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WWD

TOMMY'S IN TOWN

Hilfger returns to
New York for his
men's show.

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PHYSICAL REALITY

The market-cap
gap facing the brick-
and-mortar world.

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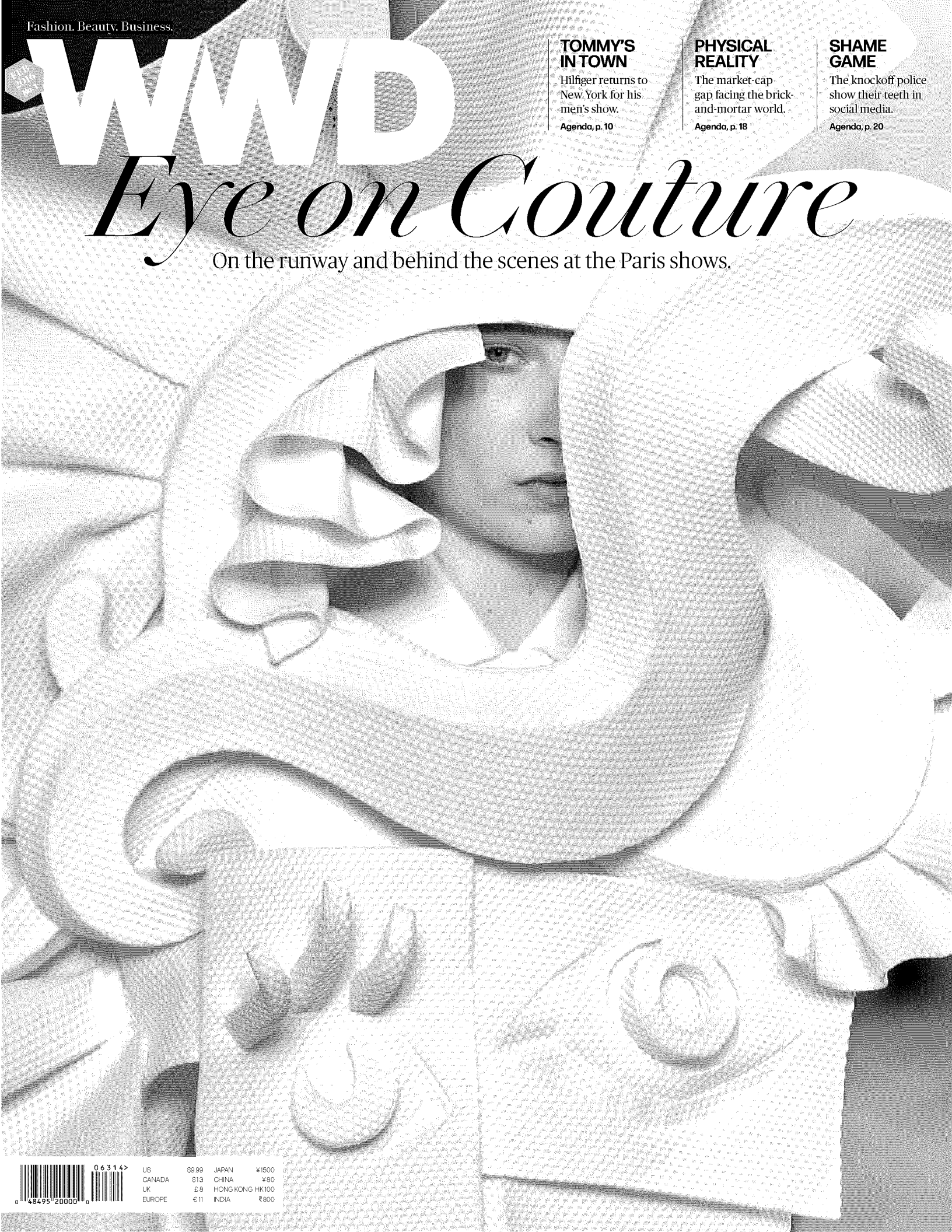
SHAME GAME

The knockoff police
show their teeth in
social media.

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Eye on Couture

On the runway and behind the scenes at the Paris shows.



US	\$9.99	JAPAN	¥1500
CANADA	\$13	CHINA	¥80
UK	£8	HONG KONG	HK100
EUROPE	€11	INDIA	₹800

Milano Unica Firms Brace for China Slowdown

Italian mills see boost from U.S. sales.

By SOPHIA CELESTE

Italian fabric firms set to unveil their spring 2017 collections at Milano Unica Feb. 9 to 11 expect China's slowing economy will weigh on revenues this year.

"We benefited from the markets that buy in dollars, but China remains a difficult market," said Silvio Botto Poala, chief executive officer of Biella-based Botto Giuseppe e Figli SpA.

China's economy grew only 6.9 percent last year, its slowest rate in 25 years. Concerns regarding further currency depreciation and increased capital outflows are weighing on markets in the world's most populous nation. Analysts project, however, that if travel recovers and stocks stabilize, luxury firms could benefit.

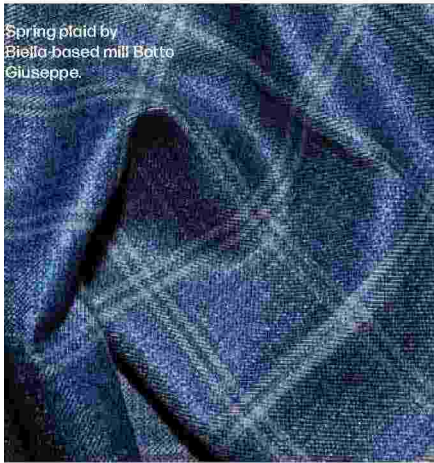
Italy's most prominent textile makers preparing to display their spring collections at Fieramilanocity are nonetheless cautious about the year ahead.

"Consumer clothing goods are being squeezed further, so it is even more important for those who sell a single product [like textiles] to stand out," said Lorenzo Bonotto, owner and marketing director of Bonotto SpA. "It will become even more important for us to maintain our market share and to expand with a strategic game plan."

Milano Unica has recently positioned itself to



Spring check fabric by Biella-based Reda.



Spring plaid by Biella-based mill Botto Giuseppe.

capitalize on the U.S. and Chinese markets, with new spin-off fairs in New York and Shanghai. Brands have reported a noted rise in U.S. sales since the opening of the New York fair in July.

"Our sales rose 18 percent in the U.S. market in 2015 versus 2014 due to a growing number of U.S. brands that are attracted to quality product rather than brand names," Bonotto added.

The euro's decline against the dollar is expected to offset the negative effects emanating from China. Last week, Goldman Sachs & Co. revised its 12-month forecast for the euro to 95 cents, after calling for euro-dollar parity in December. The euro is currently trading at around \$1.08.

"The favorable euro-dollar exchange has

