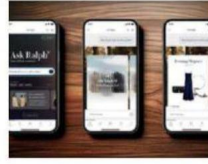


# WWD

Fashion. Beauty. Business.



## Chat With Ralph

Ralph Lauren is unveiling a new AI shopping tool that enables shoppers to "Ask Ralph" questions about styling advice. **Page 3**



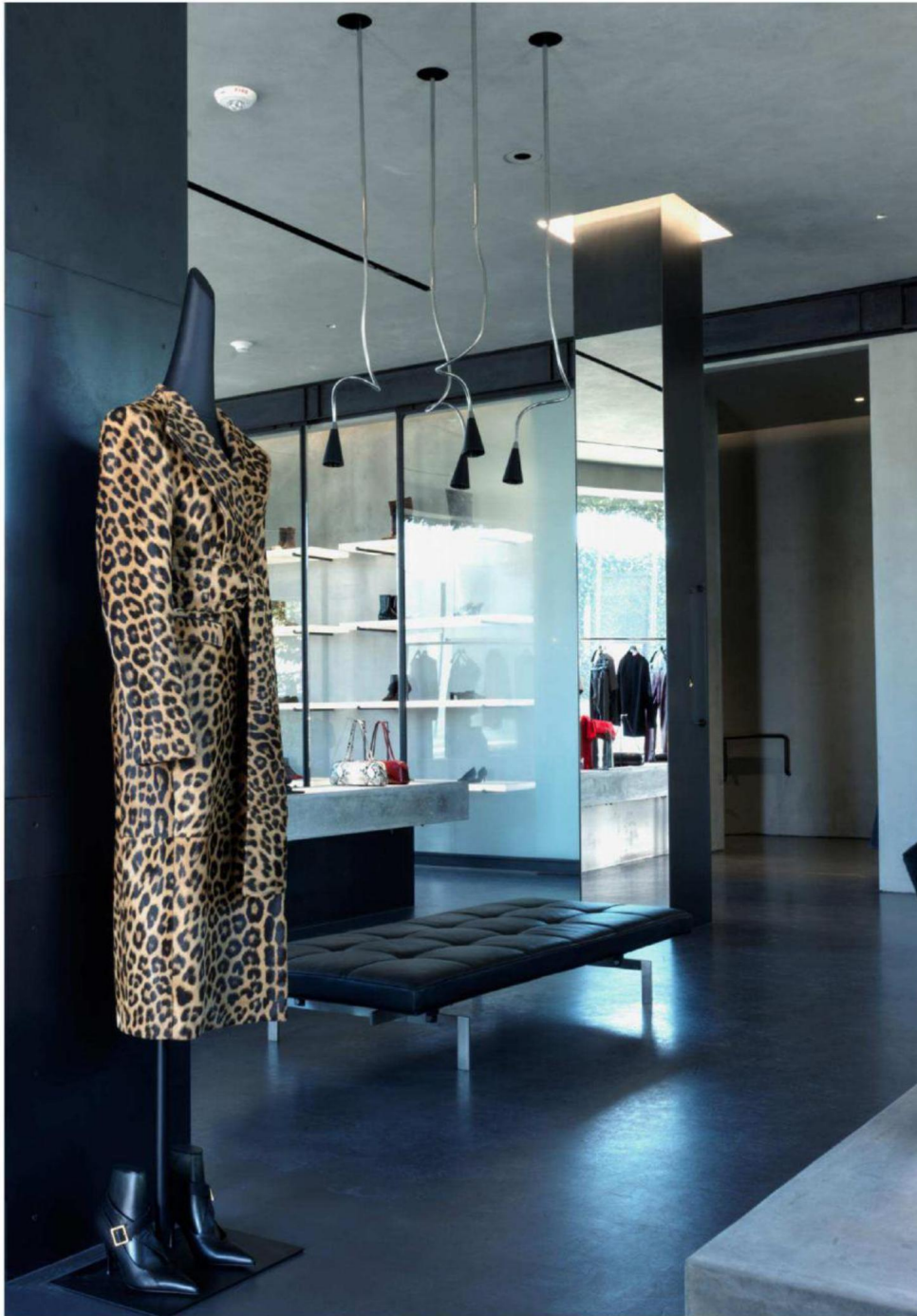
## NYFW Preview

From designers' inspirations to Ones to Watch and a chat with Alejandra Alonso Rojas, a look at the season ahead. **Pages 6 to 14**



## Makeup Makeover?

An analysis of the outlook for the makeup category in the second half, and whether M&A activity is at a standstill. **Page 19**



## Khaite's Special Place

Accessories have become a key sales driver for Khaite – a focus on full display at its 3,525-square-foot Los Angeles flagship in Melrose Place, unveiled on Monday and marking the modern American luxury brand's 10th retail location to date. *For more on the store, see pages 4 and 5.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL BUCKNER

EXCLUSIVE

## François-Henri Pinault on the Changing of the Guard at Kering

- The luxury titan reflected on his transformative and eventful 20 years helping the French luxury group before officially passing the torch to Renault executive Luca de Meo.

BY MILES SOCHA

**PARIS** – "It's not up to the company to adapt to the family that controls it; it's up to the family to adapt to the needs of the company. It's the right time for Kering to have a new CEO, to have a new perspective, a new vision."

So says François-Henri Pinault, who officially passes the chief executive officer torch to former Renault Group executive Luca de Meo this month after navigating the family-controlled conglomerate through multiple transformations, and making it a serious contender in the world of luxury goods.

The French business titan, who maintains the chairman role, sat down with WWD on Monday at Kering headquarters here to discuss his fruitful and eventful 20-year tenure as CEO, the day before shareholders are to ratify de Meo as Pinault's successor, effective Sept. 15.

Wearing a light blue shirt and gray pants, and sounding relaxed and sanguine, Pinault reflected on the key decisions and instincts that led him to shed the retail components of his family's conglomerate – founded in 1962 by his father François – and charge headlong into the high-margin fashion business.

He also spoke excitedly about Kering's future under de Meo, who was spotted in the corridors lugging a backpack and conversing rapidly in Italian with a colleague.

Viewed as a whole, Pinault's tenure at Kering and previous iterations of the French group was a vibrant one, during which many of its marquee fashion houses grew rapidly.

According to Kering reference documents, between 2005 and 2024, revenues were multiplied by 18 at Saint Laurent and II at Bottega Veneta, fueled by daring designer appointments and rapid retail expansion. The group does not break out figures for Balenciaga, but market sources estimate that revenues at the French house grew more than 30 times over the same period.

What's more, under Pinault's leadership, overall luxury revenues were multiplied by six, and profit by a factor of seven, Kering reference documents also show.

To be sure, the last few years have been more challenging, with Gucci rapidly losing momentum – and Kering's debt load swelling after an acquisition spree that included Creed, Maui Jim, a 30 percent stake in Valentino, and large chunks of prime real estate.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26

## THE BOTTOM LINE

# Lululemon Now a 'Show Me' Story With Lost 'Year' of Earnings

- Instead of proving out its U.S. turnaround efforts, the brand's second-quarter earnings last week revealed a big de minimis hit and showed how much work there is to be done.

BY EVAN CLARK

Lululemon Athletica Inc. has been re-rated on Wall Street.

Blame a slow-to-come turnaround in the U.S., worries over China or a much bigger than expected hit from the de minimis switch, but the company is just not on the industry-leading high it once was – it's in good company, yes, but Lululemon's stock is now running with the pack.

Shares of the firm hit a five-year low on Monday, but closed up 0.2 percent to \$168.10, leaving it with a market capitalization of \$19.9 billion. By sheer size, that left Lululemon between Coach-parent Tapestry Inc. (with a market cap of \$21.8 billion) and Ralph Lauren Inc. (\$18.7 billion).

Ten years ago, those three companies were each worth less than \$10 billion to Wall Street. But then Lululemon hit a profitable, double-digit growth spurt under chief executive officer Calvin McDonald, pushing the company's market cap up over \$64 billion in late 2023.

The remarkable earnings and growth behind that breakaway stock performance also earned Lululemon the benefit of the doubt when things went wrong, like the aborted venture into home fitness technology with the Mirror acquisition. And analysts leaned toward patience when McDonald laid out some merchandising course corrections in its flagging U.S.



business earlier this year.

But now the market needs proof as U.S. comparable sales fell 3 percent in constant dollars in the second quarter and have been flat or down for the last six quarters.

Sharon Zackfia, an analyst at William Blair, downgraded the stock to Market Perform due to “the combined impact of uncertainty on the timing of a U.S. sales turnaround, a much greater-than-expected impact from tariffs given the discontinuation of the de minimis provision, and emerging signs of macro noise in China.”

“As a result, we now essentially project Lululemon will lose a year of earnings, with our new 2026 EPS estimate of \$14.18 below our incoming 2025 EPS estimate of \$14.41,” Zackfia said. “Ultimately, this is now a 2026 show-me story when new product hits in the spring, and we see little in the way of catalysts in the interim.”

The Vancouver-based company said

it would take a \$240 million hit to profit outlook this year due to trade war tariffs and the early removal of the de minimis exemption.

The tariffs are hitting everybody. But the de minimis change, adding tariffs to shipments valued under \$800, came as a surprise. (The so-called loophole was used heavily by Shein and Temu, but was less discussed when it came to higher-end brands, although Tapestry recently said the change would cost it \$53 million this fiscal year).

Two-thirds of Lululemon's orders are fulfilled through Canada and therefore were coming in with no duty payments.

“This is a far higher percentage than we anticipated,” said John Kernan, an analyst at TD Securities. “Lululemon maintains ample DC and ship-from-store capacity in the U.S., but the financial incentive was huge – [an over] 250 basis

point unsustainable annual benefit to gross margin. We are disappointed we missed this and that the loophole was being used to this extent without more disclosure on risk.”

Kernan said a “strategic pivot” that went beyond the planned changes to the casual social and lounge product was needed as the company enters “a new phase.”

McDonald knows the brand's in a new place.

“Lululemon has been in a period of hyper growth for several years, more than tripling our revenue in just six years, and we have successfully managed through a number of market shifts,” the CEO told analysts last week. “We are facing yet another shift today within the industry related to tariffs and the cost of doing business. The increased rates and removal of the provision have played a large part in our guidance reduction for the year as we navigate current market dynamics.”

And he has some backers still even in a sea of analyst downgrade.

Needham's Tom Nikic stuck with his Buy rating for Lululemon and said “we hope that Q2 was a ‘clear the deck’ event, but we expect it to take time before investors warm up to this name again.”

And CFRA Research's Zachary Warring, analyst from CFRA Research, kept his Strong Buy on the company even though he described management as “pessimistic.”

“Shares trade around 13-times consensus EPS estimates for the next 12 months, well below historical and peer multiples,” Warring said. “We are well aware of the product issues and tariff headwinds; however, we continue to believe significant value remains in shares for patient investors.”

The problem for Lululemon is that patience isn't all that common a virtue in the investment set.

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

## BUSINESS

# Tom Mendenhall Named CEO of Stella McCartney



Stella McCartney

- Tom Ford and Ralph Lauren veteran Tom Mendenhall will take over from Amandine Ohayon, who is stepping down after two years running the newly independent company.

BY SAMANTHA CONTI

LONDON – Tom Mendenhall is taking over as chief executive officer of Stella McCartney, stepping into the role held by Amandine Ohayon, who is leaving the company after almost two years.

Mendenhall was formerly brand president of Polo and Double RL at Ralph Lauren and spent more than 18 years working with Tom Ford and Domenico De Sole as executive vice president, chief operating officer at Tom Ford, and worldwide director of merchandising at Gucci.

Last year, he opened Jamestown Hudson with his partner James Scully, who will continue to manage that business.

McCartney, who was once in business with Gucci Group, and who worked closely with Ford and De Sole in the years after launching her brand, said Mendenhall's “extensive experience in all facets of luxury fashion will be invaluable in propelling the business forward and building a strong future. I know that Tom

shares my vision for the brand and the ethical values that are part of our DNA.”

Mendenhall described Stella McCartney as “a powerful brand, led by a powerful and compassionate woman, and I am honored to now be able to partner with her and her incredible team around the world for the next phase of the company's development.”

In a statement, McCartney and the board said they were grateful to Ohayon for her “entrepreneurial spirit, accomplishments and steady leadership through the separation from LVMH. We are deeply appreciative of her efforts, and Amandine will continue to advise us in this time of leadership transition.”

McCartney said: “I want to take this opportunity to thank Amandine for her great work and for the successes we shared together. I wish her the very best in her future projects.”

Ohayon took over as CEO in late 2023, replacing Gabriele Maggio. Before joining, she served as CEO of Pronovias, and had spent much of her career in the beauty industry, working with brands including YSL Beauty and Armani Beauty.

She said the timing “now feels right for me to begin a new chapter. I will always remain a passionate supporter of Stella's mission, and the incredible teams that are redefining sustainable luxury. I wish Tom all the success.”

Stella McCartney's company announced in January that it was buying back the minority stake in the brand held by LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton, “after more than five years of fruitful collaboration.”

The group described the move as “a new chapter for Stella McCartney, after working closely with LVMH to strengthen the fundamentals and governance of the house.”

Founded in 2001, Stella McCartney has 36 directly owned stores and 11 franchise stores worldwide.

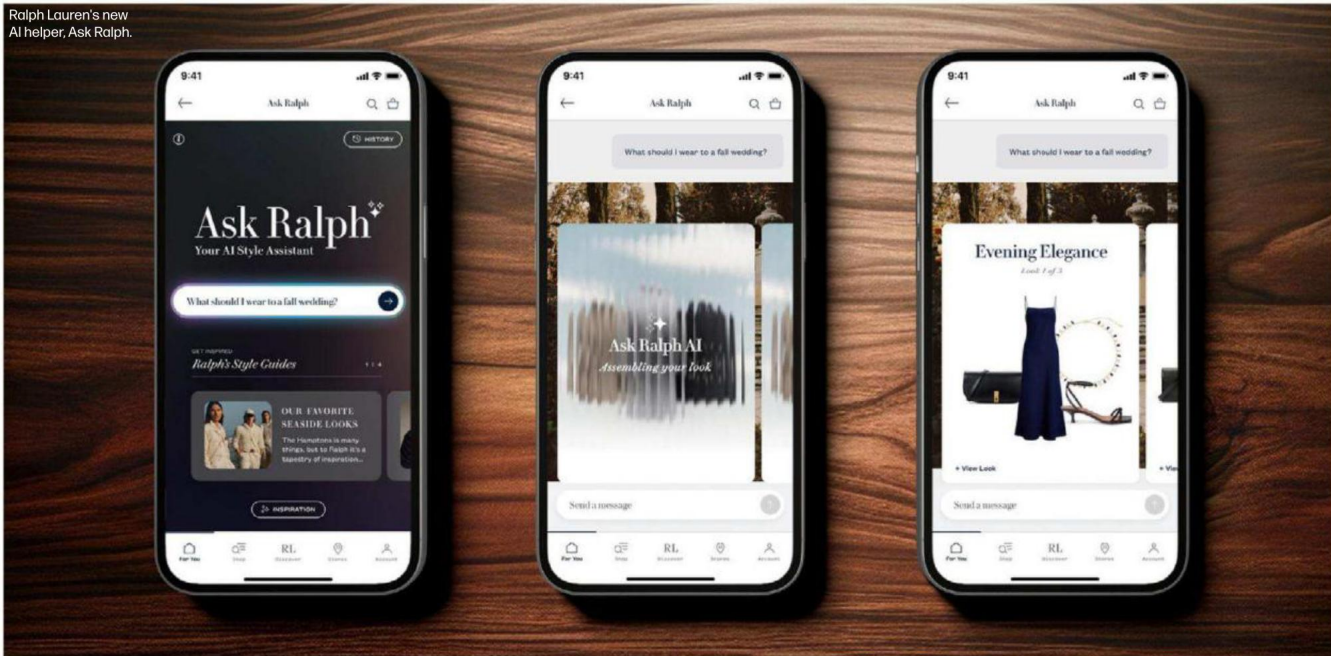


Amandine Ohayon

BUSINESS

# Ralph Lauren's Newest Salesperson? The AI-powered Ask Ralph

Ralph Lauren's new AI helper, Ask Ralph.



- The brand is launching an AI-powered feature on its app that delivers shoppable style advice.

BY EVAN CLARK

**Just how stylish is the ghost in the machine?** Fashion might be just about to find out.

When Ralph Lauren took to the web 25 years ago, it was one of the first designer brands to make a big push online, looking to carve out its own bit of digital Americana early.

That launch included Ask Ralph, featuring 100 commonly asked fashion questions answered by the designer himself and his team.

Now there's a new high-tech member of that team ready to weigh in on just what Ralph Lauren fashion is as Ask Ralph relaunches Tuesday as an artificially intelligent shopping experience on the brand's app.

"The most difficult thing for any company is to find the right technology to help you tell your story," said David Lauren, the company's chief branding and innovation officer, in an interview.

"Over 25 years we've explored a lot of different technologies. Some of them have been totally groundbreaking and have helped to change our industry and some of them disappear," he said. "This feels like a very obvious opportunity. Not just because everybody's talking about it, but because it has an ability to learn with us."

There's plenty to learn in the world of Ralph Lauren and already the AI, which has been under development for a year, has absorbed a lot, from the designer's personal take on style to how that philosophy has been absorbed by his team and how it all has translated into the brand's DNA.

"[AI] has the ability to sort of absorb our incredible archive as well as the words," Lauren said. "We use the pictures and our philosophy and put it all together

and make sense of it."

Powered by Microsoft Azure OpenAI Service, the chat-based service uses natural language processing to serve up shoppable visual laydowns of complete outfits.

So a query on just what to wear to a wedding in Miami in December will pull up a carousel of options that can be added to one's cart and bought immediately.

In a preview test at the brand's Prince Street store in Manhattan's SoHo shopping district, the service seemed, like Ralph Lauren in general, very buttoned up. The experience felt commercially oriented, offering up looks that can be bought at the moment and avoiding questions that might send it off course.

Asked how to dress in the style of Tommy Hilfinger or if President Donald Trump wore Polo, the technology demurred.

AI's launch into the world has led to any number of slip-ups and embarrassing hallucinations, but Ask Ralph does not seem primed to make any big fashion faux pas.

"We're not here to try to be clever with

it," Lauren said. "Our aim was to pull from a live inventory of what's on the site right now. There is a whole section that pulls from the archive and the history and gives you the philosophy, but the piece that I think is going to be most valuable to customers is sort of what's really shoppable."

This is the first time the brand has had a consumer-facing AI tool. Lauren said the future was still wide open and that Ask Ralph could eventually become voice-activated, integrate the Collection business or be added to other platforms.

"It's going to become more and more valuable quickly," Lauren said. "We know that everybody's talking about artificial intelligence, but we wanted to explore it, use it, and learn. We're confident that this is going to be a valuable tool, but we also recognize that what it is right now is the very beginning."

Generative AI is almost universally seen as a business and cultural game changer — potentially on the order of the iPhone or the internet itself — but there is still

little consensus on just what the mid-term impact will be, other than big.

McKinsey & Co. estimated that generative AI will add \$150 billion to \$275 billion to fashion's operating profits by 2030.

That would include supply chain and other back office efficiencies, changes to the workforce and new ways to connect with consumers, like the Ask Ralph feature.

Just what AI means to the future of fashion might be the big question in the industry, but it's too big a question to answer right from the start, so Ralph Lauren is just leaning in for now.

"Everybody walks in and they want, 'How big can it be? How fast can it grow?'" Lauren said. "That's not really how we're doing this. For us, this is very incremental. We have key learnings we're trying to measure for every week."

"What we know is that we have the tool that's going to help us get to the place we want to get to, and that over the next year it's going to become so much smarter that by the end of this year you'll be saying 'Ralph Lauren led again.'"

Lauren is reaching for the stars, but not promising the moon.

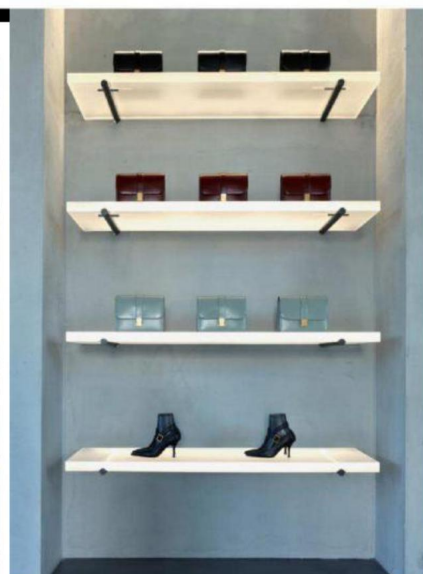
"Perfectionism is important in fashion, but it can also stop you from taking risks and moving forward," Lauren said. "I think we know that there's a good marriage here, but it's going to have to grow together to get stronger and better."

"Everybody's racing. Don't. Just stop racing. Set your own pace, understand who you are and move carefully to understand how your brand is best married to technology. And don't rush to keep up with: 'I have to change, I have to evolve. It has to be the hottest new thing.' That's what's killed a lot of fashion."

"What makes good brands work is that they understand who they are and they know how to evolve carefully with the right pace that's right for their brand," Lauren said. "We've done that over 60 years. Ralph Lauren today is not the same company as it was when it started, or else we would just be a tie."

David Lauren





Here, right and below:  
A look inside Khaite's  
L.A. flagship at 8409  
Melrose Avenue.

EXCLUSIVE

## Inside Khaite's L.A. Flagship

● Accessories have become a key sales driver for the American luxury brand – and that focus is on full display in the store.

BY RYMA CHIKHOUNE  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL BUCKNER

**Khaite has opened** doors in Los Angeles. “It was inevitable,” said founder and designer Catherine Holstein. “But we were always looking for the right space.”

When the chance arose to secure 8409 Melrose Avenue – a landmark storefront that housed Marc Jacobs for years before Gucci, on the edge of the street’s triangular corner – she knew instantly it was the right fit.

“It was just a dream come true,” Holstein went on. “Honestly, if you told me that this would be our L.A. store, even a year ago, I never would have believed you. When I heard that this opportunity was on the horizon and that it was a possibility, I clamored down that we absolutely had to have it, would not take ‘no’ for an answer. And we got it. There were other people that were in the running. I was over the moon about it. I don’t feel totally worthy, honestly, to follow such big shoes, given that it was Marc Jacobs and then Gucci. But we’re really excited.”

The 3,525-square-foot store, unveiled on Monday, was designed by her husband,

architect and actor Griffin Frazen, who is behind all of Khaite’s retail spaces. The sales floor spans 1,475 square feet, with 1,550 square feet for back-of-house operations, plus an additional 500 square feet for three fitting rooms and other areas.

“I think he’s a genius,” Holstein said of Frazen. “I really give him full creative control and trust his vision.”

“It’s our major, flagship-level store outside of New York on the West Coast,” Frazen said of the undertaking. He’s been working with the same vendors and collaborators locally in New York, where the couple is based, but also incorporated materials and partners from California for the project.

“I’m pursuing something with the stores kind of in parallel to what she’s doing with the collections,” he continued. “Because of her comfort level and confidence with my work and with the stores, we have this interesting parallel way of working where we’re both investigating ideas through different mediums. I definitely keep her informed, but she likes to be surprised.”

It’s Khaite’s second location in California and 10th total, after two openings in New York – its first on Mercer Street in SoHo, unveiled in February 2023, then Madison Avenue; Dallas, and Costa Mesa, Calif. at South Coast Plaza. Internationally, the brand operates five shops in Seoul. The L.A. flagship comes as Khaite continues

to broaden its retail footprint beyond wholesale partners, following investment from private equity firm Stripes and bringing on Brigitte Kleine, a Tory Burch veteran, as chief executive officer in 2023.

“L.A. was always on our radar screen, because it is our second-largest market after New York. But it really takes time to find the right location,” said Kleine. “Good things come to those who wait, because we were so fortunate to find this location.”

Born in 2016, the modern American luxury brand debuted with denim, leather and cashmere before expanding with handbags, footwear and accessories, while gaining a cult following along the way. Holstein, 42 and a mom of two, has since won two consecutive CFDA Women’s Designer of the Year awards, with Khaite reportedly surpassing \$100 million in sales and becoming a fixture at New York Fashion Week.

“I suffer from imposter syndrome a little bit,” Holstein said of the excitement surrounding Khaite’s L.A. opening. (Khaite isn’t her first entrepreneurial endeavor; after dropping out of Parsons School of Design, she launched a line in 2006, which Barneys New York carried before the brand closed. She then gained experience in luxury and commercial design through roles at Vera Wang and Gap, and later launched Khaite with the support of friends and backing of Assembled Brands.)



“I wouldn’t have guessed that the reaction from the general public would have been as strong – I mean, I thank god it is, because I really did this from a business perspective and raised the capital, and have gone in and out of investment rounds, and there’s that whole thing, that whole aspect of it,” she continued. “I believed in it, and people bought into that belief.” ▶

Here, right and below: A look inside Khaite's L.A. flagship at 8409 Melrose Avenue.



She designs to serve the modern woman, focusing on quality and fit. "I'm a big believer that your best marketing tool is good product," she said. "There's a core instinct, gut feeling when I see the products. I approve all products, and I work on all products. There's nothing that doesn't touch my hands in the company, and I know right away if it's right or wrong."

The L.A. store emphasizes accessories, a key sales driver for the brand. Prices in bags range from \$880 for natural python-embossed leather to \$48,000 for alligator leather, while footwear is between \$690 for flat sandals in leather to \$2,800 for over-the-knee boots in glossy calfskin.

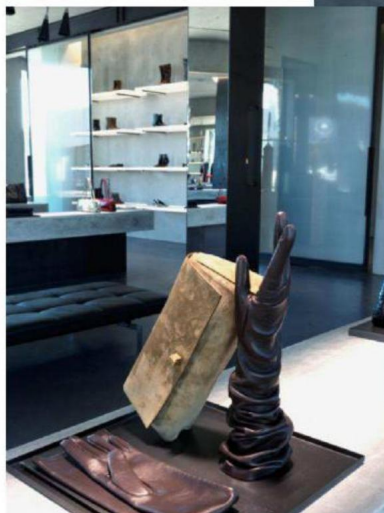
"Shoes, particularly, is our fastest growing category," said Holstein. "Belts have been a huge growth trajectory for us. Sunglasses, with our collaboration with Oliver Peoples, has really grown. So that's really where the business is headed. Right now, it's a 50-50, split, but we only launched accessories in 2019 with one boot, so it's really caught up quite fast to the rest of the business. We're expecting that growth to exceed 50 percent over the next three years, and that's what the majority of our customers really come to us for, that, cashmere, leather. We have a big leather business and a lot of denim as well."

They're still learning who that customer is in L.A., according to Kleine.

"Truthfully, we're going to know more as we build a more intimate relationship with our clients. That's the beauty of retail, is that you can really have a more intimate relationship with your clients, really understand what they want, have more interaction," said Kleine, adding, "One of the amazing things about the brand, something I think is a real positive and just speaks to the diversity of the brand, is that we have the Gen Z customer, we have the Millennial customer, and we have the Gen X customer. So, we really have all three shopping the brand and shopping our collections."

The aspirational customer often starts with accessories, Kleine said, before moving into ready-to-wear over time. She emphasizes that Khaite already has an existing community of customers, particularly stylists and personal shoppers, in L.A.: "So our initial learnings for L.A. are that we have that cross-generational customer. But now we really want to build a closer relationship with the clients."

The new store reflects the brand's design DNA, maintaining consistency across all locations while giving each boutique its own distinct character. In L.A., glass is the defining element, inspired by the space's existing large windows. But at Khaite, that light is controlled; the windows are tinted



to manage both natural light and fixtures.

Reflective and semi-transparent surfaces are found throughout the store, with Frazen highlighting shelving that illuminates a lineup of handbags and footwear on display. "They're resin, and they're lit internally, so they glow," he explained of the shelves.

Also experimenting with light, large glass panels separate the main floor from the back area, which includes a small

lounge and the fitting rooms.

The panels themselves serve as a display tool, concealing or revealing accessories.

"It's a ceramic-printed gradient," Frazen continued. "A portion of it is completely clear and transparent, and then the gradient is sort of translucent and frosted, so that the product starts to dissolve, soften. As you move it, you see things come into focus."

The interior balances industrial severity with softness. A leather bench anchors the center of the store, surrounded by a carefully curated mix of vintage finds and newer pieces sourced from galleries. The details speak to Holstein's attraction toward the dark and unusual. Accessories are staged unexpectedly: a belt styled as a choker on a mannequin, hands holding up a bag. Fitting rooms introduce a layer of surprise, with black carpet and rubber walls.

As in other stores, the material mix features concrete, plaster and steel, offering a neutral backdrop for the luxury and exotic goods, with pops of red, snakeskin and leopard. The floor is cement, and two solid concrete displays line the store. "They were poured here as one single piece," said Frazen.

The L.A. store is "a little bit slicker, for a lack of a better word, which I also feel like suits L.A.," added Frazen, who was born and raised in the city.

Outside, the facade is preserved.

"We wanted to keep the ivy, the greenery," he said. "The ivy has been here for a long time, and is maintained very well."

The front entry is framed by an elongated steel structure. "This kind of steel portal, this extended door frame, almost a hallway," he said. "The intention was that it looked like it was just kind of inserted into the ivy facade."

For Frazen, the stores "serve to test new ideas. And some of them we love and we carry on, or we develop further. Others, they remain specific to a location."

Looking forward, Khaite's growth strategy is deliberate, prioritizing long-term stability over rapid expansion, said Kleine.

"One of the things that we're all aligned on is that in order to build a business for the long term, the growth has to be measured and very considered," she said. "So, while we're all very excited about growth, we're also very careful about not seeking growth at all costs. For example, our rollout plan — we will be opportunistic in looking at opening stores, but our growth plan for retail stores right now is opening one store a year. As we establish ourselves and learn more about what works and what doesn't work, we can amend that plan. But we want to make sure that every decision we make is about the long-term health of Khaite and its future."

What's next? Miami, it seems.

When the topic of Holstein's recent trip to the vibrant Florida city came up, Kleine teased, "Miami seems like a great next city, doesn't it? We're feeling good about Miami." ■

# NEW YORK

## *Inspirations*

A patriotic attitude will filter through a few designers' collections this season, though

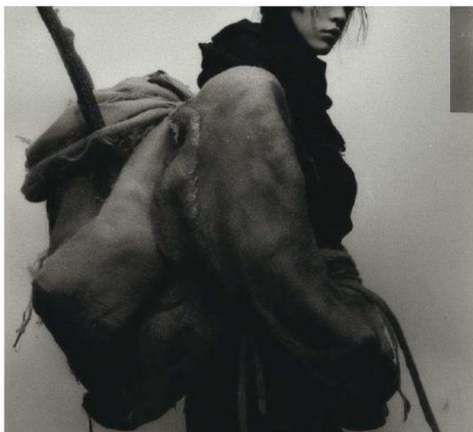
Elena Velez's lack thereof could lead to some form of political protest. Nicholas Aburn, for one, used New York City as the starting point for his Area debut, but Michael Kors? He's fled to Sicily for some R&R on the island of Pantelleria.

BY ARI STARK

**Michael Kors**  
"Earthy elegance."  
— Michael Kors



**EARTHY ELEGANCE**



### **Elena Velez**

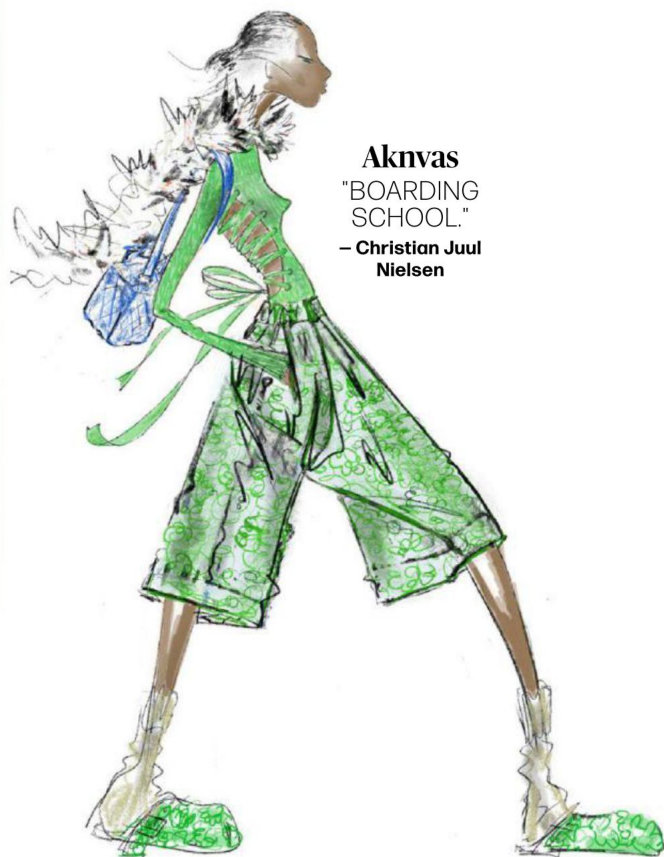
"Passage to a new land of milk and honey requires blood sacrifice; the river only parts for the faithful. The cost of this freedom is in letting yourself fall through the widening cracks of the American dream."

— Elena Velez

PERFECTION IS  
 ACHIEVED, NOT  
 WHEN THERE IS  
 NOTHING MORE TO  
 ADD, BUT WHEN  
 THERE IS NOTHING  
 LEFT TO TAKE AWAY.

ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPÉRY

**Bevza**  
 "The Importance of Imperfection."  
 – Svitlana Bevza



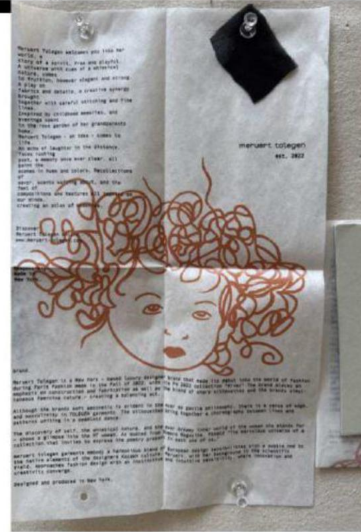
**Jane Wade**  
 "The Fulfillment" descends to the ground floor of Jane Wade Inc., shifting focus from the executive suite to the warehouse floor."  
 – Jane Wade



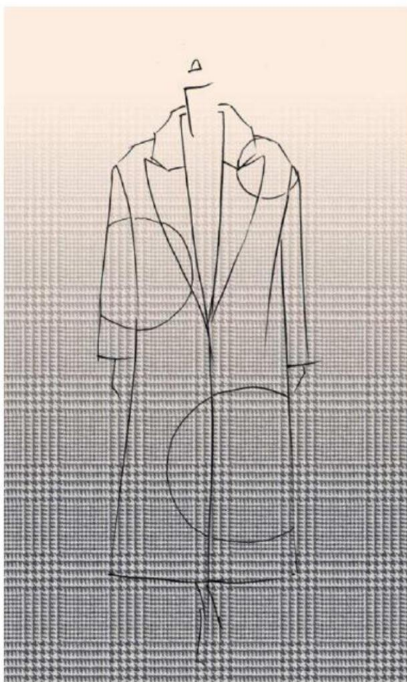
**Alice + Olivia**  
 "The American Woman."  
 – Stacey Bendet



**Grace Ling**  
 "The future is  
 in the past."  
 — Grace Ling



**Meruert Tolegen**  
 "Renewed  
 beginnings  
 and airy  
 shapes."  
 — Meruert  
 Tolegen



**Ashlyn**  
 "Vessels of  
 memory –  
 past, present  
 and future."  
 — Ashlynn Park

**Bach Mai**  
 "Undone glamour."  
 — Bach Mai



**Gabe Gordon**  
 "Inspired by Madonna's  
 'Erotica' and David  
 Cronenberg's 'Crash,'  
 spring 2026 explores  
 the collisions of sex,  
 queerness, love, death  
 and violence."  
 — Gabe Gordon

# NEW YORK FASHION WEEK PREVIEW



### Christian Siriano

"A childhood favorite of mine that's as fun to wear as it is to drink."

— Christian Siriano

### Lii

"Fragments of memory in real time."

— Zane Li

Doug Wheeler

Day Night Day



### Area

"The banality and extremeness of New York, optimism when everything's a mess, how to feel as excited about going out in the morning as you do at night."

— Nicholas Aburn



### Dennis Basso

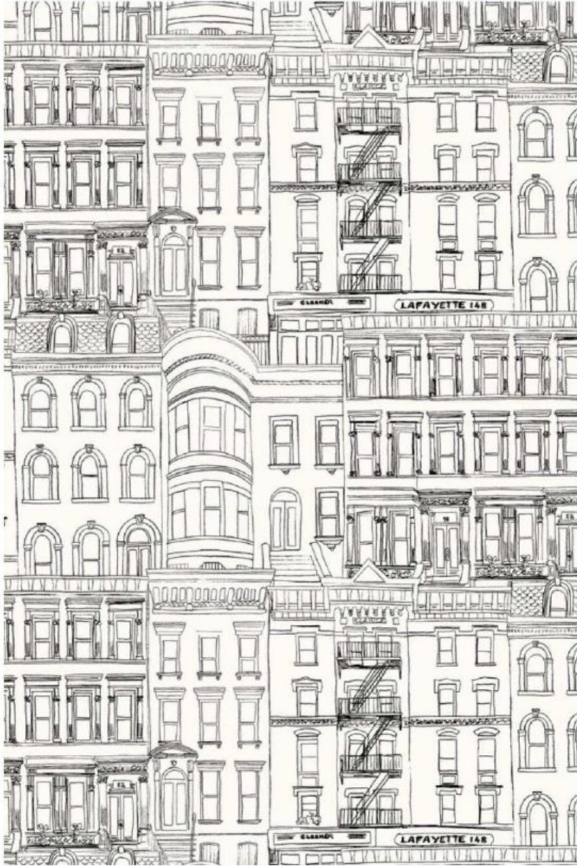
"Tailored femininity...representing women in power with a soft touch..."

— Dennis Basso

## Lafayette 148

"The beauty of Manhattan in the springtime and the uniform of the Lafayette 148 women who inhabit it."

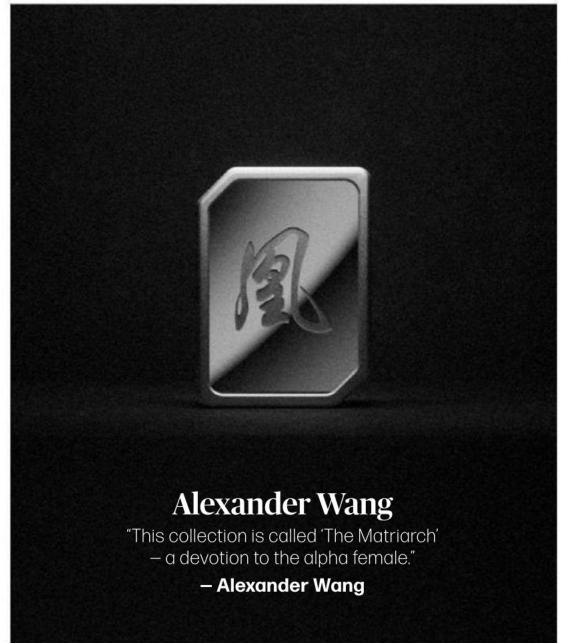
— Emily Smith



## Rachel Comey

"I'm constantly inspired — and usually humbled — by the dynamic, complex women who choose to shop and work with us."

— Rachel Comey



## Alexander Wang

"This collection is called 'The Matriarch' — a devotion to the alpha female."

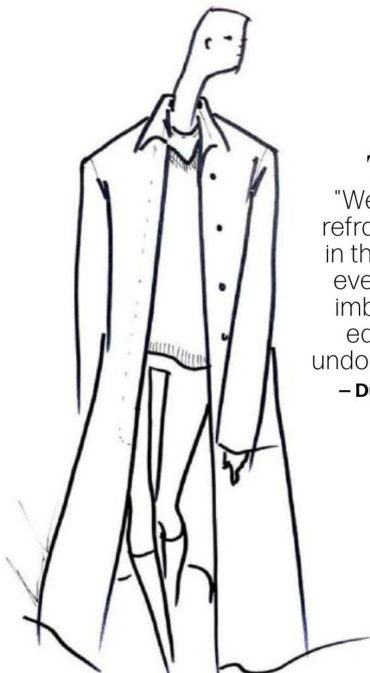
— Alexander Wang



## Theophilio

"'RIDDIM' is about honoring the heartbeat of the Caribbean — the sound systems, the dancehall and the communities that shaped me."

— Edwin Thompson



## Theory

"We wanted to reframe tailoring in the context of everyday life — imbuing it with ease and an undone elegance."

— Dushane Noble

## FASHION

# Alejandra Alonso Rojas Doubles Down on Sustainability



Alejandra Alonso Rojas

● Ahead of her NYFW spring 2026 presentation, Alejandra Alonso Rojas unveils her brand's evolution and commitment to sustainable, ethical fashion from beginning to end.

BY EMILY MERCER

PHOTOGRAPH BY LEXIE MORELAND

During February's New York Fashion Week, designer Alejandra Alonso Rojas told WWD that she was switching things up and pivoting to release two cohesive collections a year in order to reflect her brand's ongoing values of thoughtful craft and slow fashion. Fall 2025, a combination of her pre-season and mainline collections, was a direct result of that decision.

"It's still growth [for the brand], but in an opposite way that helps save the planet, in a way," Alonso Rojas said at the time, noting she had been researching more sustainable mill partners and fabrications had less environmental impact.

Now Alonso Rojas is set to reveal her follow-up spring 2026 collection on

Wednesday – a sustainable collection in partnership with Amazon's Climate Pledge.

During an exclusive interview with WWD, the Spanish designer explained it marks the next chapter in her brand's evolution and upholds her commitment to sustainable, ethical fashion from beginning to end. Although the brand has now joined the Amazon and Global Optimism Climate Pledge and is a member of the United Nations Fashion and Lifestyle Network.

"When I started the brand in 2017, I was a very different person and through the years, I've evolved into caring about what I'm putting in my stomach, about I'm putting into my skin," Alonso Rojas said.

"Instead of being disappointed by everything that's happening on the planet, I thought I really needed to trust my

intuition and listen to myself," she said of questioning the impact she wants to make with her brand. "I'm not just making clothes for the sake of making clothes. I've always hated over producing. I always hate doing crazy sales. I hate the landfills. I've always really believed in a way more sustainable way of inheriting pieces and taking care of special pieces as treasures. I don't feel they're just for one season, but are pieces that you can always wear. I'm always focusing on a more timeless approach, rather than trend."

Thinking about her sustainable lifestyle led to her doing a "huge detox" of her body spanning from looking into the labels of food to avoid chemicals and heavy metals and consciously eating meat that's traceable to wearing sustainable makeup and skin care. This also naturally led to thinking more deeply about the clothes she puts on her body, and that she designs for the global woman.

"When hard times come around, you can either be scared or continue with your doing. I feel like it was an inflection moment for me where I knew that we had spoken about [sustainable practices], and internally, we knew we were doing a lot of that, but it's something that we hadn't made a statement about. I thought it was really important that if we were gonna commit to it, we had to do it fully," she said.

During the initial stage of designing her spring 2026 collection, Alonso Rojas told her team, "We're moving into a full sustainable model, where every fabric is going to be sustainable and every mill that we're working with has to be certified."

Although it was a big pivot moment, it came naturally. Alonso Rojas is now working with six certified mills that share her commitment to human dignity and leadership in environmental and social responsibility, craftsmanship and sustainability. These mills include Kaneyo and Hasegawa in Japan, Jean Bracq in France, Soktas in Turkey and Gruppocinque and Be.Mi.Va in Italy.

"Yes, there's some partners that we have not been able to continue partnering with – not because of the mills' practices, but it was more because the qualities of the fabrics they were making were not fully sustainable. Every person I've always worked with, I believe they had good practices as in human rights for their workers. But I feel some mills are going to take longer, and right now I'm only going to partner with those mills that have the certifications," she explained, noting that she is continuing to work with her original certified leather mill and is having ongoing conversations with the handful of mills she stopped working with. "We're just putting them on hold until we know they really have their sustainability practices up and running."

Each of Alonso Rojas' garments is produced in limited runs or cut-to-order to minimize excess inventory and focus on quality and attention to detail. In addition, the brand has partnered with New York-based nonprofit Fabscrap to responsibly dispose of unusable fabric scraps and source post-consumer textiles for future projects; is investing in upcycled and experimental design with archived collection's textiles, and will be releasing limited capsule collections of leather accessories and handbags crafted from leather remnants, dead-stock trims and atelier offcuts. Furthermore, she will continue offering clients the ability to give their own Alejandra Alonso Rojas worn

garments a new life with the option to re-dye or have their items embroidered.

Additionally, more than 95 percent of the brand's production takes place in New York, which minimizes its carbon footprint, and a majority of its workforce is women, both in the U.S. and abroad, and in support of local economies. Woven and cut-to-order styles are produced in Manhattan's Garment District and hand-knit and crochet styles by women artisans are made in Brooklyn while the other 5 percent include luxe cashmere machine knits in Italy and Camariñas lace crafted by female artisans in Galicia, Spain.

Alonso Rojas explained these changes speak to the three important pillars of her pivot: transparency, responsibility and enduring quality.

Regarding transparency and messaging to consumers, starting with spring 2026 each garment will feature a QR code that customers can scan to see its fabrication, origin, manufacturing details, sustainable certifications and details about the artisans that crafted the piece.

Her garments are now crafted exclusively in certified fabrications including FSC Certified viscose and triacetate; closed-loop and FSC certified Naia acetate; GOTS, Oeko-Tex 100 and regenerative farming cotton; European flax linen; GRS, GOTS, FSC, Oeko-Tex 100 lace, and recycled and GRS-certified polyester. Furthermore, she explained that her bestselling hand-draped, bias slipdresses "will not change" aesthetically, but will be crafted in sustainable GOTS or Oeko-Tex silk in the future.

"While we go into a fully circular model, which is what we want to move into with the next generation traceability practices, I felt like the QR code was a really good start," she said.

When it comes to working with her current retail partners, Alonso Rojas said she wants to work with buyers to divide her two main seasons into drops. She also hopes the brand's pivot will be a "differentiation point" to enter new retailers and wholesalers with sustainability departments.

Outside of her upcoming intricate, special pieces for spring, Alonso Rojas said she projects prices will remain in line with her current luxury range of separates from \$925 to \$1,795; dresses from \$1,195 to \$1,995; tailoring from \$1,295 to \$2,395; evening gowns from \$2,395 to \$3,495; hand-worked gowns around \$5,000, and artisanal hand-crochet pieces between \$1,695 and \$1,895.

"I really want to dedicate the time to develop two very special collections that can be shipped throughout the different months. I believe in a more circular model, so maybe some pieces are to be kept and buyers can keep reordering them if they're performing," she explained, noting she's been working to elevate each collection with more specialty styles alongside brand classics.

"I want to present designer fashion, true creativity and craftsmanship into this collection and moving forward. I feel like people sometimes think that sustainable things have to be more simple or casual, but I want to present it in a very different way, where it's very elevated," she said, pointing out sketches of new voluminous gowns and corsetry looks, prints designed in collaboration with French artist and Alonso Rojas' friend Philippine de Richemont, and custom sustainable lace and embroidery swatches for spring 2026.

"The beauty of it is the brand is not really changing but amplifying the sustainability aspect. You can get a fully sustainable gown and know where it's coming from, that it will be good on your skin and is good for the environment. Again, it's a piece that doesn't have to end up in a landfill the next month, although most of the fabrications we're working with, if not all of them, are actually biodegradable," she said.

## FASHION

## Ones to Know at NYFW

- WWD spotlights a few of the less familiar names joining the official calendar this season, including Rùadh, Mel Usine and Zimo.

BY ARI STARK

**Ahead of New York Fashion Week's** official start on Thursday, WWD caught up with a few emerging designers to learn more about their backstories, businesses and what they're most looking forward to.

**Rùadh**

Ask Jac Cameron her favorite part about design and she'll say, blending creativity with technical skill, which is why so much of her work has been in denim.

Born in Glasgow, Cameron moved to New York City at age 20 where she began her career interning for Marc Jacobs. Over the years, she's become a fixture in the denim market, first at Abercrombie & Fitch and Madewell, then Calvin Klein jeans and finally at AYR. Needless to say, while the name of her latest project Rùadh is Gaelic for "red," Cameron's blood runs indigo.

An interest in ethical sourcing and sustainable manufacturing led her to launch the brand direct-to-consumer in October 2024. Starting with 11 pieces, all in her textile of choice, the Rùadh wardrobe now includes handwoven knits and sturdy leather outerwear, which will be stocked at premium retailers like Bergdorf Goodman and Net-a-porter come fall.

Denim still anchors the line, though Cameron plans on upping its fashion quotient for her NYFW debut. "Our spring 2026 collection represents a more fully realized, evolved vision," she said. Describing Rùadh's aesthetic as "timeless utility" expressed through strong silhouettes, she believes her Scottish heritage sets it apart. "Rùadh is deeply shaped by the landscapes of my childhood: rugged, poetic and quietly powerful."

Hence the Cameron family tartan will weave its way through a few looks at her standing presentation. And the set, a collaboration between interior designer Madelynn Hudson and florist Rana Kim, will transport guests from TriBeCa to the verdant Highlands mountains. There will also be a campaign film screening, shot on location at an 18th-century castle. According to Cameron, it's "a true expression of Rùadh's identity as it stands today and where it's headed next."

**Mel Usine**

Before gaining post-grad experience in studios on both sides of the coast (Rodarte, Proenza Schouler and Gabriela Hearst), Mel Usine's Stephen Biga majored in fashion design and culture & media at The New School with a concentration on identity politics and experimental cinema.

Biga branched out on his own in 2024, separating the name "Mélusine," an aquatic nymph in European folklore often depicted as a mermaid, in two. According to him, it's symbolic of the medieval romanticism he conjures through his work. "There are elements of historical dressing that I came across in my research, which I revitalized in a way that feels modern instead of vintage."

Key pieces in his debut collection include the Philippa top, a take on a poet's blouse with an elasticized peplum for easy movement, and a long-sleeve gown named Veronique. Cut two ways, it will be shown in lace with a sheer jersey lining and in a silver metallic knit resembling the



A look from Rùadh's spring 2026 collection.

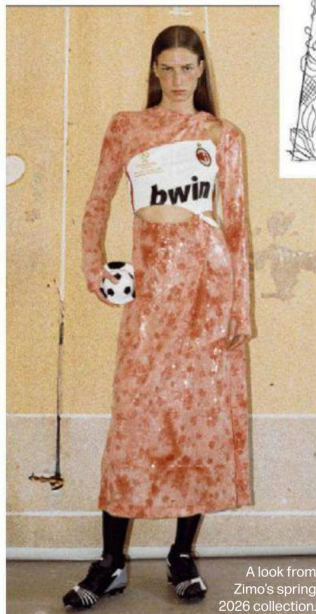
chainmail of the Knights Templar. "It looks like it would be heavy, but it's as light as a feather and feels like silk on the skin," Biga contended. "With Mel Usine, we want to show things that look and present one way, but feel another way when the body interacts with it." Prices start at \$595 and go above \$5,000 for special pieces like this one.

While Biga doesn't have any stockists lined up, he said there's been interest and he plans to bolster Mel Usine's sales through direct channels, launching "with strategic items that we think are important for us to take on as stock." At NYFW, he's eagerly anticipating the industry's reaction to Mel Usine, especially that of his peers. "The most important element to all of this for me is the world-building," he said before firmly declaring: "Mel Usine is ready to exist in the world now."

**Heirlome**

Monterrey, Mexico, native Stephanie Suberville came to New York to attend Parsons. Bouncing around the contemporary market, she rose the ranks at Rag & Bone, Elizabeth and James and Argent, where she still serves as creative director. But what Suberville has her eye on with Heirlome, cofounded in 2022 with her husband Jeffrey who manages the business end, is a more elevated reflection of her Spanish cultural heritage.

Each season, Suberville takes on a local Mexican artist as a collaborator, from potters and painters to woodworkers, reinterpreting their "artesenia" as placement prints, which are throughout her collection of relaxed evening wear and sharp tailoring. A self-described minimalist with a flair for rounded volumes and an abundance of fabric, she said: "We try to stay away from things that look like



A look from Zimo's spring 2026 collection.

you can buy it directly from the artisans themselves as we're trying to support, not compete with them."

Katie Holmes and Angelina Jolie are among Heirlome's A-list fans and the line counts 34 points of sale internationally, including Moda Operandi and Le Bon Marche in Paris. Ranging from \$490 to under \$4,000, the prices "reflect the high-end fabrics we use, and the level of skill that goes into each of our pieces," Suberville said. Skirt sets are her bestsellers, especially those in the artisanal prints, and she's



A closeup from Mel Usine's spring 2026 collection.



A sketch from Heirlome's spring 2026 collection.

excited to introduce her collaborators for spring: a father-daughter duo whose floral designs were also reinterpreted in crochet (like on the sketch seen here).

A candidate for the CFDA Vogue Fashion Fund, Suberville's first formal presentation will be intimate with just two models. "People will be able to touch and really experience the clothes up close," she said. "It's a great way for us to showcase the hand work and tell the story of the artisans."

**Zimo**

SCAD graduate Zimo Yan headed up the design team at 3.1 Phillip Lim, eventually trading New York for Shanghai where she worked at a well-established local brand. That drastic move, she says, "expanded my perspective on production and global markets," motivating her to start Zimo at the end of 2021.

A blend of Yan's East Asian identity with references to '90s youth culture, Zimo is built around what Yan defines as "documentary wear." "By working with deadstock materials and overlooked objects, we give new life to what might otherwise be forgotten, turning them into garments that allow you to "wear your memories," she explained. Deconstructed dresses made from vintage towels are an example, but for her spring 2026 collection, Yan tore-up old soccer jerseys, giving them a glam touch with florals and sequins. ▶

# NEW YORK FASHION WEEK PREVIEW



Zimo is priced in the \$200 to \$1,000 range for ready-to-wear with more elaborate outerwear pieces going up to \$1,800. “We want to stay accessible enough for young creatives while still reflecting the artisanal work and sustainable processes that go into each piece,” Yan said. While Zimo has limited wholesale distribution, Yan is focused on engaging her niche audience through e-commerce and pop-up experiences, which she hosts once or twice a year in New York where Zimo’s studio is based.

Over the past few seasons, Yan has been showing the collection in Paris, but said she’s excited to return. “It felt important to come back home to NYFW and reconnect with the community here. For me, New York has a culture of openness and experimentation that matches the spirit of Zimo.”

## Amir Taghi

Oscar de la Renta alum Amir Taghi founded his namesake label just prior to the pandemic. It was “a moment of pause,” he said, allowing him to work intimately with the women he caters to.



A sketch from the Dwarmis spring 2026 collection.

“My client is a real woman with a life, with work, with places to be. She comes to us because she wants clothes that serve her while expressing who she is.”

By 2022, Taghi was ready to commit himself more fully to building a brand. “The identity was growing clearer, our direct-to-consumer base had become a strong community and I was ready to move forward,” he continued. Wholesale followed a year later with partners including Neiman Marcus, Elyse Walker and the Conservatory, but Taghi insists the same intimacy instilled into the brand from the beginning “continues to guide everything we do.”

Taghi’s focus is on classic sportswear with a refined air, something he picked up on from de la Renta as well from watching the Southern ladies he was raised around in Houston. Colors and prints are inspired by his family’s Persian roots, and this East-West juxtaposition will be on full display in his spring collection, bringing together the glamorous style of Iranian songstress Googoosh with the clean lines of American architect Frank Lloyd Wright. Think angular jackets and harem pants, tapestry sweaters and day dresses with full skirts in a brown and navy palette.

Taghi said he waited to show on the official calendar during NYFW until his business was on solid footing and his vision fully formed. Press previews will be held at the WSA building downtown. “Now feels like the right moment. I look forward to welcoming attendees into my world.”

## Dwarmis

Born and raised in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, Dwarmis Concepcion’s developed a feel for textiles early. Her father imported them into the D.R., but it was the women in her life who had the greatest impact on her as a designer, she says. Concepcion’s mother predicted she’d work in fashion and her aunt, a musician in Latin America’s first all-female merengue band, taught her about rhythm, informing the way she feels clothes should move with the body.

Outside the family tree, her mentees Tory Burch, Ulla Johnson and Rachel Comey instilled in Concepcion a taste for American sportswear. She describes Dwarmis as the synthesis of that training “infused with Caribbean warmth.” Her spring collection presented at the Cristina Grajales Gallery, will emphasize set dressing, like the teal sculpted bustier and languid wide-leg trousers Concepcion previewed a sketch of here. There will be airy, pleated fabrics with subtle sheen for catching the light while dancing. “My customer is a global woman. She’s “creative, entrepreneurial, and values pieces she can dress up or down and truly live in,” Concepcion said.

Ranging from \$250 to \$1,200, Dwarmis



A look from Jamie Okuma’s spring 2026 collection.

is exclusively available online, but Concepcion has her sights set on attracting retailers during NYFW. She feels her brand is missing an interactive component, especially after receiving positive feedback from pop-up shops in New York City, Santo Domingo and Mexico City. “I meet clients in the fitting room, understand how they move and what they love – it’s fun and personal,” she said. She’s also proud to be representing Latine designers. “After refining our product, this felt like the right moment to present the brand on a larger stage, celebrating my Dominican roots.”

## Jamie Okuma

Born in Glendale, Calif., and currently residing on the La Jolla Indian Reservation, Jamie Okuma comes from a line of female makers. Her grandmother was a painter and her mother Sandra was a graphic artist at MCA records in Los Angeles where she produced album covers for Lynyrd Skynyrd and Cher among others.

Trained by her mother, the Luiseno, Shoshone-Bannock, Wailaki and Okinawan artist-cum-fashion designer started her own career while in high school. She later attended the Institute of American Indian Art, going on to exhibit work at the Heard and Santa Fe Indian Art Markets where she took home a total of seven Best in Show awards. Okuma’s more elaborate quilted and handbeaded couture is collected by national museums like The Smithsonian and The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Almost anyone, though, can collect her affordably priced ready-to-wear, which consists of caftans, sheaths and casual separates with Indigenous prints under \$600. “My customers are those who value authentic Native American design and want to support artisans and their families including mine,” she says. “They seek authentic cultural expression and wear my art as a proud statement of beauty and solidarity.”

The first Native American to join the Council of Fashion Designers of America, Okuma is now also the first Native American to join its official fashion week calendar, an honor she described as being “pretty cool.” She will present her spring collection digitally. “Each piece honors my identity while offering a modern, wearable expression of my culture for all,” she added.



A closeup from Taotao’s spring 2026 collection.

## Taotao

Yitao Li earned her BFA at FIT before completing foreign exchange programs at both Central Saint Martins in London and Polimoda in Florence. While developing her own custom creations on the side, Li worked as a design intern with stints at brands like Thom Browne and Monse, eventually returning home to Shenzhen. There she was able to focus solely on her own solo endeavor, ironing out sourcing and production, which led to Taotao in 2022.

A riff on her Chinese nickname, the brand evokes “playful rebellion,” she said. “We make garments that balance sensuality with subtle loudness.” According to Li, her signatures are anime-inspired prints and fabric manipulation, which are often hybrids like fusing denim with lace. Those who wear Taotao “embrace individuality and aren’t afraid to stand out,” she said, and include musicians like Halsey and the K-pop group Babymonster.

Taotao’s slashed kilt skirts, patchwork corsets, baby T-shirts and acid wash jeans with heart-shaped cutouts have a Victorian pirate girl vibe by-way-of Y2K. For spring, plaid and bows will be recurring motifs. Ranging from \$70 to \$400 with accessories and footwear starting at around \$185, Taotao’s main channel of commerce is online direct-to-consumer, but this NYFW Li said she’s planning to “expand partnerships with specialty retailers that share our niche community.” ■



Sketches of Amir Taghi’s spring 2026 collection.

## MEN'S

## Andy Hilfiger Reviving Andrew Charles Line

- The collection of rock 'n' roll-inspired men's and womenswear will debut during New York Fashion Week.

BY JEAN E. PALMIERI

### He's back.

Andy Hilfiger, the brother of Tommy Hilfiger, along with his wife Kim, is relaunching his Andrew Charles collection of men's apparel with an event on the eve of New York Fashion Week.

In 2011, Andy Hilfiger launched a men's and women's contemporary collection under that name with Aerosmith frontman Steven Tyler as its face. It was sold exclusively in the Impulse departments at Macy's and Tyler appeared in ads and at in-store events for the sportswear collection.

When the contract ended after a year, Hilfiger continued to produce a version of the line in Europe and also expanded into a licensing deal for home. But in recent years Andrew Charles has been limited to a jewelry line that is sold online at Macy's, he said.

That will change on Wednesday when Hilfiger reintroduces apparel during what

he said will be a star-studded evening at The Cutting Room in New York. The collection will consist of around 20 styles with a distinct rock 'n' roll aesthetic. "I always wanted to put out a line that defined rock 'n' roll in fashion," he said. "And the first one wasn't that."

The assortment will include flared jeans emblazoned with stars, a former hallmark of the line; leopard print jackets; blazers; sweaters; T-shirts; hoodies, and button-downs. Prices will range from \$59 for T-shirts and \$150 for hoodies to \$175 to \$295 for jeans and up to \$325 for jackets.

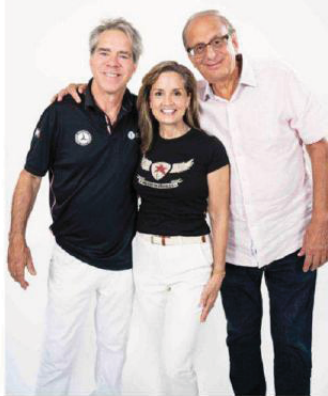
"This is an incredible moment for me, both personally and professionally," Hilfiger said. "Andrew Charles has always been about merging music and style, and I can't think of a better place to showcase that energy than NYFW."

For this iteration of the brand, the Hilfigers are working with Teddy Sadaka of Apparel Production, who will serve as the core licensee and production partner of the collection.

Andrew Charles will debut online as well as at the Underground Fashion Outlet, the Hilfigers' vintage-focused specialty store in Roscoe, N.Y.

Although the launch collection is

Andy and Kim Hilfiger with Teddy Sadaka



targeted to men, many of the pieces are dual gender and the plan is to introduce a women's-specific collection next spring, Hilfiger said.

For the event on Wednesday, he said Steve Conte, the former lead singer of the New York Dolls, will perform and other celebrities are expected to attend.

A look from the Andrew Charles collection from Andy Hilfiger.



## MEN'S

## Rowing Blazers Founder Jack Carlson Joins J. Press



Looks from Jack Carlson's first collection for J. Press.

- Carlson's first Ivy-inspired collection will be shown on Thursday during New York Fashion Week.

BY JEAN E. PALMIERI

**Rowing Blazers** founder Jack Carlson has a new gig.

The 38-year-old Carlson, who exited the brand he founded in March, has been named creative director and president of J. Press. His first collection will debut on Thursday during New York Fashion Week, which will mark the brand's first appearance on the fashion calendar.

"I grew up with J. Press," said Carlson. "I used to go to the shop in Harvard Square, and many of the first suits, shirts, ties and

belts I bought for myself were J. Press. I still have them. This role feels like coming home in many ways. I studied the classics (literally), and to me, a lot of what J. Press does is almost sacred: the button-downs, the khakis, the blazers, the Shaggy Dogs. J. Press has also had a slightly irreverent streak that resonates with me, too. I want to celebrate all of that; to build seasonal collections and collaborations around it; and to share it with more people. J. Press is an institution — in many ways, the last of its kind."

J. Press was founded on the campus of Yale University in New Haven, Conn., in 1902. Since then the company has become synonymous with Ivy League style such as navy blazers, soft-shouldered suits, oxford cloth button-downs, khaki trousers, repp ties, schoolboy scarves, and its signature

Shaggy Dog sweater.

J. Press was bought by its Japanese licensee Onward Holdings in 1986. Even so, the bulk of its collection is made in the U.S., augmented by England, Scotland, Ireland, Japan, Canada, Austria and Norway.

Carlson's debut J. Press collection for fall 2025 is a colorful celebration of Ivy style and will include a red tailcoat and a Tyrolian Janker, nods to the time Carlson spent living in Oxford and Kitzbühel. Other editorial pieces will include boatneck knits and an assortment of accessories handcrafted in New York from vintage felt college pennants, some nearly a century old. Carlson has also brought back the original J. Press "Ivy" blazer format (with a patch, rather than set-in pocket on the chest) and reinstated the brand's vintage, red-on-white label design across categories.

"Jack brings a rare combination of historical reverence and fresh perspective," Onward said in a statement. "His ability to celebrate the brand's heritage, and to also present J. Press through a modern editorial lens makes him the ideal leader for our next chapter. We believe this is the beginning of a new era for J. Press, one that will strengthen our position as the definitive name in American menswear."

J. Press operates three stores in the States: New York City, New Haven and Washington, D.C. The plan going forward, Onward told WWD, is to expand the company's footprint in the U.S.

"The appointment of Jack Carlson marks the first step in Onward Holdings' vision to position J. Press at the forefront

of American menswear, and sit alongside other historic leaders in the space.

"We plan to grow our current business roughly tenfold by 2030. Currently, we operate three stores. Our plan is to introduce two to three new retail locations in the U.S. in 2026 to expand our footprint and showcase our full lifestyle offering under Jack's direction. Beyond brick-and-mortar, we plan to focus on investing and growing our e-commerce business."

Carlson is not the first American to be creative director of J. Press. A little over a decade ago, the company brought the Ovardia Brothers on board as consulting creative directors. They created a line called York Street, a younger-skewed Ivy League-inspired collection. But that line, and a dedicated store on Bleecker Street, were shuttered after four seasons.

Carlson has a Ph.D. in archaeology from Oxford University, was a coxswain on the U.S. national rowing team and is the author of "A Humorous Guide to Heraldry" and "Rowing Blazers," a coffee-table book about the "authentic striped, piped, trimmed and badged" jackets worn by oarsmen around the world. He created the brand as an irreverent redefinition of what is generally viewed as the stuffy preppy aesthetic. His myriad collaborations with everyone from Gucci to Noah, Target and J.Crew also helped put the brand on the map. Carlson also used Rowing Blazers as a vehicle to relaunch several heritage brands, including British knitwear label Warm & Wonderful, best known for its sheep sweater worn by Diana, Princess of Wales.

In February 2024, Carlson sold a majority stake in his company to Burch Creative Capital, an investment firm founded by Tory Burch cofounder Chris Burch, as well as investors Tom Vellios, cofounder of Five Below, and Jason Epstein, partner at Stonecourt Capital. As part of the deal, Carlson continued to serve as creative director of the brand. But he exited the brand completely about a year later.



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FASHION

# Sofia Coppola Wraps Chanel Couture in a Golden Glow

Veronica Webb in fall 1987 Chanel haute couture.



The cover of "Chanel Haute Couture."

● The filmmaker's memories of her teen internship under Karl Lagerfeld were the starting point of her coffee-table book marking 110 years of the French house's haute couture.

BY JOELLE DIDERICH

**PARIS** — When Sofia Coppola first set foot in the Chanel haute couture salon at the age of 15, she was like the proverbial kid in a candy store. So when the French fashion house asked her to compile a coffee table book celebrating its 110 years of haute couture, she wanted the cover to be like a gold wrapper.

"It's almost like a box of chocolates," Coppola told WWD.

The 448-page tome, released Monday, is only the second from Important Flowers, her new publishing imprint at London-based Mack Books, which produced the book with Editions 7L, the publishing house founded by Karl Lagerfeld and now owned by Chanel.

In the foreword, Coppola recalled arriving at the Chanel studio wearing braces and an "expensive navy knit top and skirt" that her mother had bought her.

"It was 1986, and the studio was filled with music and energy — Karl was sketching, while Victoire de Castellane, in

huge earrings and a low-cut bustier, carried out trays of costume jewelry and Veronica Webb and Marpessa sashayed around with tired eyes from late nights at the Bains Douches. I was far away from the small town in Northern California where I lived and went to a rural high school," she wrote.

French actress Carole Bouquet, a family friend and Chanel ambassador, had set up the internship as the Coppolas were reeling



Inès de la Fressange in fall 1985 Chanel haute couture.

from the loss of her brother Gian-Carlo in an accident. "That summer the hole in my heart was filled with the magic and beauty of the haute couture studio," the filmmaker recalled.

In an emailed interview, Coppola said she could still recall vivid images from those days.

"Victoire de Castellane was so cool and fun and seeing Veronica Webb — her style made a huge impression on me. She wore torn jeans and a T-shirt with a Chanel jacket, which I had never seen before! She had the cutest style. It was at an age for me when I was trying to figure out my style and what kind of adult I would be," she said.

Those memories informed her selection of images, which are assembled collage-style, with sections devoted to themes like the tweed jacket, bows and the color pink, in a pop-infused aesthetic that will feel familiar to fans of her films, including "Marie Antoinette" and "The Bling Ring."

"I always wanted it to be more about the feeling of how they are worn, and not academic," explained Coppola, contrasting the approach with museum catalogs.

"I wanted to show how they were really worn and see the women who wore them and where and how, from films, events, shoots," she added. "And of course I'm a big photography fan and got into photography from fashion magazines as a kid, so I loved seeing the work of all these great photographers that I love."

Covering the era from founder Gabrielle "Coco" Chanel through to Virginie Viard, the volume features fashion photographs by the likes of Man Ray, Irving Penn, Steven Meisel, Helmut Newton, Cecil Beaton and Dominique Issermann, including a contact sheet of Inès de la Fressange doing an uncanny impression of Coco.

Glossy runway and editorial images are juxtaposed with backstage shots of seamstresses at work in the Chanel couture workshop, which employs 150 people to make its one-of-a-kind creations.

"I love seeing the bridal photos, after I've seen them making them on Stockman [mannequins] in the atelier — to see where they end up, how they are worn. It's all so beautiful and inspiring to me. I think I really appreciate what the studio makes because I've seen up close what goes into them," said Coppola, who frequently works with Chanel on everything from short films to show sets.

"Chanel gave me access to everything they had," she continued. "Kate, our photo editor, researched images from films and photographers that we love. It was really a hunt, and so exciting to find the images as we went."

Among her favorites: an Antonio Lopez illustration from 1983 published alongside a Bruce Weber photo of the same dress.

In addition to famous images like Marilyn Monroe with her bottle of No. 5, there are lesser-known treasures like a documentary-style Willy Rizzo photo from a 1956 fitting; a black-and-white snap of a 1961 show where a dachshund strayed onto the catwalk, or a candid shot of Kristen Stewart on the set of "Spencer," wearing an ivory haute couture gown with battered Nike sneakers.

The book contains unseen sketches, behind-the-scenes documents and press clippings, including two WWD covers from 1986 featuring de Castellane, who also shared her Polaroids from that period. Coppola sat down with hairstylist Odile Gilbert to root through boxes of sketches and press photos of her work with Lagerfeld at Chanel.

There are celebrities galore, including Nicole Kidman, Anouk Aimée, Romy Schneider, Catherine Deneuve, Penelope Cruz and Elle Fanning, as well as Kirsten Dunst shot at Versailles by Annie Leibovitz during the promotion of "Marie Antoinette" — one of several personal touches Coppola sprinkled in.

The director included a portrait of her teen self in French Vogue in 1986, and red carpet images, including a WWD photo of her and Marc Jacobs before the 2023 Met Gala. There is also an image of Cailee Spaeny in her bridal outfit from the set of "Priscilla."

For those who can't afford the five-figure price tags of haute couture, "Chanel Haute Couture" — the book — can be snapped up for a relatively affordable \$115. "I hope like couture, that it makes you dream," Coppola said.

Elle Fanning, W Mag, March 2021, The Director's Issue.





Jonathan Bailey

FASHION

# Shinola Names Coach Executive Jonathan Bailey Creative Director

- He will oversee all brand messaging for the Detroit-based company.

BY JEAN E. PALMIERI

**Shinola has a new creative director.**

Effective Monday, former Coach executive Jonathan Bailey has joined the company, reporting to Kevin Wertz, chief marketing officer of Bedrock Manufacturing, Shinola's parent.

At Shinola, Bailey will oversee creative direction across all brand touch points, including paid, owned and social.

Although Ruthie Underwood had previously served as chief creative officer, "This is a new role for the brand," Shinola said. "It will shape how our voice, identity and creative strategy evolve – while honoring the creative foundation built over the past 12 years. This position will specifically oversee the brand's creative direction across marketing, campaigns and storytelling."

Bailey joins Shinola after spending seven years at Coach, where he served as divisional vice president of global creative studio and was instrumental in campaigns like the "Courage to Be Real" short film with Lil Nas X, the brand's "Expressive

Luxury" strategy and Coach TV. Before that, he led global digital content at Tiffany & Co., where he oversaw the launch of Tiffany's Snapchat. Earlier in his career he held roles at Show Media, Big Smoke Magazine and cofounded the 3'Hi music agency.

Shinola was founded in 2011 as a watch brand with a mission to return manufacturing to the challenged city of Detroit. It built the first watch factory in that city in more than 50 years. Since then, Shinola has expanded into the creation of a variety of leather goods, jewelry, pet products, knives and other items, and also entered the hospitality space, opening an eponymous hotel in 2019.

Shinola assembles its watches in Detroit from Swiss-made components. But on Sunday it took out a full-page ad in The New York Times inviting Swiss brands to join it in a partnership and collaborate to bring the complete manufacturing of watches, including components, back to the U.S.

Shinola's call was sparked by the Trump administration's slapping of 39 percent duties on all imports from Switzerland, which has shocked the European nation and sent it scurrying to negotiate a better deal. The U.S. is the largest market for the Swiss watch industry.

BUSINESS

# PacSun Releases Results of First Youth Survey

- Gen Z and Gen Alpha consumers report they are most interested in their mental health.

BY JEAN E. PALMIERI

**PacSun prides itself** on understanding what makes its Gen Z and Gen Alpha consumer tick. Now the retailer has commissioned a study, "The Youth Report by PacSun," to find out what matters most to these 11- to 24-year-olds.

The study, which was conducted in partnership with data and analytics firm GlobalData, surveyed more than 6,000 Gen Z and Gen Alpha consumers in the U.S. and found that mental health is the top priority in their lives, with 42 percent responding that this was more important than physical health or academic success.

Other findings include the fact that more than a quarter of those surveyed cited music as central to their identity. In addition, fashion is important in their lives, with 21 percent saying they regularly engage in discussions about fashion trends with friends, and 15 percent saying they follow trend reports, blogs or fashion pages to stay up to date on the trends.

Other findings include 24 percent of respondents saying TikTok is the social media platform they would be hard-pressed to live without. The platform is where they turn for current fashion trends, according to 59 percent, while 66 percent said they rely on it for current events and pop culture. If TikTok were banned, 47 percent said they would use Instagram instead.

One in five respondents aspire to be content creators or influencers, they said, with 75 percent of Gen Alphas saying they have purchased clothing

specifically to create content.

A sense of individual style is also key to this demographic, the survey found. More than half of respondents in both age groups said they depend upon their own sense of style when deciding how to dress, but 45 percent said they are influenced by celebrities and public figures, while influencers were cited by 33 percent.

Their sense of individualism increased with age, with 32 percent of Gen Z saying they chart their own path while Gen Alpha consumers are more open to inspiration from creators, celebrities and peers.

PacSun said it will continue to conduct this survey annually and make the results available for free to the industry. The 2025 edition will be officially released during an invite-only PacSun Purpose Summit in Los Angeles on Sept. 18, where the company will host creators, media and brand partners for an experiential presentation of the findings. During the summit, PacSun will also introduce a Youth Advisory Council consisting of Gen Z and Gen Alpha cultural influencers.

"At PacSun, we've spent decades building trust with young people, and with that comes a responsibility to share what we've learned and to commit to keep learning," said Briane Olson, chief executive officer. "We created 'The Youth Report by PacSun' for everyone, irrespective of their industry who is navigating how to connect with Gen Z and Gen Alpha. Our goal is to offer real, actionable insights that anyone can use to better serve, support and celebrate that next generation, now and for years to come."

"What makes this study so groundbreaking is how PacSun has made the intentional decision to open these



PacSun appeals to young consumers.

fresh and often unexpected findings to the industry at large. In a competitive landscape, this gesture of collaboration rather than competition sets PacSun

apart, signaling a future-first approach that benefits the entire industry," said Neil Saunders, managing director and retail analyst at GlobalData.

EXCLUSIVE

## Dakota Fanning Becomes Face of Madewell

● The famous actress applies her own fashion sensibilities to some new designs for the brand.

BY DAVID MOIN

**Dakota Fanning** has a new role for fall. She's starring in Madewell's fall campaign and has played a part in designing a few fall Madewell fashions.

Madewell, a division of the J.Crew Group, is rooted in premium denim, wardrobe essentials and "effortless" styling, and Fanning is furthering the offering with some styles she designed in tandem with the Madewell team. The Madewell/Fanning pairing has come up with The Dakota for Madewell Longline Straight Jean, a mid-rise, longline straight leg designed to "lengthen and flatter" and with a custom label with "Dakota" embroidery. There's also The Dakota Perfect Crewneck in white, blue striped and red striped colorways. The new styles are geared for those who don't need or want much in the way of options.

"When Madewell and I first started talking about designing together, I knew exactly what I wanted—pieces I've been dreaming about for years but hadn't quite found. The jean I've always been searching for. The T I can't live without," Fanning said in a statement. "Getting to bring those to life, with a brand I genuinely admire, has been such a proud and personal moment. Every detail reflects my style—easy, lived-in, timeless."

"Dakota's timeless and confident style mirrors Madewell's ethos of cool classics, well-made denim and an effortless sensibility making her a natural muse for the brand," said Laura Michael, Madewell's senior vice president of brand creative and marketing. "At the heart of this collaboration is a quintessential cool—it is the jean, the T, the girl—the kind of cool you can't borrow. With that, the branding and storytelling has been key to bringing this to life. We took a deeply integrated approach, showing up across channels, platforms and spaces, with prominent out-of-home moments—putting ourselves in the path of our consumers, reminding



Dakota Fanning for Madewell.



them of what we stand for, while inviting new consumers into our brand."

The campaign, shot by photographer Dan Martensen, launches Tuesday. It features what Madewell describes as "integrated storytelling across owned brand platforms and channels," as well as editorial placements and a large out-of-home presence with a billboard in Times Square, among others across priority markets. "From determining the wash

and embroidery of the jean, to the T's fabrics, colorways and stripe width, as well as overall custom branding designed specifically for her, Madewell worked hand-in-hand with Dakota to co-create every detail," the brand indicated in a statement.

The 31-year-old actress has a long list of credits in movies and television including starring in "I Am Sam," "War of the Worlds," "Man on Fire," "Charlotte's Web," "Night Moves" and "The Alienist."

BUSINESS

## RAISEfashion Elevates Cause With 'Gallery' Format

● The one-day immersive, interactive experience Tuesday will spotlight 16 BIPOC designers.

BY DAVID MOIN

**RAISEfashion**, the nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing equity in fashion, has a new and innovative format to advance its cause.

On Tuesday, a one-day immersive experience called "RAISEfashion: The

Gallery | NYFW Showcase" opens at Posh VIP, located at 40 Crosby Street, and will spotlight 16 emerging designers who are Black, Indigenous and people of color. Officials told WWD the format "blends storytelling, shopping and industry connection and reimagines the traditional fashion week format, placing community, commerce and culture at its center."

Collections being shown span luxury, streetwear, jewelry and resort and include Busayo, Harbison, L'Enchanteur, Vontelle Eyewear, House of Aama, Gwen Beloti

Jewelry, Advisory, Diarra Blu, Bach Mai, Esenshel, Danzy, Nalebe, Onalaja, Cotte D'Armes, Aisling Camps and Yesaet.

The collections can be shopped by visitors and a cocktail gathering will close the night.

"So much of New York Fashion Week is about forecasting future trends and what's next in fashion, but for the designers we work with, the focus is on right now—reaching consumers, driving sales and sustaining their businesses," said Felita Harris, executive director and cofounder of RAISEfashion. With NYFW beginning on Thursday, "This is the perfect moment to spotlight these designers and invite the public and our partners to support them in real time."

Harris characterized the experience as "a true 360-degree platform for visibility and sales," adding, "We're featuring 16 designers this year compared to 20 last year. Several are returning, and we're also spotlighting new talent such as Bach Mai, L'Enchanteur, Yesaet and Diarra Blu. While the group is smaller, we were intentional in curating brands that are fully prepared with inventory, the ability to take preorders, and the readiness to drive sales. This marks an important shift from last year, when most designers participated with samples only for business-to-business opportunities, and reflects their growth and capacity to meet consumer demand directly."

RAISEfashion has partnered with Fluency, the only AI-powered SMS platform for creators and commerce, to spotlight the showcase in Times Square with a billboard appearing Monday and Tuesday at 1500 Broadway.

"At Fluency, we believe technology should be used to lift voices, not drown them out," Jalem Getz, chief executive officer of Fluency, said in a statement. "Partnering with RAISEfashion to bring the Gallery to Times Square is our way of saying these designers deserve to be seen—boldly, publicly and on their own terms. This initiative reflects Fluency's commitment to celebrating emerging voices in fashion,

connecting them to global audiences, and elevating their stories during one of the industry's most pivotal weeks of the year." Fluency is also powering the digital checkout at the Gallery.

Citing reports from McKinsey & Co., RAISEfashion indicated that only 1.3 percent of investments in fashion go to Black founders. Tuesday's program is made possible through the support of Abercrombie & Fitch Co., Make Up Forever, Ohho, Maison Perrier and Ten to One Rum.

"This partnership reflects our ongoing commitment to our values and meaningful collaboration. We're proud to help create spaces where emerging creative talent is lifted up and celebrated," Carey Collins Krug, chief marketing officer at Abercrombie & Fitch Co., said in a statement.

RAISEfashion is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit advisory network of fashion industry leaders providing pro-bono business consulting to Black, Indigenous and people of color-owned brands, including mentorship, resources, access and student internships. The organization's volunteer-run network consists of more than 300 industry experts in branding, marketing and communications, digital strategy, merchandising, sales and business development. Advisers have backgrounds ranging from high luxury to contemporary and mass markets, across men's and women's apparel, accessories and leather goods, jewelry and home goods.

"Last November, we launched our advisory platform, a structured resource that organizes expertise into 75 business categories, spanning areas such as legal, finance, production, and marketing," Harris said. "The platform was designed to make mentorship more accessible and targeted by allowing designers to connect directly with advisers whose skills align with their specific business challenges. It also provides RAISEfashion with a formal mechanism to engage with advisers, strengthen relationships and continue expanding the network in meaningful ways."



Felita Harris

# Makeup Faces M&A Stalemate

While the beauty sector sees renewed M&A activity, makeup brands are struggling to attract buyers due to category challenges and high sku demands. BY KATHRYN HOPKINS

**“Artists, Experts, Absolute Legends,”** trumpet signs all over Sephora, with close-up shots of Mario Dedivanovic, Gucci Westman, Patrick Ta, Mary Philips and Danessa Myricks, among others, and their signature products.

In recent years, these social media savvy makeup artists, in addition to other startups in color cosmetics like Selena Gomez’s Rare Beauty and Merit, have made waves in the prestige color category, taking market share from heritage brands by connecting with consumers in new ways, especially among a younger audience.

But while such brands have brought buzz and excitement to the category, the hype has yet to pay off, with the prestige makeup category largely still waiting for its wider M&A moment at a time when the industry has witnessed a significant thawing of acquisitions after a lengthy standstill.

Thus far, this year’s deals include E.L.f. Beauty snapping up Rhode, L’Oréal acquiring Medik8 and Color Wow, Unilever’s purchase of Dr. Squatch, TSG Consumer’s successful play for Phlur and even Ulta Beauty getting in on the action, with its purchase of Space NK.

Interestingly, though, the slew of color cosmetics brands lingering on the market for many months are still yet to find acquirers. These include Makeup By Mario, Merit, Kosas and Rare, who have been in market since 2024. Glossier, too, is said to have been considering its options.

WWD reached out to all brands for an update, but they did not provide comment.

Despite strong performances at retail, industry consensus is that it’s going to be tough going for makeup brands hoping to transact this year.

“Every single color deal has died,” one source said.

Another industry source added: “Some people call them simmering, but I think they’re pretty much pulled unless someone proactively has an inbound on them.”

This begs the question why.

Part of the reason is the performance of the color category overall.

According to Circana, while still the largest prestige segment, the prestige makeup category in the U.S. is slowing, edging up just 1 percent in dollar amount while units remained flat in the first half of the year, versus 6 percent growth for both hair and fragrance.

Larissa Jensen, Circana’s global beauty industry adviser, said: “It’s been positive in terms of the performance there, but overall, slowing down more dramatically. A big piece of it is just because it’s become harder to anniversary those numbers.”

On a company basis, the Estée Lauder Cos. said makeup net sales decreased 12 percent in its fourth quarter on the back of lower net sales from Estée Lauder, declines across all geographic regions from MAC and lower net sales in North America. At Coty Inc., prestige net revenue decreased 5 percent, pulled down by makeup and skin care.

It wasn’t all doom and gloom, though, for makeup in the most recent earnings period. Ulta Beauty reported that the category delivered midsingle-digit comp growth, driven by positive performances from both mass and prestige, with CEO Kecia Steelman noting that it’s been a while that both subcategories have increased. In particular, it highlighted new launches from Hourglass and MAC.

And in what L’Oréal described as

“a temporarily less dynamic makeup market,” in its luxe division, momentum continued to be driven by the couture brands like Yves Saint Laurent, Prada and Valentino.

Still, it’s clear that a lot of brands are feeling the pinch. Ami Cole, the Black-owned makeup brand sold at Sephora, recently announced that it was shuttering, while Addiction Tokyo, owned by the Japanese giant Kosé, is pulling out of the U.S. after only two years.

Most recently, Youthforia, the makeup brand founded in 2021 by Fiona Co Chan and backed by Mark Cuban, announced it was closing. It previously became the subject of widespread controversy shortly after launching 10 additional shades of its \$48 Date Night Serum Foundation, the darkest of which many consumers felt resembled black face paint, but since then had made strides to become more inclusive.

“The category is challenged so who wants to run into the storm of the overall category?” said one source, on why makeup lacks buyer appeal, adding that the segment’s dynamics make it a harder sell to investors.

“I always think of color as more like a fashion business. You always need to innovate and stay relevant, and you always need to have newness. It’s a very sku intensive category. So when you think about it, it’s hard to underwrite.”

“There’s some really beautiful brands in the cosmetics space that have been considering a transaction,” said Marissa Lepor, managing director and head of beauty and personal care at The Sage Group. “The biggest complication in color cosmetics, and why investors tend to have more hesitancy about it, is it ends up requiring a lot of skus and the working capital dynamic in terms of the cash needed to purchase inventory, fill a gondola and provide newness is quite demanding for a business.

“That’s why that it’s a harder category for M&A, at least in recent years, versus skin care, hair care and fragrances,” she continued. “That said, people are still using those products, and customers seem to be fairly loyal, at least on a product basis.”

Sources also pointed to the fact that color cosmetics is just not at the top – or even in the middle – of strategics’ shopping lists currently. They’re mainly interested in derm-backed skin care, tech, hair and fragrance.

Ashleigh Barker, a director at Lincoln International’s consumer group, said: “The opportunities that seem to be driving the most buzz and activity tend to center around these categories that have higher replenishment rates, stronger points of differentiation. When you think about formulation and efficacy specifically, it’s hard to have true efficacy with a cosmetics product.”

Out of the brands that have been considering their options, many industry insiders believe Makeup by Mario will eventually transact. Since it launched in 2020, the company has resonated strongly with consumers and revenue is on track to be between \$150 million and \$200 million in 2024, according to industry sources.

While sources close to Rare insisted that a process is yet to formally begin, the understanding among industry sources is that with net sales of \$400 million last year, the brand is too big for many traditional players to acquire, with

Linda Evangelista backstage at Gucci, spring 1996.



some speculating that the price could reach \$2 billion.

The almost five-year-old brand has been a breakout success in the celebrity brand world with a strategy that leverages founder Selena Gomez’s transparency around her struggles with mental health and focuses on a message of healthy self-esteem.

While sources expect something to happen eventually, it is looking more likely that could come the form of an initial public offering or an investment from an unexpected player.

Still, there is nervousness around brands, who are so closely to one person and one retailer – Sephora.

“The slowdown in Sephora North America has weakened some of the numbers,” said one source of the category in general.

Then there are those yet to formally come to market like Westman Atelier, which has long been rumored to be considering taking the plunge and some believe that will happen this year.

Industry watchers have long speculated that it could be a good fit at The Estée Lauder Cos., but with the beauty giant struggling it is hard to say when the new chief executive officer Stéphane de La Faverie will want to make his M&A splash. “There is a hope that Westman Atelier might open the market,” one source told WWD.

In order to secure a transaction, Lepor believes its comes down to proving brand loyalty over product loyalty.

“The challenge for each brand individually, is to get customers to be as brand loyal as they can, versus product loyal,” she said. “In general, it seems that customers tend to showcase stronger loyalty and higher lifetime revenue with skin care brands, because they’re a bit more routine oriented. For makeup brands, focusing more on the routine and how products are efficacious and are part of your daily makeup regimen can help enhance the customer dynamics to be more similar to that of a skin care brand or a hair care brand.”

# TikTok's 10 Most Viral Wellness Trends

According to data from Spate, nine of the top 10 wellness trends on TikTok are supplements.

BY EMILY BURNS



<b>1</b>	<b>Hair, Skin, Nails Supplement</b> 1.4 million views; + more than 30,000 percent
<b>2</b>	<b>Ashwagandha Supplement</b> 4.6 million views; + 27,600 percent
<b>3</b>	<b>Liquid Carnitine</b> 1.1 million views; + 11,200 percent
<b>4</b>	<b>Moringa Supplement</b> 1.1 million views; + 8,600 percent
<b>5</b>	<b>Probiotic Powder</b> 34,400 views; + 8,000 percent
<b>6</b>	<b>Nootropic Supplements</b> 708,500 views; + 4,200 percent
<b>7</b>	<b>Herbal Supplement</b> 787,300 views; + 3,500 percent
<b>8</b>	<b>Workout Supplement</b> 1.4 million views; + 3,200 percent
<b>9</b>	<b>Shiatsu Foot Massager</b> 26,400 views; + 2,800 percent
<b>10</b>	<b>Apple Cider Vinegar Gummies</b> 2.1 million views; + 2,000 percent

It's no secret that supplements have become the hottest category in wellness, and the social media traction shows it.

From gut-supporting prebiotic powders to calming ashwagandha drinks, supplements are taking over TikTok, according to data from Spate.

"Supplements and ingestibles have been growing very fast on TikTok, with 134.5 percent growth compared to last year, demonstrating the robust social community that's continually developing around wellness," said Spate senior insights and marketing lead Addison Cain. "Consumers are

turning to TikTok to learn about and discuss supplements, making trends like ashwagandha, moringa and nootropics no longer niche – they're driving mainstream conversation and consumer demand."

As gut health has been booming over the last several years, probiotic powders and apple cider vinegar gummies continue to be fan favorites on social media. Within each of the top trends, certain brands are leading the charge. For example, with the hair, skin and nails supplements growth, Mary Ruth's is the top related brand with more than 23,000 average weekly views.

Meanwhile, Goli remains

synonymous with apple cider vinegar gummies with 1.5 million average weekly views. Furthermore, trends like workout supplements been emphasized by a slew of brands launching muscle-supporting creatine offerings, including Arrae and Perel.

While supplements make up the bulk of the wellness conversation on TikTok, shiatsu foot massagers stand out as one non-ingestible trend that is growing.

Here, per Spate, are the top 10 fastest-growing wellness trends on TikTok based on average weekly views and year-over-year growth, which they are ranked by.

## Door Dashers

The latest retail expansions in beauty. BY NOOR LOBAD

**Fara Homidi** has launched her full cosmetics line in three Sephora doors in New York and San Francisco, marking the brand's first brick-and-mortar launch at the retailer. The brand is best known for its lip and eye compacts, and most recently debuted a \$46 plumping lip oil.



Ayurvedic beauty brand **Ranavat** has debuted at Space NK, entering 10 U.K. doors and online. The brand is known for its saffron-infused skin care offerings, and has reportedly sold 250,000 of its \$135 Brightening Saffron Serum to date.



Regenerative skin care brand **Sweet Chemistry** is entering Violet Grey. Launched direct-to-consumer in 2023, the range includes four products priced from \$135 for its serum and creams to \$170 for its Reparative Oil-Serum Infusion.



Sustainable personal care brand, **Commune**, has entered Australian retailer Mecca Beauty online and in-store. The U.K.-based brand's products include hand and body creams, candles and solid perfume priced from 35 pounds to 95 pounds.



**Lanolips**, the lanolin-based multipurpose balm brand, is now available at Walgreens online and in 7,700 stores. Industry sources estimate the brand could do \$1 million in sales during its first six months at the retailer.



**Range Beauty**, a makeup line formulated for people with acne and eczema, has entered nearly 100 Sephora doors. The brand is backed by Emma Grede following its 2022 "Shark Tank" appearance, and is best known for its \$33 hydrating foundation.



**Parëva Beauty**, which was launched earlier this year direct-to-consumer, is launching its trio of longevity-boosting products at Cult Beauty and in 16 Credo doors. The brand features a hero Molecu 3 ingredient, which is powered by plant stem cells and targets inflammation and UV damage.



Los Angeles-based body care brand, **Salt & Stone**, is expanding its U.K. footprint with a launch at Space NK. Known for its deodorants – which retail for \$20 and sell one unit at Sephora each minute – the brand reportedly saw triple-digit growth in 2024, surpassing 1 million orders that year.



**Sleepy Tie**, known for its blowout-preserving hair accessories, is entering Revolve. The TikTok-viral brand is offers shower caps, bonnets and its her Sleepy Tie, designed to offer heatless overnight curls, priced under \$35.



**Stripes**, the menopausal beauty brand founded by Naomi Watts, is now available at Credo Beauty online and in all stores. The brand's assortment includes The Full Monty body oil, Vag of Honor intimate area hydrator and more.

# Inside Dior Sauvage's Bestselling Status

No other men's fragrance has cracked the code to become the top seller among men's and women's perfumes combined worldwide.

BY JENNIFER WEIL

The Dior Sauvage range.



**PARIS** — In the ever more competitive fragrance industry jungle, Dior Sauvage men's scent ranks first among all fragrances — masculine and feminine combined — 10 years after its launch.

It is the only men's scent to make that claim. Currently, one bottle is snapped up every 30 seconds and more than 12 million of those are rung up yearly.

"It's by far the world's bestselling item today in the fragrance business," said Véronique Courtois, chief executive officer of Parfums Christian Dior.

Sauvage has held that pole position annually since 2021. "It's not only the number one men's fragrance sold in the world," she underlined. "It's the number-one fragrance sold in the world."

There's no specific formula to creating a fragrance hit. But various elements might have contributed to Sauvage's success. For one, there was a lucky number.

"Christian Dior was super superstitious, and his lucky number was number eight," Courtois said. "So it is because it was the eighth masculine line launched by the house? That's a superstitious way of looking at it."

"What is sure is this fragrance encapsulated something bigger than us," she continued. "Probably a vision of masculinity that was not existing, far away from all the stereotypes that existed on the market."

With Sauvage, Dior began to talk about masculine freedom, as the LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton-owned brand sensed a burden of masculinity and the stereotypes surrounding that. Its message became: You can be free and return to your roots. Johnny Depp incarnated this.

"He's always been free, even though he was a super Hollywood star," Courtois said.

Concurrently, the name "Sauvage" tapped into primal instincts, and the scent's olfactive composition included strength and refinement, elements of a classic, according to Courtois.

"It was kind of a cry for freedom," she continued, of the Sauvage packaging, adding launching it took a risk.

The original Eau Sauvage, fronted by Alain Delon, came out in 1966. The Sauvage Eau de Toilette iteration, developed by François Demachy, Dior's former perfumer-creator, in 2015 was meant to be more international.

"We coded it in a very classic way," Courtois said. "We chose the color that was among the favorite colors of Christian Dior: There was the gray, white, the light pink — rose bonheur. But there was this dark blue that was very us. This was how we could create a shock between

something that's never been seen and certainly something super classic."

A key element of staying contemporary and at the top is how a brand brings interest without changing its core.

The Sauvage line was expanded with more products. After the Eau de Toilette came the Eau de Parfum in 2018 and Parfum in 2019. Eau Forte — the nonalcohol-based proposition by Francis Kurdjian, Dior's current perfume creation director — launched last year and was new for a masculine fragrance line.

"We were the first to arrive with an elixir," Courtois said of the strong scent, Sauvage Elixir, introduced in 2021. "Our Sauvage is trying to push the boundaries of many things."

There was also a special edition made with craftspeople. And Sauvage launched Menciaire, a skin care line building on the fragrance, with a serum.

"It's breaking a lot of rules and at the same time is creating a classic," Courtois said of the Sauvage franchise. "At the same time, we brought novelty. Sauvage is about the extraordinary. That's why it's so Dior — it is about taking risk, enlarging the universe."

"It's all about this story of Christian Dior: This new look, reinventing without reinventing," she continued. "So it's always a question of building Sauvage within Dior."

Sauvage ranks first in 40 countries, according to Courtois. "It's answering a very strong men's insight that was very good in 2015 but is sustainable in time," she said.

Sauvage became a blockbuster quickly, including in Asia about three years ago. "The revolution of Sauvage is it brought people in the selective business just because of its proposition," Courtois said. "We enlarged the market a lot."

"Whenever you bring a new chapter, it has to reinforce the strength of what you want to say to the world," said Courtois, explaining the new global Sauvage campaign — the print ads came out in mid-August and the film on Sept. 2 — kept the original team: Depp as the star and Jean-Baptiste Mondino as the filmmaker. "We just wanted to pay tribute to nature...to the wilderness that is part of Sauvage, part of its name — 'sauvage' means 'wild.'"

In the new film campaign for Sauvage, a puma stars, as well as Depp. He lounges in the desert, when the big cat arrives on the scene. They're both walking and scratching at the earth. Then the two are together, side by side. Fearless, free and serene, Depp says: "In the wild, everything is always in front of you."

He brought the idea of the phrase, which

chimes with the designer Christian Dior's aim full of hopeful optimism — of making the world happier and more beautiful.

The puma idea came in a roundabout way. One year ago — in keeping with its CSR strategy — Parfums Christian Dior began working with the World Wildlife Fund to preserve and restore large spaces in France and North America.

The protection of biodiversity included protecting pumas, as there are only about 50,000 left in the world, as well as other endangered animals.

"This partnership is a very strong one," Courtois said. "It's here to create concrete actions, mapping sites for conservation, recording the number of individual animals, reconnecting habitats via ecological corridors, helping to educate communities. It was fantastic to match this with what we wanted to say with Sauvage."

Making that link came somewhat by chance. "The puma actually inspired us," she said.

In parallel, Mondino talked to the Dior

team about pumas. "He didn't know we were investing in pumas in Chile for their protection," Courtois said.

The first Sauvage campaign was about Depp leaving town to get back to his roots, while the second featured him with wolves.

"The third version is to say: The wild thing is frightening — the puma is the most dangerous animal in the world — but nature needs the puma," said Courtois, adding that vital animal symbolizes untamed spirit and is a hero of nature. "The new chapter was to anchor Sauvage in this wilderness in a much bigger way."

Each Sauvage campaign has had a whiff of spaghetti western humor, too.

Sauvage Eau de Toilette began selling a decade ago strongly in numerous markets, including the U.K., and became the top-selling men's scent globally in 2018.

"We thought, 'how can we build something phenomenal back 10 years later?'" Courtois said. "We thought it could be great to have an amazing pop-up store at Somerset House in London."

Called "Fort Sauvage," it will run from Sept. 25 to 28. "Guests will be, in a way, transported into a role, a cinematic Wild West world," Courtois said. "It should be magnetic and a way to rediscover the universe of Sauvage in a very playful way. It's also to connect with this young generation, to really build a myth."

This isn't meant to be retrospective, but about discovering Sauvage, the classic, today.

"We want every generation to have contact with this brand," Courtois said. "The concept is pretty wild, interesting, with a lot of experience and interactive games. We never played Sauvage that way."

Looking ahead, how much farther can Sauvage go? "We can be universal in a much bigger way," she said. "When you touch this universality and cross-generationality, the sky is the limit. This is very Dior."



Johnny Depp in the Dior Sauvage global campaign.

# Maly Bernstein Departs Bluemercury

Bluemercury's chief executive officer is departing the Macy's Inc.-owned retailer, and Sept. 26 will be her final day in the role.

BY JAMES MANSO

**Bluemercury's chief executive officer** is departing the retailer.

Maly Bernstein, who first assumed the top role in 2021, is leaving. Her last day will be Sept. 26.

Bernstein's next move could not be learned, and a successor is yet to be named.

Bernstein masterminded the specialty beauty retailer's growth strategy, including a range of store openings, upgrades and remodels to existing doors, a focus on efficacious products as well as discovery via its program The Cache.

"We're going to do 30 new stores and 30 remodels at least over the next three years," Bernstein told WWD in 2024. "We're creating a self care escape in the most coveted neighborhoods and we're carefully curating beauty rooted in efficacy, craftsmanship, service and education. With our strategy, we're planning to be the leading luxury beauty retailer."

In that vein, the brand matrix has been expanded beyond its footholds in skin care and makeup with a greater focus on fragrance, including brands like Vyrao and

House of Bô. On the wellness front, that entails supplements from Biocol Labs and Act + Acre.

According to financial results from parent company Macy's Inc.'s second quarter, Bluemercury is showing buoyancy despite weakening consumer sentiment, particularly toward luxury beauty. Net sales were up 3 percent for the time period, while comparable sales were up 1.2 percent. Dermatological skin care, in tandem with launches of Byredo, Victoria Beckham Beauty and Charlotte Tilbury, drove that growth.

"Under Maly's leadership, and in partnership with her team, she laid the groundwork for Bluemercury's next chapter in advancing the New Blue strategy – which includes revitalizing the brand, curating assortments to broaden our customer base and strengthening our presence in key markets," said Olivier Bron, chief executive officer of Bloomingdale's – to whom Bernstein reported – via email.

Bron said that Bluemercury saw 18 consecutive quarters of comparable

Maly Bernstein



Olivier Bron



sales growth, and he didn't have plans to immediately make any changes to that strategy. "Bluemercury customers are responding well to our aspirational-to-luxury positioning. They appreciate our curated assortments and elevated customer service orientation," he said. "I will be working closely with the Bluemercury leadership team to ensure our strategy and priorities remain on track

and build on our momentum to drive the business forward."

At the 2025 WWD Beauty CEO Summit in May, Bernstein noted the retailer's targeting of luxury consumers, which are composed of varied demographics and a household median income of \$250,000. To that end, Bluemercury is focusing on personalized service and has refreshed the brand's visual identity.

# Timothy Han Returns With Imprint

Han is looking to conjure the "mood" of specific books, including Jack Kerouac's "On the Road," with a series of unusual scents packaged as if they were paperbacks. BY SAMANTHA CONTI

**LONDON** – What does literature smell like? There are probably as many answers as there are books, and the perfumer Timothy Han has a few of his own.

Han is making a comeback with a collection of perfumes inspired by the "mood" of books he believes have impacted culture and society over the last 150 years.

The collection is called Imprint, and the fragrances are packaged in boxes resembling paperback books, with original artwork on the cover. The boxes are designed to be collected, kept and displayed, and can be shelved sideways, like books.

Han refers to Imprint as a "perfume publishing house," with stories written in scent "that unfold on your skin like pages in a novel."

The debut collection features six fragrances named after the book titles: Against Nature, by Joris-Karl Huysmans; She Came to Stay, by Simone de Beauvoir; On the Road, by Jack Kerouac; The Decay of the Angel, by Yukio Mishima; Nadja, by André Breton, and Heart of Darkness, by Joseph Conrad.

They will launch at Dover Street Market Paris in late October, priced at 164 pounds for a 50-ml. bottle, while the website is set to go live soon for preorders.

Han, who earlier in his career worked in the design studio with John Galliano, Issey Miyake and Koji Tatsuno, will be a familiar name to many. He had an eponymous line of candles, and later fragrances, which Han shelved during the pandemic. His scents were sold at places including Browns, Corso Como, Liberty and Mr Porter.

He also works on bespoke projects, and created the scent for The Peninsula London's collection of in-room bath products as part of its "Best of British"

partnership scheme, as well as for Lady Gaga and high net worth private clients.

Han isn't a trained perfumer – he studied architecture in London – but he works closely with noses to create scents which can strike people as "unsettling, polarizing and unusual – and that's what I like," he said during an interview.

Han is not bound to the traditional array, or hierarchy, of notes, and thinks instead of the mood he wants to conjure.

With On the Road, he wanted smells that evoked a trip across America: "burnt rubber, the hot tarmac of New York City in July, midwestern wheat fields, jazz, whiskey and the Pacific Coast," Han said. By contrast, She Came to Stay has a more domestic air, with notes of basil, lemon, vetiver and unexpected jolts of clove and oak moss.

Han said he wanted The Decay of the Angel to capture "birth, death and reincarnation, with the smell of sex, sweat and ash, and intensity of flowers that have been around too long." It's actually not as dark as it sounds, and smells more like freshly cut flowers.

In Against Nature, Han played with Huysmans' obsession with adding an artificial patina to the natural world. It's his first synthetic scent and has "bright green sapling notes mixed with metal, lacquer and blood." Heart of Darkness has the more natural scent of "damp river banks, wet leaves, coal and ivory."

Han plans to build his library of fragrances and create a "cultural platform." There are plans for a book club, collaborations with writers and artists, and "unusual activations." He sees the website as part-magazine, part-library and a platform for essays, interviews, recommendations "and reflections on scent and storytelling."

Timothy Han



## Clearing the Confusion Breaking Down Tariffs, De Minimis and Trade Deals

**THE PAST** few months have been dominated by an unrelenting cycle of trade policy changes, as tariff rates were announced, postponed and negotiated. Companies have also had to scramble as the de minimis provision closed, ending a long-running duty exception for direct-from-factory shipments. At the same time, scrutiny over transshipments and rule of origin is making the U.S. importation process more complex. Adding uncertainty, key trade deals in Africa and Haiti are nearing their expiration dates. With everything in flux, there is copious confusion over what the new trade landscape means in practice. This panel will break down what you need to know about trade and outline possible scenarios for the near future.

### SPEAKERS

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**STEPHEN E. LAMAR**  
*President & Chief Executive Officer*  
AMERICAN APPAREL & FOOTWEAR ASSOC.



**JOSH TEITELBAUM**  
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## ACCESSORIES

# Beka Breaks Into Song for Radley's New Campaign

● British accessories brand Radley has tapped the singer-songwriter as the face of its fall campaign, where she sings a new composition called "Bloom," a nod to the brand's new attitude.

BY SAMANTHA CONTI

**LONDON** – Radley London has tapped British singer-songwriter Beka for an ad campaign that marks a pivotal moment in the brand's shift to accessible luxury and cosmopolitan cool.

The campaign, "A New Dawn," breaks this week with Beka, whose real name is Rebeka Prance and who is pictured skipping around London with her Romilly top-handle bag in a shoot by Rhys Frampton.

She also composed a song called "Bloom," which she performs in the campaign's film shorts made with videographer Danny Bonnar.

Beka's long, swingy ponytail and high energy are part of a marketing push by the British accessories brand, which is based in London and manufactures its bags in India. It also plans to open a pop-up in Soho on Bateman Street, is papering the town with flyposters, and covering London buses with the campaign images.

The timing of the latter could not be better as London is in the thick of a major Tube strike that started on Sunday and is set to last until early Friday morning. Buses (and some overground trains) are

the only transport in town.

The Radley team has also created a tabloid-style newspaper with an artfully blurry image of Beka and her Romilly bag on the cover, and an interview inside. It has added the image of Beka to the wrappers on dark chocolate bars, which it is giving out as part of the campaign.

The new website launches in the U.K. this week, a month after the U.S. one, and there is momentum on both sides of the Atlantic, according to Nick Vance, who's served as Radley's chief executive officer since 2023.

In an interview, Vance said Radley's results in the U.K. and the U.S. have been "above expectations," a result of the brand's focus on offering a "high-quality, high-value product" and the new, more contemporary creations under Fernando Soriano Iglesias, the brand's first design director.

As reported, Soriano Iglesias' résumé includes accessories roles at Loewe, Calvin Klein and Carolina Herrera.

Radley launched at Nordstrom six months ago and the store has quickly become one of its biggest partners in the region. It also sells at Anthropologie, and will launch at Dillard's in the coming weeks.

Vance said that, in the U.S., Radley has successfully been shifting away from the wholesale model to dropshipping; "invested heavily" in its core IT and e-commerce systems; and adjusted prices "very, very carefully" to offset the new tariffs imposed by President Donald Trump.

"The U.S. is an important growth market, and we want to offer exceptional value

in the accessible luxury space. That is so important to us. We've been navigating the tariffs sensibly, and still want to offer the world's best \$348 handbag," he said, adding that "looking ahead, we're expecting great things from the U.S. market."

Vance said the aim is for all customers to "re-aspire" to the brand, which has undergone a sea change over the past year.

For most of its 26 years in business, Radley was known for its practical, accessibly priced handbags and wallets with a distinctive Scottie dog logo. They came in a rainbow of saturated colors and drew a loyal Middle England customer.

With the appointment of Soriano Iglesias, Radley has moved into richer, more sophisticated territory, with a broader offer, and its eyes on a younger and more diverse clientele. His first full collection began selling to wholesale customers in January, and landed on shop floors last month.

U.K. customers have also been rediscovering Radley. British retailer John Lewis, which is going through its own fashion upgrade, has flagged it as one of its top brands for fall.

According to Companies House, Radley London's sales in the year to April 2024 were 72 million pounds, and the company made a loss of 2.2 million pounds. Those numbers reflect the period before the arrival of Soriano Iglesias, and the brand's turnaround.

The Beka campaign, which was shot across London, is just the beginning. The Romilly, with its soft folded leather

Beka is the star of Radley's new campaign.



construction, three interior compartments, and 299-pound price tag, is one of many bags that Radley is ready to push.

In October, the Chancery, a similarly roomy bag with a large flap closure, will launch, while Radley is already preparing for the Christmas campaign which is set to launch in November.

## EXCLUSIVE

# Pierre Hardy, Alexandra Golovanoff Unveil First Joint Handbag



Alexandra Golovanoff and Pierre Hardy



The Alex bag by Pierre Hardy and Alexandra Golovanoff.

● The Alex lands in stores on Tuesday.

BY JOELLE DIDERICH

**PARIS** – Alexandra Golovanoff, the French former television presenter turned knitwear designer, is known for her perfect cashmere sweaters. Now she's launching what she hopes will be the perfect handbag.

For her first foray into leather goods, she turned for advice to her longtime friend, Pierre Hardy. That lunchtime conversation ended up giving birth to their first

collaboration. "It was time we had a baby," Golovanoff joked.

The brief for the Alex bag, which lands in stores on Tuesday, was simple. "I am the brief," she deadpanned.

An accessories fiend who got to know Hardy through his shoe designs for Balenciaga in the early 2000s, under Nicolas Ghesquière, the keen cyclist that was searching for a boxy yet supple style that would become a go-to for all occasions.

Hardy came up with a medium-sized carryall style with two top handles, a zip, and interchangeable leather and canvas

straps. Made of double-faced calf leather – one side grained, the other smooth – it can be carried over the arm or crossbody, fits an iPad and has an external phone pocket.

"There was no great strategy behind it; we didn't come up with a five-year plan or anything. It all happened really organically and spontaneously," Hardy said.

Golovanoff did not want an "it" bag, so Hardy made it the opposite of the Alpha, the signature style he launched in 2006, which remains his bestseller.

"One is rigid, the other is soft; one is multicolored, the other completely monochrome; one's a flap bag, the other has a zipper," he reeled off. "For me, as a designer, that was what made it a fun, interesting and exciting challenge."

Used to designing with a generic female customer in mind, he enjoyed the back-and-forth of creating the bag of Golovanoff's dreams. "It's almost like made-to-measure or couture," he mused.

The Alex comes in black, burgundy and camel, and features minimal hardware.

"It's a fairly neutral object, and the idea is that the girl who wears it can make it her own," Hardy said.

Golovanoff is not above switching straps to customize her handbags, but she draws the line at Labubus or other fashionable tchotchkes. "I wanted a bag that would keep its shape but that's light, because it ends up weighing you down otherwise. Every gram counts," she said.

She is, however, fixated with gluing Red Cross stickers on her bags, including a vintage black Hermès. "I sent it to the Hermès Spa and they told me I was nuts to put a sticker on it. I apologized and they took it off and cleaned it – and poof, I put another one right back," she said.

"Glue and solvents are very bad for leather. That is a major no-no," Hardy countered in gentle reprimand. Still, it's probably that kind of nonchalance that makes Golovanoff a typical Parisian, he said.

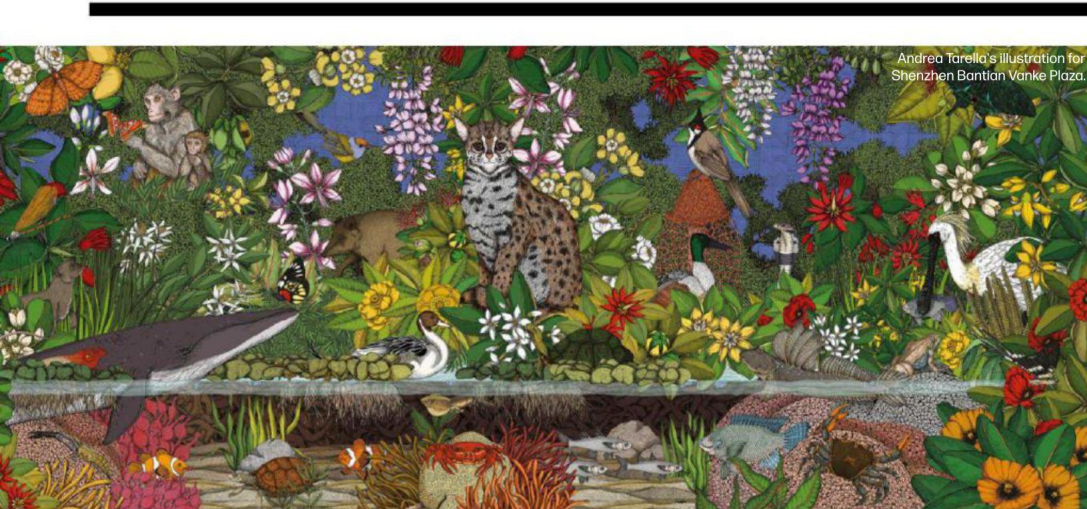
"They are quite demanding and knowledgeable about what makes a beautiful object," he mused. "And then, because they're very familiar with this French heritage, they like to treat those objects quite casually."

A case in point: Golovanoff suggested that the strap of her bag doubles nicely as a belt.

The Alex, which is made in Morocco, is available in their respective stores and e-commerce sites, priced at 1,250 euros, or \$1,450. At a time when luxury consumers are questioning inflated price tags, Golovanoff said it was important to offer good value for money.

"We've never done sales and we don't want to, which allows us to have an honest and fair price year-round," she said.

Investing in a good handbag is another secret to French girl style, she suggested. "If you have a good bag and good shoes, and your nails are not gross, then the rest doesn't matter so much," she said.



Andrea Tarella's illustration for Shenzhen Bantian Vanke Plaza.



Prada's Minimal Baroque eyewear campaign, illustration by Andrea Tarella.

EYE

# Andrea Tarella: The Self-taught Luxury Brand Illustrator

From collaborations with Prada and Gucci to children's books, Tarella has evolved his passion for nature and illustration into a career.

BY LUISA ZARGANI

**MILAN** — Illustrations can be as powerful as photographs and their visual imagery often lives on, influencing our subconscious.

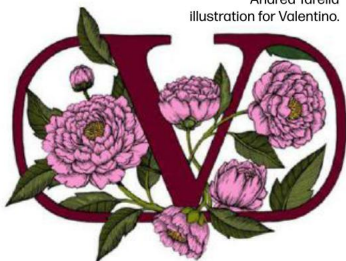
They can be an arresting medium to cut through the avalanche of photos on our screen feeds today, and become an interesting marketing and communication tool. To wit, Andrea Tarella has succeeded in transforming his passion for drawing into a profession, working with brands ranging from Prada and Gucci to Valentino.

Most recently Tarella drew a forest of animals and plants for the surprising urban oasis in Bantian Vanke Plaza mall in Shenzhen, China, reflecting his lifelong admiration for fauna and flora. The drawing in Shenzhen allowed him to discover the local animals and plants, hoping to inspire others "to explore the beauties of these territories."

Originally from Verbania, an Italian town overlooking Lake Maggiore, "surrounded by woods and mountains," he was always "fascinated by nature," he recalled. At the age of 18, he moved to Milan to pursue his creative path. A self-taught artist, in an interview Tarella looked back to his early years, and how he was "discovered" by Elio Fiorucci.

"It was a baptism of fire," said Tarella with a smile, sitting in his garden, a hidden gem in Milan, where turtles, rabbits and hens live.

Andrea Tarella illustration for Valentino.



"One of my dear friends worked with Fiorucci and, for his birthday, I made a bouquet of roses in crepe paper. To my surprise, Fiorucci saw them and asked me to create 300 of them for the inauguration of a new line. After that, for the first edition of Vogue's Fashion's Night Out, I sat in his store drawing elves, butterflies, mushrooms, sketches of an imaginative world for his Love Therapy project, as gifts for customers and anyone who wandered in."

The watercolor cards were a success, with a long line spilling out of the store, he said. "At one point, Elio was called into the store and standing next to me, he greeted everyone coming in. That's when I realized this could be more than a passion."

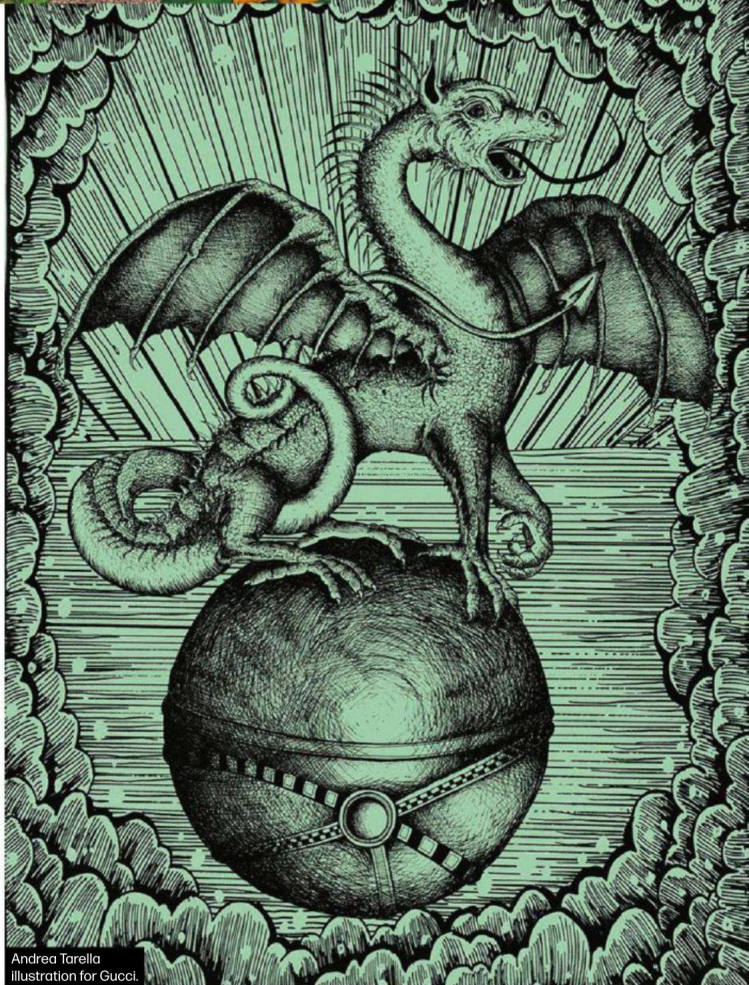
Watercolor and ink are his favorite tools, and nature — with its plants and animals — remains his main source of inspiration. In fact, he also created the illustrations for a children's book, "Lucciole, squaletti e un po' di pasta [Fireflies, sharklings and a bit of tiny soup pasta]" published by Salani this year, and written by Donatella Di Pietrantonio, the winner of Italy's most important literary award, the Premio Strega.

"The book has quickly become a bestseller in the children's literature category," he said proudly, flipping through the pages, filled with his whimsical creatures and floral decorations. "Working in publishing and in editorial was one of my dreams."

Last year he was selected to create the Strega d'autore artwork for the prestigious prize. He also created illustrations for "Guanti Rossi [Red Gloves]," a series of educational books aimed at promoting Italian Sign Language and bilingual education methods for deaf children.

A major step in his career was creating the artwork for Prada's "Minimal Baroque" sunglasses collection campaign launched in 2011. "At the time, illustration was undervalued, but of course Prada paved the way and others followed, bringing this medium back," said Tarella. "Miuccia Prada for the first time wanted a campaign entirely dedicated to eyewear," he said of the glasses, highly recognizable for the curls embellishing the accessories.

Ivo Bisignano and Marcela Gutiérrez were also tapped for the campaign. "Social media was not as developed as it is today. Sure there were blogs and Facebook, but the success was immediate, and we went



Andrea Tarella illustration for Gucci.

from zero to 100, there were suddenly editorials everywhere, window dressing and so on," he still marveled.

"Illustrations go through cycles, and clearly during the pandemic there was a boom driven by social distancing, which pushed people to experiment, try alternative ways to communicate, that I was hoping would linger."

Over the years he has worked with a number of established luxury brands, from Agnona, Buccellati and Bulgari to Dior, Etro, Gucci, Louis Vuitton, Salvatore Ferragamo, Tod's, Trussardi, Valentino and Yves Saint Laurent. He cherishes every experience, "learning from each, understanding company dynamics, processes and briefs and working with the creative directors and their teams."

Tarella was selected for a live artistic

appearance during the 30th anniversary celebration of the YSL "Paris" fragrance in 2013, during which he created a series of unique paintings using the brand's makeup products. These were exhibited in the show "Fenêtres," part of "The Super Ego of the Eye" at Milan's SpazioRAW.

Tarella worked with Coty on the launch of the first fragrance by Alessandro Michele for Gucci, called "Bloom" — fitting for the artist.

He often does not sign the drawings. "I really like to work and always do different things. This gives me independence," he explained.

Now that he has established his name, his dream project would be to stage an exhibition. "It's one of my resolutions, and now it's becoming a personal urgency," he admitted.

# François-Henri Pinault on the Changing of the Guard at Kering

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



François-Henri Pinault

## Taking Over

But when Pinault took over the CEO reins from Serge Weinberg at age 43 in 2005, he faced a similar financial scenario, his main goal then being to maximize cash generation and reduce the group's then-debt load of 4.5 billion euros.

He also faced some skepticism in the market, given that what was then PPR was a relatively new player in European luxury.

The Pinault family came onto the international fashion radar in 1999 when it agreed to buy 40 percent of Gucci Group via its distribution conglomerate Pinault-Printemps-Redoute or PPR, which ran department stores, furniture and electronics chains, and a mail-order business.

PPR began edging out of retail in 2006 when it sold the Printemps retail chain, following up with a stock market listing for African trading company CFAO in 2009 and a sale of the Conforama furniture chain to Steinhoff International in 2010.

In 2013, it finally turned a page on its retail past and became Kering, initially a fashion and accessories specialist in the luxury and sport-lifestyle segments, and later exiting the latter segment.

Indeed, after shedding retail and sport-lifestyle holdings, Kering was whittled down to a luxury pure player with revenues just north of 3 billion euros.

Yet even then, Pinault had a fluid view of the sector: "Ferrari is a luxury car. Falcon is a luxury plane. It's a very, very large universe," he told WWD in a 2005 interview. "What we call luxury is not only fashion and accessories. For me, luxury is much wider than that."

Under his leadership, Kering took many headline-making risks, notably taking a chance on Gucci studio talent Alessandro Michele in 2015, rapidly changing the fortunes of the Italian fashion house, and the same year tapping underground

Georgian designer Demna from the nascent Vetements brand to take the creative helm of Balenciaga, unleashing fashion fireworks galore — and explosive growth.

An earnest and thoughtful executive with a warm, open demeanor, Pinault was seated at Monday's interview under a large black-and-white painting of an owl, the mascot for Kering — and a metaphor for his watchful eyes on shifting consumer sentiment and economic fluctuations.

Over a wide-ranging, one-hour conversation, Pinault, 63, spoke frankly about his initial steep learning curve, his entrepreneurial streak, his pioneering sustainability initiatives, and his new priorities:

**WWD: You've been piloting this group as CEO for 20 years, through important transformations, through boom times and lean times. How does it feel to give up the CEO reins?**

**François-Henri Pinault:** I remain the reference shareholder, and I remain president (of the board of directors) so I don't feel like I'm leaving. But still, it makes me realize what I've done for 20 years, and it was an extraordinary adventure. First, I was very lucky to have these responsibilities very early on. I was 43 years old, so I'm very, very grateful for that. At the time, my father was around my age, he was 65 or 66, and I'm 63. Above all, he let me do it, he trusted me from the beginning... and I realize it even more now that it's my turn to pass the baton on the operational part.

I still have the feeling that we're at the very beginning. What's exciting is to see what Kering will become... and that's why I'm very happy to have found Luca because we have someone who is there to build. He's not there to take over something and manage it as best as possible. He's here to bring something new, a new vision, a breath of fresh air, and a new idea. And I like that.

**WWD: Even though the appointment of a new Kering CEO felt sudden to some, how far back can you trace the prospect of an eventual handover?**

**F-H.P.:** I've been preparing for it for several years now. When my father gave me the responsibility for the group in 2005, first of all, I wasn't succeeding my father, I was succeeding Serge Weinberg. But he told me two things: If I were your age, I would want to have full responsibility for the group. And for me, at 65 or 66, I don't want to cling to power at all costs. It's always very dangerous to hold on beyond a certain age. And so I told myself, "Wow, I hope that when the time comes, I'll be able to do that, too."

One special thing about me: I love numbers, and I told myself 20 years is a good symbol, and in 20 years means I'll be 63. So I set that goal for myself. Not at the very beginning, but somewhere between 2010 and 2015, I told myself 20 years would be an important milestone. I'll keep that in mind. And when the dates approached, I started the (succession) process quite naturally.

It's not an easy decision, but it's a very rewarding one to make it. That's why you have to tell yourself what matters is not me. It's the interest of the company. The group is moving into a new phase of its development. We need a new vision, new perspectives.

**WWD: Before taking the helm of Kering, you had been running CFAO, Fnac and Artémis. Did having a bit of an outsider perspective then help you?**

**F-H.P.:** The group was in good health in 2005. I could have chosen to manage it in the best possible way. But when he entrusted me with the reins, my father said, "What will your mark be? Think about what you want to do with the group later. That's what's important." That had

a big impact on me. And so that's how I came to suggest this transformation.

Having had quite a bit of experience in distribution, even if it wasn't luxury distribution, helped me a lot, especially the technology part. At Fnac, we launched e-commerce in 1997, so very, very early. Hence I had a real digital culture when I arrived and that served me well at Kering.

During the first phase, between 2005 and 2012 when I was transforming the group, I still managed the divisions, including Rexel, Fnac, etc. As a conglomerate, I had interactions with Robert Polet (then head of Gucci Group) and interactions from time to time with a few brands. During that phase I took the time to learn about luxury.

I understood that our (luxury) portfolio was very coherent, but that the houses had much more potential than what they had achieved up until then. I was convinced of that. There was really something to be done, but differently. When you're a challenger in an industry, there's no point in trying to copy-paste what those bigger than you have done. Of course, you have to understand what they do, what they do well, and what they don't do so well. But above all, you need your own vision, your own way of doing things. I've always been obsessed with changing the rules of the game.

**WWD: Also at the time of your appointment, PPR had faced skepticism in the industry for its being a newcomer in the luxury realm. How do you think Kering earned its recognition?**

**F-H.P.:** In 2005, PPR was a conglomerate of eight divisions... and the luxury division was the smallest. So at the beginning, when you're a conglomerate, you don't directly manage the businesses because the businesses are too different... The organization of the group above the brands has changed enormously and we have brought luxury expertise into the group's structures that we didn't have before. And then we moved quite quickly to reposition the brands. It was in 2012 that I took over all the luxury brand CEOs directly. The question was, "How do we become an international player?"

The priority became the development of the brands and their positioning, and that's where we changed the rules a bit... We took the gamble of differentiating ourselves through the creative component and less through the *savoir-faire* aspect. Heritage is also very important in luxury, but we said to ourselves, if we do that like everyone else; it's going to take a very long time. So I thought, why not use this creative component to create a difference? And that's when we changed artistic directors to ones with a stronger creative point of view, and a more global vision of the house. We harmonized the brand's vision across all points of expression.

This very global 360-degree approach to the aesthetics of a house that we pushed quite far allowed us to create these differences, this visibility, this desirability. We know fashion is cyclical, and we increased the cyclical aspect of the group by doing that, but that's what allowed us to change the dimension of the houses, and usher in a vision of a luxury that is a little more modern, a little more dynamic, but also consistent.

We developed a vision of creativity which is built over time. And we did that first with Hedi (Slimane at Saint Laurent), then with Alessandro (Michele at Gucci) and Demna (at Gucci), where we didn't change our aesthetic every six months or every year. There was a very long continuity to establish a strong aesthetic. And that's what we managed to do in our main brands. The figures speak for themselves. ▶

## Achievements

**WWD: Putting modesty aside for moment, can you mention some proud achievements during your tenure as CEO of Kering?**

**F-H.P.:** In a more entrepreneurial dimension, there is Kering Eyewear. I'm very proud of Kering Eyewear because, first of all, no one had done it before, to internalize what had been a licensed business. The licenses we bought were worth around 300 million... and we grew it to 1.6 billion. So that's a real entrepreneurial success, and we're still at the beginning. We changed the rules of the game for internalizing licenses. It's something we anticipated, and everyone followed.

On a smaller scale, there is Qeelin. In the early 2010s, China was driving a lot of growth in the luxury sector and we asked ourselves very early on why there wouldn't be a luxury brand in China? And we bought Qeelin in 2012 and it's grown tenfold, if I'm not mistaken. So, in the jewelry sector, here's a Chinese brand based on Chinese codes and Chinese culture that is developing essentially in China and is doing very well, and we're continuing to do so. It's not what will determine the size of the group tomorrow. But I remain very optimistic about this initiative.

**WWD: Beyond business, you also brought your own convictions to the group about planet and people.**

**F-H.P.:** It's linked to my upbringing. That's pretty clear on the environmental side. I was surrounded by women – my mother, my first wife – who were very, very sensitive to that. And my father always told me that a business can't just be about constantly seeking profit. Businesses have responsibilities that go beyond the economic or financial objectives that we set for ourselves.

It became obvious in 2007-2008 that sustainable development was part of the definition of modern luxury. You cannot develop a true luxury brand that does not take into consideration respect for the planet, the preservation of its own resources, its know-how.

For example, we developed leather tanning processes that don't use heavy metals, and we open-source them. It's about inspiring others and convincing others to follow us. That's the only way we can truly have an impact. So we have contributed to the creation of the Fashion Pact and its development. There's also all the work we've done on regenerative agriculture and water protection. We're going very far on that.

And then there's social responsibility. Again, women have had a big impact on me, especially Salma (Hayek) who brought to my attention the reality of violence against women. Our collaborators are more than 60 percent women and our clientele is overwhelmingly female. And so women's causes, including combating violence against women, became another important dimension and purpose for the group.

**WWD: This is not the first time that succession at a family-controlled luxury group went to a non-family member. What would you say is the value of having a fresh perspective?**

**F-H.P.:** It's not up to the company to adapt to the family that controls it; it's up to the family to adapt to the needs of the company. It's the right time for Kering to have a new CEO, to have a new perspective, a new vision.

It's not just about being family, it's first about having the skills. But the question didn't arise since it's not on the agenda. For the third generation, they are still too young. On the other hand, it was the right time for the group. And so we had this

very, very structured process with Serge (Weinberg) and the nomination committee, and Luca emerged quite naturally as the ideal candidate for the group.

What would be very dangerous is for the company to wait until someone in the family is ready to make the change. The company has its own life, its own needs. And it was the right time. And it just so happened that at that moment, a candidate from outside the family was needed.

**WWD: Is there still room for taking risks in fashion? In your 20 years leading Kering, what were some of the risks you took that you're most grateful for, and why?**

**F-H.P.:** You can't claim to be successful if you don't take risks. Afterwards, there are different types of risk. And in the case of Kering, yes, we took a risk taking on artistic director profiles who have a very precise, very sharp creative vision, without trying to please everyone. We did that with Alessandro, with Demna, and Matthieu (Blazy at Bottega Veneta) too. We've taken entrepreneurial risks like Kering Eyewear.

The point is taking the right risks and knowing how to backtrack. It's not easy, but you must have this ability to regularly question yourself, to not be afraid to change when you've made a mistake.

**WWD: What do you think Kering has brought to the luxury sector over the past 20 years?**

**F-H.P.:** In the luxury sector, we brought back brands that were either dormant or in difficulty in the 2000s, such as Saint Laurent, Balenciaga and Bottega Veneta, and built them into another dimension. And so we have enriched the competition in the luxury sector, which is always a very good thing.

Also, highlighting and pushing the creative dimension of luxury undoubtedly contributed greatly to introducing younger generations to luxury. We weren't the only ones, but I think we contributed to that, too.

**WWD: Can you describe what your role will be as president of the board of directors?**

**F-H.P.:** I am responsible for leading the board of directors, and the role of the board itself is to make the strategic choices that will be proposed based on the options that will be proposed by the new CEO.

I know that there is a rumor in the market

“My father always told me that a business can't just be about constantly seeking profit.”

FRANÇOIS-HENRI PINAULT

that I will remain very hands-on. Not at all. I know how important it was that I was given freedom of action on my first day in 2005. My father never wanted to intervene, which was critical for the transformation we managed to achieve. And so today, when I'm bringing in a very great new CEO to lead Kering, there's no way I'm going to stop him and make decisions for him. I want to give him all the leeway possible to express himself with all the talent he has.

**WWD: We hear Mr. de Meo has been quite active in getting acclimated to the group since his eventual appointment was announced in June. Can you share some of your first impressions?**

**F-H.P.:** It's true that Luca is a very active person, so he's already met almost all of the CEOs, almost all of the artistic directors, and all of the group's corporate directors. He's eager to get started, and he saw all those people without me, obviously.

But the feedback I have from the collaborators is that he has a lot of charisma, along with humility and simplicity in his contacts. He fits the group's culture well. He's someone who has a real sense of urgency. He's constantly thinking about the priorities, brand by brand, from the discussions he's had. What's really interesting is that even though he doesn't know the luxury world, he has a real sensitivity to brands. Right away, he got into questions about brands, brand positioning. He loves the product. He visited all our stores in Paris.

He's met a lot of people from outside, too, and he's really, really keen to understand why things are done the way they are in the luxury sector before changing them. What's certain is that he's someone who's going to bring new things. It's about bringing a new vision, new ideas to help the group evolve in its new phase. It's a young group, there's plenty to do. He already has some very interesting ideas. It's very exciting.

**WWD: Relinquishing the CEO role at Kering will free you up for other**

**projects and responsibilities. What will be some of the key subjects and priorities you will turn to?**

**F-H.P.:** I'm the head of the board of directors, and I'll be working on Artémis, where we still have a number of important assets. I'll be looking after them full-time and the long-term diversification of this family holding. So, it's a very interesting subject. I'm not about to go fishing.

**WWD: What will you miss in the first months after having passed the baton of CEO of Kering?**

**F-H.P.:** I'm really not like that. I think more about what's to come more than the past. We have extraordinary teams here, and I entrust them to Luca. I know he will be able to do it perfectly well. I will find others at Artémis.

It's true that I became attached to the artistic directors, to many collaborators of the group and I will see them less often, by definition. But it's not a regret. It's a natural evolution and it's good for them, too. They will have the chance to have a new, different leader, who has different ideas. It's very enriching for everyone.

**WWD: You have new designers, and very accomplished ones, at three of Kering's most prominent fashion houses. What does this say about the nature of your group and its place in the fashion firmament?**

**F-H.P.:** First of all, that means we're still very attractive. We've never had a problem recruiting talent. Even if we have difficulties – I don't hide that – the quality of our houses, and the quality of the group's culture remains very, very attractive. The proof is that these talents have joined us. Yes, I'm very proud to have convinced these artistic directors to join us and express themselves at Kering.

**WWD: So should we expect you to attend the Milan and Paris shows later this month?**

**F-H.P.:** Yes, but discreetly. It's no longer my place to be in the front row. But you might find me backstage. ■

Luca de Meo



# Fashion Scoops



Julia Roberts features on the debut cover of 72 Magazine.

## Debut Face

Julia Roberts is the debut cover star of 72 Magazine, a quarterly print publication and digital platform meant to be the cornerstone of Edward Enninful's latest venture, EE72.

The official reveal is set for Monday, with the magazine set to land on newsstands in major cities worldwide on Friday.

The cover was photographed in London by Craig McDean and styled by Elizabeth Stewart, with Roberts wearing a black Phoebe Philo shirt and blazer, and chunky gold and diamond jewelry by Tiffany & Co.

Enninful, cofounder and chief creative officer of EE72, said launching the magazine with Roberts "was a strategic decision that signals exactly what we're building, a media company that champions established icons alongside emerging voices."

Choosing Roberts, he added, "is emblematic of our mission: celebrating those who've shaped our creative industries while elevating the next generation of talent whose stories deserve to be told on a global stage."

He described the 57-year-old actress, whose role as a Yale professor in the new Luca Guadagnino film "After the Hunt" has won critics' praise, as having "a unique ability to connect

fashion, beauty, luxury and culture," and added that editorial director Sarah Harris will collaborate closely with Simone Oliver. Oliver is head of content for EE72, the media and entertainment company Enninful unveiled in February.

To mark the global launch, Edward and Akua Enninful, his sister and cofounder, will host an international series of events every Friday during the fashion week season, starting with New York this Friday.

The New York event will be hosted at the Four Seasons Hotel New York Downtown in partnership with Google Shopping and Moncler, while the London event will be held at Soho Mews House with Levi's.

Enninful will also be signing limited-edition hardback copies of 72 Magazine in New York City and London.

—SAMANTHA CONTI

## New Role

Versace has found its new global communications director.

Eloise Hautcoeur has been appointed to the role, quietly joining the Italian brand at the end of August.

She succeeded Mathieu Baboulène in the position and reports to Caroline Deroche Pasquier, who last year joined Versace as vice president, global communications, after a stint at Bottega Veneta.

Hautcoeur comes from the Kering-owned brand, too. Most recently she was the London-based head of communications, Northern Europe, at Bottega Veneta,

Eloise Hautcoeur



Justine Lupe, Roberto Lorenzini and Edgar Ramirez.

which she joined in 2021. Previously she held PR, talent management, media, events and partnership roles both in-house for brands and in agencies, ranging from head of communications in the U.K. for Saint Laurent to senior PR director at KCD in London.

Hautcoeur relocated to Milan during the summer, officially joining Versace on Aug. 28 — just in time for the Venice Film Festival, during which Dario Vitale's new vision for the brand debuted with the viral look sported by Julia Roberts and re-born by Amanda Seyfried.

The daytime attire — a blue wool blazer jacket with the sleeves rolled up, striped shirt and denim pants — that Roberts wore for the "After the Hunt" movie press conference and Seyfried borrowed to promote her "The Testament of Ann Lee" film, was flanked by a second design Vitale created to offer a preview of his take on the Atelier Versace line, as well.

Roberts walked the red carpet of her movie premiere in a custom-made gown cut from navy crepe de chine and featuring a damier motif handcrafted and embroidered with black silk thread.

Versace's strategy was not unique since the likes of Louise Trotter and Jonathan Anderson also seized the event's visibility to tease their new creative direction for Bottega Veneta and the Dior woman, respectively.

As for Vitale's official debut during Milan Fashion Week, it is expected to be an intimate event rather than a runway show. As reported, the spring 2026 collection will be unveiled on Sept. 26 through a presentation and, according to sources, there will be a video component — SANDRA SALIBIAN

## Exiting Tod's

Roberto Lorenzini is to step down as Tod's Group chief executive officer of the Americas.

The decision has been taken in mutual agreement with the owners of the Italian group, the Della Valle family.

"It has been an incredible honor to lead this organization for more than a decade," Lorenzini stated. "I am proud of what we have accomplished together — from showing resilience during challenging times to introducing new ways of growing the business. With this talented team in place and a clear direction ahead, I am confident the company is well-positioned for the future. I would also like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Della Valle family for entrusting me with this responsibility and for their constant support throughout these years."

In a statement, the Italian group praised Lorenzini, as he "contributed significantly to the company's growth

in the U.S., building a strong team, guiding the organization through key milestones and navigating challenges such as the pandemic."

In addition, "more recently, he supported the launch of an innovative business model designed to strengthen partnerships with major wholesale clients — an initiative that boosted sales performance and reinforced the long-term positioning of the brands."

Lorenzini joined Tod's in January 2012, overseeing the Tod's, Roger Vivier and Fay brands and succeeding Marco Giacometti, who was appointed global manager of e-commerce for Tod's Group.

Prior to Tod's, Lorenzini was commercial director at Middle East luxury retail operator Etoile Group, and before that, president and CEO of Sixty USA and president and chief operating officer of Versace USA. Earlier in his career, Lorenzini held positions at Fendi, PricewaterhouseCoopers and Deloitte & Touche.

Tod's did not specify when Lorenzini will exit, adding that "to ensure continuity and sustained momentum in the region," the executive "will continue to support the company in an advisory capacity during this transition" as a successor takes up the position.

As per the latest figures available, before the group delisted from the Italian Stock Exchange, in 2023 revenues in the Americas amounted to 85 million euros, up 3.5 percent on 2022. This represented 7.6 percent of total sales of 1.12 billion euros.

In September last year, John Galantic, previously president and chief operating officer of Chanel Inc., was named Tod's Group CEO.

Diego Della Valle, who held this role before, remained chairman and his brother Andrea vice chairman. — LUISA ZARGANI ▶



A sketch from Jason Wu's spring 2026 collection.

## Jason's Art Partner

Jason Wu is partnering with the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation for spring 2026.

The designer's upcoming collection "Collage" draws inspiration from 10 of Rauschenberg's "Hoarfrosts" series and "Airport Suite" works from the '70s, which were rooted in the artist's experimental use of textiles. Rauschenberg's creative renderings of fabric have informed various silhouettes and textures in Wu's new collection, which will be unveiled during his runway show on Sept. 14 in the Brooklyn Navy Yard. The show's set will be centered around a major Rauschenberg work on loan from the foundation.

"This collection, themed 'Collage,' is my tribute to Mr. Rauschenberg's work and my personal journey as an immigrant

who collects what seem disparate references into my creations. In that sense, there is a very direct link to the legacy and mythology of Robert Rauschenberg," Jason Wu said in a statement announcing the collaboration.

Rauschenberg is the focus of several upcoming museum shows in honor of the artist's centennial year. A few days after Wu's runway show, the Menil Collection in Houston will unveil "Robert Rauschenberg: Fabric Works of the 1970s," the first museum survey dedicated to the artist's usage of fabric during that time period. In New York, the Museum of the City of New York is getting ready to unveil "Robert Rauschenberg's New York: Pictures from the Real World," a major exhibition dedicated to the artist's relationship with the city, and on Oct. 10 the Guggenheim will show over

a dozen works, including the large scale "Barge" painting, as part of its "Robert Rauschenberg: Life Can't Be Stopped" exhibition.

Last September, Wu collaborated with Taiwanese calligrapher Tong Yang-Tze for his spring 2025 collection. The designer has also previously collaborated with artists Kaws and Isamu Noguchi. — KRISTEN TAUER

## Puma Pit Stop

Blackpink's Rosé stopped by Shanghai for Puma on Saturday, right before going on stage at the MTV VMAs to take home the Song of the Year award for "APT," her viral hit in collaboration with Bruno Mars.

The K-pop star dashed in and out of Shanghai to celebrate the global launch of her first collaborative collection with Puma, a brand she has been working with since last summer in the capacity of a global brand ambassador.

"Working with the Puma team to bring the Puma x Rosé collection to life has been a fulfilling journey, and celebrating its launch feels very special. It's an incredible experience to see the campaign come to reality and to see how people creatively style the pieces in their own way. This experience will be unforgettable," the Blackpink star said.

To showcase the collection, Puma designed an immersive physical journey to invite guests to explore, interact and step inside the pop star's world with custom photo booths, 3D holographic installations and a heart-shaped letter wall.

At the venue, Rosé, donning a mesh top with the number 97 and a black track jacket from the collection, can be seen reading the letters on the wall and posing with the Puma Speedcat sneakers in black and white. She also greeted fans and interacted with local media.

During her stay in the city, the star stayed at the Regent Shanghai on the Bund and posed in one of the rooms with the city's iconic skyline as the backdrop for social media. — TIANWEI ZHANG

## Strut Your Worth

L'Oréal Paris will host its annual runway show during Paris Fashion Week in front of the city's Hôtel de Ville on Sept. 29 at 9:15 p.m.

There, at the city's administrative center, the world's largest beauty brand said it aims to reinvent France's national motto "Liberty, Equality,

Fraternity" into the more feminist rendition of "Liberty, Equality, Sisterhood, You're Worth It."

L'Oréal Paris is inviting its ambassadors — including Gillian Anderson, Simone Ashley, Marie Bochet, Cindy Bruna, Viola Davis, Jane Fonda, Bebe Vio Grandis, Ariana Greeblatt, Luma Grothe, Kendall Jenner, Aja Naomi King, Eva Longoria, Andie MacDowell, Helen Mirren and Aishwarya Rai — fashion designers and beauty experts to the event.

The L'Oréal Paris event, part of its ethos of bolstering women's empowerment, will be broadcast live on Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, Roblox and L'Oréal Paris websites. Simultaneously "watch parties" will be held in numerous big cities around the globe.

This edition will mark the eighth time Le Défilé L'Oréal Paris is taking place since 2017.

Harold James, the newly appointed global makeup artist for the brand, and Stéphane Lancien, its global hair artist, will be behind the ambassadors' runway looks. — JENNIFER WEIL

## Comin' Around Again

The weather may still be summery in much of Europe but Martine Rose and Napapijri are already thinking about cold winter nights, blustery winds and snowfall.

The two are revisiting their partnership with a new collaboration for fall 2025 based on some of the anoraks, rain jackets, fleeces and T-shirts that Rose designed between 2017 and 2019 for Napapijri, an Italian brand owned by VF Corp. Rose's London contemporary, Christopher Raeburn, has served as global creative director at the brand since 2023.

"We're really proud of the collections we released together," Rose said. "I'm always being stopped and asked about the pieces when I wear them — and people still reference the imagery we created in the shoots. The mix of the clothing, locations and cast was so fresh. This is a chance for those who missed out the first time around to get their hands on the best of those collections."

The Martine Rose 2025 collection will be available on the Martine Rose and Napapijri sites and in select retailers worldwide, with the first drop launching later this month.

Rose is a regular collaborator, and has worked with brands



Eva Longoria in Le Défilé L'Oréal Paris in 2024.

including Clarks, Supreme, Stüssy and Nike, for which she famously created a collection of tailored clothing to coincide with the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup soccer games.

A London native, Rose is famous for her colorful, and community-focused, runway backdrops, which over the years have included her daughter's primary school; the Seven Sisters food market in Tottenham, and the roof of a corporate office block in the City of London.

For her spring 2026 show in June, the designer invited guests to St. Marylebone Jobcentre in London, where one floor was dedicated to the show and another was turned into a street market with stalls by local designers and makers selling T-shirts, magazines, antiques and accessories.

Rose, alongside Jonathan Anderson, Miuccia Prada and Rick Owens, is up for the Designer of the Year prize at the Fashion Awards in London, which take place on Dec. 1. — S.C. ►



A Martine Rose design for Napapijri from fall 2017.

Eva Longoria photograph by Getty Images for L'Oréal Paris



Rosé attends a Puma event in Shanghai.

A fashion shoot by Tina Barney.



## A New Number

Coed fashion stories, substantial coverage of the contemporary art scene, surprising interview pairings and minimalist layouts are among the key features of Numéro New York, the American edition of the French magazine.

The new biannual title is to host a launch event Wednesday during New York Fashion Week, revealing Alton Mason and Taylor Hill as its cover stars, appearing alongside

AI-generated models. The cover price of the debut 316-page issue is \$30 and 80,000 copies are to be printed.

According to editor in chief Phillip Utz, who also heads up Numéro Homme out of Paris, the New York title “unapologetically champions long-form, in-depth features by the sharpest voices shaping American culture.”

“It helps to know a few,” he added wryly, referring to the likes of art dealer Larry Gagosian, who sits down for a conversation with New York Times art critic Roberta

Smith. A less expected, intensely Gen-Z pairing in the issue juxtaposes downtown fixture Julia Fox with red-lipped Paris content creator Lyas.

Meanwhile, Tina Barney and Vanessa Beecroft contribute fashion shoots, while Jeff Koons sits down for an expansive interview.

Rick Owens inaugurates its back-page column, “Famous Last Words,” scrawling things he loves — cake, calm and empathy among them — and things he hates, such as entitlement, loafers, smugness and olives.

Numéro, founded in Paris in 1998 and published by Paul-Emmanuel Reiffers’ Mazarine Group, also counts editions in the Netherlands, China, Japan, Brazil and Germany.

The New York edition is to be distributed at major international art fairs, select galleries and such institutions as Fondation Louis Vuitton, Palais de Tokyo, MOCA and MoMA, in addition to specialty booksellers.

Its aim is to “forge an exciting bridge between the sophistication of French savoir-vivre (etiquette, in English) and the vibrancy of American culture,” according to the magazine, which will also have digital tentacles, including a presence on Instagram.

Alexander Fisher, formerly fashion director of WSJ, joins Utz as fashion director of Numéro New York. Utz is to split his time between Paris and New York. — MILES SOCHA



## Clean Shot

The Bally fall 2025 campaign wipes the slate clean, with an all-male cast led by James Turlington fronting leading images and a focus on the Swiss brand’s wardrobe staples.

In somewhat traditional imagery, Turlington — the nephew of supermodel Christy — poses alongside models Garrett Neff and Gabriel Aubry against a brass backdrop, sitting on a black leather armchair or leaning against the wall.

The campaign, shot by Italian photographer Alessio Boni, marks the second time the trio is fronting Bally ads, and will bow on Tuesday.

Although fall 2025 marked the swansong collection of Bally’s former creative director Simone Bellotti, the campaign leans toward the brand’s

essentials with a focus on accessories prominently featured in the images. These include the Plume loafers, the Easy tote bag in leather and pony hair, as well as the Retro Crest sneakers and mountain-style boots.

As reported, after Bellotti left Bally in March to join Jil Sander, the Swiss brand is staying the course with the in-house design team. Last June, the brand did not unveil a full spring 2026 menswear collection in Milan but staged a presentation of a capsule inspired by an archival tennis shoe.

Bally has been going through major changes since the acquisition in August last year by an affiliate of Regent, the owner of Club Monaco and Escada, from JAB.

Two months later, CEO Nicolas Giroto exited the brand, succeeded by former Dsquared2 and Roberto Cavalli executive Ennio Fontana, who joined as general manager.

— MARTINO CARRERA

## Fragrance Honor

The Fragrance Foundation has looked within its own ranks for its 2025 Circle of Champions honoree.

Receiving the award will be Jerry Vittoria, the organization’s chairman, who is the global president of fine fragrance at Dsm-Firmenich. Vittoria, who previously revealed his retirement slated for 2026, will have spent 35 years with the supplier. He is set to be succeeded by Jonathan Simon.

Jerry Vittoria



“Recognizing Jerry Vittoria for the outstanding work he has done to move our industry forward and steward the foundation is truly one of the high points for the entire TFF organization and the history of the Circle of Champion Awards,” said Linda G. Levy, president of The Fragrance Foundation, in a statement. “Throughout his career and his time at The Fragrance Foundation, he has been a true champion of American fragrance, embracing the community, from its perfumers to the consumer. Presenting this award to Jerry in November is a testament to his enduring impact on the industry, his integrity and leadership.”

Vittoria will be honored on Nov. 3 in New York at the foundation’s annual ceremony.

“To be on the receiving end of one of our organization’s most notable awards will be a full circle moment come November,” Vittoria said in a statement. “Being a part of such a dynamic industry and serving an organization that continues to innovate and evolve with the category’s exponential growth has truly been a rewarding experience.”

The Fragrance Foundation honors figures, products and businesses both at its namesake awards and its Circle of Champions event, but there are few losers: Fragrance is still the hottest category in U.S. prestige beauty, having overtaken skin care in sales volume last year and most recently posting 6 percent gains for the first half of 2025, per Circana.

— JAMES MANSO ■