

Paris fabric fair report: Spring 2016

Dimensions Designers reveal new fabrics and techniques influencing their designs

Spring Summer 2016 may seem a while away, but in the fashion design world, it is only around the corner. In Spring 2015, Paris was host to international trade shows *Premiere Vision (PV)* and *Texworld*. These two exhibitions are invaluable to the Dimensions design team who ensure they visit the shows each season. Our experienced designers Bindu & Sally provide an overview of their finds from the shows:

Why are these two shows imperative for you as a design team:

Bindu: *"There are something like 1,700 exhibitors at the PV show and 600 at Texworld which puts us in the middle of two very inventive atmospheres which excite and influence from the minute you walk through the door. We make this trip every 6 months as it provides us with colour, trend and fabric information which is priceless for us as designers. Our eyes are opened to what manufacturers are able to offer us in terms of future developments which we can then bring back and integrate into garments for customers. This trip really helps to inspire and trigger new ideas and helps us explore what is out there."*

Sally: *"It's a real sensory trip as it's all about what we can see, touch and feel. We see new innovations, and unique developments from a whole host of suppliers so it's also a really efficient way of finding out what's available in the market and offers so much more than searching for something on the internet or reading in trade press. It's just a great opportunity for us to be inspired and motivated for when we get back to the office."*

Do you go to find anything in particular?

Sally: *Although we go there with a few ideas of what we'd like to find, we try not to be too prescriptive and keep an open mind as you never know what we might come across. Like magpies, we are drawn to what catches the eye. It's not just about finding fabrics we can show to our customers today, but also about getting inspiration and understanding design directions for tomorrow. We always come across some really interesting things, some of which may not be ready for our market right this moment, but could be a possibility for the future. It's a real buzz to be around manufacturers who are excited to show you what they have developed and then for us to think how we could integrate the new techniques and technologies for our customers".*

Bindu: *"Each year there are new innovations which we look to bring back and discuss with the rest of our design and fabric teams to see how we could use them with our customers."*



Dimensions Designers Sally Anne Roe & Bindu Rivas

Our wearers are very vocal and we are constantly trying to push the boundaries of corporatewear and make it not so corporate! People want something to make their wearers stand out, be noticed and feel good in."

In terms of colours, were there any emerging trends?

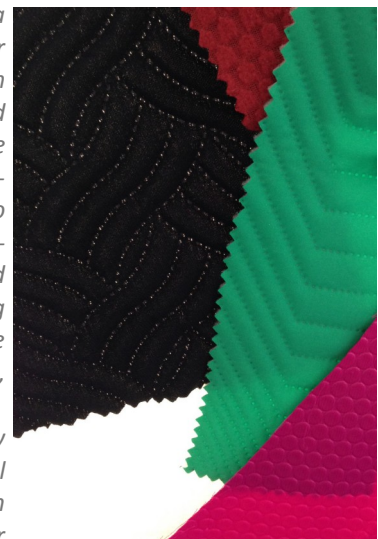
Bindu: *"There was a real variety of colours on offer this year; burnt oranges and ochre yellows, inky blues and soft turquoises to quite vibrant energetic greens. There were lots of metallic sheens and finishes too. All our customers have their own brand colours which we use when designing, but it's good to be aware about what's emerging within the retail and designer markets."*

What were the main fabric trends you saw this year?

Bindu: *"The new and emerging technologies were fascinating. Printed mesh fabrics were very popular, as were embossed fabrics."*

Sally: *"We saw a strong trend of laser cutting techniques, in particular on bonded fabrics. This could be great for warmth jackets in the future to create interesting contrasting and layered effects, incorporating brand colours into the garment in a unique, yet wearable way."*

We saw some really interesting optical illusion prints used on modern jersey. For example, a jersey sweatshirt printed to look like a traditional knitted jumper."



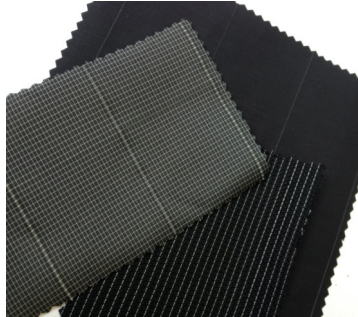
Embossed Fabrics

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Bindu: "There were a lot of developments with waterproof fabrics – especially lightweight waterproofs. There had also been a big surge in paper fabrics this year too. We saw a lot of secretly reflective fabrics which can be seen as subtle silver during the day but which becomes reflective at night. They were really interesting fabrics."

Sally: "In terms of trends, we saw a big merge between formal and casual wear; futuristic, technical sporty fabrics in traditional formal prints such as checks and stripes. High tech waterproof fabrics have also taken on a more traditional, heritage look, such as brushed wools with showerproof backing. Fleece backed



Secretively reflective fabrics

suitings, which we already offer, are continuing to be popular and are developing to include a wider range of fabric types, including more feminine options. These are great for warmth whilst giving the wearer a smart appearance.

Quilting and embossing has been very popular at the exhibitions for a few years now, but this year the designs have become much more detailed and intricate."

Bindu: "Jacquard weave was also extremely popular – it was on all sorts of garments; jackets, knits, polo shirts, ties & scarves. Literally anything. There was also a prominent trend of seam free clothing which had a really nice clean finish. There were quite a lot of jackets with laser cut pockets which had seamless clean finishes."



Jacquard Fabrics

Sally: "Body mapping is also continuing to be strong in performance clothing. In particular, we saw a lot of seam-free jersey tops featuring body contouring sections in textured knits to create a flattering, sporty look."

Bindu: "Marl and melange mixes were also widespread throughout the suppliers but it was Thermochromic prints which really caught my eye. They were really popular with manufacturers which gets the brain thinking – how can we use this in corporatewear? Antisnagging and antipilling finishes were prevalent as were waxed finishes which had good clean textures. There was also a large amount

of outerwear fabrics with stretch which traditionally do not hold this property."



Formal outerwear fabrics

When will we start to see these trends progressing to our customers?

Sally: "The suppliers are always showcasing trends for a year ahead so we saw things for spring summer 2016 in the fashion world. Depending on the individual customer's requirements, it can take longer to develop fabrics to be suitable for the corporate wear market to ensure they perform and are fit for purpose. It is also important, unlike fashion, that we interpret trends carefully in a way that is not just seasonal but has a timeless appeal as it is highly unlikely our customers will be looking to change their uniform every 6 months."

Bindu: "It's a great way to go and find new suppliers, especially European suppliers. We know our customers demand shorter lead times and so these European shows are a great way to identify what manufacturers closer to home are capable of."



Embossed Fabrics

If you would like to understand more, please contact us on 01332 697 350 or email info@dimensions.co.uk