

## Fashion Focus: First Lady Chic

First ladies have always been scrutinized for their fashion sense (or lack thereof), but it appears that the current first lady, so far, has been the recipient of heaps of positive reviews. *Fashion-era.com* says that the one-shoulder style dress Michelle Obama wore to the inauguration ball is a hot style for 2009. Her white Jason Wu gown was embellished with Swarovski crystals. She also wore a Wu dress, this time in fuchsia, for the cover of *Vogue*.

In addition to white, *Fashion-era.com* says yellow is the color for 2009, reporting that citrine lemon and buttercup gold are colors of "hope, optimism and new beginnings." Besides solid colors, black and white combined with animal prints and nautical looks are hot.



Find a selection of bright, colorful scarves from industry suppliers, including Wolfmark (*asi/98085*) and Symphony designs (*asi/90452*)



This cashmere sweater, part of SanMar's (*asi/84863*) Luxe Red House line, can be combined with a fuchsia or yellow tank. Circle 120 on Free Info Card



This Half the Sky Designs tote is made from a recycled rice sack.

### TIP

Stocking your shop with some unique accessories or bags adorned with earthy images will send a signal to your clients that you're fashion conscious and attuned to trends.

TIP:

For accessories such as bags, belts and hats, glamour is back. Fashion-era.com indicates that bags with raffia, wood, natural beads and crewel embroidery are in, as well as wide, snakeskin or lizard-skin belts with embellished buckles. Hats, hairpins and necklaces with flower attachments, especially roses, are also big.



## Accessor-Wise: Hats

From the Betsey Johnson bowler to Nicole Miller's smart little fedora to Douglas Hannant's uniquely oversized and otherworldly series of sun hats, top designers are supplying us with plenty of styles to choose from. Hats add an extra touch of color and class to an outfit. Purchased in bulk, they make perfect employee gifts; they can also accent uniforms. Philadelphia Rapid Transit (*asi/77945*) Owner Peter Goldman lauds hats this season, particularly solid colors to accompany outfits, as well as the customary straw hat: "We're getting a lot of requests for straw hats, especially those with big brims to block out the sun." Printing and embroidery requests are also on the rise, Goldman says.

— *Alissa Tallman*

Sun N Sand (*asi/90142*; Circle 121) makes this glamorous floppy sun hat (HH342) with floral trim.

Alternative Apparel (*asi/34850*; Circle 122) carries this jaunty wool cap (ah63) in an array of colors, including black dobby, red herringbone and olive plaid.



## On the Art Side: Ethnic Design

In the central Asian country of Uzbekistan, embroidery is one of the most popular forms of art, practiced solely by women. At one time, embroidered pieces were created as part of a dowry and included gowns, cloaks, purses, belts and skullcaps, as well as home interior accents such as blankets, bedspreads, prayer rugs and tablecloths. In the 1800s and early 1900s, local silk threads were colored using natural plant dyes, producing soft colors.

The chain stitch, one of the most ancient stitches, is often used to cover the entire surface of the fabric so no light penetrates it. Designs, styles and colors vary based on area, but some of the more popular elements include vegetables, flowers, birds, and an eight-pointed star in the middle and four aromas in the corners.

Suzan, which comes from the Tajik word meaning needle, is a traditional embroidery method for items like wall hangings, which can take months to complete.

Today, home interior accents using Uzbek embroidery are an emerging trend. "Most interior design to the trade fabric lines has put this type of imagery into its collections," says Michael Savoia, owner of Villa Savoia Inc. "When I purchased an

antique panel a few years ago, there wasn't much on the market except old pieces. The people of Uzbekistan have since realized the value of their designs and have added many reproductions of these pieces to the retail market. You really could call it a rebirth of Ottoman Empire imagery – Islamic floral



imagery from Spain, Uzbekistan, Morocco and India creating a modern primitive inspiration to interiors."

Savoia has embroidered curtains for actress Katie McGloin based on an antique Suzani panel which he purchased on eBay. "I've also made pillows for Katie, using appliqué," he says. "This is a good way of saving the images from pieces that are too deteriorated to use."

Product Showcase:

# Fabulous Bags

By Jill Malcolm

Add a little **bohemian-chic flair** to any ensemble with this oversized drawstring shoulder bag. Constructed from soft and supple leather, the bag features textured woven straps, striated vertical stitch detailing and antique brass elements. Available from Latico Leathers (*asi/66575*), 800-969-8426, product L8117. Circle 123 on Free Info Card



**TIP**  
Embroidering on leather can be tricky. Check out [Myembroiderymentor.com](http://Myembroiderymentor.com) for tips.

With an eye-catching **polka dot pattern** and contrasting trim and handle color detail, this beach-ready canvas tote is sure to bring a touch of summer to any look. Made from 100% cotton canvas and available in three brilliant color combinations, this bag features a large zippered main compartment with polyester lining. Available from Earth Accessories (*asi/51496*), 877-463-2784, product 9002004. Circle 124 on Free Info Card



**TIP**  
A screen-printed logo in foil ink would liven up this bag even more.

Made from lightweight, **stain-resistant neoprene** material and water-resistant nylon, this bag works just as hard as your clients do. Tough and durable, this mod striped bag features an adjustable shoulder strap, two exterior pockets and a drawstring nylon closure. This is a trendy accessory for the nursery, the gym and everywhere in between. Available from Built NY Inc. (*asi/42422*), 212-227-2044. Circle 125 on Free Info Card



**TIP**  
To keep this bag truly water-proof, make sure you consult with your backing vendor to select the right stabilizer.

This **leather bag's tote style** makes it a versatile and stylish option for work or play. Features large front and back pockets, an interior organizer, hand and shoulder straps, textured leather for color depth and an ample main compartment for carrying life's essentials. Available from Latico Leathers (*asi/66575*), 800-969-8426, product L2591. Circle 126 on Free Info Card



**TIP**  
To keep this bag looking luxe, add a simple monogram or small logo on the bottom right-hand corner of the pocket.

Sassy, spunky and vibrant, this **drawstring tote shoulder bag** is sure to turn heads. It has a bright inner lining, shoulder and hand straps, chrome hardware, and comes in a variety of fun and playful patterns. Available from JoAnn Marie Designs (*asi/63381*), 714-996-0550. Circle 127 on Free Info Card



**TIP**  
For an eye-catching logo look, try a Swarovski crystal custom heat transfer.

## Thread Trends: Rayon vs. Polyester

The term rayon was first used in 1924, but it was actually the first manufactured fiber, originally developed in France in 1890 as an inexpensive alternate to silk. According to *Fibersource.com*, in the production of rayon, purified cellulose is chemically converted into a soluble compound. A solution of this compound is passed through the spinneret to form soft filaments that are regenerated into almost pure cellulose. Because of the reconversion of the soluble compound to cellulose, rayon is referred to as a regenerated cellulose fiber.

Polyester is manufactured from synthesized polymers and produced with petroleum products. Kristine Shreve, director of marketing for EnMart, says that polyester is considered the stronger of the two threads, with rayon tending to experience more thread breaks.

“Both rayon and polyester thread can be

used for machine embroidery,” Shreve says. “Polyester thread can stand up to higher wash temperatures and more caustic detergent, so it is the ideal thread for uniforms and industrial clothing. Rayon thread shouldn’t be used for embroidery that will be washed with harsh detergents or in high temperatures.”

Shreve says both rayon and polyester thread can be washed with detergent, but care should be taken not to bleach the thread. “Polyester thread can be washed at higher temperatures than rayon thread,” she says. “If your client wants to hand wash an embroidered garment, tell her to make sure there’s enough water so the garment can float. Also, the wearer should rinse the garment thoroughly and get the majority of the water out with a gentle twisting motion. Then, hang the garment to dry immediately.”

## Stabilizer Secrets: Eco-Friendly Backing

What works on all fabrics, is needle-friendly and biodegradable? The EcoStick tear-away/wash-away sticky stabilizer with pressure-sensitive adhesive.

Fred Lebow, owner of Lebow Consulting, says that the EcoStick is used for hoopless embroidery or clamp-type applications when the item to be embroidered can’t be hooped because it’s irregularly shaped. It’s also used to avoid ring burn from hoops on towels and other high-pile items. The adhesive holds the item in place while the needles penetrate it so it doesn’t move, preventing loss of registration.

Lebow says it’s best to achieve a “tambourine skin” tension in the hoop. “Score the release paper and pull off; stick the item to be embroidered into position on the sticky surface and smooth out any bubbles or creases; and then embroider,” Lebow says. “Then remove the item and tear off the excess stabilizer. Any stabilizer residue will disappear after an initial wash, except under the stitches where it’ll remain to keep the stitches locked in place.”



Photo courtesy of A Design by Lyn

### BB101— Kids Poly-Cotton Short Sleeve T-Shirt



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## Divine Designs: Reiki Embroidery

All artists, including embroiderers, decorators and digitizers, depend on their hands for their creations. Reiki masters also use the power emanating from the hands to do their work. Reiki is a Japanese technique for healing, reducing stress and strengthening vital energy fields in the

By setting up her company, Auclair says she could continue to offer custom digitizing to her customers while following a path of being a healer. "As a healer, I saw there was nothing much out there for those of us who are called to this work, so I began to embroider what came to me through meditation, or what 'resonated' within me as I searched design areas such as Google Images and other sources."

Auclair's ideas are sent to her inspirationally. "If I feel a chord of truth ringing in my soul as I concentrate on an image or 'see' something in my mind's eye, then I know it's right," she says. "I live this life – it's not about a market that I think will bring me money. I believe in healing others. I do what I can to bring comfort to others, the Earth, animals, whatever needs it. I believe in being calm, speaking from a point of love and understanding, meditating to be centered as

much as possible, so for me it's innate."

Some of her designs resonate with both healers and non-healers, such as the Healing Hand design, plus the Reiki symbol both in modern and traditional Kanji. "Reiki means Universal Life Energy, so I suspect that's why people connect with it," she says. Another favorite is the Flower of Life. "It's created from sacred geometrical shapes. I have been driven to embroider that over and over. It calls to people."

As a healer, Auclair is involved in groups that also do this work and is able to take advantage of that networking source. "Years ago I read a quote that said, 'If you do what you have a passion for, the money will follow.' I've got the passion part down – now, I'm just waiting for the money."

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body by laying on hands, and Jerilee Auclair, owner of Busy Head Creations, incorporates Reiki into her work.

"I'm a Reiki master; I've been called to that work," Auclair says. "I got tired of the punishing demands of corporate logo work, so I did two things: I set up a company and staffed it with exceptional digitizers for all corporate work and I began to embroider the things I was being guided to do."

asi/77963

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## NEWS BRIEFS

**AnaJet Inc.** has announced a new direct-to-garment printer model, the SPRINT Digital Apparel Printer. It incorporates a new print head, print engine, Auto Print Head Maintenance and the company's highly acclaimed Closed Loop Ink Delivery System for garment printing.

**Imprintables Warehouse** has announced the winners of its Spectra Patterns contest. First place winner was Bridget VanGinkel, who used Spectra Patterns to decorate a doll house including bed spreads, wallpaper and doilies. She won a Hotronix Auto cap press with standard and children's size platens and 10 yards of Spectra patterns material.

**Penn Emblem Co.** (asi/62485) has announced that Penn Sports Patches, a division of Penn Emblem, has launched a new Web site. It can be found at [www.sportpatches.com](http://www.sportpatches.com).

**Stahls' ID Direct** has introduced new seasonal heat transfers featuring U.S. and Canadian patriotic-themed designs for application onto apparel. The transfers are available in CAD-CUT heat transfer vinyl and CAD-PRINTZ Digital Transfers.

**TRG Group** (asi/90507) helped raise over \$1 million through the March of Dimes "March for Babies" annual fundraising walk. Over 70 TRG employees raised money for this year's campaign.

**U.S. Branding Group LLC** (asi/92777) has launched its ThreadLites and TechnoThread Illuminated Branded apparel line. Illuminated logos and designs can be customized on T-shirts immediately. Illuminated caps and other products will be available in the next few months.

## CALENDAR

### JULY

July 10-12, New England  
ISS Show  
(800) 241-9034; [www.issshows.com](http://www.issshows.com)

July 17-20, Los Angeles  
California Gift Show  
(213) 430-2300; [www.californiagiftshow.com](http://www.californiagiftshow.com)

July 21-22, Chicago  
TS2  
(703) 683-8500; [www.ts2show.com](http://www.ts2show.com)

July 21-23, Chicago  
ASI Show Chicago  
(800) 546-3300; [www.asishow.com](http://www.asishow.com)

July 24-25, Nashville  
NNEP Show  
(800) 866-7396; [www.nnep.net](http://www.nnep.net)

July 25-28, Orlando  
Orlando Gift Show  
(678) 285-3976; [www.orlandogiftshow.com](http://www.orlandogiftshow.com)

July 30-31, Nashville  
PPAMS PromoShow  
(931) 695-3117; [www.ppams.com](http://www.ppams.com)

July 30-August 1, Long Beach  
The Printwear Show  
(966) 893-7682; [www.nbmshows.com](http://www.nbmshows.com)

### AUGUST

August 4-6, Long Beach  
The SAAC Show  
(818) 346-1796; [www.saac.net](http://www.saac.net)

August 8-11, San Francisco  
San Francisco International Gift Fair  
(914) 421-3200; [www.sfig.com](http://www.sfig.com)

August 12, Houston  
"Hot Stuff" Booth Show  
(281) 238-4772; [www.houstonppa.org](http://www.houstonppa.org)

August 13, San Antonio  
CAPPA Show  
(830) 980-9077; [www.cappatexas.org](http://www.cappatexas.org)

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