

style

GLYNIS TRAILL-NASH



Photo: Liz Looker/In Style

Imagination takes flight in Paris

PERTH-born designer **Michelle Jank** has been finding life sweet since her move to Paris a year ago.

Her latest coup was having her new line of jewellery featured in style.com's Style File. The oversized pieces come verging on breastplates, feature geometric designs and birds mid-flight with whimsical names such as "A bird flew into my heart".

The designs - made from perspex with jersey strapping - are about as far from her last collection of clustered bloom pieces as you could imagine.

This constant boundary pushing is what makes Jank a most intriguing talent. "I am feeling a pull to a more graphic angle for accessories," says Jank.

"The collection is about suspension, the illusion of things floating on the chest from a distance, suspended reality. It is still in the theme of jewellery as garment transformers - an accessory brings an instant update."

There seems to be no end to Jank's creative outlets and collaborations; she is working on film and book projects, as well as clothing, photography and continuing her styling work.

Jank certainly never gets blasé about her opportunities: "I think I may be living in a fairytale."

Fans can head to Bulb in Double Bay just before Christmas to get their fix.

A bigger bite of the Big Apple

ZIMMERMANN'S recent repositioning of its swimwear in the US market seems to be paying off, says **Nicky Zimmermann**, just back from a sales trip to New York.



Thriving in city of light ... Jewellery by Michelle Jank. Photo: Harold David

"Two years ago we decided to pull back, control where we were selling and focus on selling where we wanted to shop, to strengthen where people think the brand is," says Zimmermann.

Although sales initially dipped, "now we've doubled and we're selling exactly where we want to sell".

The Zimmermann sisters (Simone was in Los Angeles last week for sales) have spent a quite a bit of time in the US over the past two years, strengthening relationships with editors and being "very visible". Last year they set up a permanent showroom in New York.

Two important accounts that have markedly increased their orders are upmarket chain Intermix and online store shopbop.com. Zimmermann also sells in desirable department stores, Barneys and Saks.

"It's very important to sell through those doors that understand your product, not to be selling through Australian people who have opened a store in America.

"When [Shopbop] came to see the collection last season, their initial test order was the equivalent to the order size that our top three wholesalers would do here. It's gone brilliantly - they've come back and doubled it and ordered ready-to-wear."

And the Zimmermanns aren't holding back on their goals. "We want to build the US market up to 20 or 30 per cent of our business in

DRESS-UPS WITH REAL DOLLS

CELEBRITIES are always borrowing clothing from designers for big-ticket events but who would the designers choose to be their muse for the day? *In Style's* latest issue (out tomorrow) puts the question to some of Australia's favourite talents, with interesting results. Kirrily Johnston dresses Connie Mitchell of Sneaky Sound System; Aurelio Costarella also went the musical route with Kate Ceberano (whom he dressed for her recent Australian tour); and Toni Maticovski created a gown for actor Abbie Cornish (above). "I like to push her in what I give her to wear," says Maticovski. "Sometimes she's frightened by it, but most times she knows what works."

Australia essentially doubling it. That's without having a retail outlet." But that may change, too.

"We really want to solidify what we're doing with our wholesale but New York is where we would open a store first - when the time comes."

Forecaster fuels fashion fire

ALSO in New York last week was **Tony Bannister**, one of the silent partners of the fashion industry and creative director of Scout, a fashion-trend forecasting agency based in Sydney.

He was invited to speak at Whitespace 2007, a global design and lifestyle conference. Speaking just after his presentation on Thursday night, a buoyant Bannister was thrilled with how interested the audience of 250 was in what was happening in Australia's fashion scene; also

fascinating was what they did or did not already know about our designers and industry.

"They think there's such an energy with Australia," said Bannister. "It was quite exciting to tap into that."

Bannister gave the audience a snapshot of the Australian industry, highlighting brands such as Ksubi, Josh Goot, sass & bide, Toni Maticovski, Tina Kalivas and Collette Dinnigan.

"The key brands they knew were Ksubi and sass & bide because of their press and editorial in New York; Ksubi also has a store here. But they were so into the casual side of Australian fashion like Quiksilver, Mambo and Zimmermann swimwear."

For more information about Scout's forecasting, subscribe to its free newsletter at scout.com.au.

It's all on for honours

AWARDS season is heating up and this week sees two awards nights that will give some of our bright young talent a boost.

The Qantas Spirit Of Youth Awards on Thursday has three finalists in the fashion category. It will be stiff competition between labels Romance Was Born, Friedrich Gray and Gail Sorronda, all of whom have strikingly different aesthetics and have made big inroads in the past year.

Tonight's Fashion Group International Sydney Awards for Excellence see Yekaterina Peker, Nearly Nude and, again, Gail Sorronda competing in its rising star category. Best of British to all, as it were.



Hot property ... Zimmermann's stock is rising in the US.

SO LOVE



An interview with the most adorable of designers, Lanvin's **Alber Elbaz**, features in the latest issue of *Harper's Bazaar*. It reveals that at the age of 11, "he presented his teacher with a notebook filled with sketches of every outfit she'd worn over the previous year". So much more creative than an apple - and so much sweeter.

SO HATE



There have been some alarming sightings of the tandoori tan in recent weeks, on the street, on television and among Sydney's social set. (There also seems to be a direct correlation between skirt length - or lack thereof - and extremity of hue.) Remember, no skin should in any way resemble shades of citrus fruit or Indian takeaway.

WATCH THIS SPACE



For 13 years MAC cosmetics has supported research into HIV/AIDS through the sale of its Viva Glam lipstick and Lipglass, raising \$100 million for its MAC AIDS Fund. The latest incarnation of Viva Glam has two lip palettes, in warm and cool tones, and with World AIDS Day on December 1 now is the time to do your bit. A local beneficiary is the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation.