

WWD MILAN



Reform And Perform

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Brick by Brick

China's architectural firms for the construction of the building's tall towers to specialty subcontractors
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Report Card

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The Collections
London

Storming Ahead

London Fashion Week was a hit to the final day of London Fashion Week with an eclectic collection of colorful, experimental dresses. The backdrop was a stormy weather while the London Philharmonic Orchestra played, giving the show an emotional charge. The designer said he was looking for things that can "represent" a dark times. He certainly found them with this collection for more on London Fashion Week, which wrapped on Tuesday, see pages 22 to 27.

Neiman's Sets 4-Year Plan for Change

The group continues to narrow bottom-line losses and just experienced its fourth consecutive quarter of positive sales increases

After months of deep analysis and strategic business re-orientation, the Neiman-Marcus Group has set out its four-year roadmap for growth and greater profitability, and the management structure is making high-level changes within the executive and senior-level ranks. The changes are being directed by Geoffrey von Kroschok, chief executive officer of the Neiman-Marcus Group since last February. "It's a clear path to

positive and sustainable growth. We need to get the, but get it right." On Tuesday, the Dallas-based luxury retailer reported that three months into its fiscal fourth quarter ended July 26 to \$2.1 billion, down \$24.2 million in the prior year. The loss included non-cash impairment charges of \$27 million. Adjusted earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization were \$26.1 million, compared to \$46.2 million in the prior year. EBITDA includes cash tax payments, adjustments for purchase accounting changes in, or cash improvements for, working capital needs, capital expenditures, and the company's significant interest expense, and does not reflect the cash requirements.

Capsules, Events Add Buzz to Milan Fashion Week

Missoni, Etro and Les Copains are marking their anniversary with exhibitions and collections as events book out the city's calendar

MILAN — There are plenty of holiday cards to follow in the new season during Milan Fashion Week. It's a season of celebrations, starting with the Camera della Moda, which this year marks its centennial anniversary. It is marking an anniversary for its 100th anniversary and Missoni and Les Copains up off 40 and 60 years in business, respectively. Missoni is launching a new line in light. After 1000 people, following a

party. However, the is also a time to look ahead for the company, which has been revealed it was willing a minority stake to a government-backed private equity fund, 100 Italian euro. Angela Missoni assumed the role of president, while maintaining her creative director title. Additionally, Valentino and Salvatore Ferragamo chief executive officer Michele Tasso has become the president of the company. "None before the middle of a 'second' year for luxury, especially down for China and the U.S., which is performing better than expected." In Italy, there are opportunities about how much more of the government will take in the fashion industry and to be among other parties, such as the country's budget.

TECHNICAL AND 'SECOND SKIN' MATERIALS LEAD TEXTILE TRENDS

As activewear is taking hold as a 'relevant sector in the fashion industry' by TRACY GRONBERG

Performance and technical "second skin" fabrics are leading upcoming textile trends, replace with a sharpened focus on meeting consumers' heightened expectations for sustainable, utilitarian apparel. And as performance apparel really evolves into a viable fashion category, designers are challenged with the task of creating high-fashion looks with no-fills function.

The performance apparel market saw an uptick of 5 percent from 2017, reaching \$26.1 billion in 2018, with outdoor specialty apparel up 2 percent this year, totaling \$2.5 billion. Brands in the category with sales up double digits in the last 12 months include Patagonia, Arterry, Oberey, Canada Goose, Eidi and Decoste, all according to a report by NPD. Greg Thomson, Adidas Outdoor U.S. managing director, told WWD, "Over the past few years, we have seen a strong interest from many in the fashion market to focus their attention to adopting the outdoor look into their design lines and to marketing the overall lifestyle to their consumers." He continued, "The outdoor lifestyle look and image is being adopted overwhelmingly by a new generation of environmentally minded, adventure travel oriented, back-to-nature-driven, great outdoors enthusiasts," and simultaneously "the authentic outdoor sports brands are adding a touch of fashion to their high performance products also, in order to expand their consumers from the mountains to the streets."

And textile trends at this week's Première Vision show in Paris will likely follow suit. At the show, Eurojersey, an Italian producer of warp-knit fabrics, said it will introduce its latest campaign "Tree the Farm," which promotes its fall 2020 "Sensitive Fabrics" ready-to-wear collection. The line is "focused on style and technical performance," according to the firm. Its Sensitive Fabrics "lend themselves to so many interpretations in the apparel market that their worth is boundless, from casual sporty outfits to more formal looks, for a wardrobe played out in multifunctional garments," the company said. Materials in the collection are breathable, wrinkle-free and designed with "anatomical, contoured and fluid shapes" in mind, boasting chlorine resistance, moisture wicking, sun block, quick drying, sustainability and easy care, among other qualities. The line also tests a very soft hand and extra fine, thin fabrics that are 50 percent thinner than traditional warp-knit fabrics.

Guglielmo Oleari, international exhibitions director at Première Vision, told WWD, "We're going to pay more attention to activewear, because it's now a relevant sector [in] the fashion industry, across athleisure and performance." Oleari also noted the rising consumer demand for sustainable apparel, adding that "[sustainability] is not just a matter of save the world or save the planet, or

saving electricity or water, but it's also to show the world and the fashion industry how sustainability can be beautiful and creative as well."

More than 60 percent of emerging market consumers actively seek sustainable fashion, compared to 32 percent or less in established markets, according to a McKinsey and Co. report. Albeit, many leading brands and retailers integrate natural, ethically sourced materials and streamline production and supply chains to cater to shoppers' increased standards - but the transition isn't limited to brands such as *Patagonia* or *Arterry*.

Heritage yarn and fabric manufacturer Botto Giuseppe, founded in 1836, recently branched its sustainability model for upcoming collections by mixing its existing products with a molting-free wool from New Zealand. Branded as "Arche," its molting-free wool has been integrated into products such as "filwood," a super-fine wool and "Fair wool," a super-fine wool and cashmere. The firm's yarns are manufactured in Fivoli, Italy, a factory operated by hydroelectric dam generated energy and solar energy from photovoltaic panels on its roof.

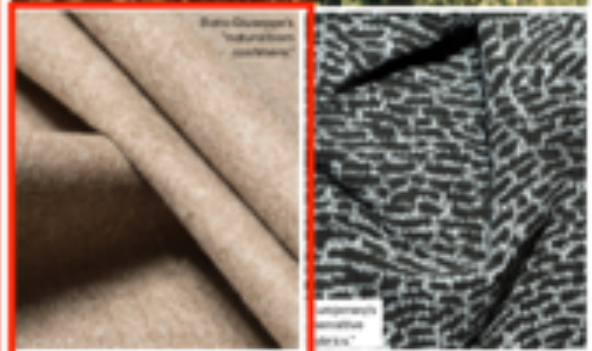
Elbio Botto Paolo, chief executive officer at Botto Giuseppe, said, "Preserving our planet and protecting its inhabitants have been popular topics for several years, and we believe, now more than ever, that it is our duty to also apply these ideas to the fashion segment to transform it into a sector operating on sound principles of eco-sustainability and ethical fashion." He noted that stringent policy plays a role in sustainable apparel's growth in Italy: "In fact, thanks to strict environment and work rules, Italy already enjoys a considerable advantage vis-à-vis other developing manufacturing countries, with lower production costs and where workers' working conditions are very good and environmental protection is simply neglected. The sustainable fashion sector we aim for strives to generate a balanced relationship both with the environment and its inhabitants in a fully, thoroughly transparent system."

On the non-wool performance fiber front, Asahi Kasei's "Bemberg" - also known as cupro, a biodegradable regenerated cellulose fiber derived from cotton linter - is popular among athleisure brands for its smooth and frictionless soft hand, as well as chemical-free technical properties such as breathability, moisture absorption and climate control. And the firm's Bioica - a sustainable premium stretch fiber - is popular among performance and outdoor wear brands. Its clients include Nike, Decoste and Nike.

As one might expect, sustainability is tested less readily across wool and fair wool to help raise awareness about wool as a natural technical fiber. The Woodmark Co. recently launched its "Live and Breathe" campaign, which aims to recognize younger generations' desire for merino wool, due



Arche from Botto Giuseppe's "Live and Breathe" campaign.



Botto Giuseppe's "Arche" wool.

Patagonia's "Fair wool" and "filwood" wool.

to its innately sustainable characteristics, including moisture management, odor control and breathability. Its campaign was directed specifically toward the athletic and outdoor clothing markets, eager to reclaim the material's reputation as the "original" performance fiber, the firm said.

But fair's "sustainability" remains in a state of flux, as both young and established brands are increasingly opting for synthetic alternatives. Granted, fair is a natural, sustainable and renewable material. It is wholly biodegradable and boasts a long lifespan, according to organizations that promote real fur. And while faux fur is undoubtedly a growing category, synthetics can actually cause more harm to the environment through textile manufacturing processes that occur during the development of chemical-based faux furs. Giline Irmann, an MIT Media Lab Director's Fellow and the founder of Slow Factory, a sustainable apparel and accessories company, told WWD, "The U.S. Sustainable Apparel Coalition ranked acrylic [and] 29 out of 46 on its list of fabrics with the worst effect on the environment,

so when buying fake fur, you may be saving an animal's life, but not for long, as the toxic aftermath of synthetic fur ends up causing more harm to our planet than buying, say, a vintage fur coat."

And sustainability remains at the core of consumers' desire for athleisure functional apparel as well. Maria Nicholson, Outdoor Retailer vice president and show director, told WWD, "We are seeing [the Outdoor category] permeate other apparel categories, such as fashion and surf. Trail running shoes and hiking boots are featured on runways, and surfboards are applying their technical expertise to gear that is great for multiple activities. The crossover demand will only help spur the further growth of outdoor." Nicholson continued, "Sustainability remains a key focus for outdoor apparel. It's part of the ethos of our industry and is driven by the conscious consumer. Brands continue to take action - they are going beyond corporate partnerships and evaluating the whole product lifecycle, considering the source, production, and future of the apparel and gear they create." ■