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Fall and Holiday Styles Lead Mix at Dallas FIG

By Rusty Williamson

DALLAS — Fashion Industry Gallery courted buyers with a mix of immediate, fall and holiday styles.

Showrooms spotlighted trendy items. They were: beaded T-shirts, denim, more coordinated and cleaner ensembles such as jackets matched with skirts or dresses, and subtle embellishment, including leather and leopard jackets with metal ring details and skirts with delicate strands of pearls, crystals or beads.

Colors ranged from browns, greens and a generally dark palette for summer and early fall to a more vibrant spectrum of brights for late fall and holiday, such as orange, pink, teal, red, white and gold.

The three-day market that ended June 4 also included an appearance by contemporary designer Chan Luu.

"Our traffic was up 20 percent over last year, and June is notoriously slow," said Elyse Wasserman, acting director at FIG.

Wasserman said FIG continues to grow and evolve, with tentative plans to open another floor of showrooms in 2007. The expansion would be in the basement of the building FIG occupies at 1807 Ross Avenue in the downtown Dallas Arts District.

Allyson Siler, owner of the Launch showroom at FIG, said buyers were enthusiastic about casual, denim and embellished styles, and the new location and size of her showroom: She moved to a choice corner filled with natural light and now has 2,000 square feet compared with 800 square feet.

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"June is normally one of the slowest markets, but it turned out to be the second-busiest ever for me," Siler said.

Paula Pierce, owner of Willow's Clothing in Sisters, Ore., was among the buyers shopping FIG for the first time. Pierce shopped for tops, sweaters, sexy camisoles, jackets and mother-of-the-bridal styles for her 30- to 50-year-old target customers.

"The timing of the FIG market was perfect, and the merchandise was right-on for my customers, Pierce said. "I'm glad I tried FIG, and I will be back for sure."

Among her buys were lingerie-style camisoles, tops and sweaters from Salomay; Western-style dresses with rope trim from Tribute, and lace or romantic crinkled mother-of-the-bridal dresses and ensembles in pink, orange and teal from a variety of vendors.

Cindi Browning, owner of Chantal's, a women's contemporary store in Colleyville, Tex., increased her budget at least 25 percent, citing a successful spring season and also to stock her new second location in Dallas, opening in July. The 2,000-square-foot store will be near the intersection of Preston Road and Luther Lane, close to the prosperous Park Cities neighborhood.

"I bought Poleci for fall, which was just amazing," Browning said. "I think my customers are going to love all the art-inspired painted floral skirts and tops. I also bought romantic and feminine immediate gypsy T-shirts from several designers, and holiday crystal-embellished dresses and leather jackets from Sheri Bodell."

Amy Hooper Trott, owner of A. Hooper & Co., a contemporary store in Fort Worth, increased her budget 15 percent and shopped for holiday dresses in neutral tones with classic styling from Trina Turk, black and cream solid silk skirts from Mint by Julie Mintz, printed silk tops from Burning Torch and flutter-sleeved tops that can be worn over skinny jeans from several designers.