

STYLE *Line*

Philadelphia University

Spring 2001

Focus on: HOUSE OF AGOSTINO

Frank Agostino:
A Brooklyn Boy Rules
in Philadelphia

By Nightwing Whitehead



Browse any recent program from the annual FIA Fashion Show at Philadelphia University and you'll see listed the *Frank Agostino Award: Eveningwear Award for Excellence in Design and Execution*. This annual award is given by an unimposing, greying gentleman who grew up in Brooklyn and who never took a design class in his life. This is Frank Agostino, a leading name in design — not just in Philadelphia, but even in Hollywood.

Agostino apprenticed with his aunt — a couturiere from Italy — and worked for several years in the theatre.

"I specialized in set design," Agostino said, "but, my real love was always the costumes." Enthralled by fabric, he can talk for hours about it. "I love the way it feels...the way it moves...the way it hangs, both on its own and on a form. I love it all!"

In the ensuing years, Agostino worked in retail, learning the business and how to design items that sell. He also continued his theatrical work. All the while, he continued to create his fashions, dressing his wife in those he especially liked. It was the fervent compliments of passersby as the couple was "out on the town" that finally convinced him to go into business for himself. He began with a line of soft suedes and leathers that, according to him "literally flew from my home and into Bendels and I. Magnin."

In 1992, he opened a boutique bearing his name in Ardmore, where in walked M. Night Shyamalan's wife, Bhavna Shyamalan, looking for a gown for the Golden Globe Awards. Agostino created a spectacular gown for her and she's now a regular.

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Focus on: Alumni

Heather Diskin:
Working with Tommy

By Amy Schwab



Everyone has heard of fashion industry giant Tommy Hilfiger. With his lines of

clothing, shoes, accessories, and body care products, he's a design powerhouse. But, did you know that several of our alumni work in Tommy's corporate offices in New York?

One such alumnae is Heather Diskin, a '99 fashion apparel management graduate, who works in Hilfiger's corpo-

rate technical services department. Recently, we sat down for an interview.

Diskin told me that the summer before her senior year, she interned at Athco in Hoboken, N.J., as assistant to the head men's designer. From Athco, a designer of athletic wear, she went to Hilfiger.

Diskin has been with Hilfiger for over a year and enjoys the company's atmosphere, in which she "learns something new everyday." She's involved with color development and creates color standards.

"Although I have a two-hour commute, I love working for Tommy," Diskin stresses.

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Joanna (Van Harte) Madden

By: Leslie Miraglia



College students usually spend a lot of time deciding on a major. But, sometimes what is cho-

sen is not what becomes a lifelong career. "What's inside of you can mean a new direction," Madden offers. "That's what happened to me."

A '97 fashion merchandising graduate, Madden explored several career paths until finding her true passion -- free-lance interior design.

During her senior year, she served as Fashion Industry Association (FIA) president and worked part time in visual merchandising at J. Crew. After graduating, she moved to Michigan and took a job buying junior sportswear for Jacobson's Department Store. "I quickly realized that it wasn't for me," Madden explains. "I do not like deskwork; I'm more the 'hands-on' type."

That was when she moved back East and changed careers.

Today, as an interior designer, she enjoys transforming a thought into a

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From the Editor



Stephanie Reynolds

What a difference a semester makes! Hopefully, freshman and new students now feel at home at Philadelphia

U, having taken advantage of the wisdom and vitality of the upper-classmen and professors.

Last September, I, along with several other students, was whisked to London for a semester abroad. No travel book could have prepared us for each day's adventures. It really was a creative and inspiring experience.

I'm excited to be back for spring semester when the fashion department — and the entire campus — comes to life and there's so much to look forward to. Can't wait to see the collections and the Fashion Show. You, too?

STYLEline Spring 2001

A publication written by Philadelphia University fashion design, fashion merchandising and fashion apparel management students for fellow students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends of the University.

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Focus on... Textiles

Denim

By Nightwing Whitehead

It was a fashion icon of the past and it's back, inspiring new ideas to recapture the feel of the past, with a look toward the future. It's denim.

Americans have had a love affair with it for 150 years. Its long, strong cotton fibers stand up under the toughest tasks and still make a statement. This quintessential American contribution to fashion is thought to have had its origin in Nimes, the French textile town. Levi Strauss, a Bavarian immigrant, introduced it to America around 1850. Traditional denim is a warp-faced cotton fabric in a 3x1 twill construction of indigo-dyed warp and gray weft.

Long a social denim shows up in shorts, jeans, jackets, shirts. In fact, part of our culture infiltrated the lexicon with

words such as stonewashed, relaxed fit chambray, and indigo-c

There's practically nothing



Bustier: Plein

that hasn't been done to denim from cut-offs to formal wear. It's been washed, bleached, torn, and even shot at for a rugged look. Today,



Shoes: Vogue January 2001

Focus on... Events

Career Day and Betsey Johnson

By Amy Schwab and Lindsey Fortado

The FGI-sponsored Career Day in October provided a perfect opportunity for fashion-oriented students to gather

advice and share experiences with people employed in a wide array of jobs in the fashion industry. Held at Moore College of Art & Design, it featured several seminars throughout the morning, with

Betsey Johnson as the main attraction.

Successful business entrepreneurs, merchandisers, designers, writers, public relations directors and others outlined a broad spectrum of



yards with the U.S. turning out about 1 billion yards annually.

Although demand for new fashion from the major denim labels has been flat in recent years, designers have made it a major trend for the new millennium. It's shown up on runways as skirts, evening dresses, handbags and boots. It has been dressed up with beading and studs, cut on the bias and wrapped around body parts, slashed and tucked and gathered, and paired with fabrics ranging from velvet to plastics.

Exclusive denim is everywhere, from Christian Dior to Chloé and Jean Paul Gaultier. As the market for standard jeans stalls, the rise of the couture market sees stores such as Bergdorf Goodman and Barneys New York picking up on it as a very hot trend. And where couture goes, the rest of fashion soon follows.





Betsey Johnson

career paths to educate students on what's available — and how to make it — in the industry.

Seminar panelists discussed their educational backgrounds, career paths, and experiences on the way to achieving their current positions. Many emphasized the importance of being patient;

your job directly out of college will not be your ideal position, and you will most likely not be given the artistic freedom that college allowed. It takes a great deal of work, effort and time to move up in the fashion industry.

A significant percentage of the speakers had their own commercial ventures, and were eager to share their experiences. Ann and Steve Lagos, the owners of Lagos Design, and Frank Agostino, president of Agostino, stressed that starting a business is much more management and accounting work than design. Only about 1 percent of their time is spent on artistic matters. Others emphasized getting involved — networking, going to trade shows, reading trade publications, volunteering to help out at runway shows, and doing internships.

The highlight of the day was the wildly talented Betsey Johnson sharing her thoughts, detailing her life, and showing her Spring 2001 line. Johnson explained she was constantly

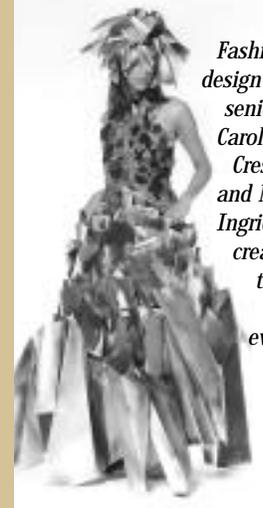
looking for new ways to shock people and attract attention.

And shock she did when she exchanged thin runway models for Playboy bunnies. Many of Johnson's designs resembled costumes, incorporating genie, Indian, and cowboy themes. A bunny theme ran through the show, with girls flipping up the backs of their skirts to reveal bunny tails, or wearing bunny ears.

Low-cut tops, stiletto heels, bright pastels, sequins, vinyl and other signature Betsey Johnson elements were prevalent. Clothes were tight, revealing, and eye-catching, with large symbols of lightning bolts, lips and hearts. The collection was great, but the real impact was in its presentation.

Career Day was a valuable learning experience. The combination of small-group seminars and Johnson's presentation was an incredible day.

By Allison Kirkman



Fashion design seniors Carolina Crespo and Monica Ingrid created this cubist eveningwear.

On Dec. 5, Fashion Industries Association (FIA) presented Design X, a fashion show comprised of experimental designs from the fall and spring Problem Solving classes. On the runway in Downs Hall, were unique designs created exclusively by the University's fashion design students. Student models walked with attitude and enthusiasm down the runway to progressive beats provided by an alumnus and previous FIA co-producer, Gregory Dickson. Providing commentary was the ever-popular Angel Smedley of the Media Services Department.

Four major scenes dominated the show. Beginning with, "Wild Things," senior fashion design major, Emily Reid, sent her two muses, Val and Heather, down the catwalk in matching lycra stretch bodysuits designed and inspired by zebras. Together, she and I constructed zebra mane mohawks out of batting, hair clips, and spray paint, which were worn in the models' hair.

In the second scene entitled "Modern Sentiments," Reid modeled Yi Nan Huang and Yeul-Lee Chung's interpretation of artist Georgia

Focus on...Color

By Amber Hasulak and Jessica Plouff

Fall 2000 dished out strong shades of red and an abundance of neutral tweeds. As winter is winding down, Spring 2001 brings a lighter palette.

A staple of spring, pastels remain an essential part of the wardrobe. Pale blues, beige and cream are inspired by granddad's closet.

Once again, pink appears, this season in a powdery hue.

Replacing fall's dominate red, green makes a long-awaited comeback. Shades like grass, flag, emerald and petroleum create a jungle look. Keeping with this theme, neutral khaki and brown produce a safari mood.

Sticking around for the spring, gold continues to generate a warm glow.

The ever-popular disco era

delivers a heap of glitter, metallic shine, and shimmering sequins.

Making way for the scorching summer heat are the acidic shades of orange, lime green and strawberry red.

Put away the heavy colors of winter, and lighten up with the vast assortment of colors Spring 2001 has to offer.

Agostino continued from page one

This April, the House of Agostino opened in Bryn Mawr. It's two stores in one: a couture line and a ready-to-wear. The same intricate handiwork, attention to details and care for the end product are evident in each piece, whether its one-of-a-kind or off-the-rack. What seems to set his line apart from many others is his innate love of the female form and his understanding of the way it wants to move. None of his clothing is binding or difficult to wear.

To ensure that others do not have to struggle as he did, Agostino provides scholarships to help new talent. "There is no such thing as too many designers," he remarked. "The more designers, the more ideas are flowing."

Diskin continued from page one

So, what's in the future? "I'd like to advance to an even more creative position with Tommy and explore different divisions within the company," says Diskin, "and I'm also considering returning to school to study the arts."

Madden continued from page one

design. Although she didn't study interior design, she uses the concepts she learned in fashion, but just "applies them through a different medium." In addition to being an entrepreneur, Madden runs an antique and home store called "Summerhouse" with her mother. They have been in business for seven years.

One constant that Madden has found in the different positions she has held is the need for good communication skills. In industries such as fashion and design, she says it is extremely important to "know how to get your point across either verbally or visually." "Not many people can think visually," she says, "and that's where I come in."

Design X continued from page three

O'Keefe's painting "Jack-In-the-Pulpit III." The designers collaborated on this innovative piece. More than 20 designers expressed their ideas with the help of models, dressers and supporting production staff. Thanks to everyone one who contributed time and effort to another phenomenally successful FIA produced event.

Spring 2001 Fashion Calendar

Every Tuesday, 11 a.m., Fashion Industries Association (F.I.A.) meeting Room 124, Hayward Hall. New members welcome!

February

- 1 (Thursday) Target
- 8 (Thursday) - "The Business of Fashion"
11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Downs Auditorium
- 9 (Friday) Gen Art
- 22 (Thursday) Spring Career Fair, Bucky Harris Gym
- 23 (Friday) FAME trip to NYC

March

- TBA Coates Brothers Design Competition
- TBA Style Wars (Design Competition and Fashion Show)
- March Sophomore Portfolio Reviews
- TBA Libby Haynes Hyman
- TBA FGI Educational Foundation
- 14 (Wednesday) Fashion Technology Fair
10 a.m.-2 p.m. Bucky Harris Gym
- 29 (Thursday) CFDA Scholarship Program
(Design/Illustrations)

April

- TBA Fashion Merchandising Workshop
on Product Development
- 1 (Sunday) Style Wars
- April Onward XVII
- 28 (Saturday) 8 p.m. Annual Fashion Show
Bucky Harris Gym - F.I.A.

May

- 21 (Sunday) 11 a.m. Commencement

Details of these competitions and special events may change. Fashion Design students: Please check your e-mail and department website, www.PhilaU.edu/FDsecure for news and updates on special events, competitions, scholarships, etc.

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