

## Per Una, Ad Alta - Fashion Visionary Returns to University

Posted on Tuesday 14th October 2008

Retail inspiration George Davies took his University motto to heart when he left Birmingham and this week he will return to his alma mater, the University of Birmingham, to talk about his fascinating career.

The man behind Next, George at Asda and per una at Marks and Spencer will draw on his decades of retail experience to deliver a guest lecture, 'Creating the Brand' to students, staff and alumni.

George studied Dentistry at the University, but was lured into the world of retail in 1962, when he became a buyer for Littlewoods. He has never looked back, and in 1982 launched high street fashion chain Next. Just two years later he became Chief Executive of the company.

In 1986 George bought his eponymous clothing range to Asda, with the aim of supplying fashion at affordable prices. The collection went from being available in nine outlets in the UK, to 250 stores globally, from the US and Canada to Japan, Argentina and Mexico.

In 2001, Gorge launched the per una range at Marks and Spencer, a collection specially for women. George describes his work with per una as, 'a bit of an obsession'. And says: "The work is something that I just have to do – it's something I live for rather than just do."

Claire O'Sullivan, Deputy Head of Alumni Relations at the University of Birmingham says: "It is a great pleasure to welcome back an alumnus of such distinction to the campus. We are delighted to be able to offer our students, staff and alumni the opportunity to hear about the experiences of one of the UK's most influential retailers."

George Davies' lecture 'Creating the Brand' will be hosted at the Birmingham Business School at 5pm on Wednesday October.

Ends

### Notes to Editors:

Journalists are welcome to attend. There will be the opportunity to interview George. Please call the Press Office for accreditation in advance.

### Further information:

Please call Anna Mitchell, Press Officer on 0121 414 6029 / 07920 593946 / a.i.mitchell@bham.ac.uk

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