



From left:
Designers Lazaro
Hernandez and
Jack McCollough

the festival [Holi]. It was pure coincidence, and we saw all this colour and powder everywhere: all the colours were faded neon and powdery. When we're inspired by something, it comes out in a very abstract, subtle way. In this instance, it was about colour, especially in the countryside, where we saw desert-like landscapes and women in fluorescent clothes tending to the land. They seemed to pop and radiate light. We had a lot of black this season, but these colours felt right to us. That's where the electric neon tones came from. From sketchbook to catwalk, everything's a long process and gets filtered, but the essential idea of using saturated colours came from rural India. Next, we want to go to Varanasi. That's on our list of places to visit. ■

PROENZA SCHOULER

New York-based Jack McCollough and Lazaro Hernandez are known for their luxe, irreverent take on fashion that's perfect for the cool urban girl. The duo talks to SARAH HAY about how the colours of Rajasthan inspired this summer collection

What's your creative process?

Jack McCollough: When we're putting the collection together, brainstorming ideas and sketching, we go up to our country house in Massachusetts. Our house is in the woods; it's a working farm. Sometimes we'll sketch for 12, 14 hours.

Do you design your clothes with a particular woman in mind?

JM: There are definitely girls that we like to dress, but we've never had a specific muse. This collection was more about an attitude. There's always something a bit dishevelled or nonchalant about our girl, [she's] never precious and perfect.

Lazaro Hernandez: We don't really research images of women in fashion; it's more like craft and exploring techniques and textiles. The S/S '11 collection was very much about fabric manipulation. We made every fabric from scratch. We researched this technique called *shibori*, a Japanese tie-dye which creates a subtle texture. In the beginning of the collection there's micro and small, pastel *shibori*. Then it goes into electric colours. The lace at the end of the show is all hand drawings that we had embroidered, then dipped into acid solution. It dissolves the

toile so it's not lace but pure embroidery. Our starting point is materials. Once we've decided upon the mood and direction, we'll start picking out fabrics and colours.

Tell us about your trip to India.

LH: A year ago, we went to India and that's what got our minds going for the collection. From India, we ended up in Japan, where the *shibori* tie-dye technique came from. In India, we were inspired by Rajasthan and the Holi festival—the colours were so awe-inspiring.

JM: Visiting factories to see how our embroidery is done was interesting. 'Atelier' is a more realistic word to describe this set-up—there were about six people working together; a very organic atmosphere. The embroidery is a real craft, almost like ballet in a way.

How did Rajasthan inspire you?

LH: We arrived the day after

"For the S/S '11 collection, we researched *shibori*, a Japanese tie-dye technique" —LAZARO HERNANDEZ

