



◀ **EYE:** Partying in the Hamptons for fashion and film, page 4.



◀ **FASHION:** Innovation the new rule in recessionary times, page 8.



◀ **FINANCIAL:** Retail shares slide on outlook, page 2.

**RETAIL:** Japanese department stores break into fast fashion, page 3. ▶



Women's Wear Daily • The Retailers' Daily Newspaper • August 18, 2009 • \$3.00

# WWD TUESDAY

Wear/Textiles

## Pretty Tough

Designers are adding a girly attitude to the season's rough-around-the-edges looks. The result: leather, denim and a bit of glitter. Here, a hipster's dream team: Alexander Wang's cotton denim and cotton French terry jacket over his silk dress with cable-knit metal embroidery and The Row's lambskin, cotton and Lycra spandex pants. Schutz shoes. For more, see pages 6 and 7.



## Playing the Web Card: YouTube Breakout Stars New Faves of Marketers

By Rachel Brown

MEET THE NEW CELEBRITY endorsers: Six-year-old misfit Fred Figglehorn; song parodist VenetianPrincess and a 19-year-old from Ohio named Mitchell Davis who shares his observations about everything from music videos to toilet paper.

They have no big movies to promote, no HBO specials, no network sitcoms — at least not yet. They're the new generation of quirky YouTube stars who inspire mass followings and are evolving into brands selling licensed merchandise of everything from bags to beauty products.

Their videos on Google-owned YouTube, which are being viewed millions of times, are catnip to retailers and brand managers eager to tap into the Web site's popularity with

See **YouTube**, Page 11

LIANNA MARTINS FOR IMG; HAIR AND MAKEUP BY CHRISTY MCCABE AT BUMBLE & BUMBLE; FASHION ASSISTANT: ALEX PZER; STYLED BY ANTONIA SARDONE





# Legging, Vintage Styles Drive Kingpins

By Khanh T.L. Tran

**LOS ANGELES** — Legging jeans and vintage styles topped the list of fall trends for premium denim designers who scouted the Kingpins textile show for the newest stretch materials and durable fabrics.

The West Coast edition of Kingpins, which ran here Aug. 11 and 12, featured fall offerings from 20 exhibitors, ranging from mills and laundries to trim suppliers and factories in Turkey and China. Among the attendees were GoldSign founder and denim industry icon Adriano Goldschmied, Seven For All Mankind creative director Tim Kaeding, Vintage Laundry's Alex Caugant, Agave chief executive officer and designer Jeff Shafer, Genetic Denim creative director Ali Fatourechi, Oligo Tissew founder Christopher Enuke, and designers from Levi's, Tommy Bahama and BCBG Max Azria Group.

While price remained a priority, attendees and exhibitors said business has been improving over the past six months. Underscoring the vibrancy of the denim market, Kingpins will host its first show in Hong Kong on Oct. 7 and 8.

"There's definitely a renewed energy and excitement in the marketplace," said Agave's Shafer.

However, attendees acknowledged the challenge of appealing to consumers who have grown accustomed to receiving incentives to buy, whether it's the U.S. government's Cash for Clunkers auto program or discounts at stores.

"The consumer is quite spoiled right now," Shafer said. "Price is a major issue."

Vendors appeared willing to do as much as they can to help designers stay on budget.

Turkish manufacturer Denim Village said although its prices sit between its competitors in Italy and China, it can produce vintage-inspired looks with 3-D whiskers, pigment spots and cotton and leather patches. China's Zhonghe Marketing Co. Ltd. sought to attract customers as a one-stop shop, which can spin cotton and blends mixed with Tencel or wool, dye the material and sew the garments. Japan's Amhot International Inc. said it can produce its yarn-dyed cotton and other fabrics in China, where costs would be half as much as in Japan.



Kingpins featured 20 exhibitors.



A buyer examines pocket linings at Kingpins.

PHOTOS BY STEFANIE KEENAN

Novelty fabrics and treatments continued to get attention with the pressure to entice consumers to spend greater than ever. Greensboro, N.C.-based Burlington Solutions offered twill weighing as little as seven oz. that it garment-dyed to evoke a tree bark pattern. Cone Denim, Burlington Solution's sister brand, also answered customers' quests for newness with a seven-oz. stretch denim, 10-oz. rigid fabric and new dyes such as cornflower blue and mauve that tinted denim with a black fill for a more robust effect.

Japan's Kurabo Denim responded to requests for lighter, softer denim by introducing new spinning technology, which produces cotton yarn that has a hollow center and is 20 percent lighter. The "Spinair" denim costs \$9.80 a yard.

Legging jeans are moving to replace skinny styles as an increasing number of designers look for superstretchy denim beyond the 2 percent Lycra spandex that is the norm.

"They used to be into the comfort stretch," said George Hayos, head of commercial sales for Spanish textile supplier Tavex. "Now they're into the body-fitting stretch for leggings."