

It's in the Jeans: Gilman Celebrates 20 Years on HSN

By SHARON EDELSON

DENIM HAS DONE A LOT for Diane Gilman. It's given her a successful career, financial freedom and a sense of purpose — and turned her brand, which was launched in 2005, into HSN's leading apparel label.

Gilman, 68, who is celebrating her 20th year on HSN, is still setting records. DG2, the collection she launched nine years ago, did \$11 million in sales during the month of May. The brand, which did \$6 million in sales in its first year, is poised to hit \$100 million this year.

"That tells you the power of one great idea," she said. "That's how I got to write my book and how I'll get to write the next one."

"Good Jeans: 10 Simple Truths About Feeling Great, Staying Sexy and Aging Agelessly," published by Running Press in April 2013, is Gilman's personal primer to health, happiness, beauty and sex in your 60s. For her next book, she'd like to curate the experiences of others who've successfully reinvented themselves after age 50.

DG2 jeans resonate with women "of a certain age." They flatter the figure because the back of the jeans is raised and shaped to give a boost to the derrière, said Gilman, who sold silk separates when she signed on to HSN in 1994. "I liked what I did, but it didn't have that strong a connection for me. I saw the customer from a distance."

When Mindy Grossman joined HSN,

the chief executive officer asked Gilman what she really wanted to do. "Design jeans," Gilman said. "I was ready for a fight. I expected her to say old women don't wear jeans. [HSN]

She's sharing stories and talking to [viewers] as if they're girlfriends."

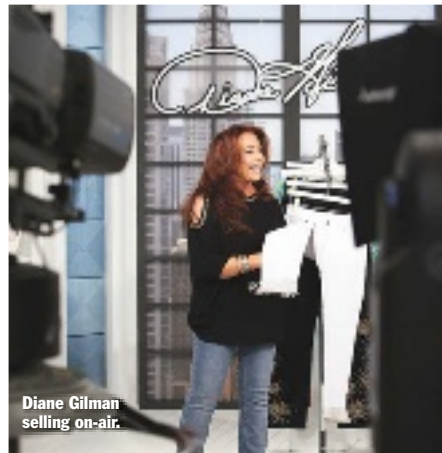
Gilman's "aha" moment came when she couldn't find a pair of jeans that vaguely fit her. So, she designed a jean that she and her Baby Boomer cohorts could wear. "Honestly, I thought, 'I've really got something here,'" she said. "I did it for myself initially. Then, I realized this was fashion for an

When Gilman designed the jeans, she was in need of a solution. Her husband had died after a seven-year battle with cancer. His death left Gilman bereft. She did what many unhappy people do: She ate. By the time she was finished, her doctor told her she was half a pound shy of obesity.

"I had rolls in my midriff," she said. "When I sat, I could barely breathe. I was 59, I wasn't happy, I didn't date and I looked like an old woman. I had made food my husband. Once I understood that I'm an emotional eater I could start working on the problem."

Gilman had other motivation — her fans. She was gaining weight on TV and viewers weren't always kind. "I had to [lose weight] to keep my validity," she said. "Television is a tough taskmaster. I was getting hate mail. People said, 'You're too fat to wear that outfit.'"

Now, Gilman and her customers wear skinny jeggings, boot-cut jeans and stretch denim flares. Soon, there will be the dressier Forever Black collection. She is also working on a project that involves putting the lyrics of classic Sixties songs on jeans. "We're doing the Rolling Stones' lyrics" on jeans, she said. "My generation broke out in the Sixties. One of the great battle cries of the Sixties was girls wearing jeans. If I could capture that Baby Boomer audience, there's a million golden memories in every pant leg."



Diane Gilman selling on-air.

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— BILL BRAND, HSN

entire generation. We were totally overlooked."

DG2 was designed for Gilman's body, not the body of a young fit model. She said wearing the jeans was transformative. "That jean was such a revelation to wear," said Gilman, who sometimes makes it sound like jeans could save the world. "It was interesting how different people treated me. I love it because it's purpose-driven and solution-driven clothing."

could not be a better platform for explaining your invention."

Bill Brand, HSN's chief marketing and business development officer, calls Gilman "a force. She's so inspiring and empowering. She has that connection with women. She's honest. She'll show before-and-after pictures of herself.

OBITUARY

Gérald Asaria, 72

By MILES SOCHA

PARIS — Gérald Asaria, a former chief executive officer of Lanvin and Condé Nast France, died on May 31 after a long battle with cancer. He was 72.

His death notice was published in Saturday's edition of *Le Monde* by APREC, a cancer research charity that Asaria supported for more than 30 years.

Brigitte Bury, a former colleague, said services took place Thursday at the Notre-Dame de Grâce de Passy church here in the presence of many figures from fashion and publishing, including Jonathan Newhouse, chairman and ceo of Condé Nast International, and L'Oréal's former honorary chairman Sir Lindsay Owen-Jones.

Asaria is survived by his wife, Fabienne, and two children, Raphael and Pauline, Bury said.

Asaria started his career as a reporter for such titles as *Paris Match* and *Marie Claire*. He launched *Vogue Hommes* in 1976 and also worked at *Automobiles Classiques* magazine.

Asaria ultimately became chairman of Condé Nast SA in France for seven years, until 1994. During his tenure at the French magazine publisher, he launched *French Glamour*, which in 1995 merged into *French Vogue* and was then re-launched in 2004.

Asaria joined Jeanne Lanvin SA as managing director in 1995 when it was then a subsidiary of the beauty giant L'Oréal.

When a group of investors led by Taiwanese publishing magnate Shaw-Lan Wang acquired Lanvin, Asaria left the fashion house and joined Shu Uemura, part of L'Oréal's luxury products division.

An avid sportsman, Asaria loved skiing at Val d'Isère as well as golf, and was passionate about cars and football, Bury said.

Buccellati to Unveil New Store Concept

By LUISA ZARGANI

MILAN — Buccellati has found a new home in New York, where it will introduce an updated store concept by the end of October.

Positioned in a five-floor townhouse in a premium location on Madison Avenue, among such brands as David Yurman, Graff, Chopard and Girard-Perregaux, the venue will cover a total of 6,480 square feet, of which 3,240 square feet will be dedicated to commercial space. Haute joaillerie, the bridal engagement and silver collections, bespoke watches and a VIP area will be available over three floors. The fourth level will house a showroom, and the top story will be a space dedicated to parties and events.

The new concept has been designed by Vudafieri Saverino Partners. Architects Tiziano Vudafieri and Claudio Saverino are known in fashion circles for creating concept stores for brands including Tod's, Roger Vivier, Moschino, Emilio Pucci and Jimmy Choo, in addition to restaurants in Milan such as Pisacco.

"It's the perfect location," said chief executive officer Thierry Andretta, explaining that the prime positioning "accelerated" the decision-making. The new store will also allow the brand to expand, as the current space, also on Madison Avenue, at 1,404 square feet, is too small, he noted.

"America is the most important market in terms of noto-

riety, visibility and affection," said Andretta. "There has always been a particular attention to us." The brand has been available in the U.S. since 1952 and today the U.S. accounts for just less than 40 percent of total sales — for which a figure was not provided.

with subliminal messages" Buccellati's history. For this reason, the architects maintained a number of "signs" from the previous concepts, such as traditional panels in damask fabric and the classic golden glass showcases, while bringing the brand forward.

panels worked as paintings in inlaid and chiseled wood to be displayed on the ground floor of the boutique and in its VIP room. "It's a very sophisticated concept with an equally sophisticated artisanal quality," said Vudafieri, noting the closeness to Buccellati's own craftsmanship.

Andretta said the idea is to create "a warm welcoming space, such as a home."

The company is set to open a second store in Bal Harbour, Fla., covering almost 7,000 square feet. "It's very important as an access to South American customers," explained Andretta of the location. Coming up soon: a space at Neiman Marcus in Palm Beach, which will grant "visibility to tourists."

There are two existing stores in London, and units in Milan, Paris and the luxury resort town Cala di Volpe in Sardinia. In the U.S., there are venues in New York, Chicago, Aspen and Beverly Hills. Gradually, each store will be revamped. The New York blueprint will not necessarily be replicated globally. Andretta said the company is looking for "the right" location in Hong Kong, given its "strong growth."

Private equity firm Clessidra SGR acquired a majority stake in Buccellati last year, with the namesake family still maintaining shares in the firm. As part of its new course, the brand is also launching a new, modernized logo. Creative director Andrea Buccellati is now flanked by his designer daughter, Lucrezia.



Inside Buccellati.

Americans are also among the main customers in Europe, along with shoppers from Russia, Japan, China and the Middle East.

Retail accounts for more than 50 percent of the company's sales and Andretta said there are no plans to change this balance, continuing to highly select distribution. "Our development passes through highly identified and personalized stores. The positioning is so high that the brand needs to be explained and described," said the executive, citing as an example how the engraving of a ring takes from eight to 28 hours.

The new store concept blends tradition and modernity, said Vudafieri, and "tells