

## Unexpected metal hues, frills—even feathers—rule 2008 fashions

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This year, there may be no such thing as "too weird." At least when it comes to jewelry and clothing, design eccentricities and intricate details will exit the fringe and enter the mainstream for at least the first several seasons in 2008.

Updated versions of layered necklaces, colorful beads, cuffs, bangles and textured metals will let jewelry wearers reveal their individuality, especially when the pieces are paired with the latest apparel such as high-waisted shorts and pants, puffed sleeves and billowing skirts with belts cinching them back in.

Rather than taking a backseat to the apparel drama, jewelry often makes the outfit—sometimes quite literally, with stones or beads embedded right into fabrics. And they aren't the only frills.

Helena Krodel, associate director of media for the Jewelry Information Center, says prints, polka dots, florals and bows will proliferate this spring. Ethereal apparel, including sheer fabrics and pajama-inspired looks in silk and satin, will join the orbit of 2008's celestial jewelry theme in which stars abound, Krodel says. Feathers and organic jewelry will linger this year too, but will be less fur-inspired than last fall.

African prints and organic hippie looks will appear with earth-tone jewelry designs set in metals such as rose and chocolate gold, Krodel says.

Black and white motifs will keep their staying power, with primary colors like red, orange and cobalt blue gaining ground along with neon accents. Metallics and glitter will infiltrate fashionistas' wardrobes and, unlike last year's top trends of solid gold and silver, next year's fashion will focus more on sparkles, Krodel says.

Michael O'Connor, Platinum Guild International USA's senior vice president of marketing communications and public relations, says designers are embracing bigger designs overall while still putting a tremendous amount of work into the details.

"Boldness can't just be big for the sake of being big," O'Connor says. "It's large and bold but also intricate."

Blackened platinum will continue to show its prowess, O'Connor says, adding that black and white themes will continue to manifest themselves in designs with black diamonds and platinum and blackened platinum with diamonds.

Retailer Evan James Deutsch of Evan James, Ltd. in Brattleboro, Vt., expects dangle-style earrings will sell especially well, as will white metal designs and pieces that can be dressed up or down.

Susan Eisen of Susan Eisen Fine Jewelry & Watches in El Paso, Texas, says designer jewelry will remain big, with silver and colored stones as well as multi-look items—such as earrings with dangling gemstones that can be switched out—holding strong on the hot list. She also projects brisk sales of antique-style pieces in 2008.

"Everybody can relate to it because of their mother or grandmother's jewelry," she says.

Duvall O'Steen, manager of jewelry public relations and promotion for the World Gold Council, says next year sees a shift to more delicate pieces that will often be worn layered up. For spring in particular, O'Steen says, big, bold looks, often with safari or tribal elements, will make their way to the wrists of style-watchers.

"Bracelets will continue to be the largest trend in fine jewelry," Krodel says, adding that anything goes for this staple. Like the dominance of gold fabric in fashion, yellow gold, especially links and textured pieces, will remain hot in '08, O'Steen says. nj

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