

The *runway* REPORT

February 8, 2008 | Tuesday was ladies day at the tents. Brooke Shields and Kim Raver, stars of the new Candace Bushnell series "Lipstick Jungle", set to debut this week, attended the Fall/Winter 2008 New York Fashion Week designer collections of J. Mendel and Dennis Basso, along with members of the fashion press. It was a day marked by beautiful fur designs — modern shapes and styles that often integrated fur with other precious fabrications or melded two or three furs together — all revealing the best of contemporary American fur design.



Pamella Roland

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Designer Pamela Roland knows how to please her ladies and did so in her Fall/Winter 2008 collection. Ensemble dressing, put-together casual chic styles and evening looks are part and parcel of her customer's lifestyle and Roland delivered these looks in spades. Her palette of mostly classic black and white is a winning one for daytime. Her easy white wool jacket with fox-trimmed sleeves and black-and-white windowpane plaid pant made a casual chic statement. A chocolate lamb suede hooded anorak with chinchilla trim more than fit the bill for après ski or weekends in the country. The pièce de résistance of the collection was Roland's diamond patterned SAGA crystal mink coat with jeweled belt, (pictured) so perfect for that "Sex in the City" goddess, Samantha Jones, who would most likely consider it a must-have for next fall as will all of Ms. Roland's loyal fans.



Doo Ri

Dennis Basso

This virtuoso designer, who is celebrating his 25th anniversary as a furrier, brought the crowd to its feet in celebration of his ongoing success and his new Fall 2008 presentation. Basso scored big with his first runway look, a trapeze-shaped collarless coat with $\frac{3}{4}$ sleeves in creamy alligator with horizontally worked Russian sable. This look showed the best of modern fur design — the integration of a fashion shape, amazing technique and contemporary details — all in a beautifully sophisticated color palette. Basso also showed opal dyed mink with handmade ribbon inserts, Lippi cat and Russian sable and feathered coyote in a variety of styles. A natural smoke broadtail jacket with handmade lace inserts, bordered with silver fox, illustrated the designer's ability to translate beautiful fur into a fashion statement. From flattering pale shades to rich neutrals to sexy shades of black, Basso's fur story this season had all the elements needed to ensure success with the fashion pack.



Dennis Basso

Doo Ri

Designer Doo Ri Chung, who has an almost cult-like following for her intricate jersey dresses, chose a new direction for her most recent collection. Sculptural elegance might best describe this talented young designer's new focus. In the past, she twisted and draped jersey



Badgley Mischka

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Designers Mark Badgley and James Mischka were inspired by Bianca Jagger for their Fall collection. Floppy hats, layering, a mix of short and long styles, a spiced-up print story and high suede boots set the pace for the duo's daytime story. Both their cropped chocolate broadtail and fox vest, worn with a bright turtleneck and glen plaid pant, and their gold washed-fox belted vest with green apple turtleneck and slim bronze lurex houndstooth pant told their pretty-yet-sporty daytime story. The dynamic duo also followed through for their gals with a pretty shoulder-grazing sleeveless black beaver and sheared mink top, which when paired with a black bell skirt offered an elegant alternative to the cocktail dress. Known best for their red-carpet looks, the boys did not disappoint. They delivered some of the drop-dead looks that their followers crave for big evenings, as in their amethyst ikat chiffon gown topped with the accessory of the season, the vest, here cropped mini-style in black lamb.

J. Mendel

Gilles Mendel is a true innovator. The furrier-turned-designer displayed his talents in both arenas in his Fall 2008 runway show held at the Plaza Hotel. Mendel knows his way around furs and this collection brimmed with opulence and new ideas that his socialite-and-star clientele will love. This season Mendel often integrated two and three furs in one garment, notably in an opulent chestnut goat and black sheared Copenhagen Platinum mink coat with brown-dyed platinum silver box sleeves. For the ultimate in elegant simplicity, a bateau neck chestnut-dyed Copenhagen Platinum Chinchilla coat dress with cropped sleeves was hard to beat. In a season where designers are showing their sporty chic side, a rounded black wool and silk cocoon back jacket with sheared ranch mink trim and tweed full skirt was striking, yet subdued. For evening, black goat stoles, dyed silver fox scarves and dyed platinum mink jackets topped red-carpet-ready crepe back satin and silk chiffon gowns for a look that is perfectly suited to the sexy and powerful women depicted by the "Lipstick Jungle" girls in his front row.



J. Mendel

satin T-shirt and slim pant. She merges artistry and form in a rounded blue iris mink jacket with a sheer organza overlay. While followers will still clamor for her signature jersey pieces, this season Doo Ri has given them an additional reason to follow her lead.

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