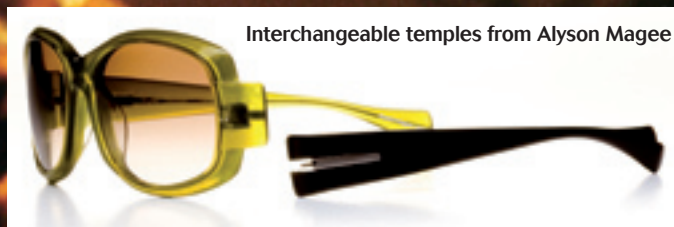




# An eyeful of Silmo

Retro sunglasses continued their ascent at last month's exhibition in Paris, with retro optical frames not far behind. **Rob Moss** and **Emma White** report on new collections and emerging trends from the year's main event for eye fashion

Yves Saint Laurent's YSL6 107s from Safilo





Anna Sui AS633 from Allison



bold but also plays its part in the structure, rather than simply being stamped on the temple.

Safilo too presented blatant and beautiful retro-influenced styles, most evidently in the Safilo Glamour collection, drawing influences from *La Dolce Vita* and the like. Since the show, Safilo has announced that it will make and distribute the Hugo Boss collections Hugo and Boss as of next October.

For this year however, it pushed its Marc Jacobs collection, an old-style range with clean, understated lines with unusual detail for a subtle, glamorous look. The Jacobs collection also won another of OPTICIAN's photo competitions, this time for the scariest promotional image (see page 14).

De Rigo Vision's retro replicas came in force in the first collection for the high-fashion men's brand Ermenegildo Zegna. Injection moulding provides slim cylindrical sections in the black aviator SZ3513 in the Nomad line, while the optical collection provides some retro surprises too.

Optical frame trends tend to lag behind the high-fashion statements of sunglasses, but last year's indications of growing eye shapes (OPTICIAN, November 19, 2004) seem to have been confirmed throughout many of the new collections at this year's show. With Zegna's VZ3506, there is little doubt that designers are pushing the larger eye shape, retro fashion providing an easy route to re-introduce them. De Rigo also launched a new collection for Jean-Paul Gaultier.

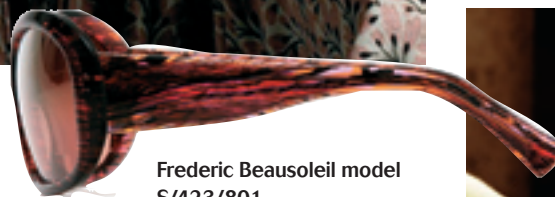
The Fendi range from Marchon

Anyone making their way to Portes de Versailles on *ligne 12* of the Paris Metro would probably have expected Silmo to play host to a little fashion plagiarism, but few would have foreseen the scale to which many designers are borrowing ideas from decades gone by.

The aviator, the chief retro model back in the spotlight, continued to fly high but it was joined by a cast of other retro styles preferring to look back beyond the 1970s and 80s to the 50s and 60s – albeit with a 21st century twist.

The biggest buzz of the exhibition came on the Marcolin stand with the launch of the former Gucci chief designer's sunglasses collection of his own potential superbrand, Tom Ford. The atmosphere on the Marcolin stand this year and last were poles apart. Last year Silmo came just days after the company had lost Dolce & Gabbana to Luxottica, but this year visitors could sense the excitement as they thronged to get a

[www.opticianonline.net](http://www.opticianonline.net)



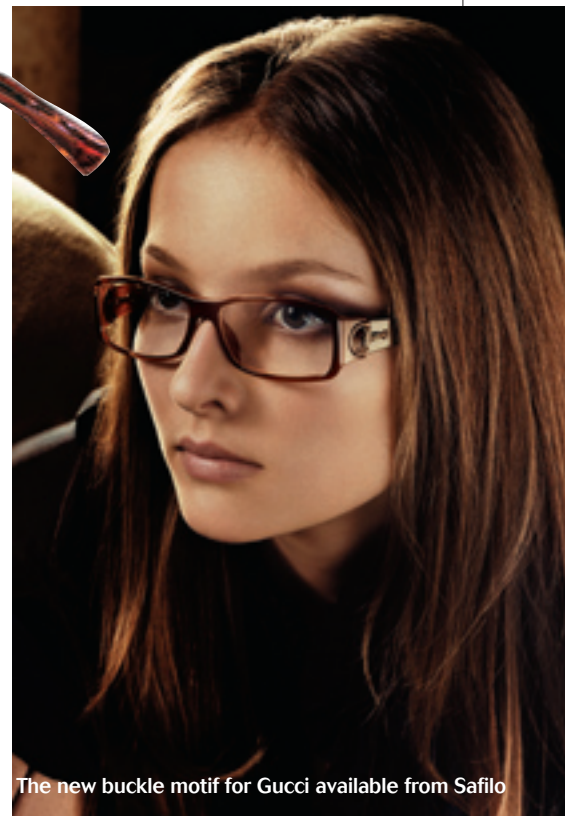
Frederic Beausoleil model  
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glimpse of or even have their photo taken with Ford (see page 18).

#### RETRO SUR LE METRO

Luxottica, fresh from the news of acquiring yet another brand, Burberry, this time from Safilo, had its usual maze of stands dedicated to all two dozen of its brands. But it was the newly acquired Dolce & Gabbana licences that grabbed much of the attention of visitors. The Dolce & Gabbana collection is split between 60s and 70s influences but with material and manufacturing technology demonstrating that these frames are actually bang up to date. DG6006B is an injection-moulded plastic with broad dimensions but slim cross sections.

Other models feature integral D&G logos in the temples. The logo is big and

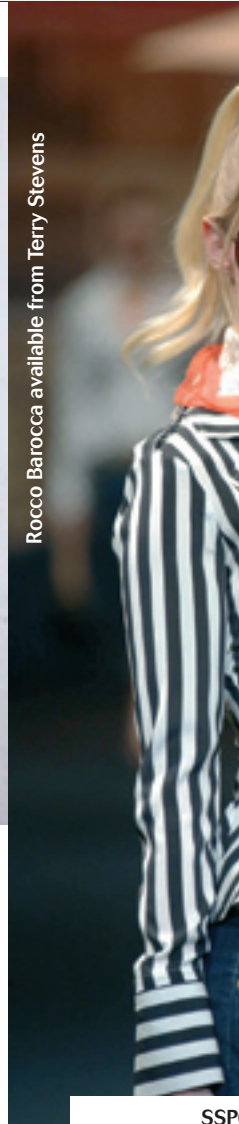


The new buckle motif for Gucci available from Safilo



Marc Jacobs MJ048s

Rocco Barocca available from Terry Stevens



presented uniformity throughout its collections of sunglasses and accessories. The sunglass line ranges from Swarovski crystal-encrusted frames to the 80th anniversary quality 'Selleria' leather Italian stitched frame, described by Marchon managing director Andy Cockayne as 'elegant and natural looking'.

'Shapes are softer this year,' said Robert Schienberg, head of global PR. 'Eyes are oval rather than square and they are more 1970s in appearance.'

Diversity in the range was demonstrated in contrast between the glamorous Parvay metal sunglass in gold, black and silver and the 'futuristic' mask, described by Schienberg as 'edgy'.

Fendi tied the same elements together in the optical collection. Swarovski crystals, rhinestones and studs, as well as the Selleria leather frames, were all present in the plastic and metal frame collection. 'The UK is increasingly showing a style direction from Southern Europe by becoming bolder and more daring,' said Schienberg.

Sunglass sales for Calvin Klein grew 70 per cent in 2005, said Schienberg. 'Calvin Klein is traditionally about minimalism, but you can add value,' he said. 'The range is sexy and has a Latin flavour with crystals and jewels.'

Uniformity is also present in the Calvin Klein optical collection frames that feature the well-known underwear band on the inner sides of large eye sunglasses. Cockayne described it as 'logo mania'. In contrast, CK presents a more 'innocent, light, but colourful range, synonymous with youth'. Plastic frames are available in multiple colours.

### MAGEE IMAGERY

Away from the world of global designer name licensing, another much-anticipated event for this Silmo was the launch of Alyson Magee's collection under the auspices of Mikli Studio. The two years of development that has gone into her collection soon became explained when, below each pair of specs on the display, were additional temples in complementing colours.

All but two pairs of the 11 optical and six sunglass strong collection come with interchangeable temples, with four or five different colours to choose from. Closer inspection of the hinge shows a small pincer-shaped mechanism. When the temple is at 45°, it can be pulled away from the hinge, ready for another colour temple to take its place.

Since leaving the hugely successful Face á Face in 2003, where she was co-founder and creative director, Magee told OPTICIAN that the next step was always to do her own collection. 'Alain Mikli was the perfect person to do it with,' she said. 'It would have taken ages to launch a new collection from scratch and I didn't want to go backwards.'

She chose Mikli, for whom she had designed in the late 80s, drawing on the technical and marketing expertise within the company. Asked why she now works for Mikli, she laughed and said, 'I don't - he works for me!' By the end of the first year she aims to have 1,000 clients worldwide, each carrying a full 50-piece collection in their practice.

Sid Firoozkoohi used to head up Mikli in the UK but, following a couple of years living in Moscow, he now runs his own

frame company, Misiyu, in London. He was in the Village launching Yellow Plus, a collection in collaboration with Japanese designer Toshiaki. Yellow Plus was launched in Asia one year ago with what Firoozkoohi said were some 'pretty extreme' styles, but the small collection now has some impressive designs and very wearable shapes.

Misiyu also distributes Sama in the UK. 'I aim to work with the best 50 to 60 accounts in the country,' added Firoozkoohi.

Elsewhere in the Village, LA Eyeworks introduced a whopping 19 new models both in titanium and acetate. Hicks, Radar and Drago all have a terrific retro feel all with rivets showing through their acetate fronts where the temple is fixed. Hicks has detail created through custom laminations to form an inlay in the frame front to

SSP



Dolce & Gabbana 6006, Luxottica





Gold & Wood Jaipur 4 from Caseco



Ted Baker TB 150 from Mondottica, at Silmo for the first time



Plastic! Berlin

003S from Jean Paul Gaultier, De Rigo



Silhouette's Titan Minimal Art 8082

Versus VR6021, Luxottica



Mykita's Rolf featuring Silverline



## Les rosbifs

Inspeks presented its frame collection on a large stand featuring a giant picture of its Farleigh House head office near Bath overlooking a mock lawn where visitors could sit and discuss the latest styles and trends.

FCUK launched a 'celebrity conscious range' to reflect 'the retro mode and scooter chic' of the season.

The brand's two colour tone metal frame is 'just like reversible clothing, one colour on the inside, one on the outside'. Finishes are space-age, frosty matt metallics in silver shimmer, black, purple, red, gunmetal and navy. 'Acetate tips are striped white with FCUK logo chips in contrasting colours.'

Pictured is a black and white acetate

OFC5308 model that provides a 'refreshing contrast to the boho/ethnic looks of this summer's collections.

Booth & Bruce introduced 13 new acetate unisex spectacles featuring plastics with acetate sides and available in subtle laminate colours. Shapes were softer and finished off, although still narrow and rectangular in shape. 'We make our spectacles colourful yet sellable,' said Peter Booth, commenting on other companies' tendency toward brightly coloured styles, which he said look great on the stand, but don't necessarily sell in the real world.

Dunelm launched six new Celine Dion rimless designs with multi-coloured sides. The ladies' supra featured Swarovski crystals for a touch of glamour. 'Wonderful show material, cases and cloths come complete with this range,' said a spokesperson. Cour Carre for men featured six metals and one acetate frame; Julian Beaumont introduced 23 acetate and supra styles for 'elegant ladies and smart stylish men'.

Emporium Eyewear director Malcolm Cooperman presented Carlucci's 50 style collection, which he said offered 'something for everyone'. A combination of metals and acetates, the unisex range is 'competitively priced' while offering 'a classical diamond appearance for mature ladies looking for an ornate temple'.



Tommy Hilfiger 7141 and 7091 from Viva



ProDesign 1339-43



Lindberg M2021j

match the temple colour.

IC!Berlin continues to innovate. At Mido in May it launched its first non-metal collection – Plastic! – and Silmo saw a range of new colours and shapes introduced, even a luxury horn version under a new brand, Onono.

Used to working with titanium sheets, IC!Berlin's Ralph Anderl said the plastic collection has opened the door to much more colour and 3D design. Certainly the plastic collection, such as Ernestine (page 15), seems to have emanated from designers who've been building up ideas

of what to do in 3D for some time. All kinds of stylish tweaks have been made to the plastic eyeshapes to make them far from conventional while retaining a wearable look. An in-depth look at the Onono, IC!Berlin's horn line will feature in OPTICIAN soon.

Mykita built on the early promise shown when it debuted at Silmo last year, with the launch of six sunglasses and 11 optical frames. The sunglasses all feature an innovative 'Silverline' finish on the material, with subtle horizontal lines engraved across the surface, similar to those found on a Dupont lighter.

The new models go into to Collection No 1 catering for addition face types. The feminine Ellen and the unisex Joe cater for narrow PDs, while Kate, June, Oscar and William are all suitable for broader faces.

Lindberg Strip is challenging the trendier end of the market with full-rim models, more aggressive lens shapes and bold temple designs. Meanwhile the Spirit collection now includes three completely new acetate temples featuring interesting patterns and colours. Lindberg now has its largest collection ever and hopes to build on the significant growth achieved over the last year.

ProDesign Denmark's contrasting colours continue to excite. 'Clean Danish design forms the basis of our products but we always add a twist of something





Cutler & Gross



Diesel, from Safilo, was recently voted Britain's coolest fashion brand in a YouGov poll



Eye'DC Cap

surprising, something unexpected,' said a spokeswoman. 'We aim to balance classic and clean with bold and bright to continuously keep classic styles updated.' Models 1339-1343 illustrate this well with black, white, silver and browns working together.

The latest additions to the Titan Minimal Art collection are again impressive at Silhouette. Model 8082 has nine colourways with lens colours for everything from golf to space: in July astronauts on board Discovery wore Titan Minimal Art with special lenses developed by Silhouette. The lenses, which let only 5.5 per cent of light penetrate, featured a thin gold coating to filter out the strong IR and UV rays in space.

UK distributor Terry Stevens returned from Silmo having secured a deal with Italian frame maker Demenego to carry the sunglass and optical collections of Rocco Barocco, a high-end Italian fashion house. Colours range from warm natural shades of Havana with natural lenses to classic colours such as black with smoked lenses, and contrasting black and white.

On the sportier side of the market, the relatively new entrant Kaenon Polarized



Recoil from Bollé's Snakes collection

continued to impress, with its mix of sport and fashion-orientated styles coupled with its SR91 lens material, which is neither glass, polycarbonate or CR39. Founder and president Steve Rosenberg said the company was driving its own Rx programme.

The company has doubled its business in the UK in the past year. 'We are blurring

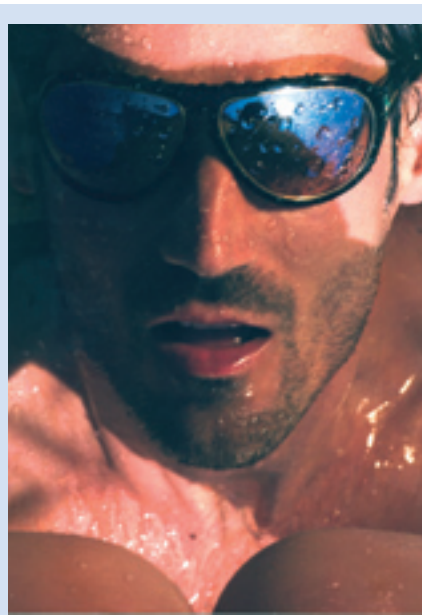


Just Cavalli JC135 from Marcolin

Top to bottom: 4909 from Rodenstock; i-i 324, available from Orange Eyewear; Ermenegildo Zegna VZ3506 from De Rigo; LA Eyeworks' Hicks; Fendi FS3391a



Face á Face celebrated 10 years with a collection of jewellery



## Ford splash

Marcolin managing director Maurizio Marcolin described the forfeiture of Dolce&Gabbana as a 'big loss of a big brand, which we worked hard to build for 10 years'.

'We had to overcome something that was not a Marcolin decision, but immediately the company made incredible changes and sought new partnerships,' he said.

Mr Marcolin credits shareholders Diego and Andrea Del Valle for contributing great ideas and connections, including Tom Ford. 'They have great marketing techniques, they know how to position brands and how to attract quality brands to us.'

'We have agreed the new Roberto Cavalli

line; I personally signed the Kenneth Cole agreement in America and we closed the agreement with Ferrari due to launch in the Spring.'

But the Tom Ford sunglass line was the focus for Silmo, comprising 20 models equally divided for men and women that are strong yet architecturally simple in design. Inspired by aviator sunglasses, sports glasses and film-star shapes, Ford's fluid designs mix luxurious materials with dramatic style.

Due for release in January is a TV ad campaign for the collection which promises to stir up some controversy. In an interview with the *Telegraph* magazine (October 29) Ford said: 'We shot it with porn stars. Two men and two women. And we paid them to have sex on set. You don't see it in the shot, but you feel it. You wait.'

Mr Marcolin said the exclusivity of the Tom Ford range means it will not be widely available. 'It's a luxury product that will have a luxury distribution.'

While he does not think the days of the designer name are limited, Mr Marcolin believes there is definitely a market for the smaller exclusive product. 'We want to represent both,' he said. 'We have the big brand notoriety, but also and especially with Tom Ford we have a luxury product that will never be available en masse. And the range is discreet. Consumers don't always want to be a brand sign walking around.'

For now, Mr Marcolin says the company is keen to consolidate its existing brands and he shrugs off the prospect of other major companies merging. 'So many companies are being absorbed that I don't think there are many left to consolidate. The mission of Marcolin is not to be the biggest but the best.'

the line between sports and fashion,' Rosenberg told OPTICIAN. 'They're over the "jock" look. We are what new athletes are looking for.' Part of this, he explains, is an increasing number of style-conscious women entering sport.

At Bollé, a similar softer approach to sports style is evident with the reintroduction of the company's Snakes collection. Successful a decade ago, these sporty, serpent-like models have been given a new lease of life with

three main fits: Serpent for smaller faces, Anaconda for broad faces and Recoil, for 'strong' face shapes.

Recoil is a base-8 frame available with the new photochromic polarized lenses. A spokeswoman said it was particularly suitable for men who like fast-moving sports such as skiing and surfing. The Bollé stand also featured a preview of the company's forthcoming optics collection.

◆ OPTICIAN December 2 will feature the lens and contact lens companies at the show.

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