

Jil Sander makes comeback at Uniqlo

The German designer is back in the fashion arena. The 65-year old designer has chosen the fast fashion business for her comeback. From autumn this year, she will design the collections of Japanese casualwear specialist Uniqlo.



Jil Sander has been rumoured to be preparing her comeback for years. Since she was recently spotted viewing samples at fabrics event *Première Vision*, speculation resparked. Now it is official. The designer has set up a consulting company to help Uniqlo create its womenswear and menswear ranges. Sander will also design a capsule collection for Uniqlo that will bear her handwriting, but not her name. The first pieces “made by Jil Sander for Uniqlo” will start retailing worldwide in the autumn.

Uniqlo parent Fast Retailing expects to cash in on the minimalist look that marked Jil Sander's success. CEO Tadashi Yanai recently announced the group's ambitious plan to become the “world's No.1 apparel retailer”. The Jil Sander brand is already in Japanese hands. Onward Holdings bought the brand from Change Capital Partners in September last year. Sander herself had left her own company twice after clashing with its former owner Prada, which sold the business to Change Capital in 2006. The deal with Sander could boost Uniqlo's success, which has translated into months of like-for-like growth. The brand contributes the lion's share of Fast Retailing's sales, which rose 12% to JPY 587bn (€ 4.6bn) in the year ended August 2008.



Heidemarie Jiline Sander and Fast Retailing chief Tadashi Yanai sealed their win-win deal with a handshake. For the designer known as the “Queen of less” it's a fashion comeback. Uniqlo hopes to cash in on the designer's fame and minimalist style.

H&M takes on Russia

The Swedish fashion retailer is joining the likes of Zara, Gap, Topshop in Moscow.

Hennes&Mauritz entered the Russian market on Friday with the opening of its first store in Moscow. The 3,000m² store in the Metropolis shopping centre offers the group's entire range for men, women and children. It is the first of three to open in the Russian capital this year. This week, a 2,300m² store will open at Megamall Khimki. In the autumn, a third store will follow at Rostokino shopping centre.



St. Petersburg is the next stop after Moscow. Here a H&M store will open in 2010. Compared to its rivals, H&M arrived late in Russia. Despite the country's poor economic indicators, the group is upbeat about business in Russia, where CEO Rolf Eriksen sees “great potential for growth”. The operator of more than 1,700 stores in 34 countries plans to add 225 stores worldwide this year. In 2010, H&M will also enter South Korea.

More than 1,000 people queued in front of the H&M store in Moscow.

Olivier Theyskens departs Nina Ricci

Confirming recent speculation, French fashion house Nina Ricci has parted ways with its Belgian chief designer **Olivier Theyskens**, right.



The 31-year old, who succeeded Lars Nilsson in 2006, will leave this month. Nina Ricci said it needed to “reorientate its strategy”. Theyskens is said to be mulling a relaunch of his own label. A possible successor could be Louis Vuitton designer Peter Copping.

Kenzo officially names new CEO



The French fashion house has promoted **James Greenfield**, left, to CEO. The 42-year old assumed operational management at the company in autumn last year after Kenzo chief Alberto Lavia left for fashion retailer Façonnable. Before joining the subsidiary of luxury goods group LVMH in 2006, Greenfield worked for Printemps and Givenchy.

Benetton poaches Bulgari's CFO

Italian fashion giant **Benetton** has appointed Alberto Nathansohn as finance chief. The 51-year old joins from Italian jeweller Bugari and will start his new job on 1 May. He fills the gap left by Emilio Foa, who left for Burberry in late 2008. Benetton sees "difficult" times ahead and plans to cut costs by € 50m a year from 2010.

UNITED COLORS OF BENETTON.

American Apparel gets cash injection

An \$80m (€ 62m) investment from British investor Lion Capital has saved the US clothing group from a financial meltdown. American Apparel boss **Dov Charney**, below, said the infusion ensured its "ability to grow domestically and internationally". The deal gives Lion Capital a 18% stake of the group that saw sales rise 41% to \$ 545m in 2008.



Three nominations for Marc Jacobs

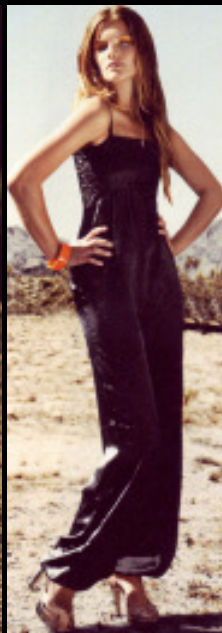
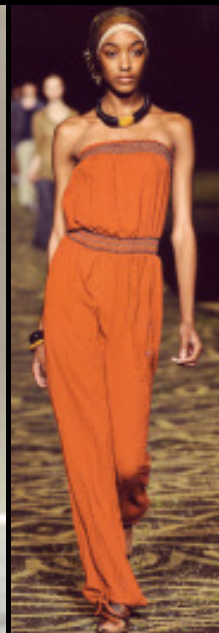
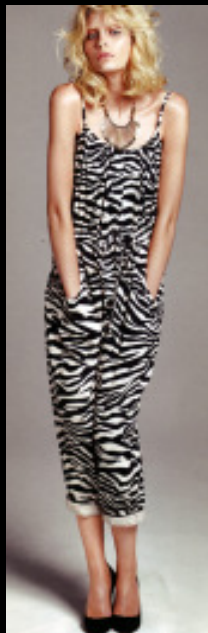


The Council of Fashion Designers (CFDA) of America has named the nominees for the CFDA awards in June. Alongside Narciso Rodriguez and Kate&Laura Mulleavy, **Marc Jacobs**, above, has been nominated womenswear designer of the year. He is also nominated for the accessory designer and the International Award for his work at Louis Vuitton.

Overall all over

Get ready for the new suit

This summer there's a new kind of suit: the overall. It comes in a large number of variations and styles. But the all-in-one piece has nothing to do with the classic 80s playsuit. New forms of trousers like pyjamas and jodhpurs with their casual and loose fits have redefined the overall. It's now more elegant, almost like a trouser suit that has fused the top with the bottom. Strap tops combine with light trousers or ballooned shorts to create a summery party outfit. Silky, shiny and flowing fabrics like microfibre, crepes de chine and parachute silk help create the new feel. To be more casual wear Roman sandals, to be sexy opt for peep toes. That's all the overall needs besides a belt that highlights the waist. The overall is a fashion item of soft minimalism.



From left to right: H&M, Filippa K., Boss Orange, Vask.

In depth

Berlin, Berlin. **Berlin** is booming. And so its retail landscape. Despite the crisis. "Germany is considered a reliable country, where expansion goes on even during a crisis. And Berlin is right at the top of the list," Roland Steinhagen from property company Comfort Berlin says. "Some projects have been put on ice, but all in all demand is unbroken," Christoph Scharf from AtisReal adds. Presently, **five shopping centres** are under construction. More than 300,000m² new space is planned. In the spring alone, three major projects will open: The **Die Mitte** commercial centre, a project by Multi Development and the **Boulevard Berlin** in Steglitz. At the end of April, the 20,000m² **Tempelhofer Hafen** will open with 80 stores.

At least **20 new major projects** covering a total space of 340,000m² are expected to be realised in Berlin by 2010. In particular demand



Alexanderplatz in Berlin Mitte is a key retail location. Kaufhof and the Alexa and Die Mitte shopping centres plan spectacular openings here soon.

for sites in the eastern part of Berlin is growing. A € 500m complex is planned for **Leipziger Platz** with a 50,000m² shopping centre and 200 stores. **Alexanderplatz** and Friedrichstraße are the two most sought-after locations at present. "Alex has grown the strongest in the past three years and will stay at the focus of interest for the next ten years," Die Mitte developer Christoph Reschke states. **Friedrichstraße** is also hot. Top names like Emporio Armani and Massimo Dutti will open here, not at Kudamm. Max&Co recently opened in the Galeries Lafayette complex. Another hot spot is **Hackesche Höfe**, mainly for young and independent concepts like Bread&Butter chief Karl-Heinz Müller's 140z store.