

Brands to watch

CWB'S PICK OF THE CHILDRENSWEAR BRANDS HITTING THE UK MARKET FOR S/S 12, ALL AVAILABLE TO VIEW AT THIS SEASON'S BUBBLE LONDON AT THE BUSINESS DESIGN CENTRE, ISLINGTON, ON 19-20 JUNE.



MAHARISHI KIDS

Launched in 1994 offering Fairtrade men's and womenswear, UK designer label Maharishi is now re-launching its childrenswear collection for s/s 12 comprising babywear and boyswear. The re-launch is in response to demand from the brand's adult stockists for "mini-me" outfits.

Renowned for not conforming to mainstream fashion trends and for its use of hemp, natural fibres, organic cotton and recycled military clothing, the brand's s/s 12 childrenswear line follows the same theme as the men's collection. Highlights include styles fused with South American military influences and graphics inspired by Aztec gods and jungle creatures. Sizes span from two years through to 14 years plus and wholesale prices range from £12 to £100.

Despite its strong commercial growth and media profile, Maharishi – which, when translated literally means "great seer" – is a privately owned company that has remained true to its strong ethos of respect for nature, while utilising the latest technology. The label's aim is to grow its customer base for childrenswear via high end boutiques, both regionally and internationally.

SUPER COOL KIDS' CLOTHING

Canadian childrenswear label Super Cool Kids' Clothing (SCKC) was officially launched in March 2010, with the opening of its flagship store in mid-town Toronto. Until now, the brand has only been marketed in North America, however, this season, it's launching to the UK.

Catering for boys and girls age newborn to 10 years, the brand focuses on mix and match pieces. For s/s 12, it has made heavy use of a lightweight fabric known as Cotton Slub, a non-clingy, airy fabric made of twisted cotton threads that produces a textured effect. Style-wise, the collection incorporates elements of retro, vintage and urban influences. Detailing plays a big part, with highlights including raw-edges, inside-out seams, layered appliqués and neon zippers on denim. Some key pieces from the new s/s line include a reversible T-shirt dress with stripes on one side and a large butterfly on the other, floral tunics and ruched leggings for girls, and graphic T-shirts and shorts for boys.

Dependent on exchange rates, wholesale prices range from around £6 to £20. The brand is looking to attract mid to high-end childrenswear boutiques and department stores with its collection.



BLUENOSE MONSTER

Hailing from Bangkok, childrenswear label Bluenose Monster is heading to the UK this season for its official UK launch at Bubble London. Founded in January 2006, the label is available from six months through to eight years and focuses on cotton pieces and garments featuring playful and creative designs.

For s/s 12, Bluenose Monster is showcasing a collection called Eco-Hero, based on the idea that everyone can be a hero in everyday life. The theme is designed to encourage children to do good things for themselves, their family and friends, the community and the environment, for instance, saving energy by using a bicycle to get around. The look is fun and casual, integrating vivid colour and taking inspiration from Pop Art, comic art and patchworks. Pieces include T-shirts, polo shirts, jeans, tops, jackets and trousers. Wholesale prices range from \$5 to \$12.

Although the brand's focus is currently on childrenswear, plans going forward include expanding the brand concept to include other children's products. Bluenose Monster is looking for UK accounts with department stores, independent childrenswear retailers and an importer or distributor.

AYA NAYA

Being showcased for the first time in the UK this season, Aya Naya is a girls' label for newborn to 12 years, initially launched in 2007. The brand is well established in its home market of Denmark and throughout Scandinavia, and is now in search for a similar foothold in the UK.

The collection is broken down into two age groups, with Mini being designed for babies from newborn to two years and Girl for children age three to 12 years. For s/s 12, the brand has centred on two key themes. Romantic Dreaming is feminine, romantic and rustic, with colours including pink, a powdery light green and aqua contrasted with bright shades of orange and red. In contrast, Colourful Spring features a kaleidoscope of colours ranging from green and indigo blue through to neutrals and pastels. Wholesale prices range from £5 to £15.

Aya Naya is represented in the UK by childrenswear agency SoLoBi, which is planning on launching the brand's other collections to the UK soon. Watch out for Tappa Nakki, Aya Naya's boyswear collection, and also Frankie & Liberty, its collection for older girls age eight to 14 years.



JESSIE AND JAMES

New baby and childrenswear label Jessie and James is the brainchild of former Vivienne Westwood designer James New and creative head pattern cutter Jessica Richard. The collection is designed and manufactured in the UK, with fabrics sourced from northern mills and manufacturing taking place in Nottingham. The brand has incorporated innovative cutting principles to create unusual silhouettes for its collection, which are designed to be fun and fashionable but also focus on practicality and comfort.

The colourful debut collection of 32 pieces entitled Under Construction takes inspiration from the Rubik's Cube and plays with form and colour, combining squares with other shapes. Colours of the season are navy, red and beige, while design features include raw edges, stripes, checks, contrast colours and bold floral prints.

Highlights in the girls' line include jersey cotton dresses, circle skirts and cotton blouses, with the batwing Kiss Me Cape with pointed hood being key. For boys, there are zip-up hoodies, baggy trousers, dungarees, tops and T-shirts with roll-up sleeves and contrast colours and prints. Wholesale prices range from £12 to £30.

