

# John Bartlett Opens in Village

Spring '08 collection, shown in the new store, is reflective of designer's fascination with Eastern culture

**NEW YORK** — The store may not have been merchandised yet, but that didn't stop John Bartlett from using the space for his spring 2008 presentation during New York Fashion Week.

In a reflection of the designer's personal interest in India, the spring collection straddled East and West with American sportswear such as bell-bottom jeans, as well as traditional Middle Eastern djellabas and European-style swimwear. Among the more tailored looks were a pinstripe waistcoat, oxford-cloth dress shirts and a tie with a barbed-wire motif.

As an exercise in less energy-intensive manufacturing, samples were made almost entirely without electricity in New Delhi, using kick-pedal sewing machines and hand-operated knitting machines. The quantity of looks was slashed from the amount required in past seasons for Bartlett's runway shows. Bartlett's unstocked store provided a clean backdrop.

"I wanted to get people into the space without the clutter of product," Bartlett said of his first retail store, a 500-square-foot space at 143 Seventh Avenue South at Charles Street in the heart of Greenwich Village.

The interior, which was designed by David Gauld, features fieldstone walls, wood floors, exposed rafters and a bank of windows that add a bright, open feeling. It opened to the public on Saturday, Sept. 15.

"It makes me feel like a retailer," Bartlett said. "But I've been doing this for so long that I welcome a new learning curve."

He said the store allowed him "to create whatever I wanted" without worrying about his retail customers, which include Saks Fifth Avenue in New York as well as specialty stores around the country. As a result, the store features Bartlett's entire collec-



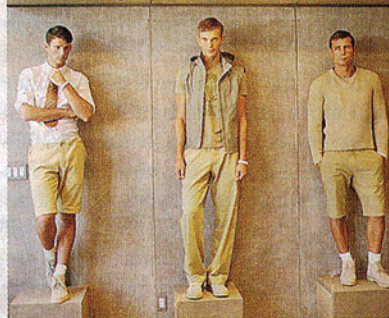
The new store, ready for fall

tion of tailored clothing, sportswear, furnishings and accessories, as well as ceramics, fragrances, books, candles and unique items on which he collaborated with local artisans.

He said the store does not compete with Saks because of its downtown location and if the department store's merchants "see something in my store that they don't have, they can order it."

Bartlett said he chose the West Village because he believes "my clothes encapsulate the freer environment" of the area. In addition, he

Three spring looks



recently moved into the neighborhood, and "ever since I started [this business] I always wanted to be able to walk to work." —JEAN E. PALMIERI AND

JEAN SCHEIDNES