

Retail

# Rebecchi arrives in Rome

The brand has inaugurated a 100 m<sup>2</sup> single-brand store in the Trinità dei Monti area. Other shops are due to open soon in Bergamo and Arezzo. The company, which has sales of €35 million, is continuing the search for a location in Milan. **Monica Camozzi**

**M**assimo Rebecchi is opening a store in Trinità dei Monti. The Tuscan brand's new boutique covers two floors and a total of 100 m<sup>2</sup> in an 18th century building at number 65 Piazza Spagna. The label now has a total of 14 single-brand stores. Both the men's and women's collections are on sale in a layout that follows the label's typical style. There is minimal design in colours like dove grey and lead, teamed with mirrors inserted between Wenge-stained oak wings. The store is part of a distribution project that was initiated in 1989. Over the last year and a half it has considerably gathered speed, as the designer himself explained to MFF: "Since 2007 we have opened in Florence, Bologna, Rimini and Rome. I confess that we are al-

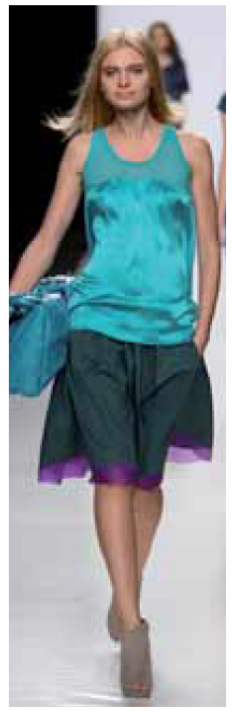
so looking for a location in Milan." Expansion of the boutiques continues at a steady pace therefore, with no sign of slowing down. Four to six stores are being opened each year, half of them franchises and the rest directly owned. The next ones, in 2009, will be Arezzo and Bergamo, but this expansion does not just involve Italy. After the first single-brand location in Beijing, a second store has been opened in China. Eastern Europe is also calling, as is Asia. "We work well with multi-brand boutiques in various parts of the former Soviet Union," stated Rebecchi, "and we are looking for a partner here to develop sales at a suitable pace. Our products are very popular and they have a price in line with the quality offered." The measured, steady growth has led the company to produce a tur-



A Massimo Rebecchi boutique and a look for spring-summer 2009

nover of around €35 million. Above all, this growth is self-financed, as the designer himself confirms. "In part we use bank loans, but not excessively, so we are currently not feeling the pinch of the economic crisis." Rebecchi has been operating single-handedly since 1997, when he bought the shares

of the brand's manufacturer, Virginia in Riccione, a step that "allowed all-round development of our business." He admits that licences are a possibility for the future. "We might consider this aspect later on. To date we have preferred to give the brand visibility, working on our image and product, so that our collections were seen to offer high value at the right price." This has been helped by promotional strategies like small trunk shows, focused encounters with clientele, organised periodically by Rebecchi in single-brand stores. Are single-brand shops the only option for the future? "No, I think that multi-brand stores run by competent staff can offer a great deal," concluded the designer/businessman. "We have 250 multi-brand clients." (All rights reserved)



Companies

## SCHNEIDERS ENLISTS MARANGONI YOUNG DESIGNERS

The Austrian company with a turnover of €40 million has entrusted the Milan creative institute with the restyling of the historic Habsburg brand

**H**absburg style conquers Italy. This could be the motto of Schneiders, the Austrian company created in 1946 which owns not only a main range of the same name, but also the Habsburg brand created in 1992, which features traditional design and is inspired by clothing details from the era of the Austrian Empire. The brand accounts for 20% of total turnover: approximately €40 million in 2007. The company, headed by Alfons Schneider, has two innovations planned for the Italian market. One is growth in retail and distribution, with the aim of increasing the number of Italian stores stocking the collections (at the moment the company has 270 clients - Ed.). The second is an exceptional partnership with the Marangoni Institute for a project that will involve new design talents and aims to give a fashionable new look to the Habsburg image, starting from this academic year. The company is present on all five continents and is continually looking to strengthen its presence on foreign markets through these activities. "We've always focused on international markets," explained Alfons Schneider to MFF. "Exports represent 85% of our turnover and we expect to see slight growth in 2008. In particular, Italy is our second largest market after Germany, which remains firmly in first position." Schneiders has two showrooms in Italy, in Milan and Rome, and a sales network that includes boutiques like Neglia and Bardelli in Milan, Duca d'Aosta in Venice and Oberrauch in Bolzano; in the rest of the world it is distributed in stores like Louis Boston, Harrods, Barney's and KaDeWe. "We don't have any plans to open a single-brand store in the near future, but when we decide to invest in the sector, we will definitely rely on one of our clients. We don't want to go into competition with them," concluded Schneider. (All rights reserved) **Cristiana Cicuto**



A Schneiders' look

New materials

## Outdry beats Gore-Tex and saves its high-tech patent

The European office has stopped the attempt to block the textile invention by Nextec from Brescia, preventing the American group from developing this innovative technique. **Alessandro Wagner**

**D**avid has once again beaten Goliath. The Nextec Group from Brescia (with expected turnover of €2 million in 2008) has beaten the US Group WL Gore (whose sales should top \$2 billion this year), which wanted to stop it patenting Outdry, a revolutionary new waterproof material for footwear and gloves, in order to develop a patent using technology by Nextec and its founder Matteo Morlacchi. The EPO (European Patent Office) has definitively rejected the opposition presented by WL Gore & Ass. Gmbh (owner of the Gore-Tex brand) which requested that Nextec's patent for Outdry, European patent EP1139805, be completely withdrawn. The patent regards the lamination of the waterproof, breathable leather membrane that is the basis of Outdry (completely produced using environmentally friendly, non-toxic materials and processes). This technology, unlike Gore-Tex or others like Sympatex or Event, directly applies the membrane to the inside of leather clothing, footwear and gloves, eliminating the traditional waterproof lining system used by Gore-Tex, the first waterproof system develo-



ped by the textile industry (originally developed for the aerospace industry), which is now over 20 years old. The main disadvantages of Gore-Tex are perspiration in hot-damp climates and less than perfect insulation in cold climates, a result of the fact that the membrane is an interspace that does not adhere

perfectly. Nextec is a company that mainly carries out research and development on advanced materials and technologies in the clothing and footwear sector for sports, professional and military use. Technological developments are patented and introduced onto the market by giving the licence to companies that produce the finished product and supplying them with machinery, materials and equipment to apply it to footwear and gloves. The Chinese controlled company Innova (whose head office is in Guangzhou) is also involved in its business. There are ten employees in Italy and 15 in China. The firm also has an important technical and business partnership with the Japanese company Komatsu Seiren, which specialises in the production of high-tech polymer film. Komatsu produces the membrane used in Outdry technology and is the licence holder for this technology on the Japanese market. To give an idea of the technological advances made by Outdry, Silvio Mondinelli, the mountaineer who last year finished climbing the 14 peaks over 8,000 metres on planet Earth (the second Italian to do so after Reinhold Messner and the sixth person in history), was among the first to use Nextec technology in his Gronell high altitude boots, to avoid any risk of water penetrating and, given the temperature, of ice forming and causing frostbite. (All rights reserved)



Above, right: Matteo Morlacchi. Above: machinery used for Outdry