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WETHERLY FASHION GROUP

SONYA AUVRAY / MARINA MORRISON

310.858.1807

J BRAND LAUNCHES NEW VINTAGE-INSPIRED MEN'S LINE

J BRAND DENIM CO.

LOS ANGELES, CA – FEBRUARY 12, 2008 – THIS FALL, J BRAND, KNOWN FOR ITS WILDLY SUCCESSFUL WOMEN'S JEANS, IS LAUNCHING A MEN'S DENIM LINE UNDER THE LABEL J BRAND DENIM CO. THE NEW MEN'S LINE, UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF VINTAGE DENIM VETERAN SEAN HORNBEAK, IS BASED ON MODERN BASICS WITH A VINTAGE SENSIBILITY. THE BODIES ARE INSPIRED BY CLASSIC AMERICANA WITH AN EMPHASIS ON FIT, CONSTRUCTION, AND TIMELESS WASHES.

SEAN, CO-OWNER OF THE RENOWNED VINTAGE STORE AND DENIM TAILORING SHOP DENIM REVIVAL, HAS OVER 18 YEARS EXPERIENCE. HE HAS BECOME ONE OF THE FOREMOST AUTHORITIES ON VINTAGE DENIM, AND, THROUGH HIS DIRECT ACCESS TO CUSTOMERS, WAS ABLE TO IDENTIFY A VOID IN THE MEN'S DENIM MARKET. "MY VISION WITH THE CREATION OF J BRAND DENIM CO. IS TO PROVIDE A LINE THAT REPRESENTS THE EVERYDAY GUY – THE MASSES – AND TO BUILD IT SO THAT IT'S AFFORDABLE YET FINELY CRAFTED," SAYS SEAN.

"SEAN IS A GOLD MINE, AS FAR AS I AM CONCERNED. I WAS SHOCKED THAT NO ONE IN THE DENIM INDUSTRY HAD GRABBED HIM YEARS AGO," SAID SUSIE CRIPPEN, CO-FOUNDER AND CREATIVE DIRECTOR OF J BRAND. "HIS PASSION FOR DENIM IS CONTAGIOUS, AND, AFTER WORKING WITH HIM FOR A FEW MONTHS, I KNEW HE WAS THE ONLY PERSON TO HEAD UP OUR MEN'S DIVISION," CONTINUES SUSIE. THE LINE WILL LAUNCH WITH THREE BASIC BODIES: WALKER, MERRICK AND KANE -- AVAILABLE IN VINTAGE-INSPIRED WASHES: RAW, PACIFIC, BLACKSMITH, GOLDRUSH, MECHANIC, AND TRAPPER. RETAIL PRICES WILL RANGE FROM \$185-\$225. J BRAND DENIM CO. WILL DEBUT AT PROJECT LAS VEGAS, FEBRUARY 13-15, 2008.

About J Brand Jeans

J BRAND, 2007 SUPIMA DENIM DESIGNER OF THE YEAR, WAS CO-FOUNDED BY DENIM MANUFACTURER JEFF RUCES AND STYLIST SUSIE CRIPPEN. THE TWO SET OUT TO DESIGN CLASSIC AND SOPHISTICATED JEANS WITH THE EMPHASIS ON FIT, WHILE HOLDING TO ONE MANDATE: CREATING TIMELESS PRODUCTS. PAYING CAREFUL ATTENTION TO DETAILS AND CLEAN, DARK FINISHES, TOGETHER THEY HAVE CREATED A COMBINATION OF SEXINESS, STYLE AND COMFORT IN JEANS FOR WOMEN. A FAVORITE OF CELEBRITIES, J BRAND JEANS CAN BE FOUND AT A VARIETY OF STORES WORLDWIDE. VISIT WWW.JBRANDJEANS.COM

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J Brand Relaunches Men's Denim

LOS ANGELES — Looking to step out from the shadows of its popular women's denim counterpart, J Brand's men's line is relaunching with a new look, cut and attitude. To inject a little more testosterone into the line, J Brand cofounders Susie Crippen and Jeff Rudes recently tapped L.A. denim impresario Sean Hornbeak, owner of Denim Revival (formerly Denim Doctors), a legendary jean tailoring boutique on Third Street that opened in 2000. Hornbeak, who was consulted for high-end denim lines like Rich & Skinny, said he sought to preserve J Brand's unadorned look while further distinguishing it from the women's line.

"I get from a lot of guys that there are not enough jeans out there that are truly a 'guy's guy' jean," Hornbeak said. "Most denim out there for guys is kind of feminine. You see the same styling and detailing on women's jeans."

Known for his vintage expertise, Hornbeak rebranded the men's line as "J Brand Denim Co.," which appears on the back leather patch that an embroidered "J" once occupied. The brand's clean-and-modern ad campaigns will soon skew more rough-around-the-edges-Americana, he explained. "We not hiring an actual model, we're just putting together regular guys wearing the jeans. Celebrities and models don't build your brand, they're not the ones who initially make it popular."

Slim styles like the "Mick" are being phased out for the slim, straight-leg "Kane," which features a 16-inch leg opening, as opposed to Mick's 15-inch opening.



J Brand cofounder Susie Crippen with men's designer Sean Hornbeak



J Brand men's new back leather patch

Other new styles include the "Walker," a 501-style cut with a leg opening large enough to accommodate a decent-size work boot; the 20-inch leg opening "Merrick," style; and the boot-cut "Ryder" fit.

Hornbeak nixed the use of stretch denim for the line

and sought out heavier fabrics—a move he says gives J Brand a competitive advantage over other classic premium lines, including Levi's Capital E. "I'm not saying I'm going after Capital E, but I am putting together a line that guys have been asking for, and a lot of guys want heavier denim."

The new line, which retails from \$185 to \$225, will feature five washes, most with light whiskering and subtle dirty finishes. "Basically the look is as if you [hadn't washed your jeans] for six months," Hornbeak said. "The lines start to pull through, with a little wallet showing in the back pocket."

Stitching has also been revamped: Hornbeak substituted a tobacco brown-colored thread for the orange thread previously used.

What hasn't changed, he said, is the company's West Coast ethos. "Everything is manufactured here in California, and we are going to roll with that as part of our story." —ANDREW HARMON

PHOTO BY TYLER BOYE



Collective

European luxury brands and denim power players headline new exhibitors at men's show that kicks off July 21

Consciousness

J. BRAND DENIM CO.

When Sean Hornbeak came on board at J. Brand one year ago, it was to consult on design and washes for the sophisticated and ultra-successful women's denim line. "When I started working for them I didn't even realize J. Brand had a men's line," says Hornbeak, the company's newly appointed men's director, who also owns Los Angeles denim alteration store Denim Revival. "I quickly realized their women's division was already where it needed to be and knowing how dramatically the men's market was growing, I thought that was where my focus would be best-suited."

Hornbeak pitched the idea to company execs and by December 2007, he was hard at work designing a men's denim line from scratch. Several months later, J. Brand Denim Co. was born and the rugged yet classic denim collection will make its debut at this month's Collective.

"It's classic vintage sensibility—very masculine and no bells and whistles," says Hornbeak. Featuring the same clean lines that the women's collection is best known for, J. Brand Denim Co., which retails for \$180 to \$230, is launching with three bodies, in six washes. The line is in the midst of a soft launch at Barneys this month, and has already picked up key accounts including Scoop Men, Jeffrey and Bergdorf Goodman Men. Hornbeak says they are looking to open 10 to 15 independent doors and find an international distributor at The Collective.

As for why J. Brand chose to show at Collective instead of Project? "We feel that Project has gotten too big," says

