

Balmain brings luxury fashion to North American salons

Pick up any beauty or fashion magazine and you'll see the hottest models and celebrities from the Kardashian-Wests to Brigitte Bardot to the Queen Bey (Beyoncé) herself have joined the #BalmainArmy, wearing looks from the French haute couture fashion house **Balmain Paris**. If that doesn't ring a bell, you might associate the name Balmain with the wigs and hair extensions used as fashion accessories on runways around the world. While hair extensions are still a part of the professional division, today the company also has introduced a luxury designer label of hair care and styling products to consumers through qualified salons.



Brothers Richard, art director, and Steward Guliker, CEO, lead Balmain Hair.

When *Beauty Industry Report* learned that our friend **Nancy Carroll** had joined **Balmain Hair Couture** to connect it with North American distribution, we rang up **Steward Guliker**, owner/CEO, to learn more.

BIR: Welcome, Steward. Please share the history of Balmain Hair with our readers.

Steward Guliker (SG): Thanks, Mike. It's the story of my family. In 1974, my father, **Dick Guliker**, created a range of hairpieces to complement Mr. Balmain's clothing collection. In 2000, the company became Balmain Hair, the beauty division of the Balmain Paris house of fashion. Although they remain two separate companies, they are essentially "married."

In 2011, my brother **Richard** and I took over the ownership and leadership of Balmain Hair. Together with Balmain Paris, we developed a



Nancy Carroll, director of business development

line of hair styling and care products needed for backstage at the runway shows.

BIR: Tell me about your history in North America.

SG: Honestly, we went through a huge learning curve. Initially, our support system for our U.S. business was based on the European model. That was a mistake. We learned that we needed to support the U.S. business with a U.S. business model, which led us to engage **Nancy Carroll** as our director of business development. She brings years of industry experience to the company. Today, Balmain Hair offers a globally recognized luxury fashion brand to salons through independent distributors across North America.

BIR: In a crowded marketplace, what is Balmain Hair's point-of-difference?

SG: The primary point-of-difference is our direct connection to and backstage focus with the House of Balmain Paris. The Balmain Hair products are designed to align with the fashion as presented each season on the runway. In this way, Balmain Hair connects hairdressers directly to the runway and latest fashion trends that enable them to create the most coveted styles for their clients.

The hair designs and trends are developed by **Nabil Harlow** of New York and Paris, who works in tandem with **Olivier Rousteing**, head designer at Balmain Paris, to present styles that finish the runway looks. Our styling and care products are produced in Scandinavia under the White Swan standards.

BIR: What are your newest products?

SG: We recently launched the Styling Couture line in the United States. This small but compact line achieves manageable, soft, shiny, healthy looking hair.

The range includes **Dry Shampoo** (75 ml/\$19.90, 300 ml/\$38.00), **Silk Perfume** (50 ml/\$19.90, 200 ml/\$44.00), **Argan Moisturizing Elixir** (20 ml/\$17.00, 100 ml/\$45.00), **Session Spray Strong** (75 ml/\$19.90, 300 ml/\$38.00), **Session Spray Medium** (300 ml/\$38.00), **Volume Mousse Strong** (300 ml/\$40.00), **Texturizing Salt**



The Balmain Styling Couture Range supports the looks created for the fashion runways.

Spray (50 ml/SRP \$19.90, 200 ml/SRP \$38.00), **Pre Styling Cream** (150 ml/SRP \$38.00), **Texturizing Volume Spray** (200 ml/SRP \$44.00), **Styling Gel Strong** (100 ml/SRP \$38.00), **Matt Paste** (100 ml/SRP \$42.00), **Shine Wax** (100 ml/SRP \$42.00) and **Matt Clay Strong** (100 ml/SRP \$42.00).

All products contain Balmain's signature fragrance. Argan elixir and silk protein are key to delivering the best benefits. Each product supports styles from the catwalk to the sidewalk. With each bi-annual fashion house collection, Balmain Hair launches a new trend collection with technical instruction for the salon professional.

We also offer beautiful gift sets, including a **Luxury Care** (SRP \$50.00) or **Styling** (SRP \$56.00) **Cosmetic Bag**, a **Styling Gift Set** (SRP \$198.00), a **Hair Perfume Gift Set** (SRP \$64.00), a **Moisturizing Care Gift Set** (SRP \$122.00) and a **Volumizing Care Gift Set** (SRP \$114.00).

BIR: What's next?

SG: See us at Cosmoprof North America, Booth 32017 to find out!

To learn more and/or set up a meeting at Cosmoprof North America, contact Nancy Carroll, director of business development/Balmain North America, at 678-575-3779 or nancy.carroll@balmainhair.com. Visit balmainhair.com.