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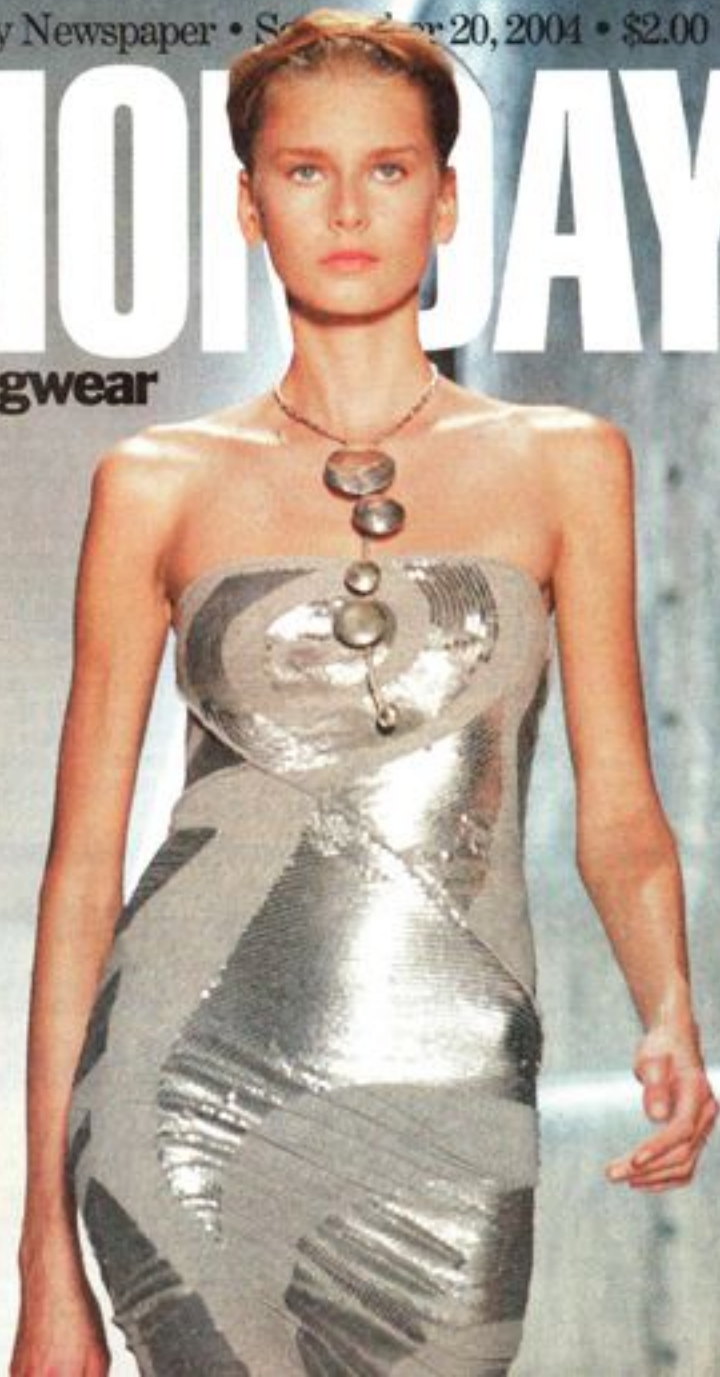
WWD MONDAY

Accessories/Innerwear/Legwear

Hi-ho, Silver...

...and gold and bronze. Metallic fabrics and motifs played important roles on the New York spring runways. They turned up, for example, at Donna Karan, who went in a new, more clean-cut and industrial direction this season, which influenced even relatively small details, as in corset looks with utilitarian net insets. Here, one of her metal-spiked styles: a striking cotton jersey evening dress with splashes of silver sequins. For more on the trend, see pages 6 and 7.

**Diego Della Valle's Drive:
New Products at Tod's**



Vertigo Returns With Modern French Twist

By David Moin

NEW YORK — Vertigo, the better-priced contemporary line, has returned to Manhattan's East Side with a store created in the mood of Paris in the Forties with a twist of modernism.

With a reconstituted and broader collection, the 5,000-square-foot store at 36 East 60th Street has been renamed Vertigo and Friends and is expected to hit \$4 million in first-year sales, according to Larry Kaynes, an owner of the store, which is a joint venture with Vertigo U.S.A., a subsidiary of Vertigo, the Paris-based manufacturer. Ultimately, Kaynes expects the store, which he considers a flagship, to reach \$5 million to \$6 million in annual sales.

He also said that several additional Manhattan sites are already being sought, and that he's partial to Bleeker Street, SoHo, Third Avenue in the Seventies, and Columbus Avenue on the Upper West Side. He is also considering stores in Connecticut, New Jersey and Westchester County, N.Y., but has no additional leases finalized at this point.

The 60th Street unit, located between Park and Madison Avenues on the same block as Dooney & Bourke, opened Sept. 7. Two years ago, Vertigo had a store on Madison and 65th Street that closed because the company thought it was too small and wouldn't be able to handle a more comprehensive and upgraded collection.

"The line had to be redesigned," Kaynes said. "We've upgraded it. It's a bit more modern, and we are using more expensive fabrics. Prices are about 25 percent higher, and we are much more fashion-forward. We want to brand Vertigo as a total collection."

The 20-year-old Vertigo does about \$30 million in wholesale and retail volume combined, according to Kaynes. The French company has a showroom here and operates four Vertigo stores in Florida, three stores in Paris and one in California.

Jean-Marc Zarka is founder, president and chief executive officer of Vertigo; Philippe Pire is a partner and vice president. Other partners are Daniel Mimoun, who is also the designer, and Simon Attias, who runs the non-U.S. operations.

Kaynes also owns Shari's Place, a two-unit designer store in Boca Raton, Fla., and Kings Point, Long Island. Some of the 15 suppliers to Shari's Place will help stock the Vertigo and Friends store with shoes, outerwear, handbags, knitwear, jeans, leather, suede, shearlings and T-shirts. While Vertigo and Friends sells such labels as Notify Jeans and Pirelli winter boots, both from Italy,



A new showcase for Vertigo's revamped collection.

and Edge boots and moccasins from Australia, about 70 percent of the merchandise bears the Vertigo label.

The 60th Street site formerly housed a center for medical testing, such as blood work, and had much of its original elements covered up with tar or plywood. The building was stripped bare, and now has exposed brick walls and two skylights 16 feet high above a small bistro serving wine, juices and sodas.

There are also Brazilian mahogany wood floors, white columns, vintage wallpaper, a mosaic tile floor at the entrance, chandeliers, animal-print ottomans and zebra carpets. Kaynes said it cost about \$1 million to build and decorate the store and that it has a 20-year lease.

Rather than merchandising by category, "We are just merchandising by color and feel and how we want to see customers wear the collection," Kaynes explained.

"We've had a 360-degree revamp. Now we consider the collection to be designer-inspired at affordable items," said Meg Himmelfarb, sales manager, citing such items as cashmere/wool jackets priced at \$690, pleated sueded evening bags for \$310 or animal skin handbags, around \$600.

The executives also noted the collection has greater detailing and luxury appeal than in the past, citing such bestsellers as the \$895 suede jackets with zip-off pockets and raw edge seams, or the goat suede capri pant, priced at \$695. In addition, precious jewelry by Michelle Lynn is sold.

"There are a lot of young, trendy of-the-moment pieces, and classic pieces that appeal to someone who doesn't want something as funky or embellished," Himmelfarb said. "There's a much broader spectrum."