



### VALÉRIE KAMINOV – BIOGRAPHY

Valérie Kaminov is Founder and Managing Director of the highly successful International Luxury Brand Consultancy based in London.

For over 20 years Valérie has been at the forefront of the global cosmetics industry and has worked with a vast array of luxury, premium and niche beauty brands and fragrances.

Her extensive expertise, commercial acumen and practical experience are much sought after by both iconic global brands and newly emerging talents. Valérie's wealth of knowledge in international growth strategies and business development is combined with an inspirational and forward-thinking approach.

Through her exceptional insight and understanding of the industry Valérie has helped brands amplify their market reach on an international scale, elevate their brand presence and improve their performance.

To her clients, she is more than a consultant, she is a trusted asset, advisor, partner and brand guardian.

Valérie's expertise in brand evaluation, acquisition due diligence, risk assessment and commercial growth is particularly highly valued by Private Equity Funds, multi-national organizations and financial investors.

Her advanced qualifications and her proficiency in corporate governance have made her a much-desired Board Advisor and Non-Executive Director to well-established companies and pioneering Indie brands.

Valérie is also dedicated to passing her knowledge along through a range of conferences and events.

She has been a guest speaker at the non-profit organization CEW's Mentoring Services where leading executives offer guidance and professional development support.

As the International Manufacturers & Distributors Forum (IMF) Master of Ceremony, Valérie organizes this influential conference in Europe; it has become a key global gathering for manufacturers, brand owners and distributors to come together to discuss the opportunities and challenges facing the industry and their businesses.

# THE BEAUTY OF SUSTAINABILITY

## Sustainable beauty, this once niche trend has become a fact of life and now more than ever it is driving the choices of the global consumer

This rise in awareness is very welcome to brands like Neal's Yard Remedies who were one of the early forerunners of the sustainable movement. In 1981 when the brand was founded it was seen as unusual in talking about values, sustainability and provenance. Now they are not only one of the most respected pioneers of change but also for their advocacy in leading the way towards more sustainable practices. As Susan Curtis, Natural Health Director Neal's Yard Remedies explains, "Sometimes the growth in awareness has been slow and incremental as with an understanding of terms like biodiversity and climate change, other times there has been a sudden shift in consciousness as with the amazing Blue Planet series where David Attenborough played an incredibly important role in raising awareness of the plastic in the oceans problem literally overnight."

In 2019, we saw an increasing number of beauty brands prioritising purpose and values to resonate with an ethically driven consumer base. Recent surveys have shown that 90% of consumers feel companies and brands should assume the responsibility to take care of the planet and the people. This conscious consumer is more aware of their impact on the wider world and how they can benefit the greater good, they expect brands to do the same. This fast-growing sector is particularly relevant when you look at the next generations. A recent Facebook report found 68% of Gen Zers expect brands to contribute to society, this younger market is particularly drawn to the agile, innovative smaller brands who they feel share their values and offer a strong sense of self-expression.



From efficacy to ethics, this mindful customer has raised the bar in beauty. What was once an exception has become an expectation and cosmetic businesses have an important role to play. One that goes beyond products to every element that shapes our industry. These sustainability aware consumers scrutinize performance and socio-environmental behaviour before buying. How eco-efficient companies are has turned into a purchase qualification. Moving forward brands will be expected to go much further, to stand for something more than a great product - ethical consumerism requires ethical standards.

The success of the movement will be when we see positive economic, social, environmental and cultural practices built-in rather than as add-ons in the industry. With some research, we can all make intelligent switches that don't compromise on quality. It's not just about negatively impacting the world but being a force for good.

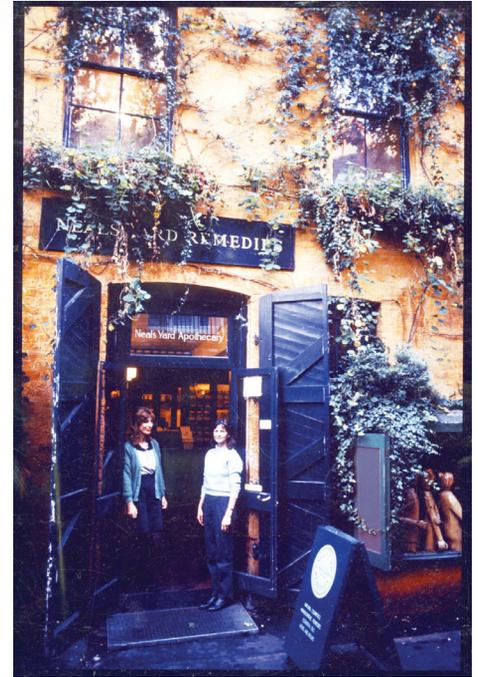
### What Does Sustainable Beauty Mean?

Around the world there are different standards for what sustainable beauty looks like, from ingredient sourcing and reusable packaging to green chemistry and circular economies; being a sustainable brand is a comprehensive commitment that can take time and effort to fully achieve. Of the dozens of eco-labels out there, most brands primarily focus on the areas of recyclable, cruelty-free, organic ingredients and certification for good business practices. One of the most rigorous accreditations is B Corp which uses the UN's sustainability development goals as a benchmark with brands needing to achieve a minimum score on the environment, community, customers and workers impact assessments. The Body Shop, a pioneer in sustainable beauty is one of the few brands that are B Corp certified others include Dr. Bronner's and Dr. Hauschka.

Susan Curtis, Neal's Yard Remedies highlights the positive side of the movement. "The phrase I like the most is that of a Regenerative Business – based on the idea that businesses can and should not only have a light footprint but actually do what they can to improve the world as they go along. It's a question of always looking to be part of the solution, not add to the many problems that we face in the modern world. That approach is very empowering because one of the biggest problems I think is people feeling overwhelmed by the scale of the problems we face – so it's very important to keep solution focussed on the small and the large issues."

### Why We Need Sustainability in the Beauty Industry

We have all read the statistics in how the beauty industry contributes 120 billion units of packaging a year, and through its integral shipping processes more than 1 billion tons of CO<sub>2</sub> a year. As much as 70% of plastic waste generated by personal care and beauty products isn't recycled, it ends up in landfills. In the US alone 8 billion micro beads are released into sewers every day, while each year an estimated 8 million tons of plastic pollute the oceans endangering marine biodiversity. Although plastic pollution is the most visible sign of damage, one of the biggest threats to marine life ecosystems is sunscreen. Hawaii has been the first US state to ban sunscreen containing coral-harming chemicals such as oxybenzone and octinoxate which comes into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> Jan 2021. Brands like Caudalie and Coola are part of the Blue Beauty trend where limiting plastic wastage and protecting our oceans from chemicals is a key priority.





Vasiliki Petrou, Chairman CEW UK & EVP  
and Group CEO of Unilever Prestige

Many industry bodies around the world are demonstrating a strong and driving commitment to the movement. In 2019, the theme for the internationally renowned beauty fair Cosmoprof Worldwide Bologna was 'Sustainable Beauty: With No Compromise'. Their 'Impact for Beauty Report' is a must-read for anyone in the industry as it explores how small changes that everyone can make can help achieve a larger scale worldwide transformation of the beauty business.

The influential organisation CEW (Cosmetics Executive Women) has long championed the need for action. "Our industry "has" to be a force for good when it comes to these important issues," Vasiliki Petrou, Chairman CEW UK and EVP Unilever Prestige. "We as brands, are in a powerful position to lead change. However, I truly believe that to make some of the social impact changes so desperately needed the industry must come together, we can't be competitors when it comes to sustainability and this is where CEW is such a driving force."

This priority focus by industry bodies, beauty giants, independent brands, retailers and distributors is reflective of how the world of beauty is taking up the reins of responsibility to act.

Science has become a key transformation driver as through biotechnology innovation as well as the use of green chemistry in formulations more sustainable options are continually evolving. The increase in biocompatible lab-grown alternatives is leading to new materials emerging that straddle natural and engineered. One Ocean Beauty source through blue biotechnology rather than harvesting from the oceans. It is also leading to the development of more synthetics to be used as substitutes to naturally grown ingredients. Although some feel it is a grey area to create chemical alternatives to plants, others feel it is an environmentally responsible option.

Many sustainable brands are very conscious of the dangers of over-harvesting natural ingredients, particularly from the wild. Some such as Neal's Yard Remedies are supporters of the FairWild scheme that ensures a fair price for collectors and sustainable harvesting. "With cultivated ingredients, there are some hard choices to be made but I do believe it is possible to always look to sustainable options," Susan Curtis, Neal's Yard Remedies, "organic cultivation for example has been proven to produce more drought resistant crops than convention agriculture, locks more carbon in the soil and improves rather than degrades soil fertility." Curtis also highlights the potential of switching out ingredients to avoid ones such as almond oil which needs a lot of water in its production, for apricot kernel oil which is generated from an existing food crop.

## A Global Movement

Around the world sustainable beauty is rapidly becoming a mainstream player, different markets are at different levels of maturity but there is no doubt it is here to stay. In the UK, the Soil Association's 2020 Organic Market report for Beauty & Wellbeing found that for the 9th consecutive year there had been double digit growth by sustainable brands. The report also looks at the buying behaviour of consumers and found the following:

- 79% of people are more likely to buy a beauty product labelled "organic"
- 92% said choosing an organic beauty product would make them feel they are making a positive choice
- 82% felt they would be doing the right thing for the environment
- 56% look for certification logos to support them with their choices
- 69% are looking for products with recyclable packaging

In the US, natural products were the top growth contributor in the prestige skincare sector and 'clean' beauty was the most prominent trend with these brands experiencing a 20% year-on-year dollar growth. Europe is one of the leading markets when it comes to ethical beauty not just in consumption but brand innovation.

Green beauty might be in its infancy in some parts of Asia but it is growing quickly and powerfully, even overcoming the price sensitivity issue which tends to occur with the associated higher price tag. India is another country that is showing a gravitational move towards organic and natural, this is partially in response to the wider internet access that has led to an enhanced focus on beauty and social consciousness. Digital discovery and the rise of the 'Instabrand' has elevated the importance of sustainability in beauty all around the world. Post Covid-19 these numbers are likely to increase as the pandemic has made us think more of the health of the planet along with people.

Salons and retailers have also responded to the demand for more sustainable brands and have increased their availability. Transparency is key as consumers are much more aware of false claims and now seek certification with their purchase. This point highlights a key challenge the industry is facing as currently the EU and FDA have no legal definition of natural beauty products which means brands can greenwash or tout natural ingredients with little oversight or regulation.

Brands that use their voice to bring attention to sustainability are experiencing double digit growth. Incorporating transparency, social awareness and ecological initiatives into your brands DNA is driving growth.

## Beauty Meets Activism

With the collective environmental conscience growing, opportunities are evolving for retailers, beauty brands, cosmetic companies and their supply chains to go green, or in some cases greener.

Indie brands recognised for their creativity and purpose are setting the standards in impactful beauty. Companies like Scentered, Beauty Kitchen, Sana Jardin and Kadalys that tackle the environmental and social issues and deliver great product are capturing both the headlines and the market share.

We are also seeing more and more forward thinking formulas using ingredients from waste by-products as beauty brands explore how to repurpose usually discarded food waste into sustainable products. What started with the simple idea of incorporating coffee grounds into facial scrubs is evolving into a new generation of brands demonstrating how to shorten a supply chain with great end results. The dilemma of packaging is addressed by brands such as Lush Handmade Cosmetics with their "naked skincare", while US brand Apothecary Muse wrap their soaps in 'plantable' paper which is embedded with wildflower seeds. Other ideas include refillable incentive schemes, recycled, recyclable or bio-sourced primary and secondary packaging whilst also reducing the amount used. The Body Shop has tackled the tricky issue of single use products with their Drops of Youth Concentrate Sheet Mask which is not just biodegradable but compostable too.

Retailers are driving the movement further. French chain Monoprix carefully consider the sustainable and ecological credentials of new beauty brands. Marie Laird, Beauty Director Monoprix, current buying philosophy is centred on brands that demonstrate innovation particularly in the clean, organic and green category. Zero waste and fair trade practices are also of primary importance in her decisions. Two highlighted brands are Mademoiselle Saint Germain, created in partnership with the King's Versailles Garden of Vegetables, uses only French ingredients and every production celebrates being a unique vintage as even if the formulation remains the same the ingredients offer a new sensoriality each time. The other is On the Wild Side which creates its organic and 100% natural cosmetics from wildcrafting, a way of collecting plants from the unspoilt and powerful natural environment, in this case the French forests. These inspiring businesses exemplify the authenticity and provenance that so often characterizes the latest wave of sustainable beauty. So important is the category to Monoprix that they are adding to their private label offering with a new sustainably focused range.





The beauty giants have also taken up the cause with all of them publishing their policies on waste reduction, respecting biodiversity, reducing water consumption and other sustainable goals. One of the leaders is Unilever who are very clear about the importance of sustainability, and as an organisation they have made some big pledges and commitments. Within their portfolio, they have REN Clean Skincare who has this commitment entwined deeply in their DNA. “The Unilever Sustainability Living Promise was launched 10 years ago now, so it’s been part of the Prestige strategy since conception. Amazing progress has been made and it’s inspiring to belong to a company so committed to making change, not just for themselves but to the industry as a whole.” Vasiliki Petrou, EVP Unilever Prestige.

The fragrance sector is responding as well. Recently launched French brand pH Fragrances is founded on a vision to design a new generation of premium perfumed home and beauty products that reflect the highest values of quality, eco-friendly, sustainable sourcing and production as well as being made in France. “Our commitment to the local economy is total.” Camille Le Feuvre, Founder pH Fragrances “We work with 20 French partners, from packaging to production, through formulations to marketing everything is done in France. It makes more sense to have your products made in France, rather than having products go around the world before arriving in our bathrooms, it is better for the carbon footprint too. We are transparent on what is inside our products, how it is done, where it is done.” Le Feuvre invested two years of research and development to ensure her products offer an exceptional level of transparency that goes beyond the normal regulations when it comes to banned controversial ingredients.

### Brand Spotlight: Kadalys

French brand Kadalys is emblematic of the meaningful difference sustainable beauty can make. Founder Shirley Billot’s vision was not just to create a beauty brand built on ethical and environmental values, she wanted to have a business that supported and developed agriculture in her native Martinique, to provide a channel for growth and empowerment particularly for black women in the French West Indies, she wanted to scientifically develop a range ‘with no exclusions’ in that every skin type and colour could benefit from using them and she wanted to ensure her brand would positively contribute to the future.

Brand identity, ingredient innovation, purpose and heritage are all intertwined with the shared goal of social, economic, cultural and environmental sustainability. Growing up in Martinique Billot was very aware of the importance of the banana industry to the people and the economy; she was also conscious of the high levels of waste, as each year almost 270,000 tons of bananas are transported to Europe, approximately 15% will never be sold as damaged.



Shirley Billot, Founder Kadalys



Alongside this understanding was the knowledge that the Banana Tree plant is very well known for its cosmetic, healing and wellbeing benefits.

These facts in combination with Billot's natural entrepreneurship, activism (in many ways inherited from her parents), community values and a desire to do something positive led to the foundation of Kadalys.

"Through Kadalys, I wanted to create Ethical Cosmetics with no compromise between high performance, naturalness and citizen engagement." Shirley Billot, Founder Kadalys. Knowing that different parts of the Banana Tree plant had different benefits, Billot commissioned an in-depth research programme that resulted in the development of proprietary active ingredients from the yellow, green and red banana to create a unique line of conscious, caring cosmetics that is also clean, organic and vegan and very importantly formulated through green chemistry. Unlocking the banana's beauty and health potential through pioneering innovation has enabled her to use the waste banana and transform them into a quality skin care product – good for the skin and good for the environment.

A key value of Kadalys is their social responsibility, as Billot regards all the Martinique banana producers as her business partners who act together to optimize resources through a participatory Circular Economy. The Circular Economy model and values are fundamental to the operations, strategy and culture of her brand. For the last 10 years, the agriculture model in Martinique has focused on promoting biodiversity and respecting the fragile balance between man and nature.

This partnership also strengthens the traceability, quality and safety of the banana, the main cosmetic ingredient. Furthermore, Kadalys redistributes 1% of its turnover to the banana sector to help finance research programmes to promote new reasoned farming systems and to intensify varietal research. Additionally, Billot is passionate about increasing employment on the islands including supporting education in areas such as science and technology, she recently sponsored two young women from Guadeloupe and Martinique to train in the scientific field. Future plans are focused on growing the business globally, from resourcing to retail Kadalys is set to have a much wider presence. Shirley Billot is representative of this new breed of influential cosmetics founder and beauty activist, her vision goes beyond the holistic to one that is committed, progressive, gives back, shares and preserves others. It is little wonder that Kadalys has been recognised with a wealth of awards and Billot's own powerful commitment to promoting innovation and sustainable management of the planet's resources has led her to be honoured in 2017 by the President of the French Republic, with the "Knight of the Order of Merit", the second national French Order.

### Some Thoughts on Sustainable Beauty Post Covid-19

"I think it's our responsibility to make sure sustainability stays a priority. Unilever remain committed to reducing virgin plastic by 2023, with a long-term goal of being 100% recyclable, reusable or compostable by 2025." Vasiliki Petrou, EVP Unilever Prestige "For us, it remains vital that we reach or exceed, our sustainability pledges, and I'm pleased to say we're on track. In fact, Tatcha recently announced they will become 100% reusable, refillable, recyclable or compostable by 2023."

"There is the recognition of just what enormous changes society can make when it puts its mind to it and how can we use the example of the Covid response to some of the massive environmental and social challenges we have." Susan Curtis, Natural Health Director Neal's Yard Remedies.

Being a responsible brand involves many challenges, sustainable sourcing of raw ingredients, energy consumption, waste management and carbon footprint of the production chain, biodegradability, lack of toxicity and corporate social responsibility. It seems daunting but it is better to address one part of the problem than do nothing, we all must contribute to finding a solution.

