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WWD FRIDAY

Beauty

The Four Tops

It's every man for himself with LVMH's new scent quartet, a lineup that includes Dior Homme Sport, Kenzo Power, Guerlain Homme and Givenchy Pi Neo, all launching this fall. As well, Givenchy is going for bonus points by introducing another men's scent franchise, Play, this month in Europe. For more, see pages 4 and 5.



On the Right Track: Revlon Back to Black, Sales Gain Momentum

By Molly Prior

Revlon Inc.'s buttoned-up, head-down approach to righting its business has begun to click, as the beauty firm reversed year-ago losses in the second quarter.

Like its industry peer, Avon Products Inc., Revlon has rolled up its proverbial sleeves to resuscitate its business with a steady focus on profitable sales growth.

"Our foremost priority is building our strong brands, particularly the Revlon brand," chief executive officer David Kennedy said during the company's earnings call. Following

See **Revlon**, Page 7

Rosa Cha Opens First U.S. Store in N.Y.

By Sharon Edelson

NEW YORK — Rosa Cha elevates the swimsuit from the familiar to the unexpected with strategically positioned cutouts, jewel-like necklaces on tops, embroidery with ropes and shells and elaborate patchworks of fabrics. It seems only fitting, then, that Rosa Cha's first U.S. store, a 1,400-square-foot boutique at 460 West Broadway in SoHo, is unusual. The store, slated to open later this week, is projected to do \$750,000 in first-year sales.

Swimsuits are showcased within large gilt picture frames, as if they were works of art. Frames are suspended in the windows and the store's ceiling is lined with gilt frame-shaped moldings that form a grid that is repeated on the top third of the walls.

"The idea was to show the swimsuits and clothes like an art gallery," said Rosa Cha designer Amir Slama, who has based past collections on Surrealism, and a Brazil-themed party staged in the 1500s in Rouen, France, for Henry II and Catherine de Medici. "I didn't want the store to be a typical white box. The architect took his inspiration from the Baroque Brazilian church. We have many churches made completely with gold."

The gilt of the frames contrasts with the store's walls and floor, which are covered with ebony-stained white oak. A metal curtain at the back of the store partially obscures two circular dressing rooms outfitted with caramel-colored tufted leather sofas. Movable cabinets, topped with gold wire mesh and looking like luxury chicken coops, line one wall of the store. With handles on either side and wheels, they could also be mistaken for a gussied-up version of the coffee carts seen around Manhattan. Swimsuits will hang on a rod in the cabinets. The open drawers of a long archival table with sand on top will also be used to display swimwear.

Rosa Cha, which does \$20 million in sales worldwide, operates 22 stores in Brazil, plus units in Lisbon and Istanbul. Slama plans to open another store in Manhattan. He also wants to distribute Rosa Cha to two or three high-end department and/or large specialty stores.

"We want to open stores in Los Angeles and Miami," said Edson Paes, president of Cotia USA Ltd., the American arm of a Brazilian trading company involved in wholesale fashion distribution. Cotia USA and Rosa Cha formed a joint-venture partnership for the SoHo store. Cotia in Brazil has revenues of \$1 billion and helps luxury brands enter the Brazilian market. Slama met Cotia through Brazilian textile group Marisol, which helped Rosa Cha with production and logistics when the swimwear firm expanded.

"The next big step for Rosa Cha is moving into accessories, handbags, shoes and sandals oriented to the beach," Paes said. "We have a special edi-

A Rosa Cha bikini from the summer 2008 collection.



PHOTO BY JOHN ADJUNG, STORE BY GEORGE CHINSE



Edson Paes



Swimwear is displayed in custom-made cabinets.

tion joint venture with Havanias for spring-summer '09."

Slama, who was born in Israel, designs ready-to-wear, which is sold in Brazil. "We have no intention of bringing it to the U.S. any time soon," said Paes. "The desire for swimwear is so big and Rosa Cha's product is so unique. Rosa Cha is going to catch the eyes of consumers." Paes is hoping Rosa Cha's runway show at the Bryant Park tents on Sept. 6 during New York Fashion Week catches consumers' attention when it's broadcast on TV and the Web.

Rosa Cha's price points, from \$190 to \$650 for bathing suits, aren't exactly made-to-order for the difficult economy. But Slama said consumers will appreciate the handmade work and variety of materials beyond the typical jersey fabric. "We love to develop fabrics and try different things," he said. "We develop 350 styles for each collection. It's not only swimwear, it's a way of getting dressed in the summer."

Slama, who studied history in college and worked as a bartender before founding Rosa Cha 15 years ago, believes his overtly sexy designs will find an American audience. "The [Brazilian] climate generates very sensual women and men," he said. "They don't live only in Brazil, they're very global."

SCAD Students Take on Retail

By Rosemary Feitelberg

It looks like a few fashion students could be about to get their big breaks at retail.

This fall, Henri Bendel Limited Edition collection will include a floral printed cashmere sweater designed by students at the Savannah College of Art and Design. Undergrads and professors in the school's Working Class Studio retooled a student's vibrant painting of poppies into a textile-friendly motif for the scoopneck, three-quarter sleeve sweater. Of course, their foray into retail fashion had to meet the inspection of vice president and fashion director Ann Watson and the rest of Henri Bendel's merchandising team.

The \$248 item will be sold in New York's Fifth Avenue store later next month and will be splashed all over the flagship's windows in October. Offered in purple or pink, the sweater also will be sold through the store's Web site.

Henri Bendel, a store known by aspiring designers for its open calls, "has always been synonymous with supporting up-and-coming talent," Watson said. "This opportunity has truly been a process of art-meets-fashion."

This is the first effort in what Bendel's and SCAD expect to be an ongoing partnership. Talks are under way for other product categories, but nothing is definite at this point.

"Art doesn't just have to hang on a wall — it can be worn to great delight," said SCAD president and co-founder Paula Wallace.

Another retailer-student venture is in the works downtown. Début, a new NoLiTa boutique, is teaming up with Parsons The New School for Design to showcase recent graduates' collections from Sept. 23 to 28. The postgrad designers will be selected Aug. 18.

Staying true to the spirit of the collections that are sold in the store, each designer will have his or her own display with a plaque listing the designer's name, company name, geographic origin, the collection's inspiration and launch date.

Parsons alumni already selling collections at Début include Angela Chen, Natalia Alcaron, Nima Taherzadeh, Salvador Trinidad and Rachel Rymar.

Simon Collins, the dean of fashion at Parsons, said working with Début in its first year encourages the school's commitment to supporting the future of the industry.

Lisa Weiss, owner of Début, said, "It's our hope that this synergy between retail and education — with two organizations so strongly rooted in the development and recognition of up-and-coming designers — will help pave the way for the next big names in fashion."



The SCAD design.

Man Found Guilty of Gucci Options Fraud

A Canadian citizen who fraudulently sold Gucci stock options to an unwitting investor was sentenced to more than four years in prison in federal court in Manhattan on Thursday.

Timothy Khan pleaded guilty in March to one count of securities fraud and one count of wire fraud. Judge Miriam Goldman Cedarbaum of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York ordered Khan to serve 51 months in federal prison, serve an additional two years' supervised release and pay more than \$8.6 million in restitution.

According to the original indictment, filed in April 2007, Khan masqueraded as a Gucci Group advisory board member in the mid-Nineties. Using the ruse, he convinced an unnamed American investor that he had the opportunity to purchase and sell discounted

options as part of the company's 1995 initial public offering. Over the next 11 years, the victim wired millions of dollars to Khan with the purpose of purchasing the options. According to the indictment, Khan routinely lied over the same period as to why he could not exercise the options, sell the stock and deliver the proceeds, as the victim repeatedly requested.

When Khan entered his guilty plea, the sentencing guidelines advised a 51- to 63-month sentence. His attorney, Donald Yannella, had asked for a 24-month term.

"We were a little disappointed in the sentence, but not entirely surprised," Yannella said. He said his client was remorseful and hoped to pay the restitution entirely. Khan has been in custody since his April 2007 arrest.

— Matthew Lynch

Obituary

Bridal Executive Ovadia 'Obie' Cohen

Longtime bridal executive Ovadia "Obie" Cohen died of cancer July 25 at Monmouth Medical Center in Long Branch, N.J., said his daughter Esther. He was 84.

Born in Jerusalem, Cohen was a member of Irgun, the underground Jewish militia, and fought in the 1948 Israeli War of Independence. He worked in the textiles business before relocating to New York in 1949 with his wife, Rebecca.

Convinced that fashion was moving away from custom-made clothes to manufactured apparel, Cohen went to school to learn about design and then took his first job working in production for Tulip Formals. When that company closed, Cohen went to Columbia Formals and then Milady's Formals, the latter an offshoot created by former Tulip Formals' staffers. Cohen joined Milady's Formals as a partial owner.

Cohen's first retirement in the Eighties lasted just two years. When the Diamond Bridal Group approached him about a potential job, he jumped at the opportunity and stayed with the company until he retired in 1996. His wife, who worked in the company's sales department, also retired at that time.

"Bridal was the first position he fell into," Rebecca Cohen said. "He loved the creativity and the challenge of creating new and different styles, while still keeping the trends of the day. It was not part of the normal cycles in the fashion world."

In addition to his wife of 61 years and his daughter, Cohen is survived by another daughter, Matica Bierstein, and two sons, Albert and Saul.

— R.F.