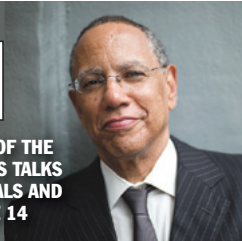


**MEDIA
PEOPLE**

DEAN BAQUET OF THE
NEW YORK TIMES TALKS
DIGITAL, SCANDALS AND
MORE. PAGE 14



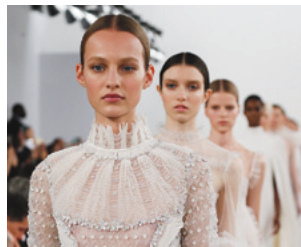
**KIMORA
RETURNS**

KIMORA LEE SIMMONS
STEPS BACK INTO
HIGH FASHION
WITH HER MORE
TONED-DOWN LINE
KLS. PAGE 4



WHITE NIGHT

VALENTINO DESIGNERS
MARIA GRAZIA CHIURI AND
PIERPAOLO PICCIOLI SHOW A
SPECIAL ALL-WHITE COUTURE
COLLECTION IN NEW YORK.
PAGES 8 AND 9



WWD

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2014 ■ \$3.00 ■ WOMEN'S WEAR DAILY

Future Chic

By AMANDA KAISER

TOKYO — Dior took over this city's famed sumo stadium on Thursday night to showcase creative director Raf Simons' vision for pre-fall: a futuristic, outdoorsy take on daywear rife with both function and sequined shimmer.

"I think it's a little bit more edgy, this one. So I'm very excited," Simons said during an interview at the Grand Hyatt two nights before his show, which took place on a massive set beneath an enormous pipe grid structure — an attempt to create what the designer termed an "urban landscape abstraction." Faux snowflakes made of a dissolving foamy substance fluttered down from the rafters for the entire show, creating a dreamy, fantasy-like atmosphere for an audience that included Audrey Tautou, Hailee Steinfeld and LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton chairman and chief executive Bernard Arnault.

The Belgian designer said he drew inspiration from disparate influences — the movie "Blade Runner," Tokyo's street fashion and urban sprawl, the Sixties-era experimentalism of Paco Rabanne, an old photo of Serge Gainsbourg and Jane Birkin in paillette-embellished underwear — and distilled them into new wardrobe pieces for the Dior woman trekking into the city in the dead of winter or taking a mini break with her kids at the Welsh seaside.

"I was very interested to do something which relates very much to the idea of outdoor, which is the opposite of cocktail or red carpet or whatever,"

SEE PAGE 6



The New Kimora Lee Simmons

A LOT HAS HAPPENED in Kimora Lee Simmons' world in the past five years. In August 2010 she departed from Kellwood Co.'s Phat Fashions, where she was president and creative director. She married and split from actor Djimon Hounsou, with whom she has a five-year-old son, Kenzo. In 2011, she became president and creative director of JustFab, the membership-based e-commerce site which was recently given a \$1 billion valuation. She married Tim Leissner, a banker at Goldman Sachs, this past February. The couple is expecting their first child in April. Today, Simmons is launching KLS Kimora Lee Simmons, her collection of clean, tailored and taut designer ready-to-wear that reflects a new phase of her life.

"It's different for me. It's, like, grown up," says Simmons, referring to her new collection and to the campaign images on the table in her office in the Flatiron District in Manhattan. David Sims shot the photos of her modeling the collection in August. She looks stunning in an unexpected way: pared down, hair undone, no makeup and unretouched, she says. "When people look at this they say, 'Oh, this is Kimora when she was 12 or 13 at Chanel,'" she says, referring to her teenage modeling days, when she was famously

plucked from Missouri and put on the Paris runways. "I didn't have on makeup when I was at Givenchy and Saint Laurent. I worked with the greatest people in the business and this is more back to that person."

Simmons is walking around her studio, literally barefoot and pregnant with her fourth child at 39, wearing the chic urban mother's uniform of leather leggings and a turtle-neck. Behind her mood board is her stylist, Karl Templar, who had put together the Valentino Sala Bianca Haute Couture show the night before (see page 6). KLS' first 30-look collection will be presented in a Chelsea gallery space this morning.

"There's a subtlety to the sexiness. It's not overt," says Simmons of a sharp tailored coat slit into panels on the front. There's jac-

quard suiting and thick jersey dresses with clean graphic lines that tastefully show off a woman's curves with a little edge. Everything is produced in New York and looks like designer-level quality. Prices range from \$500 for a top to \$2,400 for a coat. If the silhouettes aren't revolutionary, they represent a major evolution for Simmons, who is clearly taking a page from the Victoria Beckham — and Diane von Furstenberg before her — re-branding playbook.

What happened to the outrageous glamazon who was married to Russell Simmons and drove her young family through the annals of reality TV via "Kimora: Life in the Fab Lane," her show that aired on the Style Network from 2007 to 2011?

"I guess you would call it putting out a new image, but I think it's more of an evolution," she says. "I'm not the same woman now. KLS isn't catering to a teenage audience or a young party girl. I'm a serious businesswoman." Indeed, Simmons' new venture is financed via her company KLS Holdings, through which she has investments in several other startups, including beauty and tech. She is not interested in the licensing model through which Baby Phat and her various other brands, such as Kouture by Kimora, operated.

"I have shifted away from that," she says. "I've had several brands. You sell them, they're acquired and you may maintain some control, in the sense that for Baby Phat I stayed on for a very long time as an officer of the company. But visions do change."

She wants to keep KLS small, slow and steady, even launching with her own retail store, currently under construction in Beverly Hills, rather than wholesale. The store will open this spring.

"It's not as flashy. It's not loud," says Simmons of her new collection versus her old. "I can do that. I sold out Radio City Music Hall [for Baby Phat fashion shows]. I projected things in Times Square. Now, everyone does that; I was the first one. So in that sense, this is a great departure."

Simmons might be more toned down, but she hasn't lost her sparkle. Her eldest daughter, Ming, now 14, wanders over, prompting the discussion of reality TV, which Simmons says she has no interest in pursuing, at least in the short term. "Things are different now," she says of the reality TV world. "I feel like I got [my kids] out just in time, otherwise they would be running around. What 13-year-old needs to have their own TV show — Rich Kids of whatever? I don't think so."

"She was at Goldman Sachs earlier," says Simmons of Ming. "She said hello to Lloyd Blankfein. She wants to be a banker."

— JESSICA IREDALE

Looks from KLS Kimora Lee Simmons pre-fall.



FASHION SCOOPS

FAST AND FURIOUS: Olivier Rousteing serves up hot models — and a side order of fries in a Styrofoam container — in his spring campaign for Balmain. While dressed to the nines in the French brand's clingy and cutout-riddled collection, **Adriana Lima, Joan Smalls, Rosie Huntington-Whiteley, Isabell Fontana** and **Crista Cober** are depicted playing video games — popcorn scattered about the floor — and scarfing burgers on a diner banquet.

"You can't eat caviar every day," said Rousteing,

first store outside the U.S. in Tokyo this spring. The store will occupy three of five buildings at Log Road Daikanyama, a modern converted railway site being built in Tokyo's upscale Daikanyama neighborhood. While details are slim, one building in the complex will be called "Fred Segal Woman" and will have women's luxury apparel, cosmetics and lifestyle goods. Another will house "Fred Segal Man," which will consist of two floors of retail space showcasing high-end men's apparel



PHOTO BY MARIO SORRENTI

Balmain's spring campaign features a diverse range of models.

noting he was eager to depict his "Balmain army" in real situations. "I wanted to have power women in the campaign."

Photographed by **Mario Sorrenti**, the models certainly channel fashion fierceness with their curves, killer cheekbones and slicked-back hair. Art director **Pascal Dangin** said the sets were inspired by the "distorted realism" of Seventies French cinema.

Rousteing said he was also keen to show a "diversity of girls," many of whom he reunited with backstage at the recent Victoria's Secret fashion show in London, showing them preview images of the ads on his smartphone. The campaign is slated to break in February issues of leading fashion titles. — **MILES SOCHA**

WATER WORKS: Jason Morgan is the new face of Giorgio Armani's Acqua di Giò men's scent, WWD has learned. The model will appear in an international campaign photographed by **Matthew Brookes**, which is due to break globally in February. **Jacob Sutton** lensed the corresponding film. Morgan succeeds **Simon Nessman**, who has fronted Acqua di Giò since 2012. The scent was first introduced in 1996 and remains a bestseller for Armani, whose beauty license is held by L'Oréal.

— **JENNIFER WEIL**

FRED SEGAL'S OVERSEAS MOVE: Fred Segal is getting ready to bring its edgy Southern California heritage to Japan. The retailer, majority owned by Sandow, will open its

ranging from casual to formal, as well as lifestyle and home products. A third building will be named "The Mart at Fred Segal," featuring a food market. The company declined to reveal specific brand partners until closer to the launch.

The Daikanyama complex will be followed by other locations across Japan next year. The retailer has three Los Angeles locations and opened seven boutiques at the SLS Las Vegas last August. — **LISA LOCKWOOD**

HI-TECH HIGHER ED: It's not about lifestyle merchandising, but First Insight Inc. is bringing its assortment of predictive analytics to the youth market. Through a partnership with New York's Fashion Institute of Technology, students in three courses of FIT's Fashion Merchandising Management program at the Jay and Patty Baker School of Business will gain access to the technical tools that help retailers and brands introduce "the right products at the right prices," as First Insight puts it. The program had something of a dry run at the World Retail Congress in Paris in September when four students from FIT won the Future Retail Challenge by incorporating data-backed insights into their concept of "The Smart Apartment."

"Our students embrace technology and understand that predictive analytics can give those in the fashion industry an edge," said **Robin Sackin**, chair of the FMM program. — **ARNOLD J. KARR**