

Miss Teen Canada-World begins its national search for 50 semi-finalists on March 28 (until May 31). Organizers will search nine Canadian cities for girls aged 13 to 19. For more information, visit missteencanadaworld.com. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Style



Put your green foot forward

Starting next month, Payless ShoeSource stores across Canada will sell fresh green fashions at affordable prices. Their newest line, Zoe & Zac, offers on-trend footwear and accessories averaging about \$50 per item. The line features eco-friendly materials such as organic cottons and linen, natural hemp, recycled outsoles and eco-smart packaging. From the Zoe & Zac collection is the Tigerlily Espadrille Wedge, left, \$44.99.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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Giving garments a second life

Sustainable fashion is the future, say eco-friendly designers

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for Metro Canada



The fashion gods are all clear about one thing — clothes are designed to make people look good.

But, what if looking good can also be eco-friendly? That's a concept some designers have embraced in recent years, but it's yet to envelop mainstream.

Eco-friendly clothes are sustainable and recyclable, in that something that was once a throwaway can now be turned into something new. "Sustainable clothing is a movement away from fashion as a disposable commodity," says Canadian designer Kim Munson, founder of Nova Scotia-based Orphanage Clothing. "In the case of Orphanage, one that is extending the life of used textiles."

But, this concept is not entirely applicable to vintage clothing; it's also about not using synthetic fibers, which do not decompose. "Big box retail leads to the consumption of fashion, which in turn leads to more discarded clothing, which ends up in the landfills," Munson explains.

"My biggest thing with sustainability is that it's not a trend, it's very common and it's the future," says Julia Grieve, founder of Preloved, the store and fashion label that creates



"You get the people who get freaked out that the dress they just purchased was once a trench coat worn by someone else."

Kim Munson, founder of Orphanage Clothing

one-of-a-kind clothing from reclaimed vintage fabrics. Grieve began her career as a model and then started Preloved in 1995. Along the way, she also worked as a fashion editor and writer, and has made appearances on television shows, such as *Diva on a Dime* and *Project Runway Canada* season two.

"I always call myself the accidental environmentalist," Grieve laughs. "We were doing all this good without even knowing it. In one season, we'll recycle over 80,000 sweaters just to produce our sweater collection."

Grieve says their line is fashion-forward, with attention paid to style and detail. "Our line is always based on fashion first...the sustainable side is just the cherry on the top."

Munson, who actually worked at Preloved when she was fresh out of design school, calls the store the "grandfather" of the sustainable clothing

method in Canada. Her own clothing line was founded in 2003, and can be summed up as "edgy street wear" that is timeless and with a flawless cut. Munson al-

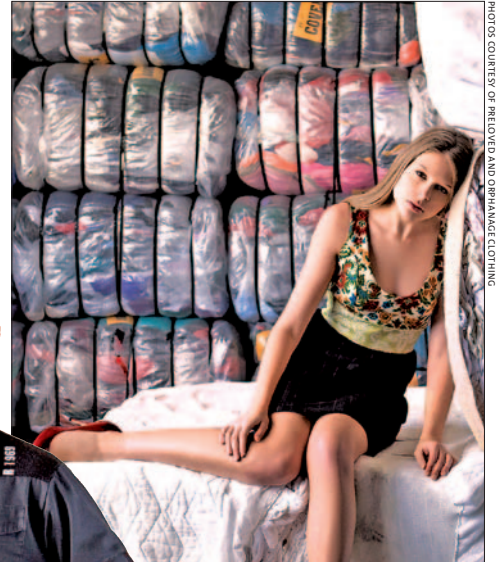
ways had an affinity for changing up her clothing. Her mother had a clothing line as well, while her grandmother made clothes out of unwanted garments. "You could say it runs in the family," she explains.

Munson says most people think that sustainable clothing lacks in quality and style. But that



LEFT: Issa (skirt), \$139, Preloved.

Men's button down long sleeve, \$89, Orphanage Clothing.



Toronto's Preloved store (881 Queen St. W.) sells clothing made from reclaimed vintage fabrics. Pictured dress: \$199.

misconception most always turns into a pleasant surprise.

"You get the people who get freaked out that the dress they just purchased was once a trench coat worn by someone else," she says.

Grieve agrees. She says people are often over-the-top when they find out that a dress Preloved designed is made from two different pairs of old trousers and two



curtains. "Oh my god, it is so cool," customers often say to her.

While the clothing is eco-friendly, it does cost more to make fashion from reclaimed clothing. "There is a deconstruction phase that happens first. It's a whole other phase that doesn't happen when you're just using regular fabric," says Grieve.

But both Grieve and Munson say that their lines are affordable for the everyday consumer.



Bullfrog Power for Earth Hour

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