

WWD

PARIS



Paris Landing

Byredo is growing its footprint in the French capital with a flagship and pop-up due to open this week.

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Magic Crystal

Streetwear brand Advisory Board Crystals is gaining momentum with its mix of wellness and fashion.

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Report Card

Blake Lively gets all suited up – with mixed results.

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The Fountainhead

Ayn Rand's was a novel, and Alessandro Michele's, plenty novel. There's even a connection beyond the visual pun: Both Gucci's creative director and Rand's protagonist Howard Roark are creative guys who refuse to cave to convention, although as far we know, only one has an affinity for fountain-esque headgear and falling-water fringe. *For more on Monday night's Gucci show and the Paris collections, see pages 8 to 11.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY GIOVANNI GIANNONI

BUSINESS

\$2.1B Versace Deal Recasts Kors

- The company is set to become Capri Holdings, marking its new portfolio approach.

BY LUISA ZARGANI AND EVAN CLARK WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM LISA LOCKWOOD

The portfolio race is on.

And while John Idol, Michael Kors Holdings' chairman and chief executive officer, made the latest move, securing Versace in an aggressive \$2.1 billion deal, his company's going to have to keep pushing to get ahead.

Idol told WWD in an interview Tuesday that the company is done with acquisitions – for now – and is going to focus on paying down its post-deal debt load and growing Versace into a \$2 billion brand.

But the group seems to be open to more deals down the line – once the Versace transaction closes in the fourth quarter, Kors will be renamed Capri Holdings, mirroring Coach's transformation into Tapestry Inc. last year after buying Kate Spade.

Investors started feeling a bit better about the deal and pushed Kors' stock up 2 percent to \$68.01, gaining back some of the 8.2 percent the shares lost on Monday as word of the deal filtered out.

Once the deal closes, the Versace family will have a keen interest in Capri's performance. Part of the total deal value of 1.8 billion euros will be paid in the form of 150 million euros in Capri shares. At current prices of Kors, that stake would equal about 1.7 percent of the company.

The rest of the deal is being funded by cash on hand, the company's existing credit facility and bank loans from Kors' advisers J.P. Morgan Chase Bank and Barclays.

Kors prevailed in what was an active sale process, sparked at least in part by Blackstone, which bought 20 percent of Versace in 2014 and was eyeing an exit.

There are few fashion properties with the kind of profile Versace has enjoyed. It is a very established brand with broad name recognition and a long history, but also has room to expand, for instance in the U.S. and through additional stores. And Versace was also not already locked up in one of the major luxury companies.

The opportunity piqued the interest of a number of strategic buyers, most notably Kering, but also Tapestry and others.

Dealmaking can become almost a reason for being for some companies

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BUSINESS

Nike Sees Record Engagement After Colin Kaepernick Ad

- Chairman and chief executive officer Mark Parker told investors he was very proud of the campaign.

BY KATHRYN HOPKINS

Nike Inc. has witnessed “record” engagement from its “Just Do It” ad campaign featuring former San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick.

Speaking to investors following the release of its first fiscal quarter results, Mark Parker, chairman, president and chief executive officer of Nike, said he felt “very proud” of the campaign, adding that it resonated “quite strongly” with consumers around the world and introduced “Just Do It” to a new generation of shoppers.

“We’ve seen record engagement with the brand as part of the campaign and our brand strength, as you well know, is a key dimension that contributes to the ongoing momentum that we’re building across the Nike portfolio so that’s really how we look at it is how do we connect and engage in a way that’s relevant and

inspiring to the consumers that we’re here to serve,” he added.

Kaepernick sparked a national conversation by kneeling during the national anthem at football games to protest racial injustice and Nike’s campaign initially sent its shares downward, but they have since recovered, recently hitting an all-time high of \$86.04 a share, as Millennials bought the stock in support of the move even though some consumers burnt their Nike shoes and otherwise criticized the brand in protest against the campaign.

Parker’s comments came as the apparel giant posted revenues of \$9.95 billion in the 13-week period ending Aug. 31, up 10 percent from a year earlier. Analysts had been expecting \$9.94 billion.

Net income for the Beaverton, Ore.-based company jumped 15 percent to \$1.1 billion, while diluted earnings per share were up 18 percent compared to the prior year at 67 cents, topping forecasts for 63 cents.

Its gross margin, however, was slightly weaker than anticipated on the back of higher-than-average selling prices. This sent shares down 4.5 percent in

after-market trading.

“Nike’s Consumer Direct Offense, combined with our deep lineup of innovation, is driving strong momentum and balanced growth across our entire business,” said Parker in a statement. “Our expanded digital capabilities are accelerating our complete portfolio and creating value across all dimensions as we connect with and serve consumers.”

After hitting the headlines earlier this month for its new “Just Do It” ad campaign, Nike has courted controversy over its alleged treatment of women in the workplace. Last month, two former female employees sued the company, alleging they were paid less than their male counterparts and were exposed to a hostile workplace.

This followed Trevor Edwards, the former Nike brand president who was viewed by many as the natural successor to Parker, resigning in March after women who worked at the company conducted an internal survey on gender discrimination and presented the results to Parker.

These issues were not discussed during the call. ■

BUSINESS

Fitch: Lampert’s Proposal Not Enough to Save Sears

- Annual liquidity needs are estimated at more than \$600 million.

BY VICKI M. YOUNG

Edward S. Lampert’s bailout plan to eliminate \$4.35 billion in Sears Holdings Corp.’s debt load isn’t enough to avoid further restructuring. That’s according to credit ratings agency Fitch Ratings, which said the proposals are “insufficient to avoid further restructuring given negative EBITDA trends [earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization] and ongoing liquidity needs.”

Lampert’s plan includes \$1.75 billion in asset sales, comprising the Kenmore brand and the Sears home improvement and services businesses. The idea was raised by Lampert earlier this year in an effort to stave off a Sears bankruptcy filing down the road. The plan for ESL, Lampert’s hedge fund, to acquire the businesses was formalized into a proposal in August. In addition, the plan counts on \$1.47 billion in real estate transactions and a \$1.12 billion debt conversion. The latter would make debt holders become stockholders. And while it would cut the debt load by \$4.35 billion, it would still leave Sears owing \$1.24 billion.

Sears said, “The board has directed Sears’ management and its advisers to work closely with ESL to seek to pursue liability management transactions, and has referred the proposed real estate transactions to the existing special committee.”

“We will now be working aggressively to execute liability management transactions so that we can extend our runway and continue executing on our transformation strategy. At the same time, we’ll continue to move forward with our other planned liquidity and cost measures,” a Sears spokesman said.

Lampert earlier this month raised the possibility of a bankruptcy filing when the company reported second-quarter earnings. He has already dangled next month as a possible time frame for a bankruptcy filing if his plan isn’t accepted. The time element could be because Sears has \$134 million in debt due on Oct. 15. And this isn’t the first time the company has raised the bankruptcy possibility. In March 2017, the retailer had its potential-bankruptcy moment when, in a Securities and Exchange Commission filing, Sears warned about its ability to continue operations as a going concern.

Fitch Ratings on Tuesday said Sears faces “significant near term liquidity constraints,” attributing that to the \$134 million due on Oct. 15 for second lien notes, as well as “associated debt maturity reserve requirements under its credit facility agreement on Oct. 1, 2018.”

The ratings agency, which considers the proposal a distressed debt exchange, said even if the financial restructuring goes through, Sears would likely still have annual liquidity needs in “excess of \$600 million annually,” with EBITDA expected to “remain negative in the \$500 million to \$600 million range. Ongoing cash interest expense was estimated at \$88 million.” ■

BEAUTY

Huda Taps Nathalie Kristo as U.S. President

- Helena Sampson joins Huda as European president, while NYX names Kristo’s successor.

BY ALLISON COLLINS AND ELLEN THOMAS

Nathalie Kristo, who was most recently global brand president of NYX, is joining Huda Beauty as U.S. president.

At NYX, she will be succeeded by Yann Joffredo, who will now serve as the firm’s global brand president.

In her new role, Kristo is tasked with driving growth for the Dubai-based business in North America. Kristo spent 18 years with L’Oréal, working in the U.S. and Canada. During her time with NYX, Kristo oversaw the digitally native brand’s aggressive expansion into brick-and-mortar retail with freestanding stores in North America and Europe. The brand also rolled out into the U.S. mass market and specialty retail doors, including Ulta Beauty, Walgreens, Target, CVS and Walmart.

Kristo was with NYX for four years, starting shortly after L’Oréal acquired the brand, and worked her way up from general manager of marketing and global business development. She was tapped to run NYX in 2017 following the departure of chief executive officer Scott Friedman, who went on to take the top job at Bellami, an Instagram-famous brand of clip-in hair extensions.

Kristo joins Huda Beauty shortly after Helena Sampson, who joined as European president in July. Sampson is tasked with growing the business in Europe. Before Huda, Sampson was internal vice



president of Kendo Brands at LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton, overseeing efforts for Fenty Beauty, Marc Jacobs Beauty, Kat Von D and Ole Henriksen in the U.K., Europe and Middle East.

“In just a short time, Huda Beauty has already become a powerful brand with its uniquely authentic, empowering and positive approach to beauty,” Kristo said. Both Kristo and Sampson will work closely with Huda Kattan, founder and ceo of Huda Beauty, as well as Mona Kattan, global president, and Chris Goncalo, chief operating officer, to grow regional teams in the U.S. and U.K.

“These roles are crucial to the growth and development of the brand so we spent a lot of time searching to ensure we found the perfect candidates to take responsibility. Both Nathalie and Helena bring incredible brand strategy expertise and knowledge of the industry, which will be invaluable for the future of Huda Beauty,” Kattan said.

The departures of Kristo and Sampson are in line with broader industry trends – many executives at major beauty companies have left to join start-ups in recent years.



Nathalie Kristo and Yann Joffredo

At NYX, Los Angeles-based Joffredo is set to start his role as global brand president this month. He is also a L’Oréal veteran, starting with the company in 2005 and holding a series of global leadership positions with brands including L’Oréal Paris, Maybelline and Essie. His most recent assignment has been global general manager of Baxter of California, where he oversaw international expansion of the men’s grooming brand and honed its digital strategy.

Joffredo joins NYX at a time when mass market makeup sales in the U.S. have been consistently flat or in decline, as consumers embrace shopping for beauty in specialty and online channels. The L’Oréal stable of brands – NYX, L’Oréal Paris and Maybelline – have been continual outliers with NYX as the leader, with sales routinely trending above category performance. Mass makeup and nail sales were flat for the 52 weeks ending Sept. 18, according to Nielsen data, compared to NYX, up 20.3 percent. Still, weak mass marketing conditions may be affecting the brand – four-week data from Nielsen ending Sept. 18 puts the brand up 15 percent. ■



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Jonathan Akeroyd,
Donatella Versace
and John Idol.

\$2.1B Versace Deal Recasts Kors

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

that have been built around one brand's explosive growth, but need to turn elsewhere to keep the enterprise moving forward.

It has long been a dream of the empire builders in the U.S. fashion industry to create multibrand giants to rival the European stalwarts LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton and Kering – a dream that so far has only been partially realized.

But Idol clearly has his sights set on the top of the heap. And he is just catching up to Kors' closest rival, Tapestry.

Kors, which also owns Jimmy Choo, logged sales of \$5 billion for the past 12 months according to S&P Capital IQ. Versace will send that number higher immediately and is forecast to log revenues of \$850 million this year, up from \$350 million in 2010.

After the deal, Kors will be about on par with Tapestry, which has sales of \$5.9 billion, but still far behind PVH Corp. at \$9.5 billion and VF Corp., which will have sales of over \$11 billion after jettisoning its jeans business. The European players are even bigger, with Compagnie Financière Richemont weighing in at \$12.5 billion Swiss francs (11 billion euros), Gucci parent Kering at 16.8 billion euros and LVMH leading the pack at 44.7 billion euros.

Scale creates power and influence, unlocks the benefits of a truly global positioning, creates management depth, lets companies nurture smaller businesses

and shields against downturns.

But it also doesn't come easy. Standard & Poor's said, "While the acquisition will increase the company's brand diversity and luxury brand exposure, we think the transaction initially adds less than 10 percent to the total [earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization] base and at a lower margin."

The debt rating agency, which revised its outlook on Kors to stable from positive, also noted the "integration and execution risks associated with the acquisition."

Wells Fargo analyst Ike Boruchow noted that Versace, at 22 times EBITDA, or 2.5 times sales, "the deal wasn't cheap." (Kors is valued at 9 times EBITDA or 2.5 times sales). However, Idol has raised analysts' eyebrows in the past with the amount he has paid for brands: The Jimmy Choo deal was at an adjusted EBITDA multiple of 17.5 times, a figure that also caused some consternation.

Boruchow added: "With the acquisition of Jimmy Choo and now Versace in a 12-month span, Kors is quickly evolving into a 'luxury house' of brands, and if they can hit their targets, the company should be able to drive 25 cents [per share] of accretion in Choo (from break-even today) and 50 cents in Versace (from a loss of 35-40 cents today) by fiscal year 2021 – creating 75 cents of M&A driven upside three years from now to come on top of any organic growth the model may generate."

And Idol is clearly looking for growth from all of the above.

The CEO was noncommittal about exact timing and said the Italian brand would hit its \$2 billion "over the next few years."

"You can see other Italian luxury

groups, which I won't name, that achieved far greater revenues than that in a very short period of time," Idol said in the interview, seemingly hinting at the powerhouse that is Gucci. "First and foremost we will focus on the brand's iconic message, and that's going to be led by Donatella and we will follow her lead. The focus is on the Italian heritage of luxury and craftsmanship. Made in Italy is very important and you will see it even more. We will move much more quickly, opening stores, an e-commerce platform and really capitalize on the brand's enormous reputation around the world. I think you will see us do that in a relatively short period."

"We gave the goal of \$1.2 billion in the next three years, it's a pretty rapid growth in a very short period of time and we will focus on doing that first," he added. "We'll let the consumer speak to us on when we get to the \$2 billion. It's very within our reach, we know that, we see it and you can measure that [against] other luxury and heritage brands from Italy."

Idol plans to open manufacturing plants in Italy and said "certainly shoes and accessories are going to be the areas where we will make investments in factories in Italy." He emphasized Jimmy Choo's "enormous shoe business" and said the category is one "we would like to control more with our own manufacturing," leveraging Versace and Michael Kors there as well.

"Clearly accessories are an area where we will need to have manufacturing capabilities in Italy to grow in size and scale," he said, and not only through acquisitions but also by building facilities.

"That's something that is part of a long-term vision that will happen over the next 12 to 36 months and you will see that implemented throughout the company."

All of this change will require a melding of the Kors and Versace corporate cultures.

So far, the people at the top seem to be getting on famously.

Asked if it was a long courtship, Idol laughed and said: "Donatella does everything very quickly, that's why she is still successful. I'm having trouble keeping up with Donatella, to be honest with you. I thought I had a lot of energy and enthusiasm, but I have met my match. It was a very, very short period of time, we met and we realized very quickly that we shared the same vision on luxury, heritage and fashion. Not in any order but those three put together and knowing Donatella's belief in that and our wanting to support her vision in all three of those things, it was pretty simple I think for the both of us to move forward."

It is noteworthy that the American company reached out overseas, again, to expand. Idol said that while there are "very talented designers" in the U.S., luxury goods from Europe simply resonate.

"We just made a decision about a year ago that consumers understand European luxury on a global basis better than any of the historical American brands and we felt that luxury is a very sustainable market for us to be in as a group over the long-term, so that's what really encouraged us to focus on European companies," he said. "We are done with acquisitions right now. We are going to focus on growing Versace, which is super important for us, Jimmy Choo and Michael Kors."



A look from the Versace spring show.



A look from the Michael Kors spring show.



A shoe from the Jimmy Choo women's spring collection.

Jonathan Akeroyd will continue to serve as ceo of Versace and said he was “very excited” to work directly with Idol, who he has known professionally for 25 years.

Asked about his first tasks, Akeroyd said “two years in, it’s great that we’ve already started the journey, the platform has been set, and I genuinely believe now working with this new group, with Idol and further investments, we can just accelerate things now.”

Akeroyd said three main drivers have been identified: “We’ll be building a stronger accessories business; further investments in marketing, and further investments in retail development. We are set up and we are ready to go and I think with the extra support we can just move even faster. We are all aware of the journey that we are going on and now we can move faster.”

“The core business is the first line and that has been bringing our growth and we are very much focusing on that,” he said.

Akeroyd is also seeking to calm any internal jitters over the deal – especially questions as to whether one of Kors’ first moves would be to replace Donatella Versace as the brand’s creative head.

In a memo sent to Versace employees and obtained by WWD, he said: “I would like to reassure all of you that Donatella Versace will continue in her role of leadership of the creative vision of the brand. Donatella is key to the spirit of innovation, empowerment and diversity that lies at the core of Versace, and she is very excited about this development, as you will hear from her. I want to reassure all of you that both Donatella and I are fully committed to this new chapter for the house we all love so much; significantly, the Versace family will become shareholders in Capri Holdings Limited, which demonstrates their strong belief that this is the right move for the company and a long-term proposition.”

It remains to be seen how the deal – and the changes that inevitably flow from it – reverberate with the consumer.

“The news of Versace’s acquisition by Michael Kors Holdings will come as quite a shock to followers, admirers and customers of the iconic Italian brand, which has always been characterized by its fierce narrative and aesthetic as well as its strong family values and independence,” said Florence Allday, research analyst at Euromonitor International. “However, several years of a difficult global luxury climate, declining growth and stiff competition from brands like Louis Vuitton, Gucci and Dior, make the sale less surprising.” ■

Donatella Versace On Michael Kors Deal, Her Role

WWD talked to the designer Tuesday, just after Michael Kors Holdings agreed to buy Versace for \$2.1 billion.

“An actual icon.”

This is how Michael Kors Holdings’ chairman and chief executive officer John Idol described Donatella Versace shortly after reaching a \$2.1 billion deal to buy her family’s company, which she steered for two decades.

Idol emphasized her “incredible celebrity following,” as well as “her leadership in the fashion field” and said the designer is “even more relevant today than any other time in her history.”

Quite an introduction, and in an interview with WWD, it was clear that, while this might very well be, Versace is not one to dwell on what had been achieved as she looks ahead to the future. As she put it, she “can’t wait to restart” with this new adventure.

She couldn’t dwell when she suddenly and tragically found herself leading the company after her brother Gianni’s murder in 1997. She chose to continue to build the business

in an increasingly competitive market and now that work has paid off.

Her attachment to the family company and its heritage have steered her decision-making over the years, leading her to this historic moment.

During a phone interview with WWD, the designer reiterated how happy she was, sounding energized and determined – and a few times breaking into a chuckle. A champion of girl power, Versace is writing a new chapter for her company, and for the publicly listed Kors.

Here, a conversation with the designer shortly after the deal was made public.

WWD: Why now and why with Michael Kors?

Donatella Versace: I must say I wasn’t even thinking about such a choice. I was happy with Jonathan Akeroyd [Versace’s ceo], we had a lot of success over the past year and he did a lot of wonderful things for the



Donatella Versace

company. I’ve been approached by many people and most of them, I didn’t really care for. But I have known John Idol for years, I wanted to talk to him, and the connection was immediate. I realized he could help grow the company more quickly and that he would bring

e-commerce skills, which we could not have had at that level otherwise. And he is passionate. So it was the fastest deal in the world [laughing].

WWD: This really changes things for you – you secured the future of the company and are investing in a public company.

D.V.: I like this very much. As you know all the family, we have reinvested in Capri Holding because we really believe in this project. Yes, I sold but I feel it is a bit mine, this Capri Holdings, which is not only Versace but also Jimmy Choo and Michael Kors. I am very happy. I am not afraid and can’t wait to restart.

WWD: Some Italian media have been underscoring how too many Italian brands have been sold to foreign investors. How do you feel about that?

D.V.: This is a beautiful thing that happened to Italy, because Versace is an Italian company and it will remain in Italy. Not

only this, but we will also create a lot of jobs. If the company grows, you need more people – I don’t understand the controversy. We did not become Americans – we are Italian and will remain Italian. The fact that the company is publicly listed on Wall Street is added value.

WWD: In light of this growth, do you plan to build your team?

D.V.: Surely, I will see what to do. I have a beautiful team, and naturally, as you know, I am always open to young new talents that can help me, that talk to me and bring a different message and lifestyle. We will set up new factories and this can only help Italy.

WWD: Did you think of the name Capri?

D.V.: [laughing] No, John Idol adores Italy and his wife is Italian. He strongly wanted the Capri name, and the three cliffs are the three brands.

– LUISA ZARGANI



FUR: A SUSTAINABLE, VERSATILE CHOICE

Emerging designer and two-time Remix Competition Winner Chunchen Liu discusses why fur is her preferred material.

As the fur debate rages on, brands and retailers have been divided regarding its use. But the material's inherently natural origins are appealing to young, contemporary designers who seek ways to create more sustainable collections.

According to emerging Chinese fashion designer Chunchen Liu, the winner of the ASIA REMIX 2018 fur design competition and the INTERNATIONAL REMIX design competition, supported by Vogue Talents, fur is a "beautiful, sustainable, and natural material with endless creative possibilities." Here, Liu discusses her experience working with Saga Furs, the sustainabil-

ity of fur, and the ongoing support from the fashion community.

WWD: Would you elaborate on your experience with the REMIX competition? **Chunchen Liu:** Winning the REMIX competition was a very big surprise. I participated in the competition completely by coincidence while studying at Bunka Fashion College in Japan in 2016. Part of our summer project was to partake in a competition — we were going to complete a course on fur, so I chose the Japan Fur Design Competition. To my surprise, a few weeks later, I was told I was selected as one of the finalists. I hadn't even thought of entering a competition before! Next came the process of production, which was both complex

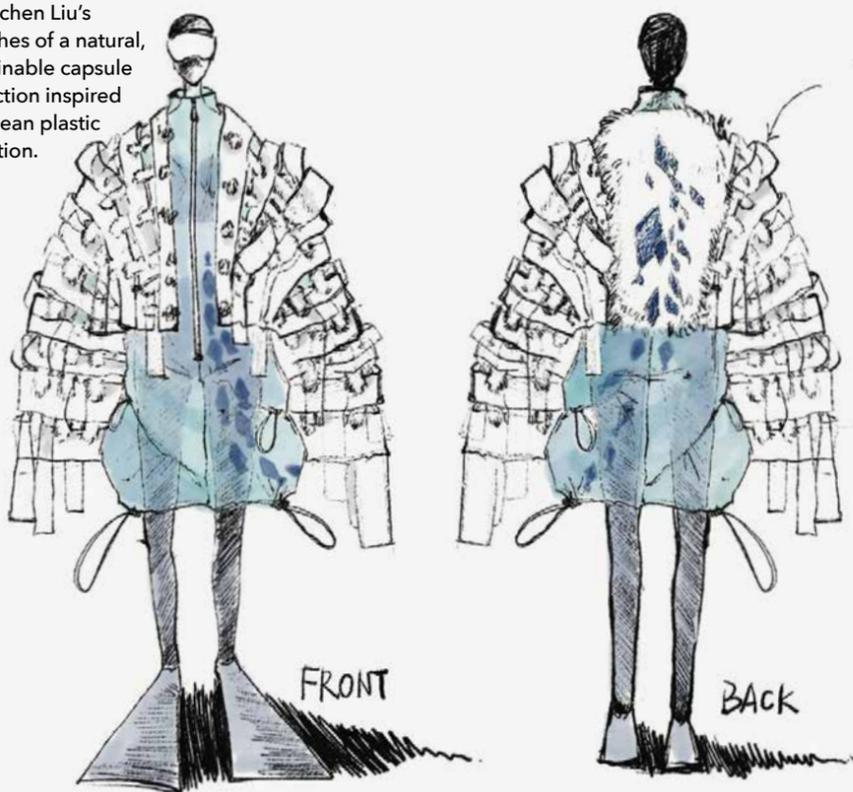
and fascinating. I learned quite a lot about using fur in garments and adapted my ideas to integrate fur alongside other materials. I wanted the main look and body of my design to be denim but wanted to mix fur with it, so I created two layers: the outer layer, which was made of fur, and the inner layer, which was made of denim.

The materials could be detached from each other to make it more versatile, which is the same concept of "detachable jackets" seen in outdoor wear. This concept then became an important focus in my designs. I won the competition with this garment, and was then asked if I would like to take part in the REMIX Asia edition, a youth design competition promoting the use of natural fur in gar-

ments, and I won the grand prize again — that is how I qualified to automatically participate in the REMIX International Edition, hosted in Milan during Milan Fashion Week.

I only had one garment made and needed to produce two more pieces in a period of two months in order to compete — I was also then completing my master's course in the U.K. It was a big challenge, but also an amazing opportunity, and with the help of the Japanese Fur Federation, the International Fur Federation, and a few local fur retailers in the U.K. who supported me, I managed to get ready for the competition and entered with a collection of three fur garments, keeping the denim and white fur as a key focus in the look, and I

Chunchen Liu's sketches of a natural, sustainable capsule collection inspired by ocean plastic pollution.



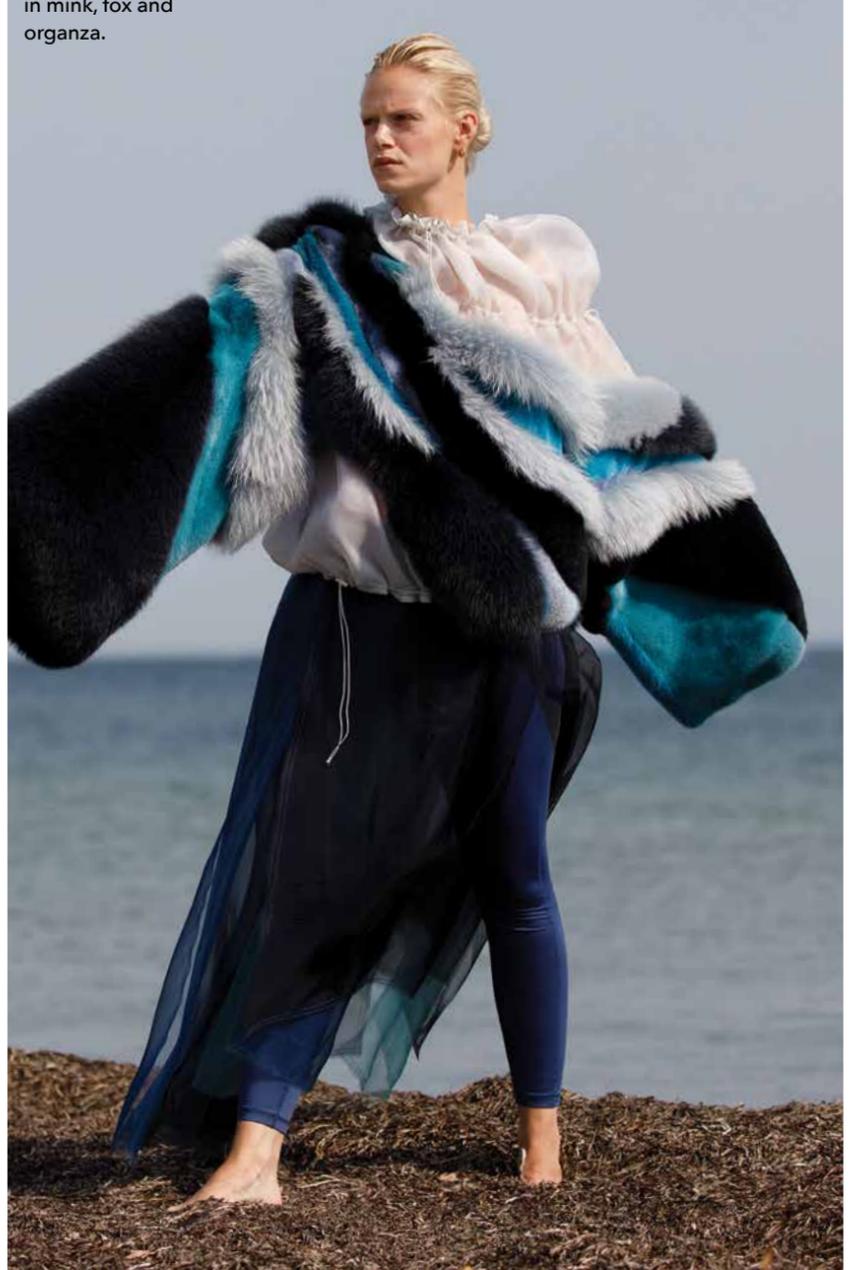
Award-winning designer Chunchen Liu.



Bolero in mink, fur and Tyvek.



Oversized sweater in mink, fox and organza.



won it. I was very lucky, not just to learn the craft of working with fur, which was completely new to me, but also for the many friendships I made along the way with amazingly talented creative people, which I will always treasure.

WWD: As a prize for winning REMIX, you had the opportunity to produce your first capsule collection in collaboration with Saga Furs. What inspired this collection, and in what ways is it natural and sustainable?

C.L.: The inspiration for my capsule collection that I produced with Saga Furs came from the impact of plastics and synthetic materials on the environment and the oceans. Current data shows that more than 8 million tons of plastic waste is dumped into the ocean each year, and this is just the tip of the iceberg. These plastics and waste do not biodegrade and are then eaten by marine organisms, which in turn enter our food chain. The plastic wastes have become part of those marine life ecosystems and they threaten their livelihood daily.

Unfortunately, our evolution is accompanied by overconsumption of natural resources in an unsustainable manner, which is overwhelming our environment. Nature is our only home, and this will affect us humans greatly.

This served as my inspiration to create a collection that contrasts the above by using fur, a completely biodegradable and environmentally friendly material made mainly by hand, as opposed to factory machines with petroleum-based operations and heavy CO2 emissions. I then mixed fur with other natural materials including organza made of silk and Tyvek. Tyvek is an environmentally

“
Fur is a beautiful, sustainable, and natural material with endless creative possibilities.”

**CHUNCHEN LIU,
DESIGNER AND
TWO-TIME REMIX
COMPETITION WINNER**

friendly non-woven fabric, produced by E. I. Du Pont Company, a high strength, waterproof, non-toxic, non-stimulating, non-corrosive and easy to recycle material that is even widely used in architecture. After use, its complete combustion products are carbon dioxide and water. Using fur and a mix of those responsible materials, I created this natural, sustainable capsule collection to raise awareness and help people understand the implications of plastics and overconsumption.

WWD: Would you elaborate on your experience working with the master furriers at Saga Furs?

C.L.: I had a week of technical training at the Saga Design Centre, a beautiful

space with a lot of heritage and creative energy. It was a wonderful, enriching experience. I learned many new technical skills and discovered technologies and innovations in fur making that I never knew existed before. Saga Furs helped me implement all those useful discoveries into my collection. The experience helped me also improve my initial sketches and designs and elevated both the look and the creativity within the collection. I also learned about their ethical sourcing and their sustainable practices – it was important for me to fully understand the material I am working with. I did fall in love with the craftsmen inside the center; they are very kind and skillful artisans.

WWD: Why did you decide to work with fur?

C.L.: I have to say, starting my work with fur was completely coincidental. But since then, after completing the series of competitions and producing my first capsule collection with Saga Furs, I understand this material much more. And I know why I like fur: Fur is a beautiful, sustainable, and natural material with endless creative possibilities. It is a very attractive material to me.

WWD: Why, in your opinion, is fur a more sustainable and responsible choice than comparable synthetics?

C.L.: Fur has strong sustainable credentials. Unlike comparable petroleum-based synthetics made of plastic, natural fur is a completely biodegradable material, which does not further burden nature. Every stage of fur production is sustainable: Fur farmed animals eat waste and bio-materials from food

production and the fur farming waste is turned into useful products, such as biofuels and fertilizers. Also, natural fur lasts for decades if professionally cared for, unlike chemical-based fur that ends up in landfill sites often after a single season. Fur can also be passed down through generations and remodeled and restyled in a variety of ways to keep it modern.

WWD: How has the fashion industry supported the decision to center your collections around the use of fur?

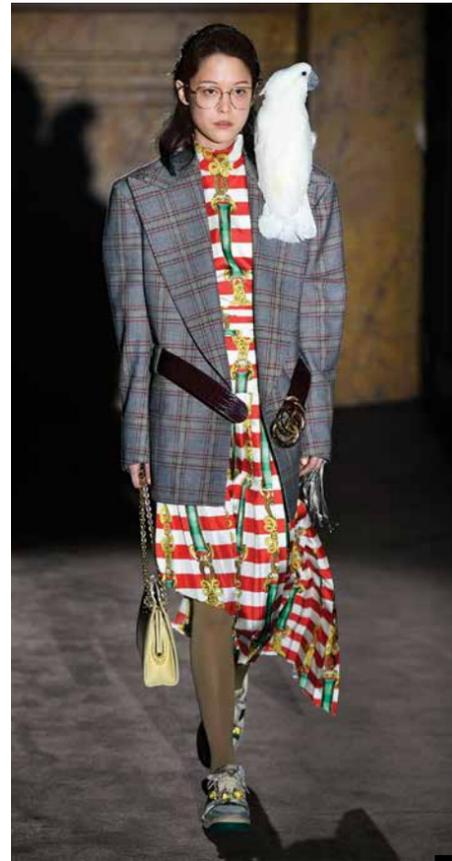
C.L.: Of course, having the support of the fashion industry is very important to me. As a future designer, I would like to have the choice and freedom to explore all my creative energy in using and innovating with materials that appeal to me and are sustainable and responsible. Fur is one of those materials that I have discovered and learned about that is in line with the fashion industry centering itself on sustainability.

I always base my designs on the fashion knowledge that I have acquired through my studies, but with the use of fur, for example, I push myself to innovate with technology and style to make the designs look more appealing and younger. I am always learning.

WWD: Will we see further use and exploration of natural fur in your upcoming collections?

C.L.: I am currently completing an M.A. illustration program in the U.K., and in the future, I would like to apply my illustration knowledge into my fashion designs and of course further explore how I can integrate fur onto those designs, if I get the chance.

The Reviews



 **The Collections**
Paris

Gucci

Do you ever long for the good old days in fashion? You know, when all a girl and boy had to do to get attention was carry their own heads in their hands? Life is more complicated now. Now, they create their own experimental theater, inspired by a grainy, creepy-chic silent film by Seventies' experimental theater impresarios Leo de Berardinis and Perla Peragallo, about a girl with black eyes (smudged or punched?) who looks like a Gucci girl on a bad acid trip, and who freshens up with a splash of urinal water. Thus inspired, they create their own performance-art world populated by the likes of Janis Joplin and a boy in a jeweled cod piece. They dress with wanton disregard for convention, some geek-chic-faux-plain, others, as if they got dressed in the dark in a crazy-ass vintage store that just received a costume shipment from waaaay off Broadway,

spliced with Goodwill items chosen for their ironic potential. And then this girl and boy throw a party for like-minded types, and Jane Birkin wanders into the middle of it and sings like an angel with a past. And, oh yes, there's Mickey Mouse (as a handbag) and Dolly Parton (on denim).

That was Gucci.

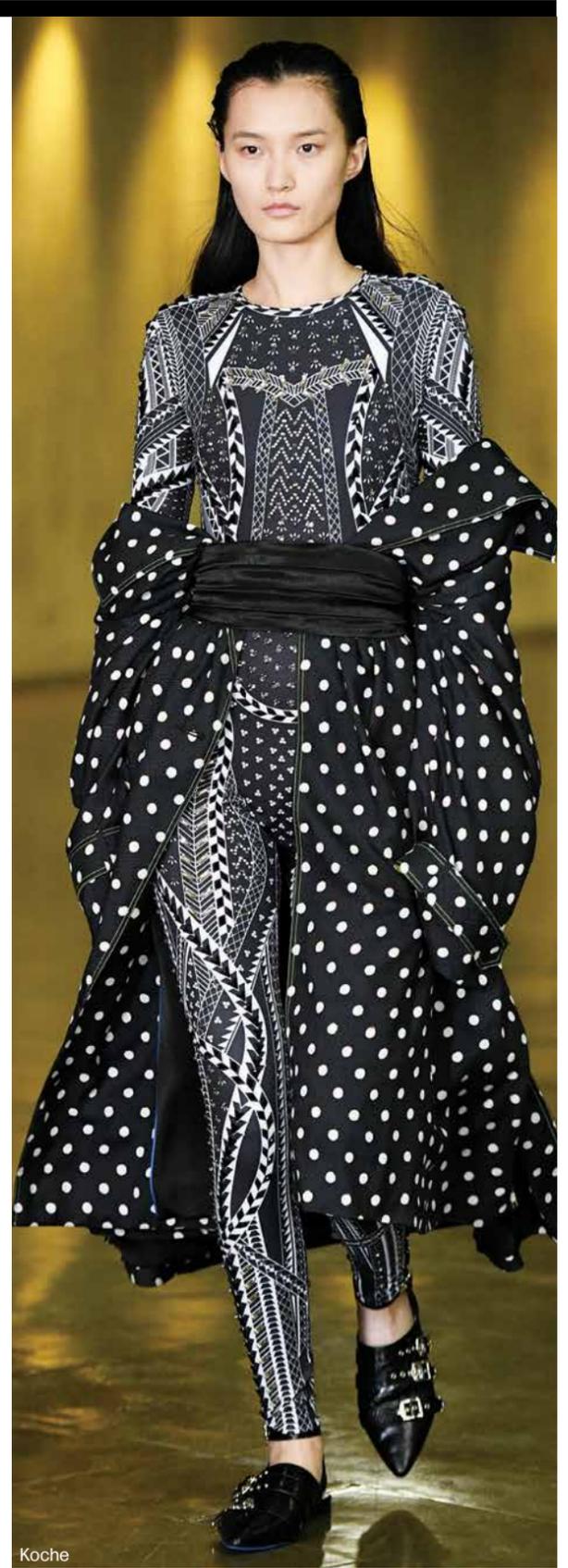
Alessandro Michele has done something remarkable at the Florentine house. In an instant, he made us all care again with something wild and outrageous and completely antithetical to the Gucci we first loved and to the Gucci that had settled into prosaic merchiness. Through several years, Michele has maintained the heady magic with a dizzying fusion of informed, referential, experimental, highly decorative fashion and street, rooted in a genuinely artistic vision and delivered with fearless assurance. While seemingly random and insane, it is in

fact brilliantly – and tactically – planned. In his post-show press conference on Monday, Michele talked about his discovery of de Berardinis and Peragallo (“they changed the rules of traditional theater”); the honor of having Birkin perform (she’s “a poet, like a Middle Ages troubadour”); and why he showed at a theater, Le Palace, “(a magic place where you get in, and something happens)”. He found the history-rich venue, a one-time famous nightclub, the right place to “reconnect high culture and popular culture,” and that it would be “nice to reactivate the underground scene.”

But with sales upward of six billion euros, Gucci is way above sea level. It just is. To suggest that it can inaugurate a genuine underground (if such were even possible anymore) is to ignore the basic reality of a bigger mainstream luxury behemoth. Deep

down, Michele knows that; at the press conference, he even worked in a couple of specifics about the clothes: “I was really obsessed with tailleur, blazers and suits,” and, “I really take care of the shoulders.” In a world in which blazers, suits and shoulders matter, Michele has dared to reimagine Gucci as a cool enclave for eccentric outsider types, the more offbeat, the better, with remarkable success. He has imbued powerhouse Gucci with niche cachet, making it both spectacular fashion curiosity and spectacular commercial juggernaut.

Yet it is now spinning toward self-parody. Truth is, it may already be there, but the trip has been incredibly inviting, fun to watch, and filled with great clothes, so who cares? So far, so great. But when the frenzy calms, and it can't last forever, Michele will have to evolve and more tightly focus his baseline of merry misfit mayhem. More isn't always more. — Bridget Foley



Marine Serre

Marine Serre may very well be the new model for a designer starting her own brand in today's complex fashion/geo-political/digital/hyperconnected world. It's not enough to bring just good designs to the table, so Serre showed up, just two years ago, ready to engage on all relevant levels. She had logo-ready iconography; references to sport, street and societal/cultural awareness, and ideas on how to confront the fashion's ecosystem of excess and waste in a proactive way. She also had very good designs.

Serre's spring collection marked an expansion and escalation of strategy. Aesthetically the lineup, titled Hardcore Couture, reinforced the scarf-dressing, silk moire turned sporty, crescent moon motifs and upcycling of her past shows, with a Formula 1 theme as an access point to new decorative motifs and riffs on racing gear. The show also introduced four new lines within the main collection: Gold Line, which show notes described as "avant-garde ready-to-wear;" Green Line, "upcycled eco-futurism," assembled from preexisting product; White line, "core brand rtw," which included collabs with Trylex, Nike, Converse and Melissa; and finally Red Line, which is "couture." The terms calls for a second set of quotation

marks since Serre's definition of couture adheres to the notion of one-off garments, here, all made from used pieces, rather than the traditional standards of haute couture.

Interesting though it was that Serre felt compelled to break down her still nascent label into subsets, it felt needlessly complicated. The collection presented cohesively as a whole. Without her callouts that denim was part of Green and the show concluded with Red, it would have been difficult discern which from what.

Though Serre's point of view is strong, there are still glimpses of the Demna Gvasalia school of thought in her rearview mirror. New versions of her's crescent moon, on bodysuits, tights, tight-covered Nikes and Converse, and a dress with a bralet over it, as well as pieces stamped with slogans from her past collections – FutureWear and Radical Call For Love – were present. From a branding perspective, the label is primed for those who want to wander over from the Gucci/Balenciaga/Vetements/Off-White club.

The upcycled pieces were her most interesting proposition. The show closed with riffs on classical couture shapes made from old stuff. A voluminous black jacket was embroidered with souvenir keychains. A draped dress was made from used white sports Ts. A mermaid gown had a scuba

suit bodice and pouf sleeves and a ruffled skirt done in children's bed sheets. Grungy reworked vintage is nothing new. Serre's version's struck a chord of ironic cool that rang familiar. What is sincerely cool is where she could take her commitment to working with preexisting materials – there's a lot more out there than your brother's old sheets and T-shirts. – Jessica Iredale

Koche

At a time when the United Nations is meeting in New York, discord between nations has rarely appeared so high. Christelle Kocher has other ideas.

Her spring collection was an ode to unity, under the guise of a celebration of women worldwide. That could be a soignée Parisienne, strutting down Avenue Montaigne in a fuchsia blazer, or a young girl in Indonesia going out with friends in a sequined top and matching headscarf, paired with pleated track pants.

"It's a homage to diversity, a rallying call in which fashion can be a good vector of unification," Kocher said backstage after the show, held at the French Communist Party headquarters in Paris, a saucer-shaped building designed by Oscar Niemeyer in the Sixties.

Kocher has always connected with a more nuanced vision of Paris than most people

who live here experience – the result of shuttling between her job as artistic director of Maison Lemarié, part of Chanel's stable of specialty ateliers, and her own studio in the multiethnic neighborhood of Belleville in the northeast of Paris.

This season, she broadened that vision to places she has visited, and those she dreams of discovering. A black bodysuit was embroidered with silver sequins in geometric motifs inspired by the tattoos of Berber hill tribes, while a blue-and-black lace-trimmed dress melded a cheongsam collar with striped tracksuit panels.

She splashed men's ponchos and tops with pixellated patterns, checks and ethnic prints, taking advantage of her ongoing partnership with The Woolmark Co. to develop Japanese fabrics with flocking techniques borrowed from sportswear.

There were riffs on the soccer jersey dresses that have become a signature of the label, but Kocher also leaned more heavily into the dressy part of her repertoire, with nods to Eighties Paris couture.

"There isn't a single straight line in this building. Oscar Niemeyer really designed it as a tribute to women, and I thought it was beautiful to come back to a certain femininity, while remaining comfortable and open-minded," she explained. That sounds like something all women can agree on. – Joelle Diderich



Ellery



Undercover



Ottolinger

Ellery

Kym Ellery drew on Paul Kos' sound installation "Sound of Ice Melting" for her spring collection. "I really like the idea that it was a little bit existential and made you think about, 'Yeah, what would that be like?'" she said during her presentation. "I think of the Ellery woman as quite intellectual, and I wanted to create a collection of wearable but unique pieces that are for women who are inquisitive and thinkers."

Mission accomplished. Ellery built her brand around restrained retro-futurism and bold volumes that elevate her clothes beyond the immediately accessible. They're anchored in classics – tailoring, feminine puffs and flared pants – but exaggerated beyond the basic. For spring, she worked in icy, fresh colors, such as silver, gray, yellow and pool blue. A long silver foiled trench had a slight feminine flare to its shape and was worn over a sunny yellow knit top. A gray knit shirt-dress in an ultralight weave had a zip polo collar and a loose, asymmetrical hem. What looked like a classic blue and white toile de jouy on a blazer and matching pants featured dinosaurs rather than 18th-century pastoral scenes. A crop top with modernly puffed sleeves was encrusted with snowflake embroidery. Everything was ultimately quite wearable. It didn't require deep thoughts to get it, but it will take a bit of confidence to carry it off. – *Jessica Iredale*

Undercover

Following on from his men's show in June, themed around "new warrior" tribes, Jun Takahashi divided the hyper-playful collection – "The Seventh Sense" – into seven groups, each with their own universe.

The designer paid tribute to the work of British photographer Mick Rock, who documented David Bowie's fifth studio album, "The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars," on a capsule of colorful basics embroidered with the singer's face, including a bright pink-and-green Lurex sweater, and a black shirt with an all-over print and star-shaped buttons, which will likely set the tills ringing.

An out-of-this-world group inspired by John Derian's decoupage technique featured planet-print platforms and coats swirling with glow-in-the-dark planet motifs. More down to earth was the "otaku" geek-themed line centered on colorful knitwear and shirt hybrids and mesh blousons sporting transfers of cult Eighties manga hero, "Creamy Mami, the Magic Angel."

Other highlights included the smocked bombers and girly dresses embroidered with pixelized hearts, and a wardrobe set for lovers of all things bright and chemical, including a high-shine plastic blue anorak and oversize yellow parka. – *Katya Foreman*

Ottolinger

Cosima Gadiet and Christa Bösch's collections always trace back to their native Switzerland, utilizing its traditional lace, craftwork, even bucolic cowbells, yet taking them way out of their comfort zone in interesting ways.

For spring, they sent everything on a trip, perhaps psychedelic, emotional, or physical, maybe all of the above. The models were dressed in clothes indicating they had been through something. Their signature denim, with its warped seam work, was cut into an acid green cropped vest with curvy, homespun laces and worn with pants that had had a run-in with a blowtorch. Denim biker shorts and jackets were also burned and battered and knits came in angry, flame patterns. Then the look shifted from postapocalyptic to a happier new world with satin techno pieces, lace, gingham, Hawaiian florals and The New York Times logo that were cut up, reassembled and layered into do-it-yourself looks appropriate for an otherworldly rave.

The overall effect of the curving cutouts, ad-hoc layers and ample lace-up, strappy accents was improvisation, as if everything was made with whatever limited resources were lying around, but it belied some of the complexity and creativity of the collection. – *Jessica Iredale*

The Collections Paris

Afterhomework

For Afterhomework's first show on the official Paris schedule, design duo Pierre Kaczmarek and Elena Mottola reached out to accessories designer Isaac Reina to create the boxy leather bags that peppered the models' looks.

"He works with Raf Simons for Calvin Klein," Kaczmarek said backstage, visibly excited. "It was important to us to work with people like him, because we need their support and experience to grow. We've never been to fashion school."

Billing themselves as the youngest designers on the fashion calendar, the duo presented grown-up versions of previous offerings in black, white and blue. Off-the-shoulder deconstructed shirts were paired with teeny skirts or stretch joggers; overalls were delivered in a wide-leg version, and ruched sleeves were added to a spaghetti-strap dress.

A pop of color was added by a red "Afterhomework Polo Club" sweater, an obvious nod to similar Ralph Lauren styles. An AHP logo was also spotted on a black towel thrown over shoulders, mimicking the font of the Calvin Klein logo. — *Fleur Burlet*

Awake

Capping with the Bee Gees' "More Than a Woman," Natalia Alaverdian had visibly matured in this covetable collection that carried just the right balance of ideas and wearability.

The conservative-chic cloths and silhouettes were broken by weird color combinations and nature prints, from bamboo and canyon prints to the eyes of albino zebras peering out from blazers that lent a slightly alien edge. The designer experimented with Japanese constructions and organic forms, with metal ball necklaces punctuating some of the looks. Standouts in the lineup of 52 looks included the color-blocked monochrome mindresses with accentuated waists.

Signature surrealist touches like the deconstructed shirts — their collared necks transplanted to the fronts or backs — and cape shirts sporting porcelain pins in the form of tiny clasped hands at the front also disturbed the silhouettes, though with a light hand.

Particularly pleasing were the fluid pleated skirts paired with minimalist kimono tops which, like the rest of the collection, felt modern, elegant and wearable but with weird twist.

— *Katya Foreman*



Afterhomework



Awake



Jour/Né

Jour/Né

Léa Sebban and Jerry Journo had Ibiza — and the Spanish island's iconic Mar y Sol café — in mind when designing their highly wearable spring collection full of elevated beachwear, long spaghetti-strap dresses and short combos of various lengths.

Models walked a red and orange runway whose undulations were echoed in some of the fabrics used, such as the printed long-sleeve shirt and trousers or the suit made of wavy eyelets.

There was a naughty-yet-nice attitude to this collection. For one look, a mint-green, two-piece satin swimsuit with high-waisted, frilly bottoms and ribbon looped around a model's midriff was overlaid with an open printed Oxford shirt. In another, a cropped white sleeveless eyelet top was worn with a long side-slit tie-dyed skirt.

Colorful beaded accessories, like handbags, belts and a necklace, and summery prints — think fruits and veggies — helped inject even more zing into this spirited collection. — *Jennifer Weil*

FASHION

Justin Thomas Expects Strong Matchup At Ryder Cup

● The U.S. team will be dressed by Ralph Lauren for the tournament that will be held outside Paris from Sept. 28 to 30.

BY JEAN E. PALMIERI

Justin Thomas has been to the Ryder Cup three times, but this is the first time he'll actually be teeing it up in the prestigious U.S. versus Europe matchup.

"I was very fortunate as a kid because my father worked for the PGA so I was able to go two times in the States and once in Wales," Thomas said. "I've also watched it on TV, so I understand the importance, but I'm excited to be on the other side of the ropes this time and to be able to play with a great group of guys."

As the number-four ranked golfer in the world, Thomas automatically qualified for the team and will join 11 other American luminaries in the game today: Bryson DeChambeau, Tony Finau, Rickie Fowler, Dustin Johnson, Brooks Koepka, Phil Mickelson, Patrick Reed, Webb Simpson, Jordan Spieth, Bubba Watson and Tiger Woods.

The biannual tournament will be held Sept. 28 to 30 at the Albatros Course of Le Golf National in Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines, a suburb of Paris.

Team USA holds a commanding lead in the overall results for the tournament, with 25 wins versus 12 for the Europeans (and two ties). And it is hoping to retain the cup that it won at Hazeltine in Minnesota in 2016.

Thomas said above and beyond the tournament itself, he's perhaps most honored to be able to represent the U.S. on a world stage. "I had the opportunity a few times in my career as a junior, but whenever you can represent your country, it's the greatest thing you can achieve. It really doesn't get any higher than this," he said.

Thomas was also chosen to play in the Presidents Cup last year, where the U.S. squares off against an international team from the rest of the world, except Europe. The U.S. also took home the win there.

But despite the prestige of that tournament, the Ryder Cup is perhaps more special. "We're going to be playing a strong team, probably the deepest team they've ever had," he said. The Europeans will field Paul Casey, Tommy Fleetwood, Sergio Garcia, Tyrrell Hatton, Rory McIlroy, Francesco Molinari, Alex Norén, Thorbjorn Olesen, Ian Poulter, Jon Rahm, Justin Rose and Henrik Stenson.

And because the tournament will be held on European soil, Thomas knows the U.S. squad won't be favorites. "There will be a lot of people there and it'll be very loud," he said, "and we're the underdogs as far as the fans are concerned."

But he's nonetheless expecting an exciting matchup, one that he and his teammates take very seriously.

And while he's hopeful that the Americans will prevail, he knows it's not a slam dunk. "All Ryder Cups are such toss-ups," he said. "It's the top 12 from both the U.S. and Europe. There are no bottom feeders there. Everyone is really good and the Europeans are executing on a course they know well. So there's a potential for a great matchup."

Thomas said although he played the course once during the French Open, he's no expert on it. Instead, he'll rely on the skills of his team, which are many.

"I'm really happy to be on the team with these guys who are so comfortable in the spotlight," Thomas said. "They know how to play when the big opportunities come around."

Another thing the team can count on is that it'll be well dressed. Thomas, who has been sponsored by Polo Ralph Lauren since he turned pro in 2013, will be sharing his favorite designer with his squad this time.

Ralph Lauren has been the official outfitter of the U.S. team since 2014 and will dress the caddies and spouses as well as the players. For the golfers, that includes the uniforms and outerwear they'll wear on the course as well as the tailored clothing they'll sport on arrival, during the opening ceremony and welcome dinner.

The outfits feature stripes and colorblocking, accented with patriotic logos and graphics grounded in an American color palette of red, white and blue and constructed from tech fabrics. "United We Stand" is printed on the interior waistband of all on-course pants, and a mapcamo print appears on selected outerwear, inspired by the Albatros Course. There are merino crewneck sweaters and half-zip pullovers, full-zip vests, quilted woven jackets and packable down jackets. The collection is also available to the public at the Ralph Lauren web site as well as select golf clubs and retail stores.

Thomas is especially fond of the outerwear pieces, particularly the one sporting a camo print of the course. "That really stuck out for me," he said.

His girlfriend Jill Wisniewski, who will join him at the tournament, is also "very excited to get her care package," he said.



Justin Thomas in a look by Ralph Lauren from the Ryder Cup collection.

"She and the other girlfriends feel very fortunate to be taken care of."

Thomas, who said he was wearing Polo before he inked the sponsorship deal, said he's gained a newfound respect for the brand after watching the design process for the Ryder Cup uniforms.

"I was really impressed by their creativity and how they can come up with different outfits with a red, white and blue theme every two years," he said.

What's also impressive is Thomas' résumé. The 25-year-old Kentucky native has won nine PGA Tour titles, has 12 other top 10s and was the PGA Tour's Player of the Year in 2017.

But Thomas is still not satisfied. "I don't think about rankings when I'm on the course, but when I'm off the course, I'm pretty determined to be the best I can," he said. "I'm upset that there are three people ahead of me. I was number one for a couple of weeks and I'm going to keep fighting to get back there – and hold it longer this time."

He could turn to one of his mentors for advice during the Ryder Cup: "There are a lot of guys I look up to, but Tiger was my idol growing up," he said. "When I was seven to 12, the way he dominated everything was so impressive, and fun to watch. Now we're on tour together and have become friends. It's awesome to be able to ask his advice, but when we tee it up, we're not really friends. We're trying to beat each other."

That's just the way it is with driven professionals.

Thomas admits that he doesn't really have any hobbies and during the off-season he watches a lot of TV, goes boating with friends, on vacation to the islands or home to Kentucky to catch a football game.

But his focus is to continue to work diligently on his game in hopes of regaining that top ranking. And his recent success also brings with it a whole other set of challenges as sponsors and media clamor for more of his time.

"It sure beats the alternative when nobody wanted to talk to me," he said. "I've gotten better at managing my time during tournament weeks. And I know that what really matters is the effort my team and I put in. There are always people who will be negative but I try to stay positive and the rest will take care of itself." ■

BUSINESS EXCLUSIVE

Byredo Chief Talks (Paris) Shop

● Ben Gorham is set to open a flagship and pop-up in the French capital.

BY JENNIFER WEIL

PARIS — Byredo is poised to broaden its retail footprint with a first flagship and pop-up slated to open in the French capital this week, days after inaugurating a store in London.

The flagship, situated at 199 rue Saint-Honoré in the 1st arrondissement, will open to the public on Thursday, while the ephemeral location, at 11 rue Debelleye in the Marais, debuts Sunday and remains operational through yearend.

Byredo founder Ben Gorham told WWD that since beginning his brand 11 years ago, he's focused on product and narrative.

"I always wanted to open retail, an important part of the vision, but I was quite specific in terms of how and when," he said. "Building a company from scratch takes time, especially in regards to our approach, [which] is quite thorough and sometimes even slow."

"But a few years ago, we started to feel

the brand maturity was there, and in cities like New York, London and Paris we have great followings and great clients," so the natural evolution was to have the anchor of stores there, he explained.

The flagship in Paris, Byredo's home base, encompassing all of its categories — fragrance, beauty and leather goods — and the pop-up focusing on just one idea — camping — are complementary, since they differ so dramatically.

The 2,220-square-foot flagship on two stories, still under construction, will be a mix of some things old and some things new. Take, for instance, the materials such as terrazzo, polished aluminum and wood that are found in Byredo's other stores. But there will also be a raw element involving the old building's structure and a ceramic-glazed brick component for displays.

"In all these retail ventures, I had the opportunity to work with great craftsmen," said Gorham. "Even though these stores [share] the same emotion, I really tackle them individually and try to understand and respect the place they are in — the city, the neighborhood. So it's

less about copy and paste and more about really creating something — in this case — for Paris."

Due to their long-standing working relationship, Gorham requested that design agency M/M Paris play a major role in the conception of the boutique, including creating a mural of sketches. Some of the agency's iconic art posters done with Sarah Morris are to be hanging as well.

"It was [about] looking at the city, and not only at our customers and following, but also our friends, and being able to get them to collaborate on this store," said Gorham. "It is really a privilege."

So, too, is the proximity to Byredo customers that the stores afford. That enables Gorham to better understand them and to have an opportunity to tailor assortments and create specific products for the various locations. "I think these stores deserve a unique facet," he said.

Meanwhile, the pop-up takes on a different character and purpose. It was imagined around the launch of Byredo's newest fragrance, called Eleventh Hour, out this month. "It's a fragrance imagined around the idea of being the last perfume on earth," said Gorham. "This entire pop-up is a build-out and an exploration of that idea in the form of a camping store."

But it will be no typical camping shop.

The 555-square-foot location with floors and walls constructed from Swedish pine sourced from a friend's mill is to have a selection of products — many done in collaboration with other creatives and artists — that will be revealed intermittently over the next three months.

"It's really a development of products beyond anything we've done," said Gorham, referring not least to a major food element. "It's our first time working around taste."

He signed on French chef Jean Imbert to create freeze-dried gourmet food for camping. One menu will be unveiled in November and a second in the following month.

"It's really interesting putting other people into different contexts and then seeing how that comes out," said Gorham. "There's obviously an experimental component to it, but it's also kind of challenging the traditional notions of camping and outdoor lifestyle."

Along with the especially created collaborative products, the camping store will carry items from the likes of Vargo, which makes titanium equipment, and Leatherman tools. It is to have a designated web shop, as well.

"An outdoor lifestyle over the last five, six years has become very important to me," said Gorham. ■

MEN'S

How Advisory Board Crystals Merges Wellness With Streetwear

Started by Remington Guest and Heather Haber, Abc. is a study in how customers want to shop and what they are buying into.

BY ARIA HUGHES

Outside of making somewhat interesting, limited-edition product, the loose formula for breaking through and succeeding in streetwear today goes as follows: 1. Be Supreme; 2. Be Supreme alumni; 3. Be associated with Kanye West or 4. Seed clothes to influencers who are probably also connected with West.

Neither Heather Haber nor Remington Guest, the couple behind Advisory Board Crystals, which is self-funded, have worked for Supreme, and while they idolize him and appreciate his candor, they don't know Kanye West. They also don't seed clothes to anyone, including Justin Bieber, who purchased their pants from Patron of the New and wore them earlier this month. And although they live in Los Angeles, which has turned into a breeding ground for streetwear brands that cross over into luxury territory, they orbit in their own very private world that's consumed by each other and building Abc., shorthand for Advisory Board Crystals.

"We don't know anyone," said Guest. "I know Scott Sternberg from Band of Outsiders, but that's just a different thing."

Despite being disconnected from the streetwear scene, over the course of two years Abc. has quickly become a key player in it. The couple has worked with retailers including Grailed, Colette, Bergdorf Goodman, Union and Barneys New York on capsule collections that quickly sold out, and built a following with their distinct crystal-infused dye technique and hand-crafted details.

The clothes connect to the greater good

of the world and the wearer, but in the most noncontrived way. Eternal youth, or living forever, is an ongoing theme for the brand. T-shirts feature terms like Eudaimonia, an Ancient Greek word that translates to "fulfillment," and certain pieces are constructed with fabric that shields the body from EMF radiation emitted by cell phones. Haber and Guest explain this information via extensive Instagram captions and sometimes zines that come with the purchase of product. And they don't confine their collaborations to clothing or fashion brands. They've created a Youth Elixir with Furnace Creek Farms and recently partnered with Wikipedia on a T-shirt to help support the platform.

"We are always on Wikipedia researching about wellness and filtering that into our brand," said Haber. "We want to offer information to live a better life, but not in a preaching or teaching way. Just by sharing the knowledge."

Haber and Guest met in Los Angeles in 2015 in the back seat of an Uber Pool car, and randomly crossed paths again later that day at the Ace Hotel. Haber grew up in Miami and studied fashion design at Otis College of Art and Design. She ran her own dress line, Haber, for a few seasons while interning for brands including Three as Four and Band of Outsiders. Guest, who is from New York, also worked for Band of Outsiders – there was no overlap between the two – and ran a food blog called The Cheap, The Best & The Hidden.

They discovered their shared obsession for crystals on their first date when Guest took Haber to a crystal store and bought her a lepidolite crystal, which helps relieve stress and anxiety. Over Thanksgiving they drafted a plan for Advisory Board Crystals, which wasn't meant to be a clothing brand, but rather a contemporary crystal store that also sold talismans and home decor. Remington met Chris Gibbs, the owner of Union, at a Noah pop-up in New



York where he mentioned Abc. and later presented the entire concept to him.

"I was blown away," said Gibbs. "They had thought everything out, even things that I never would have. They had all these creative ways that they wanted to connect with their customer. I thought it was really dope. Not to mention, they had a really great chemistry between the two of them."

The first collection, which was titled "What Took You So Long?" told the story of how they met and it featured a crystal pack along with hand-dyed, rose quartz infused T-shirts, which sold out almost immediately.

Tie-dye is trending in streetwear – see Online Ceramics – and crystals are having a moment with Millennials – see their office desks – but Haber and Guest believe their brand is more than its dyeing techniques and said they were into crystals long before they became a thing. They present crystals and wellness in a way that feels advisory rather than restrictive, which isn't typical – see Goop.

"I collected crystals because they were beautiful, but I didn't necessarily know the names of all of them or the healing properties," said Haber. "But we approach them from a viewpoint that's more pragmatic and less spiritual. We think that

if you believe in something, it is real and it does work for you. But it's not a black-and-white or a right-or-wrong thing."

It's uncanny how simpatico they are about very specific things. They both lament the decline of Virgin Airlines post Richard Branson, they both think Dover Street Market isn't as exciting as it used to be, and they both aren't into unofficial do-it-yourself projects, including the tie-dye sneakers people keep tagging them in on Instagram. They prefer certified partnerships like the one they had with Nike Milan on an Abc. Air Force 1 that was sold exclusively at Slam Jam. Guest, a Nike obsessive who refuses to work with any other sneaker brand, said it's hard to say whether it will get a wider release at some point.

They are also both critical consumers who believe retail needs to change and they're attempting to defy that by eschewing seasonal collections and working on capsules made exclusively for specific retailers and artists. The two are juggling about 10 collaborations with everyone ranging from artist Ai Weiwei to a luxury brand they can't disclose.

Guest said the clothes, which are made in the U.S., aren't marked up in an exorbitant way. He remembered a dip-dyed T-shirt from Band of Outsiders retailing for \$900, while a hand-dyed T-shirt from Abc. is usually around \$100. Some of that is because they do the labor themselves, but they also believe that pricing for their collection should be fair.

"I believe in exclusivity through availability, not by price point," said Guest. Haber added: "The paradigm has shifted. Girls mostly care about workout clothes, skin care, makeup and supplements. The other stuff is secondary. For myself, I don't buy anything. I wear all Abc. and random vintage or thrifted skirts that I've had for a while."

Despite this new paradigm, there are plans to launch a women's collection, which they said will be different from the men's line and won't include streetwear or ath-leisure. And despite being disenchanted with most retail, they are interested in opening their own physical space for Abc. But what would that look like?

"I mean, wouldn't everyone want to know?" said Guest. "We are secretive for a reason. It's only the two of us right now so we have to be protective. But it won't be your typical store." ■

FASHION

Tod's Unveils Capsule With Alessandro Dell'Acqua

The collection, consisting of nine shoe styles and seven rtw pieces, will hit stores from mid-November.

BY JOELLE DIDERICH



mix of capsules and limited editions in collaboration with different designers and friends of the house.

"We need to have to have – maximum every two months – a new product going on the market directly," Della Valle told a room full of fashion editors at a breakfast meeting at the Ritz Paris hotel during Paris Fashion Week.

"We try to remain what we are, and at the same time we put curiosity in our product, a lot of creativity and movement," added the executive, who was flanked by dell'Acqua and model Edie Campbell, who is the face of the collection. "We are doing more in one year than we did in the previous 20."

He noted that with the speed of social

media, collections could no longer be presented every six months. Tod's has tested the waters by joining forces with retailers such as Mytheresa.com, and said it also planned to enlist rising photographers, students and filmmakers to court a younger customer.

Dell'Acqua's collection consists of nine shoe styles and seven ready-to-wear pieces in three colorways – pink, black and tan – and will hit stores from mid-November, the brand said. It includes variations on its signature driving shoes such as pointy-toed moccasins with a velvet bow, or stretch ankle boots with curved heels.

"It's been a huge honor," the designer said, adding that he felt like he did at the beginning of his career, working with traditional craftsmen.

Tod's has been without a women's creative director since Alessandra Facchinetti stepped down in 2016, but plans to continue showing seasonal collections in Milan. Andrea Incontri is in charge of the men's division.

Smaller collections with more frequent drops fits in with the fashion world's latest strategy to try to excite consumers beyond the main seasons twice a year. Picking up from streetwear brands such as Supreme and Kith, luxury labels from Givenchy to Kition are adopting the concept.

Tod's has shaken up its executive ranks

to help push this strategy forward. In November, it revealed that chief executive officer Stefano Sincini was leaving after 33 years with the company, to be succeeded by Umberto Macchi di Cellere, previously managing director of worldwide sales at Bulgari.

Della Valle said then that 2018 was going to be a year of transition, citing the new team of managers and a strong component of innovation.

The group reported a 2.8 percent decrease in net profit to 33.7 million euros in the first half, but Della Valle noted that at constant exchange rates, revenues at both Tod's and Roger Vivier had returned to growth. On Tuesday, he acknowledged luxury brands are going through turbulent times.

"There is an incredible confusion in the market. Now, everything is like a Nike store," he said. Nonetheless, Della Valle believes brands should remain true to their roots, which in the case of Tod's is Italian quality and craftsmanship. "What I suggest: try to stay in your DNA 100 percent, but what changes is the communication."

As for future designer collaborations? His brief was simple. "The feeling is: 'People with taste.' I don't want to have around me people without taste, because these people don't know anything, they destroy everything in two seasons," he said to laughter from the room. ■



Report Card Blake Lively and the Power Suit

As Lively winds down her press tour for "A Simple Favor," a look at the suits she's donned in honor of the role. One thing's for certain: It's time she comes out of character.



B

✓ Two things are undeniable: One, the color looks great on her, and two, the silhouette feels very chic. But this highly committed effort would be the perfect companion for an Eighties Kermit the Frog. If that's her objective, she should lose the annoying bedazzled shoes and go full Kermit.



C-

✓ The ethereal bridal-meets-equestrian look would seem at home in a folklore land full of unicorns and flute-playing fauns.



B-

✓ Sartorially, the suit fits her well. But the pink satin lapels with silver tie and silky fabrics shifts the outfit into stripper high gear. And a portable steamer would go a long way post limo ride.



C

✓ Lively is the gift that keeps on giving. Here, she is the circus master with an incredible ability for magic tricks. A top hat and a white rabbit would help seal the deal.



A-

✓ This chic, updated Oliver Twist fits her like a glove. The outfit should teach her a lesson: Sleek, minimal suiting is the way to go.



D

✓ The theme here is a rainy afternoon in the British countryside, but unfortunately more floral cottage chintz than fashion. She shouldn't look like you're going to sit on her to have a cup of tea.



D+

✓ A three-piece denim suit is not a good idea, even in concept. But when adding the all-over geometric print, combat boot and multiple pocket watches, the result is plain confusing. Where are you going dressed like that?



FAIL

✓ The color-blocking paired with the graphic turtleneck and bright green pants is very groovy, baby. But that doesn't make it right.

Fashion Scoops

Fashion Royalty

It's not just Stateside that the celebrations for Ralph Lauren's 50th anniversary are in full swing this year. On Dec. 4, the French-American Foundation will host a gala dinner in his honor — at the Château de Versailles, no less. Lauren will be celebrated for his “unparalleled impact on the fashion world for 50 years,” states the invitation to the event, hosted under the patronage of French President Emmanuel Macron.

Lauren held his anniversary fashion show and dinner in Central Park during New York Fashion Week earlier this month. Other events and accolades for his milestone year include receiving the first CFDA Members Salute by fellow American designers, including Thom Browne, Michael Kors, Tommy Hilfiger, Jason Wu and Donna Karan, commemorating his career, at the CFDA Awards in June, while Rizzoli published a book done in partnership with WWD, titled “WWD: Fifty Years of Ralph Lauren,” a 192-page tome of five decades of archival stories, photos and illustrations.

—ALEX WYNN

Di Marco's New Role

Former Gucci chairman and chief executive officer Patrizio di Marco has joined Golden Goose Deluxe Brand as chairman of the board. He succeeds Marco De Benedetti, who will remain as director, and is managing director and cohead of Carlyle's Europe Buyout group, the buzzy sneaker label's parent fund.

Giorgio Presca, chief executive officer of Golden Goose Deluxe Brand, has exited the label, succeeded by Silvio Campara, the brand's chief commercial officer since 2013. His background

includes experiences at Giorgio Armani and Sundek.

Presca had joined Golden Goose in March 2017 from Italian footwear company Geox. His arrival coincided with the completion of the acquisition of Golden Goose by The Carlyle Group, and he was tasked with structuring the organization and growing its business globally, which was “successfully completed,” the company said. Presca will continue to collaborate with Carlyle as director of the board of Italian fashion company Twinset SpA, also under the fund's umbrella.

Carlyle purchased Golden Goose from the founders and creative directors Alessandro Gallo and Francesca Rinaldo; Ergon Capital Partners, and Zignago Holding SpA, which is controlled by the Marzotto family. Ergon Capital Partners III SA acquired a majority stake in Golden Goose in 2015.

—LUISA ZARGANI

Pick and Mix

Alessandro Michele assembled an eclectic cast of divas and misfits for his one-off Gucci show in Paris at the legendary theater Le Palace, home to France's equivalent of Studio 54 in the late Seventies.

Leading the Hollywood contingent was Faye Dunaway, who stars in ads for the Italian brand's Sylvie bag. The Oscar-winning actress hugged a very pregnant Soko, who plays her daughter in the campaign, before taking her seat in the stalls. Though she has influenced many designers, the 77-year-old was honored that Michele picked her.

“I couldn't believe that he asked me to do it,” she said. “In fashion, he is the man to meet right now. I mean, the kids love him, they keep coming in, and his line and his garments are really wonderful, so I'm very happy with it and the

Faye Dunaway



Jared Leto



photographs were great.”

The star of classic films like “Bonnie and Clyde” said she was flattered to be considered a style icon.

“I feel wonderful about it, I really do. You work very hard every step of the way with the designers, you know, from [‘Bonnie and Clyde’ costume designer] Theadora Van Runkle to ‘Thomas Crown,’ all of the films I've done, and it's very nice to be recognized and for it to be an inspiration to all of these people,” she said.

Behind her, editors peered through binoculars to identify the VIPs in the boxes. François-Henri Pinault, the head of Gucci's parent company Kering, was flanked by his wife Salma Hayek

and diminutive Belgian director Agnès Varda. Gucci ceo Marco Bizzarri sat with his childhood friend, renowned Italian chef Massimo Bottura.

Dotted throughout the theater were the likes of Jared Leto, Hari Nef, South Korean singer Kai, David Furnish, Jorja Smith, Lou Doillon, Jolin Tsai, Maurizio Cattelan and Balenciaga designer Demna Gvasalia, alongside a galaxy of rising actors, photographers, musicians, dancers and influencers.

Amanda Lear recalled performing at Le Palace 40 years earlier to the day, on what she remembered as its opening night — though accounts of the party-loving era predictably

differ. The club's official history says it opened on March 1, 1978, and Grace Jones claims in her memoir that she performed that day.

“I inaugurated this place. I was the first,” Lear said emphatically. “The paint wasn't dry, there were no dressing rooms. Fabrice Emœre came to get me in Italy and told me he was doing a kind of Studio 54 in Paris. So there were lasers everywhere and I sang here. There were 5,000 people blocking the street — all of Paris was here.”

Varda apparently wasn't one of them. “I don't dance and I don't drink,” she said with a shrug. Though the New Wave director wore Gucci to accept her honorary Oscar from Angelina Jolie last

year, she has little contact with the fashion industry, noting that Michele is an exception.

“I found him very handsome, very intelligent, very cultivated. I enjoyed spending half-an-hour with him. He spoiled me and I sent him a photograph of potatoes,” she said. Come again? “Because I photograph exceptional potatoes,” she explained. “They are heart-shaped.”

So was she to credit for Michele sending guests a sack of flower bulbs by way of an invitation? “That's a brilliant idea, because the idea of nature is so far removed from fashion that it was a sort of extraordinary reconciliation,” she marveled. “Everyone is going to plant them.”

The 90-year-old is busy working on the follow-up to “Faces Places,” which was nominated for the best documentary at the 2018 Academy Awards. “I'm doing a documentary about my work. It's a sort of master class, because it's time to leave behind a few messages,” she said.

In the darkened orchestra section, a woman in a gold-sequined dress stood out. It turned out to be Molly Lewis, known professionally as Whistler's Sista, who can whistle tunes ranging from the Queen of the Night aria in Mozart's “Magic Flute” to Nicki Minaj's “Truffle Butter.”

“It's very niche and there aren't many whistlers in the world, so it's not even something I knew existed in a wider sense until I was in my late teens and I kind of found out that competitions were a thing,” she said.

Michele, apparently, is a fan. “I got an e-mail — very random,” said the Australian performer, who plans to play two shows while in Paris. “I've never been to a fashion show. This is all very new for me.” A glance at her videos on YouTube confirms the obvious: Michele has an eye for hidden genius.

—JOELLE DIDERICH

BUSINESS

Designer Boxing Gloves Set for Cause

● Bloomingdale's will auction them off to benefit the Breast Cancer Research Foundation.

BY DAVID MOIN

In the fight against breast cancer, Bloomingdale's is saying “put up your dukes.”

The retailer has roped in 13 designers to customize Everlast boxing gloves, which will be auctioned off to benefit the Breast Cancer Research Foundation. The auction,

part of Bloomingdale's annual Pink campaign for Breast Cancer Awareness Month, runs Oct. 1 to 30 on CharityBuzz.com, with \$250 the minimum bid.

Stepping into the ring were Alice + Olivia, APL, Bally, Charlotte Tilbury, Fila, MCM, Rag & Bone, Ralph Lauren, Sachin & Babi, Sean John, Swarovski, Zac Posen and Michael Aram.

“As a designer, it's great to be thrown into something and have to figure it out,” Aram said. “When this challenge came up, I thought about how to make it my own and build a story into it. I am also a cancer survivor. I feel close to the subject. The metaphor for boxing gloves is really a good one. They are so soft, supple, fleshy, but they symbolize something fierce and aggressive.”

Aram, whose creative process is rooted in a realistic take on nature, customized his gloves with gilt orchids dipped in silver for a metallic quality, and like the other designers, he kept the Everlast logo visible, but with a “frosting.”

“I always love orchids as a symbol of extreme femininity,” Aram said. “Where flowers grow there is hope, gracefulness, determination.”

Zac Posen used classic elements from

Zac Zac Posen handbags including his leather and floral motif; Rag & Bone gloves are hand-dipped in pink glass with a crushed look to signify “crushing” breast cancer, and Ralph Lauren's pair say “Love” with an American flag motif, symbolizing the hope to unify the country in its fight against breast cancer.

Swarovski's gloves, as could be expected, are embellished from fist to wrist with more than 23,000 hand-applied crystals, making a bold statement to signify the strength shown by those touched by the disease; Charlotte Tilbury's gloves are covered in her signature night crimson and blush nude colors, to represent hope, strength and sophistication, and Bloomingdale's in-house creative team also customized a pair of gloves, which will also be auctioned.

“The whole theme behind our campaign for breast cancer awareness is about taking action, empowerment and women's strength in coping with the disease and getting out in front of it,” said Frank Berman, Bloomingdale's executive vice president and chief marketing officer.

As part of the breast cancer awareness initiative, Bloomingdale's will hold boxing

classes in several stores, including the 59th Street flagship in Manhattan. But there won't be any broken noses. “It's really about the exercise component with boxing motions,” Berman explained. “It's shadow boxing. It's not about fighting someone.”

In 2014, Bloomingdale's got designers to reimagine pro football helmets, in honor of the Super Bowl being hosted by New York and played at MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford, N.J.

The designer boxing gloves will be displayed in the flagship's Lexington Avenue arcade housing designer accessories. “They're works of art and conversation pieces, rather than meant to be functional,” Berman noted. Fourteen pairs of gloves seemed logical to Bloomingdale's considering it has supported BCRF for 14 years. Larger-than-life boxing gloves by Jen Mussari of the Ghostly Ferns artist collective in Brooklyn will be displayed, as will punching bags to punch up the presentation. The artist collective also covered a S'well bottle with terms of female empowerment, and created a pin with a pink mascot that customers can purchase to benefit the cause.

Everlast will host boxing classes Oct. 20 at Bloomingdale's stores, which are also staging yoga and fitness classes, to advocate health and well-being and cast Bloomingdale's as a community gathering place transcending selling products. ■

Charlotte Tilbury's boxing gloves for Bloomingdale's.

Dunaway and Leto photographs by Jacopo Raule



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