

SPORTSWEAR INTERNATIONAL #231

MAY/JUN 2010
D87003

THE MENSWEAR ISSUE

GERMANY € 12,00
SWITZERLAND SFR 25,70
DENMARK DKR 110,00
UK £ 9,70 / USA \$ 17
REST OF EUROPE € 14
REST OF WORLD € 16

SPRING/SUMMER 2011

MODERN SAMURAI

FEATURE
THE STATE OF
MENSWEAR

FASHION
TRENDS
NEW NATURE

PEOPLE
BILLY REID &
ROBERT GELLER

GOOD NEWS FOR THE MODERN MAN

BY CHRISTOPHER BLOMQUIST
RESEARCH: SPORTSWEAR TEAM

MEN SEEM TO HAVE FINALLY FOUND
A WAY TO EMBRACE FASHION
WITHOUT LOSING THEIR
MASCULINITY.

3. 'THE EXCITEMENT OF NEW CREATIONS' GREEK-BORN, TOKYO-BASED MENSWEAR DESIGNER MICHAIL GKINIS LAUNCHED HIS CUTTING-EDGE BRAND APTFORM IN MARCH 2008. HERE HE DISCUSSES THE LABEL'S EVOLUTION AND HIS ONGOING DESIRE TO PUSH THE CREATIVE ENVELOPE IN ANDROGYNOUS, ART-INSPIRED MENSWEAR. INTERVIEW: PAUL McINNES

➤ Can you tell us about your new a/w 2010 collection?

It's based on the idea of "industrial versus nature" which is part of my brand philosophy. I got interested in the photographs of Karl Blossfeldt—he's a late 19th century scientist and photographer of plants. I was intrigued by the way the plants develop and this, for me, is the highest form of artistic expression without restriction. I like to make single layer shirts, jackets and coats that are lightweight and I started to work on this subject while incorporating more technical aspects.

Where do you get your textiles?

Everything is always made in Japan and for this collection I collaborated with fantastic textile companies like Maruwa Knit and Furuhashi Textiles. I used their traditional techniques and technological material to make items such as jackets and shirts. I also use my own original technique which is leather bonded with cotton and then cut and then hand knitted. These items are also highly regarded by men but also by women. We also used a new technique in collaboration with Japanese artisan Kuniko Shinohara. It's called *yubiami*, which is knitting by fingers. She created this technique and she has even produced many books about it. She knitted some *yubiami* vests and various other items for us. The cornice scarves, using new Japanese yarn, have also been popular.

Are you doing other accessories?

Yes, gloves, scarves, belts and suspenders. The belts use washed leather and the gloves are hand painted by me.

How many pieces do you have in this collection?

About 40 pieces.

You have been picked up by Blake womenswear boutique in Chicago haven't you?

Yes, it has always been our intention to make

men's clothes which can also be used for women. Our comfortable, distressed jackets can be fashionable for women too. Women could wear these utility clothes from day until night. Also a lot of the clothes look classic but have a more futuristic twist. This is partly what aptform is about.

Who do you design for?

I design for me but broadly speaking he is 30 to 40 years old, a creative person who belongs in the artistic world. Someone who is confident in life and likes to experiment with nice materials and shapes. They are not afraid to challenge themselves. People who can be happy wearing nice materials and nice silhouettes.

What do you think about menswear designers who play it safe and stick to obvious trends and traditional looks?

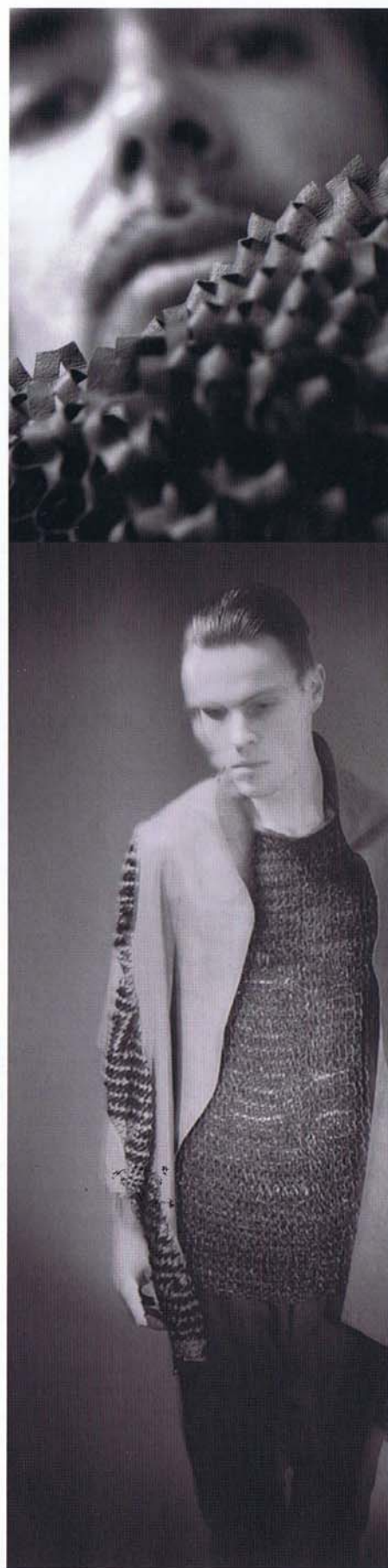
It's about the market you are targeting on and the goal you want to achieve. I'm not against it. However I personally concentrate on my work and my development and the excitement of new creations.

Are there any other living menswear designers who you like and respect?

Creation is always alive. I normally don't think about living or dead designers however Carol Christian Poell is a menswear designer that I respect.

What's the next step for aptform?

To focus on entering the US market. We have had a good response there and we have an offer to work and be represented there and we want to take the direction of men's designs for the women's market. I like to play with the idea that two people can wear the same jacket. Sometimes my wife and I wear the same items with little adaptations. This is a forward-looking way of making and wearing clothes.



PORTRAIT PHOTO: YOICHI SHIDOMOTO

PHOTO: JAMIE DE ALMEIDA