

# BRIDAL BUYER



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HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO US. 20 THIS YEAR

## LABEL TALK

ALEXIA DESIGNS  
PRIVATE LABEL BY G  
CRYSTAL COUTURE

## WILL POWER

DRESSING THE  
ROYAL GROOM

## \* *Caroline* \* *Castigliano*

MOVING INTO THE  
WHOLESALE  
ENVIRONMENT

## SHOW REPORTS

WHITE GALLERY  
BARCELONA  
THE FIRST LOOK

# the latest collections

## GETTING READY FOR BBEH

# aimed at the affluent



This October will see the launch of the Luxury Wedding Show London where discerning brides will find the ultimate products. *Bridal Buyer* talked to Event Director, Ashley Roberts about this ambitious project



VINTAGE TEA SETS

**B**ARELY A WEEK GOES BY WITHOUT there being a local wedding 'fayre' where retailers and service providers look to spread the word about what they have to offer. At the other end of the spectrum, there are the big event shows that attract huge audiences and many hundreds of exhibitors. Here, the twice-yearly National Wedding Show is always first choice; so successful is this event in delivering a huge audience (60,000 at last count for 2010) that there is a waiting list of companies hoping to exhibit.

So why is the company behind the National Wedding Show now set to launch a new venture, The Luxury Wedding Show London? According to Event Director Ashley Roberts, the existing show, now in its 16th year, meets the needs of the wide market of brides-to-be. But there is a demand, he says, for a wedding exhibition that truly serves the luxury sector. "Yes," he agrees, "there are a few upmarket shows on the circuit, but there is nothing out there currently that is designed purely for the wedding that is free of budgetary constraints."

Roberts says that there will be very little overlap – if any – between the two exhibitions with regard to exhibitors (at the Luxury Wedding Show London they are referred to as Experts) and audience. "Our experts obviously play a large part in dictating who will attend the event. A bride-to-be who is planning her wedding spend with caution will have little interest in seeing products at the level that will be the norm at the new show; after all, a Vera Wang or Carolina Herrera gown is out of reach for many."

But it is those who can afford the top names and finest accessories who will be happy to spend the £50 ticket cost in order to see more than 100 hand-picked experts in an elegant and prestigious environment. "We considered Somerset House," says Roberts, "but at the end of the day we chose the Saatchi Gallery for its aesthetics, ambience, location and profile.

"We have been looking at the luxury market for a number of years but began actively

working on this project over 18 months ago. Planning such an event takes a lot of time and consideration – elements such as the creative treatment, the name and the personality of the proposition had to be perfect; there is no margin for error with a concept like this."

One of those elements has been establishing the exhibitor criteria. Applicants are carefully vetted. Acceptance is not based on budget – just because a particular company has money to spend promoting itself does not mean they are suitable for the Luxury Wedding Show environment. Impeccable credentials are vital, however, and meeting the luxury-level price point is essential. "We are transparent in our vetting procedures," Roberts confirms. "If a company is not accepted, we will give them the reasons."

So who has been accepted thus far? Browns Brides is a key name, with labels such as Vera Wang, Monique Lhuillier, Marchesa and Carolina Herrera; top British design experts David Fielden and Temperley London will be there, as will Delphine Manivet, Peter Langer and Charlotte Casadejus. Venues signed up so far include The Lanesborough, The Dorchester, the May Fair Hotel and The Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park.

Labels on show include Vera Wang, Monique Lhuillier, Marchesa, David Fielden, Peter Langer and Delphine Manivet

The catwalk show, sponsored by *Brides* magazine and styled by Astrid Joss, will be a major feature and expert

Mark Niemierko will be on hand to advise brides-to-be on the best way to source everything from the perfect venue to florists and photographers. Visitors will have reserved seating at the catwalk show, a glass of Champagne to sip during the performance and a £30-value goody bag sponsored by *You & Your Wedding* and *Cosmopolitan Bride*.

There is no question about it, The Luxury Wedding Show London will be supremely chic with the sort of contemporary cool that its audience will love. Says Roberts: "Our visitor will be sophisticated and have her own ideas and expectations. She's used to quality and will be looking for the finest when it comes to her wedding, and that is what this exhibition is all about.

"Our launch show will take place 22-23 October. In year two or three we'll add a spring event, and may also take the concept to other capital cities. It is paramount that this first event is delivered to the highest level in every respect." **EB**

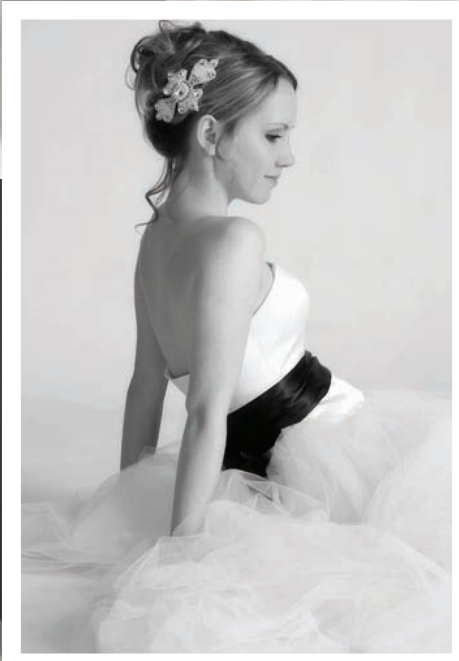


CAROLINA HERRERA

MONIQUE LHUILLIER

The bride-to-be who visits the Luxury Wedding Show London will not be intimidated by big names or high price tags. She's a girl who recognises luxury

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Clockwise from top left: The Saatchi Gallery, Chelsea; Gown by Delphine Manivet; Wedding planner Mark Niemierko; gown by David Fielden; bead-waist ballgown by Marchesa; sashed dress by Victoria Fergusson; layered gown by Vera Wang; flowers by Philippa Craddock whose work was also at White Gallery