



PREMIERE VISION

Fall/Winter 2011/12: Colors, Fabrics, New Technologies & The Economy
by Virginia Borland

According to Philippe Pasquet, CEO, Première Vision, buying habits have changed as a result of the economy. "After two to three bad seasons, consumer confidence is returning. we are mid-way into recovery," he said, "and we are reshaping where we are sourcing." Tight credit, shipping time, freight costs and risks associated with early purchases are some of the factors he cited. "And, the consumer wants quality and newness."

Première Vision Fashion Director, Pascaline Wilhelm, noted the cross-over between casual and formal wear for a more eccentric look. Funny furs and feathers, hairy surfaces, double-faced wool, quilting and padding, felted and super-dense fabrics, waxed surfaces, soft touches, and new ways with denim are some of the looks. Color will be calm, subtle and non-aggressive. A lot of the 23 shades on the Première Vision chart are off-cast or smoky.

COLOR Over 200 exhibitors reported their best sampling colors in four categories. Seduction is fancy and fluid fabrics. Distinction denotes elegant, formal and structured looks. Relax includes casual wear, sportswear and jeans. Pulsation is activewear and technical fabrics.

Seduction has been divided into two groups, one for coats and ensembles; the other for dresses and tops. The six leading shades for coats and ensembles are night (almost black navy), salt marsh (warm taupe), cookie (camel), gooseberry juice (cardinal red), mule back (greyed brown) and ristretto (blackened brown). Dress and top selections are mule back, salt marsh, pink vapour (pale misted pink), olive, shallot vinegar (rose) and antifreeze (medium, soft-greyed blue).

Two groups in the Distinction range are suitings and shirtings. First choice for suits is night, followed by titanium (pale silver-grey), ristretto, pencil lead (blackened-slate), goose berry juice and smoked tea (dark olive brown). Night also heads the shirting group, again followed by titanium. Poppy (orange-cast red) is in third place, then it's antifreeze, conifer (very dark green) and ristretto.

Relax colors are divided into a group for pants and outerwear, another for tops. All of the pant/outerwear shades are very dark or neutral. Night is number one for both categories. For pants/outerwear, pencil lead is number two, followed by smoked tea, salt marsh, titanium and ristretto. Relax top selections put titanium in second place, then olive, conifer, antifreeze and freckle (pumpkin).

There is one group of colors for Pulsation, with pencil lead as first choice. Mule back is second, followed by night, poppy, quince (a golden yellow shade), and smoked tea.



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WOOL AND BLENDS Australian Wool Innovation focused on the versatility, performance and luxurious touch of fabrics and apparel made of Merino wool. Ultra-fine mercerized Merino has a soft cashmere feel and can be machine washed. Blended with silk, it takes on a rich luster. A vintage collection includes softness with rusticity. There are muted, heathered and denim looks. Another group has the appearance of boiled wool.

In the area of suiting fabrics, a soft touch and lightness turned up in many lines. Robert Noble of Scotland reported interest in wool/cashmere Donegals and light, jacket weight Shetlands woven in wool/cotton blends. Spanish wool weaver Tintore Turull showed subtle textures, double-faced coatings, salt-and-pepper tweeds and novelty checks. Denis et Fils of France, a supplier to Chanel, showed novelty tweeds with a touch of sparkle, loopy bouclés and subtle colors and textures.

Elaborate novelties at Ratti of Italy ranged from wool felt printed with large abstract patterns, laser cut or appliqued; plaid bouclés woven with spots of organza; marabou feathered borders with metallic touches on mohair to distressed denim and pigment prints on wool stretch.

At Picchi of Italy, there are soft-hand Shetlands; long hairy surfaces woven with mohair, alpaca or angora; classic meltons and novelty bouclés. There are coating fabrics with an invisible polyurethane coating for water repellency. Vintage is sophisticated and jacquards are knitted in classic tonal patterns for outerwear.

Nikke of Japan showed a vintage collection. Heathered meltons, wool/silk cavalry twills and school uniform plaids were pointed out. One new fabric with an exceptionally dry hand is a tricotine woven in a blend of 57-percent wool/43-percent washi, a yarn spun from paper.

At BTD of Turkey, there are high performance multi-fiber blends selling for suits, jackets and pants. There are bi-stretch legging fabrics, double-faced cotton/viscose/polyester blends, fine twills woven with cotton/comfort stretch, wool blend twills, flannels and yarn dyed checks.



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FUNCTION Waterproof cottons for jackets and coats are the specialty of Olmetex of Italy. Some are waxed, others are coated. Heather-check double fabrics bonded with wool jersey are warm, water and wind repellent and breathable. For down jackets, there are crushed and subtly printed surfaces and high/low, matte-sheen effects.

New at British Millerain, specialist in waterproof fabrics, is a bee's wax treatment that is permanent. Other fabrics have a traditional wax finish or PU laminate. Surfaces can be matte, lustered, aged, or dry-handed. One new fabric develops a polished surface when it is rubbed.

Soft to the touch, ultra-light and sheer, water-proof shell fabrics at Everest of Taiwan are woven of five, seven or 10 denier nylon, or of recycled polyester. Some are transparent, others resemble leather. There are fabrics that have thermal properties and are breathable.

Gutsy denim is again in fashion. At Tavex of Spain, it was pointed out that the fabric has strength and character. Men are buying 11 and 12 ounce weights. Stretch is another factor; it's all about comfort. Slubbed denim is selling for menswear, women opt for a clean look. Coated denim can have a soft touch. Denim Therapy is all about wellness. Ceramic prints, with as many as 30 different metals, are said to have therapeutic benefits.

KNITS Sellers of knitted fabrics were busy. They reported light-and-fine or chunky-and-soft the popular looks. Denis et Fils has a line of small prints and jacquards on sheer stretch for lingerie. At Karma Kokteyl of Turkey, viscose/spandex jersey is semi-lustrous. Some jersey is single-finished for extra softness.

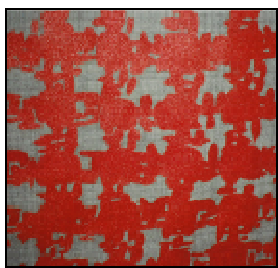
Mario Cucchetti of Italy is selling fabrics knitted with a milk-based fiber that is anti-bacterial. It is light weight, smooth and silky and going into underwear. Other ultra-light and soft jersey is knitted of 100-percent cashmere

as well as blends with wool, Modal, nylon or cotton. There are open and lacey looks, French terry cloth and double-faced bonded fabrics with techno finishes.

PRINTS Digital prints are the newest way to go. They offer endless color selections and repeats, enable small and fast runs and can be done locally. At KBC of Germany, there are enormous blurred geometrics, vintage florals, animal skins and paisleys. Engineered placements and borders are another look. Confetti of Turkey pointed up small florals, paisleys and combinations of both.

Deveaux of France also showed large and blurred patterns. There are camouflage designs, roses, geometrics and classic patterns. Landscapes, geometrics, newly styled skins and small scale shirting prints were of note at Miroglio of Italy, where the Galvano printing technique is used as well as the digital technique.

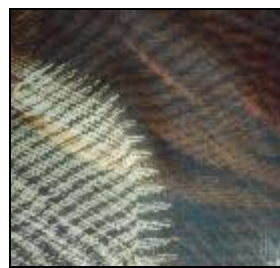
Silk georgette, chiffon, charmeuse, twill, satin back crepe and crepe de chine continue to be good selling base fabrics for inkjet prints at Ratti. There are wash or aero finishes. Patterns tend to be tweedy or blurred. Feathers, mosaics and water-colored flowers are popular. And don't forget paisleys. At Ratti there are always new ones. This season they are big, blurred and melting.



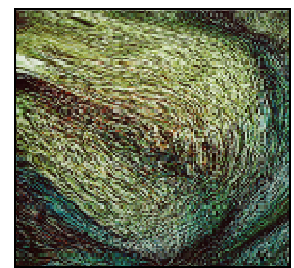
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MIROGLIO

SILK AND LACE French corduroy producer Velcorex, a company that dates back to 1828, has been taken over by Philea, producer of fancy jacquards and prints. Sometimes it was difficult to tell the difference between the two lines. Many of the Velcorex corduroys are lustered, drapery and silky. Some are woven in blends of wool with viscose, nylon or Tencel® and some are dyed to look like denim.

At Philea, there is a new metallic denim. Other fabrics include taffeta that is tonally flopped and over printed, burn-out warp knits of viscose/nylon, Modal/wool warp-knit sheers and mini-textured wool/viscose dress weights.

At Reynaud Rexo of France, prints are soft and romantic. There are simple blurred designs, large repeats, sophisticated patch works, spider web patterns, metallic jacquards and iridescent effects. Stretch, sheen, warp-print taffeta and memory fabrics are there.

Carlo Pozzi of Italy has elaborate jacquards for night and day. There are layers of differently colored and patterned sheers, quilted effects, shiny/dull/high/low sheers, quilted treatments, shaded designs, voluminous crinkles, bouclés, and velvet-dotted voiles, all woven in silk and blends with other natural fibers.

Elegance for evening at Denis is opulent and elegant. There are sheer/opaque/matte/sheen dévorés, taffeta jacquards, laser-cut open work, velvets with metallic leather overlays and iridescent chiffons. Basic satins, taffetas, and chiffons are available in 800 colors.

One of the most crowded booths was at lace weaver, Solstiss of France. Reported best sellers are fine, thin classic Chantilly laces, delicate abstract patterns, metallics and laces woven with natural fibers. Wool and linen were cited. Narrow laces are heavily embellished. Stretch lace for intimate apparel is increasing in popularity.

Spring/Summer 2012 will take place in New York on January 11 & 12 at Première Vision Preview, and in Paris on February 8-10 at Première Vision.

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