



MILAN'S MOMENT

A LOOK AT ONES TO WATCH DURING MILAN FASHION WEEK, AND THE BUSINESS MOOD. PAGES 14 AND 16



COTERIE PREVIEW

SECTION II



DAISY'S DECADE

DAISY FUENTES MARKS 10 YEARS IN FASHION AT KOHL'S. PAGE 4

WWD

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Renaissance Flare

Oscar de la Renta drew ever so discreetly on Elizabethan riches for his beautiful spring collection. Case in point: this charming tulle trapeze, with embroidery inspired by the era's needlework. For more from the shows, see pages 8 to 12.

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COLLECTIONS



PHOTO BY GIOVANNI GIANNONI

TAKING A STAKE?

LVMH Said Eyeing J.W. Anderson

By MILES SOCHA and SAMANTHA CONTI

PARIS — Does Bernard Arnault have his eye on J.W. Anderson?

According to sources, luxury giant LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton has held talks with the hot London designer about investing in his fledgling business.

LVMH declined to comment. A spokesman for Anderson's company said: "I am not aware of any talks between the two."

If a deal is completed, it would be the latest in a string of investments in fledgling brands by the world's leading luxury goods companies. Kering bought an estimated 40 percent of Joseph Altuzarra last week, after having taken a majority in British designer Christopher Kane earlier this year.

While partial to heritage brands with business scale — as LVMH's \$2.56 billion purchase of Loro Piana in July attests — Arnault last year took a stake in young French designer Maxime Simoons, with Christian Dior honcho Sidney Toledano serving as an occasional business coach.

That move suggested the French luxury giant wishes to forge ties with promising designers who might one day take on its bigger brands, which range from Loewe and Fendi to Louis Vuitton.

As reported, LVMH is also in advanced talks to invest in the British shoe designer Nicholas Kirkwood, according to sources.

Born in Northern Ireland in 1984, Jonathan William Anderson is known for his provocative and androgynous designs. He studied men's wear at the London College of Fashion, graduating in 2005, and launched his J.W. Anderson fashion label in 2008.

In November, Donatella Versace tapped him to do a capsule collection for Versus, Versace's second line. Anderson followed in the footsteps of Kane, whose own burgeoning London business attracted a majority investment from rival French group PPR.

SEE PAGE 4

Krakoff's New Era

By MARC KARIMZADEH

NEW YORK — Reed Krakoff's phase two has begun.

When the designer unveils his spring collection today, it will mark the first time in the brand's three-year history that he stages a runway show as an independent company that he can devote his entire focus to.

On Aug. 30, Krakoff, with a group of investors, acquired control of his namesake business from Coach Inc. in a buyout deal that was reportedly valued at \$50 million. Krakoff, who serves as the brand's creative director, has the largest stake, while Mark Ein, Mitch Rales and certain funds managed by T. Rowe Price also invested in the brand.

Sitting at his West 34th Street showroom between fittings, Krakoff described the recent development as "simultaneously a new beginning and a culmination of something."

"I was fortunate enough, a few years ago with Coach, to create a brand from scratch, which was an amazing opportunity and experience, and in the last couple of years, we have watched the brand grow, achieve and accomplish milestones," he added.

By milestones, he was specifically referring to the moment when First Lady Michelle Obama wore one of his designs to last year's presidential inauguration, as well as on the cover of *Vogue*; showcases in the windows of upscale retailers like Bergdorf Goodman, Saks Fifth Avenue and Paris' Colette, and product adjacencies to other major luxury brands in stores worldwide. Since the launch, Krakoff's handbags have particularly resonated with consumers, and his ready-to-wear

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Petit Bateau Links With Lacroix, Paris Opera

By JOELLE DIDERICH

PARIS — A children's wear brand, a French couturier and an opera house are the unexpected partners behind the latest high-street designer collaboration set to hit stores for the holidays.

Petit Bateau has confirmed it worked with Christian Lacroix and the Paris National Opera on a capsule collection scheduled to go on sale on Dec. 6. Consisting of four styles for women and two for children, it will be available in Petit Bateau stores and at the Opéra Garnier boutique in Paris, a concession run by Galeries Lafayette.

"We are the first brand to develop this kind of partnership with them," said Patrick Pergament, chief executive officer of Petit Bateau.

Lacroix has pursued a thriving career designing exhibitions, hotels and stage costumes, including for the Paris opera, since the couture house that bears his name was shuttered and reduced to a licensing operation in 2009. He's now at work

on Balanchine's "Le Palais de Cristal," with music by Georges Bizet, premiering in May at the Opéra Bastille.

Lacroix told WWD that Petit Bateau is synonymous with a happy childhood, and he approached the collaboration with relish. The designer knew his line had to be "iconic," so he created belted sailor-striped tops in classic navy-and-white and a specially developed version in pink, red and black.

Lacroix added a tulle petticoat to give balletic volume to a monochromatic skirt, and used velvet ribbons as piping or bows for an extra feminine flourish on other items. The line is meant "for both mother and daughter," he explained.

Prices range from 85 euros, or \$112 at current exchange, for a women's top to 250 euros, or \$330, for an evening dress in draped striped jersey. The children's items are priced at 50 euros, or \$66, for a top and 70 euros, or \$92, for a dress. The tag on the items states "Petit Bateau et Opéra National de Paris par Christian Lacroix."

Christophe Tardieu, deputy director of the Paris Opera, said the collaboration was part of a push to develop products with the Opéra National de Paris logo, which he hopes to extend into the field of shoes, accessories and dancewear, among others.

"We are convinced the Opéra de Paris brand has global recognition and is therefore valuable and can be commercially viable, so we are very keen to develop it. At the same time, we have to move cautiously, step by step. Starting with Petit Bateau and Christian Lacroix was a guarantee of security and of great quality," he said.

"If we do branch out into ballet shoes, leotards and dancewear, it is obvious that we have an enormous [potential] market overseas, given the reputation of our ballet," Tardieu added.

In recent years, Petit Bateau has collaborated with contemporary brand Carven, vintage specialist Didier Ludot, upscale retailer 10 Corso Como and Japanese designer Tsumori Chisato.

"It's absolutely brilliant to bring people like that into our traditional French factories, which are 120 years old, and for people to suddenly find themselves having to do things that are a million miles removed from the underwear and pajamas they normally produce. It's a real electroshock for both sides," said Pergament.

The partnerships are also designed to give Petit Bateau a stronger visibility overseas as it seeks to expand its international footprint.

"We are looking to conclude very important partnerships in key countries worldwide like China, Brazil and Russia, in particular," Pergament added, noting that Petit Bateau aims to open stores through license agreements with local partners and to develop e-commerce overseas.

The executive declined to provide sales figures for the brand, merely saying it was performing better than competitors in France, its main market, where apparel sales fell 1.5 percent in the first seven months

A look from the collection.



of 2013, according to revised figures released by the French Fashion Institute, or IFM.

— WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM MILES SOCHA

LVMH Said Eyeing London's Anderson

(Continued from page one)

now known as Kering.

Coincidentally, Kane and Anderson have studios in the same building on Shacklewell Lane in a gritty borough of the English capital.

Following Kering's purchase of the stake in Kane's company, the designer underlined just how important it is for an emerging fashion brand to have the full force of a luxury goods giant behind it.

He's admitted to sleeping better at night since the deal was signed, and has plans to open a flagship in Mayfair, and launch an accessories collection and another ready-to-wear line.

"PPR understands and appreciates our creative independence, but at the same time has the experience and expertise to be able to help us grow our business globally," Kane told WWD. "We have had a number of approaches, but after lengthy discussions it was clear that PPR is the partner for us."

Kane isn't the only emerging talent to benefit from the backing of the deep-pocketed Kering. On Friday, Kering took a minority stake — industry sources estimate it's in the region of 40 percent — in Joseph Altuzarra's company. "There was this need for financial support, but there was also a need for infrastructure and expertise and experience, especially in the market sector that we're in, which is luxury," Altuzarra told WWD.

"I really felt that I couldn't just do financial support. I really needed a partner who would be able to provide expertise of the business that we're in and also be able to find the synergies that would help us."



J.W. Anderson

Fuentes Marks 10 Years in Fashion

By RACHEL BROWN

DAISY FUENTES HAS DONE what many of her more famous celebrity peers could not: keep a fashion brand in stores for a decade.

With her spring collection, being presented today at a runway show at the Eyebeam Art + Technology Center in New York, Fuentes marks the significant anniversary that has proven elusive to others, demonstrating impressive staying power and persistent appeal to customers at Kohl's, which has held the exclusive on her label since the beginning. Although she may not always grab headlines like the Olsen twins or Jessica Simpson, Fuentes, whose namesake apparel brand has racked up an estimated \$1.5 billion in sales so far, should be put in their league for building a fashion business that keeps registers humming.

Fuentes, a former model who rose to fame in the Nineties as an MTV VJ, will be the first to acknowledge that gaining success in the fashion industry is trickier than gaining success in Hollywood. "There are so many elements to it. It's so moody, it's so of the moment and on to the next. It's hard to find customer loyalty. So when you find it, it's like a rare gem, and you have to celebrate that," she said. "That's why we are celebrating the longevity."

Considered by Fuentes to be a hobby at its inception, the brand was meant to fill a white space at Kohl's between missy and junior, said Haim Dabah, executive director and group president of LF USA, which designs, sources and markets Daisy Fuentes for Kohl's. "Once we defined the space, we thought a celebrity brand would work for it. We liked Daisy because she had good crossover appeal. We did not bring it to Kohl's as a Hispanic brand. We thought it was a brand for the modern woman," he said.

Of course, Fuentes' ethnicity — she was born in Cuba to a Cuban father and a Spanish mother before moving to the U.S. at a young age — was attractive to Kohl's as it pursued Hispanic customers, but the retailer learned early on that Fuentes' reach wasn't isolated to a particular group. "The Daisy Fuentes collection targets a broad range of ages and lifestyles, most importantly a shopper who wants to add a chic and feminine look to her wardrobe at an incredible value," said Michelle Gass, Kohl's Corp.'s chief customer officer.

Fuentes, currently the host of Telemundo's kids' singing competition "La Voz," believes one of the keys to her brand's longevity is that she left television for a time, allowing her to focus on it. "If I had a full-time TV job, I wouldn't have been able to do the line," she said, elaborating, "I didn't start doing this because I wanted a celebrity line. I wanted to be involved in fashion and be

creative with something that had to do with fashion. The opportunity came, and I thought it would be a dream. I really took my time with every category. I didn't just put out a line with everything. I chose partners carefully and made sense of the whole thing."

Dabah credits the design approach as crucial to fostering customer loyalty. "It's not girly. It is flattering. It's tastefully sexy, but not overly sexy. It has strong prints," he said, adding, "People say, 'It looks great on me. It is easy to build an outfit with it. It is fashionable without being expensive. It flatters my figure.' As long as we stay true to that, the brand has another decade at least."

Gass concurred, noting, "Daisy Fuentes has real women in mind when creating her collections."

Fuentes is perfectly comfortable not chasing trend after trend, but touching on those appropriate for her brand's customers, who are primarily between the age of 25 and 55. "There's a confidence to it, and it has to do with the fact that I've grown up in the last 10 years, too, and gotten away from wanting or needing to know what every trend is. I just know what works for me and put that into the line. It's glamorous and elegant with an element of trend. That's how it's progressed. It's still fashion-forward, but it's not a slave to fashion," she said.

Daisy Fuentes' sales have remained strong even as competitors, notably brands by celebrities such as Sophia Vergara, have filtered into the market.

Don Brennan, Kohl's chief merchandising officer, said, "The Daisy Fuentes brand was our first exclusive brand and has resonated well with the Kohl's customer. Over the past 10 years, the collection has expanded into petites, women's plus, intimate apparel, jewelry, accessories and home. The brand has contributed to the growth of our overall private-exclusive brand portfolio, and we are pleased with the success of the collection."

For spring, Fuentes isn't changing the formula that has been working for her. Inspired by the Malibu vibe, she said the collection contains "great gold tops, nice sand-colored knits, some pretty flowy skirts with blues and greens. There's a new take on the maxiskirt that is really pretty. I'm looking forward to wearing all of it. That's the whole point of doing it."

Next up for the Daisy Fuentes brand could be footwear, but Fuentes isn't going to push into new categories before she's ready. "I've never been a very ambitious girl at all. I don't make big plans. I hope to just continue doing everything we've been doing right and growing with our consumer. We listen to our customers, and they dictate what improvements we make and how we move forward," said Fuentes. "We're changing with the times, but not so much that our customer doesn't identify with us."

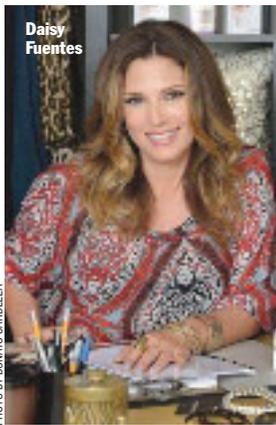


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