

# Kate Spade Taps Nicola Glass as Creative Director

- She will succeed Deborah Lloyd, who is stepping down as president and chief creative officer.

BY LISA LOCKWOOD

**Nicola Glass** has been named creative director of Kate Spade. She succeeds Deborah Lloyd, the brand's current president and chief creative officer, who, in the wake of Tapestry Inc.'s acquisition of Kate Spade, made the decision to exit the company.

Lloyd's departure from Kate Spade was first reported in WWD last month. She follows on the heels of Craig Leavitt, chief executive officer, who left the company in August.

Glass is with Michael Kors as senior vice president of accessories design overseeing all design and development of Michael Kors Collection and Michael Michael Kors. She leads a team in charge of all accessory, hardware and technical design, and is responsible for sourcing and developing all leathers and fabrics. She has been with Kors since 2004. Earlier, she worked at Gucci as an accessories designer. Born in Belfast, Glass holds a Masters of Arts in Fashion Accessories from the Royal College of Art in London.

Glass is expected to join the company in January, and will ultimately report to the brand president and ceo of Kate Spade, a role held by Tapestry's ceo, Victor Luis, on an interim basis. A search is under way for Leavitt's successor.

Glass will be responsible for leading all creative aspects of the Kate Spade brand,



including product design for accessories and ready-to-wear, brand imagery and store environments.

"The appointment of Nicola Glass marks an important milestone in the next chapter of the Kate Spade brand," said Luis. "There are very few creative executives like her, who have both the talent to lead creative teams and the appreciation and understanding of how to scale a growing handbag and accessories-driven business.

"We are extremely pleased that she will be leading the strong creative team already in place, while bringing her

unique aesthetic and personal style to Kate Spade. Nicola fully understands the feminine, fun and fashionable style of Kate Spade and is excited to bring its distinctive style to global audiences. Her depth and breadth of experience will be an invaluable asset to the business in general – and especially the design and brand teams – as we grow and develop the business globally," said Luis.

Luis said he's anxious to support Glass in writing the next chapter for Kate Spade. He said he was introduced to Glass through the executive search firm Karen Harvey Consulting Group, who has conducted several major creative searches for the various divisions of Tapestry (formerly Coach Inc.).

According to Luis, the criteria for the Kate Spade role was to find someone "with a wonderful imagination and creative skill set." He said Glass has proven leadership skills, has managed large teams, has a global view of the world and appreciates Spade's fun and fashionable style. "She comes from a background in handbag and accessory design, which is very important to us given that the Kate Spade business is founded on handbags and accessories. It's really about someone who will appreciate Kate Spade's DNA and where it's been and also help bring it to the future," he noted.

"I'm very honored to be joining Kate Spade as the new creative director. It is a brand I've long admired and I look forward to leading the team in this next chapter of Kate Spade's evolution and growth," said Glass.

Luis added: "I think the creative director and ceo partnership, as you can imagine,

is the most important partnership in any business. We're going to be looking for a ceo who can be a great partner to Nicola and understands the Kate Spade culture and positioning."

Luis thanked Lloyd for her numerous accomplishments in building the Kate Spade brand. "We have great admiration for Deborah's accomplishments and her vision and creative leadership have been instrumental to the growth of Kate Spade. Very few creative people have done as much as she has done in a decade bringing a business from approximately \$100 million to over \$1.3 billion," he said.

In developing Kate Spade into a global lifestyle brand, Lloyd brought a whimsical, quirky and youthful vibe to the label and instilled a lot of personality into the product. Prior to joining Kate Spade, Lloyd was executive vice president of product design and development at Banana Republic since 2001. Earlier, she was vice president of women's design for Burberry London for five years.

Tapestry completed its \$2.4 billion acquisition of Kate Spade in July. The company changed its name at the end of last month to better reflect its new umbrella of brands. As reported Tuesday, acquisition costs connected with Kate Spade & Co. pushed Tapestry into a first-quarter loss, but adjusted earnings per share managed to beat analysts' expectations by 6 cents.

Luis said Kate Spade had a negative-3 comp for the quarter, which was a sequential improvement from the previous quarter, which was a negative-8 comp. For the first quarter, Kate Spade sales totaled \$269 million, as global comps fell 9 percent.