

# THE IMPRESSION

ISSUE NO.3 FW16

## C&A



THE  
HOMME  
TEAM







Designers from left to right

Dao-Yi Chow | David Neville | Richard Chai | Michael Kors |  
Marcus Wainwright | John Varvatos | Maxwell Osborne | Nick  
Graham | Matthew Orley | Alex Orley | Kenneth Ning | Samantha  
Orley | Brett Johnson | Loris Diran | Jeffrey Rudes | Tim Coppens  
| Brian Trunzo | Todd Snyder | Patrick Doss | Andrea Tsao | Rio  
Uribe | Paul Andrew | Ariel Ovadia | Shimon Ovadia | Raul  
Arevalo | Steven Cox | Ricardo Seco | Daniel Silver | Thaddeus  
O'Neil | Robert Geller | Steve McSween | Donrad Duncan |  
David Hart | Stuart Vevers | Zachary Prell | Laurence N. Chandler  
| Donna Kang | Timo Weiland | Alan Eckstein | Ben Stubbington  
| Billy Reid | Joshua Cooper | Joseph Abboud | Michael Maccari

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*Creative Director* | Kenneth Richard

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| Max Clinch, 3<sup>rd</sup> Asst. | Adrien Potier, Digital Tech | Nate Rosenkrantz, Groomer | Post Production by Box Studios: Liz Brown, Senior  
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# FASHION *Fusion*

*New York is like no other city in the world, a blend of artistry and commerce steeped in the heritage of bringing people together to create something bigger than themselves. For the sophomore outing of New York Fashion Week: Men's, the city once again brings together diverse group of designers as well as The Impression and the Council of Fashion Designers of America to celebrate the best in men's fashion. Stay tuned to our ongoing show coverage throughout the week online. From the front row to back-stage, from the street to the studio, The Impression/CFDA is here to shine the spotlight on New York's finest men's designers.*





## THE NOTE

# FIRST *Narratives*

This sophomore outing of New York Fashion Week: Men's comes with more than a few firsts, including our first men's issue as well as our partnership with the Council of Fashion Designers of America.

Like all good partnerships, this one happened organically – within five minutes of meeting, no less. Sometimes you just know. That knowledge comes from a sense of understanding of shared core values. Like The Impression, the CFDA strives to celebrate and champion creatives as well as inspire, inform, and generally help. While that may sound overly simplistic, the best ideas and partnerships are often that simple.

Bringing together the best American men's designers for what we hope will become an iconic photograph wasn't a simple task. But it was worth it. Designers are the rock stars of fashion and to capture that essence, we went to rock's leading photography front man, Danny Clinch. With nothing but a simple set consisting of stools and crates, Danny cleared away all the drama that comes with fashion to capture something more emoting, the quintessential edge of American fashion's leading spirits.

Those spirits are visionaries, as we learned from speaking to John Varvatos, who unveils how he drives his rebel point of view and partners with the 'other' rockers, from Jimmy Page to The Roots. Joseph Abboud returns to the runway this year after a hiatus, and talks about bringing 'Made in America' to a whole new level. Further, designers Siki Im and Thaddeus O'Neil speak about architecture, photography, philosophy and being fashion first.

For our contributors' section, we asked our team about their first fashion show experience. In reflecting on my own, I realized how it inadvertently influences me today. My first show wasn't out front; it was backstage for a designer whose collection I illustrated weeks before the show so he could sense the show order. While anxiously waiting out front for the show to start, his business partner pulled my wife and I aside to let us know the designer had misjudged the time while chasing down some last minute samples. We would have to start without him. Suddenly I found myself backstage arranging a show order, wide-eyed with curiosity and excitement, trying to figure out who all the behind-the-scenes players were while the drama unfolded. That sense of wonder is still with me today and inherent in celebrating all that goes on behind and in front of the curtains.

This week, both TheImpression.com and CFDA.com will be celebrating all NYFW: Men's has to offer, spotlighting the latest design creations from the runway to behind the scenes. So go ahead, take a second look. You may just discover some fashion first.

— KENNETH RICHARD



### NOTE FROM THE CFDA

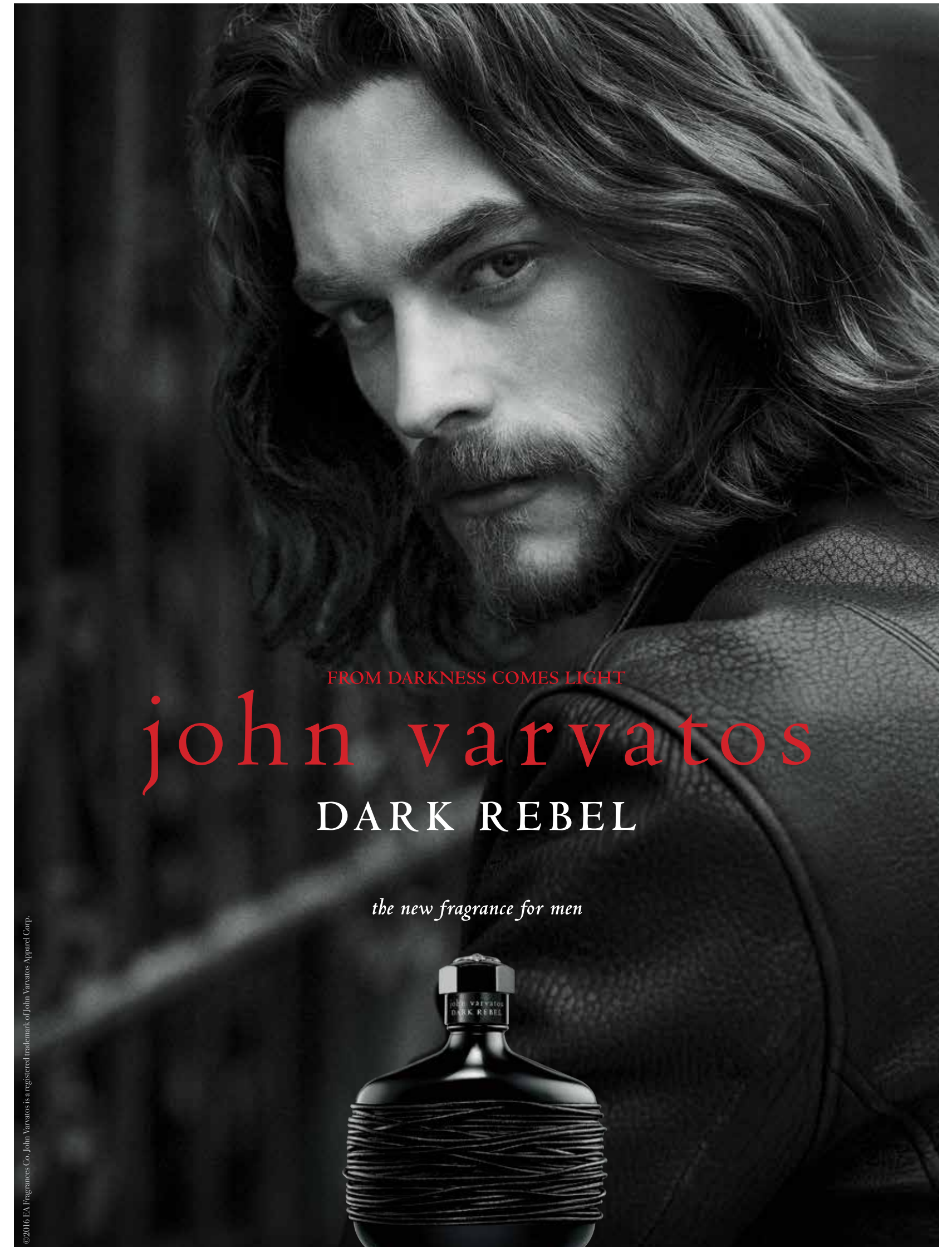
Partnering with The Impression made much sense for the CFDA. For one, its founder Kenneth Richard was once a designer and CFDA Member. In the past year, he and his team have built an impressive publication and online destination that has caught the eye of fashion creatives from designers to photographers to art directors.

At the same time, the CFDA has set out to create and distribute exclusive, engaging content via CFDA.com and our social channels (read more on this in Constance C.R. White's profile of CFDA President and CEO Steven Kolb). The collaboration with The Impression allows us to do just that during both New York Fashion Week: Men's and Women's, and much of the content that we created together will live on CFDA.com as well as TheImpression.com.

New York Fashion Week is among the most exciting times of the year for our industry and the experience of attending shows can be an exhilarating. I remember, while still at Brown in the Nineties, coming to New York during 7th on Sixth. I snuck into the Bryant Park tents determined to crash a show, ending up at Yeohlee (I don't think she was too amused when I told her years later).

With this collaboration, our goal is to tell the story of our industry in an elevated way that is both inspiring and informative. We hope you enjoy this first issue of The Impression/CFDA.

— MARC KARIMZADEH, CFDA EDITORIAL DIRECTOR





## CONTRIBUTORS

On the eve of *NYFW: Men's* we asked our own fashion family to share their memories of their first fashion show experience.



### Simon Collins

I snuck into see BodyMap during LFW in 1985. As an impressionable young fashion student the raw energy and wild creativity changed my life. Though I'm still sneaking into shows now - plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose



### Danny Clinch

It was the John Varvatos show last year with my 16yr old daughter, Nina. When we arrived, John was gracious enough to bring us backstage. He showed us all the hard work that goes into preparing the show. From the set design to dressing the models; it was impressive. Not to mention, Nina was a hit with her friends Instagramming photos of her and male models!



### Constance C.R. White

My first show as a journalist was a fur show. I was at WWD. It might have been Dennis Basso or Arnold Scaasi or Donna Karan. I honestly don't remember whose it was but to paraphrase the great Maya Angelou. I remember how it made me feel.



### Erica Roseman

It was John Galliano at Bergdorf Goodman, which took place in the penthouse apartment of Andrew and Nena Goodman. The Paris Haute Couture recreated in New York — I still vividly remember the exquisite clothes, sophisticated models and decadence of it all.

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I glow in #mycalvins

Calvin Klein

Justin Bieber, Musician



# 1 MONDAY

9:30-5:30pm Opening Ceremony

10:30-12pm NYMD  
*Krammer & Stoudt*  
*Edmund Ooi*  
*PLAC*  
*Garcia Velez*  
*David Hart*  
*Max n' Chester*

12pm *Concept Korea*

12-1pm *Uri Minkoff*

1pm *Loris Diran*

2-4pm *Suitsupply*

3-4pm *Deveaux*

4:30pm-6pm NYMD  
*Matiere*  
*Robert James*  
*Lucio Castro*  
*HVRMINN*  
*CWST*  
*Chapter*

6:30-9pm NYFW  
*Men's Opening Event*

# 2 TUESDAY

9am *Joseph Abboud*

9:30-10:30am *Stampd*

10am-7pm *Shinola Detroit*

10am *Duckie Brown*

11am-12pm *Public School*

11am-2pm *Simon Miller*

1pm *General Idea*

1:30-2:30pm *EFM*

2pm *Robert Geller*

3pm *Nautica*

4pm *Carlos Campos*

5-7pm *Zachary Prell*

6pm *Ovadia & Sons*

6:30-7:30pm *Brett Johnson*

7-9pm *John Varvatos*

9pm *N. Hoolywood*

# 3 WEDNESDAY

8:30-10am *Coach*

9am-1pm *Michael Kors*

10am *Perry Ellis*

11am *Cadet*

1-3pm *Tommy Hilfiger*

2pm *Nick Graham*

2:30-3:30pm *Gypsy Sport*

3pm *Palmiers du Mal*

4-5pm *Jeffrey Rudes*

5pm *Greg Lauren*

5:30-7pm *Calvin Klein Collection*

7pm *Tim Coppens*

7:30-8:30pm *Ricardo Seco*

8pm *Billy Reid*

# 4 THURSDAY

10am *Orley*

10:30-11:30am *Kenneth Ning*

11am *John Elliott*

12-1pm *Eidos*

12-2pm *Paul Andrew*

1-2:30pm *Craft Atlantic*

2pm *Timo Weiland*

3pm *Rochambeau*

3:30-4:30pm *Devon Halfnight LeFluffy*

4pm *Hickey Freeman*

5-7pm *Theory*

7pm *Siki Im*

7:30-8:30pm *Second / Layer*

8pm *Todd Snyder*





THE WORD



# SIMON Says

*Fashion is full of potential faux pas, from wardrobe malfunctions to etiquette errors. To tackle these fashion conundrums, THE IMPRESSION turns to the sartorial fashion icon and creative seditionary, SIMON COLLINS, for his sage wisdom and random musings.*

*What is your stance on sneakers & suits? Is the traditional head-to-toe formality the way to go? Or should I go with the street influence of a sneaker?*

In the year of 2005 I happened to be a creative director at Nike. Imagine if you will one fine evening in LA on the vintage set of the movie *Back to the Future* (not germane but I thought it interesting). I was there to attend a black tie dinner to honor Nike people who'd run fast, jumped high or otherwise distinguished themselves.

My tailor at the time created a scarlet-lined midnight blue, slim fit dinner suit that I wore with high shine Church's (patent would have been too much). All well and good I thought, but alas I was only the second best-dressed person on the lot (as film people say). The winner, my good friend and fellow Simon, was wearing a well-enough fitted black suit with a white stand-collar shirt, no tie—and crucially, black leather Jack Purcells with white soles. I must admit that in that instance he had the edge over me.

Then we have the preponderance of West Coast tech gentlemen who've got enough cash to find themselves presenting and receiving awards here and there. Since I believe many of them sit on bean bags all day and rarely stray out of their pajamas, it comes as no surprise that when required to don an actual suit, or even full evening attire, they stop short of patents and stick to their running (or, more likely, sitting) shoes.

If you spend your life in sneakers then don't randomly put on a pair of leather shoes to go with your suit, as it will look like you are wearing your dad's shoes. Equally I promise not to wear sneakers with my suits, as it would look like I was wearing my daughter's gym shoes. Fortunately for both sides of the divide, there is a solution. The low profile leather sneaker with subtle sole. A formal sneaker entirely suited to suits, if you'll forgive the pun.

So, yes, you may wear trainers (or sneakers) with a dinner or any other kind of suit. But, for the love of god, don't make them quirky. Since you are almost certainly not David Beckham, you have my personal assurance that you are not cool enough to carry them off.

*When is it appropriate for men to go sockless? Are there any times when it is not acceptable?*

If I ever have the honor to be in the presence of Her Majesty the Queen I promise to wear socks, for her Royal Highness does not need to be aware of the existence of my ankles. Everyone else can bloody well get used to them.

Shoes are lovely. They really are. I adore my Church's and Trickers and Lobbs and Esquivels and Loakes and Clarks, and so the shorter trouser leg length favored by Mr. Thom Browne is a godsend for those of us who like to flash our cobbling. Given this opportunity for ankle exposure, a gentleman may or may not choose to eschew hosiery. Though why you would compromise black bluchers shined to the brilliance of a member of H.M.'s Household Cavalry is beyond me. Far better a well-turned ankle—not too pale, not too tanned, not too hairy, and not too much of it. My butterscotch brogue Trickers never looked better than when they debuted 3 inches of naked ankle below the hem of my steel grey, skinny super 150's.

Careful, though. If you're going to draw attention to your shoes, then make sure they deserve it. Dodgy shoes can't be improved by any kind of ankle action. Brogues, loafers, bluchers and heavier dress shoes tend to work best. But then that's all you wear anyway, isn't it? So when is it appropriate to not wear socks? Answer: whenever the hell you want. And if anyone has a problem with it, refer them to me at the above address.

**Simon Collins** Did 20 years as a designer/creative director for companies like Nike & Zegna, followed by a 7 year stretch as Dean of The School of Fashion at Parsons. He now advises brands, groups, and governments, & gives speeches about his adventures. His next step towards design enlightenment is the inaugural Fashion Culture Design event in NYC in June. @simoncollins08



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THE WORD

# THE Architect SIKI IM

BY MARC KARIMZADEH

A few things people in fashion may be surprised to learn about Siki Im: He was born and raised in Cologne and is a native German speaker; he is a guitarist and singer in a band called JVLIVS/ERVING, which prides itself on mellow and melancholic tunes; and he quite regularly attends church in downtown Manhattan. And those are just some of the facets that add up to this dynamic Renaissance man.

Born to Korean parents, Im's interest in creative culture can be traced to his early years in Germany's art mecca, Cologne.

"I was always really into subculture," the menswear designer, who launched his namesake label in 2009, recalls. "In Cologne, there was graffiti, hip hop, hardcore punk, skateboarding. There was all this American subculture. This helped me get into style and design."

That, and an early proclivity to draw, paint, photograph and write poetry. By the age of 17, he had his first photography exhibition that came with what he playfully refers to as a "little, young existential art crisis." It prompted his wish to study architecture at the Oxford School of Architecture in England. Post-graduation, he moved to New York and worked for progressive architecture firm Architectonics—a move that ultimately led to fashion when he met stylist David Vandewal, whom he considers his mentor.

"He came from Raf Simons and Dries Van Noten and I assisted him," Im explains of the moment that launched his fashion journey. "I first worked at Club Monaco, then at Karl Lagerfeld under Melanie Ward, and then Helmut Lang."

Im came to fashion with a point of view that draws a distinct line to other designers who pursue a more classic approach to sportswear. He describes his aesthetic as "quiet, but strong." Though the designer refined a goth-y streetwear sensibility in earlier collections, his impressive Spring-Summer 2016 lineup pulsed with a youthful, almost raw touch. "Classic as in timeless but also genderless" is how he put it.

"Gender is such a huge word right now," Im says. "I see my garments not as androgynous but as unisex. That's a big difference. The sensibility is for everyone. It's not about emasculating or demonizing certain genders anymore."

"Modernity," he adds, "doesn't care about race, religion, or sex. This freedom can hopefully give a strong and quiet sensibility. Whatever the emotion is, if they can feel what I feel, I have succeeded."

Different cultures from Asia to the Middle East provide him with



inspiration. "Vernacular cultures inspire me, as they are less contrived and more pure," he says. "These cultures don't even know they are stylish, which inspires me. I also don't look at blogs for inspiration. I think New York City is so inspiring itself, especially the outer boroughs and all the beautiful cultures there. The best school for me is traveling and being respectful and open to a new culture."

Since launching, Im has developed quite a following with this sartorial approach, and stores such as Barneys New York and Lane Crawford have embraced the collections. He has won accolades from an Ecco Domani to the Samsung Design & Fashion Fund as well as the prestigious Vilcek Prize. He was also a finalist for the 2015 International Woolmark Prize and teaches at Parsons School of Design BFA and MFA.

In addition to his namesake label, he designs Den Im, an extension line launched in 2014 with a focus on essential utilitarian clothing.

"I design the main line for the future, Den Im is more about the now," he says. "Den Im is a little bit more dynamic, younger, more fun, in a way. With the main line, if we use lofty concepts, there is always humor to it. You can't be too serious in this industry."

But when it comes to his future trajectory, Im is serious.

"We are more of an interdisciplinary studio," he says. "I do architecture. We now have almost three lines. I would love to do women's wear and hopefully have a concept store. I want to do different things—not just clothing. I am a very curious person."

Photo Credit: Robert Hamada



# NYFW

## MEN'S FALL 16

FEBRUARY 1-4

- |                         |                  |                 |                |
|-------------------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Billy Reid              | Eidos            | Max n' Chester  | Rochambeau     |
| Brett Johnson           | Garcia Velez     | Michael Kors    | Second/Layer   |
| Cadet                   | General Idea     | N.Hoolywood     | Siki Im        |
| Calvin Klein Collection | Greg Lauren      | Nautica         | Simon Miller   |
| Carlos Campos           | Gypsy Sport      | Nick Graham     | Stampd         |
| Chapter                 | Hickey Freeman   | Orley           | Suitsupply     |
| Coach                   | HVRMINN          | Ovadia & Sons   | Theory         |
| Concept Korea           | Jeffrey Rudes    | Palmiers du Mal | Tim Coppens    |
| Craft Atlantic          | John Elliott     | Paul Andrew     | Timo Weiland   |
| CWST                    | John Varvatos    | Perry Ellis     | Todd Snyder    |
| David Hart              | Joseph Abboud    | PLAC            | Tommy Hilfiger |
| Deveaux                 | Kenneth Cole     | Public School   | Uri Minkoff    |
| Devon Halfnight LeFlufy | Krammer & Stoudt | Ricardo Seco    | Zachary Prell  |
| Duckie Brown            | Loris Diran      | Richard Chai    |                |
| Edmund Ooi              | Lucio Castro     | Robert Geller   |                |
| EFM                     | Matiere          | Robert James    |                |

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS





# The ALL American Joseph Abboud

BY ERICA ROSEMAN

There is a certain sense of patriotism one gets when hearing the Star Spangled Banner. Not necessarily before sporting matches, but when it rings true in moments of national unity. One gets that same sense of pride in listening to pioneering American menswear designer Joseph Abboud, who returns to the runway after a fifteen-year hiatus and opens New York Fashion Week: Men's.

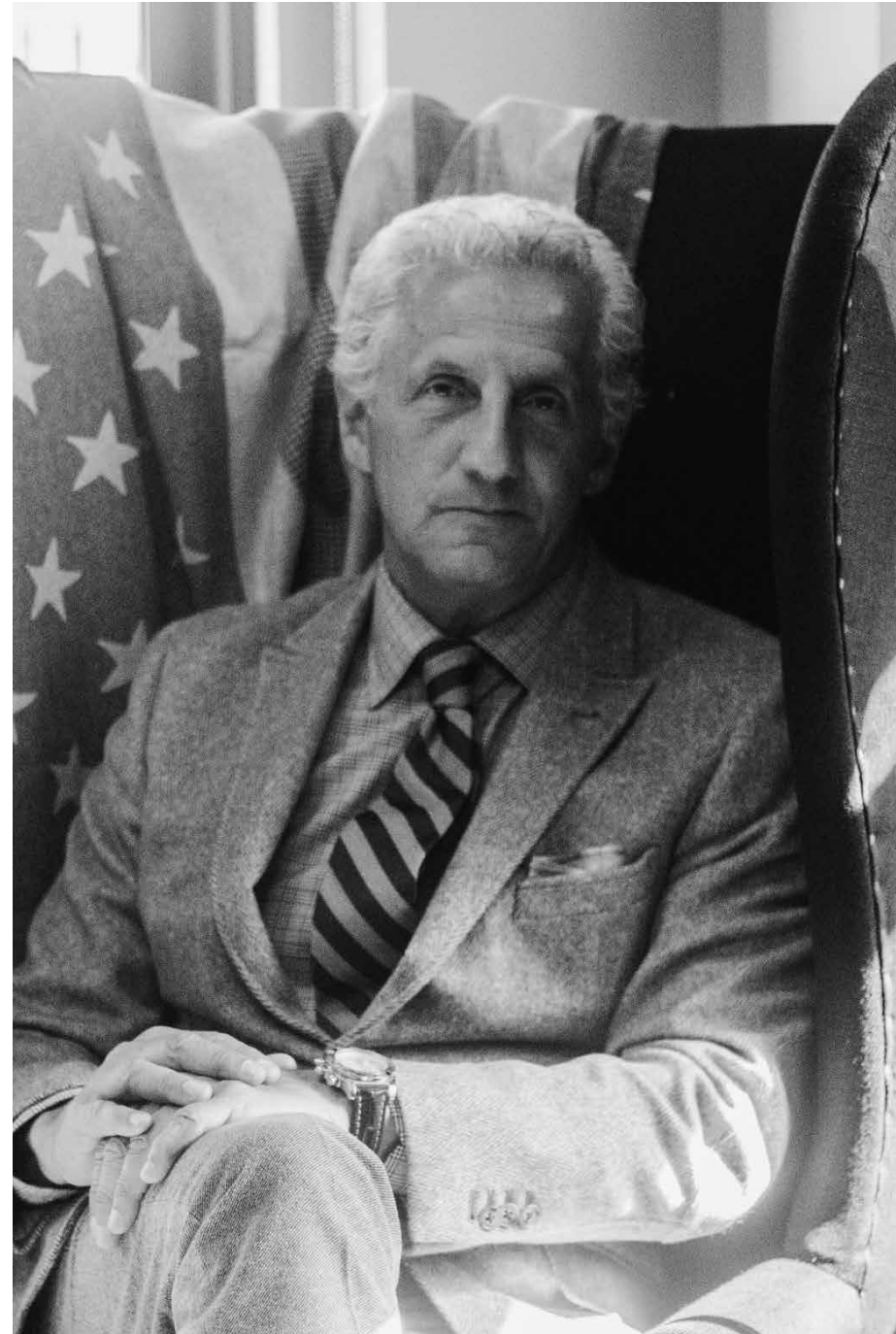
"It's not about being made in America; it's about being made well in America," declares the designer, while sitting among the rich tweed fabrics and dark-toned wainscotting of his Madison Avenue boutique.

A native of Boston, Abboud ventured forth to study at the Sorbonne and later work for Polo Ralph Lauren, in New York, before returning to Beantown, where he worked for the upscale Louis Boston. In 1987, he launched his namesake brand that led to a conversation with Italian super-conglomerate GFT, who managed menswear for the likes of Valentino and Giorgio Armani. "There was an old saying," explained the designer, "You don't choose GFT; GFT chooses you."

Looking for a relationship with an American designer, the company backed Joseph in the opening of a factory in New Bedford, Massachusetts with the shared goal of bringing the quality of Italian manufacturing to the United States. In what would become a defining moment, this changed the course of menswear manufacturing in America. Throughout the years and successive career moves, Joseph's place, passion and pride have always remained with his namesake brand and the vertically integrated supply chain he built from the ground up.

Today, the Joseph Abboud Manufacturing Corporation employs over 800 artisans, craftsmen and tailors. The designer enthuses, "Converting a cotton mill to a factory was not only a defining business moment, it also created a work force, many of whom have worked with us for twenty to thirty years." He continues, "The community has such a rich history, strong work ethic and wonderful Yankee pride." It is this dedication to craft and community that underscores what Abboud looks to put forth in his Fall/Winter 2016 collection this week.

Abboud explains his creative process, "For collections, I never start with



a product; I start with a spirit for something. This season, it's American Saville Row." In this vein, his show will highlight the heritage of American menswear, teaming up his capsule collection with similarly patriotic labels and designers. Expect to see bags by Rawlings, hats from Albertus Swanepoel, ties from Barbara Blank, timepieces by Kobold, shearling outerwear by Aston Leathers, and footwear by Allen Edmonds.

Rawlings Accessories Creative Director Viengkham Phommala shares his enthusiasm for Abboud and what he stands for, "As a young designer, working with such an iconic, classic menswear designer was like working with one of my idols." He continues, "There's a certain pride in creating something with your own hands, by American workers, that will be passed down from one generation to the next." New York-based designer Swanepoel agrees, "Joseph was great because he gave us freedom to design. We enhanced his vision of rugged dandyism with classics, and added a few quirky surprises, such as a Western take on the top hat."

These accessories and accoutrements work back to the main event, the collection. This season, Abboud's signature tailored clothing story spans from sportswear to formalwear. Think textural bold plaids, ancient matte paisleys, custom military details, and American flags made out of mixed tweeds, reflecting the designer's "renewed passion for loving what [he does] as a commercial entity and art form." Expect to be inspired by not only the fashion, but by a quintessential American favorite – the comeback.

# The Natural Thaddeus O'Neil

BY MARC KARIMZADEH

To understand Thaddeus O'Neil, consider the designer's notebooks that he has used to unveil new collections in the past. These books, which he is revisiting for his Fall/Winter 2016 lineup, feature a charming mix of photography and musings typed on an antique typewriter. The overall effect makes a statement for a distinct aesthetic or, more specifically, an almost idyllic lifestyle.

Said way of life is quintessentially Thaddeus. The Eastern Long Island native grew up surfing and, from an early age, modeling for Bruce Weber, a neighbor in Bellport whom O'Neil considers a friend and mentor.

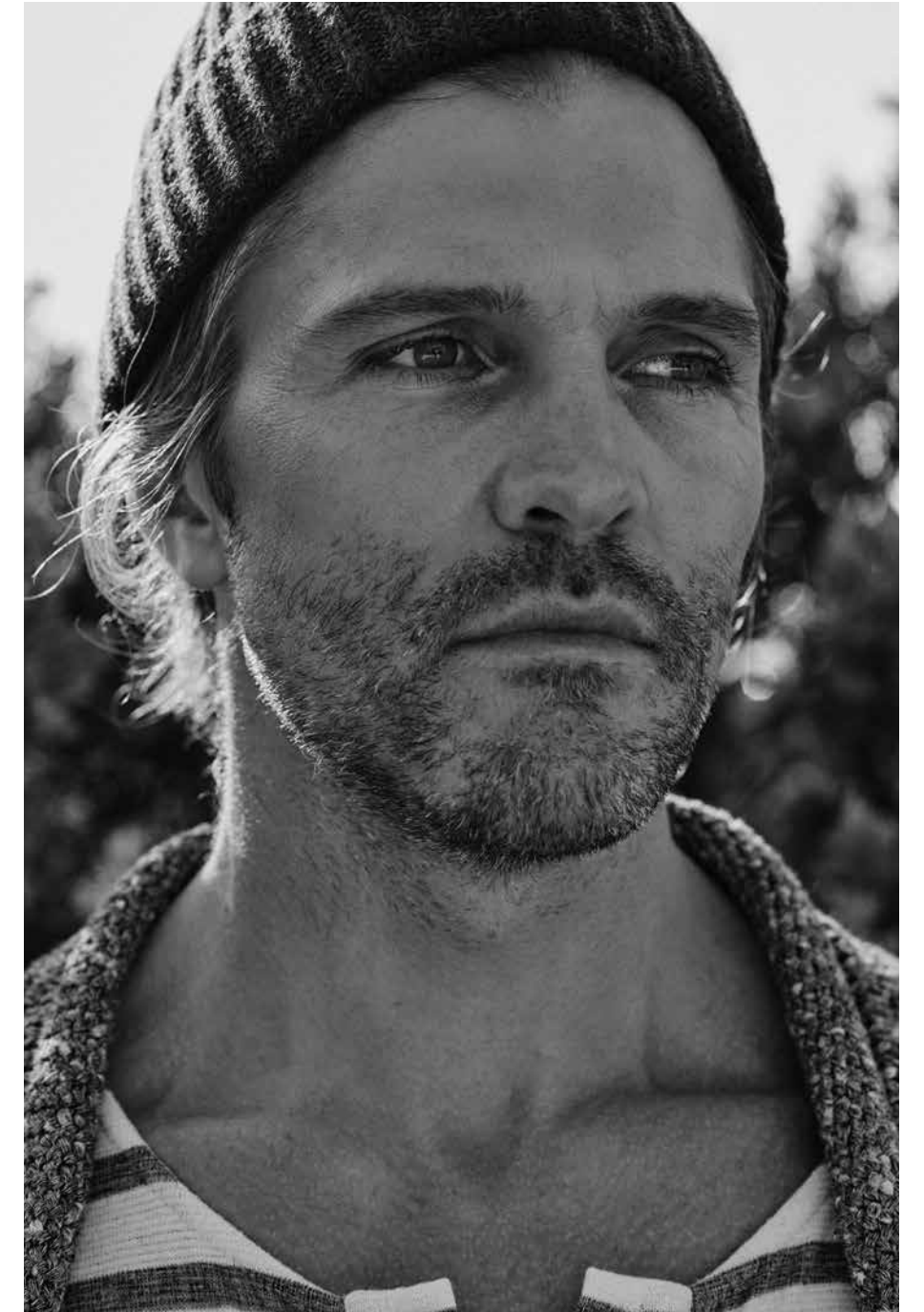
"He introduced me to photography, which was my first view into this world," O'Neil recalls over a plate of pasta Bolognese at Sant Ambreose in SoHo, a stone's throw from his Manhattan base. "Bruce Weber is an artist in the truest sense of the world. He creates a world from scratch. It's a real feeling of letting things move along in a very organic, simple way. He creates a situation and lets it evolve."

Though intended as a compliment, the designer may just as well have described his own work ethos.

O'Neil didn't take the traditional path to fashion. He first studied philosophy and geology, and obtained a Master's degree in philosophy of art. Along the way, he honed his eye as a photographer's assistant, which allowed him to travel the globe and explore many of the cultures it has to offer.

"It was all very organic," he points out. "I never thought about becoming a fashion designer. I made my first pieces while traveling, and consistently so over a number of years. I would find a fabric that I love, make a little sketch, and then find someone to make these pieces. If I was in Bali, I'd find a seamstress in Bali. If I was in Africa, I'd find someone in Africa who could make things for me. I would come back wearing them on the street and people really responded."

Such response encouraged him to launch his own label in 2013, initially focusing on a menswear line of American luxury playwear, then augmenting it with womenswear this spring. Per his own bio, the clothes exude a sense of "abandon and rebellion customary of surf culture juxtaposed with



a poetic, nomadic and romantic essence," a sentiment crystallized with his first runway show at New York Fashion Week: Men's last July.

"I pretty much exclusively make things that I would want to wear," says the designer. "Sometimes I push things a little bit to have more fun. But I don't want to make things I wouldn't wear."

Whether intended or not, the lineup, with its gender-ambiguous styling, also zeroed in on the sartorial Zeitgeist. O'Neil, for his part, traces the aesthetic back to surf culture.

"For me, there is a casualness, a naturalness and a simplicity," he explains. "Those are the things that I like. I grew up reading surfing magazines. I was studying these surfers and their style everywhere, from Australia to Hawaii. Their sense of style is a mashup which I like. They don't really have any restrictions. They might be wearing a woman's fur coat with a hot pant. I appreciate the organic sense of that culture. There is no programmed way of dressing. You write your own program."

The latter is something O'Neil is busy crafting for himself and his model wife Pania Rose, his three-year old son Cas, their two dogs, Hemingway and Shirley, and the cat called Teddy Boy.

"I really want to build a house in that classical sense," the designer explains. "I want to slow things down and make really beautiful things that are handed down. I want to make clothes that feel like they belong to the family, things that are passed on and yet stay."



## THE WORD

# Meet this season's NYFW: Men's CFDA Ambassadors

New York Fashion Week: Men's is here, and **THE IMPRESSION/CFDA** are proud to present this season's ambassadors: **ERIC DECKER, JOHANNES HUEBL, MATT HARVEY, SHAUN THOMPSON, and VICTOR CRUZ.** These renowned athletes and models have some of the greatest, most well-known careers in America today, and still have time to showcase their unique and elegant sense of style through the world's top menswear trends.

BY MARISSA TOZZI



### SHAUN THOMPSON

**Career** | Fitness Trainer, Choreographer, Motivational Speaker, TV Personality

**Derivation** | Deptford, New Jersey

**Cred** | Most known in the world of health and fitness, Shaun T has a passion for helping people improve their overall lives through physical triumphs. He has since branched out to other

endeavors such as commercial fitness, dance, and entertainment through television and music. From dancing on Mariah Carey's tour to starring in Tyler Perry's "House of Payne," Shaun T's fashion ambassador cred adds another sartorial facet to his growing resume.



### MATT HARVEY

**Career** | New York Mets, Starting Pitcher

**Derivation** | New London, Connecticut

**Cred** | This NY Met is bringing "Harvey Day," as his fans dubbed it, to NYFW: Men's. Harvey's love of fashion has grown since being in the Big Apple. Not only does he buy his off-the-field wardrobe at designers, like John Varvatos and Rag & Bone, the MLB pro-athlete has modeled in the New York Post

wearing the likes of Gucci, Michael Bastian, Marc Jacobs, and more.



### JOHANNES HUEBL

**Career** | German Model

**Derivation** | Hannover, Germany

**Cred** | This IMG model, photographer, and fashion consultant has been featured in GQ, Vanity Fair, Vogue, and more, and has worked for clients such as Hugo Boss, Ralph Lauren, and Donna Karan. He and his wife, style icon Olivia Palermo, are besties with Valentino and Giancarlo Giammetti, and continue to rock the fashion world.



### ERIC DECKER

**Career** | New York Jets, Wide Receiver

**Derivation** | Cold Spring, Minnesota

**Cred** | Decker, who recently broke the NFL record for most touchdowns by a receiving tandem, has gained widespread fame with his wife, singer/songwriter / designer, Jessie James Decker, through their E! reality show Eric & Jessie: Game On. From gracing the cover of Sports Illustrated to hosting his own GQ magazine

party, Decker sure has a wide range of attributes that are perfect for ringing in NYFW: Men's with a bang.



### VICTOR CRUZ

**Career** | New York Giants, Wide Receiver

**Derivation** | Paterson, New Jersey

**Cred** | This Super Bowl Champion has no trouble incorporating style into his life, both on and off the field. As an athlete in the public eye, fans clamor to have their pictures taken with him, and he's always dressed for the occasion with ample style.

He owns his own clothing line called "Young Whales" and often attends fashion weeks. This new ambassador's football season may be over, but his fashion season is just beginning.

Victor Cruz photo courtesy of BFA.com



# THE IMPRESSION CFDA

## NYFW ISSUES SEPTEMBER 2016

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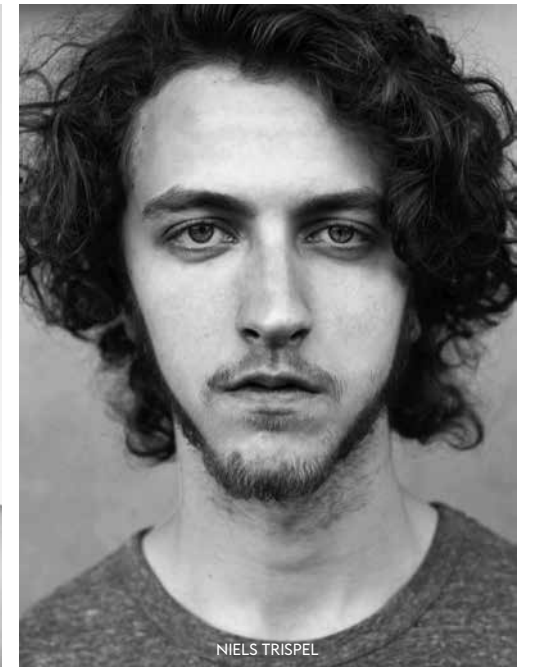
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# CASTING Call

With every season, New York's melting pot of fashion designers help to launch the next wave of fresh faces. We asked casting director extraordinaire, **STEFANIE STEIN**, who she thinks will rule the runway this season. Here are her top picks.



**MODELS:** Adonis Bosso / DNA Model Management (Photograph by Blair Getz), Justin Gossman / Wilhelmina, Felix Gesnouin / VNY Model Management, Rory Cooper / DNA Model Management (Photograph by Hadar Pitchon), Lucas Satherley / IMG Models, Erik Van Gils / Re: Quest Model Management

**MODELS:** Brandon Bailey / Soul Artist, Sam Visser / Re: Quest Model Management, Niels Trispel / IMG Models, Noa Thomas / Re: Quest Model Management, Sup Park / Wilhelmina, Reid Rohling / Fusion, Alljah Harrison / Soul Artist, Michael Lockley / RED Citizen, Nathaniel Visser / Soul Artist



THE MODELS



PIERO MENDEZ



HIDEKI ASAHINA



SVEN DE VRIES



ABIAH HOSTVEDT



TRE SAMUELS



JOEL MEACOCK



RHYS PICKERING



BENJAMIN BENEDEK



ALESSIO POZZI

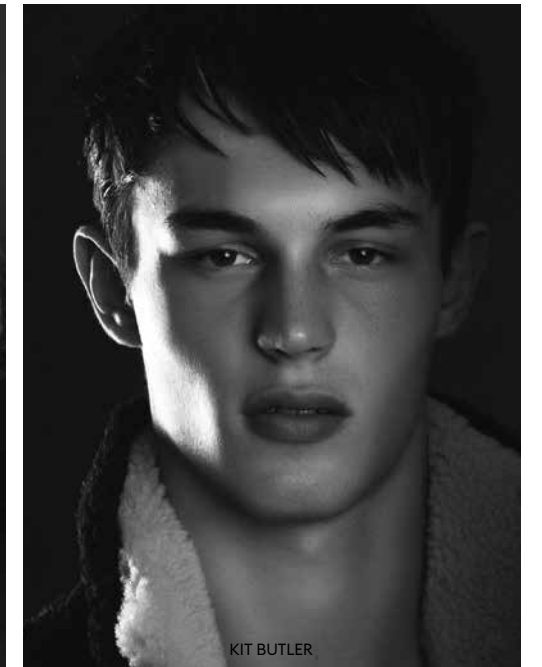
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BRODIE SCOTT



RYAN KEATING



KIT BUTLER



HARRY CURRAN



MATTHIEU GREGOIRE



MATTHEW HOLT



LOGAN FLATTE



WILL WADHAMS



JACKSON HALE

MODELS: Piero Mendez / Re: Quest Model Management, Hideki Asahina/ Fusion, Sven de Vries / Wilhelmina, Abiah Hostvedt / RED Citizen, Tre Samuels / Re: Quest Model Management, Joel Meacock / IMG Models, Rhys Pickering / Soul Artist, Benjamin Benedek / Wilhelmina, Alessio Pozzi / Re: Quest Model Management

MODELS: Brodie Scott / Wilhelmina, Ryan Keating / Soul Artist, Kit Butler / Soul Artist, Harry Curran / Fusion, Matthieu Gregoire / DNA Model Management (Photograph by Hadar Pitchon), Matthew Holt / Re: Quest Model Management, Logan Flatte / Ford Models, Will Wadhams / Wilhelmina, Jackson Hale/ Soul Artist



# THE *Players*

While the away games in London, Milan, and Paris were exciting matches, there is nothing like rooting for the home team. Now that **NEW YORK FASHION WEEK: MEN'S** is upon us, **THE IMPRESSION** wanted to introduce you to the starting line-up.



## Billy Reid

**Launched** | 2004  
**Retailers** | Neiman Marcus, Journal Standard, Union Made  
**Favorite Destination** | Cape San Blas, Florida  
**Drink of Choice** | Bourbon, rocks  
**Favorite Film** | Bring Me the Head of Alfredo Garcia

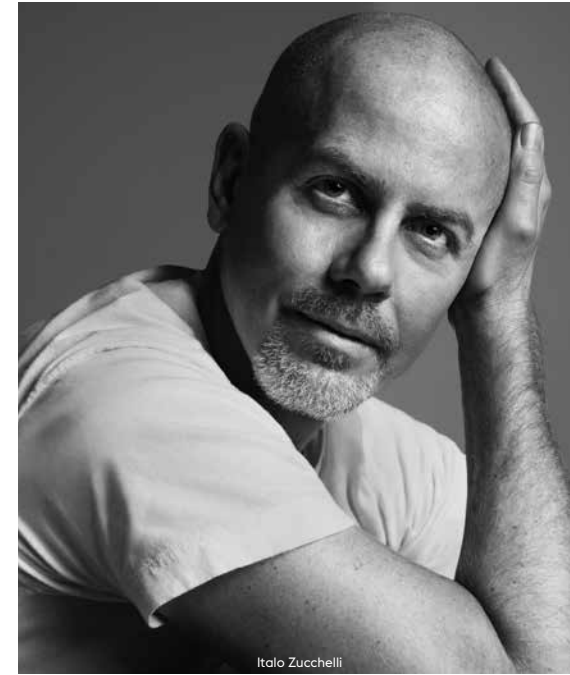


## Cadet

**Launched** | December 2011  
**Retailers** | Store Locations: Williamsburg, East Village, West Village  
**Favorite Destination** | Angkor Wat  
**Drink of Choice** | Pinot Noir (Brad), Ginger Margarita (Raul)  
**Favorite Film** | The Color Purple (Brad), Children of Men (Raul)



Brad Schmidt and Raul Arevalo



Italo Zucchelli

## Calvin Klein Collection

**Launched** | 1968  
**Retailers** | Mr. Porter, Opening Ceremony, The Webster  
**Favorite Destination** | Any place by the ocean, I feel at home.  
**Drink of Choice** | Wine  
**Favorite Film** | The Shining by Stanley Kubrick



## Carlos Campos

**Launched** | 2007  
**Retailers** | Lord & Taylor, Swords-Smith, carloscampos.com  
**Favorite Destination** | Roatan, Honduras  
**Drink of Choice** | Mezcal



Carlos Campos



Stuart Weitzman

## Coach

**Launched** | 1941  
**Retailers** | Opening Ceremony, Mr. Porter, Selfridges  
**Favorite Destination** | Disneyworld  
**Drink of Choice** | Red wine  
**Favorite Film** | Working Girl



Italo Zucchelli Photo Credit: Inez & Vinoodh



THE WORD

# Craft Atlantic

**Launched** | 2014  
**Retailers** | Scoop, Nordstrom, Craft Atlantic store in West Village  
**Favorite Destination** | Stockholm  
**Drink of Choice** | Whisky on the rocks, Kings County  
**Favorite Film** | Interstellar



Luis Fernandez

THE WORD

# Duckie Brown

**Launched** | 2001  
**Retailers** | Barneys NY, Odin  
**Favorite Destination** | Anguilla  
**Drink of Choice** | Stella  
**Favorite Film** | Dune



Steven Cox and Daniel Silver



David Hart

# David Hart

**Launched** | 2012  
**Retailers** | United Arrows, Journal Standard  
**Favorite Destination** | Palm Springs  
**Drink of Choice** | Manhattan (on the rocks)  
**Favorite Film** | Strangers on a Train



# Eidos

**Launched** | January 2013  
**Retailers** | Barneys NY, Gentry NYC, Trunk London  
**Favorite Destination** | Ischia  
**Drink of Choice** | Budweiser  
**Favorite Film** | Rio Bravo



Antonio K. Ciomgoli

# DBYD Concept Korea

**Launched** | 2009  
**Retailers** | Tomorrow Showroom  
**Drink of Choice** | SoJu  
**Favorite Film** | The Avengers: Age of Ultron



Kang Dong Jun

# Greg Lauren

**Launched** | 2011  
**Retailers** | Barneys NY, Dover Street Market, Maxfield  
**Favorite Destination** | Cafe Flore, Paris in the morning  
**Drink of Choice** | Coffee, extremely light and sweet  
**Favorite Film** | Saturday Night Fever



Greg Lauren





THE WORD

# Hickey Freeman

**Launched** | 1899  
**Retailers** | Nordstrom, Saks Fifth Avenue, specialty stores  
**Favorite Destination** | Turks and Caicos  
**Drink of Choice** | The Hickey Drink: Fords gin, lemon juice, simple syrup, muddled cucumber, dill, club soda  
**Favorite Film** | James Bond



Arnold Brant Silverstone

THE WORD

# John Varvatos

**Launched** | 2000  
**Retailers** | Barneys NY, Bloomingdale's, Saks Fifth Avenue  
**Favorite Destination** | Mustique  
**Drink of Choice** | Margarita  
**Favorite Film** | Pulp Fiction



John Varvatos



Jeffrey Rudes

# Jeffrey Rudes

**Launched** | 2015  
**Retailers** | Jeffrey Rudes - Soho store, jeffreyrudes.com  
**Favorite Destination** | Mykonos  
**Drink of Choice** | Gin martini  
**Favorite Film** | Godfather



# Joseph Abboud

**Launched** | 1987  
**Retailers** | Joseph Abboud Flagship at 424 Madison Avenue, NYC, JosephAbboud.com  
**Favorite Destination** | Nantucket  
**Drink of Choice** | English Breakfast Tea  
**Favorite Film** | Casablanca



Joseph Abboud

# John Elliott

**Launched** | Spring 2012  
**Retailers** | Harvey Nichols, Barneys Men's Store, Bergdorf Goodman Men's Store  
**Favorite Destination** | Tokyo, Japan  
**Drink of Choice** | Vodka, ice  
**Favorite Film** | Rio 2



John Elliott

Jeffrey Rudes Photo Credit: Luc Braquet



Loris Diran

John Varvatos Photo Credit: Lazalo Regas

# Loris Diran

**Launched** | 2006  
**Retailer** | White Gallery, Roma  
**Favorite Destination** | Spring in Nolita, NYC  
**Drink of Choice** | Gin & Tonic  
**Favorite Film** | Quadrophenia







# Lucio Castro

**Launched** | 2011  
**Retailers** | Saks Fifth Avenue, Bloomingdale's, Lord & Taylor  
**Favorite Destination** | Athens, Greece  
**Drink of Choice** | Mate  
**Favorite Film** | The Loved One by Tony Richardson



# Nautica

**Launched** | 1983  
**Retailers** | Macy's, Lord & Taylor, Dillard's  
**Favorite Destination** | San Francisco  
**Drink of Choice** | Wine  
**Favorite Film** | Being There



# Michael Kors

**Launched** | Complete collection launched in 2002.  
**Retailers** | Saks Fifth Avenue, Bloomingdale's and Macy's in NYC, newest NYC flagship in Soho along with locations in Amsterdam, Stockholm, Ginza, Houston, and Moscow. Freestanding men's stores in Las Vegas, New Jersey, San Francisco, and Scottsdale.  
**Favorite Destination** | Capri  
**Drink of Choice** | Ketel One on the rocks  
**Favorite Film** | The Godfather



# Nick Graham

**Launched** | 2013  
**Retailers** | Macy's, Amazon, Bon Ton  
**Favorite Destination** | Vancouver Island  
**Drink of Choice** | Earl Grey  
**Favorite Film** | The Big Short



# N. Hoolywood

**Launched** | 2000  
**Retailers** | East Dane, Carson Street, Haven  
**Favorite Destination** | Del Mar at sunset  
**Drink of Choice** | Evian after hot springs  
**Favorite Film** | The Gambler



Michael Kors Photo Credit: Inez & Vinoodh, Daisuke Obana Photo Credit: Kiyohide Hori

# Ordinary People Concept Korea

**Launched** | 2011  
**Retailers** | Lotte department store, A Land, Hiphoper  
**Favorite Destination** | Paris, Hawaii, New York, Los Angeles  
**Favorite Film** | Life Is Beautiful







# Orley

**Launched** | January 2012  
**Retailers** | Barneys NY, Bergdorf Goodman, Matches Fashion  
**Favorite Destination** | Detroit, Michigan  
**Drink of Choice** | Cucumber Water  
**Favorite Film** | Good Will Hunting (Matthew), Dances with Wolves (Samantha), Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory (the original) (Alex)



# Perry Ellis

**Launched** | 1980  
**Retailers** | perryellis.com  
**Favorite Destination** | Shelter Island, New York  
**Drink of Choice** | Negroni in winter  
**Favorite Film** | Eyes of Laura Mars



# Ovadia & Sons

**Launched** | 2011  
**Retailers** | Barneys NY, Neiman Marcus, Saks Fifth Avenue  
**Favorite Destination** | St. Bart's (Ariel), East Hampton (Shimon)  
**Drink of Choice** | Israeli Wine, TMG Teas (Ariel), Wine, Fresh Juice (Shimon)  
**Favorite Film** | American Psycho (Ariel), Star Wars (Shimon)



# Richard Chai

**Launched** | Womenswear, 2004; Menswear, 2008  
**Retailers** | Odin New York  
**Drink of Choice** | Black Iced Tea  
**Favorite Film** | In the Mood for Love



# Palmiers du Mal

**Launched** | 2014  
**Retailers** | CPCM (Tokyo), C'H'C'M (New York), Seaport Studios (New York)  
**Favorite Destination** | Marrakech - it's heavenly  
**Drink of Choice** | Bloody Mary  
**Favorite Film** | La Jetee



# Robert Geller

**Launched** | 2007  
**Retailers** | Barneys NY, Totkaello, & Maas and Stacks  
**Favorite Destination** | Cap D'Antibes, France  
**Drink of Choice** | Pellegrino  
**Favorite Film** | The House of Spirits







# Rochambeau

**Launched** | 1983  
**Retailers** | Just One Eye, Los Angeles; Alchemist, Miami; Storm, Copenhagen  
**Favorite Destination** | St. Bart's (Joshua), Carayes (Laurence)  
**Drink of Choice** | Dirty vodka martini on the rocks with 2 olives (Joshua), Dirty Kettle Up (Laurence)  
**Favorite Film** | The Godfather (Joshua), Mulholland Drive (Laurence)



Joshua Cooper & Laurence Chandler

# Suitsupply

**Launched** | Amsterdam, 2000; NYC, 2011  
**Retailers** | Store locations in: Seattle, Dallas, Miami, London, Russia, Italy, and Shanghai  
**Favorite Destination** | Tokyo, because of its singular design aesthetic on all levels  
**Drink of Choice** | Whiskey Sour, made with Jack Daniels Gentleman Jack  
**Favorite Film** | Rosemary's Baby



Murray Coetzee, Head Designer

# Siki Im

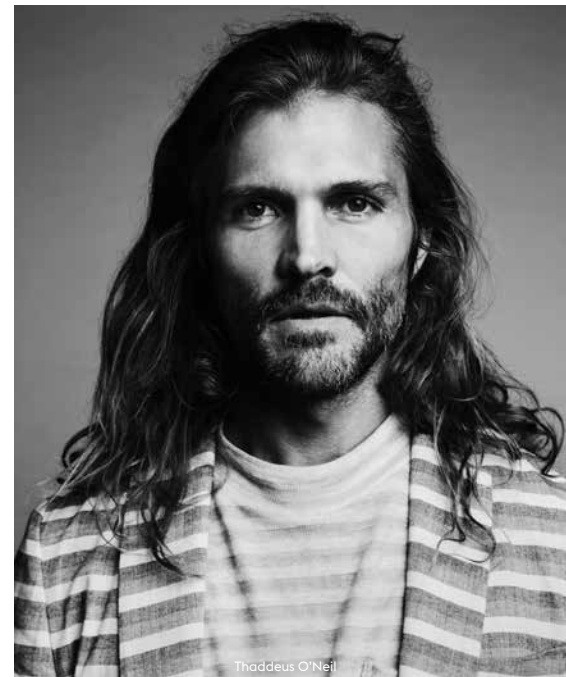
**Launched** | August 2009  
**Retailers** | Barneys NY, Lane Crawford, Ssense  
**Favorite Destination** | Berlin, Santa Teresa, Seoul, Nashville  
**Drink of Choice** | Whiskey, Wine, Beer, Milkshake  
**Favorite Film** | Stalker, Wings of Desire, Oasis, Chungking Express



Siki Im

# Thaddaus O'Neil

**Launched** | 2012  
**Retailers** | Ron Herman, Tomorrowland, United Arrows  
**Favorite Destination** | Indonesia  
**Drink of Choice** | Mezcal/Tequila with some spice  
**Favorite Film** | Zabriskie Point



Thaddaus O'Neil



# Simon Miller

**Launched** | 2011  
**Retailers** | Barneys NY, Matches, Lane Crawford  
**Favorite Destination** | Austin, Texas (Daniel)  
**Drink of Choice** | Foxy Brown from Acme in Noho, NY (Tequila, brown sugar, ginger, lime) (Chelsea)  
**Favorite Film** | Boondock Saints (Daniel)



Daniel Corrigan & Chelsea Hansford

Siki Im Photo Credit: Francesco Lanera

# Theory

**Launched** | Men's 1999  
**Retailers** | Barneys NY, Saks Fifth Avenue, Bloomingdale's  
**Favorite Destination** | Big Sur and Nosara, CA  
**Drink of Choice** | Guinness or Old Fashioned - mood dependent  
**Favorite Film** | Le Grand Bleu - Luc Besson



Ben Stubbington





# Tim Coppens

**Launched** | 2011  
**Retailers** | Barneys NY, Matches, Net-a-Porter  
**Favorite Destination** | Christmas in India  
**Drink of Choice** | Old Fashioned  
**Favorite Film** | Reservoir Dogs



# Tommy Hilfiger

**Launched** | 1985  
**Retailers** | Tommy Hilfiger flagships in New York, Paris, London, Tokyo, Los Angeles, and Düsseldorf and on Tommy.com  
**Favorite Destination** | Mustique  
**Drink of Choice** | Mint Tea  
**Favorite Film** | Easy Rider



# Timo Weiland

**Launched** | Spring 2010  
**Retailers** | Saks Fifth Avenue, Ron Herman, & East Dane  
**Favorite Destination** | New Mexico & Jamaica  
**Drink of Choice** | Tequila on the rocks (preferred Herradura)  
**Favorite Film** | Stop Making Sense



# Todd Snyder

**Launched** | 2011  
**Retailers** | Nordstrom, Bloomingdale's, The Webster Miami  
**Favorite Destination** | Tokyo for work, Capri for fun  
**Drink of Choice** | Moscow Mule for cocktails, Franiacorta before dinner  
**Favorite Film** | Hitchcock's North by Northwest

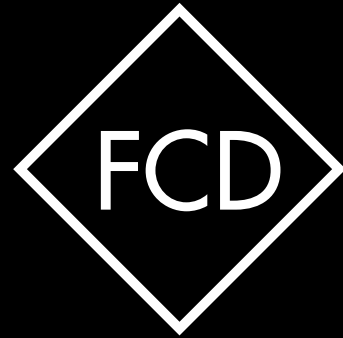


# Zachary Prell

**Launched** | 2009  
**Retailers** | Nordstrom, Neiman Marcus, Bloomingdale's  
**Favorite Destination** | Tamarindo, Costa Rico  
**Drink of Choice** | Oban 14 year scotch, neat  
**Favorite Film** | Sideways







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# INSIDE *Man*

*In a decade at the helm of fashion's pre-eminent organization, **STEVEN KOLB**, president and CEO, has treated it more like a corporation than a trade group. His approach has paid off with record revenues, the successful revival of the men's shows, the acquisition of the Fashion Calendar and lucrative partnerships with companies like Cadillac and Amazon, sponsors of New York Fashion Week: Men's. His vision for the next ten years is even bigger; he tells **THE IMPRESSION.***

BY CONSTANCE C.R. WHITE



Steven Kolb stands at the threshold of his CFDA office, a light-filled space in New York's trendy West Village. At 54, he is a trim, compact man whose rectangular jaw is emphasized by square, thick-rimmed glasses and neatly-tailored jackets which he prefers be American made. Right now he favors sweaters by menswear darlings Orley. There's no affectation or haughtiness to Kolb's game, just a fair amount of no-nonsense directness. He describes his look as "American disheveled," as in: "There's always something a little off," like a button missing or a tie askew. "I guess if I were 20 years younger I'd do the drop crotch pants, but I'm a bit too old for that."

In his younger days, the Village was ground zero for the fight against HIV/AIDS and Kolb was a fundraiser for the leading activist group battling the disease. These days, his work is more corporate and less grassroots. It's not a matter of life and death, yet he's just as passionate and proactive about his cause today as when he worked for DIFFA (Design Industries Foundation Fighting AIDS).

Kolb has now logged a decade with his hands on the wheel at the CFDA, steadily steering it forward while transforming himself from tentative outsider to quintessential insider, which, loosely, means he speaks with designers regularly; when he says Anna he means Wintour; and, generally, earns his living attending to the kind of minutia that makes the wheels of fashion turn. During show week, he is a familiar yet low-key figure who attends dozens of presentations. It's faux-glamorous (he gets a front-row seat every time), but it's actually a really exhausting and peculiar part of the job that he has had to overcome a natural shyness to do.

But it's not the end of the road for Kolb. He's ready to tackle bigger challenges, like stocking a war chest to the tune of \$25 million. "With that, I think, there's opportunity for a greater expansion," he said. He has reason to be optimistic. Annual revenues have grown at a rapid clip from \$3.5 million in 2005 to \$15 million in 2015.



## THE WORD

The money will go primarily in four directions: education, media, manufacturing and an overhaul of Fashion Week.

CFDA Media, as it's called internally, will bulk up with new staff, publishing partnerships and a reimagined website, one that emphasizes an editorial approach rather than, say, the company newsletter. A year ago, Kolb hired Marc Karminzadeh, a former editor at WWD, to serve in the newly created position of editorial and communications director. Freelancers and additional staff will contribute to the site.

According to Kolb, CFDA Media is "not something we're branding, but the objective is to be more of a media company. A lot of companies are staking claim to their content." Why not the CFDA?

Across America, the loss of factories and jobs that come with them have left swaths of the landscape with hollowed out buildings, ghostly remnants of productivity. In fashion's garment center in Manhattan, the factories have been replaced by luxury offices and pricey apartments, a threat to fashion's viability.

Kolb wants to create a manufacturing hub in New York City and the CFDA has already donated about \$ 2 million to support factories. The CFDA is working with the city to find a suitable location. It could include a subway ride to Brooklyn. Wherever it is, it will be a handmaiden to two successful lifelines for young design companies, the 14-year-old Vogue Fashion Fund and the Fashion Incubator, which was introduced four years ago. It has put folks like Public School's designers and Prabal Gurung into a 2-year business development program.

Kolb assures that veteran designers, too, will begin to see more educational initiatives to support their professional and business growth.

But the move that could have the most dramatic impact is Kolb's decision to do a 360 evaluation of Fashion Week. A report commissioned by the CFDA is due from Boston Consulting Group in mid-February.

The central question, said Kolb, revolves around: "Is the present fashion show system broken, now that we are operating in a world of technology?"

Because of the web, designers get gobs of publicity, but it's starting to seem like they may not benefit proportionally from this information deluge fueled by show week. Do runway presentations still help build brands and – let's be honest – sell clothes? Is that \$100-\$200,000-show worth it? Birthed some 60 years ago, the New York shows were just a loose group

of American designers presenting their wares to the trade, largely hidden from public view. Understatement: They were nothing like the global spectacle they've become, attracting hundreds of photographers, retailers, editors, bloggers and marketers transmitting millions of images around the world, in many cases instantaneously.

You might think this is, undoubtedly, a good thing. I would argue, you could be wrong. "Shows should have a more buy-now factor," said Kolb. By the time a shopper's ready to pull out her credit card, she's seen the image of that sexy, red Ralph Lauren dress on Valery Kaufman so many times she's confused, and she's "consumed" it repeatedly with her eyes. Does she even know what season it is?

The report could shake the industry to its boots. And if that's the case, Kolb is ready. "What's the Helmut Lang factor in this disruption?" he said, referencing the influential Austrian designer who in the Nineties switched his runway presentation from Paris to New York and set off an international furor. Others followed suit and ultimately changed the order of the major shows around the world, with American designers kicking off first.

The CFDA has always existed to support and promote the work of American designers. Membership – generally coveted by designers, with a few outliers over the years, including, at one point, Marc Jacobs – has expanded from about 260 designers ten years ago to over 500 today, including his boss, Diane Von Furstenberg.

Kolb just expanded the staff to 25, with strategic partnerships being key to future revenue. Without this expansion, designers could well have found themselves victim of fashion's growing popularity. As more people lay claim to a piece of fashion, a strong CFDA may be one way designers remain central to their industry.

Kolb never expected to lead the CFDA for more than five years. "My goal was to go one more year than my predecessor," he said. Now, although he has a full life outside of fashion, spending time outdoors with his partner and their dog Donna in his home in rural Pennsylvania, he can't imagine doing anything else. "I don't want any other job. I'll have to take it one day at time."

When he first took the job, Kolb said, "I was an outsider. What made me stand out is I was not a fashion person. Now I guess I can say I'm an insider." Insiders never really become outsiders again. You're La Familia for life.



Steven Kolb, Eva Chen, Leandra Medina, and Bryanboy

Photo Courtesy of BFA.com



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# ONES TO Watch

As we all know, **NEW YORK FASHION WEEK: MEN'S** has an exciting roster of seasoned players who deliver, but no team is complete without a few rookies. **THE IMPRESSION** suggest keeping your eye on the following new talents who are putting the 'fresh' in perspective.



Patrick Doss, Andrea Gao, Matt Breen, & Brian Trunzo

## Deveaux

**Launched** | Began to take shape in 2014. FW '16 is inaugural collection  
**Favorite Destination** | Paris (Brian), Greece (Matt), Coastal Georgia (Patrick), Home (Andrea)  
**Sport of Choice** | College Football (Patrick), Basketball (Andrea), Baseball (Matt), Boxing (Brian)  
**Favorite Film** | Shawshank Redemption (Patrick), 'Before' Trilogy (Andrea), Raging Bull (Matt), La Haine (Brian)  
**Who has most inspired you creatively?** | Vidal Sassoon & Jonathan Ive (Patrick), Joan Didion (Andrea), Adolf Loos (Brian)



Brett Johnson

## Brett Johnson

**Launched** | 2013  
**Retailers** | Stanley Korshak, David Lawrence, Neiman Marcus  
**Sport of Choice** | Football (Dallas Cowboys)  
**Favorite Film** | Gladiator  
**What was your first job?** | Executive producer of Lee Daniels' 'The Butler'  
**Who has most inspired you creatively?** | My Mom  
**If you weren't a designer, what else would you be?** | Fighter Pilot



## Devon Halfnight LeFlufy

**Launched** | 2013  
**Retailers** | Opening Ceremony, V-files, Louis Antwerp  
**Sport of Choice** | Running  
**Favorite Film** | Dog Tooth by Yorgos Lanthimos  
**What was your first job?** | Washing dishes at a Mexican restaurant.  
**Who has most inspired you creatively?** | Roland Barthes  
**If you weren't a designer, what else would you be?** | A lawyer or a rare book dealer.



Devon Halfnight LeFlufy



# EFM

**Launched** | 2014  
**Retailers** | MartinPatrick3 (Minneapolis), David Lawrence (Bellevue, WA), CHCM (NYC)  
**What was your first job?** | Strategic planner in rural community development  
**Who has most inspired you creatively?** | German architect Walter Gropius  
**If you weren't a designer, what else would you be?** | A farmer



Donrad Duncan



# Kenneth Ning

**Launched** | 2013  
**Retailers** | Isetan Shinjuku (Tokyo), International Playground (NY), Jenko Ltd. (HK)  
**Favorite Film** | Reservoir Dogs  
**Sport of Choice** | Muay Thai  
**What was your first job?** | FedEx - Handler



Kenneth Ning



Rio Uribe

# Gypsy Sport

**Launched** | 2012  
**Retailers** | Opening Ceremony, thecorner.com, GR8  
**What was your first job?** | Janitor at Universal Studios  
**Who has most inspired you creatively?** | Tim Burton  
**If you weren't a designer, what else would you be?** | A songwriter



# Ricardo Seco

**Launched** | 2010  
**Retailers** | Boutique Bloom (Mexico City), Flagship store (Wynwood, Miami), InLand Venice (Los Angeles)  
**Favorite Film** | Grease and Star Wars  
**Sport of Choice** | Tennis  
**Who has most inspired you creatively?** | The Artisans and the Indigenous people, Wixarikas o Huicholes  
**If you weren't a designer, what else would you be?** | A Diplomat or Investor



Ricardo Seco



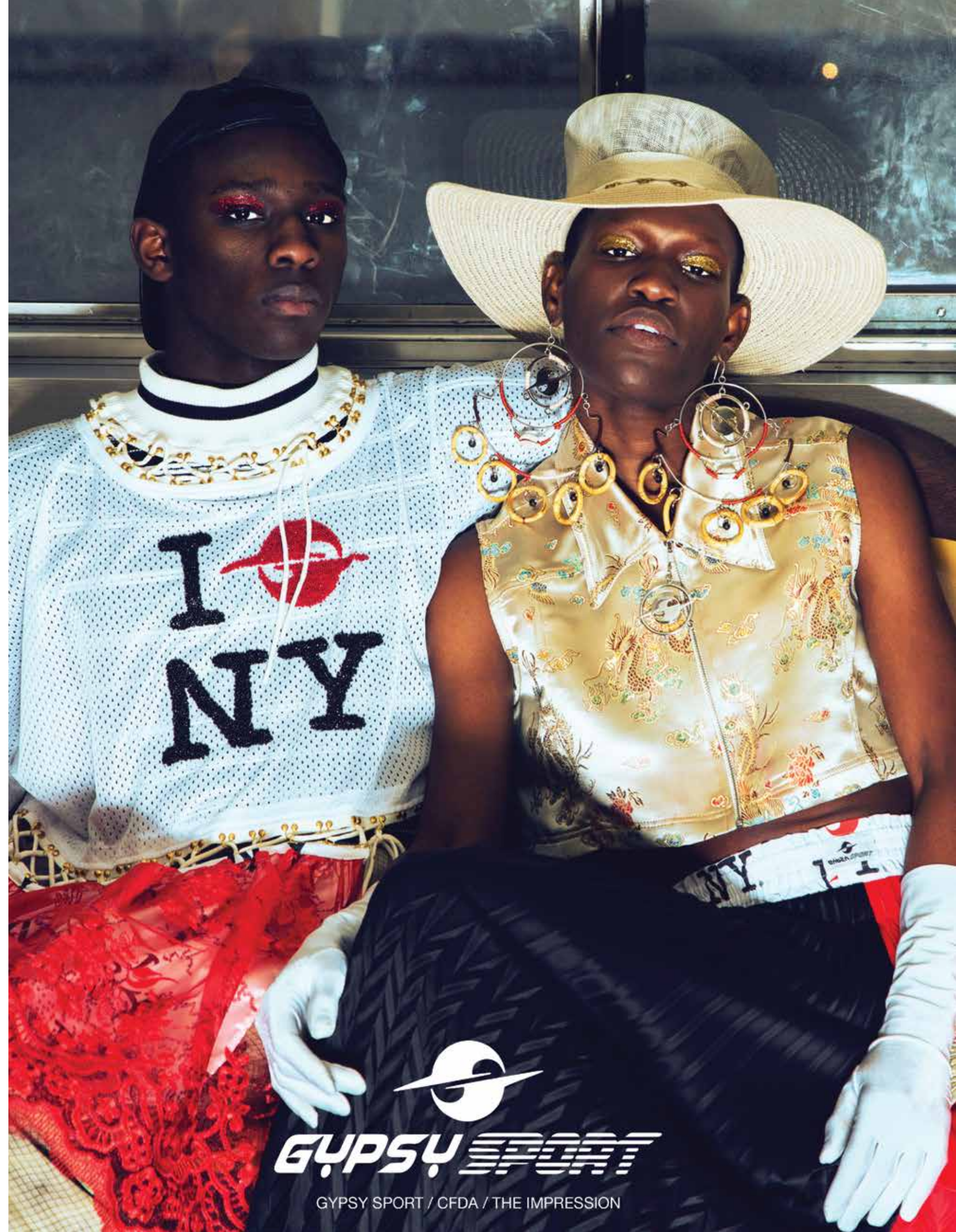
THE WORD

Second/Layer

Launched | 2014  
Retailers | H. Lorenzo, FRWD.com, 424  
Sport of Choice | Skateboarding (Anthony), Surfing and Baseball (Josh)  
Favorite Film | RIKI-OH, Ghost in a Shell (Anthony), American Mc (Josh)  
What was your first job? | Ceiling concepts/T-bar ceiling (Anthony), Digging ditches (Josh)  
Who has most inspired you creatively? | Paulo Reversi (Anthony), Ray Petri (Josh)  
If you weren't a designer, what else would you be? | Industrial Designer (Anthony), Psychologist (Josh)



Anthony Franco & Joshua Willis



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Chris Stamp

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Launched | 2011  
Retailers | KITH NY, 424, American Rag Cie LA  
Sport of Choice | Surfing  
Favorite Film | Lost in Translation  
What was your first job? | Worked at a surf shop





# The Gentleman REBEL

BY KENNETH RICHARD

While many seek to own a look, designer **JOHN VARVATOS** has transcended the fashion genre to do something more... capture a spirit. That catch was a byproduct of mastering the craft of his trade with an eye for product as well as having a respect for his heritage and an ear for what is next. The Impression spoke with the quintessential rock-n-roll gentleman and his lead advertising drummer, **STEPHEN NIEDZWIECKI**, founder and Chief Creative Director of agency Yard, about being the consummate rebel, those rocking ad campaigns, and what his ear is tuned to now.



**KENNETH RICHARD:** John, thanks for carving out the time. Stephen will join us in a bit, but beforehand, I'd love to hear how you got into the field.

**JOHN VARVATOS:** When I was in my first year of high school, I started working in a men's store for a couple of reasons. Most importantly, I wanted to make my own money. My parents had five kids to take care of and I didn't want to burden them by asking for money to buy clothes for school. I figured if I get a job at a men's store, I would get a discount and I'd have the cash to buy the clothes I wanted. That really was it. I fell in love with the whole style thing. I didn't even call it fashion, so much as style. I grew up in Detroit with Motown artists, but they were all wearing uniforms, and to me, it felt like they were costumes. I was much more captivated by all the British invasion bands, like the Rolling Stones, who didn't wear uniforms. I was always intrigued by the individuality and style of those groups.

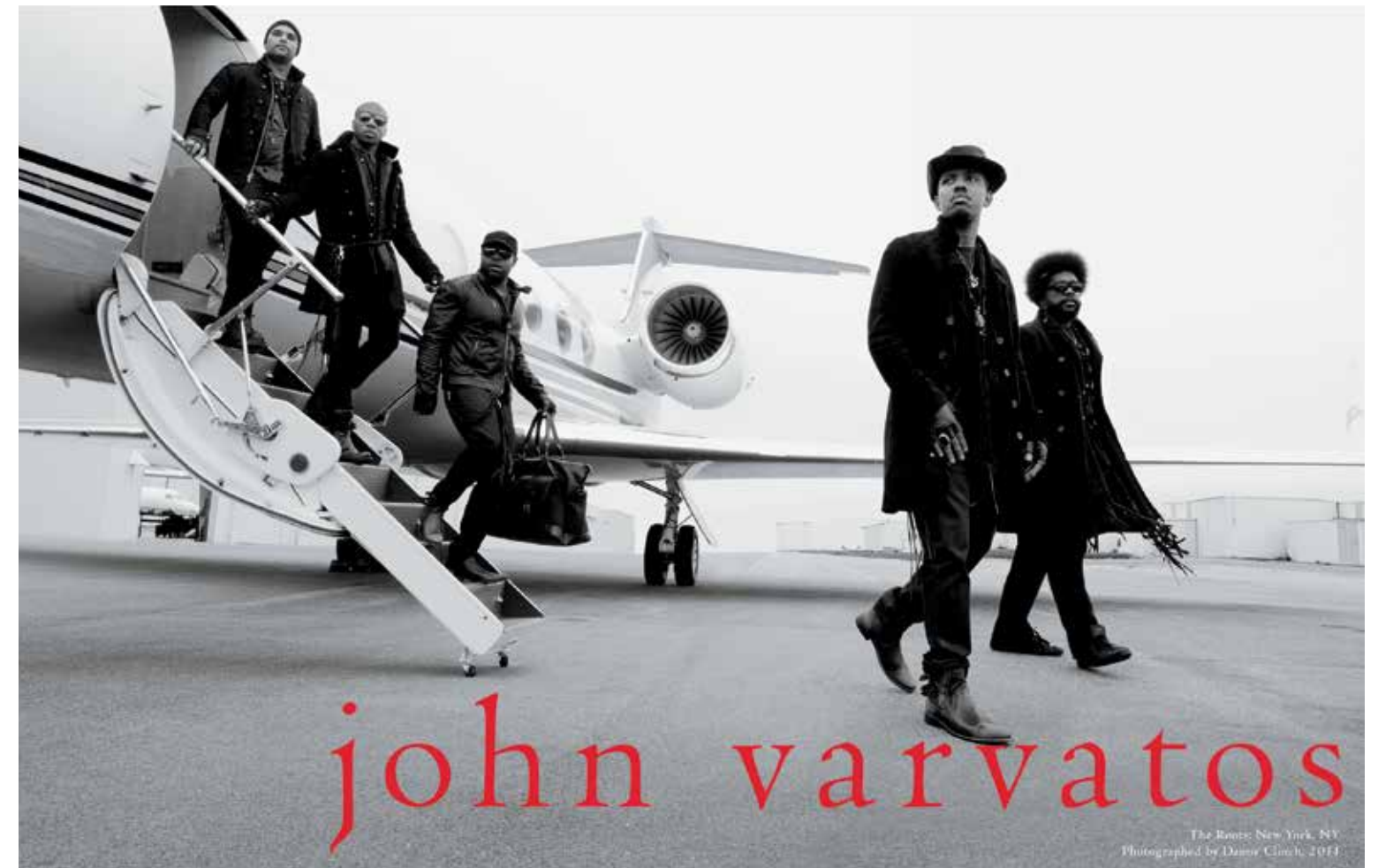
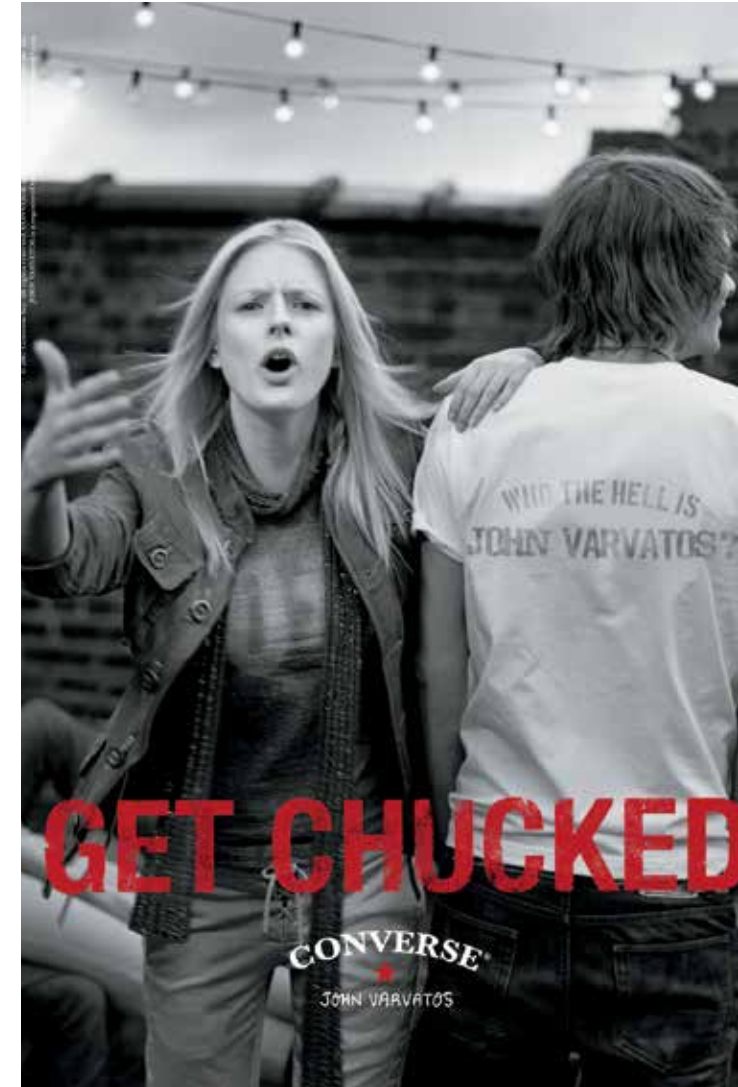
Eventually, I went away to college in Ann Arbor. I stayed with the company that I had been working for because they had stores in the Midwest and across Michigan. I worked there 30 hours a week while going to school full time to earn a degree in education.

When I graduated, I got a job teaching at the university's science and

chemistry lab. I was actually making more money working at the retail store than I was making as a teacher, so eventually I went into retail.

When I was 24, I partnered with some people in Grand Rapids, Michigan and opened up a men's store, which is still there. I did that for four years. It was a very unique store, even in today's world. When I first started the store, a brand like Ralph Lauren wasn't a department store brand at all. There was only one shop in America. We were one of the first stores that kind of created a world with Ralph Lauren, but we mixed it up with other things, too. The people from Ralph Lauren would come out to look at our store because they always heard so much about it from the sales reps who would talk about us. So, they came in, and were enamored, and I became friendly with them.

Very quickly, I made a decision to make a change into wholesale and took over the Midwest for Ralph Lauren, where I oversaw 10 states, like Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, all the way to Nebraska. It was 1984 and at that time Polo was really starting to happen. I took over the territory with the same passion I had put in my store, and it just blew up. The timing was great. Ralph was doing well and so was I. I was the youngest person in the





organization and they moved me to New York to head up sales for the menswear company. Very shortly after I moved to Manhattan, I was given merchandising as well, so I was VP of Sales and Merchandising for menswear. It was a very different company then, than it is now. When I joined the business, it was 150 million. When I left, four years later, it was a billion plus. It grew very quickly. So, while heading the merchandising piece, I began sitting with Ralph and the design team. That's when I woke up and had the realization, 'this is what I want to do.' So I started taking classes, pattern making and illustration.

**KENNETH RICHARD:** *Where did you take classes?*

**JOHN VARVATOS:** At FIT. It was just a couple of classes. I was leaving at six o'clock to make the seven o'clock class. When Ralph found out, he said, "You don't have to go to school to be a designer. What you have to have is the taste level, the eye, and the vision. Work here in design."

That's how I got my start in design. A couple of years later, I was contacted by Calvin Klein, who wanted me to come to talk to him about being a designer there. After our meeting, Calvin asked me to head up design for the whole men's company. At that time they had Calvin Klein women's collection, underwear and Calvin Klein Sport, but everything else was a license and he wanted to shut them down and revamp things. He wanted to start a men's collection business.

So I started designing Calvin Klein collection and I said to him, "We should start another brand. Why don't we try to do a diffusion kind of thing with its own point of view?" So, CK was started at the same time and it grew quickly. I definitely was in the right place at the right time, but I had a very strong point of view and was confident about what I could do for these brands, both in sales and design.

I enjoyed Calvin, but eventually I went back to Ralph in 1994 to take over design for all of menswear. It was a big opportunity. I wanted to be at Ralph Lauren. I wanted to design lifestyle. I wanted to be able to design from head to toe. I wanted to be able to understand how to finish the shoes and construct them. I wanted to know how to build bags. I was voracious. I still am, but I was voracious at the time for knowledge. I made sure I knew everything there was to know about shoes, about underwear, or about socks. I didn't want to be one of those people that touched a lot of things, but was an expert at none. I didn't want to be a jack-of-all-trades. I wanted to be an expert in everything.

**KENNETH RICHARD:** *That time at Calvin was Sam Shabid, Fabien Baron and some other greats. You were really building brands. What did you pick up about marketing?*

**JOHN VARVATOS:** Neil Kraft was there, too.

Well, before Calvin, I was at Ralph. I learned more in the first month there than I've learned in my entire career. That was a company that broke the rules. There weren't any shop-n-shops before Ralph Lauren. There wasn't true lifestyle design before Ralph Lauren. There was couture, and then, there were brands. He was the first at doing a lifestyle and I learned about advertising and creating a dream and creating the excitement that people wanted to be part of.

When I went to Calvin, it was the complete opposite. It was about sex, drugs, maybe not rock-n-roll, but it was definitely about sex and drugs. I don't want to make the drugs thing sound like a big thing, but it was about irreverence and sex, and creating things that were rebellious and shocking at times.

It was very different at Ralph's. Ralph was very pure about everything. The girls looked very pure, everybody was buttoned up. At Calvin, we did a whole film with Bruce Weber. Mickey Rourke was dating a really beautiful actress for a time, and we shot her nude in the shower. It was crazy. I can't remember her name.

**KENNETH RICHARD:** *Shower, motorcycles... Carré Otis?*

**JOHN VARVATOS:** Carré Otis! Yes. So, we did that kind of thing. I was so fortunate. I couldn't have been at two better brands. I really saw how to push the envelope. I also learned that marketing sells. Beyond the dream that Ralph was creating, I learned that sex sells, and that shocking sells, too. But it is not always easy to know what is right and when it is right!

I remember when we met Kate Moss. We were working on a men's runway show in the early 90's. Somebody wanted Calvin to see Kate, maybe it was Bruce or Sam. We're styling the show, and in walks this 15- or 16-year-old girl. At that moment, I didn't get it.

I always think back to that moment, to think that someone had the vision to see in her that sensuality, something so special. Because, what I saw was her coming in at 10 in the morning, just out of bed and kind of a mess. At the moment there wasn't a lot of sensuality. I also didn't look at her pictures until later. When I saw those pictures that David Sims took, I got it.

It was an amazing time to be around all of that. And Ralph was pushing the envelope in a different way. It was, in his way, groundbreaking, in terms of how you brand yourself and how you create a lifestyle, how you create the dream and all those things. Calvin was about constantly changing and shaking shit up. I connected very much with it.

I've used that term for seven years now, we talk about it all the time. I like the idea of "shaking shit up," because I'm very antsy. I don't like to stay too much in one particular direction because I love change.

**KENNETH RICHARD:** *So how did the change come about to open John Varvatos?*

**JOHN VARVATOS:** When I went back to Ralph, we changed from being in a brownstone with everybody running up and down the stairs, to an office building on Madison Avenue. When I left it was a billion dollar company, when I came back it was four and a half billion. My first meeting back, there were 20 people in the meeting, to talk about the new shirt body. I was there for another four and a half years. It was great, I had a super relationship with Ralph and I still do. But the company had gotten very big and I was a product guy.

There was this spark that hit me one day. I was at Barneys, it was a fall day in 1988 and I was looking at Helmut Lang, Jil Sander, Gucci, Prada and such. They were all doing black nylon, with their own point of view, but very similar in a lot of ways.

**KENNETH RICHARD:** *Utilitarian.*

**JOHN VARVATOS:** Very utilitarian. I guess I was in my early 40's. And I thought, "It is time to do something different."

And on that day, I decided, "I'm definitely going to do it."

When I was at Calvin there was a guy by the name of Harvey Sanders, who was the President of Nautica. He had reached out to me when Calvin got a lot of buzz and CK was doing extremely well. He called and said, "You guys are the talk of the town. I'd love to have you join us, but not Nautica, we'd love to start another brand. It could be your name, whatever you want to do, but we'd like to do something more contemporary." I explored that with him before I rejoined Ralph, but I decided that I didn't really think

it was something I needed to do at the time.

However, that fall day in Barneys, I thought, "I should call Harvey and see if he's still interested." That was a Sunday. Monday morning, when I came into my office, the message light on my phone was blinking and there was a message from Harvey Sanders. "Hey, good morning, John! It's been a long time! Just thinking about you over the weekend. Still interested if you ever want to do anything." I called him back, it's 7:45, and said, "Harvey, you're not going to believe this, but I was going to call you today. This sounds like a story. I was thinking about you yesterday and I think I'm ready to do something here." Within one week we put a deal together and that was the start of John Varvatos.

I was too late to actually launch for Fall '99, so I started slowly working on my collection by myself, in addition to helping Nautica. I launched Nautica jeans for Harvey, and created some other things, and I launched officially for Fall 2000. Then long story short, a few years later, Nautica was bought by VF. I decided to stay with VF for a period of time and then we took the company private two or three years ago.

**KENNETH RICHARD:** *Big difference going from a billion dollar company to a start up?*

**JOHN VARVATOS:** Harvey was hugely supportive. But, there were learnings. Now we were dealing with a finance department.

But I have to say, when people asked me how we launched in 2000, followed almost immediately by 9/11, and how we navigated our way through it all, I say it really boiled down to the fact that I was 43 years old, and I had a lot of experience and I knew how to execute. I also hired other people on the team who had the experience and knew how to execute. Even though we started the company with seven people and the second year I think we had 12 people, we all knew how to get things done.

**KENNETH RICHARD:** *And sales?*

**JOHN VARVATOS:** I was selling in the first season. I was in the showroom. I had another person working with me, but I was in every single appointment working with the accountants. I sat down with Tom Kalendarian at Barneys and Peter Rizzo at Bergdorf's and Wayne Michael at Saks, and the guys at Neiman Marcus. They might have known me a little bit from my background at Polo, but they didn't really know me. I helped to give them confidence with my ability to talk about retail, price-point, fit, finish, delivery and all the things that we were going to do correctly, right out of the gate.

[Stephen Niedzwiecki of Yard joins us]

**KENNETH RICHARD:** *Played well to your foundation in sales and retail. Stephen, good timing, we are about to chat about advertising John, what was the first campaign you did as John Varvatos?*

**JOHN VARVATOS:** At the time I was working with Mike Toth. I had

known Mike from a previous life and we had even talked about going into business together at one time, because he loved what I did and I loved what he did. He used to do the Chaps at Ralph Lauren line and some advertising at Polo as well. He really understood what I wanted to say, and we conceived a shoot with Richard Phibbs as photographer. They were a great team, and Mike really got what I was about.

**KENNETH RICHARD:** *He was a great DNA expert.*

**JOHN VARVATOS:** Totally. That's why he wanted me to partner with him and help reinvigorate both brands and really get to their DNA.

So the first campaign was really a point of differentiation in 2000. We shot a good-looking guy with long hair in a suit with a shirt and tie and full trousers. Everything was a spread. On one page we had the suit and tie and his long hair, and on the other page were wide trousers with the big cuff on the bottom. That drove more people into the store than anything we've ever done in our history. Why? I can't tell you exactly. But it was something - the silhouette of the pant, the boot with it, the jacket, the guy with the long hair. I remember Harry Rosen up in Canada coming to our showroom and going, "Your product is beautiful. Why do you have a long-haired guy?" Because nobody was doing that kind of thing, especially in an elegant way. Well, a year later Harry Rosen used that guy in their ads, too! [Laughter]

**JOHN VARVATOS:** That was the beginning of it. It was really an interesting time. Back then we didn't have all the west coast jeans brands and the premium denim thing hadn't happened yet.

**KENNETH RICHARD:** *You kicked off a USA badge back then that was a little hand-crafted that was also a little bit ahead of its time.*

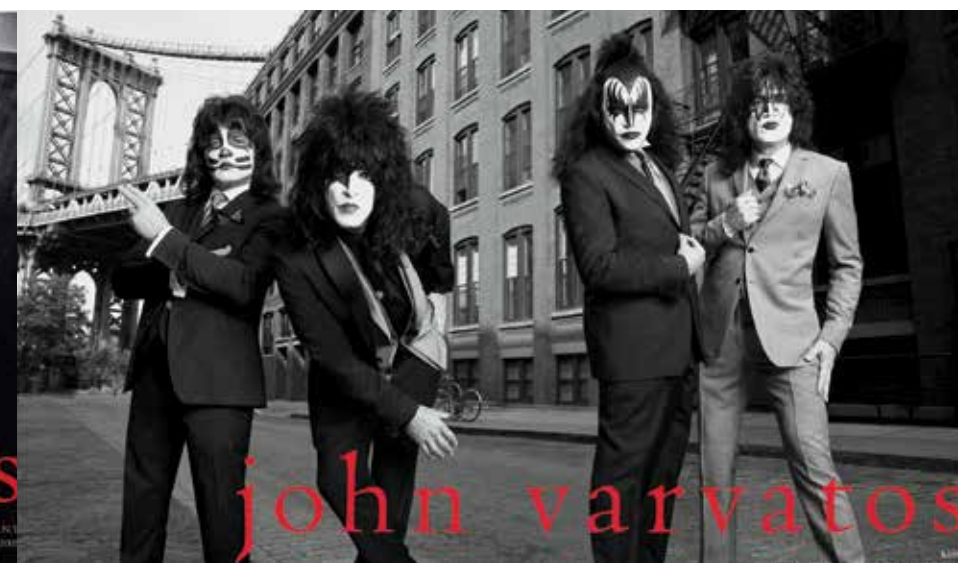
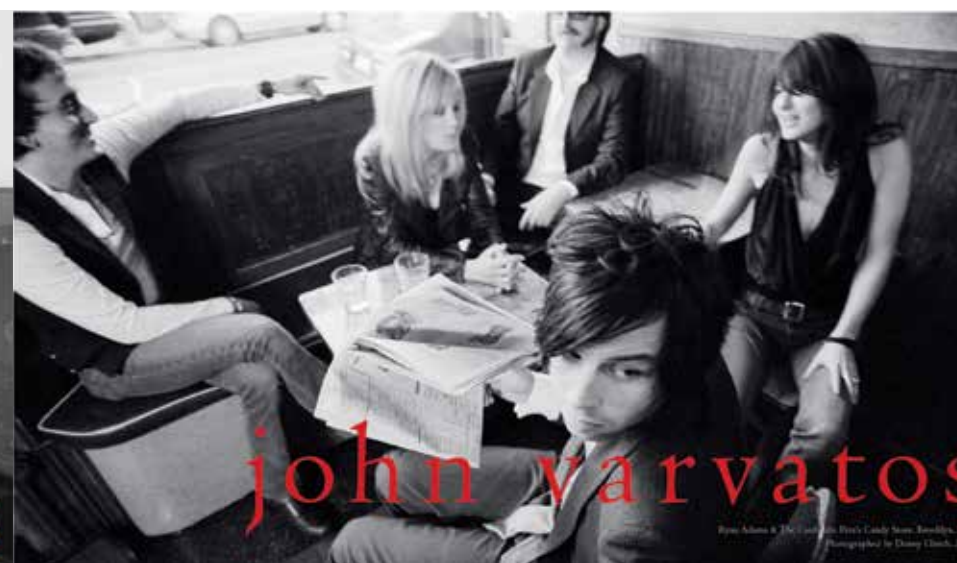
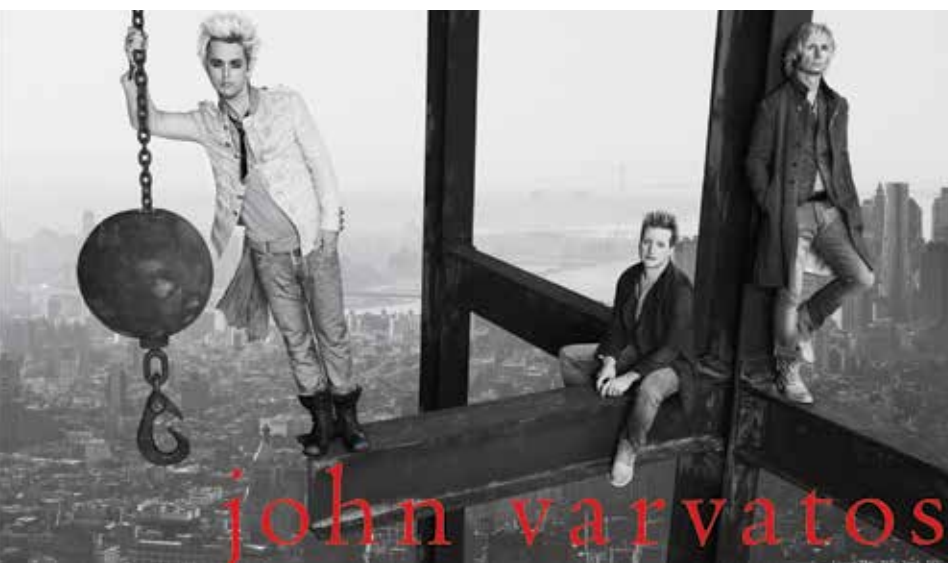
**JOHN VARVATOS:** I remember when we did it. We shot the back of the jean with the guy's hand in the pocket. Mike loved that patch more than anything because he felt it was so artisanal and so American. He really wanted us to talk about that at the time, and it worked. It worked around the world when we did it, too. People used to say, "Well, I don't think this is going to work in the Middle East because they don't like Americans," but most people want USA.

Actually, I found a vintage belt in Italy that someone had done hand-tooled. In the back of the belt it said USA and I thought, "Wow, I don't know if I would wear it as a belt, but that's a cool idea."

**KENNETH RICHARD:** *So, how did you two meet?*

**JOHN VARVATOS:** We had been working with Mike for five years and I just felt like we needed to do something different. I loved Mike. Mike was a great one, one of my close friends, too, really close friends. Big loss last year.

But, what I wanted to project was something different and I just felt like I needed someone else that wasn't as close to me at the time. So we talked to a bunch of different creative people. Stephen was one of them. I don't even remember the presentation. We didn't do an agency review. It was more





about a connection. We have worked with other people on fragrance, like Doug Lloyd, who's also a great guy. But I was looking for someone to really encompass the entire brand and that's when I met Stephen.

**KENNETH RICHARD:** *What was that first season like?*

**STEPHEN NIEDZWIECKI:** John and I spent quite a bit of time together before we landed on the rock-n-roll gentleman muse, we actually worked together on a campaign right before it which used models.

**JOHN VARVATOS:** It was what I call 'romantic advertising.' The first five years is what I would call beautiful, elegant, romantic ad campaigns. We won some awards and those ads were beautiful, but when I opened up a Vanity Fair or GQ, there were a lot of beautiful campaigns that featured 'romantic advertising.'

**STEPHEN NIEDZWIECKI:** It was a time, especially in men's, where it was all looking pretty similar. I think it was during that time hanging out with John, one-on-one and really seeing who he was as a man and as a designer that the whole rock-n-roll thing started to bubble to the top.

**JOHN VARVATOS:** Our path wasn't as obvious back then as it is today. We didn't have the Bowery store. We didn't have a record label. Everybody didn't equate us with music back then. We had a big following in the music industry where people connected with us and being from Detroit, Stephen knew where my soul was. But it just wasn't obvious. Stephen sat in this exact room along with Donna Faircloth, our SVP of Marketing. We came to talk about the next campaign, which was going to be one more beautiful 'romantic advertising' campaign, and I said, "I don't want to do this." And they both said, "Good." That was when we started the whole conversation about what we could be. I started talking about breaking the rules and creating something that was our own. In general, shaking shit up!

**STEPHEN NIEDZWIECKI:** Part of 'breaking the rules' was not using the same ingredients that had made other fashion campaigns at the time. It was all about going against the grain and that was where the idea of shooting, not with a fashion photographer, but with a rock documentarian, came from. Also, at the time, it's not like we had big budgets to pay artists, so using someone with credibility in the world of music and having musicians feel comfortable with who was going to take their photo was a big deal. That talented photographer with credibility was Danny Clinch. That was the way we approached it, and it worked.

**JOHN VARVATOS:** The first step was coming up with a concept, because when we first talked about it, I wanted to do a musician but Stephen had done music and musicians for the GAP. Then we thought about how we could do it like nobody else has done it - so we own it and it really becomes part of the DNA.

When we started thinking about the guy, that's when it really got interesting. We all agreed that the guys needed to be bad boys, they needed to be in the genre of either leading or breaking, like Alice Cooper, the godfather of shock rock, for example, or Iggy Pop, the godfather of punk. In the beginning we threw out all the names of artists we wanted that were the bad boys. That's when we came up with Ryan Adams. Ryan's a bad boy who's always in trouble and he's also a total genius. He's not a commercial guy, either. He had this band called "The Cardinals" that he was starting with and he liked the idea of it being Ryan Adams and The Cardinals so it wasn't just about him.

**STEPHEN NIEDZWIECKI:** Also, Ryan had a relationship with Danny. So he felt confident doing it.

**JOHN VARVATOS:** Let's go back to Danny Clinch. So, we had talked about all the photographers that we could use and Stephen brought up Danny.

**STEPHEN NIEDZWIECKI:** I knew Danny from the early nineties. I met him on a personal level and we had stayed in touch even when I left New York to go work for GAP's in-house agency, mid 90's, a true heyday for the

brand! The night we all went to Danny's studio and I introduced John, I knew right then and there it was love at first sight.

**JOHN VARVATOS:** There were lots of rock photographers we loved, but we were looking for something that was going to be shot very differently. Danny was a guy that was about all capturing "a moment."

**STEPHEN NIEDZWIECKI:** And at the time, he wasn't doing many ads.

**JOHN VARVATOS:** I don't think he wasn't doing any ads. He was doing album artwork and stuff like that.

**STEPHEN NIEDZWIECKI:** So, with Danny, you might have to worry about where the guy fell on the page, or if his face was going to be right in the middle of the gutter, but not having that experience was also a blessing because Danny had real freedom in his style.

**JOHN VARVATOS:** He allowed us to capture the moments and in any given season, we had 20 pictures we could have run.

**STEPHEN NIEDZWIECKI:** So, we go to shoot the first rock campaign and I'm nervous as shit because we're stepping out of the comfort zone of fashion, where the agents make sure the models show. We're on location and Ryan's band members, The Cardinals, all show up on time. It was eight o'clock in the morning and they were there all there on time.

**JOHN VARVATOS:** Ryan's supposed to be there at nine.

**STEPHEN NIEDZWIECKI:** First location, we were shooting at Pete's Candy Store, a little Brooklyn bar, and then we were going to go to Manhattan.

We had this plan of going to three locations. Ten o'clock passes, 11 o'clock passes, and noon passes, and his manager's trying to get in touch with him. Six hours later!?

**JOHN VARVATOS:** Yeah. Ryan's like six hours late. His band was so pissed off at him. But we got him dressed and we started shooting. We're not even shooting for 15 minutes before in the middle of shooting, he just gets up and he leaves the Candy Store. He walks down the street. We're like, "Where the f\*\*\* is he going?" Ten

minutes later he comes walking back with a can of sardines and a bag of peanuts and he sits down at the table, opens up the can of sardines with the plastic forks and the peanuts and he goes, "I needed a little energy." And that was our first rock shoot...

[Laughter]

**KENNETH RICHARD:** *The sophomore effort to stay the course. That was brave.*

**JOHN VARVATOS:** Well, now we have some pictures to show people and so we make our list of who we're going to ask, and the first person we go out to after Ryan is Joe Perry. Joe said, "I like the idea, the pictures are beautiful, but can I bring my son along, he is a musician as well?" We thought it sounded cool! His son Tony was a young guy, a good-looking kid, and it was that quick. It wasn't a big negotiation.

**JOHN VARVATOS:** We had some great shoots, but I have to say, when we shot Iggy, the whole world changed for us.

**STEPHEN NIEDZWIECKI:** That was definitely the turning point. We had a two-tiered day planned for Iggy, the idea was that we were going to do Central Park and then we were going to do some stuff at his hotel late at night.

**JOHN VARVATOS:** We're leaving the bus on 57th Street parked in front of like the Helmsley or something, and we're crossing the street on 57th Street and he starts spinning around and dancing and Danny's taking these pictures. We're not into the park more than a couple of minutes and we know we already have it. I mean, it was obvious it was going to be incredible.

**STEPHEN NIEDZWIECKI:** The thing that was amazing is how excited Iggy was. He was a fan of John's, but also, he was excited by the fact that we actually wanted him dressed. He said that no one ever actually wanted to shoot him with clothes on and John had him in a 3-piece suit! So we finally get into the park and the weather's terrible, but we start shooting. We start with this park bench shot. Then just as it's going, we're all looking at each other.

**JOHN VARVATOS:** Danny grabs our arms and goes, "This is epic!" And



Left to right | Stephen Niedzwiecki and John Varvatos

Danny, who shoots all this amazing stuff during his career, says this is one of the most epic moments that he's ever had.

**STEPHEN NIEDZWIECKI:** After we got that umbrella shot in the rain, we stopped. We felt like we had it, but we still had this amazing evening planned so we went back to the hotel and shot more and hung out. It was such an amazing time and truly a life-changing point for us.

**JOHN VARVATOS:** Iggy was one of the most gracious people that we've ever worked with and he became a friend from that point on.

**STEPHEN NIEDZWIECKI:** He kept asking Danny, "Do you want to keep going?" Finally, we went back up to the room at 2AM and had tea and listened to stories of him and Bowie. That was also the most incredible thing, to hear him tell stories.

**JOHN VARVATOS:** That was the beginning of almost a ten-year friendship with him. He did a Chrysler ad with me; he's done charity stuff with us. He's just been a super friend. That's the one thing I also think is really interesting - every artist we've worked with, we're still very connected to. Christmas time, New Year's, birthdays, they play at our charity events. It's really amazing. Even bands like KISS.

**KENNETH RICHARD:** *How did KISS happen?*

**JOHN VARVATOS:** Nick Simmons, Gene Simmons' son, came to our charity event in West Hollywood all dressed up and he said, "I love your stuff. You should shoot KISS." I'm like, "Okay. But it costs a lot to work with your dad and we don't have big fees," and he goes, "Leave it to me." That was on a Sunday.

Tuesday I'm in Toronto at the airport, and my phone rings. "John? It's Gene Simmons, you handsome fellow," you know how Gene's always very courteous and complimentary. He goes, "My son said we should talk. He says your brand is cool and we should be involved." That was another shoot that could have been a nightmare, but it was one of the most amazing experiences we've ever had in our lives. And I don't just mean the shooting. I

mean the experience of working with Gene, Paul and the band. It was just an amazing experience. From the day we fit them, to the day we shot, they were unbelievably gracious and incredibly funny.

We had planned a video to shoot in the Bowery, one song shot four different ways. We invited 150 to 200 people to a secret show, made them sign an NDA, leave their cellphones in Ziploc bags. We never told them who was playing. Even in their sound check they played Zeppelin because they didn't want anybody to know it was KISS.

But that afternoon, we were on the bus heading to the show and they said to me, "It's been so great. You know, we haven't played a club in 40 years. How about if we just play off the first three albums and f\*\*\* that one song video thing. We don't want to play that song anyway." So we have all these people in this club and the place goes dark, except for one little pin-light on the stage, so no-one knew who was going to come out and then, all of a sudden, through the lights you see a flash of makeup. The hair on our arms stood up because of the screams. It wasn't like we had invited the KISS army. We just put a message on our website saying, "Do you want to be part of a music video?" but we didn't say who. Even if you weren't a KISS fan before that night, you left being one of the biggest KISS fans on the planet.

They played for over two hours, something like 28 songs. They'd started in dressed to kill suits, and makeup. They played through with the makeup, but the jackets came off and then the vests came off. They had so much fun. They gave the audience a show like they were playing at an arena.

**STEPHEN NIEDZWIECKI:** To see a band that usually performs arena rock in a venue like CBGB's was just incredible!

**JOHN VARVATOS:** We shot them in October and we were doing our runway show in January in Milan and they suggested, "We should come to the runway show." We were like, "Well, that's frigging cool." So they flew over and walked the runway in Milan.

**KENNETH RICHARD:** *We have pictures of them walking through Milan to the*



show; it was a scene.

**JOHN VARVATOS:** We're in an industry where people can be so jaded at the shows. They tend to rush out at the end. When KISS came down that runway, people were jumping up to take pictures! The best thing is to watch our video of the retailers and press, the look on their faces is priceless. They were genuinely happy and excited and smiling when KISS came out, it was great. That evening, we had an after party with the band, the press and the buyers. They were so generous with everyone. We've been so fortunate. We've just had so many of those moments.

We shot Jimmy Page with Gary Clark Jr. back in Spring 2013. We shot Paul Weller with Miles Kane in Fall 2012. When we did the opening party for our London store in September of 2014, it was a real homecoming - Iggy was there, Jimmy Page was there, Ringo Starr was there, Paul Weller and Miles were there. All these people who had been in our campaigns came out to celebrate with us. And they brought their friends like Jeff Lynne, Adam Ant and all these other crazy people. We all had such a good time together. It was fantastic!

**STEPHEN NIEDZWIECKI:** Even when we were doing the Ringo modern drum circle, the people that joined were new and old friends of the brand, Steven Tyler, Chad Smith, and Tre Cool from Green Day.

**JOHN VARVATOS:** At the time, we had talked about shooting Ringo for more than three years but we thought he's a Beatle, he's never going to do it. But then, the week that we were deciding what artist to shoot for that season, he was on the Grammy's salute to the Beatles and every outfit he had on was John Varvatos. I had known that he was a good customer of ours. He'd even played drums in our Bowery store with some of our sales guys when he was in shopping, so I knew he was a fan. So Stephen, Donna and I agreed, "We've got to ask him now." We go out to him and he immediately responded, "What took you so long to ask?"

[Smiles]

**JOHN VARVATOS:** When we saw him in LA for the shoot, he greeted us with big hugs and he goes, "What took you so long? I'm finally a male model now! At 70 years old!" I responded, "It's a f\*\*\*ing Beatle! It's Ringo!" He is such a warm and kind person, another gem of a human being!

We've just had so many of those great moments. We could sit here for hours and talk about the unbelievable moments that we've had with so many of the iconic artists. When we asked the Roots, the first thing they said was, "Are you sure that you have the right Roots?" Because they're thinking of the JV campaigns as a total rock-n-roll thing and we go and change it up and ask someone out of the rap/soul genre. We put them in all rock-n-roll and they loved it. They are another band that became our really close friends. We love those guys!

**STEPHEN NIEDZWIECKI:** The beauty of it all was always the artists' feedback. They always say how much fun the shoots were. Every artist has said that. Even Willie Nelson, who doesn't always love a photoshoot!

**KENNETH RICHARD:** *What is next?*

**JOHN VARVATOS:** We're evolving that "Rock-N-Roll Gentleman." He's going to come in and out of what we do, but in different ways. Our past campaigns really zeroed in on rock, not rock-n-roll, but "rock" as a spirit, the spirit of rebelliousness.

I've been working with Converse for 15 years. They were just here yesterday and they were talking about how ours is the longest collaboration, maybe in the fashion industry, but for sure in the footwear industry. They were talking about how we first got together and I was saying, "My connection with you was always the rebelliousness of what Converse stood for." So we're zeroing in on the spirit of rock and what rock stands for. Being a rebel

is being an individual and having your own voice.

Back when I was in college, people had a voice. They were talking strongly about what the government was doing, they were talking strongly about the war, whatever it was that was happening, they were talking strongly about it. People today just complain that nobody does anything. Very few people have voices today and it's a time for people to use their voice, raise it, and take that spirit of rebelliousness to get things done.

So now we are talking about who the rebels of today are. The interesting thing about the rebels today is that they're not just men. There are more women out there that are the rebels today. They're Miley Cyrus, they're Taylor Swift, they're in the music industry and they're women who are having a big voice today. We're really zeroing in on everything we do now, including my Fall '16 show, thinking about it from the perspective of what the "spirit" of what rock represents. It's a soul kind of thing. It's something that runs in your blood. That isn't necessarily about a music genre, it's more about a way of life.

**STEPHEN NIEDZWIECKI:** It's not about a genre, it's not about even being in a band. It's truly more about a spirit and a lifestyle. I also think the world has changed and the way brands communicate has changed. There is more of an opportunity for deeper storytelling and a bit more risk-taking. You create content that can be on for shorter hits; if it doesn't work, you move

on, do something else. There's an opportunity to keep the conversation fresh and alive with the consumer. I also think it's about creating desire. It's desire for product, but it's also desire for feeling 'this is a brand I can be a part of. A brand where I can be part of the conversation. They're not just talking at me, or just creating for me, but they're creating with me.'

**JOHN VARVATOS:** It's an interesting time to evolve the same spirit and take a look at the way we market ourselves, the way we communicate with our customers. We built a lot of fans with our campaigns, so we don't want to walk away from it. But it's also, to some

degree, a very poignant type of thing and we're much more than that poignant type of thing as a total brand.

I'm not looking to take over the world, meaning that I don't need it to be a ten billion dollar company, I don't want to be that commercial, but you still want to grow. I think there's another thing that is really important that we do, it's called product.

We have a huge shoe business, especially when you look at the penetration to our total brand, over 20% of our business is in shoes. Nobody, but the few companies that started with shoes like Gucci and Prada, have that kind of penetration. However, there are a lot of people who still don't even know that we do shoes.

So one of the things we want to do going forward is zero in on showing how we have the attitude AND the product. Because, before when you have KISS, it almost didn't matter which suits they were wearing because they were so powerful. They got your attention.

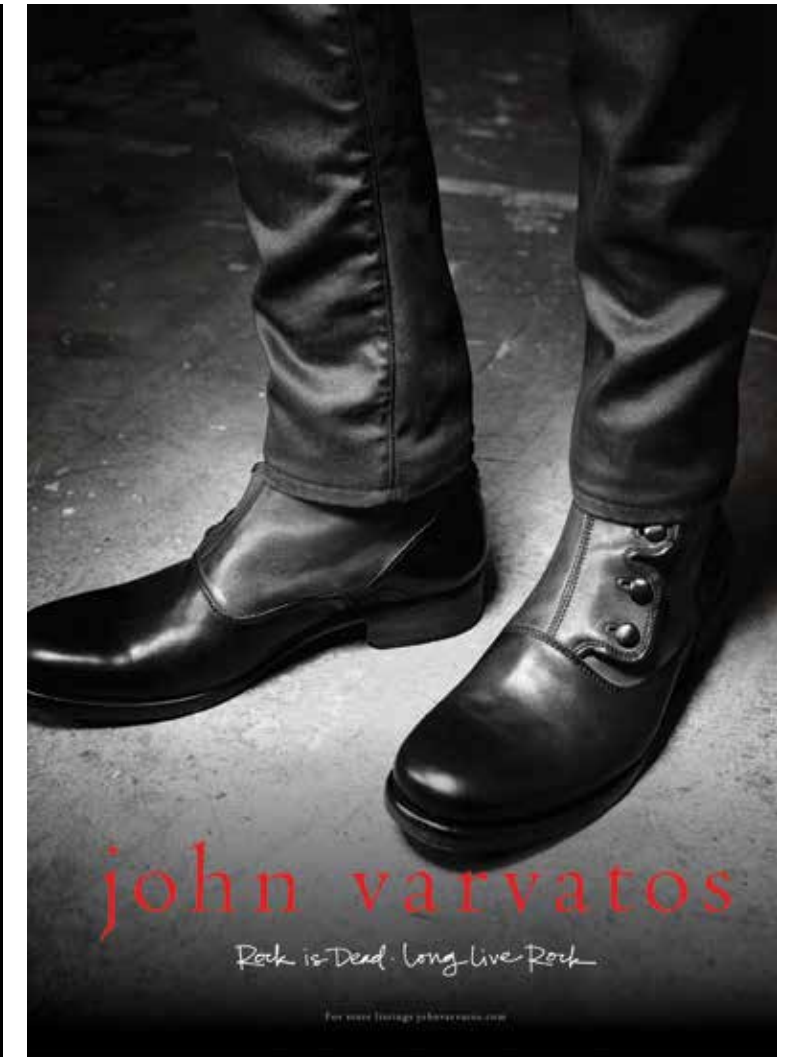
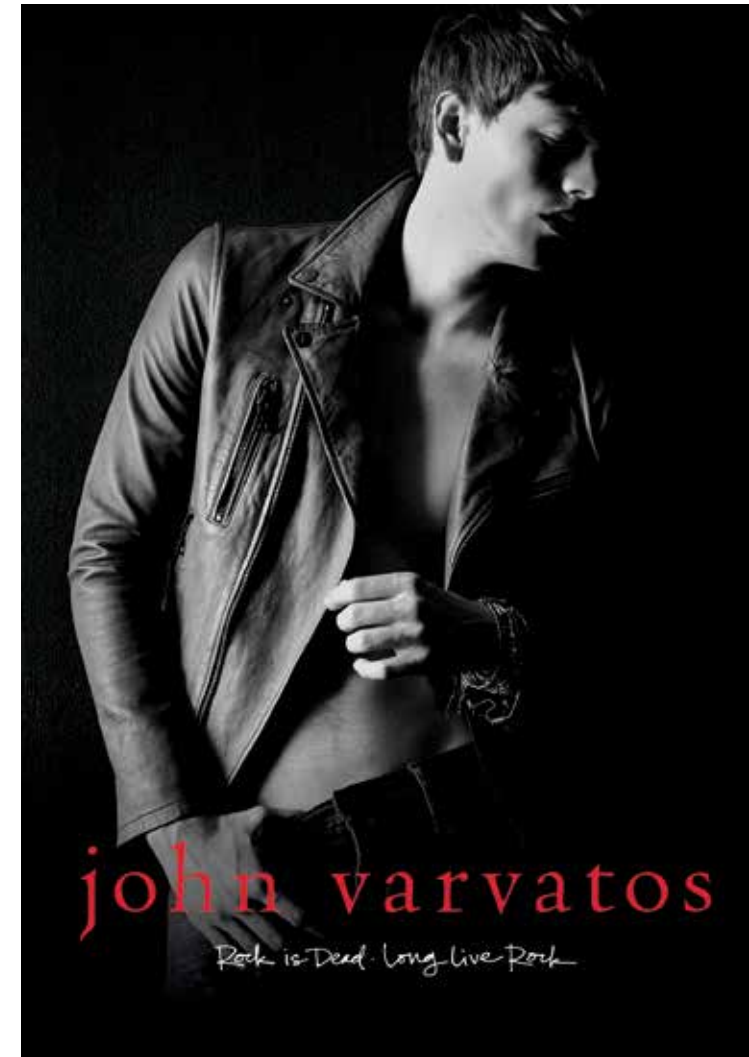
But the reality is that you want people to know that you do the greatest boots, or that you do great bags, or that you do great suits. Our goal now is to incorporate both the past of the "Rock-N-Roll Gentlemen" and to also incorporate the "Rebel Spirit" and show our product as well. Still very powerful, still in your face, but we are evolving and sharing more of ourselves today.

**KENNETH RICHARD:** *Thanks for taking the time to share your story.*

**STEPHEN NIEDZWIECKI:** It was good to catch up.

**JOHN VARVATOS:** Really great. I enjoyed it. I love that you're wearing our clothes. Thank you.

“  
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that I don't need it to be a ten billion dollar  
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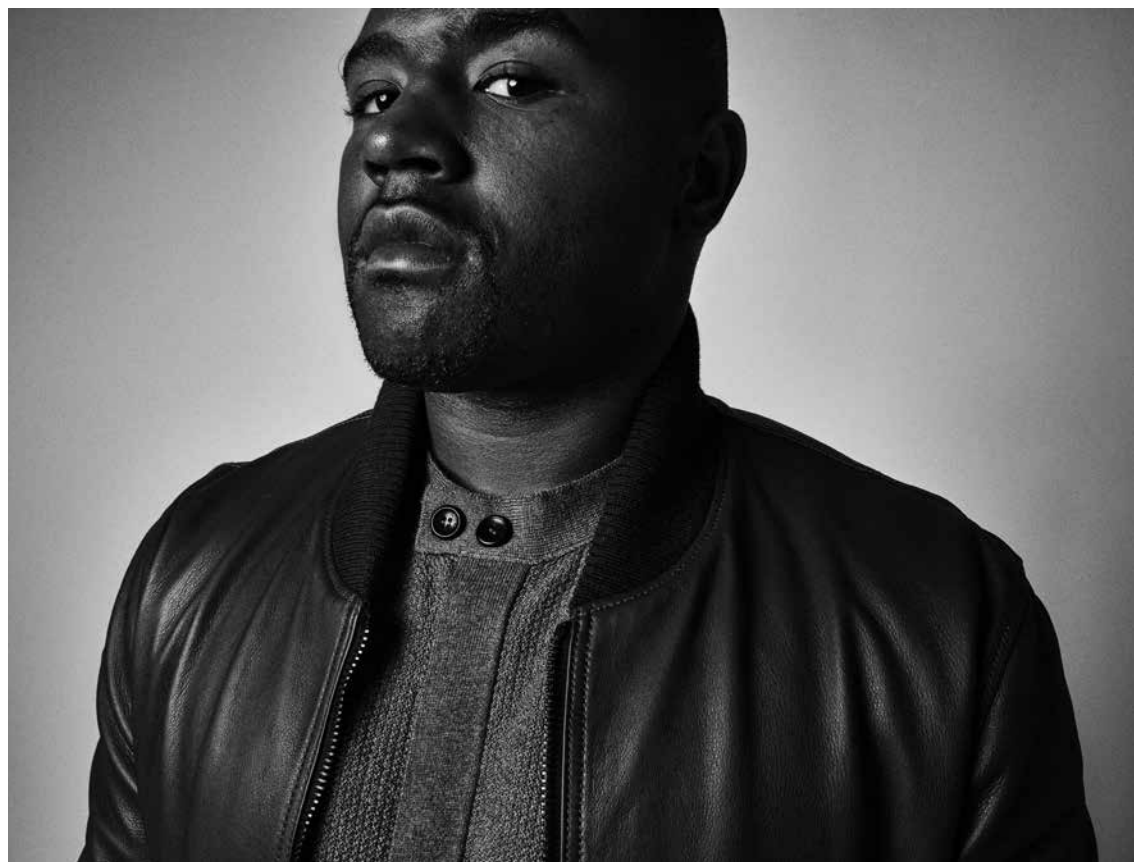




# THE *Homme* TEAM

*Photographer* | Danny Clinch  
*Creative Director* | Kenneth Richard

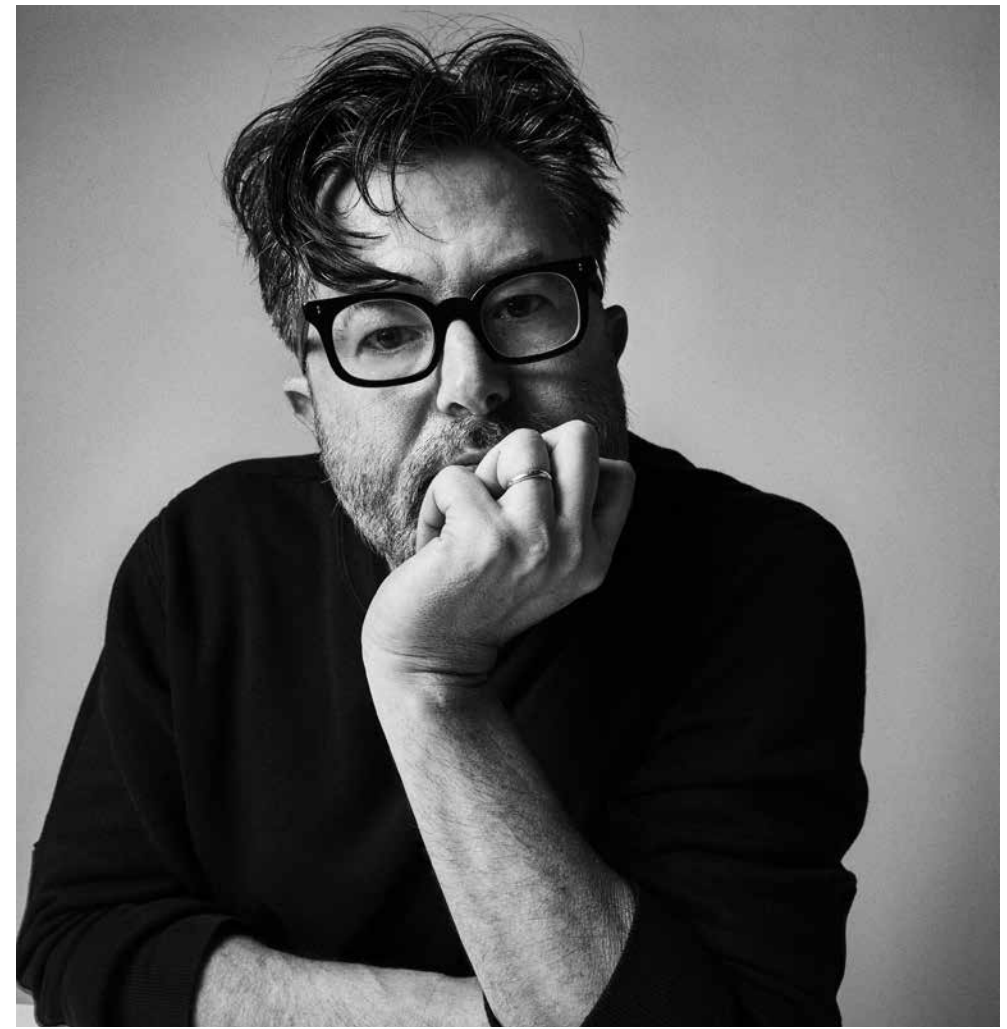




*Previous spread from left | Tim Coppens, Todd Snyder, Jeffrey Rudes, Brian Trunzo (Deveaux), Patrick Doss (Deveaux), Andrea Tsao (Deveaux), Rio Uribe (Gypsy Sport), Paul Andrew*

*Clockwise from left | Stuart Vevers (Coach), Thaddeus O'Neil, Michael Kors, Alex Orley, Samantha Orley, Matthew Orley, Brett Johnson*





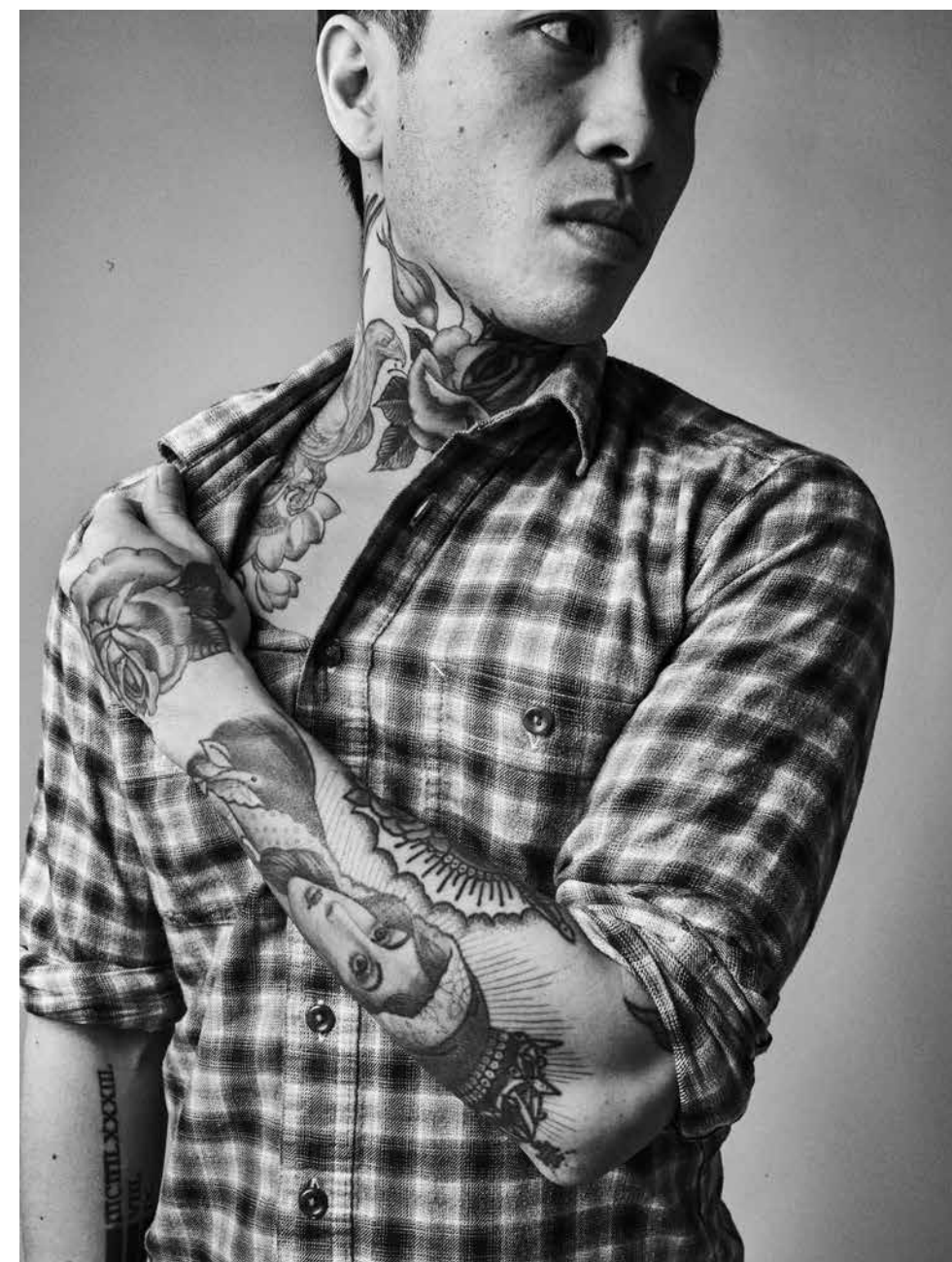
*Clockwise from left | Steve McSween (Nautica), Rio Uribe (Gypsy Sport), Robert Geller, Donrad Duncan (EFM), David Hart, Stuart Vevers (Coach), Zachary Prell, Billy Reid, Nick Graham, David Neville (Rag & Bone), Marcus Wainwright (Rag & Bone)*





*From left | Lawrence Chandler (Rochambeau), Timo Weiland, Donna Kang (Timo Weiland), Ben Stubbington (Theory), Alan Eckstein (Timo Weiland), Billy Reid, Michael Maccari (Perry Ellis), Joseph Abboud, Joshua Cooper (Rochambeau)*





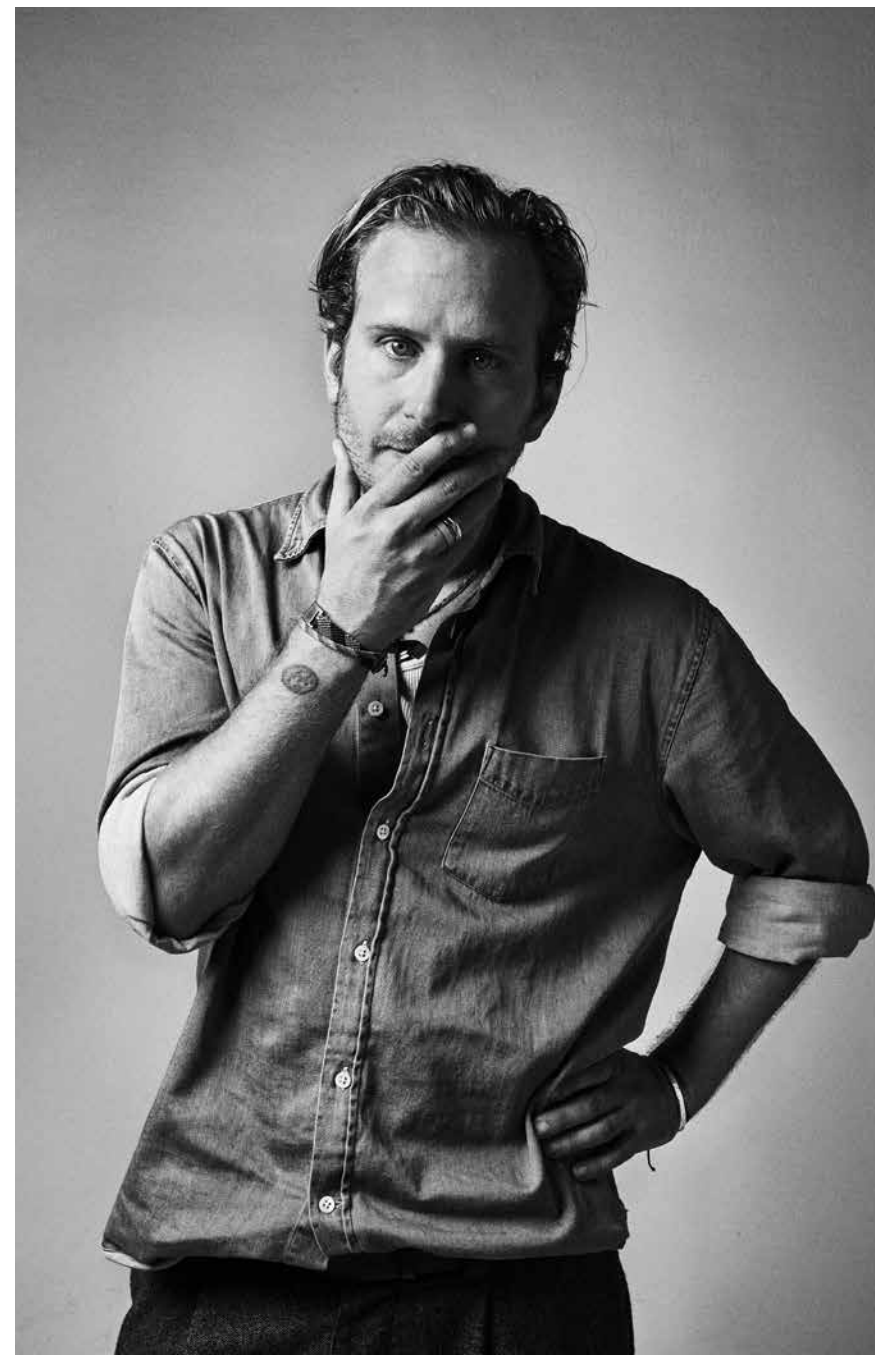
*Clockwise from left | Tim Coppens, Shimon Ovadia (Ovadia & Sons), Ariel Ovadia (Ovadia & Sons), Richard Chai, David Hart, Kenneth Ning, Loris Diran, Donrad Duncan (EFM), Dao-Yi Chow (Public School), John Varvatos, Maxwell Osborne (Public School), Richard Chai, Michael Kors, David Neville (Rag & Bone), Marcus Wainwright (Rag & Bone)*





Clockwise from left | Ben Stubbington (Theory), Zachary Prell, Michael Maccari (Perry Ellis), Timo Weiland, Alan Eckstein (Timo Weiland), Donna Kang (Timo Weiland), Todd Snyder, Shimon Ovadia (Ovadia & Sons), Raul Arevalo (Cadet), Ariel Ovadia (Ovadia & Sons), Steven Cox (Duckie Brown), Ricardo Seco, Daniel Silver (Duckie Brown), Thaddeus O'Neil, Laurence Chandler (Rochambeau), Joshua Cooper (Rochambeau)





*Clockwise from left | Brett Johnson,  
Kenneth Ning, Nick Graham,  
Matthew Orley, Loris Diran, Alex  
Orley, Samantha Orley, Robert  
Geller, Joseph Abboud, Jeffrey Rudes,  
Maxwell Osborne (Public School),  
Dao-Yi Chow (Public School)*

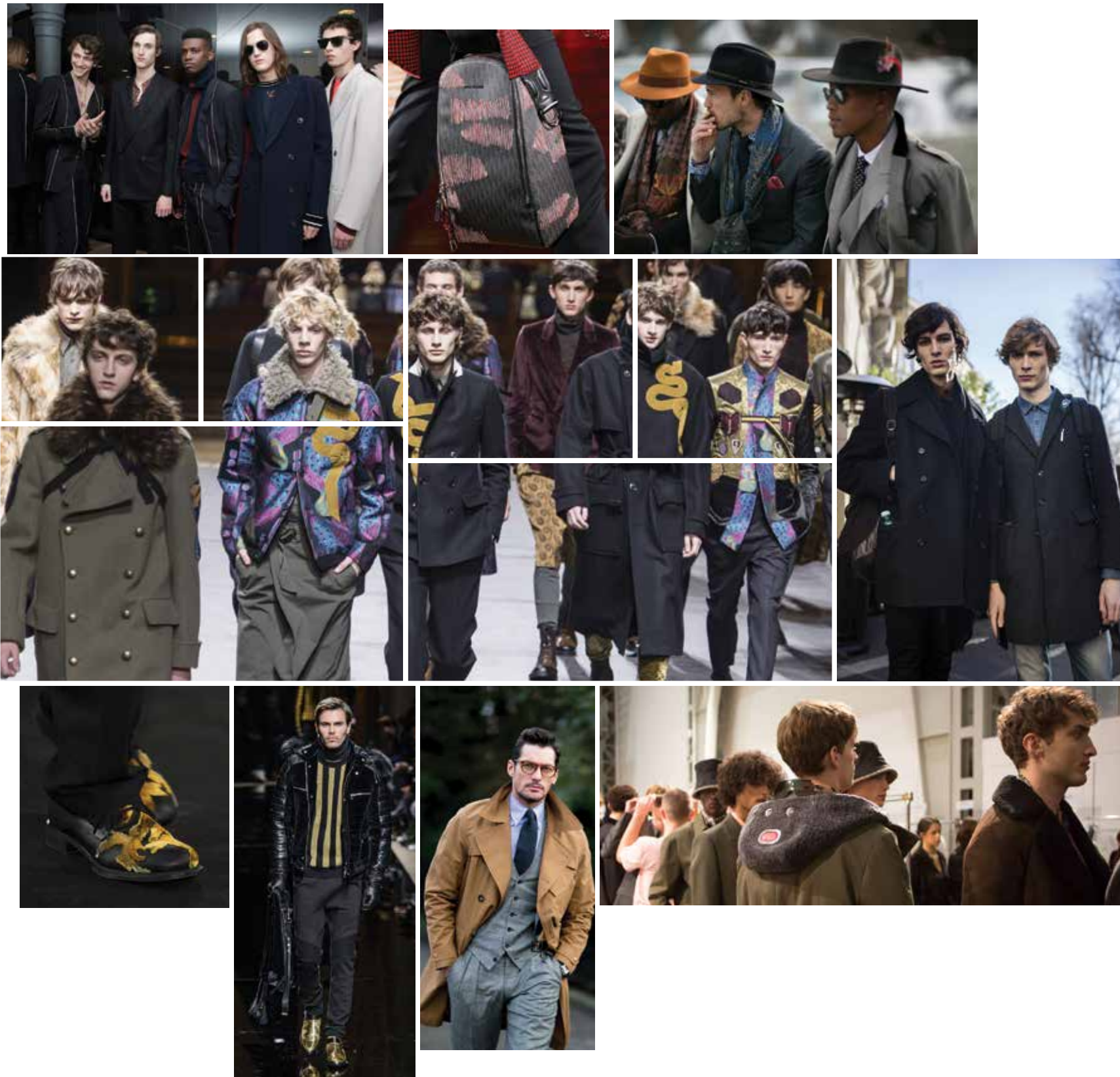




*Clockwise from left | John Varvatos, Paul Andrew, Raul Arevalo (Cadet), Steven Cox (Duckie Brown), Daniel Silver (Duckie Brown), Andrea Tsao (Deveaux), Brian Trunzo (Deveaux), Patrick Doss (Deveaux)*

*Senior Producer, Marc Karimzadeh | Art Director, Judy Downs | Producer, Miyazu Sato | First Assistant, Edward Smith | Second Assistant, Dan Prakhopyk | Third Assistant, Max Clinch | Digital Tech, Adrien Potier | Groomer, Nate Rosenkrantz | Retouching by Dawny Clinch Studio | Shot on location at Pier 59 Studios*





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# BEST IN SHOW

*The European Collections*

**THE IMPRESSION SHOW SCORE CRITERIA\*:**

- Integrity and innovation of presentation
  - Stage of design house in its business cycle (e.g. start-up vs. established)
  - Designer acumen
  - Quality of workmanship
  - Addressing marketplace innovation
- \*shows are rated on a scale of 1-10  
 \*\*scoring reflects the views of The Impression





THE SHOWS

9.5



Dries Van Noten

THE SHOWS

8.6



Craig Green

8.9



Prada

9.1



No. 21

8.7



1205

8.8



Coach

8.5



Fendi



THE SHOWS



8.7

J.W.  
Anderson



9.1

Kolor



9.1

Dolce &  
Gabbana



9.1

Hermès

THE SHOWS



9.5

Louis  
Vuitton



9.0

Alexander  
McQueen



9.2

Rick  
Owens



THE SHOWS



9.1



Calvin Klein Collection

THE SHOWS



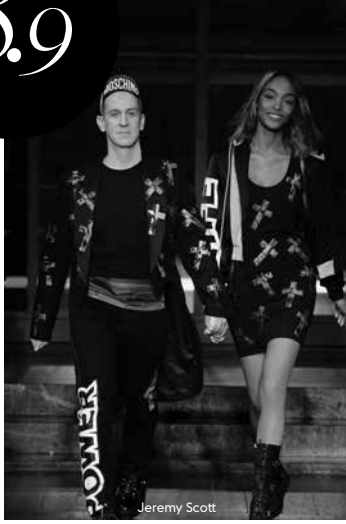
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Agi & Sam



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Moschino



9.1



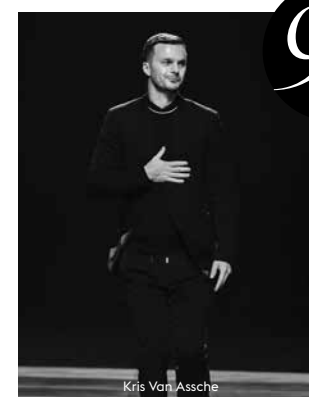
Ermenegildo Zegna



9.0



Dsquared2



9.0



Dior Homme



THE SHOWS



Marni

8.9



Berluti

9.0



Raf Simons

9.0



Jil Sander

8.5

THE SHOWS



Valentino

9.3



MSGM

9.0



Sacai

9.1



THE SHOWS

9.0



Gucci

THE SHOWS

8.5



Salvatore Ferragamo

9.0



Burberry

9.2



Lanvin

9.3



Thom Browne

9.0



Bottega Veneta

8.9



Kenzo



# GET *Back*

The 'Other' Show is happening **BACKSTAGE**, where the rules are relaxed, the confident are candid, and the line-up tells the whole story.





# THE A-Game



*Fashion often worships at the altar of **ACCESSORIES**, and this season European designers got carried away with bags while remaining sure-footed with their statement footwear.*





# THE *Asphalt* RUNWAY

*Fashion always belonged to **THE STREET**. With influencers from models outside of shows to editors en route to the next, the asphalt runway has more than its fair share of head-turning moments. Part drama, part circus, and always entertaining, photographer **VINCENZO GRILLO**, helps us celebrate those who keep our streets chic.*



PITTI UOMO



LONDON





THE STREET



MILAN



THE STREET



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