



Happy Halloween! It has been an eventful fall season

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It's been an eventful fall both in the city and nationally, with primary elections and government shutdowns. And we're all anxiously awaiting the results of the mayoral election next month, and how New York will change after the Bloomberg era. I'm happy to report that last month's Fashion Week showed classic and up-and-coming designers stepping a bit out of their comfort zones for next year - which should excite our shoppers in coming months!

I'm already being asked for my predictions for the holiday season - which admittedly are a little murky right now given the stalemate going on in Washington, D.C., as I write this. As of early October, the National Retail Federation has predicted a 3.9% sales increase, slightly above last year. That seems about right, given all the uncertainty right now. Shoppers are still investing in their homes, so there may be a bit less for apparel and other goods. Children, of course, will be taken care of very, very well. But a lot depends on our elected leaders, so we'll all have a better sense next month, right before the season kicks off.

My leasing overview begins with one of my favorite deals ever - even though it's not mine! Ham's Times Sq. megastore will open next month - and in particularly appropriate news for this month, the company's COS brand will make its U.S. debut at 129 Spring St. The Travel Channel named the location as one of the 10 most haunted places in America as the result of a notorious murder just north of the location in 1799. (Thanks to Racked.com and The Wall Street Journal for the history lesson!) West Elm is consolidating its retail stores and offices into one location at 55 Water St. in Brooklyn. Construction should begin soon on the Whole Foods at 240-242 Bedford Ave. in Williamsburg. Nearby, Juice Generation has taken 210 Bedford Ave. Brick + Mortar has come to the neighborhood at 240 Kent Ave. Caron Callahan showcases her apparel in a pop-up at the Wythe Hotel (80 Wythe St.) through December 31st.

Claire Vivier opened her first store in the city at 239 Elizabeth St. Room & Board will have a flagship for its home furnishings at 249 West 17th St. Wedding Atelier is relocating to a larger space at 72 Madison Ave. Fairway continues its march through the city with a new unit at 255 Greenwich St. Hermès popped up (with a diner-themed scarf shop) at 10 Columbus Cir. Is Tory Burch taking over 151 Mercer St.? Published reports say so. City Bakery has debuted Birdbath at Columbus Ave. and West 85th St. Montmartre, a women's apparel boutique will add to its store count (others are in Williamsburg and Columbus Cir.) at 282 Columbus Ave. Drummer-turned-haberdasher Gabriel Holl opened his first menswear shop, Holl, at 188 Orchard St. Affordable vintage (\$100 and under) has arrived at Ritual Archive, 167 Mott St. Jerry's Artarama, an art supply store, will open at 111 Fourth Ave. in December.

The year may be winding down, but the calendar has not. On November 19th, I'll be speaking on the state of retail for my colleagues at CREW Connecticut at the Gershon Fox Ballroom at 960 Main St. in Hartford. I'll be interviewed by Hutensky Capital chairman Brad Hutensky (also a past ICSC

Chairman) on what's going on in retail and real estate locally, nationally and internationally. Cocktails begin at 5 p.m., and the program will last until 7 p.m. For more information, please visit <http://www.crewct.org/events.php>.

We're eagerly planning NYCREW's year-end Annual Gala and Vanguard Awards Celebration, set for Tuesday, December 3rd, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at The Columbus Townhouse, 8 East 69th St. This is always one of my favorite NYCREW gatherings, where we look both backwards with our awards program, and forward to the year ahead. Visit www.nycrew.org for registration.

I'm also looking forward to moderating the Women's Special Industry Group year-end program at the International Council of Shopping Centers' New York National Conference, with the session scheduled to focus on urban redevelopment in our wonderful city. Our event will be held Monday, December 9th from 4 to 5:30 p.m. at the New York Hilton's Mercury Ballroom. Please keep checking www.icsc.org - and this column - for details.

Happy Shopping!

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