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- Warren York
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- Victoria Kay
- White Collection by Victoria Kay
- Victoria Kay Bridesmaids
We are a group of wholesale bridal manufacturers who specialise in the supply of bridal apparel to retail wedding shops. Our aim is to tour the country with a number of regional shows where we can exhibit our latest collections. You can visit us and view our collections at your convenience at a local venue. We have a number of companies represented, covering all aspects of the bridal industry, which will be announced before each show.

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linzijay.com
Summer sparkle

Summer is a favourite season, and it still remains the most popular one for weddings. It’s certainly clear what’s in style from reading Attire Bridal this issue – think glamour, rose gold, copper, sequins and lace. This issue, we start a new series called Fashion DNA where we take a look at a particular style and put together some inspiration for your brides. This time, it’s all about the free spirit of boho (page 87). We also look at the jewellery trends (page 35), put a spotlight on the veil market (page 67) and how to cater for the smallest members of the wedding party (page 27), to mention but a few.

In our fashion files, we highlight the latest floral gown trends (page 47) and figure-skimming dresses to accentuate a brides’ curves (page 54) plus a myriad of business features to help keep your company flourishing.

Happy reading,

Julie

Julie Bonnar
Editor

Window dressing on page 40

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Editor’s pick

I’ve fallen in love with Neola’s Celestine gold labradorite and the Athena amethyst rings. Both come in other wonderful gem combinations.

Go-to-guide for the wedding industry
In the bridal industry, while we believe every wedding should be original, there’s no escaping the trends, and it’s all about how we can reinterpret them for each client that counts. The International Wedding Trend Report by The International Academy of Wedding and Event Planning has now been published. This year’s report includes trends from more than 45 of the world’s leading professionals including lifestyle guru and party planner to the stars Colin Cowie, TLC’s Brides of Beverly Hills star Renée Strauss, celebrity cake designer Peggy Porschen, renowned luxury invitation designer Ceci Johnson, luxury wedding planner Bruce Russell and many more.

Type in The International Wedding Trend Report 2016 to YouTube to watch or download a copy by registering at www.weddingacademylive.com/wedding-trend-registration.

CHARLOTTE MILLS EXPANDS WITH LAUNCH OF HER FIRST STORE
Since launching her bridal footwear brand two years ago, Charlotte Mills has seen her business grow rapidly in a short space of time. She now has more than 40 stockists in the UK, Ireland, Spain, Germany, Australia, USA, Canada and Japan as well as a strong e-commerce presence with her own online shop. The next step for the designer was to open her first store. The new boutique is located in the picturesque village of Uppermill in Saddleworth where the designer currently has her studio.

“This is something I’ve dreamt about from the very beginning. It’s amazing to meet with brides and help them find their dream shoes. I feel like I’m part of their special day and I find it really inspiring hearing about every bride’s story and amazing wedding plans,” comments Charlotte.

For more information, visit www.charlottemillsbridal.com.

THE FIRST WEDDING TEMPORARY TATTOOS
The French temporary tattoo brand, Sioou has launched the first set of white temporary tattoos to adorn brides on the big day. Inspired by French lace, the designs have been illustrated by Ombeline Brun and entitled Un Beau Jour (beautiful day). The result is white, light and feminine designs that can be worn for the day. Some designs also feature a selection of refined words around love and union. The tattoos retail at €24.90 for two different tattoos sheets.

For more information visit www.sioou.com/gb.
Waistcoats with attention to detail

Waistcoats with matching accessories are the creative link to Wilvorst suits, and thanks to innovative and elegant shell fabrics, waistcoats have become an indispensable partner to the suit.

Wilvorst has a high quality range that’s fanciful, easy and traditional, and comes with matching cravat, pocketsquare and bow tie. The waistcoat is a garment where tradition meets innovation and enables the groom to distinguish himself from the rest of the wedding party, so that he can take centre stage with his bride.

Wilvorst celebrates 100 years of fashion competence and with an anniversary collection including the jubilee, an especially developed waistcoat in the trending blue colour with an exclusive fireworks print.

For more information visit www.wilvorst.de.

A fitting tribute to fashion and flowers

Floral alchemist Larry Walshe was again commissioned by M&G Investments to create an astonishing dress made from more than 2,000 fresh stems to celebrate their seventh consecutive year as title sponsor of the RHS Chelsea Flower Show. The exquisite dress opened the Gold award-winning Cleve West garden design which featured more than 2,000 real Peruvian ferns, spray roses, achillea, astilbe, alstroemeria, dahlia and astilbe in a palette of white and green.

Larry Walshe is one of Britain’s foremost luxury floral designers. Based in London, his lavish, abundant use of texture and colour, coupled with a distinctive vision delivers opulent, memorable and dramatic designs that transform weddings and events both in the UK and abroad. Larry Walshe commented, “Being the first designer to be commissioned on more than one occasion to create this magnificent floral dress for M&G is an absolute honour.”

Crafted from a skeleton of raw steel by skilled artisans, the dress assumes a timeless and theatrical silhouette whilst seamlessly integrating a contemporary approach through the use of progressive techniques and modern innovation. The bodice works to create a flattering shape whilst the crinoline below adds a rigid notion that echoes the masculinity of the Cleve West garden design. For more information about the designer, visit the website: www.larrywalshe.com.
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Growth of bridal fabric market
So far, this year has been a busy period for Platinum Bridal Fabrics, with sales growth in excess of 20 per cent. The company has just added in excess of 50 new laces designs, trims to its already significant stock range, as well as the trend of non-symmetrical laces, whereby the two edges don’t match one another. The business has also continued to expand the range of corded, beaded, Guipure and Chantilly ranges as well as added to the selection of trims and appliqués.

A number of new fabrics now come in a wonderful wide colour palette including silk dupions, polyester chiffons and different weights of silk satins, together with a new range of stock coloured laces. Whether you’re a retailer looking to add something new or a couture designer, Platinum Bridal Fabrics can offer the best selection of stock laces and fabrics in UK, and the experienced customer service team look forward to helping with enquiries.

To find out more visit, www.bridalfabrics.co.uk.

SAY ‘I DO’ WITH TWEED
Since the launch of tweed fashion designers, Timothy Foxx’s first Wedding Collection in autumn of last year, the label has been inundated with orders from brides-to-be looking for something different and with a tweed twist.

New for this year is the Timothy Foxx Abigail tweed wedding dress. Styled in stunning lime tweed with a beautiful purple and tangerine plaid, the dress takes a romantic stroll through the countryside, with a distinctly British designer feel.

Featuring a beautiful corseted bodice with silk ribbon lacing detail across the back, sweetheart neckline and a feminine fishtail skirt, the designer dress can be tailored for the perfect fit and finish. There are more than 20 different tweeds and a huge array of matching accessories and garments for brides, bridesmaids, grooms, mother of the bride and wedding favours. Entirely created through the exclusive made to measure bridal service. Prices start from £3,100 RRP.

For more information visit www.timothyfoxx.co.uk.

SEEKING UK STOCKISTS
Italian Atelier Barbara Montagnoli is looking for a stockist here in the UK for its bridal, prêt-a-porter and formal collections.

Having had several decades of experience in bespoke dressmaking within Crema in Milan, Barbara Montagnoli now brings her bespoke service and label to the UK. Barbara’s designs champions careful selection of fine textiles to flatter any shape and size of every woman that she dresses.

Her prêt-a-porter collections are whimsical, yet with touches of elegance and feminine flair, while her bridal and formal collections make use of traditions with twists that cater to an individual’s needs and tastes.

If you’re interested in stocking get in touch at info@barbaramontagnoli.it.

WEDDING BLOG WINS PRESTIGIOUS UK AWARD
Fashion-forward bridal website, Style & the Bride has won a prestigious UK Blog Award in the Wedding Company category. The much-coveted award was accepted by Marina Licht, editor of Style & the Bride, at the glittering UK Blog Awards 2016 ceremony at Park Plaza in April. Marina is no stranger to success in the wedding industry. At the age of 26 she became the youngest editor at the National Magazine Company (now Hearst), editing Cosmopolitan Bride.

In addition to the blog’s style-oriented editorial focus, the panel of expert judges praised the site’s clean and chic design, as well as its excellent responsiveness across all platforms. “I’m so proud of how the blog has evolved since our re-launch last year. My aim was to create a luxury wedding blog that was for fashion-conscious couples who love keeping up with the latest trends. It’s lovely that the UK Blog Awards has recognised all the hard work that has gone in to creating the look and content of Style & the Bride,” says Marina Licht.

To view the blog visit www.styleandthebride.co.uk.
PLANNERS LAUNCH WEDDING ADVICE VIDEO CHANNEL

London-based wedding planners Revelry Events has launched a new YouTube channel dedicated to helping plan weddings. The new channel will feature regular ‘how to’ videos from Revelry, and some of the top suppliers in the wedding industry. The videos will cover everything from budget to beauty and vows to venues. The channel is live now with videos including how to maximise your wedding budget and how to impress your guests with wedding food. More videos will be added to the channel soon.

“We know planning a wedding can be a minefield. There’s a lot of information out there but sometimes it can be overwhelming and difficult to wade through. The channel will provide bite-sized videos covering wedding planning from start to finish. We’ll be giving out tips of the trade, and providing expert advice from suppliers as well as answering the frequently asked questions that most newly-wed couples have,” says Holly Poulter, co-owner of Revelry.

To watch the videos head on over to the Revelry YouTube channel or for more information visit www.jointherevelry.com.

NAOMI NEOH ANNOUNCES NEW STOCKIST

Naomi Neoh is excited to announce a new stockist of the brand, Tilly Trotter’s Brides in Leamington Spa, Warwickshire. Owner Sian Alexandra had a career in the luxury goods market prior to opening Tilly Trotter’s Brides, and from this she’s learned what vital ingredients are necessary to create a bespoke and decadent experience for her brides and the importance of making a bride feel absolutely amazing when she’s about to purchase what is likely to be one of the most expensive pieces of fashion she’ll ever purchase.

For more information visit www.tillytrottersbrides.co.uk.

NEW HORIZONS FOR THE BRIDAL ROADSHOW

The Bridal Roadshow show has just launched its new website that keeps bridal retailers up-to-date with the latest events from around the country. There are five locations around the UK every year, and the roadshow is rapidly growing in size, and becoming a popular choice for bridal retailers to visit exhibitors on their own doorstep.

The company is currently looking for new locations to host more events, and the last show of the season will take place between 21st - 22nd August, 2016 at University of the West of England, Stoke Gifford in Bristol.

For more information visit www.bridalroadshow.co.uk.

Anyone for cocktails?

Pronovias has just launched its cocktail collection for 2017. The new designs feature wonderful fabric such as crepe, paillette and lace as well delicate embroideries and revealing bare back. Colours are another one of the highlights of the next season. The colour range includes the richer shades like red, bougainvillea or purple, and brighter colours like yellow, lime or turquoise. The line also has two-coloured pieces that combine colours in one-piece dresses.

Discover the new designs on the www.pronovias.co.uk website.
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Little treasures
How to cater for the smallest members of the wedding party.

Little Bevan
www.littlebevan.co.uk

Little Bevan is all about great British design and creating special occasion clothes from tots to teens in luxury fabrics. The elegant and quintessentially English designs are made at the company’s London studio. The label caters for good fit, and great attention to detail with quality fabrics and finishing touches.

Amy Jewel dress (shown here) is a sleeveless silk-shot ballerina-length dress in coloured dupion silk, with full gathered skirt, silk covered buttons, round neckline with silk piping and fully lined. Made to order so you can choose from a wide range of 30 jewel colours and available for girls between the ages of two and 12. The luxe sash is sold separately.
Evermore by Amberley London
www.amberley.com
Amberley London is a newcomer to the bridal market but already established company in the luxury children's clothing market. Designer Rebecca Curreen has turned her talents to creating beautiful flower girl and special occasion dresses for little girls. The collection features classic silhouettes combined with luxurious fabrics including silk brocades and cut silk velvets. We've fallen in love with the Alicia dress' wonderful grey embroidered bodice.

Le Mu
www.le-mu.co.uk
Turn up the glamour with this luxury Golden Glitz flower party dress from Le Mu. It’s perfect for the party season as well as weddings, and all eyes will be on your little princess as she graces the room wearing this stylish dress. The dress features lots of gold flower detailing and at the bottom of the bodice there's a stylish couture edge to finish the look.

Joan Calabrese
joancalabrese.ie
Joan Calabrese joined Mon Cheri Bridals in 2008 to create a new children's collection, Joan Calabrese for Mon Cheri. Her premiere collection for the label offers moderate priced dresses while still providing the signature style and fine fabrication her designs are known for. Classic with an edge, this collection includes special occasion, flower girl and First Holy Communion designs.

The sleeveless satin and tulle tea-length A-line dress has a jewelled neckline, tulle overlay bodice, thin satin band with centre bow over thick double layer tulle waistband, covered buttons down the back bodice, multi-layer tulle overlay skirt with scattered hand-beaded satin and organza three-dimensional flowers.

Linzi Jay
www.linzijay.com
Linzi Jay has just launched its 2017 bridesmaid collection with fresh new tea-length ’50-style dresses along with beautiful lace detail on classic full length styles with new colours added to the range of chiffon and satin dresses. The collection also features a new two-piece bridesmaid dress with a lace button back top and chiffon fitted skirt proving very popular. Log on to the website to view the full collection.
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This issue, we turn our attention to behind the scenes, where expensive kitchen equipment, lighting and PA systems are all helping to bring the big day together.

Where would we be at a wedding without food, music and lights? External caterers and hired in bands and DJs do so much to ensure that their customers wouldn’t face such a scenario. Unfortunately, you can’t always vouch for the equipment working as it should, or PA systems being 100 per cent safe from theft, and without these, a simple, well-rehearsed job can soon become a near impossible feat.

Equipment fails
Any equipment you rely on to do your work needs to be cared for, secured, and last but not least, insured. Insurance will reduce the likelihood of something such as an industrial mixer breaking down unexpectedly, as regular checks and inspection will have already flagged up certain elements that are looking worse for wear.

Sound and vision
Speakers, PA systems and lights are expensive, widely used, and sought after – a detail not lost on organised and opportunist thieves alike. With this sort of equipment spending most of the time in unsecured venues, or in a van, it’s also vulnerable to theft.

Your insurance back up
What your insurance policy should include greatly depends on the service you’re supplying, the equipment used, and whether or not this equipment is transported.

Goods in transit
If you’re a caterer using heat lamps, or a DJ who needs a mixing desk, then you’ll need to consider Goods in Transit Insurance to protect this equipment, while it’s on the move.

Engineering inspection
Coffee machines which use steam pressure, and industrial mixers such as those used by commercial bakers, should have regular inspections to ensure that they’re safe to use, and detect any problems which may cause a breakdown in the future. You can ask for engineering inspection to be added to your policy to cover this.

Contents
Contents Insurance is a standard for most commercial policies, but you need to be sure that specific, essential items, such as an expensive piece of equipment is adequately covered within this policy. If you’ve recently upgraded a set of lights, it’s vital you let your insurer know, as this will inevitably increase the sum of your contents. If the level of cover doesn’t match the true value, you run the risk of being underinsured.

Other insurance covers you might consider to fill in any gaps include business interruption for those times when machinery can’t be replaced quick enough; professional indemnity in case you’re unable to fulfil the job you’ve been contracted to do, and public liability for any losses or injuries to wedding guests or venue staff for which you’re deemed responsible.

To further discuss how insurance can keep the mechanics of your wedding business in motion, contact the experts at Hine.
Online marketing is a confusing profession sometimes. At various times of the day I’m asked to be a statistician, author, business analyst and programmer and that’s before we get started on actually putting together campaigns, dealing with copywriters and managing multiple clients through various communications systems. The phrase ‘octopus on stilts’ springs to mind if you want a visual clue as to what it’s like working in our office on the average day.

While it’s sometimes taxing on the brain trying to keep a successful marketing campaign going, one thing I never considered myself to be is a psychologist. It turns out, however, that how people think is so ingrained in what we do on a daily basis it’s quite easy to ignore that what we’re actually doing is analysing people. This may mean we’ll have to order in some white lab coats and the chaise longue for when things get really heavy!

A recent blog post on the Moz.com Internet Marketing blog (https://goo.gl/g0RqXK) highlighted for me just how much psychology is involved in creating a successful campaign to promote a website and how we all as marketers and retailers need to consider what our target audience is thinking when we try to sell products online.

In this post, content marketing company Fractl showed through analysis of 300+ content campaigns what really counts to get the best engagement from online marketing campaigns. The results aren’t exactly surprising, but you’ll only realise this when you have your ‘psychology head’ on.

It turns out that promotional campaign performance is directly tied to several triggers including emotional response, comparisons (which you could class as ranking or pride) and pop culture references, which could be pandering to our sense of belonging or affinity. All of these emotional triggers are well recognised and known to anyone who studies psychology.
CONTENT MARKETING CAMPAIGNS
If you don’t know what content marketing is, a simple definition would be creating online content (whether that is text, video or imagery in any format) that will both be viewed and shared.
Successful content marketing campaigns can go viral and generate massive amounts of social shares on sites such as Twitter, Facebook and Google+ while bringing in hundreds of links to a target website. This in turn increases both direct traffic to that target website, will increase referral traffic (from all of those links) and will increase rankings in search engines for a range of key phrases related to the content of the campaign. Content marketing can therefore be very powerful and bring in the revenue your business needs to survive, if done well.

WHAT MAKES A GREAT CAMPAIGN?
From the data supplied by Fractl, it turns out that a really great content marketing campaign needs a strong mix of emotional hook, comparison and a good mix of pop culture.
For an example of how this would read when related to giftware, you need look no further than the craze for Keep Calm paraphernalia a few years ago. This had oodles of emotional hook, there was massive competition to see how products could out-do each other on the Keep Calm front and there’s definitely a big mix of pop culture in there as well. Campaigns like this can take on a life of their own and be self-promoting – after a while it’s the people you’re selling to who do the promotion for you, which in marketing terms is nirvana!

THINKING ABOUT YOUR CAMPAIGNS
Now that you know what makes a great content marketing campaign, think how you can create one for yourself. Find products in your online store which will promote an emotional response. If you can also find products which also appeal to popular culture you’re already over half way there to having a great subject for a content marketing campaign!
If you want inspiration then consider that trading verticals which traditionally sell well include video gaming, equestrian, angling, shooting, motorsports and other participation sports. If you can therefore find gifts which appeal to people who participate in these sports and pastimes then you are probably onto a winner. Remember, if all else fails, controversy will usually get you the viral response you need to sell – everyone loves a bit of scandal! (Check this out if you don’t believe me! https://goo.gl/HiYuDu).
We are one of the largest stockists of fashion jewellery and accessories for boutiques and bridal shops. We have been a trade only supplier, all over Europe, for the last twenty five years.

For latest product details or to make an enquiry please visit our website or give us a call.

www.natraj.co.uk

98-100 Hospital Street, Hockley, Birmingham B19 3QP
T: 0121 236 2211 / 0121 200 1060 M: 0780 164 9899 E: kp@natraj.co.uk

Exhibiting at Spring Fair - NEC, Moda - NEC, London Bridal Show - Olympia and many other leading shows in UK.
We asked Sarah Kitley, Marketing Manager from International Jewellery London (IJL): “What are the main factors influencing jewellery trends for the rest of the year?”

Traditional 9ct and 18ct yellow gold has been steadily growing in popularity, but it’s predicted to hit its peak in the winter of 2016. For jewellery customers, this will mean a wider gold offering alongside the bi-metal and rose gold options that have been a consistent feature on shelves in the last 12 months.

Jewellery will also continue to be influenced by this year’s Pantone colours—a soft ethereal pink and wispy sky blue, which work equally well with gold tones and white metal shades. These delicate pastel hues are also reflected in clothing on the High Street, so expect to see more quartz, moonstone, aquamarine, tourmaline and topaz gemstone jewels designed to match.

A blossoming interest in more whimsical themes, fairytales and fantasy will impact the jewellery market this year too, with fiery opals playing a key role. Think Alice in Wonderland with suspended décor, unusual table centre pieces and jewellery that surprises such as asymmetric ear climbers and cuffs.

In terms of bridal jewellery trends, single and double halo styles in oval, round and square shapes will be popular. For inspiration take a look at British designer Andrew Geoghegan’s Clair de Lune collection, which plays on the standard halo to create something enticing and unusual. The search for unexpected, intelligent design is also lending itself to illusion-settings, whereby smaller clusters of diamonds are used to mimic bigger carat sizes. Engagement rings in 0.30ct to 0.70ct sizes, especially in cushion and oval shapes, are certainly seeing a rise in popularity.

Finally, customers will be presented with a greater array of ethical and Fairtrade jewellery options, thanks in large part to the growth of Fairtrade gold and silver in the UK. We’ll also see a plethora of unusual diamonds, including naturally included stones, plus grey, cognac, champagne and peach shades.

We catch up with experts and suppliers to see what’s hot or not when it comes to bridal jewellery.

**BRIDES ARE GOING FOR GOLD**

**Gecko jewellery**
www.geckojewellery.com

More and more, bridal fashion is moving away from classic styles and is instead embracing gorgeous, vibrant colour and creative, non-traditional designs. Jewellery is becoming a focal feature of an outfit, rather than just an accent, empowering a bride to really shine!

Gold is also in the spotlight, in the form of clothing, accessories and jewellery. Emulating pure luxury, the gold trend never strays far from the fashion radar, and is particularly prevalent in bridal right now. Lush gold highlights create an instant opulence to make the day truly special.

**Girls Love Pearls**
www.girls-love-pearls.co.uk

Girls Love Pearls has always excelled in classical elegance and timeless style, with many of its pieces becoming best sellers with stockists. Although the company continually launches new designs throughout the year, it has recently announced the first range of pearl and diamante designs in a gold finish, which has seen some earrings completely sold out.

Classic brides still adore the more timeless designs, and they have ensured that the gold finished jewellery appeals to these brides too. Stockists can expect competitively priced quality jewellery, and a high percentage of items that are finished with a rhodium plating, which adds to the longevity of jewellery pieces and in styles that are effortlessly sophisticated.
Wedding Collection

ELEMENTS SILVER

gecko

For more information: T: +44(0)1376 532 000  E: sales@geckojewellery.com  W: geckojewellery.com
BIG AND BOLD STATEMENT PIECES

Wedding Factory
www.weddingfactorydirect.com

The Elegance by Carbonneau collection has a wonderful selection of statement bridal jewellery including this multi-strand statement necklace and bracelet, which is bold but also traditional as made from rows of classic freshwater pearls. Brides are opting for simpler dresses and going big on jewellery to complement. The company has an extensive selection of matching necklace, bracelets and earring collections with a style to suit every bride.

ESCAPE THE ORDINARY

Neola
www.neoladesign.com

Neola is a new British jewellery brand with a range of fashion forward designs at an affordable price point that offer fresh and contemporary vibrant designs, with the high quality usually reserved to fine jewellery. Neola is exhibiting at the following trade shows this year include IJL, Scoop, Pulse and Inhorgenta.

The directional collections are based on distinctive geometric concepts contrasted by intricate and organic shapes. Neola’s contemporary jewellery is handmade by highly skilled artisans, using precious metals and natural gemstones and the company takes pride in offering ethically produced jewellery, where everybody involved in the making of the pieces is paid and treated fairly. The new Equilibrium range focuses on geometric minimalism, and the Charleston collection is all about the Art Deco movement, combined with ’70s flair.

BACK TO BACK

Miranda Templeton
www.mirandatempleton.co.uk

Miranda Templeton has recently launched its beautiful jewellery range that has been created to wear with backless dresses. Gold is making a welcome return with several of their key pieces now available in both gold and silver options.

International Jewellery London
4th - 9th September, 2016
Olympia London
www.jewellerylondon.com

IJL 2016 is set to showcase the most innovative designers and brands from the UK and around the world with a host of new international companies making their debut at this ‘must visit’ industry event. Many of the features on offer at the show can only be found at IJL, from the most impressive line-up of fine jewellery and the annual Market Focus to cutting-edge trends and thought-provoking seminar topics. With more than 500 exhibitors drawn from 33 countries, the international line-up includes an array of individual companies from Australia, Columbia, Brazil, Greece, Germany and Denmark to name but a few, but also high profile Country Pavilions from Hong Kong, South Africa and Sri Lanka, together with the European Village. This in turn has attracted a number of new key buyers from Russia, France, America and the Middle East to this year’s show for the first time as members of the prestigious Diamond Club.

To register free visit: www.jewellerylondon.com/register.
Karen Taft, Managing and Sales Director of Benjamin Roberts, talks to us about the business.

What’s your background in bridal designs, and what attracted you to this sector of the fashion industry? Whilst I’ve never formerly trained as a bridal designer, I guess I’ve learned about the design aspect in bite-size pieces ‘on the job’ and been thrown into the deep end of manufacturing since the acquisition of Benjamin Roberts in 2003.

I have a city & guild qualification in Interior Design, Soft Furnishing, Hairdressing, Carpentry & Upholstery (not that any bride would ever desire a wooden gown) but having a creative background and an eye for design must certainly help.

I’m attracted to this sector of the fashion industry because bridal is special, exceptionally original, and requires endless passion. A bride shopping for the dress of her dreams doesn’t come close to purchasing just a new outfit.

Founded more than 40 years ago by Benjamin Roberts, what do you think makes the company continue to flourish?

Just recognising if something is broken, and trying to fix it and not sweeping it under the carpet. We learn from our mistakes and embrace the changes needed. All manufacturers have good times and not so good times. Just like boutiques, actors, artists and singers, you need to know when your style needs to move on, and keep up with what the bride is asking for. Going on the road, and listening to your stores’ ideas and getting feedback has been so enlightening that I could write a book – tips to help you to the top!

How would you describe the Benjamin Roberts bridal collections to potential customers?

This year, we’ve fused gorgeous with curves, Tia, Karen George and Benjamin Roberts into one Benjamin Robert collection. Consequently, the 40 to 50-piece collection is extremely diverse, so it’s like a scrumptious chocolate box with something delicious for everyone to delve into.

How often do you release new gowns, and what is the gown price range?

This year, we’ve released our main 2017 collection in April at our own show at Kilworth House, Lutterworth and everyone joined us for the weekend. Next year we’ll be doing something similar. If a number of stores asked for something specific for 2017, we then have enough time to try and bring a few extra last minute pieces to the Harrogate Bridal Show in September. The price range is vast and starts from £155 to £529 wholesale.

What inspired the latest Benjamin Roberts collection for 2017, and do you follow bridal trends?

Feedback from stores was the primary source for the inspiration as the bridal retail is the ones directly in touch with our end user. Then our manufacturer has a wonderful liaison with a company of textile designers who create fabrics for the International Haute Couture. They’ve designed 12 dresses just for Benjamin Roberts with bespoke designs that will never be seen elsewhere.
Which bridal gowns do you foresee as going to be the most popular from the new collection, and why?

This is a good question. Before I went on the road in May with 50 bridal dresses swinging in the back of a lovely new white transit van, I thought I knew which dresses would be more popular. How wrong could I be?

Within a 35 mile radius and three shops, they each chose totally different dresses without any overlap with different ideas of the perfect gown for the their boutique, different sized brides, and individual requests. So I reckon, it’s whatever dress gives you goosebumps!

Are there any trends that you see emerging for this autumn?

The Haute Couture catwalks have recently revealed some very risqué semi-transparent wedding dresses which could trend into something less suggestive and paired down for the British bride, while keeping elements of the original idea.

There are some stunning beaded gowns out there, which expose the back and shoulders, and crepe is a gorgeous new matt, plain, flowing fabric that drapes expensively.

The company introduced a collection of gowns for brides with curves. How important do you think it is to provide dresses for more voluptuous women?

We did this back in March 2009 where Benjamin Roberts invited a size 18 model, Zoe to the Harrogate show showing stores the same gown in a size 10 next to a size 18. Gorgeous with Curves (GWC) was responsible for 25 per cent of the shows orders, requesting sample sizes between 18 to 28. At the time, there were only a couple of other manufacturers who were covering this market with us, and since then the market for the curvier brides has quadrupled.

We’ve tried setting it apart from the main collection but now that everything is fused together under the Benjamin Roberts label, we’ll market the GWC with a photo shoot using a size 20 model wearing flattering styles from the 2017 collection. This way, the curvier girl feels she’s as special as slimmer brides.

How many stockists do you currently have, and are you looking for new retail partners?

By fusing the collections together, the number of accounts has naturally reduced because we’re now not selling three or four different ranges to three or four different boutiques in the same town.

We’re therefore embracing new and exciting stores who might be looking for something a little bit different to the norm, who share the same passion as us, and have their feet firmly rooted in social media.

Do you have any other exciting news you’d like to share with us?

I received this hot new information three days prior to my answering your questions. We’ve also introduced Accessory packs in April, which are aimed at stores who like to be creative with their brides and give them a bespoke look.

I’d also love to create a Benjamin Roberts Private Collection that would be at the higher end and use the wonderful talents of our Haute Couture textile designers. Who knows? We all have to aim for something whimsical and exciting don’t we?
Blush METALLIC EDIT

Inspiration to dress your window in trendy rose gold and coppery tones.

Copper squash vase, £18, Mia Fleur
www.miafleur.com

Copper leaf decorations, £18, Marquis & Dawe
www.marquisanddawe.co.uk

Versailles French gold dressing table, £945, The French Bedroom Co
www.frenchbedroomcompany.co.uk

Hexagon copper trinket boxes, £7.95, Rigby & Mac
www.rigbyandmac.com

Copper hummingbird mirror, £265, PUJI
www.puji.com

Umbra ribbon wall clock, £39, Red Candy
www.redcandy.co.uk

Cocolux Luna copper candle, $65, Norsu Interiors
www.norsu.com.au

Ava copper table lamp, $648, Eco Chic
www.ecochic.com.au

Illuminated wooden and copper love sign, £29, Twenty Six Degrees
www.twentysixdegrees.co.uk

Betty Gold shoes, £245, Charlotte Mills
www.charlottemills.com

Copper hummingbird mirror, £265, PUJI
www.puji.com
Retailer round-up

*Attire Bridal* speaks to two successful bridal retailers to find out about what’s happening at the shop front.

**Rebecca Franklin, Fleur de Lys Bridal**

www.fleurdelysbridal.co.uk

**Besides bridal gowns, do you find it profitable to stock any bridal accessories, and if so what?**

Our bridal accessory business is really strong, and it’s very much part of the bridal package with most brides buying at least one accessory. This year, we’ve seen Cathedral length single tier veils make a huge comeback, and although tiaras are still a popular option, we’ve seen an increasing number of brides choosing hair vines instead. I think it’s the influence of all the American bridal shows shown in the UK that is influencing trends.

**What key accessories would you say every bridal shop should stock?**

Along with veils, shoes are an essential, and are always bestsellers. Every bride wants a really good selection of shoes and veils on hand to try on with her dress. We believe it’s important to be able to completely dress a bride to help her create ‘the look’, which means having a wide and varied selection of accessories on hand for her to try.

**How much do your brides spend on accessories?**

Most brides will buy at least one accessory, and it’s generally around £350 including shoes, veil and tiara.

**Odette Lister, Brides By Solo**

www.bridesbysolo.co.uk

**Besides bridal gowns, do you find it profitable to stock any bridal accessories, and if so what?**

We’ve slowly cut back on bridal accessories over the past five years as the demand to buy them in-store has greatly diminished as on-line competition has stepped up. We stopped selling shoes two years ago, and find a lot of our brides borrow their headpiece or buy them on-line. We still sell petticoats and every single variety of veil really well. We sell a lot of tea-length dresses, which again require their own set of quirky accessories.

**What key accessories would you say every bridal shop should stock?**

It’s important to stock some accessories so the potential bride can see the completed look for her intended bridal outfit when the accessories are added, without these the look isn’t finished. We find stocking a few select key pieces is much more profitable than the vast ranges we used to stock years ago, which ended up being too much choice for the brides.

**How much do your brides spend on accessories?**

The average price of a veil is £99 and the average price of a hairpiece is £60. Petticoats vary depending on style and jackets and straps are made-up bespoke with our in-house seamstress, the price being absorbed in the cost of the alterations.
Bringing bridal local

The Bridal Roadshow is rapidly growing in size and popularity, and already looking for more locations across the country to host more events. We report on the last show of the season.

What is The Bridal Roadshow?
The Bridal Roadshow is made up of a group of wholesale bridal manufacturers, which specialises in the trade supply of bridal apparel to retail wedding shops and boutiques around the UK.

Together, they aim to tour the country with a number of regional shows and exhibit their newest collections. Retailers can visit and view the latest collections closer to home at a more convenient local venue. With events taking place across the UK each spring and through the summer, it’s a must-visit for boutique owners, offering a brilliant opportunity to see new season ranges from some of the biggest names in bridal fashion.

Benefits of staying local
• For some retailers, it’s a first chance to look at the new collections.
• Spread the cost of buying across the year by selecting a local road show that suits you.
• Take advantage of retailer incentives at each show.
• All the venues have free parking based in locations where there are also good transport links.
• Shows have a relaxed atmosphere and comfortable surroundings.
• Save valuable time away from the shop and reduce your travel costs.
• Meet reliable and trustworthy suppliers.

Companies represented at the show include*:
Alexia Designs
Alfred Angelo
Amaré Couture
Bridal
Allure Bridals
Affinity Bridal Gowns
Benjamin Roberts
Banny Bridal
Bridal Vantage
Bliss
Blush
Casablanca
Catherine Parry
Concept
Crystal Breeze
DD Designs/IT Services
D’Zage Bridesmaids
Danielle Couture
Decorum
Demetrios
Eddy K
Elizabeth Dickens
Ella Rosa
Emmerling
Hermione Collections
Hilary Morgan
HT Headwear
Hollywood Dreams
Illusion Prom
Interstiss
Joan Calebrese
Kenneth Winston
Lindsay May Shoes
Liliana Couture Bridal
Michael’s Bridal
Fabrics
Masterhand
Madison James
Margaret Lee
Mia Mia
Michelle Bridal
Mikaela by Paloma
Blanca
House of Nicholas
Omnisew
Opulence
Pallas Athena
Phoenix Gowns
Private Label by G
Phil Collins Bridal
Pure Bridal
Raymond
Santaeularia
Rita Mae
Romantica
Rosa Couture
Serenade
Shades Shoes
Sophia and Camilla
Special Day
Tiffanys
The Perfect Bridal
Company Tres Chic
True Bride
Twilight Designs
Victoria Kay
Venus Bridal UK
Veromia
VK Bridal Couture
Wendy Makin

*Correct at the time of going to press

DIARY DATE
The last Bridal Roadshow of the season takes place:
21st - 22nd August, 2016
University of the West of England, Bristol, BS34 8QZ

Attire Bridal is a media partner of The Bridal Roadshow and will be attending the Bristol event. Register for this show and be in with a chance to win £1000 to spend on stock at the event.

For more information about the shows, visit www.bridalroadshow.co.uk.
SHOW TIME

TEXTILE FORUM
THE FASHION
FABRIC SHOW
LONDON

October 12-13 2016

follow us
@textile_forum

ONE MARYLEBONE
LONDON NW1 4AQ

Register now at textileforum.co.uk
ATTIRE BRIDAL

Fashion Files

FILE 1 Beautiful Blooms
Bridal gowns with floral designs are big news, and perfect for summer weddings

FILE 2 The Collections
Fabulous accessories to match our two key fashion trends

FILE 3 Sleek & slender
Figure-skimming, fit-and-flare gowns that show off the brides’ curves

FILE 4 Up and Coming
We catch up with Evermore by Amberley London, who has just launched a luxury and timeless collection of flowergirl and junior bridesmaid dresses incorporating gorgeous British, French and Italian fabrics
If you would like to become a stockist of this exclusive collection please call Chanticleer on +44 (0) 1242 226501
or email me direct on: tracey@chanticleerbrides.co.uk
Bridal gowns with floral designs are big news, and perfect for summer weddings.
1. Forget Me Knot by Sharon Bowen-Dryden
   +44 (0)7801 446 985
   www.bowendryden.co.uk

2. Tilda by Muscat London
   +44 (0)20 3488 1562
   www.muscatbrida.com

3. 151210 by Savin London
   +44 (0)203 389 9070
   www.savinlondon.com

4. Posy two-piece by Charlotte Balbier
   +44 (0)161 493 2700
   www.charlottebalbier.com
VICTORIA KAY
5. Flora by Moijgan Bridal Couture  
+44 (0)1202 525 123  
www.mojganweddingdresses.com

6. Katelyn by Wendy Makin Bridal Designs  
+61 7 3823 0100  
www.wendymakin.com

7. Delilah by Eliza Jane Howell  
+44 (0)20 7436 2992  
www.elizajanehowell.com

8. Marilyn by Sassi Holford  
+44 (0)20 7584 1532  
www.sassiholford.com
The Collections
We showcase a collection of fabulous accessories to match our two key fashion features.

Beautiful blooms
Bridal gowns with floral designs are big news.

SLEEK & SLENDER
Figure-skimming, fit and flare gowns that show off the brides’ curves.
Sleek & slender

Figure-skimming, fit and flare gowns that show off the brides’ curves.
1. 2733 by Benjamin Roberts
   +44 (0)1792 564 710
   www.benjaminroberts.co.uk

2. 791F by Martiana Liana
   +44 (0)800 961 140
   www.essensedesigns.com

3. 116121 by Mon Cheri
   +44 (0)1954 232 102
   www.mon-cheri.co.uk

4. Trisha by Modeca
   +31 85 489 9270
   www.modeca.com
If you would like to become a stockist, please contact Mark & Sam Everard
07711 208586 or 01202 424477
prettymadesmia@hotmail.co.uk
www.miasolano.com
7. Tatiana by Sassi Holford
   +44 (0)1823 256 100
   www.sassiholford.com

8. Secret love by Lyn Ashworth by Sarah Barrett
   +44 (0)1283 820 643
   www.lynashworth.co.uk

9. G009 by Valenti Spose
   +44 (0)1626 333 541
   www.valentinispose.com

10. SA509 by Danielle Couture
    +44 (0)1689 831 841
    www.daniellecouture.co.uk
HARROGATE BRIDAL SHOW
11TH - 13TH SEPTEMBER 2016
STAND Q19

AWARD WINNING DESIGNER
MOJGAN NOORIAN- BELLAMY
Fabrics and finish

Rebecca Curreen talks to Attire Bridal about her new and exciting brand Evermore by Amberley London, and how gorgeous fabric and subtle design do the talking.

Amberley London has been making luxury clothing for girls for four years so what inspired you to go into bridal partywear?

We noticed that some of our party dresses were being put into the ceremony section of many department stores and boutiques. So as a test style specifically for this market, we showcased the Alicia dress recently at Pitti Bimbo, the luxury childrenswear trade show in Florence. Buyers were picking it up all day long, and we kept hearing “what else do you have?” Therefore, the Evermore by Amberley London collection was born.

What has influenced the design of the Evermore collection?

The name Evermore reflects how little girls feel in the dresses like a fairytale princess, and how the memories can last a lifetime. We love the idea of that.

For me, both the fabrics and the finish must be perfect to do the occasion justice. This means pure silks and cottons, intricate laces, cut velvets and embroidered silk with beautiful details including handmade piping, true highball buttons, and satin bias edged netting. One of the reasons that we got into luxury childrenswear was because I love beautiful fabric, and design inspiration comes directly from a fabric’s personality.

Above all, I’d have to say that the basic design principles underpinning our main line made for a natural move into ceremony wear. Amberley London is an antithesis of a bling brand, we believe in understated elegance, letting gorgeous fabric and subtle design do the talking.

My personal influences come from the great style ages of the past – the Romantic era and the ‘50s. I’m a great admirer of the post-war Dior’s New Look movement. The challenge of course is making these design ethics relevant and beautiful in modern times. Evermore is the perfect outlet for me. I hope the market likes the result.

What makes the collection stand out from other bridesmaid ranges?

I think being mindful of traditional styling and always aware of the nature of the occasion is important. I’m surprised that there are many sleeveless flowergirl dresses cross-purposed as First Holy Communion dresses without a shoulder cover strategy. This is just not acceptable in many parishes. There are situations where it’s great to break with convention, and really push the boat out for style’s sake but we don’t think weddings and religious ceremonies are the right forum for that. However, it does force me to think harder about how to produce something special within traditional realms, and that’s a good thing.

It’s the small things that can make all the difference. Sometimes, it’s an adjustment of a few millimetres on a puffed sleeve, the volume of fabric at the waist, or even the spacing of the gathers that makes that difference. Put alongside, one version looks dowdy, and the other looks elegant; it really is wonderful alchemy, and people seem very good at recognising it.

There’s plenty of science in the dressmaking. We sample and sample again until it’s perfect; it’s part art, part mathematics and part perseverance! I have an amazing pattern cutter with the same eye and sensibilities as me.

What makes Evermore different from what others have to offer this market?

We looked carefully at the competition and tried to put ourselves in the position of the customer, and identified areas where we simply think we can do better, or offer something more.

Pricing was one of the areas, and with the right production model, we’ve improved price point on a like-for-like basis without compromising, and in fact enhancing both fabric and construction quality. Appreciating luxury isn’t after all mutually exclusive to an appreciation of value, and we wanted flowergirls to be able to wear that dream dress, not a lesser version of it.

Detail is important too. The full lining is one example, we line all our skirts in soft Italian cotton, and will never suggest to a child that netting against their skin is okay because it’s ‘just for one day’. I don’t like compromise and shortcuts, and would rather find a better way of working in order to provide the perfect detail.

Choice of silhouette was another area we felt needed improvement. We noticed a
reinvigorate the collection constantly with genuinely new pieces each season, as well as updating the fabrics and trims of the classic styles. We feel we’re uniquely placed to do this at the luxury end of the market. Some of these new pieces might be seasonal – for example, the Eden dress features a pretty rose patterned Liberty print bodice, which by definition be will seasonal due to the ever changing nature of Liberty’s own offering.

Where are your bridal designs made, and for what reason?
All design, development and pre-production is carried out in the UK, and involves patternmaking from scratch based on original sketches, toileting, grading, sampling and fitting. Then there are adjustments, reworks, tweaks and improvements, which continue right through to the first factory garment being produced, and often beyond.

When it’s time for the bulk and to-order production phase, this is passed to our factories elsewhere in the EU, principally in Bulgaria with a comprehensive remit from our UK staff.

What’s your favourite dress you’ve designed so far and why?
Our very first design was the Alicia Dress, which holds a special place in my heart. The pale ivory of the silk organza skirt pairs beautifully, with the ivories in the embroidered damask bodice. The colourway of heavenly blue and angelic almond is both subtle and stunning. When the first Alicia sample was unboxed, we all went “Wow!” and everyone agreed, it was just perfect.

Have you exhibited at any trade shows?
We recently showed at Pitti Bimbo in Florence, the premier luxury childrenswear show, and last month at one of the most prestigious bridal shows, the White Gallery in London. The collection will be available during July in the London showroom of our UK agent, Superkids & Co, by appointment www.superkidsandco.com.

We’re members of the National Childrenswear Association (NCWA) so can showroom on an ad hoc basis in central London by appointment or customers can email for appointments enquiries@amberley.com.

But what we really want to do is get out on the road. We’ll be looking to visit bridal boutiques across the country to show Evermore to boutique owners all across the UK. We see the bridal boutiques as important partners.

Where do you see the business in five years?
The ceremony wear segment is so exciting, and embodies everything that I love about working in childrenswear. We’re still growing and have, I believe, a one-of-a-kind take on this market, as well as an exceptional position from which to launch Evermore.

Our primary markets for Amberley London day and partywear have pretty much been from the US, Italy, UAE and Japan. It’s simply a matter of buyer demographics and proclivities; we’re better known in New York than we are London, even though we’re a British brand. But what I’d like is to have real recognition and serious uptake for Evermore in the UK. Evermore is a natural fit for the UK, where you might say people are traditional, but you can’t say they’re old fashioned. That’s Evermore in a nutshell.

Contact
Julie Bonnar chats to Lucy Choi about following in her uncle’s footsteps when it comes to designing stunning shoes.

The Lucy Choi London brand has come a long way since its launch four years ago. Tell us how this all came about?

I can’t quite believe all that has happened since launching my brand four years ago. I’ve loved every moment! It all began in 2012, when I felt I had accrued the right experience in both the financial and the fashion worlds to confidently launch my own label with a strong USP.

I’d spotted a gap in the market for stylish and luxurious, but also comfortable and affordable shoes for all occasions, and for women of all ages and tastes. I noticed huge disparities in price ranges between other brands, with designers charging more than £900 and high street stores charging very low prices and anywhere up to £200.

I want to champion craftsmanship and design, and an ethos that luxury is accessible and affordable. I question why you always feel you must spend hundreds of pounds for a pair of beautiful shoes and wanted to provide an alternative.

How did your love of shoe designing come about?

I’ve always had a passion for shoes, as I grew up watching my uncle Jimmy Choo at work in his studio as a young girl, and then later on I helped out in his atelier during my university holidays. I was hooked and I knew I’d eventually follow him into the shoe industry. My sister is also in the shoe industry so shoes are definitely in our DNA!

Does being the niece of famous shoe designer put you under extra pressure to prove yourself in the footwear industry?

Of course, but I put the pressure on myself to produce exquisite shoes. I’m extremely close to my uncle and have learnt many lessons from watching him at work, especially his strong work ethic and values. He has always been a role model and a mentor to me, and I learnt early on that nothing in life comes easy and you must give 110 per cent. My uncle has always stayed true to his belief in himself, in his workmanship, and in delivering his promises, so I’ve been striving to stay true to those values that he instilled in me while establishing my own original shoe label.

How would you describe your label’s signature style?

I believe Lucy Choi London is a one-of-a-kind, and ensure that each one of my shoes, albeit priced affordably, have the wow factor and stand out from the crowd. Every pair is shaped by my ethos of the three ‘C’s – comfort, craftsmanship and character. I don’t compromise on price or originality. I’m not a follower of trends particularly, nor a slave to fads or fast fashion, I love to be creative, innovative and explore new styles.

My personal style is very much a reflection of my brand, and our shoes are classic yet playful rather than...
Trend led. I like to inject character into all of my shoe designs, sometimes through striking use of colour or unexpected textures and fabrics, such as leather, silk and lace.

Tell us more about the company’s ethos and the three C’s?
The brand’s ethos is defined by what I call the three C’s: Comfort, Craftsmanship and Character, each one intrinsic to creating a shoe that will last a lifetime, and is guaranteed to make my customers look and feel confident. Every time I design a pair of shoes I think of our motto Rock ’n’ Royal, which to me is characterised by style icons; Kate Moss and Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge. Some shoes represent the edgy and iconic Kate Moss, other shoes the elegant and classic Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge and many are a combination of both.

The brand is well established now and is sold in more than 80 stockists around the world? Why do you think the label has been so popular?
I believe the brand’s success is due to a combination of hard work and determination, good teamwork, alongside our mission to offer something quite different to today’s customer. Our shoes offer comfort, craftsmanship and plenty of character, while remaining affordable and accessible. Our customers are savvy, they expect quality and luxury for the best possible price point, which I feel is the secret of the brand’s appeal and our longevity.

Tell us about the latest collection and why it would particularly appeal to the bridal party?
My collections offer something really quite different for a bride, with its wide range of styles for the whole bridal party, who can choose from an array of shoes from stilettos to flats, peep toe styles to classic pumps that they will then want to wear again and again. I play with materials and trims to create shoes with our signature knockout factor.

When I was deciding which shoes to wear for my own wedding day, I wanted to wear shoes that were slightly sexy, yet classic and that would be comfortable to wear all day and into the evening. I always keep this at the front of my mind when designing shoes. I want brides to have confidence on their special day. I’m also very aware that many shoes on the market are really expensive, and now offer brides the chance to buy going away shoes and wedding shoes together.

In the boutique, we now offer a VIP Bridal Shopping Experience, for the bride-to-be, the mother of the bride, her bridesmaids and a bridal party of 10 or more of her best shoe-loving friends. Her guests are treated to a complimentary glass of champagne on arrival, be styled by a Lucy Choi London stylist, and browse our gorgeous collections. I was constantly asked by loyal customers about shoes for the big day, so decided to create shoes that were versatile, which can be worn at weddings, but also at parties and special events.

Are there any bridal designs that are proving extremely popular?
The Venice glitter styles and the Rose glitter styles are consistently bestsellers, with cute bow detailing and luxurious glitter fabrics, and two heel heights that appeal to different customers. I love the Adelite, a classic stiletto in a sumptuous champagne glitter fabric, and a new personal favourite has to be the Davy for someone a bit more adventurous, in striking metallic gold and silver.

What sort of bride will be attracted to the collection?
Our collection is aimed at brides of all ages and tastes, who appreciate quality and comfort, but also want to be a little playful with their footwear too. The collection embodies classic elegance with edgy and unusual touches to give each design that special wow factor.

Contact
Lucy Choi
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A fine romance

We talk to Designer, Gema Nicolas about the latest collection from Cabotine Bridal.
What prompted Cabotine to launch the new collection for 2017 and how does it differ from previous years?
Here at Cabotine Bride, we launch one collection each year in line with the European shows with this year seeing the introduction of lots of new fabrics and silhouettes. We’ve strong traditions with the brand that’s evident in our gown finishes.

Who designed the range, and how would you describe its signature style?
I designed this range, and my proposal this time for Cabotine Bride has a more romantic yet glamorous feel with voluminous overlays, but without losing our signature timeless look.

How many designs does the collection include, and why?
The collection includes an extensive line of 74 designs to offer stockists a wide choice of styles and fabric options.

What fabrics and embellishments are key to the latest Cabotine collection?
The collection boasts a variety of fabrics with texture such as on the new Ottoman gown, and luxurious jacquard, guipure and embroidered tulle.
We’ve also used beautiful sheer fabrics and delicate lace for a subtle look, and embellishments come in the form of jewelled belts and delicate beading.
Cabotine designs are intended for the bride who want to look feminine but without losing a touch of innocence and simplicity. The subtlety of sheer fabrics such as silk and georgette co-exist in harmony with the roundness of fabrics like silk or crêpe mikado designs that give a spectacular fall.

What type of retailer is the collection most suited to?
The collection is a beautiful addition to any boutique looking to add a little sophistication to their rails at a commercial price point.

What sort of bride will be attracted to the collection?
Cabotine Bridal will appeal to brides looking for a soft romantic look for her big day with a touch of elegance.

What is the price range of the collection?
The collection usually wholesales from between £300 - £800.

Which of the designs do you predict will be your best-sellers and why?
There are a number of gowns that are sure to be best sellers, with brides loving the dreamy style of the Cabotine Bridal. Brides will love the clean-cut Ottoman wedding dress (7651) – the bodice is covered in a lace overlay, and the skirt has a detachable train, which is joined to it under the belt. Another one to look out for is the Mermaid chiffon wedding dress (7654) – the dress features a halter neckline and a semi-sheer back embellished with delicate guipure.
Other designs to watch out for include the delicate flared guipure embellished wedding dress (7657) with semi-sheer straps, and the gown (7675) with silked-tulle skirt and tulle bodice with semi-sheer, long-sleeves, deep V-back and lace detail embellishment.

Where can potential stockists view the new collection?
Any retailer wanting to stock Cabotine Bridal should contact our UK sales agent Tony Bromilow. Tony carries a large amount of samples from the new collection along with our beautiful look books and fabric samples.

What retail support can Cabotine offer its stockists of the collection?
The company can provide retailers with a huge amount of support including DVD, mini-brochures, brochures, social media and our website. We’re also able to loan samples for events and provide extra fabric or beads if required.
All our gowns arrive beautifully packaged with Cabotine Bridal branded dress bags and hangers. We’ve an excellent customer service team and a UK agent on hand to help.

How many stockists do you have in the UK?
We currently have 12 stockists.

Contact
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UK Agent
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07962 226 543
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www.cabotine.co.uk
MODA 7th - 9th August Stand X7 hall 20
Harrogate 11th - 13th September Stand B37

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www.promfrocks.co.uk
Spotlight on Veils

We reveal three styles to look out for this year.

Tallulah ’20s Juliet style veil,
www.karendornellie.com
Barely there

Single and double layer veils with a tiny amount of embellishment are a popular choice with traditional and contemporary brides.

Karen Dornellie
www.karendornellie.com
Karen Dornellie continues to expand the collection with a stunning line of veils. Karen Rob took her designer name from her maternal grandmother who was a milliner, and has a wealth of experience in costume making so knows all about bringing a sense of glamour, elegance, beauty and a dash of drama to her designs.

Two of our favourite designs include the Tallulah and Beau veils. Tallulah is a long single layer ’20s Juliet style veil with a silver sequins headband tied with satin ribbons while Beau is a mid-length double layer veil with a detachable satin bow topper.

Linzi Jay
www.linzijay.com
Linzi Jay has a wonderful selection of veils from shoulder length to Cathedral length tulle veils with delicate embellishments. Lace-edged or embroidered-edged veils are perfect for a vintage bridal look while a crystal-scattered veil offers a subtle sparkle. Many of the styles that the company offers are made in the UK making them customisable with different edging and scattering options including pearl and crystal. The veil shown here is the flower and leaf beaded pattern raw-edge veil.

enVogue Bridal Accessories
www.envogueaccessories.com
enVogue Bridal Accessories offers high quality veils that come with an attached 4in metal comb to keep it secure. Hugely popular right now is the heavily beaded and pearl edge veils that sit about waist length. For more elaborate looks, try a Cathedral veil with a beautiful embroidered and beaded design or a dramatic lace that tapers up to the comb for a softer look around the face. Most veils are offered in multiple lengths and layers.

Birdcage beauties

Birdcage veils are a wonderful style for brides with shorter hairstyles, and for those who want to give their wedding a vintage feel.

Lily Bella
www.lilybella.co.uk
The Classic French is the best-selling birdcage veil from Lily Bella. This design is held in place by a metal comb or Kirby grips, and can be worn on the side, fully covering the eyes, and many other ways to suit the bride. It’s made from the finest French net and is available in a range of colours including baby pink, gold and silver.

HT Headwear
www.htheadwear.com
Ella from HT Headwear is a pure silk teardrop shaped headpiece is trimmed with super cute flowers and trimmed with tiny pearl centres. The detachable birdcage veil makes it a great day to evening piece and it’s available in white or ivory.
Elizabeth Dickens

DESIGNERS & MANUFACTURERS OF BRIDAL VEILS

CREATING THE PERSONAL TOUCH.

Who we are and why we’re different...
Elizabeth Dickens designs and manufactures beautiful hand-made bridal veils and accessories, using the finest materials from across the world.
We have an extensive, carefully created collection, including contemporary, classic and lace-edged veils, as well as gorgeous belts and head pieces.
Each item is made lovingly here in the UK by our highly-skilled team, offering something special for every bride.
So if you’re a new or existing stockist looking for the latest designs to add to your bridal range that are British-made, imaginatively designed and beautifully constructed, please do get in touch. We’d love to hear from you.

What our stockists say...
“Elizabeth Dickens’ service and attention to detail is second to none. They go above and beyond to make sure they provide us with the best quality products, and have also created bespoke veils for our brides, making them our ‘go to’ accessories company!” - Santy, Brides-2-B

“We love Elizabeth Dickens! Their customer service is second to none. Nothing is too much trouble, even when we are asking for something obscure! Delivery fantastic... I could go on and on, an amazing company.” - Nicola, Bridal Gowns at Jodi

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@ElizabethDVeils
Lovely Lacy borders

Not every bride chooses to wear a veil these days, but those who are opting for traditional are doing it in a contemporary way. A lace edge is a popular choice for long veils this season.

Elizabeth Dickens
www.elizabethdickensveils.co.uk
Elizabeth Dickens has grown steadily to become one of the leading suppliers of bridal veils in the UK. The company has noticed an increase demand for lace edged veils and now has over 15 styles available. Dido is a stunning long length lace veil featuring beaded lace and crystal scatter on the train’s edge giving weight for the perfect drape.

Nymphi Design
www.nymphidesign.com
The Nymphi Design team has started the year off with a more extensive array of veils to covet and fall in love with. More is more, and lace is definitely the first choice for vintage and boho brides, but also for the most fashion forward too. From layers of corded, beaded, or Chantilly lace edging to veils that are hand-embroidered from top to bottom, brides are embracing the once-in-a-lifetime feeling, and look that only a veil can offer. Nymphi has a wide selection of veils that are customisable so that every bride is completely original in the way she looks.

Nilah & Company
www.nilah.com
The romance of Italian laces is currently captivating brides. With stunning twists and turns that intertwine the lace you can be swept away in the shape that’s created. This veil shows how beautifully the blush tones can marry with the ivory lace. The light Swarovski Crystal Elements dance across the body and lace of the veil creating a graceful sparkle that’s sure to captivate.

Twilight Design
www.twilightdesigns.co.uk
Twilight Designs has created a sumptuous collection of stunning veils with beautifully beaded edges to delicate lace edges at incredibly affordable prices, and the collection is a must for any bridal retailer. The company prides itself on high quality at affordable prices, with longer lengths being extremely good value compared to the market standard, and in many cases for next day delivery and no minimum order limit.
Twilight Designs
for that extra bit of sparkle...

WE ARE A TRADE ONLY SUPPLIER
We only supply direct to retailers

Visit our website to view our stunning collection of Bridal Accessories

01827 55444 | info@twilightdesigns.co.uk | www.twilightdesigns.co.uk
GETTING the message
Heidi Thompson of Evolve Your Wedding Business reveals how to make sure a potential client remembers your business.

You work hard to get clients for your business, and sometimes it feels like you’re throwing everything at it and seeing what sticks, only to find that nothing does.

You feel like you’re doing everything you can and nothing is working. I find time and time again that wedding professionals are missing a very powerful tool that could really supercharge their marketing and sales. That tool is email marketing.

Now maybe you’ve heard about email marketing or you want to start but you don’t know how. Well I’m going to walk you through how it works, why it’s so powerful and how to get started.

What is email marketing and how does it work?
It’s simply direct marketing to a subscriber through email. The term subscriber is important because email marketing is permission-based so people have to ‘opt in’ or choose to receive your emails.

The services manage your list, allows people to subscribe and unsubscribe, but also allows you to track and measure the impact of your emails. What’s the point of doing it if you can’t track what it’s actually doing?

Website visitors sign up via a form you’ve created with an email marketing service such as Mailchimp, Convertkit or Getresponse. Don’t worry, it’s simple to create and simple to embed or integrate with your website.

For more information, I’ve created an Email Marketing Services Comparison Guide, which you can download for free using the link here: http://bit.ly/attireemailguide.

Why should wedding professionals use email marketing?
Let’s say someone finds you today but they’re not quite ready to book you for another three, six or 12 months. What are the chances of them remembering your site when the time comes? They might have really liked your website, but simply forgotten to come back to you, and that’s a silly reason to miss out on a booking.

With email marketing you invite them to sign up for your email list so that you can keep in touch. Couples don’t make these decisions quickly, they spend hundreds of hours researching, so the chances of them booking with you from the first visit to your website is pretty slim.

How do you use this to your advantage? You set up a sales funnel to nurture them as a lead over time, and market to them so that you’re top of their list to contact.

Sales is a lot like dating. What would you do if someone came up to you and asked you to marry them?
You’d probably be uncomfortable with the proposal, and look for a way to escape the situation. This is a similar situation when you expect a potential customer to land on your website, and get in touch with you to make a sales conversation.

There’s a process that we all know and understand when it comes to meeting someone, getting to know them, dating them, and then getting more serious about them. It doesn’t just happen overnight.

Sales is no different, and that’s why you need a game plan for taking these potential clients from total strangers to in love with your business. This plan is called a sales funnel where your potential clients move through the sales funnel step-by-step, getting to know you and earning your trust.

There are a lot of processes that you can automate which will make your life a whole lot easier. When you have a sales funnel you can turn potential clients into paying clients by focusing on just two things:
• Bringing in leads
• Doing the work that you started the business to do

How does your website factors in?
Your sales funnel starts with your website. It’s where you convert casual visitors to email subscribers. What path do your visitors take when they land on your site? Most people haven’t thought about this but it can be the difference between someone getting in contact and leaving your site. Most wedding professionals give the following options to their browsers: About, Services, Photos/Portfolio, Blog and Contact.
When someone visits your website, they will most likely view these pages, and then leave because they aren’t ready to make contact for a sales conversation yet.

3 steps to easy email marketing
1. Build a relationship
The ‘know, like, trust’ factor is incredibly important in marketing. People don’t do business with people until they can know, like and trust a business.

2. Provide potential clients with useful product information
In a world of comparison shopping, how can you ensure that more of your website visitors actually get in touch with you? First, stop and think about why they’re visiting your site in the first place. Are they trying to decide what sort of wedding dress would look best on them? Then be the person to give them that advice. They’ll remember this when it comes time to make a purchase. Why not offer potential customers a helpful e-book, checklist or video in exchange for their email address. This way, you can start to build a relationship with them.

Give them a reason to sign up. Make sure what you decide to offer is targeted and valuable to your ideal client. If you’re a wedding planner and the most common question you get is, “When do I need to book each of my vendors?”, offer a timeline or checklist in exchange for their email.

One member of The Wedding Business Collective created an invitation-wording guide. If you’re a stationer, you could create a guide to finding the best dress for your body shape? By answering questions, you build that crucial relationship and use email marketing to your advantage. It’s a win-win-win.

3. What do you send to people?
There are two types of emails that you’ll send:

Auto-responder email is a series of emails that get sent to subscribers automatically in the order you designate. You set it up once and it works forever. Every new subscriber goes through this series of emails upon signing up so it’s a pretty powerful selling tool.

Regular email or broadcasts line up with your content schedule. If you’re blogging each week, you send an email to your list each week to deliver the new post along with any promotional information, or calls to action to get them to take the next step and book you.

“Even affluent millennials comparison shop. Research is a way of life for this generation, it’s not a trust issue. They research everything and read an average of 13.9 reviews before making a purchase. Getting published on blogs helps give millennials more places to look when researching. This counts towards that 13.9,” according to Splendid Insight

Your questions answered:
“But I don’t have repeat business”
I hear this a lot and it’s because the person saying it is thinking about email marketing as a post-purchase follow up mechanism – it can be, but that’s not how it helps you book more clients. Email marketing works best when it sits in that period between someone thinking about hiring someone and actually booking someone.
It’s during this time you can provide valuable, helpful content and stay relevant and top of mind with your potential clients.

“I just need more traffic”
It’s true that a certain percentage of your website visitors turn into clients. You could just send more people to your site to have the vast majority of them leave and never take action or you can increase the percentage of people who turn into clients by allowing them to take a small first step by opting into your email list.

Once you’ve a sales funnel in place, more people who visit your site will join your email list, and more of them will become clients. So yes, more traffic can help, but sending more traffic to a website that isn’t set up to generate leads is like trying to fill a leaky bucket. Plug the hole in the bucket first by setting up your email marketing, then fill it.

“I don’t need an email list, I have social media!”
Remember when Facebook changed their algorithm, and people who relied on Facebook for business were disappointed when they wanted to pay for ads? That’s what happens when you put too many eggs in baskets that you don’t own.

You own your email list. You don’t own your social media followers. If all of your social media profiles and your website were hacked tomorrow, could you still get business? An email list of people who are interested in your work, the problems you solve and interested in working with you will always be there.

“So how do I get started?”
You’re going to need an email marketing service in order to set up anything. The good news is there’s a huge variety of them available. The bad news is that having a huge variety can be very overwhelming. That’s why I’ve created the Email Marketing Services Comparison Guide for you and it’s totally free. You can download it by visiting http://bit.ly/attiremailguide.

CONTACT
Heidi Thompson
Evolve Your Wedding Business
www.evolveyourweddingbusiness.com
Timeless appeal

We chat with Tracey Salt, designer and owner of Chanticleer, and find out why her business is all about building relationships.

When was the Chanticleer label established and what inspired you to do so?
Chanticleer Bridal & Eveningwear was established in 1988. I started working there as a seamstress and was given the opportunity to buy the eveningwear side in 1992, which at 23 years old was a massive step and commitment. In 1998, I merged the bridalwear and eveningwear into the one Chanticleer label on the retirement of the previous owner. I knew I wanted to be my own boss, designing is my passion and wedding dresses are my destiny.

Last year, the business celebrated 25 years – how has the brand evolved since this time? What have been the most significant moments in its development?
Over the past 28 years we’ve seen fashion change, and the construction of our corset, fabric selection and style have all been influenced heavily on what our brides want. For me, the introduction of imported manufactured gowns has had a massive impact on the UK bridal industry. Lots of my fellow designers sadly lost their businesses to cheaper quality gowns at a fraction of the cost. The fact that we’ve survived this and are still able to create and sell gorgeous timeless dresses that appeal to UK brides year after year is a massive achievement and means we can keep developing the label.

How often do you release new bridal collections, and what is their price range?
We release a new collection of around 16 to 18 dresses each year in autumn. Our dresses range between £1200 and £2500.

Where are your gowns made, and is this important to you?
Our gowns are all made above our little boutique in the heart of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire. We’re proud to say that all our dresses are designed and manufactured in the UK. This is extremely important to us as we can guarantee the quality and care of each dress from design to finish.
What do you predict will be your bestseller over the next six months from this year’s collection, Shakespeare in Love? Are there any trends that you see emerging?

Our Shakespeare in Love collection has received such a positive response already this year. At the moment, there’s a little competition between Rosalind, Nerissa, Lady Montague and Perdita who are all fighting for the top spot!

My favourite has to be Rosalind, she was my first for this collection. I fell in love with the fabric at first sight and knew I had to include it – although it was a little out of my comfort zone being so sparkly and embellished.

Trends I see emerging this year are structure and form contrasting from last year’s floaty ethereal look.

Simplistic silhouettes that ooze glamour and sophistication.

What’s your inspiration when it comes to a new collection, and what fabrics and embellishments do you prefer to use?

My inspiration has always come from my brides. Each year they critique my gowns, tell me what they want and don’t want. I listen and make mental notes ready for the new collections. I do love using vintage-inspired delicate beading and pearls rather than harsh crystals and heavy embellishment, which is why Rosalind was such a risk for me.

Can you tell us a little about the 2017 collection to be launched in the autumn?

I’m not giving too much away but let’s just say it will be classic, timeless and the rest you’ll just have to wait for!

How many stockists do you have presently, and how do you decide which retailers you’d like to partner with?

Currently we have eight stockists across the UK. We took the executive decision to cut back last year, as it’s really important for us to have a good one-to-one business relationship with our stockists.

Their feedback is crucial to us, as we go forward each year. If they’ve any worries or concerns we want to solve them, same as if a dress is excelling in their boutique, we want to know why so that we get a better idea of what their brides want, and what designs could benefit them in the future.

Which bridal trade shows do you exhibit at and why?

We don’t exhibit at any anymore. I prefer the personal approach and visiting boutiques with the collections so we build solid working relationships with the owners.

How would you like to see the brand grow over the coming years?

Organically...

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Starting a conversation online

Joanne Childs, PR Director at Sprae PR, discusses whether to blog or not to blog.

We’ve all seen industry bloggers that have hundreds, even thousands of followers, who write several different blog posts a week sometimes even a couple of times a day but the question is how do they do it? And does writing business blogs really help you move forward and get ahead?

The first thing to understand is that writing a blog is actually a lot of hard work, occasionally the writing itself may only take a couple of hours but sometimes it can take a lot longer especially if you get writer’s block. Yes, that’s a real thing and it can happen to the best of us. Having a blog takes dedication and hard work, and in some instances it can mean opening yourself up to criticism.

Before you start one, there are a few things to consider:
Why do you want a blog? Who is this for? What does the audience care about? Who will be writing the blog posts? Who will look after it? Will you be able to generate enough blog content regularly? What are you using the blog for? These are all questions you should ask yourself before commencing with the blog.

Here are our top tips on whether as a business you should blog or not:

- Why do you want to blog in the first place?
The first question you have to ask yourself if why do you want to start a blog, do you represent a company, do you want to share your expertise or do you have something to share, such as a new product or service? Whatever you decide to do you need to make sure that you love what you’re writing about and you need to make sure that comes across in your blog posts.

- Who are you writing the blog for?
Once you’ve decided to start writing blog posts you now need to know who you’re
targeting your blog towards. Will it be industry professionals, media or bride-to-be? Once you’ve decided whom your target market is, you can start thinking about what you want to write about and what your potential readers will like.

What do the readers care about?
When it comes to deciding what to write you have to think about what your readers and target audience would like to read. Remember that the blog should be about what your audience finds interesting and useful, which isn’t always about your day-to-day tasks.

One good way to begin is to ask them, put a list of suggested topics to your audience via a newsletter or social media and find out what they’d like you to discuss. In some cases, the reason you might write a blog post is because a certain question has come up time and time again when talking to customers.

Who’ll be writing the posts?
So now you’ve decided to start the blog and have some topics in mind – who will write the blog posts? Are you the best writer? With all the will in the world, if you’re a designer or boutique owner, and your pattern cutter or Saturday girl can write better than you can, why not ask them if they want to do it. You have to make sure that if you’re going to start writing a blog that it completely reflects you and your business style, and this can mean making tough decisions on who is the best writer for the job.

Who will look after it?
Now the blog is up and running, you’ll need to generate enough content and make sure your blog posts are published regularly. You might love your business, and the industry you work within, but if nothing newsworthy is going on it can be hard to write about something that your readers will want to read. Using photography and images is a good way of starting a conversation.

What are you using the blog for?
It’s also important to decide whether you’re planning on using your blog along side or in lieu of a website? If the answer is ‘yes’, then you need to look at making some changes so that you don’t put off or turn away any potential customers. Unless you’re a full time blogger then there’s no excuse for you to only have a blog and not to have a website.

Having a good looking website will instantly give you and your business credibility, you can then have a blog feature on your website so when you do start blogging your website will benefit by always having new content added to it and keeping it fresh. Sharing new insights, collections, trends, event photos or even sharing celebrity weddings will all add interest to your website and blog.

In summary if you want to blog, then blog, no one will criticise you for trying, you just need to consider the amount of work that’s involved and whether you’ll have the time. Blogs allow you to share more information and detail than a 140-character tweet. You’ll then be able to show and redirect people to different parts of your website and it will give you more options to share a variety of information. Try and set yourself a schedule maybe once or twice a week to start with to build an audience and keep them engaged.

I hope you’ve been inspired to give it a go! ☞

CONTACT
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WEB WATCH

Attire Bridal is at the heart of the online bridal community. Here’s a quick update on what’s been happening...

SHORT AND TWEET

Trade Show International Jewellery London (IJL) explains why Twitter is such an invaluable social network for its business

**Show Name:** Jewellery London
**Follow me at:** @jewellerylondon

*When did you set up a Twitter account and what prompted you to do so?*

We set up our account and username @jewellerylondon in July 2009. Twitter was really quite new then and not a lot of people used it, but we figured we would get a head start as this was likely to be big in the future and we’re really glad we did!

*Has the company benefited as a result? If so, how?*

We now have a following of almost 20,000 so it’s been an absolutely vital tool for us to reach our audience, share news, keep up-to-date with the industry and engage with our followers.

*How often do you tweet and what do you tweet about?*

We tweet a minimum of once a day and what we post really does vary. We love to share our blogs, welcome new exhibitors to IJL, inform our audience about our initiatives like KickStart and Bright Young Gems, and most of all get people to register to come to the show.

*What advice would you give to first-time tweeters?*

Just have fun with Twitter, keep it quirky and share great images – people are responding a lot more with visuals and graphics these days.

*Which bridal companies do you enjoy following on Twitter?*

Attire Bridal of course, Wedding Daily, You & Your Wedding, The Knot and we can’t resist browsing the Vera Wang page every now and again!

This month on Twitter we’ve mainly been:
- Retweeting the latest industry stories
- Sharing our followers’ successes

Total number of followers: 8,862!

Welcome to our newest followers:
- DIY Wedding Supplies @IMAGINEDIY
- The Walk-in Wardrobe @_walkinwardrobe
- James Knowles @MrJamesKnowles

We’re now following:
- Anny Lin Bridal @annylinbridal
- Sioou @SioouNews
- Veromia Bridal @VeromiaBridal
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Sassy occasionwear with exceptional fit for best-dressed mums of the moment.

Zeila from 2017 collection, Mon Cheri, www.mon-cheri.co.uk
Mon Cheri
www.mon-cheri.co.uk
Mon Cheri has every formal event covered with a wonderful selection of social occasion frocks. The two-piece crepe set features a strapless knee-length sheath dress with bow at centre-back neckline, belted natural waist, concealed side pockets, and centre-back slit. The dress comes with a matching scalloped lace zip back bolero jacket with short sleeves and removable straps, which can be discarded for the evening. It’s available in two jewelled colours – wine (pictured left) and sage, and is available in sizes 6 to 22.

Victoria Kay Gowns
www.victoriakaygowns.co.uk
Victoria Kay, established in 2006, is run by husband and wife team Khalid and Lisa Al-Amoodi. Victoria Kay is another exceptional provider of mother of the bride dresses at affordable prices. Collections include dresses, two-piece outfits, short bolero style jackets as well as longline coats in a stunning selection of fabrics and colours.

Cabotine
www.cabotine.co.uk
Cabotine is one of the top Spanish mother of the bride collections designed by Gema Nicolas, offering a flexible, fashionable flair with great fit that's flattering. The latest collection features an extensive range of dresses and matching jackets that are ideal for all sorts of special occasions. We particularly like Donna 7026 (shown above on the right), which features a French portrait neckline, asymmetrical sleeve and pretty rhinestone belt.
White Gallery London provided a key seasonal event for influential bridal names to unveil their latest collections. The event has continued to grow, and this May’s exhibition housed many of the biggest names in the bridal industry who gathered together in the luxurious surroundings of Battersea Evolution.

Every year, White Gallery introduces edited collections, and this year was no different with glittering Swarovski crystals suspended over the entrance, an impressive glass-mezzanine level overlooking the central exhibition area, and lavish catwalk productions. With such a luxurious environment, both exhibitors and visitors couldn’t fail to be inspired for the forthcoming bridal season.

Retailers travelled from more than 28 countries including as far afield as Australia, Israel, Japan, Norway, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Spain, the US, as well as France, Germany and Luxembourg. This year’s affair boasted an impressive 41 per cent increase in European visitors and 22 per cent in international guests. Some of the best bloggers like Love My Dress, Rock ‘n’ Roll Bride and Brides up North were also present at the show.

PRIVATE CATWALKS
Private catwalk shows took place from Alan Hannah, Sassi Holford and Annasul Y setting the scene with an array of the most up-to-date softly-sculpted silhouettes, delicate layering, and lace embellishments with feminine boleros, body-skimming sheer jackets and capes that flowed from the shoulders or formed delicate sleeves.

Alan Hannah
www.alanhannah.co.uk
Acclaimed British designer Alan Hannah kicked off the catwalk shows with the launch of its 2017 collection, Porcelain. Porcelain is the epitome of real couture elegance with extraordinary attention to detail. The catwalk presentation showcased the beautiful range of pieces, which are delicate and translucent. Designer Marguerite has introduced floral printed chiffon to the line, and also designed a capsule collection of very fashion-forward crepe dresses that have a gorgeous flow and movement and come in a lovely new palette of colours. All gowns are designed and made in England.

Annasul Y
www.annasuly.co.uk
Annasul Y launched her 2017 collection along with a preview of the diffusion line, Snow by Annasul Y. Next year’s collection took inspiration from the pastoral charms of delectable French gardens filled with beautiful clipped hedges, weathered pergolas and stone ornaments in geometric layouts, bringing a touch of spring and etherealness to the wedding dresses in this collection.
“It’s a testament to the appeal of the exhibition that the biggest names in the business choose White Gallery as their key platform. We always strive to showcase exquisite quality in terms of the designers, and this year has topped all previous visitor figures, which is a clear indication of optimism at the top end of the market. We’re already planning the 2017 show,” said Wendy Adams, Event Director of White Gallery London.

INTERNATIONAL PREVIEW
There were two mixed fashion shows featuring fabulous British talents including Zaeem Jamal, Ivory & Co, Katya Katya Shehurina, Savin London, Eliza Jane Howell, Donna Salado, Rasha, Ruth Milliam and Charlotte Balbier. The other headline runway brought the best from the international names such as Anny Lin, Atelier Emelia Paris, Cymbeline, Inmaculada Garcia, Paloma Blanca, Tarik Ediz and Martina Liana.

Sassi Holford
www.sasiholford.com
Sassi Holford launched the Twenty 17 collection, which is extra special for the brand as it marks 35 years of design, and is dedicated to Sassi’s mother who passed away earlier this year. Sassi commented, “My mum loved everything different and unusual; she was truly a one of a kind and a huge creative influence for me.”

Diary dates
The next edition of White Gallery London takes place:
14th - 16th May 2017
Battersea Evolution, Battersea Park, London
www.whitegallery.com
WHAT’S TRENDING
Daring backs, narrow cuts and beautiful bohemian highlights made a strong statement with daring beaded detailing, dispersions of laser-cut petals, and pretty caped sleeves introducing a different styling for brides.

New fabrics to watch out for included waffled silks, lattice-worked lace, sequined tattoos and soft flowing skirts topped with fine cashmere sweaters, edged in lace.

ON THE LOOK OUT FOR LABELS
Emmy London
www.emmylondon.com
Emmy London presented the latest Cancello collection. Emmy Scarterfield’s signature style includes luxurious handcrafted and embellished shoes. Emmy’s iconic cut out detailing and intricate embellishment remains a key feature of this season’s collection with a modern linear twist. Blush tones mixed with cooler grey and ivory, set with silver, gold and blush metallic create a soft, subtle palette, which epitomises the brand.

Lattice straps add a new dimension to the collection while the introduction of a super high mule and ivory shoe boot with pompom detailing gives the latest Emmy offering a fashion forward edge for modern brides-to-be. A range of styles in duck-egg suede also provide the perfect ‘Something Blue’ accessory, designed to be treasured for years to come.

The Season Hats
www.theseasonhats.com
Award-winning milliner, The Season Hats specialises in beautifully engineered hats that are flattering and original. The latest collection is Season Bridal, which offers a stunning contemporary headwear. The collection features laser-cut white leather headpieces and hairbands that are hand inset with Swarovski crystals as a contemporary alternative to a tiara. Secured on elastic, the pieces can be worn with the elastic hidden under hair worn down, or with the elastic used as a base for a classic up-do hairstyle.

The company has developed a range of unfolding pieces including hairbands, headpieces and hats that are easy to transport in bespoke boxes. They unfold and secure with simple snap fasteners for a pristine look. In tulle, they create a delicate haze around the bride, as much veil as headpiece, while in French satin, they create a more graphic effect, yet still remain soft and feminine.

Charlotte Simpson
www.charlottesimpson.co.uk
British designer Charlotte Simpson presented a collection that builds a continuation of Charlotte’s signature style of minimalist elegance with intricate embroidery, and the existing pieces have proven very popular with brides in the UK and overseas.

Cherished
www.cherishedvintage.co.uk
Cherished introduced the Nature’s Diadem collection. New for this year, the range celebrates the beauty of floral and leafy forms, their delicacy, fragility and architectural presence. The line of made-to-order pieces draws on influences from nature to the wonderful Art Nouveau jewellery of Rene Lalique. Many of the pieces have a sculptural quality and the three-dimensional floral forms sweep through the hair making the pieces perfect for the elegant or bohemian bride.
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86 ATTIRE
BOHEMIAN STYLING

An in-depth look at the inspiration and styling of Bohemian bridalwear

THE DESIGNER SAYS…..

The bohemian look is most definitely my favourite bridal style. It represents everything that is cool, chic and relaxed in the word of weddings. Bohemian to me covers so many looks from ethereal woodlands and coastal beaches, to tipi festivals, village halls and afternoon tea.

I love its flexibility and limitless boundaries, as it allows brides to express themselves with the added bonus of being able to move around freely on their big day. There’s one element that links all definitions of this style and that’s a flower crown – I absolutely love them and use them at every opportunity!

Fiona Cooper, www.felicitycooper.co.uk.
Boho brides are looking for a laid-back glamour to their wedding with hints of vintage, delicate lace, floral trims and rustic elements.

Lace background by Michael’s Bridal Fabrics
www.michaelsbridalfabrics.co.uk

Eternity by Complice Stalo Theodoru
www.complice-st.com

Alana by Wendy Makin
www.wendymakin.com

Brigitte, Catherine Deane,
www.catherinedeane.com

Bluebell by Body Frock
www.bodyfrock.co.uk

Delicate Peony by Lyn Ashworth
www.lynashworth.co.uk
**HEADWEAR**

Pick pretty floral-themed crowns and handmade hair adornments

- Hydrangea Bloom, Cherished, www.cherishedvintage.co.uk
- Freya Rose, www.freyarose.com
- Cecelia, Rachel Simpson, www.rachelsimpsonshoes.co.uk
- Trezone, Miranda Templeton, www.mirandatempleton.co.uk

**SHOES**

Look for neutral colours with delicate embroidered embellishments

- Clover Cherry by Harriet Wilde, www.harrietwilde.com
- Freya Rose, www.freyarose.com
- Blossom by Charlotte Mills, www.charlottemills.com
As I write this it’s only two days until my own wedding. I tried to think of something else to write about such as shop displays or social media, only I couldn’t – all I’m thinking about is the big day. I’ve tried to avoid calling it ‘the’ wedding as it implies that ours is the only one currently being planned or taking place.

**Why we work in the bridal industry**

As we all know from working in the industry, there are thousands of ceremonies happening in this country this weekend alone. Fortunately we forget this fact when we meet individual brides-to-be and hear their planning worries and needs. We all understand the significance of getting married and that’s why we enjoy working in this industry. We relate to our brides and grooms, and helping them on their journey to a new phase in life is just as exciting now as when we first started doing it. If we as professionals don’t believe in the importance of marriage, then we wouldn’t be trustworthy and successful suppliers.

A wedding isn’t just a party, it isn’t just a celebration or just one special day, it’s the beginning of a new phase in life with new possibilities and adventures ahead. We’re involved in weddings every day of our lives, there’s no escaping them as they are an occasion intertwined with life itself. We can all take a holiday from our work, but I wouldn’t be surprised if, while away, we walked past a bridal shop, saw a wedding on television or in a magazine, or even witnessed one from a distance. And who would want to escape weddings? It’s a privilege to be involved, no matter how distant or close we are to the bride or groom.
Planning a wedding and building relationships

Our marriage is very simple – just family, in the city where I grew up, a dress, a suit, a meal and a party. No frills, no DIY favours, no drama. I’ve always known since I met my fiancé that I wanted to be married to him, not just get married to him. The most important part of the day to me is the ceremony, making promises to each other in front of those closest to us, followed by starting our new lives together and creating new memories.

I say this all, yet it’s impossible to not be overtaken by the drama and stress of planning and that’s where you as suppliers and industry professionals come in.

I can’t say enough good things about all of the suppliers we’ve chosen to support us on our wedding day. This is a familiar phrase we hear over and over again in real bride stories and on blogs and here I am saying it myself.

Most brides have never planned an event to this scale, especially while working, looking after a family, or continuing their day-to-day responsibilities. Planning has become a long process, with the average engagement lasting one year and four months, according to Hitched W.I.F.E. This means that couples can spend time not only finding suppliers that they feel a connection with, but also building relationships with those suppliers. Having suppliers that you trust and who take a certain amount of control of the day is key to a successful day.

I have no worries about the day because I know that the people we’re working with live and breathe weddings, just like all of us.

Going about your business

Essentially we’re on a conveyer belt of marriages – one on, one off. Far from being disconcerting, this is comforting to me. Everyone at the venue knows what to do and when to do it. If there’s a problem they’ve likely seen and dealt with it all before. We’ve been lucky over the past year to witness a glimpse into the preparation of several marriages on Saturday mornings that we’ve visited the reception venue.

The anticipation and excitement in the air is infectious and we’ve felt it from both the staff and the guests hanging around the hotel lobby waiting for the bride and groom to be ready for their day. Weddings are part of my life, and being part of the Richard Designs family, always have been. In contrast, my fiancé works in IT and although he must have picked up a more-than-average amount of knowledge since we met, he essentially knew very little about how a day runs before we got engaged. However, now he feels relaxed and comfortable with it, or as relaxed and comfortable as a groom can be on the week of his wedding. Main factors in him feeling this way are the suppliers that we’ve spent time with, the preparatory process they’ve taken us through, and the trust they’ve garnered from us.

This trust is essential in any industry and any relationship between consumer and supplier. If we can gain the trust of our customers and keep it, we have a strong foundation for a successful and lasting relationship.
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Shimmer and shine

Designer Nicki Flynn fills us in on True Bride’s newest collection of sequined bridesmaid dresses, and the latest glamour and glitzy trend.

One of the biggest trends for this year is soft metallics, and the glistening shades and shimmering sequin fabrics have got people excited. Help your brides get this season’s shimmer and shine trend with sequin details and metallic embellishments in neutrals, matt silvers and rose gold shades. These offer an ideal colour palette for every season.

The Vintage Hollywood glamour vibe is still very much around, and this glitzy look is a subtle nod to that era. It’s a great way to add a little glamour and sparkle to the wedding day. This trend is a strong look, so to avoid going over the top, it’s all about balance. True Bride’s Lola keeps it subtle by adding a plain chiffon skirt to the sequin blouson bodice while the Lulu is full on sequins but with a silhouette that’s chic and simple and won’t overpower the bride.

Gone are the days where bridesmaids fade into the background – today’s bridesmaids are becoming more glamorous, and going sequin crazy down the aisle. It’s an added bonus that the dresses are stylish, and can be worn again for special occasions and parties.

“Infuse a little shine and add the glam-factor to your rails this season,” says Nicki Flynn, designer at True Bride.

Here’s how brides can get the look:

• This season expect to see metallic lace details, soft gold and nude – the perfect match for shimmery sequins.
• Full on glam with long, luxurious and shimmering gowns.
• Bridal parties in mix and match metallics.
• Pick from a palette of vintage shades and muted metallics. True Bride has three subtle sparkle hues of pearl, shell and rose gold.

Contact
True Bride
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Top trends
Bridal styles to look out for in S/S 2017
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For the last four years, I’ve worked between both the bridal and fashion industry and it has become apparent to me that the gap between the two industries is narrowing. Red carpet and bridal trends are becoming going hand-in-hand, labels are increasingly willing to evolve and are more trend-aware season upon season. This is a great thing, not for only fashion forward stockists but also for trend setting brides.

Hot on the heels
Fast fashion, low-budget high fashion brands with a big online presence have recently plastered mail shots with sexy, kitsch and rebellious editorials in an attempt to lure the trendiest and most unconventional of brides to their newly launched collections.

Predominantly floor-length, figure hugging and overly sexy, these styles seem to be directed at the budget conscious and confident bride. However, the reality of the garments can be surmised under what I’d like to call the three F’s: Fit, Feel and Finish. All three elements are compromised for a mass-produced dress for around a tenth of the average cost of a high-end wedding dress that are suffer from over-featured sameness and poor quality.

Budget brides are missing out
You really are getting what you pay for when that plastic bag arrives in the post to your front door. Unlike your local bridal shop there’s no one there to dress you, give you a glass of fizz to steady your nerves or soften your grandma. From first appointment to big day, White Closet brides are nurtured with a more personal or bespoke shopping experience during the build up to their wedding. I have had many a panicked bride show me images of a high fashion disaster while I re-assure her that we will find her ‘the one’ even in her very short time frame.

A higher premium is not only providing you with a luxurious, ethically made and exclusive gown but also for the store experience. I truly believe as long as we can keep enticing brides-to-be through the doors they’ll be less likely to cut corners and continue to invest in more luxury labels but also in us as passionate and caring stylists. With the huge separates trend that has graced us with its presence for the last season or two, brides are able to build their looks and be budget conscious too, allowing them to have the luxury experience and dress at a more controlled cost.

Hold tight
In conclusion, we have to ride the wave of nylon nastiness and hold on tight to our principles as luxury stockists. Trends will come and go, and yes, girls will marry in some sorry sights, but if we just hold tight and continue to provide an excellent level of service, I really believe the high fashion lines will be left by the wayside once again for boutiques, bubbles and beautiful dresses.

Lucy Cowan, Studio Manager and Senior Stylist of The White Closet Studios in Liverpool asks whether the new influx of inexpensive high fashion gowns is kill or cure for the budget conscious bride?

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