

PRADA EXEC CHANGES/3 YULE WINDOW PREVIEW/6-7

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WWD WEDNESDAY

Sportswear

## FIG Sparkles and Shines

By Rusty Williamson

**DALLAS** — Buyers scouting out holiday immediates, resort and early spring styles kept showrooms humming at Fashion Industry Galleries, the boutique-style mart downtown here that features contemporary and bridge collections.

Retailers were mostly in an upbeat mood during the market that ended Oct. 25, with increased budgets buoyed by strong back-to-school and fall business, though some stores played it safe with flat open-to-buys in light of the economic climate.

Buyers' must-have lists included fashion items with sparkle, shine, color and embellishment, especially metallics, beading and embroidery, along with shrugs, retro pants, wide-leg pants, longer hemlines and denim in myriad washes and silhouettes.

Shelley Cox, owner of Cayman's Clothiers, Norman, Okla., hiked her budget about 10 percent and shopped for spring to fill the recently expanded women's specialty store that nearly doubled in size to 7,000 square feet.

"We loved Poleci's colorful satin A-line halter dresses in the new longer tea length, or midcalf," Cox said. "I definitely feel that hemlines are dropping, but buying longer styles requires caution. If it's too long, it looks wrong. We also bought Chameleon's pointelle and leopard-pattern shrugs, which are an important item for spring. Shrugs are great because you can throw them on over a tank or something dressier."

Cox also left orders for Weston Wear's lace and embroidered sportswear, Jon's gold metallic blazer jackets and Fork's crinkled stretch skirts in stripes and bright colors.

Carolyn Billet, owner of Maple Street Clothing, a specialty store in New Orleans, scouted FIG for beaded bohemian tops and denim pants. Her budget was up by 10 percent.

"We really liked Subtle Tone's beaded crinkled silk tunic tops and full skirts, some of which were done in retro prints, such as California in the Fifties or Sixties, and crystal-embellished denims that lots of vendors were showing," Billet said.

Mary Stone, owner of Joni's Boutique, based in Dallas, shopping with a slightly increased budget, left orders for Renfrew's classic tweed and more forward novelty jackets in pastels, some with a quilted finish; Darjoni's sequined tank tops in colors, such as champagne, and silk and spandex printed knit tops in a spectrum of colors, and Leatherock's fashion belts in turquoise, citrus brights and animal prints.

Carolyn Spradley, owner of Understatement, an innerwear store in Little Rock, Ark., bought early spring novelty pajamas and lingerie. Her budget was up less than 10 percent and was spent on Loungerie's tank tops, lounge pants and hooded jackets in forest, papaya and lemon; Nick & Nora's troll doll and monkey-print night-shirts, and Scanty's camouflage-print lounge pants and tank tops.