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WWD WEDNESDAY

Ready-to-Wear/Textiles



Lots Of Zip

NEW YORK — This season, Michael Kors envisioned his collection as set at an imaginary party at Mr. Chow, where, as he put it in the program notes, “high society meets hip-hop.” To that end, he combined luxe sportif with touches of bling bling in his proportions and materials. Here, Kors’ cashmere down vest, cashmere mesh tank and black leather track pants, with bold zippers.

Prada’s New Universe: SoHo Store Gets Chinese Makeover

By Anamaria Wilson

NEW YORK — Everyone is looking to China for inspiration these days — including Miuccia Prada.

For Prada, those Asian influences are found not only in her spring

collections, but also in the new design concept of the SoHo store, which will be unveiled at a party this evening. Only 14 months after opening, the sprawling space has undergone a metamorphosis of sorts with an

installation entitled “Parallel Universe.”

When it opened in December 2001, the high tech, 30,000 square-foot store, built at an estimated cost of

See **Prada**, Page 3

Art Cooper to Exit GQ

By Jacob Bernstein

NEW YORK — Just days after Art Cooper declared that he had no plans to retire, Condé Nast shocked the publishing industry on Monday with the news that the GQ editor in chief indeed would be stepping down, effective June 1.

Condé Nast said Monday that James Truman, its editorial director, will conduct the search for a new editor and that Cooper will work with him on it. Speculation has centered on British GQ editor Dylan Jones, with an outside chance that David Zinzenko would be plucked from Men's Health.

"I've been thinking about this for a long time and it was a really hard decision," Cooper said in

a press release issued Monday. "I strongly believe that the time to leave is when you still love what you're doing. June 1 will be precisely 20 years from the day S.I. Newhouse [chairman of Advance Publications, owner of Condé Nast and WWD] offered me the job and therefore, an appropriate time to step down."

Cooper did not return telephone calls seeking comment. But company officials claimed they were caught off guard by his decision, which he delivered to Newhouse early Monday morning. Condé Nast chief executive Steve Florio was out of town, as was Lisa Dallos, the magazine's spokeswoman. "We did not plan on this for Monday," a Condé Nast source said.

What led up to that, though,

was far more complicated.

While Cooper had a long and successful run at GQ, the magazine's newsstand sales began to plummet in the late Nineties with the onslaught of the "laddie mag" movement. Cooper sniped publicly that the magazines were read by Neanderthals, but within months of their release, titles like Maxim, its offshoot Stuff, and Emap's FHM were quickly eating into his newsstand sales. In 1997, just before the release of Maxim, GQ was the largest men's general interest magazine with a newsstand circulation of 336,000 copies per month. By June of 2002, GQ's newsstand sales had plummeted to 188,000, less than a quarter of what Maxim currently sells and

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WWD TUESDAY

Ready-to-Wear/Textiles

GENERAL

- 4** FASHION: Color might rule the runways once again for spring 2004, judging from the array of hues shown at the Première Vision textile fair.
- 1** Prada is redecorating in SoHo. The company has mounted the second installation for the Rem Koolhaas-designed emporium. Here's a look.
- 2** Just days after Art Cooper declared that he had no plans to retire, Condé Nast said the GQ editor would indeed be stepping down, effective June 1.
- 10** After Warren Buffett's decision to buy bankrupt Burlington Industries, textile executives are wondering if the sector's investment climate might improve.
- 2** Pinault-Printemps-Redoute has acquired another 1.17 million shares of Gucci stock, boosting its stake in the luxe firm one point to 59.33 percent.
- 6** EYE: Grammy coverage aplenty, including Clive Davis' primo bash and Nelly's rehearsal antics, plus the newest take on karaoke.

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PPR Adds to Gucci Holdings

MILAN — Put another point on the board for PPR.

French retail giant Pinault-Printemps-Redoute acquired another 1.17 million shares of Gucci Group stock between Jan. 28 and this past Thursday, boosting its stake in the luxury house to 59.33 percent from 58.2 percent.

As reported, PPR has pledged to buy all shares of Gucci it doesn't own in 2004 for \$101.50 each. Any purchases made for less than that amount at current market prices represent savings to PPR. Through an affiliate, PPR most recently spent \$110.2 million for 1.17 million shares of Gucci, an average of \$94 a share.

Acquired at \$101.50 a share in 2004, those same shares would have cost \$119 million, \$8.8 million more.



François Pinault

between \$91.96 and \$94.86 a share for a total of \$67.3 million. Dollar figures have been converted from the euro at a current exchange rate of about \$1.08 per euro.

During the same period, PPR bought 452,474 shares on the New York Stock Exchange at prices between \$93.17 and \$94.38 a share for a total of \$42.5 million.

PPR said last month it would continue to buy Gucci shares on the market and eventually lift its stake to more than 61 percent. Prior to next year's deadline, PPR can lift its stake to as high as 70 percent by buying shares on the market.

The purchases were made through PPR's Societe Civile de Gestion Financiere Marothi subsidiary and Marothi's Scholefield Goodmann subsidiary.

— Amanda Kaiser

PPR said Monday in a filing with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission that it bought 719,973 shares on the Amsterdam exchange at prices

Delia's Licensing Deal Adds \$16.5M in Cash

NEW YORK — Delia's Corp. continues to execute the teen retailing business model in reverse.

Late Monday, the company said it had entered the world of wholesaling through a licensing agreement with JLP Daisy LLC, an affiliate of Schottenstein Stores Corp. Daisy, as the master licensee, will in turn advance Delia's \$16.5 million in sorely needed cash against future royalties. Once JLP Daisy recoups the advance plus an unspecified preferred return as sub-licensees begin to generate revenue, Delia's will receive a majority of the royalty stream after brand management fees are subtracted. Group 3 Design Corp. has been retained to manage Delia's new licensing activities.

Originally a catalog and Web marketer that entered traditional retail and now has 68 stores, Delia's has incurred losses of nearly \$100 million in the last two fiscal years, including a \$22.1 million loss in the year ended Feb. 1, 2002. Sales declined 33.2 percent to \$143.7 million for that year.

In a statement, Delia chief ex-

ecutive Stephen Kahn noted, "We believe these activities will complement Delia's direct and specialty businesses. The deal also solidifies Delia's balance sheet while creating an opportunity to participate in a meaningful future royalty stream. The advance proceeds from this transaction leave us well positioned to continue to run our core Delia's direct and retail franchises."

Peter J. Solomon Co. advised Delia's on the transaction, as reported, and officials with the firm had said that the strategic alternative being put together would be "unconventional."

Mary Gleason, Group 3's CEO, said the brand, highly regarded by teenage girls and young women, "has the potential to become a powerhouse licensing franchise." Products could hit the market in time for fall selling, she said.

A spokesman for Delia's told WWD Monday, "This is a terrific way for us to expand the brand, heal the business and build a pretty substantial business."

— Arnold J. Karr

A Rare Visitor: Calvin Klein Set For Bergdorf's

NEW YORK — Calvin Klein is expected to make a rare appearance at Bergdorf Goodman today at noon to promote his spring collection.

Klein has generally limited his in-store appearances to beauty launches and store openings, such as the Paris flagship that opened in June.

The event today is billed as a personal appearance for top Bergdorf Goodman customers to review the spring collection and to place special orders, with guests expected to include Clarissa Bronfman, Patricia Wexler, Cece Cord and Diane Simms, wife of NFL veteran Phil Simms.

A spokeswoman for Klein said the designer is making the appearance in recognition of the "tremendous support that Bergdorf Goodman has shown for the collection business."

In Brief

● **SEARS SUPPORT:** Sears, Roebuck & Co. said its wholly owned finance subsidiary, Sears Roebuck Acceptance Corp., completed a new \$3.5 billion syndicated bank facility. The committed 364-day revolving credit facility, which closed Monday, will replace SRAC's current standby bank facility. The new one will be used to support its commercial paper program. The facility includes an option to extend the repayment of borrowings, if any, to February 2005. SRAC raises funds through the issuance of unsecured commercial paper and long-term debt.

● **TEAM SEVEN:** Los Angeles-based denim resource Seven for all Mankind has hired two new designers from Levi Strauss and Gap. Stefano Aldighieri, former Levi's design director for fabrics and finishes, is now Seven's creative director. Also on board is Tim Kaeding, who was Gap's head design director for the past four years, overseeing the women's line. The new hires will work with Rebecca Danenberg, who joined Seven's design staff in September 2001. Aldighieri and Kaeding fill in the void left when former Seven partner and designer Jerome Dahan left the company along with partner Michael Glasser in December, and filed a lawsuit against the third Seven partner, Peter Koral, for fraud, breach of fiduciary duty and breach of oral contract. The suit is still pending.

● **EU-VIETNAM TRADE ACCORD:** The European Union has reached a three-year agreement with Vietnam to increase quotas on apparel and textiles in exchange for a reduction in tariffs on EU apparel and textile exports to Vietnam. The agreement, which must still be approved by the European Commission, would give Vietnam an increase in apparel and textile quotas worth \$216.3 million a year and increase quotas by 50 percent on sensitive categories such as trousers or shirts, and up to 70 percent, on brassieres. In return, Vietnam has agreed to reduce its customs duties on EU apparel and textile imports progressively over the three years, beginning retroactively this year. Duties on apparel would be reduced to 20 percent by 2005, while duties on fabrics would be lowered to 12 percent, duties on yarns would be reduced to 7 percent and duties on fibers would be reduced to 5 percent. Those rates are less than half the duties Vietnam presently applies.

WWD Stock Market Index for February 24

Composite: 92.62 ↓ -2.36	Broadline Stores: 93.29 ↓ -2.39	Softline Stores: 87.45 ↓ -3.22
Vendors: 95.62 ↓ -1.07	Textiles: 94.61 ↓ -3.83	Index base of 100 is keyed to closing prices of Dec. 31, 2002.



The expanse of the wallpaper inspired by a Chinese image; Prada's army of 24 vintage mannequins from China.

Prada Takes an Asian Trip

Continued from page one

\$30 million, drew all sorts of industry scrutiny — good and bad — given the waning economy, the troubled retail sector and the post-Sept. 11 distaste of any over-the-top displays of commerce or conspicuous consumption. But Prada has trumped the naysayers by forging ahead with her and architect Rem Koolhaas' initial plan for a totally innovative retail concept. The new installation is the first of many that will significantly alter the flagship's aesthetic at regular intervals.

"The basic idea of the store was that it was a place where we could experiment on different levels," said Prada over the telephone from Milan, where she was busily putting the finishing touches on her Prada and Miu Miu collections.

"Three years ago we started saying that we were kind of fed up with the old stores all being equal. That was the reason we contacted these famous architects, and since the beginning the idea was to do something new and different."

Though changing the installations once or twice a year may seem like an expensive proposition, not so, according to Prada. "Changing [the store], it's not crazy at all. It's like normal expenses. We also like the idea that sometimes [the installations] can be super-expensive and other times super-poor."

While the store's detractors maintain that the space is pretentious and unshoppable, Prada disagrees, pointing to positive consumer reactions.

"The store is super-successful. It is the first or second store in America, and we are super happy. Remember when everybody said that we were wrong, that we were crazy? Now everybody is doing it," said Prada, likely referring to the recent roll-out of high-concept retail stores from luxury brands like Armani and Gucci Group. The new store concept is a product of an ongoing collaboration with Koolhaas, whose philosophy for "Parallel Universe" was to create an

atmosphere of shopping and living in another geographic locale within a static retail climate. In this case, it's China.

"We always conceived of that space as one that was unpredictable, one that would change character and wouldn't always be the same. So that's what we're doing," said Koolhaas.

The store's conceit has evolved from depicting Prada's images of beauty and fashion to portrayals which reflect renderings of Chinese life, like a person eating a bowl of noodles, someone getting a haircut or having their ear examined by a doctor. Other elements included in the installation are fleets of vintage, occidental-looking mannequins from China along with video and digital stills of other vivid eastern images.

“Remember when everybody said that we were wrong, that we were crazy? Now everybody is doing it.”

— Miuccia Prada

Stretched along the entire store's length is an expanse of wallpaper that depicts a stadium in China with thousands of people holding up placards to form a larger image of Asian women with uplifted arms.

"Everyone is obsessed by China now. I have always been obsessed with it," said Prada. "I like that world in general and there is so much happening there now. Everybody is going there like artists and architects, it's a place full of new life."

"We called it 'Parallel Universe' based on our recent experience in China," said Koolhaas. "We did all kinds of documentary and other research and are simply presenting some of that in Prada without necessarily mak-

ing it explicit. There's the idea that there is an entirely different world there.

"It's also very interesting to show in New York such a very forward-looking and really enthusiastic culture like China," said Koolhaas.

However, the goal isn't just to transport shoppers to another country; the concept goes beyond that to incorporate cultural activities into the space. Over the last year, dance recitals, documentaries and film screenings have been held at the SoHo store, including Fischerspooner's DVD launch and actor Fisher Stevens' directorial debut film, "Just a Kiss."

"Everybody wants to do things in the store," said Prada. "We are overwhelmed with requests."

The cultural programs are run in conjunction with Fondazione Prada, the philanthropic and cultural arm of the company.

Using the SoHo store as both a retail and cultural incubator space also affords Prada a certain amount of freedom to try new things on a smaller scale that may or may not work when implemented in hundreds of Prada stores all over the world.

"What I like about that is the idea that it's kind of like my first store," said Prada. "I can do things in a very spontaneous way without all the usual considerations that you have to take in mind with the big business. It's like having a little company in the bigger company."

"We can use it as a laboratory to do things in a more free way, kind of disconnected from the other system," said Prada. "But there is also work that can be reintroduced in other stores. I'm really focused on stores recently because you can do a beautiful show maybe and then there's newspaper [coverage] and advertising, but in the end what people see are the stores."

"And basically I like the idea that you can transform a store into something else. You can inject so much energy, and you can do so much. It is a lot of fun."



Cubes wrapped in eastern images; a cage of undressed figures; a Chinese street scene playing on a video display screen.

Rainbow Coalition

PARIS — Color may rule the runways once again for spring 2004. Exhibitors at *Première Vision* showed everything from brightly hued prints and jacquards with shots of red, orange, pink, green and aqua to more refined and structured plains in Easter-egg tones that included mint green and yellow. The plains, many of which featured smooth, almost chintz-like finishes, were a move away from the more relaxed, overly washed-out styles of last spring. At Reggiani, an Italian stretch mill, the return to a more sophisticated look was evident. "The feel is much more structured now," said Elena Reggiani, president. "We're using what we call a tuxedo finish on many of our fabrics. It gives a very evening look to the cloth, which in turn makes it look cleaner and very chic."

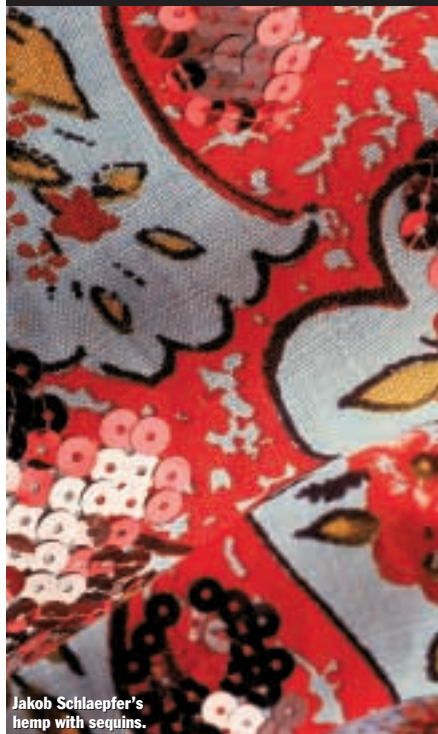
Designers shopping the show welcomed the trend. Michael Kors, perusing

the new collection at Ratti for Celine, was happy to see a return to the more classic and feminine fabrics that were at the show. "It's great to see so many polished looks," he said. "Honestly, how much more casual could we go?"

Patterns and prints took a new turn, too. After seasons of traditional floral motifs, textile designers chose to feature more abstract options, which included both florals and a return to geometrics. Knits, meanwhile, provided the lightweight and draped contrast that buyers were looking for. Guigou's new collection featured many of these looks, all in a selection of clean, vibrant colors. According to Sophie Véron, marketing and development manager for the French mill, these bright shades — with a slightly glossy finish — were what buyers particularly liked.

— Daniela Gilbert

Print Play



Jakob Schlaepfer's hemp with sequins.



Ratti's cotton.



Komar's cotton.



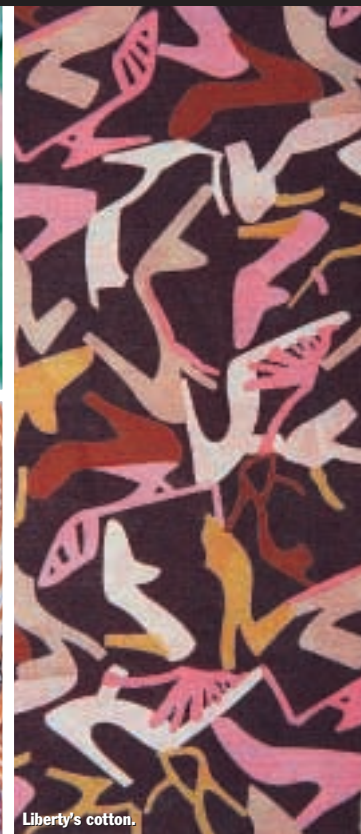
Etro's cotton.



Seterie Argenti's cotton.



Bianchini Fèrier's silk.

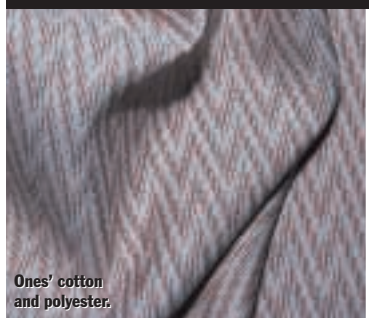


Liberty's cotton.



Picchi's linen.

Abstract Expressions



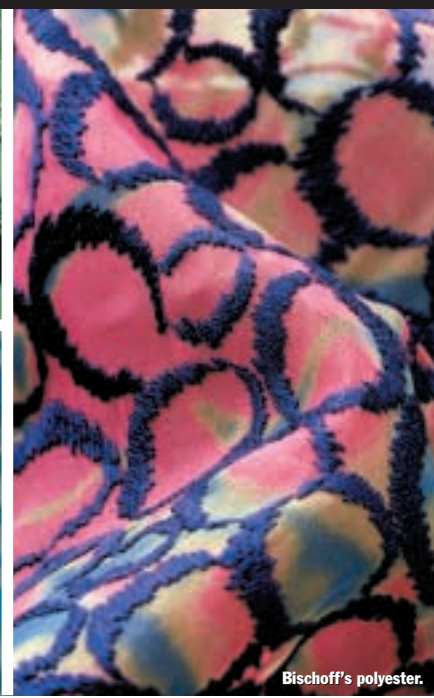
Ones' cotton and polyester.



Laurent Garigue's wool.



Girani's silk and cotton.



Bischoff's polyester.



Henry Bertrand's silk and linen.



Clerici Tessuto's cotton, polyester and silk.

Color Class



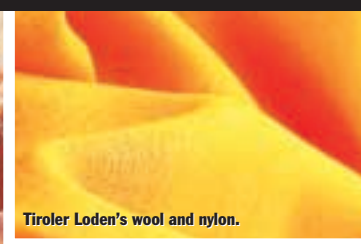
Guigou's silk and cotton.



Solstiss' nylon and rayon.



Bucol's silk.



Tiroler Loden's wool and nylon.



Weisbrod Zürrer's polyester.

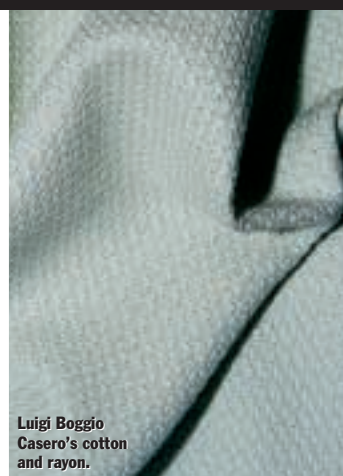


Mallia Kent's nylon, polyester, cotton, wool and rayon.

Polished Company



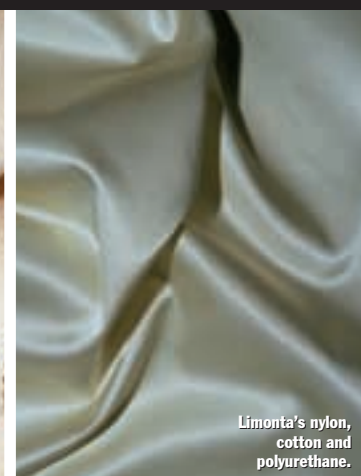
Bonotto's cotton and rayon.



Luigi Boggio Casero's cotton and rayon.



Reggiani's silk, cotton and Lycra spandex.



Limonta's nylon, cotton and polyurethane.

Face the Music



Move over, P Diddy. **Clive Davis** is in town — and in the words of **Rod Stewart** and **Danielle Steel**, “he knows how to throw a party.”

In fact, Steel, who brought her daughters to his Grammy bash Saturday night at the Regent Wall Street, came to town just to attend her old friend’s party. All the barricades, bomb-sniffing dogs and metal detectors in lower Manhattan couldn’t deter the crowd, which included everyone from **Aretha Franklin** to The Strokes.

“This is like a big home, and we’ve gotten everybody to come back,” said an enthusiastic Davis, who arrived with artist **Heather Headley** on his arm. Headley, who performed at the bash, was aglow over her prime placement.

“I’m the date,” she said nervously. “I’ve got butterflies.” **Alicia Keys**, who swept last year’s Grammys, was happy to be out of the white-hot spotlight. “It’s good to be on the other side, to hang out backstage and be able to relax,” she said. Both Keys and **Kelly Rowland** admitted they were looking forward to seeing one artist in particular: **Justin Timberlake**.

“I’m here for the party. I’m not even here for J. Records,” said Timberlake, who, in turn, had only one artist on his mind: his new love **Kylie Minogue**, whom he courted at his post-Grammys party Sunday night at Capitale.

Minogue, who chose a Givenchy couture gown for the awards ceremony, was part of an alarming red-carpet trend — overly polished pop stars. Where have all the red-blooded rock stars gone? As they entered Madison Square Garden, the night’s stars looked like well-heeled starlets headed to a movie premiere.

Sure, **Gwen Stefani** reverted to her punk style during her performance, right down to the bare midriff and faux hawk, but she switched back to her Forties’ do and polkadot dress the second she stepped offstage. As for **Norah Jones**, she may have owned the evening, taking home five Grammys, but with her nondescript black dress, she looked like she was attending a high school choir performance. Note to Norah: Time to hire a stylist.



Norah Jones



Heather Headley and Clive Davis



Victoria Traina in Emanuel Ungaro, Samantha Traina in Collette Dinnigan, Danielle Steel in vintage, and Vanessa Traina in Versace.



Kelly Rowland in Tina Knowles.



Gwen Stefani in Vivienne Westwood.



Justin Timberlake in Prada.



Faith Hill performs in Stella McCartney.



Alicia Keys in Roberto Cavalli.



Kelly Rowland and Nelly

The High Notes

What does it take to get the normally happy-go-lucky **Nelly** all worked up?

“I’m slipping out!” the rap star shrieked, as he dangled 20 feet above the stage at Madison Square Garden on Friday afternoon. His Grammy rehearsal for “Hot in Herre” wasn’t going quite as smoothly as planned. The harness he was strapped into wouldn’t behave — he yelped and cursed the first time they hoisted him up when it pinched him in the wrong place. Then, his dancers, who were supposed to unleash him from it once he descended, couldn’t unhook it.

Then came his duet, “Dilemma” with **Kelly Rowland**. Sick with the flu, she watched from the sidelines, surrounded by her bodyguards, as a stand-in, wearing a matching newsboy cap, shimmied alongside the rapper, who sang both parts off-key, much to the amusement of his entourage. He even cracked himself up. When the back-up dancers wiggled too close, Nelly laughed so hard he couldn’t rap. Singing Rowland’s part — “Nelly, I love you” — almost sent him into hysterics. After two hours, Nelly finally dragged a feverish Rowland on stage, and she lip-synched and danced her way through the performance in a pair of stiletto boots.

Post-Grammy practice, most of the artists, including **John Mayer** and the Dixie Chicks, hit the Distinctive Assets Grammy lounge, where they picked up freebies like the new Nintendo Gameboy or in **Ashanti**’s case, a manicure. But while the \$20,000 gift bag for the show’s participants packed everything from Crest White Strips to an iPod, there was no antidote for Rowland’s symptoms — or a cure for Nelly’s giggles.

— Alison Oneacre



Flying high: Nelly rehearses his entrance.

Vox Populi

NEW YORK — Oops, they’ve done it again. Diane Paulus and Randy Weiner, the theatrical duo behind New York’s “The Donkey Show,” have opened a new, pop-fueled production, “The Karaoke Show,” at El Flamingo. Via karaoke favorites, from “Hot in Herre” to “Bohemian Rhapsody” to “Sweet Child o’ Mine” to “Independent Women,” the show’s 15-member cast tell the story of Shakespeare’s “The Comedy of Errors.”

But the performers aren’t the only ones belting out the hits. On Thursday nights the club is packed with tipsy pop fans who follow along, reading lyrics off a huge screen behind the stage and singing for all they’re worth. It’s campy. It’s ridiculous. And it’s fun. Paulus calls the interactive entertainment “nightclub theater.”

“It’s a communal event, all these people who don’t know each other singing along to pop songs,” she says. “Pop music is in our blood. I don’t know church hymns, but I know these songs by heart. It’s part of who we are.”

The language of Shakespeare’s original, in which



Mustang Sally, narrator of “The Karaoke Show.”



The “Karaoke” cast does “Sweet Child o’ Mine.”

twins are mistaken for one another, is long lost in this production. But the spirit of the Bard’s bawdy humor remains, as do his analogies between twinning and every individual’s duality. “People become someone else because of the karaoke song they sing,” Paulus explains. “The story is about the union of the two halves of the self, and all the mishaps lead to a harmonious union.” In this case, the moment of harmony comes at the end, with a full-cast rendition of Michael Jackson’s “Man in the Mirror.”

When the show is over, however, the karaoke aficionados have only just warmed up. Audience members are invited on-stage to strut their stuff and belt out their favorite tunes, while the show’s campy cast members sing back-up.

“It’s an opportunity to become someone else, that’s why we dress up and go out,” says Paulus. “Karaoke is deeper than wanting to be a rock star. It’s a release.”

— Jessica Kerwin

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Designer Michelle K in michelle·K footwear

Price Pressure Squeeze Goes On

By Vicki M. Young

NEW YORK — Signs of deflation are everywhere, especially in the windows of stores advertising 25 or 30 percent off or more.

Apparel prices, already driven down by the rise of offshore manufacturing and the ascendancy of Wal-Mart Stores and other low-price operators, have been forced down even further by consumer indifference about apparel, lack of hot fashion items and the pressure on stores to make their budget targets. So, with prices lower, stores need to sell more units to wind up with the same dollar revenue, and that's made retailers more inclined to hit the promotional panic button.

For example, Target stores said Thursday when it reported its fourth-quarter and yearly results that it took more than \$1 billion in price reductions for the year, as reported.

Chief financial officer Douglas Scovanner said that comparable-store sales without the price deflation would have been up more than 5 percent for the year. Instead, they were up less than half that amount — 2.2 percent.

Recent government numbers bear this out. On Thursday, the Labor Department said wholesale prices on domestically produced women's apparel fell 0.2 percent in January compared with December, and were off 1.5 percent compared with January 2002. And in its Consumer Price Index, Labor said women's apparel prices fell 2.1 percent last year and apparel prices were off 1.8 percent overall.

"Apparel prices are suffering from cheaper imports and heavy discounting," Rajeev Dhawan, director of the Economic Forecasting Center at Georgia State University, said last month in reacting to the news of continuing depressed pricing. "The rest of the world is not doing so well, so if they sell us apparel, it is at huge discounts and that also shows up in lower prices at retail."

"We have too many stores and too much stuff, driving competitors' use of lower prices as a primary weapon for growth," said retail and apparel consultant Robin Lewis. "Once the low price was trumped by a competitor's even lower price, it turned into a vicious cycle. Now, the inevitable result is unyielding pressure on profit margins, which I call the value vice that chokes companies to death."

While consumers benefit from the downward pressure on prices, retailers are facing the worst of both worlds: deflation on the revenue side and inflation on the costs of operations side, the latter compounded by a severe winter and rising energy costs.

Thirty years ago, inflation ran rampant and dominated the consumer psyche. But stores benefit from inflation in some ways — they can raise prices far higher and much faster than it takes for expenses to catch up, increasing their profit margins. Retailers' hands are tied in a deflationary cycle, however, because of a decline in gross margins from lower prices amid fixed — and often rising — costs.

Retail consultant Walter Loeb noted: "In order for a retailer to stay above water, it needs a 2 to 3 percent sales increase every

year. That's the same as a cost-of-living adjustment for the retailer. Because operational expenses increase yearly, that increase is the bare minimum required for most retailers."

The consultant pointed out that the percentage required is likely to be far higher for certain department store sites because older locations typically have higher maintenance costs, whether to account for rent increases for leased sites or refurbishment costs.

Retailers, to meet their profit goals, have been on a discounting spree, betting that they can make up some of the lost dollars by selling more on a volume basis. Some are also up to their old tricks by squeezing more money from manufacturers in the form of give-backs, markdown allowances and charge-backs.

Adam Winters, senior vice president at Merchant Factors Corp., observed: "In order for a retailer to make more money, they need to squeeze the manufacturer. The concept of retail partner is such a falsehood. It can't work, and in this kind of environment, I don't see it changing. With the economy still soft, I expect retailers will apply more pressure on their vendors. It is all about pricing right now."

While Winters doesn't expect the country in general to head into a period of deflation, he does anticipate that deflationary pressures will continue to impact the apparel industry.

"Deflation is definitely getting worse in our industry. The suppliers are continually asked to source for cheaper and better goods. They've managed to do it bouncing from country to country, from India to Vietnam and the Caribbean Basin.

"I suspect the pricing pressures will get worse as consumers start pulling back on their spending. People just don't feel good right now and that's the barometer that we go by to gauge spending. In a country based on consumption, driven by consumers, what we need is [freedom from] worries over possible job losses and future terrorist activities," he said.

Carl Steidtmann, chief economist at Deloitte Research, said: "I don't think that retailers, particularly department stores, understand deflation. They almost need to have a major in mathematics to figure out the price on an item. You know, 10 percent off, then 20 percent off because of a coupon and then because it is Tuesday there's another 10 percent off. For retailers, this whole idea of price issue rationalization is a way for them to fool themselves into not understanding the deflationary issue so that they can continue to operate in the mode that they know best.

"Retailers don't want to have to deal with it. They're also hoping that it will go away so they can go back to the days where they have some pricing power and not have to discount the merchandise."

Steidtmann observed that apparel has become so value-obsessed, with quality and pricing pressure high and fashion distinctions low, that the only way for retailers to differentiate themselves is through price. He sees the problem getting worse.

"One thing is for certain, re-



With discounts predominant, the inflationary spiral that once confounded retailers seems a distant memory.

tailers are not going to wean consumers off price expectations on promotions. It's the same problem across the board. Automobile companies and their zero percent financing would love to get the consumer off the promotional kick. But they've got last year's numbers that they have to beat and the easiest way to do that is to promote," the economist said.

Loeb agreed: "Department stores can't get out of the morass of 30 percent off coupons. Another problem is that there's no relationship between the customers and the stores to make consumers feel good about shopping at a particular nameplate. In the end, the retailers end up discounting to the lowest price in order to get some level of traffic."

Loeb doesn't see the cycle stopping. "I'm worried," he said. So what is the real problem plaguing department stores, and what should they be doing before the problem gets any worse?

First, the department store should take a good look at its business model, determine who its customers are and what kind of retailer it wants to be, noted Arnold Aronson, managing director of retail strategies for Kurt Salmon Associates.

Aronson explained that the different retailing environments once unique to department stores and discounters are starting to move closer together in approach. Mass chains are trying to emulate the trendier side of fashion, while traditional department stores are cutting operating expenses in order to meet price competition from their retail cousins in the mass channel.

Those moves are also blurring the lines between the two business models. The department store operates on the premise of high gross margins coupled with a certain level of customer service and a focus on convincing the consumer that higher-priced merchandise is what they should buy.

"The problem with the model is over the value equation," Aronson said. "Is the customer getting enough bang for the buck? Is the department store making the right investment into those areas

that are truly value added that the customer considers worth buying at the higher prices?"

Many department stores try to get a 35 percent gross margin. If they can get their expense ratio to a 27 to 28 percent range, they get to make a 7 or 8 percent profit, explained Aronson.

At the opposite end, discounters operate on a different business model. It is one that has a tighter expense structure with emphasis on self-service. If a discounter is assumed to have a 27 percent gross margin, it would need to keep its operating expense ratio at 19 percent to get the same 8 percent profit, surmised Aronson.

Even the competition between the two for market share has changed. It used to be a game of higher markups and bigger expenses versus lower margins and lower prices.

"With the slight homogenization that is occurring, where these two forces are moving closer together, one has to wonder whether it is smart for department stores to want to be more like discounters. Or even for discounters to take on some of the attributes of department stores. Are discounters still able to do that without sacrificing the efficiency and value of the dollar they are able to give to the masses, so to speak?" Aronson wondered.

So far, discounters such as Wal-Mart and Target are upping the focus on labels and fashion content, creating an epiphany for some shoppers who are now suddenly attracted to the value proposition they never knew existed before at the discount channel. In contrast, department stores are chopping away at the creative and cosmetic sides of their cost structure, jeopardizing the look, feel and emotional rewards once attendant to their stores. The problem is that customers see higher prices and fewer services and are less willing to leave their dollars with the department stores which, as reported, have seen their market share for products other than for automobiles contract to 10.2 percent in 2001 from 12.8 percent 10 years ago.

Aronson concluded that once retailers have a better focus on where they think they should be on the retail food chain, they can make better decisions on how to attract and meet customers' emotional needs. Those decisions can range from merchandise mix, such as which designer brands to carry, to how to improve displays and make the presentations sexier and more seductive.

Steidtmann said that retailers can also fine-tune their operational expenses by decapitalizing their assets. "It really all goes back to their real estate, which is what gave department stores a new lease on life many years ago. They realized that no one went downtown anymore, so they targeted regional malls for their new store locations. Now, the shift for consumers is that they don't shop at the malls anymore. Department stores were perceptive in the earlier shift, but have completely missed the latest one."

One major reason retailers' feet are stuck in the concrete is their generally short-term focus: numbers have to be met in the current quarter, as well as the current month and week.

However, owning hard assets in a deflationary period, observed the economist, reduces a retailer's flexibility. Stores need to take advantage of opportunities to take real estate off their balance sheets either through sales of the property or lease-back agreements of their own real estate. Lease terms, when they come up, should be renewed for shorter periods to take advantage of decreasing rent costs.

To minimize inventory on a retailer's books, Steidtmann favors getting suppliers to own and hold the goods until needed in the stores. It already is a common practice among food and general mass-merchandise retailers, and is certainly growing in the apparel sector.

Other areas to cut costs include outsourcing information technology, indexing wages to actual performance and a move toward more private label goods to create unique merchandise available only at a particular retailer — differentiation not tied to price.



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Will Buffett Give Mills a Bump?

By Scott Malone

NEW YORK — Textile stocks may be in for a Buffet.

Following this month's news that investment guru Warren Buffett is interested in buying bankrupt Burlington Industries, textile executives are stepping back and wondering if the textile investment climate might improve.

For the last several years, textile stocks have been ill-favored by the financial community. Major mills, including Guilford Mills Inc., Galey & Lord Inc. and Burlington, have lost their listings on major stock exchanges and now trade over-the-counter. Major equity analysts who followed the textile industry lost their jobs or found themselves transferred into different functions.

The four mills that remain listed on major exchanges — Cone Mills Corp., Delta Woodside Industries Inc. and Dan River Inc. on the New York Stock Exchange, and Fab Industries Inc. on the American Stock Exchange — all trade for dollars a share, with market capitalizations that range from about \$20 million to \$75 million.

At the close of its 1995 fiscal year, when Burlington's revenues peaked at \$2.21 billion, the company's market capitalization was north of \$820 million. At the close of trading

Tuesday, Burlington's market capitalization was \$1.6 million.

But investors tend to follow where Wall Street successes like Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway Holdings lead and executives said his \$579 million cash bid for the bankrupt giant may make it a little easier for other mills to raise the capital they need to expand operations abroad.

"It's a great thing when somebody of Warren Buffett's stature and track record is investing in our industry," said James Martin, president of apparel fabrics at Danville, Va.-based Dan River. "Warren Buffett doesn't invest in things that he doesn't think are going to make him and Berkshire Hathaway money — which is his job — and he seems to have a good track record."

Buffett is not alone in his interest in Burlington. Investor Wilbur Ross of W.L. Ross & Co. has made a larger, but more complicated, offer for Burlington. His proposal called for paying off Burlington's \$439 million in secured debt and \$28 million in administrative claims in cash, to issue \$250 million in new debt and to give the company's creditors a 57 percent ownership stake in the company.

Their bidding war will potentially play out in bankruptcy court. A hearing is scheduled for Friday to review the proce-



Keith Hull, of Avondale Mills Inc., called Buffett's bid for Burlington "an interesting turn of events, but it hasn't become a fad yet."



"It's a great thing when somebody of Warren Buffett's stature and track record is investing in our industry," said James Martin, of Dan River Inc.

dures Burlington is using to evaluate offers.

Some observers said the news has sparked a new glimmer of interest among investors who, given the collapse of the dot-com bubble and the generally lagging stock market, have been on the lookout for new opportunities.

"From the banks to the factors to the stock analysts down on Wall Street, they'll be taking a second look [at the textile industry]," said consultant Mary O'Rourke, of New York's Jassin-

O'Rourke Group.

"They're stopping and saying, 'What does Warren Buffett know about the textile industry?'" she added, noting that her office had been contacted by some potential investors in the weeks since the Buffett news broke. "That will probably prompt some more interest in mergers and acquisitions."

Attracting investment has been a major hurdle to textile companies for the past few years. Cone Mills last month said it planned to sell \$27 million in bonds that could be converted into stock to help fund expansion in Mexico. The buyer is to be Ross' company.

That proposal prompted one dissident Cone director, Mark Kozberg, to protest. He plans to bring his complaints before other shareholders at the mill's annual meeting. But Cone offi-

cialists have said that low investor interest in the firm's shares has made it necessary to explore alternative ways of raising money.

While Buffett's move may have some investors thinking about textile companies again, it hasn't yet resulted in a flood of new investment. The prices of major textile companies haven't spiked upward since the news broke. (See chart, this page.)

"It's an interesting turn of events, but it hasn't become a fad yet," said Keith Hull, president of marketing and sales at privately owned Avondale Mills Inc., which has some public debt. "People with some far-sightedness and some degree of risk are bound to check things out, but the banks and traditional lenders are still cautious."

The biggest equity investment question floating around the textile industry at this time is DuPont's proposal to spin off its \$6.5 billion DuPont Textiles & Interiors division this year through an initial public offering, if market conditions allow. If Buffett's deal sparks renewed interest in the sector, that could bode well for DTI.

DuPont officials could not be reached for comment.

Buffett has a history of buying ailing companies — he last year bought Fruit of the Loom out of bankruptcy — and the reasons for his investments aren't always immediately clear to other investors. Buffett could not be reached for comment for this story and Burlington chairman and chief executive George Henderson declined comment.

One source suggested that Buffett's interest in Burlington is primarily limited to the Lee's

Continued on page 12

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No Boom Yet

U.S. investors tend to keep a close eye on Warren Buffett's moves, but they don't always follow where he leads. Textile executives said they hoped Berkshire Hathaway's bid for Burlington Industries would prompt more investor interest in the sector. So far, though, there hasn't been a run on textile stocks. Below, a comparison of closing prices for the four U.S. mills listed on major stock exchanges on Feb. 10, the day before Buffett's bid was reported, and Monday:

	CLOSE FEB. 24	CLOSE FEB. 10	PERCENT CHANGE	MARKET CAPITALIZATION
Cone Mills Corp.	\$1.85	\$1.60	+15.6	\$47.7 million
Dan River Inc.	\$3.40	\$3.20	+6.3	\$76.2 million
Delta Woodside Inc.	\$3.49	\$3.77	-7.4	\$20.5 million
Fab Industries Inc.	\$8.76	\$8.76*	unchanged	\$45.9 million

* The lightly traded Fab Industries Inc. shares closed at \$8.76 on Feb. 3 and did not change hands again until Feb. 11, the day of the Buffett announcement.

SOURCE: STOCK DATA FROM YAHOO FINANCE

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Slowdown Looms on Buffett Bid

NEW YORK — With Warren Buffett and Berkshire Hathaway on one side and creditors on the other, the battle for Burlington is heating up.

According to court records, attorneys for a creditor group led by bankruptcy baron Wilbur Ross are set to question Burlington Industries' chairman and chief executive officer George Henderson today. The unsecured creditors' committee also filed paperwork with the court alleging that the acquisition proposal by Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway doesn't stand a chance

tions about negotiations between Berkshire and Burlington; establishment of bidding procedures; the mill's financial projections. Also on the schedule for a question-and-answer session is Douglas C. Werking of Jay Alix & Associates in his capacity as financial adviser to the firm, according to court papers.

The bidding procedures under consideration before a Delaware bankruptcy court include the payment of a \$14 million termination fee to Berkshire should Burlington elect a different suitor. In addition, any pur-

ment if the closing fails to occur by July 30, 2003.

The unsecured creditors' committee specified that the bidding procedures for the court-sponsored auction prohibited "multiple sales of different divisions, stand-alone restructurings, or any [other] combination."

As reported, Ross has charged that Burlington has failed to pursue a "systematic" shopping process. He told WWD, "There has been no shopping of the company, which indicates to me a very Draconian set of bidding rules that were followed. They made it impossible for a third party to bid for the firm. We think that this is wrong."

Financial sources in the Burlington case told WWD that many creditors believe the company's parts would be worth more than its whole.

Court records indicate that Berkshire's first expression of interest in buying Burlington occurred on Dec. 9, with negotiations continuing through late January. In choosing Berkshire, Burlington rejected a competing bid from Ross, although the Berkshire proposal allows the textiles firm to continue negotiations with him.

The committee also filed legal papers opposing Burlington's request for an extension of exclusivity. Burlington is seeking the

“They made it impossible for a third party to bid for the firm. We think that this is wrong.”

— Wilbur Ross

of passing muster. Holders of more than 51 percent of the unsecured claims in the Burlington bankruptcy oppose the proposed sale, court documents said.

As reported, Burlington announced on Feb. 11 that it had signed an agreement to be acquired by Berkshire, and that the purchase would constitute the basis of its plan of reorganization and exit from bankruptcy proceedings.

The creditors' committee wants to ask Henderson ques-

tioner that wishes to enter the fray must make an initial bid that is \$19 million higher than Berkshire's \$579 million offer, the papers indicated.

Burlington told the court that Berkshire reserved the right to terminate its offer within three business days beginning Thursday in the event that the bankruptcy court fails to approve the proposed bidding procedures. In addition, either Berkshire or Burlington can end the purchase agree-

The Fiber Price Sheet

On the last Tuesday of every month, WWD publishes the current, month-ago and year-ago fiber prices. Prices listed reflect the cost of one pound of fiber.

Fiber	Price on 2/25/03*	Price on 1/28/03*	Price on 2/26/02*
Cotton	53.36 cents	51.08 cents	38.13 cents
Wool	\$3.12	\$3.10	\$2.24
Polyester staple	52 cents	52 cents	51 cents
Polyester filament	65 cents	65 cents	64 cents
September Synthetic PPI	106.1	106.3	106.1

*The current cotton price is the January average on fiber being delivered to Southeastern region mills, according to Agricultural Marketing Services/USDA. The wool price is based on the average price for the week ended Feb. 21 of 11 different thicknesses of fiber, ranging from 15 microns to 30 microns, according to The Woolmark Co. Information on polyester pricing is provided by the consulting firm DeWitt & Co. The synthetic-fiber producer index, or PPI, is compiled by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and reflects the overall change in all synthetic-fiber prices. It is not a price in dollars, but a measurement in how prices have changed since 1982, which had a PPI of 100.

exclusive right to file a plan of reorganization through May 31, which would be its third extension. The current exclusivity period ends on March 31.

According to court documents, the committee said that the "price at which [Burlington has] decided to allow themselves to be sold is unanimously opposed by the members of the committee."

The committee also said in its opposition papers that

courts have refused to extend exclusivity where the "debtor is using [it] to hold creditors hostage to [the firm's] approach to the reorganization." In the Burlington bankruptcy, the committee said it has "not been allowed to participate in the negotiation process with [Berkshire], nor has it had the ability to meaningfully assist the debtor in finding alternative sources of funding"

— Vicki M. Young

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Roseann Forde, Dupont
Paul Pelssers, Paul Pelssers Ltd.
Roseanne Morrison, The Tobé Report
Sharon Graubard, ESP Trendlab
Pat Tunsky, The Doneger Group

10:30am

INPRINTS NY SPRING/SUMMER

2004 FORECAST

Lisa Mainardi, Director, Inprints NY

11:30am

SPRING/SUMMER 2004 ESSENTIALS

Pat Tunsky, Creative Director, The Doneger Group

1:30pm

SPRING/SUMMER 2004 TRENDS,

COLORS AND KEY ITEMS

Roseanne Morrison, The Tobé Report

2:30pm

COLOR AND TREND RIGHT ISSUES

FOR SPRING/SUMMER 2004

Carol Meek, President, Color Portfolio, Inc.

3:30pm

THE POWER OF TRENDS

VIA THE INTERNET: 'HAVING IT 'NOW' AND MAKING IT 'WOW'

Eva Brune, Senior Editor, Fashion Snoops, Inc.

4:30pm

FASHION SALES, MARKETING AND

MERCHANDISING IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Jennifer Phillips, President, Stylesmart

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12, 2003

9:30am

SPRING/SUMMER 2004 -

THE TOP TEN TRENDS

David Wolfe, Creative Director, The Doneger Group

10:30am

SPRING/SUMMER 2004:

COLORS, FABRICS, SILHOUETTES

Britt Bivens, Promostyl

11:30pm

THE EDUCATION OF FASHION

Timothy M. Gunn, Parsons School of Design

1:30pm

SPRING/SUMMER 2004 COLOR &

TREND PREDICTIONS

Ben Gomes, Vice President of Creative Services, OPR/The Style Center

2:30pm

DEMISTIFYING FASHION

FORECASTING - CONVERSATION AND REFLECTION

Neville Bean, Owner, Neville Bean Design

3:30pm

ATMOSPHERES - SPRING/SUMMER

2004 AND FALL/WINTER 2004/05

FABRIC TREND PREVIEW

Ornella Fila, Creative Director, Italtex, SRL
Represented By Hanna Cohen Design Products

Produced by Advanstar Communications, Inc.

Saks in FAO Deal

By David Moin

NEW YORK — Saks Inc. is taking a minority stake in the bankrupt FAO Inc., which in turn will open up licensed shops inside Saks department stores featuring merchandise from its FAO's retail concepts, including FAO Schwarz, The Right Start and Zany Brainy. The three chains sell toys and educational products for infants, toddlers and children.

Under the agreement, licensed FAO boutiques, including FAO Express shops, will open in most of Saks' 245 department stores, which operate under the names Parisian, Proffitt's, McRae's, Younkers, Herberger's, Carson Pirie Scott, Bergner's and Boston Store. Saks also operates the Saks Fifth Avenue and Off 5th stores, but those are not included in the agreement.

For the past couple of years, Saks Inc. has been trying to differentiate its stores by offering exclusive merchandise through an intensified proprietary brand program, introducing the Relativity, Pursuits and Studio Works women's labels, among others, as well as by penning agreements with such brands as Laura Ashley, Jane Seymour and Ruff Hewn.

The FAO departments are seen opening in the second half of this year. Toys is a category that many department stores have downsized over the past few decades due to the rise of discounters and specialty chains.

Saks and FAO also are exploring several joint marketing initiatives and the opportunity to jointly own and operate an in-store and online electronic baby gift registry business that would be available to their respective customers.

"This partnership clearly supports the strategic direction for SDSG by providing distinctive and differentiated merchandise offerings to our customers," said George Jones, president and chief executive of the Saks department store group.

Jerry R. Welch, president and ceo of FAO, said, "George Jones and his senior management team are leading an impressive reinvention of the department store business, and we look forward to partnering with them."

FAO is operating under Chapter 11 bankruptcy and has filed a proposed plan of reorganization. Saks will purchase a minority share of FAO's common equity as part of its reorganization plan and also obtain a seat on the FAO board, but specific terms of the agreement were not disclosed.

"FAO Schwarz has one of the great brand equities of American retailing and the average consumer has no clue about its operating difficulties," said Isaac Lagnado, president of Tactical.org, a market research company. "All consumers are concerned about is the panache and the marquee value of the brand, and because of that, FAO Schwarz has been able to do some good private label programs. FAO Schwarz used to be really silk stocking, but over the last 15 years or so, it has positioned itself for the top third or half of the population. In that sense, there is a fairly good synergy and congruence with the mainstream Saks department stores."

In addition, Lagnado said as far as Saks' investment, "I don't think there is a huge price tag or downside. Mainstream department stores desperately need novelty."

Fashion Scoops

FRENCH CONNECTION: French actress **Emmanuelle Seigner, Roman Polanski's** wife, is expected to make an appearance at the cocktail party to inaugurate the new Yves Saint Laurent store on Via Montenapoleone. **Tom Ford** is hosting the bash Thursday.

VALLEY TALK: Is something up between contemporary designer **Alvin Valley** and Bill Blass? Valley, who's based in SoHo, has been seen several times leaving the Blass showroom at 550 Seventh Avenue, most recently on Monday morning when he left with a serious look on his face. Valley's visits have some observers wondering whether he is talking to Blass management about a position. Valley had no comment, but a Blass spokeswoman confirmed that he had a meeting with chief executive **Michael Groveman**. "Alvin called him to set up the meeting," she said, declining to divulge what they spoke about.



Alvin Valley

Not that they're hedging, **Michael Vollbracht**, who is said to be up for the design post at Blass, has also been spotted around the Blass offices twice in the past week.

MORI STORY: Could the house of **Hanae Mori** have its eye on **Ece Ege**, the Paris-based, Turkish-born designer behind fashion brand Dice

Kayek? Word has it the two have been talking about a project to revive the Japanese designer's quiet ready-to-wear. Ege, known for her soft and romantic designs, declined comment. But Mori's new Japanese partner, Misui Busan, has made no secret it intends to pump life into the house. Mori herself is expected to continue designing the couture, which is shown in Paris.

THE TWILL OF IT ALL: On Sunday **Avril Lavigne** joined pop stars like **Kylie Minogue** in dressing in couture for the Grammys. But while Minogue chose Givenchy, Lavigne went for haute Dickies. The pint-sized rocker had her own suit custom made from Dickies' classic twill fabric, after Lavigne's stylist, **Stephanie Wolf**, contacted the workwear house, where Lavigne's favorite pants, the basic 874, are made. Dickie's, which outfits not only Lavigne, but her band and roadies, was happy to send over the raw materials.

FUR AFLYING: Austria's social set, a fur-wearing set to be sure, is a-twitter over **Pamela Anderson's** decision to bring PETA's **Dan Mathews** to the Vienna Opera Ball on Thursday night as her date. Controversy over the animal-loving invitee has fueled national news stories there, but Mathews hopes to win over the evening's host, **Richar Lugner** (whom some call the **Donald Trump** of Austria) and his wife, **Christina**. Packed in Mathews' bag: a faux-silver fox coat designed by **Marc Bouwer**, which Mathews plans to present to the hostess.

"Relax," Mathews wrote in an fax to Lugner on Friday. "Your wife and I will tear up the dance floor — just make sure she leaves her fur at home."

SUPED UP: Could **Linda Evangelista** be making a return to the runway? That's what some in Milan are saying following the former supermodel's cover shot in this month's *Vogue Italia*. Although no fashion houses

have confirmed that Evangelista is slated to walk, the rumor mill is churning among industry sources that Evangelista — who famously said back in the Nineties that she didn't get out of bed for less than \$10,000 — is reportedly looking for up to six figures a show.

Meanwhile, **Helena Christensen** is returning to the Milan collections. The green-eyed model is slated to walk exclusively for Mariella Burani.

FRIENDLY FAVORS: **Tina Lutz** and **Marcia Patmos** have recruited photographer **Elen Von Unwerth** to be this spring's guest designer for their Lutz & Patmos collection. Von Unwerth named her cotton cashmere capes after her friends **Carine Roitfeld**, **Darryl Kerrigan**, **Melanie Ward** and **Hannelore**. Next up: **Christy Turlington**, who has designed a cape that doubles as a meditation blanket for fall.

SHOPPING EASE: For those who consider shopping to be too stressful, **Gianfranco Ferré** is introducing a spa — smack in the center of Milan's golden shopping strip, inside its newly renovated store at Via Sant'Andrea 15. Aromatherapy, hydrotherapy, and thalassotherapy are only a few of the comforts offered seven days a week.

ARMANI'S CELEBRITY: First it was the perfect form of athlete, now **Giorgio Armani** is hosting a photo exhibition dedicated to the many faces of celebrity. Kicking off with a cocktail party on Friday, "Encounters with Celebrity, Time for Celebration" will feature 46 shots by British photographer **Rankin**. Images range from a toned **Madonna** to a smiling **Queen Elizabeth**.

A FINE VINTAGE: As the race to dress Oscar nominee **Nicole Kidman** heats up, **Emanuel Ungaro** scored big Sunday night at the BAFTAs, the British version of the Academy Awards. Kidman, **Julianne Moore** and **Thandie Newton** all wore the designer's couture gowns. Kidman's white vintage column brought her good luck, since she walked away with the award for Best Actress for her performance in "The Hours."

Mill Execs See Hope

Continued from page 10

Carpet business, which could be a strategic fit with Shaw Industries, the leading rug maker that Berkshire Hathaway acquired in 2001.

"Don't read any broad trends about the textile industry into this," said the source, who asked not to be identified. "This looks like it's about carpet and the question is what will come along for the ride, if anything."

For the last two fiscal years, Lee's Carpet has been Burlington's only profitable unit.

In the fiscal year ended Sept. 28, the carpet division recorded pretax profits of \$36.8 million at a time when the apparel fabrics business was \$14 million in the red. Its sales were \$262.5 million, representing 26 percent of Burlington's \$1.01 billion in revenues.

Burlington's other divisions have contracted dramatically over the past two years — its \$484.6 million in apparel-fabrics sales were off 41.6 percent from their 2000 level — the result of a move out of unprofitable operations and product segments. The carpet business has also contracted, but not so dramatically — its sales were off 11.3 percent over the same period.

Others viewed the move as a more straightforward one.

"This event provides tremen-

dous validation for George Henderson's strategy at Burlington," said consultant Nick Hahn of Hahn International, based in Stamford, Conn. "What his strategy has essentially been has been to move out of manufacturing businesses in the U.S."

In addition to company-owned mills in Mexico and a joint venture in India, Burlington has organized its apparel-fabrics businesses into a new division, Burlington Worldwide, based in Hong Kong. That division has begun to sell fabrics made by independently owned mills in Asia, but offering Burlington's brand name and technology standards.

It's essentially a contracting business model, the same approach that apparel and footwear companies, including Liz Claiborne and Nike, have taken to their manufacturing operations for years.

Several major bankruptcies and extended waves of plant closings have radically changed the face of the U.S. textile industry over the past decade. Hahn contended that some of the surviving companies have developed strategies that are logically sound and that their major weakness is a lack of access to new investment to execute their ideas.

In some U.S. mills, he said, the ideas are in place. "What is lacking is the financial strength," Hahn said.

Weather Takes Toll on Comps

By Evan Clark

NEW YORK — With the weather outside frightful and the fire inside delightful, shoppers stayed home last week, driving down comparable-store sales for major chains.

The blizzard that blanketed much of the Eastern half of the U.S. on Presidents' Day weekend, and the digging out in the days after, contributed to lowered February comp expectations at Federated Department Stores Inc. and J.C. Penney Co. Inc. Other firms were also pressured, both on the top line and in the price of their shares, as the storm took away whatever momentum the month may have had.

Federated's comps during the third week of its fiscal month further depressed expectations for a down month. The parent of Bloomingdale's and Macy's, among others, is now looking for sales at stores open more than a year to fall 7.5 to 8.5 percent in February. Through Valentine's Day, Federated had been on track to reach its forecast of a 4 to 5 percent drop.

Last week was the fourth and final week of Penney's fiscal

month. Once it was over, Penney's reduced its February comp projection for its department stores to a decline of 2 to 3 percent. Previously, the retailer had been looking for a flat performance.

With its larger base, Wal-Mart Stores Inc. was better able to weather the storm. After the third week of its fiscal month, the discounter said its U.S. comps overall were tracking toward the low end of its projection for a 2 to 4 percent upswing. The Wal-Mart division's February same-store sales were headed toward the low end of its expected 3 to 5 percent rise.

"This week was impacted by the snowstorm in the Northeast over the weekend and on Presidents' Day," said a spokeswoman on a recorded call. "However, as the week progressed, sales returned to prior levels. Average ticket drove the comp increase for the week. Traffic was negatively impacted by the snowstorm."

Meanwhile, Wal-Mart, already the world's largest company, was proclaimed the most admired firm in the U.S. by Fortune magazine.

Target Corp., reporting on

the week after the close of the market, said comps last week and for the first three weeks of the month were trending below its plans for a flat to up 2 percent performance. Men's apparel was among the weakest product categories at the Target division so far this month.

Last week's whitout conditions contributed to a flurry of selling Monday on Wall Street. J.C. Penney Co., which has managed to buck many of the industry's negative trends recently, was hardest hit with a 95 cent, or 4.7 percent reduction in the price of its shares to \$19.39. Federated's stock similarly sunk 76 cents, or 3 percent, to \$24.82, while shares of Wal-Mart were off \$1.26, or 2.6 percent, to \$47.64. Target gave back 25 cents, or 0.9 percent, to close at \$28.23. All four issues trade on the New York Stock Exchange.

The Blue Chip Dow Jones Industrial Average, of which Wal-Mart is a component, sank 159.87 points, or 2 percent, to 7,858.24, while the Standard & Poor's 500 was off 15.59 points, or 1.8 percent, to 832.58. The S&P Retail Index fell 4.91 points, or 1.9 percent, to 252.01.

Ready-to-Wear Report



◀ Bogner is seeing a lot of interest in this trenchcoat.



Versatile styles are important for Schneiders.

Spring's Outer Limits

NEW YORK — Even though winter still isn't showing any signs of letting up, outerwear makers expect spring business to give the category a blast of fresh air.

Lighter-weight, more versatile styles, such as reversible jackets and seersucker blazers, are expected to help keep the momentum going from a strong fall-winter season that's wrapping up. Coat makers are more concerned about touching up their images than generating blockbuster sales. Spring sales, after all, typically comprise no more than 20 percent of total retail sales, which were \$3.5 billion last year.

Some retailers have pushed back their spring deliveries by two to three weeks due to the "supercold weather," said Glen Palmer, president and chief executive officer of the Amerex Group, which produces Weather Tamer, 1 Madison and the licensed Jones New York outerwear.

Amerex is counting on faux-suede walking-length raincoats to energize the rainwear business, which has suffered in recent seasons. A quilted reversible barn jacket, a faux-silk anorak and a poplin jacket with plaid detail are spring best-sellers, Palmer said. A barn jacket that appeared in a Jones New York national print ad has also spurred spring sales.

"We're planning sales to be flat, but we're [seeing strong] early trends," he said. "Perhaps, it's time to get the rainwear business to work again."

Jeanette Nostra, president of G-III Apparel Group, is seeing interest in washed canvas, cargo details, safari looks and suedes with appliques in its Nine West and Kenneth Cole lines. But spring sales are inhibited by cold weather.

"People are buying clearance fall items because it's still so cold and spring hasn't gotten much of a hold yet," Nostra said.

Searle is rolling out its spring outerwear on Saturday, following continued strong full-price selling on shearing, down and wool coats at \$425 to \$3,400 through this past weekend, said David Lazar, director of retail.

"We're getting down to the nitty-gritty now," Lazar said. "There's not much left."

"No one is going to order typical outerwear for spring. It has to be a luxury," said Jais Perdetis, president of the Victoire showroom, which lists Salco, Kryos and Gruppo Marly among the lines it represents.

Military looks like gold buckles, multiple pockets and camouflage patterns are doing well for Kryos.

"This spring, the military influence ranks high," Perdetis said. "In a time of trouble in the world, military is a little reassuring — for better or for worse."

For Salco, Aspen-inspired styles that wholesale from \$200 to \$400 are important for spring.

Edward An, a company founded last

year by Lori Schlachter, a former Kate Spade employee, expects spring sales to account for at least 15 percent of its projected \$1 million annual business. About 45 specialty stores will carry the brand's outerwear this spring, with a pink twill safari coat and seersucker blazers being key pieces, said Beth Stover, director of business affairs.

For spring, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Seattle are top markets. To try to build sales in other regions of the country, especially on the East Coast, Edward An has hired Showroom Seven as its new sales rep.

Tonight, the company will hold its first sale here at Ideya, a SoHo restaurant, to try to introduce the label to New Yorkers.

Outerwear is an important component of Bogner women's sportswear, tallying 27 percent of the brand's total business, said Homeira Lane, vice president of sales and marketing.

"Our strength is in suede and leather outerwear, ranging in price from \$800 to \$1,700," she said. "The colors this season are bright: pink, baby blue and orange, as well as sand and khaki. Our most popular styles are the cotton safari trenchcoat at \$1,200 and the lavishly embroidered, white fitted 'Sonia' coat at \$3,000."

Woolrich is planning for a 20 percent increase in spring sales, based on strong bookings for cotton canvas button-front coats, reversible jackets and waterproof hooded jackets with reflective tape that can be packed into its pocket, said Paula Kosmatka, director of merchandising and product design.

"Overall, fall was a little weird," she said. "It was so cold after Christmas, I'm not sure anyone shopped. I think a lot of people decided to wait until spring, so there will be pent-up demand."

Buyers at Schneiders showroom also favored soft polyester, three-quarter-length raincoats, as well as pastel fly-front cotton jackets. The collection will be offered in about 25 stores in the U.S. — one-third of the accounts that carry the line for fall, said Gisela Schwartze, vice president.

"Spring is not as dressed up as fall," she said. "People don't buy coats in the spring. They walk around in shorts, T-shirts, a little cardigan and not much more. That's especially true on the West Coast and in the Midwest."

Jamie Satnick, marketing executive at Alorno Coats, a third-generation family business, said department stores are reluctant to try new labels, especially for spring.

"Buyers kind of have preconceived notions of what they use you for. It's very hard to come in as a new vendor," she said. "The economy is very slow and buyers are very hesitant to commit."

— Rosemary Feitelberg

Yolanda's: 35 Years in the Making

NEW YORK — What started more than 35 years ago as a woman selling wigs from the trunk of her car to cancer patients has developed into a \$5 million ready-to-wear business.

Wigs and free coffee were big draws when Yolanda Cellucci opened Yolanda's in 1968. But there was also a small rack with 13 dresses from the likes of Victoria Royale, Mollie Parnis, Pauline Trigère and Oscar de la Renta. Over the years, Cellucci finetuned the mix with hard-to-find labels and new categories.

Outposts for Mr. Tux, KaBloom florists and Montilio's bakery were the most recent additions to her 27,000-square-foot store in Waltham, Mass., and a jeweler is on deck. But the one-stop-shopping concept is not new to shoppers who have a spa, juice bar, hair salon, fitness club, swimming pool, a children's department, day care and limousine rentals at their disposal.

She tends to lean on lines that customize, such as Atelie Aimee, a bridal collection that offers various colors. Bridal, the bulk of sales in the early days, comprises 60 percent of volume today, with special-occasion and prom and cocktail dresses each accounting for 20 percent of the store's \$5 million annual business.

To differentiate the store from department stores, Cellucci favors labels such as Lane Davis, San Carlin, Monique Lhuillier, Helen Worley, Catherine Reger, Mark Heister, Stephen Yearick, Waters & Waters, Vera Wang and Alberto Makalia.

"No one wants to look like anyone else. What's been our success is customers get personal attention and they get what they want," said Cellucci, who is known for her own all-white wardrobe and long eyelashes. "I look for things that are different with a little bit of an edge. Even if a company says they just sold Saks 40 of these dresses, I'm not interested."

Cellucci carried Bob Mackie in his first season and dressed Ava Gabor, Natalie Cole, Diahann Carroll and Joan Kennedy, but has moved forward with the times. Prom dresses are now as important a part of her business as mother-of-the-bride dresses, and high school and college-age interns' ideas are welcomed at weekly staff meetings as much as longtime employees.

"Young people keep you fresh. You

can get stuck and do the same thing again and again," she said. "They let us know what they're looking for and what the kids are buying."

They also do a good job of selling to their contemporaries. Cellucci makes a point of matching shoppers with salespeople. Thanks to the teenage quotient, Yolanda's is offering stretch white denim, bare looks and less-expensive pieces for younger shoppers. But brides remain the most finicky of shoppers.

"No matter what people find, they want to change it and we will make it the way they want," Cellucci said.

To try to simplify shopping, she introduced Montilio's, KaBloom and Mr. Tux a few months ago. Each is well established in the area and follows Cellucci's service-oriented pitch. Montilio's, a 56-year-old family business, lists the Rolling Stones among its customers and recently made a \$9,000 wedding cake for a Yolanda's customer.

Cellucci, who's cousin, Paul Cellucci, is a former Massachusetts governor, is well connected in the state's political scene. Serving on the committee for this year's inaugural ball, an event for 7,000, helped her meet some new customers. She aims to get her shoppers jazzed up by holding special events periodically.

She is now auctioning off a handful of gowns by Mary McFadden, Bob Mackie and other designers that she collected over the years. Earlier this month, there was a Paint the Town Red pitch, encouraging shoppers to buy red apparel and to get red manicures. To bolster eveningwear sales in December, Cellucci had her 55 employees wear formal attire for the entire month and sales climbed by 15 percent compared with 2001.

"We dress some of the best people in town," Cellucci said. "Most of our business is done through recommendations."

To try to keep those customers, she e-mails them news of special promotions and trunk shows. About 350 people visit the store daily. To try to keep them in the store, they can join the health club for \$675 annually and receive 20 percent off any purchases or spa services on an ongoing basis. That service helps draw some women to the store for three or four hours at a shot, Cellucci said.

— R.F.



Yolanda Cellucci

MARKET BASKET

SHOES AND SHOWS: Nicole Miller debuted her licensed footwear collection at the World Shoe Association Show in Las Vegas Feb. 8-11. The deal was signed late last year with Los Angeles-based manufacturer The Fashion House, which also produces shoes for Richard Tyler.

The line consists of about 110 styles, with the average price around \$200. The stiletto-heavy group also features lots of boots, according to the designer, who recently used them in her Feb. 8 runway presentation. There is also a sport line and flats.

BUSY BEA: The Halmode division of Kellwood has promoted Bea Myerson to president. Formerly executive vice president, she will report to Halmode chief executive officer Jay Diamond. Halmode produces suits and knit and woven dresses under the brands Kathie Lee, Kore Lifestyle Dresses, Plaza South, MHM, Sag Harbor Dresses, Sag Harbor Suits

and True Beauty by Emme. Myerson will be responsible for merchandising and design of all Halmode brands.

TESO COMES TO AMERICA: Vicenza, Italy-based ready-to-wear and fur designer Giuliana Teso opened her first New York showroom at 584 Broadway last month.

Daniella Baumol, formerly director of sales at Chloé, was named commercial director. Anthony Orlando joined the company from Neiman Marcus, where he was director of luxury apparel, and has been appointed director of Teso's Luxury Division, which produces the fur and rtw collections.

They will report to Carlo Teso, president of GT USA Inc. The rtw collection wholesales for \$250 and \$3,000. The white label fur collection begins around \$700 for a shearing vest and the higher-priced black label can run up to \$60,000 for a full-length sable coat. The showroom also will sell the younger spirited line Byte, which is designed by Teso's son, Marco, and wholesales for \$400 and \$3,000.

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Woven Sport Shirts & Pajama Private Label Mfr seeks Production Coordinator with 3-5 yrs+ experience in woven garment mfg.
This position encompasses understanding of garment construction; sewing; production T&A calendar; detailed follow up & tracking starting with approval; and preproduction sample through production start; cutting, sewing and finishing inclusive of QC final inspection for on-time garment delivery. The Coordinator will be issuing production status reports utilizing the company's computerized report builder. This individual will be expected to follow up with the garment factories to confirm production status and to advise the account executives of problems as they arise.
Person should have a high energy level, be detail oriented, have excellent verbal and written communication skills and a positive attitude; this position necessitates liaison with customer, internal design and product development and overseas mills and garment producing factories.
College degree in garment manufacturing or garment production management and 3-5 years of relevant apparel industry work is required. Well-developed computer skills (Excel, Word) are required. Must be self-directed with ability to be deadline oriented and to maintain composure and productivity in stressful situations.
Fax resume: 212-764-5535 or email: gwachter@b-w-a.com

ASSISTANT TO CREATIVE DESIGN DIRECTOR

ALFRED DUNNER, INC.

We are seeking an Assistant who is highly organized and detail-oriented. Must have at least 5 years experience with a strong background in color, print & fabric markets. Strong communication and decision making skills also required.

Fax resume attn HR:
212-354-2215

Production/Design Asst

Est'd updated dress co. seeking assistant to prepare cost sheets, source trims, followup with lab dips. Communicate with Orient; organization a must.
Fax resume to: 212-944-6835

PRODUCTION MGR ALVIN VALLEY

Designer sportswear company seeks domestic PM. Experience and computer skills required. Fax resume: 212-253-7802 or e-mail: info@alvinvalley.com

PRODUCTION MGR

C & S Knit Spwr 'Mills' - Walmart exp a must
Apparel Staffing, Ltd. Fax (202) 302-1161

PRODUCTION PATTERNMAKER

Eveningwear firm seeks very exp'd individual to join our team.
Please fax resume to (212) 391-8753

PRODUCTION PATTERNMAKER

Junior & Missy Sportswear w/min 5 yrs. exp. for first thru production involved with specs & fittings. Fax resume with salary requirements to: 212-382-3554

Cooper to Leave GQ June 1

Continued from page 2
about half of what Stuff, FHM and Men's Health sell.

As the magazine began to lose face with readers, the rumors within Condé Nast began. Sources said Cooper had a chilly relationship with Truman, whose input has not always been welcomed by some of the company's more well-known editors.

In 2001, word broke that the magazine's new art director, Fred Woodward, had been picked by Truman. Cooper denied the reports.

But changes he supported did not go as planned, either. In February 2002, following the demise of Talk Magazine, Ronald Galotti returned to Condé Nast as GQ's publisher. Galotti and Cooper were "friends," but the publisher was said to quickly grow unhappy with the magazine's performance editorially.

In August, WWD reported that Galotti had been complaining to

Condé Nast higher-ups about the magazine's long-term prospects under Cooper, which Cooper again denied. He also said that newsstand sales had begun to increase and that the July, August and September issues had all been selling well. Newsstand sales did show an increase for the period, but by only a little more than 5 percent, according to the publisher's statement.

A series of p.r. blitzes also failed to generate real buzz for the magazine. In December, Condé Nast purchased a time slot on NBC Saturday night to air GQ's "Men of the Year" awards. It was the worst performance on a prime time network that night.

Cooper began his career at GQ after a stint at Penthouse, when it was trying to rival Playboy with its articles as well as its nudity. But it was his stewardship at GQ that turned him into a star editor: His 20th anniversary at the maga-



Art Cooper

zine will mark the longest run of any current Condé Nast editor.

MEMO PAD

launches planned for this year."
— Samantha Conti

A SPRUCE FALLS: It looks as if Spruce, Wallpaper Group's biannual fashion title that was suspended last year, may never again see the light of day. "I'm concentrating on getting the core product — Wallpaper — right now," editor **Jeremy Langmead** said. "I don't think Spruce is very good, and if it were to return, it would have to come back much improved." He's right to be worried about the flagship, which readers clearly didn't think improved during the interim reign of former Teen People editor **Christina Ferrari**. Its circulation declined 15.5 percent in the second half of last year, to 110,811, according to the British Audit Bureau of Circulations.

Spruce's apparent death would seem to make the much-vaunted "Wallpaper Group" a bit of a misnomer, but Langmead hopes to restock it with new titles at some point. "I have other new magazines in mind," he said, "but no

NOT-SO "FAST" EDITORS: Art Cooper wasn't the only editor rendered obsolete Monday. Fast Company founders **Bill Taylor** and **Alan Webber** announced they would step down from their shared editor in chief post as soon as they can hire a successor for the Gruner + Jahr-owned title. The pair tried numerous tricks to revive the magazine's relevance after the New Economy imploded. "That evangelical tone is over," said a former senior staffer. "The last two to recognize how quickly the magazine was losing its audience were Bill and Alan." Nevertheless, the magazine's circulation still grew in the last six months of 2002 to 734,449 from, even though newsstand sales slumped 20.4 percent. Meanwhile, G+J promoted Cindy Spengler to an EVP as well as chief marketing officer. YM publisher Laura McEwen will report to her now. McEwen's stock dropped after WWD revealed that she had overestimated YM's newsstand circulation in the first half of 2001 by more than 200,000 copies an issue.
— Greg Lindsay and Jacob Bernstein

Help Wanted

Baby Toggs
Product Manager - Assist
Apparel - Sourcing
Leading childrenswear mfr searching for an Assistant Product Manager. Will report directly to the Division Head in our Foreign Sourcing Dept & will be resp for creating vendor manuals, sample follow-up, fabric/trim devmt, costing pkg sent overseas, maintain Time/Action Calendar, order placement & PO entry. Will monitor & follow-up on all issues relating to prod'n & quality to ensure quality product & on time shipments. Email resume: holt@babytogs.com or fax: 212-643-2826. No calls please. EOE.

Senior Apparel Designer
Great oppy at Motionwear, a market leader in design and mfg. of dance & gym apparel. Resp for trend forecasting, fabric design/sourcing & full product design. Strong creativity, related degree. 5+ yrs. exp & CAD proficiency is req'd. Located in Indianapolis, IN, we offer a bright future in an est'd growing co. Reloc negot. Full benefits. Send resume to: Motionwear, 1315 Sunday Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46217 Fax (317)780-4188 email: resume@motionwear.com

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Help Wanted

STEVE MADDEN
Associate Knitwear Designer
Super hot activewear licensee seeks energetic Designer. Min. 3-5 yrs. exp. in Junior knitwear required. Strong communication skills with overseas factories as well as knowledge of garment fit and construction a must. MAC graphic skills required. Fax resume (212) 473-4778 Attn. HR EOE

Energetic Dynamo Wanted
Looking for a hip, aggressive modern thinker to join our small team. Must be able to develop creative selling strategies to open new accounts. Resume & sal reqs to: BPL02@aol.com

JUNIOR SALES
Junior Denim Knit Co seeks exp'd salesperson w/ off price & discount chain stores. Salary plus commission. Please fax resume to: 212-827-0011

SALES (2)-2+ yrs exp selling Jr knit tops to better dept str-\$75-85+ OR Miss markets. Jrtis socks, \$8/Opn. Les Richards Agcy Call (212) 221-0870

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*Sales Kids To \$150k
*Sales Mgr. Gifts/Stationary \$70-90k
*Sales HF Target \$150k
*Account Mgr HF \$80-100k
800-544-5878 Agcy
www.justmgt.com

Sales Help Wanted

SALES EXECUTIVE
Leading manufacturer of missy/updated and junior knit tops & wovens, seeks highly motivated key account executive with major dept store and specialty chain following. Please fax resume to 212-398-5177

SALES EXECUTIVE
Michael Simon has an opportunity available in their CONTEMPORARY Knit Division. Professional with excellent resume & extensive contacts with the more MODERN stores. Fax: R. Newhardt @ 212-730-6595

SALES EXECUTIVE
JILL STUART
seeking highly motivated sales prof. must have established relations w/ speciality & dept. stores in designer womens market. fax 212 921 2850

TEXTILES

SALES MANAGER
Seeking sales pro with contacts & solid relationships with Asian mills. Must have good relations w/garment manufacturers. Team player with managerial skills. Fax resume to Steve: 212-695-8392

SALES - N.Y.C
Bridal Ladies Sweater/Knitwear Collection seeking experienced sales professional with contacts in major department & specialty stores. Must have min 7 yrs related sales exp., sweater knowledge, strong organizational & detail skills. Email resumes & salary history to: KnitResumes@yahoo.com

SALES - N.Y.C
Well-known Better Ladies Sweater line is seeking sales professional with contacts and account experience with major department stores and specialty stores. Min. 3 yrs related sales experience, sweater & private label knowledge a plus. Email resumes & salary history to: KnitResumes@yahoo.com

SALESPERSON WANTED!
Ladies Jr/Missy Sportswear Co. Seeking self-motivated, energetic sales person should have 5 years exp in sales offering major account list. Great opportunity. Fax resume: 212-278-8697

Sales Help Wanted

Liz Claiborne
From classic and traditional to modern and contemporary. From brands that truly inspire to people as diverse as our 25 brands. Everything you've ever wanted in a career is here at Liz Claiborne. Currently we have the following New York based positions available:

account executive
japan
You will achieve sales targets with leading Japanese distributors, support Japan-based office from NY and work with US divisions to implement programs needed for Japan market. Account executive experience with a retail or wholesale company required. Fluency in Japanese a must. Job code: JAE/NN

account executive
latin america
You will achieve sales targets with key department store groups, and utilize retail sales analysis, planning and merchandising. Account executive experience with a retail or wholesale company required. Fluency in Spanish a must. Job code: LAE/NN

For consideration, please fax or email your resume, including salary requirements and job code, to Liz Claiborne, Inc., (212) 626-5537; Email: staffing@liz.com. Visit our Career Page at www.lizclaiborne.com. Only candidates who are being considered will be contacted. We are committed to a diverse workforce. EEO/AA/M/F/D/V

Liz embodies the finest a sales career has to offer.

Sales Help Wanted

SALES PRO
Fantastic opportunity for a reputable hot sock manufacturer. Seeking experienced person w/present contacts at May Co., Target, Walmart, Penny, Sears. Fax resume 212-679-0263

SALES PRO
Large children's outerwear mfg. seeks energetic, extremely organized self starter to work in fast-paced environment. Must be highly motivated team player with min. 5 years sales exp. and have current contacts with major dept stores. Great opportunity! Pls. fax resume: (718) 318-2026

Sales Rep/Client Relations
Position available for a fast-paced, rapidly growing co., we service & sell high-end clientele since 1959. MUST have fashion, couture, bridal exp. Excellent comm. skills, self-starter w/ comp. knowl. Salary based on skills & exp. Full ben., commi./bonus. NYC & LA/C locations. Fax resume w/cover letter attn: M. Paulo 718-482-7156 or email: mspaulo@aol.com

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Sales Rep Wanted
Canadian vertical novelty knit fabric mill, looking for experienced Sales Rep. Please call or fax Les or David at: Tel: (905) 926-7275, Fax: (905) 928-9080

TECHNICAL WOVEN SPECIALIST
Well known label and private label moderate sportswear/jacket manufacturer seeks skilled technical designer to join our production team. Candidate must have full knowledge of garment construction and patterning. Excellent written communication and technical drawing capability is a MUST in order to give clear guidelines and directives to factories. If you are a team-player with a CAN DO philosophy, please fax resume to: D. Tom 212-704-6576.

SALES HELP WANTED

ACCOUNT EXEC \$75K+
Mens. Major Department Stores. FASHION NETWORK 201-503-1060/Fax 1070

Creative Opportunity
SALES MGR. / MERCHANDISER
HOT Brand, now expanding into Children's Wear, is seeking a dynamic Sales Mgr./Merchandiser able to start-up and lead a Children's Dress & Sportswear Co. The right candidate will have mgmt. & buyer contacts with better dept., specialty and mid-tier stores. Minimum of 5 years experience is required. Please Fax resume to: 212-594-6412

SALES HELP WANTED

Baby Toggs
Sales/Admin Assistant
Leading childrenswear mfr is looking for a professional Sales & Admin Asst to assist the Account Executive in the daily execution of duties including audit & control and shipping and distribution of merchandise. Retail exp a plus. Must be proficient in all admin duties incl. excellent written & verbal communication and Microsoft Word & Excel. Excellent salary & benefits. Email resume: holt@babytogs.com or fax: 212-643-2826. No calls please. EOE.

SALES Cattiva Inc.
Special occasion dress mfr. is looking for a sales rep w/ existing better Specialty store relationships. Individual must be a team player, motivated & aggressive. Please fax resume to (212) 947-1814

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POSITIONS WANTED

Positions Wanted Agencies

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Positions Wanted

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Exp'd. in Production, Sourcing, QC
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