

# WWD

Fashion. Beauty. Business.

## Sonia Rykiel

1930-2016

One of Paris' most influential designers of the 20th century, Sonia Rykiel died Thursday at the age of 86. With her signature shock of frizzy red hair and magnetic personality, Rykiel thrived on her own terms. Reflecting on her career a few years ago, she told WWD: "Since I didn't know anything, I did everything I wanted. I didn't listen to anyone. I was so violent, so authoritarian, only listening to what I wanted and myself. People loved me or hated me. Those who loved me, loved me a lot. The others, I didn't bother with them very much." Here, the designer photographed by WWD in Paris in 1978.

*For more, see pages 4, 5 and 6.*



# Richard Found on Design And Retail Projects

WWD sat down with the director to talk about his latest projects.

**Launched in 2007**, Richard Found's London-based architectural design practice is headquartered in SoHo. Found's clients range from retail, commercial and residential and include Alice Temperley, Anya Hindmarch, Donna Karan, Givenchy and Tiffany & Co. and retailers such as Harrods, Harvey Nichols and Selfridges. His latest projects include building Saks Fifth Avenue in Brookfield Place, which launches on Sept. 8 and the redesign of photographer Mario Testino's London offices.

**WWD: Can you tell us about the Saks Fifth Avenue project?**

**Richard Found:** As you know, it was Saks downtown next to the 9/11 memorial. I suppose we'd been working on it for probably around two years now. What was quite exciting was that obviously it was a very different concept to Saks Fifth Avenue actually on Fifth Avenue. It's almost like a concept store baring in mind the location. It's a language. Throughout the floor we used a Terrazzo floor. You know all about the artist Barry Reigate, who has painted this long mural, which is 220 feet long. It was a very enjoyable process working with Saks. We're working on another project with them in New Jersey, so it's an ongoing relationship. They gave us total freedom to design the store. As you know, some clients will say, "this is what we've done before..." but they were totally open-minded to a new approach.

**WWD: What was your most memorable project that you have worked on?**

**R.F.:** On the retail side, it may well be Anya Hindmarch, as we've worked on quite a few stores for her in the past on Bond Street and Sloane Street. It was a very pleasurable experience and it was great to work with her — she's a



Richard Found

real visionary. It was a very good experience. Her attention to detail is very similar to mine. We're both almost OCD when it comes to certain details, so we're very like-minded in that sense.

**WWD: What was your most challenging project?**

**R.F.:** I suppose the most challenging project was a house we designed in the Cotswolds all totally out of concrete, and unfortunately there was a very steep hill to get down to the site, so while we could get the concrete lorries down to pump all the concrete out, what we couldn't do was get the concrete lorries back up the hill without the use of a tractor (because they had no traction on their tires to get out). Also the planners were quite strict on us when it came to the location of the new build alongside the cottage that dated back to 1730. The

planners insisted that the extension, which was like 5,000 square feet, had to be behind the cottage, which meant we had to excavate a tremendous amount of soil in order to start the build. So that was probably our most challenging project on-site. It wasn't too bad in the end — it was about 14 months on-site.

**WWD: What are your thoughts on the retail landscape now and how does that affect the design process for stores?**

**R.F.:** The experience within a department store has to be far more exciting than it ever has been because of online trade, so to speak. I think there has to be more of an interactive element within the stores. We're also coming up with the idea of having an app, with your mobile phone telling you what you

bought last time you walked into a store, and what should buy this time — so it's more of an interactive experience. My personal thoughts are that there's a challenge having this interactive element without it being too gimmicky or passé. For instance, a couple of our competitors design these mirrors that ask if you want a cup of coffee or not when you tap on them. There's a person standing outside the fitting room, so there's no need to order a coffee through a mirror!

**WWD: What do you like to do when you're not designing?**

**R.F.:** When I'm not designing, I



The Harrods restaurant.

love going to the Gagosian Gallery and I go to Chelsea in New York to look at the galleries whenever I'm over. I always go to Frieze New York and Basel Miami, Basel in Basel and Frieze in London.

**WWD: If you weren't working in design, what would you be doing?**

**R.F.:** If not working in design, I

**WWD: Can you tell us about some upcoming projects and plans?**

**R.F.:** We're working with Mario Testino on refurbishing his studio in West London. We're working with Saks on their department store in New Jersey. We are designing a house in the South of France, South Africa, Derbyshire (North



The Kurt Geiger store.

like to travel if at all possible. But having said that, I do coincide travel with work obviously. I travel to New York probably every third week. My wife is in the art world, so we go to a lot of galleries and museums together. Mainly just being involved in the art world, so I spend a lot of my free time looking at different paintings and purchases. I

would probably be involved in property somehow, a property developer. I just enjoy challenges of gaining additional square feet wherever possible, adding an additional story, adding a basement. I've always been interested in structure and spaces. Without focusing on something totally different, there's a kind of synergy there.

England), another one in the Cotswolds and a large penthouse apartment in Central London, Mayfair. We are working with Alsterhaus in Hamburg and also Illum in Copenhagen, two large department stores. We're working with Vittorio Radice on those projects, who's part of the Central Group.

— LORELEI MARFIL

# 'Southside With You' Premieres in N.Y.

Tika Sumpter, Parker Sawyers and Richard Tanne premiered the film about Barack and Michelle Obama's first date.

"I just think it's a great love story," said Tika Sumpter Wednesday evening from the red carpet at the Cinema Society's New York premiere of her film "Southside With You." Sumpter, also a first-time producer of the film, plays second-year legal associate Michelle Robinson, who agrees to spend an afternoon with the charming young summer associate at her Chicago firm, Barack Obama, played by Parker Sawyers. "Any actor would be lucky to play these two parts," Sumpter continued. "And it just happened to be us. I think anybody will be able to relate, no matter what side of the alley

you're on. It's not political at all — I mean, they talk about things in the future, but it's not a wink-wink movie, it's not [about] red state, blue state — it's really a story about forgiveness, love, walking in somebody else's shoes. And I think any human being can relate to that." The story of the President and First Lady's first date stood out to writer and director Richard Tanne from the moment he heard it. "It must've been in an interview," he said of how he learned the story. "There was some anecdote they gave about the first date. They've been very public about it. The dynamic of the date [was inter-

esting], because by her account Michelle wasn't interested at first, and [Barack] had one date to kind of make his case and prove himself as worthy — and by her own admission he had done just that. It felt like a classic romantic movie." The film debuted to critical acclaim at Sundance, and arrives in theaters this Friday. "I wrote it with Tika in mind, because I had met her before I went off to write the script and I thought she'd be great for the part" Richard Tanne said ahead of the screening, after which the crowd continued onto the yet-to-open Harold's Meat + Three at Arlo Hudson Square. "And



Parker Sawyers and Tika Sumpter

for Barack, it was sort of one of those big question marks of who was going to be the person to take care of this role. I wanted basically who Sawyers] is. A total unknown, a total discovery, who comes out of the gate with a brilliant performance." "When I first read it, because it was so much dialogue, I was like, 'How is this going to work?'" said Sawyers. "But then, when I really drilled down into it, and understood the nuances and the conflict between very simple exchanges, I was like, 'This would be really interesting as an actor.'" Sawyers originally approached the role as an impersonation, but soon abandoned that approach in favor of embodying a young man with all the confidence but none of the power the Obama audiences today know. "I just focused on being 28, and trying to impress a woman, and his confidence and so forth, at 28, without the presidential or senator title," Sawyers said. "Rooting it in 'I've been around the country, studied hard, I know myself quite well, and I walk around like this at 28.'" — LEIGH NORDSTROM