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Molto Chic

NEW YORK — Step aside, layers and pilings and bulk. Marc Jacobs took a 180 on Monday night, delivering a stunning, austere collection inspired by Bertolucci's "The Conformist." And there was plenty of understated drama, too, as demonstrated by this sequined, tailored jumpsuit. For more on the shows, see pages 6 to 15.

**Adding Different Facets:
Swarovski Eyes Growth**

Exec Tech

Pattern Company Creates Community

By Cate T. Corcoran

Joining the online tech-craft renaissance, magazine publisher and pattern making company Burda Moden has created an online community for "open source" sewing patterns.

The idea comes from open source software, such as the Linux operating system, which is free and can be modified by any programmer. A special collection of Burda patterns is available online and can be printed for free and sewers can post photos of their creations online. They are encouraged to alter the patterns and post instructions.

"It is our dream to have a fashion show" of the outfits people make, said Benedikta Karaisl von Karais, Burda Style's designer.

Designer Wendy Mullin of Brooklyn, N.Y., who has three stores and designed special collections for Wrangler, tapped into a similar idea when she sponsored a contest of designs made with Simplicity patterns from her Sew U book, which came out in September and teaches sewers how to creatively adapt patterns.

The McCall Pattern Co. sells Vogue, Butterick and other patterns online but does not yet have an online community.

Fitz Patterns and Craft magazine also offer free patterns online.

At Burda Style, sewers may create online profiles where they can post photos and videos of their creations and instructions of how to make something, list supplies for trade and bookmark favorite designs from other sewers.

The site has been up for a week, and even before there was any publicity, sewers from as far as Iran, Sweden, Germany and Russia visited and left comments or posted photos.

For instance, Jennifer Tomaszewski of Milwaukee had transformed the Ellinor tunic — originally made up by the Burda team in a disco-worthy sequined black chiffon — into something more suitable for a breezy picnic with the addition of buttons and looped buttonholes and the choice of a sprightly striped cotton.

She also photographed every step of the process, which she posted with instructions on the site.

Sewers are welcome to use patterns from any company. "We don't see it as competition," said Nora Abousteit, who handles marketing and communication for Burda Style.

The idea for the site and the collection was Herbert Burda's, the son of the founders, Abousteit said. He wanted to create younger styles and reach a younger audience.

Burda patterns are well-known among older sewers, such as teacher and author Sandra Betzina, for their precise fit, particularly in jacket sleeves and pants.

Abousteit and Karaisl von Karais make up the Burda Style team, which is located in an old bank in the Forte Greene neighborhood of Brooklyn, near the base of the Manhattan Bridge. It is no accident that the two share offices with Etsy, the online craft marketplace. Etsy is also subleasing offices to the New York staff of Make and Craft magazines and designer Alison Lewis, who teaches at Parsons The New School for Design. Karaisl von Karais is married to an Etsy engineer. She and Abousteit met at a technology conference in Germany last summer.

They are based here rather than Germany because crafting and social software are taking off here, said Abousteit.

"In Germany, the market is not as open," she said. "The scene is happening here."

Even the names of the pattern collections were inspired by Brooklyn. Burda Meets Brooklyn, Hudson Style and Windy Day in the Park include 14 patterns, all taken from the Burda

archive and updated.

In Germany and other parts of Europe, Brooklyn is synonymous with creativity and youth. "It's known as the new creative hub," Abousteit said. "It sounds cool and creative."

Patterns can be printed out on a regular home printer and taped together, or sewers can print out a pattern on a poster printer at any copy shop. In fact, there is no need to leave the house. Sewers can order printing online at Fed Ex, which will print the pattern and mail it to the sewer.

One day it might be possible to custom-alter a pattern for fit before printing it out, but the technology is complex, Abousteit said.

In the meantime, each pattern prints out in multiple sizes at once so it is easy to cut from one to the other in different areas of the pattern.

"The U.S. market is very excited and ready for it," Abousteit said. "There is a whole resurgence of craft in the U.S. and you can see it with Etsy." In a future version of the site, sewers will be able to click on any style to see if a version of it is for sale on Etsy.

"It's this whole idea of a young start-up and a new beginning for Burda Patterns," she said.



The Burda Style patterns were inspired by Brooklyn.



The Burda Style team.

