



Leave it to American men to latch onto a pair of jeans the manufacturer recommends wearing without laundering for at least six months.

the great unwashed

SHOPPING | CLICHÜ



Korrin Lohmann's fashions are available at Cliché.

Artsy Minneapolis boutique Cliché will celebrate its second anniversary tonight by highlighting what has unexpectedly made the store a success: local designers. The shop started out carrying a mix of vintage and new apparel from small national and international lines but quickly added locally designed clothing, which is becoming much easier to find as the Twin Cities enjoys a fashion boom.

Creative, locally designed clothing has become the shop's calling card and will be on display tonight during a fashion show at 8 at Babalu (800 Washington Ave., Minneapolis). Designers include Red Shoe Clothing Co., Julz Maire, Kjurek Couture and Shameless Hussy (which, it's worth noting, offers sizes up to 16). Tickets are \$10 at the door. A DJ will play until midnight.

If you see something you like, stop by the store on Saturday, when everything will be 20 percent off. It's at 2403 Lyndale Ave. S., Minneapolis; 612-870-0420; www.clichempls.com.

— Allison Kaplan, Pioneer Press



SHOPPING | GEHRY JEWELRY

Legendary architect Frank Gehry, known for many distinctly shaped museums including the University of Minnesota's Weisman Art Museum, is taking a stab at design on a more intimate level: a new jewelry collection exclusive to Tiffany & Co.

Gehry's signature style comes through loud and clear: twisted metals, divergent lines, a mix of unusual materials including black gold, pernambuco wood and cocholong stone. He also continues his famous fish motif with curvy pendants on chains, reminiscent of Gehry's glass fish at the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden. The collection includes necklaces, rings, bracelets and earrings. Prices start at \$125.

The Gehry collection launched recently in Los Angeles and then made its New York debut, but it's not scheduled to hit Tiffany's at the Galleria in Edina until August. Until then, the store can place orders for eager customers at no additional charge.

— Allison Kaplan, Pioneer Press

SHOPPING | KISS PERFUME

Do you have your own branded fragrance? No? You're one of few these days.

Almost every celebrity who ever had a mug shot in People or Rolling Stone sells a signature scent. Even Paula Abdul has a perfume. The latest to tiptoe through the French flowers is the rock band Kiss. Its product is expected in 2,000 department stores in September, says trade journal Women's Wear Daily. Industry analysts predict it will bring in \$30 million wholesale the first year.

The target consumers are ages 18 to 24 and 40 to 55, including original Kiss aficionados and recent arrivals. You don't have to love the band to like the smell, says guitarist Paul Stanley. "It's about being a free thinker who blazes their own path ..."

What's that smell? No. Not sweat, tears and cigarette smoke. Top notes for the perfume are said to include wet fig leaves, appletini and red peppercorns. The bottom notes are described in terms of calla lily, amber crystals, bare skin accord, red poppy, patent leather and mahogany. Can you hardly wait for a whiff?

— From wire services



JONAS LINELL/NUDIE JEANS

BY JESSICA RAMAKRISHNAN
Columbia News Service

Mike Neuman is a committed jeans freak. He trawls Internet retail sites and checks in with his favorite downtown Manhattan boutique to get the latest scoop on the hottest trends in denim.

While browsing superfuture.com, an online shopper's forum, Neuman, a 22-year-old advertising sales assistant at Rolling Stone magazine, discovered Nudie Jeans. Nudie is a Swedish label begun by former Lee Jeans designer in 2001 that offers raw — unwashed and unprocessed — denims.

Since buying a black pair of Nudies, Neuman, who lives in Manhattan's East Village, has barely taken them off. He has also not washed them once since he acquired them eight months ago.

Neuman is not merely slacking off on his chores; he is "working" his jeans to customize them as recommended by the manufacturer.

"Anyone can go out there and buy a prewashed, created pair of jeans," Neuman said. "With Nudie, it's almost like you've earned it."

It is a convention for raw denim to be left unwashed, according to jeans connoisseurs like Neuman, but Nudie Jeans is the only brand that has made the "no washing" ethos part of its brand identity. The unique stance of the men's denim label has created a cult following among young American men.

THE RAW DEAL

With legions of fans in Europe, Nudie's popularity has grown strongly in the United States since its 2004 launch. Initially only available at five stores, Nudies are now offered at more than 100 retail outlets across the United States and Canada, including Barneys and Fred Segal, according to the label's North American distributor, the Montreal-based Want Agency. The label is in the midst of expanding its retail presence and introducing a women's line, Denimbirds.

"It's the first time our male customers have really sought out a cult denim brand," said Jim Wetzel,

owner and buyer of Jake, a hip Chicago boutique.

At Jake stores in the city's Gold Coast and Southport areas, Nudie fans drive from as far away as Milwaukee and Columbus, Ohio, to pick up a pair of Nudies, which cost between \$155 and \$499.

"It is usually the one fashion trend they are interested in," said Wetzel, a Nudie Jeans wearer himself. "They are not concerned what Gucci has on the catwalk."

Neuman, the Rolling Stones staffer who is an indie-rock and punk DJ and promoter in his spare time, says he does not pay as much attention to the rest of his wardrobe as he does to his jeans.

But the catwalk could be catching up to fans of Nudie Jeans like Neuman.

"If anything, the most recent fashion shows in New York and London have proven that we are over and done with embellishment, especially as far as denim is concerned," said Tom Julian, director of trends at McCann Erikson in New York.

The backlash against processed, washed jeans adorned with details like zippers could see more men embracing Nudie's raw offering, "which is not about the fashion or status but about the denim and its construction," Julian said.

MEMORY SERVES

Nudie recommends that people wait at least six months before washing their jeans. The user's body contours, movements and even the contents of his pockets, like keys and wallets, are remembered and become imprinted on the denim.

One of the desired effects is "whiskering," where permanent creases are created at points where jeans naturally bunch up, like in the upper thigh area or along the crotch.

Another effect is "honeycombing," the crisscrossing effect seen at the back of the knees.

"Denim is like leather," said Bryon Peart, president of Want Agency, the Nudies distributor. "It looks better with age."

Matthew Rodriguez, a 26-year-old student in St. Louis, has had his two pairs of Nudies for only a month, but he said he could already see some

If Nudie Jeans go unwashed for at least six months, as recommended by the Swedish label, the user's body contours, movements and even the contents of his pockets become imprinted on the denim.

changes.

"All the distressed jeans I bought before look alike," he said. "My Nudies don't look like they did when I bought them. They are unique, and I like that about them."

Nudie's new women's line is technically not raw material, as it contains stretch fabric to maintain a tight fit. But it clings to its no-wash ethos.

"Washing ruins the fit of jeans and makes them lose their color," said Jessica Hon, 25, a law student in St. Louis who has a pair of raw jeans from Earnest Sewn, a Nudie competitor in New York.

"The whiskering and fade you get when you don't wash jeans makes you look skinnier," she added.

JUST DON'T TELL MOM

To be sure, the great unwashed are not the great uncared for. Nudie diehards are regular users of online sites and chat rooms, where they discuss care of their jeans at superfuture.com and MyNudies.com, a fan site that is not affiliated with the company.

Tom Horne, a 20-year-old sophomore at the University of Pittsburgh, learned to starch his two pairs of Nudie Jeans from reading forum posts on the Web sites. Other methods of cleaning include freezing them in oversized Ziploc bags, spraying them with Febreze, having them dry-cleaned or airing them outdoors.

Fans of Nudie Jeans often keep their jeans "hobby," as Jake's Wetzel puts it, to themselves or play it down.

Horne's girlfriend, for example, does not understand his "relationship" with his two pairs of 6-month-old unwashed Nudies.

And while Rodriguez's girlfriend has come to appreciate the merits of eschewing detergent and a wash and dry cycle, his mother knows nothing of his Nudie Jeans interest.

"She is not very aware of contemporary fashion," Rodriguez said of his mom. "She would find Nudies' no-washing philosophy absolutely disgusting and filthy."