



# INTERFILIÈRE

PARIS

## TIMELESS

## JACQUARD

Summary of the Interfilière Paris January 2016 conference.

Featuring:

- Martin HERMANN, CEO of WILLY HERMANN, Designer of the Year;
- Agnès COLOMBET – Fashion Division Manager for SATAB;
- Florence BOST – Designer and Founder of SABLE CHAUD;
- Fabio CESCONE – Sales and Marketing Manager for MAGLIFICIO RIPA;
- Jean-Pierre GUINET – Design and Marketing Consultant at MG CREATION;
- Jean-Laurent PERRIN – CEO, LES TISSAGES PERRIN;
- Massimiliano DENNA, Managing Director of BRUGNOLI GIOVANNI.

Organized and led by the journalist-consultant Dominique DEMOINET-HOSTE



### From the origins of Jacquard weaving machines...

A brief historical recap offered Jean-Laurent Perrin (Tissages Perrin) the opportunity to underline the **two major evolutions** which marked the key stages in the development of the jacquard loom and the corresponding technology first initiated by Lyon silk-workers, two centuries ago: **the transformation of the weaving loom** and the mechanical processes themselves, and **the introduction of computer technologies** at the start of the millennium, which revolutionized the definition of jacquard patterns. *“The arrival of Lycra stretch yarns in the 1980s was a major innovation, which allowed for a significant increase in the use of jacquard fabrics in the lingerie market, including our stretch silks featuring refined motifs,”* added Jean-Laurent Perrin, who pointed out that **jacquard is, first and foremost, a ‘revolutionary’ technique** which continues to offer producers a way of combining different materials, creating different finishes, experimenting with weaves, shiny and dull effects, fabric hand-feels.



Florence Bost (Sable Chaud) underlined the impressive modernity of jacquards by explaining how she used this technology to develop a **highly technical sound jacquard** in 2010. It was woven as a double thickness, with pockets into which speakers were inserted, and connected to an electronic circuit which broadcast the sound. *“In this case, we used a multi-ply copper wire, twisted with a silk yarn,”* she explained, before adding that while jacquard is ideal for creating raised surfaces, it also offers new potential with regard to **formats and linking large-scale motifs** (impossible on shaft looms, thus limiting pattern repeats).

## ...to today's knit developments

Dominique Demoinet-Hoste then turned to the knit specialists, Willy Hermann, Maglificio Ripa and Brugnoli, to discuss the crossover potential of jacquard, which is also very popular in knits. Fabio Cescon (Ripa) mainly insisted on the **impressive flexibility of use and versatility** of jacquard techniques in the knit sector. *"Thanks to computerized machines, we can now tell each individual needle what to do. That gives us an extraordinary range of creative possibilities, whether with regard to motifs, details or repeats,"* enthused Fabio Cescon. Jacquard is therefore omnipresent in all the collections presented by Ripa (intimates, ready-to-wear, sportswear and beachwear) with a **wide range of patterns, effects and colours**: *"It enables us to offer this touch of fantasy that the market wants to see, which allows us European producers to differentiate ourselves by offering European inspiration and creativity to compete against basic products. Mastering the jacquard technique is essential for producing high-stretch 3-dimensional knits, making the most of Lycra yarns, which completely revolutionized our range. Unless you control it properly, it can affect the appearance of the jacquard."* French and Italian companies have **this level of experience and know-how**, acquired over time and handed down from one generation to the next.



## Jacquard's exceptional potential

Martin Hermann (Willy Hermann) was keen to underline that **jacquards have always been a permanent fixture** in the Austrian knit specialist's collections. *"We seem to be the only company that uses so many different jacquard techniques and takes advantage of all the new technologies available to us, in circular, warp and seamless knitting or double tricot. Jacquard has always played an essential role in our collections and new products since it's the only technology open to **so many different interpretations.**"*



Having established a reputation for its extra-fine 60-gauge knits (Superfine), Willy Hermann holds the undisputed record for the finest jacquard motif with very precise lines which are comparable, in flat jacquard motifs, to those of prints.

Massimiliano Denna (Brugnoli) then explained that jacquards have become an **essential feature** of its collections over the last 30 years. The Italian company has even been offering a **dedicated collection known simply as 'Jacquard'** for several years now. *"We thought carefully before investing in second-hand machines that we then renovated. When the technological innovations arrived in the 1980s, we were ready to develop an entire collection,"* remembered Massimiliano Denna. The aim of this collection, updated and expanded each year, is to demonstrate the range of **different designs and effects** available from jacquards. Brugnoli favours exclusive developments with its clients. *"We focus on finding new solutions, in terms of fabrics, as well as design and performance, with specific stretch criteria to offer the right solution for the client,"* he added.



## Performance and technical prowess

Unanimous in their praise of **jacquard performance**, participants reiterated the fact that the stretch properties of jacquards have been perfectly controlled since the development of Lycra yarns around thirty years ago. Established



in 1994, MG Création now specializes in the production of stretch jacquards. *"Everyone was doing prints back then. With stretch jacquards, we offered **something different and original** with sophisticated motifs capable of rivalling prints. We can also use specific yarns to combine stretch and non-stretch materials,"* underlined Jean-Pierre Guinet, before concluding by mentioning the new technological solutions offered by large-scale weaving machines.

Agnès Colombet (Satab) explained why jacquard techniques play a key role in narrow fabrics (trims, waistbands, straps, etc.). *"Whether woven or knitted, all the narrow textiles we produce on jacquard machines correspond to a very precise marketing position,"* she clarified. The European narrow fabric leader includes jacquard products in its

Signature by Satab range. In this highly creative range, jacquards feature various raised or fabric effects. *“Jacquards offer added-value for underwear, lingerie and homewear, with original details that make all the difference. Nowadays the increasing proximity of the various markets, whether fashion, intimates or sportswear, ensures that jacquards has gained a legitimate share.”*

## An emotional dimension

Dominique-Laure Demoinet then underlined a dimension mentioned during the interviews with participants that is unique to jacquards: **emotion**. Agnès Colombet (Satab) continued by insisting that: *“As well as being a fabulous technique, jacquard also evokes a specific environment or **atmosphere**, even just the construction of the wooden looms and the distinctive sound they make. Testing out designs or patterns is an emotional experience,”* she confided. Fabio Cescon (Ripa) explained that although it’s the colour rendering in jacquards that excites him the most, the emotion inspired by the pattern, the jacquard itself, comes a close second. *“When people ask me how jacquards come about, **where the ideas come from**, I’m tempted to reply ‘from all over the place’. My ideas are guided by my own personal taste, they’re gleaned from what I see in museums, in the street, shop windows, images, adverts, etc. If you’ve established a good connection with the client, you’ll find the inspiration to suit their requirements. Then we create the pattern and at that point it’s a simple case of ‘yes’ or ‘no’,”* he explained to a particularly attentive audience.

## Standing out from the crowd

The success of jacquards in the fashion market and the inroads made in the intimates and beachwear markets are also due to their impressive capacity to differentiate products, as underlined by Jean-Pierre Guinet (MG Créations). He explained that his aim, in using jacquard wovens, is to make up for the shortcomings of knits and prints! Fabio Cescon (Maglificio Ripa) reminded him that the **‘dynamism’ of the raised effect** of jacquard motifs can also be produced in knits, unlike printing, which remains flat and lacks ‘movement’. *“Whether jacquards, prints, embroidery or lace, we’re in a fashion market. You either like it or not. It’s important that the end-customer likes it. She’s not interested in the technical details behind the fabric. People like materials for the characteristics of the fabric, the texture, the quality of the motif. Jacquards give us the opportunity to offer **original products** which are sure to appeal to end-customers,”* confirmed Martin Hermann (Willy Hermann).



Boasting a vast machine fleet, with some hundred jacquard machines (weaving, knitting, needle-weaving, shuttle-weaving), Satab creates a variety of different products for various price points: a single product, grosgrain for example, is produced on needle machines and shuttle machines. But these two products are designed for two distinct end-uses. *“We think about the applications before creating products and adapt them using different technologies, materials, etc.”* explained Agnès Colombet, before handing over to Jean-Laurent Perrin (Les Tissages Perrin) who added that jacquards are currently proving a very effective way of personalizing ready-to-wear and accessories.

## Today’s effective cost control

*“Having the ideas is not the problem,”* continued Martin Hermann (Willy Hermann) *“it’s about **channelling, guiding and selecting them** to work with this very special technology. With 300 new products, we’re not short of ideas for jacquards. But it’s important that each motif and every idea fits with fashion trends. Sometimes we even come up with too many ideas! There’s a tipping point!”* Jacquard can replace lace or embroidery, it can create a **decorative aesthetic at a reasonable price** because it’s a precious material, capable of holding its own. There is no need to add lace or embroidery. The participants were keen to talk about the cost of jacquards, which is pushed up by slower production times. As Jean-Pierre Guinet (MG Création) reminded the audience, jacquards require high-level precision, particularly for two-way stretch fabrics, which partly explains **their higher price-point**. *“But jacquard prices*

are becoming increasingly reasonable, since the calculation power of the computer technology guiding the needles and ever faster computer processing are enabling us to reduce production times,” explained Fabio Cescon (Ripa).



Florence Bost (Sable Chaud) pointed out that in addition to reducing production costs, the digital dimension also, and above all, **significantly benefits the creative process** by offering a host of new opportunities. On this subject, she mentioned an experiment carried out by designers which involves integrating the digital tool at the creation stage of digitalized patterns: the variables are then integrated into the programme, allowing each motif to be personalized.

## A promising future

**Sustainable development** offers new scope for development: Brugnoli has got off to a head start by developing “**ecological jacquards**” for its brand new Br4 range of stretch knits. These jacquards have been developed using Fulgar’s new high-tech and environmentally-sound yarn, Evo. They are produced using a patented production process, with a low environmental impact and the BLCOLOR dyeing process for reduced energy consumption.

According to Martin Hermann (Willy Hermann), jacquards have a bright future ahead of them: *“The development of jacquard motifs by computer will enable us to push back the boundaries but a number of constraints have to be taken on board: it’s important to balance yarn tensions when using circular machines. Variations in the tension can deform the design and wrinkle the fabric. It’s a problem that needs to be dealt with on the feed system, rather than the machine.”*

Also confident, Jean-Laurent Perrin (Les Tissages Perrin) believes that the trend for **hyper-segmented collections** and ever-increasing production speeds constitute an opportunity for jacquard in its many different guises: *“Our biggest challenge will be satisfying customer demands on time.”*

The trend for increasingly functional fabrics is also an area in which jacquards should feel particularly at home, since the technique can now be used to incorporate yarns featuring specific properties in defined zones, as mentioned by Florence Bost (Sable Chaud). There is considerable scope for developing jacquards in functional fabric markets, such as **cosmetic textiles**. *“Jacquards can be used for miniaturized mechanical effects, such as massage, or to integrate captors for monitoring elderly people’s vital signs,”* she added. Flat machines can produce jacquard knits that include a conductive stretch yarn to integrate electronic components.

## New research underway

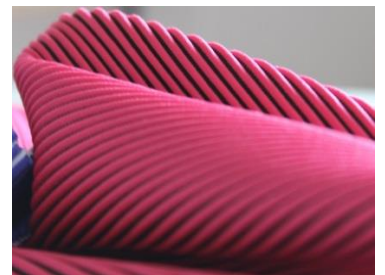


**The fashion – and intimates – market** can expect to take advantage of new technologies, as pointed out by Fabio Cescon (Ripa). Having just returned from the ITMA trade show, Fabio explained that new double needle-bed machines should be capable of creating very fine designs **with two different patterns, one on each side of the fabric**.

Massimiliano Denna (Brugnoli) added that jacquards are also highly sought-after in the **sportswear market** and research has been stepped up to offer fabrics that are at once technical and creative. *“While finding solutions for the future, we should not lose sight*

*of the fact that jacquard needs to maintain its image as a luxury product in comparison to prints. Jacquard fabrics need to preserve this ‘hand-made’ feeling. That’s why it’s so important to include exclusive products in today’s collections, with results that cannot be achieved with prints. Fixing the pattern at the finishing stage can affect the motif. Jacquard requires high-level precision in the definition and placement of patterns. We are still lacking precision technologies to control these elements,”* explained Martin Hermann (Willy Hermann).

The narrow fabric market faces its own issues: *“For us, it’s important to clearly specify with which machines we are working, with needles or shuttles. Once that’s done, we can feel confident about the future of jacquards, with the use of highly technical fibres, such as optical fibres, for example. A number of products require specific tensions for solidity and resistance. That’s what we’re working on at the moment, seeking out **new materials, new applications, new fabric interplays,**”* underlined Agnès Colombet (Satab).



## In conclusion

Having reached the end of the conference, the participants were asked to answer a simple question **is jacquard timeless or does it tend to follow fashion cycles?** Fabio Cescon (Ripa) is convinced that the answer is **'both'**. A point of view shared by Agnès Colombet (Satab), who is renewing her jacquard collection and developing a **more cutting-edge and design-focused range** with new textured materials (matting, raffia).



For Jean-Pierre Guinet (MG Création), whose production focuses almost exclusively on jacquards, fashion cycles have more of an impact on **specific jacquards**, with the introduction of new materials and the development of new technologies which will allow for different stretch properties in the long run.

**'Timeless'** for Martin Hermann (Willy Hermann): jacquard is, remains, and always will be present. *"There are a number of markets in the world where we only sell jacquards. European creation is sought-after in these markets. The creativity of our designs fulfils this demand."* Willy Hermann is increasingly involved in coordinating its jacquards with basic fabrics, as well as

developing **high-performance jacquards** for sportswear, applying finishes to jacquards, such as windproof treatments for wind-resistant cycle-wear.

Of the opinion that the market experiences 'on' and 'off' years for jacquards, Jean-Laurent Perrin (Les Tissages Perrin) revealed that a very big player in the intimates market has just selected a high number of jacquards, perhaps the sign of a new 'jacquard trend'. *"Whatever the case, I'm convinced that we're seeing a trend where jacquard's popularity is due to its capacity to satisfy the need for differentiation."*

Invited to round off the discussion, Florence Bost (Sable Chaud) confirmed that jacquards can also be used to introduce genuine craftsmanship into a savoir-faire that has been handed down from generation to generation. *"In our sector, excellence also involves being able to educate the end-consumer's eye through the quality of our work."*



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