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WWD MONDAY

Accessories/Innerwear/Legwear

Hot Tomatoes

NEW YORK — The shades are not quite red and not quite orange. Designers have found hues somewhere in between for spring with tomato-colored accessories. Here, Y-3's cotton scarf, leather flat from Giuseppe Zanotti Design, Lambertson Truex's ostrich clutch and Colette Malouf's silk charmeuse headband. For more, see pages 4 and 5.

Kenneth Cole's Goal: Firm Upgrades Brands To Jump-start Profits

By Whitney Beckett

NEW YORK — Something was missing from New York Fashion Week last September. The Kenneth Cole New York show, which traditionally kicks off the week on Friday morning, was notably absent.

The move is all part of Cole's strategy to take his brands upmarket and get profits back on track.

"What you saw for spring was a good first step, but it's not there yet," said Cole, who instead of a show held a private presentation of the spring collection in his SoHo store in October. "We traditionally created clothes for

See **Kenneth**, Page 8

Akris Names Brown U.S. Chief

By Miles Socha

Bolstering its management to drive growth in a key market, Akris has tapped Caroline Brown from Giorgio Armani Corp. as its first U.S. chief executive officer.

Brown, most recently senior vice president of marketing and communications at Armani, joins the Swiss designer firm on Dec. 4. Based in New York, she will report to Peter Kriemler, president of Akris, which has headquarters in St. Gallen, Switzerland.

Kriemler said Brown would be charged with raising brand awareness, building an infrastructure and formulating a development strategy. Her responsibilities include the brand's retail and wholesale businesses, marketing, communications, image and operational support.



An Akris look from the spring runway.

Kriemler said North America represents about 40 percent of the Akris business, with annual growth in the range of 20 to 30 percent.

The company operates free-standing stores in New York and Boston and wholesales its Akris and Akris Punto collections to retailers such as Neiman Marcus, Bergdorf Goodman, Saks Fifth Avenue, Bloomingdale's, Nordstrom and Holt Renfrew in Canada. The brand arrived in the U.S. in 1988.

Designed by Peter Kriemler's brother, Albert, the collection has been raising its international profile with runway shows in Paris and advertising campaigns shot by Steven Klein. But the family-owned firm, founded in 1922, is unique, with its focus on luxury ready-to-wear and no licenses or accessories.

WWD MONDAY

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GENERAL

- 1** Kenneth Cole hopes to escalate his brands and his margins with a new management team and a new business plan.
- 2** In a renewed effort to grow brand awareness, Akris has tapped Caroline Brown from Giorgio Armani Corp. as its first U.S. chief executive officer.
- 4** FASHION: Accessories designers are coming out with bright creations in fiery color palettes of reds, oranges and yellows.
- 16** EYE: Louis Vuitton held a dinner for Olafur Eliasson on Thursday, with the mood coming courtesy of the artist's "Eye See You" installation.

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American Eagle Plans New Concept

By Jeanine Poggi

After the launch of its latest "grown-up" brand, Martin + Osa, and intimates sub-brand, aerie, American Eagle Outfitters is devising the next concept to add to its portfolio.

At a Susquehanna International Group conference last month, the teen specialty retailer said plans for a third concept are on the drawing board. While executives did not reveal the direction of this new brand or when it would be launched, analysts agree another concept is necessary for the success of the company's long-term growth.

It will take about two to three years before American Eagle can break even from its Martin + Osa launch and start seeing a profit, said Christine Chen, senior research analyst at Pacific Growth Equities.

"They need to get a new concept incubated sooner rather than later. Martin + Osa was launched a little later than it should have been,

and American Eagle wants to reap the benefits of a third concept earlier this time," she said.

It can take years before a brand really becomes a success, as seen with their flagship, said Margaret Mager, analyst at Goldman Sachs.

But with a positive balance sheet and steady cash flow, now is the right time to start exploring an expansion of the brand. "American Eagle's comps are reaching saturation point," said Eric Beder, senior vice president at Brean Murray, Carret & Co. "Store growth has been in the low single digits and their second concept [Martin + Osa] won't make a difference for a few years."

Analysts have a few guesses as to what's next for American Eagle, with possibilities including a children's line, similar to Abercrombie & Fitch's abercrombie, or an extension of the intimate collection into a separate women's lingerie store. Another option is an accessories brand targeting the middle-class teen and contemporary shopper.

Bauer Sale Talk Heats Up Again

By Vicki M. Young

A sale of outdoor lifestyle retailer Eddie Bauer Holdings Inc. is said to be back on track, but financial sources said the company's retail operations

could put off potential buyers.

Strategic players that have looked at the company, and passed, include VF Corp., Perry Ellis and Iconix Brand Group, according to sources. Financial buyers that have peeked at the retailer's books include Sun Capital Partners, Cerberus Capital Management and Bain Capital. Sun is said to have passed, while sources said Bain is tied up with the acquisition of Outback Steaks. Sources said the state of Bauer's retail operations was unattractive to potential bidders.

A spokeswoman for Bauer declined comment.

Another name said to be interested in Bauer is NexCen Brands. The firm is relatively unknown in fashion circles, but Robert D'Loren, its chief executive officer, is well known in the industry.

D'Loren sold his company, U.C.C. Capital, to Aether Holdings, which later was renamed NexCen Brands. U.C.C. is known for securitization deals involving intellectual property assets, such as Bill Blass and Candie's. U.C.C. was the former financial adviser to Iconix. Just last week, NexCen closed on its purchase of The Athlete's Foot.

A spokeswoman for NexCen declined comment, but said the

company is looking at a lot of deals."

An industry executive who is familiar with Bauer's operations and the outdoor sector said Friday, "Bauer is still a good brand that people recognize." But other sources said the retailer is saddled with too many stores. One industry source said the company needed some fine-tuning, such as reworking the layout and footprint, and improving inventory management.

Bauer's manufacturing and retail operations do not exactly fit well with NexCen Brands' current strategy, which centers on franchise operations and licensing, but a deal is still doable, according to industry sources.

It's unclear how much the retailer would fetch. Six weeks ago, sources estimated Bauer's worth to be between \$650 million and \$750 million, including about \$300 million in debt.

Fidelity Investments has several funds tied into Bauer with a combined stake of 12 percent. A financial source said Friday that Fidelity might not give shareholder approval unless a deal could be made for \$12 per share, which is about \$360 million, excluding debt.

Bauer's shares closed Friday down 6.65 percent at \$8.85.

COMING THIS WEEK

MONDAY: Benetton Group and Dick's Sporting Goods report third-quarter sales and earnings.

TUESDAY: The U.S. Labor Department releases the Producer Price Index for October.

The U.S. Commerce Department releases the October retail sales report.
American Eagle Outfitters, Fossil Inc., Ross Stores, Saks Inc., Target Corp., TJX Cos. and Wal-Mart Stores report third-quarter sales and earnings.

WEDNESDAY: Cosmoprof Asia, Hong Kong (through Friday).

Charming Shoppes, Hot Topic and Talbots Inc. report third-quarter sales and earnings.

THURSDAY: The Labor Department releases the Consumer Price Index for October.

Gap Inc., Limited Brands Inc., New York & Co., Pacific Sunwear, Stage Stores and Wet Seal report third-quarter sales and earnings.
Zale Corp. reports first-quarter sales and earnings.

FRIDAY: Ann Taylor Stores Corp. reports third-quarter sales and earnings.

In Brief

● **THE RUSSIANS ARE COMING:** The United States and Russia reached an agreement in principle Friday on a bilateral trade deal, marking a major step in the former Communist country's bid to join the World Trade Organization and become a full partner in global commerce. The trade accord, which would further open Russia's vast market to exports and retail distribution, was a milestone for the Cold War-era foe and capped 12 years of often bitter negotiations. The two top trade chiefs for the U.S. and Russia plan to sign the agreement next week in Hanoi during a meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum. To complete its accession bid to the WTO, Russia still must finalize its bilateral market access agreements with other countries and then complete multilateral negotiations within the WTO. Congress must also ultimately grant permanent normal trade relations status to Russia in order for U.S. companies to gain the full benefits of the country's entry into the WTO. Russia is a small supplier of apparel and textiles to the U.S., with imports valued at just \$92.6 million in 2005, but it represents untapped opportunities for retailers seeking to open stores and distribute goods throughout the country.

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Tina Brown, Jeffrey Kaplan
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Hermès Sales Rise 3% in 3rd Quarter

By Miles Socha

PARIS — Still trailing its luxury peers, Hermès International said Friday its third-quarter sales rose 3 percent to 351.3 million euros, or \$446.9 million, a 6.2 percent bump at constant exchange rates.

Patrick Thomas, chief executive officer of Hermès International, characterized the figures as consistent with the firm's full-year growth target of 7 to 7.5 percent.

He also noted that gains would have been close to 10 percent were it not for the elimination of a range of canvas bags that were considered a threat to Hermès' upscale image.

Thomas also trumpeted robust growth in Europe, excluding France, where sales at constant currency jumped 12.6 percent in the quarter to 63.6 million euros, or \$80.9 million. "Also, luxury has been going very well in the U.S.," he added. The Americas logged a 7.5 percent organic sales increase to 55.1 million euros, or \$70.1 million.

Gains were more modest in points East, with a 1.8 percent organic increase in Japan to 94 million euros, or \$119.6 million, and a 3.1 percent rise in Asia to 156.7 million euros, or \$199.3 million.

However, Thomas asserted that Hermès is outperforming its peers in Japan, where demand for European luxury goods is softening as spending shifts to other categories such as leisure.

Last month, Hermès expanded its 10-story flagship in Tokyo's Ginza district to an adjacent building, adding 3,900 square feet of retail space and a cafe with furniture designed by Martin Szekely. Thomas said that was cause for "a little bit more optimism" in the market.

And last week, Hermès christened a new six-story building on Seoul's prime luxury strip, boasting 9,700 square feet of retail space over two floors, a cafe, an equestrian library and an art gallery currently featuring works by French artist Daniel Buren.

By product category, sales of ready-to-wear and accessories slipped 0.4 percent at constant exchange in



The new Hermès flagship in Seoul.

the third quarter to 74.9 million euros, or \$95.3 million, while watches rose 2.5 percent to 25.2 million euros, or \$32.1 million. Perfumes and tableware powered ahead, registering organic gains of 36.3 percent and 30.8 percent, respectively, for the three months ended Sept. 30.

Sales of bags and luggage, the category with the fastest margins, gained 4.1 percent in the quarter to 136.1 million euros, or \$173.1 million.

Analysts said the numbers were below expectations. "Watches and ready-to-wear were also disappointing, implying that initial guidance of high-single-digit

growth for both categories will be tough to reach," HSBC analysts Antoine Belge and Erwan Rambourg wrote in a research note from Paris. "In 2006 and 2007, Hermès should once again underperform the industry, both in terms of top-line growth and EBIT margin evolution."

Shares in Hermès International have been rising on speculation the company could be in play, but Thomas dismissed the rumors and said its shareholders remain loyal to the company.

"We continue to believe the company is not for sale," Rodolph Ozun and Antoine Colonna wrote in a research note for Merrill Lynch, Paris. "Hermès confirmed...that none of its shareholders had disclosed a stake exceeding 0.5 percent of the capital...Family shareholders have not sold any shareholdings, either."

Thomas noted that men's rtw maintains strong momentum, but the women's department has been marred by delivery problems in several categories, including belts, fashion jewelry and footwear. "This category for the moment is performing below its potential and we're going to act on that next year," he said.

Thomas returned from South Korea last week where the company inaugurated the Maison Hermès Dosan Park with gold balloons, confetti, singers and a party for 500 guests.

Designed by architect Rene Dumas, the Dosan Park is one of only four Hermès buildings, the others being in Tokyo, New York and Paris. The Seoul store's double-layer glass facade is composed of squares banded in golden stripes and, despite the building's hulking cube shape, it shelters a tree-filled central atrium. Hermès opened its first hotel-based shop in South Korea in 1985, establishing an affiliate, Hermès Korea, in 1997, and an art prize, the Missulsang, in 2000. Today, the French luxury firm counts six boutiques in South Korea and eight corners.

The building, near one of the city's few parks, also houses the headquarters for Hermès Korea, a press office and showrooms, as well as underground parking and stockrooms.

Share in Hermès International fell 4.7 percent Friday to close at 84.7 euros, or \$107.75, on the Paris Bourse.

Fashion Scoops

GOOD LUCK CHARM:

You might think the reason **Paul Smith** chose Greene Street as the location for his new store was its proximity to Louis Vuitton and Prada, but he seemed most excited about being next to the quirky furniture store, Moss. "We're really pleased to be next to them because there's a similarity between their clientele and ours," he said at his store's opening Thursday night, which drew the likes of **Joel Grey**,



Joel Grey and Paul Smith

Ann Dexter Jones and virtually every men's fashion editor in town. Smith spent the night in the farthest-back room of the store, endlessly signing books for fans and greeting well-wishers. "He loves it," said his wife, **Paula**, standing quietly in a corner with her granddaughter near the front of the store. "He'd go on all night if he could." And what, exactly, was Smith signing in all those books? A Union Jack and a rabbit. "They're good luck for me," he said of the large-eared creature.

BIG NIGHT: The annual Library Lions benefit at the New York Public Library is tonight, and anyone traveling down Fifth Avenue already might have noticed the banners proclaiming this year's honorees. It's such a lauded group that the only non-Nobel Prize winner among them is **Oprah Winfrey**. The others are **Elie Wiesel**, biologist **James D. Watson**, Turkish novelist **Orhan Pamuk**, Chinese political dissident **Gao Xingjian** and the evening's emcee, **Toni Morrison**. The usual literarily inclined luminaries are chairing, including **Annette and Oscar de la Renta**, **Princess Firyal of Jordan** and **Felix Rohatyn**. St. Luke's Orchestra will serenade the 550 dinner guests, the largest group ever, who will number among them **Henry Kissinger**, **Marie-Josée** and **Henry Kravis**, **Tom Wolfe** and **Jessye Norman**.

A|X Armani Plans to Grow

By Jennifer Hirshlag

Giorgio Armani sees plenty of room for expansion at A|X Armani Exchange.

The designer has just launched a sunglasses line for the label under license with Safilo, but views this as only the beginning of other product categories for A|X Armani Exchange.

"Last November we announced our intention to expand the A|X Armani Exchange lifestyle, both in terms of product range and geographical distribution," said Armani. "Shoes, bags, watches, jewelry, fragrances and eyewear are all categories that can sensibly be added to the world of A|X Armani Exchange."

Armani added the sunglasses license seemed like the right choice to start with because the typical customer is such an avid wearer of sunglasses. No other licenses have been signed at this time, according to a spokesman at the firm.

The A|X Armani Exchange sunwear line comes three years after the debut of the designer Giorgio Armani and diffusion Emporio Armani eyewear lines, also under agreement with Safilo. While those collections retail from \$200 to \$350 and from \$150 to \$200, respectively, this collection will range from \$58 to \$65 to appeal to a younger and more contemporary customer.

Safilo anticipates that it will compete in the market with eyewear from Calvin Klein, Michael Kors and Ralph by Ralph Lauren, the latter of which Safilo will cease to have the license for in December. Polo Ralph Lauren has signed a 10-year licensing deal with Luxottica Group SpA for the design, production and worldwide distribution of prescription frames and sunglasses.

A|X Armani Exchange, which was founded in 1991 and whose direct retail network and clothing collection is operated by a joint venture company owned by Giorgio Armani SpA and Como Holdings Inc., now runs 105 stores worldwide. Over the next three years, there are plans to double the size of the direct worldwide retail store network, with key markets including the U.S., the U.K., Brazil, Mexico, Japan, South Korea and

China. There are also plans to expand its e-commerce business, which is currently only active in the U.S.

A|X Armani Exchange has projected an 85 percent increase in revenues from \$300 million at the end of 2005 to \$550 million at the end of 2008.

While Mark Ugenti, vice president of sales at Safilo, declined to offer sales expectations for the three Armani eyewear lines, Ed Jankowski, chief operating officer of Solstice Marketing Concepts, the privately owned parent company of Solstice Sunglass Boutique and its new lower-priced concept retail chain, SunSights by Solstice, which will carry A|X by Armani Exchange, said the potential is there.

"If you combine the business I do with Giorgio Armani and Emporio Armani, it is already one of our top five brands for sales," said Jankowski. "Armani is such a strong brand with recognition worldwide. A|X is a great example of how we will be able to offer the brand at an approachable price point."

The A|X Armani Exchange eyewear line is anticipated to begin distribution worldwide in A|X Armani Exchange freestanding stores this month. The collection will be shipped to retail chains like SunSights by Solstice, and selected department and specialty stores in the U.S. starting in January.

The collection comprises 23 women's, men's and unisex styles that range from sport-inspired silhouettes to aviator, shield and oversized designs. Metallic treatments included palladium, dark ruthenium, brown bronze and light gold, while plastic tones span from black, tortoise and bone to vibrant hues like dusty blue and orange.

"My design philosophy for the new sunglasses collection really reflects the overall spirit of A|X Armani Exchange," said Armani. "It has an urban, contemporary design using innovative materials to create a fresh and sexy look that complements the clothing. I would particularly highlight the women's large and oversized styles as being a signature for the first collection."

A|X Armani Exchange intends to support the launch of the eyewear collection with trade, consumer and Internet advertising, as well as counter displays in-store. An ophthalmics line may follow in the spring.



A|X Armani Exchange eyewear.

Light My Fire

NEW YORK — Accessories designers are coming out with guns, or rather, color palettes, ablaze this season with reds, oranges and yellows that are almost too hot to touch.



▲ LAI's lizard belt.



▶ Stuart Weitzman's calfskin bag with wood and resin trim and lacquered wood and Swarovski crystal bangle from Pono by Goan Goodman.



▶ Resin bangles from Isaac Manevitz for Ben-Amun.

◀ II Bisonte's leather clutch at Showroom Seven.



◀ Chrome Hearts' copper beryllium, sterling silver and leather sunglasses at OSA International.



▼ Susan Daniels' acrylic hair bands at Susan & Co.

▶ Renata Mann's cotton, glass and brass necklace.



▶ Barolo leather bag from Paula Thomas for TW at CD Network.



▲ Hollywood's cotton canvas hat.

▶ Patent leather flat from The Frye Company.



◀ Nine West Scarves' polyester and cotton scarf at Collection 18 Showroom.

◀ Sang A's python clutch at Showroom Seven.

◀ Be&D's calfskin bag and Twinkle by Wenlan's acrylic pin and hairpin at Hasson Mireles.

Alexis Bittar's Lucite bangle with gold studs.

◀ Furla's resin bangle.

Chlorofiber, acrylic and nylon hat from Kangol & WeSC.

◀ Andrea Brueckner's washed cowhide bag at Denise Williamson Showroom.

▲ Linea Pelle's leather belt at Hotline Showroom New York.

▲ Kenneth Cole Reaction's leather and wood wedge.

Innerwear Report

Bracing for a Frenetic February Market

By Karyn Monget

The two-week market literally was a work in progress.

There was a laid-back ambience to the first half of the week because of the absence of the Lingerie Americas fair and the elimination of the frenetic pace generated by the specialty boutique buyers who typically attend the trade show. Despite the lull at Madison Avenue showrooms, a majority of major retailers showed up, including Nordstrom, Saks Fifth Avenue, Neiman Marcus and, of course, Federated Department Stores.

The second week, which ended Friday, reflected a similar atmosphere of quiet discussions behind closed doors with other powerhouse retailers such as J.C. Penney, Dillard's Department Stores and Kohl's, all of which were on the hunt for special product, value deals and key items.

In addition to completing spring-summer buys as well as back-to-school programs, a key topic of discussion was the Salon International de la Lingerie trade fair in Paris scheduled for Feb. 2 to 5. The main complaint among exhibitors, industry executives and retailers was the conflict caused by the Feb. 5 to 9 innerwear market in Manhattan, which kicks off on the final show day in Paris. Industry executives will have to take red-eye flights to also exhibit, or visit the Lingerie Americas trade fair here slated for Feb. 7 to 9.

Adding to the frenzy is the prospect of packing up again to participate in the first Curvexpo lingerie trade show in Las Vegas that is being organized by former Lingerie Americas show managers Jean-Luc and Laurence Teinturier. The new fair is set for Feb. 13 to 15 at the Venetian Hotel Resort.

"It's going to be tough for a lot of people," said Steve Chernoff, chief executive officer of Long Island City, N.Y.-based Rago Inc. "The issue of [lingerie] trade shows is quickly becoming a global issue with other shows like Lyon, Mode City in France and Shanghai Mode Lingerie in Shanghai." A third Shanghai Mode Lingerie fair staged by Eurovet, which operates the French SIL and Lyon fairs, is being scheduled for October, as well as the launch of the Hong Kong Mode Lingerie show in late March, said Eurovet officials.

Chernoff, who also serves as vice chairman of the Intimate Apparel Council, which sets the annual market dates, further noted, "All of the U.S. market dates should be revisited to see how they work in context with other shows outside and inside the U.S. It would make it a lot easier for the industry."

The flurry of trade-show activity and the bustle of the official fall 2007 market is causing a range of responses among vendors, from anger and concern among smaller and midsize companies that do not have substantial financial resources to a laissez-faire attitude at Fortune 500 companies and major independents that have deep pockets.



New washed silk and cashmere loungewear by Rich at Richard Leeds International.

But, large or small, a common denominator is being shared among industry executives: A majority of vendors, some of whom exhibit at SIL, are privately complaining that the timing of the combined shows and market will force them to make additional samples, hire extra help and work a grueling three-week schedule. Ironically, the first official market week in February in New York was created to consolidate the former January and March editions into one venue, a move that was expected to facilitate travel and buying patterns as well as ease budgets for retailers.

However, the inconvenience factor is generally overshadowing a positive outlook in a global arena that is large enough for a number of competitors.

"The only way we can swing this is to show at my apartment in Paris so we can get back to New York on time," said Josie Natori, ceo of the Natori Co., an exhibitor at SIL. "We would never have time to set up at SIL and make all of our appointments. So, retailers will come to us, and we can pack up and leave quickly."

"It's really going to be difficult for a lot of companies," said one manufacturer from a midsize company who did not want to be identified. "Budgets are already tight enough at smaller companies without having to put up with the decisions of a few who put their personal interests above others in the industry. A lot of that de-

cision-making was based on Federated's schedule, and key suppliers were willing to accommodate them."

Regarding any changes in the way business will be conducted at the February market, Martha Olson, president of core brands at the Warnaco Group, said January used to be known for its discussions of markdown money.

"It will be interesting to see what will happen in February," said Olson. "It will probably be the same thing."

Meanwhile, vendors were targeting several classifications at this month's two-week session:

- Baby dolls in sheer, tiered layers or solid silk and polyester charmeuse at Flora Nikrooz. Many looks feature updated, bohemian looks and colors at French Jenny.

- A variety of mix-and-match pajama pants, whether puckered and ruched at the ankle, bloomer-style boxers, ready-to-wear-inspired gauchos or Bermuda lengths at Hue. The silhouettes are predominant in three new lines: Hue to Go, a dual-purpose loungewear line; Hue d'Lux, an upscale line of key items that can be worn in or out of the home, and Eco Crush, an homage to Earth-friendly graphics and motifs that are not necessarily organic products. The central figure: Earth Girl carrying Mother Earth.

- Luxury fabrications such as pima cotton at Eileen West and proprietary blends such as washed silk and cashmere by Rich at Richard Leeds International.

- A focus on more young contemporary lingerie items in two-by-two heather ribs and butter-soft Modal blends for department store distribution, including XOXO sleepwear at the Cayre Group.

However, one classification in particular was a priority for a number of manufacturers because of popular demand by retailers: anything organic.

The message of well-being, whether it's organic cotton or soft-spun fabrics derived from bamboo or soybeans that have a lightweight, silk-like hand, are beginning to fill the marketplace. The demand for environmentally correct products, whether sleepwear, undies, apparel or food and beverages, is being propelled by the success of wellness programs at Wal-Mart, Target and scores of specialty stores that are addressing the lifestyle demands of consumers who want Earth-friendly products.

Addressing the hunger for organic products, Richard Leeds, chairman of his own firm, said: "Sell-throughs on our organic Mutts line of sleepwear at Wal-Mart have been very strong. We sold out in less than seven weeks at Wal-Mart and less than one week on the Mutts Web site. Wal-Mart plans to expand organic products in a big way." He added that the number-one-selling organic item by Mutts at Wal-Mart is a top that says, "Saving One Kitty at a Time."

Flora Nikrooz has added an organic brand to her portfolio of feminine bridal and special occasion fare called 2 Life, Earth Friendly Clothing. The daywear and sleepwear of soft, pliable soybean protein fiber features lifestyle items including a variety of tops — tanks, hooded tops, lounge tops — and racer-back chemises and undies. Colors are pale pink, taupe, ivory and aqua. The tag line for marketing and advertising is "Dream in Green."

"It's received really good reaction and will be launched at Macy's East," said Nikrooz.

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Elle Macpherson's Boudoir

LONDON — Elle Macpherson knows how to steam up a room.

For the launch of her new Boudoir by Elle Macpherson Intimates line, the supermodel-turned-designer recently treated guests to a preview of the boudoir lifestyle, which she re-created in the penthouse at London's Sanderson Hotel.

Lace garter belts, silk corsets and satin bras from the 13-piece line were draped around the suite, against a backdrop room/set including a TV showing classic black-and-white movies, a guitar and an abandoned Noam Chomsky tome. "I didn't want to have girls walking up and down a catwalk," explained Macpherson, as she led guests through the rooms. "I wanted to be creative."

Macpherson added that the line of sexier pieces, which will launch in January at retailers such as Neiman Marcus in



Elle Macpherson makes herself perfectly at home while displaying her latest line of naughty but sophisticated lingerie, Boudoir by Elle Macpherson Intimates.

the U.S. and Selfridges in the U.K., was inspired by icons like Marilyn Monroe. "She was so comfortable with her sensuality and her femininity," she said. "The pieces aren't meant to be worn for costume. It's for women to wear for themselves, to feel

confident and comfortable in." The line will be priced slightly higher than Macpherson's mainline Intimates collection and will retail from \$52 for a silk thong to \$150 for a stretch silk "torsolette" corset.

— Lucie Greene

Accessories Report

Ray-Ban Tunes In to a New Generation

By Jennifer Hirshlag

NEW YORK — Ray-Ban wants to rock the house with the relaunch of its original Wayfarer sunglass silhouette.

That's rock, as in rock 'n' roll. The eyewear label, seeking to affirm its leadership in the category for a younger generation, is aiming to create buzz by focusing on its 70-year history, including its links to rock music, said Marcello Favagrossa, Ray-Ban's brand director.

"When we began to look at how we wanted to strategically position the brand, we came to an easy and natural conclusion that in the history of our product we have a gold mine," Favagrossa said. "So now what we are trying to do is dig out the gold nuggets. But the challenge behind promoting a history of a brand is how do you convey the message that it's always modern? Then we began addressing the brand's longtime association with rock 'n' roll, and we realized it would be a perfect thing to focus on. We wanted to stress the American DNA of the brand, but also let it be a bit rough around the edges."

Ray-Ban, which was acquired by Luxottica Group in 1999, is staging a rock event Wednesday night at Irving Plaza here. It will bring together famed photographer Mick Rock, who will host an exhibit of his contemporary photos of musicians wearing the Wayfarer frame and classic images shot by others; Eagles of Death Metal, who will perform, and some 700 guests, many from the worlds of rock 'n' roll and young Hollywood.

Ray-Ban introduced the oversized boxy acetate shade called the Wayfarer in 1952 and it became an instant hit, Favagrossa said. But it took the waifish, doe-eyed Audrey Hepburn to bring the Wayfarer to another level. The actress paired the spectacle with her little black dress and pearls in her 1961 role as Holly Golightly in "Breakfast at Tiffany's," transforming the Wayfarer into an accessory legend.

During the Eighties, the Wayfarer had a renaissance, trickling into the mainstream after its starring role wardrobe Dan Aykroyd and John Belushi in "The Blues Brothers" (1980) and Tom Cruise in "Risky Business" (1983). It also secured a place in pop music. Madonna wore the frame in photographs, as did Blondie's Deborah Harry, Elvis Costello, The Smiths' Johnny Marr and members of U2, among others.

"The Wayfarer was a huge success in the Sixties and all through the Eighties," Favagrossa said. "In the mid-Nineties, many historians claimed it was the most widely sold sunglass in history."

Although the popularity of the frame helped to raise the profile of the Ray-Ban brand worldwide — it came in as the fifth most recognized accessory brand in this year's WWD 100, behind Liz Claiborne, Nine West, Gucci and Coach — meeting demand began to compromise overall quality.

"For so many decades Ray-Ban was fantastically managed," said Fabio D'Angeloantonio, group marketing director of Luxottica, referring to Bausch & Lomb, Ray-Ban's founder. "The iconography of the brand is closely linked with the movie industry, as well as the music industry. And that created a magic that has moved with the brand. But when we acquired it, the business results were not as healthy as the image and reputation."

D'Angeloantonio attributed the slide to several factors: Bausch & Lomb's move to concentrate on its growing lens business, an aggressive distribution strategy that led to Ray-Ban's appearance in ill-fitting channels and its production being downgraded with multiple factories in Mexico, Ireland and China.

"We had no hesitation in having the chance to add the Ray-Ban brand to our portfolio," D'Angeloantonio said. "In this category, which is strongly moving with fashion brands, Ray-Ban is undoubtedly the category captain. It's a genuine brand for people who don't want to be worn by a brand. They want to wear the brand to show who they are. But with any brand you manage, you have to ask, what is the brand? And the mistakes that were made in the past are ones we won't make in the future."

D'Angeloantonio said Luxottica has refined Ray-Ban's distribution, as well as its manufacturing, moving it to its factories in Agordo, Italy. It also has reached into its past and is starting to pull out its iconic models for a new generation. Two years ago, capitalizing on a trend for aviator silhouettes, Ray-Ban relaunched its original design from the Forties, which now accounts for 20 percent of its sales, D'Angeloantonio said.

Ray-Ban also introduced an evolution of the Wayfarer, with a lighter weight and smaller shape that the brand expected would make it easier to wear.

"But on the con side, it lost much of its personality," Favagrossa said.

The relaunch of the original Wayfarer design required a bit of industrial archaeology to get it right, he added.

"We had to find the hinges that were similar to those used on the original," he explained. "No one was making them anymore, so we had to develop them."

The company also had to re-create the logo on the temple, the proper slant of the lenses, the acetate used and the construction, which incorporates handmade steps. The only thing that is varied from its past are the colors offered. Ray-Ban is introducing white and red, in addition to the classic tortoise and black, to raise its appeal among women. More colors may follow.

The Ray-Ban Wayfarer will first roll out to Europe, beginning this month, with distribution in the U.S. to follow in January. It will be sold at retail chains like LensCrafters and Sunglass Hut, independent retailers and select department stores, many of which Favagrossa said haven't carried the brand for years. It is expected to retail at more than double the original price at \$129.95, with a version encasing polarized lenses for \$179.95.

Favagrossa said that although he expects the relaunch of the Wayfarer to help the bottom line, business is not the primary objective behind the launch.

"It's one event in a larger strategy to dust off the brand for a younger audience and rediscover its roots," he explained, adding that similar events will follow in London and Tokyo.

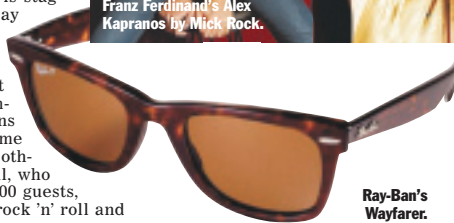
D'Angeloantonio said Ray-Ban sells about 12 million pieces a year between its sunglasses and ophthalmics. It represents 13 to 14 percent of consolidated revenues for Luxottica, making it one of the most profitable brands for the firm, which also owns house brands Vogue, Persol, Arnette and REVO, as well as licenses to produce eyewear for Bulgari, Donna Karan, Prada and Versace, among others. Although he declined to reveal figures for the brand, industry estimates have put Ray-Ban's total retail value at 1.4 billion euros, or \$1.8 billion. D'Angeloantonio said he anticipated double-digit percentage sales increases for 2007.



Franz Ferdinand's Alex Kapranos by Mick Rock.

Peaches by Rock.

Deborah Harry from Blondie by Henry Diltz, 1977.



Ray-Ban's Wayfarer.



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Kenneth Cole Upgrades for Growth

Continued from page one

the runway, but for this to really work, we need to create product for the customer.”

The switch is the public symbol of even more significant internal changes at the \$474 million company. With an almost entirely new management team — including brand presidents for the first time — the firm is elevating its Kenneth Cole New York brand from its former better status to what executives are calling “affordable luxury” — as in, contemporary — and at the same time positioning the Kenneth Cole Reaction label as a lifestyle brand that has taken over where the New York line left off.

“We made a big strategic decision about three years ago. We took a good hard look at not just the business, but also the brand and the customers,” Cole said, “and we realized we can do this better. We made it our corporate purpose to create two individually viable brands that both serve a distinct customer.”

Liz Dunn at Prudential Equity Group LLC labeled the strategy “lift and separate,” and Allan Ellinger, senior managing director at Marketing Management Group, said Cole’s strategy was dead-on.

“Historically, it has been harder to go up than down, but the redefining of the department store tier of distribution that just occurred will make it easier for some of the better brands to trade up. Brands, like Kenneth Cole, who trade at the higher end and have national recognition, will find it easier to trade up, and their success depends on how well it is presented and defined with clear demarcation between their best and better.”

With a new management team and business plan, Kenneth Cole’s brands may not be the only thing on the rise. As the product improves, Cole hopes its earnings will, as well. For the first nine months of this fiscal year, income dropped 27.9 percent, to \$18.8 million, or 92 cents a diluted share, from \$26.1 million, or \$1.28, despite a 4.3 percent increase in revenues, to \$401.5 million from \$385 million. While wholesale contributes the most to the firm’s top line, and licensing is highly profitable, retail — with 54 domestic stores — has been a drag on profitability for nine consecutive quarters of sales declines.

Although analysts are optimistic about the firm’s long-term direction, in the short term, numbers likely won’t improve, as the company takes hits from reclaiming its Kenneth Cole New York women’s sportswear license from Paul Davril Inc. After third-quarter results were released earlier this month, management said it expected to lose \$5 million to \$6 million in royalty revenue, plus \$3 million to \$4.5 million in advertising contributions, suggesting a potential 27-cent hit in 2007, though the company declined to give guidance until the fourth quarter report.

Since the repositioning began, Reaction is leading the way with an 82 percent increase in sales. Today, it is “an entire lifestyle brand” with 30 categories, with new product lines including men’s and women’s sportswear, which was launched in spring 2006.

“We took some of the businesses that should have been Reaction but weren’t and made them Reaction,” Cole said, “and we made Kenneth Cole New York the flagship brand, with elevated quality of design, quality of product and quality of distribution.”

Reaction prices resemble those of the former New York line; women’s sportswear ranges from \$69 to \$189; shoes, from \$49 to \$198, and handbags, from \$78 to \$178 at retail. The new Kenneth Cole New York line has approximately doubled in price to \$118 to \$350 for sportswear, \$120 to \$495 for shoes and \$188 to \$998 for handbags. After gauging customer response, the company lowered the price floor on the New York line.

Reaction took over the firm’s existing accounts at Macy’s and Dillard’s, and Kenneth Cole New York aims for Neiman Marcus, Bloomingdale’s, Nordstrom and Saks Fifth Avenue.

Saks and Cole have collaborated on launching outerwear and the RSVP fragrance, in partnership with Jon Bon Jovi, exclusively at the retailer. In addition, Saks started carrying Cole’s men’s footwear for fall, but at this time has no plans to sell other Kenneth Cole New York products.

“As each of his product categories evolve and develop, we hope we can find a place for them,” said Ron Frasch, chief merchant at Saks Fifth Avenue. “It’s less about the individual categories than the decision we have made that the Kenneth Cole brand is a good match for Saks Fifth Avenue, whereas a year and a half ago we would not have had this discussion, because of the new business strategy Kenneth has developed, combined with his great management team and personal vision.”

Selling primarily in Kenneth Cole stores for now, the New York line is more of a work in progress. The firm just reclaimed its women’s Kenneth Cole New York sportswear license from PDI a year early. PDI began with the spring 2005 line, taking the reins from Liz Claiborne Inc., which had produced the brand’s apparel since 1999. During the course of 2007, the sportswear will shift hands, and in-house designers will produce their first full line for women for fall 2007 and for men for spring 2008. The full impact of the firm’s total control over the label won’t be evident until spring 2008.

Cole has created brand president positions — “keepers of the brand” — whose primary responsibility is ensuring both consistency and quality over every category of their brand, both licensed and in-house.

“We need to get all parties to work together so the shoes look like the bags, the watches relate to the jewelry and the fit of the denim is consistent with the woman who would wear the handbag,” Cole said. “We now have direct control over sportswear, shoes and handbags, which are all defining elements of the brand.”

Kenneth Cole New York brand president, Joshua Schulman, the most notable addition to the revamped executive roster, added, “Every important designer brand has control of its flagship categories.”

Just moving into his post this month, Schulman came from Gap Inc., where he was concurrently managing director of international strategic alliances for Gap Inc. and

Joshua Schulman, Kenneth Cole and Doug Jabukowski.



PHOTOS BY PAVEL ANTONY



senior vice president for international product development and merchandising for Gap brand. Before that, he worked at Gucci Group as executive vice president of worldwide merchandising and wholesale for Yves Saint Laurent, during the makeover of that brand.

On the Kenneth Cole Reaction side, Doug Jabukowski recently was named president. Formerly president of Perry Ellis men’s wear, Jabukowski joined the company as senior vice president of Kenneth Cole Reaction in August 2005.

Joel Newman was named chief operating officer of Cole in February, replacing Paul Blum, who resigned a month earlier. Newman came from Tommy Hilfger. In January, Richard Olicker joined as executive vice president and president of wholesale. Olicker, formerly president of Steve Madden, will help position the brands and create faster fashion, according to analysts. The firm hopes to cut a month off its turn time.

Also in January, Henrik Madsen was named senior vice president and general manager of international operations. Coming from Jones Apparel Group’s Kasper Europe division, where he was ceo and president, Madsen will help guide international expansion. International sales represent only about 2 percent of sales, but could grow to up to 30 percent, Dunn predicted.

On the third-quarter conference call, the firm said Jeff Cohen had filled the role of president of its outlet stores, a division that produced great returns in the third quarter. Analysts think the newly labeled “company stores” will continue to produce under a new strategy that allows them to do their own buying instead of serving simply as a clearance channel for products.

The only major remaining spot is head of the retail division, after Carol Sharp left in April. Newman and Cole have been handling her responsibilities.

“We are impressed with the executives that have been hired this year and believe in the strategy long term, as well,” Dunn said in her report on the company. “The additions are all seasoned executives who have been successful in previous roles at other companies. We think fresh input and new skill sets have the opportunity to be a very big catalyst for Kenneth Cole. However, we do get the sense that Kenneth Cole is a dominant leader and sometimes his ideas supercede other executive input.”

With his presidents in place, though, Cole said, “now I will be operating more at 20,000 feet.”

From that vantage point, Cole plans to return to the runway when the product is ready — definitely by next September for the spring 2008 collection — if not for February. And this time, the product shown on the runway will be the product sold in stores.

“One is invariably more proud of what is a better product,” Cole said.

Children's Wear Report

Poesia's Pint-Sized Designer Duds

By **Emili Vesilind**

The children's apparel brand Poesia aims to answer the question of where a four-year-old fashionista might score designer looks on a par with mom's Marni and Miu Miu.

The Taiwan company takes its cues from runways, not playrooms — manufacturing shrunken-down versions of trend-right women's apparel in decadent fabrics.

Designer Chris Chang first glimpsed a void in the children's apparel market during her tenure as a general manager for Prada in Taiwan, where she helped expand the number of retail units to 12 from two. "I didn't have much time for myself while I was at Prada," she said, "but when I did go out, I shopped for my daughter. I realized that something that was the equivalent of a Prada in kids' wear was almost nonexistent."

Costly silks and furs are used in the line as they would be at Dior or Dolce & Gabbana, despite the potential for grass stains and dinner-table mishaps. "I believe in children dressing like little grown-ups," Chang said. "Poesia is for the fashion elitist. It's a new phase in children's wear."

The pieces are finely detailed. A silk and velvet dress is hand-trimmed with rhinestones; another bears a repetitive pattern borrowed from Gustav Klimt and is trimmed with forest green rabbit. There are sequined necklines and off-the-body geometric silhouettes in heavy brocade fabrics, reminiscent of early Balenciaga. Wholesale prices range from around \$40 for a simple cardigan to about \$180 for intricately wrought frocks and coats.

Chang, who studied design at Parsons the New School of Design, said that after leaving Prada, "I knew I wanted to start a global brand, and I knew it would be difficult with a women's brand. There are so many out there. It's much easier to break into children's apparel and get recognition. There isn't much out there that's not baby-like or toddler-like."

Still, Chang said Poesia may prove to be "a means to getting back to women's wear."

She marketed the first Poesia collection, spring-summer 2006, exclusively to Barneys New York.

"It was about 40 pieces, and the only store I had in mind was Barneys," she said. "My background is in New York. I know the people who shop there...and

the prices they're willing to pay."

Barneys picked up 12 pieces from the initial collection. "I got to sell to Barneys, but it's a money-losing thing," Chang said. "A size four-year-old dress would be cut with four to five yards of fabric, so you can imagine that this is a tough business for me."

Chang recently decided to try her luck in Los Angeles, where \$100 jeans for toddlers are becoming common. The line was picked up by Bramasole, a showroom for upscale children's apparel at the California Market Center.

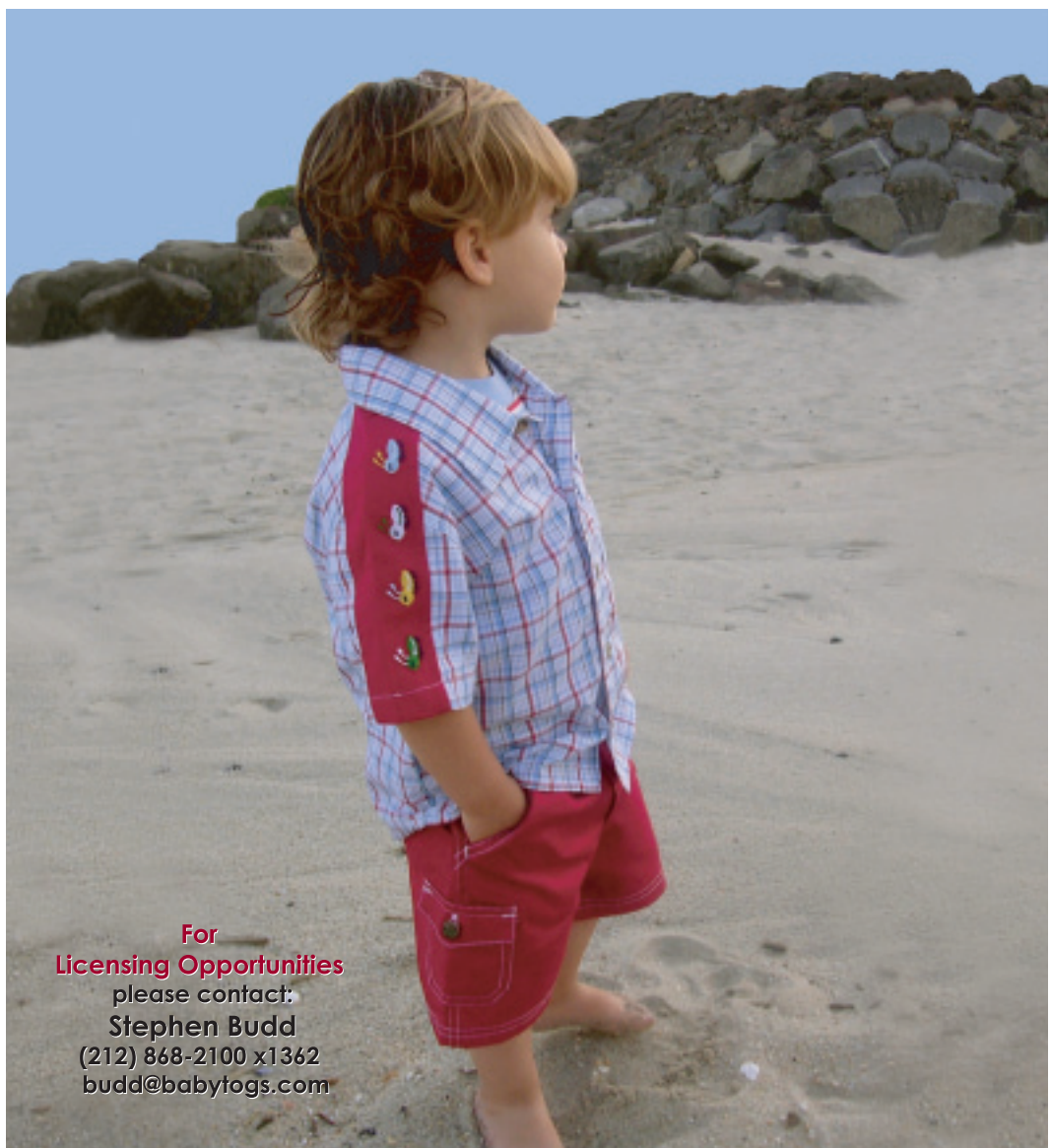
"Dresses are one of the strongest styles in children's wear, but no one's doing something as beautiful as Poesia," said Marian Lee, owner of Bramasole, adding that sales have been steady.

New accounts for the line include Lisa Kline on Roberston Boulevard in Los Angeles; Grasshoppers in Newport Beach, Calif.; La La Ling in Los Angeles, and Garage in Scottsdale, Ariz.

"It's a diamond in the rough right now," Lee said. "But all the best stores have found it."



Poesia's Diana Vreeland jacket, skirt and patchwork cocktail dress.



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MEMO PAD

IT'S RAINING MEN: It's not quite Time magazine, but speculation has been growing over who will make GQ's "Men of the Year" issue in December. Playing the field, the title has picked the "comic, musician and actor of our time" to appear on separate covers: **Will Ferrell, Jay-Z and Leonardo DiCaprio.**

Lindsay Lohan is named "obsession of the year" and gives a tongue-and-cheek interview about how she wishes celebrity magazines would write more about her. (Are there enough trees?) Meanwhile, the photographs with the story show Lohan happily ripping up the pages of a tabloid.

GQ's December issue also honors **Pamela Anderson**, who caused a traffic jam during her 40-minute photo shoot with **Michael Thompson**. She pretended to be hitching a ride on the Pacific Coast Highway, clad in a white bikini. Back to the men, other honorees include **Stephen Colbert, Thom Browne** (who was interviewed by **Simon Doonan**), **Ryan Gosling** and **Burberry's Christopher Bailey** as designer of the year. Editor in chief **Jim Nelson** said he asked **Terry Richardson** to shoot the honorees (excluding Bailey and Anderson) because of his "versatility in style and approach." The issue will hit newsstands Nov. 21. — **Amy Wicks**

VOGUE, PART DEUX: Vogue's national sales meeting this week may have ended with an expensive bang — Memo Pad reported Friday that sales staff members received gifts from Hermès — bracelets for the women and belts for the men, each valued at around \$450 — to celebrate the magazine's best year ever for ad revenue. Publishers Information Bureau estimates, as printed in the same item, put revenues at \$306.4 million for the first nine months

of the year, an increase from \$282.7 million in the same period of 2005. For all of 2005, Vogue's revenues were \$345 million, according to PIB estimates. PIB is expected to estimate the magazine's ad revenues at about \$380 million for the 12 months of 2006, a 10.1 percent increase. (The figures were unclear in the item Friday. PIB gets its estimates by multiplying page rates by number of ad pages, and may not reflect actual revenue of a given publication.)

Meanwhile, before the Vogue team received its congratulatory gifts at dinner, they partook of how-to sessions from top chefs and decorators Thursday afternoon at Hudson Yards. There was a wine tasting and mixology session led by **Juliette Pope**, senior wine director at Gramercy Tavern, and **Jim Meehan**, the head mixologist at Gramercy Tavern; a cooking class with **Michael Romano**, executive chef at Union Square Café, and creating centerpieces and "environmental decor" with **Thom Felicia**, from "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy." Later, the decor, food and drink tips were incorporated into the dinner festivities. — **Stephanie D. Smith**

BALL OF ENERGY: Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes took center stage at the Black Ball gala to benefit the Keep a Child Alive foundation at the Hammerstein Ballroom Thursday night, as the two chatted energetically with ex-Viacom chief **Tom Freston** at a front-row table near **Iman** and **Valentino** and **Anne Hathaway** (who arrived arm in arm). The dinner and concert, where **Alicia Keys** and **David Bowie** were among those who performed, honored Condé Nast Media Group president **Richard Beckman**, among others. He said foundation founder **Leigh Blake** "had me at hello" at their initial meeting, when she convinced Beckman to become involved. Before the concert began, Beckman and Blake demonstrated their dance moves in the lobby, where Blake said Beckman's grace has spawned a Latin nickname. "I call him Ricardo Beckinelli," she said. — **S.D.S.**



Katie Holmes in Armani Privé and Tom Cruise in Giorgio Armani.

PHOTO BY KEVIN MAZUR/WIREIMAGE

2006 YEAR-END AD PAGES

	Ad pages 2006	Ad pages 2005	% change 2006 vs. 2005	% change 2005 vs. 2004
Allure	1,556.0	1,428.9	8.9	3.5
Cosmopolitan	1,740.0	1,811.4	-3.9	-3.1
Elle	2,363.0	2,066.9	14.3	10.7
Essence	1,453.0	1,455.0	-0.1	-2.6
Glamour	1,889.0	1,757.6	7.5	6.6
Harper's Bazaar	1,772.0	1,620.3	9.4	6.5
In Style	3,456.8	3,503.1	-1.3	4.0
Jane	592.3	749.6	-21.0	-8.0
Lucky	1,846.4	1,858.8	-0.7	4.6
Marie Claire	1,330.0	1,347.3	-1.3	-9.0
Self*	1,252.0	1,204.2	4.0	3.9
Vanity Fair	1,929.0	2,071.7	-6.9	-8.9
Vogue*	3,056.1	2,958.2	3.3	-1.8
W	1,978.0	1,962.0	0.8	-1.8
Women's Health*	400.5	203.8	96.5	—
Cosmogirl	793.3	771.4	2.8	3.4
Seventeen	939.2	972.3	-3.4	2.3
Teen Vogue	1,223.0	1,000.4	22.3	27.8
Martha Stewart Living	1,288.5	910.7	41.5	38.2
O, The Oprah Magazine	2,029.3	1,797.7	12.9	13.0
Real Simple	1,808.7	1,743.8	3.7	15.3
Best Life*	426.4	259.0	64.6	198.9
Details	1,236.3	1,177.0	5.0	1.5
Esquire	1,195.0	1,141.2	4.7	4.2
GQ	1,771.0	1,666.6	6.3	2.0
Maxim	941.4	998.9	-5.8	-6.2
Men's Health	1,063.8	1,117.0	-4.8	0.7
Men's Journal	1,080.6	1,025.0	5.4	13.8
Men's Vogue*	398.5	—	—	—

SOURCE: PUBLISHERS' ESTIMATES, PUBLISHERS INFORMATION BUREAU

BEST LIFE: PUBLISHED THREE ISSUES IN 2004, SEVEN IN 2005 AND 10 IN 2006; MEN'S VOGUE: PUBLISHED THREE ISSUES IN 2006; WOMEN'S HEALTH: PUBLISHED ONE TEST ISSUE IN 2004, FIVE IN 2005 AND NINE IN 2006; VOGUE: 2006 NOVEMBER PAGING NUMBERS INCLUDE PERCENTAGE FROM VOGUE LIVING; 2005 SEPTEMBER VOGUE INCLUDED PORTION FROM MEN'S VOGUE; SELF: 2006 INCLUDES PAGING FROM SELF DISHES

CORRECTION: The chart and story in Memo Pad on Friday related to ad page performance for all of 2006, not for the first half, as the headline mistakenly stated. In addition, Details had an ad page increase of 5 percent, not a decrease, as stated in the chart. Teen Vogue had 284 more ad pages than Seventeen in 2006, totaling 1,223 compared with Seventeen's 939. Marie Claire's ad pages for 2006 totaled 1,330, a 1.3 percent decline from 1,347 in 2005. Meanwhile, Real Simple's ad page increase of 3.7 percent, to 1,808.7, reflects 13 issues in 2006 versus 12 issues a year earlier, when ad pages totaled 1,743.8.

Chadha Taps Fardell to Head Mexx Europe

By Robert Murphy

AMSTERDAM — As a budding entrepreneur, Rattan Chadha sold private label garments from his sister's factory in India out of the back of his car.

He went on to found the Mexx men's, women's and children's brand here, a rapidly growing 1 billion euro, or \$1.25 billion, a year business sold in 66 countries around the world that Liz Claiborne Inc. acquired in 2001.

Last Friday, Chadha said he was passing the baton to Jeff Fardell, a former Nike executive, who will succeed him as president of Mexx Europe Holding on Dec. 1. Chadha said he would remain director of the supervisory board through 2007, when he would step aside to fully devote himself to other projects, including the development of a hotel chain, the golf course he owns in southern France and the creation of a museum in Amsterdam for his art collection.

"Jeff understands branding, merchandising and retail," Chadha said at a news conference with Fardell here. "More importantly, he understands the Mexx culture [of creativity and entrepreneurship]."

As he introduced Fardell, an Australian who was vice president of global apparel at Nike prior to Mexx, Chadha reminisced fondly on his time at Mexx.

To celebrate his departure, the brand has published a valedictory book, called "It Started With a Kiss." Chadha's daughter, Natascha Chadha, wrote it.

"I started as a private-label business

with \$2,000," said Chadha. "When someone asked how long it would take to get the clothes, I'd say 45 minutes, just the time it took to get to the car."

Chadha decided to create his own brand after he broke his leg and was confined to bed for three months.

During his convalescence, he wrote a book outlining his ideas on successful brand building and then created two labels, Moustache and Emanuelle, for men and women, respectively. In 1986, he merged them to maximize investment, finding the Mexx name by taking the first letter of each and adding two x's to symbolize two kisses.

Chadha said he considered Mexx a marketing exercise from the get-go. "In brand building, you have to be worried about everything, from your offices to the products to the stores."

One example is the company's corporate headquarters in an industrial park outside of this canal-bound city: It offers a sleek, light and modern statement. Even in the bathrooms, inspirational messages are etched on the mirrors.

Though Chadha declined to provide figures, he said Mexx has done very well since the Claiborne linkup, with growth continuing at a double-digit clip. He added there was room for Claiborne brands, such as Lucky Jeans and Juicy Couture, to expand in Europe. "I think it's still Day One for Mexx," he said. "The brand has a lot of potential."

For instance, Chadha said opportunities existed in America, where custom-

ers are responding "better and better to European style."

"There's so much sameness in American retail," he said. "There's a place right now in the U.S. for more European brand expansion. H&M and Zara are doing very well in the United States."

Though Chadha said the retailing landscape has altered greatly since he started, including the emergence of the fast-fashion giants such as Hennes & Mauritz of Sweden and Zara of Spain, he said brand building remains vital to success.

"The key is to be different. People said the middle market was disappearing. It isn't true. A brand must be about expressing itself. If you lose your focus, it becomes only about selling clothes. You lose your soul."

In a brief presentation, Fardell outlined a rough set of goals he hopes to tackle in the near future, including the "development of Claiborne's multi-brand strategy in Europe, underpinned by Mexx." He said the "amalgamation" of sourcing and resources between Claiborne and Mexx would underscore another effort. He also identified an opportunity for Mexx to grow outside of its home European market into Asia, the U.S. and Canada.

"There are multiple opportunities for Mexx [including accessories and the tween segment]," he said. "What we are aiming at is an evolution, not a revolution."

To that end, he said several key executive appointments had been made in recent months, including a new vice

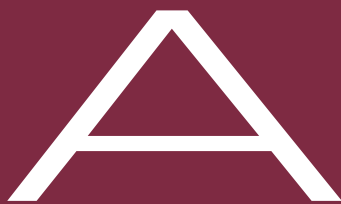


Jeff Fardell and Rattan Chadha

president of product, a new visual merchandising director and a human resources director.

As for Chadha, he said he may be closing the book on Mexx, but he has no intention to retire.

"I want to write a few more chapters," he said. For instance, he is in the final stages of developing a new hotel concept that would launch in some 20 European cities, starting next year. "It will be very hip, modern and cheap. I want to reinvent the one-star hotel."



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WWD Style Starts Here™

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Financial

Retail Real Estate Primed for Investors

By Amy S. Choi

Hundreds of billions of dollars are locked up in the real estate market, and it's ready to be invested on whatever brick-and-mortar opportunity becomes available. Retail real estate is especially alluring these days, and it is being targeted not only by public real estate investment trusts, but by private equity interest, according to experts at the National Association of Real Estate Investment Trust's annual conference in San Francisco last week. In fact, the same institutional and private equity money salivating over retail REIT stocks also are said to be eyeing companies such as Gap Inc., Kohl's Corp. and McDonald's USA.

Sources at the conference said private equity firms view these companies as ideal real estate plays that would maximize their portfolios. And despite the retail industry's obsession with same-store sales and consumer confidence, the sector remains attractive for investors of all stripes. "Retail real estate has nothing, nothing, nothing to do with retail sales," said Rich Moore, managing director of equity research with RBC Capital Markets. "That's especially true for the mall guys, but also the community center guys."

Retail sales, he said, are a good indicator of

how rents will rise. But on the flip side, when sales are down, rental rates don't spiral downward. In fact, retail REIT values seem to grow regardless of how retailers themselves are performing, at least on a short-term basis.

Given the universal desire by investors to absorb more retail real estate, analysts and executives at the conference were buzzing over who would be the next takeover target. Some whispered that Kite Realty Group Trust, a \$524 million shopping center REIT that went public just a few years ago, might be snapped up by Kimco Realty or Developers Diversified Realty, neither of whose acquisition appetite seems to be sated by recent multibillion-dollar deals. In the shopping center and strip-mall market, where sheer mass is a key indicator of strength, another scenario for Kite may be to merge with the similarly sized Ramco-Gershenson Properties.

"As a sector, the retail REITs are the most attractive out of any asset class from an M&A standpoint," said David Aubochen, vice president of securities research with AG Edwards. "It could be public money, or Australian, European or Middle Eastern capital. But five years from now, there will be 25 to 30 percent less retail REITs than there are today."



Obituary

Retail Journalist Isadore Barmash

ISADORE BARMASH, A JOURNALIST who spent much of his career covering the ins and outs of the retail industry, died Thursday.

Barmash worked as a reporter and editor at Women's Wear Daily in the Fifties and early Sixties and was a longtime business reporter for The New York Times. He was also a prolific author of business books.

He died of complications from bladder cancer at the Margaret Tietz hospice in Jamaica, N.Y., at the age of 84, confirmed a spokeswoman for the Times.

According to information from one of his books, 2005's "Fashion, Retailing and a Bygone Era: Inside Women's Wear Daily — A Look Back," on which he collaborated

with six other former WWD editors, Barmash, a native of Philadelphia, served with the U.S. Army in the Pacific from 1942 through 1945. In 1947, he joined WWD parent Fairchild Publications in its Philadelphia bureau as a reporter, becoming bureau chief three years later. In 1951, he was appointed chief of Fairchild's central copy desk, and in 1959, was named WWD's managing editor.

In 1960, he was appointed editor in chief of Home Furnishing Daily, one of Fairchild's trade publications. He left the company in 1962 to become staff business writer for the New York Herald Tribune and in 1965, joined The New York Times, where he worked until his retirement in 1991.

After leaving the Times, he

continued to write freelance articles and lecture about the retail industry.

Among his other books were "The Chief Executives," "Macy's For Sale," "Welcome to Our Conglomerate — You're Fired," "A Not So Tender Offer: An Insider's Look at Mergers and Acquisitions," "The Barmash Bible," "More Than They Bargained For: The Rise and Fall of Korvettes," "The Self-Made Man: Success and Self-American Style," and "Net Net: A Novel About the Discount Store Game."

Barmash is survived by his wife, Sarah; four children, Elaine Charnow of Jericho, N.Y., Marily Barmash, of St. Louis, Marilyn Weinberger, of Livingston, N.J., Stanley Barmash, of Clayton, Del., and four grandchildren.

Fund-raiser to Help Children Fight Illness

Kids in Distressed Situations Inc. will host its birthday fundraising gala, with partner charity Fashion Delivers, on Dec. 4 at the Mandarin Oriental New York. U.S. Senator Barack Obama (D., Ill.) will deliver the keynote address.

New York Yankees catcher

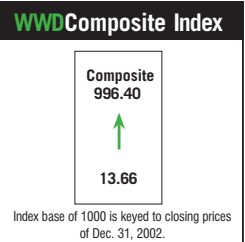
Jorge Posada will receive the K.I.D.S. Mentor Award. Posada and his wife are founders of the Jorge Posada Foundation, which provides financial assistance for children affected by craniosynostosis.

The fund-raiser, expected to draw over 500 executives from

the fashion, financial and related industries, will also honor chief executive and chairman Fred Rowan and president Joe Pacifico of the William Carter Co., and Anthony Buccina, vice chairman and president of merchandising for the Bon-Ton Stores Inc.

Weekly Stocks

Table with columns: 52-WEEK HIGH, LOW, RETAILERS, P/E, VOLUME (000'S), AMT, CHANGE. Lists various retail stocks like Abercrombie & Fitch, Acadia, Acrostable, etc.



Weekly % Changes Ending Nov. 10. Table with columns: Gainers (Urban Outfitters, Crocs, Big Dog, Chico's, Timberland), Decliners (True Religion, Blue, Movie Star, Cygne Designs, Iconix).

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Men's Skin Care Sales Losing Momentum

NEW YORK — After several years of double-digit growth, sales in the men's prestige skin care category have slowed.

Men's prestige skin care sales reached \$32 million in the first half, a 3 percent rise compared with the same period last year, according to The NPD Group. In comparison, men's skin care sales were up by 15 percent for the full year last year and up by 18 percent in 2004.

"We haven't seen anything to indicate it's going to accelerate [in the second half]," said Karen Grant, senior beauty industry analyst for NPD. "On a monthly basis, it looks as if it's going to continue on that same trend."

Grant projected the category could grow by 2 to 3 percent for the full year.

"The decline [in the growth rate] started with store closings within the department store channel," Grant said, adding, "We haven't seen tremendous launch activity that could spark some acceleration in the category."

One bright spot, however, could be the holiday season, given that each year since 2003, December has accounted for 18 to 19 percent of annual prestige men's skin care sales. In December of 2005, sales increased by 13 percent.

"That can have an impact on how the overall market does," Grant said of December sales. She maintained that promoting skin care products as gift items could have a positive impact.

In the first half of this year, men's facial moisturizers grabbed 27 percent of the category, or \$8.6 million, and treatment shave products took a 24 percent share, or \$7.7 million. Facial cleansers were the hottest men's skin care products, with a 14 percent growth rate to \$3.4 million. Facial exfoliators, however, slid 7

Origins for Men was one of this year's entries for prestige men's skin care.



BEAUTY BEAT

percent to \$3.7 million.

The top 10 brands in men's prestige skin care during the first half were, in order, Clinique's Skin Supplies for Men, Lab Series Skincare for Men, Zirh, Anthony Logistics for Men, Jack Black, Clarins Men, Biotherm Homme, Shiseido Men, Origins and Polo Sport.

"The smaller brands in the marketplace are still growing at double-digit rates, which speaks to the fact that there's still a lot of activity and interest in the category overall," said Grant. But, "while there's more activity around men's grooming, there's still an educational and aspirational lag — where men aren't engaged in the category."

"We feel there's more opportunity [for men] to adopt a broader regimen, to fuel some growth in the category."

Male consumers, who are typically thought to be more price-sensitive than their female counterparts, are "willing to pay a little more for their prestige skin care products year-over-year," NPD stated. Still, the average price of men's treatment products, which was up 3 percent to \$18.56 in the first half, is "much lower" than women's skin care items, which had an average price of \$34.53. That's a difference of 46 percent.

Women's skin care still makes up the lion's share — nearly 97 percent — of the prestige skin care market, a nearly \$2.1 billion business. Of that, men's accounts for nearly \$70 million annually.

Despite this disparity, "based on the size of the [nearly \$1 billion] men's prestige fragrance industry," Grant said, "we believe men's skin care also has the potential to be a billion dollar industry. We see this as an opportunity for the industry to go after men and broaden their user base."

— Matthew W. Evans

Calvin Returns to TV

NEW YORK — Few can forget the legendary TV commercials featuring a teenage Brooke Shields in skintight Calvin Klein jeans declaring, "Nothing comes between me and my Calvins."

Calvin Klein Inc.'s apparel has been absent from the small screen in recent years, but the house is staging a comeback this holiday season. On Nov. 20, CKI will kick off a nationwide TV campaign for its better-priced Calvin Klein white label line.

Tom Murry, president and chief operating officer of Calvin Klein Inc., explained the white label business "just achieved critical mass recently from a distribution standpoint to justify a television campaign. That's really why we have chosen to do one now." For fall, the better line is available in more than 4,280 sales points, combining men's and women's sportswear.

Fabien Baron created the commercial with CKI's CRK Advertising division. It features models Doutzen Kroes and Gabriel Aubry, opening with Aubry in a sleek glass penthouse looking at a large flatscreen TV displaying sequences of Kroes on the street. He then appears in the film, first alone, then with her and, eventually, the duo ends up together in the apartment. The sequence concludes with a voice-over stating, "You can make a wish or you can make it happen. Calvin Klein. A World of Style."

The ad will air on shows such as "Grey's Anatomy," "Desperate Housewives," "Ugly Betty" and "Studio 60," as well as several specials, including a Madonna concert scheduled for Nov. 22 on NBC. Murry didn't disclose a budget for the campaign. "We will spend \$220 million this year globally on marketing and advertising," he said. "I would say that this is a significant spend for us."

— Marc Karimzadeh



A still from the commercial.

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Candidates will identify and source product from around the world; negotiate price and terms; identify, buy, develop and execute new products, concepts, shows, brands, and ideas that will be successful in Electronic Retail; create proprietary brands; analyze sales trends; monitor inventory levels; and oversee staff.

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GRAPHIC ARTIST S

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Graphic Artist to 60K. Exp in kids, Newborn, toddler, up to tween. Girls, Boys. Fashion visibility of GAP, Zara, etc. Full time perm only. Call 973-564-9236 or email jaralinc@comcast.net

HANDBAG DESIGNERS/\$60 - \$100K+ Great opp'ty at major NYC accessory co. branded & private label. Req: handbag design experience w/ strong illust/Photoshop, trend and fashion sense, overseas travel.
Email resume: cburke@ecburke.com Fax 917-591-2521 Ph: 914-337-3660

HEAD DESIGNER/TO \$150K
Young MEN'S STREETWEAR
Put your creative mark on this Young Men's line at major NYC apparel co. Req: Young men's "streetwear" background, strong design/ trend sense, mid price point, Illustrator/Photoshop. Email resume: cburke@ecburke.com Fax 917-591-2521 Ph: 914-337-3660

Help Wanted



TECH DESIGNER/ PROD. COORD.

Young Designer collection seeks Technical Designer/Production Coordinator, capable of costing as well as communicating technical details w/ our domestic factories. 5 yrs related work exp. required. Great Benefits and Opportunities! Pls fax resume to: 646-349-4367 Email: aoshrin@millyny.com

HOT SPOTS-COOL COMPANIES

- * Costing Managers \$70K
- * Inventory Planner \$80K
- * Designers: Kids/Tween, Lic/ \$65K
- * Generic: Toys/Accessories \$45-60K
- * Licensing Coord. Disney Exp \$55K
- * Sales: Mass /Mid /Dept.
- * Bedding or Accessories \$100K+ Comm
- * Scrub: Contacts Needed \$\$\$\$

Call Laurie 212-947-3399 or e-mail laurie@karlyn.com
KARLYN FASHION RECRUITERS

LANDAU

100 STORE NATIONAL LUXURY RETAIL CHAIN SEEKS: 1. VP OF STORE OPERATIONS - Training, personnel recruitment, inventory, and management for chain. Exp. req. 2. BUYER - Fashion Jewelry. Asian sourcing exp. req'd. Some travel. 3. MERCHANDISE PLANNER - ANALYST - Monitor sales trends. Work in Allentown, PA. 4. BENCH JEWELER - Repairs/size 14kt & costume jewelry. Work in Allentown, PA. E-mail: Nick@hymancompanies.com or Fax: 610-433-2790 attn. Nick

Merchandiser/Designer

Established intimate apparel company looking for energetic and motivated sleepwear merchandiser/designer. 2-3 years experience and CAD experience a must. Fax resumes to (212) 859-4082

National Jewelry Account Executive

Leading Designer Jewelry Brand seeks National Account Executive to manage and expand its already flourishing business. Candidate must have at least 3 to 5 years experience, possess a strong management perspective and be well grounded in retail math and sales analysis. You will join an intense, dynamic, focused team on mutual success & a high level of achievement. Email resumes to tf14@yahoo.com

Operations Manager

Mid-size N.Y.C. based Accessories Mfr. seeks hands on executive & logistics coordinator to oversee all back office functions. Responsibilities include order data entry, daily order follow up, inventory control, and daily communication with warehouse on low status. Must have min. 5 years Operations experience plus full command of EDI & Dept. Store negotiations. A proven track record in a leadership position for mfrs. Professional attitude with excellent verbal & written communication skills a must. Proficiency in Excel and Outlook required. E-mail resume /salary requirements: careers@merkurynovations.com

Patternmaker \$100-125K. Current exp in first + production patterns of lined tailored womens suit jackets. Must have exp on Gerber also. Midtown Co. Call 973-564-9236 or jaralinc@comcast.net

PATTERNMAKER

Established evening dress mfr seeks experienced patternmaker. Responsibilities incl. garment specs and communication with overseas factories. Fax to: 212-398-0654

PRODUCT COORDINATOR

NJ based importer selling to major retail chains seeks Product Coordinator for our Crafts Marketing Department. Our line includes Ribbon, Beads, Trims, Bridal & Baby. Responsibilities include vendor communication product costing, specs & approvals. Candidate must have strong EXCEL spreadsheet literacy & be detail oriented & highly organized. Excellent salary / benefits. Send letter / resume / salary requirements to: HR1@horizingroupusa.com

Production Coordinator

Seeking individual to handle Wal-Mart color approvals and sample tracking from overseas. Wal-Mart experience a big plus. Knowledge of Wal-Mart color systems preferred. Individual must be detail oriented & organized. Please fax resumes to: 212-730-9705

Help Wanted

Production Manager

Morgane Le Fay seeks Prod Mgr with knowledge of entire prod. process, strong staff mgmt and personnel skills, expertise with in-house domestic and overseas production of high-end garments a MUST! Fax or email resume 212-604-9190/ asullivan@morganelefoy.com

Production Sourcing Mgr \$130-160K Current extensive exp in outerwear, polyfill, wool, winter jackets req'd. Must have worked for min. 100 mil vol co. technical proficiency in construction of outerwear. Will supervise min 10. Aggressively growing midtown co. Call: 973-564-9236 or Email: Jaralinc@comcast.net

Production Sourcing Mgr to \$125K. Current strong exp in better to bridge womens market required. Domestic plus overseas. Well known brand. E-mail Jaralinc@comcast.net

Product Manager

NYC based children's apparel co. seeks exp. individual to manage all aspects of garment approval process for sport team licensed products ie lab dips, fit, strike offs, pre-pro and production. Excel benefits. Salary comm. w/ exp. Fax resume to 212-967-7395 or E-mail to hr@francoapparel.com

SHOWROOM ASST \$27-35K

SOURCING ASSISTANT Moderate Missy Sportswear Co. offers entry level (or 1-3 yrs exp) for Garment Costing/Fabric Research. Good at Math/Excel/Communications/Detail Oriented. Salary: 28K+ based on exp. Please Fax resume to: 212-788-8873 or E-mail to: humanresources@mlclothing.com

Tech Designer-\$50-60K. Current exp in putting tech pkgs together to be sent to far east. Strong in sewing construction. Long Island City. Call 973-564-9236 or Email: Jaralinc@comcast.net

Tech Designer \$70-80K. Current exp in kidswear exp dealing w/ Wal-Mart retail link. Womens & knit. Call 973-564-9236 or e-mail Jaralinc@comcast.net

Technical Designer

Major apparel co. seeks individual w/ min. 5 yrs exp. preparing overseas tech packs, follow up on samples and communication with overseas factories. Must have sketching ability and proficient in Illustrator, Photoshop, & Excel. PLS e-mail all correspondence to: mia@silverwear-usa.com

TECHNICAL DESIGNERS SH

1) Childrens 2) C/S Knits & Wovens 3) Sweaters 4) Assistants or Associates Call (212)643-8090 Fax (212)643-8127 AGCY

SALES HELP WANTED

Sales Help Wanted

Account Executive

Established women's contemporary apparel/accessory co. seeks motivated sales exec w/ strong customer relationships at better dept & specialty stores to grow branded and private label accounts. Growth potential. Fax resume / cover letter with salary history to: 212-629-7454

Sales Help Wanted

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE HUGO BOSS WOMAN'S

Enthusiastic and highly motivated individual with at least 5 years experience in women's apparel, & wholesale experience with major department and specialty stores wanted, to aggressively expand our customer base and develop our existing client base. Candidate must have excellent customer service and analytical skills. Domestic & International travel required for this attractive visible position which offers a competitive compensation and benefit package.

Fax /Email resume & salary requirement to: Director of Women's Sales 212-940-0606 or usjobs@hugoboss.com

Account Rep • UNIFORMS

Philadelphia based Uniform Mfr. seeks a highly motivated, dedicated individual with a minimum of 2-3 years apparel sales experience. Must be challenged to open new business as well as building est'd business. Contacts/experience in the uniform business a plus. Please Fax your resume to: 215-638-7928 or E-mail to: ront@flagstaffuniforms.com

JR SWEATER SALES

Est'd co seeks person with sweater sales exp in mass & moderate mfrs. Following & est'd contacts a must. If you are looking for a new environment w/ an opp'ty to grow, contact us. Salary + incentives. Fax resume: 212-869-5772

Key Acct Salesperson

Major girls dress mfr seeks aggressive, dynamic, enthusiastic indiv to handle dept store accts. Great opp'ty. Excellent work env with competitive salary/benefit package. Fax 212-987-4915 or Email anne.dee@reeditions.com

Sales Assistant

Est'd Lingerie Co. seeks exp'd individual to assist Account Exec. Call/Fax resume: Tel: 212-889-7878 / Fax: 212-889-8411

Sales Assistant

Leading watch co seeks candidate with exp to assist National Sales Manager. Must be detail oriented, team driven, with excellent communication and follow-up skills. Previous accessory exp a plus. Proficient in Excel and MS Word. Email: mtidda@hotmail.com

Sales Exec/ HANDDRAGS MID-TIER MARKET/TO \$100K+

Great opp'ty. at major NYC accessory co. Req: aggressive, seasoned, mid-tier handbag sales exp w/ ability to take brand lines to next level, lead team. Email resume: curke@ecburke.com Fax 917-591-2521 Ph: 914-337-3660

Sales Help Wanted

Sales Help Wanted

A·B·S

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVES New York and LA

Results driven and self motivated Sales exec. with 3-5 year exp. and contacts to join our Sales team based in NY and LA. The challenge is to open new business with Specialty and Department stores.

Send resume to Attn: JR Fax: 323-222-2940 Email: hr_bluecrush@yahoo.com

Retail Sales Help Wanted

Chic Boutique Manager

Accessory designer is opening first ever boutique on the upper east side. Exp a MUST. Please know the business and how to run it. Full and part-time position. Please email resume to: blu484@earthlink.net

SALES EXECUTIVE

Rapidly growing branded & private label co seeks exp'd salesperson to join our team. Will work on existing major accounts and grow branded and private label Mens/Boys jeanswear business. Must have exp w/retailers such as American Eagle, Aeropostale, A&F. Great opp'ty & benefits! Fax resume: 212-947-6868

SALES EXECUTIVE

Est Importer of Junior, Missy & Plus outerwear, jackets & bottoms seeks aggressive salesperson w/ proven track record to devel. major chains and dept stores. Must have 5+ yrs exp w/ strong buyer / managerial following. E-mail resume to HR@Lane-Crawford.com

SALES

Masquerade, a Jr. Dress Co. based in L.A. seeks an exclusive Jr Dress Rep for our NY showroom. Merchandising experience a plus. Fax resume: 323-278-5453

Sales OPEN BOE. Current strong exp in selling junior sportswear. Min. volume 4-5 mil. Established well known firm. Email jaralinc@comcast.net

SALES PRO

Supplier of hardware, leeks and zippers to discriminating manufacturers seeks sales pro w/ following in the handbag & accessory industry. Jobs@tasitd.com

SALES REPS

Hip Southern CA apparel Co. is looking for nationwide Sales Reps to sell 3 quality Surf/Skate/Snow/Motocross apparel & accessories brands. Must have 3+ yrs exp & established customer base. Very generous commission package! Email resume: chriss@ichurchill.com

SALES REPS WANTED

Medical uniform mfr. seeks Independent Reps. Many states available. Cute, fashion forward styles! E-mail: friedak@mmfab.com



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Night Lights



NEW YORK — “It’s magic,” LVMH chief **Bernard Arnault** enthused of the warm orange light that swathed the Louis Vuitton dinner held for **Olafur Eliasson** on Thursday. The mood came courtesy of the artist’s “Eye See You” installation — a veritable throbbing sun — at the entrance of a raw space above its flagship here.

But even so, it was a tad too dark for **Christo** and **Jeanne Claude**. “I can’t see, but I have two flashlights in my purse,” she joked.

Vuitton had flown three-star chef **Pierre Gagnaire** in from Paris for the night, and he served up a feast of Oscietre caviar and filet of beef with foie gras to the likes of **Robert Wilson**, **Harvey Weinstein**, **Pharrell Williams** and **Marisa Berenson**. The real stars, however, were the wines: Arnault’s own 1999 Saint-Emilion Cheval Blanc and 1999 Chateau d’Yquem.

Earlier, in the store, the crowd listened to the Icelandic band Le Dinner Romantica. “It’s got lots of energy, but it’s not too dance-y,” Williams exclaimed. “So it keeps the focus on all the beautiful things here. There are girls everywhere.”

Downtown, more members of the female persuasion were clamoring for a different reason at Capitale at the Aid for AIDS gala. A band of PYTs were angling to have their pictures taken with one of the night’s honorees, the diminutive **Gael García Bernal**. “He’s so mini,” said **Carolina Herrera**.

Across the pond, **Elle Macpherson**, no stranger to the camera, posed endlessly for lensmen at a party in London Tuesday night at Koko club to fete photographer **James Houston**’s book, “Move for AIDS,” and the Elton John AIDS Foundation. “I told James, ‘You’re talking to the wrong chick — I go to parties, I don’t throw them!’” said the model as guests trickled in. Dancers from the Rambert Dance Company performed, while **Jade Jagger** amused the likes of **Natalie Imbruglia** and **Camilla Al Fayed** with a few jerky moves of her own. “My mother used to take me to a lot of modern dance recitals,” she said.

The following night, editor in chief **Alexandra Shulman** hosted a British Vogue 90th-anniversary love-in at the Serpentine Gallery. **Jemima Khan**, **Thandie Newton** and **Mario Testino** mingled. Even London’s

favorite lurid lovers, **Kate Moss** and **Pete Doherty**, popped in for a glass of champagne before making off for an East End pub.



Bernard Arnault and Yves Carcelle



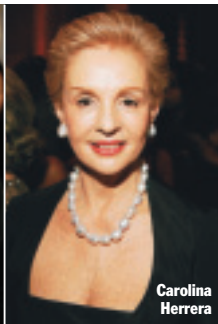
Pharrell Williams with Camille Miceli in Marc Jacobs.



Olafur Eliasson with Marisa Berenson in Louis Vuitton.



Gael García Bernal



Carolina Herrera



Jade Jagger



Jemima Khan with Mario Testino.



Kate Moss

Thandie Newton

VUITTON, EVERETT SCOTT PHOTOS BY STEVE ECHNER; HERRERA, BERNAL BY DAVID X. PRUITTING/PMC; MOSS BY CAN NGUYEN/IFL; ALL OTHER PARTY PHOTOS BY TIM JENKINS

Dog Days

NEW YORK — Think playing gay in a movie is a risky career move? How about playing gay in a play about a closeted gay actor who’s about to play gay in a movie? Cat got your tongue?

It certainly had Tom Everett Scott’s when he found out, on the Vancouver set of his hit summer TV show “Saved,” that Douglas Carter Beane had offered him a lead in the Broadway run of his play “The Little Dog Laughed,” opening tonight at the Cort Theatre.

“We shot the rest of the day, and I just couldn’t stop thinking about Broadway,” says the actor, who is making his debut on the Great White Way.

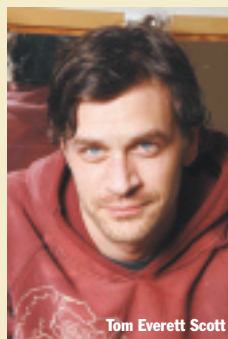
Scott, 36, who grew up in a small town in Massachusetts, first encountered Broadway in high school on a trip to New York with his parents to see “The Fantasticks.” In “Little Dog,” which had a critically acclaimed off-Broadway run last winter, Scott stars as Mitchell, a red-hot movie star with a problematic predilection for other men. Julie White plays his agent, Diane, obsessed with keeping her client in the closet and his career on the rise. When Mitchell falls in love with a young male escort (Johnny Galecki), the plot thickens.

As part of his preparation, Scott hired a trainer and nutritionist, intent on getting into the best physical shape of his life. But it wasn’t all brutal workouts: Scott also felt that some grooming was in order for him to fully embody his character.

“I decided I wanted to pamper myself, you know manis and pedis, which I’d never done before and which I f---ing love!” he says, down on the spa lounge.

And though Scott is straight (and married with two kids, who live in Los Angeles), he has had experience with a coming out of sorts. While in high school he acted in plays, and his senior yearbook future goal declared he wanted “to be a star of stage, screen and film.” But when he headed off to Syracuse University, it was not as a drama major.

“I got accepted to their communications program because I wasn’t accepting the fact that I was going to be an actor,” recalls Scott. “I wanted to do it, but I didn’t know how to say it or do it....I thought I could get communications past my parents and then everyone would get on board, and



Tom Everett Scott

then somehow I’d get into acting.”

He moved to New York after graduation and did just that, landing his breakout role 10 years ago in Tom Hanks’ directorial film debut “That Thing You Do.” It is a film for which he is still probably most recognized and certainly an experience that helped him channel Mitchell’s feelings of being a movie star on the brink.

“I think after ‘That Thing You Do’ I made a couple of movies I maybe shouldn’t have made,” he says. “At that point I wasn’t even knowledgeable enough to be afraid I was making the wrong movie. I had people telling me that I was bulletproof and that it wouldn’t matter what movie I made. Horrible advice.”

But the film career that could have been is not something about which the actor waxes nostalgic or regretful.

“It’s hard to stay on top and keep making great movies and keep getting chosen for the right stuff,” says Scott. “You’re hot for a minute. If you’re hot for longer than that, that’s really cool.”

— Vanessa Lawrence