

Drapers

The fashion business

PUPPY LOVE

Hush Puppies steps up a gear on its 50th birthday

CASH IN HAND

Discover new ways to finance your business

MAN POWER

Go Bohling on USC's menswear makeover

YOUTH CLUB

We pick out the brands joining the kidswear gang for autumn



FOOTWEAR AWARDS
Drapers' 2008 shortlist
in this issue



FASHION

In brief

Hamsin, the Manchester-based footwear distributor, has signed a deal to become official distributor of US flip-flop brand **Beech Shoes** in the UK, Europe and Republic of Ireland. The brand offers flip-flop styles for men and women with four toe separators, designed to instil good foot alignment and posture. Prices start from £10.50. Call 0161 975 5380 for details.

Koolaburra, the California-based, Australian-made sheepskin boot brand, is being launched in the UK by distributor **Laidback Apparel**. The brand's signature line, Kettle Black, features embroidered leather patches by the LA designer of the same name, with prices from £98. Classic boots start at £54. For details call 020 8863 3510.

Amplified has teamed up with 1960s rock poster artist **Bob Masse** to create a capsule collection of four women's T-shirts, which are available now. Styles feature original artwork by Masse, including art nouveau-style figures of women, are £8. For details call 0208 452 4266.

Fobia Boutique, the high-end handbag label, has unveiled its first **autumn collection**. The range features handcrafted bags made from natural materials, with understated styles coming in black and white. Prices start at £52 for a clutch, to £134 for an oversized pony skin bag. Call 020 7866 5454 for details.

Seychelles, the Californian footwear label, and sister brand **BC Footwear** have both unveiled a high summer injection line available for wholesale. The Seychelles range includes 21 styles, such as 1970s-inspired platforms and metallic Grecian sandals, priced from £28 to £40. BC Footwear's range offers wraparound sandals, floral pumps and sporty slip-on trainers in perforated leather. Prices range from £11 to £32. For information, contact 0870 853 785.

BRANDS

Storm whips up loungewear

Watch brand Storm London is producing its first clothing range for autumn 08.

The brand has signed a licensing deal with clothing manufacturer McGregor International to produce a capsule collection of loungewear and underwear for men and women. It follows the brand's recent expansion into jewellery, bags, umbrellas, wallets, eyewear and fragrances.

The loungewear range will be aimed at 18- to 35-year-olds and will include briefs, hipsters, boxer shorts, oversized T-shirts, camisole sets and diamanté-embellished robes, with prints, metallic bands, velvet trims and studded details.

Fabrics include cotton jersey and bamboo mixes in a palette of bright fuchsia and petrol blue. Prices range from £5 for underwear to £21 for robes. For details, call 0161 942 4800.

McGregor already supplies retailers including Next, House of Fraser, Oasis, Jane Norman and Arcadia Group.

FOOTWEAR

Berry tones ripen

By Melinda Oliver

Berry tones, textured patents and chunkier heels are stepping into the spotlight on women's footwear for autumn 08, according to agents and buyers.

The new looks are in line with autumn 08 international catwalk trends, in which designers used colour, texture and unique shapes to create statement shoes.

Debbie Lord, general manager at N Brown's footwear retailer VivaLaDiva.com, said: "There is a lot of colour coming through for autumn with red, burgundy, claret and purple, which is a nice change."

Belinda Sly, owner of footwear independent Sly in Stamford, Lincolnshire, said she was particularly pleased with the new autumn colours and styles. "It is lovely that there are strong pinks, purples and blue tones coming through," she said.



Marni

One to watch

The debut collection from designer **Karen Brost** blends classic tailoring with a sexy, rock 'n' roll edge.

London-based Brost's autumn 08 range features dramatic floor-length coats, pencil skirts, silk blouses, cashmere knits and tailored waistcoats teamed with masculine wool trousers.

Details include exaggerated collars, oversized bell sleeves, bows, sharp frills and shoulder-revealing cuts in a palette of vivid red, black, white and grey.

Prices start from £70 for silk printed shirts, rising to £150 for dresses and £220 for coats. For more information, contact 0207 580 5580.

