

Trend forecasts

Caroline Shaw



Caroline Shaw is one of the industry's leading trend forecasters and will be on hand each issue to predict the latest trends. We take a look at how she began her journey and what she recommends for late 2010.

The key to success in the fashion industry is to be one step ahead of the game at all times, so being able to predict what trends will strike a chord with the buying public is absolutely crucial. Making such a forecast, however, is very much a skill in itself, and not one which everyone is capable of with assured confidence or accuracy, so how do companies acquire such vital information?

The answer lies with trend predictors. These specialists are able to deduce what fashions, colours, textiles and lifestyle trends are likely to grab the attention of a fashion conscious audience, and their role in the industry is, as you can imagine, invaluable. They can provide a company with that all-important leading-edge over competitors and create an image of assured confidence in the minds of the buying public.

Global Inspiration

Caroline Shaw is one such specialist in the field of trend predictions, with over 25 years' experience. She began her career in the fashion world as a buyer, working first for Warehouse on the shop floor. Her ambition and drive must have been evident early on as after just three weeks, she was presented with the opportunity of becoming a buyer for the company. It was, as she describes, her, "Baptism of fire. I was thrown straight in and thrived on the new opportunity and challenge." As a buyer she worked at least one year ahead, developing a feel for what would sell. "It's important to get it right, as you commit thousands of pounds to stock which cannot be changed."

Before she knew it she was working closely with Jeff Banks who, at the time, was at the helm of Warehouse. She describes him as, "a perfectionist who taught me to take inspiration from a wide-range of different places" – something which she still does today. As travel was key to her role, Caroline would take influences from the many places she visited such as Japan, New York and Milan, as well as students working on sculpture or paintings from the Royal College of Art. She still gets inspired by watching how people on the street put things together through personalising and mixing, "Everyone is creating their own story of life and how they see the world."



Caroline's mood boards — colours and inspirations

“Everyone is creating their own story of life and how they see the world.”

Trendsetter

Since then, Caroline hasn't looked back, becoming involved with online site Trendstop.com to establish a younger and more contemporary brand, and advising on how to communicate what buyers look for. She has also worked with young designer-makers through workshops, providing affordable storyboards where such information would normally be costly.

Colour & Jewellery

As a trained colour specialist, Caroline presently runs her own business, advising clients on what colours and styles work best for them, as well as keeping up her trend forecasts. She finds this particularly interesting as on the one-hand she will be predicting a style, and two years later she will be buying those styles in for her clients!

And it's not just the clothing side of fashion that Caroline has been drawn to, but also jewellery, which stems from her passion for predicting 3D accessories in her forecasts. She hopes through working with *Fine Silver* magazine, she can give designer-makers access to how she sees the world, and thus inspire them so that they can translate what they see from the fashion world into jewellery.

Lace – The Trend for 2010/11

So what predictions does Caroline have for the latter part of 2010?

“Lace is going to be a huge trend for womenswear this year and will continue into 2011. It's homage to the fun of the 80s, referencing Madonna's *Like a Virgin* video, and Kylie Minogue. Lace has been out of vogue for a long time so it's time for a resurgence!

“Prada introduced a lace collection in 2009, and it has influenced designers ever since. It's flirty, frothy and feminine! The new look mixes multi-layers of lace and different patterns in one garment, creating interest by playing with scale of pattern. Colours will range from antique creams and taupes, to bright neon pinks and lemons.” ♦



Photo courtesy of Next Ltd

Here's how you too can be inspired by lace:

- Use lace to create a beautiful pattern for small pieces
- Mix lace patterns with vintage beads or pearls
- And of course, have a go at producing the lace pendant on page 13 of this issue