A Touch of Color

Domenico Dolce and Stefano Gabbana are adding two new elements to their color cosmetics range in September. Perfect Finish Creamy Foundation is the brand’s first cream foundation, and Passion Duo Gloss Fusion is a cream lipstick with a gloss center. The line is in 70 doors globally. Industry sources estimate that the two new products could add $15 million at retail to the brand’s sales. For more, see page 6.

EXCLUSIVE

P&G’s McDonald Out to Cover Globe

By MOLLY PRIOR and ANDREA NAGEL

BOB MCDONALD WANTS seven billion customers. As the leader of the multibillion-dollar consumer products giant Procter & Gamble Co., McDonald has the world within his reach. And his goal is as immense and vast as P&G’s $82.56 billion global business: Convert every person on the planet into a customer, and get every one of the firm’s categories into every country.

His sights are set on the developing world, where razors and shampoo are not commodities but aspirational luxuries.

“There’s no question that 30 years from now, when people look back at this moment in time they are going to ask, ‘Did the [P&G] leadership team properly move the center of gravity of the company more toward Asia and Africa where the babies are being born, or in this country to the Hispanic population, or in the Middle East to the Islamic population?’” said McDonald, P&G’s chairman, president and chief executive officer during an exclusive interview.

He also wants current customers to spend more.

“The average American spends roughly $100 on P&G products every year [across 35 product categories in the U.S.]. In China — where we are the number-one consumer goods company and do $5 billion in sales, over half of which is beauty — the average Chinese consumer spends less than $3 a year on P&G products across 15 categories. You can see the tremendous opportunity,” he said. McDonald ultimately sees Chinese customers spending much more per head on P&G products.

When it comes to beauty, the company said the average U.S. household spends $270 a year on female beauty products in general across all distribution channels, with $66 of that total dedicated to P&G beauty products, and $290 on beauty and

SEE PAGE 4
Nordstrom Net Up 20%

By DAVID MOIN

EVERYBODY LOVES a good fashion deal, even in hard times. Take it from Nordstrom Inc., which on Thursday said net earnings rose 20 percent in the quarter ended July 30, and credited its anniversary sale, which offers shoppers new merchandise at a discount, for much of the period’s success. Nordstrom’s earnings rose to $1.15 billion, or 80 cents a diluted share, from $146 million, or 66 cents a diluted share, in the same quarter last year. Same-store sales increased 7.3 percent, marking the fashion-based retailer’s seventh-straight quarter of same-store gains. Net sales rose 12.4 percent in the quarter to $2.72 billion from $2.43 billion in the same period in fiscal 2010.

“The anniversary sale was a significant factor. It was the best yet in the history of our company,” said Nordstrom Inc. president Blake Nordstrom, during a conference call. “It remains unique. It offers the customer preseason savings on new merchandise. After the event, everything goes back to regular price. It’s fresh new merchandise at considerable savings. Our customers love it.”

The anniversary sale is Nordstrom’s biggest sale of the year. It starts in mid-July and lasts two weeks. The event this year had the added dimension of providing early access for reward customers.

In addition, “strong executions” on two clearances — the half-yearly women’s and kids sale and the half-yearly men’s sale — helped the retailer. Both clearances were marked down by 25 percent to 60 percent in marked-down prices reported by Macy’s Inc., Ralph Lauren Corp. and Kohl’s Corp. earlier this week.

Nordstrom closed up 5.5 percent to $42.73 prior to its after-market earnings report. Equity markets rose sharply Thursday, pushing retail stocks up 3.8 percent after Wednesday’s 4.6 percent drop. Overall retail average was up 4 percent, or 423.37 points, to 11,143.31, recapturing most of Wednesday’s losses. The S&P Retail Index increased 17.46 points to 483.36.

Signs of U.S. economic weakness and the fears that the debts of Italy and Spain or others could cripple the banking sector have had markets on a ragged path over the last two weeks as investors shied away from risk. At Nordstrom, shoes, cosmetics and designer apparel were standouts in the quarter, though according to Pete Nordstrom, president of merchandising, women’s apparel lately has “lagged the average. We hope to have some things we can talk about in coming quarters on the work we are doing to improve the business.”

Regionally, the South and Midwest were the top performers for full-line stores. The direct channel continued to show strong sales growth, outpacing the overall Nordstrom increase. Nordstrom Rack’s net sales increased 92 percent, or 24.8 percent, with same-store sales up 4.8 percent. Rack will open 17 stores this year and about 13 next year.

Nordstrom’s renowned customer service has been ramped up this year. An enhanced mobile Web site was launched in June and about 6,000 associates were outfitted with mobile point-of-sale devices to speed checkouts and locate merchandise. “As we learn more, we are in a strong position to accelerate the utilization and add more if needed,” noted Jamie Nordstrom, president of digital. “Direct is the fastest growing part of the business.”

The company’s strong balance sheet, with $1.1 billion in cash at the end of the quarter, positions it for further investments in new merchandise. “As a result, we made changes in our merchandise and about 6,000 associates were outfitted with mobile point-of-sale devices to speed checkouts and locate merchandise,” noted Jamie Nordstrom, president of digital. “Direct is the fastest growing part of the business.”

The company is focusing on signing new charge card holders. The Menomonee Falls, Wis.-based retailer is focusing on signing new charge card holders. “As a result, we made changes in our merchandise and about 6,000 associates were outfitted with mobile point-of-sale devices to speed checkouts and locate merchandise,” noted Jamie Nordstrom, president of digital. “Direct is the fastest growing part of the business.”

FASHION

Kohl’s, Dillard’s, Profits Rise in 2Q

By SHARON EDELMAN

Kohl’s Corp. may have seen profits rise 16.5 percent in the second quarter, but chairman and chief executive officer Kevin Mansell was less pleased with the retailer’s sales performance.

The Menomonee Falls, Wis.-based retailer Tuesday reported net income for the quarter of $250 million, or $1.09 a share, for the quarter ended July 30, from $200 million, or 84 cents, in the prior year’s quarter.

While earnings per share beat Wall Street analysts’ estimates of $1.08 a share, Mansell said during a conference call that, “We were not happy with our sales performance. The quarter was up 3.6 percent to $4.2 billion, from $4.1 billion in the 2010 period, and comps rose 1.9 percent, below the company’s estimate.

The lack of a big apparel launch was one reason cited for what Mansell called a “subpar sales performance.” Also, Axxess, “a pretty big anchor that we purchased from St. Clairborne, was eliminated,” he said. “It’s been a drag on the first half of the year.”

Other exclusions include brands such as Fila, Lauren Conrad, Simply Vera Vera Wang and Mudd achieved “strong-double digit growth, with apparel sales,” Mansell said.

Kohl’s won’t launch for the first quarter to the third quarter, when its exclusive Jennifer Lopez and Marc Anthony brands bow. Same-store sales were up 3.6 percent as the company helped Kohl’s achieve a 4 to 6 percent sales increase in the third quarter. Comps are forecast to rise by 2 to 4 percent. Mansell raised Kohl’s full-year EPS estimate by 20 cents, from $4.40 to between $4.45 and $4.60 a diluted share.

The retail company is on plan to reach the company’s goal of $1 billion in annual sales. E-commerce sales in the quarter were up 36 percent, and the company added 780,000 new digital devices to its network, allowing it to grow to 28 million units, up from 18 million a year ago. “Our goal is to create a clear distinction at Dillard’s with emphasis on the digital media.”

There’s also a campaign to get more credit card holders. “History has proven that Kohl’s charge card holders are the most loyal customers,” said Mansell. “They have a significantly higher annual spend. As a result, we made changes in the incentives to open a Kohl’s charge account.”

The retailer is focusing on signing new charge customers in the South Central region. A partner-
Ralph Lauren Drops 'Polo'

By MARC KARIMZADEH

NEW YORK — Say goodbye to the Polo in Polo Ralph Lauren Corp.

At the firm’s annual meeting on Thursday, shareholders voted to change the company name to Ralph Lauren Corp. The move is a result of just how much the corporate identity has evolved over the years, with several brand-name labels that do not carry the Polo name and logo. It is also in line with other developments at the company, including the change of polo.com to ralphlauren.com in 2008.

Ralph Lauren, chairman and chief executive officer, had all the reasons to be confident at the meeting. The company’s one of the rare stocks to rise on Wednesday after its first-quarter results increased 52.4 percent and revenues gained 32.4 percent. Wearing a gray suit with a matching gray tie, Lauren stressed just how robust the company is, even in these volatile times.

“Thirty years ago, this company went public, and it went public very successfully [with] about $1 billion. We have one of the IPO trip, one of the investors asked me a question. ‘Well you have been in this business for about 30 years, isn’t that enough?’ We went from $1 billion to $12 billion [in retail value].”

Lauren said it was the consistent vision that separated the corporation from many others, and it’s one that applies to many markets.

“We have gone to China and there’s aspiration in China,” he said. “If you want to create people that are excited about living, excited about growing, that hadn’t had the taste of luxury that we have in America... We have seen that in China, we are seeing it in India, we are seeing it in Russia, and we have just begun. This company is, as far as I am concerned, at the beginning.”

Lauren is not oblivious to the world climate, though. “We know what’s going on Wall Street,” Lauren said. “We have one of the companies, I think, in America that had amazing increases.

“I can’t give you any answers to what’s going on around the world. We added, “Do speak to people and we do watch the world. I can only tell you this company is as solid as we ever think it should be.

For the three months ended July 2, the company’s income rose 52.4 percent to $184.1 million, or $1.90 a diluted share, from $120.8 million, or $1.21, last year. Revenues rose 32.4 percent to $1.53 billion from $1.15 billion. Total sales for the quarter rose 33.3 percent to $1.49 billion from $1.12 billion.

Shareholders clearly had reason to be pleased. Harry Korba, an individual shareholder, pointed out how, at the time of the meeting last year, the common stock was at $85.47. “It closed yesterday on the New York Stock Exchange at $125.28,” Korba said. “The common stock has risen $39.81. Thank you very much.”

Philip Berman, a portfolio manager, used the Q&A session as an opportunity to suggest additions to the board. “Right now we are top heavy on the over-60 level,” Berman said. “In fact, now would be the ideal time to nominate David Lauren to the board and to have him as chief operating officer of the newly-minted Polo Ralph Lauren Corp.”

Berman also asked Lauren whether there could one day be another acquisition for the company that is comparable to the $1.4 billion it bought Club Monaco in 1999, or whether future growth would rely on internal expansion.

“I would never say never, and when we talk about Club Monaco, it has great potential,” Lauren said. “It is doing very well today and so I think we are open to anything that comes along that we think is valid.

Study: Bargains Not Always Key for Shopper

By SHARON EDELSION

A RECENT STUDY by Kantar Retail found bargains are not always a prime motivator of shopping trips. The study compared the value propositions of 17 retailers and found which is the most compelling. It also looked at breadth of selection and promotional activity.

The research firm then juxtaposed the findings with data from its ShopperScape consumer survey. Probably the most confounding consumer finding is that the main reason shoppers go to a specific store is not to find bargains. Rather, Kantar found that trip missions differ by retailer. For example, shoppers are most likely to be looking for items to build their wardrobes, while Wal-Mart shoppers want to replace items that are worn or torn. “Browsing decisions at Old Navy and off-price retailers. Meanwhile, specific needs send shoppers to J.C. Penney, Target and Kohl’s. The latter is by far the most promotional retailer in the study, followed, by Penney’s, Old Navy, Sears and Macy’s.

The survey found that only a small percentage of shoppers are focused on styles and trends when they visit a store, while another focus on replacing worn or stained items rather than shop for new looks.

Pricing touches consumers’ psyches as well as wallets, influencing their perception of a brand. Premium pricing promotes a retailer’s credibility. Target’s limited time collections [such as Go Internationals] are extremely important because they establish the references for value for the work horses such as Mossimo,” said Anne Zybowski, Kantar’s director of retail insights.

At Nordstrom, luxury brands establish expertise through breadth of assortment, helping to reinforce the company’s positioning. Women’s jeans at Nordstrom had a weighted average price of $160, yet there were styles priced as low as $100 and as high as $350. “Nordstrom uses a lot of luxury brands to carve out fashion at the top end of the price range,” Zybowski said.

While shoppers of certain retailers overlap in some cases, consumers of each channel essentially have different needs. Dollar store shoppers are looking for value and quick check out. “Dollar stores are playing to their audience with a much tighter assortment,” said Zybowski. “The [stores] are easy to shop and provide a lot of clarity. Dollar General has one or two jeans stock-keeping units at $10 each.”

“I do criticize them for not closing the deal.”

In terms of where people shop, power centers had the biggest drop, down 2.7 percent from 2010, followed by strip centers with specialty stores, down 0.2 percent, and regional malls, down 0.1 percent. Online shopping sites grew by 1.2 percent and lifestyle centers, 0.9 percent.

“The regional mall base is holding steady with one-quarter of all shoppers going there,” Zybowski said. Online shopping may be getting more competitive, though. One-quarter of online consumers buy only when there’s an offer for free shipping.

Li & Fung Acquires Fishman & Tobin and Crimzon Rose

By VICKI M. YOUNG

LI & FUNG LTD., the Hong Kong-based sourcing giant, on Thursday posted a 16 percent decline in first-half profits and it acquired children’s apparel firm Fishman & Tobin Inc. and jewelry company Crimzon Rose International.

Both acquisitions of American firms will fall under the LF USA umbrella. Terms of the two deals were not disclosed.

Fishman & Tobin is seeking to expand its licensing business in children’s apparel and men’s tailored apparel, while Crimzon is gearing up for the unveiling of a jewelry line under the Jennifer Lopez Collection set to make its debut next month at Kohl’s.

Investment banking sources expect Li & Fung to do at least one or two more transactions by yearend.

First-half profits fell to $236 million. The company said the decline was due to higher operating expenses from recent acquisitions. Revenue for the first half of the year rose 33 percent to $8.8 billion, helped by growth in all three of its business units: trading, logistics and distribution. All figures are in U.S. dollars.

Shares of the company, a major supplier to U.S. retailers, have plummeted nearly 70 percent over the last three months amid concerns about a weak U.S. retail outlook and consumer confidence.

Li & Fung’s chief executive officer and group president Bruce Rockowitz said at a news conference in Hong Kong that despite the global economic environment, both companies are confident about the company’s outlook and three-year plan, targeting core operating profit of $1.5 billion, up 33 percent.

“I feel confident despite what is going on in the world,” he said. “I don’t see market improvement during the three-year plan, that’s what we are planning for.”

Rockowitz said the company has the top line and margin growth needed. “Now it’s about rationalization and integration and putting everything together,” he said.

In June, the Asian firm bought Loyalteey Apparel and TVMania, a European supplier of TV character-branded apparel. The company also made a number of smaller acquisitions of companies, such as Beyond Productions, which manages all of Beyonce Knowles’ brands and Celissa.

Allan Ellinger, senior managing partner of Marketing Management Group, the financial adviser to both Fishman & Tobin and Crimzon Rose, said “Through those transactions, Li & Fung acquires two of the best management teams in their respective markets, while both Fishman & Tobin and Crimzon Rose will strategically benefit from Li & Fung’s expanding global platform.”

Mark Fishman, chairman and CEO, and Jimmy Rosenfeld, president, will become co-presidents when the deal closes, Rosenfeld said.

Rosenfeld said the 97-year-old firm now has a partner that can help it take advantage of growth opportunities. It currently has licenses for Izod, Arrow, Nautica, Dockers, Calvin Klein boys tailored apparel and Tommy. “Crimzon Rose was founded by Felix Porcari Jr., who will remain chief executive officer of the firm. In 2009, it merged with Erica Lyons Jewelry.”

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According to Lori Porcari, director of marketing, the firm just signed a licensing agreement for jewelry under the Jennifer Lopez Collection.

Its costume jewelry lines are sold at major retailers such as Belk, Bon-Ton, Forever 21, Macy’s, Shopko, Target and Wal-Mart.

With contributions from Ellen Sheng
beauty

McDonald’s Global Beauty Vision

(Continued from page one)

When McDonald took the helm from his predecessor, A.G. Lafley, in 2009, P&G counted 3.8 billion people as customers. Today, 4.4 billion consumers buy P&G products, ranging from diapers to high-end skin care.

McDonald’s Global Beauty Vision

The CEO of the company is the leader of the beauty business. You can’t delegate that big a piece of the business.

— BOB McDoNALD, PROCTER & GAMBLE CO.

For all of P&G’s might and success in the beauty industry, a number of Wall Street analysts say they’ve growing increasingly impatient as they wait for the consumer products giant to jump-start more aggressive growth in the category. For the three-month period ended June 30, the company’s most recently reported quarter, P&G’s organic sales ticked up 1 percent. The two categories were outpaced by health care, which grew 7 percent; fabric and home care, up 10 percent. Snack and pet care declined 1 percent.

Further raising eyebrows was a string of management changes earlier this year, precipitated by a number of executive vacating key beauty and grooming posts. At least five beauty executives have left the company so far in 2011. P&G has emerged from the changes with a leaner organizational structure, an outcome McDonald views as a positive one.

That said, the departure of Ed Shirley — who was vice chairman of Beauty & Grooming and seen as a rising star within the company as the chief architect of P&G’s “him” and “her” beauty strategy — rattled some industry observers, who suggested McDonald was under growing pressure to fix the beauty business.

As of July 1, Shirley’s role has been overseen by Dimitri Panayotopoulos, the former vice chairman of Global Household Care, who as part of the changes was named vice chairman, Global Business Units. “The leadership turn is nothing to sneeze at,” said Deutsche Bank analyst Bill Schmertz. “P&G has lots of opportunity and an amazing geographic footprint. But I’d love to see someone take accountability for the beauty business and stick his [or her] neck on the line.”

He suggested should the company decide to appoint Drosos as the head of beauty, it would signal that “P&G is serious about beauty.”

RBC Capital analyst Jason Gere approved of P&G’s move to flatten the organization with one exception. “For beauty, you need the right reinforcement. You have to have a seasoned and focused executive there,” he said. “There’s been a lot of change over at P&G. It feels like this is one business where P&G hasn’t figured out the right recipe for success.”

McDonald sees the changes as part of the normal ebb and flow of a large corporation.

Referring to Shirley’s departure, he said, “Ed wanted to retire and we supported that. He is a good friend. And we felt like it was an opportunity once Ed made that decision to flatten the organization. It used to be beauty was a disconnect for P&G.” He notes that if you include segments such as oral care and feminine care within beauty and grooming, the business accounts for nearly 50 percent of P&G’s sales, saying, “So why wouldn’t I want to be more engaged in 50 percent of the company?”

He added, “Since I became CEO, what I have been trying to do is flatten the organization and simplify the way we work. We have gone from seven layers to five. We now have 30 percent fewer vice chairs and vice presidents and 15 percent fewer directors.”

FRIDAY, AUGUST 12, 2011

FRIDAY, AUGUST 12, 2011
McDonald emphasized the current structure, namely the “him” and “her” beauty set up, as appropriate for the moment. “I can’t predict what P&G’s structure will look like in the future, but I can predict it will change,” he said. “I tell young people in the organization about the importance of having a purpose in life and not to make it as narrow as being in a (certain) position at P&G because by the time you’re ready for it, we will have reorganized and the position won’t exist anymore.”

When asked if P&G plans to name a new head of beauty, McDonald chuckled, “Who is the leader of the beauty business? Well, the CEO of the company is the leader of the beauty business. You can’t delegate that big a piece of the business.”

Bob McDonald’s Goals for 2015

- Reach five billion customers, up from 4.4 billion currently.
- Expand to an average of 25 categories per country from its current average of 19.
- Increase consumers’ average spending on P&G products to $14, up from $12.

For McDonald, a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and a former U.S. army captain, years of globe-trotting have informed his international view, particularly about beauty. The CEO, who was born in Gary, Ind., left his small-town roots behind during his time in the military, which took him to Beall, Panama. He left the army in 1980, taking a job with P&G. The company’s growing interest in international markets led him to take posts in Canada, the Philippines, Japan and Belgium.

McDonald, who speaks four languages — English, Japanese, French and a bit of Filipino (or Tagalog) — says his two adult children, Jennifer and Robert, didn’t attend school in the U.S. until college.

He is teeming with anecdotes from his years spent abroad and, despite the demands of the corner office, is aavid student of history. “Washington, D.C., is a very good school,” he said. He has written and published his favorite book, “Washington: A Life.” Boy, was that a mistake. It’s a great book.”

During the decade he spent in Asia, McDonald developed a fondness for the beauty category. “I spent nearly five years of my life running the hair care business, from 1991 to 1995, at a time when we created Vidal Sassoon in the U.S. and started P&G’s acquisitions — from Clairol to Gillette Co. to introduce items consumers said they missed, including two-in-one shampoo-conditioners and larger-size items — all backed by a new marketing campaign.”

Enter Walter Geiger, P&G’s newly named vice president of North America, hair care and color. Geiger comes to the U.S. with more than 10 years of hair care experience, most notably in Asia and most recently in Singapore.

One month into the position, Geiger said the most important thing to do is to grow market share. “To get there he wants to sell more treatments and styling aids, and grow into premium and specialized offerings. The plan to grow in men’s grooming isn’t a new one. This year Geiger saw it in a local chain.”

He also wants to tap into the Hispanic and ethnic consumer. “In Asia, everyone has long dark hair. In Europe, it’s thin brunette or blonde [hair]. Here, everyone is diverse,” he said.

Geiger said he remembers the launch of Pantene in Japan and how the model of bringing a two-in-one technology (healthy hair and shine) was a new benefit message. “That still sticks in my mind,” he said. “And there is still an opportunity to go back to that in the U.S. on TV.”

Currently, P&G is honing on in its “zero breakage” end-benefit message to TV and print ads featuring Eva Mendes. How long it will take Geiger to recharge hair care and color is unknown. And while analysts often point to Pantene’s sheer mass as one of its biggest hurdles, McDonald sees Pantene’s size as an advantage.

- We at P&G don’t buy that there are mature categories and mature brands,” McDonald said. “We have to have each of our brands have that kind of relationship with the customer. We want to understand the insights and then develop big ideas ways people can participate and turn their participation into movements.”
beauty

Dolce & Gabbana Adds to Color Cosmetics Lineup

By JULIE NAUGHTON

WITH A NEW CREAM FOUNDATION AND LIPSTICK/GLOSS COMBINATION DUE THIS FALL, DOMENICO DOLCE AND STEFANO GABBANA AND THEIR SHARPEST COLLABORATOR, LILO FEOLA, CAME TOGETHER IN A DYNAMICALLYzeichner in the color cosmetics playing field.

The designers, whose scent and color cosmetics business licenses are held by Procter & Gamble Prestige Products, first entered the makeup category in February 2009 with 110 stockkeeping units. Including the new additions, the range will now comprise 250 SKU’s.

Perfect Finish Creamy Foundation, which will be available in 15 shades, each $55, is the line’s first cream foundation and is intended to offer easier application and is buildable. Each glass jar is hand-dipped and filled with an engraved gold top. “A woman who applies makeup is doing a very sensual act that captures the attention,” said Dolce. “So the quality is important, but also its image, its packaging…” Everything in our products is designed to have women feeling sensual, and extremely feminine while using it.

Passion Duo Gloss Fusion Lipstick combines a cream-like bullet with a center of gloss. “Passion Duo is the Dolce & Gabbana woman: passionate, extremely feminine,” said Feola. “It’s sensual.” “A woman who lives in the present, likes to take care of herself and has confidence in herself,” added Dolce.

Twenty lip colors in four shade families — Nudes to Browns; Reds to Oranges; Pinks and Trues — Passion will be offered, each priced $34. Depending on the desired finish, the cream bullet can be emphasized (for vivid color) or the center gloss can be (for a stain effect). “Today’s girl likes traditional makeup, but also likes to try new things,” said Gabbana. “Passion Duo links gloss and lipstick and the final effect on lips is very nice.”

Dolce said, “The combination between matte and gloss gives an extra shine on the lips, especially on their central part. And it has a very specific click when the packaging closes. After several attempts we achieved the result we wanted and we are very proud of it.”

While color cosmetics isn’t an inexpensive category to enter, the designing duo felt extremely strongly about involving themselves in makeup. “For us, makeup has always been a fundamental element to complete the Dolce & Gabbana universe,” said Gabbana. “We had thought about makeup for a long time and we had dedicated energies, study and intensive research before launching it. Fashion collections and makeup are linked together, since they complete each other.”

Dolce added: “We always knew that makeup is a very challenging market, with specific rules and characteristics, and we wanted to enter in the best way: a rich lineup with several products and colors available with a clear story.”

To most effectively integrate color and apparel, the duo discuss both at the same time. “Once we decide the theme for our [collection] show, we start to create the entire look of the Dolce & Gabbana woman, from accessories to hair and makeup, of course,” said Gabbana. “The way we work is the same for makeup and fashion. The biggest part of our work is talking — we talk about everything.”

“This season, we worked on the sensuality of the contrast between masculine and feminine, and everything was built on this main theme,” said Dolce. “We start from the main idea, the concept, and then we build the story, we aim to see this new product within the Dolce & Gabbana world, we contaminate it with our DNA.”

The duo consulted with makeup artist Pat McGrath on the new additions, as well as the original collection.

According to Liugi Feola, vice president of Procter & Gamble Prestige, the color cosmetics line has grown more than 50 percent this year, via new door openings and higher productivity in existing doors. “The growth rate was beyond expectations,” he said. While Feola declined give dollar figures, industry sources estimate that the two new products could add as much as $15 million at retail to the line in their first 12 months on counter. Globally, the products are available in about 70 doors, including Saks Fifth Avenue in the U.S. It will enter Saks doors in late September.

“It is of great strategic importance to us and to the fashion house that we win in this category,” said Feola. “We look at color as part of a natural expansion of the brand and believe very strongly in its potential.” In its success, designers also bring strong passion to the line, because they feel strongly that color is a natural extension of what they do.

Ads featuring Scarlett Johansson, shot by Solve Sundsbo, will begin running in September. Fashion, beauty and lifestyle magazines globally.

Actresses Team With Glamour to Direct

EVA LONGORIA, Zoe Saldana and Olivia Wilde are stepping behind the camera this month to bring the stories of Glamour magazine to life.

The three actresses are each directing a short film based on true-life stories of Glamour readers (the magazine, like WWD, is owned by Condé Nast Publications.) The films will premiere on Oct. 24 at the Directors Guild of America Theater in Los Angeles.

Longoria is taking on the tale of Alex, a 35-year-old Glamour reader forced to undergo a double mastectomy. And it had a great personal connection, as Longoria said that Alex’s story appealed to her on a number of levels. “First of all, it was a surprisingly humorous story for such a serious topic. It also demonstrated the camaraderie and support of a group of women who are trying to help their friend give her a proper send-off before her double mastectomy. And it had a great story arc. These are short films, and you normally have to be at A-list in less than 20 minutes.”

While she’s certainly no slouch in front of the camera, Longoria said she greatly enjoys working behind the scenes, on projects produced or co-produced six TV projects, including the TV movie “The Philanthropist,” over the past several years and said she is currently developing three TV projects.

Longoria also has two films in postproduction: “Cristiada,” a chronicle of the Cristero War (1926-1929), which was touched off by a rebellion against the Mexican government’s attempt to secularize the country, and “The Baytown Disco,” in which she stars with Billy Bob Thornton. Longoria is also about to launch her second fragrance with Falic Fashion Group (“the first one was clean and fresh, like you got out of a shower. The second is a little muskier and different — it’s more of a nighttime scent with white musk”) and said she is in talks to do an apparel line, although she declined to give details.

Saldana’s film, “Kaylien,” is about a young schoolgirl who feels like an alien. At the end of the film, it is revealed that the little girl is autistic. Saldana cast Bradley Cooper and Malin Akerman in the story, which was filmed earlier this month.

“My 7-year-old niece was getting bullied this year, so shedding light on that was very important to me,” said Saldana. “We know a lot of people who have kids with some form of autism, so I wanted that to be part of it. Then, I wanted to integrate what I love in filmmaking — storytelling and some of my colleagues to life as ‘Avatar,’ including my assistant director, my stunt team, animators and the guys who trained me for the role for help. It took three days to shoot, because even though it’s short, it was the first Glamour film with motion capture, stunts and special effects.

Wilde — who was named as a face of Revlon earlier this year — took a practical view: “I think it will make me a much better actress and it seems like something every actor should do at least once,” she said. “Actors so often walk onto a set and believe that the process starts when we arrive and it ends when we leave. So I think the greatest discovery is how much work happens when the actors are not there. Also, I’ve always kind of mourned the small number of female directors in this business and I kind of complain about it a lot without doing anything. So instead of whining about there being a lack of female directors, why don’t I become one and create my own story. So it’s been a dream for a long time.”

Leslie Russo, associate publisher and brand development director for Glamour and an executive producer on Glamour Reel Moments, noted that the project began in 2005. Alums of the Glamour project include Gwyneth Paltrow, Jennifer Aniston, Demi Moore, Kirsten Dunst and Jessica Alba. Actors, directors and crew donate their time to the project, and underwriting is involved each year. This year the underwriter is Clarisonic.

Chris Payne, vice president of marketing for Clarisonic, noted that the project was “a great fit” for the brand. “Working with the Glamour team to select stories from readers and watch those stories come to life helps us connect on an emotional level with readers.” — J.N.
Retailers Nurture Baby, Mommy Segments to Boost Sales

NEW YORK — Baby care is the latest category crying for attention.

With retailers looking for new ways to plump sales in categories that are struggling, baby and mommy care is a department more want to nurture than toss into the bargain bin after Ulta, Duane Reade, Wal-Mart and Walgreens are among those indicating baby and mom care is set to expand, joining other emerging products and services such as teen, premium skin care and do-it-yourself beauty as those getting more space in newly remodeled doors.

“We were so pleased to add the new category of mother and baby to our stores this summer. The category is in a majority of Ulta doors,” said Heather Holubek, senior buyer prestige of Ulta doors,” said Heather Holubek, senior buyer prestige.

Those indicating baby and mom care is becoming a category are including baby care items. Navarro has Vida Mia targeting upscale brands such as Mustela. Other baby and mom lines are expected to follow such as Bethenny Frankel’s Skinnygirl Mommy collection. Rite Aid has revamped its private label baby care under the Tugaboo name, and Navarro has Vida Mia targeting Latin following and including baby care items. As drug chains look to bridge health, wellness and beauty, baby and mom care is becoming a category of interest.

Mustela is the lead vendor in Duane Reade’s Locale Boutique, but the department will feature additional brands, according to Pedro Carlo. Carlo managing director of U.S. and Canada.

“We envision a burgeoning future with mother and baby sections expanding to other selective retailer of $18.50. The newest product in the lineup is Stelatria Purifying Recovery Cream, which is backed with research showing it helps reerguson and redness and reduce appearance of scars. It hits shelves next month with a suggested retail of $49.99.

Celebrities rely on Mustela products with moms including Gwenyth Paltrow, Bethenny Frankel, Molly Ringwald, Rebecca Romijn, Tory Spelling, Denise Richards and Melissa Joan Hart among loyal users.

The Mustela display at Duane Reade and Mustela Stelatria Purifying Recovery Cream ( inset).

Baby care products exceed $400 million in food, drug and mass stores (excluding Wal-Mart), according to Symphony IRI Group. Sales are almost equally divided among drug, mass — suggesting the channel that jumps out front in presentation could steal some share from competitors. While the National Center for Health Statistics reported a decline in the U.S. birth rate, retailers said they expect to see mothers spend more on their offspring and their own needs related to childbirth.

Gibson to Open Salon in Florida

HAIRSTYLIST AND SALON OWNER Ted Gibson has signed a deal with W Fort Lauderdale & Residences in Florida to lease space there for a new Ted Gibson salon slated to open in November. It will join Bliss spa as one of the hotel's beauty retreats.

The salon measures about 2,000 square feet with 12 stations and will offer L’Oreal Professionnel hair color, as well as Goldwell’s hair stylings.

The new location will bring his salon count to two (there’s also Ted Gibson Salon in Manhattan). His Washington, D.C., salon was closed earlier this year — it is now the Hela Spa Salon — after almost two years in operation.

Hair colorist Jason Backe, chief executive officer of Ted Gibson, explained the salon’s closing.

“The D.C. salon was a licensing deal with the brand of Ted Gibson responsible for branding, training, image and p.r. for the location in exchange for a percentage of the business. When ownership of the location changed, the new owners insisted on changing the terms of the license. The new terms did not reflect the standards of the Ted Gibson brand and we were forced to terminate the relationship and pull the license.

Gibson’s product line, which includes hair care and styling tools, continues to be carried online and at his salon. With fashion week round the corner, Gibson is planning an all-day event for Fashion’s Night Out from his Manhattan salon with one of his A-list celebrity clients. He will be styling the spring shows for Lela Rose, Carmen Marc Valvo and Rachel Roy this season. Gibson will remain the beauty transformer for TLC’s “What Not to Wear,” which premieres its new season Aug. 16.

— ANDREA NAGE

Arden, Claiborne Rework Licensing Deal

BY EVAN CLARK and MOLLY PRIOR

LIZ CLAIBORNE INC. raised $58.4 million in cash from Elizabeth Arden Inc., agreeing to accept lower royalty payments on fragrance businesses tied to its brands — including Juicy Couture and Lucky Brand — and transferring the trademark for its Curve fragrance to Arden.

The deal will help Clairolne pay down some of its debt and clear the way for Arden to invest more into the licensed fragrance brands. Arden also reported Thursday that both fourth-quarter and year-end profits more than doubled.

For Claiborne, the deal could be a prelude of more to come. The company is already in talks to sell a majority stake in its Mexx division.

The fact that they were able to get $50 million in the deal is a surprise,” said Jim Chartier, an analyst at Monness Crespi,Hardt & Co. “I think the turnaround’s on track, but it’s probably in their best interest to continue to sell some of these non-core assets.”

The amendment to the 2008 licensing agreement also includes the transfer of other smaller fragrance brands to Arden in the minimum guaranteed royalties and the prepayment of certain royalties.

The amendment also includes the transfer of other smaller fragrance brands to Arden, which benefits by owning the Curve fragrance outright and from the lower royalty fees on Claiborne licenses. During the company’s earnings call on Thursday, Arden chairman, president and chief executive officer E. Scott Beattie told analysts that lower royalties will allow the company to increase its investment behind the fragrance brands licensed from Claiborne. Regarding Arden’s decision to keep Curve, Beattie said, “It’s a stand-alone fragrance business so it made sense to buy that out.”

Beattie expressed some apprehension on franchise stores to benefit to begin to benefit Arden’s earnings in fiscal 2012, and more significantly in 2013. Arden ended its fiscal year on strong footing.

For the three months ended June 30, Arden’s net income was $5.4 million, or 18 cents a diluted share, up from $2.3 million, or 8 cents, in the year-ago quarter. Net sales in the quarter gained 11.2 percent to $258.3 million, from $228.2 million in the year-earlier period. Excluding the impact of foreign currency translation, net sales gained 7.7 percent.

For the year, net income also more than doubled to $41 million, or $1.41 a diluted share, from $19.5 million, or 66 cents a share, a year ago. Sales for the year gained 6.5 percent to $1.18 billion, or 5.9 percent excluding the impact foreign currency translation, driven by gains in North American and International sales.

Revenue in North America gained 5.2 percent to $756.7 million, outpaced by international sales, which gained 8.9 percent to $418.8 million.

In a bid to meaningfully reinvent the mass marketed fragrance business, Arden is currently rolling out scent tester bars to key mass retailers.

Arden also is gearing up for the introduction of Taylor Swift’s fragrance Wonderstruck, which will launch in prestige stores in the U.S. this fall, followed by an international rollout in 2012.
Yummie Tummie Founder Speaks Out on Settlement

By KARYN MONGE

THE $6.75 MILLION settlement agreement revealed Wednesday between Maidenform Brands Inc. and Three Times Clothier LLC has given closure to Heather Thomson-Schindler, founder of Yummie Tummie shapewear.

Thomson-Schindler, who serves as Times Three’s president and chief executive officer, called the settlement a “victory” for entrepreneurial designers and innovative fashion apparel companies.

“It’s a win in general for innovation and I’m very proud of it. I think there are a lot of new designers and companies that have new ideas but are scared to death their ideas will be taken away from them,” said Thomson-Schindler, who started her firm on a shoestring budget in 2008.

“This is my new emblazoned passion — I am planning to work with Stephen Kolb at the CFDA and I want to go to Congress to help pass laws to protect designers and their innovative ideas...they have no protection,” she stated.

The litigation involved Maidenform's multimillion-dollar Fat Free Dressing by Flexees line and Yummie Tummie, a contemporary shapewear line from Times Three. The two companies have been embroiled in legal battles for years.

The settlement ends patent infringement and invalidity lawsuits that the companies had filed against each other last year. As a result, Maidenform has agreed not to assist any third party that may seek to invalidate or render unenforceable the patents.

Maidenform filed a lawsuit in Manhattan federal court seeking a declaratory judgment that its Flexees Fat Free Dressing Tank did not infringe on a design patent held by Times Three. At the time, Times Three held one design patent for the three-panel Strappy Tank, and it now holds four patents with another pending for the Yummie Tummie franchise.

Thomson-Schindler told WWD that she designed the three-panel control tank top for herself when she couldn’t find a shaper to smooth her post-maternity figure. Times Three countersued in September 2010 in Manhattan federal court, accusing Maidenform of copyright design patent infringement.

Times Three said in court papers that Thomson-Schindler and her business partner, Eric Rothfeld, met with Maurice S. Reznik, CEO and director of Maidenform, on Jan. 29, 2009, to discuss Maidenform’s possible acquisition of Times Three and the Yummie Tummie designs. Reznik indicated that Maidenform had about $40 million available for acquisitions, but Rothfeld said that sum was too low given the popularity of the shapewear and Times Three’s growth potential, according to the suit.

Reznik allegedly expressed continued interest in Times Three, but in July 2009, Times Three reached a settlement with the lawsuit, we paid Times Three $6.75 million. We are very pleased to put this litigation behind us and focus all of our efforts on growing our business.

For the second quarter ended July 2, Maidenform’s income decreased to $11.6 million, or 50 cents a diluted share, from $13.7 million, or 59 cents, last year. The litigation charge of $4.1 million settles patent infringement and invalidity lawsuits that the two litigants filed against each other. Excluding the charge, diluted earnings per share would have been 67 cents for the quarter versus 59 cents a year ago. Sales rose 13.8 percent to $170 million from $149.4 million. The company said shapewear sales increased 9.8 percent, while those at the mass market channel gained 29.1 percent.

For the six months ended July 2, profits grew 1.2 percent to $26.1 million, or 59 cents, from $25.8 million, or 50 cents, last year. Sales increased 4.1 percent to $54.4 million from $52.2 million. The company said shapewear sales increased 9.8 percent, while those at the mass market channel gained 29.1 percent.

The settlement was not an admission of wrongdoing by either party, but reflected the significant legal fees and management time that would have to be devoted to continue to vigorously defend the lawsuit,” said Reznik. “In connection with the lawsuit, we paid Times Three $6.75 million. We are very pleased to put this litigation behind us and focus all of our efforts on growing our business.

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“You think this will open more retail doors and more opportunities in the retail environment for Yummie Tummie... New Maidenform is no longer producing three-panel tanks in their Fat Free Dressing line. They are only doing two panels. We needed to bring in this settlement with one of the biggest companies and draw a line in the sand. Other companies will see this and say, ‘OK, I’m not playing this game,’” said Thomson-Schindler.

The settlement, which also resolves a federal court proceeding that had been pending since March 2010, is not the same as the acquisition of Times Three that has estimated wholesale sales of $20 million, according to industry sources.

The Original 3-Panel Strappy Tank that provoked the lawsuit.

The Original 3-Panel Strappy Tank that provoked the lawsuit.
MEMOPAD

REMEMBER WHEN — AND RETWEET: “For a few weeks in March and April, a strange fad took hold in the headquarters of Condé Nast Publications at 4 Times Square,” wrote Warren St. John in The New York Times during the spring of 2003. “After sharing elevator rides with Anna Wintour, the editor in chief of Vogue, Condé Nast employees sat down at their desks and typed accounts of their vertical journeys with the fashion icon,” he continued.

St. John was describing Gawker’s Elevator Chronicles and, more broadly, a new swath of New York media — what he called the “New York School of bloggers.” The Elevator Chronicles and other Gawker posts moved the cult of personality around Condé Nast editors online. That same year, Lauren Weisberger published “The Devil Wears Prada,” and the book became a movie. Four years later, Condé Nast published the thickest September issue of Vogue ever and that book became a movie, too. The blog and book were snarky, yes, but they were also an homage to the company’s power.

Then the seas changed for the magazine world. McKinsey consultants and magazine closures followed and this year the company lost its position as this city’s top privately held fashion magazine publisher in terms of market share to less-glamorous Hearst. Over the years, Condé Nast intrigue online has turned more than a few corners.

But last weekend, more than eight years after the genesis of the Elevator Chronicles, someone on the Internet again began recording vignettes from Condé Nast’s elevators. This time, instead of sending their elevator stories to a poorly salaried blogger working at home, Condé Nast employees were sending the fruits of their eavesdropping to a Twitter account started and maintained (most likely but not certainly) by one of their own. Someone inside Condé Nast had taken up the mantle of mythologizing the company on the Internet.

An audience emerged immediately. The @condeellevator account grew fast — 10,000 followers turned into 30,000 in one 24-hour period and the audience climbed over 60,000 in the account’s fifth day. ABC News, The Daily Beast, The New York Observer, New York Magazine, The New York Post, the Dutch edition of Elle magazine, Russian Vogue and the Daily Mail among others wrote about the feed. Twitter was aroused by this weird taste of 2003 in 2011. The Internet felt punk again.

Then muscle memory went to work. Gawker, which has moved on to writing about things that get more page views than elevators at media companies since 2003, started to dig around for the anonymous elevator tweeter’s identity. Other blogs joined in and by Thursday, speculation about who was running the account brought it to an early end.

“The love my job. Better stop,” the anonymous tweeter wrote, signing off. But the fear of the company — scary Condé Nast — retaliating was largely imagined online. One Condé Nast freelancer, Andrew Krucoff, remains the only person to ever lose a job, a research gig, for leaking to Gawker. If anything, the company actually seemed delighted by the attention that was coming from the anonymous feed. “We have no idea if this is real or made up and don’t know who is behind it, but it certainly suggests that many people care a great deal about what happens at Condé Nast,” a Condé Nast spokeswoman said in a statement to the outlets that were writing about the feed on Wednesday.

“There was no concern, and there was no witch hunt,” Patricia Steele, Condé Nast’s senior vice president for corporate communications, said on Thursday afternoon.

Comparisons between 2003 Gawker and an anonymous Condé Nast staffer on Twitter in 2011 can’t go very far. The @condeellevator had none of the bite of the Gawker version. The vast majority of the quotes from inside the elevator weren’t sourced to real people, just Condé Nast archetypes (the dudeitor; someone in a linen blazer; the intern). The feed was more interested in saluting the relics of the company’s past — Town Cars, helicopters to the Hamptons and small lunches of lettuce and carrots from the Frank Gehry cafeteria. One of the most prescient tweets out of @condeellevator’s short life came from one of the feed’s fans, someone named Breanna Monique, who tweets as @dungeon_dragonb and has nothing to do with the company: “The funny thing about that @condeellevator is I was just Wikipediaing Anna Wintour and watching the ‘Devil Wears Prada’ yesterday,” she wrote on Thursday.

The feed’s brief time represented a medieval moment for the Internet, a recycling of culture to the point that it’s difficult to remember what was so great about the original. Meanwhile, a company that often seems to be wrestling with not capitalizing on the Internet had a definitely brief but nevertheless self-deprecating and attention-grabbing moment on Twitter.

The Internet was once again intrigued with Condé Nast and it was a nice hardening back to the salad days of 2003. A Hearst account emerged on Thursday. At presstime, @hearsrelevatorz had just more than 500 followers.

The ‘O’ Team

About 50 designers and celebrities — including a confident Jimmy Fallon — turned out for a fund-raiser for President Obama at Harvey Weinstein and Georgina Chapman’s West Village town house Thursday night. For more, see page 10.
THE SUN SLOWLY inched into the Hudson River and illuminated the glass windows and roofs of western Chelsea, casting the brand-new Hôtel Americano in rose and then bruise-colored tones on Wednesday night. It did little to illuminate a mystery presented to guests upon entrance.

“First, please just sign this waiver,” a petite woman in a hotel uniform said as she greeted the Young Friends of ACRIA, headed to a dinner to celebrate the one-year anniversary of the youth group associated with the AIDS Community Research Initiative of America. “It just says that we’re not open yet,” she went on. “But you can’t come in until you sign it.”

With visions of plummeting off the roof or pieces of metal scaffolding raining down on unsuspecting heads, the woman was asked if the form was a release from liability. “It’s just that we’re not done yet,” she chirped before scuttling away.

The expansive roof-terrace and its enviable panoramic views seemed to be stable enough to play host to a small swarm of designers, artists and socials who encircled a small lap pool and adult-sized bean-bag loungers. Chelsea Leyland manned the DJ booth, where the dyed-purple tips of her bleach-blonde hair undulated as she skipped along to the music. Leyland, who has spent most of the summer months at Ruschmeyer’s, her boyfriend Ben Pundole’s new Montauk-based “summer camp for adults,” was eager to share insight from “Tapped,” a documentary she had seen about the purported deceit of the bottled water industry.

“They’re just too rich and nobody’s watching,” Leyland bemoaned of the companies, “Clean drinking water is a basic human right, not a commodity. And we just drink this stuff, not knowing what it’s doing to us.”

Francisco Costa, a longtime friend of ACRIA, surveyed the scene but left before dinner began, pausing to greet Prabal Gurung and Maggie Betts on his way out. Betts was clad in a two-tiered black satin cloud of fabric, which she had created by combining a piece from Gurung’s latest collection with Lanvin from her closet. “It’s not a dress, but everybody thinks it is,” she laughed.

Angel Otero, Bibhu Mohapatra, Chris Benz, Marjorie Gubelmann and Jason Wu were all on hand for the dinner, which ended with some vigorous dancing poolside. At a table facing north, as the lights of Times Square crested over buildings in the distance, Waris Ahluwalia was in pains to describe his jewelry line to the uninitiated. Grinning triumphantly, he finally decided. “It’s halfway between incredible and beautiful,” Ahluwalia explained. “That’s pretty modest, right?”

—ALESSANDRA CODENIA

THE EXTENDED fashion set came out to pay their respects — and a reported $71,500 per couple — to President Barack Obama at a fund-raiser at Harvey Weinstein and Georgina Chapman’s West Village townhouse Thursday night, where Anna Wintour was also co-hosting. Among those who turned out for the Bank Street bash were Tory Burch and Lyrn Cohen, Gwyneth Paltrow and Chris Martin, Pharrell Williams, Aerin Lauder, Kenneth Cole, Alicia Keys, Gayle King and Jimmy Fallon. After stopping by the Ritz-Carlton for another fund-raiser, the President was scheduled to arrive at Weinstein’s pad at around 7:10 p.m., give a presumably brief set of remarks and leave New York by 9:10 p.m. Quite a profitable few hours.
The big screen as a pop star in the celebrate top-level, whom she hadn’t seen since hits relatively scandal-free. That is until she out of here so much faster than everyone as she swapped her heels for biking waiting for their cars,” said Christensen downstairs in the hotel’s driveway, the filled a plastic bag with over a pound don’t need to take this,” she said. Once of candy from the self-serve bar on the up was Jessica Paster Jessica Chastain InStyle’s annual Los “Help” co-stars are many, including permitted smoking. “The advantages of an open-air party are many, including permitted smoking. “It’s not very InStyle,” commented one guest of the jars of cigarettes provided on the tables. “Well it’s relaxing and everyone was relaxed,” replied stylist Jessica Paster. One actress not lighting up was Merit Elliott, who instead filled a plastic bag with over a pound of candy from the self-serve bar on the way. “It was a great excuse to buy some,” she said. Erika Christensen, who instead didn’t have to take this,” she said. Once downstairs in the hotel’s driveway, the reason for her desire to travel light became apparent. “We’re going to get out of LA and need to go somewhere that’s much faster than the hotel,” she said. “It’s so much quicker than the hotel.” California Girls: having grown up in Hollywood, Emma Roberts has been relatively scandal-free. That is until she hits the big screen as a pop star in the film “Celeste and Jesse Forever.” “I got to dress inappropriately and act obnoxious,” Roberts said of her character, who wears what she described as “a lot of bright bra and her heels.” “And Roberts cleaned up nicely in a black and white tea dress by Prada when New York to co-host a dinner at Petit Ermitage in West Hollywood on Wednesday. The guests of honor were her longtime style advisor Emily Curran, Merit Elliott, who launched a bag collection called Westward with Kate Spade New York just the day before. “We love bags, we buy bags,” Current said of her journey into bag designing. “Some bags (in Westward) are perfect for a portfolio, laptop and a pair of flats. Some bags are perfect for the red carpet,” Elliott added. Kate Spade New York creative director Deborah Lloyd said she was “on fire” with the stylists, who also founded L.A. premium denim label Current/Elliott, and allowed Kate Spade to tap into what she characterized as the “T.L.A. chic on full display with guests including Jaime King, Ali Landry, Sasha Spielberg and Robert Downey Jr.’s Chord Overstreet. Other famous attendees played a role in the fashion industry. Gia Coppola recently directed a short film for California fashion label Wren, while Michelle Trachtenberg, who will portray a drug dealer on “Weeds” and a former heroin addict in “Sexy Evil Genius,” will showcase a pair of studded platform pumps she designed for Stuart Weitzman at Fashion’s Night Out in New York. Zelda Williams is testing her fashion limits in a web comedy series in which she plays a Wal-Mart employee domino, in her words, a “superplain color polo shirt and black Dickies and comfy shoes.”

PRINTEMPS GETS CRAFTY: Printemps is shining a spotlight on luxury with fall window displays and in-store events that celebrate top-level craftsmanship. Brands including Celine, Chloe, Alexander McQueen, Gucci, Lanvin, Miu Miu, Balenciaga and Alexander Wang will showcase a single iconic item from their collections in window displays scheduled to run from Aug. 26 to Oct. 8 at the Paris flagship of the French department store chain. The windows of the adjacent Printemps de l’Homme men’s wear store will feature leather goods by the likes of Courrèges and Coach. The main Printemps store will host a working Claude Carlier, who runs the fashion house of Gucci’s 90th anniversary, with demonstrations by artisans who will be hand-finishing some of the brand’s most recognizable pieces. The first round of events will be held on Sept. 8, when customers a personalized initials service for a limited period. A Balenciaga pop-up store near the store’s entrance will sell accessories specially designed for Printemps, such as a yellow fluorescent python tote priced 2,245 euros, or $3,200 at current exchange. Salvatore Ferragamo is bringing a craftsman from Florence to take custom orders, while children’s wear brand Bonton will host garland-making workshops for kids. De beers will present exclusively its Swan Lake collection of diamond jewelry, while Swiss watchmaker Girard-Perregaux will stage an exhibition, “Tourbillon,” to mark its 220th anniversary.

BETSEY’S ELOISE DAY: The Palm Court at The Plaza was a riot of pink-striped hatboxes, stuffed animals, flutes of rose Champagne, tiered stands holding macaroons, chocolate-dipped strawberries and scones last week for Betsey Johnson’s celebratory tea party for the one-year anniversary of the hotel’s Eloise suite, which she designed. “I had been working my little ass off,” Johnson laughed. “I keep saying, ‘Next year won’t be the same.’ but it will. I love it, but my dream in this life is to take a month off with the grandkids, take them to Africa or something. Not just to the backyard in East Hampton.” They certainly won’t be shacking up in the Eloise suite anytime soon. The room — which booms, among other amenities, a sparkly pink headboard, neon sign “The room and starts at $1,125 a night — is booked solid until next year. “They sold out in September of last year until now,” Johnson said. “I wanted to have a party with, like, 30 kids, now I can barely get in. Though I don’t know if it’s Eloise or Charlie Sheen... when I heard Charlie had thrown a party at The Plaza, I thought it was Eloise’s, and I was thinking ‘Oh, that’s not so good...’ All the walls and furniture were bought, custom fabrics, one-off prints, you know. But it was actually Denise Richards and her kids staying there. All those passes to the hallowed halls. Luckily, or not so luckily? Though Denise just named her adopted daughter Eloise, too.” Johnson just found out she’ll be doing the hotel’s Christmas tree, “It’s not the only big event she has to look forward to in the near future. I’m turning 69 on Wednesday,” the designer said with a grin. “I’m a Leo, like Obama.”

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Botkier Takes Action Against Kardashian Line

By RACHEL STURGATZ

MONICA BOTKIER is on a crusade to protect her designs.

On Tuesday, the designer sent a cease and desist letter to Sears Holdings Corp., the exclusive retailer of Kim, Kourtney and Khloe Kardashian’s handbag line Kardashian Kollection, after Botkier discovered a style from the reality stars’ collection that contains nearly identical to a bag from her own.

Sears declined to comment.

On Tuesday, Botkier was flooded with e-mails from friends and family, telling her a story in the U.K.’s Daily Mail about the letter to Sears Holdings from Kardashian Kollection’s fall offerings and the Clyde, one of the original styles the brand launched when Botkier founded the company in 2003.

“In a case like this, it’s upsetting because it’s a trademarked shape for us, and people recognize it by sight. It’s a lot more complicated because it’s hard for independent designers to do anything against mass retailers or megabrands. It really calls attention to what Steven Kolb and the CFDA are trying to do — not necessarily about sticking on a fake label, you are actually taking someone’s design idea,” Botkier told WWD.

“Unfortunately, the problem people in the industry and it makes it a lot more difficult that you can’t protect it by law. The CFDA and the attorneys are trying to change these laws and make designs more protected,” Botkier said.

She is really feeling that independent designers legally being able to protect their design is a very important thing in particular. Botkier does acknowledge that it’s a unique situation because the Kardashian sisters were so big in the public eye — not even be aware of everything they’re putting their name on.

“All designers deserve the right to design protection and only the creator of an original design should profit from that design. Taking someone’s work and calling it your own is wrong and robs the designer of a rightful return of their investment,” the CFDA’s Kolb said.

Uniqlo Ready for 5th Av Flagship Opening

By SHARON EDELSON

NEW YORK — Manhattan, meet Uniqlo — the Manhattan giant has been aiming to attract attention with projects around Manhattan. Four cubes, which open like door roller skating rink under the High Line that opened last month and will close on Sept. 26.

“The Cube” counts Down Town Flagship Opening” is the message on a microsite that lists the addresses and hours of the pop-up shops.

The retail giant planning to open a third Manhattan store on 34th Street between Fifth and Sixth Avenues in late fall.

Karen Bellantoni, a retail broker at Robert B. Futterman & Assoc., who represents the landlord, Eretz Group, along with Eretz in-house representative Melissa Rose, said, “We can grow the space to accommodate them.” However, a source close to the retailer said, “Permanent is not the objective. [The pop-up]

stores are just to get people familiar with Uniqlo. They’re doing it for brand awareness. It’s an attempt to get into the neighborhoods and shopping areas that aren’t SoHo.”

To give brand awareness an extra boost, Uniqlo is planning a grand opening event to take place in the pop-up shops around Manhattan. Four cubes, which open like doors, were plunked down at the High Line roller skating rink at the end of July. The cubes contain dressing rooms and sell a variety of merchandise.

Mark Waldrop, SVP at Jones New York

NEW YORK — Mark Waldrop, senior vice president of design for knitwear for the Jones New York Collection, died Friday at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. He was 52.

The cause of death was complications from non-Hodgkins lymphoma, said his partner, Jeffrey Libby.

Waldrop was born into a military family in Quantico, Va., his father serving as a colonel in the U.S. Marine Corps. Waldrop graduated from the University of Georgia with a degree in land-use, but then began working in the publishing industry.

He worked in that field 12 years, noting that it’s a more personal and intimate relationship that redefined and benchmarked the company, which could have put a small dent in imports.

Hughes noted that it was surprising there was a 2.8 percent decline in apparel imports from China in the first six months of the year.

“Obviously, that has a big impact,” she added. “The floor is even bigger for the total trade numbers.

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