

WWD FRIDAY

Beauty



▲ Paco Rabanne's latest men's scent, called 1 Million, page 6.

Noir Note

Ralph Lauren found inspiration for his new women's fragrance, *Notorious*, in the film noir classics of Alfred Hitchcock and other Hollywood greats. The fall launch will mark the 10th anniversary of Lauren's top-selling *Romance* women's scent, and L'Oréal USA, the designer's beauty licensee, hopes the new addition will be just as great a star. For more, see page 6.



Clarins' Next Move?: Beauty Firm Suspends Trading in Shares

By Jennifer Weil

PARIS — Groupe Clarins sparked a global guessing game Thursday when it suspended trading in its shares on the Paris Bourse — and the leading theory is the group aims to go private.

Clarins is expected to make a statement today, sources close to the company said.

The beauty firm has been one of the most sought-after brands for the last few years, with everyone from Coty Inc.,

L'Oréal, Procter & Gamble, the Estée Lauder Cos., LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton, Beiersdorf — and even private equity players — mentioned as possible acquirers.

See **Speculation**, Page 14

Prize Architects Jam in London

WHILE MANY AMERICANS WILL BE FIRING UP THEIR FOURTH OF JULY BARBECUES, scores of Londoners will be eyeing architectural replicas made of jelly.

Foster + Partners, William Alsop and Rogers Stirk Harbour are among the 10 finalists vying for the Architectural Jelly Design Competition crown that will be bestowed July 4 for all to see at the University College London Quad. The winning entry will have to outdo the rest of the pack for innovation, aesthetics and wobble factor.

Lord Norman Foster took care of the task at hand personally and designed a jellied version of The Millennium Bridge, better known by Londoners as The Wobbly Bridge that he created across the Thames in 2000. The nickname took hold after the \$36 million bridge, central London's first new river crossing for more than a century, was so shaky that it had to be temporarily closed and retooled with an additional \$10 million investment. In terms of sturdiness for gelatin-based designs, a bridge is generally not the first idea that comes to mind, but the competition's sponsor, Bompas & Parr, embraced the concept wholeheartedly, even allowing for added wobble in the jelly used.

Sam Bompas and his business partner Harry Parr, who used to work in architecture, anticipated such complexity. "We knew what we were getting ourselves in for. I think these architects really understand some of the magical things you can do with jelly," Bompas said.

Another finalist, Austin + Mergold, the only American submission, tackled Russian history, more specifically how its state symbol morphed from the imperial eagle into the Soviet star. The idea was developed by two Cornell University professors, Jason Austin and Aleksandr Mergold, who enclosed a 13-page document illustrating their thinking. Two types of jellies were required to distinguish the old melding with the new.

Design



Harry Parr's inspirational submission of St. Paul's Cathedral.



Foster + Partners' jelly Wobbly Bridge.

Laughable as all this may seem, the showdown is meant to explore relationships between food and architecture, and is part of the London Festival of Architecture, which runs through July 20. In addition, jelly molds and equipment will be auctioned on behalf of Article 25, a charity that provides building expertise to aid agencies, nongovernmental organizations and areas affected by disaster, poverty or need.

For next month's Jelly Banquet and judging, Bompas & Parr has recruited a modern dance troupe to show off their agility carrying 3-foot spoons amid the quad's neoclassical architecture. On Wednesday, company staffers were holed up in an anechoic chamber recording the oscillation of various types of jellies that will then be played over the event's sound system. The surroundings will also be infused with strawberry-scented air.

Lining up the architects took a lot of legwork. Bompas said, "There were a lot of phone calls. Architects like to give the impression that they are working on a lot of glamorous projects, but there is a lot of drudgery. Someone doesn't go into architecture to spend hours in meetings trying to convince clients why they should do a particular project or sitting in front of a computer screen finessing a design. So this was fun."

— Rosemary Feitelberg

Let There Be Light

MUCH COULD BE DRAWN FROM artistic-looking lamps made from recyclable water bottles, but Berlin-based designer Johanna Keimeyer just wants to shed a little light.

"I really like different aspects of the lamps. I don't explain to people why this is the way it is or why I use water bottles," she said.

Her recycled lights — colorful compilations of water bottles, jugs of laundry detergents and cosmetic containers — are on display at Pinacoteca Agnelli in Turin, Italy, through July 6. From there, the exhibition is expected to move on to Taiwan and Nepal. Keimeyer, a 25-year-old design student, used to earn her keep as a cabinetmaker and apprenticed at Vitra Design.

It was at a Vitra Design Museum Workshop about recycled goods by Brazilian designers Fernando and Humberto Campagna, held in collaboration with the Pompidou Center in Paris, where she first came up with the idea. But the Gwen Stefani look-alike was driven more by artistry than the bottled water debate.

"My idea was about color. I wanted different colors of light to come out in different directions," she said. To accomplish that, Keimeyer essentially used heat to iron out strips of recyclable containers and then soldered together 200 pieces of various bottles. "For me, this was a nice activity, like painting," she said.

Apparently the end product was equally nice, considering Vitra



▲ Johanna Keimeyer



"Trashure 1"

Design Museum director Alexander von Vegesack was the first to commission one of her pieces for his private collection. That lamp, "Treasure 2," is among the work featured in the "Adventure With Objects" exhibition now on in Turin.

Keimeyer rooted out her trove of recyclables from Slovenia, Spain, France, England and Germany. After seeing Rajec's pale pink water bottles during a jaunt to Great Britain, the designer requested some from the Slovenian company. The company sent her a case with one condition, that she photograph the finished product for them to see. She did them one better, naming the piece for the company.

When asked, the designer admitted she is a bit perplexed about the existence of designer water bottles and how a natural substance could even be glamorized. Never mind the fact that clean water is a luxury for many people in the world. "For some people, it's very important that they only buy very expensive brands even though it's just water," she said. "I would like to create more lamps and chandeliers to show, in the end, it's just water."

Next year she is off to Tokyo to study and in 2010 will be on to Manhattan. Fusion Publishing plans to release two yet-to-be-named books about her work with accompanying exhibitions next summer. By then, she may have brushed up her business skills. When someone inquired about buying a piece earlier this week, Keimeyer said she told the buyer what she tells others. "I always ask how much people want to give. I'm not so interested in the money."

— R.F.

On the Drawing Board

THE BEE'S KNEES: For many, Murray Moss is the godfather of undiscovered design talent, always fishing around for the next big thing. These days he is jazzed about Tomas Libertiny, whose honeycomb vases are front and center in his downtown design emporium, Moss. The end result is not your average undertaking. The Slovakian-born designer sets up Ming vase-shaped scaffolding in beehives and then waits seven to 12 days for the beeswax to take hold.

Moss first bought one of Libertiny's pieces a few years ago in a group show in Milan, and spoke with him about his design process. "The first thing I look for is a person who thinks. I wanted to know what Tomas was thinking [when he designed the piece I bought] and to know how he was going about his work," Moss said of the Design Academy in Eindhoven grad. "Generally, I do like to stay with people for a very long time and not constantly be bouncing



Tomas Libertiny's vases at Moss.

and bouncing around for new people."

"Tomas is really like an engineer that follows a very natural process of manufacturing. He has a very sophisticated and very engineered way of making something that just happens to be manufactured by bees," said Moss, adding that the Netherlands-based designer's work is very close to what was done in the 16th century

in a similar vein to the old royal Cabinet of Curiosities.

Moss is busy with his own time travel of sorts, on behalf of the forthcoming SLS at Beverly Hills Hotel, by designing 35 vitrines for The Bazaar, an open area for lounging, drinking, eating and shopping in the highly stylized Philippe Starck-designed space. The Scandinavian bicycles, Camper patent leather shoes and other sundries will only be available at the hotel.

Involved as all this is, it's still window-dressing at this point. "It's like an opera: You can go play the violin every day, but until it comes together in that real moment, it's all just imagined. It doesn't really happen until it's live and people are there. And then it's too late to do anything about it." — R.F.

CLIMBING THE WALLS: Manhattan's East 86th Street doesn't scream green, but Pure Yoga is offering a touch of nature in the form of the city's first exterior vertical living wall. Nine

species of plants were used for the initial planting. Earlier this week, commuters paused en route to the subway to have a gander. Some were so inquisitive that construction workers prepping for Wednesday's opening put up a sign that read, "Yes, the grass is real."

For the first American outpost of Asia's premier yoga studios, Equinox Holdings Inc. kept things clean in the 20,000-square-foot space at 203 East 86th Street. "Usually you think of 86th Street as a cacophony of glass bus stops, stores and souvlaki stands," said Paul Boardman, chief design officer, who, in his previous architectural career, helped design spaces for Chanel and Frédéric Fekkai.

Indoors there are water walls, circular lighting and even an elongated front desk from an old sycamore that had fallen and was not cut down for this purpose. Should members need a quick fashion fix, they can always borrow programming director Michelle Demus' ear. She used to work for Prada.

— R.F.