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**LUXURY FOOTWEAR, HANDBAGS CONTINUE STRONG
AS 350 BRANDS PREPARE TO SHOW
AT THE COLLECTIONS AT WSA™ FEB. 1-4**

***The Collections at WSA Brings Together the Largest Global Gathering of Designers;
New Design Talent and Styles Emphasize Artistry at Juried Show***

(Encino, Calif.) – Jan. 10, 2007 – The world's finest designers of luxury footwear and handbags are putting the final touches on their collections for fall/winter 07/08 before gathering together at *The Collections at WSA™* in Las Vegas, Feb. 1-4. This semi-annual show has become the world's largest and most respected venue for discovering the next new styles, palettes, and materials from more than 350 luxury and designer brands.

Set at the Venetian Resort Hotel in Las Vegas, *The Collections at WSA* takes place in creative, one-of-a-kind suites that match the creative appeal of the stunning footwear and handbags on display for discerning luxury retailers and buyers. The luxury showcase operates concurrently with The WSA™ Show, the largest global marketplace for footwear and accessories.

"The luxury sector continues to expand – our pool of designers and brands is stronger than it's ever been. Our 385 merchandised rooms are sold out," stated Leslie Gallin, director of *The Collections at WSA*. "Consumers are willing to invest in shoes, handbags and accessories, as these items update any wardrobe. These purchases enable them to feel fresh and current with fashion – regardless of size or mental attitude – without redoing their entire wardrobe.

"The demand from consumers continues to grow as they become more educated about the luxury market. The upswing continues with luxury accessories, as well. Retailers who are looking to venture into the luxury accessory market will find all they need at *The Collections at WSA*."

One of the quickly emerging targets is men's footwear as consumers become more acclimated to the importance of designer styling and appeal. One of the most comprehensive collections, with something for each marketplace, can be found in San Diego designer Alan Gordon's **Gordon Rush** line that blends modern aesthetics and luxury materials. Another Southern California designer, **George Esquivel**, focuses on fashion-forward, handcrafted shoes that appeal to a celebrity clientele. And from Europe comes the well-known **Preventi** collection of dress-to-casual designs from Spain, as well as a unique and fun line by **n.d.c. by hand** from Belgium.

Innovation is the byword for footwear designers such as **Francesca Giobbi** from Brazil, **Gwendolyn Carrie** and **Gil Carvalho** from England, **Colin Robertson** from Los Angeles, or **Heirs & Grace** from

Australia. Each designer and brand emphasizes different techniques that are individually appealing, whether it's the use of real fish skin, unusual craftsmanship, architectural forms, or color treatments.

New handbag lines from **Sequenza** and **Ripani** and noted footwear designer **Stuart Weitzman** will be introduced for the first time at *The Collections at WSA*. The Sequenza and Ripani lines feature fine Italian craftsmanship and quality leathers and exotic skins designed with artistic flair. Stuart Weitzman's entry into handbags demonstrates a timeless design quality.

Among the newest handbag collections are designs from **Clara Kasavina**, a New York-based designer who concentrates on exotic skins, leathers, and beading on hand-cast frames. From the world of celebrities come new collections from **Cate Adair**, costume designer for television's "Desperate Housewives," and **Alexis Hudson**, the brand that designers Rachele Copeland and Emily Ironi have made a must-have among some of Hollywood's A-list stars.

Each company/brand looking to exhibit within *The Collections at WSA* must meet the selective criteria for entry. According to Gallin, these criteria continue to be adjusted as the marketplace changes in order to ensure a high bar for admission to *The Collections at WSA*.

With its own distinctive logo and marketing, *The Collections at WSA* allows the luxury buyer and international fashion editor the ability to find the best in one easy-to-navigate facility. And for the first time, *The Collections at WSA* designers will participate in a Feb. 3 benefit "Super Slippers" program featuring silent and eBay auctions, the proceeds from which will benefit the Ovarian Cancer Research Fund. The "**Super Slippers**" program is an exciting new element of "The Glass Slipper Awards" cocktail party. The "Glass Slipper Awards" honor exhibitors who best display product within their suites.

The "Super Slippers" silent auction presents soft sculpture shoe-shaped "slippers" that are decorated, embellished and styled by the leading footwear designers exhibiting at the show. These one-of-a-kind works of art will showcase the designs of **Bettye Muller, Taryn Rose, Claudia Ciuiti, DETNY by Shane & Shawn**, and many more. Silent auction bids will be limited to those attending the "Glass Slipper Awards" on Sat., Feb. 3, 2007, from 6:30 to 7:30 pm at Pinot Brasserie, located on the casino level of The Venetian.

Bidding online for designer footwear and handbags donated by exhibitors with the proceeds to benefit OCRF will be open to shoe-lovers all over the world via *The Collections at WSA/OCRF* live eBay auction (www.ebay.com/wsacollections) Jan. 24-31, 2007 and Feb. 3-10, 2007. Most of the brands now exhibiting with *The Collections at WSA* are expected to provide product to be auctioned off.

About *The Collections at WSA*

The Collections at WSA is the largest and most prestigious luxury designer fashion footwear and accessories event in the world featuring more than 350 international designers. As a "show-within-a-show" (held simultaneously with the twice-yearly WSA Show™), *The Collections at WSA*™ enables the discerning buyer to select from the best of the luxury market under one roof, at one time. Each WSA Show™ attracts more than 36,000 participants from 95 countries including 1,600 exhibitors showcasing over 6,000 brands. For more information, please visit www.thecollectionsatwsa.com.

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