



Metro Edition

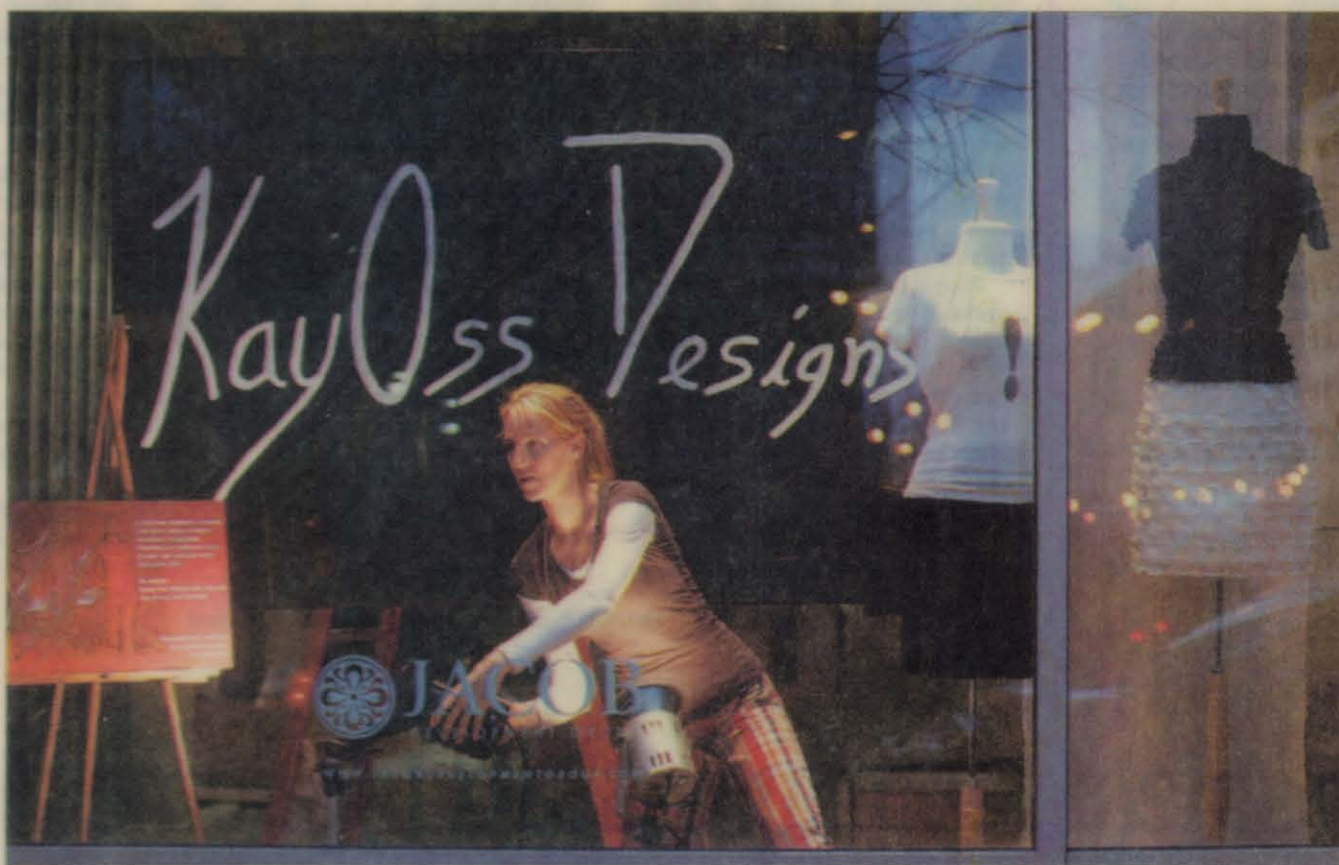
It's fashion week

ST. LOUIS HOPES EVENTS WILL BOOST IMAGE AND ECONOMY
METRO, C1 • RUNWAY SHOWS START TUESDAY: WATCH STLTODAY.COM FOR UPDATES

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

MONDAY | MARCH 24, 2008 | FOUNDED BY JOSEPH PULITZER IN 1878 | STLTODAY.COM | 75¢

ST. LOUIS: WASHINGTON AVENUE



Amy Johnson of KayOss Designs positions a light in her window display on Washington Avenue in St. Louis on Friday. Johnson will be showing her collection Tuesday night, the opening night of St. Louis Fashion Week, at the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis. Photo by Whitney Curtis

Fashion friendly

Businesses hoping for a boost from window displays.

By Debra D. Bass
ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Promoters of St. Louis Fashion Week aim to nudge the region's fashion index up a notch — for the sake of the city's image, economy and fashionistas.

Local property developers, city officials and retail franchises insist that fashion, and therefore Fashion Week beginning Tuesday, is good for business.

"It would be great to have a street like Michigan Avenue (of Chicago) in St. Louis — an outdoor fashion and lifestyle center," said Zach Riley of developer RileyWaldrop. He believes that bolstering St. Louis Fashion Week, running through Sunday, is a step in

that direction. His company and a number of other developers and property management firms clustered along Washington Avenue near downtown offered their vacant store fronts between Tucker Boulevard and 14th Street as free advertising space through May to area fashion retailers and designers.

He said that he wanted to show the community what a contiguous downtown fashion retail center could look like. So far at least 15 local fashion outlets are jumping at the chance to participate in the window shopping display.

"This signals the rebirth in St. Louis and the revitalization of downtown," said Sarah King of Blush Boutique in Kirkwood. King took advan-

tage of free window space in the Bogen building and will maintain the display, which includes a faux sitting area and some mannequins in spring dresses, for two weeks.

"It's nice to see fashion being treated as an arts and cultural event," King said. "There's a buzz about shopping and specialty shopping in particular that I think encourages people to pay more attention to their individualistic style rather than just wearing big name brands from the major department stores."

FRESH IDEAS, VENUES

King said she hoped the growing popularity of fashion week would show people that boutique shopping wasn't just about buying expensive

items. She hopes some mall shoppers will be enticed to venture into her 750-square-foot shop as part of their regular shopping routine.

And major retailers such as Macy's agree that more consumer fashion interest is good for everyone.

"This type of event helps to create a stronger fashion community," said Nathan Shore, director of public relations for Macy's Midwest. "We hope it will inspire local designers who are thinking about making their mark on the fashion world and local fashionistas who are looking for the hottest spring items to buy for their wardrobe."

Shore says that all the

PLEASE SEE FASHION | C3



Best clothes for emerging socialites

Amy Johnson of KayOss Designs creates the kind of pieces that are too pretty for typical office attire. Her outfits are elegant with notes of mirth and guile and are much better-suited for a long lunch followed by light shopping on a day with little to do but be seen.

AVAILABLE AT KAYOSSDESIGNS.COM