



LEVI'S BRIEF

In September 1934, Levi's® created the first jeans especially designed for women. While the original invented by Levi Strauss in 1873 was a sturdy and functional garment for rugged workers, the women's version was born in response to a fashion demand – out of the original blueprint but filtered through the Hollywood romantic ideal of the American West. Sketched in black ink the May 1935 issue of Vogue, Levi's® women's jeans captured the free spirit of the feisty style mavens of the time – fearless creatures who had embraced a new ideal of modernity, heralded by Elsa Schiaparelli's sportswear or Coco Chanel's free spirited androgyny.

Since that famous editorial debut, denim has always fascinated designers and provided a *trait d'union* for creativity from all continents. It soon became an integral part of the American Look pioneered by designer Claire McCardell, a Paris-trained designer who started her career disassembling Madeleine Vionnet's famous designs and distilling her techniques into simpler yet ingenious versions that could satisfy the mass market needs of a booming post war generation.

The defining item in the American Look was always a pair of denim jeans. If Rebels Without A Cause wore cuffed Levi's®501® Jeans, their girls wore Levi's® denim skirts or pedal pushers, which turned into cigarette pants in the 1960s. The iconic Levi's® denim jacket and perfect tee-shirt also became wardrobe staples - icons that continue to evolve with the times, taking advantage of innovations in textile technology and yet maintaining their original design ethos.

Vietnam changed everything, including fashion. Radical bellbottoms ruled the 1970s, from the very beginning into the *disco* part of the decade. A new love for spandex spilled into denimwear at the turn of the 1980s, with candy coloured skin-tight styles embraced by young people from Paris to New York. High waist, stonewash 501® jeans were the great success story of the mid-1980s, a look that returned to prominence at the end of the Noughties - heralding a sea change in the expression of femininity, after a long decade of overt body politics.

The 2010s, according to Levi's®, are above all about the perfect fit – the ideal combination of rigorous tailoring techniques and advanced materials that can turn a pair of jeans into any woman's favourite.

The Levi's® Award at Mittelmoda 2010 will reward the womenswear collection that best captures the unique spirit of contemporary denim, while upholding timeless design and craftsmanship standards. Finalists will be selected amongst the Mittelmoda 2010 entries by a panel of

international industry leaders and editors, and will be provided by Levi's® with material and technical advice from some of the world's leading denim experts.