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WWD SATURDAY



Ciao, Bella

NEW YORK — They say all roads lead to the Eternal City, and Diane von Furstenberg took that thought to heart. For spring, the designer found inspiration in the glamour of Rome, including, she says, “the Cinecittà, paparazzi, movie stars and principessas.”
For more on what’s driving the designers this spring, see pages 23 to 30.

Plus: Badgley Mischka Rides Again,
The Newest Models and Bryan Bradley’s Library

Easy and Breezy

Cool and simple were the watchwords on the spring runways, designers toned it down with casual yet chic and pretty looks.



Yigal Azrouël: Mr. Azrouël is so lucky he pulled together a pretty collection. Due to a production glitch, a gaggle of editors had to wait outside his West 14th Street store, site of his spring show. For those stylish loiterers of the Pollyanna persuasion, the extra hour did offer a chance to pass time trawling the latest deliveries at Alexander McQueen and Stella McCartney across the cobblestones.

Happily, when the crowd settled, Azrouël sent out a brief 20-piece lineup that reached a new level of savvy sophistication. And for once, his gowns, so long a favorite of socialites and actresses, took a backseat, making way for smart skirts, bermudas and shirts. He kept the mood easy and breezy — lots of crisp whites; fuss-free cotton skirts; a cool blue seersucker jacket that touched subtly on a Napoleonic theme. Couldn't you just see some lithe, young Hollywood thing in the cropped khaki gauchos and belted coat that was a chic meeting of a navy blazer and swingy cape?

But there are those ladies — Natalie Portman, Evangeline Lilly and most notably

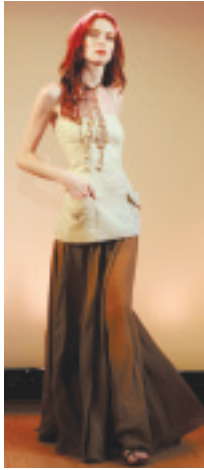
Maggie Gyllenhaal — who love their Yigal Azrouël party dresses. While the few long gowns lacked a little oomph, the shorter frocks, especially a pale purple jersey jacquard, more than made up for it. And here's a little heads-up for those who keep tabs on the red-carpet credits: Gyllenhaal, currently making the rounds at the Toronto International Film Fest, just had the delicate brown chantilly lace dress, cinched with an ice blue sash, shipped to her.

Brian Reyes: It's not news that hype can be both friend and foe, but it's a lesson that Brian Reyes may be learning this season. Early excitement about the 24-year-old designer's debut collection certainly got a crowd into his chairs, and while Reyes certainly had a fine first showing, there was perhaps more of a buildup than was necessary.

Of his former bosses — Ralph Lauren, Michael Kors and Oscar de la Renta —

PHOTOS BY LUHNA ADJINO, TALAYA CENTENO, GEORGE CHINSEE, ROBERT MITRA AND DAVID TURNER

Does It



After stints at Zac Posen and Ralph Lauren, **Lyn Devon** marked her debut with a number of skirts — trim, embroidered pencils, as well as billowy, wind-swept numbers — all executed with a Rucci-esque undercurrent of Moroccan desert chic.



Promising first-timer **Nuj Novakheht** showed a number of puffed confections — with tucked-under hems, peg waists, you name it — as well a penchant for exaggerated proportions.



Austin Scarlett proved that there is life after "Project Runway," with a capsule evening collection heavy on frilly, feminine, Southern romance. The star frock: a satin and lace gown made from a Twenties bedspread.



Savile Row fabrics morphed into 10 downtown-style sundresses at **Hanuk**. Unfinished edges and drawstring detailing rendered them sweet, but probably not sweet enough to justify their hefty retail prices.



Liz McClean showed a roundup of pretty chiffon frocks with a witchy feel, like this silk chiffon layered tunic, along with a group of gold medallion necklaces.



Way uptown, **Mal Sirrah**'s stylishly wrinkled pinstriped silks made for fresh spring fare.

Fashion Scoops

THE REAL THING: With only **Rachel Feinstein** and **Yvonne Force** in the front row, signs didn't bode well for **Tara Subkoff**'s celeb quotient at *Imitation of Christ*. But the designer made good to show goers who faced stiff security and butt-numbing wooden stools by enlisting her best buddy, **Scarlett Johansson**, to open the show. Johansson, wearing skintight jeans, a tank top and red heels, made her way down the elaborate stairs inside Surrogate's Court smoking a cigarette. She then strutted and vamped for the frenzied photographers, her hair done up in the fluffed Fifties style the starlet seems to prefer for her red-carpet appearances.

REST DAY?: So much for relaxing before the big match. **Roger Federer**, the number-one seeded men's player at the U.S. Open, took time out from practicing for today's semifinal match against **Lleyton Hewitt** to attend **Naeem Khan**'s fashion show Friday morning. Federer had just beaten **David Nalbandian** in straight sets the previous night and appeared to be enjoying a different venue.

"It was exciting. It was nice and short," he joked afterward. He said he's a friend of **Lionel Geneste**, the company's creative director. "I met him, and they came to the match, and I wanted to return the favor," said the Swiss tennis star, adding this was his first fashion show. Did he find any similarities between professional tennis and the models on the catwalk? "They're in center stage, the way I am on the court."

Meanwhile, on Thursday night, **Kim Clijsters** wasn't exactly taking it easy before her semifinal U.S. Open match against **Maria Sharapova** Friday. The shy Belgian player, who beat Sharapova and has been on the comeback trail all year, was fending off the paparazzi at a store opening party on Madison Avenue for her sponsor Fila. "I am here now because I keep winning in the Open," she quipped. And regardless of how she plays going forward, Clijsters will still have Fila's backing; The company said it will sponsor her for "the duration of her career."

STAR HOST: One celebrity who won't be making the rounds of shows today is **Mischa Barton**. Chanel tapped the actress to co-host a cocktail party at its Costa Mesa, Calif., boutique tonight to celebrate the store's recent makeover by architect **Peter Marino** as well as the arrival of the fall

collection. Naturally, Barton is expected to be wearing an embroidered cocktail dress from Chanel's fall collection. Expected to make an appearance are **Rachel Bilson**, **Camilla Belle**, **Kelly Rowan** and **Melinda Clarke**. One of them might just get lucky that evening: a quilted Chanel 2.55 bag will give away in a raffle.

SIMPLE ADDITION: **Ashlee Simpson**'s on-again, off-again boyfriend, **Ryan Cabrera**, can hold his own in the fashion department. Front row at **Esteban Cortazar**'s show Friday, the spiky-haired singer said, "I'm really into fashion. I don't always admit it. But deep down, everyone is."

Cabrera said his interest in fashion isn't due to label-happy Simpson. "When you're in music and you're performing and doing TV shows, you have to be." But his fans might easily overlook his favorite possession, a calculator watch. "It's coming back," he said.

BUYS NIGHT OUT: By some miracle, **Tom Parker Bowles** and his bride **Sara Buys** have managed to keep the key details of their nuptials — which take place this afternoon — under tight wraps. The two, who met while they were both students at Oxford, will be wed today at 4:30 in the tiny Saint Nicholas Church in the village of Rotherfield Greys, near Henley-on-Thames, England. Only a handful of guests, including newlyweds **Prince Charles** and the **Duchess of Cornwall**, will attend the church ceremony, while a dinner dance, with more than 400 guests, will follow at the bride's father's home, a few minutes from the church. The guest list for dinner is heavy on the fashion crowd — Buys is, after all, fashion features editor for *Harpers & Queen*. Sources said rock 'n' rollers will also be there, in addition of course, to royals. Everyone's great hope, is that **Princes William** and **Harry** will show up with their respective girlfriends — and future brides? — **Kate Middleton** and **Chelsy Davy**.

YURMAN'S NEW

FACE: Jewelry company David Yurman has signed 20-year-old Australian singer **Delta Goodrem** to wear only Yurman looks. The up-and-comer is to wear Yurman pieces in public appearances, on her album cover and in her music videos. Goodrem has had number-one singles in Australia and has won eight Aria Awards, the Australian version of the Grammys.

She has already been on the "Today" show and has visited various events wearing Yurman. On Thursday, she wore a black Donna Karan dress paired with Yurman necklaces, a ring and earrings to the Elle/Bloomingdale's party. Details of the contract's length were not disclosed.



Kim Clijsters and Giorgio Borruso

PHOTO BY KEITH SMITH



Delta Goodrem

PHOTO BY DIMITRIOS KAMBOURIS/WIREIMAGE



Mischa Barton

Reyes seems to relate most to the last. His collection appeared to make a bid for the same client — the skirt suit-wearing socialite, perhaps of a certain age. But Reyes was actually at his best when he steered toward ease and youth and away from the prim and ladylike — as in a simple and sporty cotton khaki hacking dress or a blousy chiffon tank paired with a full skirt. Evening, too, was a slightly spotty affair: A lace gown looked like a student's work, while another hacking dress, this time in chocolate chiffon, was lovely with a lace hem.

Tocca: Newly appointed creative director Edoardo Mantelli and new design director Samantha Sung, formerly of Cerruti and Ralph Lauren, showed a new Tocca girl for spring, much less twee and prim than in past seasons and more relaxed and easygoing. Sung's debut collection for the line played with volume and raw, earthy materials such as shells, wood, coconut and rope detailing. Gauguin-inspired prints

made for lovely day dresses and tunics, while more structured pieces such as navy jackets in cotton and linen rounded out the lineup.

Form: For his first collection under his label, **Form**, Jerry Tam kept his looks feminine with a modern edge, and he worked a silver theme, adding metallic tones to normally muted shades such as lavender, taupe and peach, which resulted in a shimmering, liquid effect. Tam emphasized draping, curves and princess cuts without making any of the pieces look too tricky — perhaps a trick he picked up while working with **Zac Posen** and **Patrick Robinson** at Perry Ellis. The inside-out pockets on his shrunken jackets and the double lapels, for example, while playful, were still smart, and his fluid tops easily could be worn in a variety of ways, valuing a sense of utility throughout. His trenchcoat summed up his entire collection — modern and intricate, yet easy and effortless, a look sure to be a hit among the cool, hip girls about town.