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# Optical Prism

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030915 09/05 A PM400464 xx731C1  
KATHY KOULAS 877  
COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR  
5550 PARE SUITE 201  
MONTREAL QC H4P 2M1

# Canadian passion

by Craig Saunders

**T**here's a question I keep coming back to: is there such a thing as Canadian design?

The Danes have minimalism, the Germans have modernism, the Japanese have elegance, the Italians have adornment. What makes a Canadian frame? To find an answer, we put the question to Canadian eyewear designers, and asked them to pick their favourite frame from their collections, too.

#### **Traff Green Reflections by Traff**

**The Frame:** I chose this frame [Maja] because of its incredible versatility for all ages. It's pretty much impossible for me to pick a favourite, as so much goes into each one of my creations that they all become special to me. I know that sounds so predictable but what can I say—it's the truth.

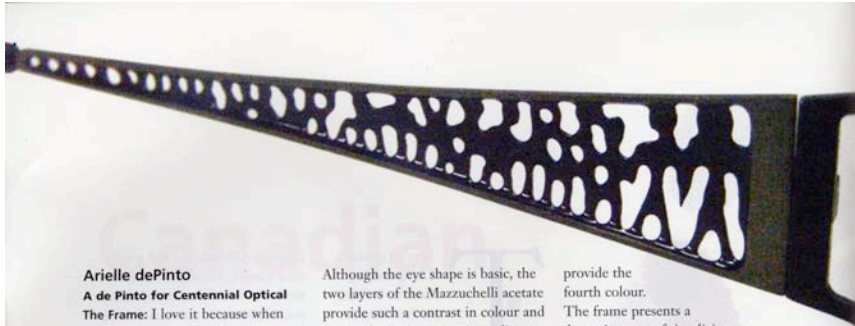
**Canadian design:** I think the great thing about being a Canadian designer is that I'm blessed with having the freedom to imagine and develop anything I want. Whatever

I believe will look and feel good on a woman, I have the freedom to do. As for a Canadian aesthetic... yes, I believe there is such a thing. I believe Canadian's have a love of life, a love of freedom and a freedom of spirit, and that's what I try to implement and portray in my designs.



Maja from Reflections  
by Traff

**We asked the country's eyewear designers to pick one favourite from their collections, and to help us define Canadian design**



**Arielle dePinto**

**A de Pinto for Centennial Optical**

**The Frame:** I love it because when we first conceptualized the frame we were concerned it could look a little absurd on the face, but with a little experimentation it's quite flattering and almost subtle. It's wonderful to have the slightest movement in a frame, we never expected it to be so wearable.

The garments and jewellery I make are all unique hand-crocheted metal; it doesn't get more niche. I am constantly struggling with how to reach a broader audience, and was delighted for the challenge to communicate luxury ideas using manufactured techniques, and pulling it off. I think we've succeeded.

**Canadian design:** At first I really didn't know how to respond. Then I thought about rifling through drawers filled with thousands of frames as a kid, whenever I was dragged into the office. That was the fun part. I always remember the classic Alfred Sung shapes and the Nygard collections. I probably remember my mother's Sung frames most fondly. And who could forget the first Roots shape? I wouldn't say the Canadian eyewear designers are always the most adventurous, but there are some really classic elements in place.

**Beverly Suliteanu**

**Wescan Optical**

**The Frame:** I love the colour and texture of the Kliik KL 434.

Although the eye shape is basic, the two layers of the Mazzuchelli acetate provide such a contrast in colour and design that it turns a quite ordinary frame into something unique, fun and interesting. Although never out of fashion, acetate will be particularly strong in 2011. We used a special double-layer acetate that combines two strong trends—natural material and colour. The first layer is a wood-grain design in natural earth tones, while the second is all about vivid colour. The milling of the temple design adds texture and a three-dimensional feel to the design.

**Canadian design:** I think Canadian designers definitely have a unique aesthetic. We have been able to capture the aggressiveness of Northern European design, but in a way that is softer and easier to wear for most consumers. Our strong use of colour has definitely been noticed as a hallmark of Canadian design. Based on the global popularity of our brands, I think this is an aesthetic that resonates with consumers around the globe.

**Stephen Kapoor**

**Enigma**

**The Frame:** I picked Heartbeat because of its four-tone colouring concept. The outside colour is brown with yellow on the inside. The light blue trim along the top of the frame front and temples compliments the other colours. Finally, the green temple tips

provide the fourth colour. The frame presents a dynamic sense of simplicity. The heartbeat temples create a dynamic look for the person who wears it without being too loud. The fashion forward design makes the frame acceptable for anyone who wants to enjoy their life along with great fashion sense.

**Canadian design:** I believe Canadians are very fashionable. There is great demand for unique eyewear designs along with striking colours. We are fortunate to have some great eyewear designers in this country. I believe Canadian designers step out of the box to make the consumer feel comfortable in trying wonderful new frame lines.



Clockwise from top left: A de Pinto People from Centennial Optical; Heartbeat from Enigma; A de Pinto Fringe from Centennial Optical; Kliik K 434 in brown and red, and Kliik K 434, in teal from Wescan Optical.