

# WWD

Fashion. Beauty. Business.



## Peak Performance

Moncler's sales jumped 54 percent in the first nine months of the year, driven by China and digital.

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## Locals Welcome

A slew of new tenants is opening in Rockefeller Center as the area seeks to appeal more to locals.

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## Mary's Moment

Sadie Frost talks about her documentary on the influence of iconic British designer Mary Quant.

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# Ludo Rising

After a strong show during Paris Fashion Week that garnered praise from retail and fans alike, WWD sat down with Ludovic de Saint Sernin to talk about his views on queer- and sex-positive fashion and how he's crafting couture-like garments that do double duty to advance a message of acceptance and love. *For more, see pages 4 and 5.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY VANNI BASSETTI



## FASHION

# Loro Piana Names New CEO

- LVMH, the Italian luxury brand's owner, said the goal is to evolve Loro Piana, including by adding new product categories.

BY MILES SOCHA WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM LUISA ZARGANI

Signaling a new development phase for Loro Piana – and underlining the stockpile of well-rounded management talent within LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton – the French group has appointed dynamic Dior executive Damien Bertrand as the new chief executive officer of the Italian brand, which is known for its luxury fabrics and quiet chic.

Currently managing director at Christian Dior Couture, Bertrand, 48, is to take up his new role on Nov. 15. He succeeds Fabio d'Angelantonio, who is leaving Loro Piana after five years at the management helm.

Touting his "sense of product excellence, daring ideas and commitment to brand

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## FASHION

# Brunello Cucinelli's Next Project: Universal Library

- Through his family's foundation, the Italian entrepreneur will create a Universal Library in the medieval hamlet of Solomeo.

BY LUISA ZARGANI

**MILAN** – Is old-school print on paper a thing of the past? Not if Brunello Cucinelli has anything to say about it.

The Italian entrepreneur has been known to rub shoulders with Silicon Valley tycoons, but, in his mind, the desirability of physical tomes beats e-books on all fronts.

So much so that, on Thursday, Cucinelli presented his next project for Solomeo, the medieval Italian village home to his namesake company – a Universal Library.

"The founding of libraries is like

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## Loro Piana Names New CEO

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desirability," LVMH group managing director Toni Belloni said Bertrand has "shown the ability to deliver great results" during his five years at Christian Dior Couture.

"He is a well-rounded leader, able to get the best from people, while maintaining a strong team spirit," Belloni added. "This skill set will help him take the beautiful Loro Piana maison to the next level."

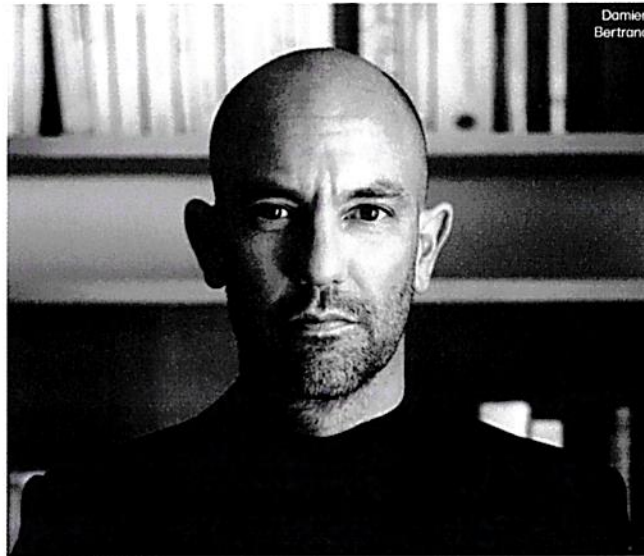
After an 18-year career at French beauty giant L'Oréal, Bertrand joined the Dior fashion house in 2016 as managing director in charge of women's departments, then a new position.

He would later add responsibilities for the Dior Men and Dior Baby business units, collaborating closely with multiple creative and management teams.

According to an internal announcement seen by WWD, Bertrand is to "lead a new phase of evolution at Loro Piana and the development of new product categories," while ensuring the maison stays true to its "extraordinary fabrics and understated elegance."

Bertrand reports to Andrea Guerra, CEO of LVMH's hospitality businesses and a member of the LVMH executive committee. Guerra also has oversight of the Fendi business.

In recent years LVMH has steered Loro Piana in a younger direction, recently asking Hiroshi Fujiwara of Fragment to design a capsule collection, a first for the brand.



Damien Bertrand

It is understood that collaborations are likely to continue for a brand that, unlike other LVMH fashion maisons, lacks a visible creative director.

According to sources, Phoebe Philo, who is gearing up to launch her own fashion brand with LVMH as a minority investor, has held discussions about a one-off side project with Loro Piana, though talks have yet to be concluded and any collaboration would not be imminent.

Philo confirmed her return to fashion last July, saying she would create clothing and accessories "rooted in exceptional quality and design" – and divulge more details about her eponymous new brand in January 2022.

Given Philo's knack for sumptuous sweaters, eye-catching coats and great-fitting pants, a Loro Piana capsule signed by her would surely bring a lightning rod of attention to the Italian brand's women's department.

Loro Piana could also tap any number of buzzy designers within the LVMH galaxy – which spans from Jonathan Anderson to Virgil Abloh – for future capsules.

Antoine Arnauld, chairman of Loro Piana, thanked d'Angelantonio for "steering the transformation of Loro Piana from a family business to an LVMH maison, with great respect for its heritage and people."

Arnauld also credited him for "leading performance improvement and the

modernization of key functions and products."

"We wish him well in his new endeavors," he added.

D'Angelantonio's next move could not immediately be learned. An Italian native, he has also worked at Luxottica and its Sunglass Hut unit.

LVMH acquired an 80 percent stake in Loro Piana for 2 billion euros in 2013.

Founded in 1924 and based in Quarona, Italy, the company is billed as the largest cashmere manufacturer and the biggest single purchaser of the world's finest wools. The brand is vertically integrated, from access to the finest raw materials to distribution, and operates with an entirely made in Italy policy via nine production sites.

Loro Piana has a total of 152 stores, of which 135 are directly operated. The company has secured locations for units in Doha, Qatar, and Palo Alto, Calif., to open in the next 12 months.

The company reached the 1 billion euro sales mark in 2019, and revenues in 2021 are forecast to surpass the 2019 figures, as reported.

A graduate of elite French school HEC, Bertrand began his career at LVMH in 1998 as Guerlain's marketing director for Australia.

At L'Oréal group, his roles included CEO of L'Oréal U.K.; president of Maybelline New York, and CEO of L'Oréal Brazil.

A raft of brand CEOs with LVMH's linchpin fashion and leather goods division rose through the ranks of the French group, including Serge Brunschwig at Fendi; Pascale Lepoivre at Loewe; Renaud de Lesquen at Givenchy; Séverine Merle at Celine; Hugues Bonnet-Masimbert at Rimowa, and Lisa Attia at Moynat.

Bertrand's successor at Dior has yet to be named.

## Brunello Cucinelli's Next Project: Universal Library

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constructing public granaries," said Cucinelli, quoting Emperor Hadrian, adding that he "felt responsible for the beauty of the world."

Cucinelli spoke from the stage of Milan's Piccolo Teatro – behind him, a giant reproduction of the Great Library of Alexandria, Egypt, one of the largest and most significant libraries of the ancient world, and a rendering of the 18th-century villa he bought in Solomeo that he will restore to house the library.

Thinking long-term continues to be a priority for Cucinelli, as it has been in building a future for his company and in the restoration of Solomeo. In fact, he said that "the library is a project meant to last for the next 1,000 years." Building monuments similar to those of antiquity has long been a focus of Cucinelli's, who in meetings at Solomeo has pushed tech titans such as Jeff Bezos of Amazon and Jack Dorsey of Twitter to ponder the question and think in those terms.

Cucinelli on Thursday was flanked on stage by architect Massimo de Vico Fallani, a longtime friend and collaborator, as well as by the Cardinal of Perugia Gualtiero Bassetti, who has blessed his previous projects.

"During the pandemic, Massimo and I asked ourselves, what can we do for humanity?" The library is the response, and yet another step in Cucinelli's restoration of Solomeo, dubbed the "Hamlet of the Spirit," which also includes a theater, a winery with a vineyard, and the building of

the Monument to the Dignity of Man.

Cucinelli's company was publicly listed in 2012, and he underscored that this project is separate, funded by his family's foundation, but he declined to provide financial details.

The villa, surrounded by a park, spans over some 21,600 square feet and Cucinelli estimated the library will comprise between 400,000 and 500,000 books. The first 30,000 to 35,000 books are forecast to be available in 2024.

The library will be open to the public and carry books on five subjects: philosophy – dear to Cucinelli; architecture, literature, including poetry and craftsmanship – not necessarily connected to fashion, he noted. "There is a strong return to the value of craftsmanship," he contended.

Cucinelli was eager to underscore that the books will be acquired from all over the world, and potentially also translated into Italian. Only the catalogue of the titles will be digitized, but not the books, he insisted. A dedicated team of 14 people, in Italy and around the world, will be in charge of buying the books.

"Books indicate us the path," mused Cucinelli, who in 2018 published his first book, "The Dream of Solomeo," subtitled, "My life and the idea of humanistic capitalism" – a collection of his notes, he insisted, shying away from being called a writer. "I've always been in love with books," he continued, saying that he gifted each of his daughters with 1,000 books on their

wedding days. "And I plan to give the same amount to each of my three grandchildren when they will marry," he added.

"My first encounter with philosophy took place at the age of 17, with Immanuel Kant, thanks to a book, the "Critique of Pure Reason," reminisced Cucinelli, who throughout the press conference cited several of his mentors and inspirations, from Plinius and Aristotle to Saint Benedict, Plato, Alexander the Great, and Petrarch.

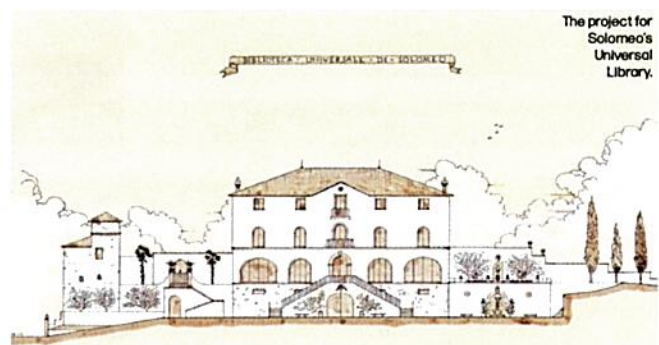
"Today I am convinced that the universality instilled by the great thinkers in their writings is perhaps the greatest gift to humanity, and that this gift nourishes any collection of books, large or small, as long as they are good books," claimed Cucinelli.

"Emperor Hadrian and Alexander the Great both knew how to combine dreams with actions for the benefit of the world, and Massimo and I remembered that they both loved books. One of Alexander's most trusted generals was Ptolemy, who wanted to build the most famous library

in the world in the newly founded city of Alexandria. And so we said to ourselves: why not follow on the dream of those great men in spite of our smallness, why not build a great library here in Solomeo, a library that, thanks to the universal thinking of the authors of the books that will enrich it, may be imagined as 'universal.'"

Cucinelli said the type of books he would like to see on the shelves of the Universal Library in Solomeo "is the original text but in current editions, enriched by fascinating, simple and deep prefaces, to be read after finishing the book, and not before."

While a separate project and connected to his fashion group, Cucinelli earlier this month said he is also investing in a former industrial space in Solomeo that covers eight hectares, or about 540,000 square feet, which will allow him to expand the company. The project is expected to be completed in 2024 and is in sync with Cucinelli's 10-year goal to double his brand's sales compared with 2018.



The project for Solomeo's Universal Library.