

## Not part of the flock

**Summer Rayne Oakes**, recently returned from the wto meetings in Hong Kong, models her Ramona coat from the Sage by the Delano Collection—proof that being eco-conscious can be stylish, too. There's more in her 'Behind the Label' column in this issue of *Lucire*.



# Fashion

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# Sage by Delano

The shepherd or the sheep? **Summer Rayne Oakes** has jet-setted around the globe in her new organic wool Ramona jacket, only to have been followed by many a hungry photographer looking to capture this tailored treat on camera

*Photographed by Jon Moe  
Make-up and hair by Johnny Lavoy  
Modelled by the author*

Ramona jacket by Sage by the Delano Collection;  
vintage hat; ring by Kirsten Muenster



IN THE SEA of black and navy trench coats that stream through the streets of New York City on a daily basis, I must admit that my naturally white organic wool Ramona stands out. Suppose that there is irony in being the “black sheep” in white wool, but I’ll revel in that. The truth is when I slide into my Sage by the Delano Collection, button up the bamboo buttons, and place on my great-grandmother’s vintage 1930s cloche cap, people notice. In fact, after having procured the clearly cosmopolitan creation this past November, the jet-setting jacket has a way of getting caught in the crossfire of many a photographer’s camera.

**Caught on tape:** it’s quite impossible to even imagine that a 12 lb frozen turkey; fair trade, and the song ‘Shake It Off’ have any commonality whatsoever, but alas, because of my woollen Ramona, they do. *Late November*, Chester Higgins, photographer for *The New York Times* was drawn to the jacket as I was purchasing a free-range turkey at the Green Market on Union Square for Thanksgiving dinner; *mid-December*, photographers made certain they caught me in the coat while at the press conference for the Fair Trade Fair in Hong Kong; *New Year’s Day*, the dapper Delano jacket was once again caught in the ricochet of paparazzi

## The jet-setting jacket has a way of getting caught in the crossfire of many a photographer’s camera

flash while partying with Mariah [Carey] and friends at Cipriani’s.

I must admit, my little Ramona doesn’t just keep me warm on cold winter nights; she’s a magnet for attention—a real show-stopper. I just can’t seem to tear her away from the limelight, which is fine by me, because what Ramona won’t tell you in photos is that she’s shaking up the

status quo not only by image standards, but also by design standards: ‘We *wanted* to shake things up and challenge the current conceptions about sustainable and organic materials,’ comments designer Chuck Heckman. ‘This meant creating new fabrics that were both luxurious to the eye and the hand as well as sustainably produced.’

The truly special part about the Sage by Delano Ramona jacket in my opinion is not the fit (*which by the way is absolutely fabulous*), but in fact, the fibre. Wool, though a natural fibre, is usually processed using a concoction of chemicals which is largely polluting. Heckman worked diligently with a textile manufacturer in Vermont on *O-wool*, which is a 50–50 wool-merino blend without the chemical crutch. The us-sourced organic wool and 100 per cent certified organic Australian merino are then blended specially to create a top-of-the-line luxurious felted fabric. ‘*Living Well Clean*,’ the purported Sage collection saying, is a mantra which is clearly shepherding in many a conscious follower.

‘The name and concept behind the brand is a reflection of our customer,’ remarks Heckman. ‘The woman who wears Sage is an urban sophisticate who loves luxury and beauty. She is educated, socially conscious, and takes care of herself, her body, and her mind. She wears Sage not only because it’s sustainable, but because it’s sexy, beautiful and smart.’ *Not a bad trend to follow I must admit.*

So, ladies: I encourage you to wear your Ramona and see how many followers you can come up with ... and stay tuned for the spring–summer line. The simple, sexy, and flattering pieces will be focused on using bamboo and organic cotton blends in deep merlots, natural and soft greys. •

Summer Rayne Oakes is head of Summer Rayne Oakes LLC and a spokeswoman for socially responsible and eco-friendly projects. She has appeared in *Lucire* regularly since April 2005. The Sage by the Delano Collection can be found online at [www.delanocollection.com/sage/index.html](http://www.delanocollection.com/sage/index.html). Jon Moe is a New York-based photographer and has shot numerous *Lucire* covers.