

WWD



DIOR

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Fashion. Beauty. Business.



Olivier's Twist

Olivier Rousteing and the brand's new chief executive officer Matteo Sgarbossa are out to write a new chapter at the French house – and are rekindling retail expansion, too. Here, two looks from the fall 2025 collection to be presented on Wednesday. *For more on Balmain, and a preview of Paris Fashion Week, see pages 6 to 20.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY KUBA DABROWSKI

EXCLUSIVE

Jacquemus Confirms New CEO



Sarah Benady

● Simon Porte Jacquemus and Sarah Benady, who joins from Celine North America, are eyeing international expansion, more freestanding stores and the brand's first fragrance.

BY MILES SOCHA

Freestanding boutiques in Los Angeles and Miami – plus a foray into fragrance – are among headline projects in the near term for Simon Porte Jacquemus and his new chief executive officer Sarah Benady, who officially started Tuesday.

"It's been a year that I was looking for someone to help me, to be next to me and to fully embrace what I've had in mind for this house since forever," Jacquemus said in an exclusive interview, confirming a WWD report on Jan. 28 that Benady, most recently Celine's North America president, would take up the management helm, freeing up the Frenchman to concentrate on design, image and brand storytelling.

He's been doing double duty as creative director and CEO since Bastien Daguzan stepped down in December 2023, initiating an upscaling drive and making further steps into brick-and-mortar retailing by planting directly operated new boutiques in New York and London, plus franchise locations in Seoul and Dubai.

Now he and Benady are relishing the

chance to double down on products, explore more international markets, enlarge the nascent retail network and finally enter the beauty category with French giant L'Oréal as its long-term licensee – and new minority investor.

Benady arrives at Jacquemus less than a month after the L'Oréal deal was announced, setting the stage for the French fashion house's next phase of growth.

Seated next to the designer for the interview, Benady likened working with Jacquemus to what it must have been like to partner with Christian Dior or Hubert de Givenchy at the early stages of their fashion houses.

"When I first spoke with Simon, I immediately felt that he was the designer of our century," she said. "There is something very special about him – his energy, his work, his authenticity. There's something very solar, very warm and you just want to be around him and be surrounded by that. There is nothing more energizing than to be able to support his vision and the brand."

"There are not many brands that are only 15 years old and that have accomplished that much at this stage," Benady asserted, mentioning the bestselling "It" bags, the Chiquita and Bambino, the very promising La Pochette Rond Carré style and partnerships with such blue-chip companies as Nike and Apple.

For his part, Jacquemus described



Simon Porte Jacquemus

an immediate complicity with Benady, "someone with a business mind, but also a product lover...We had the same feeling and the same ambition for the brand, for where we want to go...It's about finding the right balance of development and protecting the brand."

The designer also lauded her varied CV and trajectory through department stores, contemporary fashion chains and a luxury house.

A graduate of French business school HEC, Benady started her career as a project manager at French department store Printemps, later joining The Kooples, first as international director and then president, later logging four years as North American president of Ba&sh before moving four years ago to helm Celine's North American operations.

Jacquemus declined to give precise business targets, but both described lots of runway for development.

First up: The Los Angeles boutique is slated to open at 8800 Melrose Avenue in late April, and Miami in the first quarter of 2026.

The designer said Europe would probably be a "main focus" for freestanding retail next, but there are other geographies in his sights.

"In South America there is room for Jacquemus. Asia is also a big potential market," he said, also highlighting the performance of its boutique in the Dubai Mall, which opened in April 2024 with Chalhoub Group as the partner. "We might open some other stores there as well, because it's very, very successful," Jacquemus said.

In addition to its online store and permanent boutiques, Jacquemus operates seasonal resort boutiques in Saint-Tropez, Ibiza, Monaco, Capri, Courcheval and Mykonos. The brand is also sold through about 400 wholesale doors in 60 countries.

Having planted his stores in top luxury locations such as Avenue Montaigne in Paris, Spring Street in New York and New Bond Street in London, the designer has attracted a clientele in line with the brand elevation strategy signaled with a fashion show at Versailles in July 2023, and further reinforced with his "Sculptures" collection paraded in January 2024 in front of the likes of Julia Roberts at the Fondation Maeght in Saint-Paul-de-Vence in the South of France.

"My more elevated silhouettes are resonating with the new Jacquemus era," he said, mentioning as one example his popular Ovalo suit jacket, priced at 1,190 euros. Retail prices for apparel currently top out at 3,490 euros for leather and shearing jackets.

Asked if his freestanding boutiques were

meeting business expectations, Jacquemus shot back with an immediate "yes," noting that "every day we have a new record with the number of clients in Courcheval, in New York. It's step-by-step, of course, but it's encouraging."

Benady concurred: "I was very impressed when I saw the performances of the freestanding stores, and I was very surprised to see the high-end product that we were selling in those stores."

In addition, she lauded architecture and art curation that "makes you feel at home, but in a very elevated environment, which is never an easy balance to find, something that is welcoming and warm enough but still extremely high-end and elevated. You're immediately immersed in the brand environment."

Among her missions are to "spread the retail culture and clienteling culture across the different stages of the organization."

In addition to testing higher price points, Jacquemus had the courage to step away recently from cinematic outdoor show locations – who can forget the lavender and wheat fields, or the Camargue salt flats? – to more intimate displays, like his January show at the oak-paneled Paris apartment of architect Auguste Perret.

Despite its more modest scale, the "La Croisière" show secured almost 140 million online impressions, a new record for Jacquemus.

"Sometimes we don't need much, and I want people to look at the clothes and the collection, and not just a beautiful landscape," the designer said.

During the interview, Jacquemus spoke at length about his passion for perfume and his impatience to finally land on counter.

"It's a dream that I've been vocal about for a few years," he said. "When you grow up in the countryside as a kid, you don't look at fashion shows, you look at perfume ads on TV."

The designer was a teenager in 2004 when the Baz Luhrmann-directed Chanel No.5 commercial starring Nicole Kidman came out, and he was transfixed by the storytelling. He asked a friend to record it for him and he memorized every detail.

(In a full-circle moment, he finally met Kidman at the 2023 Met Gala, explaining to her that the "J" pendant dangling on the bare back of his date, Bad Bunny, was inspired by that ad.)

"I do feel that we already are a perfume brand because we are solar, we are already in the mood," he said. "We just don't have the product yet. It's a big detail, but it's just a detail."

To be sure, he's impatient to come out with such an accessible, universal product as perfume. "It's so Jacquemus to speak to a lot of people. There is nothing snob here," he said.

Despite long development times to bring a new perfume to the market, the designer has already formulated everything in his mind.

"The image and the idea I have hasn't change since eight years," he said. "And I think this woman does not exist in the luxury perfume world, so there is a room for that woman."

And his ambition is high.

"My goal is to be the perfume of my generation, like a Mugler, like a Calvin Klein, like Jean Paul Gaultier – all those perfume that we all have stories with," he said.

Likewise, he's committed to the brand's elevation strategy.

"We transform ourselves step by step," he said. "I want to continue to listen to what I have in my heart."

He also said he's heartened to have Benady, a woman and a mother, as his new CEO.

"I think it's beautiful in an environment where there is a lot of men," he said. "I'm surrounded by women today. It's beautiful, and I'm happy."



DIOR

BUSINESS

Judge Issues Final Judgment in Chanel, WGACA Infringement Case

- The French luxury house and reseller What Goes Around Comes Around have been battling for years in and out of court.

BY ROSEMARY FEITELBERG

More than a year after a jury ruled unanimously in favor of Chanel in its trademark infringement battle against What Goes Around Comes Around, a federal judge's final judgment includes issuing such penalties as a permanent injunction against the resale platform from using Chanel trademarks and branding.

The decision by Judge Louis Stanton of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York on Wednesday is a win for the luxury house, as it continues to try to tamp down on the distribution and marketing of products with the Chanel name, logo and other trademarks. It also bans sales of unauthorized or altered products, which are more commonly called "Frankenstein bags" that incorporate different elements from different resources. The reseller is now required to flag disclosures on Chanel-branded items, and it cannot claim authenticity for any Chanel products that it resells.

Chanel first filed a lawsuit against the New York-based resale company in March 2018, alleging that there appeared to be an affiliation between the two fashion resources that did not exist and that

Chanel had authenticated the pre-owned items sold at WGACA. The yearslong dispute finally went to trial in a New York federal court last year with both sides disputing trademark infringement, false advertising, an implication of an alliance that did not exist, claims of counterfeit goods and other issues.

A Chanel spokesperson said Monday that the company is pleased with the court's final judgment, which confirms the jury's decision from Feb. 6, 2024, in Chanel's favor against WGACA.

"The jury found WGACA guilty of intentionally infringing on Chanel's trademarks by selling infringing and counterfeit products and falsely associating and advertising themselves with Chanel. This judgment supports Chanel's unwavering commitment to protecting its brand and consumers," the spokesperson said. "The final judgment will prevent WGACA from selling infringing and counterfeit Chanel products, falsely linking themselves to Chanel and misleadingly advertising Chanel-branded items. Chanel expects WGACA to follow the judgment, take responsibility for identifying counterfeit Chanel products and ensure they aren't sold to unsuspecting customers."

Asked for comment Monday, What Goes Around Comes Around cofounder Seth Weisser said via text, "We are still in the process of litigating these issues. The judgment is just the first step in the process. We will avail ourselves of all

remedies including appeals."

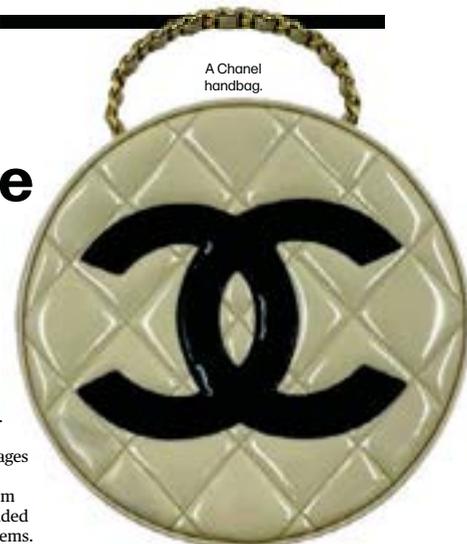
The permanent injunction prohibits the reseller from doing anything that could mislead shoppers into thinking that it was affiliated with Chanel. That could include the misuse of Chanel's trademarks like the two interlocking "Cs" in any in-store displays, promotional materials or advertising.

Last month's final judgment included \$4 million in statutory damages for selling counterfeit handbags, and disgorgement of \$12,739 in profits from the sale of unauthorized Chanel-branded handbags and 779 counter-support items.

Weisser, who serves as chief executive officer and was in the courtroom daily during last winter's weeks-long trial, said post-trial motions will be filed before the appeal process. He also said that What Goes Around Comes Around is still reselling Chanel items and will continue to do so. "The ruling did not impact our ability to resell," he claimed.

During the trial, jurors were shown multiple examples of how old Chanel ads and runway shots were used by WGACA in its social media posts, as well as print ads with "Chanel" being the prominent name — even larger than What Goes Around Comes Around — as well as examples of how the resale company has featured Chanel's interlocking "Cs."

Another issue that was hashed over during last year's trial involved WGACA's



A Chanel handbag.

use of Chanel display material and its purchase of 779 such items, including plastic trays and tissue boxes. During the trial, Chanel employees emphasized that those items are "props" and are never given away or sold, and that that constituted infringement. WGACA had provided an invoice listing those items from the Hong Kong vendor that they had been purchased from, and suggested that those items may have been passed along by Chanel or store employees.

During last year's trial, Yale Galanter, an attorney for the reseller, suggested that the \$17 billion luxury brand with "thousands" of stores didn't like that WGACA, a three-store operation, was growing and wanted to make a statement by going after the reseller.

ACCESSORIES

Pomellato Unveils New Initiative for International Women's Day



Pomellato's campaign advocating against domestic violence.

- The brand's campaign against domestic violence includes influential voices like Jane Fonda, America Ferrera and Mariska Hargitay.

BY LUISA ZARGANI

MILAN — Pomellato continues to strengthen its commitment to women's empowerment.

For International Women's Day on Saturday the Milan-based jewelry company is unveiling a new Pomellato for Women initiative. This is the brand's eighth annual video campaign, and it delivers an urgent

message calling for collective responsibility and action against violence.

Once again, Jane Fonda lends her voice and image to Pomellato, urging in the new video to "Look around you." She is flanked by the likes of actresses and activists America Ferrera and Mariska Hargitay saying: "One in three women suffers from domestic violence."

"Domestic violence is a collective wound that scars our entire society," said Sabina Belli, Pomellato's chief executive officer. "As a maison that has cared for women since 1967, we believe that transformation begins when we all accept our role as social sentinels. This means being vigilant and brave enough to

act. It means understanding that silence is not neutrality — it is complicity. We must move beyond awareness to action, beyond sympathy to systemic change."

Others involved in the initiative are Laura Harrier; Olympic athlete Mattia Furlani, and Gianvito Martino, professor of experimental biology at the Vita Salute San Raffaele University Milan.

"You are not alone," Belli reassures survivors who are trapped in "a silent epidemic," and who have to choose between speaking up and reliving the trauma or remaining voiceless. "The cruel reality of domestic violence lies in its spiral of silence — where women face not only their abuser's violence but also society's judgment."

Belli said Pomellato "chose to work with America and Mariska because they represent authentic voices of change. America is a passionate advocate for women's rights, founding initiatives that empower communities and celebrate diversity, while Mariska has dedicated her life to transforming society's response to violence through her Joyful Heart Foundation since 2004. Together, they bring strength, empathy and action to our commitment to women's freedom."

She underscored that "when you witness violence against women, don't turn away saying, 'not my problem.' It is your problem. It is everyone's problem. Sometimes just listening and believing is enough — but do something. Supporting, helping, listening, believing — these are the actions that can change a woman's life. Choosing to act instead of looking away is how we create change."

She also pointed out that "men are not just part of the problem — they are an essential part of the solution. We need their voices, their support, their action to end violence against women."

The video charts a course for change through three vital steps: "We speak out. We break the silence. We listen to survivors," the participants declare in turn. "By being social sentinels — watchful, compassionate, and unafraid to step in," the ensemble urges collectively, we can create real change.

The goal is to challenge harmful norms, ensure perpetrators face real consequences through accountability and stronger legal protections with connection, and link survivors to a network of support services, shelters and advocacy groups.

Ferrera said that "to dismantle the system of violence, we must dare to understand its roots. True change means healing not only victims, but those who inflict pain."

"When we listen to survivors, we witness not only their pain, but their extraordinary resilience," said Hargitay. "Their voices deserve to be heard, their stories deserve to be believed."

Pomellato has renewed its support of CADMI (Casa di Accoglienza delle Donne Maltrattate), Milan's first anti-violence center for women, and of the Kering Foundation's L.A.-based partner FreeFrom, an organization dedicated to establishing long-term financial security for survivors of domestic violence.

Belli, who joined the brand controlled by Kering in 2015, launched the Pomellato for Women platform two years later with an inclusive, inspirational and diverse group of women from various disciplines, ages and arts to inspire and promote women's empowerment, inclusion and gender equality and raise awareness of the problem of violence against women.

Belli was the first to develop the tagline "Pomellato, caring for women since 1967," the date the Milan-based jewelry company was founded.



DIOR

FASHION

Matteo Sgarbossa on Balmain's Next Chapter

● "Hero-ing the brand," says the executive, who is partnering with creative director Olivier Rousteing to sharpen products and communications – and elevate the retail experience.

BY MILES SOCHA

PREVIEW PHOTOGRAPHY BY KLSA DABROWSKI

Amid widespread creative upheaval, here is a story about designer continuity – and purposeful reinvention.

In his first interview as chief executive officer of Balmain, Matteo Sgarbossa outlined a plan to streamline – and broaden – the brand's products and collections; sharpen communications with a host of new collaborators, and elevate the retail experience in line with the couture roots of the house, which is marking its 80th anniversary in 2025.

His partner in crime is none other than Olivier Rousteing, Balmain's creative director since 2011.

"Seeing him so aligned with me on this new strategy, I cannot see any better partner than him in doing this adventure together," Sgarbossa said, waving away speculation on social media that a designer change could be in the pipeline. "Myself and Olivier, we both believe strongly that we need to write a new chapter, and to embrace a new era...He's proven his ability to reinvent himself."

Since arriving at Balmain 10 months ago, Sgarbossa, previously international director at Givenchy, has made some strong decisions, some visible, such as canceling Balmain's men's show last June, and skipping the January men's moment, too.

Others were less obvious, like pausing brand collaborations and retooling accessories with subtler branding and a broader range of wearing occasions and price points, including below 1,000 euros.

Rousteing already pointed at a new fashion direction with his pre-fall offering for women and men, beckoning a wider customer base for Balmain by plying softer, simpler options with controlled doses of zing.

The fall 2025 runway show on Wednesday during Paris Fashion Week will be focused solely on womenswear, and word has it Rousteing will be working with a different stylist, whose identity is still under wraps.

Changes in Communication

Meanwhile, on the communications side, Balmain brought on art director Enzo Petrenio for brand art direction, starting with its pre-fall campaign, which had Jaeger Teller turning his lens on French model and actress Laetitia Casta and the new Arnhem bag, a squishy style cinched with a wide belt.

Balmain welcomed a new chief marketing officer last September – Bruna Scognamiglio, who came with more than two decades of experience at brands including Procter & Gamble and Ferragamo – and also quietly switched its external communications agency to Karla Otto after more than a decade with KCD.

Sgarbossa summed up all his efforts as "hero-ing" the brand, which still demonstrates a lot of dynamism and energy, despite being 80 years old.

"It's a big responsibility to be leading this maison, which has such an incredible heritage and history," he said in an interview in his office, decorated with potted plants and glamorous black-and-white photos of Beyoncé, Cindy Crawford and Gisele Bündchen wearing the house's creations.

In recent years, Balmain teamed up with an eclectic array of brands, including Evian, Chivas, Barbie, Disney's "The Lion King," Pokémon, "Stranger Things" and Kylie's Cosmetics. But such hookups have been paused. ▶



A preview of Balmain's fall 2025 ready-to-wear showing at Paris Fashion Week.

PARIS FASHION WEEK PREVIEW

WWD



Matteo Sgarbossa and Olivier Rousteing

"We have so many things to say about Balmain that we don't need to gain visibility with other collaborations," Sgarbossa said. "We don't need to tell other stories, because our story is already very rich."

To wit: The CEO is encouraging Rousteing to continue his enthusiastic excavation of Pierre Balmain's life, archive and fashion legacy, and to continue speaking to a "sexy, confident, powerful woman" with his bold designs. "We love to describe her as an unapologetic troublemaker," he added with a grin.

"There will be some discontinuity with the past, but the reference to the archive and to the story of Pierre Balmain will be even stronger," he continued. "But once again, it happens in a very genuine way, because it's what Olivier loves to do. When he talks about Pierre Balmain, you can see he's really, fully in love with this man's story. So it's not something opportunistic or that I'm forcing him to do. He is really genuinely attached to the figure and the work of Pierre Balmain."

"There is no way that a brand can work when there is no synergy between the artistic director and the CEO," Rousteing said in a separate interview. "And I have to tell you the truth, we've got this synergy. We are working together every day to make sure that we find our path and our strength together."

"The beauty of being a creative director is building new chapters and new stories," the designer continued.

Sgarbossa, who worked at Gucci and Benetton earlier in his career, said he was heartened to discover similarly energetic and devoted employees across Balmain.

"They really feel like they are part of a family," he said. "They are very engaged with the brand, and they are very loyal to the brand. So I see really the opportunity with this team to write together this new chapter at the Balmain."

"Nonetheless, there was also a need to inject new talents across all the different

and most important functions of the company, from product to merchandising, from communication to retail, and we have been taking on board a lot of new talents," he added.

A Retail Expansion

Balmain is also back in expansion mode, plotting four stores this year in the U.S., its number-one market. One opened early this year in the Aventura Mall, with a second Miami location coming soon in the Miami Design District. The second half of the year will see new units debuting in Las Vegas and Houston.

The brand also opened a boutique in

"Seeing [Olivier Rousteing] so aligned with me on this new strategy, I cannot see any better partner than him in doing this adventure together."

MATTEO SGARBOSSA

Guangzhou at the end of January, bringing to 15 the number of doors in Asia-Pacific. The brand counts 44 boutiques worldwide, and with the DTC channel accounting for roughly half its revenues.

Sgarbossa said he's angling to bring DTC up to 70 percent, but set no specific time frames or revenue targets, characterizing growth as a natural consequence of a well-executed strategy.

"It will be the result of the communication campaigns we do, the way we treat our clients and how desirable our products will be," he said. "The brand needs to be at the center of the strategy."

It is understood revenues have doubled since Mayhoola acquired the brand in 2016 — they are estimated at 300 million euros — and accessories have zoomed to account for about 30 percent of the business.

Sgarbossa still spies growth opportunities in women's ready-to-wear, Balmain's "core" category.

"The ambition for the brand is really to serve a woman from day to evening. We are very recognized and very associated with special occasions, red carpets, parties, etc., but the brand can also cover different wearing occasions, while still keeping its distinctive and strong attitude."

He said a wardrobing approach is also being applied to shoes and accessories, which means a variety of heel heights, fashion attitudes and a broader handbag offering.

"First and foremost, we are aiming to connect with a very realistic woman — the way that she lives her life, in what she's doing daily," he said.

Sgarbossa also sees rejiggered communications as a means to fan brand momentum, conveying Balmain's history, legacy and values "in a fresh, contemporary and sexy way."

The Casa campaign is a perfect example.

"She represents for us the perfect Balmain woman. Obviously, she is an icon of French beauty, but also in her personality, there is a lot of femininity, confidence, a sexy attitude and, let's say, a notion of intrigue and danger. This is something that really resonates with Balmain's clients, and it's the attitude that

we have in mind and the vision that we want to promote.

"It's about reconnecting with the past, but at the same time, promoting a new esthetic and a new era," he added.

The Addition of Beauty

Last August, Balmain reentered the beauty category with Les Éternels de Balmain, a collection of eight fragrances produced under license by the Estée Lauder Cos. A ninth, Blanc Galaxie, was recently added.

Sgarbossa said the brand extension raised the visibility of the brand, and offered a more accessible point of entry than its heavily embellished jackets or dresses.

"Since we launched, we are seeing results above the initial expectation. So it's really giving us the confirmation that there was this appetite for the brand on the beauty part," he said. "We have our strong database of top clients, but if we want to grow, we really need to enlarge the audience, and having a perfume line is really helping."

Menwear, which currently accounts for about 30 percent of the business, is seen as another growth opportunity, also hinged on the founder's legacy and tailoring forte. "But the starting point is really crystallizing the woman's identity first," Sgarbossa said.

The retail experience is the CEO's third strategic thrust, wishing to treat each client — whether VIP or aspirational — "like a king or queen."

"Obviously, it's much easier for me to tell the story about Balmain in a store where I can control the storytelling, where I can train my people," he said. "Retail, if we do it properly, can be really a driver of the acceleration that we are expecting."

In his view, "Balmain can be much bigger. The brand awareness is still very high, and there is still a lot of appetite for this brand," he said.

In particular, he detects growing demand for strong creativity amid a glut of quiet luxury.

"I want the luxury clients and fashion clients to have Balmain in their top of mind, to visit our store, to be curious about what we are doing every season. This is my ambition," he said. ■



EXCLUSIVE

Gabriela Hearst Opens Second Pop-up Shop at Le Bristol



A model at Gabriela Hearst's spring 2023 show with the Leonora handbag



Gabriela Hearst

● The sustainable luxury brand plans to double its global store network within three years, the designer and the brand's CEO Thierry Colin said in a joint interview.

BY JOELLE DIDERICH

PARIS — Gabriela Hearst is back in Paris with her second pop-up shop at Le Bristol hotel, as she works to establish a permanent presence in the French capital as part of a plan to double her global store network within three years.

The ground-floor boutique, which opened on Saturday, comes as the sustainable luxury brand celebrates its 10th anniversary, and Le Bristol its 100th.

The hotel is a home-away-from-home for the New York-based designer, who stays there whenever she comes to Paris, where she is preparing to show her fall collection on Monday during Paris Fashion Week.

"There's nothing better than staying over here and seeing my product downstairs," she told WWD over a breakfast of poached egg and mushrooms.

In their first joint interview, Hearst, the founder and creative director of her eponymous brand, and Thierry Colin, its chief executive officer, detailed plans

to widen its store footprint, overhaul its e-commerce site and branch out into new categories, including the launch of its debut sneaker.

The first time Hearst had a pop-up at Le Bristol in 2022, it was due to stay open six weeks and ended up running five months. This time, it's booked until October and will offer an even more elevated selection of ready-to-wear, handbags and accessories, including its new Leonora bag, Colin said.

"We are definitely determined to have a home in Paris. We feel that we belong here," he said. "So what better way than just already to present ourselves and make people aware that we are committed to being here."

The brand has more than doubled its retail revenues since it emerged from the coronavirus pandemic, he said. Sales from its physical stores and online logged a compound annual growth rate of 30 percent between 2021 and 2024, Colin reported.

"We have had another record year in terms of turnover," he said.

The executive declined to provide absolute revenue figures for the privately held company, which sold an undisclosed minority stake to LVMH Luxury Ventures, an entity within the French luxury conglomerate LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton, in 2019.

when she landed on Madison Avenue, that area was no longer seen as a hotbed for luxury retail.

"Now The Carlyle is having a resurgence. It's the place to go at night, but when we opened in 2018 it wasn't the most desirable location. But I just knew that when we are talking about true luxury, that's when a hotel and us associate, because it's about service," she explained.

"We will never be able to be where the big, monolithic brands are," Hearst added. "So I'm not as concerned in the sense of the traffic, because when people know our product, they come. I'm more concerned with the quality of people that look at our product."

Business remains brisk, despite the global slowdown in luxury spending. "We've had a very strong end of the year and a very strong beginning of the year," she said. "We are not as exposed to the conflicts as other brands that have been overexposed."

Exclusive, but Welcoming

Suiting has a 77 percent sell-through rate, said Hearst, who offers jackets starting at \$1,800 and going up to \$21,800 for a patchwork blazer. Some of her sweaters have seen 228 percent growth year-on-year, with price tags that easily run over \$5,000.

The brand has a line of fine jewelry and launched its first five pieces of haute jewelry for spring, including a \$265,000 ring set with a padparadscha sapphire. Since they were presented to clients in December, two pieces have already sold, Hearst said.

The label is also working to expand its more accessible offerings, with the planned launch of the Ohio sneaker and a denim line made from 100 percent recycled cotton.

But Hearst credits the company's strong track record in retail to the early success of handbags such as the Nina, whose fans include Meghan Markle, Angelina Jolie and Anul Clooney. She intentionally withheld them from wholesalers, and used them to drive traffic to her own stores.

The brand has maintained its wholesale network fairly stable since its inception. Retail currently represents roughly half of revenues, and the plan is to increase this to two thirds within the next three years, Colin said.

It is also upgrading its online presence to make sure the technology is up to date and the experience in line with its stores, with storytelling a key aspect for the brand rooted in Hearst's upbringing on a 17,000-acre sheep and cattle ranch in Uruguay.

"Compared to some of these big dot-com retailers, we have had a very good year and we are able to expand the penetration of very important categories, like our ready-to-wear, online by replicating the quality of the brand presentation, the service," Colin said.

Hearst last year brought Sigg Hilmarsson, entrepreneur and founder of Sigg's Yogurt, onto its board of directors, and plans to leverage his expertise in logistics for the e-commerce revamp, which is expected to take 18 months.

"We want to be sure that our new platform continues to allow us to increase the quality of the contents," Colin said. "We love our clients to feel that they can live in our stores. We want them to be able to live on our website with the same type of feeling."

Hearst creates a film for her sales associates each season where she walks them through the whole collection, detailing the sourcing and fabrication of each piece. She also personally interviews everyone who works on her shop floor.

"They need to be hungry for knowledge. Sales is a skill you have to love to do, but at the same time, you have to be able to impart this knowledge, even if someone doesn't want to buy anything," she said. "At every one of our stores, you feel a calmness and a sense of you coming into a home."

Doubling the Store Network

With flagships in New York City, Los Angeles and London, Gabriela Hearst is looking to open additional freestanding stores in its domestic market, as well as in continental Europe and Asia.

"We want to double our store network over the next three years," Colin said.

The brand is mulling a dedicated menswear store in New York, Madrid is also on its radar, as is Tokyo, where it opened its first shop-in-shop last year at the Isetan department store in Shinjuku.

"Our strategy is rooted in the success of our retail experience," he continued. "It has been from the beginning one of the pillars of the existence of this brand. We opened our first store in 2018 when the brand was only three years old."

The label's strategy so far has been to open boutiques adjacent to hotels: The Carlyle in New York, the Beverly Wildshire in Los Angeles, and Claridge's in London. For its Paris home, it has set its sights on a location near the Bristol, famous for its top-notch concierge service.

"We know where we want to be and we are waiting for that," Hearst said.

Although that stretch of Rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré has been plagued by disruptions, due to its proximity to the Elysée presidential palace, the designer is confident in her choice. She noted that

BUSINESS

Lawyer Discusses How to Negotiate a Job Offer in Fashion

● Hedi Slimane's lawyer
Leon Del Forno says an
iron-clad prenup is key to
a happy fashion marriage.

BY JOELLE DIDERICH

PARIS – At a time of unprecedented creative upheaval at European fashion houses, it can feel like designers are the ultimate expendable commodity, with some tenures lasting as little as one season.

There's never been a greater need for a good lawyer.

Hedi Slimane, Chemena Kamali, Luke and Lucie Meier, Yang Li, Serge Ruffieux and Camille Micelli all have the same man on speed-dial: Leon Del Forno, a partner at leading Paris law firm Temime.

Though he specializes in criminal law, Del Forno first appeared on the industry's radar nine years ago when he represented Slimane in his drawn-out lawsuit against his former employer Kering following the designer's departure from Saint Laurent.

It helped to forge his belief that for a happy fashion marriage, nothing beats a good prenup.

Despite the uncertainty roiling the luxury sector, Del Forno advises designers not to be shy when it comes to negotiating a pay package. "I think designers are right to be demanding," he said. "At the end of the day, it's their performance that's being judged."

While he describes his job as playing the "bad cop" in contract negotiations, the 36-year-old attorney appears to wield the proverbial iron fist in a velvet glove. Affable and exceedingly polite, he works out of a large art-filled office overlooking the Tuileries gardens in Paris, and is the soul of discretion.

In an exclusive interview with WWD, Del Forno explained how the legal landscape is shifting, with shorter and more complex contracts becoming the norm, and shared some tips for designers on how to come out on top when negotiating for a new job.

The conversation has been edited and condensed.

WWD: Given the current creative churn, has fashion design become a high-risk occupation?

Leon Del Forno: Yes, considering there are fewer examples of creative directors with long tenures, and brands and groups now have fewer scruples about changing creative directors.

Fewer artistic directors now have full-time employment contracts, so freelancing is the norm.

Either brands replace them quickly because it's not working out, or they anticipate public fatigue, a bit like in politics.

You sometimes see panic reactions.

Sometimes the owners are listed groups so there are stakeholders. You have to reassure markets and investors, and changing the artistic director is a way to show you're doing something.

Paradoxically, it shows that artistic directors matter because if they didn't, there would be no reason to replace them.

This whole game of designer musical chairs means that designers are really at the center of the conversation.

WWD: Is it fair to place that much responsibility on the shoulders of artistic directors?

L.D.F.: The media, in particular, often focuses on artistic directors at the expense of management. In a way, it's the price of fame, because artistic directors are in the spotlight. And when it works out, they often get the lion's share of the credit.

The reality is that neither one nor the other is responsible.

From a legal standpoint, it's a really

fascinating exercise because you need an osmosis between three parties: the owners, the managers and the designer.

That's why you have to lay the bases for a fair balance of power where things are clearly spelled out and each person's set of responsibilities is precisely defined.

I'm in favor of designers, insofar as possible, having a holistic 360-degree approach, and taking an interest in the business side.

That can lead to friction and that's why governance is absolutely key in contracts, with principles of cooperation and agreement, and depending on the area of expertise, what I call a final cut.

Bad governance can ruin a project. You can have money, resources, good ideas and the right people, but if the responsibilities are not clearly defined, it can all end in tears. So it's important to take the time to negotiate these contracts, which are increasingly complex, dense, thorough and far-sighted.

WWD: Have contract negotiations become more complicated in the last 10 years?

L.D.F.: Yes, contracts have become more sophisticated, more complex.

I'm also seeing that when times are tough, contract negotiations are more difficult.

The potential scope is infinite. Right now we're talking about contracts that are several dozen pages long. Maybe one day, they'll be 200 or 300 pages long because there are so many aspects to take into account.

WWD: Is that why some designer handovers take such a long time?

L.D.F.: Contracts are sticky in the sense that you often have a notice period in addition to a non-compete clause, meaning that moving between jobs takes time, doubly so when the person you're replacing also has a long notice period. Several times I've negotiated contracts [that] only came into effect more than a year later.

In the last 10 years I've witnessed a slight shortening of contracts and increasingly, they come with unilateral termination clauses that can be invoked by either party. Often you will see a midterm exit right, where you establish a contract for three or four years but you determine that after two years, either side can decide to end the contract. We're also seeing shorter non-compete clauses of six or nine months, rather than 12. And we're also seeing that those non-compete clauses are not necessarily enforced.

WWD: What's your advice for young designers?

L.D.F.: The most talented designers, certainly the successful ones I've had the privilege of representing, are people who are involved way beyond the purely creative aspect of the job.

So my first piece of advice to young designers is to have that thirst to understand the business as a whole.

For people fresh out of school, my advice as a lawyer is, don't be scared to seek counsel but above all, don't be scared to ask for things.

If you're already looking at a contract, the company is not talking to a bunch of other people. It means that either you've already been chosen, or you're close to clinching the job, so you should not be afraid to set your terms because it shows you're serious. It inspires respect.

That doesn't mean you'll get everything you want, but you're well-positioned.

The advantage of having a lawyer is that they know what to watch out for.

But above all it means you don't have to do everything yourself. It's the basic good



Leon Del Forno

cop, bad cop principle: it means someone else can go to bat on your behalf.

There are lots of potential grounds for disagreement and it's best to plan in advance how they will be handled.

It's like a prenup. Often at the beginning of a relationship, it's the honeymoon period. You think everything will be perfect.

Just because you're madly in love doesn't mean that one day, in five, 10, 15 years, you won't start fighting over something and it's best to agree how to handle that ahead of time because that will be the wrong time to figure it out.

WWD: Is there any upside for designers to the current instability?

L.D.F.: I think short contracts are better for designers.

If they're talented and they believe in themselves, a short contract will give them more leverage.

Sometimes young designers, when they're starting out, think [a longer contract] is great because it gives them visibility over how much they'll be earning over the next five years. But even from a financial perspective, it freezes their pay package for the duration of the contract, without possibility of revision.

Sometimes it doesn't work out and it's not really your fault, but you're the one shouldering the blame.

Don't hesitate to pull the plug if it's not working and move on.

WWD: What is the impact of social networks? Rumor-mongering is rife, with anyone and everyone weighing in on contract negotiations that are supposed to be confidential. Do you take legal action?

L.D.F.: For it to be punishable under French law, you have to prove that spreading false information either infringes a person's privacy or that it denigrates or defames them; in other words, that it damages their honor or their reputation. It's not always easy to characterize, and designers rarely want to engage in

open conflict. However, these things are monitored and depending on who it is and how it's done, there can be a response.

Some blogs have made it their bread-and-butter. Fortunately, they are seen for what they are, so they don't have a ton of credibility.

Clients or houses are more worried about the fact that some blogs or social media accounts can appear to be manipulated by competitors or by malicious individuals to either spread false information or leave negative comments.

The positive aspect [of social media] for designers is that it gives them a platform of their own. It provides them an opportunity to express themselves, own their story and community, and set the record straight.

You rarely see scores being settled, but I think for everyone involved, knowing that they can speak out and there are tens or hundreds of thousands, or perhaps millions, of people following them, keeps everyone – journalists, houses and competitors – at a respectful distance.

WWD: Have all these precautions reduced the likelihood of lawsuits?

L.D.F.: Experience shows that even the best laid plans can go awry.

Lawsuits are not over, but they've been fairly rare in the last 10 years and I don't think that will change going forward.

In general, this industry is not very fond of litigation. It's an environment of repeat players. Artistic directors are generally looking for their next job, so suing their previous employer is not always good for them and doesn't allow them to focus on their next project. The same is true for houses. It's an image-based industry so they would rather come across as patrons of creativity and freedom of expression than be bogged down in lawsuits.

That's another reason why it's important to anticipate things and make sure contracts are not ambiguous and contain clear provisions to avoid conflicts, especially at the end of the contract when the honeymoon is over and there can be bad blood.



Looks from
Icicle's spring
2025 collection.

CEO Talks

Icicle's CEO Talks Paris Ambitions and Its New York DNA

● Cofounder Ye Shouzeng spoke to WWD as the brand is about to make its Paris Fashion Week debut on Saturday, with a presentation at its upcoming third store in the French capital.

BY DENISE HU

Icicle, the Shanghai- and Paris-based fashion brand with a novel taste for minimalism and eco-friendly design, is making its Paris Fashion Week debut with a presentation on Saturday.

The presentation will see the introduction of the brand's Atelier line, a collection that integrates the "artisanship and elegance of France with the new and innovative manufacturing expertise of Icicle China," according to the company. Created by Icicle's Paris-based studio founded in 2013, it will be the first time the brand is opening for wholesale business.

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For the group's founder Ye Shouzeng, who also founded Icicle with his wife

Shawna Tao in Shanghai almost 30 years ago, the time was ripe for the brand to initiate its global expansion plans.

"We are not yet a household name in the European market, so after major adjustments to the company strategy during COVID-19, we are now ready to show the world our latest developments, to have this particular landmark moment to usher in a new phase, a new beginning—it's the right time to truly launch our global business," said the executive, known within the company as "Teacher Ye" given his background as a fashion professor and an air of scholarly reserve he retains.

Based on the premise of rebuilding the connection between urban lives and nature, Icicle grew to become one of China's largest womenswear groups of its generation.

In 2024, sales rose 7 percent to 3 billion renminbi, or \$418 million. The fourth quarter stood out with an 18 percent revenue jump, which Ye attributed to brand elevation efforts.

International expansion began 12 years ago with a design studio and showroom in Paris' tony 16th arrondissement.

A first flagship on 35 Avenue George V in September 2019 was followed by a womenswear and accessories concession at Le Bon Marché. Then came a second outpost, at 50 Faubourg du Saint-Honoré in 2021.

Meanwhile, the group's China footprint is a network of 241 stores in more than 100 cities.

"We spent the last 10 years cultivating a local team of over 70 people...now's the time to get down to business," Ye said. By that he means Icicle's retail expansion in

Europe, which will focus on bolstering its brand-owned and wholesale networks in the market.

Leading up to Saturday's presentation, the chief executive officer spoke to WWD about Icicle's ambitions abroad, its premiumization plan, its secret New York DNA and more.

WWD: What's the inspiration behind Icicle's Paris Fashion Week debut? What can we look forward to?

Ye Shouzeng: Our storyline will evolve around the idea of "home." It was also heavily inspired by our creative director Bénédicte Laloux, how she started out as a young girl at our company, and now she has matured into a woman, a mother. Her story is that of every female professional, how she navigates her family life and work life. This has been the story of Icicle all along, it's why we care so much about designs that seamlessly blend comfort, eco-consciousness and practicality.

WWD: How has the company's strategy evolved in recent years?

Y.S.: After COVID-19, the world was in flux and so we felt an urgent need to rethink the company organization, which led to a sweeping reform within the company two to three years ago. As market polarization continues, we realized we had to level up, the state of our supply chain meant that we had no choice. Before [COVID-19], we used to source 25 percent of raw material

from Italy. After the adjustment, it jumped to 50 percent, so that expanded our more expensive products by around 20 percent. Last year's fourth quarter was the first time we saw this change in style and product direction reflected in sales. It proved that our decision was right, as we grew by 18 percent.

WWD: What are some of the opportunities you see in the European market?

Y.S.: Quality manufacturing is a global rarity, it usually means Made in Italy, yet it's also a finite resource almost completely taken over by luxury groups. But after over 20 years of development, with our two manufacturing hubs in the Yangtze River Delta area, I believe that the apparel we are making is on par with what's Made in Italy, sometimes even better. Our production capacity remains a rarity in China, but we made it work, here in Shanghai.

Of course, the business we are in is not just about making clothes, it has to sustain through brand building. The creation of Icicle was a response to the environmental problems and the pollution we were experiencing in our everyday lives. We vowed to create a brand that pursued the "oneness" between humans and nature, which became our brand DNA. This idea works on a global scale, it just happens that it became a luxury proposition in maybe the last five years. But we started over 27 years ago.

WWD: Having opened several stores on Paris' luxury retail boulevards, will Icicle venture across the pond?

Y.S.: I think we will, maybe in 2026 we will have a store. I've been closely watching the U.S. market since I started this company—I must give credit to my father-in-law's primary school classmate, who was the cofounder of Lafayette 148. We call him [Shun Yen Siu] the Icicle Godfather, as he was the one that taught me how to make "honest products," how to manage a business and how to create a brand. I may not be familiar with the U.S. landscape as a whole, but I think I'm pretty familiar with New York City. If we do decide to go there, we wouldn't be starting from scratch. In a way, we are not only a company with Shanghai and Paris DNA, but also U.S. DNA.

WWD: Any future plans that we could look forward to?

Y.S.: Before COVID-19, we were just another Chinese brand, focused on the Chinese market, with a global design center in Paris. After COVID-19, we found a new direction, which is to go global, with a clear timeline in mind. It might sound abstract, but our goal starts with Paris Fashion Week, followed by a wholesale plan, which might also take us to the U.S. market, the Japan market soon. However, we must make sure that Paris is on a healthy growth trajectory because it's the hardest market to tackle—it's expensive and the most competitive, but once we've got Paris figured out, we can go to any other city in the world.



An exclusive preview of
Icicle's Atelier collection.

PARIS FASHION WEEK PREVIEW

WWD

EXCLUSIVE

Merci Unveils Second Paris Store



Inside Merci on Rue de Richelieu



The dressing area with embroidered curtains at Merci



The back section of the new Merci

CEO Arthur Gerbi talks about his "post-luxury" philosophy for the famous destination store's new outpost.

BY RHONDA RICHFORD

PARIS — It was the ceiling that sealed the deal for Arthur Gerbi when selecting the location for the second outpost of the famous Marais retailer Merci.

He had been looking for a "sparring partner" for the original location, a new place to play with his overflow of ideas. When he came across the disused post office at 19 Rue de Richelieu, it had been divided up and fitted with dropped ceilings for decades.

Gerbi suspected the building held some architectural secrets, so when he uncovered the arched glass ceiling, he knew it would be Merci's second home.

"I'm not Sir Edmund Hillary, but when he climbed Mount Everest, it was because it was there," Gerbi joked. "We're a project-driven company, and when we found this place, we just did it."

The glass roof is reminiscent of the Marais store's similar dome, but Gerbi was clear that he did not want to copy-paste the original's interior design for this new incarnation. With its wide and rectangular space, it recalls an artist's loft in Manhattan's SoHo.

Gerbi recounts a tale of his mother Danielle in '80s New York, when she strayed through a secret door in an art gallery only to come across Jean-Michel Basquiat and Andy Warhol playing cards. Gerbi wanted to capture that spirit of discovery in the 6,500-square-foot new store.

"You have all these things that make it

very New York," he said. Architect Jules Mesny-Deschamps opened up the space from what had been the customer entrance all the way to what had been the delivery dock. The store stretches across the block, to a second entrance on Rue Molière.

At the Rue de Richelieu entrance, a copper checkout counter crafted by Piet Hein Eek, the Dutch craftsman famous for his work with reclaimed materials, sits front and center. The shelves are lined with books, art supplies and small objects ranging from umbrellas to jellcat plushies.

Up a small staircase is the heart of the store — shelves filled with stacks of plates, glasses and dishes, cookbooks propped up between pots and pans. Common objects like Opinel knives are paired with Japanese measuring cups.

"We tried to put it in an environment where it doesn't look like a hardware store, but more like a candy store," Gerbi said of the eclectic selection from American, Japanese and French makers. That space is anchored by a big blue table, lacquered in Japanese urushi by artist Jo Nagasaka.

Walking under half a red Fiat — a nod to the famous car parked in Merci's courtyard in the Marais — the fashion selection spans the main floor. Brands include indie labels Nothing Written, La Fetiche, Mysayang, Pas de Calais and Sarahwear. The jeans bar sits to the side, carrying Carhartt, Levi's and Re/Done, while jewelry in wood and glass cases is perched opposite.

The dressing rooms are closed off with curtains embroidered by Marseille-based artist Sarah Espete, while trompe-l'œil artist Emma Jager has sketched hangers and hooks around the walls. They were all plucked from Gerbi's orbit of creatives.

"I'm just like a centrifuge of artists, of

brands, of trends, I just put them all in and spin very fast," he said.

Merci was founded in 2009 and Gerbi's family, founders of French brand Gérard Darel, took it over in 2013. Gerbi himself stepped into the chief executive officer's role.

"It's like I adopted a child," he said of taking over the then-four-year-old brand. Ever since, it's been a series of lessons about nature versus nurture for the business school graduate, shaping the store's values. He's arrived at the conclusion that Merci is "the opposite of marketing."

"This whole place is all about curation. It's about 'coup de cœur.' It's about meeting people that have good energy, that have a product that makes sense. We hear their story, and if it makes sense we say yes," he said. "But we don't do hype brands."

Gerbi positions the Merci philosophy as "post-luxury."

"Luxury is something you buy for somebody else, to show that you belong to a certain group or to a certain crowd," he said. "At Merci, you buy something that truly makes you happy, and most of the time there's no logo or not a big logo. It's not about saying that you paid a big sum of money for it."

Marketing divides people into target categories and micro-trends, he believes, while Merci aims for a more happenstance mix.

"Merci is about speaking to everybody with a very Parisian spirit, our Parisian spirit — not the global and mainframe 'Parisian' spirit — but how we live ourselves," he said. "It's not about excluding people."

To that end he wants the store to draw a wide swath of visitors, from the fashion

week flock that frequents the Marais shop, to neighborhood locals. Rue de Richelieu is undergoing a bit of a retail renaissance, with hip bag brand Rive Droite opening across the street last November.

The surrounding streets house several offices, and the new Merci door is just steps from both the gardens of Palais Royal and the ramen mecca of Rue Saint Anne. Gerbi's in-laws live nearby.

"We're proud of having this mix of people that would never bump into each other except that they would come to Merci," he said.

Downstairs, shoes from Parabout, Emme Parson and Anne Thomas are perched on shiny copper shelving, though Gerbi hopes it won't stay that way for long. He wants a rougher, lived-in look. "We're all about the patina," he said.

Customers can sit on wooden benches recovered from a Swiss ski chalet to try on a pair, or on a deep couch piled with pillows. It's all about recreating an apartment-style feel.

At the back sits the beauty section, filled with ranges from La Bonne Brosse, Doré and Augustinus Bader, flanked by racks of fluffy towels.

While Gerbi would love a store in New York or even Tokyo someday, he's clear that Rue de Richelieu is not the opening shot of a worldwide rollout program. Any additional business development is far off, and even then, would be unique to its location.

"I think the worst thing is to copy your own self," he said. "We don't see a Merci on every corner that's some kind of clone, but we see customers discovering us on Instagram or on the website, planning to come to see us, and then discovering what we do."

He sees the website as more of an old-fashioned catalog to encourage physical foot traffic instead of some grand omnichannel plan.

Gerbi points out that the "aggressive strategy" of online multibrand retailers largely faltered, citing Farfetch as an example. "Most of the time [a multibrand online retailer is] doomed, because whatever the turnover you will do, there will never be enough margin for you to be sustainable and profitable."

The online multibrand retail model doesn't make sense for small designers either, particularly as they often rely on subtle cues and customer loyalty. "What value are you creating? It's just stock trading," he said. "What we are trying to do is create something that's more than just a transaction."

Merci launched its own label with a watch in 2017, a move that "completely changed the economics," said Gerbi, making the multibrand business model more steady and sustainable. The in-house label has now expanded into ready-to-wear, accessories and homegoods such as blankets and pillows. There's a Merci couch, too, plus fragrances and candles.

The private brand has embarked on several collaborations, the latest a partnership with L.A. phenomenon Erewhon, the health food supermarket that has morphed into a lifestyle brand, which launched on Monday. It features sweaters and bags, among other collectible items.

"Being a multicategory-maker and a multicategory curator and mixing this whole thing together is really what we love," said Gerbi, summing up his 360 view of retail. He eschews the word "concept store"; instead Merci "is about the art of living."

"Do you know what the real name of Merci should be? 'Merci la vie,'" he added. "This store is a way to celebrate life."

CREATIVE FLOW

With inspirations from stem to screen, designers explored color and shine with blooming florals, touches of flamenco and swings of fringes. Silver and a spectrum of blues portend a cool season for fall 2025. Here designers hint at the shapes, shades and silhouettes they will reveal during Paris Fashion Week. **COMPILED BY PASCALE RAJAC**

Casablanca



Ganni

"With this collection, I wanted to bring that essence to the Ganni woman's wardrobe — one that cocoons and protects, yet allows for self-expression. It's an invitation to reconnect with spaces that make your heart feel most at ease. It's about carrying that feeling with you, wherever you go, so home can follow you wherever you are."

— Ditte Reffstrup



Akris

"Blue is chroma, and chroma is blue."

— Albert Kriemler



PARIS FASHION WEEK PREVIEW

WWD

Off-White



Leonard Paris

"City Nomade"

"Flying over the nighttime deserts, the nomad Leonard woman glimpses the lights of the oases. Like the hair of a mermaid, luminous lines undulate in the dark of the night. In search of adventure and beauty, she discovers the fairy tale places of her childhood, scented with the perfume of Isfahan roses."

— Georg Lux



Issey Miyake

"What do you see?"

— Issey Miyake



Shiatzy Chen

"Immersed in boundless cloud and haze, with the sky draped on her back and the soil carried on her shoulder.

The traveler who shapes the sun and crafts the moon, forges ahead, never ceasing to compose the endless journey of her own. She is always on the road."

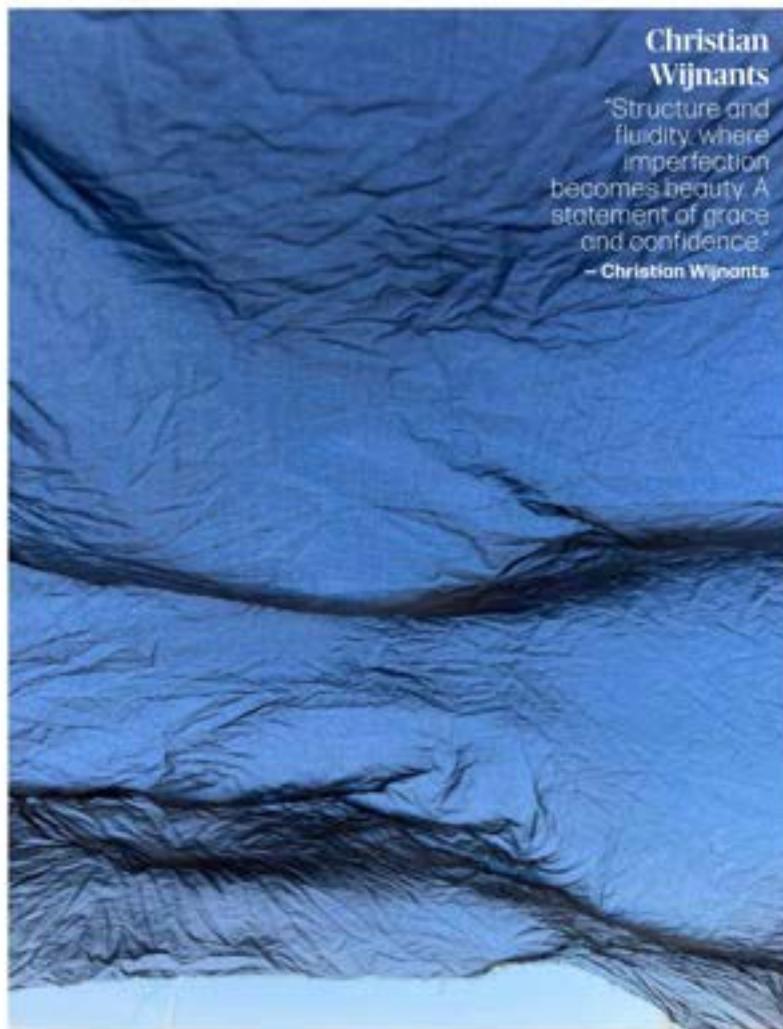
— Shiatzy Chen



Mame Kurogouchi

"Katachi - Forms in Flux"

— Mame Kurogouchi



Christian Wijnants

"Structure and fluidity, where imperfection becomes beauty. A statement of grace and confidence."

— Christian Wijnants

Zomer



Weinsanto

"Cold as ice."

— Weinsanto



CFCL

"Curving, folding, expanding..."

— CFCL



Niccolò Pasqualetti

"Brittle leaves, gilded in silver like lingering frost, tremble in the first light."

— Niccolò Pasqualetti

PARIS FASHION WEEK PREVIEW

WWD



Anrealage

"The theme of Anrealage's next collection is "Screen." Fashion is not merely clothing; it functions as a medium for transmitting information. One of its origins can be traced back to the early 20th-century sandwich men, who wore advertising boards and walked the streets to disseminate information. Later, in the 1970s, message T-shirts emerged, giving rise to a culture where individuals could express their thoughts and messages through clothing.

Today, urban advertisements have shifted from print to LCD screens, allowing information to be updated instantly. The world inside screens is entirely composed of light. We constantly gaze at this light in our daily lives, receiving information from it. Just as city advertisements transitioned from print to digital displays, fashion should also evolve from fixed designs on fabric to dynamic, fluid expressions. We envision a future where clothing, like a screen, projects images and information, allowing designs to change instantly.

In this collection, we aim to explore the evolution of fashion as a media platform, beginning with sandwich men, and bring the world of light – once confined to screens – into reality."

— Kunihiro Morinaga



Christopher Esber

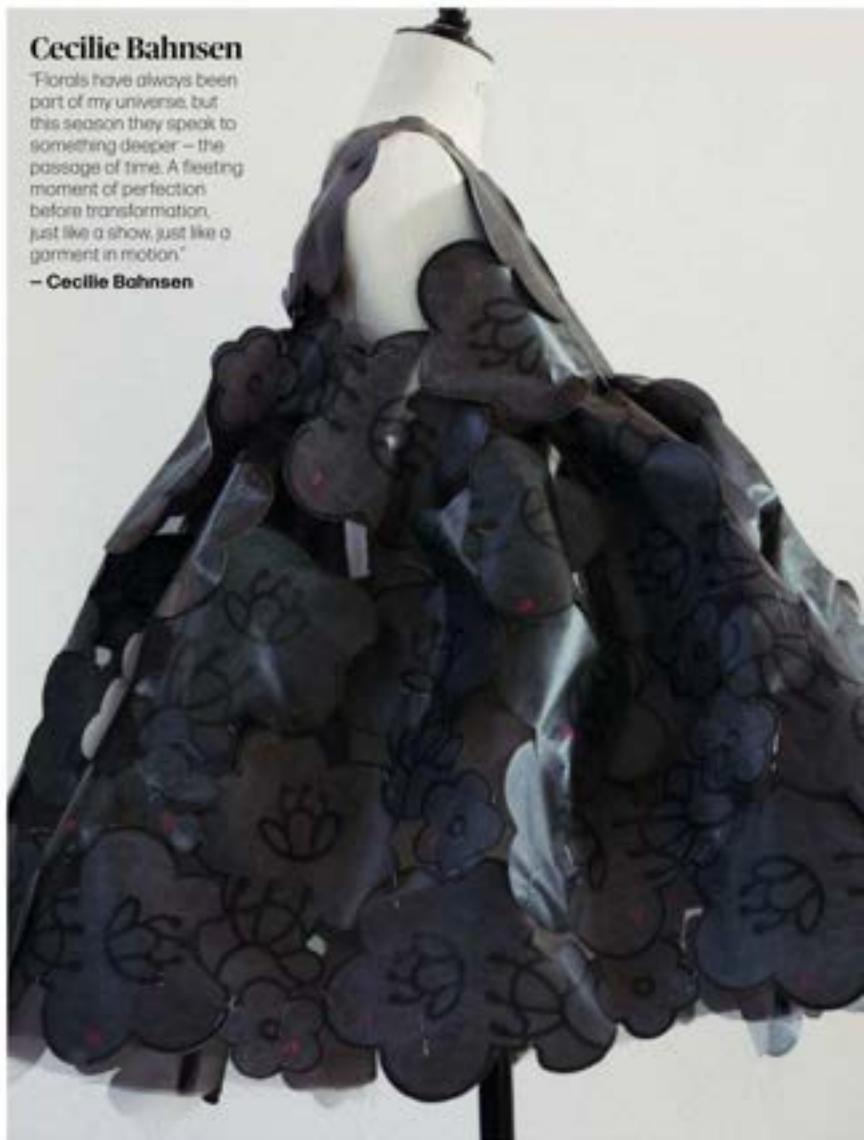
"Updated antiques. Flamenco."

— Christopher Esber

Cecilie Bahnsen

"Florals have always been part of my universe, but this season they speak to something deeper – the passage of time. A fleeting moment of perfection before transformation, just like a show, just like a garment in motion."

— Cecilie Bahnsen





Bernadette and Charlotte de Geyter



Hannah Rose Dalton and Steven Raj Bhaskaran



Armine Ohanian



Limi Yamamoto

FASHION

The Ones to Watch at Paris Fashion Week Fall 2025

- WWD spotlights the runway debuts of Bernadette, Matières Fécales and Hayeli for fall 2025, while Limi Feu steps back into the limelight.

BY LILY TEMPLETON

PARIS – Whether it's a first season or a quarter of a century's worth of collections, the brands looking to make a splash at Paris Fashion Week for fall 2025 are all about strong perspectives and exacting technical standards.

Bernadette

After celebrating its fifth anniversary with a Paris café and a New York holiday pop-up in 2024, Belgian brand Bernadette is about to have another milestone on Thursday: its first runway show.

"For the past six years, we've had to grow so much as people, connect with our customer and see what makes sense for us," Charlotte De Geyter, one half of the mother-daughter duo behind the Antwerp-based label, told WWD. "Now we feel it's the right time: We're ready for it."

The brand has certainly found the playful, art-loving and nature-influenced audience it was hoping for with its inaugural lineup of 12 dresses decked in hand-drawn floral prints. Retail prices for dresses start around 650 euros for day options, while richly embroidered evening gowns can go up to 3,800 euros. Knitwear averages around 800 euros.

While the company does not disclose sales figures, De Geyter said the team has now grown to six full-time employees and three freelance designers.

Wholesale accounts for 70 percent of the business with 94 doors globally such as Bergdorf Goodman, Neiman Marcus and Le Bon Marché as well as Net-a-porter. Its own e-commerce is also growing strongly, doubling year-on-year for 2024.

The fall collection, titled "Sacred Women, Secret World," is a story they felt needed a 360-degree expression as it centers on the bedroom. Not as a place for seduction, mind you, but as "a very cinematic, intimate space where a woman can recharge," De Geyter said. "That's very important for womanhood and it's a very special moment in the bedroom where she gets ready every day."

Expect lingerie-inspired touches infusing the retro-romantic Bernadette aesthetic and elements influenced by the idea of cycles, such as polka dots that morph into snow, stars or moons.

But the runway cycle isn't one they're locking themselves into. "I do feel that next season, we will definitely have that hunger to show the collection in a big way," De Geyter said. "But I don't want to make promises and get stuck – it's important for us to have that freedom."

Matières Fécales

For Hannah Rose Dalton and Steven Raj Bhaskaran, best known as the creative entity Matières Fécales, their fashion label's debut on Friday is all about showing their design chops.

"For the past 10 years Steven and I have been able to show ourselves through visibility and through our message, but we never had the opportunity to our craftsmanship and patternmaking skills," Dalton told WWD.

The trifecta of perspective, individuality and fearlessness is an idea the duo want to embed in their garments. Rooted in their personal wardrobes and what they want to look like – otherworldly beings, in a nutshell – this inaugural lineup reads as the embodiment of their experience: on the one hand, it's an armor and on the other, it's a source of vulnerability for the attention it draws.

In the 35-look lineup, which will translate to around 85 stock keeping units in the Dover Street Market Paris showroom, expect a mix of strong-shouldered tailored pieces hewing close to the body and looser options ranging from cocoon-shaped bomber jackets to cozy lush knitwear. Dalton also promised "subtle ways of contorting the body – through the footwear, through the makeup and through couture elements."

"There's a lot of pieces that can also stand on their own, without the branding, without having to explain it – they can explain themselves – and also be integrated into all types of people's wardrobe while keeping the same [sense] of being fearless, the values that we have and also be beautiful period," Bhaskaran said.

With a price range that starts around 100 euros for tank tops and 600 euros for, say, tweed corsets and goes up to 5,000 euros for elaborate outerwear, there will

be "something for the 'mature Matières madam'" looking for upscale handcraft-intensive pieces as well as a 25-year-old hankering for destroyed jeans, twisted-seam tank tops and bomber jackets, he promised.

Categories will include denim and outerwear as well as shoes, leather goods and jewelry.

"We're also conscious of playing with different price points [and having] things that are still inviting and approachable for a younger clientele," particularly those who currently feel underserved in today's luxury landscape, Dalton said.

Hayeli

What a way to launch. Hayeli's Paris Fashion Week show at Palais de Tokyo on Monday will not only be its first runway outing but will also mark the debut – and big ambitions – of the six-month-old brand.

Hayeli is the brainchild of a triumvirate of cofounding industry executives and creatives: designer and creative director Armine Ohanian and painter and art director Tigran Tsitoghdzian, all backed by multibrand retailer Yooto.

Ohanian has helmed her own namesake label since 2017 and has a string of awards and accolades under her belt.

She met Tsitoghdzian through the latter's art exhibit, and when Yooto approached the artist for a collaboration, the designer's work immediately came to mind. "He thought we could create this project together," Ohanian said.

The idea was sparked a year ago, and the design and development process went into high gear in September.

Now she will bring in elements of what she calls her signature "techno couture" style to the new collection.

Looks will merge fashion and art, playing on the themes of Tsitoghdzian's "Mirrors" portrait series to challenge our current cultural obsession with social media. "We explore the delicate balance between privacy and self-promotion," Ohanian said.

Screens will be incorporated into the clothing to display Tsitoghdzian's works, morphing throughout the show. The music and scenography will create an immersive installation billed as part fashion show and part performance piece.

Ohanian revels in the contrast between old-fashioned artisanal techniques and technology. Her Hayeli pieces will juxtapose natural materials like silk

organza alongside lenticular fabrics, all handcrafted in her Paris studio.

Yooto is part of the Nork Group. The conglomerate, founded by Norayr Khachatryan, operates the online multibrand luxury retailer, a network of physical stores plus manages luxury brands across Eastern Europe. Alongside planned twice-yearly Hayeli runway shows, the brand will develop accessible items such as T-shirts.

The company will bring its 30 years of brand-building experience to the table with retail dreams: It plans to open a Hayeli store in the U.S. within a year.

Limi Feu

"I'm not a fashion designer, I'm a patternmaker," said Limi Yamamoto ahead of the Paris reveal of the fall 2025 collection of her 25-year-old label Limi Feu.

Letting fabrics guide her hand have been the throughline since Day One and the reason why the brand has been largely absent from official fashion week schedules for more than a decade.

Not that it has been dormant commercially: it boasts 10 shops-in-shop across Japan, a dozen doors outside Japan and since May, a flagship store in Tokyo's Aoyama neighborhood. A three-month London pop-up open in November on Savile Row that has now been extended to July heralded Limi Feu's global ambitions.

And with international expansion heating up – a Milan pop-up is slated for September – the designer felt it was time to deliver her message more accurately – and to a broader-than-ever audience.

Expect a punk vibe and extensive draping for fall, as pleated wools and rayon viscose are the materials Yamamoto reached for. It will be contrasted with her always-sharp tailoring and a collaboration with Japanese workwear specialist Toraichi.

"Everything is about the pattern. Once the pattern is OK, the clothes will be OK; otherwise, it doesn't work," she told WWD through a translator. This technique-first approach is something she feels the industry has forgotten, particularly at a time when new designer appointments have come at a fast clip.

"Creative directors can change places all over, but tailors and patternmakers sometimes have more skills, more talent than them," she continued. "While I am not nostalgic, I hope that in the future, clothes will be at the center of the conversation [rather than] the campaign, the model walking the show or the VIP in the front row."

That said, Yamamoto is not ruling out a return to the runway for her label. While determined to only do it when good and ready, there is a sign the wait won't be long: two Limi Feu silhouettes will be slotted into the Yohji Yamamoto fall show on Friday.

The Reviews



Sonia Rykiel

Under the helm of Adrian Gilbey, the Sonia Rykiel brand is entering its next chapter.

"The saying is, 'You can never go home,' but actually, you can," Gilbey, who last year was appointed senior vice president of design at the G-III owned label, mused during a preview of his debut fall 2025 collection for the brand. The lineup celebrated his early years working alongside the late fashion icon as head of the design studio in the mid-'90s.

"This is a love letter to Sonia, and a love letter to La Femme Rykiel — the women that wore Sonia, and will wear it again in the future," he explained of the knit-forward collection, which is also filled with tailoring, cocktail dresses, fun outerwear and plenty of modernized takes on the brand's deep archive.

"If you were to say to anyone, 'What is Rykiel?' the first thing they would say is a striped sweater; any woman that wore Rykiel would add, 'and a fabulous pair of those pants,'" he said, pointing out a smattering of colorful striped sweaters (including re-editions of the spring 2000 striped minidresses and "Pull de Luxe" witty slogan jumpers) and pull-on sailor trousers.

His overall goal was to pay homage to the two distinct Rykiel runway women — the coquette (hyper feminine) and the gamine (more androgynous) with modern styles priced \$250 and up. There was a good balance of both, reflected through styles that were designed to amplify personal style over trend with ample archival "Rykielisms." For instance, "pitched" (high back, low front) jackets; inventive head-to-toe knits (pencil skirt, party dresses, "tweed" jackets, trompe l'oeil styles, floral coesages, etc.), and statement outerwear, ranging from a playful leopard bomber and faux fur gilets to an elegant cape with gold closure.

By homing in on the mid-'90s collections within the brand's Parisian archive, the collection successfully married the past and present. Case in point: a shrunken,

tailored jacket inset with ottoman ribbon details from 1995, recreated for today in dark blue denim or leather and worn with wide pants; a crisp white suit, as seen on Amber Valletta on the spring '94 runway, cut in satin-back crepe with recast heavy gold archival buttons, or a sleek pair of black leather overalls (also seen on Valletta in spring '95). Gilbey rounded out the line with party dresses — pleated babydolls, plenty of little black dresses, and signature lingerie-inspired slips — that bridged the label's Parisian chic with youthful joy.

Fall served as a strong start for tried-and-true, as well as the next generation, of Sonia Rykiel fans. — Emily Mercer



BUSINESS

A Magazine Curated By Celebrates 25th Anniversary



Designers including Martin Margiela, Yohji Yamamoto and Kim Jones contributed pieces to the show at an experimental cultural space in the French capital's Barbès district.

BY JOELLE DIDERICH

PARIS — A Magazine Curated By is celebrating its 25th anniversary with a special issue and an exhibition during Paris Fashion Week.

The magazine will mark the milestone with an event on Thursday at Union de la Jeunesse Internationale, kicking off a three-week-long residence at the experimental cultural center located in the former flagship of the now-defunct French discount clothing chain Tati.

Initiated in 2000 by Walter Van Beirendonck, the publication started its "Curated By" era in 2004, with a first edition with Martin Margiela.

It has since published issues with guest editors such as Alessandro Michele, Halder Aclermann and Pierpaolo Piccioli, in addition to releasing special print projects with the likes of Gucci, Acne Studios and Jordan Brand.

For its anniversary issue, scheduled for release on Thursday, the 32 past curators contributed fresh material, with Margiela designing the cover featuring a gold metallic balloon in the shape of the letter "A."

"To see the attachment of all the designers to the magazine was extremely touching," Fatme Layt, president of A Magazine Curated By Group and the magazine's publisher, told WWD in an interview.

"For me, the gift among gifts was Martin Margiela who, having guest edited the inaugural issue, accepted my request to design the cover, even though he stopped working in fashion years ago," she added.

The special issue comes with a supplement featuring a series of interviews between designers. Among the pairings are Hussein Chalayan and Olivier Theyskens; Thom Browne and Stephen Jones; Kim Jones and Chitose Abe, and Francesco Risso and Simone Rocha.

They have also lent objects or silhouettes that reflect their creative worlds for "25 Years of Curation and Creation," an installation designed by the Cigué agency that will run from Friday to March 30.

"They had the choice to either talk about their work, or about the issue of the magazine they worked on, or things that inspire them or are part of their daily lives," said Julie Pont, vice president and creative officer of A Magazine Curated By Group.

"For example, Yohji Yamamoto told us, 'OK, I'm going to send you a pack of cigarettes,' which we thought was very funny," she added.

Cigarettes, Bambi and a Sock Sweater

Alongside Yamamoto's pack of 16 Lites will be other personal objects including Kris Van Assche's Libertad o Muerte necklace, Martine Sibon's Bambi figurine and Rocha's Astier de Villane egg cup.

Original designs will include Margiela's sock sweater, Stephen Jones' Planetarium hat and a custom Hermès Kelly bag designed by Jun Takahashi. "We also have a teddy bear arriving from Tokyo in business class with someone from Takahashi's studio," Pont said.

Some designers opted to show full looks that represent their signature style, including Glenn Martens, Yamamoto, Kim Jones, Jack McCollough and Lazaro Hernandez of Proenza Schouder, Browne, Sibon, and Luke and Lucie Meier, who recently exited Jil Sander.

Visitors will be able to browse through the magazine's complete archive in digital form, and listen to a soundtrack specially composed by Studio Ingram, sampling every piece of music ever mentioned in the



publication's history.

Woven into the mix are excerpts from the curators' and editors' letters, narrated by current editor in chief Blake Abbie.

A Curated By Group also plans to organize a series of free public talks at the pop-up venue founded by French Senegalese designer Youssouf Fofana, which houses a cultural space, a clothing store with up-and-coming brands, a cafeteria and a library.

"We wanted to do it somewhere where it makes sense, where culture will be truly appreciated," said Layt, noting the space is located in the historically mixed neighborhood of Barbès. "Our project is rooted in the idea of community."

A veteran investment banker, investor and entrepreneur, she took over the magazine owned by her late husband Evence-Charles Coppée three years ago, following the Belgian media executive's death from cancer.

"He loved this magazine. He spent a lot of time and money relaunching it," she said. "I promised him that I would take care of it, and I honestly didn't think I would enjoy it this much."

Having initially delegated the running of the magazine, she has taken on a more hands-on role.

New Growth Channels

To finance the biannual publication, she has branched out into consulting, with the launch last fall of A Lab Curated By, a new entity that uses AI-powered data



Fatme Layt



Julie Pont

intelligence to offer market and trend insights as well as advisory services.

"The most important thing for me is to maintain the independence of the magazine, so we have to find a growth engine that is also completely independent," Layt explained. "We want to develop our DNA of culture, creativity, independence and counterculture with many different branches."

One of these is cultural events: A Curated By Group is working with the Théâtre National de Chaillot on an event on April 4 and 5 exploring the relationship between dance and fashion, which will feature a group of young designers selected by the Villa Noailles.

Layt, who serves as "executive in residence" at U.S.-headquartered global investment and merchant bank LionTree, brings to the table years of experience in the creative industries and fashion tech.

"We're at a pivotal moment in the digitalization of fashion," she said. "Few people have the ability to connect all these different worlds that now gravitate around fashion. I've been doing just that for 30 years, because those are the industries I work in, so it's all happening very organically."

While she wants to keep the format of the magazine unchanged, Layt intends to make it more international by featuring designers from Asia and the rest of the world. "It must not be limited to the small microcosm of European fashion. I think it really needs to be much broader than that," she said.

She's keen to develop a sustainable income model for the publication, which has a circulation of between 5,000 and 10,000 per issue and retails for 35 euros. "Today, the only way to return to profitability is through subscriptions," Layt said.

Nonetheless, she's confident in the future of print media, with plans to also grow the publication's custom content publishing arm, A Magazine Curated For.

"At a time of rampant AI, standardization and globalization, people are hungry for creativity, and creativity remains something very human," she said. "Paper is back."



PARIS FASHION WEEK PREVIEW

WWD
FASHION

Paris Exhibition Shows How Azzedine Alaïa, Thierry Mugler Became Fashion's Odd Couple

● Mugler encouraged Alaïa to launch his own label and was his biggest cheerleader.

BY JOELLE DIDERICH

PARIS – Would there have been an Azzedine Alaïa brand without Thierry Mugler?

An exhibition in Paris spotlights the unique friendship between the two designers who epitomized '80s glamour with their sinuous creations. If some of their designs look similar, it should come as no surprise: they practically lived in each other's pockets, even vacationing together.

"It was a story of friendship and mutual admiration," said Olivier Saillard, director of the Fondation Azzedine Alaïa.

The exhibit, titled "Azzedine Alaïa Thierry Mugler 1980/1990," features 72 pieces culled from Alaïa's archive and his personal collection of more than 200 vintage Mugler designs.

They are organized by section – skirt suits, white, leather, exotic materials – but correctly identifying which is which could stump even the most dedicated fashionphile. "I had fun mixing them up, and even I'm sometimes not sure," Saillard confessed.

Pointed sleeves, peplums, anatomical

zippers, lacing and hoods were just some of the signatures they shared. "The '80s brought sexy back, and the decade belonged to Mugler and Alaïa," Saillard said.

Though Mugler was a good decade younger, he was staging shows in the '70s while Alaïa was working behind the scenes for private clients, or as a tailor-for-hire for couturiers like Yves Saint Laurent.

Mugler drafted Alaïa to work on a series of tuxedos for his fall 1979 collection, one of which is featured in the exhibition. The typed program notes, also on display, erroneously credited the designer as "Asdin Allaia."

It marked the beginning of a beautiful friendship. Mugler subsequently convinced Alaïa to accept Bergdorf Goodman's invitation to stage his first show in New York City in 1982.

"It was Thierry who essentially motivated Azzedine to launch his own label," said Saillard. "Thierry even went with Azzedine to the United States. He was sending out the models backstage, and translated his interviews into English."

Though Mugler was known for extravagant designs that transformed the female body with the use of unusual materials like rubber, Plexiglas and metal,



Looks in the "Azzedine Alaïa Thierry Mugler 1980/1990" exhibition.

Alaïa mostly bought his daywear pieces.

"He collected Mugler pieces that were very close to his own: a lot of suits and coats, and a few evening dresses, but the evening dresses are very minimal. It's not the fantasy Mugler," Saillard observed.

Mugler, who always gave Alaïa a preview of his collections, credited the Tunisian designer with making his designs more grounded. Conversely, the designer, obsessed with Hollywood's golden age, helped Alaïa develop his sensual side.

Mugler was such a big fan, he would personally bring journalists to Alaïa's workshop on Rue de Bellechasse.

When Alaïa was awarded the award for Designer of the Year, as well as the Special

Jury Prize, at the French Fashion Oscars in 1985, Mugler expected a shoutout.

But Alaïa, who was pathologically shy, had to be pulled up to the stage by Grace Jones and was so flustered, he didn't make a speech. Mugler was furious, and the two didn't speak for several years, eventually reconciling in the 1990s.

If Mugler is remembered as a showman, staging some of the most spectacular runway displays in French fashion history, Alaïa favored the intimacy of his headquarters and kept to his own schedule.

In terms of personality, they could not be more different. Style-wise? Two sides of the same coin.

EXCLUSIVE

Ace & Tate Names Lex van de Vliet New CEO

● Founder Mark de Lange will shift to a product and brand development role as the eyewear company seeks to expand its care offering.

BY RHONDA RICHFORD



Lex van de Vliet

PARIS – Amsterdam-based eyewear brand Ace & Tate is undergoing a C-suite makeover.

Founder Mark de Lange is stepping down from the chief executive officer role, handing the reins to eyewear executive Lex van de Vliet.

De Lange will shift his focus to brand and product development, as the direct-to-consumer glasses brand increases its focus on eye care.

The executive shakeup is set to position the brand for further European growth.

"We are doing really well in sunglasses and fashion, and there still lies a lot of opportunity for us to grow our optical business, which is very significant," said van de Vliet. "If we double down on the optical side going forward, we really want to establish ourselves as the leading brand in the eye care segment."

Ace & Tate now has 85 stores across Europe, mostly concentrated in four key territories of Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands and the U.K., with additional outposts in Spain and Switzerland.

While it continues its fashion proposition, including collaborations with brands such as Ganni, Ace & Tate sees opportunity to grow alongside its customer cohort.

Prior to Ace + Tate, van de Vliet spent six years at optical distribution company GrandVision, which operates

more than 7,400 stores and has since been acquired by EssilorLuxottica, as well as time in luxury hospitality and consulting at KPMG.

The appointment came about through mutual acquaintances and deep discussions about the optical market. Van de Vliet said it's a "very natural, smooth transition."

"Ace & Tate today is a completely different animal than when we first started out – and efficiently running a business at this scale demands a whole new set of skills compared to launching one," said de Lange.

The two will continue to work closely together. "We spent months debating what's next for Ace & Tate, and honestly, it felt like finding a late-stage cofounder," added de Lange.

The former CEO added that bringing in new management "would be a massive win for the business – a real catalyst for the next phase of growth" while he concentrates on shaping the brand and refining the product.

While Ace + Tate started as a DTC Instagram brand, continuing to accelerate brick-and-mortar openings is the biggest opportunity for growth, van de Vliet believes.

"There's eyewear and eye care," he said. "And we want to very much pull [eye care] more to the foreground."

That will include more personalized advice, expanded care, easy-to-understand prescriptions and integrated cross-border client services. For example, if a customer gets a pair of glasses in London, they can have them adjusted or exchanged in Amsterdam.

The focus on eye care is "basically not taking away from anything that we do on

the fashion side," van de Vliet said, and the collaborations strategy with brands like Ganni will remain the same. That fashion bent will continue to appeal to the 25- to 35-year-old demographic, while its original client base will need additional and "more complex" needs as they age and increasingly spend time staring at screens.

"Our focus is not so much changing, but in terms of the group of people that we want to be able to serve, it's going to be more inclusive. The eye care journey needs to have a broader scope," he said.

Customers also want to have more access to their information and manage their own care plan.

Ace & Tate will continue to build out their DTC retail network with its small, neighborhood approach to stores in its core market countries, before expanding further across Europe.

The U.S. "is definitely not off the table," but it is not in the cards for the next two years at least.

Fiscal year 2024 results will not be made public until the second quarter, but van de Vliet said that financials were "in line with the plan" and sales "showed a lot of progress."

The company produces primarily in China, Cambodia and Vietnam, with some models made in Italy. For its Asian production, the company is reexamining the network, and its diversification strategy as economic headwinds shift. "We are starting to really take a deeper look at if we are carrying any unnecessary risks in that supply chain," he said.

The company recertified its B-Corp status and said that while final numbers are not yet available, their scoring improved this time around. "We're progressing in terms of our strategy to make [sustainability] even more part of our DNA," he added. "It is a topic in every meeting."

EYE

What to Do Between Shows

- There's never a dull moment in the French capital during women's ready-to-wear season – or, really, any time.

BY LILY TEMPLETON,
JENNIFER WEIL AND RHONDA RICHFORD

Paris has a lot of novelty on offer this season – from shopping to dining and art exhibitions. Here, a list of places for the fashion pack to hit up during whatever down time they can grab.



C.P. Company

Where to Shop

A word to the Y's – or several – in the case of the concept refresh at the Yohji Yamamoto offshoot. The brand has layered quotes from the Japanese designer in stark white across its windows, fashioning them into a lettered screen and creating a less-exposed shopping experience. The store has also reimaged its soundscape with the electro-jazz mixes of Toshio Matsuura. The updated touches add an enriched sensory background to shop Y's minimalist take on everyday essentials, from sweatpants to cotton twill button downs.

Athens-based accessories brand **Callista** has opened its first flagship outside of Greece. The 13-year-old brand was cofounded by Celia Sigalou and Eleni Konstantinidou to create timeless, detailed pieces crafted by female artisans. Made in its atelier, the bags are known for their distinctive stitching and hand-knotted top handle designs. Tucked away in the Saint-Germain-des-Prés district, the store will offer new styles exclusive to Paris.

After dipping its toes in Cannes and Lyon, stalwart Italian sportswear brand **C.P. Company** has opened its French flagship with a sleek 3,200-square-foot store in the Marais. Designed by Milan-based collective Andrea Caputo Studio, the light-flooded sales floor sits under a massive steel-and-glass pyramid. Shoppers can pick up pieces from the brand's collaboration with Junya Watanabe, its Metropolis citywear line or its military-inspired classic jackets.

Streetwear brand **Stone Island** is maturing with the times, moving into more tailored outerwear and knitwear. So its Paris retail moved, too, from its old digs into a new flagship designed by Rem Koolhaas' OMA/AMO studio. The 650-square-foot, two-floor store features textured walls, aluminum lighting fixtures from Tim Hooijmans of De Studio, and sleek metallic shelving, all as a backdrop for its full range including the Ghost, Marina and Stellina lines. – Rhonda Richford

Stone Island 223 Rue Saint-Honoré,
75001 Tel.: +33 1 42 60 38 04

Y's 25 Rue du Louvre, 75001
Tel.: +33 1 42 21 42 93

Callista 79 Rue des Saints-Pères,
75006 Tel.: +33 1 42 18 00 01

C.P. Company, 21 Rue Sainte-Croix de la
Bretonnerie, 75003 Tel.: +33 1 55 43 97 26



The intimate atmosphere of
Sushi Park Paris in the Saint
Laurent Rive Droite boutique.

Where to Eat

Taking pride of place in the lower level of the Saint Laurent Rive Droite boutique is **Sushi Park Paris**, the first permanent location of chef Peter Park's omakase eatery outside Los Angeles. As actor Dominic Sessa said in the teaser film revealing its opening: "Of course I'm going."

Billed as a Chinese neo-bistrot with Cantonese roots, **Sensation** is the brainchild of Samuel Lee, the Michelin-starred chef formerly at Paris' Shangri-La hotel. In this address playing on his Chinese first name, expect his impeccable takes on classics such as siu mai dumplings and the roast duck, and more daring creations such as a vegetable spring roll with Comté cheese and a sharp wine list.

French chef Eloi Spinnler continues his exploration of the seven deadly sins with **Colère**, his second Paris eatery. Here, the alum of the Plaza Athénée and La Tour d'Argent focuses on French dishes with spicy kicks – and scrumptious cocktails to boot. There's also a 15-seat omakase-only room tucked in the back.

A cornerstone of Rue Royale is back with the opening of **Bistrot Minim's**. Under the Paris Society umbrella, this new chapter offers smartly executed bistro fare and a refined decor weaving Art Nouveau touches with contemporary touches. – Lily Templeton

Sushi Park Paris 8 Rue du 29 Juillet, 75001
Open for dinner Tuesday to Saturday
Tel.: +33 1 40 13 00 32

Sensation 32 Rue Saint-Maur, 75011
Open Tuesday to Friday from 7 to
10 p.m., Saturday from noon to 2 p.m.
and 7 to 10 p.m. Tel.: +33 1 42 31 32 24

Colère, 39 Rue Richer, 75009
Open seven days a week for lunch
and dinner Tel.: +33 6 84 64 98 88

Bistrot Minim's, 7 Rue Royale, 75008
Open Monday to Saturday from noon to 2:30 p.m.
and 7 to 11:30 p.m. Tel.: +33 1 42 65 30 30

Where to Stay

Named after the mythical concert hall next door – David Bowie and Björk performed there – the **Élysée Montmartre Hotel** is a serene haven tucked between bustling Pigalle and the foothills of the stately

Sacré-Coeur basilica. Residents can cut the line for sought-after concerts.

Once a theater closed by order of Napoléon Bonaparte for its loose morals then a convent, the 28-key **Boudoir des Muses** leans into both sides of its unusual history, juxtaposing decadent lush interiors in the lobby and a 12-meter-high atrium with near-monastic rooms with 18th-century architectural features.

If you're spending so much time in Paris that you need a home away from home, Highstay's first "**Maisons**" private residence will hit the spot. Set in an 11,000-square-foot Haussmann-style building near the Champs-Élysées, "Boétie" offers 17 one- and two-bed apartments by architects Thomas Geerlings and Bella-Pia Richard, plus all the convenience of a luxury hotel thanks to its concierge service.

Other options include **L'Appartement** of the Park Hyatt Paris-Vendôme, the five-star hotel's Ed Tuttle-designed two-bedroom private residence, and **L'Appartement du Collectionneur** in Saint-Germain-des-Prés' Grand Hôtel Cayré, appointed with finds curated by Gilbert Kann, a specialist of 20th- and 21st-century design. – L.T.

Élysée Montmartre Hôtel 78 Boulevard
Marguerite de Rochechouart, 75018
Tel.: +33 1 44 92 78 00

Boudoir des Muses 6 Rue de Saintonge,
75003 Tel.: +33 1 87 58 08 08

Highstay Maisons - Boétie 81 Rue La
Boétie, 75008 Tel.: +33 1 76 40 25 25

Park Hyatt Paris - Vendôme 5 Rue de la
Paix, 75001 Tel.: +33 1 58 71 12 34

Grand Hôtel Cayré 4 Boulevard Raspail,
75007 Tel.: +33 1 45 44 38 88



L'Entropiste

Where to Beautify

The **Ritz Club & Spa** and Kure Bazaar have inaugurated a nail bar that is tucked into the hotel's shop on its minus-one floor. To celebrate, they launched a first nail polish, called Ritzzy, for use in a manicure by that same name.

The new fragrance brand **L'Entropiste Paris**, by Bertrand Duchaufour, has just inaugurated its first boutique, in the Marais district, which seconds as an art gallery. The perfumer, whose moniker



The living room of
L'Appartement of the Park
Hyatt Paris-Vendôme.

is the Master of Disorder, has previously dreamed up scents for labels including Amouage, Comme des Garçons and Penhaligon's.

Looking for an indie French beauty product? **La French Beauty** has recently opened in the second district. This boutique stocks 38 brands, including 1919 Bains de Mer, Algologie, Amaé, Ensème, Les Petits Prôdiges, L'Odaités, Mono Skincare and Radish Gang, with new ones invited monthly. – Jennifer Weil

Ritz Club & Spa 17 Place Vendôme, 75001
Tel.: +33 1 43 16 30 60 or ritzparis.com

L'Entropiste 59 Rue des Francs Bourgeois,
75002 Tel.: +33 6 70 87 73 41

La French Beauty 27 Rue Léopold Bellan,
75002 Tel.: +33 9 83 75 70 50



The Jeanne Friot-designed rider's outfit worn during
the 2024 Paris Summer Olympics opening ceremony.

Where to Eye Art

The Palais Galliera is presenting the final part of its "**Fashion on the Move**" exhibition, and in it, for the first time, the rider's armor from the 2024 Paris Olympic Games opening ceremony is on display. On view also are more than 180 new items, with a focus on winter sports, from the museum's collection.

Wax textile prints are under the spotlight at the **Musée de l'Homme**, which takes a historical and sociological look at the fabric that became popular in West Africa and were initially inspired by native Indonesian batik designs.

The Centre Pompidou is hosting a monograph of **Suzanne Valadon**, who helped birth artistic modernity. It includes almost 200 works, with an emphasis on drawing and painting.

France's first exhibit devoted to "degenerate" art, which was how Nazis called modern art, is on exhibit at the **Musée National Picasso-Paris**. It particularly focuses on the propaganda exhibition, "Entartete Kunst," held in Munich in 1937, where more than 600 works were shown by the likes of Otto Dix, Vasily Kandinsky, Emil Nolde and Paul Klee. – J.W.

"Fashion on the Move #3" to Oct. 12
Palais Galliera - Musée de la
Mode de Paris 10 Avenue Pierre 1er
de Serbie, 75116 Tel.: +33 1 56 52 86 00

"Wax," to Sept. 7 Musée de l'Homme 17
Place du Trocadéro, 75016 Tel.: +33 1 44 05 72 72

"Susan Valadon," to May 26
Centre Pompidou, Place Georges-Pompidou,
75004 Paris Tel.: +33 1 44 78 12 33

**"Degenerate Art: Modern Art on Trial
Under the Nazis"** to May 25 Musée National
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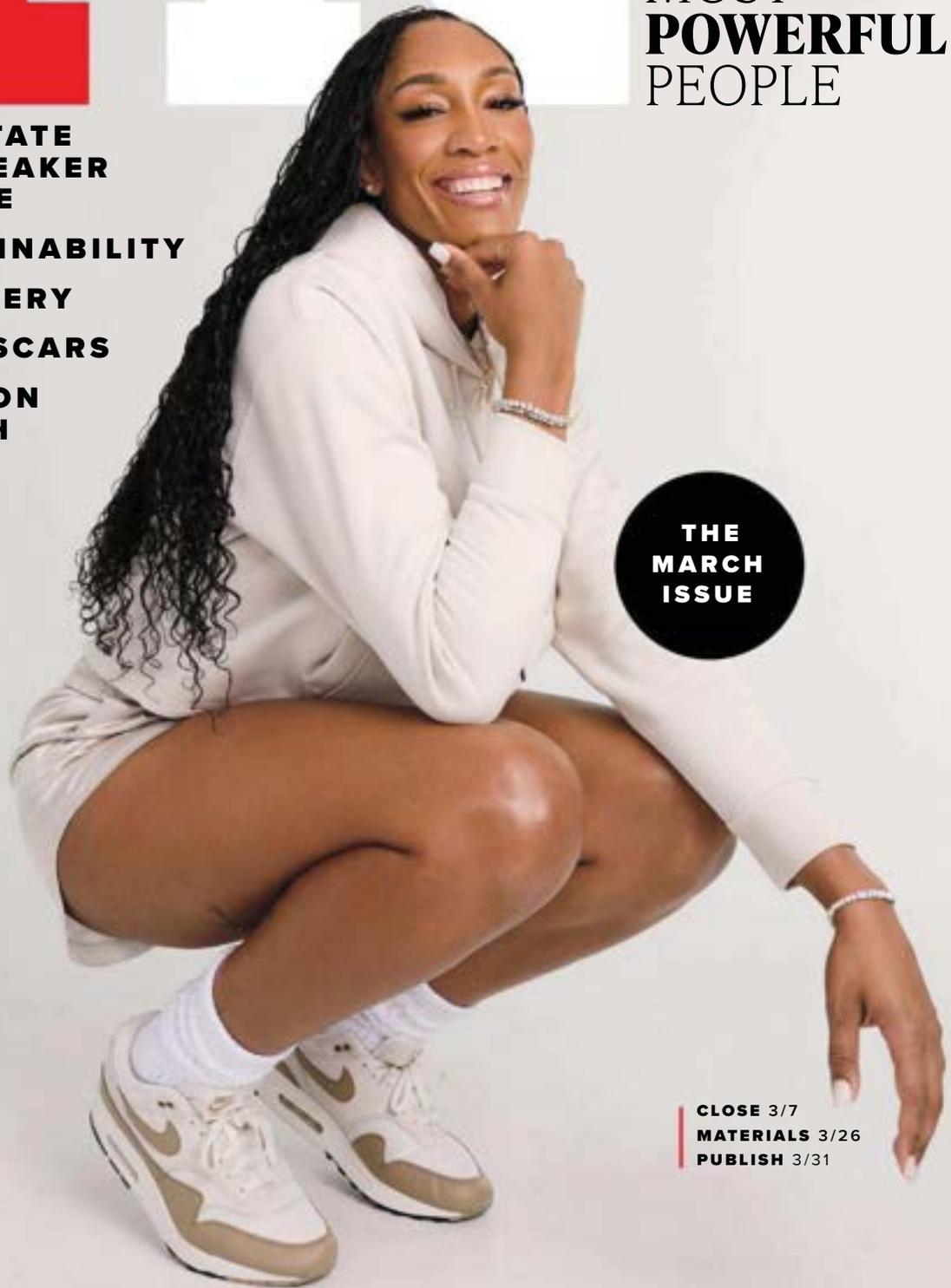
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BUSINESS

Welcome to New York: Printemps Arrives on Wall Street

WWD previews the artfully designed, experiential retail concept, which is gambling on a section of the city not generally perceived as a destination for luxury.

BY DAVID MORIN

It's spacious, visually sumptuous, and filled with a total of 450 big brands, niche labels and brands arriving to New York City for the first time, as well as ample food and beverage options.

But don't call Printemps on Wall Street a department store. Better yet, it's a "hospitality project."

At least that's how executives from the Paris-based retailer prefer to characterize the new Printemps store, located at One Wall Street by Broadway. The official opening is March 21 with some preceding "soft opening" days and advertising.

Don't expect a version of the 480,000-square-foot Printemps flagship on Boulevard Haussmann in Paris. Printemps on Wall Street is an original work, with 55,000 square feet, including 40,000 square feet for selling over two floors, and features distinct from other stores in New York City. Most striking is the landmarked Red Room, a soaring 33-foot tall Art Deco marvel with original 1920s Hildreth Meiere red ombre and gold mosaic-covered walls and ceilings. The Red Room establishes an impressive, grand introduction to the store, and is gracefully merchandised with footwear on exquisite circular onyx tables.

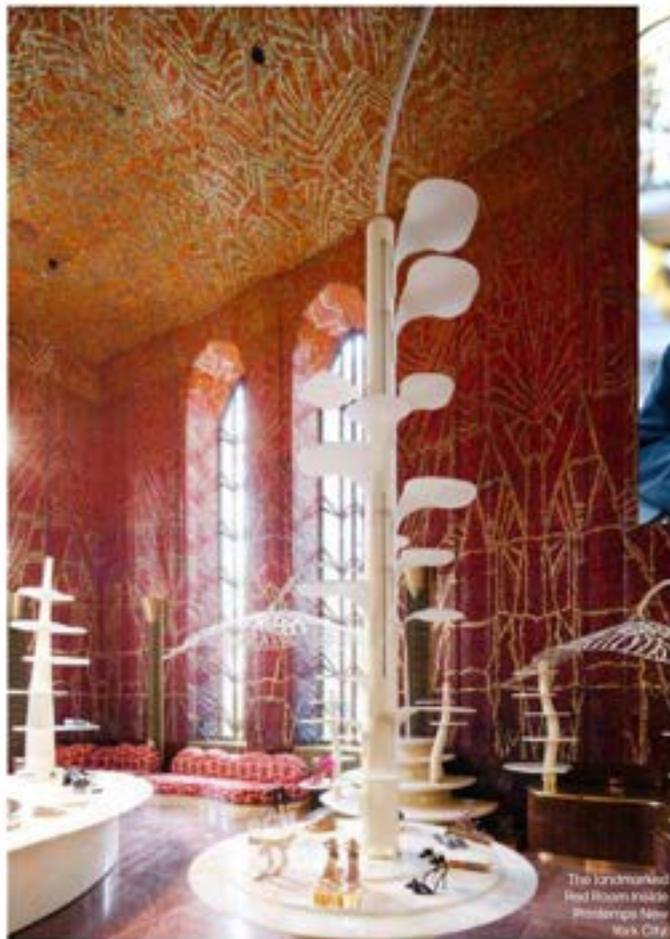
Printemps New York will also be selling men's and women's ready-to-wear, casualwear, outerwear, vintage, active, accessories, beauty, wellness and gifts. Among the brands being carried at the debut are JW Anderson, Jacquemus, Jean Paul Gaultier, Manolo Blahnik, Aquazzura, Balenciaga, Nike, Acne Studios, Simone Rocha, Carven and Jil Sander.

There are also niche labels like Vautrait, Le Monde Bery, Corsi Design, Aeyde, Magda Butrym, Plan C and several brands Printemps is bringing to New York for the first time, including Joseph Duclos, Pinel & Pinel, Pascal Mathias, Capuleme, Maison Ernest and Taller Marmo.

F&B Front and Center

Compared to other retailers, Printemps New York devotes a much higher percentage of its space, about a third, to food and beverage. The culinary director is Gregory Gourdet, a two-time "Top Chef" finalist and three-time James Beard Award winner, who for the store's Maison Pisserelle restaurant, with its open kitchen, interprets "tried-and-true French favorites through a contemporary cultural lens" or a passerelle, which means bridge in French, between Parisian and New York cuisine. Gourdet has created four other F&B concepts for the store, including Café Jaha, an all-day casual café named after Printemps' founders Jules and Augustine Jahan; Salon Vert, a classic Parisian-inspired raw bar; the Red Room Bar, and The Champagne Bar. There is also a French wine shop.

Printemps New York has a section dedicated to preserving and restoring clients' cherished pieces, called Atelier & Repair; circular and vintage pieces are interwoven throughout the assortment.



The landmarked Red Room inside Printemps New York City.

Then there's the Sneaker Room, crowned by a ceiling-spanning LED screen that could project, for example, a marketing campaign, or a blue sky for a meditation session being held. It's temporarily merchandised with Nike.

Also special is what's lacking. The store is completely devoid of leased shops. The selling floors feel open, with flexible areas that can morph and enable the merchants to showcase different designers, artists and events, and change the presentation depending on what's selling or not. A few spaces were crafted for brand takeovers, so for the opening, there's a Jacquemus pop-up.

A Risky Expansion Move

Printemps' management knows well that being situated in the financial district, a neighborhood not perceived as a destination for designer and luxury shopping, requires a distinct and compelling experience and offer. Luxury hasn't exactly blossomed downtown. A Saks Fifth Avenue women's store and separate men's store, as well as Barneys New York, came and left, and 10 Corso Como came and left the South Street Seaport. However, in the past decade there's been a modest buildup of luxury and designer stores with the openings of Tiffany & Co. and Hermès on Wall Street, and Elyse Walker and Thom Browne in

TriBeCa. Also on the west side, Brookfield Place houses Gucci, Bottega Veneta, Louis Vuitton and Zegna.

"We come to the New York market with humility," Jean-Marc Bellaïche, chief executive officer of Printemps, said in an interview. "We know it's a difficult market. It's crowded with stores, including strong department store players we respect a lot. It's a demanding market. At the same time, what we propose is very different from any other store. We're not a department store. This is a destination where shopping meets food meets experiences meets culture and service. It's French sophistication and curation meets American hospitality merged with a highly curated offer."

But is Printemps New York a luxury store, through and through?

"It's definitely a store that brings a lot of surprise," Bellaïche said, responding to the question. "It's a store that will carry some of the most luxurious brands and expensive products, but part of the offering is accessible. We have, for example, a lounge for gifting, coffee table books, candles and some of that will be quite accessible. We also are bringing for the first time in the U.S. our own brand, Saison 1865. It's all made in Italy and other European countries with very good quality at accessible price points. It's men's and women's ready-to-wear, shoes and accessories. It could be quite an interesting



Jean-Marc Bellaïche



The ornamental fresco in the Salon at Printemps New York.

brand for Americans to discover.

"In food, we will have Maison Pisserelle for very high-end fine dining and at the same time, we have Café Jeru, where we serve coffee and croissants for daily commuters or residents." He draws a parallel to Printemps' Paris flagship, where he said, "You can eat a crepe for 15 euros with a view on the Eiffel Tower and we have fine dining for 150 or 200 euros per person."

"The world is so transactional, we wanted Printemps in New York to be decidedly less so," said Laura Lendrum, Printemps America CEO. "It's a place where you come for a cappuccino or a manicure, not necessarily to buy something. The store will have less product and more good product. We don't want this to be a markdown experience. We are buying in a more strategic way, for a higher price sell-through."

Even with that approach, Lendrum said, "We don't expect a lower productivity." ▶



One of three "baroques" for lifestyle merchandising at Printemps New York.



Printemps New York's interior design is inspired by Parisian apartments.



Louise Grosche



The shoe hall room with fake merchandise in Printemps New York.

"We know it's a difficult market. It's crowded with stores...At the same time, what we propose is very different from any other store."

JEAN-MARC BELLAÏCHE, PRINTEMPS

Realistic Expectations

The Printemps executives declined to disclose how much volume the store is expected to generate, or how much it cost to build. They have been working on the project for four years.

"We have a very reasonable business plan," Bellaïche said. "We didn't push it too much, because we know it's a tough market and it might take some time for people to [adapt] new habits."

While Printemps in France has many American clients, Americans in general, Bellaïche acknowledged, have little awareness of what the retailer is all about. "We know we need to build awareness," he admitted. "We have a strong, 360-degree marketing plan with outdoor advertising in key areas, a lot of digital, and we will progressively build a nice [program] for CRM," customer relationship management.

Unlike opening another store in France, where existing IT and logistics would be utilized, for New York, "We had to build everything from scratch, but at the same time, it was not so complex," Bellaïche explained. "In a way, that can be an advantage because when you start from scratch, you go directly to the next generation of systems. Our point-of-sale system is state-of-the-art. The cameras we put in the store are better than the ones

we have in Paris." They monitor shopping traffic patterns and "cold and hot zones" in the store, the CEO noted.

In entering the U.S., as many foreign retailers fail as succeed, Printemps first came to the U.S. in 1984 with a licensed store opened on the outskirts of Denver. Three years later, it closed. Other foreign retailers that entered the U.S. and eventually shut down include Galeries Lafayette, Takashimaya, Topshop, Tesco, Carrefour and Joe Fresh.

Manhattan's financial district quiets down on weekends, which for department stores are often bigger volume days than weekdays, and many office workers still work from home a few days a week, although most financial firms in the neighborhood have returned to full office work. In addition, the residential population and tourism downtown are growing, so Printemps expects locals — including those living in the 500 apartments in the building housing the store — customers, and visitors from out of town to take advantage of its curation and hospitality, even if just for a croissant and a coffee.

Bellaïche said Printemps has good reason to come to New York. "In Paris, U.S. tourists are a priority. We've been focusing on this segment. In fact, we tripled our business with Americans in France from

2019 to 2024. So being present in the U.S. helps create a very positive halo effect in France for American tourists.

"We know that New York is a difficult market, that it doesn't need another department store per se, but we felt there was an opportunity to come with our own DNA — this French curation meets American hospitality is a good concept. And we're all aware that Barneys is missing, Jeffrey's is missing, and we felt we can recapture some of that consumer as well.

"Lastly, we saw the financial district as an opportunity and changing in a very big way. We feel we are opening there at the right time," Bellaïche added, citing the recent openings of Cipriani South Street, the Perelman Performing Arts Center, new residential developments and an influx of fashion, media and tech firms to an area formerly dominated by financial workers.

Printemps isn't expecting to capture much of the uptown crowd, but Bellaïche said, "We think we can attract specific

clients that want to see our beautiful store, experience the amazing service, dine with us, spend a few hours with us, and buy. We are an example of 'retailtainment' where [the setting] is much more than a store. We have in Paris 15 restaurants with 1,000 seats for restaurants and coffee, of which 400 have direct views on the Eiffel Tower, or the opera or Sacre-Coeur in Montmartre. You can enjoy shopping. You can have your lunch. You can go to a conference.

"We have so many things happening on weekends. You can learn to make a flower bouquet, attend a fashion show and end the day with tea time or a beautiful dinner, and maybe visit the personal shopping salon in the meantime. You can spend a bunch of hours at Printemps in Paris. It's much more than a store. It's really experiential. And we want New York to be the same but on a different scale — a more condensed, local experience, a touch of Parisian life married with New York. French savoir faire meets American hospitality." ▶



Two dressing rooms at Printemps New York.

Inventiveness and Innovation

The interior design of Printemps New York was inspired by a French apartment, being divided into ten areas, or rooms, as Printemps officials say, for different concepts and categories. They've named each. For example, there's the 6,800-square-foot "Playroom" for casual clothes, denim, outerwear, activewear, a sneaker shop and a café, providing a sense of discovery, but it's still all luxury. There's also the "Curiosity Corner," a perpetually changing space for gifting and holiday-related merchandise.

The Salon, with its intricate wood flooring and floral-patterned carpets and textiles, houses women's ready-to-wear and accessories. There's La Garçonnère for menswear, distinguished by its pink motif wallpaper, soft pink curtains and pastel frescoes. The "Boudoir," with double-height ceilings, gold-colored metal cladding and cracked lacquer screens from the Parisian atelier Maury, houses evening wear and vintage clothing, and high fine jewelry. The Salle de Bain beauty and spa area contains treatment pods for skin care, hair blowouts, makeup and color.

"Everything started with us wanting to bring joy to this place," said Laura Gonzalez, the French interior designer and architect on the Printemps New York project. "We want Printemps to be playful. To be the unexpected, so we designed room-by-room, each with another story," with its own touch and feel, said Gonzalez, who has also created Cartier and Louis Vuitton interiors, among other projects.

"It's not pretensions. It's luxury in an artful, colorful way, and it's kind of democratic in the sense of being a luxury shop but you can also buy a coffee, a pair of socks or a high jewelry necklace."

Her vision for Printemps New York initially came from a short movie created with AI by a group of students in Barcelona, that she happened to watch. "You see the city of New York invaded by vegetation and flowers. It's beautiful." She showed the movie to Printemps management, telling them, "This is what we want to do. We want to bring flowers, colors, joy to New York. And that was my

first vision. This is what we try to do in every room in a different way," sometime in a minimalist way, sometimes more maximalist.

In addition, Gonzalez and her team were inspired by the heritage of Printemps — the mosaics, the stained glass, the patterns, the original art. "But this is New York," Gonzalez said. "It's a new story. It's a city where everything is possible. I don't think this project could have been designed anywhere else because New York is very special. Here, there are no boundaries."

For the project, Gonzalez modernized classic materials and developed new ones — traditional oak floors inlaid with natural stone, richly patterned textiles, stained glass panels, large frescoes, vintage-looking handmade Art Nouveau tiles for a new take on an old Printemps pattern. Tabletops seemingly in marble are actually compressed recycled plastic from fashion industry excess.

In the landmarked Red Room, the mosaic walls could not be touched. They had to be completely protected, Gonzalez said. "We decided to make an entirely freestanding 'forest of flowers' made from ecological resin, which was developed especially for this project," she said.

Along with ecological resin, Gonzalez used all upcycled materials in creating the store's furniture, something not done before for large-scale retail concepts, and she found unique, antique pieces at French flea markets. Sustainability was important.

She teamed with both French and local artists, utilized traditional 19th-century craftsman's materials as well as upcycled ones. "I always find a local artist to have a bridge. I think it's very important to bring my culture and to be inspired by the local culture," Gonzalez said.

With materials, "I mix a lot of things in ways that people don't expect and wouldn't think would work, and it works because I find the good balance. I'm like a scientist of interiors. I always mix different eras, like wood architecture from the 19th century mixed with very Art Deco-style marble detail with a very organic plaster

shape. But it's a lot of work because I redo a lot. If it's too much. If it's not enough. So it's always [much] design work."

"Laura brought many nodes and details from Printemps Haussmann to New York," Bellaiche said. "In some rooms, we asked her to go for her natural style, which is maximalist Art Deco, Art Nouveau. For other rooms, we asked her to go a little bit beyond her natural style, and she did it with perfection. At the end of the day, you have a very consistent store, but with rooms that tell different stories."

"The most challenging thing — it's not a department store. No shops-in-shop. No brand DNA to maintain," Bellaiche said. "Printemps in Paris has a big vision and an amazing architecture but the interior is more like a department store everybody knows. This one is a concept store. We created a whole journey for the client and adapted the architecture between the landmarked part of the building and the modern part," Bellaiche said, noting that Printemps New York is divided into two sections — to the north an Art Deco former Irving Trust bank with the Red Room, and to the south, a '60s glass and metal extension. They're linked by an alluring plastered, cylindrical, caterpillar-like corridor, merchandised with beauty products.

Teamwork

Collaborating with Gonzalez to craft works of art for the store were Paris-based Studio Pierre Marie, which reimaged Printemps Paris' classic stained-glass features with a contemporary twist; Brooklyn-based sculptor William Coggin, who contributed a striking bar counter, drawing inspiration from the organic forms and sea coral textures, and French artist Charles Kaisin, who designed an installation for The Salon.

When creating the Maison Passerelle restaurant, Gonzalez worked with chef Gourdet, who culled photographs of sunsets from former French colonies and incorporated their culinary legacies into the menu. Using AI, they merged the photos into a singular image that Gonzalez redesigned and transformed into a fresco

"It's always important to build on tomorrow's traffic and not today's traffic."

JEAN-MARC BELLAICHE, PRINTEMPS

executed by Atelier Roma on the dining room's wall.

Overall, Printemps New York is a multifaceted, visual eye-feel, where the architecture and decor might overwhelm the merchandise for some. But then again, this isn't a department store.

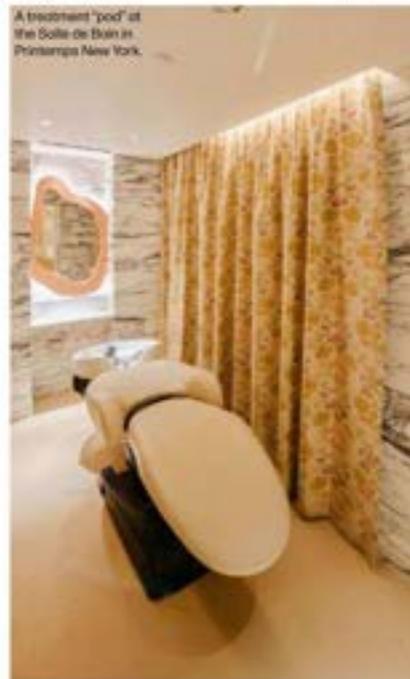
The Printemps Group, founded 160 years ago by Jules Jaluzot, operates 20 department stores and nine Citadium stores in France, as well as Place des Tendances, a fashion and beauty e-commerce site, and Made in Design, an online store for designer furniture, lighting and decoration. There is also a Printemps store in Qatar. The company is owned by a Luxembourg-based Qatari-backed investment fund Divine Investments SA.

Asked if Printemps could open another store in the U.S., Bellaiche replied that if the New York one makes its plan, "we might consider opening a few others, either in the U.S. or elsewhere in the world."

He said that after two seasons, he would have a good sense of whether Printemps New York is a success. He said he sees lots of opportunity to grab space in the U.S., citing Miami and Los Angeles as examples. "Some retailers are struggling, and there's some open space. If we decide to open more stores, we will have great opportunities."

One space that's been available for years is the former Barneys flagship on Madison Avenue. "We did not look at Barneys," Bellaiche said. Nor were other spaces around town considered, he added. It was always to be lower Manhattan. "We felt the financial district was changing super fast," Bellaiche said. "It's always important to build on tomorrow's traffic and not today's traffic. Then the space was available and when we visited, we saw the Hildreth Meiere Red Room [closed at the time] and we said, 'wow, we've got to do something with it. We have to give it back to New York.'"

Photographs by George Chenese



A treatment "pod" at the Salle de Bain at Printemps New York.

BEAUTY INC THE BEAUTY CEO SUMMIT ISSUE

The WWD Beauty CEO Summit unites top retailers, marketers, and creative leaders to explore **The New Leadership Mandate: The Innovators, The Issues, The Insights** this May. Spotighting the visionaries reshaping beauty and the key challenges and opportunities ahead, the Summit will set the agenda for the industry's future. As a companion to the event, Beauty Inc will produce a special WWD Beauty CEO Summit issue, offering exclusive insights into the discussions and innovations shaping what's next—giving brands a powerful platform to align with industry leaders and showcase their influence in the evolving beauty landscape.

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CLOSE **04.18** MATERIALS **04.25** PUBLISH **05.09**



Statement beauty looks, as seen on Doechi, Cynthia Erivo, Chappell Roan and at the fall 2023 L'Oréal and Thom Browne New York Fashion Week presentations, are surging.

Makeup's Mega Moment

Ultra-expressive beauty is having a cultural moment. While the air feels reminiscent of many antiestablishment bygone beauty eras, one thing is clear: this time, the movement looks different on everyone. **BY MOORLOBAD**

In a seven-second TikTok video uploaded by Doechi last November, the Grammy Award-winning rapper succinctly clears the air.

"OK, so the face tapes are there on purpose — because it's c—nt," she said, referencing her signature on-stage beauty look, which entails two pieces of cosmetic tape placed next to her eyes for a lifting effect, courtesy of makeup artist Dee Carrion.

Rather than being camouflaged by her hair or makeup, Doechi's viral face tapes are meant to be seen — at the Grammys, they're adorned with rhinestones, even.

It's a level of aesthetic transparency aligned with that which the 26-year-old rapper has long exhibited in her flow, particularly on her recent breakthrough album, "Alligator Bites Never Heal," which nabbed the *Album of the Year* Award at the 2025 Grammy Awards.

More broadly, it aligns with the kind of experimental, referenced approach to beauty that is increasingly manifesting across culture today — from pop star Chappell Roan's avant-garde and drag-inspired looks to Charli XCX's purposely imperfect club girl makeup to the surge in statement beauty seen at New York Fashion Week (think Pat McGrath's hyperreal, fabric-cutout blush at Marc Jacobs; Fara Homid's concealer lips at Sandy Liang; Isamaya Ffrench's feather eyelashes at Thom Browne and so on).

"It's almost like makeup has decided to become completely eclectic again," said MAC global creative director of makeup artistry Terry Barber. "There's as much of a fascination right now with imperfection as there is with perfection — it's this idea of beauty not being an illusion, but it being something real, something raw."

This trend toward statement and nonconformist beauty signifies a shift on multiple levels.

For one, there's a reactionary element to it.

"There's always some form of pushback when it comes to beauty, whether it's 'OK — we're going to do clean girl makeup because the contoured, 2016 makeup look was too heavy,' or, 'now we're going to do over-the-top, statement beauty, because we're so bored of the clean girl.' Social media tends to fuel those pendulum swings further now, too," said beauty

artist and historian Erin Parsons, who has amassed a TikTok following of 2.7 million for her videos chronicling beauty trends throughout the decades.

Added British makeup artist and beauty founder Isamaya Ffrench: "It's this idea of transparency that we're leaning toward — there's been so much in the last five years of just, the fakery of Instagram, and people just don't buy it anymore — they're desperate for realism."

Indeed, a widespread movement away from the one-look-fits-all beauty trends of recent years isn't the only thing fueling today's rise in statement beauty. Like many decade-defining eras before it — for instance, the '60s Black is Beautiful movement or the '70s rise of punk — there is an anti-establishment aspect to the boom in self-expression.

"When you talk about Chappell Roan today, I flash back to early Elton John, who also pushed back against norms, or David Bowie; Patti LaBelle & the Bluebelles, who were very futuristic when it came to their makeup," said makeup artist D'angelo Thompson, whose clients have included Aretha Franklin, Ashanti, Heidi Klum and more. "You can see how it's political: it's a way of saying — excuse my French — 'F—ck you' to the establishment, 'I'm going to look how I want, I'm going to perform how I want and I'm still going to be a winner.'"

As Roan, who won the award for Best New Artist at the 2025 Grammys and often pays homage to drag artists like Sasha Colby and Divine in her looks, put it in Sephora and Hulu's "Faces of Music" docuseries: "Being a woman in pop does not mean it has to be slick and clean — I decided I'm going to build myself off of being a messy, campy, raunchy, thrift-store pop star... It's going to be undeniable that I'm gay, and there's nothing wrong with that."

Roan, whose recent looks have been crafted by makeup artists Andrew Dahling, Nick Leterson and "Euphoria" makeup artist Doonri Davy, also cites musicians like Lady Gaga, Nicki Minaj and Kesha as inspirations for her subversive approach to beauty.

"Statement beauty is a way to get, and maybe to keep, people's attention, because they're interested to see what you're going to do next — that's something Gaga really excelled at when she emerged," said Parsons.

But statement beauty doesn't only

come in the form of a full face of makeup. Actress and longtime beauty icon Pamela Anderson's stark 2023 pivot toward a natural, barefaced look is also one that sends a message. "I feel powerful right now when everything is very pared down; I like to see my freckles, I like when my hair isn't done," the actress previously told WWD.

"Maybe people wouldn't care as much if it was anybody else, but because [Anderson] wore so much makeup, because she was the reason we all tweezed our eyebrows out in the '90s — that's what makes it a statement," said Parsons.

To that end, statement beauty today isn't about a singular prevailing trend or look — rather it's, as Barber put it, "a melting pot of influences — everybody wants their own signature, their own stamp on beauty."

"There's a generation now which is trying to bring youth back — because it felt like youth disappeared for a while," he continued, pointing to the seeming post-COVID-19 return of club culture last summer, a period widely referred to as "brat summer" in honor of Charli XCX's chart-topping, messy-girl, club-anthem-filled "brat" album which dropped in June.

"There's a generation which are interested in youth and also being hedonistic — only thinking in the moment and not caring how others perceive them, not looking how they're meant to look; there's a smugness and a bit of a worn-in feel that comes into the beauty conversation now. It feels like how we were as a

Sabrina Carpenter, Beyoncé, Lady Gaga, Charli XCX and Rihanna.



generation of kids in the '80s," Barber said. As makeup artist and founder Pat McGrath put it: "We're witnessing a renaissance of unbridled creativity — of makeup as identity, as performance, as storytelling. And we need it. After years of minimalism, there's a hunger for spectacle, for transformation; for beauty that demands to be seen. This movement is about joy, and about embracing artistry in real life."

This ethos is translating on a product level, too. For one, McGrath recently released a limited-edition, \$38 peel-off mask meant to allow consumers to recreate the viral, porcelain doll-like makeup look she created for the Maison Margiela Couture spring 2024 runway show — in just one step.

At Mecca, which is Australia's largest beauty retailer, a similar effect is taking hold.

"The democratization of artistry is becoming more of a driver of interest within the makeup category," said Marita Burke, chief Mecca-magnations officer, adding that artist-led brands such as Westman Atelier, Davy's Half Magic and Violette FR are seeing particular success. "Expertise as a differentiating factor is becoming more and more important; brands that have artistry as their form of genius are really being embraced by our makeup artists and customers."

The retailer, which operates more than 100 stores across Australia and New Zealand, has seen a surge in demand for its signature masterclasses hosted by founders and artists such as Gucci Westman and Rae Morris. "Customers want more education — they want more access to be able to drive their own personal mastery," continued Burke, adding, "there isn't one particular look defining the industry right now; it's the vibe behind the look, the moment behind the look. It's, 'what am I channeling today, and how will I use beauty to get there?'"

Another brand making artistry accessible is Haus Labs by Lady Gaga, which sells at Sephora and is known for offering clean yet high-payoff products, such as its viral cream and powder blushes which come in red, pink and lavender shades.

"You often don't see beauty brands that are clean yet full of pigment — something that has the kind of staying power for Gaga to be able to wear it on stage," said Sarah Tanno, Haus Labs global artistry director and personal makeup artist to Lady Gaga of more than a decade.

"Makeup should be playful; it shouldn't be something that you overthink or that needs to be 'right,'" she added of why statement beauty is resonating today. "When things get a little tough in the world, that kind of artistry and expression and pushing yourself out of your comfort zone can feel celebratory — it's self care."

Fenty Beauty, Medicube Among Top Skin Care Brands on TikTok Shop

A breakdown of the top 10 skin care brands by TikTok Shop sales in January, per Charm.io.

BY NOOR LOBAD

The TikTok “ban” that never quite was hasn’t slowed sales on the platform’s commerce arm.

In fact, data from Charm.io shows sales on TikTok Shop increased – both in general merchandise and in beauty specifically – on Jan. 19, the day the proposed ban was meant to take effect. While the app did go dark the evening of Jan. 18, access was restored a little more than 12 hours later – and users wasted little time getting back to perusing the virtual aisles.

For the month of January as a whole, the skin care brands that dominated on the platform were a varied bunch. Among them: K-beauty favorites like Medicube and Anua; The Ordinary; Rihanna’s Fenty Beauty, which is a more recent riser, and notably, Terra Lotus, known for its beef tallow balm.

Medicube was the number-one brand for the month, logging \$2.7 million in revenue.

While the brand first became popular in the U.S. in 2023 for its \$240, celebrity-loved LED and microcurrent facial wand, its skin care products have recently risen to the fore as a more accessible entry point. Today, Medicube’s “glass skin” bundle, which includes a foam cleanser, pore pads, an “exosome shot” serum and more, is the brand’s most popular offering via TikTok.

Single-dose hyaluronic acid serums by WNP Skincare – a brand which emerged both on Amazon and TikTok Shop in December 2024 – have also been booming, costing just under \$30 for a 30-day supply. Meanwhile, in tandem with the late-2024 beef tallow trend, Terra Lotus’ Tallow Honey Balm, \$20, has taken the number-five position.

Interest in the offering, as well as beef-fat-powered skin care in general, has surged as natural skin care enthusiasts have championed its purported moisturizing and acne-reducing benefits online.

On the prestige beauty front, Rihanna’s Fenty Beauty has been having a moment on the platform, with its \$37 Perfect Puck’r Hydrating Lip Care Duo emerging as the brand’s top seller for January. This follows the longtime success of fellow LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton-owned Benefit Cosmetics on TikTok Shop.

The top 10 beauty brands by influencer MIV during the first half of 2024, per Launchmetrics.		
1		<p>Medicube \$2.7 million</p> <p>Items sold: 86,140 Top product: Affordable Glass Glow Skincare Set</p>
2		<p>WNP Skincare \$1.6 million</p> <p>Items sold: 44,476 Top product: 3% Hyaluronic Acid Serum</p>
3		<p>Anua Store U.S. \$1.5 million</p> <p>Items sold: 37,069 Top product: Ultimate Skincare Routine Set</p>
4		<p>FrenchPharmacy \$776,271</p> <p>Items sold: 26,232 Top product: A313 Vitamin A Pomme</p>
5		<p>Terra Lotus \$722,084</p> <p>Items sold: 42,179 Top product: Organic Grass-Fed Beef Tallow Balm</p>
6		<p>The Ordinary \$714,709</p> <p>Items sold: 56,274 Top product: The Acne Set</p>
7		<p>VGO Beauty \$672,683</p> <p>Items sold: 18,024 Top product: VGO Skincare 5-step Routine Skincare Set</p>
8		<p>Fenty Beauty \$647,453</p> <p>Items sold: 17,624 Top product: Perfect Puck’r Hydrating Lip Care Duo</p>
9		<p>Cocomint Beauty \$605,855</p> <p>Items sold: 31,873 Top product: Sungboon Editor Deep Collagen Power Boosting Mask</p>
10		<p>Drmtlgy \$528,806</p> <p>Items sold: 19,415 Top product: Luminous Eye Corrector SPF 41</p>



Amika products.

Bansk Beauty Refreshes Branding

The parent company of Amika, Eva NYC and Ethique is rebranding as the vision for the platform manifests.

BY JAMES MANSO

As Bansk Group’s vision for its beauty portfolio comes into focus, the brands are now grouped under a newly named umbrella.

The division is now called Bansk Beauty, which differentiates it from Bansk’s pet, home care and food and beverage businesses. The idea is to “have an identity that was a bit more focused around beauty,” said group chief executive officer Reuben Carranza. “We’re a part of Bansk, but this allows us to be very specific in how we talk to and speak about what it means to be a portfolio brand, founder and leader.”

Carranza said the business is strong across its three brands, which he’s aiming to broaden in scope to all other beauty categories. “We don’t bring brands into the portfolio unless we know they have a performance trajectory,” he said. “We’re not starting with brands that are doing \$5 million. These are brands that are already scalable in size, they’re doing above \$50 million in revenue, and they’ve got a track record of delivering.”

For Bansk Beauty, Carranza thinks of business strategy and leadership style as inextricably linked. “Building culture is important, culture is driven by leadership,” he said. “Our focus is on great brands, great people on the brands, and it’s not just an execution of an investment thesis.”

That thinking is present at Bansk from the top on down. “It’s really led by brand builders,” Carranza said, nodding to chairman Bart Becht’s history at Reckitt Benckiser Group and Coty majority owner JAB. “There are some fundamental things that are important to us – talent development, top talent identification, cross-pollination of talent. We look at opportunities to collaborate and to leverage scale. We connect those dots, but all with the same playbook in mind.”

Is Ren Clean Skincare's Demise Imminent?

A memo to partners acquired by WWD from an industry source says the brand is undergoing a strategic review. **BY JENNIFER WEIL**

PARIS — The fate of Ren Clean Skincare has hung in the balance for a while, but a memo recently sent to the brand's partners seen by WWD gives a hint at what's next to come.

A memo dated late February from parent company Unilever addresses partners and outlines what is called "an important development" for the brand.

"As part of our efforts to navigate current challenges, we have entered a collective consultation process with our employees and their representatives," the memo reads. "This involves reviewing our operations to determine the best path forward for the business."

The memo emphasizes that "no final decisions have been made," but that Unilever is "committed to transparency and wanted to inform you at the earliest opportunity."

The language is vague but leaves open the possibility of the brand potentially being shuttered.

When asked to comment on the memo, a Unilever spokesperson said: "We have shared with our employees that we are undertaking a strategic review of the future of the Ren Clean Skincare brand. As part of this, we have set out some proposed plans which are now subject to consultation. No final decisions have been made and we recognize that this is an unsettling time for employees, and we will do what we can to support them during the consultation process."

In its memo to partners, Unilever wrote that it remains committed to trying to

supply Ren products and to meeting its commitments, while aiming to sustain uninterrupted service.

"We will keep you updated on any developments that may affect our partnership," Unilever wrote.

Unilever — and the beauty industry — are undergoing sea changes, which are likely contributors to Ren's fate.

In late February, in a surprise announcement that sent shockwaves through the industry, Unilever said its chief executive officer Hein Schumacher was exiting the company after less than two years in the job.

The phrase, "We committed to doing fewer things, better and with greater impact," became Schumacher's mantra during his short tenure. On his watch, Unilever decided to separate the ice cream business, which will be separated by way of a demerger expected by the end of this year.

Fernando Fernandez, Unilever's chief financial officer and executive director, replaced Schumacher. Prior to becoming CFO in January 2024, Fernandez had a successful tenure as president of beauty and well-being, among Unilever's fastest-growing businesses.

At the time of the CEO announcement, Fernandez said in a statement that Unilever will now concentrate "on building a future-fit portfolio with an attractive growth footprint and delivering unmatched functional and perceivable superiority across our top 30 power brands."

Such brands generally generate upward of 1 billion euros annually. The prestige



Ren Clean Skincare

division has two brands knocking on the door of that status: Dermalogica and Paula's Choice. Five brands exceed \$100 million in sales — Murad, Living Proof, Tatcha, Hourglass and K-18, while Ren, Kate Somerville and Garancia, are thought to make less than \$50 million annually.

It had been said that Unilever was shopping around some of its prestige brands, including Ren and Kate Somerville, as part of the consumer giant's wider efforts to streamline operations, boost profits and deliver more value to shareholders.

In mid-June 2024 it was announced Vasiliki Petrou, who assembled the then 1.4 billion-euro prestige division through an M&A-based strategy over a decade, was leaving the company. She was succeeded by Mary Carmen Gasco-Buisson.

Unilever acquired Ren Skincare in May 2015. The British brand had been created 15 years earlier by Antony Buck and Robert Calcraft. It positioned itself in the naturals category, which had by the time of its acquisition become among the

fastest-growing skin care segments globally.

The brand's premium positioning complemented Unilever's burgeoning prestige beauty portfolio, and the multinational planned to build on Ren's global potential.

By the time of its purchase by Unilever, Ren had built a committed consumer base around the motto of "performance; purity; pleasure."

The range of high-performance skin care was at the time predominantly in specialty stores and pharmacies, then branched out to perfumeries and department stores, as well.

The natural and clean beauty space has become ever more competitive, with many brands trying to find their footing in the crowded space today.

Most recently, Ren — which had added "Clean" as part of its moniker — was doubling down on its Clean to Planet positioning. The company had met its zero-waste promise by the end of 2021, with its packaging fully recycled, recyclable or reusable.

Lisa Price



L'Oréal USA Sells Carol's Daughter

Founder Lisa Price is named president and takes an equity stake as part of the deal. **BY KATHRYN HOPKINS**

After a decade under its ownership, L'Oréal USA has sold Carol's Daughter to an unnamed independent beauty entrepreneur.

The brand's founder Lisa Price will take on the role as president and has an equity stake in the deal. Other terms of the deal were not disclosed.

"We are proud of Carol's Daughter's long legacy and the transformative impact it has had on the beauty industry," said David Greenberg, chief executive officer at L'Oréal USA. "At the heart of this legacy is Lisa Price, an entrepreneur who has always been ahead of her time and has built Carol's Daughter into a beloved brand that has honored and celebrated women of color for decades. We are confident that, with Lisa Price as president and the support of its new partner, Carol's Daughter will continue to thrive for years to come."

Price founded the textured hair brand in her Brooklyn kitchen in 1993 and L'Oréal USA acquired it in 2014 for an undisclosed sum. Under L'Oréal USA's ownership, Price noted that the brand had significantly increased distribution from around 3,000 doors in 2014, reached a wider audience and expanded into Canada.

In an exclusive interview with WWD,

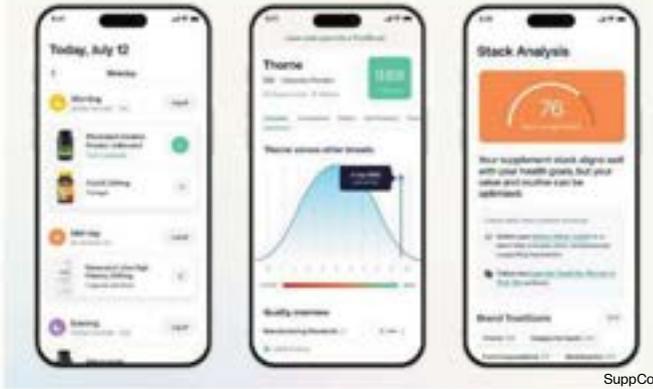
Price said: "I have all the feelings at the same time, because there's definitely excitement about being independent again, but L'Oréal has been so great. There's sadness that these people that have become like family in the past 10 years, some of them I won't be seeing on a regular basis. I feel like someone who has always done a thing, and then got to go to school and really, really learn the thing, and now I get to do it again on my own with all of this education and knowledge. So it's pretty fantastic."

Price did not know if the whole team would follow her: "People will be given the option because some people come to work at a company like L'Oréal because they want to work at a big beauty company. They want to have a career that spans from hair to makeup to skin care, and they may not want to come and work for an independent brand," she said, "but those who want to come are more than welcome."

For now, Price is planning to continue innovating, while being more nimble. "Sometimes it's hard to react quickly to things in a really big company. I have so much more information now, so much more knowledge."

SuppCo App Tracks Supplement Brands' Cleanliness, Efficacy and More

Entrepreneur Steve Martocci launched the app in October 2024, which allows users to track their supplement routine and discover the trustworthiness of brands. BY EMILY BURNS



SuppCo

Sorting through hundreds of thousands of supplements is a seemingly impossible task but one that the app SuppCo is looking to solve.

Launched by Steve Martocci, the app allows users to track their supplement routines, discover the efficacy of their stack based on specific goals they input — each user is scored out of 100 on how effective their stack is — and explore the trustworthiness of certain brands. According to Nielsen IQ, total vitamins, minerals and supplements omnichannel sales in the United States exceeded \$35

billion in a recent one year period, having grown 18 percent since the previous year.

Currently, the app tracks 8,000 brands and nearly 200,000 products. It provides a trust score out of 10, based on manufacturing standards, certifications and ingredient quality for several hundred brands with many more on the way. Currently, the app attracts approximately 1,000 new users each day.

"It's a platform to help people make sense of supplements," said Martocci.

Currently, the app is free and monetizes via affiliate revenue, though Martocci plans

to launch a premium version with added features for an additional cost.

Prior to starting SuppCo, Martocci, a serial entrepreneur, started companies like GroupMe, Blade and Splice. However, he'd always struggled with his health and weight. After selling GroupMe, he began seeing a functional medicine doctor, who put him on a regimen of supplements and prescriptions, which helped him regain his health and ultimately sparked the idea for SuppCo. After reaching his health goals, people began asking Martocci what he did and he started sharing a document of everything he was doing and taking.

"It would inspire [people] that there's stuff out there. Over the last decade, you continue to watch how much sharing of supplement routines has become zeitgeist," he said. "I wanted to build the ability to share and optimize your supplement stack."

While SuppCo was built on this idea of sharing routines, Martocci's ultimate goal is to cut down on the noise in the space and streamline supplements for consumers.

"You can be taking the wrong thing. Some influencers are telling you one thing, and it's totally contradictory to what the other influencers are saying. Your doctor's like, 'Don't take anything,' and you're just like, 'How do I make sense of this?'" he said. "We're on this mission to help people figure out what to take, which products to buy and clean up a space that has so many trust issues."

To provide additional education, the platform can make suggestions on what a user might be missing from their routine based on their goals, which span heart health, longevity and immunity. In addition, users can find stacks built for specific cohorts or concerns, such as Essential Women's Hormone Support or Essential Energy Support.

While there's thousands of brands and products to explore, there are highlights that have been topping the charts. According to the team, the most stacked products on the app currently are Seed DS-01 Daily Synbiotic, \$50; Thorne Creatine, \$43; Pure Encapsulations Magnesium, \$12; AG1 The Pouch, \$79, and Armra Colostrum, \$110. According to Martocci, brands have been eager to share information with the team and work toward upping their scores on the platform.

As similar platforms have gained traction in the beauty and food space, such as EWG's Skin Deep and Yuka, some users have expressed feelings of anxiety after learning their products might have toxic ingredients or aren't as trustworthy as others. To this, Martocci tells people not to freak out.

"The good news is just being aware of any of this stuff is a step in the right direction," he said. "That anxiety might come... [but] the answer's on the platform."

Next up for SuppCo: Refining the trustworthiness scores, adding scoring for more brands and an ability for users to explore different supplement stacks from experts and potentially influencers and celebrities.

According to Martocci, the biggest challenge was developing a way to score the brands and products on their trustworthiness, a feature that will become more specific over time.

L'Oréal, Retailers Team Up to Promote Sun

A new campaign that will roll out in stores and across social media will up the ante on skin care education. BY FAYE BROOKMAN

CVS and Walgreens — longtime rivals on street corners across America — are putting competition aside to promote sun care safety, joining forces with other major retailers for a common cause.

The nation's biggest drugstore chains are joining Ulta Beauty, Meijer, Hy-Vee, several dermatologists and The Skin Cancer Foundation to support an unbranded campaign called Sun Responsibly.

The concept emerged from L'Oréal's Dermatology and Retail Alliance event when retailers called for a unified approach to amplify the need for greater sun safety. Damien Favre, the newly minted president of L'Oréal Dermatological Beauty, L'Oréal USA, emphasized how the campaign aligns with the division's mission to pioneer sustainable and life-changing dermatological solutions for all. "But this campaign goes beyond innovative product development," he said. "LDB is championing collaboration between dermatologists and retailers to ensure expert skin health guidance to address this public health concern and contribute to skin cancer prevention."

Gina Daley, assistant vice president integrated health at L'Oréal Dermatological Beauty, added, "The U.S. health care system spends \$8.9 billion per year treating skin cancer. Recognizing the limited accessibility to dermatologists and their expertise, we need supplemental channels to promote the importance of daily sun protection." The creative will be previewed Friday at the American Academy of Dermatology Annual Meeting in Orlando, Fla.

The campaign spans social media and retail stores, and is receiving support from The Skin Cancer Foundation. "By leveraging media, social platforms and a strong presence in doctors' offices, we aim to maximize the reach of the Sun Responsibly message," Daley said. The goal is to inspire brands beyond CeraVe and LaRoche-Posay to join the movement, as well.

Penny Coy, Ulta Beauty's senior vice president, merchandising, skin care, body care, hair care and wellness was an early adopter. "When we first learned about the Sun Responsibly campaign from our partners at L'Oréal, we knew it was going to become a powerful and unifying initiative to spread research-backed information on sun protection," she said.

Carolina Howski, senior director, divisional merchandise manager, beauty at Walgreens added, "All retailers and dermatologists agree on this opportunity to educate people on the benefits of protecting their skin from the sun."

Michelle LeBlanc, vice president of merchandising for beauty, personal care and Hispanic Center of Excellence at CVS Health, said the campaign dovetails with its efforts such as removing products with an SPF below 15 and eliminating parabens, phthalates and the most prevalent formaldehyde-releasing preservatives from CVS Store Brand product lines. "It's a powerful yet simple message: Sun Responsibly. Just two words that help encourage everyday sun protection and foster lifelong sun safety habits," she said.

Rather than scare tactics, the initiative presents the positives of safely enjoying

the sun. "The Sun Responsibly campaign emphasizes it is possible to enjoy a sunny day while still taking care of your skin," said dermatologist Clifford Perlis.

According to The Skin Cancer Foundation, one in five Americans will develop skin cancer by the age of 70; more than two people die of skin cancer in the U.S. every hour, according to Deborah S. Sarnoff, MD, and president of the foundation.

"In a world where misinformation around health topics is common, this united effort allows us to combat potential confusion on a wider scale and show up as one voice to make a clear, meaningful impact on consumers," LeBlanc said.

The falsehoods spread on social include everything from using SPF as a contouring technique to suggestions sun protection causes rather than prevents cancer.

"The craziest misconception is thinking you don't need to wear sunscreen every single day. But you do — even on cloudy days, UV rays can reach your skin and cause damage," said Walgreens' group vice president, general merchandise manager, health and beauty Heather Hughes.

Sun care is a strong performer across trade channels, but there is money left on the table. According to Circana, mass market sun care sales hit \$2.5 billion in 2024, up 3 percent; prestige sales jumped 11 percent to \$539.3 million. Retailers said that education surrounding consistent and year-round usage can propel sales.

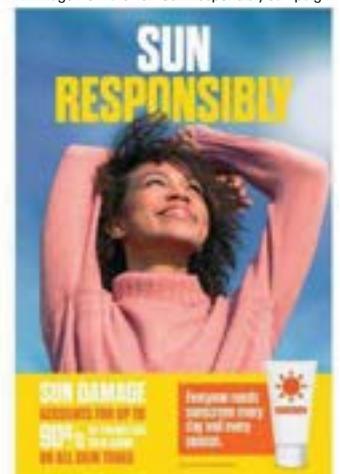
Retailers have plans to amplify the campaign. "From May to July, customers can expect to see the 'Sun Responsibly' campaign come to life in Walgreens stores

and digital channels. Signage will be displayed in beauty aisles and in all stores with beauty and wellness consultants, helping to reinforce the importance of sun protection," Howski said.

Ulta will highlight key researched-backed insights and efficacious SPF solutions from La Roche-Posay, to reinforce the importance of daily sun protection. "We'll also integrate some key messages from the campaign into our sun care display throughout the summer months, which will house our top SPF products across multiple brands, in addition to digital amplification across our owned channels," Coy said.

"Our hope is that sun responsibility becomes a movement, not just a seasonal campaign," she said.

An image from the new Sun Responsibly campaign.



Celebrating Beauty Inc's List Of the Top 100 Hair Products

The party celebrated the 100 greatest hair products of all time, as voted on by industry insiders and executives.

BY JAMES MANGO PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALLIE JOSEPH

One might call it a good hair day when the category's leading executives all get under one roof together.

On Feb. 25, the Estée Lauder Cos.' Jane Hertzmark Hudis, Fekkai's Tennifer Koplas, MAV Brands' Serge Juridini, Olaplex's Katie Gohman and more gathered at the Times Square Edition Hotel to celebrate WWD Beauty Inc's list of the greatest hair products of all time.

"There's nothing like a great hair day to make you feel like anything is possible," said Penny Coy of Uta Beauty, which sponsored the event, when toasting

attendees. "It's innovators like you that are shaping this exciting category and helping empower us to deliver a best-in-class assortment that fuels discovery and help our guests reach their beauty goals."

To that end, the products voted onto the list by hundreds of industry savants spanned categories, geographies and brand types, from a hairbrush developed in 1885 to a treatment mask that only launched last year.

Here, a look inside the cocktail party celebrating the 2025 greatest hair care products of all time.



Jen Chamberlain, Jeni Thomas and Sarah Passanucci



Erin Endree



Penny Coy



Serge Juridini



David Hutchison, Shane Wolf, Jane Hertzmark Hudis, Susie Aminson and Corry Reese



Alexandra Fernandez and Celina Deluca



Michelle Chandler and Ruby Fyle



Jill Eisenstadt-Choyet

Ariana Grande



Margaret Qualley



Miley Cyrus

The Best Beauty Looks At the 2025 Oscars

Attendees opted for glowy yet neutral makeup with glamorous hair looks.

BY EMILY BURNS AND JAMES MANGO

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LEXIE MORELAND AND JC OLIVERA

At this year's Oscars, the stars ditched some of the bolder looks sported at other awards shows throughout the season and opted for minimalist glam.

When it came to hair, the styles, as plentiful as the talent on the red carpet, ranged from Miley Cyrus' loose waves to the close crop on Emma Stone. Demi Moore showcased her waist-length waves and signature middle part, while Zoe Saldana married the middle part with shoulder-length soft waves. Meanwhile, updos were also on trend, shown best on Elle Fanning and Margaret Qualley. Frontally, Qualley's slicked-back hair mirrored that of Ariana Grande, but a quick turn showed an intricate pin-up that allowed her to showcase her plunging diamond necklace and backless dress.

While the hair looks were varied, the stars kept things a bit minimalistic compared to some of the bolder looks sported at other shows this awards season. Dino with the makeup.

Celebrities swapped the bold lips for soft

pink pouts. Grande opted for a cool-toned light, glossy version, while Moore, Selena Gomez, Saldana and Rachel Sennott went for a more neutral "your lips but better" look. Meanwhile, Qualley opted for a slightly deeper pink hue.

While most eye looks remained neutral, some stood out, notably Fanning's and Miley Madison's bold cat eyes and Rachel Zegler's bronzy smoky eye courtesy of Dior. Nail looks were similarly minimalist, though Cynthia Erivo stood out with her signature ultra-long manicure, this time with gold and green accents.

As for skin prep, which has become viral on TikTok, it was on full display for many, including Scarlett Johansson whose skin was prepped using her own skin care brand The Outset. Additionally, Ivan Pol, known for his proprietary radiofrequency treatment called The Beauty Sandwich, prepped Stone, Ana de Armas, Penelope Cruz and Minsy Kaling for the awards show.

Here, a look at the best beauty looks at the 2025 Oscars.



Cynthia Erivo



Omar Apollo



Zoe Saldana



Selena Gomez



Demi Moore

ACCESSORIES

Shoes and Bags Look to Inject Excitement Into Fall 2025 at Milan Fashion Week

● As many fashion brands look to move away from the “quiet luxury” trend, accessories seen in Milan provided a much-needed injection of newness and glamour.

BY STEPHEN GARNER WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM SANDRA SALIBIAN, MARTINO CARRERA AND ANDREA ONATE

MILAN – When it comes to luxury shoes and bags from specialty brands, there’s no place like Milan Fashion Week. As many fashion brands look to move away from the “quiet luxury” trend, accessories seen at presentations around town provided a much-needed injection of newness and glamour, with unexpected twists dominating the fall 2025 collections.

Here, a roundup of some of the week’s key accessories’ presentations.

For fall 2025, **Aquazzura** creative director and founder Edgardo Osorio wanted to play with the notion of day-to-night transition with street-to-slope options. But most of the options seen at the Milan presentation lend themselves more to an opulent night on the town, like the intricate Ce Soir sandal featuring a scalloped upper adorned with hand-applied paillettes, reminiscent of a mermaid’s scales in glazed rose, aqua and gold, and the Sweet Surrender sandal, infused with an Art Deco inspiration. A highlight came via the use of mesh, tulle and netting on the Bisous mule, the Bow Tie Net flats and pumps, the Love Affair pump.



Aquazzura
Mon Amour
boot.



A boot from
Gianvito
Rossi.

Art Deco inspired golden details were also seen at **Gianvito Rossi**. Boots took center stage this season – with over-the-knee styles seen in buttery-soft suede infused with golden elements, which soar stylishly to the sky, while there also were chunky platform sandals with a ‘70s edge. Rossi’s presentation doubled down on the importance of the designer’s iconic pump, which was shown in over 30 shades of suede, from a rich purple to several variations of browns.



A bag from Rodo.

A garden of roses dominated **Rodo**’s latest collection. The flower of love adorned accessories this season through the use of precious metal mesh. Ruffles and pleats echoed the shapes of roses in napa leather and velvet on clutches and shoulder bags. For footwear, Rodo presented a complimentary collection that featured bows, big and small, on pumps, sandals, cowboy boots and ankle boots.



Styles from
Pollini.

A collegiate theme strung together **Pollini**’s “refined classics” fall collection. This season, the brand’s Archive collection welcomed a new reinterpretation of the classic Cavaliere boot, including a tubular style with a chunky sole and super-lightweight lug bottom, crafted in a soft lacquered leather with a maxi croc-print effect. As for the bags, a new crossbody was seen everything from polished calfskin to grained leather, enriched with a metallic buckle featuring the classic Pollini logo. The brand also introduced a performance-leaning capsule named P-Ride in collaboration with Michelin and its footwear licensing partner, JV International. Inspired by trail running shoes, the collection includes several styles in three different colorways boasting ultralight soles with extra grip.



Giuseppe
Zanotti
GZ Dafne.

Dubbed “Back to Myself,” this season’s **Giuseppe Zanotti** brought opulence and embellishments back in full force. A highlight was the sleek Intriigo shape, with a towering stiletto heel, which was reimaged with a new jewel toe adorned with pavé-set, baguette-cut crystals. A showstopping evening sandal, like the iconic Venere sandal, made a grand comeback in the form of the new GZ Dafne, which features a flexible metal and crystal pavé choker that drapes across the foot like a piece of fine jewelry. Plus, from the ‘90s, came a striking over-the-knee boot in suede, enveloping the leg like a second skin.



The Milano Senso suede bags from Valextra’s fall 2025 collection.

Valextra

For fall 2025, **Valextra** unveiled its new Senso suede alongside the evolution of its slouchy Sublime leather that was first introduced for spring. The Milano handbag is the first of the new-era Valextra icons to be realized in Senso suede, arriving in shades of chocolate brown, black and nude. The brand’s Sublime leather was also seen this season in two new sizes of the MyLogo Bowling Bag in mini and micro dimensions, as well as the Mochi handbag.



A new style from
Jimmy Choo.

According to **Jimmy Choo** creative director Sandra Choi, this season’s collection is filled with tactile contrasts and warm tones with finishes that “beg you to touch.” New for the season, the Farren round-toe pump offered a sculptural take on a traditionally ladylike silhouette; presented in soft high-shine calf leather and chocolate-hued mock croc. The Tylor was also a new consideration of volume with a chunky, sturdy loafer-inspired silhouette, presented with a belt detail across the vamp and an amped-up heel. This season also introduced the Scarlett pump, its sharply pointed toe in black napa balanced on a lacquered 95mm Drop heel, alongside the new Scarlett ballerina, with rounded toe and corset straps, executed in chocolate-mix zebra patterns.



A hat from Borsalino.

Borsalino focused on the theme of regeneration this season, taking its collection inside a beautiful home in the center of Milan. Evoking the sense of home, the crowns of the label’s Sophie and Agata hats for her and the Andrea and Heath for him were wrapped in an intricate pattern often seen in home rugs and the velvets of sofas and blankets. Other highlights were the classic Basco, absorbed in the colorful Lynchian texture of a painting, and the Leslie and Brest models that mixed sequins from old evening gowns to create intricate floral patterns.



A style from
Santoni.

Santoni marked the start of its 50th anniversary with the presentation of its latest collection. The elevated women’s line this season revolved around the ideas of “everyday glamour” and “refined ease,” seen in pumps that feature elongated vamps and softly rounded toes that rise on sculpted heels. Ankle boots hug the leg made in supple lambskin, while loafers are sculpted with slender lines and delicate piping.

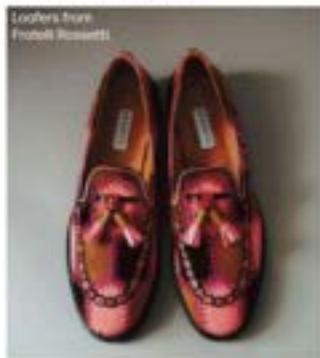


Sneakers from
Hogan.

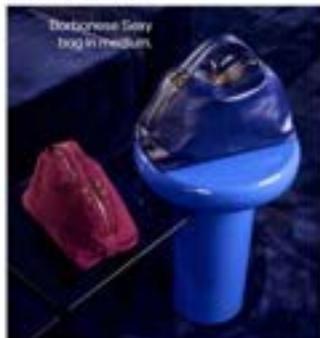
Hogan looked to its urban home of Milan for fall 2025. First up, the brand renewed its Hogan Cool sneakers with a brand-new signature maxi sole in lightweight crepe, which contrasts the upper with the chunky lower construction. Plus, the Olympia is presented in a new, slim-fit and super-feminine design mixed with a football-inspired tread. Both sneaker and ballerina versions were served in deep-tan suede, as well as white or silver leather. As for bags, the Script logo shopper was made in an even lighter, more relaxed shopping bag in an all-over calfskin leather, suede or pony skin, while the Flap Bag reinterpreted a classic camera bag in smooth calfskin leather. ▶

Sergio Rossi
Sinuous heel.

Paul Andrew's debut collection for Sergio Rossi was an exploration of the archives and legacy of the brand. A true standout in the collection was the new Sinuous wedge, which is crafted in carbon fiber and then either galvanized in silver or gold finishes or lacquered for a color surface. The Surge was another new shoe family for Andrew's Sergio Rossi, which is characterized by a chiseled pyramid toe shape seen across styles including sandals, loafers, slides and mules.

Loafers from
Fratelli Rossetti.

Multiple personalities — six to be exact — were on display at the Fratelli Rossetti presentation. The theme was to highlight the different moods of the collection, which centered around the label's Brera loafer. One personality dubbed "I Am Wild," sees the loafer in an animalier version, featuring a giraffe-patterned "printed pony" finish, while the "I Am Cozy" version of the loafer was made entirely of a wool-blend fabric and was adorned with patterns typical of hand-knit sweaters.

Bobbonese Sexy
boots in red/blue.

Bobbonese returned to the 25th floor of the Torre Velasca building to present its new "Skylines" collection for fall. The brand's iconic silhouettes of the Sexy — which was seen in three sizes — and the Luna were accessorized by a screw motif. Plus, the Rondò evolves this season into a puffy and embroidered version, with mini bags also in a laminated version, while the Nido is reinvented into the Mini Nido bag. Also of interest, the company noted that sustainability continues to be a "fundamental" pillar, with almost 90 percent of the collection made from sustainable materials.



Eye-catching gold embroidery defined Rene Caovilla's latest collection. It was a golden fantasy that evokes couture ateliers that enriches the Cleo model, along with two new flat models, the mule and the slingback. Full crystal models offered by the historic brand also sparkled, like slingbacks, mary janes with Parisienne côté and boots, as well as flat ballerinas, kitten heels and stilettos. This season also launched the Spark model, a new snake made of luminous stones that wrap around the ankle in a spiral of crystal baguettes. This new accessory was available in purple, orange, and gray metallic fabrics, blue, purple, and raspberry velvet.



Mach & Mach's Floating Pearls design.

Mach & Mach brought the moon to Earth for its new "Cosmos" collection for fall. The star, no pun intended, of the show was the new "floating pearls" concept that was seen on the brand's most popular models. Silver, moon-textured displays showcased the brand's new and signature shoe families — Double Bow, Orchid, Galaxy, Le Cadéau, and others — positioned like constellations in orbit. A playful take on polka dots and bows was also seen throughout the collection.

Paris Texas showcased a mix of boots and heels for fall 2025 including the crystal-embedded Lidia, which features crystal stones hand-set in a brass chain against a backdrop of satin and metallic shades. Plus, the El Dorado boots dig into classic Americana roots, showcasing Western-inspired embroidery and the addition of an internal shearing liner, while the Aspen fur-covered boot features a curly, European lamb shearing against natural shades of cognac and black.

The Aspen
boot from Paris
Texas.The scene of the
Alexandre Birman
presentation.

Inspired by contemporary architecture, the fall 2025 Alexandre Birman collection featured striking silhouettes, from angular heels to curved lines. The collection's color palette introduced deep, rich tones like Espresso, Dark Ruby and Brickwood, complemented by neutrals such as Meringue and Eggshell. Velvety suedes, polished leathers, and metallic finishes were also seen throughout the line. Standout styles included the Gia Family, which features a vintage-inspired heel with a contrast of black suede and metallic plaid, and the Thalita Family, which is a series of bold platform heels in 90mm and 125mm heights.

Casadei
Tacco Infinity
chain heels.

A new chain heel stole the show at the Casadei presentation last week. The Tacco Infinity chain heels is a look to the future of the brand with a metallic, stand-out shape. Other highlights include the iconic Blade heel seen in the Aurora bootie, with its regal cape-like ankle detail, and the Lingerie boot with flocked panels to give the illusion of lace. This season also expanded the recently launched Ageis Ski collection with the introduction of a new faux fur boot designed to transition from city streets to mountain retreats.

The notion of "Goth couture" took over the fall season for AGI, — with inspiration hailing from '90s rock bands. The collection saw rock star shapes, like a combat boot covered in floral cutouts and piercings, while mary janes were seen with a removable chain that covers the heel. Other standouts included booties with graphic lacquered heels, made in animal print leather with ribbons and piercing, and ballet shoe styles made in squared or potney-toe models in soft faux fur or macro flower.

A style from AGI's fall
2025 collection.A boot from Le
Silla's fall
collection.

Le Silla took inspiration from Jamiroquai's hit song "Virtual Insanity" this season to blend nostalgia and innovation into one. This could be seen as far added a playful twist to the Bella mules with 80mm and 120mm spike heels, the Danielle ballet flats with jeweled buckles, and the Andy cuffed boots. Pony fur in animal prints such as leopard and cowhide took center stage on Bella boots with wide shafts. Plus, Western styles remain important with the Eva boots in soft suede, reinterpreted with cascading fringes and stiletto heels, and the Tess boots in a boho-metropolitan style featuring a Western-inspired heel, with or without a metallic toe cap.

Testoni Spiral
heels.

Inspired by the history and architecture of Bologna, the Testoni fall '25 collection celebrated the brand's century-long legacy of Italian craftsmanship. At the core of the collection was the brand's new Lacquer Spiral, an evolution of the spring '25 Gold Spiral, which involves molding, engraving, plating, and lacquering using a custom formula. Plus, the new Enzo Shopper, a unisex tote available in two sizes, boasted clean lines in solid leather and Intreccio versions crafted from smooth French calf leather. ▶

WWD



Enterprise Japan Egg Rocket sneaker

Enterprise Japan's latest collection centered around a sneaker produced in the heart of the Marche footwear region of Italy. This could be seen in the EJ Egg Rocket, Enterprise Japan's first style, and the EJ Run Rocket shoes, inspired by the running world that features a lightweight construction and a strong grip sole. The limited edition of the Run was also seen in animalier versions made of calf hair and printed suede.



A style from Premiata

At the heart of Premiata's new collection was the Prima Linea, which debuted a new heel shape this season. Premium materials played a key role in the collection, like pony hair, which was the undisputed star of the season, and blends with a sophisticated color palette ranging from deep black to intense burgundy and forest green. The collection's standout designs mixed sporty elements with feminine allure. Among them were a pair of bold ankle boots enriched with metallic buckles and contrast stitching, sculptural-heeled booties and ballet-inspired designs.



The Doox Sphera Plus sneaker

The range of sneakers grows in the latest Geox collection, which features its "Fast-In System" technology for a slip-on effect. There were new interpretations of Sphera Plus in leather or knit with a Lurex accent, and Nebula Plus, another brand staple that appears in a new version with a technological update. The more formal models focus on styles that tap into seasonal trends and shades: from loafers to boots in a range of heights and materials, from platforms with an urban feel to ballet flats and mary jane court shoes.



A style from the Stuart Weitzman Fall 2024 women's collection

In its fall 2025 collection dubbed "Pretty Gritty," Stuart Weitzman explored the duality between feminine styles and rugged designs, showcasing footwear that ran the gamut from the Virnie pumps and boots with a sculptural pointed toe and angular heels to the lug-soled boat shoes, chukka boots and lace-up booties included in the Hudson line. In between, the brand played with smooth block heels and rounded toes in its reinterpretation of the mary jane style and offered new takes on its 5050 boots with the 5050 Gisele design, defined by a new stretch-infused suede back shaft.

Set against the concept of a black-and-white masked ball, Seraplan's lavish presentation showcased new iterations of the brand's icons. The Mosaico technique the luxury label is best known for was refreshed with the integration of new materials, adding a 3D effect to its signature woven pattern. Cue micro metal chains and soft mohair woven into the black-and-white leather construction of styles like the Secret bag and clutch, available in different sizes. Bright leather beads, ribbons and decorated stripes were also used in the new iterations of the brand's hero designs.



A diamond-encrusted Seraplan bag from the 2025 collection

Inspired by the creative mood of the "embrace," Gianni Chiarini looked for warmth this season. Highlights included the Helena Round and Aurora bags made in maori croco print in textured suede, as well as the Eliana soft leather bucket bag. Plus, the Penelope bag was reinvented in its new petite size in patent leather this season, while the Dua bag captured the vibe of the season with the use of suede and the brand's unmistakable Bubble Double leather.



Gianni Chiarini Dua bag



The Mame handbag by Benedetta Bruzichich

Benedetta Bruzichich keeps expanding her assortment way beyond the glitzy clutches her namesake brand built a reputation on. Cue the Mame handbag, that with its maxi shape in shirry or suede calfskin offers an everyday alternative to her sparkly and draped mesh styles, like the Yennifer bag or Venus La Grande clutch. For those still looking for a fancy option, the designer partnered with Italian artisans on the limited-edition Armonia clutch, sculpted by a block of methacrylate, enclosing an organic silk satin pouch and topped by a crystal-encrusted closure.



The Afrodite satin gold bag from Themoiré

Themoiré's fall collection, titled "A responsible legacy," highlighted the handbag brand's commitment to the environment. It was inspired by the '70s, years in which the EPA was founded and Earth Day was set. All designs were crafted from newly introduced materials such as the processing of the waste of the olive tree, recycled suede, satin and pineapple, from the pineapple leaves with a laminated finish and corn fur, a fabric made from the processing of corn seeds first introduced last season. For the Bios collection, the brand introduced Afrodite, a clutch bag with a chain made from a satin fabric which features a recycled aluminum chain.



The Colombo Venere bag for fall 2025

The storied leathergoods brand Colombo, known for its exotic skin handbags, channeled a winter resort vibe in its fall collection inspired by autumnal colors in Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy, with the introduction of new top-handle styles. The matte alligator Venere bag with a concave top was hand-painted to achieve a shirry, shimmering effect, while the top-handle Perla, a squarish bucket-like bag, came in rich hues, including dark brown and ruby red.

Zanellato, best known for its hit bag Postina, is ready to seize the opportunity of Made in Italy's appeal and start international expansion, beginning in Europe. Moving from its flagship style, the fall collection expanded the range to new design pillars. These included the grainy leather Dotta, modeled after doctors' bags with a metallic clasp closure, puffy flap, and flat studs punctuating its frame or the bucket bag Mondà, named after rice weeders. ■



BUSINESS

Sofia Richie Grainge, Tommy Hilfiger Codesign Capsule Collection

- An ambassador for the brand since June 2024, Richie Grainge will appear in the Sofia for Tommy ad campaign.

BY LISA LOCKWOOD

Sofia Richie Grainge is Tommy Hilfiger's newest design collaborator.

After curating a 12-piece summer capsule for Hilfiger last year, Richie Grainge has stepped up to codesign a capsule collection called Sofia for Tommy

that is available at retail from Tuesday.

A brand ambassador since June 2024, Richie Grainge will also appear this month in Hilfiger's spring 2025 ad campaign. Shot by Alejandra Nataf, the campaign features the 26-year-old model and social media personality in Hilfiger's apparel and accessories inspired by coastal cool.

"Tommy is a true icon of style," said Richie Grainge. "He is someone I've looked up to as a designer and a creative force ever since I started working in the fashion industry. I'm so proud to introduce a collection that embodies effortless sophistication for the everyday. These pieces were built for limitless self-expression and a deep love of authentic, classic style — values that Tommy and I both share."

A wife and mother, Richie Grainge is Lionel Richie's youngest child. This isn't Richie Grainge's first womenswear collection. Her previous experience includes designing a women's collection for Solid & Striped.

"Sofia represents the modern multihyphenate woman, capturing the strength and depth of today's generation. As a model and entrepreneur, she has captivated audiences with her modern take on timeless style. Sofia elevates classic staples into contemporary must-haves that set the tone for a new era of style," said Tommy Hilfiger.

The 24-piece collection takes inspiration from archival prep silhouettes and vintage nautical flags. It features tailored blazers and wide-leg denim slacks, tanks, and a series of luxe dresses. The color palette is a deeper, richer take on the all-American red, white and blue, with shades of cream, crimson and navy.



Here and left: Sofia Richie Grainge in limited images for Sofia for Tommy.



Retail prices range from \$50 to \$425.

Sizes go from 36 to 46 and XXS to XXL.

"I wanted this collection to reflect the way women move through life today — balancing so much while still making style feel effortless. Tommy is known for giving his unique twist to everyday essentials, while I wanted every piece to bring a sense of ease to everyday dressing. It's about marrying the two. We ended up with a beautiful range that embraces both softness and strength, feels polished yet natural, and looks as confident as they are timeless," said Richie Grainge.

Hilfiger said that designing the collection together "feels like the most authentic fusion of her contemporary style and our timeless heritage."

Richie Grainge said that the past year with Hilfiger "has been an incredible journey, and co-creating a collection that truly reflects my style is such a special moment."

"It feels like a representation of where I am in my life — comfortable and confident in my style. I'm so proud of the smooth shape, sculptural design, and the level of care in every piece. It's my interpretation of assured femininity, one that is effortless, refined and designed for the way women dress today," said Richie Grainge.

Richie Grainge said her personal favorite from the collection is the red double-breasted blazer. "It's sharp, effortless and just the right amount of bold. Its structured fit makes you feel put together, then the relaxed tailoring keeps it cool and chic. It's the perfect balance of sophistication and ease," she said.

The Sofia for Tommy capsule continues Hilfiger's partnerships with women such as Jisoo, Gigi Hadid, Hailey Bieber and Zendaya.

The Sofia for Tommy capsule will be available on tommy.com, in Tommy Hilfiger stores worldwide and through select wholesale partners beginning Tuesday.

ACCESSORIES

Eyecon Show to Debut in New York

- Industry veteran Tarence Lackran is rethinking the playbook for an eyewear trade-focused show.

BY THOMAS WALLER

Tarence Lackran is looking to shake up the eyewear show circuit. "I want buyers of luxury eyewear to feel not just that they are coming to see product, but also to develop an emotional attachment or connection to a brand," he said.

A seasoned eyewear executive with a social media presence as The Optical Poet, Lackran founded Eyecons Agency and has stints at Reed Exhibitions and The Vision Council. Now he is reimagining a trade event, debuting the Eyecon show in New York March 14 through March 16.

"Eyecon is not a trade show," he contended. "It's a reimagined space where creativity, education and business converge. By integrating storytelling into every aspect of the event — from vendor showcases and including voices from across the luxury spectrum — we aim to inspire our industry to think beyond boundaries and elevate the entire luxury eyewear experience."

Lackran's show invites vendors to dive deeper, transforming their booths into immersive brand showcases, "creating environments that bring their stories to life



and offering buyers and attendees a deeper connection to their craft and vision."

He explained that he wants to spark something different for attendees that will trickle down and help them tell a fuller story to their clients. "Anything that we can do to bring more people into this world of luxury eyewear," he said.

He defines what makes eyewear

luxury through a variety of touch points. "One, I think there's access. If there's limited access or exclusivity on a brand, I think that's luxury to be able to have something that no one else has. I think production is another side of luxury, including the materials being used. Also function — are they servicing a need from underrepresented clientele, like the

bearing impaired or the blind? And then, of course, there's just sick sick design."

Panelists are standard for industry events and he is thinking differently, reaching outside of eyewear to enlist other industries' voices for conversations — leaders in fashion, retail and hospitality — to explore innovation, craftsmanship and the future of luxury.

"I feel like our industry has a lot of people that when they think about customer experience, service and luxury, they only know what's happening in eyewear. So it's very important to bring the New York vibe of luxury inside and get outside perspectives into our industry."

Other sessions will cover the growth of performance eyewear. "We have an Olympic athlete speaking along with a few different performance eyewear brands to discuss the style and how performance eyewear is evolving, just content that's very relevant to these types of opticians," he said.

He is expecting around 350 to 400 attendees over the three-day show. So far the lineup includes Ahlem, Alain Mikli, Anna-Karin Karlsson, Capote, Dindi, Dita Lancier, Jacquemus, Kuro Athletics, Lapima, Leisure Society, Max Pittino, Miga Studios, House of Mode, Native Sons, Nuance Audio, Oscar Marmocci, Persol, Puroo, Quay, Sauvage, Selma Optique, Shady Character, Shamir, Solamor, Soya, T Henri, Vakay and Zeiss.

"We got people attending from Tokyo and Sweden, which I did not expect it to get international," he said. "You know New York is a little bit different this year with Vision Expo not being here."

BUSINESS

Charles Leclerc Named Chivas Regal's New Global Brand Ambassador

- The Monégasque Ferrari driver and the Scotch whisky company are hosting an exclusive piano bar pop-up at the Australian Grand Prix to kick off the multiyear partnership.

BY KANIK TALWAR

Scuderia Ferrari's Formula 1 driver Charles Leclerc has a new role – he's been tapped by Scotch whisky brand Chivas Regal to be its global brand ambassador. This multiyear partnership announcement follows the spirit company being named an official team partner of Ferrari for the 2025 season and beyond.

Chivas Regal said that the partnership is celebrating redefining success and celebrating the achievement of personal goals and creativity. Beyond the racetrack, Leclerc is a self-taught piano player and lover of music. During the off-season and between races, he has spent time perfecting and pouring his passion for the instrument to create music. The company went on to note the synergy between Leclerc's dedication to the mastery of the piano and the craftsmanship used to create the Chivas Regal whisky.

Thus far, Leclerc has released two songs ahead of the 2025 season – with a total of nine songs released since 2023.

"Success is about blending all the right notes – on and off the track. My craft demands time, precision and dedication, but what truly drives me is the journey, my passions and the moments shared along the way," said Leclerc. "Chivas Regal embodies this same ethos, encouraging people to find their own rhythm and celebrate every win, big or small. I'm

excited to redefine success together and share this experience with fans through our partnership."

To celebrate, Chivas Regal and Leclerc are hosting a one-night-only piano bar pop-up called "Leclerc's" on March 11 at the upcoming Australian Grand Prix in Melbourne season opener, merging together the worlds of music and whisky.

The exclusive event will host VIP guests and a small selection of fans to enjoy the Chivas Regal x Charles Leclerc whisky

cocktails. Leclerc's signature cocktail, The Leclerc Spritz, is a twist on the Italian classic, paying homage to both the Italian roots of Ferrari and the French Riviera of Leclerc's birthplace of Monaco. The whisky brand said that the evening will be centered around Leclerc's passion for the piano.

Beyond Leclerc's passion for piano, his paddock style has also been a noteworthy topic – as reflected in the accompanying Chivas Regal campaign photos, styled by Carlotta Constant. Leclerc's ambassadorships

with APM Monaco and Richard Mille are showcased alongside a mix of major luxury fashion brands, including Simone Rocha, Reiss, Amiri, Saint Laurent, Intimissimi, 1017 Alyx 9SM, The Row and Burberry.

"It's no secret Charles has had incredible success in his life, but it is his tenacious spirit, commitment to excellence and off-track passions that inspired this partnership," said Nick Blacknell, global marketing director of Chivas Regal at Chivas Brothers. "The 88 notes of the piano draw perfect parallels with the 85 flavor notes of our iconic Chivas 18 Year Old expression, showing how both music and whisky blend passion with precision. We're excited to bring fans on the journey to celebrate our wins together – the ethos that lies at the heart of Chivas Regal."



Charles Leclerc wears a Simone Rocha suit, Intimissimi vest, Phix shirt, APM Monaco jewelry, Richard Mille watch and a vintage brooch in his new Chivas Regal's global brand ambassador campaign.

TECHNOLOGY

Do Retailers Ambitious AI Goals Align With Consumer Expectations?

- A new report examines surveys from retail executives and U.S. consumers on the evolving role of AI in retail.

BY ALEXANDRA PASTORE

AI's integration into retail is moving quickly with 98 percent of retailers reporting plans for full AI deployment by 2027. In a new report from Everseen, the Vision AI technology for global retailers, researchers took a closer look at how retailers and consumers align on AI's role in the shopping experience, aiming to help retailers understand the path forward.

Everseen's research was conducted in January in partnership with Censuswide and surveyed 200 prevention loss executives from U.S. retailers (with self-checkout options in stores) and 1,200 U.S. consumers (who have confirmed use of self-checkout technology). The company's Vision AI solutions are designed to minimize shrink,

streamline operations and deliver a better customer experience. Everseen's technology entered over 8,000 stores in 2024.

Overall, as AI becomes more engrained in the retail journey, 80 percent of senior managers said that they believe consumers understand AI's role in stores – a contrast to just 31 percent of consumers who said that they feel they have "fully grasped it." Everseen's report found that while there are many areas in which consumers and retailers are aligned on the benefits of AI, some holdouts remain.

Key findings of the report include a shared sentiment from retailers investing in AI to drive results. Over 60 percent of retail survey respondents said that AI is critical to "maintaining a competitive edge" with an expected 51 percent average ROI from these AI deployments to occur within three years.

Similarly, consumers said they expect to see benefits with AI. Fifty-five percent of consumers said that they are comfortable

with AI and advanced retail technology, and 65 percent said that AI has made shopping "more convenient."

Transparency for the use of AI is a great concern for consumers with 72 percent reporting that they want to see greater transparency about AI use in stores. To address this, 44 percent of retailers surveyed said that they are using signage at entrances while 64 percent of consumers said they find it helpful.

Both consumers and retailers reported an enthusiasm for using AI technology to prevent loss. Eighty-five percent of consumers told the company that they believe theft to be a contributor to higher prices.

"AI is already transforming retail – driving efficiency, reducing shrink, and enhancing customer experiences," said

Alan O'Herlihy, chief executive officer of Everseen. "It's encouraging to see the shared perspective of consumers and retailers on how AI can improve the shopping experience. The insights from this report can help the industry align on key success factors for AI, including measurable impacts on shrink reduction and the importance of transparency."

Notably, 60 percent of retailers said that they have already turned to AI for loss prevention and an additional 30 percent said that they have plans to do so in the next year.

"AI is no longer a future investment – it's an operational necessity," said O'Herlihy. "Success will belong to those who operationalize AI at scale, integrating it seamlessly into the customer experience and transforming retail for the future."



Transparency for the use of AI is a great concern for consumers with 72 percent reporting that they want to see greater transparency about AI use in stores with entrance signs and/or self-checkout pop-ups.



eye

'Anora' Cast Parties at Vanity Fair's Oscar Bash

'Anora' received Best Picture and Best Director at the 97th Academy Awards on Sunday evening, with its rising star Mikay Madison taking Best Actress. BY RYMA CHIKHOUINE PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHAD SALVADORI

From Mick Jagger and Debbie Harry to Timothée Chalamet and Lisa, Vanity Fair's Oscar party continues attracting Hollywood's biggest stars across generations — and drawing the night's top winners post-ceremony.

It's where the cast of "Anora" let loose with Sean Baker, the visionary behind the film, after scooping five awards including Best Picture and Best Director. Baker alone won four, also as producer, editor and screenwriter. Its 25-year-old rising star Mikay Madison, who snagged Best Actress, celebrated alongside her fellow acting honorees, Best Actor Adrien Brody and Best Supporting Actress Zoe Saldana — who stayed out until the early hours.

At the bash, it's as much about the award ceremony (with a viewing party and dinner that starts at 3:30 p.m.) as it is about the flashy arrivals, happening all night long. Conan O'Brien, fresh off hosting the show, pulled up just before 10 p.m. with his wife by his side. The comedian walked into the venue exchanging pleasantries with staffers along the way. "Hello, how are you?" he echoed. "Thanks for having us."

He walked past a L'Oréal beauty touch-up station, where Kendall Jenner was taking a mirror selfie, and into the giant photo op. Gal Gadot, Megan Thee Stallion and Joe Alwyn were among those waiting in line, watching actress Zoëy Deschanel and costume designer Ruth E. Carter pose for cameras.

The venue — a custom design in Beverly Hills, nestled between the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts and City Hall — led into a mirrored hallway before opening up into the main party space with carpeted floors and a sunken lounge with deep couches and a disco ball.

Flashes went off for Ana de Armas' every step as she shimmered her way inside. Nearby, Paris Hilton caught eyes with her sparkling silver sheath gown, accessorized with long sheer-black opera gloves and diamond bracelets, while Isabella Rossellini exuded a quiet power in a blue velvet dress. All around were familiar faces: Andrew Garfield with Monica Barbaro; Cynthia Erivo with Lena Waithe; Margaret Qualley with Jack Antonoff; John Mulaney with Olivia Munn; Sydney Sweeney with "The Housemaid" costar Brandon Sklenar; Deja Cat; Ava DuVernay; Mary J. Blige; Tracee Ellis Ross; Zac Posen, and Rachel Brosnahan. Judd Apatow shared laughs with Fred Armisen, while Hiroyuki Sanada caught up with Walton Goggins.

Raye was still riding the high of stepping onto the Oscar stage. "It was scary, I'll tell you that," she said of the experience, performing Adele's "Skyfall" from the 2012 film starring Daniel Craig, as part of a tribute to the James Bond franchise.

While some were just getting started, others headed out. "Sorry, we're trying to leave," said Christina Ricci, mistaking the entrance for the exit.



Further back by the bar, the pièce de résistance in the center of the room, Zoë Kravitz and Zoey Deutch caught up before being joined by Hailey Bieber. Steps away, Rosalia and Sarah Paulson shared a warm embrace. Paulson was now barefoot — pumps off — standing out in a red, sculptural Marc Jacobs creation. "Excuse me," she smiled, squeezing through the crowd.

Rosalía, in a romantic, victorian-like sheer Dilara Findikoglu gown, was approached by Madison Beer. "I'm obsessed with you," she told the Spanish singer, in awe.

Suddenly there was commotion: Timothée Chalamet has arrived. A crowd followed as he walked through the lounge with his mother in tow. "He's an amazing guy," a photographer told her, as she nodded back. Chalamet made his way to an area where he remained for most of the night, joined by Kylie Jenner and others.

By 10:28 p.m. the dance floor was slowly gaining traction, luring Sofia Vergara, Lil Nas X, who was in the middle of the action, and Jenna Ortega, twirling to Bad Bunny's "Nueve y 10."

Oscar trophies were now circulating the room, as winners had finally finished



making their party rounds — all stopping at Governors Ball to get their awards engraved.

The commotion continued for Saldana, Brody (snagging his second Best Actor win) and Madison, who was met with congratulations at every turn. The actress had swapped her pastel pink Dior dress for another gown by the French house, a recreation of an haute couture design from the '50s. With her posse of handlers, and stylist Jamie Mizrahi, she headed toward the party's outdoor space — a more chill atmosphere where guests stood by heaters, smoking and indulging in pizza and In-N-Out burgers.

"I'm so happy and so proud," a teary-eyed Ortega, who was now outside, told Madison as the two hugged.

"If you've got an Oscar, hold it up," the DJ shouted to cheers.

Fashion Scoops



Lily Collins in a look from Calvin Klein.

Choosing Collins

Count Lily Collins as the latest face for Calvin Klein.

The "Emily in Paris" actress and daughter of singer Phil Collins is pictured in a series of still photos and social videos dressed in pieces from the brand's spring '25 collection.

She sports several looks intended to reflect the brand's day-to-night dressing, including the Tech textured vest and blazer, a viscose ribbed maxidress, crepe printed slipdress, matte satin midi skirt and jacquard stripe popover shirt.

Collins also wears pieces from the more-sporty Calvin Klein Studio collection including the '90s trucker jacket and '90s straight jean, both made from Cone Denim.

The campaign, which was directed and shot by Charlotte Wales, launches on Tuesday with content rolling out across the Calvin Klein social channels throughout the week. The images will also appear on digital media platforms and high impact out-of-home sites globally.

Calvin Klein returned

to the runway in New York during Fashion Week last month after a six-and-a-half-year hiatus. The runway show served as an introduction to the brand's new designer, Veronica Leoni, whose first collection will debut at retail this fall.

Before that, the last show for Calvin Klein, which is owned by PVH Corp., was in September 2018 when Raf Simons was creative director.

Leoni was named creative director of Calvin Klein Collection last May. A 2023 LVMH Prize finalist and founder of Quira, Leoni also worked for such brands as Jil Sander, Celine, Moncler and, most recently, The Row, where she was womenswear and menswear design director. — JEAN E. PALMIERI

Shades Like Jagger

Parisian label Pressiat has teamed with luxury eyewear brand Thierry Lasry on an eyewear design inspired by the gender fluid glamour of the 1970s.

The design, a futuristic interpretation of the cat-eye and aviator shapes popular during the period, features a lens that extends over the

nose bridge and plays on a mask-meets-cosmonaut vibe.

Its name is a nod to Rolling Stones front man and perennial fashion plate Mick Jagger, who left a deep impression on designer Vincent Garnier Pressiat after they met on the Parisian's 23rd birthday.

"I've always been in love with his outfits, which are

incredible, and the energy of this man, his music, his whole look with oversize eyewear," he told WWD. "So it was mandatory to call it Jagger."

It is the culmination of a collaboration that began when Lasry eyewear made a cameo in the Pressiat fall 2024 and spring 2025 shows.

For Garnier Pressiat, who "can't leave the house without glasses and [finds] no outfit is complete without a pair," Lasry's "futuristic vintage" style with a dash of rock 'n' roll, as well as "the clarity of his lines, the sculptural process and the sophistication" resonated with his own work.

As for Lasry, he was drawn to "the truly unique energy in Vincent's work," he said. "There's something both sensually aggressive and full of grace, values that are close to me and that also align well with the DNA of the Thierry Lasry brand."

The eyewear will make its debut Tuesday, accenting fall looks inspired by "a play on light, a play of blacks and depth," which is also figured in the patterns of the acetate used for the eyewear, Garnier Pressiat said.

A print of leather strips, dressing the glasses' bespoke packaging and pouch, also plays into this idea. It will be revisited as a couture dress that will be unveiled at an event on March 31 in New York City.

Available in eight colorways and priced at 450 euros in Europe, or \$575 in the U.S., the collaboration will drop in selected stores as well as on the online stores of both brands on April 1.

— LILY TEMPLETON

Winning Windows And Installations

There's the Academy Awards, the Golden Globe Awards and the Emmys — but tucked into the middle of the award season there's also the WindowsWear Awards recognizing innovative and creative store windows, installations, props and interiors around the world.

More than 400 guests from Louis Vuitton, Bottega Veneta, Loewe, Coach, Michael Kors, Longchamp, La Prairie, Saks Fifth Avenue, Macy's and other companies attended the WindowsWear award ceremony at Nebula on Manhattan's West Side last month to celebrate the WindowsWear winners. "It was a very fun night full of creative people in the industry," said Raul Tovar, cofounder and creative director of WindowsWear.

"The show opened with a powerful video, reminding us that inspiration is everywhere," said WindowsWear cofounder Jon Harari. "It exists in the moments that move us, the stories that shape us, and the world that connects us. Curated by WindowsWear, this breathtaking visual journey wove together global events from the past year, reflecting the challenges, triumphs and creativity that define our time."

Each year, WindowsWear examines and documents thousands of store windows, retail interiors, pop-ups, campaigns

and other projects in the physical and digital realms.

The winners included: Givenchy for best interior; Coach for best pop-up; Loewe, best exhibit/installation; David Yurman, best AR/VR experience; Glossier, best packaging; Harrods x Piaget, best window display; Pandora, best holiday window; Saks Fifth Avenue, icon award; Loewe, best prop seen at Saks Fifth Avenue; Kate Spade, best mannequin; Macy's x Disney, best collaboration, and Calvin Klein at Macy's, best use of color.

New Balance was honored for sustainability; Longchamp for best interactive experience; Rodeo Drive, best neighborhood installation; Harrods x Loro Piana, best use of light; Etro, received the Heritage Award; Macy's, best digital experience; Coach, best gamification; H&M, best set design; Michael Kors, best hospitality experience; Stuart Weitzman, best social media campaign; Marc Jacobs, best email marketing campaign; Prada, best brand strategy; Gucci, most liked on social media, and Jacquemus received the Simon Doonan Award.

For its annual awards, New York-based WindowsWear reviews thousands of photos then selects several nominees per category, which are revealed online. Members of WindowsWear community and other contacts around the world vote for the winners.

WindowsWear has a comprehensive database of content used by creatives, retailers and ▶



The Jagger model imagined by Vincent Garnier Pressiat and Thierry Lasry.



brands to research visual merchandising, social media and e-commerce campaigns; retail designs; window displays, and trends, to support their own physical and e-commerce projects. — DAVID MOIN

Cozy Ride

Hawke & Co. has come up with a novel marketing scheme to help raise its visibility.

The outerwear brand on Monday outfitted a dozen of Central Park's famed carriage horses with "coats" sporting the company's logo that they can wear during the winter months and rainy weather to stay warm and dry.

The company also dressed the drivers in Hawke & Co. jackets and provided blankets for those

visitors and locals taking a swing around the park in the carriages.

"Hawke & Co. has always prided itself on innovation and creativity," said Michael Rosenberg, president of the brand. "By dressing the horses in our signature look, we're not just promoting our outerwear, we're making a bold statement about our brand's dedication to redefining style and marketing."

In addition to the Central Park event, Hawke & Co. sponsored the Taste of Tennis tournament in Indian Wells, Calif., on Monday evening. Taste of Tennis brings together the top tennis players and renowned chefs for an evening of dining and entertainment. The event, which is held in the run-

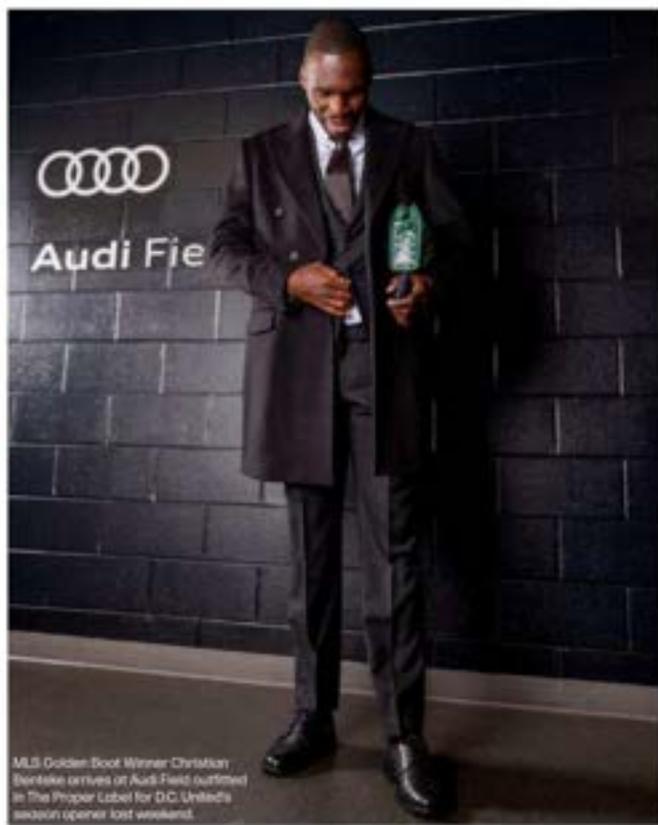
up to the ATP and WTA tournaments, benefited Shay's Warriors, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting cancer survivors and their families on their journey to healing and wellness.

"We are honored to support an event that blends sport, culinary excellence and philanthropy," said Rosenberg.

Hawke & Co. has been producing outerwear since 1958. — J.E.P.

Proper Attire

In a first for Major League Soccer, D.C. United is opening their season with a new look — a bespoke tailoring collection by designer Camille Tanoh of



MLS Golden Boot Winner Christian Benteke arrives at Audi Field outfitted in The Proper Label for D.C. United's season opener last weekend.

The Proper Label. Dubbed "Tailored for Champions," the collection is a first of its kind partnership for professional soccer in the United States, elevating the pre-match tunnel walk to a runway worthy moment and sports marketing boon.

"This is about more than tailoring. It's about identity, presence, and the legacy of champions," said Tanoh, founder and creative director of The Proper Label. "D.C. United's players embody strength and determination on the field. Their off-field attire should

reflect that same energy, commanding timeless elegance."

That tunnel walk moment, when cameras capture athletes at their most poised and most styled, has taken the simple pre-game arrival routine and transformed into a powerful statement of identity. European players have long understood the branding potential of these moments, with teams like Real Madrid, Paris Saint-Germain, and Manchester City establishing sartorial

identities through designer collaborations. Now, MLS is catching up.

Tanoh brings considerable fashion credibility to the partnership, having worked with Balenciaga under Nicolas Ghesbriès, as well as with Paul Smith, and Pierre Hardy.

The collection reflects the unique demands of athletes' bodies and lifestyles. Each suit is hand-sewn in Portugal, ensuring fit, structure, and fluidity in movement. The fabrics have been engineered with a specially formulated weave, incorporating antimicrobial, antibacterial, and moisture-wicking finishes for enhanced comfort.

"The Proper Label is about longevity, responsibility and elegance. This collaboration with D.C. United is just the beginning," said Tanoh.

As D.C. United prepares for a season of renewal with MLS all-stars Christian Benteke and Aaron Herrera, alongside new signings Kim Joon Hong, Jabo Pagiow and Kye Rowles, the team is making clear that their ambitions extend beyond the pitch.

Darita Johnson, president of business operations at D.C. United, said the collaboration is "a bold statement that reflects our ambition, confidence and commitment to excellence."

— SITU UPADHYAY ■



Hawke & Co. outfitted Central Park's famous carriage horses with blankets.