kate Spade, started working with Gen Phoenix in 2022 and made a small initial investment in the company the following year.

Now, the handbag giant has taken part in Gen Phoenix's latest \$15 million fundraising round, led by venture capital firm, Material Impact.

Tapestry nearly quadrupled its investment and now owns 9.9 percent of the Peterborough, England-based firm, which gives a second life to leftover leather scraps with a patented technology platform.

Gen Phoenix said it has been working closely with Tapestry sharing research and development information, design insight and factory floors.

"This expanded partnership marks

a major milestone – not just for Gen Phoenix, but for the future of sustainable materials," said John Kennedy, chief executive officer of Gen Phoenix, in a statement. "Together with Tapestry, we're proving that circular innovation can meet the demands of global brands without compromise. It's a powerful example of what happens when you combine material innovation, leather heritage, shared values and a commitment to scale."

Gen Phoenix plans to use the new money to expand into additional categories, scale its production infrastructure at its U.K. facility, which already has capacity for 60-plus million square feet annually, and speed the development of its circular leather solution.

Scott Roe, Tapestry's chief financial and chief operating officer, told WWD that the investment was about innovation on one hand and a desire to follow what's important to customers on the other.

"We know this is important to our consumers and particularly to our youngest cohorts," Roe said, referring to Phoenix' sustainable approach. "Eighty percent of our business is leather goods. So it's hard to find an area where we have a bigger impact or a bigger say in the development of an innovative new material."

And that new material weighs 30 percent less than virgin leather and meets or exceeds all the company's physical property goals, Roe said.

"It's also really good for the planet, and it is helping us meet our science-based targets as it relates to carbon reduction, et cetera," he said.

And as CFO, Roe is also always thinking of the economics of any deal.

"Purpose and profit need to be in balance," he said. "And if either one of those get out of balance, then you have a problem."

## BUSINESS

# Galleries Lafayette Reshuffles Management Ranks

- The retailer is in the midst of a generational handover following the death of matriarch Ginette Moulin.

BY JOELLE DIDERICH

**PARIS** – Galleries Lafayette Group continues to reshuffle its management ranks in the wake of the death of matriarch Ginette Moulin.

Following the appointment last week of Arthur Lemoine as chief executive officer, the French department store chain announced three senior appointments on Tuesday.

Guillaume Houzé has been promoted to chief image and innovation officer, after 11 years as director of image and communications. He is also chairman of Lafayette Anticipations – Galleries Lafayette Corporate Foundation, and chairman of the ANDAM fashion prize, among others.

"With this new cross-functional role, the group is affirming its ambition to leverage creativity and technology as core pillars of its differentiation strategy," Galleries Lafayette said in a statement.

Emmanuelle Greth, formerly director of human resources and sustainable development, has been named chief human resources and CSR officer. Meanwhile, Matthieu Caloni is taking

over as chief financial officer after serving as head of finance, strategy and transformation since 2016.

The CFO role was previously held by Ugo Supino, who stepped down in June after 25 years at the company, signaling a handover to the fifth generation of the retailer's founding family. Guillaume Houzé is the brother of Nicolas Houzé, executive chairman of the group. Lemoine is their cousin.

"By strengthening our governance around cross-functional functions and asserting clear lines of responsibility thanks to the expertise of Guillaume, Emmanuelle and Matthieu, we are laying the foundations for a more agile, consistent and forward-looking model," Nicolas Houzé said.

"Through these choices, our ambition is to consolidate the Galleries Lafayette group's positioning as a benchmark player in retail and creation, capable of anticipating the profound changes in our environment and carrying a sustainable, innovative and committed vision," he added.

The group has adapted its governance as it seeks to redress its business. Though sales at the flagship on Boulevard Haussmann have returned to pre-pandemic levels, with revenues of 2 billion euros in 2024, the group's regional network continues to suffer.

The Galleries Lafayette flagship on Boulevard Haussmann in Paris.



Galleries Lafayette sold 26 stores to embattled French businessman Michel Ohayon, while key holdings such as e-tailer La Redoute have racked up losses.

Moulin last year stepped down as chairwoman of Motier, the holding company of the Moulin Family, paving the

way for her son-in-law Philippe Houzé to take the reins.

The company is banking on international expansion, with the planned opening of stores in Mumbai and New Delhi as part of its partnership with Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Ltd.

EXCLUSIVE

# Thom Browne Opens Two Manhattan Stores

● A ready-to-wear store as well as the first accessories-only boutique are the first New York stores to open in nearly 20 years.

BY JEAN E. PALMIERI

It's been nearly two decades since Thom Browne opened a store in his hometown of New York. That's about to change Wednesday when the designer officially debuts not one, but two new boutiques on the Upper East Side.

The first is a 1,700-square-foot unit located at 19 East 72nd Street that features the full expression of the brand's men's and women's ready-to-wear and accessories. Around the corner at 898 Madison Avenue is the company's first accessories-only store, a 900-square-foot space dedicated exclusively to leather goods, footwear, eyewear and fragrances.

These stores join the Thom Browne unit at 100 Hudson Street in TriBeCa, which opened in 2006.

"TriBeCa is really the worldwide flagship," Browne said in an exclusive walk-through of the stores on Tuesday. "It's my home. But I've had so many conversations over coffee at Sant Ambroeu [on Madison Avenue at 77th Street] that it was time for me to have a location here because so many people were anxious to have a store in their neighborhood."

He obliged.

Browne said the space on 72nd Street is located in "one of the most special buildings in New York," so when the space became available, he jumped at the chance. The 17-story, 40-unit limestone-faced Art Moderne-style cooperative building was built in 1936-37 and is considered to be one of the most beautiful buildings in Manhattan.

Being able to snag a space right around the corner for his first accessories-only store was a bonus.

Browne designed the interiors of both stores based on the original Four Seasons restaurant in New York, one of his all-time favorite restaurants that was designed by legendary architect Philip Johnson. "It's based on something very personal," he said.

While the original design is centered around terrazzo and gray marble, the new aesthetic, while similar, is softer and uses travertine instead. "It's an adaptation of the Four Seasons, but it still feels like what it's been for the last 25 years," he said of the design.

The furniture as well as the merchandise mix were also chosen specifically to appeal to the New York City customer.

"Twenty or so of our 119 stores are true flagships and the product is curated to be very special to the neighborhood," Browne said. "So on Melrose [in Los Angeles], you'll see a more weather-appropriate assortment. Same thing with Miami or the Ginza in Tokyo. Everybody travels, so it's nice that you can go into this store and see something different than you would see on Melrose or in Palm Beach."

The new ready-to-wear store is also large enough to allow Browne to display the menswear and womenswear together. "As women's has grown, it's nice to be able to have both in the same store," he said. "The collections really complement each other because I design them at the same time. And I do consciously think of them in the same store at the same time, so you see the synergy between the two collections."

The store is opening with pieces from both the summer collection as well as a few from fall 2025, along with an assortment of childrenswear.

In addition to the collections, the



Inside the new Thom Browne accessories store on Madison Avenue.

ready-to-wear store carries an assortment of accessories, many of which are displayed on an accessory wall.

"The stores have evolved to be more functional," Browne said. "At the beginning, I wanted you to walk into a space that didn't really feel like a retail space. Over the years, with the business growing, it was important that they evolve to really be able to house and showcase the different parts of the collection."

Although some of the offerings overlap, the new accessories store concept features a full range of bags, from purses to briefcases, as well as an assortment of the Mr. and Mrs. Thom bags, which are displayed as art objects in the gallery-like space. The store also features a wide range of Hector bags, including a baguette style in pebble grain leather and a navy tweed and a pearl-studded version.

Hector is Browne's dachshund and the muse behind his dog-shaped bags.

Other animal bags in the shape of foxes, sheep, pigs and bears are also offered in the store.

"We actually have 20 animals that travel around the world," Browne said. "We've had made-to-order events with the animals ever since our Noah's Ark show in 2020. There are 20 different colors you can get, so it's special."

Footwear is also a key part of the mix, from heritage trainers and dressy brogues to wingtip pumps for both men and women.

"This is the first time I've ever concentrated an entire store on accessories," Browne said. "We're not the first to have a focus on accessories to grow the business, but accessories have become so important to us, really focused around the Mr. and Mrs. Thom bags and the new softer versions of

those bags. The collections are evolving and growing enough to warrant a store."

While separated by a few feet, the accessories store is being viewed as an adjunct of the larger ready-to-wear unit. In fact, behind a door in the smaller unit are several fitting rooms where staff can bring clothes from the 72nd Street unit for customers seeking to add a bag or shoes to their wardrobe to complete the look.

Browne said to expect more accessories-specific stores in the future as the brand continue to expand.

"I think you're going to see the stores evolve in general," he said. Rather than just focus on the brand's signature tailored clothing, the emphasis going forward is to highlight other popular categories such as shirts and knitwear.

"Shirts have become really important along with knits," he said. "And they're just easier to buy than a tailored jacket. Sure, it all starts with the collection, but how you experience the collections and the product in the store you'll see evolving in the way that the collections have evolved. There's a lot more to buy in the stores."

In addition to made-to-order animal bags, the brand offers made-to-measure knitwear in a range of colors as well as tailored clothing for men and women. "Made-to-order tailoring has become a significant part of the business, which is good for me because it's where it all started," he said. "It's nice to know that people still appreciate it."

The stores also allow customers to experience a different side of Thom Browne. "I think that's something that a lot of people don't really understand until they come into the stores," he said. "People see my shows, and they think: 'Oh, Thom, does concept,' but in reality, when you come to the stores,

there's just really good, beautifully made classic clothes to buy. So you can get the conceptual ideas, but you can also get a really amazing poplin shirt, or a basketball jersey in cashmere mesh — really classic ideas done in really special ways."

This is one of the reasons that the company has been putting more emphasis on its direct-to-consumer business and cutting back on wholesale. In reporting its first-quarter results in April, Ermengildo Zegna Group, majority owner of Thom Browne, reported that revenues fell 18.9 percent to 64.2 million euros as the brand continued to streamline its wholesale channel. For the year, wholesale sales are expected to be down 25 to 30 percent.

However, the company's direct-to-consumer sales were up 3.5 percent to 46.3 million euros, boosted by store openings as well as double-digit growth in Japan and South Korea.

Browne said focusing more on DTC just makes sense for the brand. "The experience is so much better when we get to control it ourselves," he said. "What I do is so specific that people need us to really tell the story. And I think we tell the story better than anybody: that we started some 20-odd years ago with a gray suit and it's evolved over the years into so much more."

To celebrate the two new stores, the company will host a cocktail party Wednesday night where guests can not only experience the stores themselves, but also check out the topiary version of Hector that the designer created for the outside of the 72nd Street store.

"It's the 10th anniversary of Hector," he said with a smile. "What started as a folly with the first Hector bag has grown into a really important business."

## BUSINESS

# Why Fashion CEO Pay Keeps Rising

- WWD's annual study on executive pay found 25 U.S. leaders with pay packages topping \$10 million last year.

BY EVAN CLARK

**Life in the corner office** might be full of ups and downs – but when it comes to the multimillion-dollar pay packages corporate chiefs get, it's mostly up.

WWD's annual pay study looked at nearly 50 of the largest publicly traded companies with fashion-industry ties and found 25 executives who logged pay packages valued at more than \$10 million in 2024.

It is an exercise that, this year at least, cast a spotlight on the people in charge of the sector-leading giants.

David Simon, chairman, chief executive officer and president of Simon Property Group – the dominant U.S. luxury mall

owner – led the list with a stock-heavy package valued at \$61.3 million.

And the rest of the top five included heavyweights in their own fields, including Amazon CEO of worldwide stores Doug Herrington (with a package valued at \$34.1 million), Walmart CEO Doug McMillon (\$27.4 million), Ralph Lauren Corp. executive chairman and chief creative officer Ralph Lauren (\$24.1 million) and TJX Cos. Inc. CEO Ernie Herrman (\$23.4 million).

All together, the – let's say Golden 25 – were paid \$485 million last year, on top of the \$393 million they made in 2023 – that's a 23.5 percent increase for the tip of the U.S. fashion pay pyramid.

Much of that two-year take of \$878 million is money that exists only theoretically. That's because executive pay includes oodles of stock and option awards that only pay off if the company's shares perform and targets are met.

And there's really no telling how much CEOs and top executives ultimately take home once all the options are cashed in. But with a top-line figure approaching \$500 million for just the top 25 earners last year, the answer would seem to be “enough.”

Even so, CEOs carry a lot of responsibility, traveling ceaselessly and coming under constant scrutiny while navigating what is currently a very dicey consumer market.

“Their jobs and what they get paid for is to keep the ship on course, but to also instill not only a positive corporate culture, but enthusiasm and inventiveness,” said Elaine Hughes, board adviser and former CEO of search firm E.A. Hughes & Co.

“Their biggest challenge is, in the past 10 years since technology has literally upended communication – how do you harness that [new technology] to enhance

your brand?” Hughes said. “The other big issue is supply chain, and this was long before [trade war] tariffs were put into place. Even one of those CEOs knows it's not like the old days where everyone rushes to China. Now it's global sourcing.”

Executive pay stirs up a range of emotions – most often envy and outrage from outside and, on the inside, frustration from CEOs and board members setting their pay that compensation reported to the Securities and Exchange Commission doesn't reflect take home pay and is tied to the performance of the company.

Any leadership rundown in U.S. business also underscores a continuing lack of diversity with white men holding most of the top jobs and therefore gaining most of the sweet rewards.

And while the fortunes of brands and retailers go up and down, CEO pay seems to keep going higher.

Twenty years ago, Simon made only \$814,179 while building his mall company, no one at Amazon made more than \$8 million and Walmart's CEO registered pay of just over \$12 million. Lauren logged more than \$17.8 million in compensation in 2004. But the CEO of TJX at the time made less than \$3 million.

The job of running all of those businesses has only become more complex over the last two decades, but CEO compensation has been on a kind of steady march higher in part to how corporate boards set pay.

The process starts with a review of compensation at a company's peers.

Wanting to run with the pack, boards then look to set the pay for their CEO at the median of that group for the following year.

That gives the appearance that they're targeting a kind of market-decided middle. But going for the median skews pay over time.

“Invariably, that's just going to push that median up and up because by definition, when you're targeting the median, half of the companies should be higher and half should be lower,” said Roy Saliba, managing director at ISS-Corporate, the Rockville, Md., data and analytics provider. “But if everyone is doing the median, then over time, that just continues to creep up.”

So some of the increase in CEO pay packages is “mechanical,” according to Saliba, “but some of it is really just related to performance. As companies grow, you expect pay to grow for the position. And then the question always is – is it appropriate?”

“Is the increase appropriate relative to the performance that the company is delivering?” he said. “There's no simple answer to that question.”

But Saliba did have a way to start: By stacking the change in CEO pay against their company's total shareholder return.

ISS analyzed 151 fashion and related companies in the Russell 3000, looking only at CEOs who had been in the top job for at least the last two years.

The study found that median CEO pay rose 6.3 percent to \$8.2 million last year. Looking at the medians, salaries were up 2 percent, bonuses were generally flat, stock awards rose 6.2 percent and options, when granted, increased by 2.9 percent. Against that, the stock market performance of the companies resulted in an 8.9 percent increase in total shareholder return.

So shareholder return grew slightly faster than pay last year, giving the growth rates a certain symmetry.

That leaves just the raw size of the typical CEO pay package, which boards, employees, competitors, customers and everyone else still has to get their head around.



# What the Highest-paid CEOs Make

Running the biggest fashion or retail company doesn't guarantee the biggest paycheck. **BY EVAN CLARK**

**When it comes to executive pay** in fashion, the leaders lead.

A WWD study of nearly 50 of the largest publicly traded companies in and around the U.S. fashion industry found 25 executives who logged compensation packages valued at more than \$10 million in 2024.

The executives at the top of the list were steering companies that in one way or another have come to dominate their own niche.

Big-time compensation packages can be more than a little squishy.

They are dominated by stock and option awards that pay out over time and are tied to how well a stock fares on Wall Street. But the top-line numbers can be a useful gauge of who's up as companies in ascent are motivated to keep the people in the driver's seat happy.

David Simon, chairman, chief executive officer and president of Simon Property Group – who has been battling cancer

for over a year, but continues to run the company – has labored for three decades to build the business into the luxury mall powerhouse. And last year, he was rewarded with a stock-heavy package at \$61.4 million.

That made him the highest-paid person in the U.S. fashion industry last year, according to the study, which drew figures from Securities and Exchange Commission filings.

Rounding out the top five were Amazon

CEO of worldwide stores Doug Herrington (with a package valued at \$34.2 million), Walmart CEO Doug McMillon (\$27.4 million), Ralph Lauren Corp. executive chairman and chief creative officer Ralph Lauren (\$24.2 million), and TJX Cos. Inc. CEO Ernie Herrman (\$23.5 million).

That has the top mall operator, the top e-commerce company, the top retailer, the highest profile American designer brand and the biggest off-pricer handing out the biggest pay packages.



## 1 David Simon

*Simon Property Group chairman, CEO, president*

**Total compensation:**

**\$61,394,770**

+294.5% compared with 2023



## 2 Doug Herrington

*Amazon, CEO worldwide stores*

**Total compensation:**

**\$34,193,958**

+8,573.6%



## 3 Doug McMillon

*Walmart Inc., president, CEO*

**Total compensation:**

**\$27,408,854**

+1.6%



## 4 Ralph Lauren

*Ralph Lauren Corp., executive chairman, chief creative officer*

**Total compensation:**

**\$24,183,147**

+22.6%



## 5 Ernie Herrman

*TJX Cos. Inc., president, CEO*

**Total compensation:**

**\$23,482,528**

+5.7%



## 6 Patrice Louvet

*Ralph Lauren Corp., president, CEO*

**Total compensation:**

**\$23,079,435**

+38.8%



## 7 Brian Cornell

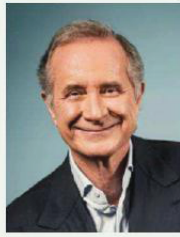
*Target Corp., chairman, CEO*

**Total compensation:**

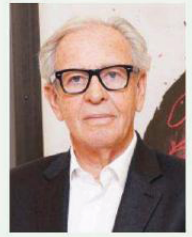
**\$20,407,603**

+6.3%


**8**
**Paul Marciano**
*Guess Inc., chief creative officer*
**Total compensation:**  
**\$20,150,655**
**+65.3%**

**9**
**Richard Dickson**
*Gap Inc., president, CEO since Aug. 22*
**Total compensation:**  
**\$19,426,846**
**+35.2%**

**10**
**Fabrizio Freda**
*The Estée Lauder Cos., former CEO, president*
**Total compensation:**  
**\$17,851,573**
**-18.2%**

**11**
**Fran Horowitz**
*Abercrombie & Fitch Co., CEO*
**Total compensation:**  
**\$17,036,310**
**+13.3%**

**12**
**Barbara Rentler**
*Ross Stores Inc., vice chairman, CEO*
**Total compensation:**  
**\$16,994,251**
**-6.1%**

**13**
**Morris Goldfarb**
*G-III Apparel Group, chairman, CEO*
**Total compensation:**  
**\$16,652,646**
**-47.0%**

**14**
**Tony Spring**
*Macy's Inc., chairman, CEO, appointed in 2024*
**Total compensation:**  
**\$16,452,108**
**+184.7%**

**15**
**Stefan Larsson**
*PVH Corp., CEO*
**Total compensation:**  
**\$16,278,038**
**+4.3%**

**16**
**Joanne Crevoiserat**
*Tapestry Inc., CEO*
**Total compensation:**  
**\$15,430,213**
**+6.5%**

**17**
**Jay Schottenstein**
*American Eagle Outfitters Inc., chairman, CEO*
**Total compensation:**  
**\$14,980,527**
**-10.8%**

**18**
**Calvin McDonald**
*Lululemon Athletica Inc., CEO*
**Total compensation:**  
**\$14,551,916**
**-11.8%**

**19**
**Michelle Gass**
*Levi Strauss & Co., CEO, president*
**Total compensation:**  
**\$13,704,334**
**-62.4%**

**20**
**Stephen Bratspies**
*Hanesbrands Inc., CEO*
**Total compensation:**  
**\$12,933,300**
**+31.8%**

**21**
**Lauren Hobart**
*Dick's Sporting Goods Inc., CEO, president*
**Total compensation:**  
**\$12,916,771**
**-4.9%**

**22**
**Scott Baxter**
*Kontoor Brands Inc., chairman, CEO, president*
**Total compensation:**  
**\$12,586,582**
**+26.6%**

**23**
**Rati Sahi Levesque**
*RealReal Inc., CEO, president, appointed in 2024*
**Total compensation:**  
**\$11,496,401**
**+461.9%**

**24**
**Kevin Plank**
*Under Armour Inc., CEO, president, reappointed in 2024*
**Total compensation:**  
**\$10,964,002**
**+136.0%**

**25**
**Bracken Darrell**
*VF Corp., president, CEO*
**Total compensation:**  
**\$10,729,899**
**-20.7%**

## BEAUTY

# Houbigant Paris Reawakens



Inside Houbigant's new Paris flagship.

- The 250-year-old niche fragrance brand has two new freestanding stores, including a Paris flagship.

BY JENNIFER WEIL

**PARIS** — How best to breathe new life into a 250-year-old French niche fragrance brand? Owners of Houbigant Paris have a strategy.

The brand never ceased operations since its founding by Jean-François Houbigant in Paris in 1775. "It has been the perfumer of many royal houses," said Gian Luca Perris, deputy chief executive officer of Houbigant.

It created bespoke fragrances for Marie Antoinette, French King Louis XIV, Napoleon Bonaparte and Queen Elizabeth II — among other dignitaries.

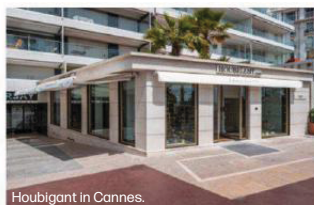
"Lady Di was wearing a Houbigant fragrance at her wedding," Perris said. Queen Marie of Romania not only sported

Houbigant fragrance, but her testimonial featured in its advertising.

Yet the brand has not only made waves due to its celebrity following. "Modern perfumery would not be like it is today without Houbigant," claimed Perris, who explained the brand invented the first modern perfume, Fougère Royale. That paved the way for fougère to be among the main fragrance families of today.

"It takes the name from this product," said Perris, adding "fougère" means fern, which has no odor. But a Houbigant perfumer, Paul Parquet, created one in 1882 for the brand. "Since then, the house has been continuing innovating in perfume creation," Perris said.

Quelques Fleurs was the first multifloral scent, dating from 1912, he added. Subsequently, Houbigant went international, but after that, niche fragrances generally were eclipsed by fashion brands' perfumes for decades.



Houbigant in Cannes.



Houbigant perfumes.

However, niche has risen again.

"The brand is living a second youth," Perris said. "It's expanding again worldwide."

Houbigant's big birthday this year is being marked with French flagships, after more than 70 years of having no standalone stores. As of June, Houbigant runs a new shop, measuring 915 square feet, in Paris, at 62 Rue François 1er. "That's again the epicenter of the brand," Perris said.

In May, Houbigant debuted a 1,560-square-foot boutique on Cannes' Croisette. Each location includes a private space for VIP clients.

Houbigant's store opened on Rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré and remained there for 180 years. Its sign was made of a hanging basket of flowers.

"Today, we are hanging clouds of

flowers in both shops," Perris said.

Florence-born architect Filippo Burresti created the spaces with white marble flooring echoing the design of Haussmann parquet. Furniture nods to that of ancient perfumeries. "Inside, we give a lot of attention to the light, so that it makes the products shine in the shops," Perris said.

His family owns Houbigant, as well as another perfume brand, called Perris Monte Carlo, which it began 15 years ago and also is sold in the freestanding boutiques.

Houbigant is carried in about 400 doors worldwide, including Bergdorf Goodman, Fortnum & Mason (its largest retailer), Liberty and Printemps, plus perfumeries in France, Italy, Spain and Germany.

"It's also quite present in the Middle East and in a few Asian countries, including Japan and China," Perris said.

The executive would not discuss figures, but industry sources believe the new boutiques will together generate about 20 percent of Houbigant's business. Those sources estimate that the brand currently makes about 20 million euros at in retail sales annually.

Houbigant counts 20 fragrances in its collection, including historical products, such as Mon Boudoir. Quelques Fleurs remains the brand's bestseller. The more recent scents Vanille Impériale and Ambre Rubis are popular in Europe, according to Perris.

Prices range from 185 euros to 190 euros for a 100-ml. eau de parfum.

Different perfumers have created Houbigant fragrances, including Jean-Claude Ellena. Essence Rare was the first perfume he developed.

The U.S., where Houbigant is sold at Neiman Marcus, Saks Fifth Avenue and independent retailers, is the brand's largest geographic market. "France is becoming again very important," Perris said.

Today, the U.K. ranks second for Houbigant.

## BEAUTY

# Ralph Lauren Taps Usher to Launch New Cologne

- The brand is introducing a "more elevated" scent franchise with the debut of Ralph's Club New York, fronted by the R&B musician.

BY NOOR LOBAD

**Ralph Lauren** is embarking on a new chapter in men's fragrance.

The brand, best known for its long-standing Polo franchise, is introducing a Ralph's Club New York Eau de Parfum, meant to serve as a "more elevated" scent offering retailing for \$110 for a 60-ml. bottle and fronted by R&B musician Usher.

"It is our most ambitious launch in years," said Charles Finaz de Villaine, global brand president of Ralph Lauren Fragrances, adding that the launch is part of the brand's effort to "connect Ralph Lauren Fragrances to the next generation."

While Polo is anchored in lifestyle and sport — the line's most recent ambassadors have included the New York Yankees' Aaron Judge and Formula 1 star Charles Leclerc — Ralph's Club is rooted in music and dance, which represent "another key aspect of the American Dream," Finaz de Villaine said.

"Mr. Lauren has been inspired by musicians like Frank Sinatra and Fred Astaire, and we wanted to find who is the

Sinatra of today — an American hero who encompasses the modernity of today's society — and that's Usher," he continued, adding that the singer, who wrapped his recent "Past Present Future" tour in May, "will allow us to target the Millennial, 30-plus man, while also appealing to both men and women across generations and communities."

As part of the Ralph's Club campaign, Usher reimagines Sinatra's "New York, New York," bringing his own flair to the famous tune.

"There's a natural synergy between me and Ralph Lauren Fragrances because we build worlds through style, emotion and storytelling," wrote Usher in an email to WWD. "With this being my first fragrance campaign, I wanted to approach it the way I would an album or a tour — every detail had to tell a story — it was about curating a world that felt cinematic, elevated and authentic."

The launch also breaks new ground for the brand from an olfactive point of view. "We've always been known to do classic, fresh fragrances, but for this one, we decided to embrace the trend of fruity fragrances for men," Finaz de Villaine said.

Developed by Nadège Le Garlantezec and Shyamala Maisondieu, senior perfumers at Givaudan, the scent features top notes of blackcurrant and mandarin,

with middle notes of lavender and sandalwood and a base of moss, fir balsam and bourbon vanilla. Its flacon blends the look and feel of a whiskey flask, with inspirations from New York's Art Deco-style skyscrapers, which have long been a source of artistic inspiration for Lauren, Finaz de Villaine said.

Ralph Lauren's Polo 67 Eau de Toilette, introduced last year, was a hit for the brand, according to the executive, and this year it added an eau de parfum version of the cardamom- and cedarwood-infused scent.

The brand's renewed efforts to reach new consumers appears to be working: separate Piper Sandler and Boston Consulting Group surveys conducted this spring both showed that teenage boys rank Ralph Lauren among their top-10 favorite fragrance brands.

With this launch, the brand is doubling down on reaching young fragrance lovers.

"Our hero asset is the TV commercial with Usher's song, but we're going to arrive on TikTok with all of the unfiltered, behind-the-scenes assets — his raw recordings, him describing the scent, users will be able to replicate his choreography — we want to create a social big bang," said Finaz de Villaine.

"We're changing the recipe: new face, new bottle, new olfactive profile and a new way to craft a 360 campaign."

Usher for Ralph's Club New York Eau de Parfum.



EXCLUSIVE

## Supplement Company Cymbiotika Opens First Wellness Café



Cymbiotika Wellness Café

- The café will open at the Fontainebleau Las Vegas food hall later this summer.

BY EMILY BURNS

**Cymbiotika** is headed to Las Vegas.

The supplement company, best known for its liposomal packets, is opening its first Cymbiotika Wellness Café at the Fontainebleau's food hall Promenade later this summer. At the café, guests will be able to experience smoothies, juices, açai bowls, yogurt bowls, salads and wraps featuring the brand's supplements. By adding Cymbiotika products to these beverages and meals, guests can opt for a specific health goal, from boosting immunity to supporting focus. There

will also be grab-and-go items, as well as Cymbiotika products available.

Some of the brand's bestselling products include Liposomal Vitamin C, \$62, and Liposomal Glutathione, \$88, and new launches include Liquid Colostrum, \$88, and Irish Sea Moss, \$65.

"Opening our inaugural Cymbiotika Wellness Café at such an iconic and forward-thinking destination like Fontainebleau Las Vegas is a monumental achievement for us," said Cymbiotika cofounder and chief executive officer Shahab Elmi in a statement. "Our mission has always been to empower individuals on their wellness journeys, and this café provides a unique way to experience the benefits of our supplements in a convenient



Cymbiotika Irish Sea Moss

and delicious format. We are excited to be part of Fontainebleau Las Vegas' continued commitment to guest well-being."

While the words Vegas and wellness may seem like polar opposites, the party destination has been getting a bit of a health refresh. For example, in-room IV drips, juice bars and luxe gyms have become the norm along the Strip.

"People aren't really drinking anymore. Vegas once was an absolute party scene, and still is, but I think now... the environment is changing. Everything is about health and supplementation and finding alternatives to drinking but still having a good time," said cofounder and chief operating officer Durana Elmi. "Generations now are so much more health-conscious and so much smarter in terms of how they're living their life. They're still having a good time. They're still partying... but they're doing it in a way

where they're not damaging their body."

Fontainebleau, in particular, has a NutriDrip IV Lounge, IGK Salon, luxury fitness center and its Lapis Spa and Wellness.

In a statement, Michael Waltman, senior vice president of hospitality and nightlife at Fontainebleau, added: "Health and wellness have always been key pillars of the Fontainebleau Las Vegas guest experience. From the award-winning Lapis Spa & Wellness to our innovative fitness center, we pride ourselves on being a leader in wellness tourism with our best-in-class amenities and offerings. This partnership with Cymbiotika brings a natural synergy across our culinary, spa and fitness offerings, furthering our commitment to delivering a holistic and enriching stay at every touchpoint."

The Cymbiotika Wellness Café is expected to open late summer.

BEAUTY

## Typebea Is Scaling Its Hair Care Range and Business

- The hair care brand cofounded by Rita Ora and Anna Lahey has introduced a 3-in-1 dry shampoo.

BY HIKMAT MOHAMMED

**LONDON** — The hair care brand Typebea, cofounded by Australian entrepreneur Anna Lahey and musician Rita Ora, recently celebrated its anniversary.

The brand already has more than six products on the market, from a shampoo and conditioner, boosting peptides to styling serums. It's now added a 3-in-1 dry shampoo to its range as the business scales.

"It cleanses the scalp and creates a volumizing lift, but what's really different about our dry shampoo is that it does have

that efficacious dose of baicapil, which is the hero ingredient that's in our G1 peptide hair serum. Baicapil is clinically proven to reduce hair loss and promote hair growth by a staggering 60.3 percent," said Anna Lahey in an interview with Kieran Lahey, her partner in business and life.

Typebea has been taking their products beyond shelf life in bathrooms. They've extended into the travel size market with smaller versions of their products.

"Mini versions of the product in general are a big part of our retailers strategy, such as Sephora and Douglas," said Kieran Lahey, who is chief executive officer of the brand.

According to Typebea, in the first full year of trading, the brand has projected a turnover of between \$12 million to \$15 million. The brand has experienced a 500 percent growth year-on-year.

The brand's biggest market to date is Europe, which accounts for 55 percent of the market share followed by Australia with 33 percent, the U.K. with 9 percent and U.S. at 3 percent.

The G1 peptide hair serum is Typebea's hero product and accounts for 44 percent of sales. It's also the number-one hair serum in Sephora in Australia.

Scaling and starting a business is nothing new to the Laheys.

Anna founded Vida Glow, a collagen and wellness brand in 2014 with Kieran onboard as chief executive officer. The couple continue to operate the business.

In 2021, Vida Glow underwent a rebrand during the COVID-19 pandemic

and invited Ora to attend the relaunch event for a key sum.

"There was a small group of people at the event because Australia was so strict about the pandemic and Rita was filming 'The Voice.' At the time, Rita overdelivered on all her deliverables [in the contract with Vida Glow]," said Anna.

As travel rules relaxed, Anna and Rita met up in London and Los Angeles to have general discussions that led to the subject of starting Typebea together.

"I could tell that there was this interest of her doing something that was her own, as opposed to putting her name to a brand deal. We naturally bonded over hair. Rita had some pretty funny hair stories about committing to a look and for women, much of our identity is our hair," said Anna.

Starting a hair care brand was also a personal sentiment to Ora, who experienced her mother battling cancer and losing all of her hair with chemotherapy.

"As a young teenager, Rita saw the sort of emotional toll that it took on her mum and the identity crisis, if you will, of what losing her hair did to her personality and how that made her feel," said Anna.

Scaling the business was always on the cards for Typebea.

The Laheys used their track record with Vida Glow to plan out the first year of the brand.

"We wanted to launch with major retailers from Day One. We're now in 22 countries across Europe with the likes of Sephora, Douglas and Boots because we've

worked with them before [on Vida Glow]," said Kieran.

Typebea is currently working on its North American strategy as it projects a lot of incoming growth from the region, as well as eyeing up the Middle Eastern and Asian market, where there's promise.

Rita Ora and Anna Lahey



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PARTNERSHIP INQUIRIES

Melissa Rocco

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FASHION

# GCDS, Mattel Create Italy-themed Polly Pocket Compact



● Creative director Giuliano Calza teamed with Mattel to create a limited-edition collectible toy, flanked by a dedicated ready-to-wear capsule collection and gadgets.

BY SANDRA SALIBIAN

**MILAN** – With the Labubu craze far from winding down, GCDS cofounder and creative director Giuliano Calza is offering some compelling competition and tapping into the collectible toy fever with a project sprinkled with a dash of nostalgia.

Calza has teamed up with Mattel Inc. and its Mattel Creations design-driven platform dedicated to the intersection of pop culture, fandom and play to create

a one-of-a-kind Polly Pocket play set, marking the first time a fashion designer has been called on to reimagine the doll's miniature world.

Available in only 3,000 pieces and dropping Wednesday, the limited-edition toy centers on a pocket-sized version of Milan seen through the doll's eyes and filled with clichés of Italian lifestyles.

These range from grabbing a slice of pizza to cycling through the city, from a quick stop at a gelato cart to a visit to the GCDS store – all experiences squeezed into Polly Pocket's signature heart-shaped case in iridescent pink hue.

"Redesigning Polly Pocket marks a personal milestone," said Calza. "Ever since I was a kid, the moment I thought of something beautiful, those pastel cases would appear in my mind like a reflex.

"Polly taught me that you can hold [an infinite world] in the palm of your hand, all you need is imagination," he continued. "For me, it wasn't just a game; it was a pocketed universe where anything was possible. That's where I learned that even the tiniest ideas can have a giant impact if they deliver an authentic message."

Calza said that feeling shaped him. "I've built my creative universe on the idea that 'cute' isn't superficial – it's a bold, emotional language of contemporary culture," said the designer, who hopes the toy "resonates with the GCDS community and Polly lovers around the globe with the same emotional intensity it holds for me. Because when nostalgia meets design, it becomes desire."

"Polly Pocket has always used its tiny

worlds to inspire big imagination," said Chris Down, Mattel's chief design officer. "With GCDS, that sense of wonder takes on a bold new form – where fashion, nostalgia and creative freedom converge. Giuliano's vision transforms a beloved icon into something unexpected and delightfully expressive."

Flanking the toy, GCDS also developed a themed ready-to-wear capsule collection including T-shirts and spaghetti-strap dresses printed with images of the doll and nods to the themes of the play set; slogan T-shirts with actual tiny plastic dolls featured along the hem, and a cheeky crochet bikini with the upper reprising Polly Pocket's star-shaped cases.

Approachable gadgets such as themed stickers, hair clips and combs, key chains, sleep masks and little heart-shaped mirrors and pouches round off the offering.

The toy will be priced at 55 euros; items in the capsule collection will cost between 45 euros and 200 euros, while gadgets will mark the entry price to the project starting to retail at 9.99 euros.

The collectible toy and the capsule collection will be available on the GCDS online store starting Wednesday, and launch on the Mattel Creations website on Friday.

Polly Pocket and GCDS fans could additionally buy a selection of pieces at the launch event the two parties will host at the Giardino delle Arti location in Milan on Wednesday. The fashion brand will recreate the play set for the occasion, welcoming guests to partake in an immersive experience replete with interactive installations ranging from gelato carts and a pizzeria to photobooths.

The ties between Calza and Polly Pocket trace back to 2019, when designs such as satin bomber jackets, micro handbags and knits incorporating the brand's original logo paraded on the GCDS fall 2019 runway.

Last year, GCDS teamed with the tiny doll again as part of its "Toys for Adults" fall 2024 show, whose invitations consisted of Polly Pocket dolls wearing GCDS hoodies. Also last year, in celebration of the doll's 35th birthday, GCDS released a limited-edition of its fan favorite acrylic heart clutch in a transparent version filled with all the colorful miniature trinkets, making it available only in 20 pieces each retailing at 550 euros.

The famed plastic doll was initially designed in 1983 by Chris Wiggs, who created the tiny plaything for his daughter, fashioning a dollhouse out of a makeup compact that later became the basis for the original Polly Pocket heart-shaped plastic cases.

After these hit shelves in 1989, Mattel purchased the property in 1998, redesigning Polly Pocket and making her slightly larger. They also introduced clothing, shoes and accessories for the doll – many of them rubber.

Although Polly Pocket toys were discontinued in 2012, Mattel brought them back in 2018, catering to a new generation of children and cashing in on retro nostalgia.

## FASHION

# Sandra Graham's Memorial Service Set

- The New York City fashion publicist was a forerunner in celebrity dressing for red carpet appearances.

BY ROSEMARY FEITELBERG

A memorial service will be held on Sunday for fashion publicist Sandra Graham at the Marble Collegiate Church in New York City.

Graham, 83, died from leukemia and endocrine cancer on May 14 at the Calvary Hospice Center in New York City, according to her daughter Rebecca Cox. Born in Montgomery, W.Va., and raised in Michigan, Graham trained to be a respiratory therapist after graduating from Lincoln Park High School. For 20 years, she worked in that capacity at the Riverside Osteopathic Hospital in Trenton, Mich. As a mother of four, Graham had first gotten a hankering for Manhattan as an avid reader of *The New Yorker*, as well as *Vogue* and *Cosmopolitan*.

Switching career tracks, she worked with small boutiques in Michigan and traveled to New York, California and Texas for buying trips. Graham also teamed up with hairstylists and makeup artists to appear on local cable shows to offer styling advice in the 1970s and 1980s. The entrepreneurial Graham offered to work with women in their homes and also organized gift-giving shopping events that were targeted at men for Valentine's Day and other key holidays. Eventually, that experience would be the catalyst to create Graham Communications.

After she and her first husband Darrell Graham divorced in the 1970s, Graham later relocated to New York City to get further into fashion, where she stayed for more than 40 years.

Cox said, "It was like she had two lives — and each one was lived to the fullest. One was in Michigan with the family, the kids and the respiratory therapy job. She even

got promoted to pulmonary functionalist to work with an innovative new machine. And she had her life in New York."

Her New York career started at the directional specialty store Charivari where other yet-to-be-discovered fashion talents like Marc Jacobs worked the cash register. After a run at the jewelry company Krementz & Co. in the 1980s, she moved on to Halston in its Randolph Duke years. Later at posts at Vivienne Tam and Reem Acra, she became a forerunner to celebrity dressing by linking up with Tina Knowles to dress her daughter Beyoncé Knowles-Carter and Kelly Rowland of Destiny's Child — at a time when few public relations directors were giving Black celebrities their due respect.

Graham also had a hand in actress Minnie Driver's winning look at the Oscars, and Taraji P. Henson's 2006 Oscars look. "In the 1990s, Sandy was at the forefront of what has become an extremely critical part of the fashion machine, which is the work between the stylist, the celebrity and the PR person representing the house. Now we take that for granted," said Constance C. R. White, an award-winning fashion journalist. "Sandy was creating these invaluable relationships with stylists, who very much worked behind-the-scenes."

Concurrently, major designers like Versace, Chanel, Giorgio Armani, Dolce & Gabbana and other major brands were on the rise. Phillip Bloch, Jessica Paster, Elizabeth Saltzman and Arianne Phillips were a few of the stylists that she connected with, White said. "Back then there was this very delicate dance that she did so well, while representing independent designers, who were going up against these big-name, big-wallet brands. Yet, she was able to get these celebrities into these dresses by her understanding of the game, her charisma and the delicate relationships that she had

with stylists and in some cases with the celebrity themselves," White said.

In 2010, Graham lined up the jewelry including a \$1 million diamond necklace for the wedding of Olympic gold medalist Sanya Richards' nuptials to Super Bowl winner Aaron Ross. For her own attire, Graham was known to shop at vintage stores to wear "the funkiest, weirdest things" to see how strangers reacted to get a sense for what intrigued people, Cox said. Another example of that ingenuity stemmed from necessity. As the stylist for a fashion show at Harrods in London that championed size inclusivity and had had the support of Princess Diana prior to her death, Graham and the team were asked to carry on with the project by the royal's brother Charles Spencer after she was killed. Cox said, "My mom had gotten all these clothes together not realizing that the show was for bigger women and not for the smaller women she was used to working with. To improvise, she ended up getting scarves, drapes and fabrics to pull it all off. She was very good at last minute changes so that people could wear it with confidence, in order to sell it."

Although Graham was not intimidated by any stars, there was one exception, her daughter said. While working for Randolph Duke at Halston, she was a little uneasy during a breakfast with John F. Kennedy Jr. that was held in memory of his mother Jackie Onassis, who wore a Roy Halston-designed hat to the 1961 presidential inauguration. She headed up public relations and sales at Halston in the early 1990s.

Graham was very comfortable changing up her own look. Cox said that she sometimes approached the wrong woman in airports, mistakenly thinking that they were her mother. "There was the geometric perm and then the red hair, and then the blonde hair. She tried it all, and she loved every minute of it," Cox said. "She wasn't afraid to try something new to see what kind of reaction she would get. And she had a great personality to go along with it."

Graham's panache for red carpet trends never waned, nor did her all-black dress code change, her daughter said. "She would critique the Oscars. Even when she was close to being near-death and was



Sandra Graham

disoriented, she was talking about designing clothes that she would wear and she was rearranging the room. She would tell the doctors that her hair was too red and that she really needed an updated hairdo," Cox said with a laugh, adding that medical workers routinely asked what Graham's profession had been due to how proper she was.

Graham often gathered friends in her New York City apartment for long conversations over a glass of wine or a meal. The walls were covered with art — much of which she mined from flea markets, Cox said.

Graham orchestrated the plans for her memorial service, which will be held at the same church where she met her second husband Arthur Caliendo, while singing in the gospel choir. Cox said, "She very carefully picked out the music and the pictures. I don't want to change anything."

Graham was predeceased by Caliendo, as well as her parents Michael Thomas and Anna Ruth Johnson and her sister Jane Sherberg. In addition to Cox, Graham is survived by her daughters Catherine Milot, and Jayne Michelle Gorham, her son Matthew Graham and her brother James Michael Johnson.

In lieu of flowers, Graham's family requests that donations be made to the Grey Muzzle Organization at the Marble Collegiate Church.

## OBITUARY

# Franco Moschini, Former Owner of Poltrona Frau



The Poltrona Frau Archibald chairs.

- Moschini, who was the president of the Marche, Italy-based company for more than 50 years, headed the storied brand through a period of international expansion.

BY SOFIA CELESTE

**MILAN** — Franco Moschini, who expanded Poltrona Frau through an age of globalization, making its Archibald and Vanity Fair chairs well-known all over the



Franco Moschini

world, has died at age 91.

"With deep sorrow and immense gratitude, Poltrona Frau announces the passing of Franco Moschini.

For over 50 years, he was the guiding force and the face of the brand. His loss leaves a profound void in the entire world of design, but he also leaves behind an extraordinary legacy of style," Poltrona Frau posted on its LinkedIn on Monday.

Over his long career Moschini forged ties between the brand and design forces like Gio Ponti, Gae Aulenti, Ferdinand Porsche and Michele De Lucchi and saw the brand listed on the Milan Stock Exchange in 2006.

Moschini was a native of the Marche region and was born in Macerata in 1934. Poltrona Frau was founded in Turin, Italy, in 1912 by Renzo Frau. In 1962, it was

bought by the Nazareno Gabrielli group and was moved to Tolentino, a city in Marche and its current home.

One of Moschini's last major projects was Interno Marche, a hotel and cultural initiative that narrates the history of Italian and international design through the last 60 years and beyond. It was built by Moschini's investment vehicle Moschini SpA and unveiled in 2024.

The hotel is situated in Villa Gabrielli, an Art Nouveau-era landmark and spans nearly 39,000 square feet housing 30 rooms, 25 of which are dedicated to 25 different iconic designers throughout history. Five long-stay suites are decorated in the lines, colors and styles of five movements that have shaped the 20th century: Arts and Crafts, Viennese Secession, Radical, Pop and Modernism.

Moschini remained in office until 2014, when Poltrona Frau was acquired by Haworth Lifestyle Group and delisted. Following the acquisition, he remained an institutional figure with the company.

Haworth also owns Cappellini, Cassina, Janus et Cie, Luminaire, Ceccotti Collezione, Karakter, Luxury Living Group, Interni and Zanotta.

In remembrance, Poltrona Frau posted one of Moschini's cherished quotes: "Every life has a place, every place a story. My life is my people, the gentle hills of the Marche region, and the objects that hold and transmit emotions. Like an armchair."

## FASHION

# Paris Fashion Museum Names New Director

● Emilie Hammen took the helm of Palais Galliera on July 10.

BY JOELLE DIDERICH

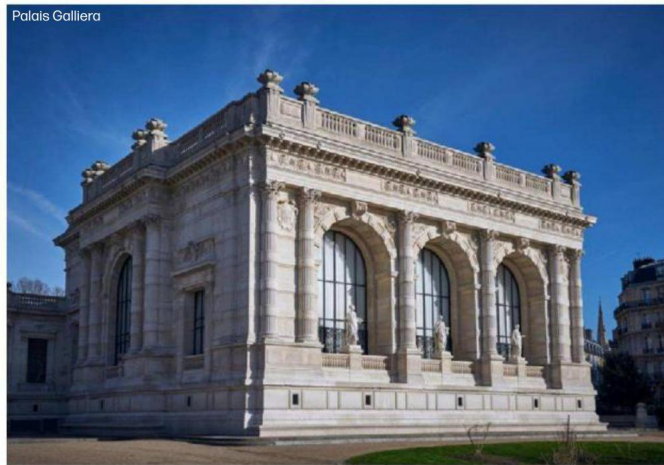
**PARIS** — Palais Galliera has named Emilie Hammen, a respected academic with experience of working for leading luxury houses, its new director.

Hammen took up the post on July 10, succeeding Miren Arzalluz, who was named general director of the Guggenheim Bilbao last November following a seven-year stint at the head of the fashion museum backed by Paris City Hall.

A graduate of the Ecole Duperré and the Institut Français de la Mode, or IFM, Hammen began her career as a textile accessories designer at Louis Vuitton and Marc Jacobs. She earned a PhD in fashion history from the Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne in 2020.

“By closely articulating theory and practice, she has developed an original approach that contributes to the renewal of contemporary readings of fashion history,” the museum said in a statement.

Hammen teaches history and theory of fashion at the Sorbonne, where she helms the first French university research chair dedicated to the history of fashion and its heritage. Since 2014 she has also taught fashion history at the IFM, where she leads the Chanel and Le19M Chair in Fashion Savoir-Faire.



A curator and a scholar, Hammen is the author of the 2023 book “L'idée de mode,” or “The Idea of Fashion” in English, which explores through the analysis of texts, history and visual studies the way that fashion evolved into a discipline in its own right.

A Franco-American national, Hammen collaborated with Dior under Maria Grazia Chiuri's tenure on the research behind each collection, and co-curated the

exhibition last fall marking the centenary of embroiderer Lesage, among others.

“As director of the Palais Galliera, Emilie Hammen will draw on her dual expertise in fashion, both scientific and creative,” the museum said.

“She will continue to develop the museum's exceptional collection through an ambitious and balanced program of exhibitions, anchored in contemporary issues and attractive to

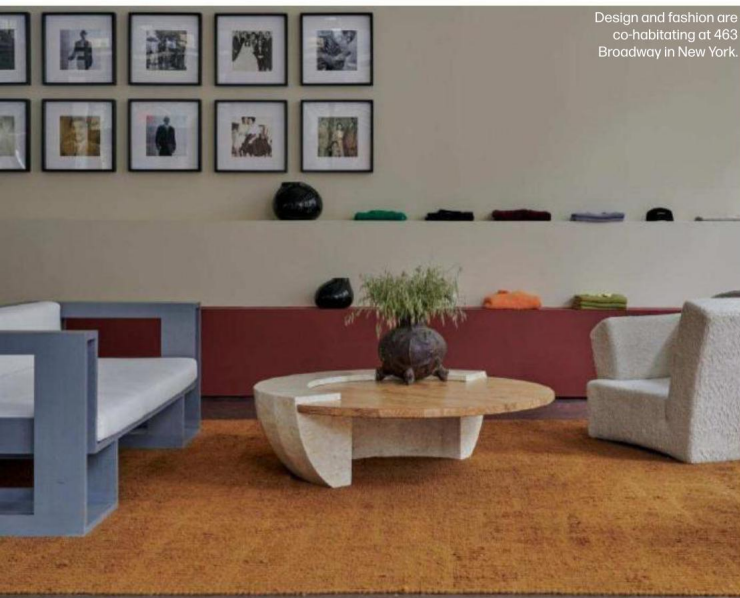


visitors from Paris, France and abroad,” it added.

During her tenure, Arzalluz oversaw a major expansion funded by Chanel that doubled the museum's exhibition area and introduced a permanent collection alongside rotating exhibits.

## BUSINESS

# Áwet New York Opens Experiential Flagship



Design and fashion are co-habiting at 463 Broadway in New York.

● The store at 463 Broadway in New York's SoHo bridges the worlds of fashion and design.

BY LISA LOCKWOOD

**Áwet New York** has opened a flagship at 463 Broadway in New York. The luxury women's and men's fashion brand

designed the space with design house Max ID NY. The shop features bespoke furniture and lighting designed by Max ID NY's founder Maximilian Eicke with spacial and experiential design by My Nguyen and art by Chidy Wayne.

The space was created with the intention to become a vibrant neighborhood hub, blending modern fashion and furniture



Áwet Wolegebriel

design. The 4,000-square-foot store is part of the Jean Nouvel-designed property constructed in 2007. The flagship is positioned in the biggest retail offering within the Mercer Building.

Áwet New York, which threw a cocktail reception to inaugurate the new location last week, is confirmed for the space through year-end.

The shop features Áwet New York's signature silk-infused clothing line, alongside a selection of Max ID NY furniture. Áwet New York's new brand color, a rich rust red, is featured prominently throughout the space. The hue embodies the brand's Eritrean roots, symbolizing heritage, authenticity, comfort and earthiness.

The interior showcases vintage black-and-white photographs from Asmara, Eritrea, dating from the 1950s to the 1970s. These images pay homage to the “Asmarino” style of dressing, which inspires Áwet New York's designs.

“Our vision is to create a space where customers can fully immerse themselves

in the Áwet New York lifestyle — where fashion exists alongside the objects and aesthetics that inspire us. I'm beyond excited for this store to embody what it means to live with Áwet New York. We're also honored to collaborate with Max ID NY, a renowned design house with a 15-year legacy in the Hamptons, whose work will elevate the experience and atmosphere of the space,” said Áwet Wolegebriel, who founded Áwet New York four years ago.

His aim is to bring underrepresented narratives into the spotlight of global fashion.

Alex St. Urbain, chief marketing officer of Áwet New York, said, “Our new store will be a living, breathing space right in the heart of the city's bustling shopping district. Beyond its retail offerings, this new flagship will serve as a dynamic community outlet for fostering cultural engagement, a core tenet of Áwet New York's mission.”

He said the brand will introduce interactive pop-up events, exclusive bespoke clothing drops, intimate supper club dinners and other gatherings. “It's more than just a store; it's a vibrant destination designed to foster connection and authentic experiences,” St. Urbain said.

Max ID NY's Eicke, added, “The location feels like a dream — an architectural gem in a place shaped by the legacy of artists like Donald Judd, whose work has deeply shaped my own path. To be able to add more perspective to this landscape is not just an opportunity, but a deeply personal milestone.”

The space, owned by Blackstone and L3 Capital, was brought to life through the partnership with Áwet New York. Áwet New York previously had a flagship location at 57 Bond Street with RWN Real Estate Partners that opened in 2023 and featured the company's multibrand Livewear concept, an evolving roster of Black, people of color and Indigenous designers. It closed at the end of May.

# WWD Weekend NEW CLASS ISSUE

**YOUR GO-TO GUIDE** for fall's most coveted fashion, handbags, and accessories. From statement bags to essential accents, this issue defines the season's standout style. In beauty, we spotlight the hottest indie and emerging brands, surfacing fresh ideas and innovation across categories. A must-read for trendsetters and tastemakers—position your brand at the center of fall's most influential fashion and beauty conversations.

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EXCLUSIVE

# Tag Heuer Named Official Timekeeper For New York Marathon

● After stepping away in 2016, Tag Heuer is once again the official timekeeper of the TCA New York City marathon. “We are very proud to be back,” Tag Heuer chief marketing officer George Ciz told WWD.

BY THOMAS WALLER

After stepping away in 2016, Tag Heuer is once again partnering with the New York Road Runners as the official timekeeper of the TCA New York City marathon.

“We are very proud to be back,” Tag Heuer chief marketing officer George Ciz told WWD. “The New York City Marathon is such an iconic event, celebrating human resilience and the city itself. We were part of it in 2016 and always felt there was unfinished business. It aligns perfectly with what we stand for as a brand: precision, performance, and those moments of truth when you test your limits. This is our way of honoring the runners’ commitment and ensuring every one of those achievements is measured with absolute accuracy.”

First held on Sept. 13, 1970, the race began with just 127 runners lacing up in Central Park. Only 55 crossed the finish line and the prizes were recycled trophies and inexpensive wristwatches. In 1976, the course expanded beyond Central Park for the first time, evolving into the five-borough endurance challenge known today. That year, runners crossed the Verrazzano-Narrows Bridge and passed through Staten Island, Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx and Manhattan, turning the marathon into a moving celebration of New York City itself.

“The marathon embodies perfect alignment with Tag Heuer’s brand, showcasing the behind purpose of celebrating human resilience, and the runners’ capacity to surpass themselves not only physically but also emotionally by pushing themselves beyond their own limits,” Ciz said.

The new chapter in the partnership sees the LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton-owned timepiece maker create race-day integrations that will include an official countdown clock display at the TCS New York City Marathon Expo; Tag Heuer-branded official race clocks at the race start, on the lead vehicles, along the course, and at the finish line, and marathon champion gift.

“We are all measured by the moments that define us” said Antoine Pin, chief executive officer of Tag Heuer, in a statement. “The TCS New York City Marathon represents a moment of truth, resilience, and shared humanity. It is remarkable to witness a single event bring together so many individuals from all walks of life, united by the common drive to push their limits. Every runner arrives at the start line with a deeply personal story, and each of those stories deserves to be honored with absolute precision.”

Over the decades, the race has welcomed Olympians and Paralympians, world record holders, wheelchair racers, first-time marathoners, and runners from every corner of the globe, becoming a platform for powerful stories. Now drawing more than 50,000 runners annually, cheered on by more than 2 million spectators, and watched by many millions worldwide, the TCS New York City Marathon represents sportsmanship for all.

Tag Heuer’s campaign announcing its partnership with the New York Road Runners.



In recognition of excellence, winners of the professional athlete field will be presented with Tag Heuer Connected – the watchmaker’s smartwatch that merges high-performance sport tracking with luxury design. The style comes with GPS, heart-rate monitoring and VO2 max estimates. “We wanted the winners to receive something that was not just a trophy but something they can actually use to continue their journey,” Ciz explained. “It is a reward for what they have accomplished and a companion for what comes next. We couldn’t think of a better gift for the winners to run with, but also appreciate the duality of using the watch for other moments in their lifestyle.”

A new evolution in the partnership, the brand will also be a part the United Airlines NYC Half and the Abbott Dash to the Finish Line 5K, secondary events that are part of the New York City Marathon family. “It is important for us to be present at the marathon, which is the big stage, but also at these other races that really nurture the running community throughout the

year,” Ciz said. “You will see the same commitment from us, official timing, branded clocks, engaging with runners. It is our way of supporting athletes at every level, whether they are racing 5K or 26.2 miles. It is about being there for the entire journey and creating meaningful conversations with the runners, our clients & helping NYC Marathon with all of its secondary event continue to grow.”

Sports have always been part of Tag Heuer’s DNA, from motorsport to sailing to golf, tennis and long distance running. “It fully represents the pursuit of excellence and the mental strength it takes to get there – a mindset beautifully captured by our new brand campaign ‘Designed to Win.’”

“This partnership is a natural evolution for us. By timing the New York City Marathon, we are connecting with people who represent those values of preparation, resilience, and pushing their limits. We share those defining moments and helping athletes at every level mark them with precision and meaning,” Ciz said.

ACCESSORIES

# Chow Tai Fook Debuts at Bilibili World

● The space showcased the jeweler’s collaboration with Black Myth Wukong, Clot and Chikawa.

BY DENNI HU

Chow Tai Fook Jewelry Group, the Hong Kong jeweler, made an unexpected appearance at Shanghai’s Bilibili World 2025 this weekend, signaling the company’s interest in China’s booming anime, comics and gaming youth culture.

Chow Tai Fook’s booth, which is located within the expo’s core Gaming World section, is designed as an all-white archive storage system punctuated with display windows filled with special products and an interactive multimedia screen, where visitors can enter a lottery to win souvenirs.

“The group’s debut at Bilibili World 2025 underscores the commitment to both product optimization and fostering connections with the next generation of consumers,” the brand said in a press release.

The space included the jeweler’s collaborations with notable anime, comics and gaming intellectual property assets and brands, such as Black Myth Wukong, the popular action adventure game

adapted from Chinese mythology, Edison Chen’s streetwear brand Clot and Japanese anime Chikawa.

Dubbed by Chinese netizens as “Bilibili World’s most expensive ‘goods’ booth,” the Chow Tai Fook showcase also included pieces from its CTF Joise collection,

which spun off of its popular CTF Rouge collection, which is inspired by traditional Chinese motifs and characters. The CTF Rouge collection is expected to generate around \$509.8 million in annual sales for the company.

The expo, which ran from July 11 to 13



A Black Wukong cosplay performer at Chow Tai Fook’s Bilibili World booth.

in Shanghai, attracted more than 300,000 visitors. Launched by the Chinese video streaming and gaming platform Bilibili, the annual showcase included around 700 exhibitors, including Lenovo, Nvidia, Sony, Disney and Popmart, the maker of Labubu bag charms. However, the undisputed star of the expo is gaming – Japanese video game director Hideo Kojima caused an uproar upon arriving at the expo.

According to Chow Tai Fook, the collaborations are a part of the brand’s transformation strategy set in motion in April 2024. Spearheaded by Sonia Cheng, the brand-focused revamp aims to help the jewelry giant stay competitive in China’s increasingly unpredictable market, one where emerging players like Laopu Gold have gained attention by capitalizing on the rising demand for traditionally crafted Chinese jewelry.

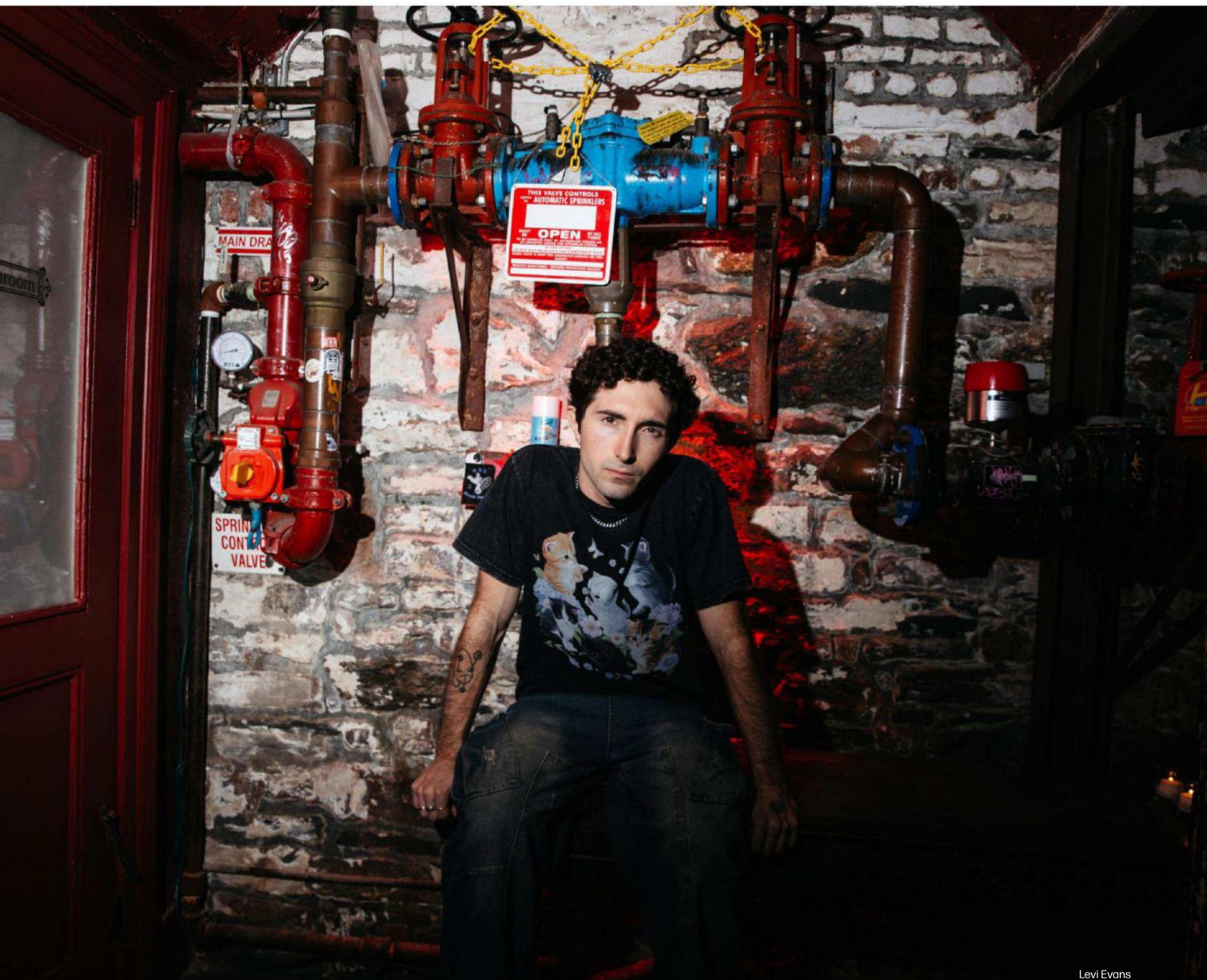
So far, Chow Tai Fook’s culturally savvy collaborations have shown positive returns. The Black Myth Wukong collaboration, which made its debut in January and focused on gold jewelry, has already generated more than 150 million renminbi, or \$20.9 million, in retail sales.

According to the brand, the collection “resonated strongly” with male consumers, which drove demand for self-purchase over gifting. “The proportion of male customers on the group’s e-commerce channels surged from 20 percent to 40 percent,” the brand noted in the press release.



# Levi Evans Makes a Name For Himself in the Music Space

After initially wanting to be an illustrator, the 25-year-old son of U2's The Edge has found his footing as a solo indie artist. BY LEIGH NORDSTROM PHOTOGRAPH BY LEXIE MORELAND



Levi Evans

"My musical journey has been quite eclectic," admits Levi Evans. The 25-year-old, who is now making a name for himself as an indie rock solo artist, initially wanted to be a rapper, then started a group called NOFUN! with some friends in a genre he describes as "someplace between One Direction and Wu-Tang Clan."

"When I first moved to L.A., my one friend that I had out there, all we did was listen to hip-hop music," Evans adds. "I've grown up in a musical household, but my intro into creating my own music was through hip-hop, which was kind of crazy."

His musical journey began much before getting into Tupac and A Tribe Called Quest with friends: Evans is the son of U2 guitarist The Edge, and moved to L.A. from Dublin with his family as a teenager. After years of

releasing music under different names, he's finally emerged as a solo artist with a debut EP called "Head Chatter" last year and a string of singles dropping throughout 2025.

Like many kids of famous parents, Evans initially didn't have interest in what his dad does. Instead of music, growing up he was big into illustration and still does his own cover art and visuals.

"I wanted to be an animator, and I did some animation classes. I was the kid that if you looked at their homework assignment, it was just cover corner to corner, just doodles all over the place, which got me into trouble sometimes," he says. "But, yeah, it wasn't until I was around 15 when I wanted to pursue music."

Evans' writing has gone through its own journey of transformation. Initially

his "alter ego," as he calls it, wrote about partying and a lifestyle that "masked insecurities."

"A big thing was coming to terms with who I was and being like, 'hold on, actually, I am not facing a lot of these things that I should be,'" he says. "And that's why I got more vulnerable and more sensitive with my work. I actually am this vulnerable, sensitive guy that has been doing this fun stuff for a while, but I'm growing up now and I'm actually really looking at myself in the mirror and being like, 'all right, who am I?'"

As a kid, he grew up on a diet of The Beatles, The Kinks and The Strokes, but now finds solo singer-songwriters to be more his speed.

"A big part of my inspiration now

is I don't have a band and a lot of my production is from home. And so I find I get inspired by artists who are similar in that way. People like Dominic Fike, who are sort of that multigenre sort of thing... there's a kid, Oliver Malcolm, who I really like. I think Hozier is a great songwriter. And he's Irish as well."

Last month Evans took the stage at New York's club Berlin, and dropped his latest single "Bar Stool Rose." He plans to keep releasing songs one-off throughout the year, now that he's finally found his sound.

"It's the refining of this focus from this journey and this experimentation to this sound where we really think this is it," he says. "Now, we've worked on it for a year, and it's really homing in and just getting better at what I have been doing."

# Fashion Scoops



An EcoBeautyScore label.

## On the Score Board

L'Oréal Paris, Neutrogena, Nivea Q10 and Eucerin — from L'Oréal, Kenvue and Beiersdorf — are among brands starting to use the EcoBeautyScore online in some European markets, in the wake of greenwashing and mounting consumer demands for transparency. The EcoBeautyScore Association, a nonprofit that collaborates with more than 70 cosmetics and personal care groups, developed the label over three years. The association claims its labeling offers brands and retailers a clear, transparent and consistent way to measure and communicate how their beauty products impact the environment.

The score is based on the European Union's Product Environmental Footprint methodology, and rates products with grades ranging from A to E. The rating takes into account impacts on land, water and air during a product's entire life cycle — including ingredient-sourcing and packaging materials to usage and disposal.

Four product categories — shampoo, conditioner, body wash and face-care products — initially are scored. L'Oréal Paris Age Expertise garners a B score, Neutrogena Anti-Pickel+ Liquid Exfoliant has an A, while Neutrogena Hydro Boost was given a C, for instance.

According to EcoBeautyScore Association, consumers — who increasingly want to shop more sustainably — are expected to spend more than \$150 billion on beauty and personal care products in Europe this year. "However, half of European consumers are skeptical

of brands' sustainability claims, suspecting they don't accurately reflect the real environmental impact of products," the association said in a statement.

"EcoBeautyScore gives the beauty industry the transparency tool it has long been missing," Jean-Baptiste Massignon, managing director of the EcoBeautyScore Association, said in the statement. "For the first time, brands can communicate their environmental impact in a way that is science-based, consistent and easy for consumers to understand. Through a simple-to-use scoring platform, companies have access to a wealth of data about the environmental hot spots of their products, making it accessible for brands of all sizes, no matter their sustainability expertise.

"It's encouraging to see pioneering companies begin publishing their scores; it marks an important milestone of collective openness and accountability across the sector," he continued. "We know this won't happen overnight, but this is how progress starts: with a shared framework, honest data and a commitment to informing better choices for the planet."

The EcoBeautyScore labeling will, after Europe, expand gradually worldwide and span the full range of beauty products. It will appear on product packaging in Europe in late 2025.

In early February 2022, it was announced that beauty companies were forming a united front, called the EcoBeautyScore Consortium, with 36 personal care companies, plus professional associations from four continents taking part. They included L'Oréal, Amorepacific, The Estée

Lauder Cos., LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton, Beiersdorf, Cosmetic Valley, Cosnova, Coty Inc., FEBEA, Henkel, Johnson & Johnson, Natura & Co., Oriflame, Sisley and Unilever. — JENNIFER WEIL

## Singular Talent

Givenchy Beauty on Tuesday appointed acclaimed Chinese actress Zhao Liying as its latest global brand ambassador.

The brand said Zhao will help the brand forge a new chapter in the makeup vertical as she wears an almond terracotta shade in the campaign for the brand's new Le Rouge Velvet Matte lipstick.

Often hailed as the queen of daytime TV drama in China, Zhao achieved household fame for playing Hua Qiangu in "The Journey of Flower," Sheng Minglan in "The Story of Minglan" and Xu Banxia in "Wild Bloom."

Those roles helped her score top accolades at some of China's most prized awards in the television industry: the China TV Drama Flying Awards for Outstanding Actress, Golden Eagle Award for Best Leading Actress and Hundred Flowers Award for Best Supporting Actress, to name a few.

Zhao has been steadily entering the film industry as well. Her portrayal of a hearing-impaired mother in famed director Zhang Yimou's Lunar New Year box office hit "Article 20" last year earned her universal praise on Chinese social media.

This year, she was also a part of the highly anticipated crime drama

Helena Helmersson



film "She's Got No Name," directed by Peter Chan. Zhao plays Xi Lin, a high-society divorcee who is also a playwright, during the Japanese occupation of Shanghai in the 1940s.

As of July 2025, her name has been mentioned 11.2 billion times on China's popular social commerce platform Xiaohongshu, and she has more than 92 million followers on Weibo.

Romain Spitzer, chief executive officer at Givenchy Beauty, said Zhao's "singular talent,

captivating elegance, vibrant energy and powerful femininity all perfectly capture what Givenchy Beauty stands for." — TIANWEI ZHANG

## On Board

Helena Helmersson, the former chief executive officer of the H&M Group, has joined the board of directors at Mango, the Barcelona-based global fashion retailer.

Helmerson, who has more than 20 years of international experience in the fashion industry, was H&M's CEO from 2020 to 2024, heading up sustainability, production and global operations. Helmerson is also chairwoman of the board of Circulose and board member of On Holding AG and Quizrr.

Toni Ruiz, chairman and CEO of Mango, said in a statement, "We are welcoming an exceptional professional whose vast international perspective and extensive experience in the fashion industry will undoubtedly propel us to new heights. Her expertise and visionary approach are invaluable assets that will enrich our leadership team and drive our global ambitions forward."

"Mango is pursuing a very ambitious plan, developing the brand and

assortment, and bringing it to more customers around the world," Helmersson said in a statement. "At the same time, they are part of leading the sustainability practices in the industry. I'm impressed by what they have accomplished and feel very inspired to contribute to the future success."

Members of the Mango board of directors include Ruiz; Jonathan Andic, vice chairman; Daniel López, and Margarita Salvans, both executive directors, and six independent directors: Jordi Canals, professor and chairman of the Center for Corporate Governance at IESE Business School; Jorge Lucaya, founding partner of AZ Capital; Jordi Constançs, former Louis Vuitton CEO; Marc Puig, chairman and CEO of Puig, and Manel Adell, former CEO of Desigual. Eugenia Jover serves as the non-director secretary of the board.

"This strengthening of the board is part of Mango's commitment to the objectives defined in its 2024-26 4E Strategic Plan, focused on reinforcing its differentiated value proposition, its commitment to innovation and sustainability, and driving sales through significant expansion," Mango indicated in its announcement. — DAVID MOJIN ▶

Zhao Liying





Henry Samuel

## Like Mom

Henry Samuel is following in his mother Heidi Klum's footsteps.

The 19-year-old son of Klum and musician Seal has been signed to Next Management to secure opportunities in the fashion space. He will continue to be managed by Jennifer Love.

"I've grown up around fashion and entertainment, but stepping into the world myself is a whole new experience. I'm grateful to Next Management for this opportunity and excited to learn, grow, and find my own voice in the industry," said Samuel Tuesday.

"Henry brings a unique presence and creative energy that feels fresh and entirely his own," said Josh Otten, U.S. director of talent, Next Management. "He's entering the industry to forge his own path, and at Next, we're committed to supporting this through a 360-degree strategy that spans fashion, entertainment, and cultural relevance."

Born in Los Angeles, Samuel has been carving out a name for himself in the fashion and entertainment industries. He made his runway debut last January at the Lena Erziak Haute Couture spring-summer 2025 show, which was part of Paris Fashion Week. He has also appeared on the cover of Hunger Magazine, photographed by British photographer Rankin.

In May, Samuel made a red carpet appearance with Klum at the 2025 American Music Awards at Fontainebleau in Las Vegas wearing a black suit and black button-down shirt. In addition to fashion, Samuel's interests run the gamut from sports to music and film. Klum and Seal, who were married in 2005, divorced in 2014.

— LISA LOCKWOOD

## Bigger Footprint

Von Dutch is taking another step toward becoming a full-scale lifestyle brand with its latest move.

On Tuesday, the Y2K brand exclusively revealed to WWD that it is expanding into the food, beverage and hospitality space with the launch of Von Dutch F&B.

"Von Dutch has always been more than just a fashion brand; it's a symbol of bold individuality, rebellion and creative expression. Expanding into food and beverage was a natural next step in bringing that lifestyle to life in a more tangible...way," said Jack Cheika, chief executive officer of Von Dutch and WSG Brands. "This move allows us to deepen our emotional connection with consumers by meeting them in new moments."

The first launch under Von Dutch F&B will be a line of organic, plant-based mocktails and functional sodas, created in partnership with beverage incubator Flavor House. The initial rollout will also include a range of alcoholic offerings, including vodka, tequila, beer and spiked seltzers.

Following the debut of the mocktails and spirits, the brand will introduce Von Dutch Water, a "premium hydration line that aims to reintroduce the brand to a new generation across convenience stores, bars, restaurants and music festivals," according to Cheika.

To deliver a fully immersive brand experience, Von Dutch F&B will also unveil a series of Von Dutch Cafés.

These "vibrant" café lounge hybrids are set to open in New York and Los Angeles within the next 12 months which, according to Cheika, will transition

from daytime coffee and snack spots to evening destinations offering mocktails, cocktails and live entertainment. The venues will combine wellness-driven snacks, branded beverages and immersive Von Dutch culture in "one cohesive setting."

"Although we're currently finalizing our roll-out strategy, the vision is intentionally expansive," Cheika said. "You'll start to see Von Dutch F&B products across a mix of specialty retailers, mass and convenience channels, as well as in nightclubs, restaurants and hospitality destinations that align with the brand's cultural energy."

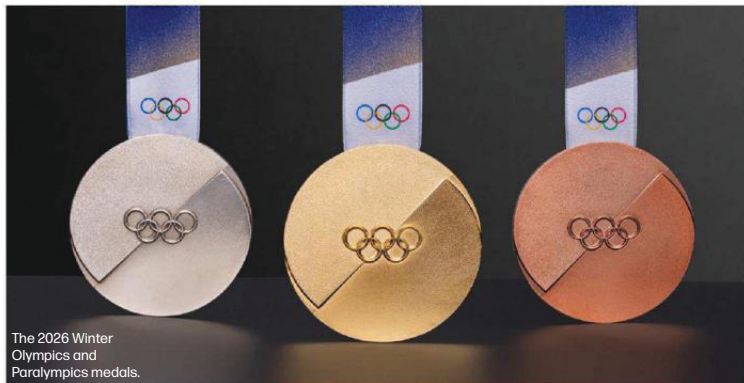
While plans were already underway to revitalize Von Dutch and branch out with new ventures — like Von Dutch F&B and Von Dutch Loves, a Gen Z-focused platform celebrating music, nightlife and underground culture that launched two months ago — Cheika noted that British avant-pop and electronic star Charli XCX played a key role in pushing the brand back into the zeitgeist.

"Charli XCX [whose sixth studio album, 'Brat', features a track titled 'Von Dutch'] was one of many cultural catalysts that have impacted our return to fashion, but the foundation for this revitalization was already in motion," Cheika said. "Our vision has always been to evolve Von Dutch beyond apparel into something that resonates with today's consumer across fashion, music, nightlife, wellness and more. Charli XCX's track undeniably reignited Gen Z's interest and gave us added momentum, but it aligned perfectly with what we were already building:

A brand that honors its rebellious roots while actively shaping culture today." — ANDRÉ CLAUDIO

## Medal Story

The 2026 Winter Olympics and Paralympics medals are here, and they align with



The 2026 Winter Olympics and Paralympics medals.

the overall minimalist bent of the upcoming Games.

Unveiled at Palazzo Balbi in Venice on Tuesday, the medals boast a sleek aesthetic reflecting the country's legacy in avant-garde design.

The Winter Games will be held between Milan and Cortina d'Ampezzo, a luxury winter resort in the Veneto region not distant from Venice. The Olympics will run Feb. 6 to 22, while the Paralympics will run March 6 to 15.

They will mark the third time Italy hosts the Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games, following the 1956 edition, also held in Cortina d'Ampezzo, and Turin in 2006.

The 0.3-inch-thick medals, boasting a diameter of 3.1 inches, feature two halves welded together to symbolize the union of the two cities, said Fondazione Milano Cortina 2026, but also the connection between the athletes and their support network of coaches, teammates, families, and fans, instrumental to their victories. The medals come in a round box with a frosted finish.

"The medals of Milano Cortina 2026 are much more than mere awards: they are the heartbeat of Italy, the essence of a design that moves, the reflection of a dream taking shape. They encapsulate the identity of a country — its creativity, its passion for sports and beauty," said Giovanni Malagò, president of Fondazione Milano

Cortina 2026.

"Each medal, whether Olympic or Paralympic, is a story etched into metal: it speaks of effort, determination, sacrifice, and the hopes of those who have lived to reach the podium. But it also tells the story of a country that believes in the most authentic values of sport. Those who win it will carry with them not just the tribute of victory, but a living fragment of the Italian spirit an eternal symbol of what we are capable of dreaming and achieving together," he added.

The gold, silver and bronze medals were manufactured by the Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, or Italian State Mint, in Rome with a sustainable approach, including the use of non-toxic and recyclable protective finishes, with energy channeled into the process coming entirely from renewable sources.

They were designed by a multidisciplinary team led by Raffaella Paniè, brand, identity and look of the Games director for Milano Cortina 2026.

"We conceived a medal that represents purity and a return to essence. With our medals, we celebrate the strength found in difference: two unique halves that join through the Olympic and Paralympic symbols to deliver a bold and unified message. This concept is also reflected in the surfaces of the medals, where two textures meet

and begin a story written not only by the athletes and Para athletes, but also by those who supported them: coaches, teammates, family members, and fans," Paniè said about the design process.

The 2026 Winter Olympic and Paralympic awards comprise 1,146 gold, silver and bronze medals overall, to be awarded across 195 competitions and events. In addition to the main two locations, the latter will be held also in neighboring cities.

Brands are gradually joining as partners of the Games in a quest to secure a considerable return in terms of image, as well. For example, partners will include the likes of Emporio Armani's EA7 line, Solomon, Omega, P&G, Alibaba, Coca Cola and Samsung, to name a few. Kiko Milano, Technogym and Salesforce also figure as sponsors of the event.

On Tuesday, the design was presented by two Italian athletes: Olympic swimming champion Federica Pellegrini and Paralympic champion Francesca Porcellato, who has won medals across disciplines, including Para athletics, Para cross-country skiing, and Para cycling.

As reported, last April Fondazione Milano Cortina 2026 unveiled the Olympics and Paralympics torch via two simultaneous events at the Triennale Milano museum here and at Expo 2025 in Osaka, Japan.

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Aptly christened "Essential," the minimalist torches were designed by Carlo Ratti Associati, the architectural studio of famed Italian architect and urban planner Carlo Ratti, who is also the curator of the 2025 Venice Biennale of Architecture running through Nov. 23.

The anticipation around the upcoming Milano Cortina 2026 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games is exponentially growing in Italy.

The event promises to enhance Milan's international appeal and Cortina's status as a luxury ski resort destination.

— MARTINO CARRERA

Von Dutch F&B's hard soda.

