

Now modelling for Marks and Spencer, Twiggy helped define an era in the 1960s and is now the inspiration behind Fluxá's spring-summer collection for 2009.

CREDIT: MARKS AND SPENCER.

A splash of sixties colour

High-end Spanish footwear brand Fluxá has added an interesting twist to its spring-summer collection for 2009.

Called Twiggy Twiggy after the iconic model that helped make the London fashion scene of the late 1960s, colours for this part of the collection are bright—electric blue and kiwi fruit green predominate—with classic 1960s lines on the toes and heels. Linings have the full force of flower power.

It's a bright and joyful collection and reaction at this autumn's edition of Micam, the Milan footwear show chosen for its launch, was overwhelmingly positive. People love the name and the look and Fluxá's parent company, Elche-based Gedeca, is confident that the idea will bring success. And yet, there is something curious about it all.

The fortieth anniversary of the Summer of Love was 2007; it may have made more sense to launch shoes like those in the Twiggy Twiggy line then. This year, 2008, was also an important Hippie Movement anniversary, marking 40 years since the protests that gave a global voice to anti-war and environmental movements for the first time.

BBC Radio ran an amazing series of programmes playing snippets from 1968—the Prague Spring, student riots in Paris, Rome and beyond, the assassinations of Dr Martin Luther King Jr and, later, of Bobby Kennedy, racial tension in Chicago, all era-defining moments—and discussing them with the benefit of four decades of hindsight.

This period coincided with Twiggy's rise to global fame. Having become the 'Face of England' in 1966, at the age of just 16, the Summer of Love and the momentous world events of 1968 coincided with Twiggy establishing herself on the world stage as one of the earliest supermodels. She arrived in the United States in 1967 and surprised many people when her fame and popularity grew instead of fizzling out. The following year, she took Japan by storm, even appearing in a television advertisement for Toyota.

All of this suggests that the summer of 2009 seems a strange choice for a retro line of this name. Is the collection appearing one or even two years too late?





Miguel Muñoz, a member of the sales team at Gedeca, cannot see what the fuss is about; 1968, 1969—what's the difference? He's a child of the 1980s and says his company's motivation for bringing these shoes to market now is much more about how the shoes will appeal to sophisticated women today than about nostalgia for a lost hippie heaven on earth.

He readily confesses that he had never heard of Twiggy, but the name caught his attention when he heard a famous song called Twiggy Twiggy by Japanese pop legends The Pizzicato Five. He loved the song and decided to find out who this Twiggy person was.

"The more I found out, the more I loved it," he says, "and the result is the collection we have put together. We were amazed, really amazed, to find that the name was not copyrighted, so it's just been sheer luck that we've

been able to use it. And people love the name; it has gone down really well."

The collection is aimed at a particular kind of consumer, a young woman with plenty of personality, someone who is not frightened to combine different styles, different colours, different looks, but who can still be, at times, sweet and innocent. "She is, in other words, naive but chic," Gedeca says. It's a customer who knows and cares about fashion trends, who reads magazines covering the subject and allows herself to be influenced by what they say.

The company pictures this customer in the middle-income bracket, someone who buys shoes at a price between €39 and €69, so this is not a top-of-the-range collection. But this is part of the current strategy that Gedeca has in place for Fluxá. It believes that it will be good for the

Some of the shoes that make up the new Twiggy Twiggy collection.

CREDIT: FLUXÁ

Spanish footwear industry as a whole if it can offer shoes in keeping with the latest fashion tendencies at around this price.

It wants to help its retail partners have new shoes in their shop-windows every 30 or 45 days. That means being able to respond quickly to market demands and is in keeping with the 'speed-to-market' moves that the fashion industry has been making for most of this decade, with much of the impetus coming from Spanish companies such as Zara, Mango and Cortefiel. It wants Fluxá to become a touchstone brand among footwear retailers, one of the sector's most reliable suppliers.

With Twiggy Twiggy, it hopes to achieve all of this, and still offer customers some summer fun. 🍷