



Thursday Styles

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Front Row
Eric Wilson

A Sense of Fashion Is Lost in Transit



Tyler Hicks/The New York Times

LAYERED LOOK The morning commute across the Brooklyn Bridge.

ran with Vivienne Westwood in the 70's, and for his role in the punk movement as the founder of the Sex Pistols, has designed a collection of clothing for children age 4 to 12.

Before passing judgment on Mr. McLaren's suitability as a fashion role model for children, one should consider this: If children are taking their cues from Britney Spears and Jessica Simpson, how bad can he be? He has experience in the field, having designed with Ms. Westwood the tattered T-shirts and bondage pants that defined the look of an era.

And his vision for children's wear is more a commentary on today's gaming culture than war or female anatomy (as it was in the old days). His designs, made for Yoox.com, include renderings of harmless little critters inspired by the pixelated characters of early video games.

"I'm so bored and uninterested in the real world, one that is looking less attractive to me by the hour," he said. "I was searching for the new, listening for the sound of whatever was happening, and what I found was so close to children's culture that I wanted to communicate with this whole new generation."

Mr. McLaren, who lives in Paris, saw artists working on the outskirts of the city with dismantled video consoles, lifting icons from Pac-Man, Centipede and Asteroids. He heard traces of their digital jangles sampled in pop songs. He saw that it was children who best understood what was happening. "That has started a revolution, in my mind," he said.

From Punks to Children

A photograph of Malcolm McLaren from the 1950's shows a chubby faced boy with wildly curly hair, a ragged crewneck and what is not exactly an intelligent looking smile, but an innocent enough one. A more recent image shows him with a curl of smoke issuing from his weathered face.

This came in the mail attached to an announcement that Mr. McLaren, famous for Sex, the London store he



Alessia Branchesi

GAMESMANSHIP Malcolm McLaren's clothing line for children.

Mr. McLaren describes this generation as "Martians among their older tranquilized Earthling pals," a thought that led his stream of consciousness back to the days when he was bored lying in an Abbey Road studio. "I would run out to the canteen and be comforted by playing the Space Invaders machine," he said.

Mr. McLaren translated characters from those games into the motifs of his collection. Instead of traditional snowflakes, a \$375 sweater is knit with a wincing alien, and the closure of a \$130 ski hat bears the image of a ghost that looks like the ones in Pac-Man. Kids will get it.

"The intellectual vanguard today might just be under the age of 13," Mr. McLaren said. "It's frightening, but kind of wild."

