

Sunday trading

In the first of two parts, **Simon Jones** reviews some of the highlights of Mido 2012 in Milan

Over 42,000 optical professionals from all five continents descended on Milan for the 42nd Mido International Optics, Optometry and Ophthalmology exhibition last month. 2012 saw the event open on a Sunday for the very first time in its history – a move designed primarily to try and attract more Italian opticians. The date format change caused a few raised eyebrows prior to the show and there was an air of apprehension among some of the British exhibitors travelling to Italy. After the opening day, it appeared that some of those doubts had been misplaced. *Optician* and indeed the majority of the exhibitors we talked to were astounded as to how busy the show had been on the Sunday. It looked like the show organisers had pulled off something of a masterstroke. Alex Kleinschmidt, head of marketing for German manufacturer ic! Berlin, was just one of many who reported high volumes of visitors on the opening Sunday. 'In terms of sales, the show was really good for us. On the Sunday, we sold more products than we did in the whole of the last Mido exhibition,' he said.

However, there were noticeably fewer visitors on the Monday, and fewer still on the final day of the exhibition. After such a promising

start, it was shame to see the show close on such a low point. 'The satisfactory first two days made up for the falloff on Tuesday,' said Mido president Cirillo Marcolin, who added it was the first time that a Tuesday made up one of the exhibition days. Dates for the 2013 exhibition have been set for Friday March 8 through to Sunday March 10.

After being teased with glimpses of new collections in January at Opti Munich, Mido gave exhibitors the chance to launch spring/summer frame ranges in full, and was a perfect opportunity for practice owners to buy product which could potentially allow them to stand out in a crowded market.

The new breed

One collection *Optician* was especially excited about viewing was the PQ Eyewear range of sunglasses and ophthalmic frames designed by designer and architect Ron Arad. The collaboration was announced just before Silmo 2011 – where the manufacturer showcased the designs and finalised production details through 3D renderings. At the time, it was clear that the designs were different from the norm, with their unusual use of acetate and wire and leftfield shapes. However, without seeing the frames in the flesh, it was quite hard to get a complete picture of what they would look like.





- 1 Holland Park by Ron Arad for PQ Eyewear
- 2 Tottenham Court Road by Ron Arad for PQ Eyewear
- 3 3D printed Angel by Ron Arad for PQ Eyewear
- 4 Decades by Mykita
- 5 Vega and Olimpia by Mykita
- 6 Booth & Bruce P058 UK2012
- 7 Booth & Bruce P046
- 8 DL5011 by Diesel
- 9 DL5003 by Diesel
- 10 DL5017 by Diesel
- 11 DL5002 by Diesel

adjustable A-shaped bridge. The bridge can be adjusted by 2mm upwards or downwards by backing off four screws and sliding the horizontal bar into grooves on the vertical A-shaped bar. PQ said the adjustment functionality wasn't just for patients, but allowed opticians to play a more prominent role in the sale of the frames by offering quick and easy adjustment should a frame not quite fit fully. Sixteen ophthalmic models comprise the A-Frame collection, which are also available as sunglass models.

Retro appeal

For those looking for more traditional frames, but still with the feel of utmost quality, Andy Wolf's offerings may just fit the bill. Designs across the collections range from timeless shapes to angular, modern silhouettes for both men and women. All frames are hand made in Austria. The manufacturer is keen to experiment with new colours, breathing life into existing styles. This strategy was evident in the release of the feminine Emma Peel sunglass and 4467 ophthalmic frame. The acetate

Mido presented PQ Eyewear with a perfect opportunity to show off the finished products in time for the scheduled April delivery dates. The products did not disappoint. It has been a while since *Optician* has been wowed by a product, but the Ron Arad frames for PQ Eyewear did just that.

Some frames designed by architectural designers can have too much of a clinical shape and feel, which can put patients off, but the Arad frames in the A-Frame and Corbs sunglass lines tread the line between high concept design and wearability with aplomb. The focal point of models in the A-Frame is the





used for the frames was sourced from a factory which has been forced to close. However, the factory had a stockpile of the material left over from the 1980s which was promptly purchased by Andy Wolf.

The company's more masculine new offerings at Mido included the 4472 ophthalmic frame and the Jerry Cotton sunglass. 'The 4471 should be a big seller in the UK,' said Jonathan van Blerk, managing director of EyeRespect, Andy Wolf's UK distributor. The modern looking frame has an angular shape with flat top edge and is pictured in the new translucent brown retro colour scheme. The Jerry Cotton Sunglass follows a similar angular script to achieve masculinity, but this time a thick acetate top brow has been mixed with a metal lower section.

Taking the masculine theme one step further, Andy Wolf's limited edition Blacknovum line should appeal to male patients who want the manliest of glasses. All models in the 18-strong range are finished in the same shade of black and come with a black recycled Italian leather case. In addition, frame shapes are exclusive to the Blacknovum collection.

The establishment

Diesel has been a strong brand name in optics for some time now, and Mido saw its latest production and distribution partner, Marcolin, debut the first ophthalmic collection it had produced. Many of styling cues from Marcolin's Diesel sunglass collections carried over into the ophthalmic range. Faux rivets and folds are evident on the DL5003 and DL5002 men's frames. The former sports an aviator shape, while the latter has more of a classic retro feel. The stud theme is continued with the DL5011 women's frame, which has a retro modified cat's eye silhouette. For the metal DL5017



- 12 Thorvald and Teiti by Mykita**
- 13 Blacknovum 11 by Andy Wolf**
- 14 Model 4471 by Andy Wolf**
- 15 Emma Peel and model 4420 by Andy Wolf**
- 16 Jerry Cotton by Andy Wolf**

and designers should want to celebrate the occasion. Booth and Bruce was just one company catering for patriotic patients, with the P058 frame in the new layered red, white and blue UK 2012 colour scheme. The company also showcased its P046 ophthalmic frame, which was created in response to customer demand for larger frames, and features sculptured temples in a selection of on-trend colour schemes.

After a slew of new releases at Opti Munich, German manufacturer Mykita showed no signs of complacency with the release of a number of new models at Mido. The Decades sunglass line is a marriage of old and new. An obvious panto silhouette has been fused with sheet metal and the quintessential Mykita screw-less hinge. The Thorvald and Teiti sunglasses also twist the panto shape, but the form of the metal used is more minimalist. As such, the frames take on a totally different look.

The company's futuristic laser printed Mylon sunglass line has also been extended with the release of the Vega and Olympia models. The Vega frame is similar in appearance to the signature Mylon sunglass, Nova. However, the lens profile and top brow section have been modified to give the sunglass a more subtle appearance. The Olympia sunglass is a modern take on the aviator silhouette, with chunky edges and colour coordinated lenses. ●

frame, Diesel has taken the timeless aviator sunglass shape and turned it into a retro optical design. Red colouring on the temples extends all the way over the top brow bar, giving the frame an up-to-date look.

It's only natural that in the year of London 2012, British manufacturers

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