



Working Woman

Coye Nokes appeals to the modern female professional.



AS A FINANCIAL consultant working in London, Coye Nokes knew exactly what a professional woman seeks in a work shoe: timeless style, excellent fit and the ability to transition from day to night. Her work with various retail and

consumer goods companies further convinced her that there was a definite niche that needed to be filled, and she went about doing so with an eponymous line launching for Fall '09.

"The collection is all about clean lines with a bit of an edge," Nokes says, explaining her goal was to make exciting shoes that women could wear to work. "Work shoes don't have to be dull and boring," she stresses. In order to add an edge to her shoes, Nokes incorporates subtle details like an updated peep toe, metallic detailing and color-blocking onto streamlined silhouettes. Every pair in the collection would fit right in at a Parisian office, according to Nokes, who describes her shoes as having innate style, understated glamour and versatility.

When selecting materials and merchandising for the debut line, Nokes enlisted the help of her childhood friend Vanessa Bartko, a former handbag and belt designer for Michael Kors. "It's



Clockwise from top: **Klub Nico** shoeie with buckles; **Geé WaWa** boot with stacked heel; cowboy boot by **Rough Justice**; **Frye** shoeie. Center: paint-splashed shoeie by **Bionda Castana**.

EDITOR'S PICKS

My Peeps Hot boots with some breathing room.

definitely 'office with an edge,'" Bartko says of Nokes' designs, adding that the collection reflects her pal's personal style. "It's for the woman who wants to look professional but not corporate," she offers. "It's stylish but still appropriate."

With price points running between \$390 and \$640 (the majority of styles retail for approximately \$450), Coye Nokes offers a range of heel heights from flats to mid-heights and all the way up to four-inch platforms. Handmade in the Marche region of Italy, the line includes classic pumps; mixed suede and leather ankle boots with a side zipper; two-tone pumps with patent detailing; tall boots and patent Mary Janes. All the styles are very strong, stable and walkable, Nokes

says. "Our pumps and Mary Janes take into account that women are always on the move. They are pretty sensible from a wearability standpoint."

With the exception of a pleated satin d'Orsay heel, the mostly leather collection features rich neutrals in black, taupe, ink blue and metallic gold. "The colors are very versatile and easy to wear," Bartko says. "We wanted the shoes to seamlessly integrate into one's wardrobe but still be special, so a woman wants to wear them." Nokes plans to carryover a couple of staples into the Spring '10 collection but vows to maintain the collection's uniqueness and professional air. "You will never see sheepskin in my line," she concludes. —Nicole Yee