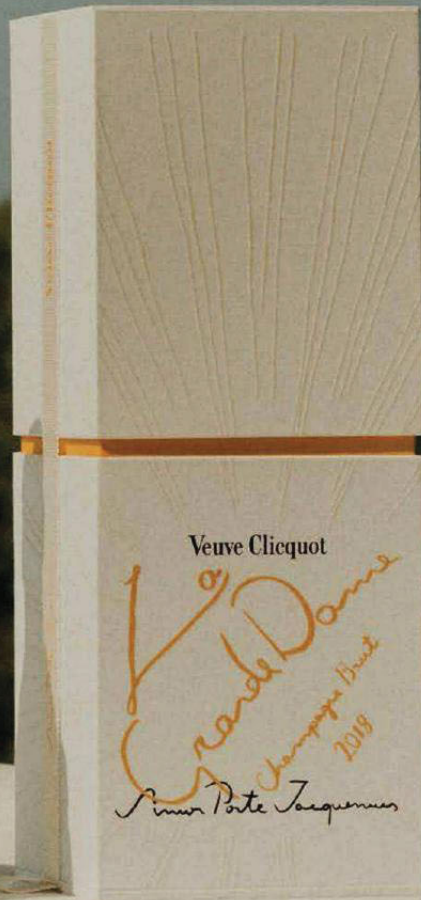


WWD

Veuve Clicquot *Simur Porte Jacquemus*



WWD

Fashion. Beauty. Business.

Home Again

Elin Kling and Karl Lindman may be based in Stockholm but their label Toteme actually began in New York and they brought it home for spring 2026, showing in that ultimate Manhattan power lunch spot, The Pool room. The lineup was full of minimalist, done-but-undone looks, like those seen here – further proof of why it is one of the hottest brands around. *For more on New York Fashion Week, see pages 4 to 10.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY WESTON WELLS



BUSINESS

Saks' S&P Scorecard Shows Continued Concerns About Liquidity



DJ Noodles at the Saks party for fashion week.

● The retailer, which this summer refinanced most of the debt it raised to buy Neiman Marcus Group, is still seen as pressured financially.

BY EVAN CLARK

Marc Metrick, chief executive officer of Saks Global, wants nothing more than to move beyond all the financial intrigue and talk of past-due bills, mortgages and debts.

But a skeptical reading on the company's new financing from Standard & Poor's and some low-level grumbling from vendors show that he's not there yet.

"We need to move on from that part of the conversation and move towards, 'What are we doing for our brand partners?'" Metrick told journalists gathered for a pre-New York Fashion Week update at Bergdorf Goodman last week.

The CEO said brands would be paid, but insisted that wasn't "exciting."

"What's going to excite them is, I'm going to add 50 percent of volume that we're doing with you and Saks Global over the next five years," he said.

Vendors want to have that same conversation.

But the retailer's financial adventures have been the focus since Saks was combined with Neiman Marcus and Bergdorf Goodman in a \$2.7 billion deal in December. This summer, the company brought more debt on board and refinanced most of the money it borrowed to close the deal.

Just after the meeting at Bergdorf's, debt agency Standard & Poor's rated the company's restructured debt at "CCC" with a negative outlook. The rating had been in "Selected Default" after a

below-par debt exchange.

Once again, the credit agency sent up a warning flare on Saks Global's financing, reiterating past concerns and offering some estimates on the future that showed just how much work the company still has ahead of it.

"Our 'CCC' rating reflects default risk in the next 12 months without improvement," S&P said.

Saks exchanged \$2.2 billion in bonds issued in December for \$762.5 million special purpose vehicle notes (which included \$600 million in new money from lenders), \$1.4 billion second-out notes, and \$441 million third-out notes, all maturing in 2029.

"While the new capital structure provides a much-needed infusion of cash, we expect liquidity will be rapidly depleted by the investments required to stabilize the business amid a challenging macroeconomic environment," S&P said.

The rating agency expects the company will see a \$500 million deficit in reported free operating cash flow this year "partially driven by nonrecurring expenses related with the capital structure transaction, acquisition and higher interest expenses."

Interest expense to cover all the debt load will be about \$400 million over the next 12 months, S&P said — which comes on top of payments due to vendors, for past-due bills and new merchandise.

"As a result, we expect the company will continue to heavily rely on its [\$1.8 billion asset-backed lending] facility," S&P said. "We believe there's risk of another default absent significant improvement. We continue to view liquidity as less than adequate despite the financial package..."

"While potential cost savings from synergies are significant, we

believe liquidity constraints can delay implementation," S&P said. "In addition, we believe operating deleverage will continue to compress profitability if Saks cannot stabilize its business."

A person close to Saks Global acknowledged that the retailer has to drive sales and keep its promises, but that it will save enough money from the integration to cover any of its needs.

"From a sustainability standpoint, if you look at a company that does \$8 billion [in sales] and you look at what does the EBITDA margin need to be to do all these things, and then you think about \$600 million of synergies [cost savings from the merger], I don't know, it's not where the concern should be," the source said.

So far, the integration is a work in progress. Saks Global moved from four different purchase order and supply chain systems to one over Labor Day weekend in a streamlining effort.

"They created duplicative purchase orders in some instances," said a financial source watching Saks Global's finances. "They created purchase orders that were not allowed with how the vendors expected their purchase orders to look."

The result was \$110 million to \$180 million in canceled orders for holiday, the financial source claimed.

"They're saying they can get that back," the source said. "They're going to reorder, but nobody's sure if that's true. We're not sure if they're going to get to holiday as smoothly as they could before."

A Saks Global spokesperson said: "In early August, Saks Global initiated a merchandising systems integration, which was completed earlier this month. While the integration proceeded smoothly for

the legacy Saks business, August inventory receipts for the Neiman Marcus business were negatively impacted. This was due solely to a systems integration issue related to data transfer and not related to brand partners delaying shipments. The company is now working closely with brand partners to bring in receipts. We remain focused on executing our multiyear transformation strategy, including working with our brand partners to drive growth, continuing to capture synergies and delivering for our customers across all of our retail brands."

Brands are willing, but cautious.

"They paid me and so I was happy, but I only have a certain amount of money that I can ship them, that I'm willing to risk," said an executive at one established brand selling goods to Saks Global.

If vendors are holding inventory for Saks Global in reserve, they can at least borrow against it, the vendor said. But if they ship their goods and are waiting to be paid, that inventory can't be used as collateral.

"Their systems are a mess at the moment," the vendor said. "The goods I shipped them, they can't even receive. I have more goods that I won't ship unless they pay me down."

In at least this case, Saks executives seem to have earned back some goodwill. But the vibe is one of wait and see.

"One of two things is going to happen," the vendor said. "They're going to dig their way out of it. They own Neiman's, Bergdorf [Goodman] and Saks. Nobody else is going to get that business. Or they're never going to figure it out and they're going to destroy three companies and have to sell them. Something is going to have to give. I want them to figure it out. It's in everybody's best interest."

Bondholders have likewise settled in with their new deal after the refinancing, but are watching.

The rejiggered first-lien bonds have traded at 90 cents on the dollar, which is much better than before the refinancing, but one bond trader who's closely following the company said the price "isn't really a huge sign of success."

"They have the liquidity to get through the end of the year," said the bond trader. "If they don't make their numbers in the fourth quarter, it's going to be really difficult for them in 2026. They have to deflect to positive growth in the fourth quarter."

But given that many luxury brands have moved to a concession or consignment model, meaning Saks never actually owns the inventory, a good holiday has to be even better to really move the needle.

"If you walk into a Saks store, you're going to see a pretty nice assortment of industry and brands," said one industry source. "A lot of the really high-end stuff is not actually owned by Saks, it's all in there on consignment. Because that's the case, their actual margin opportunity is depressed. That stuff, they want in the store because it's the big traffic driver."

That makes the goods Saks Global buys from brands directly all the more important.

"Vendors that Saks views as critical to them, they're doing what they need to do in terms of getting them their money and paying them," the industry source said.

Between orders new and old, interest payments and operating expenses, Saks Global has a lot of demands on the money that is coming into the business.

"They frankly just have an unsustainable debt load," the source claimed.

Veuve Clicquot *Siwar Porte Jacquemus*



BUSINESS

Jared Puts Natural Diamonds in the Spotlight and on the Big Screen

A scene from the documentary "A Diamond Is Born" filmed in Botswana.



- A documentary by Luc Jacquet, a campaign with Antonia Gentry and an engagement collection that's blockchain-enabled are being introduced this week.

BY DAVID MOIN

For Jared, the accessible luxury division of Signet Jewelers, this Wednesday is movie night.

That's when at a New York City location, Jared premieres "A Diamond Is Born," a 20-minute documentary by Luc Jacquet, created with assistance from the country of Botswana. In the film, Jacquet, who won the Academy Award for "March of the Penguins," depicts a diamond's origins, its journey from the mine to someone's finger and the social impact of this precious gemstone.

"We gave Luc Jacquet complete creative license to tell the story of a natural diamond through an artist's eyes, not through a business person's eyes," said Claudia Cividino, the president of Jared. "We wanted to tell the story of a natural diamond in a way that it has not been told. And I think this film achieves that. It portrays the rarity, the innumerable incredible circumstances that have to come together on Earth to create natural diamonds.

"We do not believe there is enough natural diamond narrative and information in the market about the true rarity and significance of a natural diamond," Cividino said. "A diamond is essentially the oldest, most rare element that a human will touch. There is nothing more rare or older than a diamond."

In addition to the documentary, Jared launches an engagement collection on Thursday called "Storied Diamonds Desert Sands of Eternity," to further

the narrative. "About two years ago, my team set out to create a natural diamond engagement program that was blockchain-enabled [for traceability and transparency]. A customer choosing a diamond at Jared can see the diamond in the rough right out of the ground, and again after it's been cut and then when it's polished to a finished stone. So you will see the entire path of your diamond, from the ground to the finished diamond on your finger."

"Think of it as a digital record. It's very clever," Cividino said.

Consumers can scan a QR code and view the full story of their jewelry's components. Each unique digital experience provides access to more than 40 data points and images, including the diamond's rough shape, country of origin, design and transformation journey, setting dates, and final Gemological Institute of America-certified color, clarity, carat and cut specifications. The purchaser will receive a certificate that can be stored on a phone with a QR code to show friends and family the journey of the diamond they own. Similarly, the app also enables you to trace the gold in the ring. The collection utilizes reclaimed gold, and every diamond in the collection is sourced from one mine in Botswana.

The Storied Diamonds Desert Sands of Eternity collection is priced from \$1,700 to \$22,999, and includes semi-mounts, anniversary bands and complete bridal rings, available in 18-karat white, yellow, rose gold and platinum.

Antonia Gentry, who stars in the Netflix series "Ginny and Georgia," is the face of the new Storied Diamonds Desert Sands of Eternity campaign. "She's very passionate about natural diamonds, but not just the diamonds themselves, but also the impact that natural diamonds have on the society of Botswana in

particular, being the leading diamond purveyor of the world," Cividino said.

David Lipman was the creative director of the campaign. The De Beers Group collaborated on the marketing.

Diamonds were discovered in Botswana in 1966. At the time, Botswana was one of the poorest countries in the world, but the emergence of its diamond industry helped transform it into a thriving democracy.

Between the movie, the new collection and campaign, "We've never done storytelling of this magnitude," Cividino said. "I don't know that storytelling of this magnitude on the rarity and provenance of natural diamonds has ever been done, but Jared certainly has never done anything like this in the past."

It will help underscore how Jared, as Cividino said, is "deeply rooted in the values of natural diamonds." Jared sells "significantly more" loose diamonds than the other two biggest brands at Signet,

Zales and Kay Jewelers, Cividino said. That's partly because most of Jared's engagement rings are custom. "You come into a Jared store, choose a diamond, choose the mount, and that's how we deliver this personalized experience to each of our engagement buyers," Cividino said. "We are specialists in diamonds, and we sell more natural diamonds than our sister banners' brands, in part because we serve a different consumer."

Jared's concerted efforts to deepen the public's awareness of natural diamonds comes at a time when natural diamond sales, industry-wide, have been soft, for a few reasons, including the growing popularity of lab-grown diamonds, which are far less expensive than natural diamonds. Also, due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, diamonds from Russia are now sanctioned by the G7 nations, which account for about 75 percent of all diamond consumption. The U.S. alone accounts for 55 percent of diamond consumption.

The majority of diamonds sold at Jared are natural. "They're increasingly two different products. They are purchased for different reasons," Cividino said, and depending on an individual's budget. The lab-grown diamond Cividino characterized as a category extender. Jared's assortment includes engagement and bridal jewelry, custom jewelry, timepieces, and men's and women's fashion jewelry.

For the making of the documentary, Cividino said Jacquet visited the mine in Botswana. He and his crew spent several weeks interacting with many people in the diamond industry, as well as in schools and hospitals. "He really saw firsthand the impact that natural diamonds have had on the economy of Botswana, and he was very touched," Cividino said. Mining companies build hospitals and clinics and provide housing, as well as jobs.

Following the premiere, Cividino will visit Botswana to show the documentary there. "I think that it will be a great source of pride to the people in Botswana, and particularly those who work in the diamond industry," Cividino said. "It's really an homage to their work."

Signet, she said, has been "very committed to ethical natural diamond sourcing. We were a founding member of the Responsible Jewellery Council and we were also a founding member of the World Diamond Council. We have some very strong pillars that we stand on as an organization."

Antonia Gentry is the face of the new Jared campaign.



Claudia Cividino at the Jared store in Carle Place, N.Y.



Veuve Clicquot
Grand Dame
Simon Porte Jacquemus



The Reviews



Toteme

Toteme's Elin Kling and Karl Lindman once again touched down in New York with their understated and refined take on Swedish minimalism. Now based in Stockholm, the brand was actually founded in New York and once called it home.

"It feels very special and quite nostalgic," Lindman said backstage. The husband and wife showed at The Pool in the landmarked Seagram Building, the go-to spot for a proper New York power lunch.

When the duo lived here it was the spot to which they came to celebrate moments in their lives. "We love this idea of Park Avenue, the modernism, obviously quite stylish," he said. "The room is perfectly square, like our monograph."

On the seats the collection notes spoke of distilling undone beauty, with Kling adding backstage that "bringing more raw elements in and lived-in textures that you can see," like on a crinkled leather dress and loose knits. "It has quite an ease to this season," she added. The undone came

via handbags left open, or little raw edges on the straps of wispy knit tanks – subtle ideas on letting go, but still utterly refined.

The lineup was in bright white and black, with a knit dress over transparent slips adding a bit of languor. Satin was a primary fabric, with its lustrous fluidity well explored in incredible cigarette pants and trenchcoats reimagined in the evening fabric with blouson sleeves. Undone as it may have been, there were moments of Scandinavian strictness. A compact knit V-neck sweater hugged a super-size striped men's button-down, for instance. "I guess that lands in some sort of control still, a sharp control that is very much Toteme," she said of the idea.

Toteme launched bags three years ago with their popular T-lock styles (many women in attendance were carrying one) and the runway showed their commitment to grow the category with a range of ideas – black and white leather envelope clutches, top-handle lady bags, and a couple of raffia styles in cream and white. They would be good companions for a day at the beach, and several models indeed carried towels with their handbags.

The finale took the beach vibe up a notch, with compact knits in bodysuit and one-piece swim silhouettes, the models cocooning in Swedish lace cover-ups. Not exactly swim, but Kling said it's a category that she's looking to bring to the market.

A noble simplicity but never rigid, the spring lineup spoke to why the brand has hit such a strong stride – opening a second store in New York last year, a second one in London this summer and a new flagship in Beijing.

Theirs is a study in modern ease. Toteme's minimalism feels both exacting and undone – an urban wardrobe distilled to its purest form. – *Thomas Waller*




The Collections
 New York



Coach

Stuart Vevers isn't getting caught up in the negativity that permeates the world today. Instead, the Coach creative director did his part to lighten the mood.

"Coach has always been an optimistic, positive brand," he said. "And this is a very forward-looking collection. At its heart, it's about looking forward positively, optimistically."

Although the distressed denim and leathers and the grunge-influenced outfits didn't exactly scream positivity, what they did prove is that Vevers continues to be a master at knowing how to speak to young people, Coach's target customers. He took these Coach followers on a journey that time-traveled from New York in the '70s to Seattle in the '90s.

Those were some of the references evident in his spring women's and men's collection, shown at Pier 36 in downtown Manhattan on Monday afternoon, a location Vevers created to feel like a city at dawn, a time that he said "embodies that new day possibility." That aesthetic also showed in the color palette, which was lighter than usual but still had "a very Coach sensibility" with its "warm, pale saddle colors."

While the grunge references were unmistakable, there were also a few pieces that showed true playfulness, notably sheer dresses emblazoned with balloons, stars or hearts. But while pieces like that lightened the mood, "there was still a balance of polish and shine with some New York grit," he said. "That's a different balance than we've had in recent seasons."

That juxtaposition was evident in the loose tailoring complemented by

distressed leather jackets and scuffed boots and sneakers. There were raw cut, unlined suede jackets and a collection of T-shirts and shirtdresses sporting images of some of Vevers' favorite places, such as Seattle; Santa Cruz, Calif.; Detroit; Phoenix, and, of course, New York City.

Most of the pieces were genderless, such as the wide, tattered jeans paired with crop tops, and the raw edging on many of the pieces that spoke to this season's undone trend. Among the standouts were pants and long pleated skirts created from three different menswear patterns, styles that brought your grandfather's heritage pieces into today's modern wardrobe.

Pants as a whole were wide, but tops and outerwear were more fitted. Vevers described one of the suits as sporting "a narrow shoulder, quite cropped but angled at the back so it feels quite fitted. And the underpinnings, knitwear and T-shirts, they're all fitted as well."

The collection featured upcycled materials in some of the denim and leather pieces along with knitwear that looked frayed. These designs spoke to Gen Z's propensity to vintage.

Vevers continued to pay homage to the core of the brand with accessories ranging from bags that were "quite geometric," many of which featured the brand's signature "kisslock frame," in duffels, barrel bags and pouches, some of which were shrunken and worn as necklaces. "That definitely came from this idea of New York, the way that New York is so good at providing random objects like a playing card dropped on the street, or a random sticker on a lamp post," he said.

— Jean E. Palmieri

Jason Wu
Collection



Jason Wu
Collection




**The
Collections**
New York



Off-White



Off-White

Jason Wu Collection

"What I really like about fashion is it's about the reflection of what's happening in our society, and it's a time that I think we need to," Jason Wu said backstage of his pretty spring show while putting the finishing touches on an upholstery-inspired gown. Putting on one show a year has given the designer the freedom to imbue his clothes with more meaning, which has resulted in designs seen through the lens of deconstructed, raw beauty and to special artists partnerships.

This season Wu partnered with the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation, which is marking its 100th birthday, to explore the dialogue between art and fashion through collage. Granted access to the archive, Wu focused on 10 of the artist's works from his '70s Hoarfrost series and Airport Suite editions that feature layered translucent textiles, unexpected materials like cardboard and solvent-transferred images. They were reflected not only through Wu's clothes, but were also present, on loan

from the foundation, within his industrial show space.

"It marks a time that we're in right now. I think now we need beauty more than ever, but yet, it's also a reflection of me. I'm a collage – I've lived everywhere, and New York is the biggest collage place ever," he mused.

He translated the artist's methodology by collaging and patchworking his Purina Dog Chow bags and retro lingerie works with trompe-l'oeil effect into ample airy, sheer organza garments. Wu continued to fill the collection with artisanal texture, combining stripes of printed washed satin into fringes; peeling back the layers of a cardboard-inspired brown corset dress, and tacking on draped sheer and printed panels to add new dimension to his undone evening and sportswear works. A beautiful balance of art and fashion.

"For the first 10 years of my career, I was trying to be very perfect because I thought that's what people wanted to see. I'm taking my DNA, but doing it as I would do it now, with a little more guts," Wu said.

– Emily Mercer

Off-White

Off-White is back in New York City, a locale it considers a core influence.

"I think New York is a boiling pot of multiculturalism and community. Which is the core of Off-White, it's supposed to be for everybody," Ib Kamara said at a preview.

His show notes elaborated, stating, "There is no better place than New York City to highlight how central the influence of Black culture has been in the shaping of pop culture as we know it. Disco, hip-hop, graffiti, and what is today known as streetwear all flourished in the cradle created by African creatives who chose the city as their playground."

Inviting guests to the roof of the Lower East Side's New Design High School – and a mix of students – and commissioning local graffiti artists to tag the space in the theme of the five boroughs, creative director Kamara fully embraced all the city

has to offer. "It's sexy, it's romantic, it's American, it's street," he said of his work.

Kamara called the collection "Pop Romance" and from the looks on the runway his customer wants color, maximalism and, most importantly, to fully express their individualism. "They don't want to look like anyone else," he said.

Denim with Swarovski crystals, color-blocked leggings, prints on fluid separates, body-con body suits in saturated pastels, airbrushed leather varsity jackets – one for the New York Liberty, whose mascot Ellie sat in the front row, just down from Mary J. Blige and Ciara and a few "Love Islanders."

For the boys, there was a mix of boxy tailoring, athleticism with track jackets and motorcycle jackets; crystallized denim; graphic T-shirts, a few from a collaboration with Brigade, and a new range of covetable sneakers, including a new flatter bowling style and some classic logo-bearing performance styles.

"It's a good marriage between my background and Off-White," Kamara said of the collection. "In reconnecting to the roots of Black culture in the city, a leap forward happens, putting romance where pop is."

Founder Virgil Abloh envisioned a brand for everyone, and Kamara is carrying it forward with joy, maintaining the mission. – Thomas Waller



Ulla Johnson



Ulla Johnson


The Collections
New York



Cos



Cos

Ulla Johnson

Ulla Johnson looked to Expressionist Helen Frankenthaler as lodestar for her spring collection, the next chapter after collaborating with female artists Lee Krasner, Anna Zemánková and Shara Hughes.

"She struggled with the meaning of the word beautiful," Johnson said of Frankenthaler's work, adding that she also thinks of the idea in her collections.

Inviting the fashion crowd uptown to the Beaux Arts Cooper-Hewitt Museum, a few blocks away from her new Upper East Side boutique, Johnson's idea of beauty is as ornate as her location, explaining that "pretty and feminine" are ideas not often taken to mean "serious or powerful."

Questioning if these ideas are reductive, Johnson is digging in, embracing it full on. Enter her range of gauzy, abstract, color-filled – by way of Frankenthaler's work – pieces with embellishments – fringe, feathers and ruffles abounded. There was a lot of transparency and buoyancy in the movement of the collection. "That gave the sense of lightness, this weightless way of feeling both powerful and completely yourself," she said of the prairie dresses, printed denim, bow blouses and lightweight capes.

She centered three of Frankenthaler's paintings – "Western Dream," "Nature Abhors a Vacuum" and "Moon Tide" – which gave her a bright color palette of green, purple, peach and rose mixed with caramel browns on floating dresses with ruffles; coats, and even realized in sequin on skirts and tops. A few handbags also came in bright colors, each inspired by movement.

The collection was strongest when she showed restraint, like a strapless dress where the colors blended to the floor or a hand crochet knit dress. Other pieces might be a heavy lift, with a mix of ideas with peplums and volume filled sleeves creating a bit of sartorial dissonance.

"I think a sense of life and joy is something that I've really sought to convey," she said of her collection. – *Thomas Waller*

Cos

Cos returned to New York City on Sunday afternoon for its fall 2025 collection runway show filled with quiet yet strong takes on the minimalist spirit that the brand is known for.

"We really wanted to put a point of view across in the new silhouette, which is a little bit more waisted, but we still wanted to keep the sort of effortless feeling that is so core to Cos," creative director Karin Gustafsson said postshow.

She cited loose inspirations of the '50s for open necklines and a few cinched, feminine cuts, but a majority of the minimalist-bent, dark-hued collection sought to offer smart yet effortless dress by reinventing the classics. For instance, semi-sheer mulberry silk turtlenecks had long built-in scarves that wrapped around the neck and hung atop cozy shearling coats, while many great double-faced wool coats had slightly nipped-in waists with subtle sculptural appeal. She also reimagined heritage checks in tight turtlenecks, one of the styles rolling out now into the H&M-owned brand's stores – and cool paper bag-esque crinkly clutches, to name two.

Gustafsson said mixing the soft with structured in rich materials was a key element across men's and women's, such as breezy crinkled satin sets and draped and caped silk looks against cocooning, high-neck coats, sleek leather jackets, capes and utility-bent tailoring.

Each easy yet polished look was grounded in reality with flat shoes – simple suede sneakers, loafers and leather sock boots. Perfect for their global customer on-the-go, which will soon include in-person shoppers in New Delhi. Later this fall, the brand is set to open its first store there. – *Emily Mercer*

Who Decides War



Adeam



Monse

Who Decides War

For spring 2026, the design duo behind Who Decides War, Ev Bravado and Têla D'Amore, continued to flex their creativity in a collection filled with surprising materials and new techniques.

"We were inspired by damask prints and wallpapers this season and really trying to figure out how to take it to the craziest level," D'Amore said in a preview. "We wanted to find a way to recreate these unconventional materials into fabrics. It's almost like, 'is it real, or is it cake?' That's what we've been saying around the studio this season. While something may look like a poster, it is actually screen-printed on fabric."

The duo also used wheat-pasting techniques inspired by the posters seen around New York City with the adage "Post No Bills." The result was garments covered in materials that resembled cracks and rooms, or draping that mimicked collapsing structures, with the intent to illustrate the tension between decay and reconstruction.

This was seen in its fullest form in the finale dress, which featured the designer's wheat-pasted posters idea and metallic tulle covering two donut-like structures that took a team of 10 to assemble.

"We want the model to look like she is walking out of a wall," Bravado said. "The intentionality and complexity of our fabrics this season are next level, and I think we achieved that illusion."

Other details like distressed fabrics, raw edges and visible seams helped to emphasize the decaying theme, as did the

color palette of dusty grays, charred blacks and sand.

A standout look came toward the end of the show via a chandelier-inspired dress that featured dramatic 36-inch beaded fringe detail. "The structure of the chandelier took about three weeks to get right in order to make sure it can stand on its own," Bravado said. "With the beaded fringe and an organza that was made to look like spider webs, I love that the gown turned out to be both ornate and decaying at the same time." — *Stephen Garner*

Adeam

Designer Hanako Maeda is aiming high for spring.

Maeda, fresh on the heels of a Mikimoto collaboration at Paris Couture Week, said she drew upon that capsule for spring 2026. "It was my first time creating something at the level that pairs with high jewelry," she said. "It got me thinking of bringing in this idea of craftsmanship — the touch of hands and, ultimately, how we make everything in Japan."

That nod was subtler than expected, given Maeda's emphasis on versatility for ready-to-wear. "Through my past couple seasons, I've explored this idea of duality within women's wardrobes — things that can take you from day to night," she said. To open the offering, for example, what looked like a gauzy warped gingham was actually organza, followed shortly by a men's denim jacket. That jacket also got a Neoprene incarnation, which was styled alongside a Grecian-style gown.

"Mixing in these chiffon and organza fabrications, putting them against denim and Neoprene, creates more of an interesting contrast in the collection," Maeda said. That contrast took a literal turn with some of her more formal shapes.

"I liked this idea of taking things that were more appropriate for a dinner or cocktail, cut them in more utilitarian fabrics like this waterproof tafetta and jersey," she said. For day, striped shirting anchored the assortment in the everyday.

Beyond those, Maeda also nodded to lingerie with lace details here and there. "The lace is a custom pattern we created for this collection," she said.

Much of those creations, Maeda said, were about answering her customers' calls. "Tourism in Japan is so big right now, and a lot of the clients are coming from China and [South] Korea," Maeda said. "They love dressing in a way that's a bit more elevated, so they appreciate this idea of easy-care fabrics you can wash at home. Then, you throw it on and it looks very put-together." — *James Manso*

Monse

For spring 2026, Monse staged its runway show at Uovo, the art and fashion storage facility located in Long Island City that preserves the brand's archives dating back to its debut collection. In marking the brand's 10th anniversary, founders Laura Kim and Fernando Garcia chose the venue as both a celebration and reflection on a decade of work.

While discussing the inspiration for

this season, Garcia explained that, "It's not about repeating the past, it's about reinventing the future." While there were talks about whether to incorporate archival pieces into the show, it was ultimately decided to expand upon the "Monse-isms" of the brand and deliver pieces that felt fresh.

Like the bandana print, a hallmark of Monse, offered in new versions, colors and silhouettes, one standout being a pair of wide-leg trousers draped at the waist. Or the selection of deconstructed shirting, assembled into an asymmetrical dress to a blouse to a bralette.

When asked how they find new ways to approach their designs, Kim exclaimed, "We love cutting up s-t," referring to the numerous experimentations and testing that goes into constructing each piece and giving it their stamp of approval. It comes as no surprise, given that's how the duo began their label — taking apart all of Garcia's shirts from his closet — and continue that process in exploring and refining their core offering.

This cutting effect doesn't apply just to clothes, however. Bags were given a similar treatment, with a flap purposely hanging loose from its seam, from an otherwise structured bag.

While references to the sea were sprinkled throughout — a roped halter neck dress, fishnet imprints on a shirtdress, a miniskirt stringed with pearls — the collection offered something more: a full range of fun and stylish clothes to wear to all occasions of life, be it a party, a vacation or to work. — *Kathy G. Lee*

Grace Ling

“‘Future Relics’ comes from this idea of something very ancient combined with something that is very modern and futuristic,” Grace Ling said backstage before her show. She returned to the runway, bringing both her one-of-a-kind garments made using 3D printing and her ready-to-wear for spring.

She reported that she finds inspiration in “found objects,” an idea she used on handbag details – daggers as handles – and charms, 3D printed in silver. “Technology and traditional methods of craft,” she said, are the duality she seeks in her work.

The craft came in black satin suiting with tapered waist jackets and second skin skirts or languid skin-baring jersey dresses. A 2023 Vogue/CFDA Fashion Fund alum, Ling’s technology-meets-the sensual style has people taking notice and she had a few heavy hitters walk the runway – Ashley Graham, Quannah Chasinghorse and Precious Lee – and backstage too, snagging Patti Wilson as stylist.

“The garments are really savage. I think maybe it’s an embodiment of myself. I’m calm and I’m shy, but my garments are not,” she said of the range of velvet burnout fabric on dresses and jackets, each on mesh, creating skin baring

moments of transparency.

“I like concealing and revealing the body, but in a very elegant way,” she said, with a closing look of silver branches shooting over the body, barely covering the model. It brought a dose of the high fashion dystopian drama she was seeking.

– Thomas Waller

Aknvas

For the fashion set, September means the start of the spring runway season. For everyone else, it means the start of the fall semester.

Christian Juul Nielsen bridged the two at Aknvas, packing his new lunchbox shaped bags to head back to boarding school, “the happiest years of my life,” said the Øresund efterskole graduate.

Stomping down the hallway – er, runway – in lugged Stuart Weitzman wader boots, the spring 2026 “Breakfast Club” was a hodgepodge of preppies, punks and princesses. “I always have something related to the monarchy in my collections,” explained Nielsen, who’s Danish, “and in this case, my niece is in the same class as the crown princess of Denmark.”

Planting his historical court theme firmly in the youth culture of today, tiers of buoyant ruffles sprouted from bloomers and micro miniskirts – “It’s all minis, we

do well with minis,” said Nielsen – while corset lacing cinched the fronts of low-riding skinny jeans.

Outerwear was a highlight, especially boxy cutaway trenches with jaw-framing storm flaps. They read a bit like redingotes and Nielsen offered them in myriad textiles, from blue denim and khaki cotton to red-and-white tie-dye and green bonded lace. Varsity jackets in distressed leather added edge, as did acid wash pieces, though those didn’t quite make the grade.

Pleated chinos with 10-gallon pockets jutting out like panniers got an A-plus. They looked cool on a girl with a simple tank and even cooler on a guy, giving regal airs to his collegiate striped shirt.

But as Nielsen explained, his vision for Aknvas is greater than any one particular item, it’s head-to-toe. “My clients are very open to us selling everything as-is and they really want the whole look,” he said.

Asked who his dream client is, Nielsen’s answer wasn’t surprising: the princess of Denmark. With his niece’s foot in the door, maybe that assignment will come soon. – Ari Stark

Alice + Olivia

Stacey Bendet is a master at creating innovative sets for her Alice + Olivia collections, and spring ’26 was no

exception. This season’s theme was “The American Woman.”

“The idea was to focus on the 250th year anniversary of America in 2026, but also the intersection of fashion, pop culture and history, and how those moments define how women dress and how we feel,” said Bendet during a preview.

As guests entered the Hall of Records, they encountered a 20-foot interpretation of the Statue of Liberty wearing a gown printed with butterflies and American roses to symbolize life. One of the sets represented American pop culture with fast food, American sports and art. It featured a printed dress encapsulating the show’s theme, referencing vintage, the American West, the flag, the American eagle and the Statue of Liberty.

The 45-look lineup capitalized on American sportswear and clothing that could easily take the woman from day through a dressy evening. There were preppy and colorful staples such as polos, collegiate knits, baggy jeans, and pleated minis and lots of great eveningwear, such as a poppy red bias-cut jersey gown that captured 1940s glamour, or pretty florals in engineered beading. Gowns featured lace, burnout chiffons and intricate jacquards layered over organza, along with embroidery, sequins and beadwork.

– Lisa Lockwood



Grace Ling



Aknvas



Alice + Olivia



Christian Cowan



Sandy Liang

Bach Mai



Christian Cowan

It was only a matter of time before Christian Cowan found his way to Broadway. In a match made in musical heaven, the designer is costuming “The Queen of Versailles,” starring Kristin Chenoweth as beleaguered timeshare heiress Jackie Siegel.

“The vibe is early 2000s glamour, but Orlando, Fla., glamour,” Cowan joked during a spring preview. Winking at Siegel’s flashy Barbie-doll looks, he added: “It’s maximalist all the way.”

Siegel, who built the largest single-family home in America, doesn’t go by half-measures. Neither does Cowan, but Saturday night it was clear he was designing for city streets, not the stage – Cortland Alley, to be exact.

After last season’s performance-piece one-offs, Cowan’s been fleshing out his ready-to-wear line. Still, “my version – it’s not just a T-shirt you’re gonna run to Target in,” he teased, “but I hope you do!” His version of a basic white T-shirt – a collaboration with emerging corset maker Elias Matso – comes whirled around a snatched bodice. Tattered to shreds with sullen fringes down the back, it looked like the remnants of a back alley brawl.

One could more realistically see a fashion victim like Siegel pushing a big red shopping cart in the pedal pushers, rugby polos (one had a Polaroid of Cowan’s face on it) and furry matador shrugs. Second-skin club dresses with bands of mesh, latex and marabou of varying widths resembled barcodes, a fitting tongue-in-cheek consumerist nod.

You might not’ve guessed it, but Cowan said this collection was spun from rather innocent childhood memories, realized

as he remembers them now in queer adulthood. Born in Glasgow, Cowan grew up in the Spanish fishing village of Moaña, which fed a nautical undercurrent in Matso’s wet-look ruching and those striped dresses.

Rings of tulle protruding from halternecks were inspired by tutus, which Cowan often stole from his sisters, while silk maxis referenced his Catholic grandmother’s modest field skirts – doubtful, though, hers came with garters.

A self-professed underwear freak, Cowan is attracted by the scandal of showing them on the runway. He recently asked his mom why that might be and she answered with another memory: seeing her hang them from clothing lines to dry.

Cowan said: “These pieces are like love letters to the women in my life, who are my rocks.” Only in his hands could a sentiment so sweet turn into something so naughty. – Ari Stark

Sandy Liang

Sandy Liang’s collection notes talked about self creation, but backstage after the show she shared that her inspiration was sparked by something more personal. “My obsession with Chinatown grandmas and revisiting that idea in a new way,” she said. Liang grew up part time in New York City’s Chinatown and draws influence from her childhood there, even showing inside the Far East surreal atmosphere of Chelsea restaurant Buddakan. “I kind of grew up in a restaurant,” she quipped backstage.

Nostalgia, fantasy and a bit of surrealism – that is her lane and she delivered it with spring’s collection. There were cat cartoons on dresses and handbags, tiered ruffle dresses and nightgowns with cheeky

care labels on the outside.

She also spoke about dollhouses and learning about life through Tomagotchi, cementing her modern nostalgia as fashion. But Liang isn’t stuck in the past, as she is seeing the grandmas she adored in a new light. “I’m really inspired by the flowy floral dresses and how they layer their clothes,” she said, offering her own ideas of layers with a bright blue gingham skirt and bra under a coat with a rounded collar. There is a sweetness in her work, with short-sleeve jackets with rounded shoulders, which came in three pastel hues and were paired with conversational handbags and her take on a white “tabi” shoe.

One trapeze-shaped sleeveless dress had a mix of underwear sewn across it, the type of humor and whimsy in her work that resonates with her customer. And as her show notes read, “This is what made me who I am.” – Thomas Waller

Bach Mai

Bach Mai flew under the radar last season, hosting a private client dinner where he unveiled a small line of reedition cocktail attire. No big show. No big gowns. No reviews.

During a spring preview at his temporary studio in Berkeley College (Mai is this year’s designer-in-residence), the demi-couturier revealed he’ll be putting out one full collection a year going forward. “We don’t have the manpower or the resources to be pumping them out and getting them where we want them to be,” he explained.

Acknowledging past issues with construction and taste, he added: “I have a tendency to do too much, to add too much.” But as a CFDA Vogue Fashion Fund

nominee, he’s opened himself back up to the scrutiny that comes with the runway. So rather than rush, he’s reduced his output.

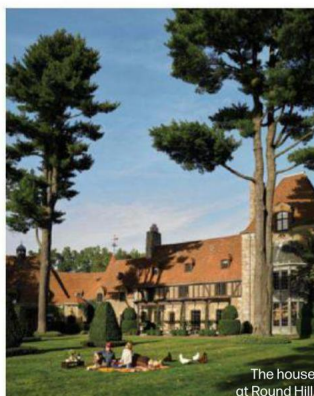
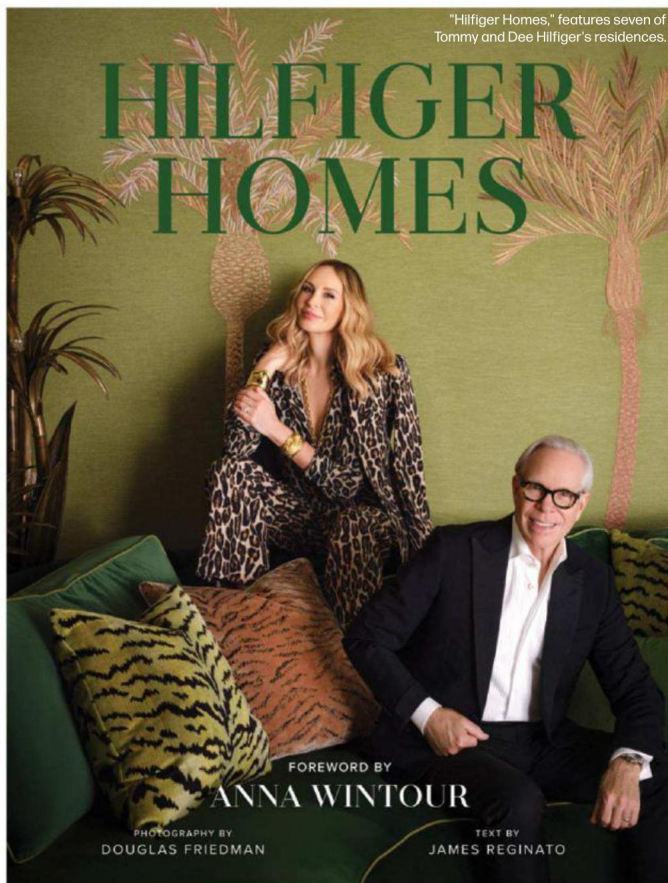
The idea of reduction led Mai to think in terms of basic geometry with circles and squares becoming polka-dot mikado and glen-plaid wool. The latter was used in the opening gray robe coat, which bled seamlessly into fluttering chiffon. Worn over a creamy Áo dài-style nightie, it embodied the “glamour in coming undone” that Mai was searching for.

From there the math got complicated and didn’t always add up. Satin Sophie shorts with out-flipped waistbands felt too undone on an errant swatch of lilac fabric tacked onto a corset didn’t make it more effortless to wear.

The polka dots burst forth during the finale in celadon sequins and crinoline-exposing portholes. They were also printed on a bustle-back gown masked by another one of those coats. Apart from styling being off this time, it hid the fact that the dress underneath was actually well executed, though it too closely resembled a vintage one by Balenciaga pinned to Mai’s inspiration board.

His desire to recreate such grandiose couture moments in the vein of Charles James and mentee John Galiano seemed antithetical to the goal of restraint. Hewing closer to it, a blouson sweater in citron-colored gossamer – Mai’s first knit – and a pair of bell-curve nylon shirtdresses translated midcentury shapes to sportswear.

These showed directions Maison Mai could go off on for the red carpet, but he freely admitted this collection is starting a new journey. “It’s the beginning of trying to find my voice again.” – A.S.



The house at Round Hill.



The Plaza Hotel apartment.

Rinfret Ltd., which is based in Greenwich, Conn., their interior-designer team includes Los Angeles-based Martyn Lawrence Bullard and Paris-based Chahan Minassian. For landscape design, they use Miranda Brooks and Deborah Nevins of New York and Mario Nievera and Keith Williams of Palm Beach.

"We're hands-on because we care deeply about every detail," said Hilfiger in the book.

The Hilfigers have lived in many places from Manhattan to the Caribbean island of Mustique, and each of their homes is different and exudes a unique approach to design and life. For example, their Palm Beach paradise is a world away from their bespoke Greenwich manor, which differs completely from their retro-glam 1970s-style Miami home and their vacation house on Mustique. There's also their sleek Feadship yacht, *Flag*, a 203-foot superyacht, on which the family sails during the summer.

"A house is always a work in progress, just like life," said Tommy Hilfiger in the book. Throughout the colorful pages, each of the beautiful homes are featured along with family members. For example, Tommy and the couple's son Sebastian are shown jumping into the Palm Beach pool wearing swimsuits and button-down shirts. "It's barefoot elegance...the opposite of our busy lives," said Hilfiger.

At their Plaza Hotel apartment, where the couple began their married life, artwork featuring Elizabeth Taylor, Marilyn Monroe, and Mickey Mouse line the walls. "I loved living there. It was a very special, exciting time in our lives," said Dee Hilfiger. For their Round Hill estate in Greenwich, Dee Hilfiger said, "We knew we were going to buy this house from the second we walked in. It had us at hello."

Hilfiger has owned several properties in Florida spanning Miami to Palm Beach. "The inspiration for the [Miami Beach House, *Villa Dentz*] is *Austin Powers...a fun, crazy, Miami, Pop Art wild beach house*," said Tommy. The couple and their family are shown on surfboards, motorboats, and kayaks. Their *Villa Maria* home in Miami was a lot calmer situation. Of *Flag*, their floating dream house, Tommy said, "It's really a floating house in every way — our summer house."

The book ends with *Coral House* in Palm Beach which is on South Ocean Boulevard, and took a while to find. "Dee and I have worked on many houses together, but I would say this one has been the most challenging so far," said Tommy.

"Once we were in the living room, we looked at the lake on one side and the ocean on the other side. Dee said, 'This is it.'"

"That house took three years to restore to its original glory. 'We had so many contractors bumping into each other, it's like the *Keystone Cops*,'" said Tommy Hilfiger. "It was really a test of patience and determination. A lot of people would have given up," said Hilfiger in the book.

"I've so enjoyed vicariously visiting Tommy just about everywhere in the world by poring over this book, which makes clear that he gives as much creative consideration to his interiors as he does to his runway collections," wrote Wintour in the foreword.

The 336-page hardcover book features 300 color illustrations and retails for \$75.

HOME DESIGN

Tommy and Dee Hilfiger's New Book Invites Readers Into Their Multiple Residences

● "Hilfiger Homes" comes out this month and features both past and present residences in Greenwich, Conn.; Mustique; Miami, and Palm Beach, among others.

BY LISA LOCKWOOD

Tommy Hilfiger and Dee Hilfiger offer a glimpse into how they live and their past and present residences in a new book, "Hilfiger Homes" which comes out this month.

Published by Vendome Press, the book is a visual autobiography and spotlights seven of their properties, photographed by Douglas Friedman, a longtime creative partner of the Hilfigers who specializes in fashion, architectural and interior design photography. Friedman's work has appeared in such publications as Harper's

Bazaar, Elle Decor and Wallpaper, and numerous books. James Reginato, a writer-at-large for Vanity Fair and the former features director for W magazine, penned the copy, and Anna Wintour contributed the foreword.

Dee Ocleppo Hilfiger is the founder and creative director of both Dee Ocleppo and Mrs H. and also serves as the creative director of Judith Leiber. She and Tommy Hilfiger, who has built his fashion company over the past 40 years, have been married since 2008 and share a large, blended family of seven children.

"Hilfiger Homes" tells the story of the places Dee and I have imagined, built and lived in — each one representing a meaningful chapter in our lives," Tommy Hilfiger told WWD. "Some we call home, others are part of our past. It's a celebration of design, creativity and personal expression, and my hope is that it

inspires readers to embrace their own style and create spaces that truly reflect who they are," he said.

The book describes what it took to turn these homes into showplaces, all the work that went into them and why they made the decisions they did. Family photographs are interspersed into the pages of the books.

"We've bought and decorated so many houses over the years, we thought a book would be a beautiful way to archive everything we've done, and share it with people," said Tommy Hilfiger in the book. "Each one has been a labor of love. It's been fun to collaborate on all these projects. For us, it's not just about living in these spaces, but about bringing a vision to life and honoring the history and character of each property," he said.

In the book, he and Dee Hilfiger give credit to those with whom they work. In addition to Cindy Rinfret of the interior design firm,



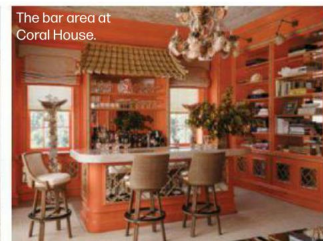
Villa Deniz in Miami.



Round Hill in Greenwich, Conn.



Villa Maria in Palm Beach.



The bar area at Coral House.

L'Oréal Chief Corporate Responsibility Officer Shares Vision

Ezgi Barcenas discussed strategies, such as scaling, partnerships and how environmental performance combines with financial performance. BY JENNIFER WEIL

Ezgi Barcenas



PARIS – “Sustainability is a team sport,” said Ezgi Barcenas, chief corporate responsibility officer at L'Oréal.

She was speaking from her office in the Paris suburb of Clichy just days before Climate Week NYC begins, in her first interview about strategy since starting the job in March 2024.

At L'Oréal, she wears many hats: Barcenas is a member of L'Oréal's executive committee, chief executive officer of its foundation, plus steers the company's Fund for Nature Regeneration, Fund for Women and Climate Emergency Fund. But a guiding force for Cyprus-born Barcenas is the fact that she's a trained engineer.

“That has really stayed with me over time,” she said. “How I see the world, and how I think of sustainability as a design problem in everything we do – in how we design our products, our processes, our markets – is something that has been very close to me in how I pursued my career ambitions and trying to make it a better world.”

Being at L'Oréal also takes her back to her roots, as it's a 115-year-old-plus company born from science and innovation. (Her parents were both scientists.)

“I see that curiosity in all of our colleagues – 90,000 colleagues around the world – the pioneering spirit to always ask the questions, to challenge ourselves, to raise the bar, to look for that continuous improvement,” said Barcenas. “It's really fascinating to be part of such a culture and a group of colleagues that are also pushing themselves, pushing the boundaries, to continue to help serve the infinite diversity

of the beauty aspirations and our diverse consumers out there.”

L'Oréal for the Future, the group's sustainability strategy she oversees, spans four main pillars: lead the climate transition, safeguard nature, drive circularity and support communities. The company has 15 goals within those.

“For us, this is about: How do we build business and community resilience?” said Barcenas. “Innovation and partnerships are big enablers of that.”

A new goal, for instance, is offering water-saving products and technologies to consumers in high water-stressed areas around the globe. L'Oréal Water Saver, created with Gjosa, is a solution.

“We're starting to think: How can we bring that to greater scale?” said Barcenas. “What does the shampoo of the future look like?”

Earlier this year, she also oversaw the Sustainable Innovation Accelerator's launch, with an endowment of 100 million euros over five years, to step up new breakthrough technologies.

“In everything I do, I look for solutions and I work with our teams to ask for the solutions,” said Barcenas. She explained key is sending demand signals to the market, to be very transparent about L'Oréal's aspirations, goals, vision, as well as challenges.

L'Oréal, with its 4,000 scientists and researchers, has tremendous internal capabilities.

“But at the same time, we also know that we have to turn to our ecosystem and find those partnerships outside that will

help us tackle those technical challenges, break those ceilings and find new ways to bring new ingredients and new packaging solutions, to think through greater transparency and traceability in our supply chain,” said Barcenas.

That's where the Sustainable Innovation Accelerator helps.

“We very clearly listed our challenges,” said Barcenas. “For us, it's not just about sourcing the first set of cohorts and identifying the first set of start-ups and partners that are going to come in through the program, but actually to send those demand signals into the market and to seed what I would call ‘innovation ecosystems’ around the world.”

Other large companies are facing similar sustainability challenges and seeking answers, so there is predictable growth in solutions to come.

L'Oréal partnered with Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership, which helps to source the applications that remain open until Sept. 30, plus select and curate them.

“We're mobilizing a lot of different teams inside our company in different zones and markets, because a lot of the challenges could be very local and market-specific,” said Barcenas, describing sustainability as a transversal function. “We want to tap into those innovation systems everywhere around the world.”

The idea is to pilot the solutions and ultimately bring them to scale. “This is one of the biggest challenges-slash-opportunities that is out there for sustainability right now,” she said.

L'Oréal has already begun. Last September, the group announced it had participated in a 35-million-euro funding round for start-up French company Abolis Biotechnologies in the quest to create purpose-made, sustainable ingredients produced at scale.

The deal was part of a three-way partnership. Evonik CVC, a global specialty manufacturer that's a long-standing partner of L'Oréal, took a minority share in Abolis, too. L'Oréal, Abolis and Evonik together aim to discover, develop and manufacture innovative, sustainable ingredients for beauty products and more.

Scale, according to Barcenas, is “that transformative power that we can bring to the market.”

Other upcoming goals include those in line with the 1.5-degree trajectory by 2030 and net-zero science-based target by 2050.

“There's a lot that we have to do,” said Barcenas. “If you look at our scope 1 and 2 [carbon] emissions, we've done tremendous effort, but scope 3 still remains a big challenge, both upstream and downstream. So how we work with our supply chain partners is a big piece of it.”

That's why in mid-November 2024, L'Oréal and Chenavari Investment jointly launched Solstice, a 50-million-euro debt fund created to help suppliers accelerate their significant industrial projects' decarbonization.

“As you're talking about decarbonization and mitigation, we should not forget the adaptation and resilience component, as well,” said Barcenas.

That's where a separate fund – Fund for Nature Regeneration, announced in 2020 – is at play.

“A lot of projects have been funded through the program, and what we're looking to learn is how does environmental performance combine with financial performance?” she explained. “We're looking to learn what it means, and where we can support those projects around the world.”

L'Oréal keeps gleaned knowledge from its efforts linked to circularity, including improving recycled product contents and packaging solutions that are both sustainable and desirable.

The company just completed the first year of its Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive, or CSRD, for 2024.

“This is a fantastic step forward. We've done many years of voluntary reporting or mandatory reporting, depending on different markets that we operate in,” said Barcenas. “But for us, what's really fascinating about this development is not only looking at historical performance and disclosing how we've done over the past year. But also putting in place the systems, the reporting processes, to continue to raise the auditability, quality, consistency of extra-financial data, and to bring them to the same levels of financial data, so that we can do better performance planning and monitoring looking forward.”

Barcenas takes a 360-degree scope to navigate and understand a swiftly changing world today, while imaging the future of beauty and working toward it.

“That allows you to integrate sustainability across the business,” she said. Barcenas and her team participate in different industry and professional groups, which is useful for benchmarking and can lead to non-linear thinking that helps connect the dots of sustainability solutions.

“As a global company, we have the unique opportunity to learn from around the world,” she said. “In sustainability, you learn to be resilient, to always look for what is next.”

That goes hand-in-hand with L'Oréal's pioneering spirit, continued Barcenas.

“There is that shared sense of commitment, and those core values are essential, they are the cornerstone of our legacy, but also our long-term success,” she said. “Those convictions drive us forward.”

Retailer Love, Ranked

A ChangeUp survey of more than 1,600 shoppers shows how beauty's retail players are faring by consumer sentiment in 2025.

BY NOOR LOBAD

As beauty e-commerce continues to grow – most recently, accounting for 48 percent of U.S. beauty sales year-to-date, per NielsenIQ – the stakes are mounting for beauty's brick-and-mortar retailers in more ways than one.

A new ChangeUp survey of more than 1,600 beauty shoppers shows that nearly half of consumers think physical retail hasn't caught up to how quickly beauty trends move, with 69 percent also reporting that beauty product shopping is "overwhelming."

To that end, said ChangeUp director of strategy Alexa Jewell Schaefer, "what's working well at retail right now are opportunities for education and discovery – being overly product-heavy and transaction-based is where retailers

now are missing the mark."

According to the survey, Nordstrom is excelling by these measurements, with 52 percent of shoppers saying they "love" the experience of shopping for beauty at the retailer and 35 percent reporting they "enjoy it a lot."

Last month, the Seattle-based retailer revamped the beauty department at its New York flagship, moving the handbag and jewelry sections in order to merchandise its full beauty assortment, divided into four sections, together on the first floor where customers enter the store.

"It's entertainment and animation as soon as you enter," said former executive vice president and general merchandise manager of beauty,

accessories and home at Nordstrom, Debbi Hartley-Triesch in a WWD interview.

Ulta Beauty takes second place by positive customer sentiment, followed by Sephora which tracks behind by just 2 points in terms of how much consumers "love" shopping at the store. Drug and mass retailers like CVS Pharmacy, Walmart and Walgreens rank last by enjoyment, in that order. Their positions are in part a reflection of increased product lockups in stores, which inhibit discovery and being able to touch and feel products before purchasing. Case in point: a 2024 Kearney survey found "negatively or very negatively" influence consumers' perception of a store.

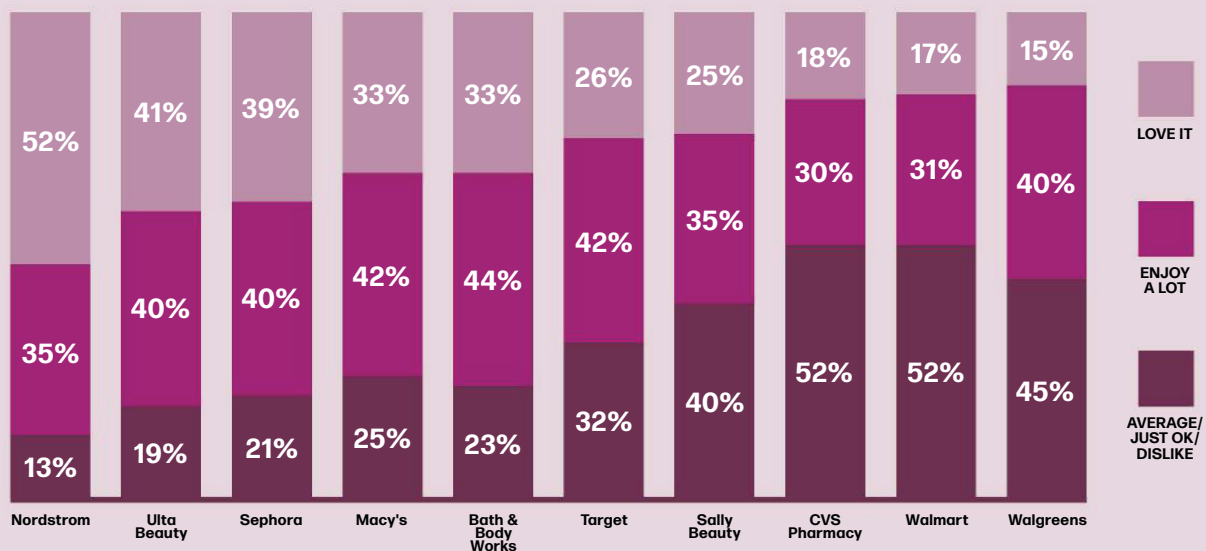
Of course, consumer perception is

not a 1:1 reflection of sales performance. In fragrance, for instance, Macy's was the top retailer – across physical and online stores – by sales during the first half of 2025, per YipitData, though it ranked number four by enjoyment in ChangeUp's survey. Ulta, though, took second place in both first-half fragrance sales and customer delight, with Sephora also ranking third in both assessments.

Overall, beauty shoppers tend toward specialty beauty stores across the board, ChangeUp found, though dupe-focused shoppers demonstrate an increased affinity for drug and mass retailers.

Here, how 10 beauty retailers fare by consumer sentiment, per ChangeUp's 2025 survey.

Shopping Enjoyment in Brand's Physical Stores (among total beauty shoppers)



The C-suite Shuffle

The latest executive moves in beauty. BY NOOR LOBAD



Minimalist skin care brand Sionsie has named **Kailey Bradt**, formerly the founder of waterless hair care line Susteau, as chief executive officer. Sionsie is majority-owned by actress Pamela Anderson, who joined the 2023-founded line last year.



Beauty manufacturer Solésence has tapped **Kevin Cureton** as president and CEO. Previously, Cureton served as chief operating officer of the Illinois-based manufacturer. He succeeds Jess Jankowski, who will retire from the company in November.



Emily Rose Campbell has joined Iced Media to head up the content and social commerce agency's new search and discovery practice. In the role, Rose Campbell will aim to support brands as AI-driven agentic commerce takes off in beauty.



Melissa C. Welch, who has previously worked with companies including The Estée Lauder Cos. and Shiseido via her longtime eponymous consulting firm, has joined Ogaki as executive vice president. She will oversee growth at the agency, which offers social commerce, influencer marketing and communications services.



Liquid supplement brand Cymbiotika has named **Andrei Najjar** as chief marketing officer. Most recently, the executive was senior vice president of marketing at Pressed Juicery and before that, head of global brand strategy at PepsiCo Studio.



Patrick Foley, formerly resident makeup artist at Neiman Marcus, which was acquired by Saks Global last year, has joined Bloomingdale's. The celebrity makeup artist and beauty consultant now holds the resident makeup artist role at Bloomingdale's Century City location in Los Angeles.

EXCLUSIVE

James Pecis' Clean Hair Care Brand Grows

The celebrity hairstylist is adding Daily Shampoo and Conditioner Concentrates to his Blu & Green line. BY JENNIFER WEIL



Blu & Green Shampoo and Conditioner Concentrates.

PARIS — Celebrity hairstylist James Pecis' clean hair care brand Blu & Green is expanding, with the launch of Daily Shampoo and Conditioner Concentrates.

He and his wife Kimberley Norcott introduced the eco-conscious, high-performance line in February 2024, with a shampoo and conditioner in tablet form, a repair mask and solid oil. Those were followed by a dry shampoo and texture dust, created without using aerosol or plastic.

"The first year was good," said Pecis. "It was really getting our feet wet."

Blu & Green is part of the hot prestige hair care category, which registered a 6 percent sales increase to \$2.3 billion in the United States in first-half 2025, Circana data shows.

Each Blu & Green product won some type of award, and the mask has been the brand's bestseller. That's sold out a couple of times, while the solid oil has been another big seller.

"We're seeing the texture dust right

now having a moment," said Pecis. "It might, actually, surpass those two."

Tweaks are being made to the tablets, meanwhile.

Products are tested with Pecis' team backstage at fashion shows, and feedback is also gleaned when salons are using them.

"The tablets were an amazing thing to launch with," said Pecis, explaining they've developed a somewhat cult following. "But also, we knew immediately that they aren't for everybody."

So work began on a shampoo and conditioner in a concentrated cream version, to be a little more consumer-friendly.

The concentrates have same product formula as the tablets. They are made with minimal water content and allow for about one-third of the amount of product usage per washing versus a traditional shampoo or conditioner.

Blu & Green's ingredients include natural and botanically derived actives, and eschew sulfates, GMOs, parabens, petroleum, cyclic silicones, synthetic fragrances, phthalates, SLS/SLES, PEGs or other harmful additives. Products are vegan and Leaping Bunny-certified.

The Daily Shampoo Concentrate includes biotin, panthenol and aloe barbadensis leaf juice.

"It has a beautiful lather and cleans the hair really [nicely] without stripping it," said Pecis.

The Daily Conditioner Concentrate has coconut fruit powder, jojoba ester and inulin.

The concentrates are packaged in lightweight, recyclable aluminum tubes, with each containing about 50 washes-worth of product. Therefore, the packaging waste and carbon impact are reduced, according to the company.

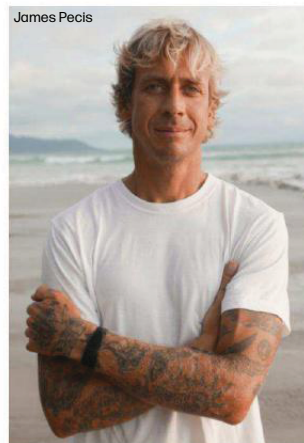
The new products will launch Oct. 3 on bluandgreen.com, Amazon.com and in select salons across the U.S.

A 100-ml. tube will retail for \$34.

Blu & Green began in about 20 salons. Its distribution countrywide will be expanded by at least 50 doors, in tandem with the concentrates' introduction.

"I've already started our educational program," said Pecis, who gives classes in some of Blu & Green's top-performing salons. "It equates directly to better sales."

The plan is to then expand into the European Union, United Kingdom and Middle East.



James Pecis

Michael Anastassiades Debuts Rocc Home Fragrance Line

The Cypriot-born, London-based designer worked with Alessi to develop six petrologic scents.

BY SOFIA CELESTE

The smell of freshly cut stone from the Italian quarries of Carrara and Versiglia was the starting point for designer Michael Anastassiades' first home fragrance line with Alessi.

"There was a combined smell of smoke and gasoline. Then there was the smell of damp earth. Lastly, there was the smell of spring flowers, thyme, rosemary, and the subtle smell of poppies, together with the soft resin on the bark of pine trees in the vicinity," he detailed.

And while the Cypriot-born, London-based creative may be best known for his lighting creations for upscale design brands like Flos or most

recently, his furniture for Fritz Hansen, Anastassiades said he has had a strong olfactory sense since he was young. "All my childhood memories are around smells, whether single or combined. I remember vividly the scent of many plants that I came across during my walks in Cyprus while growing up," he mused.

On Tuesday, Italian design brand Alessi unveiled his first fragrance line of candles and home diffusers. Named Rocc, the collection is inspired by Anastassiades' first passion for rock collecting.

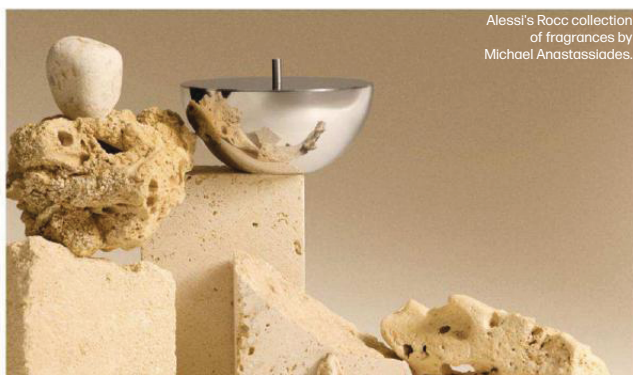
Each fragrance was developed

in collaboration with the Robertet perfumery in the fragrance capital of Grasse, France.

Robertet, renowned for its use of natural raw materials, guided Anastassiades on a memory-conjuring journey through time, resulting in six, mineral-rich yet clean fragrances: Marble, Clay, Flint, a scent that imbues the smell of flint shards with wild fern and oakmoss; Amethyst, which is infused with violet, lavender and myrrh; Amber, made with a rare mix of balsamic tonka bean and warm spices, and Basalt, a fragrance enhanced with Nepal pepper and lemon zest.

The Rocc fragrance collection includes candles and diffusers. Each one comes in stainless steel containers designed by Anastassiades and manufactured at the Alessi headquarters in Omegna, Italy. Each vessel is sold separately, with prices starting at 55 euros, and can be reused as a candle holder or a decorative household object once the product has been depleted.

The collection will be available from October through the official Alessi channels in Europe, the U.K. and Switzerland.



Alessi's Rocc collection of fragrances by Michael Anastassiades.



Natura to Sell Avon CARD

The Brazilian beauty giant has entered into an agreement with Grupo PDC to divest the holding.

BY JENNIFER WEIL

PARIS — Natura Cosméticos has entered into a binding agreement with Grupo PDC, a consumer goods company, to sell the Avon business located in Guatemala, Nicaragua, Panama, Honduras, El Salvador and the Dominican Republic, or CARD.

Avon CARD is to be sold by its Brazilian parent for a nominal value of \$1, plus payment upon closing of a receivable of \$22 million by Avon Guatemala to Natura's owned subsidiary in Mexico.

"The transaction will support Natura's effort to streamline its operations and simplify its businesses, as well as position it to continue focusing on the integration of Natura and Avon in Latin America," Natura said in a statement of material fact on Monday.

As part of the deal, Natura is in agreements to continue supplying finished goods to Avon CARD and be the licensor of the Avon brand in the region.

The transaction is expected to close by Oct. 30, according to the company.

Natura reiterated that it continues to explore strategic alternatives to its Avon International business, which is officially on the block.

On Aug. 12, concurrent with the release of its second-quarter results, Natura said: "Strategic alternatives for Avon International continue to progress, and all necessary requirements were met to classify the business unit as an asset held for sale."

Avon Central America and the Dominican Republic, which formerly was under Natura & Latam, was reclassified as an asset for sale, as well.

Natura has — on and off — been exploring options for Avon's international business.



Avon's Hydramatic Shine Lipstick

Sheglam Founder and CEO Sylvia Fu Talks Fast Growth and Future Plans

In her first U.S. press interview, the founder of the Shein-owned beauty business discusses Sheglam's rapid ascent through the ranks of Gen Z beauty brands – and what's next. BY NOOR LOBAD



Shein's Gen Z beauty play, suffice it to say, is paying off.

While the Chinese retailer has long made headlines – first, for shaking up the fast-fashion game with its ultra-low prices and rapid churn of new designs and, most recently, for its ongoing IPO preparations – Shein has also been growing its beauty business, Sheglam, to much less fanfare.

Founded in 2019 by Sylvia Fu, former assistant to Shein founder Chris Xu, Sheglam has swiftly become a formidable player in the global beauty game. It debuted with a \$6 Color Bloom Liquid Blush – just months before Selena Gomez's Rare Beauty introduced one of its own to similar, long-lasting success – and has steadily built out a range of viral, affordable makeup products since, also branching into hair care last year.

According to a source with knowledge of the matter, Sheglam's net sales reached \$400 million in 2024, up 60 percent versus the year prior. In turn, parent company Shein ranked number 81 on the WWD Beauty Inc Top 100 list of global beauty manufacturers for the year, outpacing players like Maesa, Weluda, Kering Beauté and Parlux in sales.

Data from CreatorIQ shows that Sheglam is also a top-40 cosmetics brand by earned media value, having garnered \$89.9 million EMV during the first half of 2025, driven largely by creator content on TikTok including tutorials, product

roundups and try-on videos.

With a fast-growing global retail footprint and category ambitions that go beyond its core cosmetics business, Sheglam is just getting started, said Fu, who is also chief executive officer of the brand, in her first U.S. press interview with WWD.

"We were lucky in the sense that our first product easily went viral on TikTok," said Fu, adding that a decision then to focus a majority of Sheglam's marketing efforts toward growing its presence on TikTok, where the brand now counts 9.8 million followers, has played a key role in Sheglam's success.

"We design products, from the very beginning, that will be suitable for future TikTok marketing. It's much easier to make the right content if you have the right product, and if you make the right content, everyone who uses your products will know how to present them – you will be able to more organically go viral."

The Color Bloom Liquid Blush remains Sheglam's hero product, and the brand has added liquid contour and highlighter iterations to further its momentum in the category.

Gen Z has been the brand's core shopper from Day One, Fu said. "Cheek, priming and setting products are still our largest categories. We intentionally chose those to start rather than foundation, mascara and lip, which giants like L'Oréal have been more focused on."



It was six months into her tenure as Xu's assistant at Shein when Fu proposed the launch of Sheglam.

"I witnessed the boom of Chinese and Korean beauty brands and sort of proposed to [Xu], 'why don't we leverage Shein's massive consumer base and platform to build another disruptive brand in makeup?,'" said Fu, who previously worked at a venture capital firm in China focused on the consumer goods sector.

Initially, Sheglam products were sold solely on the Shein website before a stand-alone Sheglam website was launched in 2020. The brand then debuted on Amazon in 2022, and in 2023 embarked on its in-store retail footprint, which is the "largest growth engine for Sheglam now," Fu said.

"We expanded to the Middle East and Latin America first, because when we were only operating online, we found that we had more brand awareness in those regions."

Today, Sheglam is available in more than 900 stores across six gulf countries in the Middle East, including Watson's and Lifestyle at Centrepoint. According to Euromonitor, Sheglam was the single fastest-growing mass beauty and personal care brand in Saudi Arabia in 2024, and Fu reports that 25 percent of consumers who shop Sheglam at Lifestyle at Centrepoint have been net-new shoppers for the retailer.

In Japan, the brand sells in more than 6,000 doors at stores such as Donki and Plaza. In Columbia, Mexico and India, Sheglam sells in another roughly 200 doors at retailers like Aruma, Liverpool and Tira, respectively. Like Shein, Sheglam does not sell in China, where Shein was founded.

The U.S., where Sheglam only sells online, however, remains the brand's key market.

"We pour most of our efforts into analyzing consumer needs in the U.S.," Fu said. "It is the most competitive market, and it is the market where Sheglam must try its best to do well – we've basically developed our portfolio and creative strategy based on U.S. trends and consumer needs."

While Fu declined to comment on whether the brand is expanding into U.S. retail soon, she said the brand is "working now to expand to more well-established markets," with launches planned "this year and next." The beauty brand has a staff of 300 people globally, and operates offices in China, Singapore, Los Angeles, Dubai, Milan, Tokyo, Berlin, Mexico City and Melbourne, some of which are markets Fu hinted Sheglam will soon

expand into retail.

The apparel business of the brand's parent company, Shein, by comparison, is strictly online, barring the occasional pop-up.

"Sheglam is a brand that was born amidst much criticism, because many consumers connect the image of Sheglam with Shein," said Fu, referencing the widespread critiques of Shein's sustainability and human labor practices. In 2024, Shein reported two cases of child labor in its supply chain, adding that it "suspended orders" from the contract manufacturers in question until "remediation steps, including terminating contracts with underage employees" were taken.

Shein, founded in 2012, has also faced mounting pressure to reduce its environmental impact, with its 2024 Sustainability Report demonstrating that the company's total emissions rose 23.1 percent versus 2023 to more than 26 million metric tons of CO₂e (carbon dioxide equivalent).

Sheglam has, however, taken steps to distance itself from the contentious image of its parent company as it looks to rise through the ranks of beauty.

For one, Sheglam's supply chain was built "completely from scratch," said Fu, adding that there is no crossover between Shein's manufacturers and those used by Sheglam, which are "totally independent manufacturers used by most other top players in the beauty industry."

"Our product development, supply chain, quality control, marketing and e-commerce operations, and [retail] operations are run quite independently at Sheglam," Fu said.

Sheglam sources beauty ingredients from China, Italy, Japan and South Korea, among other regions. Most of its packaging is made in China, and though Fu declined to comment on how Trump's tariffs are impacting the Sheglam business, she said the environment "is challenging for us," and the brand "will continue to focus on keeping our products as accessible as possible, without compromising on quality, regardless of the trading environment."

Sheglam introduces between 10 to 15 core products each year, as well as an additional seven or eight limited-edition collections. These limited-edition collections comprise roughly 10 to 15 percent of the brand's total business, and include IP collaborations with brands like Harry Potter and the Twilight Saga, as well as original themed drops like its Chroma Zone and Crimson Butterfly collections.

Expanding Sheglam's hair range, which includes hot tools priced between \$29 and \$60 and hair care and styling products ranging from \$3 for a tube of scalp serum to \$11 for heat protectant, is a key priority for the brand over the next year.

"Our range now is limited, but we're looking to build our community for hair care and styling – we have many hair launches in our pipeline," said Fu, adding that Sheglam will also "expand to larger cosmetics categories including mascara, foundation and lip."

"Localization, and understanding the local consumer's needs for products, content, and patterns of shopping, will be our next big priority, as well," Fu said.

BUSINESS

Neiman Marcus Celebrates Brunello Cucinelli



The Brunello Cucinelli fashion show at Neiman Marcus in Dallas.

- Thursday's luncheon and fashion show in Dallas benefited the Crystal Charity Ball.

BY DAVID MOIN

At Neiman Marcus in downtown Dallas last Thursday, it was all about fashion, philanthropy and the ladies who lunch.

Neiman's showcased Brunello Cucinelli's fall 2025 collection and gave a sneak peek of the designer's newest exclusive line for the luxury retailer during the Crystal Charity Ball Fashion Show and Luncheon.

The exclusive collection, called Heirs of Craftsmanship, honored the next generation of artisans at Cucinelli and featured a women's assortment balancing feminine

elegance with a modern edge, including tailored lavender corduroy jackets, monili-detailed outerwear and shimmering sequined evening styles. The menswear reimagines sartorial tradition with relaxed tailoring, from lavender herringbone suiting and supple leather jackets to tonal jacquard cardigans and refined evening blazers. Neiman's and Brunello Cucinelli have a history of partnering on exclusive collections and in-store experiences.

Regarding the Brunello Cucinelli's fall collection, Neiman's said that it "balances the brand's tailoring with modern, creative elements and has a mix of luxurious, natural fibers and bold, intense colors."

This year's philanthropic event marked the 50th year Neiman's has hosted The Crystal Charity Ball.

"For decades, Neiman Marcus has cultivated a strong partnership with Brunello Cucinelli, a brand whose commitment to timeless elegance, exceptional craftsmanship and purpose-driven luxury aligns with our own," Emily Essner, president and chief commercial officer of Saks Global, said in a statement. "Bringing Brunello Cucinelli to Dallas for an exclusive presentation for our Neiman Marcus customers in celebration of the Crystal Charity Ball reflects how we unite our valued partners and philanthropic commitments to create meaningful moments of luxury with impact."

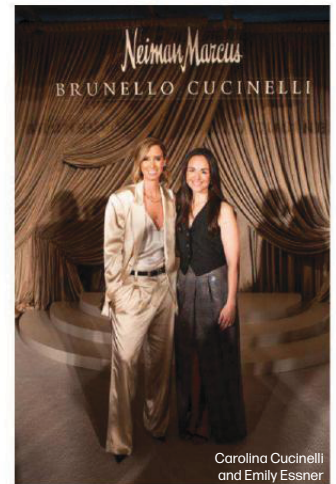
Carolina Cucinelli, vice president and co-creative director, and Massimo Caronna, chief executive of North America for Brunello Cucinelli, were among those at the event. Saks Global recognized Carolina Cucinelli with an International Cultural Impact Honor for her role as a mother, creative and woman in leadership shaping the future of fashion.

"It is a true honor to celebrate this special occasion with Neiman Marcus, a partner who shares our deep appreciation for craftsmanship, beauty and community," Carolina Cucinelli said in a statement. "To be part of the Crystal Charity Ball, where fashion and philanthropy come together to support such meaningful causes, is profoundly inspiring. I am grateful to witness how our values of humanity and creativity can find resonance here in Dallas, among such extraordinary women and leaders."

The Crystal Charity Ball continued its tradition of honoring the "ten best dressed women" for their community service and personal style while raising vital funds for eight local Dallas beneficiaries making an impact on the community. Each honoree

was dressed in Brunello Cucinelli. The 2025 honorees included Jacquelin Sewell Atkinson, Julie Bagley, Shelby Goff, Shannon Graham, Tracey Kozmetsky, Tracy Lange, Lisa Rocchio, Sunie Solomon, Wendy Messmann and Katherine Wyker. Amy Hegi served as chair of the fashion show and luncheon. Also during the event, the 2025 Hall of Fame Award was presented to former Crystal Charity Ball chair and philanthropist, Aileen Pratt.

Local organizations benefiting from the event, include Café Momentum, Cristo Rey Dallas High School Inc., Dallas CASA, Foundation for The Callier Center, Retina Foundation of the Southwest, The Stewpot and West Dallas Community School.



Carolina Cucinelli and Emily Essner

BUSINESS

Dickies Sold to Bluestar Alliance for \$600M

- The venerable workwear brand is owned by VF Corp., which has been working to pay down its debt load.

BY JEAN E. PALMIERI

Count Dickies as the latest company to be sold to a brand management firm.

On Monday morning, VF Corp. said it will sell its Dickies brand to Bluestar Alliance for \$600 million in cash.

Dickies was founded more than a century ago as a workwear brand and in recent years has expanded its reach into streetwear as well. It is distributed in 55 countries.

"Since 1922, Dickies has provided hard-wearing, long-lasting and comfortable clothes, cementing its status as a storied brand in performance workwear," said Joseph Gabbay, chief executive officer of Bluestar. "We have followed the brand for many years and have a deep appreciation for its history and legacy, which VF Corp. has successfully begun to rebuild over the past few years. We are committed to supporting the Dickies brand's growth by leveraging our consumer insights and operational excellence to unlock its full value for all stakeholders."

VF's president and CEO Bracken Darrell added: "Dickies is an iconic American workwear brand with a bright future, and I am confident that under Bluestar Alliance's ownership, it will continue to improve and realize its significant growth potential. As I've said before, we continuously evaluate



A T-shirt celebrating the 100th anniversary of Dickies.

our portfolio and this transaction will enable us to bring our net debt level down and will be accretive to our growth on a pro-forma basis. I want to thank the entire Dickies team for their strong commitment to transforming the brand."

VF has systematically been paring its portfolio as it works to turn around its business and pay down the debt it accumulated in purchasing Supreme for \$2.4 billion in 2020. Last October, it sold Supreme to EssilorLuxottica for \$1.5 billion. The company still owns Vans, The

North Face and Timberland.

Bracken took over the helm of VF two years ago and immediately made his presence known by changing management at both Vans and The North Face and working to pay down that debt. And it appears to be working, since in the first quarter ended June 28, VF reported overall sales of \$1.8 billion with The North Face up 6 percent and Timberland increasing 14 percent. But the company is still in the red, with adjusted operating losses hitting \$56 million in the period,

down from the \$110 million to \$125 million the company had forecast.

Bluestar has quietly been building its portfolio. In February, it acquired Palm Angels and it also owns Off-White, Scotch & Soda, Hurley, Tahari, Bebe and several other labels. The company was founded by Gabbay and Ralph Gindi in 2006. It manages a portfolio of more than 500 licensees globally.

The deal didn't do much to move the needle on VF's stock, which was trading down around 1 percent on Monday, but was viewed mainly positively. As Tom Nikic of Needham & Co. wrote in a research note: "We view this development favorably as Dickies has languished in recent years — three straight years of double digit revenue declines. And importantly, it helps VF with their balance sheet cleanup efforts, as the sale price represents about 15 percent of the current net debt balance."

Anna Andreeva of Piper Sandler said the sale came as a bit of a surprise considering VF moved Dickies headquarters to California from Texas earlier this year to be closer to Vans, but Bluestar approached the company and brought up the idea of the sale. Now that the deal is done, it will help VF pay off the \$500 million in notes that are due in March, she wrote, "strengthen the balance sheet and also streamline focus across the organization."

The Dickies deal is expected to close by the end of this year.



EN

The TRE ISSUE

THIS NOVEMBER, the Footwear News TRE issue explores the innovations, trends, and stories driving performance footwear. Discover the latest running technologies, athlete spotlights, retail strategies, and exclusive coverage from The Running Event—from product launches to sustainability breakthroughs and standout collaborations. Whether designing or selling, this issue keeps you ahead of the pack.

CLOSE **OCT 10** • MATERIALS **OCT 29** • PUBLISH **NOV 10**

FOR MORE INFO

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Looks from
the Anta Zero
collection by
Kris Van Assche.



EXCLUSIVE

Kris Van Assche Is Taking Anta Way Beyond Sports

- The Belgian designer has been tasked with giving a more urban, sophisticated elan to the sustainable Anta Zero subbrand.

BY MILES SOCHA

“Taking Anta from the running track to the city street” is how Kris Van Assche summed up his new collaboration with the Chinese activewear giant, which conscripted him to help rev up its nascent Anta Zero subbrand.

The project allowed the Belgian designer to apply his tailoring prowess and soigné touch to a slate of sustainable fabrics for the Anta Zero project, which has already developed carbon-neutral sweatshirts and opened a carbon-neutral store in Shanghai.

It also allowed Van Assche to design what will be his next winter coat: a belted, double-breasted puffer topcoat that exemplifies how he merged form and function to create a hybrid style you might call ath-elegant.

Anta, which boasts some 7,000 stores in China, is sure to gain greater international renown for tapping Van Assche, who’s well known for his past roles as creative director of Berluti and Dior Homme, in addition to his namesake brand.

The designer remarked that it’s something of a full-circle moment for him: “In 2005, when I launched my brand, it was three-piece suits worn with white sneakers. Now I’m making suits with a sportswear brand.”

Anta is to unveil Van Assche’s coed collection Tuesday in Shanghai. It spans parkas in mushroom leather, snazzy warm-up jackets with vegan leather piping; flaring windbreaker dresses; sculpted puffer pea coats, and inventive takes on the hoodie, sometimes cropped and flaring like a bolero, or extended into a skater dress to wear over leggings.

In an exclusive interview, Van Assche said he was attracted to the challenge

of applying his luxury experience and streetwear sensitivity to a sustainable collection with accessible price points.

“They have the know-how of sports, tech, and sustainable fabrications, and they have such a large distribution that they can offer good quality at a low price point,” he enthused about Anta. “So I felt it was very interesting.”

Flicking through photos of the collection taken by his longtime collaborator Julien Martinez Leclerc, Van Assche explained that tailored coats are

made with double-face jersey, the button holes heat sealed rather than stitched, and shirts and ties realized in a recycled nylon and polyester fabric.

Meanwhile, more identifiably “active” pieces such as sweatshirts or track pants are elevated with couture-esque volumes, vegan leather trims or unexpected color combinations.

“The look feels elevated Parisian chic, but the fabrication is completely sports,” Van Assche explained, also pointing to drawstrings and other activewear details.

“These clothes really have this double function to them. You can wear them on the street and to more elevated events, or you can wear them for your active, sporty life.”

In addition, Van Assche said he was seduced by the clear positioning of Anta Zero, its sustainable credentials, and the scale and speed of the Anta company.

Backpacks, trapunto-stitched hats and monochromatic sneakers round out the range. Retail prices for overseas markets are expected to range from about 90 to 490 euros for clothing, 40 to 120 euros for accessories, and 80 to 120 euros for sneakers.

The fall 2025 Anta Zero collection spans 51 styles across 106 colorways, and will be available in stores from November.

Anta is expected to offer Van Assche’s designs at 40 select Anta locations, and its online store. A pop-up in Europe is in the pipeline.

Founded in 1991 and headquartered in Jinjiang, Anta is billed as the one of the world’s largest activewear companies by revenue, and markets large selections of clothing and footwear for running, outdoors, training and basketball, including a line by NBA star player Kyrie Irving.

Last year, revenues at Anta Sports, which also markets the Fila brand, rose 13.6 percent to reach 70.83 billion renminbi, or 8.47 billion euros.

Since exiting Berluti in 2021, Van Assche has taken on an array of different design projects, including childrenswear for Chinese kidsweat giant Balabala; vases and candy dishes for Belgian homewares firm Serax, and bronze vessels for the Laffanour Galerie Downtown in Paris.

He said he relished the opportunity to flex his tailoring muscles, and to discover the advanced fabrics Anta employs, including Aerovent Zero, billed as China’s first PFAS-free waterproof and breathable membrane, EcoColy fibers that can biodegrade in less than a month under controlled conditions, and Mulkol vegan leather, which Van Assche said could almost pass for the real thing.

“This is not merely a collection of products, but an answer to the question: Why does the world need Anta?” Tsui Yeung, chief executive officer of Anta Brand, said in a statement. “We will fulfill our commitment to sustainable development through action and respond with greater confidence to the needs of the global market.”

Dressy puffers by
Kris Van Assche for
Anta Zero.



Kris Van Assche



SUSTAINABILITY

Biofabricate Fair Redefines Biomaterials at London Design Festival

- Biofabricate "went back to the drawing board" for a downsized London fair as start-ups are facing the post-ESG funding landscape.

BY RHONDA RICHFORD

As the biomaterials space navigates a more turbulent landscape marked by tightening budgets, regulatory uncertainty, and investor caution, Biofabricate is adapting its approach. Following last year's large-scale Paris convention, this year it is reborn across the Channel as Biofabricate Fair – a smaller and more focused event timed to coincide with the London Design Festival.

"We needed to go back to the drawing board," said Biofabricate chief executive officer Suzanne Lee, noting the challenges the industry has faced over the past two years. "The fundraising climate has been very tough. Paris was our biggest, most expensive event ever, but as we sought interest for the next edition, it became clear that marketing and travel budgets were seriously hit."

So Biofabricate, which launched in New York in 2013, made a strategic pivot to London, where an eager sustainability community is concentrated. This year's edition will run over two days starting Tuesday, with the first day as a traditional industry summit, and the second as a more public-facing exhibition inviting young designers, students, investors and the general public.

"It's intentionally reaching out to a broader cross section of potential customers and people who are curious," said Lee.

Whereas prior editions focused on science and business scaling strategies, the upcoming fair puts design and product innovation at the core, hence the timing with London Design Week. "The real goal is to have a design conversation around biology," said Lee. "What is it that biology can do that petrochemicals and animal products can't? What does it unlock for designers and brands?"

The luxury sector, long an early adopter and supporter of biomaterials, will continue to support the fair as the industry works to meet its sustainability targets, Lee said. Big names like Kering, LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton, Hermès, and French sportswear giant Decathlon will be present. "There's that sort of luxury sector that is just deeply wedded to this whole field," Lee said. "They know they've got to get off plastic and some of the more challenging animal products they use."

Investors, many of whom had limited experience in biomaterials, first flocked to the space. But some have since backed away, discouraged by long product development cycles and inflated early valuations. Today, Lee noted, some are asking pre-seed companies to already have sales agreements in place – terms she called "near-impossible."

Despite this retreat, regulatory pressures around "forever chemicals" such as PFAS are spurring new innovation. Bio-based coatings are being developed as safer alternatives, while other legislative frameworks aim to drive industry-wide change. And big brands, especially those with previously stated sustainability goals, continue to invest.

"They are starting to be a little more pragmatic," noted Lee. "They got very



Alternative leather company Bucha Bio attended Biofabricate in 2024.

excited initially and wanted to work with everyone, but you have to match resources to the needs of the innovator."

Among bright spots is the beauty space, which still has "enormous" potential, Lee said, particularly as brands seek bio-based pigments to replace petrochemical-derived colors.

London-based brand The Unseen, which developed the world's first mascara using algae-based pigment, is one example Lee cited, and has seen interest from consumers concerned with toxicity and "clean" ingredients. Brewed collagen and peptide-rich fermentation processes are also drawing significant attention from beauty brands.

Other promising innovations include packaging. Living Ink, for example, has partnered with major brands including Nike to use bio-based black ink. Shellworks, creator of compostable bioplastic Vivomer, has supplied packaging to Unilever brands. Founder Insiya Jafferjee recently won the Veuve Clicquot Bold Future Award.

To bridge the gap between innovation and investment, Biofabricate is extending its reach beyond London. The week following the fair, the organization will partner with Juniper VC during New York Climate Week to cohost an event focused on fashion, beauty, and bio-innovation.

Juniper's portfolio includes forward-looking companies like Matereal, which produces bio-based polyurethane alternatives, and Simplifiber, which turns organic slurry into shoe materials.

While funding remains available, founders and investors alike are adjusting to a reality where the language of climate or ESG is no longer enough to secure capital, said Juniper's chief of staff Mackenzie Scurka. It falls under the term "green-hushing," the new-ish phrase signifying how sustainability messaging is being downplayed.

Biotechnology is "inherently climate technology," she said, but she acknowledged that current political dynamics have made "onshoring" and "strengthening domestic supply chains" a more effective framing. Start-ups have had more success shifting their narratives away from climate and toward performance, resilience and national interest.

"We've noticed a lot of folks trying to go for [Department of Defense] funding,

for example," said Scurka, citing high performance and cost advantages for the military. "That is a really smart way for the companies we work with to lean into their technology."

Still, the early stage is a difficult one to navigate. "There's this gap of funding in the middle," said Scurka. Companies emerging from the lab are often too far along for R&D grants but not far enough to meet the milestones venture capitalists expect. "That valley is getting wider," she said.

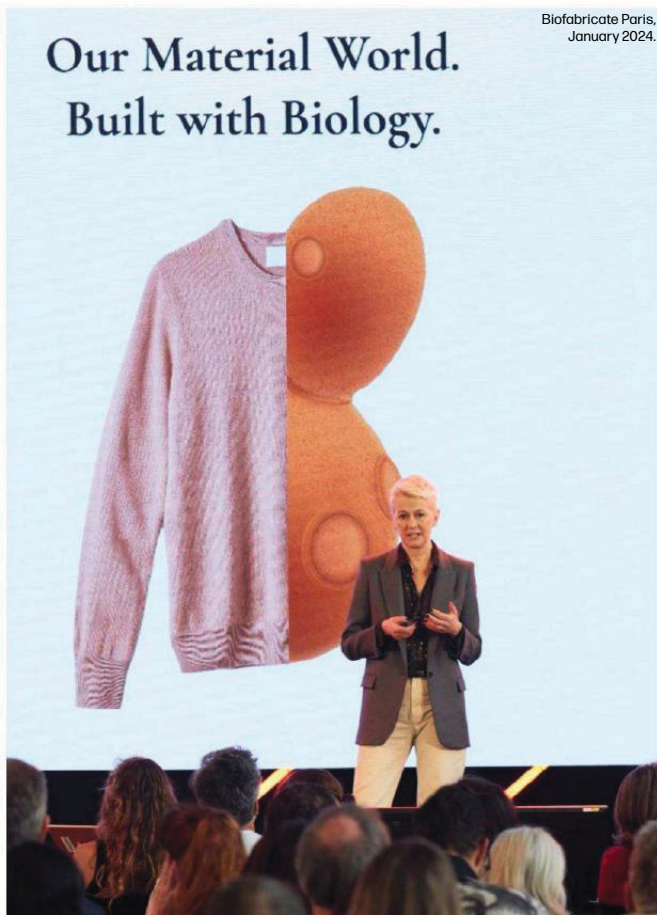
Juniper encourages founders to make the most of grant funding early, diversify their capital stacks, and adopt messaging that aligns with current funding trends – particularly government-backed programs. "Try to shift your messaging so that the grant funding that is available – you can reframe your narrative to try to fit into that."

"Biology is a remarkable platform for material design. Unlike traditional manufacturing methods, biology allows us to fine-tune properties dynamically – adjusting strength, flexibility and functionality in response to specific needs or shifting demand. That adaptability is the core value proposition biomaterials can offer in fashion and personal care," added Juniper general partner Jennifer Kan.

While investors may be more cautious, Scurka believes consumer interest is still strong. "I think consumers are still interested in making more sustainable fashion choices," she said. "Having more vegan ingredients or having more sustainable products is something that people care about."

There's also an economic incentive. "When [these materials] scale, they will be made for cheaper than current incumbents, and so hopefully that translates into more affordable fashion and more affordable beauty for consumers as well," she added.

The upcoming New York Climate Week event, cohosted by Juniper and Biofabricate on Sept. 25 at IndieBio, will include a panel moderated by Lee, with Juniper general partner Michael Luciani and Simplifiber chief executive officer Maria Intscher-Owring. A showcase will include between 10 and 15 companies demonstrating material innovations across different stages of development – from prototypes to market-ready products.



Biofabricate Paris, January 2024.

BUSINESS

Tariffs, Price Hikes Drive Shoppers to The Secondhand Luxury Handbag Market

● As inflation and tariffs bite, consumers turn to resale platforms for more affordable luxury bags.

BY RHONDA RICHFORD

PARIS - U.S. tariffs of 15 percent on imports from the European Union are bad news for beleaguered luxury brands already struggling with softening demand. But they're proving a goldmine for the secondhand market, which is booming as shoppers seek out more affordable alternatives.

They are increasingly migrating to resale platforms, not only for the savings but also for greater access, authenticity and sustainability. With price increases compounding across categories - often driven by brands like Hermès, Louis Vuitton and Chanel, which often raise prices - pre-owned luxury now represents a more accessible path to luxury brands.

"The sector is relatively healthy," said UBS analyst Jay Sole, who follows The RealReal. "It's not a question of demand, it's a question of supply. If there are legitimate, authenticated luxury goods available, consumers will buy."

The new tariffs are adding to the inflationary pressures and post-pandemic buoyancy that have already driven retail prices sky-high. But for resale platforms, the result has been a growing pricing gap between full-price and pre-owned items - a difference that benefits platforms that maintain stable average selling prices.

"Despite the new 15 percent tariffs, average selling prices on the resale market have remained stable - including handbags - making secondhand an even more affordable alternative as firsthand prices continue to climb," said Maximilian Bittner, chief executive officer of Vestiaire Collective.

Recommerce platform Fashionphile is also seeing that shift play out.

Demand ticked up even before the tariff rate was finalized. "We've seen some early activity - people buying before price hikes, and increased listings by owners anticipating higher retail replacement costs," said Fashionphile founder and president Sarah Davis. "Shoppers are very responsive around those changes. They are buying or selling according to the market and pricing announcements."

Brand price hikes, including Hermès and Louis Vuitton's earlier this year, also created a pre-emptive panic among buyers. "This always brings out 'buy-before-it-gets-more-expensive' behavior," she added, while sellers have had a more wait-and-see approach in hopes that offers will increase.

While some price-sensitive consumers are pulling back from new retail purchases, they aren't necessarily leaving the luxury market. "There are some buyers who have said they shop from us because they've been pushed to their limits," said Davis. "We know that many of those same consumers are migrating to pre-owned rather than exiting the category entirely."

As tariffs tighten pressure on retail pricing, resale platforms are well-positioned to capture the shift.

Even with economic uncertainty and seasonal slowdowns, resale platforms say consumer interest has remained stable.

"Demand has remained steady month-over-month, highlighting the resilience and attractiveness of the secondhand market," Bittner said, noting that order volumes

Popular brands on luxury resale sites.



Sarah Davis



Maximilian Bittner

from June to August did not see the typical seasonal dip.

In the current climate, the pressure is pushing sellers to list more and buyers to act faster - particularly as new prices continue to climb.

The most sought-after brands on the resale market remain consistent across platforms. Chanel, Hermès, Louis Vuitton, Dior and Gucci top both demand and gross merchandise value.

According to Davis, even amid macroeconomic caution and viral criticism of pricing - particularly following an investigation by Italian prosecutors which alleged Dior paid a supplier 53 euros to assemble a handbag that would sold for upward of 2,600 euros in its boutiques, which amplified on TikTok earlier this year - resale prices have held strong.

"Pricing for Dior has not taken a hit, even on the book tote," she said.

At the same time, more under-the-radar but in-the-know like U.S. luxury brands like The Row and Khaite are gaining traction. They're some of Fashionphile's hottest selling styles.

Recent high-profile creative director shifts at major houses such as Demna to Gucci, Pierpaolo Piccioli to Balenciaga and Matthieu Blazy to Chanel have yet to significantly impact resale demand. Davis noted that designers have not yet launched

collections under their new roles, limiting opportunities for renewed consumer interest or, conversely, nostalgia.

"Designer 'chess moves' have not yet generated a measurable impact on resale demand or brand awareness," said Bittner.

However, history suggests that once new collections debut on the runway, resale interest often spikes.

"A designer really can make all the difference and we've seen new designers pump up the resale value of even discontinued, older styles. When Daniel Lee breathed new life into Bottega [Veneta], it not only helped with current resale brands but prices for older bags benefited," said Davis.

For example, following Céline's reintroduction of the Phantom bag in July, searches for the style increased tenfold compared to the previous month, Bittner noted.

Vintage in particular has emerged as a breakout category, representing legacy and original-era items more than 20 years old.

Bittner said that vintage listings have grown 220 percent in the past five years, while searches for vintage items have increased fivefold. With some vintage handbags from big brands can be priced as low as \$100, they hold significant appeal for aspirational buyers facing sticker shock over new goods.

On Sept. 4, Vestiaire launched its "Vintage Pieces at Vintage Prices"

campaign, offering heritage handbags at their original price points - a move designed to attract those value-driven aspirational buyers.

"Vintage icons carry the same timeless appeal as modern re-editions, at up to 70 percent less," Bittner said. "That makes resale not only desirable, but strategic."

Still, price sensitivity remains a key theme. "There are some buyers who have said that they shop from us because they've been pushed to their limits.

Economically sensitive consumers pull back on big discretionary new buys," Davis added. "We know that many of those same consumers are migrating to pre-owned rather than exiting the category entirely."

According to Sole, the UBS analyst, resale's ongoing challenge is not moving inventory - it's acquiring it. "Demand is there. It's about supply," he said. By some estimates, there is \$200 billion worth of potential inventory in U.S. closets, and it's a matter of making them available to the eager resale buyer.

The current economic environment, he suggested, could help change that. "If consumers who own luxury goods, who have a bunch of handbags sitting in their closet, feel like they want to turn that inventory into cash, that would be really compelling. That would be a catalyst for growth," he said.

FASHION

Fashionphile Book Looks at 25 Bags That Have Shaped Fashion

● The new coffee-table book offers an inside look at the most iconic bags across the resale market.

BY KANIKA TALWAR

Luxury handbags have continued to dominate the fashion industry – in both their cultural relevance and their resale value in the secondhand market. As Italian fashion journalist Anna Dello Russo once said, “Accessories are like vitamins to fashion. Handbags are the main course.”

Assouline on Monday has launched its latest coffee-table book with luxury re-commerce platform Fashionphile – “The Book of Iconic Bags.” Ranging across the past three decades, the book examines the 25 most iconic bags that have been seen as status symbols, a means of personal expression, collector’s items and investments.

The book features everything from Hermès’ record-breaking Birkins and Kellys to “Sex and the City”’s Carrie Bradshaw and her beloved Fendi Baguette and Dior Saddle bags. Newer viral bags include Jacquemus’ Le Chiquito, Balenciaga’s Le City and Loewe’s Puzzle. Other brands highlighted are Gucci, Prada, Saint Laurent, Celine, Judith Leiber, Stella McCartney and Goyard.

Sarah Davis, founder and president of Fashionphile, told WWD in an interview that making a coffee-table book has been something the company has wanted to do for decades.

“We’ve seen everything from one-of-a-kind, record-breaking Hermès Birkins to beloved pop-culture staples like the Fendi Baguette that we have sold thousands of,” said Davis. “We realized we were in a position not just to sell these bags, but to tell their story. But we recognized that to do it right, we needed the right partner. Assouline is itself an iconic brand. They were the only partner for us.”

Citing the process as being collaborative, Fashionphile worked with Assouline to



pull from its archives and leaned into its resale market expertise to inform the book’s contents. The two teams heavily researched, curated historical imagery and dove into what made each handbag so significant to the cultural zeitgeist.

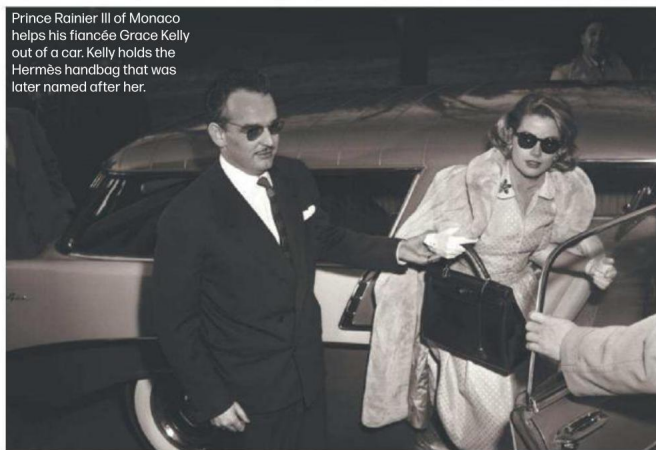
“At Fashionphile, our mission has always been about more than resale,” continued Davis. “It’s about preserving the artistry, honoring the heritage and extending the long-term value of the world’s most exceptional handbags. The Assouline book is a natural extension of that mission. With decades of data and expertise, we’ve seen first hand which designs transcend trends and become true cultural icons. By documenting these 25 handbags, we’re honoring their legacy. We look forward to educating a new generation of collectors and to reinforcing the idea that these pieces are not disposable fashion but enduring works of art.”

When selecting the 25 bags featured, Davis said they first looked at bags that, beyond retaining value in the resale market, have shaped cultural moments.

“These bags are instantly recognizable and continue to influence fashion today,”



A guest wears a Dior Newspaper Saddle bag during Copenhagen Fashion Week SS25.



Prince Rainier III of Monaco helps his fiancée Grace Kelly out of a car. Kelly holds the Hermès handbag that was later named after her.

Judith Leiber’s gold Sunken Treasure Chest clutch bag, 2022.



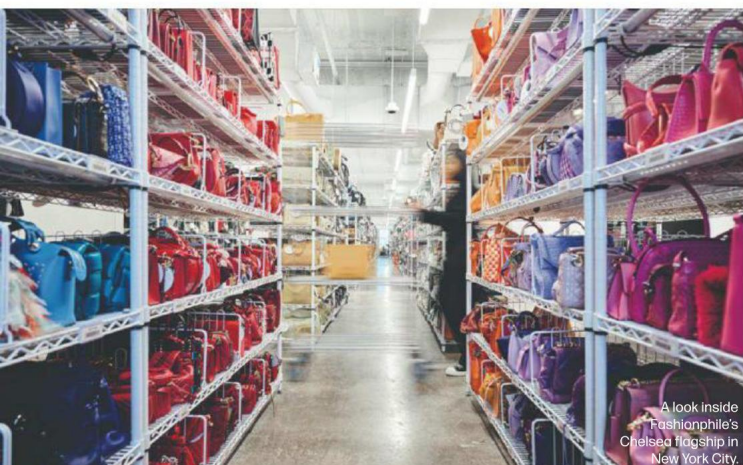
continued Davis. “If you close your eyes, and think of a brand, what styles come to mind? Our team relied on decades of sales data, historical context and cultural impact to identify which designs truly deserved the label ‘iconic.’ The final 25 are not just bestsellers, they’re milestones in the story of fashion itself.”

From a historical standpoint, Davis said in the early 20th century, Louis Vuitton, Chanel and Hermès began the era of brands transforming functional pieces into status symbols through craftsmanship and exclusivity. This was cemented by iconic Hollywood starlets such as Grace Kelly wearing her namesake bag, Jane Birkin and the iconic plane ride that led to the creation of the Birkin and Audrey Hepburn touting her Louis Vuitton Speedy. Then the 1990s and early 2000s saw luxury and pop culture meeting like never before. Now the internet age and resale market have made the “It” bag a phenomenon of shoppers purchasing as investment pieces.

Some standout moments from the book for Davis include Marc Jacobs joining Louis Vuitton in 1997 and giving the 150-year-old brand at the time a creative boost, which led to others following suit. And the following year, Carrie Bradshaw’s Fendi Baguette turned handbags into characters themselves – fueling desire, recognition and global appetite.

Looking ahead to what’s to come from the next era of iconic handbags, Davis said timelessness and trends are not necessarily at odds with each other – they in fact go hand-in-hand. A truly timeless bag, Davis noted, will balance the best of both worlds.

“You’ll find pieces with enduring craftsmanship and design on one hand, and the ability to capture the spirit of the moment on the other. Creative directors like Daniel Lee, who was able to combine the spirit of the Bottega [Veneta] brand, with cultural momentum of the moment are able to catapult styles into the zeitgeist in a way that elevates the brand for years to come. This blend creates true icons, not hits that act as flashes in the pan,” said Davis.



A look inside Fashionphile’s Chelsea flagship in New York City.

Dior photograph by Edward Berthelot/Getty Images; Grace Kelly by Bettmann Archive; Judith Leiber by Guy Bell/Alamy Live News

BUSINESS

Universal Music's Jody Gerson Joins Gap Inc. Board

- With the addition of the music executive, Gap Inc. raises the size of its board to 12 members.

BY DAVID MOIN

Gap Inc., furthering its efforts to integrate fashion and culture, has added Jody Gerson, chairman and chief executive officer of Universal Music Publishing Group, to its board.

The addition of Gerson raises the size of Gap's board to 12 members.

Gerson is the first female CEO of a major music publisher and the first woman to chair a global music company. Since joining UMPG in 2015, she has led the signing of such influential artists as Adele, Harry Styles, Kendrick Lamar, SZA and Coldplay, and spearheaded acquisitions of the Bob Dylan, Neil Diamond and Sting catalogues.

She also serves on the boards of the USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative, the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, Ancestry.com, Project Healthy Minds and the National Music Publishers Association, and is a cofounder of the nonprofit She Is the Music.

"Jody is a cultural force in her own right," Richard Dickson, president and CEO of Gap Inc., said in a statement. "Her insights into fashion-tainment — our platform at the intersection of fashion, music and celebrity — are unmatched. At Gap Inc., we've always believed that style is a form of storytelling, and Jody's ability to amplify voices and shape cultural

moments will be invaluable as we continue redefining what it means to be an iconic, purpose-led house of brands."

"Jody's ability to connect culture and commerce is exactly what makes her such a dynamic leader," added Mayo A. Shattuck 3rd, chair of the Gap Inc. board. "Her vision and creativity will help us strengthen our brands' resonance with the next generation of consumers."

"Gap Inc. has long been a cultural icon, bridging fashion, music and identity," Gerson said in her statement. She also credited Gap for undergoing "a remarkable renaissance as a brand that's become synonymous with the culture of music."

Among Gap Inc.'s efforts to connect fashion and culture, the company featured girl group Katseye in the "Better in Denim" campaign this season, and last year hired designer Zac Posen as executive vice president and creative director, where he has been dressing celebrities in Gap including Timothée Chalamet, Anne Hathaway and Demi Moore for red carpet events. At the 2025 Met Gala, actress Laura Harrier wore a custom look by Posen, who also serves as chief creative officer at the Old Navy division.

The San Francisco-based specialty retailer reported that net sales for the second quarter ended Aug. 2 reached \$3.7 billion, which were flat compared to last year, though comparable sales, a better barometer of the business, rose 1 percent year-over-year.



Gap's "Better in Denim" campaign, starring the Katseye girl group.

Operating income was essentially flat at \$292 million from \$293 million a year ago. Net income rose to \$216 million, up from \$206 million in the year-ago period.

Aside from Dickson, Shattuck and Gerson, others on the Gap Inc. board are: Brady Brewer, CEO of Starbucks International; Salaam Coleman Smith, former executive vice president of the Disney ABC Television Group; Lisa Donohue, former CEO of Publicis Spine; Robert Fisher, managing director of Pisces Inc. and former interim CEO of Gap Inc.; William Fisher, executive vice chairman, Pisces Inc., founder/CEO of Manzanita Capital Ltd.; Kathryn A. Hall, executive managing director of Pathstone, founder/co-executive chair of Galvanize Climate Solutions; Amy Miles, former chair and CEO of Regal Entertainment Group; Chris O'Neill, CEO of GrowthLoop, and Tariq Shaukat, CEO of Sonar.



Jody Gerson

POP CULTURE

StyleWeekOC, Newport Beach Film Festival Join Forces

- The annual festival is being staged at the upscale Fashion Island shopping center in California.

BY DAVID MOIN

For the second year in a row, StyleWeekOC and Newport Beach Film Festival are joining forces "to ignite the conversation between film and fashion."

The 14th edition of StyleWeekOC, happening Oct. 15 to 19, will celebrate film and fashion, encompassing fashion shows, beauty activations, red carpet moments and panel discussions at the Fashion Island shopping center in Newport Beach, Calif.

The event includes, a Neiman Marcus runway show benefiting CASA OC, an organization that helps abused children; an opening night gala with Newport Beach Film Festival spotlighting Fashion

Island restaurants; a Bloomingdale's beauty experience, and celebrity-driven conversations featuring "Emily in Paris" star and fashion maverick Ashley Park in partnership with Women's Wear Daily, and an appearance by actor and author Penn Badgley to present his new book "Crushmore" alongside his "Podcrushed" podcast cohorts Sophie Ansari and Nava Kavelin. StyleWeekOC will also feature live fashion performances, an interactive masterclass with Creed at Neiman Marcus, shopping parties and fashion film screenings

including the documentaries "Akris-Fashion With a Heritage," and "Thom Browne: The Man Who Tailors Dreams."

Participating brands include Cinq à Sept, Paige, Rag & Bone, L'Agence, Veronica Beard, On, Monica Vinader, Rails, Todd Snyder, Good American and Alice + Olivia.

As part of StyleWeekOC, the VEA Newport Beach resort and spa is offering an exclusive StyleWeekOCShop & Stay Package for Oct. 15 to 19, which includes a \$100 Fashion Island gift card, two VIP tickets to a StyleWeekOC event, a welcome gift from Fashion Island and a consultation with Fashion Island's personal shopper and stylist, based on availability. Guests also receive a \$50 food and beverage credit at VEA, located across the street from Fashion Island. Packages are through Oct. 12 with a one-night minimum stay.

Further details and reservations for StyleWeekOC are available at styleweekoc.com. Fashion Island tenants include RH, L'Agence, Veronica Beard, Neiman Marcus and St. John.

The Newport Beach Film Festival, among the largest luxury lifestyle film festivals in the U.S., is a mix of films and cultural events. The festival is dedicated to showcasing contemporary screen culture, cinematic excellence and storytellers. Sponsors include UCI Health, the Los Angeles Times, Visit Newport Beach, Fashion Island and the city of Newport Beach.



Last year's StyleWeekOC festival.



Ashley Park

Veja Walks a Different Path

SINCE ITS START 20 years ago, Veja has not been afraid to go against the grain. The shoe brand's strategy has centered on slow and steady growth rather than rapid expansion, which has enabled it to better weather whatever storms the market throws at the fashion industry. On the sourcing front, the philosophy is all about supplier partnership, as Veja chooses to work directly with raw material producers and build relationships rather than rely on certifications. This chat with two of the brand's executives will dive into how Veja thinks differently, what impact that has had on the company during challenging times and how it is thinking about responsibility throughout the full life cycle of its footwear.

SPEAKERS



TARA GILSON
Chief Executive Officer, North America
VEJA



LUCIANA BATISTA PEREIRA
Director of Sourcing
VEJA

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WWD


Chopard's New Ice Cube High Jewelry Collection Dazzles in New York

The launch party brought together a mix of celebrities on Sunday night including Jodie Turner-Smith, Pom Klementieff and Emily Ratajkowski. **BY KRISTEN TAUER PHOTOGRAPHS BY LEXIE MORELAND**



Jodie Turner-Smith and Pom Klementieff



Ashley Graham and Emily Ratajkowski



Ariana Greenblatt



Jordyn Woods

While on the West Coast celebrities were piling on jewels for the Emmys red carpet, in New York the Chopard dressing credits were concentrated in one high-wattage room.

On Sunday night, the jewelry brand hosted a launch party for its new Ice Cube high jewelry collection at Centurion, a space near Grand Central Terminal usually reserved for Amex Black Card holders. The room's wraparound windows provided clear views of the top of the Chrysler Building, but the exterior attraction was quickly outshined by the arrival of brand clients and VIPs alike.

"I love that they have an emphasis on film and filmmakers. And they're a huge partner of the Cannes Film Festival, which is dear to me," said Cody Fern, who was wearing a pair of Chopard mismatched diamond earrings and Ice Cube necklace. The actor is gearing up to direct his first feature film, "Mother Courage," starring Sarah Paulson and Dianne Wiest. "I've literally flown in from scouting and doing all of that," he added. "We start filming in January."

"I wore Chopard at the Cannes Film Festival for the premiere of 'Mission Impossible,'" said Pom Klementieff, who arrived at the party with fellow actress Jodie Turner-Smith. "The jewelry is just stunning. And I'm wearing a ring right now that looks like an artichoke," she added,



Cody Fern

showing off the green-and-purple design on her finger. Klementieff is in talks to star in two movies, and has French film "Mi Amor" coming out later this fall. "It was something very different from what I've done before," she said of the thriller directed by Guillaume Nicloux.



Odell Beckham Jr.

Other guests included Emily Ratajkowski, Odell Beckham Jr., Ariana Greenblatt, Ashley Graham, and more — all wearing Chopard pieces from the new collection.

"It's very versatile, it's very modern and it's very playful, but at the same time, it's very classic," said chief executive

officer of Chopard USA Jean-Baptiste Maillard of the new collection. "Ice Cube is really the new younger client coming into the brand and getting to know it."

On one side of the room, models were showcasing the collection from a raised platform; on the other side, the jewelry was laid out in displays where guests could get a closer look. Nearby, guests were waiting in line for the cinematic Glambot photo booth, while others were being rendered by the illustrator weaving through the crowd drawing portraits of guests. Next to the step and repeat, a man was folding origami versions of the Chrysler Building with gold paper.

At the end of the night, every guest received a new Chopard ice cube to add to their collections: a set of reusable, literal ice cubes, perfect for accessorizing a chilled beverage.



Katherine LaNasa and Noah Wyle at the Emmy Awards.



Tramell Tillman at the Emmy Awards Governors Ball.



Seth Rogen at the Emmy Awards Governors Ball.



Stephen Graham, Owen Cooper, Erin Doherty at the Emmy Awards.



Emmys Red Carpet: From The Show to the Parties

A look at the highlights from the 77th Primetime Emmy Awards held in downtown Los Angeles on Sunday. BY RYMA CHIKHOUNE

“It’s hot, huh?” Justine Lupe told TV producers on the Emmys red carpet – where the heat was nearly as headline-worthy as the stars, with the sweltering air hanging heavy inside the tent on Sunday.

“Are you OK?” she asked the crew, who were all in suits. “I’m, like, barely OK, and I’m naked. So, I can’t imagine how you guys are doing,” she joked, wearing a barely there nude embellished halter-neck gown from Carolina Herrera by Wes Gordon.

Lupe was among the early arrivals, alongside the likes of Walton Goggins, Sarah Bock, Sam Nivola and Dewayne Perkins; most guests began trickling in an hour before showtime, creating a whirlwind of star appearances: Cate Blanchett, Kathy Bates, Harrison Ford, Michelle Williams, Colman Domingo, Colin Farrell, Selena Gomez with Benny Blanco, Scarlett Johansson with Colin Jost, to name a few. But it was Lisa – Blackpink’s pop sensation and “The White Lotus” breakout – who stole the spotlight, in pink Lever Couture and sparkling Christian Louboutin pumps.

“Love you, Lisa,” a voice cried out from the packed carpet, the crowd pressed nearly shoulder to shoulder into the Peacock Theater.

Inside, the show opened with a standing ovation for Stephen Colbert, following news of CBS’ abrupt cancellation of “The Late Show With Stephen Colbert” – a controversial move, particularly after Paramount’s settlement with the Trump administration. The audience roared, chanting “Stephen! Stephen! Stephen!”

Colbert, wrapping his run on a high after his show earned its first Emmy for Outstanding Talk Series and Outstanding Directing for a Variety Series, took the stage to present the night’s opening award. Best Actor in a Comedy Series went to Seth Rogen for his role in “The Studio,” the satirical Apple TV series he cowrote, coproduced and codirected.

“I’ve never won anything in my life,” Rogen chuckled in his familiar laugh. It

marked his first Emmy, and by the end of the night, “The Studio” had racked up 13 in total, including best comedy series.

Best Actress in a Comedy Series, meanwhile, went to a seasoned pro: Jean Smart, earning her seventh Emmy. It’s her fourth consecutive win in the category for her role as Deborah Vance in HBO Max’s “Hacks.” “Thank you so much. You honor me so much,” she said.

Her costar Hannah Einbinder won Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Comedy, delivering the night’s most political moment: “F-k ICE and free Palestine,” Einbinder ended her speech.

“I thought it was important to talk about Palestine, because it’s an issue that’s very dear to my heart,” she told reporters backstage. “I have friends in Gaza who are working as frontline workers, as doctors right now, in the north of Gaza to provide care for pregnant women and for school children to create schools in refugee camps. And it’s an issue that’s very close to my heart for many reasons. I feel like it is my obligation as a Jewish person to distinguish Jews from the state of Israel, because our religion and our culture is such an important and long-standing

institution that is really separate to this ethnonationalist state.”

Einbinder is among the Hollywood names who have signed a pledge by Film Workers for Palestine. “Boycotting is an effective tool to create pressures on the powers that be to meet the moment,” she continued. “The Film Workers for Palestine boycott does not boycott individuals. It only boycotts institutions that are directly complicit in the genocide.”

Javier Bardem, who has also signed the pledge, used his platform all night to speak out on the issue, wearing a Palestinian keffiyeh scarf around his neck as he called for an end to “the genocide in Gaza.”

As the ceremony went on, Jeff Hiller took home Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Comedy for his role on HBO Max’s “Somebody Somewhere.” In the Limited or Anthology Series or Movie category, Cristin Milioti earned Outstanding Lead Actress for HBO Max’s “The Penguin,” while Netflix’s psychological crime drama “Adolescence” took the other three awards: Stephen Graham for Outstanding Lead Actor; Erin Doherty for Outstanding Supporting Actress, and 15-year-old English actor Owen Cooper for Outstanding Supporting Actor,

becoming the youngest in history to do so. How does it feel?

“So good,” he told WWD, eyebrows raised and full of glee, his excitement palpable at the after-party gala, where winners have their trophies engraved. He’d been snapping a series of selfies while squeezing through the crowd, being pulled in every direction.

By 10 p.m., the stars had headed to their respective network after parties. Once again, HBO Max hosted the most intimate affair at members club San Vicente Bungalows, with flowing drinks and bites, a caviar station, tiki bar and buzzing dance floor. The platform, tied with Netflix as the year’s top winner with 30 Emmys, celebrated multiple hits – and everyone came out to party: “The Penguin” with nine wins (Milioti swapping her red corseted Danielle Frankel gown for a black minidress and oversize leather jacket); “Hacks” with three wins, including a cake for Smart’s 74th birthday, which had been the day before; “Last Week Tonight With John Oliver” with two, and “The White Lotus” with one.

But the moment belonged to newcomer “The Pitt,” the hit medical drama that took home the coveted Outstanding Drama award, along with its stars Noah Wyle and Katherine LaNasa. (Outstanding Lead Actress and Outstanding Supporting Actor in drama went to Britt Lower and Tramell Tillman of Apple TV+’s “Severance,” respectively, with Tillman as the first Black man to take the category.)

Wyle, previously nominated five times for supporting actor in a drama for “ER,” finally secured his first Emmy. He walked into the party with a trophy in each hand, grinning, before joining his cast.

LaNasa – earning Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Drama Series for her performance as a seasoned ER nurse – stood out in a white gown adorned with a ceil blue bow. “It’s a traditional nursing color,” she said of the hue, “Jason Wu made it for me.”

Taking the stage to a room full of cheering peers was an emotional experience, she said, reflecting on the win. “It’s so humbling.”

She and the cast are currently filming season two of the show. “I fly out Tuesday to Pittsburgh,” LaNasa said.

But for now, she was savoring the celebration – which stretched into the early morning.



Cristin Milioti at the HBO Max Emmy after party 2025.



Hannah Einbinder and Jean Smart for “Hacks” at the Emmy Awards.

Katherine LaNasa/Noah Wyle, Stephen Graham, Owen Cooper, Erin Doherty, Hannah Einbinder and Jean Smart photographs by Gilbert Flores/Variety; Tramell Tillman and Seth Rogen by Michael Buckner/Variety; Cristin Milioti by David Jon/Courtesy of HBO

Fashion Scoops



The Prada Galleria ad campaign directed by Yorgos Lanthimos and fronted by Scarlett Johansson.

Scarlett's Turn

Prada is acting as a cinematic matchmaker for the latest iteration of its leather goods campaign dedicated to the signature Galleria handbag.

The Italian luxury brand has scripted Oscar-nominated actress Scarlett Johansson, a regular of Prada Galleria campaigns, and breakthrough director Yorgos Lanthimos, marking the first time the pair work together on a project.

Johansson returns as the face of the Galleria bag for the third time, after previous installments of the campaign in 2024 and 2023, directed by British screenwriter and director Jonathan Glazer and Venezuelan American artist Alex Da Corte, respectively.

The 2025 short movie – titled “Ritual Identities” – leans on the surreal and symbolism-rich oeuvre of Lanthimos who captures the actress impersonating three characters within archetypal settings of contemporary life.

“This Prada campaign really comes from Yorgos’ unique mind and whatever magic is created between the two of us as artists. The performance – is opened up. This process of discovery is what makes any creative collaboration special,” Johansson told WWD. “Filmic shorts like this are a playful collaboration for actors and directors – it gives us an opportunity to work together in a different manner. You get to dip into somebody’s mind, their way of working, explore their world,” she said.

Although the movie is up for multiple interpretations, the storyline seems to center on Johansson playing some sort of guru, who provides a recipe for what’s apparently a potion, the ingredients of which include morning breeze, rainwater that drips from a

non-blooming cherry tree, whispers of dead loved ones’ names and feather of a chirping bird, which she bills as non-necessary, though.

Johansson also performs as the recipient of such recipe and is seen strolling around a metropolis – could be New York, although the brand didn’t specify – in search of the ingredients which she fills her Galleria bag with. The short movie ends with a third Johansson-interpreted character emerging, Frankenstein-like, from a life-size metallic sphere placed at the center of a townhouse’s salon.

The movie, Prada said, reflects not only the Galleria’s many iterations over the years, as well as the multiple styles offered every season, but it also “investigates the fluidity of the persona.”

“The idea for this Prada campaign is a play on identity, the identities that live within all of us, the different masks we wear, the different characters we play, the different people we are with other people, in different relationships,”

Johansson explained. “The work becomes personally meaningful because you start to really feel it as you’re saying it, it starts to live more inside you – and then, you can really explore. This film is less about assuming a character, more about expressing different versions of myself,” she said.

The video campaign – which is flanked by imagery captured by Lanthimos, also an accomplished photographer – marks the first time the Greek director, producer and screenwriter collaborates with Prada. – MARTINO CARRERA

Coach Crowd

At the Coach show on Monday afternoon at Pier 36 in New York, the front row was ripe with K-pop frenzy.

The crowd jostled to get a moment with I-dle girl group member Soyeon, a new brand ambassador who appears in the fall “Revive Your Courage” campaign. Not even the most stern calls to sit down

An illuminated storefront of a Gucci store in Chongqing.



could keep the crowds away, as production staff tried to pave a path for fellow front row faces like rapper Glorilla, Charles Melton, Celtics player Jayson Tatum – who was sidelined late last season with an injury – Elle Fanning, and more.

“I love the message that they deliver to the audience,” said Japanese model and actress Köki, who starred in Coach’s campaign last fall, before taking her seat next to Soyeon. “I love the creativity and the courage to be real. That is something really important to me. And I love how the brand embraces individuality, originality – and also the leather goods.” The actress is filming her next movie in Japan. “Coming to New York and being able to see the Coach family and Stuart means so much to me, and it’s like a new energy for me. I’m really grateful,” she added.

Storm Reid has marked a major milestone since attending last season’s Coach show: graduating from the University of Southern California.

“I’m freshly post grad,” said Reid before the show, adding that she has worked with Coach since she was 13. “I think Mr. Stuart is such a genius, and he does amazing things with each collection,” she said. “I love to be in relationship with authentic brands, and Coach has been in my life for so long,” Reid continued. “I love that it’s a tried and true brand that I feel is for everybody, but continues to elevate and have fun and surprise us. So I’m excited to see what he has come up with today.”

She might not be headed to class anymore, but Reid still has a busy fall ahead. “I just shot a Netflix film called ‘Roommates,’ an Adam Sandler film,” said Reid. “And I have a production company – doing some production company things.”

– KRISTEN TAUER

Data Breach

Kering is the latest luxury group to be targeted by hackers.

The French conglomerate on Monday confirmed it was the victim of a cyber attack in June, following a BBC report that a group of cyber criminals that calls itself Shiny Hunters stole the private details of potentially millions of Balenciaga, Gucci and Alexander McQueen customers.

It said the stolen data included names, email addresses, phone numbers, addresses and the total amount spent in the luxury stores around the world.

Kering declined to confirm which brands were affected and in which countries customers were targeted.

“In June 2025, we identified that an unauthorized third party gained temporary access to our systems and accessed limited customer data from some of our houses. Our houses immediately disclosed the breach to the relevant authorities and notified customers according to local regulations,” it said.

“No financial information – such as bank account numbers, credit card information or government-issued identification numbers – was involved in the incident. The breach was promptly identified, and appropriate actions have been taken to secure the affected systems and prevent such incidents in the future,” Kering added.

It is the latest of a wave of global cyber attacks in recent months targeting high-profile brands and retailers from M&S, Co-op, Adidas and The North Face to Harrods, Louis Vuitton, Cartier, Chanel and Dior.

“This wave of attacks on both luxury brands and high-street names shows just how attractive retailers

are to cybercriminals,” said Julius Cerniauskas, chief executive officer of web intelligence platform and proxy provider Oxylabs.

“They hold vast amounts of customer data, and when defenses are weak or inconsistent, it’s only a matter of time before someone takes advantage,” he added.

– JOELLE DIDERICH

Fashion High

New York Fashion Week has everyone on a high...literally.

New York-based dispensary Gotham partnered with Collina Strada and Eckhaus Latta on their shows this season to highlight the intersection of cannabis and fashion. The collaborations included models consuming cannabis on the runways, resulting in chatter from attendees, as well as weed-inspired products like Collina Strada’s limited-edition top featuring a pocket for a vape pen and an Eckhaus Latta x Gotham lighter sheath and joint case.

“Both Eckhaus Latta and Collina Strada embody a spirit of innovation, community and authenticity that mirrors what we are ▶



Elle Fanning and Storm Reid at the Coach spring 2026 show.



Collina Strada button-down featuring a pocket for a vape pen.



Kaws has been named the first Uniqlo Artist in Residence.

building at Gotham," said Rachel Berks, vice president of product development and partnerships. "Collaborating with them on exclusive products has been a natural extension of that alignment, and this season, bringing cannabis consumption to the runway has taken it to the next level."

Berks continued: "We intend to subvert the traditional sponsorship model, by not only supporting the production of the show, but in creating covetable products. These collabs are uniquely born from elevated cannabis culture, and enable the designers to work in ways that they might not have done previously."

Gotham, which has partnered with Eckhaus Latta and Collina Strada in the past, carries both brands at its concept stores in Chelsea and Williamsburg.

"Partnering with Gotham allows us to challenge perceptions in a way that feels both daring and intentional – integrating cannabis into the runway conversation as naturally as a silhouette," said Collina Strada founder and creative director Hillary Taymour. "It's a collaboration rooted in innovation and risk-taking, designed to capture how fashion and cannabis intersect to spark creativity and cultural inspiration."

In addition to these shows, Gotham also gifted models, stylists and creatives with cannabis-filled gift bags at Theophilio, Tyler McGillivray and Allina Liu.

Upon receiving the goods, one model at Eckhaus Latta said "I might cry. This is amazing." – EMILY BURNS

Kaws' Turn

Monday was a big night for Uniqlo. Not only did the company host a star-studded event for its LifeWear collection at the Museum of Modern Art, it also revealed that it has tapped its longtime collaboration partner and popular pop culture artist Kaws to serve as its inaugural Artist in Residence.

In that role the contemporary artist will work with the retailer on the development of its LifeWear products, beginning with the fall 2025 collection. He will also partner with the company and its museum partners to enhance Art for All events at its stores globally.

Uniqlo has a history of working with artists, designers and other creatives and the new Artist in Residence program will serve to amplify that by introducing new collaborators and creative concepts. It is intended to be complementary to Uniqlo's global brand ambassadors.

For more than a decade the company has worked to enhance the appreciation of art while educating and increasing public access and engagement through its Art for All program. Among the institutions it has worked with are the Museum of Modern Art, the Tate, the Louvre and the Boston Museum of Fine Art.

"I am thrilled to be taking this next step with my longtime partner Uniqlo to become the brand's first artist in residence," said Kaws, who has collaborated with Uniqlo since 2016. "In this role I hope to tap into the art community and global creatives to curate

the next generation of Uniqlo. I am looking forward to working on exciting new kinds of LifeWear."

"In our ever-evolving world, art is now more important than ever as an expression of our humanity. Kaws has been breaking the traditional boundaries of the art world, just as Uniqlo in its efforts to redefine the apparel industry through LifeWear," said John C. Jay, president of global creative for Fast Retailing, parent of Uniqlo. "As our artist in residence, Kaws will help Uniqlo to expand the global appreciation and participation of art and creativity for all."

– JEAN E. PALMIERI

Mickey Mouse Christmas

Halloween may be more than a month away, and only the most organized



The kids' pajamas in the La Ligne x Observed by Us capsule campaign.

homemakers are thinking of Thanksgiving in the U.S., but in the U.K., the Christmas season is ready to kick off, at least at Selfridges.

The store will start its official holiday countdown on Nov. 6 with a big Disney collaboration, "A Most Magical Christmas," that will see Selfridges stores in London, Manchester and Birmingham and Selfridges.com transform into festive wonderlands branded with the Mickey Mouse logo.

There will be 18 Disney-themed windows, and more than 60 brand collaborations, including limited editions of Disney favorites, specially commissioned fashion pieces and gifts. There will also be two bespoke Disney iterations of the Selfridges yellow carrier bag, and a transformed facade on Oxford Street.

The latest partnership has been more than two years in the making.

André Maeder, Selfridges group chief executive officer, said "it's been a joy to dream up something this unique and special, working with some of the world's best storytellers. We can't

wait to reveal more and share the magic with our customers."

Tasia Filippatos, global president of Disney consumer products, said the collaboration with Selfridges "allows us to share the magic of Disney through imaginative window displays, festive experiences, and unique products – all inspired by the stories that have captured hearts for generations."

Although the big reveal will be in early November, the Selfridges Christmas Shop is already open with an edit of Disney decorations and tree baubles with iridescent and mirrored Mickey Mouse motifs, fairy princesses and Tinker Bell from "Peter Pan."

From Sept. 22, visitors will be able to shop a dedicated Disney Store destination as well as the Harry Lambert for Zara x Disney residency at The Corner Shop. –SAMANTHA CONTI

New Line

La Ligne, known for its modern take on stripes and wardrobe essentials, has partnered with Observed by Us, the design line founded by actress Kirsten Dunst and artist Jessica Hershko, on a limited-edition collaboration.

The capsule launches Tuesday and is a playful and nostalgic take on sleepwear, fusing La Ligne's signature silhouettes with Observed by Us's hand-drawn, storybook-style illustrations.

The capsule includes 10 pieces of elevated loungewear that features delicate piping, soft cottons, silk and cashmere, patterned in prints drawn from the Observed by Us universe. The line is designed to be worn to bed, around the house, or styled for day.

The offering includes the Women's Printed Bonne Nuit pajamas (\$395) in

classic navy and white or a colorful white multicolor, as well as an elevated set in burgundy silk with delicate gold embroidery (\$495). Matching sets for children include the Enfant Bonne Nuit pajamas (\$125), which comes in white/multi and navy/multi, while a coordinating men's version of the Printed Nuit pajamas (\$395) rounds out the offering.

Accessories include the burgundy embroidered cashmere night mask (\$75), matching embroidered slippers (\$45), and Mini Marin socks (\$55) both in white and burgundy/gold.

"Kirsten and Jessica have created such a whimsical, joyful world – one that we instantly wanted to live in. It's a breath of fresh air to step into their dreamscape, and we feel lucky to do that through this capsule. Sleepwear felt like the natural way to wander in," said Molly Howard, chief executive officer of La Ligne, who cofounded the company along with Valerie Maccauley and Meredith Melling.

"La Ligne is a brand that we both gravitate towards and have in our personal wardrobe collections. Their simple yet elevated styles and colors align with our sensibilities, and being able to infuse their sleepwear with our out-of-the-box illustrations felt completely natural. Working with Meredith, Molly and Valerie was so much fun and effortless, and we can't wait to share this collaboration with everyone," said Dunst and Hershko in a statement.

Observed by Us is a collaborative venture born out of Dunst and Hershko's shared love for storytelling and illustration. The La Ligne x Observed by Us capsule will be available exclusively at laligneny.com and in select La Ligne stores starting Tuesday. –LISA LOCKWOOD ■



Selfridges is teaming with Disney on a big Christmas takeover to be revealed on Nov. 6.