

Blues, greens, big size rule N.Y. fashion week

By Hannah Connorton

NEW YORK—Every shade of blue, a lot of green, lavender and pale yellow with ornamentation and bigger proportions and an increased interest in men's jewelry—those are the predicted trends for jewelry this year, hot off the runways of New York's fashion week.

Casual style trickling its way into day and night wear will also affect designers' boundaries as the "high-low" mentality of dressing comes into play.

"We're going to start to see, in jewelry, a lot of designers who are veering towards blues, greens, oranges, reds and purple colors," Michael O'Connor, jewelry style expert and celebrity stylist, explains.

There's a lot of color in fashion, O'Connor says, and it dictates for jewelry designers the colors that will be requested by the people who buy those clothing pieces. Gayle Grenadier's Italian chrysoprase, 18-karat yellow gold earrings, shown above, exemplify the type of gemstone hue that may be in demand.

Fashion has also transitioned from ultimate simplicity back to ornamentation, with more exaggerated details in beading, ruffles and fringes.

"In order to keep up with beading, big shoulder pads, large ornamentation, jewelry needs to maintain a proportion that is going to work with that," O'Connor predicts. "Jewelry, overall, is going to get bigger."

Helena Krodel, director of media and special events at Jewelers of America, agrees, predicting interest in cluster earrings that will feature gemstones, pearls or diamonds, grouped together in abstract or finite shapes, sitting predominantly on the ear. Gladiator-type neck cuffs, not malleable but form-fitting around the neck, are also expected to become more popular into the year.

Krodel also foresees a continuation of large cuff bracelets into fall 2011. "It's something we've been seeing for a couple of seasons, and now it's just mixing them eclectically," she says.

Krodel also notes that the presence of lace in fashion will not only influence jewelry design, but the cost of pieces made from precious metals. Lace's cut-out design will translate to the metal, creating a feminine look and, possibly, a more affordable look.

"Openwork will make jewelry look large, but keep the weight and cost down," she explains these upcoming trends, previewing a number of clothing designers' fashion styles for the fall.

Global buying house CIRCA was also in attendance (below), showcasing multiple items from their collection of estate jewelry.

Day and evening wear is also an indicator of where jewelry design is heading. In evening wear, there's been a slight relaxing of lines and a more natural approach to makeup and hair-dos, which translates to a more casual attitude towards daywear and a mixing and matching of elements.

"This affects jewelry because people develop a high-low mentality when it comes to putting together daily looks," O'Connor says, explaining the mixing of casual pieces with one or two stand-out "status" pieces.

Jewelry is used in the same way—people will pick a statement area, like their neck, wear an attention-grabbing necklace and wear it with tiny stud earrings. Paired with a more casual outlook on fashion, jewelry designers will experiment with different kinds of materials, hanging pendants from chords, using rough gemstones or utilizing materials that don't cost a lot.

"So you get a great looking piece of jewelry, but it's on a silk chord or on a piece of leather," O'Connor says. "That's how that kind of casualness impacts jewelry."

The stylist said he's also seeing more men venture into the idea of jewelry,

namely younger male celebrities who don't embody the idea of men not wearing jewelry. Consequently, walls of men's leather bracelets, necklaces with shells and other pieces are showing up in lower-end stores.

Silver jewelry also made an appearance on the runway at fashion week,



with the Silver Promotion Service (SPS) dressing models for the New York label Ruffian fashion show.

SPS provided pieces from its Savor Silver roster of designers and manufacturers for Ruffian's "Tuxedo Park" show, including jewelry from Robert Lee Morris, Ippolita, Paz Collective and Thistle & Bee.

Brian Wolk and Claude Morais, creators of Ruffian, invited the SPS to sponsor the jewelry for their show to complement the "Hollywood glamour" silver theme their fall 2011 collection embraces.

Silver cuffs in various sizes were the most commonly seen accessory among the models, void of gemstone or color detail, yet complementing to the clothing in its simplicity and color. Long necklaces made of interlocking hoops and other shapes and a pair of hoop earrings also made a debut on the Ruffian runway.

Additionally, Pantone, a renowned authority on color, chose honeysuckle as the 2011 Pantone Color of the Year.

"Honeysuckle is a captivating, stimulating color that gets the adrenaline going," Leatrice Eiseman, says executive director of the Pantone Color Institute.

