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Aspen Daily News

aspendailynews.com

970-925-2220

The Roaring Fork Valley's only independent and locally owned daily newspaper

Vol. 33 #261

Printed on Recycled Paper

FRIDAY, MARCH 18, 2011

INSIDE TODAY'S PAPER
TIME OUT

fashion

Aspen Fashion Week, Part 1

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Rossignol by Jean-Charles de Castelbajac



Dannenmann



Rossignol by Jean-Charles de Castelbajac

Lights, cameras, action ... and more cameras! Aspen Fashion Week just ended, and though it was a day or two shorter than last year, it was still full of fabulous fashion, flamboyance and extravagance — everything we're known for.

The Snowstage that was at the gondola last year was moved to the ice rink in front of the Grand Hyatt Hotel. An elevated runway down the center of the rink was surrounded by tents with open bar drinks for patrons. It cost \$100 a day to participate or \$1,500 for the week. There was on drink, called the Fashionista, that, of course, yours truly had to sample.

There was also a tent where you could have your hair primped by stylists from New York who worked on all the top models. Kudos to Noah, who curled my locks so effervescently, that a friend of mine at the Aspen Club who saw me later at Body Pump said I looked like Teri Hatcher. Now that's a great hairstylist!

Driving pop music, both current and retro, kept the crowd pumped up. There was a party vibe from start to finish, playing non-stop for three hours during and between shows. Local DJ Naka G did the music for all the shows except the Castelbajac show and private party honoring the designer at Casa Tua after his fashion event, which was dialed in by The Misshapes, a NY-based DJ trio and artist collective.

Aspenites love a good party, and it was visible as guests, models and even AFW Founder and organizer Lisa Johnson danced in celebration, both on and off the stage.

French fashion designer Jean-Charles de Castelbajac opened the event last Sunday with his new ski line for Rossignol, which he has been designing for the last 10 years. Speaking with him after the show, the designer expressed that he likes to apply the duality of the "savage sensuality in animals" with his love of primary colors. "I combine a strong pop attitude with my artistic feeling inside," he said. A major designer for 40 years, Castelbajac created the sexy, micro-sport quilted coat for the late Farrah Fawcett in "Charlie's Angels," an innovative look at the time.

Bold zebra stripes provided the backdrop for his stage, as male and female models strutted down the runway in ski clothes of the same prints superimposed with stylized animals on slacks and jackets. JCC explains, "Skiing conjures up doing daring things ... my clothes do the same."

Monday and Tuesday were the major runway show days, with three events each day. Various in-store parties came afterward, including Dannenmann and Ralph Lauren hosting two simultaneously on Monday, and Theory, WeSC and Ariane Zurcher & Jewel Box doing the same on Tuesday. The FEED Foundation, hosted by Lauren Bush, returned to the Ralph Lauren store. All participants of AFW were given canvas FEED Foundation bags to carry all their goodies. I'm sure you saw them being toted around town. Thank you, Lauren, for coming back to see us, and congratulations on your engagement to Ralph Lauren's son, David.

Dannenmann did their second show in two years, with another gorgeous array of brightly colored, chic, boiled wool separates. Owning a few of her designs, I can tell you that not only are they

breathable, as wool is, but are lightweight enough to layer under another coat when you need it; and then perfect to wear alone as we move into our luscious late-winter, early-spring 40s and 50s temps. She's lining some of her coats now, so that they have a more luxurious feel, and is making some silk separates. Check out the exquisite and feminine ruffled silk skirt that designer Petra Dannenmann calls the "schi-schi" skirt, pronounced she-she. Sound familiar? So perfectly paired with her tailored, asymmetrically zipped jacket, it may be the skirt of the season! I also like her short micros that are meant to be worn under one of her matching coats ... quite a stunning look in royal blue, lime green or hot pink. We're pleased that they have opened their first U.S. store on Cooper Ave. since their show last year.

A highlight for me was to see the documentary at the Wheeler which was shown in conjunction with Fashion Week. "Bill Cunningham New York" chronicles the celebrated *New York Times* photographer, who has made a name and a life snapping fashionable New Yorkers in their daily lives. He finds them as he pedals around on his old Schwinn bike, negotiating the wild taxi-infested streets of New York with the same ease as he snaps ladies jumping puddles or laden with jewels at high society soirees. His "On the Street" and "Evening Hours" columns for the *Times Style* section are legendary, and the film portrays a man obsessed with his art, needing nothing more than a cot and his file cabinets, where he lived until recently at the Carnegie Hall apartments. In his words, "I let the streets speak to me, with no short cuts." *Vogue* Editor Anna Wintour says, "We all get dressed for Bill," and adds that when Bill photographs a style, "six months later, it will be a trend." According to Cunningham, "Fashion is the armor to survive everyday life." I like that, Bill. May I borrow that line?

More to come next Friday...