

◀ **EXCLUSIVE:**
First look at the Madonna, Dolce & Gabbana sunglasses collection, page 3.

Madonna Enters Eyewear With Dolce & Gabbana

By **Alessandra Ilari**

MILAN — From friend to ad campaign star to co-designer — that's how the relationship between Madonna and Domenico Dolce and Stefano Gabbana has evolved.

Fresh from inking a deal with Iconix Brand Group Inc. for multiple fashion-related projects, Madonna has teamed up with Dolce & Gabbana to codesign six pairs of sunglasses bearing the logo MDG. The collection will go on sale in May. The news confirms a report in WWD Thursday.

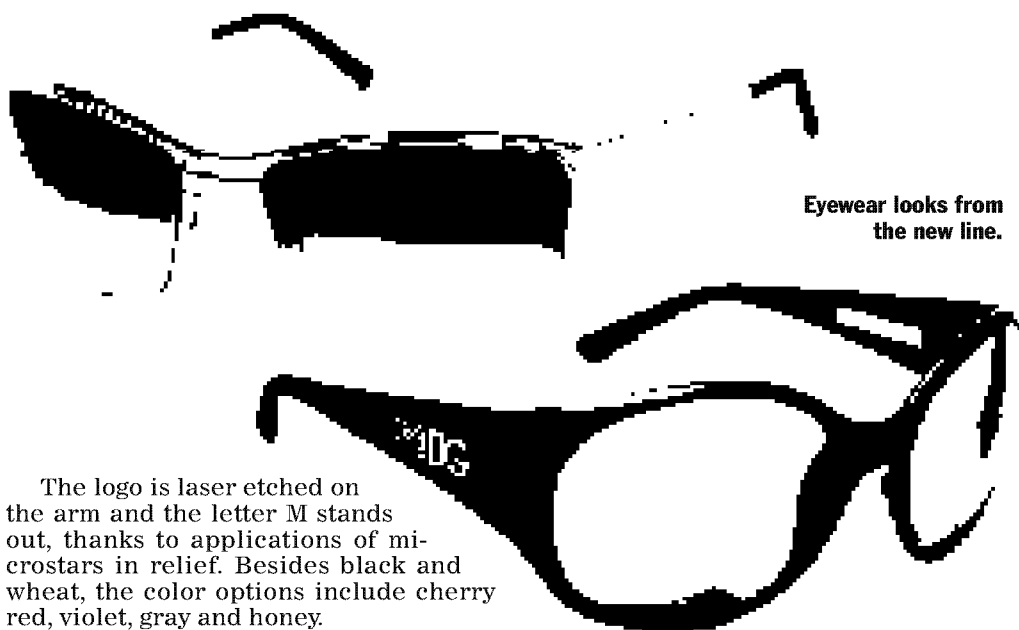
The idea of an eyewear project was developed last fall and comes on the tail of Dolce & Gabbana's spring ad campaign featuring Madonna clad in black lace, corsets and skimpy floral dresses from the Sicilian-themed spring collection.

"We're so excited. This further strengthens our relationship with Madonna, and it was a very constructive experience for us," mused Gabbana in an exclusive interview. "[Madonna] is very exacting and a professional who seeks perfection in everything she does, and this was no exception."

Dolce noted the superstar had been wanting to get involved in some design project for a while. "So we thought, 'Why not do something together and unite two very strong and high-profile names?'" he said.

This is the first co-branded project Dolce and Gabbana have done in their long career. The duo sketched more than 50 styles of sunglasses, which were promptly shipped to Madonna, who then edited, tweaked and changed the designs to her liking.

The result is a broad selection, spanning from retro-esque black plastic shades to gold-and-silver metal frames or more sinuous goggles that frame the face.



Eyewear looks from
the new line.

The logo is laser etched on the arm and the letter M stands out, thanks to applications of microstars in relief. Besides black and wheat, the color options include cherry red, violet, gray and honey.

Luxottica, Dolce & Gabbana's eyewear licensee, will produce and distribute the frames.

The collection will retail for 180 euros, or \$248 at current exchange, to 210 euros, or \$289. The collection will be carried in all Dolce & Gabbana stores worldwide, plus the Sunglass Hut chain owned by **Luxottica** and select opticians.

Madonna also masterminded the ad campaign for the eyewear and once again teamed up with her favorite photographer, Steven Klein, who also shot the designers' spring ad campaign.

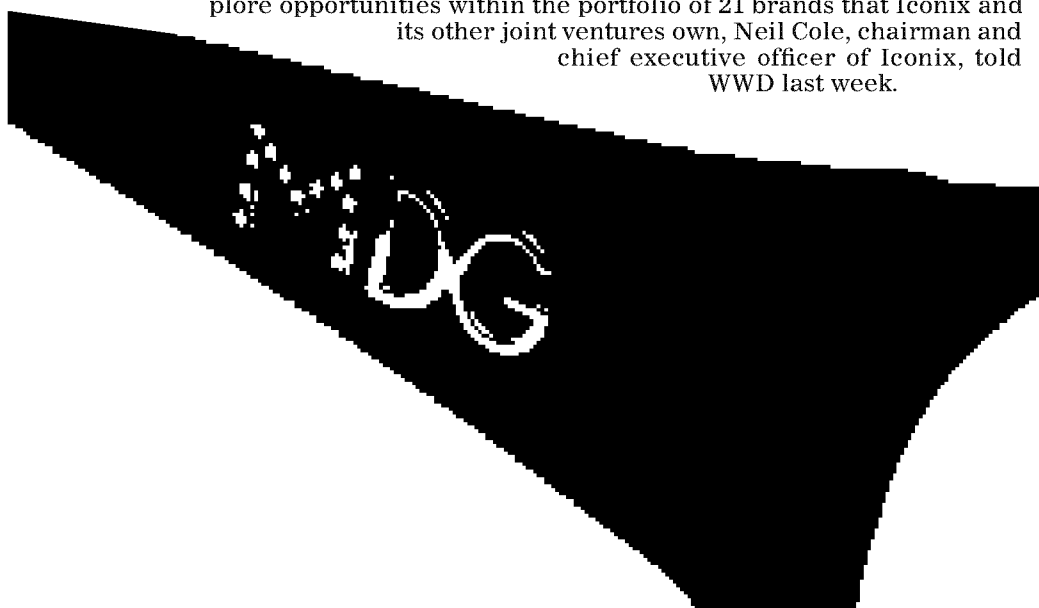
The color images are the result of stills taken from a video shot by Klein in a New York studio. To help create the idea of motion, the clips, which in large part zoom in on Madonna's face to enhance the frames, are mounted in horizontal strips.

The images take their cue from the sensuality of "film noirs," and Gabbana noted how Madonna plays herself in the video, flirting seductively in diva-like poses with model Tyson Ballou. "She's the way people see her — a real star, admired, desired and spied," he explained.

The campaign breaks in May magazines and will also be on billboards in major cities such as New York, London, Paris and Milan.

The sunglasses collection will be the first product to go on sale under Madonna's new joint venture with Iconix, called MG Icon LLC. The venture aims to develop a slew of fashion-related projects worldwide, including a juniors' line called Material World that will be introduced exclusively at 200 Macy's stores in August. The venture is 50 percent owned by Iconix with the remainder held by Madonna and Guy Oseary, her longtime manager.

MG Icon hopes to develop more brands, perhaps acquire additional labels and explore opportunities within the portfolio of 21 brands that Iconix and its other joint ventures own, Neil Cole, chairman and chief executive officer of Iconix, told WWD last week.





Two ads featuring Madonna.

