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March 15, 2010

Current Designers: FRM1023

Final Project
New Designer in Fashion: Jason Wu



Jason Wu

Part I: Personal Data

Jason Wu was born in Taipei, Taiwan in 1983. His family ran an import-export business. When Jason was young (around the age of five), his mom would drive him to bridal shops so he could sketch the wedding gowns in the shops windows. Obviously, at an early age Jason was creative and talented and his parents recognized this in him.

Part II: Education & Training

Jason's family moved him to Vancouver, Canada when he was nine years old because they wanted him to have a better education. This is when Jason started experimenting with fashion designs and using mannequins as dolls. Within a year he learned to sew, sketch and pattern. Jason went to Eaglebrook School in Deerfield, Massachusetts and Loomis Chaffee School in Connecticut. By the time Jason was fourteen he went to Tokyo, Japan to study and learn to sculpt. During his senior year of high school he studied in Paris, France. He attended Parson's School of Design after high school for three and a half years. At Parson's School of Design he interned with Narcisco Rodriguez who is known for designing Carolyn Bessette Kennedy's wedding gown in 1996.

Part III: Fashion Design Information

Jason Wu did some freelance design work at sixteen for a toy company called Integrity Toys. His designs were under the names "Jason Wu dolls" and later on "Fashion Royalty". At "Fashion Royalty" he became creative director. "Fashion Royalty" is a line of high-end designer fashion dolls that are sold at FAO Schwartz. Jason also started his own label while working as a freelance designer. His parents helped him financially and he used the money from his freelance work. Jason's line was called "ladylike" which exhibited hourglass figures with nipped-in waist as well as floral prints. His first

complete collection was of ready-to-wear, which debuted in 2006. Later in 2008, he won the Fashion Group International's Rising Star award. Also, in 2008 he was nominated and then a finalist for CFDA/Vogue Fashion Fund award and Anna Wintour attended his show. His early clients included: Ivana Trump, Amber Valletta, January Jones, and for a considerable amount of time with RuPaul and designed six RuPaul dolls.

Later, Andre Leon Talley (Vogue Magazine's editor-at-large) introduced Jason to Michelle Obama before the election. Michelle bought four dresses from Jason and wore one of them on a *Barbara Walters Special* before the November 2008 election. Then at the inaugural ball on the night of President Barack Obama's inauguration, Michelle wore a custom-designed one-shoulder floor-length chiffon gown. The dress was decorated with tiny flower and Swarovski crystals he and his four assistants hand sewn to it and the gown is said to represent youth and change. Jason immediately gained worldwide recognition and the media would say Michelle Obama was his "career launcher" as well as Ikram Goldman. Michelle Obama went on to appear on a Vogue magazine cover wearing another one of Jason's designs, a magenta silk dress.

Jason's evening dresses are sold at Bergdorf Goodman and range in prices from \$2,990 to \$4,700. He has been called a "prodigy" by some and is a very talented and already successful young designer. His next collection is expected to have sales of \$4 million this year alone.

Jason Wu's designs have been described as proper and ladylike. He's known for his flower prints, polished jackets, teacup skirts, and dresses with nipped-waist that flatter the hourglass silhouette. His 2010 collection included fabrics such as: silk, innovative tweed, and even ostrich feathers. Jason stated about his 2010 collection, that he wanted to take everyday pieces of American Sportswear and re-create them using beautiful luxury fabrics. These designs have been called quirky and playful.

Part IV: Fashion Design Philosophy

Jason Wu has said fairy tales inspire him and some of his dress designs have been called “princess dresses”. Irving Penn’s photographs were a source of inspiration for him, which was shown on a strapless bubble dress that has a reproduction of a cigarette-burn print that appeared to be polka dots in his 2010 collection. Irving Penn himself was an inspiration as well. Jason’s 2007 designs were said to be “tasteful” and “mature” utilizing colors such as: white, blush and black. He’s known for his immaculate tailoring and gorgeous clothing designs with a lot of attention to detail. Jason’s modern lifestyle designs are innovative, romantic, and have a relaxed and youthful attitude and emphasize and celebrate the hourglass silhouette.

Jason Wu is already a part of history because of the inauguration gown he designed for Michelle Obama and has been quoted saying “It is priceless to be a part of history”. Jason has already contributed so much to fashion at such a young age. He is well known for his sophisticated designs and already has many young starlets and socialites wearing his creations. Jason Wu went from dressing dolls to dressing the First Lady in a very short period of time. He is expected to continue in his success in the fashion industry and is now known as one of the leading new American designers.