

SHOW ISSUE

TENT

CARTOON NETWORK

The hottest pre-fall looks go on an animated adventure

AIRING LAUNDRY

Behind the scenes of Kristin Cavallari's new campaign

SIRIANO SAYS

The quirky designer on profits, Payless and plus-size controversies

Star Tracks

Katy Perry is serious about creating a hit in the shoe biz. In an FN exclusive, the pop star goes on the record about learning from the pros, keeping it real and her ambitious plans to conquer the fashion world.



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"I go to Twitter to know what's going on in real time. ... You have to be your own filter for everything you ingest."

Katy Perry

HERE & ON THE COVER
Photographed by ROMY ALWIN

TRAFFIC REPORT

The most-read stories on
Footwearnews.com last week.

1 MELANIA TRUMP FLAUNTS LEG AT INAUGURAL BALL IN WHITE HERVE PIERRE DRESS AND PUMPS

Long gone are the days when the Kardashians dominated the headlines online and everywhere else. The Trump family is fully instated, and whether you support the new president or not, their every move is followed closely.



2 MELANIA AND IVANKA TRUMP'S GLITZY STYLE AT DONALD TRUMP'S CANDLELIGHT DINNER

The leading ladies of the incoming first family wore form-fitting gowns for the candlelight dinner the night before Inauguration Day. Rachael Roy, Wendy Deng and Caitlyn Jenner were also among the event's attendees.

3 TRUMP INAUGURATION DAY FASHION: THE AFFORDABLE BOOTS WORN BY VP MIKE PENCE'S WIFE

Karen Pence went for a modest, affordable pair of black Impo boots for her husband's big day. Priced at \$69.90, the style became an instant internet hit.

4 MELANIA TRUMP ROCKS TOWERING LOUBOUTIN PUMPS FOR NATIONAL PRAYER SERVICE

It's pretty clear at this point that first lady Melania Trump has a penchant for those iconic red-soled pumps. For the National Prayer Service following the inauguration, she wore a patent-leather blue style.

5 THE MOST LUXURIOUS MEN'S SHOES FROM PARIS FASHION WEEK FALL 2017

Paris Fashion Week, whether it's for the men's shows, couture or women's ready-to-wear, never disappoints. The houses of Louis Vuitton, Givenchy and Dior Homme delivered luxurious looks and high-end sneakers that readers couldn't get enough of.



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I N S I D E R



Christian's Calling

How the young designer is making bold moves during a pivotal moment for his namesake brand.

By Kristen Henning

PHOTO: AXEL DUPEUX

From his first job working at a hair salon at age 13, Christian Siriano has paved a path that is all his own. “I was a funny, sassy boy who wore fishnets,” the designer recalled. ➔ Siriano is coming off an eventful year of expansion: a bridal debut, the introduction of a vegan handbag line, the launch of two plus-size collections with Lane Bryant and the continuation of a Payless partnership. ➔ “We did so much in 2016. It was quite intense, but it was great,” he said. “It was a year of building steps to bigger things. Now we are nurturing those moments and figuring out [our next steps].” ➔ Siriano plans to open a New York store and launch more fashion-forward product with Payless, including special direct-to-consumer styles that will walk down the New York Fashion Week runway. “Through this partnership, we’ve sold millions of pairs of shoes [overall] to customers over the years,” said Lorraine Hitch, SVP and GMM of buying at Payless. ➔ These initiatives are helping the designer stand out, but it hasn’t been easy. “Young brands are still struggling because we are all competing in the same space,” said Siriano. “We’re not Dior, we’re not Gucci, but we’re being held at the same level in a way. We have to have the same quality and ship the same way. It’s hard to be in that place.” ➔ Siriano spoke candidly about the heat in shoes, celebrity style statements and more.



SIRIANO SAYS

Christian shares a few secrets and some of his favorite things.

Entertainment obsession:

“[My husband Brad Walsh and I] have been watching crazy Netflix shows. We just binge-watched ‘The OA.’ It’s so crazy and weird.”

Hidden talent: “I’m a good skier and ice skater. I think I have good balance from being a ballet dancer when I was little.”

Pre-Fashion Week ritual:

“Sometimes [my team] and I have a junk-food party situation. Everybody in the office is very healthy and talks about where they workout and go to the gym. During Fashion Week, that all changes.”

On dressing Melania

Trump: “We just have to wait and see. Nobody knows what will happen, which can be scary.”

Favorite hobby: “Brad and I love vintage antique shopping. That’s our favorite thing. We go near our house in Connecticut a lot. [Brad] is quite smart and knows a lot about history, so things like that are interesting for him and me, too, because I like beautiful items. That’s our fun hobby. He won’t go boxing with me, which is my other hobby.”

What’s on the top of your agenda this year?

Our biggest yearly goal is to open a bigger flagship retail space, hopefully in the next couple of months. That’s the area for the most company growth, which is exciting. Retail is super-crazy right now, but designers have to figure out a way to grow, and that’s what we’re going to do. We had a store downtown in New York City that was a test store, and our flagship will be uptown in the 50s.

How do you draw consumers to the store in a challenging retail climate?

I plan on carrying different parts of the collection — shoes from Payless and the Lane Bryant collection. It will be a multibrand store with people that are partners on my product. We will have a private bridal suite area. It’s a space where you can get a Payless shoe for \$40 and eveningwear that’s \$8,000 to \$10,000. I want a department-store feel but in a newer and younger way. That’s the goal.

What’s new with your Payless partnership?

We’re in almost 4,000 stores. I keep my core collection [of shoes] tight because we do so much work with Payless, and I focus on that because it works. The goal now is to introduce more fashion and relevancy with the new product.

What inspired you for fall ’17?

Our collection has a romantic boudoir feel in general, which is what’s happening. It’s the idea of sexy romanticism and deep velvets.



Fall '17 Payless style for NYFW

We have gone away from the chunky platforms to a single sole and a sexier heel for fall. Statement shoes are still important in the designer space. That’s what consumers are spending the money on. The market has changed, and in the designer world, people are spending over \$1,000 for a shoe.

How has the shoe market evolved since you started out?

It’s very diverse. Gucci is creating lavish, ornate and interesting shoes. Celine is making the most clean and modern shoes. I don’t think there was as much variety before, when everyone had a gladiator. Brands are being true to what they want, and hopefully the consumer will be into it. I don’t think the market is as trendy as it used to be. It’s also interesting with girls on the red carpet. Before, it was all about the sexy black platform because it looked good; now it’s about a cool shoe to wear. It’s changing.

New York Fashion Week is around the corner. What can we expect?

We’re doing a direct-to-consumer idea again, but we want to try it with two styles for Payless. They have huge lead times normally, and we wanted to figure out a way to have two styles in stores and online ready to go so that people can be excited in the moment. Last season, we did it with clothing. This season we are focusing on shoes. It will be cool for the Payless consumer. They are not used to getting something like that.

How have you evolved your strategy?

Any young designer has to

“Any young designer has to figure out who their customer is. Everybody wants to be young and cool. At the end of the day, we stopped listening. We started doing our own thing.”

— Christian Siriano



Fall '17 Payless pumps for NYFW

figure out who their customer is, and that's a challenge. Everybody wants you to be everything — and be young and cool. At the end of the day, we stopped listening. We started doing our own thing and it helped. Fashion is a business. We're dressing people on the red carpet, and we have beautiful ad campaigns, but it's to sell product or else we don't exist. We can't be too serious.

Anything you would have done differently?

Not necessarily. I'm pretty happy with the choices we made early on. I knew we had a strong interest from the Middle East, and it's a huge part of the business. Our first buy was in Kuwait and in Dubai in 2008. Not a lot of brands were doing that. I wouldn't have known that was successful early on, but it's a choice I'm glad we made.

You have gained a lot of attention from the celebrity world. How important has that been to the business?

I don't need a fashion it-girl. Issa Rae [star of "Insecure"] is a great example. Her first awards show was the Golden Globes. She had one of the most

amazing, impactful red carpets for us. We have people requesting that dress every day. I approach it in a way where I dress who I like. If Kathy Bates needs a dress for the Emmys, I will dress her because I love her.

After dressing Leslie Jones for the "Ghostbusters" premiere, you received coverage as a designer who dresses women of all sizes and celebrates body positivity. What was that moment like?

We don't think about it that way. I think people will be surprised that a lot of actresses are not sample size. Viola Davis is not a sample size, but who is not dressing Viola Davis? There are a lot of amazing people that still need a fabulous dress. That's a great thing to think about. I have learned very quickly.

What has dressing Michelle Obama meant to you?

Michelle Obama was so impactful. She's worn a couple of our dresses, but obviously the Democratic National Convention was the most impactful. The dress was simple, but it was her speech and what she was standing for. We get to be a part of history, which is great.

What are your expectations for growth this year?

We doubled wholesale sales in 2016 and were profitable in 2016, 2015 and 2014. Hopefully 2017 will be even more profitable. We're in a nice place, but obviously we could grow so much more. ■



Leslie Jones in Siriano



The Mercedes Model

Innovative product, sharp price points: How Mercedes Castillo is making a splash with her new collection. By Katie Abel

It's challenging to break into the high-end shoe world today, but Mercedes Castillo's deep industry experience is helping her find early success with her eponymous brand.

The designer will show her modern, architecturally driven fall collection this week at FFANY following a spring '17 launch. Her debut line is rolling out at top retailers in the U.S. and globally, including Nordstrom, Net-a-Porter, Bergdorf Goodman, Saks Fifth Avenue, Lane Crawford and Level Shoes.

"The brand connects with how people want to dress today. Its essence is about creativity, imagination, inspiration and optimism," said Castillo, who is working with Camuto Group on the venture. The designer, who built the Tory Burch shoe business with Camuto, also served as creative director of contemporary brands at the latter, before launching her own business. "Mercedes is an extraordinary, talented designer that has been with the organization for many years," said Alex Del Cielo, chairman and CEO of the Camuto Group. "The collection offers a bold point of view that is very wearable. Retailers instantly responded with enthusiasm and support."

Castillo and the Camuto team were determined to develop shoes with a sharp price point that would be competitive for retailers — and attractive for consumers. The spring '17 collection is priced from \$198 to \$595, while fall retails for \$198 to \$850.

Major retailers are upbeat about the potential for the brand, which is produced in Brazil and Spain and imports some materials from Italy. "The collection is just that — a true collection. It has a distinctly identifiable point of view," said Anne Egan, VP and DMM of designer shoes at Nordstrom. "Mercedes has an amazing sense of color as evidenced in her first collection. She applied a wardrobing approach to the line with the potential to sell multiple pairs to one customer."

Sara Wong, DMM for the Lane Crawford account at Pedder Group, said Castillo's slides, mules, block heels and architectural heels resonated with consumers in the Asian market. "Mercedes not only placed emphasis on the right silhouettes and fit but also has amazing details ranging from leather pleating to beautiful architectural hardware that is very cohesive throughout," said Wong.

"Mercedes not only placed emphasis on the right silhouettes and fit ... but also has amazing details."

SARA WONG, LANE CRAWFORD



While Castillo is making a statement with her shoes, she is also determined to succeed in handbags, ready-to-wear and jewelry. She said, "We definitely believe it's a lifestyle brand, and that's how we want to establish ourselves." ■

Castillo will also stock her collection on her website.



Angela Sarafyan at the SAG event

EN
Spy

Whole New 'World'

Actress Angela Sarafyan talks period style on set. By Charlie Carballo

"Westworld" actress Angela Sarafyan is a fresh face — or not much of a rind, as her character would say on the HBO series — who was nominated in the Best Ensemble category of the 23rd annual Screen Actors Guild Awards. Wearing a red Rhea Costa jumpsuit and silver Stuart Weitzman heels, she helped unveil the SAG statue last week at The Grove shopping plaza in Los Angeles. In the sci-fi Western drama, the 33-year-old stars as android brothel hostess Clementine Pennyfeather opposite Thandie Newton as the madam. Sarafyan wears a period dress teamed with Old West-inspired boots while charming human customers in the Mariposa Saloon. Here, she shares her favorites styles on and off the camera.

Tell us about your series wardrobe.

"Our costume designer [Ane Crabtree] is so talented; she created the costumes by looking at older clothes, and sewed it from head to toe on my body. The cloth was new, and the shoes were authentic. The gloves and my earrings were these antiques. The shoes are beautiful and have this incredible detail: It's very feminine and very sexy. It's so delicate as well because it's old."

What exactly drew you to the script?

"It was something that was romantic, poetic and pertinent to today, where we are going with technology: I can't deal without my phone — I'm on it all day long. I feel like it's ingrained in everything that we do."

What's your style like off-camera?

"I love wearing sweats and pajamas all day, but I also love fancy things. I like dresses — simple flowery dresses — or easy pants. I keep it simple, but because of these opportunities, I get to wear these fancy clothes. It's so fun to wear because you start to feel like a whole other person. The jacket you're wearing — if it's velvet versus wool. It builds your character and it feels different."



Matthew Modine

Dr. Strange

"I take all the credit for my costume," said **Matthew Modine**, who plays Dr.

Martin Brenner on Netflix's 1980s-set "Stranger Things," at the Greet the SAG Awards Actor event at The Grove in Los Angeles.

"The way it was scripted, I was going to wear a beard, flannel shirt, jeans and boots — a lumberjack. I told them, 'That's not my guy. I'm going to be so clean-shaven the audience is going to smell my after-shave.' I was going to wear a suit like Cary Grant in 'North by Northwest,' white

hair like Robert Shaw [in 'Battle of the Bulge'], and I wanted to wear cap-toe shoes like John Kennedy. I thought it would be much more compelling — he's a doctor." — *Charlie Carballo*

Girl Power

The debut of Keds' second collaboration with Disney will feature two famous female icons: **Minnie Mouse** and Rosie the Riveter. "Minnie has incredible iconography — she's fashionable and all the things that we stand



Minnie Mouse sneaker

for. We dug into the archives to create a vintage look using Rosie the Riveter," said Keds president Gillian Meek ahead of the label's Create & Cultivate 100 List event. — *Charlie Carballo*

Design Duo

Christian Louboutin shoes were seen on the Viktor & Rolf runway for Paris Haute Couture week. "We've known Christian for a long time, and he kindly helped us out with the shoes," said Viktor Horsting, who co-designs Viktor & Rolf with Rolf Snoeren. "They're such delicate dresses, and as he does such gorgeous heels, we thought a collaboration would fit really well." The pumps were a nod



Viktor & Rolf

to vintage style and were offered in red, black and nude. (For more from the Paris Haute Couture runway, turn to page 32.) — *Kristen Henning*

Spotted

The Sundance Film Festival brought a number of snowy style moments in Park City, Utah. Last week, **Michelle Monaghan** rocked Louis Vuitton hiker boots on the red carpet for the premiere of "Sidney Hall." Elizabeth Olsen and Judy Greer both turned to Sorel. Meanwhile, Nia Long made a statement in iridescent knee-high boots, and Riley Keough opted for a cool and casual look in a pair of Fenty Puma creepers by Rihanna. — *Kristen Henning*

PHOTOS: SARAFYAN, MODINE, VIKTOR & ROLF, REX SHUTTERSTOCK, KEDS; COURTESY OF BRAND

Why Via Spiga Turned to a Fresh Face

Carla De Freitas will lead the design strategy at the Caleres-owned brand.

By Kristen Henning

There's a new creative director leading the charge at Via Spiga. Carla De Freitas was recently brought on board to bring a new voice to the brand. Her appointment marks the first full-time creative director under the ownership of Caleres.

De Freitas has held design posts at Alexander Wang, Elizabeth & James and most recently at fellow Caleres brand Vince. Now she's working to give the label, founded in 1985 by Paolo Batacchi, a modern spin.

Her first collection for fall '17 will be revealed at FFANY. "The major element is to embrace new technology and [fresh] ways of thinking — that's something I'm really



Jay Schmidt and Carla De Freitas

interested in," De Freitas said. "We are looking at the brand's classic Italian-made element and making shoes in a classic way and looking at innovation and how those things can be married in the future."

Fit and function will also be a priority, De Freitas added.

"As a design element, it's really about getting those two disciplines to work as best they can," she said. "The collection is focused on how the women can move in a fluent and efficient way, because when

"We're focusing on this modern take on an established brand."

Jay Schmidt, Caleres

they do, they will feel good and go about their day."

Caleres brand portfolio president Jay Schmidt echoed that De Freitas' dedication to her craft will benefit Via Spiga. "We're focusing on this modern take on an established brand. She cares about the shoes, how they look as much as how they fit and feel for the consumer," he

said. "It's something that is rare and delightful."

The product, priced at \$225 to \$425 for the fall '17 line, should appeal to more "elevated retail accounts," according to Schmidt.

"We are looking to have a much greater emphasis on made in Italy; it feels like a great moment for that right now," he added.

In fact, the label is working with the original factory in Milan, and their long-standing relationship has allowed Via Spiga to source globally and increase its speed to market.

"One of the strengths of Paolo was that he was very sensitive to silhouette, shape and simplicity," said De Freitas.

"He spent a lot of time on the lasts and the heels. That's something I personally am very connected to: how the shapes look, the strong lines and form as opposed to patent and decoration."

Schmidt said Via Spiga will focus on more sport-driven product, too. "We've had items with success in the past," he said. "That's also something that's unique about Carla: She has a background across different types of footwear."

De Freitas added that when looking at a sport element, she wants to fuse dress components into the line for a full collection. ■

Shift in Men's Evident

Retailers at the Project shows were looking to diversify with multipurpose looks. By Barbara Schneider-Levy

After seasons of sneakers taking center stage in men's footwear, retailers are ready for a change.

Men's storeowners attending last week's Project/Mrkt and Project Sole shows in New York were searching for styles that can easily transition from denim to dress-casual wear.

These relaxed looks, emphasized retailers, are further defined by their comfort elements from cushioned insoles to sneaker-influenced bottoms.

"I'm looking for shoes that go with denim, that [guys] can also pull off with dressier, in-between looks," said Albert Idy, owner of

Bertalia in Rockville Centre, N.Y. "They're not super-formal, but denim-friendly styles that can be dressed up or down."

Comfort, added Idy, is also part of the story, noting features such as cushioning and softer constructions.

Dual-purpose footwear is the way Verrandall Tucker, owner of Details in Norfolk, Va., described these versatile dress-casuals, adding the days of men buying an accessory for each outfit is over.

"The trend [today] is more casual," agreed Ryan Shanahan, co-owner of Grae Clothing in Omaha, Neb. "[A guy] wants to wear his shoes from the office

to dinner. It's not a sneaker, but a dressier upper on a more casual bottom."

Like Shanahan, David Eisele, owner of Davelle Clothiers in Reston, Va., said, "We need more [items] to wear casually," citing looks that can complement jeans or a sport coat and slacks. On his shopping list were styles such as wingtips on sneaker bottoms.

To further distinguish these looks on the shelf, color is key. "Everyone wants color, even in



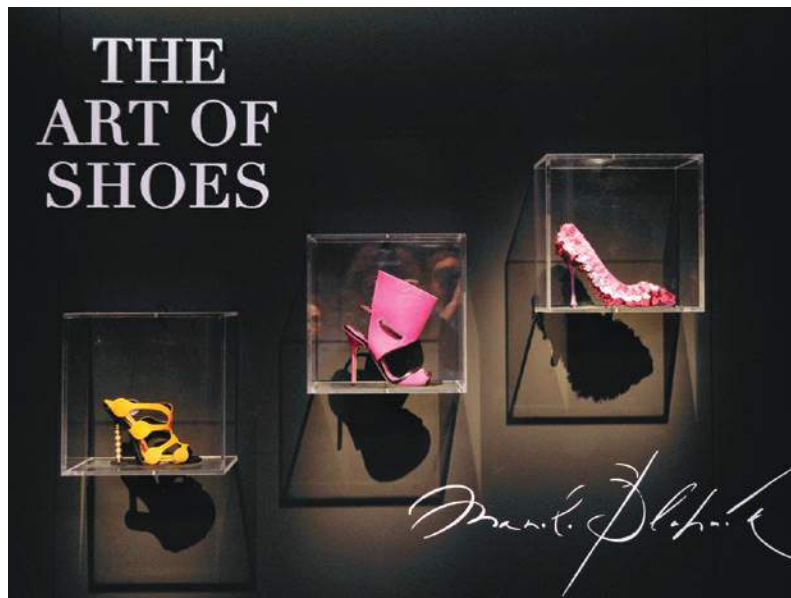
fall," Eisele noted, citing shades of blue and tobacco.

Luke Abney, owner of The Rogue in Jackson, Miss., was scouting the show for athleisure styles. "They're sporty, but more dressy than a tennis shoe," he said, referring to bottoms such as lug soles. "They can cross over from jeans to a pair of five-pocket trousers. And they can be worn on the job or for an evening event."

At DLM Supply in Dallas, owner Deavon Moore is interpreting the dress-casual trend in boots: "They are still popular, and we'll carry them in different materials [such as] suede, which have done well."

For his customers, boots are an everyday footnote. "[They can] wear them with denim and khakis to work," said Moore, adding they must have a more refined look. "[Our customers] want to look sharp and put together." ■

WHAT'S TRENDING



Manolo Blahnik Debuts Exhibit in Milan

TOP STORY

Manolo Blahnik unveiled his new exhibit last week in Milan, showcasing 212 shoes that were selected from more than 30,000 styles and 80 sketches. “I do all this with immense joy,” Blahnik said. Curated by Cristina Carrillo de Albornoz, “Manolo Blahnik: The Art of Shoes” celebrates the designer’s work as a form of art, highlighting his creativity, vision and craftsmanship. The retrospective, divided into six areas according to Blahnik’s inspirations, will be held through April 9 in the Palazzo Morando. Milan is only the first leg of the touring exhibit, which will stop in other locations, including Toronto and St. Petersburg, Russia.



Usain Bolt Stripped of Gold Medal

Usain Bolt’s gold medal count is down by one as of last Wednesday. After Jamaican teammate Nesta Carter tested positive for a banned substance, the International Olympic Committee announced that he had been disqualified from the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, and subsequently stripped of the gold from the 4x100m, which Bolt participated in. Carter reportedly plans to appeal the ruling.



Jimmy Choo’s Revenue Hits \$495 Million

Jimmy Choo is bullish on the year ahead. The luxe brand said last week its 2016 revenues were 364 million pounds, or \$495 million. That was a 14.5 percent increase, or 2 percent at constant exchange. The firm said year-end profits will be in line with expectations. Choo added that sales trends have been “improving” across all regions, and that the brand is well-positioned.

INSTAGRAMS OF THE WEEK

The 5 most-liked photos from @FootwearNews



1 Melania Trump stepped out in a @ralphlauren dress at the #InaugurationDay ceremonies.



2 @louisvuitton debuted its collection with @supremenewyork at Paris Fashion Week.



3 @olganaparis #prefall17 collection hit all the right notes with its piano story. #pfw



4 The mainstay @chanelofficial couture show were silver pumps to go with the gowns.



5 @djkhald now has his own @timberland boot with Champs.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

Overheard in the footwear industry.



“The U.S. has a \$60 billion dollar trade deficit with Mexico. It has been a one-sided deal from the beginning of NAFTA with massive numbers of jobs and companies lost.”

Donald Trump, writing on Twitter last week.



“A true couture moment when the beautiful [Lily Rose Depp] closes the [Chanel] show with the brilliant [Karl Lagerfeld].”

Rachel Zoe, writing on Instagram about Chanel’s Paris Haute Couture fashion show.



“We are extremely disappointed that the U.S. has withdrawn from the TPP because of the significant lost opportunity.”

FDRA president & CEO Matt Priest, on U.S. withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

Ready to

ROBB

Why Katy Perry is fired up to take on the industry with her mass appeal and quirky sense of style.

By Sheena Butler-Young



Perry, photographed for FN at the Global Brands showroom in New York



Katy Perry has been keeping a secret. ➔ In 2013, the Grammy-nominated singer's "Prism" album sat atop global music charts and became one of the best-selling albums released that year. ➔ But even as global fascination with the edgy pop songstress was skyrocketing, she was privately courting another passion. ➔ Inspiring meetings with fashion industry veterans Tommy Hilfger and the late Vince Camuto preceded visits to factories in the Tuscany region of Italy, as Perry nurtured an affinity for the world of shoe design and manufacturing. "[Footwear] was a part of me that needed to be carefully created and developed, and I had to weigh a lot of my options," Perry told *Footwear News* in an exclusive interview. "So for about three years, I was educating myself on the business and [thinking about] who would be a great partner." ➔ Ultimately, Perry and Global Brands Group Holding Ltd. — which owns and manages a roster of heavy-hitting fashion and entertainment labels — formed a joint venture yielding next month's launch of Katy Perry Footwear. ➔ The line — the first of several fashion projects for the singer, according to Perry and Global Brands — is an affordable take on the star's bold, signature style.

To use her words: "It's vibrant, expressive and defining." For Perry, this recipe has been crucial in helping her to resonate with her diverse fan base.

"Here's the thing: When I'm working or promoting music, or onstage, I don't get the opportunity to have a one-on-one conversation or meet everybody individually," Perry said. "So the way I present myself

can set the tone. It could be a conversation opener, just by my shoes or by the way I wear my nails — it could be [my form of] hello."

And the way that the songstress says hello has appealed to fashion influencers since she achieved mainstream success in 2008.

"She's a brilliant combination of high fashion



The "Jessica" flat style

KATY'S MUSINGS

The songstress-turned-designer on multitasking, wearing her own shoes and finding new fans.

On juggling it all

"The art of delegation is important and also the art of saying 'no.' And pure and simple balance — mental, physical and spiritual balance. But not everything is going to be perfect. I have days — especially PMS days — where I breathe fire."

On wearing her own line

"You are what you wear, right? It's one of those things where I really love the line and I'm excited by it. It's not like you'll never see me in a pair of Adidas slides ever again. And you'll [probably still] see me on the streets wearing Uggs."

On wanting her fans to become her consumers

"Yes, I do have a wonderful group of people that like and follow what I do, but my goal for this line is that it's just a great product. The first thought [for consumers] is, 'I love this shoe.' The second thought is, 'Oh, I didn't know Katy Perry made shoes!'"

On her massive Twitter following

"It comes down to authenticity. There's only so much that people can relate to when you're a celebrity living in a bubble with 1 percent [of the population]. I share my life story, give light to things that need a voice; and [I'm sometimes] silly, dark and sarcastic."

On social media politics

"I go to Twitter to know what's going on in real time. But you can sometimes find that not the greatest voices make the most noise. You have to be your own filter for everything you ingest — period and end of story."

and pop-culture references,” said Derek Blasberg, *Vanity Fair*’s “Our Man on the Street” and host of the television show “CNN Style.” “There’s a smile — but also a wink — in everything she does and everything she puts on.”

It makes sense then that Perry’s intentional storytelling has found its way into her footwear line. The collection features Easter Bunny flats that were inspired by a pair of Perry’s cherished Dalmatian-themed shoes that she found after her move to L.A. to pursue music more than 15 years ago. “I swear I started so many conversations because of those shoes. I had to get them resoled several times — and I didn’t have the money for it,” she said, recalling thrift shopping as a teenager and the early years in her career when money was scarce.

Those experiences were top of mind when Perry decided on a pricing strategy for her collection, which retails from \$59 to \$299.

“Not everybody is rich, and not everybody is excessive,” she said of her logic. “And everybody has more important things to spend their money on — whether it’s their children, or their family or their health. At the end of the day, your personality shouldn’t be so expensive to display.”

With the help of Global Brands, Perry found a winning price-value formula. “We’ve learned through manufacturing and science that we can make things [with] better quality that don’t take so much time,” Perry said. “Applying all of this information makes a better product faster and with more options.”

To hash out the creative elements of the line,

[our ideas] to Katy. She picks through what she likes and puts pictures in and takes pictures out, and then it goes into sketching.”

In between formal sessions, the team keeps the creative juices flowing via a WhatsApp group it created, aptly titled Sole Sisters. “We are just throwing ideas and screen grabs in there all the time,” Wujek said. “It’s just so much fun.”

Whimsical and wacky touches throughout the line — including a cigar-shaped heel on a series of mules and sandals inspired by Perry’s trip to Cuba — exemplify the range of unconventional ideas birthed during their sessions. Meanwhile, there is a currency-themed collection, which features shoes accented by monetary symbols, including a dollar sign and a golden nugget for a heel. Similar to the rest of the line, the looks feel like nods to Perry’s “shoe heroes” Charlotte Olympia and Sophia Webster.

Jimmy Gabriel, president of footwear for Global Brands, said he’s banking on Perry’s imaginative fashion sense and broad appeal to snap up a solid share of the 16-to-40-year-old female market.

“In addition to her music, Katy Perry’s unique, signature style is followed by loyal and passionate fans around the world — an ideal foundation for a successful brand,” Gabriel said. “[Our] joint venture will capitalize on Katy’s creative vision, global reach and audience connection, as well as Global Brands’ expertise in building brands and its strong



The “Stella” is one of Katy Perry’s favorite shoes in her new collection, which features styles named after several of the singer’s family members and girlfriends.

“I mix all kinds of things. [My look] can be a combination of something I bought 10 years ago vintage or something I buy vintage now, or something I find on Etsy or Fancy. I can take a cheap thing that I love or that I’m drawn to and pair it with something glamorous.”

Perry enlisted her former stylist Johnny Wujek, who currently counts Shakira, Kate Mara and Laura Marano as clients. Wujek and Perry met at a party in L.A. nearly a decade ago and about a year before “I Kissed a Girl” catapulted her to stardom.

“Katy and I have always talked about doing a clothing line and shoes, so this was the perfect transition,” said Wujek, who is one of the creative directors on the line.

Today, he and Perry bring their “quirky twist on humor and fashion” to high-powered strategy meetings at Global Brands’ offices. “Global Brands has a design team that has all of the trend forecasting knowledge, and we powwow,” Wujek explained. “I contribute images, and we pitch

global relationships with distributors and retailers.”

So far, Macy’s Inc., Lord & Taylor, Amazon.com Inc. and Zappos have signed on to carry the collection. (The shoes will also be available on the brand’s proprietary e-commerce site.)

Mike Normart, senior director of women’s footwear at Zappos, said the e-tailer is looking forward to being one of the first to debut the line.

“Katy has cited her fascination with space and vacationing in the tropics as inspirations for the line and has been heavily involved in the design process.”

Normart noted. “The result is designs that are fresh and fun.”

For his part, David Law, an SVP and GMM at Hudson’s Bay and Lord & Taylor, said he sees the collection — with styles that are “unique and different from anything else” on Lord & Taylor’s shoe floor — being a hit among the department store’s more daring shoppers. “These are vibrant, colorful statement shoes; [they] will be a conversation starter,” Law said. “They’ll attract a customer who is confident, has a playful attitude toward fashion, and isn’t afraid to stand out.”

Feedback from the collection’s debut at FN Platform last August as well as other retailers along the way has left Perry and Global Brands in a confident place ahead of the launch. “I don’t want to be cocky, but it’s just about keeping up with demand right now, which is very exciting,” Perry said. “I think it’s evidence of the fruits of our labor, the great team we have around us and the vision they believe in.”

But that’s not to say that Perry doesn’t expect to do some fine-tuning as time goes on. “I don’t operate in fear, but I think there are lessons to be learned,” she said.

Experience and practice in tow, Perry said the fashion industry can expect to see more of her in the future — starting from the feet up. “I want to learn a lot, master it and become a serious contributor in the fashion world,” she said. “[I don’t want] to be a celebrity who overindulges and takes advantage of their position.” ■

