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TREND PRESENTATION Fall 2013



OSCAR DE LA RENTA



GIVENCHY



CHRISTIAN DIOR

A sold-out crowd attended Fashion Group International's seasonal trend report and panel discussion of the collections—New York, London, Milan and Paris for Fall 2013.

As attendees arrived—or on their way out—they were able to view a curated exhibit featuring pieces from Indonesian designers **Ardista Dwiasri** and **Auguste Soesastro**, members of Cita Tenun, an association of artists dedicated to preserving the traditional Indonesian weaving technique. The exhibition was a joint effort from FGI and Fashion 4 Development, a global platform supporting the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. F4D is led by **Evie Evangelou** with the support of global goodwill ambassador and editor in chief of Vogue Italia, **Franca Sozzani**.

The noon showing started with **Marylou Luther's** summary of the trends—always clever, always spot-on. With a soundtrack that started with “Here Comes The Sun,” the opening message was upbeat—a new season, a new day. For the full recap, check your inbox for Luther's trend report, or order the DVD of the presentation—including the panel discussion from FGI. Here, the highlights:

Trend Highlights:

- Prints and patterns with arty inspirations (Warhol, Man Ray, Steichen)
- Florals, in bouquets and oversize patterns, plus insects
- Paisleys and tie-dyes
- Tartans and plaids
- Tweedy textures
- Lace and lacy looks (leather lace!)
- Intarsias and fabric mixes to up the textural ante
- Coats and capes (from crisp and practical to long and dramatic)
- Sleeveless jackets
- Skirts in every length (including paniered minis)
- Pants in any length, but growing wider
- Blass-inspired evening looks pairing a sweater with a ball skirt
- Covered-up, demure but still glamorous evening dressing
- Feathers
- Boots and booties, men's-inspired Oxfords and loafers

RTW



Marylou Luther and Diane von Furstenberg



Nicole Fischelis and Bryanboy



Ana Maria Pimentel and Colleen Sherin



Amy Synnott D'Annibale

Key trends included a focus on gender: menswear, ladylike femininity and a gender-bending blend. Comfort was also a pervasive theme, with oversize silhouettes and easy, less body-con shapes. High necks and long sleeves signaled a new modesty—balanced by a wave of “dishabille” looks with a careless flair that ranged from ripped hems and mismatches to pajama and nightgown styling. At the same time, a religious theme—from iconic motifs to habitlike styling, and pieces evocative of the Virgin Queen—was not necessarily demure. Another idea that crossed most collections: the motorcycle jacket in all its forms, from grunge and rocker chic to sleeker stylized versions to deconstructed elements.

When it came to color, the palette was brighter and broader than the typical fall range. Black, white and black-and-white, gray, camel and military shades of green and blue (plus camo) were bolstered by less typical powdery pastels and a wide range of clean brights: pink, purple, emerald green, teal, blue, red and sunny yellow. While fashion often repeats, this seasons retro inspirations ran from updates to the Twenties' Flapper (no doubt a mix of *Downton Abbey's* continuing influence and the upcoming *The Great Gatsby* remake) through each decade to the Eighties.

The other big idea was fur: Real and faux versions turned up everywhere in the form of trims, wristlets, cuffs, collars, stoles, hoodies and turtlenecks—even fur dresses. It was worked in stripes, colorblocks, as well as pieced, patched and embroidered for added textural impact. And if it wasn't fur it was leather: in addition to the aforementioned moto jackets, items ran the gamut from dresses with prices comparable to a NYC studio apartment, to sweatpants, skirts, pants and more. There was also python and 'gator, as well as fabrics embossed to resemble skins.

After the trend presentation, Luther introduced the panel—fashion blogger **Bryanboy**; **Nicole Fischelis**, group vice president, fashion director and global forecasting, Macy's; **Amy Synnott D'Annibale**, beauty director, *InStyle* magazine, **Ana Maria Pimentel**, fashion director, women's accessories, Neiman Marcus; and **Colleen Sherin**, fashion director, Saks Fifth Avenue—and the special guest moderator, **Diane von Furstenberg**, designer and president of the CFDA.

Von Furstenberg started the conversation by pointing out that fashion is such a mystery—“It's

l'air du temps—something in the air that designers pick up on—and yet it's also big business.” Pointing to her several decades in the business, she said at this point anything goes—price, silhouette, color is not dictated in the same way it was in the past. She asked the panelists what they saw as “the big relevant thing” in fashion today—and what, if anything, was missing. Fischelis said she sees fashion at a crux between art and commerce. “It's our job to look at the runway and bring it to reality.” Bryanboy said fashion today is all about comfort and practicality: “Women work and have insane schedules; lifestyle is a driving influence and ultimately women will choose what is easy to wear and works for their lifestyle.” D'Annibale pointed out that wearability means different things to different women, but what is more exciting to her is the immediacy of fashion—the influence of the Internet and bloggers—and the fact that anyone can be a stylist today and post their own takes on fashion and have great influence. “It's been democratized,” she said. Sherin pointed out that beyond comfort, what drove fashion, at least for her customers, was the emotional factor—“the Wow pieces that create real desire.”

Turning the tables, von Furstenberg asked the panelists what their big questions were. D'Annibale brought up the mixed reaction to Hedi Slimane's collection for Yves Saint Laurent. Von Furstenberg said, “I was close to Yves and I am close to Hedi. I loved Hedi's first collection and I think Yves would also have loved it. I didn't see the second collection in person, but what I saw made me laugh—it was provocative and I think it was good.” Frischelis agreed, saying that while her first reaction wasn't good when she saw it on line, when she looked again she decided that it really captured the DNA of the house with a modern attitude. Pimentel also had a mixed reaction, but said that when she saw the collection in the showroom she liked it—saying it had all the right pieces for the modern woman. Turning to another controversy of the season, the panel weighed in on the Céline jacket that was said to very closely resemble a Geoffrey Beene jacket from some years ago. Pimentel referred to the cyclical nature of fashion. “A knock off is when someone copies a runway item five minutes later,” she said. Von Furstenberg agreed, pointing out that designers go vintage shopping all the time and have always taken some influence from the past.

Next, the topic turned to the role of accessories and the idea that fashion today is all about selling handbags. Pimentel disagreed, saying the Nineties

trend of the “it” bag had evolved. “Houses now focus on creating a core collection of bags that stay relevant,” so a bag isn't defined by a single season. “Functionality is much more key now, too,” she said. “Long and short straps, and the functionality of the inside is really important.”

Pimentel also pointed out the broader range of shoes considered “fashionable.” “It's not just about the pointy high heel any more. Low heels are not dowdy anymore and actually look quite modern,” she said. Von Furstenberg countered by pointing out that for the modern, busy woman the shoe was hardly an accessory: “Really, the shoe dictates what you wear—are you walking, what is your day like,” she said.

Von Furstenberg opened up the panel to questions from the audience, which ranged from the place of plus sizes in fashion (“We embrace it and make an effort to offer fashion to the plus size customer,” said Fischelis. (“The average American customer is a size 16,” she said) to a discussion of John Galliano and his presence at Oscar de la Renta, and reaction to a short film shown at Louis Vuitton depicting the models as streetwalkers in Paris (“It's said ladies want to be treated like whores and whores want to be treated like ladies,” von Furstenberg quipped).

Bryanboy then brought up the issue of pricing—and asked if there was a limit to how high prices can go. “If you want a cotton T-shirt, you can go to Uniqlo, or you can spend \$200...” Marylou Luther joined the conversation, pointing out the expense of just putting on a show nowadays and how it all rolls back into the price. “Back in the day, models brought their own shoes for fashion shows.” And von Furstenberg weighed in, saying there is so much choice and so many options that you can pretty much pay as much or as little as you want for clothing these days. “3-D printing is going to revolutionize fashion,” she predicted.

The conversation came full circle, back to the mysterious nature of fashion and trends. “Thirty years ago, a group of designers were asked to predict what fashion would be in the year 2000,” she said. “My God, it was the future—I just painted animal skin right on the mannequin,” she said. “But look at 2000 and what was everyone wearing: It was all about the Seventies.”

—Katie Kretschmer
Editor / Contributing Writer



A group of FGI members just returned from India, where they attended the Bombay Fashion week and visited the Golden Triangle, Delhi, Agra (Taj Mahal) and Jaipur. It was an amazing experience exploring the diversity of the people, the history, the culture, the ancient architecture blended with modern style, the colorful outfits, unique fabrics, delectable food and especially the courtesy extended to the group by everyone. It was very endearing and touching.

The group arrived in Delhi, where I met them with our guide. Our hotel, built during the British Raj, had large, beautifully appointed rooms, great restaurants, a fabulous gym and lovely gardens. In the hotel's restaurant, we sat at the table where Gandhi and Nehru used to have tea. Delhi has numerous sights, and we took in quite a few in our three days there.

Red Fort is a huge 17th century complex built with red sandstone. Qutub Minar (Victory Tower), built in the 12th century, is 239 feet tall—the tallest minaret in India. The complex around it shows the blending of Indo/Mughal architectural style. Humayun's Tomb, built in 1562, is a significant example of Mughal architecture. The famous Bahai Temple, shaped like a lotus flower, is a historic landmark surrounded by beautiful gardens and ponds. We also saw the replica of Gandhi's famous Salt March and Akshardham Temple, the largest Hindu temple complex in the world, with its intricately carved and gold-embossed interior. On a sprawling 100 acres, it also has serene gardens and an underground boat ride that depicts India's ancient culture and history.

I also arranged a visit to an area called Hauz Khas, originally a village around which Delhi was built in the 13th century. It provides a glimpse of ancient India, now surrounded by boutiques, restaurants and cafés for upscale yuppies—an interesting blend of old and new India.

After three days, we drove to Agra. On the road, we had the unusual sight of cars, motorcycles, bicycles, cows and pedestrians—even an occasional camel or elephant—all jockeying for room to maneuver. Before getting into Agra, we visited Akbar's (the greatest of Mughal Emperors) Mausoleum. The grounds had peacocks and deer roaming freely, adding to its ambiance.

The next day we visited Agra Fort and Itmad-ud-Daula (known as Petite Taj). Queen Nur Jahan built the mausoleum in 1622 in memory of her father. It was Shah Jahan's inspiration for building the Taj.

Finally, we visited the Taj Mahal, the highlight of the trip. Photos don't do justice to this awe-inspiring monument of love. We admired its flawless white

marble, its colorful inlays and inscriptions. Built in memory of Queen Nur Jahan, who died at the young age of 39 giving birth to Shah Jahan's 14th child. In the evening, we enjoyed a great Bollywood-style musical play, with amazing dancing and costumes.

After two days in Agra, we drove to Jaipur, stopping en route in Fatehpur Sikri, capital of the Mughal Empire between 1570 and 1586. Just before we arrived in Jaipur, I had arranged a great surprise: We were invited to have tea with a prince at his ancient ancestral home (called a Haveli), in a village. The tiny dirt roads did not even allow our van to go all the way in, so we walked a few blocks. It turned into a delight, as the kids had never seen foreigners and they all surrounded us, wanting to have their pictures taken with us. Everyone came out to greet us. We truly felt like VIPs. At tea, the prince regaled us with stories, and shared photos and artifacts of his ancestors—truly an unforgettable experience.

In Jaipur (known as the Pink City, as most buildings are painted a terra cotta color), we visited Jantar Mantar, an ancient observatory built between 1727 and 1734, that is a unique architectural collection of instruments devoted to astronomy. City Palace, built in the 18th century, is an impressive array of courtyards, gardens and buildings with a museum showcasing the history, costumes and jewelry of a bygone royal era. Amber Fort, built in 1592, is a huge red sandstone and marble palace on a hill that dominates the Jaipur skyline. Our highlight there was a specially planned private lunch in the Royal Dining Room. We truly felt like a group of maharani and maharaja being catered to by the most attentive, polite staff.

Shopping for clothes and jewelry in Jaipur was fabulous. We were also treated to a variety of amazing teas and introduced to some great perfumes and spices.

After Jaipur, we flew to Bombay. For the next two days, we attended the fashion shows and admired the fabulous colors and fabrics they use to create both western-style and Indian fashions, and met several Indian designers.

For our final night, we transferred to the famous Taj Hotel. Everyone was glad that they took the post-tour option I had suggested, and a chance to experience this ultra-luxury hotel. We got upgraded to the historical wing, with some rooms facing the sea. The beautifully decorated rooms, great restaurants and impeccable service made us all wish we could stay there forever. Everyone enjoyed the great shopping in and around the hotel. We walked across to Gateway of India, built to welcome King George V in 1924.

Our last day being Holi, we observed the Festival of Colors, and we watched and enjoyed the revelry as people (including several hotel guests) threw colored water or powder at each other.

That evening, we said goodbye to India and headed home, with memories of our sojourn we will all treasure forever.

*Fashion Group member **Shafiq Hasan** is based in Palm Springs, CA., where he is C.E.O of Pinnacle Fashion Tours. He organized the trip to India and hopes to recruit Fashion Group members for future trips.*



FGI Board of Directors member, Karen Young sends her rave review:

“Our FGI Members trip to India for the Fashion Week in Bombay & Golden Triangle will go down in history as one of the best. The hotels (specially the Taj Mahal Palace in Bombay) and food were all terrific. Your well-designed itinerary, extreme personal service and attention to detail were unparalleled. We have fallen in love with the country, its food and its people.

Two things that you specially arranged for us stand out among many others we enjoyed:

Visit to Kableswhar & afternoon tea with Prince Robin: an unforgettable experience.

Amber Fort Jaipur: Breathtaking. Loved our private lunch in the Royal Dining Room.”

— Karen Young, CEO, The Young Group



Back row: left to right, Shafiq Hasan, Karen Young's husband, Richard, and guide, Nand Singh;

Front row: left to right, Eloise Wagers, Mary Ann Yuen, Nancy Farel and Karen Young

Rock stars always draw a crowd, and the “Rock Stars” frontliner was no exception: There was a full house at FGI headquarters for the April 2 event examining the secrets to success in the fine jewelry market.

Moderated by **Stellene Volandes**, style director of *Town & Country*, the panel was made up of three gems of the fine jewelry category: **Temple St. Clair**, **Paul Morelli** and **Monica Rich Kosann**, plus FGI’s 2013 Rising Star in the fine jewelry category, **Alexandra Mor**.

Volandes began by asking the panelists about how they knew they were jewelers.

“I really just fell into it,” said Temple St. Clair, who explained how she had been studying art history in Florence when she began designing jewelry. Her pieces reflect those beginnings with their classic but not necessarily traditional designs.

Paul Morelli also describes his start as a jeweler as more of an accident. “I have no formal training.” As the Philadelphia-based artist tells it, a friend who was an artisan suddenly had a huge commission for a fashion designer. He asked Morelli to help, and “I just sort of got hooked—on the creative process more than specifically jewelry,” he says.

Photographer Monica Rich Kosann says she began creating jewelry as an extension of her photography work. A collection of home accessories she developed from helping her clients display her work evolved to the creation of her line of “modern heirlooms” that revolve around lockets and charm bracelets.

Alexandra Mor had been creating jewelry for herself when pieces she was wearing caught the attention of a discerning eye at an event. She credits her family background of French couturiers and learning to sew from her mother.

Asked to identify the key elements of their “brand DNA” or what significant steps they took at the beginning that planted the seeds to their success brought answers as diverse as their styles.

St. Clair said that studying art and design in Italy, having an academic point of view and living in Florence all contributed to her style.

“I’ve been told I have a very vivid imagination,” said Morelli. “I get bored easily and so am always changing my style. I’ve been told that, at least commercially, this is a detriment.”

High price points on line don’t seem to be a barrier.



Temple St. Clair

Paul Morelli



Monica Rich Kosann

Alexandra Mor

Relative to the others on the panel, Mor is perhaps still developing her “brand DNA,” but she said that she believes the desire to always do her best came from her mother—a different form of DNA. She primarily does “demi couture,” creating custom pieces for customers. She said working with her clients and “capturing their personality” is one of the things she loves about her work.

Rich Kosann sees herself as a storyteller, going back to her roots as a photographer. She said her pieces help each woman tell her own story—charms, pendants and lockets that have personal elements, like photos. “Lockets are sexy—you don’t know what’s in my locket unless I show you,” she said.

Considering the highly personal aspect of jewelry—both for the designer and to the wearer—Volandes asked how the panelists controlled the presentation of their pieces in a retail environment that is itself very concerned with controlling its own brand identity.

St. Clair acknowledged the challenge. “Buyers change, teams change. Its important to have your own people on the ground,” she said, explaining that education was key to making sure that sales people were inspired by your personal story and brand DNA. “You need to tell it so that sales people can really absorb it and share and express it to the customer.”

Morelli said he tries to have his own people on-site in any retail location, and Rich Kosann said she also tries to bring in her own sales people to educate and excite the staff at stores.

But how does that deeply personal connection come into play when selling fine jewelry on the Web? Is there a price cap where customers need to see and hold a piece before spending?

Mor pointed out that the Web helped her establish her line—and her site creates a personal connection with clients, allowing them to view each step in the creation of their piece on line.

St. Clair noted that sales are not the primary purpose of her site; rather, it tells the story of the line and the brand. On the other hand, she said that for customers who know the collection, high price points on line don’t seem to be a barrier.

Shifting focus again, Volandes asked about the role of editorial coverage.

Rich Kosann said building relationships with the various editors has been crucial. “Our story is the key to our brand DNA, so we take a lot of time understanding each editor, each title and developing those relationships,” she said.

“Back in the day, you could pretty much turn up at Condé Nast and show your stuff to editors,” said St. Clair. “Now it’s much more complicated, and much more important to present in a more businesslike way—collateral material and organized communication.” She said she counts on a great, long relationship with her p.r. person—as does Mor, who added that, “You can’t do everything yourself.”

Opening up to questions from the audience, the panel addressed the topic of advertising—agreeing that it was necessary but expensive. “It definitely helps with brand imaging, and when you are consistent in a publication, it does make a difference,” said St. Clair.

The group was also asked about counterfeiting—a challenge for all luxury markets, and one only managed with vigilance, said Morelli—and diffusion lines. Temple St. Clair produced a diffusion line for Target, and said she was pleased. “But I had a good partner—Target did a good job—and I didn’t knock myself off, either.” She said it didn’t seem to affect her core business, and it was “fun.”

—Katie Kretschmer
Editor / Contributing Writer

BEAUTY'S LUXURY LIFT-OFF

OVERVIEW

Prestige beauty brands have continued to experience a meteoric rise against a struggling economy and a growing competitive landscape. What makes luxury beauty fly?

MODERATOR

Greg Furman
President, Luxury Marketing Council

SOCIAL BEAUTY

Laura McEwen
Vice President & Publisher, SELF

PANELISTS

Nancy Feetham
Vice President, North America Sales, Marketing & Education
La Mer / Jo Malone London

Frederic Fekkai
Brand Architect / Founder, Fekkai

Veronique Gabai-Pinsky
Global Brand President, Aramis and Designer Fragrances,
BeautyBank and IdeaBank, The Estée Lauder Companies Inc.

Ava Huang
Senior Vice President, Fragrance and Skincare Marketing, Chanel

BEAUTY COMMITTEE CHAIRS
Caroline Pieper-Vogt
Karen Young

Prestige beauty brands continue to distinguish themselves in an increasingly competitive market, while consumers look forward to the best products and the most engaging experiences. The key ways to sustain the relevance, cachet and appeal of these brands was the subject of The Fashion Group International's presentation, Beauty's Luxury Lift-Off, held April 24 at The New York Hilton Hotel.

FGI Board member **Caroline Pieper-Vogt** introduced the discussion, thanking moderator **Greg Furman**, president of the Luxury Marketing Council; and panelists **Nancy Feetham**, vice president of sales at La Mer; **Frederic Fekkai**, brand architect/founder of Fekkai; **Veronique Gabai-Pinsky**, global brand president for Aramis and Designer Fragrances, Beauty Bank and IdeaBank at The Estée Lauder Cos. Inc.; and **Ava Huang**, senior vice president, fragrance and skin care marketing at Chanel; and **Laura McEwen**, vice president and publisher of *Self*, who made a brief presentation on beauty and social media. Pieper-Vogt also acknowledged *Self* and The Estée Lauder Companies for their support of the luxury-focused Beauty Symposium.

The Power of Beauty

McEwen said, "Whatever the culture, throughout history, women have gone to extraordinary lengths for their beauty." Citing Cleopatra's oils, Queen Esther's anointment with myrrh and today's arbiter of royal style, Kate Middleton, McEwen noted that beauty and in particular, luxury beauty, are now poised to reach new heights.



From left:
Frederic Fekkai,
Nancy Feetham,
Veronique Gabai-Pinsky,
Ava Huang, Laura McEwen,
and Greg Furman,
Photography by Bruce Borner

There are 45 million Gen Xers with \$125 million in buying power, and 80 million Millennials, with \$200 million in buying power, who are taking the market forward. "Children of affluent boomers and Millennial college students are part of the millennial force. They want Dior mascara, hair done by Fekkai, and are generally eager for luxury products and treatments. They're paying attention to their appearance constantly," said McEwen, further noting that this includes beauty, makeup, eyelash extensions, exercise and going to the gym.

"While Millennials want to look their best, they are also buying mass, and they are not elitists, with all open to buying less-expensive products. However, it's all about the experience for them, which should be fun and consumer-centric," she said. "Sephora is an example of how well it's working, where there's agnostic sales support, no pressure to buy specific brands and the ability to try products," noted McEwen. Other influences key to spending for Millennials, are technology and social media. "This generation is in tune with their devices, and they're 'showrooming,' that is, they're shopping in store and then going online to scout out the best deals," said McEwen.

McEwen said that magazines are still number one to get ideas for beauty, with friends and social media, including Pinterest, becoming a new retail channel. "When individuals can pin and share images, it's also a great channel for marketers." She concluded, "Digital divas mesmerize millions, with all feeding the millennial engine," McEwen said, adding that technology will no doubt continue to feed this process.

Luxury Lift-Off Has Heart

According to Furman, "The sweet spot is really working-class folks; that is the community the industry is talking about." He contends that the strategy is more about referral from the customers that love you, noting that if brands agree to

collaborate, share and delight, consumers will respond. "It's from the heart first, then communicate and collaborate. This can be a way to refer and have consumers spend more. The ultimate client is redefining and becoming a partner in how to impact the growth of a brand," said Furman.

He highlighted the themes to be addressed by the panel, including the definition of luxury, best brand-success scenarios, the impact of global influence, thinking globally and acting globally and the impact of social media.

Frederic Fekkai began, saying, "The customer is extremely savvy today, so defining luxury is really about guiding the customer, being genuine to really help them feel and look beautiful is key." He noted that the first Fekkai Day Spa and first beauty bar they created, new to the industry at the time, featured Bobbi Brown as their makeup artist. "We had a café as well," said Fekkai, asking, "How does that translate today? Today we want to have a customer put a sensual, good-smelling product in her hair," said Fekkai, highlighting the importance of the original message.

Gabai-Pinsky took the luxury equation a step further, saying, "The big question is deciding what luxury really is. We refer to luxury as having the 'Three Cs', that is, craft, creativity, and culture. These letters epitomize what luxury is all about. When you talk about your metier, luxe, it's about offering the best to your customer, owning this craft, and then providing the creativity, which must answer the needs of the customer. You always have to surprise and delight," she said. "The culture of luxury has depth. In America, where lifestyle was invented, culture and patrimony are fundamental. Together, they are about experience, best service. If you're not hugging and loving your customer all the time, you're not going to get there," said Gabai-Pinsky.

Huang said, "Luxury is constantly evolving and we all define it our own way." She quoted Coco Chanel: "Luxury is a necessity that starts where necessity ends," and "Luxury is not the opposite of poverty, it's the opposite of vulgarity." Huang elaborated, "It's very discrete. At Chanel, we very much believe in the patrimony of the brand. That's where you create an emotional connection. For example, you feel the pleasure every day, when you pull that Chanel bag out of your closet." Furman concurred, noting, "The architecture of real value behind the product is key."

Feetham added, "Undeniable talent is at the heart of luxury. A good founder, like Fekkai or Coco Chanel, creates a place where the brand created is always evolving. Amazing brands continue through time. They've been brave enough to incorporate change. This quality and sustainability are key. There was a time when bling was big; that has changed. Then the home became more important. Then e-commerce emerged, became stronger, and engaged the consumer. This gave them permission to do their own homework, as well as gave them access to those famous red soled shoes that they couldn't have before."

Furman added, "That is what people are now expecting. It's acquisitive, meditative and experiential. It used to be the brand was enough. Now those days are gone and everyone wants the experience. The price-value equation has given rise to connoisseurship. It's shifting gears."

Brand Stories

Fekkai related a scenario in which Fekkai had partnered with Saks to create a program in which customers could come to Saks and swap their shampoo for a Fekkai shampoo. "This was a very popular program," he said. "Not only did the customers swap, but they were buying Fekkai products as well."

Gabai-Pinsky described the success of Cashmere Mist, the Donna Karan fragrance, noting that they had put their resources into a sampling campaign, offered hand massages at point of sale, and saw the product grow from a top-30 fragrance, to a top five, increasingly building on the power of the brand.

Huang described the success of Coco Noir, the most recent Chanel launch. To elevate and create passion around the brand, she explained how Chanel slowly revealed the notes of the scent, the packaging, the history, the complete story. "We also created a black box installed at Bloomingdale's, where customers were taken through the journey of the scent, from its origins to the final product, where they could smell the fragrance at the journey's conclusion."

"Every brand has to make a decision about its direction," said Feetham, describing the introduction of La Mer Moisturizing Soft Cream, with a lighter texture than the original Crème de La Mer. "Did we want a product that could compete against Crème de la Mer? We decided to go ahead and launch the lighter-textured product," she added, which has been successful.

Part of Crème de La Mer's success comes with its position in the market. Feetham added, "We've decided to cultivate cult followers, and have gone to our partners, Bergdorf, Saks and Neiman's, and have invited them to partner with us to reach our customer, along with beauty editors and the press. We took editors to Istanbul to learn about the journey, ingredient production and the product. Without the retail partnerships we wouldn't have gotten the impact we got. They made sure that the Moisturizing Soft Cream was given key positioning in the stores and that was important to us," she said. Furman added, "The luxury customer likes nothing more than high touch. If the customer has the luxury of being listened to, that's key."

Thinking Globally

"Global can be amazing, but it's important to be true to your brand in each market," said Fekkai. "For us, to develop a star product in each region is key. For example, Scandinavia likes shampoo; Western Europe loves treatment; and in Hong Kong, we created a special protective product for antipollution. It's important to show you understand your customer, to be genuine and not calculated, but sincere about bringing the best you can to each customer. Trust is most important. It's what luxury is all about," he said.

Gabai-Pinsky noted there are differences that must be understood in all locales. She explained, "In Asia, it's skin care. In Brazil, it's fragrance and hair. In Asia, for example, you have to understand physiological differences." She cited a luxury brand for Asian skin, called Osiao, created by The Lauder Cos. for the Asian high-end luxury market. The product, which contains ginseng, pennywort and other Chinese herbs, is designed to promote natural radiance for the skin.

Huang agreed that local nuances and cultural differences are key. "However, the important point is creating a cohesive voice, so the orchestration of the communication piece is critical," said Huang. Feetham noted that distribution plays a key role in the process. "Select distribution in luxury always goes hand in hand, and simple is always the best. But, simple is always the most difficult," she said.

Brand Communication and the Internet

Fekkai stressed the role of the Internet in communication today. "Social media is the most magic tool we have today. It's also a way of thinking out of the box to have customers discover your brand, to share your world with them. When you have customers asking questions about their hair and beauty, we are able to provide a library of ideas for them to explore," he said.

"Print, TV and digital are all important, and you have to set that conversation," said Gabai-Pinsky. "Little by little the conversation grows between the customer and the brand," she added. Furman noted, "More brands and people are becoming more sensitive to the ways they are being solicited."

Huang noted that the process has changed over time. "It used to be about coming into the store. Today, 70 percent of customers do a search to learn about the brand and the product they are seeking. For true luxury, it is about scarcity and exclusivity, so it becomes what information do you want to give to the masses? The reality of that dream isn't for everyone, so you need to look at that," she added.

"At Chanel, we developed a series of videos that tell the history of Chanel. It's a beautiful story and it reinforces our brand. We have one video of Marilyn Monroe, who when asked what she wore to bed, replied, 'No., 5' " said Huang, who noted that organic views of the Marilyn video were more than five million.

"When you talk about your brand, it's one thing, but when consumers talk about and engage with your brand it's fantastic," said Feetham.

Strategizing and leveraging social events drive communication. Fekkai noted the role of customer participation in events held at the Fekkai salons. "More and more brands are leveraging locations, adding to the experiential understanding of the brand," said Furman. Gabai-Pinsky added, "Events should give an experience and an education that really builds the equity of the brand. The other thing an event does is celebrate a point in the lifecycle of the brand."

Huang concurred, "Event strategies are important. It's an experience you are offering. As a color brand, we have events all the time. It's an extension of the brand image... So, orchestration and flawless execution are also key."

In sum, offered Furman, the luxury concept is sustainable, emotional, emphasizes craft, creativity, culture and a cohesive voice, and necessitates the inclusion of trust.

—Nancy Jeffries

Contributing Editor, bnjcasa@aol.com



Attendees at The Players Club from left to right:

Rikeeda Jordan, *North Florida*;
Julie Turchin, *North Florida*;
Terri Mahn, *Boston*;
Jeanette Crutchfield, *San Diego*;
Yoko Ohara, *Tokyo*

2013 Annual FGI Conference

With much anticipation—and over packing—I learned everything I hoped to learn at the May 2013 Annual FGI Conference. If I could sum it up in one word, it would be *FABULOUS!* From the moment I received the e-mailed itinerary, I was totally committed and dialed-in to this amazing opportunity.

The meet & greet cocktail hour hosted by Estée Lauder at their headquarters on Thursday evening gave us the opportunity to meet FGI President **Margaret Hayes**, as well as her talented staff. Hayes' team works closely with her to ensure our mission is executed seamlessly. Also in attendance were regional directors and board members from around the globe. Our goals were similar: Take back information that would reenergize our boards and inspire our members. People often say, "Music is the international language of love".... but after this conference, I am convinced that fashion, and the drive to succeed, is a close second.

"Leadership Now: Evolve-Execute-Engage," the conference theme, was well planned from the first presentation forward. Speaker after speaker, from **Laurie Beja Miller**, EVP of The Square, to architect **Barry Svigals**, gave us an afternoon of invaluable information. The presenters spoke about their perspectives on business; how they overcame obstacles, met challenges head on and gained the respect of those they were required to motivate. I was soaking up information like a sponge, and incredibly inspired.

Later that evening, at the Museum of New York City, we visited with fashion icon **Stephen Burrows**. Both he, and his work, were out of this world. I was not only taken by Stephen and his masterpieces, but also bursting with pride to be a part of an organization that embraces diversity and views achievements in such a limitless way. Celebrating his greatness through a platform of sharing intimate details with an admiring industry was the perfect showcase for this legendary designer.

I am impressed at FGI's forthrightness, and I could sense Mr. Burrows felt the same.

Next, we were off to the Merit Awards Dinner. Guest speaker, designer **Tracy Reese**....what a treat! The exquisite salmon and Sauvignon Blanc, paired with Tracy's story of how she developed her business by overcoming obstacles (due to her indomitable spirit to excel) brought me to tears... literally.

Breakfast, more speakers and the Rising Star Panel at FGI Headquarters made up the final day of the conference. Each presentation was dynamic, and each Rising Star panelist brought a different perspective of their brand, as well as the importance and privilege of receiving the FGI Rising Star Award.

Enjoying lunch along with workshops at the Movado building was a fantastic way to end our two-day conference. Each session was positioned to ensure all in attendance had a clear picture of what our expectations were as regions.

We gained the understanding that Membership, Public Relations, Programs, and Events are not only vital to our organization, they are the main arteries to its survival and success. I was fortunate to witness the incredible benefits FGI offers, and can now articulate them from first-hand knowledge.

After the workshops concluded, we shared wine and cheese, while merrily exchanging business cards. I found it extremely hard to say "goodbye"... I have never been in a professional environment where I felt I would miss people that I just met... That's the effect of FGI—It's a Fashion Family.

I am still in awe at how an experience you hope will help you change the perspective of others can end up actually changing your own. The FGI 2013 Conference brought more to me than I imagined possible: The camaraderie, the information, the support were all excellent. It is indeed an honor to know I share membership with such accomplished individuals. And, because of the efforts of those who coordinated a weekend that essentially changed my professional life, it is my goal to share these experiences with others, in the hope they will join this leading business organization.

— **Rikeeda Holmes-Jordan**
*Is the founder and president of
The Jordan Company which specializes
in custom lifestyle services.
www.thejordansite.com*

first impression

Want to be successful in life? Whether it's a new job you seek or seed money for your start-up or meeting the love of your life, being an effective communicator will greatly enhance your chances of getting the success you want.

Being a successful communicator is not just about what you say with words. You say far more with what you do than what you say. You communicate a great deal to the people you meet with your body language, how you enter a room and even your choice of wardrobe and grooming. Showing up with dirty hair and nails makes one first impression that you want to avoid.

When it's time to "suit up and show up," how you present yourself can be the difference between getting the job, securing investors, finding a new mate or walking away empty-handed. Believe it or not, major decisions will be made about you by the people you meet within the first three seconds of your time together.

Consider this: You will never get a second chance to make a first impression and how you come across becomes how you are remembered and can have a powerful impact on your life.

Here are seven Success Secrets I use with my clients to help them to make the kind of first impression that moves them toward the goal they desire.

Shake hands firmly, smile warmly. Remember to say, "Pleasure to meet you."

Dress for success means dress for your audience. Whether casual or corporate, make it the best quality you can afford and check to make sure it is clean, pressed, buttons on, zipper up. Unless you are auditioning to be in a band, check your grooming. Be impeccable. Hair combed? Nails clean?

Watch your body language. Be aware of the messages you are sending with every gesture. Be sensitive to the body language of others.

Camille Lavington, author of *You've Only Got Three Seconds* says this: "You can read "somebody's" attitude—it's either a pleasant attitude or "it's" a negative one and you can spot that in their body language, their eye contact and the way they march into a room."

Develop posture awareness; practice using a full-length mirror to get the picture. It is easy to project confidence—or the lack of it—by the way you walk into a room, sit or stand during a meeting. Record yourself with your smartphone, share your results with a trusted friend or coach and get feedback. Take note of what works, what doesn't work and what you can do differently and make adjustments. Your body language speaks volumes.

Listen to others. Make eye contact. Rephrase. Restate. Ask questions to be sure you have heard and understood what the other person is saying. Avoid interrupting.

Want to really stand out from the crowd? Stow the iPhone, Android and Blackberry, put your device on vibrate and stay present to the people you are speaking with. Yes, I can hear the collective groan already and the "You have got to be kidding me" chorus.

While it does seem impossible, being tethered to your smartphone instead of focusing on the people you are with is actually considered rude and shows a lack of professionalism and maturity. While it may be acceptable in some circles to obsessively have your nose in your smartphone, to certain decision makers, checking your phone rather than paying attention to the conversation at hand could be enough to pass on having a relationship with you.

In a recent meeting with a prospective client who was a decision maker at a Fortune 500 firm, I observed that she turned off her phone and put it away as we began our meeting, as had I. Her take on this was that we do not need to be tied to our phones 24/7. "The most powerful person in the room is the one who can keep their mobile off," she said. "Focus on the task at hand and the people who are with you and present and giving you their time."

Nancy Mindes works with Audacious Ladies who want to reinvent themselves to be bold, live rich and do good. She is currently working on a memoir and reinventing herself yet again.

— Nancy Mindes

Guest contributor,

Motivational speaker, Coach University-trained coach

Nancy is currently working on a memoir.

Her blog is <http://www.fancynancysays.com>

Twitter @fancynancysays

Jane Ross Smith, FGI member for more than half a century and founding member and first Regional Director of the Denver region, died in that city on February 8, at age 98.

With a love of fashion that blossomed in her earliest years, Smith forged a path that started with a post as an instructor at the University of Denver, where she focused on merchandising and retail. A veteran of the retail industry, Smith began as a buyer and fashion coordinator at Norman's, the specialty store in Denver at that time.

Relocating to Ohio, Smith landed a position as a fashion copywriter at Morehouse-Fashion, a prescient move into the world of retail advertising. Her next step took her to Lazarus, the storied Columbus department store, then back to Morehouse-Fashion, this time as copy chief. Her trajectory continued with Smith cast in the role of copy chief at Cleveland's leading department store, the upscale Halle Bros. Co. (In an interesting aside, though sadly defunct for some years now, the name lives on in the moniker of the gifted and beautiful Halle Berry who, born in Cleveland, was named after the iconic store.)

After another relocation, this time to Asheville, North Carolina, Smith was appointed advertising director of that city's shopping destination, Ivey's of Asheville, where she worked for some years.

Jane Ross Smith served as the director of development for Historic Denver, Inc. and was a longtime member of Achievement Rewards for College Scientists. She was predeceased by her husband, Richard Gibson Smith, whom she married in 1936, and survived by a caring family—two children, five grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren—and legions of former associates and present friends who will sorely miss her.

— Wendy D'Amico

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Greg Furman
Frederic Fekkai
Veronique Gabai-Pinsky

Laura McEwen
Margaret Hayes
Stephen Burrows
Tracy Reese

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