

# Four Top Texas Contemporary Artists + **Forward Spring Fashion** = **The Art of Fashion at Neiman Marcus**

I love the fashion at Neiman Marcus, but just walking through the store gives me a charge when I see the walls hung with important contemporary paintings. Confession: I've always wondered, "Wouldn't it be fabulous to curate a show for NM?" Well, one day this spring, the call came in: Neiman's PR director **Stacey Swift** buzzed me at *PaperCity*. Before we got off the phone, an exhibition was hatched. Two weeks later, I was meeting with Stacey and Neiman's visual manager, **Patrick Russey**, to plan a show.

**Only catch:** We had a mere four weeks to select works, organize and install the entire exhibition, titled "The Art of Fashion."

I rang up the four tagged for the show, all Houston talents who have exhibited nationally and/or internationally: **Sharon Engelstein**, **Bert Long Jr.**, **McKay Otto**, and **Aaron Parazette**. Everyone sprang into action. Engelstein had her sexy, biomorphic cookie jars ready. But for Parazette, the situation was more critical: His major show at McClain Gallery opened days before ours. The solution: For Neiman's, he created special ink-jet drawings that, like his canvases, expand letters to spell out surfing lingo in candy-hued colors. Otto raced home from a Hawaiian vacation to deliver his ethereal, vaporous paintings. Long accelerated the editing of a piece created specially for NM — *Cold Couture*, a riveting video based on footage from his mammoth ice-carving projects. Bert's first-ever video, it would fill the store's Galleria window and be projected during the fashion show.

Flash forward. One cool spring evening, several hundred guests converged throughout Neiman's first floor. As the vivid spring fashion waltzed by against the backdrop of important Texas art, the art and social sets converged:

Neiman's ringmaster **Bob Devlin**; top collectors **Judy Nyquist**, **Heidi Gerger**, **Jan Diesel**, and **Jorge Duran**; **Kimberly DeLape**; **Elizabeth Petersen**; gallerist **Sonja Roesch**; designers **Michael Landrum**, just engaged **Selena Mackay**, and **Melissa Rosenberg**; **Doris Taylor**; **John Guess Jr.**, who is producing, writing and directing a film on Long; Long's video editor **Thomasid Rolls**; newlyweds **Tatiana** and **Craig Massey**; restaurateur **Andrea Lazar**; **Philip Paratore**; **Carol Walker** with Hines; and fellow artists **Dune Patten**, **Shannon Duckworth** (up now at TSU's University Museum), and **Richard Fluhr**.

