MILAN — There's a new kid in the old part of town. Etienne Russo, show producer for Dries Van Noten, Dior today's Paper

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World NEWS

Why the Built-In Banquette Is

No Champagne.'

Vianney Le Caer/Invision, via Associated Press

Mr. Russo’s new Milan outpost is housed in the 17th century Palazzo Durini.

The rooms at Mr. Russo’s Villa Eugénie creative agency are a repertoire of curiosities, talismans and

Sunday Opinion

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should I do?

Sorokin's first night of house

crush leads to marriage

End of tour

Learning about creatures from 400,000,000 years ago, it made me

Museum,“ he said of a former commission to revamp its mammals

it comes back through the front door, and even more.’”

Mr. Russo recalled working with Karl Lagerfeld from 1999 until his

Cultural appropriation, and sustainability, are also top of mind

stylist’s interpretation. And it’s not only constant adaptation.

inspired when traveling and sketch things on the back of a napkin.”

agency and clients as akin to a Ping-Pong game.

half months but can take up to five. Fees vary widely, but Mr.

Walt Disney World in Florida, where curiosity led him to inspect

rains,” he said. “We take risks, but controlled ones.”

Like the weather. Often there’s no Plan B in case of inclement

laughing.

And he doesn’t sweat the small stuff anymore.

social media, and pressure to capture everything,” he said. He and

“I was scared, but it was around 30 years ago — there was no

Museum. He worked at high-end restaurants after attending École Hôtelière,

He installed air-conditioning in the palazzo as quickly as possible

Vegetation, shipped in, created a lush landscape. Mr. Russo said

belonging to the painter Duncan Grant in Charleston, England.

French, English and a smattering of Japanese.

perfectly, I’d move on to chop parsley and onions,” he said, sipping

a Belgian hospitality school. “When I’d learnt to peel potatoes

He worked at high-end restaurants after attending École Hôtelière,

Etienne is very good at this.”

catwalks and moving things,” Mr. Van Noten said. “It’s also

fainthearted.

moods, whims and idiosyncrasies. It’s certainly not a job for the

Mr. Russo’s showroom is an improbable repertoire of curiosities,

follow in Paris, including Hermès, Givenchy and Dries Van Noten;

more will

beavering away in anticipation of the forthcoming fashion weeks.

On a sultry late July afternoon here in Milan, one could hear little

lot of people, and a lot about light and sound,” Mr. Van Noten said in

The palazzo’s legacy may be memorable, but then so is Mr. Russo’s.

17th-century building constructed for the noble Durini family, art

where guests dined at a banquet table turned catwalk.

other such large-scale designer narratives, transforming runway

an outpost here.

Franco Pagetti for The New York Times