

Women's Wear Daily • The Retailers' Daily Newspaper • April 20, 2005 • \$2.00

WWD WEDNESDAY

Sportswear

Central Park Fest

NEW YORK — What do Simon and Garfunkel, the Dalai Lama and H&M have in common? Drawing a faithful flock to Central Park. When H&M presents its fall collection there tonight, there won't be any sing-alongs or spiritual guidance, per se, but there will be fashion. And it'll be on a grand scale. The Swedish retailer has erected a four-story tent and invited 750 guests for a sit-down dinner and a Kanye West performance to toast a new season. Here, an embroidered wool jacket, wool pants, scarf and hat. For more on tonight's party, see pages 6 and 7.

Penney's Growth Plan: Ullman Stresses Value And Off-the-Mall Stores

By Rusty Williamson

PLANO, Tex. — J.C. Penney Co. is looking to the future with a new five-year growth strategy that chairman and chief executive officer Myron E. Ullman 3rd on Tuesday described as a dramatic evolution of the chain's drive to be the dominant midtier department store in the U.S.

Ullman, who took the reins in December upon the retirement of Allen Questrom, outlined his vision for the \$18-billion chain during a two-day equity analysts' meeting at Penney's headquarters here that concludes today after speeches from most of the top

See **Ullman**, Page 12

Ann Taylor Price Tag Said at \$2B

By Vicki M. Young

NEW YORK — Several leveraged buyout firms are said to be eyeing specialty apparel chain Ann Taylor Stores Corp., and the price tag for the 738-unit chain is \$2 billion, or \$27 a share, according to industry and financial sources.

As of Jan. 29, the company ended fiscal year 2004 with 359 Ann Taylor stores, 343 Ann Taylor Loft stores and 36 Ann Taylor Factory stores.

A spokeswoman for Ann Taylor did not return phone calls for comment.

For buyout firms, Ann Taylor represents a more traditional — and ideal — takeover candidate.

A \$2 billion purchase price would represent a 25 percent premium above the retailer's market capitalization at around \$1.75 billion, based on a share price of \$24 and 72.9 million shares outstanding. That premium range is within the percentage range preferred by buyout firms, financial sources at hedge funds and buyout firms said.

Ann Taylor is also an attractive target because it's in the middle of a turnaround scenario for its core Ann Taylor stores. A fund manager at an institutional investment firm, who requested anonymity, said, "Based on our set of calculations, we believe that a well-run Ann Taylor is capable of earning \$4 a share, compared with its current \$1 in earnings-per-share range."

Talk of a buyout first surfaced in February, with rumblings that several apparel firms had considered purchasing the retailer. The chatter subsided only slightly, following the general conclusion that, at \$2 billion, Ann Taylor was too pricey for even the largest of the apparel giants.

At the time, analyst Jennifer Black, who heads her own independent research firm, wrote in a Feb. 11 note, "Rumors have wildly circulated regarding a potential buyout of the company, a prospect we cannot dismiss. Based on the company's inconsistency issues over the past several years, we would welcome a change in top leadership."

That change came on March 17 when the specialty chain posted fourth-quarter and year-end results, along with the announcement that Kay Krill will become chief executive officer in October 2005.

Black wrote in an April research update that she believes the design and merchandising teams "have identified the root of their recent woes and are on the way to rectifying the issues at hand. We are particularly pleased with the company's decision to part



ways with its current [ceo] Pat Spainhour as of October 2005. Under his watch, the company's business has been wildly volatile."

Ann Taylor is ripe for an LBO said one buy-side analyst whose firm owns shares of the retailer, but who requested anonymity. "The LBO profile are these stalwart brands that have been underperforming. That is really the hallmark," he said.

The analyst described the retailer as a great brand, and said: "There's a lot of growth opportunities. It's selling at a low multiple of depressed earnings, so it's selling at around five times the EBITDA range." The analyst noted that companies typically sell at a high price when they have depressed earnings.

In addition, Ann Taylor ended the most recent quarter with zero long-term debt on its balance sheet. From a financial buyer's point of view, said the buy-side analyst, having no debt makes Ann Taylor attractive because the company can easily take some debt on to help improve its operations.

— With contributions from Meredith Derby

WWD WEDNESDAY

Sportswear

GENERAL

- 1 J.C. Penney has a five-year growth strategy that company officials said was "dramatic and an evolution" for its plan to dominate midtier retail.
- 2 Several leveraged buyout firms are said to be eyeing Ann Taylor Stores with a price tag for the 738-unit chain of \$2 billion, or \$27 a share.
- 2 The House approved a trademark-protection bill that would make it easier for brand owners to get injunctive relief in trademark-infringement cases.
- 4 SUZY: All about the upcoming On Stage at the Met extravaganza, celebrating its 20th anniversary... Gisele Bündchen's side job.
- 6 FASHION: A preview of Hennes & Mauritz's fall collection is set to be unveiled at a big bash in the middle of New York's Central Park tonight.

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 VOLUME 189, NO. 84. WWD (ISSN # 0149-5380) is published daily except Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, with one additional issue in June; two additional issues in April, May, August, October, November and December; and three additional issues in February, March and September, by Fairchild Publications, Inc., a subsidiary of Advance Publications, Inc. PRINCIPAL OFFICE: 7 West 34th Street, New York, NY 10001. Shared Services provided by Advance Magazine Publishers Inc.: S.I. Newhouse, Jr., Chairman; Steven T. Florio, Vice Chairman; Charles H. Townsend, C.O.O.; John W. Bellando, Executive Vice-President and C.F.O.; Jill Bright, Executive Vice-President, Human Resources; John Buese, Executive Vice-President, Chief Information Officer; David Orlin, Senior Vice-President, Strategic Sourcing; Robert Benin, Senior Vice-President, Real Estate; David B. Chernin, Senior Vice-President, General Manager, Advance Magazine Group; Shared Services Center, Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY and at additional mailing offices. Canada Post Publications Mail Agreement No. 40032712. Canadian Goods and Services Tax Registration No. 86654-9096-RM0001. Canada post return undeliverable Canadian addresses to: DFGM, 7496 Bath Road, Unit 2, Mississauga, ON L4T 1L2. POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO WWD, P.O. Box 15008, North Hollywood, CA 91615-5008. FOR SUBSCRIPTIONS, ADDRESS CHANGES, ADJUSTMENTS, OR BACK ISSUE INQUIRIES: Please write to WOMEN'S WEAR DAILY, P.O. Box 15008, North Hollywood, CA 91615-5008; Call 800-289-0273; or visit www.subnow.com/wwd. Four weeks is required for change of address. Please give both new and old address as printed on most recent label. First copy of new subscription will be mailed within four weeks after receipt of order. Address all editorial, business, and production correspondence to WOMEN'S WEAR DAILY, 7 West 34th Street, New York, NY 10001. For permissions and reprint requests, please call 212-221-9595 or fax requests to 212-221-9195. Visit us online: www.wwd.com. To subscribe to other Fairchild magazines on the World Wide Web, visit www.fairchildpub.com. Occasionally, we make our subscriber list available to carefully screened companies that offer products and services that we believe would interest our readers. If you do not want to receive these offers and/or information, please advise us at P.O. Box 15008, North Hollywood, CA 91615-5008 or call 800-289-0273. WOMEN'S WEAR DAILY IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LOSS, DAMAGE, OR ANY OTHER INJURY TO UNSOLICITED MANUSCRIPTS, UNSOLICITED ART WORK (INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, DRAWINGS, PHOTOGRAPHS, AND TRANSPARENCIES), OR ANY OTHER UNSOLICITED MATERIALS. THOSE SUBMITTING MANUSCRIPTS, PHOTOGRAPHS, ART WORK, OR OTHER MATERIALS FOR CONSIDERATION SHOULD NOT SEND ORIGINALS, UNLESS SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED TO DO SO BY WWD IN WRITING. MANUSCRIPTS, PHOTOGRAPHS, AND OTHER MATERIALS SUBMITTED MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY A SELF-ADDRESSED OVERNIGHT-DELIVERY RETURN ENVELOPE, POSTAGE PREPAID.

In Brief

• **NEW MAN:** PPR on Tuesday appointed Ross McInnes as executive vice president of finance, the most recent management change since François-Henri Pinault took over as chairman in March. In the newly created post, McInnes, who begins July 1, will be responsible for all of PPR's financial functions. Patrice Marteau, the group's longstanding chief financial officer, will remain with PPR as corporate secretary, overseeing legal, insurance and internal audit matters. McInnes joins PPR from Thales, the electronics company for the defense and aerospace markets, where he had been chief financial officer for the last five years.

• **AMAZON'S LINK:** Marks & Spencer has signed a deal with e-commerce provider Amazon Services Europe Inc., a subsidiary of Amazon.com Inc., based in Luxembourg, which will host and provide the technology behind the M&S branded Web site. It will also provide the underlying systems for Marks & Spencer's in-store and telephone ordering and customer service systems. M&S will manage the Web site and handle customer service, warehousing and distribution. Marks & Spencer customers will benefit from the creation of an integrated order system, the companies said in a statement. For example, if a customer orders a pair of jeans from the Web site, she can change or check the status of her order online, with a customer assistant in the store or by calling the M&S customer service line, according to an Amazon spokesman. M&S customers can already return items purchased on its Web site by mail or in the store. The two companies expect to complete the first phase of the project by early summer 2006.

• **LONDON LEVERAGE:** Two English luxury retailers are taking advantage of the rising value of central London retail property to bankroll their expansion. A&G Group, parent of the Asprey and Garrard brands, and Liberty, the specialty store, both sealed sale-and-leaseback deals this week for their London flagships. A&G has sold Asprey's Bond Street store to Quinlan Private, the Irish property group, for an estimated 55 million pounds (\$105 million at current exchange), although an Asprey spokeswoman declined to confirm the price. A&G Group said it planned to use the proceeds to fund its international expansion program. Asprey has been trading from Bond Street since 1847, and the current building has been handed back to A&G Group on a long-term lease that will last for at least 25 years. Meanwhile, Liberty, which has been undergoing a revamp, has sold two London buildings to a joint venture between Great Portland Estates and the Liverpool Victoria Friendly Society for 66.5 million pounds (\$127 million). The sale has enabled Liberty to wipe out debts of nearly 62 million pounds, or \$118 million, and to focus on building its in-house brand, which it eventually plans to wholesale and retail internationally.

House Approves Brand-Protection Bill

By Kristi Ellis

WASHINGTON — The House passed a trademark-protection bill Tuesday that would make it easier for famous brand owners to get injunctive relief in trademark-infringement cases.

The legislation stems from a 2003 Supreme Court case over the Victoria's Secret trademark in which the justices ruled against Victoria's Secret's claim that a small Kentucky lingerie and adult "novelty" shop called Victor's Secret had infringed on the national lingerie chain's trademark.

The Trademark Dilution Revision Act of 2005, sponsored by Rep. Lamar Smith (R., Texas), seeks to clarify an existing federal law protecting famous trademarks from brand "dilution" that could tarnish a mark or blur the association between it and a product, service or organization.

Most notably, the bill allows the owners of famous trademarks to seek an injunction to block the use of similar trademarks that threaten to diminish their unique brands without having to show "actual economic injury" or "actual or likely confusion" to prove their case.

The measure exempts from liability any commentary, comparative advertising, parodies, criticism and the noncommercial use of trademarks.

"Trade law empowers consumers by giving them information that is often critical to their purchasing decisions," Smith said during House floor debate Tuesday.

"Diluting needs to be stopped at the outset

because actual damage can only be proven over time, after which the goodwill of a mark cannot be restored," Smith said.

In the Victoria's Secret case, the High Court sent the matter back to the lower federal court with some guidance: Federal law requires evidence of "dilution" to a trademark name beyond the "mere fact that consumers mentally associate the junior users' mark with a famous mark," as Victoria's Secret had claimed. However, the Supreme Court failed to resolve the underlying issue of what constitutes dilution, trademark attorneys claimed.

The justices, in a unanimous opinion, gave few details as to what level of proof is needed to show a violation of the 1995 Federal Trademark Dilution Act. That law added new protections for famous trademarks so companies could quickly stop a look-alike name or logo from trading on the reputation or tarnishing the image of an established company.

Meanwhile, federal courts have offered varying interpretations of how the law's "dilution" standard can be proved. Supporters of the new legislation contend it clarifies the dilution standard and establishes a test of likelihood as opposed to actual harm.

"This legislation does a lot of little things, but the one big thing it does is [clarify that] you don't have to prove actual dilution," said Ethan Horwitz, a New York trademark attorney. "That is the big hurdle to win these cases now and [the bill] would make it easier to protect famous trademarks."

Producer Prices Down in March, But Up for Year

By Kristi Ellis

WASHINGTON — Wholesale prices for U.S.-produced women's and girls' apparel fell 0.5 percent in March, but were up 0.4 percent compared with a year ago.

Producer prices for all apparel fell 0.1 percent in March against February, although they increased 0.4 percent versus March 2004, according to the Labor Department Producer Price Index released Tuesday.

"With energy costs rising, a lot of companies have gone as far as they can go in terms of lowering prices," said Charles McMillion, president and chief economist with MBG Information Services. "The increases in the textile and apparel cluster were relatively modest and less than in other industries, and much less than rising energy costs."

As a result, McMillion said producers are "really struggling and are being caught in a vise between very competitive pricing on the one hand, and rising costs for their production on the other....I think we're going to see profits severely squeezed," he said.

Prices in the textile sector are rising sharply, but rising energy costs are cutting into any profits, he said.

Driving by a 3.3 percent boost in energy costs, wholesale prices for all finished goods increased 0.7 percent in March, the biggest jump in five months. However, excluding the volatile food and energy prices, the overall core rate in the PPI rose 0.1 percent for a second month.

Wholesale prices for yarns rose 0.9 percent in March and were up 3.3 percent over a year ago, while prices for greige fabrics were down 0.2 percent in the month, but up 2.2 percent against a year ago. Prices for finished fabrics were up 0.3 percent last month and increased 3 percent against March 2004.

Swimwear was among the apparel categories showing significant wholesale price changes, falling by 14.8 percent last month and down 13.8 percent against a year ago. Producer prices for specific outerwear and girls' sweaters rose 0.1 percent in March and were up 8.7 percent over a year ago.

In another category tracked by the Labor Department, wholesale prices for apparel made in knitting mills fell 0.3 percent in March and were flat compared with a year ago, while prices for knit shirts fell 0.6 percent last month, but were up 4.7 percent over a year ago. Producer prices for finished pantyhose and tights rose 0.1 percent in the month, but fell 0.6 percent year-over-year.

Alaïa Previews Poiret Auction

PARIS — Modern may be an overused word in fashion, but it seems apt when describing the designs of the late French couturier Paul Poiret, he of hobble-skirt fame.

Consider a dress he made for his daughter in 1922, topped with a knitted vest overlaid with silver that is reminiscent of recent work by Belgian Martin Margiela.

The dress is among some 530 lots of the personal wardrobe and belongings of Poiret's wife, Denise, to be sold at auction house Piasa here next month.

On Tuesday, Azzedine Alaïa, an avid collector of Poiret and other vintage fashions, was busy installing that dress and other key looks at his Marais headquarters

for one of two exhibitions leading up to the hotly anticipated sale.

"She was very modern for her time," said Alaïa, admiring an embroidered dinner suit expected to fetch 8,000 to 15,000 euros, or \$10,320 to \$19,350 at current exchange, come May 10 and 11. "She had true style and elegance."

Indeed, Françoise Auguet, a vintage dealer and the appointed expert for the sale, said the couturier's wife, as depicted in group photos during the period 1905 to 1928, often looks as though she belongs to the present.

Auguet describes Denise Poiret's taste as "avant-garde," given her penchant for free-flowing dresses at a time of constrict-

ing corsets. Poiret's model, muse and booster, she wore little make-up, often went barefoot and was a consummate stylist, cinching her loose robes and caftans with belts, twisting fabrics into turbans and constantly changing her accessories, Auguet related.

The collection, put on the block by the late designer's granddaughter, Perrine, spans everything from handkerchiefs and dinner plates to bed linens. Auguet said she expects individuals seeking a piece of fashion history may snap up small items, with museums duking it out for the most important pieces.

These include a fur-trimmed evening coat with a fabric by



PHOTOS BY STEPHANE FEUDERE

A children's dress from 1922.

French painter Raoul Dufy, estimated to fetch up to 20,000 euros, or \$25,800, and a pair of elaborately beaded shoes that could sell for up to 8,000 euros, or \$10,320.

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Night at the Opera • Bergdorf Blondes • Gisele's Other Love

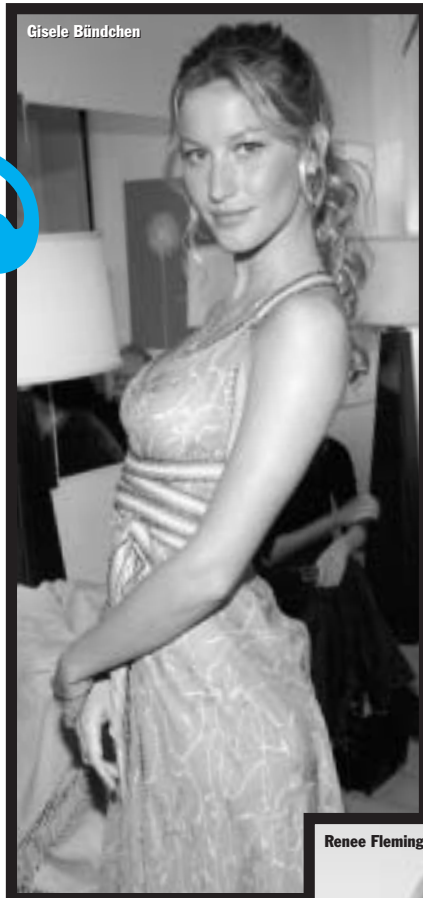
OSNY

By Aileen Mehle

eye If New York is anything at all, it's Party City. Every night there are big ones and little ones, fun ones and deadly dull ones, beautifully decorated ones and ghastly looking ones, ones filled with beautiful people and others with — well, let's not go there.

Many of these fetes are fund-raisers, which keep the city alive. One of the most glamorous "different" celebrations is the On Stage at the Met extravaganza, a fabulous dinner-dance that this year celebrated its 20th anniversary. This is the Met's most successful benefit and this year it set a record by raising \$2.4 million.

What makes this party so "different" is that it is set on the great stage of the Opera on the very boards where the world's greatest singers trod and tread amid the most amazing decor — huge sets from the Met's most famous operas. Imagine the drama of it all. This year's huge backgrounds were from the Opera's 1967 production of "The Magic Flute" designed by Marc Chagall. Even **Renee Fleming** looking around at all the glory was impressed. As this annual On Stage celebration salutes corporate support of the arts, many of the business world's biggest big shots who care about culture attend every year looking spiffy and rich in their dinner jackets with their lovely best-dressed ladies on their arms. Each year, there is an honored guest and, at this one, the honoree was **Josef Ackermann**, the handsome chairman of Deutsche Bank. He and the bank were saluted for their leadership support of the Met for more than two decades. Deutsche Bank's chairman is the greatest of music lovers, who once took singing lessons in Washington and has been known to say that, if he had ever had the slightest chance of a career in opera, banking would have gone right out the window. Among the dinner chairmen were **Victor Ganzl**, the president and chief executive officer of the Hearst Corp.; **Klaus Kleinfeld**, president and ceo of Siemens; **Seth Waugh**, ceo of Deutsche Bank Americas; **William Weldon**, chairman and ceo of Johnson & Johnson, and **Dieter Zetsche**, the president and ceo of DaimlerChrysler Corp.



Gisele Bündchen



Diana Negroponte



Renee Fleming

Of course, none of this great financial success, the Met's foremost fund-raiser, would have existed without the one and only **Cecile (Mrs. Ezra) Zilkha**, the Met's vice chairman and the chairman of the evening, a dynamo who created the event, which has since raised \$27 million, in 1986.

Zilkha's lime and tangerine chiffon was kissed and congratulated by what seemed like each and every one of the 950 guests. Those two dazzling stars, **Placido Domingo** and Fleming, sang for the multitudes before dinner, which was purveyed by Glorious Foods.

Bill Tansey made the tables beautiful with centerpieces of French tulips, ranunculus, roses and sweet peas. It was a rich Chagall palette of pinks and

reds, a very elegant, lush still life accented with three silver Corinthian candlesticks towering above tables covered in shimmering cerise and blush. The **Michael Carney** orchestra played for the dancing.

And this is just a few of the swells who showed up: **Mrs. Josef (Pirko) Ackermann**, wife of the honored guest, in shimmering satin; **Ambassador John Negroponte**, the consummate diplomat ready to become our new security chief, one of the most powerful figures in government, with his charming wife, **Diana**, wearing a beautiful jeweled shawl of many colors; **Carol** and **George McFadden**; **Anna Moffo**; **Irene Aitken**; lovely **Lily Safra** in from London with her emeralds; **Ambassador** and **Mrs. William Luers**; **Marie-Josée** and **Henry Kravis**; **Mercedes** and **Sid Bass**; **Helen Gurley Brown** and **David Brown**; **Bruce Crawford**, the chairman of Lincoln Center, and **Mrs. Crawford**; **Ambassador John Loeb Jr.** with **Sharon Handler**; **James Kinnear**, the honorary chairman of the Met; **Marilyn Horne**; **Robert Higdon**; **Catharine Hamilton** from Chicago; **Kenneth Jay Lane**; **Pete Hathaway**; **Peter John** and **Karen Goulandris**; **Patricia Ganzl**; **Pamela** and **James Finkelstein**; **Pierre Durand**; **Mrs. Placido (Marta) Domingo**; **Mr. and Mrs. James Conlon**; **Bob Colacello**; **Deborah Norville** and **Karl Wellner**; **Mr. and Mrs. William Morris** (he is the president of the Met); **Ambassador** and **Mrs. Edward Ney**; **Ezra Zilkha**; **Bettina Zilkha**; **Mr. and Mrs. James Wolfensohn**; **Linda Wachner**; **Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Volpe** (he is the general manager of the Met), and **Mrs. William (Christine) Hunter** (she is the Met's new chairman, a brilliant woman who was formerly chairman of the Washington Opera, is a great philanthropist and is as knowledgeable about the arts as you can get).

● **Mark Badgley** and **James Mischka** will premiere their fall collection Thursday at Bergdorf Goodman, and among those expected to see the duo's new cocktail and eveningwear are **Cornelia Guest**, **Mai Harrison**, **Joanne de Guardiola**, **Muffie Potter Aston** and **Cynthia Lufkin**.

The collection was inspired by an **Irving Penn** photograph of Charles James ballgowns in muted shades of pink, blue and champagne. The show marks the return of Badgley Mischka to Bergdorf's.

● Speaking of **Joanne de Guardiola**, whose mansion on East 64th Street is on the market for almost \$30 million, she's busy scouring the city for a suitable new residence that she and her family can move into when she is finished designing it. At the Kips Bay Boys and Girls Club preview, where she and **Adrienne Vittadini** were co-chairs, Joanne wore a silver trenchcoat over her short silver and white polkadot dress by Behnaz Sarafpour, diamanté-studded stilettoes and a green lacquered Yves Saint Laurent evening bag with jeweled flowers and handles shaped like ivory tusks. It seemed like the thing to do. **Adrienne** wore a black-and-white Chanel jacket and **Charlotte Moss** was in a black column with feather trimming by Lee Anderson. The night's

honorary chairman was great interior designer **Albert Hadley**, who has influenced a bushel and a peck of present-day designers. At the black-tie dinner at the Union Club that followed the preview, **Ann Getty** wore a white Chanel dress and short jacket and **Muffie Potter Aston** chose a vintage silver silk suit by Isaac Mizrahi.

● **Gisele Bündchen** has a little something going on on the side and it has nothing to do with **Leonardo DiCaprio**. She has been buying, renovating and selling properties in New York, Brazil and Los Angeles. She says she spends about 40 percent of her time on her new projects and I guess that leaves 60 percent of it for Leo.

Selfridges Celebrates Vegas Style

By Samantha Conti

LONDON — What happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas — until now.

On Friday, Selfridges will kick off a Las Vegas-inspired extravaganza, complete with a little white wedding chapel, Liberace fashion exhibition, Elvis impersonator auditions — and fried peanut butter and jelly hors d'oeuvres.

Vegas Supernova, this year's annual spring promotion at the Oxford Street store, celebrates 100 years of the neon-bright city in the desert, and runs until May 15.

The event is creative director Alannah Weston's first major in-store promotion since she joined Selfridges a year ago — and she's doing it her way.

"The store is going to be pumping full of energy, the glamour is going to be over the top, and it's all going to have a 24-hour feel — and that's very much in keeping with Selfridges," said Weston, whose family owns Selfridges, Holt Renfrew in Canada and Brown Thomas in Dublin.

In addition to bringing in David LaChapelle to do the neon-bright, kitschy windows; production designer Michael Howells to create the wedding chapel and cocktail lounge set, and photographer Luca Pizzaroni to display his reportage photographs of Las Vegas, Weston also brought the focus back to the merchandise.

"It's very fashion-oriented this year, and there's glamour at all

price points," said Weston, who worked with about 30 of Selfridges' brands to create special, limited-edition products. These include a metallic Paddington bag from Chloé (there's already a waiting list); a metallic gold-fringed bag from Lanvin and snakeskin designs from Luella; Pringle poker chip T-shirts; a Burberry Prorsum metallic leather bomber jacket; Seven For All Mankind jeans adorned with Swarovski crystals, and Vegas showgirl-inspired dresses from Matthew Williamson and Alice Temperley.

The beauty floor will feature Skin Health Spa's glamour girl treatments from Botox to

BriteSmile tooth whitening, the Japanese cosmetic brand SK-II's facials, as well as bronzers from companies including Bobbi Brown and Prescriptives. Yves Saint Laurent's limited-edition Bayadere collection will be on sale with its sparkly lip glosses with names like Pure Diamond and Pink Quartz.

The store's atrium will feature a giant cathedral structure made from neon lighting and visible from all floors. On a similarly spiritual note, the wedding chapel, also in the atrium, will offer blessings from Charlotte Richards, the woman who presided over the weddings of couples including

Elvis and Priscilla Presley and Bruce Willis and Demi Moore.

Production designer Howells has created the ultralounge on Selfridges' lower ground floor, where customers can see shows by the comedy duo Jarrett & Raja, play casino games (poker lessons are also on offer), quaff Perrier Jouet Belle Epoque and Kaufmann's Vodka and snack on chocolate poker chips. For those in need of comfort food, Selfridges will be selling American culinary staples including Twinkies, Oreos, Marshmallow Fluff and Kraft Macaroni and Cheese.

Vegas Supernova events include an Elvis impersonator

contest and the first-ever exhibition of Liberace's show garb outside the U.S. The eight outfits will be on display alongside the crooner's Swarovski crystal-covered Roadster, which Selfridges also shipped in for the occasion.

Selfridges prides itself on capturing the fashion zeitgeist, and past annual events include Brasil 40°, Bodycraze, Bollywood and Tokyo Life. Last year, the store spent about \$2.7 million on the Brasil event.

Weston said the store chose the theme both because of the city's anniversary and because of the Vegas-like vibe in the air. "There was so much metallic and glitter on the runways last fall — at Dolce & Gabbana, Alice Temperley and Burberry. It really seemed like the right moment!"

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MEMO PAD

LIFESTYLES OF THE RICH AND OVEREXPOSED:

At last, a weekly magazine that isn't obsessed with finding out which Hollywood couple conceived this week. The first issue of *Celebrity Living*, American Media Inc.'s newest title, goes on sale today. Its mission is to delve into stars' homes, wardrobes, diets, vacation getaways, skin care secrets — everything but the juiciest details of their personal lives. (That's Star's job.) "It's a lifestyle magazine — really a lifestyle magazine," promised **Kelli Delaney**, *Celebrity Living*'s editor in chief and Star's creative director. "It's not gossip."

"There's a different level of nosiness that this satisfies," added **Bonnie Fuller**, AMI's editorial director. Translation: Come here to find out what kind of sheets **Nick** and **Jessica** favor (Frette), not what goes on between them.

About 500,000 copies of *Celebrity Living* will be distributed for an initial test run of five issues. The magazine is priced at \$1.89, 10 cents cheaper than its nearest competition, Bauer Publishing's *Life & Style Weekly*. "We want to get people sampling immediately," said Fuller. — **Jeff Bercovici**



A group of layered and knitted looks from H&M's rustic trend.

H&M's Walk in the Park

By Nandini D'Souza

NEW YORK — There's a surprising calm at the studio H&M has commandeered in the Meatpacking District. Surprising because the Swedish retail giant is about to throw one helluva bash in the middle of Central Park. Tonight, Hennes & Mauritz will unveil its fall collection with considerable fanfare. Expect an hour of cocktails, a 150-model runway show (100 women, 50 men), a sit-down picnic-style dinner for 750 guests (in assigned seats, no less) and live performances by Kanye West, John Legend and Miri Ben-Ari.

You might expect that, on the eve of such a fete, tempers would be frayed and diva behavior on display. Not so. With Zen-like calm, head designer Margareta van den Bosch surveys the studio, from the tables laden with accessories and piles of yet-to-be-opened boxes sent from

Sweden to the countless racks — all bursting with clothes ready to be styled, steamed or hemmed. Models quietly stream into a side room to be fitted by stylists Lori Goldstein and Bill Mullen. The only noise, really, comes from the low, steady hum of sewing machines manned by a team of seamstresses happily sustained by the early afternoon sun and the well-stocked catering tables. This is clearly a drama-free, streamlined Scandinavian operation. (It helps that Bosch and her crew can afford to keep the focus on fashion, since the behemoth event setup is in the hands of the serious party-planners at KCD, who started brainstorming for H&M a year-and-a-half ago.)

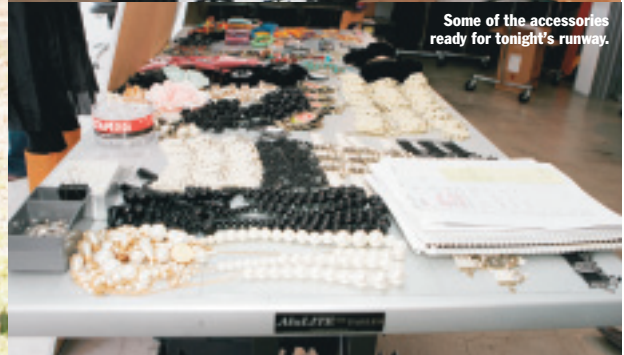
H&M insiders are not just keeping their pregame cool, though. They're keeping mum on the details of tonight's event, too. Company execs promise surprises, but won't divulge too much, hoping to build suspense. Anyone passing Central Park's Fifth Avenue and 72nd

Street entrance, however, can see the giant tent that's been erected in Rumsey Playfield — it's 20,000-square-foot and four stories tall. The entrance will be swathed in a 16-by-12-foot curtain made from fresh orchids. Beyond that? It's a mystery.

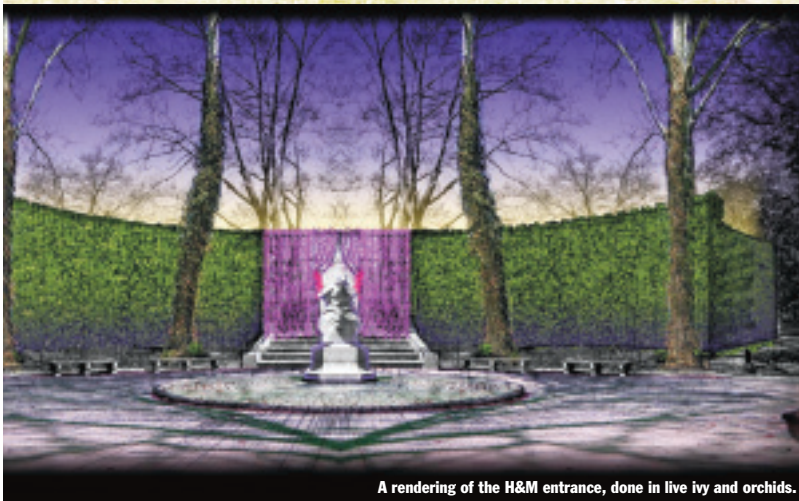
Less of a mystery, though, will be the clothes. Bosch gave WWD a preview, and the fall collection promises to be exactly what H&M's global fan base wants — fun fashion at a fun price. Bosch, who's general to an army of more than 100 designers, split the season into three easy-to-understand trends: rustic, minimal and "Barrococo," a mix of the Baroque and Rococo periods. "Rustic has different influences," she says. "It could be European folkloristic or American handcrafted looks." She focused on tweeds, coarse cottons and heavy knits, all in color and most with prints and embroidery. There's also a bevy of chic knitted accoutrements — hats, scarves, socks,



Head designer Margareta van den Bosch picking a few of her favorite minimal and "Barrococo" looks from fall.



Some of the accessories ready for tonight's runway.



A rendering of the H&M entrance, done in live ivy and orchids.



A preshow scene.

FASHION PHOTOS BY LOHNA QUINN; VAN DEN BOSCH, ACCESSORIES AND PRESHOW BY TALARA CENTENO

mitten and shrugs. Think Galliano.

The minimal group follows fashion's burgeoning less-is-more movement, but isn't just black-on-boring. There's an Eighties club feel to the cut-up cotton dresses, and where Bosch toned down the color to black, gray and violet, she amped up the volume with balloon skirts and baggy legs. Meanwhile, the Barrococo section indulges all the glamour of bygone times as well as a few military riffs à la Napoleon. There are heavy velvet and brocade looks — dresses, coats, corsets and even a pair of off-white cinched bloomers. There's also a sexy stroll through lingerie with corsets, undies and the like as well as sheer cream knits that are certainly bouboir-bound.

"I like them all," Bosch says of the trends. "And there's something for everyone." She's aware that, with H&M's growing retail presence around the world, she's designing for a much larger, more diverse, audience. "We listen to the customers in each country," she says. "But you also have to put out a line that is still H&M no matter where it is."

Going into tonight's party, she's confident that the clothes won't be overshadowed by the spectacle. But she's not really losing any sleep over the festivities, either: Up by 6:30 a.m. most days, Bosch is making sure not to skimp on her morning ritual of reading maga-

zines and newspapers for at least an hour: "I don't like to rush," she says.

H&M chief executive officer Rolf Eriksen is equally calm, even though he isn't in on all of tonight's details. "It's going to be a surprise for me, too," he says. Anyway, he's more concerned with the company, which is riding the waves of a healthy fourth quarter, thanks in no small part to a design cameo by Karl Lagerfeld, which helped a 23.9 percent bottom line spurt to 4.06 billion kronor, or \$605.9 million, as reported in January. And for the year, profits climbed 15 percent to 11.01 billion kronor, or \$1.49 billion. Meanwhile, first-quarter sales look strong, rising 7 percent to 12.61 billion kronor, or \$1.84 billion.

Eriksen is looking forward to H&M's continuing global expansion this year, including its first West Coast store in San Francisco, to open in the fall.

Tonight's party is the second step, he says, in the company's plans for North America. The first was opening the Fifth Avenue store five years ago. "We want to show our strength," Eriksen says. But the company won't go over budget with the event. "It won't cost more than what we spent last year," Eriksen says, since the executives reshuffled activities and campaigns for the year to compensate.

If history repeats itself, H&M's party will be a hit.

The company throws a runway show of this scope every four to five years. The last one, which included a fireworks display, was in May 2001 in a quarry outside Stockholm, attended by 550 international journalists. Prior to that, there were parties in Copenhagen, Amsterdam and Berlin. But Eriksen didn't have to think twice about choosing New York City as a venue. "It was a natural — our first choice. And Central Park is the most famous park in the world." He's a big fan of Sunday brunches at the Boathouse.

Early buzz among the city's fashion flock is that this could be the ticket of the season, especially because of the high production quotient. It's a big enough event that the Central Park police precinct and the parks commissioner were too busy to comment, no doubt trying to figure out how to handle a mob of editors, models and behind-the-scene teams, not to mention the curious rollerbladers, joggers and strollers who'll inevitably stop to see what all the fuss is about. And that's just the crowd — not the nitty-gritty logistics of getting this beast up and running.

"Thinking about the lighting, sets, backstage and all the rigging, it's a huge undertaking," says Chad Kaydo, editor in chief of BizBash, the trade publication for special events. "It's not like there's an electrical outlet in the middle of the park that they can just plug the lights into."

In the Mainstream

To the Manor Born

NEW YORK — Banana Republic's fall lineup gives girls exactly what they want — fashionable clothes and accessories at a price most can afford. Inspired by "Brideshead Revisited," executive vice president of design Deborah Lloyd reinterpreted the early 20th-century looks of the English aristocracy, then added a modern flair, perhaps ironically, with looks that suggested the swinging Sixties in London. The firm showed chunky knit cardigans paired with floaty florals, a Sixties-style coat worn over a short paisley dress, little sequined cardigans, sexy camisoles and plenty of shorts. Lloyd also featured men's wear-inspired looks, such as pinstriped vests, pleated trousers and a slew of herringbones, plaids and tweeds, while for evening there was plenty of color, from a simple mint silk charmeuse dress to a peacock green pleated frock.



PHOTOS BY ZAC SECKLER

EU Trade Chief: Lift Cotton Duties on West Africa

By John Zarocostas

GENEVA — In a bid to help struggling West African cotton-producing countries, European Union Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson on Tuesday called for wealthier nations to provide duty-free access to cotton grown in that region by 2007.

Mandelson said that, during the July summit of the G-8 economic powers, he plans to push world leaders to commit to fast-tracking cotton within the agricultural talks of the World Trade Organization. Key cotton growers in West Africa, including Benin, Chad, Burkina Faso and Mali, have grown increasingly vocal in recent years, complaining that they are not benefiting from the trade liberalization efforts of the WTO.

During a keynote speech at a summit on African issues being held this week in Bamako, Mali's capital city, Mandelson called on advanced countries to "fast track cotton" and said: "Cotton should be first in the queue."

Cotton has come to the fore of trade issues in recent years because poor African countries argue that it's one of the few sectors of the global economy where they enjoy any comparative advantages — namely, ready land and low-cost workers.

The four nations Mandelson singled out account for about 5 percent of global cotton production.

Poor nations have been complaining loudly that subsidies paid by the U.S. give American farmers an unfair eco-

nomical advantage and make it impossible for the African nations to compete in the world market. In March, the WTO ruled the U.S. Step Two cotton program, which included \$2 billion in annual payments, broke global trade rules.

Differences between poor and rich countries over cotton contributed to the collapse of the Cancun trade summit in September 2003.

Mandelson cited World Bank estimates that cotton support measures paid by economic powers reduce world prices by 10 to 15 percent and said: "At the moment, we are probably witnessing the sharpest drop in these prices in absolute terms since 1985."

The price of cotton has fallen by 30 percent over the past two years, dropping

below 50 cents a pound.

Roman Benicchio, trade analyst with the antipoverty advocacy group Oxfam International, said he "welcomed" Mandelson's call, but noted that it wouldn't take effect until 2007 — after the current round of WTO talks concludes.

Several trade ambassadors from poor WTO member countries, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, complained that the proposal was not enough and said they want to see tangible results by July.

A U.S. trade official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said, "We're working with others concerned about the cotton trade and, in particular, countries in Africa to address their concerns and promote development."

Labor Problems Put Cambodian Exports in Peril

GENEVA — The takeoff in apparel exports that helped war-ravaged Cambodia rebuild its economy could be in jeopardy if authorities don't put a stop to the recent escalation in labor abuses, an industry report warned Tuesday.

The spate of repression that followed the Jan. 1 lifting of apparel and textile quotas "risks tarnishing the country's good reputation in the eyes of foreign investors," wrote the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

The report noted that Cambodian industry has blamed the change on the fierce competitive climate following the dropping of quotas by the nations of the World Trade Organization, which has resulted in the loss of 15,000 jobs in the member nation's garment sector.

Cambodia and the U.S. in 1999 signed a trade accord that linked the growth in the Southeast Asian nation's export quotas to it demonstrating better labor standards in the sector. The accord was overseen by inspectors from the International Labor Organization. Since that agreement was reached, Cambodian trade authorities have marketed the country as dedicated to complying with international labor standards.

The report, which draws on interviews from a trip in February and March, warned that Cambodia's respect for labor rights, "which had provided it with a reputation as a high-quality producer...is threatened by growing repression of freedom of association, a development that has now been clear for several months."

Apparel exports from the nation rose to \$1.9 billion in 2004 from \$26 million in 1995, with two-thirds going to the U.S. and most of the remainder to the EU. New investment from Hong Kong, Taiwan, China, the U.S. and U.K. poured into the country to develop this capacity.

Last year, U.S. imports of Cambodian textiles and apparel were up 15.2 percent to \$1.44 billion. Through the first two months of this year, they rose 10.6 percent.

— J.Z.

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Marketing

On the Prowl for Prestige

By Valerie Seckler

NEW YORK — Status-seeking hasn't lost its cachet.

In fact, it is a compelling consideration among luxury goods consumers in the country's 10 percent of wealthiest households — contrary to the belief among many market researchers that, in recent years, the aura of social status had declined considerably as a driver of such purchases.

That phenomenon is one key finding in the "Luxury Brand Status Research & 2005 LuxuryStat Index," newly published by the Luxury Institute based here. The research is based on a nationally representative sample of more than 200 adults, among the country's 10 percent of wealthiest households, with a median annual household income of \$395,000 and a median net worth, including home equity, of \$1.9 million. (For the past 40 years, 80 percent of the nation's wealth has been held by 20 percent of its households. Although people don't generally dip into their assets for everyday purchase such as apparel, a wealth effect, or sense of security brought by such holdings, is believed to stimulate consumption.)

Among four categories of products and services evaluated in the first-time study — automotive, fashion designers, hotels/resorts and retailers — fashion designers accounted for three of the top 10 brands in the LuxuryStat Brand Value Index for 2005, an evaluation based on an index of 0 to 100. The index reflects an average of four factors: quality, exclusivity/uniqueness, status and self-enhancement. The three fashion houses ranking in the top 10 — Giorgio Armani, Hermès and Prada — also led the study's list of designer brands that symbolize the strongest social status.

More than half, or 54 percent, of those responding to the online survey in the fourth quarter of 2004 agreed or strongly agreed that Armani is the designer name that conveyed the strongest social status. Armani was followed by Hermès and Prada, each of which commanded a 44 percent share. In the broader LuxuryStat Brand Value Index, Armani was accorded the fourth-highest rating, or a 72, by those surveyed, making it the top-ranked fashion brand overall; Hermès was seventh best, with a 68, and Prada, eighth, with a 67.

Fashion designers were the second most prevalent sector in the LuxuryStat Index, a group dominated by five automotive brands. Porsche led that category, garnering a 78 from wealthy adults and finishing second overall. Ritz-Carlton topped the index with an 81 and one other hotel franchise, The Four Seasons, rounded out the top 10, tying with Mercedes for the third-highest rating, a 76.

Consumers were asked to rank 17 fashion brands, which were chosen for the luxury study based on their frequency of advertising in magazines aimed at wealthy readers, including *Worth*, *Travel & Leisure* and *Departures*, noted Milton F. Pedraza, the Luxury Institute's chief executive officer, in disclosing the fashion results exclusively to WWD. As such, the 17 included only three American brands: Coach, Polo Ralph Lauren and Calvin Klein. And those three labels fell into the bottom half of the 12 rankings, which included five ties.

Coach came in eighth, indexing 62, including a 65 from women and a 59 from men; Polo Ralph Lauren placed 11th, with a 55, based on a 56 from women and a 53 from men, and Calvin Klein was 12th, scoring 50, as women gave it a 53 and men, a 48.

The broad distribution of Polo Ralph Lauren and Calvin Klein merchandise and wide range of prices of those products, such as Polo Sport activewear, Chaps sportswear, CK Calvin Klein jeans and Calvin Klein underwear, Pedraza posited, have reduced Klein's and Lauren's luxury luster for the nation's wealthiest consumers. "They are upscale brands but they are not [perceived as] luxury brands," Pedraza maintained. "They are not seen in the same way as brands like Giorgio Armani, Gucci and Prada."

A pair of brands appeared among the top three fashion names seen both as most exclusive and as most likely to offer a sense of self-enhancement, that is, make someone feel special: Armani and Versace. More than half, or 57 percent, agreed or strongly agreed that Armani made them feel special, making it the leader for that attribute, while 51 percent made that association with Versace, which was ranked third. Asked to assess exclusivity, 44 percent associated the quality with Armani, while 39 percent said it described Versace.

There was also a correlation between the two fashion names — Armani and Prada — that scored highest both in quality and status. Nearly half, or 47 percent of those polled, agreed or strongly agreed Armani was a designer brand offering consistently superior quality, as did the 41 percent who considered Prada as such. That compared with the larger shares of 54 percent who contributed to Armani's top ranking for status, and 44 percent who propelled Prada into second place in that regard.

"Luxury in the highest [fashion] sense has long been an Italian and French phenomenon," offered Pedraza, who added he believes the suggestion of exclusivity is the biggest piece of that perception, alluding to their distribution, which has generally been narrower than that of their U.S. counterparts.



▲ Giorgio Armani, Hermès and Prada were the luxury fashion brands that symbolized the most social status among wealthy consumers, who evaluated a list of 17 luxe fashion labels.

TRENDING UP: FASHION BRANDS WITH LUXE APPEAL	
Fashion Brand	Share of People Who Say Luxury Status Grew or Grew Dramatically in 2004
1. Prada	12%
2. Louis Vuitton	10%
3. Dolce & Gabbana	10%
4. Giorgio Armani	9%
5. Gucci	9%
6. Hermès	8%
7. Versace	8%
8. Coach	7%
9. Burberry	7%
10. Chanel	6%
11. Polo Ralph Lauren	5%
12. Bottega Veneta	5%
13. Ferragamo	5%
14. Christian Dior	3%
15. Hugo Boss	3%
16. Calvin Klein	2%
17. Yves Saint Laurent	2%

SOURCE: THE LUXURY INSTITUTE, MARCH 2005

▲ While American fashion luxury brands took a beating in the 2005 Luxury Stat Index, when ranked among 17 fashion labels by the wealthiest Americans, Coach placed in the middle of the pack, when rated for how much its luxury status rose last year.

Marketing Intelligence

GAY TITLES IN FASHION: Apparel and jewelry advertising in gay print media increased at more than twice the rate of ads placed in gay publications overall in 2004, climbing 39.2 percent to reach 618 pages, up from 444 pages in 2003. That's according to the "2004 Gay Press Report," published by gay media placement firm Rivendell Marketing and Prime Access, a multicultural ad agency.

By comparison, the number of ad pages placed in gay publications last year advanced 17.5 percent, totaling 39,561, versus 33,681 ad pages in 2003.

The growing number of locales sanctioning gay civil unions and the legalization of gay marriage in Massachusetts spurred much of the growth in fashion advertising in gay magazines and newspapers, said Todd Evans, Rivendell's president and chief executive officer. Apparel ads accounted for 369, or 60 percent, of the 618 fashion placements tracked in the April 2004 editions of 139 gay titles, while 249 jewelry ads made up the difference.

The fashion category's ad increase marked the ninth-largest percentage gain among 16 sectors with double-digit increases in ads in gay titles in 2004, a group led by health, fitness and grooming ads, which tallied 3,179, up 87.2 percent from 1,698 in 2003. Asked to assess the timing of fashion advertising placed in gay titles — once heavily skewed to gay pride month, in June editions, and holiday, in December issues — Evans said: "Fashion ads have become pretty consistent year-round, which has contributed to the increase. April is a very average month."

COLLEGIANS' CHOICES: Nordstrom is number one on their gift card wish list, eBay is the online shopping destination they visit most often and bill payments are the leading source of their spending.

They're college students, ages 16 to 25, polled by Buzz Marketing Group between March 3 and April 7. The 620 survey subjects, who constitute a nationally representative sample of college students, hail from such institutions as New York University, Temple University, Auburn University and the University of Indiana at Bloomington.

At first blush, it may seem surprising that college students would favor a gift card from Nordstrom over all other stores, but Tina Wells, chief executive officer at Buzz Marketing, attributes the preference to a broader trend of spending on upscale items among today's collegians. "iPod helped launch [youth] spending on high-end items," said Wells. "I'm surprised a lot of people in college spend on things like Louis Vuitton bags. Their income is limited."

Nordstrom rated as first choice for a gift card among 38 percent of those surveyed, followed by Best Buy, with 24 percent; Target, cited by 22 percent; Urban Outfitters, 14 percent; and Barnes & Noble, 2 percent. "I have heard from a lot of teens that they may replace H&M with Target, in terms of [where they spend] their fashion dollars," Wells related.

Nearly three-quarters of the college crowd, or 72 percent, shops online, and 52 percent do so most often at eBay. Amazon ranked as second favorite, named by 32 percent. Next were the shopping sites of Victoria's Secret, most popular with 11 percent; Best Buy, 4 percent, and Nordstrom, 1 percent.

More than one-third of collegians, or 42 percent, spend most of their money paying bills, while 33 percent devote the biggest part of their budget to eating out and entertainment. Seven percent said they shell out most of their funds for fashion; 5 percent spend most heavily on cell phone costs, and 2 percent allocate the most money to CDs and electronics.

COLOR MATCHING: People's preferred colors overall tend to also play out as their favorites for only one category of products: apparel. Most popular, in that sense, are blues, fiery reds and black, according to a new study, "Consumer Color Preferences," co-sponsored by BuzzBack Market Research and Pantone. Those also are the hues in which more than half of the country's teens and adults, or 54 percent, feel most confident, with red considered an attention grabber; black, slimming, and blue experienced as ego gratifying.

The findings are based on a representative sample of 2,769 Americans, ages 13 to 64, who were probed online for their reactions to 44 colors and their opinions about the use of those colors in 19 categories of products.

Despite the close match between people's favorite colors in general and those they most like to wear, Carol Fitzgerald, president of BuzzBack, acknowledged variances can manifest because of the prevalence of particular items that are in fashion at any given time and the offer of different items and colors in different locales.

A shade of black designated as limousine black by Pantone is seen as the must-have color for this fall, named by 21 percent of the study's respondents, and it was also the color cited by 31 percent as most popular to wear to a job interview and by 30 percent as their first choice to close a deal.

— V.S.

Principal Bobbi Brown Goes Back to School

NEW YORK — Bobbi Brown left a lasting impression at a Bronx vocational high school last week where she gave a makeup class, spoke with students and visited the school's day care center in her role as Principal for a Day.

Brown first became a Principal for a Day at the Jane Addams Vocational High School in 2001 and was instantly taken with its warmth, energy and friendliness. Seeing the school desperately lacked resources, Brown decided to make the relationship permanent. She began regularly donating discontinued makeup and magazines from her company to the school's cosmetology program and supplies like baby formula, diapers and blankets to its day care center.

"I was hooked," said Brown, who has returned as Principal for a Day every year since. "I realized how much they needed and how much I could give them of what they needed, so I adopted the school."

Brown gave a makeup class before an audience of 18 aspiring hair, makeup and nail artists in the school's cosmetology lab. After selecting a model from the group to demonstrate on, Brown got to work, applying under-eye concealer and foundation while teaching the students about correct shade selection. Moving from eyes to cheeks to lips, she demonstrated the appropriate tools and application techniques to use for each area. Brown also gave the young women tips for healthy skin — and shared her own beauty philosophy that makeup should accentuate a woman's natural beauty to help her feel more confident about herself, not less.

After plying the class with product-filled makeup cases, Brown made her way to the school's Living for Young Families Through Education day care center where she visited infants and toddlers while their teenage mothers were in class. The program helps young parents finish high school by providing child care and outside resources necessary for their children.

Brown, a mother of three, has a soft place in her heart for children, which was evident as she knelt on the floor to greet a toddler and coo at a baby.

Although the New York City Department of Education funds the program, parents must supply the day care center with formula, food and diapers for their children. According to LYFE social worker Ana Martinez, many cannot afford even these basics.

"A lot of these young students live in shelters and have no money," Martinez said. "They think Women, Infants and Children and welfare will provide all they need," but they don't, she added, referring to a popular federally funded program.

Martinez explained that the formula, diapers and other supplies that Brown gives the nursery help keep young parents in class. Otherwise, they might be tempted to stay home from school where they can stretch the time between feedings and diaper changes to conserve these expensive items.

"By Bobbi Brown assisting us, it allows them to come to school every day," Martinez said. "We're very grateful that she participates."

— Karen James



Bobbi Brown and students of Jane Addams High School.

Inter Parfums SA Sales Rise 22.3%

PARIS — Inter Parfums SA, the Paris-based subsidiary of U.S.-based Inter Parfums Inc., announced consolidated first-quarter 2005 sales of 47.2 million euros, or \$62.6 million at average exchange rates, an increase of 22.3 percent year-on-year. At constant exchange, the increase would have been 25 percent.

By market, North America and France posted growth of more than 40 percent, the company stated, adding it reinforced its position in Western Europe.

Inter Parfums SA attributed its first-quarter performance to the solidity of its principal brands, the success of recent launches and the dynamism of Lanvin fragrances. Its portfolio includes the Burberry, Christian Lacroix, Celine, Nickel, Lanvin, Paul Smith and S.T. Dupont beauty brands. Upcoming launches include novelties for Christian Lacroix and Lanvin.

— Brid Costello

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Ullman Outlines Vision for Penney's

continued from page one
departmental executives.

His goals include solidifying Penney's standing with the current customer base and reaching out to new shoppers with more vibrant, emotional and compelling in-store trend statements that also denote value; increase inventory productivity, and build more off-the-mall free-standing stores. The company now has 10 freestanding stores and previously said it plans to open at least 75 such stores on the next few years.

Penney's current freestanding stores continually beat plan and ring up sales of at least \$250 a square foot. Penney's mall-based stores typically average about \$150 in sales a gross square foot, up 15, or 11 percent, since 2001, the first full-year of Questrom's five-year turnaround mission.

"I've waited four months for this day," Ullman said in opening remarks to several hundred Wall Street analysts. "I believe that we have the power to achieve dramatic growth at J.C. Penney in the next five years and attain top profitability by 2009.

"We're in a position to grow more and capitalize on opportunities, and are committed to the path that we are going to outline to you," he said. "We have dramatic plans to increase earnings per share in 2005. This plan is not a revolution but an evolution of our desire to be the preferred choice for middle America."

Ken Hicks, president and chief merchandising officer, said the chain is committed to stronger sales and profits and

to polishing its image among shoppers.

"We will continue to develop and implement more of our Box 1 [latest prototype] format style department stores and play up trend-drivers and key fashion statements across the store in areas that we call 'hot spots' and 'hot zones,'" Hicks said. "We plan to improve consistency across the stores, update fixtures and store appearance on a continual basis, grow sales and profits, reduce expenses by \$200 million and make a strong emotional connection to the J.C. Penney shopper. We really want her to feel smart about the prices she pays.

"Our new, long-range plan includes a stronger merchandise focus on the needs of our shoppers and keeping J.C. Penney in a leadership position by building focused businesses that cater to their lifestyles, including women's and men's casual fashions, lingerie and soft home furnishings," Hicks added. "We will reach them through powerful marketing initiatives."

Penney's recently has rolled out several exclusive new brands, including nicole by Nicole Miller, a moderate dress and sportswear line, and said Tuesday it will debut a myriad of other private brand products in the coming year, including a men's tuxedo collection and more products for women's, men's, teens and home.

Ullman is seeking to leave his imprimatur on the 1,017-unit chain after Questrom conceived, implemented and shepherded the Penney's five-year turnaround plan that ends this year. The company's target shoppers are women 35 to

54 years old with household incomes of \$35,000 to \$85,000 a year who crave fashion but demand value.

Penney's shares closed Tuesday at \$45.52 in New York Stock Exchange trading, down 2.15 percent from Monday.

The company previously said that it's planning low-single-digit comp-store sales gains in 2005. It had 2 percent annual store-to-store increases in 2004. Ullman said Penney's will achieve 6 to 8 percent earnings before interest and taxes levels by yearend 2005 and that EBIT levels were 7.1 percent in 2004.

For its latest fiscal year, Penney's posted earnings of \$524 million, or \$1.76 a share, compared with a loss of \$928 million, or \$3.13 a share, the previous year. Revenues grew 3.6 percent to \$18.24 billion from \$17.79 billion.

Ullman, who planned to give his clos-



“We have dramatic plans to increase earnings per share in 2005. This plan is not a revolution but an evolution of our desire to be the preferred choice for middle America.”

— Myron E. Ullman 3rd, J.C. Penney Co.



Penney's recently has rolled out several exclusive new brands, including nicole by Nicole Miller, a moderate dress and sportswear line, and said Tuesday it will debut a myriad of other private brand products in the coming year.

ing remarks today as well as take analysts' questions at a news conference, did not comment Tuesday on published reports about a potential leveraged buyout. As reported late last month, Cerberus Capital Management LP and the Carlyle Group, along with another private equity player, were said to be contemplating a move on Penney's in a \$16 billion to \$18 billion leveraged buyout.

With a market capitalization of about \$13 billion and \$4.7 billion worth of cash and short-term securities on its balance sheet, up from \$3 billion a year ago, Penney's is considered an attractive LBO target. The goal of the Cerberus-Carlyle investment could be to milk Penney's for cash while improving the businesses' operations, especially considering the company has more steam left in its turnaround program.

However, Penney's has strong defenses in place that would make an LBO by financial investors difficult, mostly because getting the board's consent would be extremely tough and time-consuming. A hostile takeover of Penney's could take place, but it would carry a high acquisition price.

According to Penney's bylaws, the retailer has a tight defense against hostile takeovers, including a shareholder-rights

plan — otherwise known as a "poison pill" — that was initiated in 1988 and replaced in 2002. Public companies implement poison pills as a way to dissuade hostile takeovers. They use them to make the company's stock less attractive to the potential buyer.

Speculation about a possible LBO came several days after New York-based Cerberus hired Vanessa Castagna, former chairman and ceo of J.C. Penney stores, catalogue and Internet, as a senior member of its operations team and executive chairwoman of Mervyn's department store chain, which Cerberus partially owns.

In the last two years, Penney's shed its ailing Eckerd drugstore chain, implemented aggressive cost reductions and overhauled its private brand offerings for greater quality and value.

As of Jan. 29, in addition to 1,017 stores in the U.S. and Puerto Rico, Penney's operated 62 Renner department stores in Brazil. Although it owns more than 70 stores in California, its strength is east of the Mississippi, especially in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Florida and Michigan. The retailer has stores in all 50 states except Hawaii.

— With contributions from Lisa Lockwood, New York

Fashion Scoops

ART'S SAKE: While François Pinault awaits a verdict in California in the Executive Life case, he's on the move in Italy. Speculation is heating up in Europe that Pinault will buy Venice's Palazzo Grassi to showcase his extensive collection of modern and contemporary art. A spokesman for the retail and luxury magnate, who controls France's PPR, declined to comment. But sources familiar with the matter said Pinault has already made an offer to buy the 18th-century landmark on the Grand Canal. A decision on whether the municipality of Venice will approve Pinault's offer is expected as soon as next week, sources said. Pinault's interest in the prestigious property comes as he experiences growing frustration with plans to create an ambitious contemporary art foundation outside of Paris.

Administrative red tape has stymied the project to transform an industrial island in the Seine River, with, among other buildings, Pinault's museum. A source said Pinault remains committed to the foundation. But that taking control of Palazzo Grassi would, in the meantime, allow him to stage temporary exhibits of his collection.

THINK PINK: Diane von Furstenberg is teaming up with Teens for the Cure to host a mother-daughter fashion show and shopping event Friday night at her West Village studio. The gathering will benefit the New York City chapter of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation.

SNYDER'S SALUTE: For 36 years, the 21 Club's maître d' Bruce Snyder has welcomed guests, and Sunday night they turned out in force to toast him on his retirement. William Donaldson, Philip Miller, Drew Nierpont, Leroy Neiman, Ralph Destino, Phyllis George, James Destino,

Edward and Tricia Nixon Cox and Connie Ann Phillips were among the 600 who poured into the jockey-happy joint.

Several reminisced about "21 at 21" birthday cakes, boozey nights and Salvation Army Christmas carolers. Laurence Leeds recalled how in 1929 his late father once planned to meet George Gershwin after the opening of "Wintergreen for President" at 21 when it was still a speakeasy. But the composer arrived early, didn't look familiar and was turned away. Embarrassed by the gaffe, the then-owners threw a party for Gershwin and the elder Leeds the following night.

William O'Shaughnessy, who was tucked into a booth with his wife, Nancy, said Snyder "picked up the mantle and became Mr. 21, and he did it with elegance, dignity and charm." The broadcaster said, "I was talking to Mario Cuomo today and he said, 'Bruce Snyder sounds like an English general but he has a voice like an English poet. But why do the Irish like him so much?'"

George said she has known Snyder through her five careers. "No matter who was in the room, Bruce always made you feel like tonight is your turn to be important.

"Who else could keep presidents, sportscasters, movie stars and business titans — people with big egos — and keep them placated?" George continued. "He is also a great listener and if he ever wrote a book, we'd all be in trouble."

There has been interest in a book, but no one has pursued it, Snyder said. There would certainly be plenty to draw from. Greeting the Duke and Duchess of Windsor in the early Seventies, chatting with George H.W. Bush, who sometimes walked over from the United Nations for a solitary lunch, or seating Ronald and Nancy Reagan at a table that Gerald Ford had just used, Snyder said. "So many out-of-the-ordinary things happened so much that you don't really take note of them," he said. "It would have to be someone who knows how to draw it out of me."

De Quercize Named Chief Executive at Van Cleef & Arpels

By Robert Murphy

PARIS — Compagnie Financiere Richemont, the Swiss luxury group, on Tuesday appointed Stanislas de Quercize as president and chief executive of Paris-based jeweler Van Cleef & Arpels. The appointment confirms an April 7 report in WWD.

De Quercize will move over to Van Cleef from Cartier, Richemont's cash cow, which he has guided in North America as president and ceo for the last three years. He will succeed Isabelle Guichot, who left Van Cleef in January for Gucci Group, where she is director of business development and also ceo of Sergio Rossi.

De Quercize, an energetic and affable manager who also has experience at Richemont's Mont Blanc and Alfred Dunhill brands, is slated to begin at Van Cleef here in September.

Until then, Michel Patout will continue as interim chief executive, a position he took on Guichot's departure. On de Quercize's arrival, Patout will return to his role as Van Cleef's chief financial officer.

Though Van Cleef is much smaller than Cartier, the brand has garnered a higher profile in recent years, presenting a greater range of high jewelry creations, courting the fashion media and developing its range of accessible products.

At this month's watch and jewelry fair in Geneva, the house presented a watch based on its Alhambra design, a tourbillon men's watch, as well as a raft of fine jewelry creations.

Though Richemont doesn't break out sales figures for individual brands, the firm said revenues at its jewelry houses — Van Cleef and Cartier — rose 12 percent in the quarter ended Dec. 31.

Founded in 1894, Van Cleef has long catered to lu-

minaries, from Romy Schneider and Grace Kelly to Madonna and Elizabeth Taylor. Richemont bought a 60 percent stake in Van Cleef in 1999 for about \$325 million. It purchased an additional 20 percent of the brand in 2001 and took total control of it in 2003.

Richemont's strategy for Van Cleef has been to slowly bolster its profile by opening stores around the world. Van Cleef presently counts 43 stores, 34 of which are wholly owned. Last January, the brand unveiled a flagship on London's Bond Street, designed by Anouska Hempel.

A Richemont spokesman said Van Cleef would open a "single digit" number of stores this year, focusing on growing business in Asia, the U.S. and Eastern Europe.

Among Richemont's other brands are Chloé, Vacheron Constantin, Piaget, Jaeger-LeCoultre, Pannera, IWC and Baume & Mercier.

KKR Files For \$835M REIT IPO

By Amy S. Choi

NEW YORK — Kohlberg, Kravis Roberts & Co., a private equity firm said to be making a play to acquire the Neiman Marcus Group, filed an initial public offering for \$835 million with the Securities and Exchange Commission for a real estate investment trust Monday. It will offer 79.6 million shares at \$10.50 a share.

The REIT, KKR Financial Corp., will be managed by KKR and expects to be listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the ticker "KFN." KKR Financial will continue operating as a specialty finance company. It currently has \$6.3 billion invested in residential mortgage loans and mortgage-backed securities; corporate leveraged loans and high-yield securities; commercial real estate debt, and asset-backed securities.

According to its IPO prospectus, the firm will continue focusing on its core areas, but also will "invest opportunistically in other types of investments from time to time, including investments in equity securities." This opportunistic strategy echoes that of its parent, which specializes in leveraged buy-outs. Kohlberg, Kravis Roberts is said to be bidding against The Blackstone Group in a \$5 billion play for Neiman Marcus. It recently completed a \$6 billion-plus acquisition of Toys 'R Us.

As a REIT, KKR Financial will not be charged a federal income tax on the income it distributes to its stockholders, but it will be subject to tax on net income or capital gains not distributed to its stockholders.

As reported, KKR is said to be teaming with Bain Capital Partners in a bid for Neiman's. Thomas H. Lee and The Blackstone Group is the other team of bidders. KKR's current portfolio of investments include: A.T.U. Auto-Teile-Under Holding Inc.; Masonite International Inc.; Primedia Inc.; Sealy Corp.; Texas Genco; and Zumtobel AG, among others.

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WWD West

Green Day: Organic Fashion Takes Root

By Nola Sarkisian-Miller

LOS ANGELES — Imagine this: models parading on a runway dressed in bamboo jersey form-fitting dresses, sherpa coats made of recycled plastic bottles and even slacks made of soy products.

That is the vision of model-actress-activist Angela Lindvall, who is negotiating to bring her ecology-friendly show to New York Fashion Week in September, providing as many as 40 designers, including Stella McCartney and Zac Posen, with sustainable fabrics.

The timing comes as West Coast designers such as Linda Loudermilk are helping to propel a green makeover that is wending its way through the fashion industry now that natural beauty products and health food stores have won the wallets of the eco-chic.

As the 35th Earth Day is celebrated on Friday, organic fashion is taking hold as a viable business attracting retailer investment. U2 frontman Bono this year launched the organic line Edun with his wife, Ali Hewson, and denim designer Rogan Gregory. And a growing list of influential apparel names, such as Nike, Timberland and Nordstrom Inc. have incorporated Earth-conscious fibers into their merchandise.

"There's a whole trickle-down effect happening," said John Howell, an organic marketing consultant who has worked with the Body Shop and Calvin Klein. "People are interested in the natural-organic category across the board, from what they eat to what they put on. It's not market-driven, but the other way around."

The category is no longer driven by hemp-based, sack-like dresses. Designers are using organic cotton grown and harvested without pesticides, trying out fabrics that use renewable resources such as bamboo and even creating fashion out of old clothes.



Linda Loudermilk's sasawashi and organic cotton mesh top layered with a bamboo jersey knit.

At the same time, companies are re-examining their marketing strategies, delivering messages that are less preachy and more hip.

"It was marketed like medicine — it's good for the environment and it was the right thing to do — but no one wanted to take it," said Danny Seo, ecostylist and special projects editor at Organic Style magazine, where ad pages rocketed 81 percent in the past year and circulation climbed 18 percent to about 750,000.

Instead, companies rely on product design or harness the power of celebrity to create buzz for their brands. The Bono connection certainly didn't hurt Edun.

"To have such a spokesman, certainly raises the bar," said Michael Fink, senior fashion director at Saks Fifth Avenue, which exclusively carries the line. "But also, the design is so strong and attached to such an incredible humanitarian issue that it was one of those magic moments."

Women's clothing is the fastest growing category in organic fiber consumer sales in the U.S., according to the Organic Trade Association. Women's represented 38 percent of 2003 sales — the most recent data available — which grew 22.7 percent from 2002 to \$85 million.

Berkeley, Calif.-based Organic Exchange, which promotes the use of organic agriculture, said global sales of organic cotton products tripled from 2002 to 2004 to \$240 million. Of that, apparel accounted for \$220 million.

That means fiber sales are also sprouting.

Organic Exchange, whose founding member is Nike, credits the sneaker giant for the spike in fiber sales, noting demand for organic cotton fiber grew to almost 20 million pounds in 2004 from about six million pounds in 2002. The organization projects sales will increase this year to 30 million to 40 million pounds. Nike's organic cotton program alone used three million pounds of organic fiber last year, making it the biggest buyer of the fiber. That is also helping suppliers in Turkey, Pakistan and India that benefit from partnerships with well-financed apparel firms and can keep prices competitive. Organic cotton typically carries a 20 percent premium above conventionally grown cotton.

Nike first launched its organic cotton collection in fall 2002 and carried it for a few seasons, but ran into supply delays. Its focus is working on blended programs (37 percent of its cotton fabrics include 5 percent organic cotton) and in integrating organic cotton into its edgier White Label collection for fall.

"That consumer is more likely to be attracted to the sustainability story," said Eraina Duffy, Nike's sustainable innovation director for global apparel.

Nike, like the rest of apparel's eco-minded, is responding to cultural cues.

Beauty products made with natural ingredients and not tested on animals have revolutionized the trade. Health food stores are now hip outposts to buy granola by the pound thanks to Whole Foods Market. Cars have turned the corner with the popularity of economical and luxury hybrids made by Toyota and Ford. Even hotels have gone green, such as Hotel Triton in San Francisco, which recycles 60 percent of its waste.

Fashion is the new frontier and many organic companies are aiming high.

Branding herself the "Neiman Marcus of environmentalism," Loudermilk is focusing on building a lifestyle company in Los Angeles with her two-year-old Luxury Eco by Linda Loudermilk apparel line as the foundation. She plans this year to open a 1,500-square-foot store on Melrose Avenue in Los Angeles, carrying the collection as well as a line of bamboo jersey, a housewares line offering high-thread count organic sheets and beauty products.

"Luxury and eco normally aren't put together and we'd like to be the first to do it," Loudermilk said.

The line, which doesn't stop at organic cotton, also offers eco-friendly products such as sasawashi slacks (made from a Japanese leaf used to roll sushi) and sweaters crafted from recycled plastic bottles and organic wool (gathered from sheep who are fed organically and bred humanely) knit dresses.

The road to getting to these products hasn't always been smooth. Loudermilk has had to partner with fabric manufacturers in creating the product. Fabrics also have to undergo stress tests to verify their elasticity and longevity. "I jumped off a cliff and built wings on the way down," Loudermilk said.

It's a similar path taken by New York-based Loomstate, an organic denim line from the makers of Rogan denim. Two years in the making, Loomstate hopes its supply chain investment in cotton, gin and spinning facilities will pay off over the firm's life. It is tailoring merchandise for fashion fans with polkadot-printed pockets and clean washes.

"We're not focusing on the environment side of the company as a marketing hook," said Scott Hahn, chief executive officer of Loomstate. "We want to just make a sexy fashion jean that people want to buy."

Retailers such as Barneys New York and Bloomingdale's have picked up the line that wholesales for \$72 to \$79 and is on track to gross \$5 million this year, Hahn said.

Organics isn't the entire story. California-based companies, such as Deborah Lindquist, Claudette and Koi, are focusing on redesigned clothing made from castoffs.

Claudette has earned a celebrity following — Brad Pitt and Rebecca Romijn — for its deconstructed T-shirts, skirts and dresses reworked from rag house togs. The nine-year-old line, run by Anamyn Turowski and Paula Scolaro, wholesales from \$72 for a camisole to \$200 for a cashmere sweater.

Last September, Claudette opened a 600-square-foot store in Studio City, called ynop3, featuring its three-



Loomstate is an organic cotton denim line.

year-old edgier ynnub line and kid's label Claude, which can be found on the babies of Reese Witherspoon, Cindy Crawford and Angelina Jolie.

"It used to be harder for retailers to buy one-off type items, but they now appreciate its custom appeal," Scolaro said.

Even existing contemporary lines are taking a dip in eco-friendly waters. Park Vogel, a hot, year-old T-shirt line owned by Julie Park and Vanessa Vogel, began working with an Australian converter last year that Vogel said uses 80 percent fewer chemicals and recycles 85 percent of its waste water from its dye baths. About half of Park Vogel's production now originates from the mill and sells at Fred Segal in Santa Monica and Nordstrom.

"It was an easy decision since it wasn't affecting our price and we were able to churn out the same beautiful product," Vogel said.

The saturated contemporary market prompted Joyce Azria, the designer and founder of Joya, to test bamboo. She shipped five styles for spring, including bamboo minidresses with novelty chains and deep V-neck, reversible tops to Harvey Nichols in London and Girlshop.com.

"It's always nice to have novelty in your product to set yourself apart from the competition," she said.

For Azria, as with others, there's a learning curve when working with alternative textiles. She has had to replace some of the pricy product — wholesaling from \$113 to \$172 — at stores since bamboo clothing can continue growing on hangers.

"The nature of the fabric becomes longer and leaner and it's something we're working on with stores," she said.

What's still up for debate is the name to assign this category. Granola-infused symbols of organic and eco-fashion can still create a barrier, said Michael Korchinsky, whose San Francisco-based company, Wildlife Works, produces organic apparel benefiting a wildlife sanctuary in Kenya and employs local people to sew. He has been named the producer of the June 4 fashion show in San Francisco in honor of World Environment Day.

"We're trying to avoid calling it the eco-fashion show because people won't show up," Korchinsky said. "We win when that distinction goes away and it's a fashion show that happens to be comprised of materials good for the planet."

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Production Coordinator
Production Coordinator with a minimum of 2 years experience, responsibilities will include daily communication with overseas vendors, act as a liaison between design and sales depts. regarding artwork and sales order details and various other follow up issues. The ideal candidate must be detail oriented, organized and possess excellent written and verbal communications skills. Computer literate a must, AS400 experience a plus.

We offer an excellent compensation and benefits package including a 401(k) plan. For immediate consideration please fax resumes including salary history and requirements to: **212-842-3217**. When applying, please indicate for which position you are interested in.

DESIGNER
At Last Sportswear, Inc.
Major importer of Missy Sportswear is seeking a highly motivated designer. Responsibilities include: communicating with overseas offices/factories, preparing sampling/production packages, assisting designer in all phases of development. If you're a team player who is proficient in Photoshop & Illustrator and have a min. of 5 years experience we want to hear from you! We offer a great working environment with excellent benefits! Fax or email resume Attn: Maggie (212) 382-1469 / maggiemendez@atlast.us

DESIGNER
Boys 2/4, 4/7, 8/18; Active looks. Illustrator & Photoshop req'd. Must be detail oriented. Fax resume to: **646-827-9645**

Fast growing Ladies Apparel Co. seeks detail oriented, self motivated & hardworking person for full time position in our NYC office as:

TECHNICAL DESIGN

We looking for tech person with min. 5 yrs exp to control garment fittings & communicate corrections regarding quality & fit to overseas factories. Exp in measuring & grading garments, be able to sketch & make corrections. Knowledge of knits/woven, illustrator & Photoshop. Chinese language/writing a plus.

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

We are looking for production assistant w/2 yrs min. exp to grow w/company. Must have overseas communication skills, Photoshop, Illustrator & Excel knowledge. Org. skills a plus.
Please e-mail your resume to hrs@milanold.com or fax to 212-398-0032

Designer / Head Designer
Estab Better Missy contemporary sweater knit Co. Seeks highly detail oriented & efficient designer. Min 5 yrs exp. Able to accurately identify trend direction, merchandising, strategic planning and presentations. E-mail to: **cdryga@gmail.com**

DESIGNER - KNITWEAR
(FULL & PART TIME)
Christopher Fischer, a leading designer & retailer of cashmere knitwear, seeks a highly creative designer for our branded and retail collections. Must have min. of 5 years experience, degree in knitwear design, thorough technical knowledge of knitwear construction & fully fashioned knitting, and experience in knitwear specification and the fit process. Should have an individual sense of style, and a good knowledge of the luxury, designer, and contemporary markets. Fully paid health/dental benefits + life/disability insurance, 401k + match, NYC Transit checks, and clothing allowance. E-mail cover letter, resume, and salary history to: **info@c3concepts.com**

Design Assistant
Girls Import 2-16 Sptrw co. seeks detail oriented team player w/ min. 2 yrs exp. to sketch, create detail packages, do artwork & presentation boards. Min. 18 hrs/week. Fax/resal req: 212-695-9721

DESIGNER
IN THE NOW seeks Designer with contemporary/young designer background. Must have 3+ yrs. exp. & possess a youthful flair with great style & taste. Please fax resume with salary requirements to: (212) 919-1990 or Email: jobs@intheNOW.com

Jewelry Designer
Dynamic Fashion Jewelry Co. in Orange County, CA seeks an energetic, creative, and experienced Jewelry Designer. Must possess leadership and communication skills. Innovation, familiarity with current designers, and the ability to anticipate trends req'd. Complete benefits package included. Fax resumes to: **949-863-9170**

DESIGNER - Jewelry
Prestige jewelry company seeking designer experienced in delicate, cast metal designs and the use of set-in stones and pave work. Please email resume to: **HR@NadriJewelry.com**

CARMEN MARC VALVO

Expanding prestigious 7th Avenue design house has the following exciting opportunities available:

DESIGNERS: Join a dynamic, fast paced design team. Work directly with designer in developing collections from concept to finished product. Must be detail oriented with excellent organizational and computer skills in addition to creativity, knowledge of international fashion trends, color, textiles and consumer sensibilities. Travel required.

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Requires a minimum of 8-10 years experience in a fast paced environment, excellent computer skills, aggressive follow-up with mills and overseas factories. Must be a team leader and be able coordinate production to meet tight shipping schedules.
Excellent salary and benefits.
Fax: **212-944-0320** / E-mail: **CKnaust@LCEL.com**

capellinewyork

Capelli New York, a global manufacturer of fashion accessories, legwear, footwear, rainwear, sleepwear, home fashion and novelty gifts, has career opportunities available

Production Manager - Detailed oriented, good with product and numbers, communication & computer skills. Must have exp. working with overseas factories, sourcing, understanding of imports. Ass't positions also available.

Technical Dept. Manager - Color/Tech specialist responsible for color and spec approvals, lab dips. Good communication & computer skills. Exp. a must.
Fax or email resumes with salary request 212-202-4837 HR@capellinewyork.com

DESIGNERS (2) \$55-\$65K
* GIRLS-Sportswear Co seeks Import Exp & Knidge of Market
* BOYS-Associate. Denim.3yrs Exp
Both Req Photoshop/Illustrator e-mail Kenji@karlyn.com
KARLYN FASHION RECRUITERS

DESIGNER
Willow Creek Apparel, an intimate apparel co. seeks a motivated Designer to rejuvenate its current Ladies Sleepwear Line. Candidate should be organized, have a great eye for color & trend, also detail and team oriented. Photoshop & Illustrator a must.
Please fax resume to (212) 736-3334

DESIGNERS
Top Branded Company
Mens Bottoms \$888 Open Mens Sweaters \$95K
Womens Sweater Collection \$95K
Jobs@TheFashionNetwork.com

Design Room Assistant - FT
Busy mid-town apparel company seeks organized and motivated person to support graphic design team. Duties include filing, mounting art, and ordering color. Must be detail oriented. Some experience a plus.
Fax resume to (646) 277-7445

Designer - Sweater
Well est'd import co seeks talented, exp'd Jr./contemporary sweater & knit designer. Responsibilities include sketching, spec'ing & product development. Must be proficient in Photoshop/Illustrator. Email resumes to: **dora@segermannintl.com** or Fax: **212-398-2087 Attn: Jody**

Design

Van Dutch Baby seeks exp'd. **DESIGNER** to create holiday line of gift sets for newborn & infants. Please Fax resume to Norman Jemal at: **212-563-2301**

DESIGNER
Tween/Junior
Exciting and fast paced mass/moderate Sportswear Co. seeks a multifaceted designer for development of cuty/sew knits & wovens. Must have min 5-5 years exp. in the fashion industry and a good eye for trend. Fax resume Attn: Cathy/Mr. G **646-562-9650**

Digitizer - Embroidery
Must have exp in emb digitizing & production coordination. call 954-965-7020 or fax resume to 954-965-8566

Help Wanted

TECHNICAL DESIGNERS
Dresses
 Ann Taylor is one of the fastest-growing specialty retailers and we currently have opportunities available in our Technical Division. Qualified candidates will have excellent knowledge of patternmaking and garment construction; good verbal and written communications skills; and proficiency in computer applications. For consideration, email your resume, indicating Job Code "TD" in subject line to: employment@anntaylor.com, or fax to: 212-506-4885. EOE

ANN TAYLOR
LOFT

TECHNICAL DESIGNER

You know us as G+G, Rave, and Rave Girl. We are a successful chain of junior specialty apparel stores searching for an experienced Technical Designer for our New York City corporate headquarters. The primary responsibility is technical design for our juniors division including leading fit sessions with our buyers & follow through correspondence with our vendors. Background requirements include: 3-5 years current technical design experience, experience in juniors or ladies denim/outerwear & knowledge of garment construction. EOE

Please forward resume by fax to: 212-564-1856 or e-mail to: heatherb@gorave.net

Textile Print/Asst DESIGN LINK

Duties include supervising pattern concept and coloring, technical engraving and following up final cloth production. Excellent feel for color a must. Attention to detail and follow up a must. Familiarity with textile printing a plus. Please fax resume to Design Link: 212-869-0499

Visual Merchandiser

A Luxury Retail Company is looking for an entry level visual candidate. Must have a visual display background. Fax your strengths and background to 212.202.6297

Visual Merchandiser LA PERLA

Italian Fashion Co. seeks part time visual merchandiser for NY stores. Knowledge of Italian a plus. Email resume to: Sarah@laperlafashions.com

SALES HELP WANTED

Sales Help Wanted

Li&Fung USA

Account Executive
 LFUSA seeks a Key Acct Sales Person for private label wovens. Must bring strong rltps. w/ buyers in the mid-tier and specialty store arena w/ proven ability to execute sales. Only candidates with Missy exp. will be considered.
jobsny@lifusa.com
 Fax to 646-366-0288
www.lifung.com

Sales Help Wanted

CALYPSO
Christiane Cella
SALES EXECUTIVE

CALYPSO's own perfume line is looking for very aggressive and ambitious SHOWROOM sales executive who has strong ability to promote its well-established brand to specialty stores, apothecaries, spas & hotels. Must have strong following and at least 5 year wholesale exp on national level. Available to travel and attend shows and visit/train accounts on how to promote retail sales. Excellent salary + commission + benefits!

Please email or fax resume with salary requirements to: vmarin@christianecelle.com or 212-219-9437

Accessories/Bath/Cosmetics
 Looking for sales person with strong following. Good opportunity.
 Email resumes to: tune2@aol.com

Account Executive
 Canadian Private Label T-shirt importer seeks experienced Account Exec. to join our team. Energetic, highly-motivated candidate must have established relationships with better specialty & dept. stores in U.S. Polished presentation skills and strong merchandising abilities req'd. Min 3 years in Senior position req'd. Fax/Email resumes:
 Attn HR: 416-665-4688
HR@incredibleclothing.com

Account Executive to \$110K
 5-10 yrs better handbags major dept. stores
 Allen*Just Mgmt* 800-544-5878
Allen@justmgt.com

Exciting Opportunity!!!
 Established Women's Handbag & Hat Accessory company seeks an aggressive, experienced national salesperson.
 Please fax resume to: 305-596-4418

Great Opportunity!!
Senior Sales Executive
 Est'd Import Co. seeks aggressive/exp'd & self motivated Sales Exec for budget priced Missy/Plus Sizes Sptswr. Must have current contacts with Specialty Chains/Mass Retailers. Excellent salary/comm & benefits! Fax or email resume: 212-840-2796 / RG@argeesportswear.com

LINGERIE SALES
 Entry level wholesale Intimate Apparel sales. Must love to sell. Develop boutique biz. Strong org skills & Excel. Car a+, \$10/hr, 30+ hrs/wk. No seasoned sales reps pls. Fax: (212) 755.0089 or E-mail: AlanaHouston@prettier.com

tailor new york
NEW YORK ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
 Travel to regional shows. Specialty store following. FAX: (203) 840-1117
 E-MAIL: info@tailornewyork.com

SALES ASSISTANT
 Seeking exp'd person. Must be organized with excellent computer skills. Great opp'ty to advance. Benefits. Fax resume to 212-354-5198

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www.CNF.com

Sales Help Wanted

SALES EXEC (2) \$150K++
 Junior Sportswear Knits & Sweaters
Jobs@TheFashionNetwork.com

SALES EXECUTIVE
 Designer collection seeks creative individual to develop specialty store accounts. Travel for trunk shows & special events.
 Fax resume with cover letter to: 212-244-6598

Sales Executive - Knits
 Established vertical brand looking to expand private label adult & youth programs for basic t-shirt & related styles. Current experience/contacts with mass, mid tier & specialty chains required. Excellent comp. pkg.
 Fax resume to 212-476-0323

SALES EXECUTIVE
 Missy woven shirts mfr. seeks sales pro for NY showroom. Must have strong dept. and chain store contacts. Fax resume to: (201) 330-0002

SALES EXECUTIVE
 We are seeking experienced Sales Pro. with min. 5 yrs. experience selling knits to specialty and department stores. Must have good communication skills, be well organized and a team player.
 Serious inquiries please e-mail: planetearthtm@yahoo.com

Sales Manager
 Well known missy contemporary knitwear Co. seeks min 5 yrs exp'd in cut & sewn knit sales pro, with estab contacts within major, mass & mid-tier, prv label acc. E-mail to: cdryga@gmail.com

Sales
 Top designer sportswear co. seeks a seasoned sales person. Must have prior experience in higher priced lines. Excellent growth and compensation opportunity. Please email or fax resume to emhiring@yahoo.com / (212) 695-9483

SEAMLESS WEAR MFR.
 Seeking exp'd salespeople w/customer base and strong contacts w/Chain/Dept./Specialty Stores. Fax resume: 212-629-6790

Showroom
ARNOLD ZIMBERG SHOWROOM SALES
 Est'd Better Men's Sportswear Co., selling the finest Dept. & Specialty Stores, seeks motivated individual to work with existing clients and new target clients. Travel necessary. Call/E-mail resume to: 917-576-7834 / brucezimbarg@aol.com

Reem Acra
 NEW YORK
Showroom Sales
 Leading bridal design house seeks sales professionals w/exp in wholesale and trunk shows. Strong background with independent salons and dept. stores essential. Computer literate. Fax resumes w/sal. req. to 212-202-4637.

Sales Help Wanted

Showroom Salesperson
 Better knit & sweater co. seeks motivated & experienced salesperson to expand existing DEPT. & CHAIN STORE business. Unlimited potential since we are looking to expand into other ladies' apparel categories. mod-better. Salary + commission. EMAIL resumes to: KnitsAndSweaters@yahoo.com

Retail Sales Help Wanted

Maternity Wear
 Upscale Nolita Maternity store seeking PT/FT sales associate. Retail experience a must, with strong client service skills. Email: cthompson@cadeamaternity.com

Reem Acra
 NEW YORK
Retail Sales
 Bridal & eveningwear salon seeks individuals with exp at high-end specialty salons or fine dept stores. Right candidates must present a professional demeanor w/good communication skills. Fax resume w/sal. req. to 212-202-4837.



THE COLLEGE ISSUE RECRUITERS!

Place an ad in our annual WWD College Section, and capture the undivided attention of 15,000 fashion savvy entry level candidates.

For information on placing your recruitment advertising in this special section, please call your WWD Classified Specialist at 212-630-4618.

Retail Sales Help Wanted

Soho high-end Women's Wear flagship boutique seeks F/T retail sales associates w/ potential for advancement. Candidate must be sales driven with excellent customer service skills. Entry level ok.
 Fax to: 212-274-8975

YIGAL AZROUEL
 Hot designer boutique in Meatpacking District seeks F/T salespeople. Salary plus commission. Email resume to: Jordan@yigal-azrouel.com

LINES

Lines Offered

ACCESSORY SALES
 NY based Men's/Women's Accessories brand searching for an Independent Sales Rep or Group to cover the West Coast territory (CA, AZ, NV, WA, OR, CO). Commission based only with great potential. Pls forward resume and work history to: tim@gotoro.com

Lines Offered

Independent Sales Reps
 Major Cold Weather Fashion Accessories manufacturer is seeking Independent Sales Reps for our Fall 2006 branded & licensed cold weather accessories. We are seeking motivated Sales Professionals with extensive specialty store contacts and experience in regional markets. Regional and National organizations are welcome.
 Available territories include: Northeast, Northwest, Southeast, Midwest & Rockies
 Please fax resume to: (518) 661-7574

POSITIONS WANTED

Positions Wanted

HIGH ENERGY DESIGNER
 Contemporary, Junior, or Missy. Excellent
 Please call 212-273-9650

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 7 West 34th Street, New York, NY 10001.

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