



Life of Style

Local 4's Jon Jordan wants you to be a chic shopper

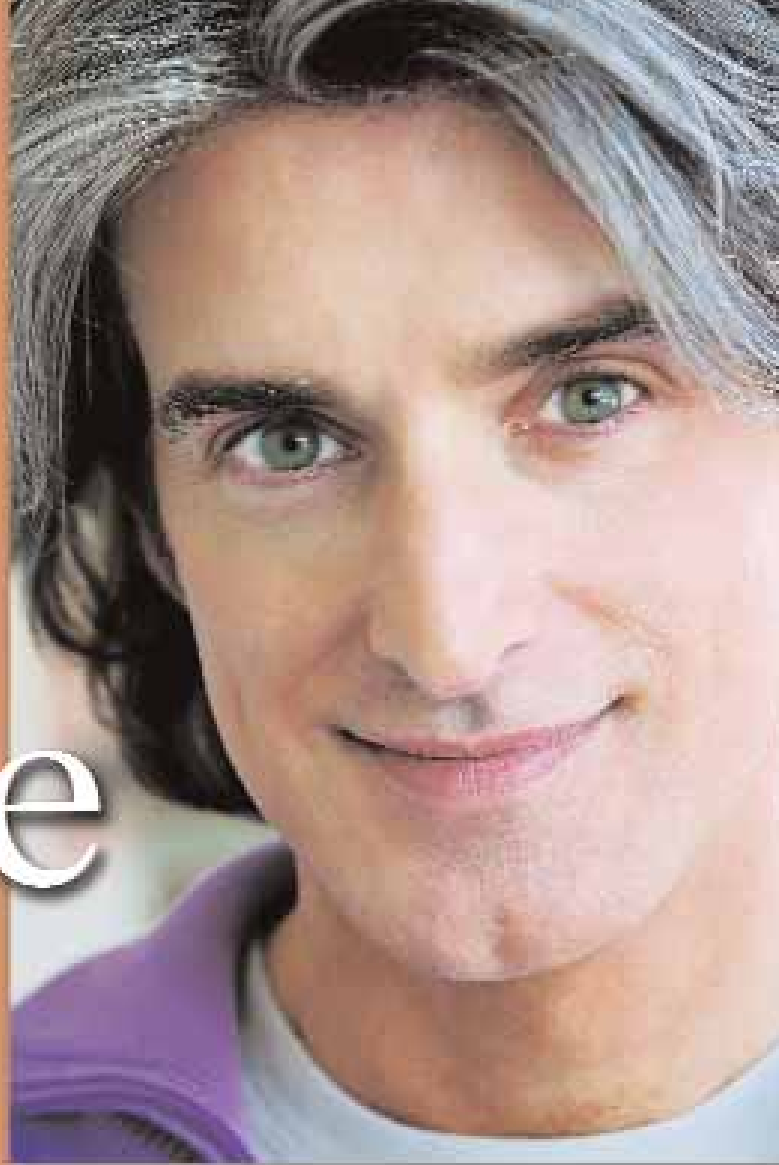
By Karen Buscemi Photos by Daniel Lippitt

It's fitting that, with his striking looks and hair that doesn't know a bad day, Bloomfield Township's Jon Jordan also happens to be an expert stylist, able to piece together ensembles that showcase his impeccable taste. The style editor and fashion show host for WDIV Local 4, Jordan, 48, is always on the lookout for the latest trends and timeless pieces that go together effortlessly.

His eye for fashion is so highly respected that the stations's parent company, Post-Newsweek, hired him as its image consultant. Jordan visits stations across the country, consulting broadcasters about their style and how viewers perceive them.

Jordan recently chatted with *Signature* about his career and philosophy on getting dressed. And on pages 36-40, you'll find his selection of fashion options just for *Signature* readers.

Facing page: Jon Jordan in front of the lit display wall of handbags and shoes at Tender in Birmingham.



How did you decide to be a stylist?

JJ: I majored in art at the University of Michigan, then went home and told my parents I wanted to go to beauty school. That went over big.

What happened to a career in art?

JJ: It became evident that a degree in art was going to be a challenge. Unless you want to teach art. Some friends had just come back from London and trained at Vidal Sassoon, and I saw the kinds of things they were doing and I thought, well that's art, it's just a different medium. So they inspired me to go to beauty school at Virginia Farrell, in Ferndale, where everybody went at the time, in the late '70s and early '80s.



Jon Jordan gets candid with Birmingham's Kevin McManamon (modeling one of Jordan's menswear selections) about not being afraid to wear color, mix patterns, or dress down a suit by losing the tie.

“There are more important things in life [than style] – personally, I can't think of one – but I've heard that there are more important things in life.”

– Jon Jordan

Which celebrities have you styled?

JJ: I've worked with Bill Clinton; Cindy Crawford; Sarah, Duchess of York; Paulina Porizkova; Nick Lachey; and Ryan Cabrera. I also worked with some old showgirls like Rita Moreno. Lots of people. Most of them were for in-town appearances. People have to look good.

What's your style philosophy?

JJ: My philosophy is that style is relevant to everybody. It's a quality of life issue. I think that, more so in America, we're

conditioned to see it as a little more superficial. Europeans typically understand that it's about investing in a really great pair of shoes or a great pair of trousers or a great coat. Americans are more quantity oriented. Style can make people feel better about themselves. It can make them feel more confident. It gets you ahead in the business world. It isn't anything to take for granted, because it improves one's life. There are more important things in life – personally, I can't think of one – but I've heard that there are more important things in life.

How is Post-Newsweek using your expertise with its broadcasters?

JJ: They hired me to be their image consultant at all the Post-Newsweek stations across the country, so I get an opportunity to pay visits and talk about style and how to improve makeup and hair and wardrobe. There's a definite psychology to it – what a viewer perceives in terms of how on-air people look. You have to look at your fashion choices as part of an overall composition. Every news set used to have a blue background and you sat at a wood-grain desk. Now you have really complicated



sets where you're moving, and you have bright graphics and animation and primary colors and crawls underneath you – and if you're wearing beige, you become the least important aspect of that overall shot composition.

Do you advise female broadcasters against the hair helmet?

JJ: It's regional. What works on the air in Miami doesn't fly in Detroit. You have to balance the idea that journalistic integrity is obviously the most important thing, but if you're going to be on television, especially in the age of high def, you have to really think about that stuff. While you want to convey the message properly and be credible, if your appearance is distracting – either

you're not paying attention to yourself or you're paying too much attention to yourself – people will focus on the fact that your hair is messy or your makeup is too heavy or your accessories are distracting. They miss the message completely, which defeats the purpose.

Have you ever made a fashion faux pas?

JJ: I remember a bright yellow paper jumpsuit that at the time I thought was cool. Everybody went through a perm phase. I don't know if people get perms anymore, but this was big hair and there is really horrifying photographic evidence. Not really proud of that. And I went through big shoulder pads and hair that was every color at one time or another.

How has your fashion sense evolved?

JJ: As you mature, you become more discerning about which trend you're jumping on. You get to my age, and the considerations are different. There's a real fine line between looking contemporary, modern and cool, and looking foolish. What works at 50 is not what works at 25. A lot of people in the fashion and hair business think it's about completely keeping on the edge with the latest trend, but it has to be age-appropriate. I'd rather people perceive me as looking good for somebody who is closing in on 50 than somebody who is trying to look like I'm 20.

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– Jon Jordan



What are your favorite labels?

JJ: I'm a huge fan of Burberry. Christopher Bailey has done an amazing job reinventing that line. I wear tons of Polo, I'm a big Ralph Lauren fan. I love Paul Smith. I love the fact that his approach is really great English tailoring, but he has this sense of whimsy that makes his stuff just enough to be interesting without looking crazy. I was at his collection in Paris and he sent his guys down the runway in great tailored suits with Western shirts underneath. I like that unpredictability.

What's happening in fashion these days?

JJ: Fashion is about rethinking things, not being predictable. One of the big surges in fashion has been no-more-matchy-matchy, and that's hard for people. They know how to match things, but they don't know how to *not* match things. They don't know how to not look too predictable. That's a real art. I think about it every day when I'm putting things together. I see people playing it too safe. Patricia Field, who did the wardrobe for *Sex and the City* and most recently was nominated for an Academy Award

for *The Devil Wears Prada* ... was in town two years ago and I interviewed her. She heralded the no-more-matchy-matchy. I asked her about that, and Patricia – she's no shrinking violet. She's very colorful, literally – she has magenta hair. She said to me, "Well, Jon, all colors go together, because they all come from God." I'll never forget that, because it's a great way to think about it and it's a beautiful life philosophy as well. You think about trendy clothes and you would think Patricia is the queen of trendy, but she says she isn't. She believes in buying classic pieces and combining them in interesting ways. And that's really what I've always been about.

So, how do you apply that idea to you?

JJ: My sense of style has evolved. When I was growing up in the '70s, I went to prep school and I was the biggest WASP on the planet. I was influenced by glam rock and the advent of disco, so it was about topsiders, but sequins, too. It was always this merging of things. I think that was what Patricia was able to put succinctly. You take these classic pieces, which are always a better investment and

stay relevant for longer, [and are] better made, and then you rethink how you put them together. If you're a man, it's how you wear a khaki suit with a bright pink polo shirt. And a really cool pair of sneakers. Men think their business wardrobe is 9 to 5, but you can mix it all up. And men are especially challenged. Women are much more comfortable thinking about things that way.

Isn't it more difficult for women to get dressed?

JJ: Women have more choices, men have more hang-ups. A pink tie, for a lot of guys – there's a sweat factor there, and there shouldn't be. Color is something that nobody should be afraid of.

How do people dress in metro Detroit?

JJ: I think we're more in tune with the East Coast. Chicago may be a bigger city, but I think Detroit has a little bit faster pace, a little bit more edge to it, and it's reflected in the way the people dress here. We have pretty pronounced sophistication. And within the metropolitan area there are distinct pockets of style.

"... I think everybody can address trends. I see a lot of people with unlimited budgets completely screw it up. They may have expensive labels on, but it doesn't mean they're getting it at all. There should be legislation regarding that."

– Jon Jordan

Facing page: Jordan appreciates all style successes, such as these chic handbags from Tender.



Jordan's personal style philosophy is "the simpler, the better." The current overuse of accessories in the fashion world is difficult for him to accept.

What about 20-something girls? Less-is-more too often seems to be the mentality.

JJ: At that age, you're really screaming for an identity. You're deciding who you are. I can relate to that. When I was younger, I was a lot louder about my choices. When you're younger you can get away with certain things. But that doesn't mean you necessarily *should*. Right now in fashion, we're bombarded by too much skin, too many doodads, too much fringe, and over-accessorization and details that have become

overwhelming – and it's not a good thing.

Talk about trends for summer 2007.

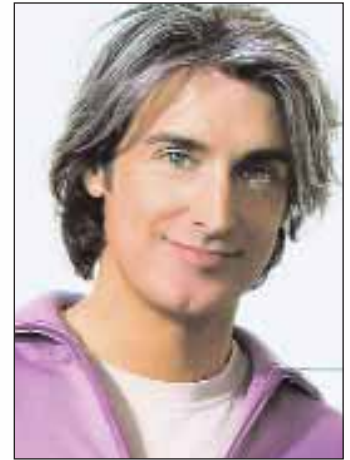
JJ: We're going to see lots of metallic stuff. The recent collections are carrying that into fall and winter next year. In terms of making an investment in a trend, if you do something in silver, if you do something in metallic, that's a good investment. Lots of neutrals for summer – that can be a good thing if it's done the right way. But I like color, so you're not going to see me turning up in off-white and sand and khaki, without a punch of color. Details are becoming a little more palatable. Detail is important again, but it's not going to be overwhelming. If you have lace, fringe, beads and Victorian and Renaissance and it's

all rolled into one, it's a bit much. Designers are becoming more discerning about that. Everything has an empire waist right now, and for women, everyone can wear that and have fun with that.

What if you don't have the budget for the costly trends?

JJ: If you can't buy a silver trench coat from Burberry, get some silver nail polish. For \$4, you can address the trend. That's why I think everybody can address trends. I see a lot of people with unlimited budgets completely screw it up. They may have expensive labels on, but it doesn't mean they're getting it at all. There should be legislation regarding that. ☒

Ordinary to Extraordinary



Professional stylist Jon Jordan makes fashion basics fashionably fabulous with his unique creative touch

Produced by Karen Buscemi and Laura Maniaci

Styled by Karen Buscemi and Jon Jordan

Photos by Daniel Lippitt

Hair and makeup by independent stylist Monica Margerum of Creative Touch by Monica

Shot at Tender in Birmingham and L'Uomo Vogue in Bloomfield Township



Paul Smith suit, \$1,675 and shirt, \$470; JoJo necklace, \$250; leaf earrings, \$1,130. All from Tender
Model: Stephanie Wineman, Bloomfield Township

MAKE A SUIT SASSY

Jon Jordan says:

“With this look, it’s about looking polished and looking professional. It’s about not looking like you’re wearing your husband’s wardrobe. By paying attention to detail – the fabric and the cut – you can embrace your femininity and not lose your credibility. That’s a mistake that career women make frequently.

You can make a suit more festive and more feminine by choosing the right accessories. You can add a little bit of frill to it; you can add a sexy shoe; you can add necklaces. That will propel the suit into a new kind of existence.

Pattern-on pattern-dressing is certainly an art. You have to understand what works and what doesn’t work. You can coordinate colors, but you can clash patterns. The key is to let one pattern predominate. If you have two or three fine patterns that are all working against one another, it becomes a bit confusing to the person who’s looking at you. You want a bolder pattern combined with a minor pattern, with some sort of coordinating color value.”

**ADD A LITTLE
EXTRA TO THAT
LITTLE BLACK DRESS**

Jordan says:

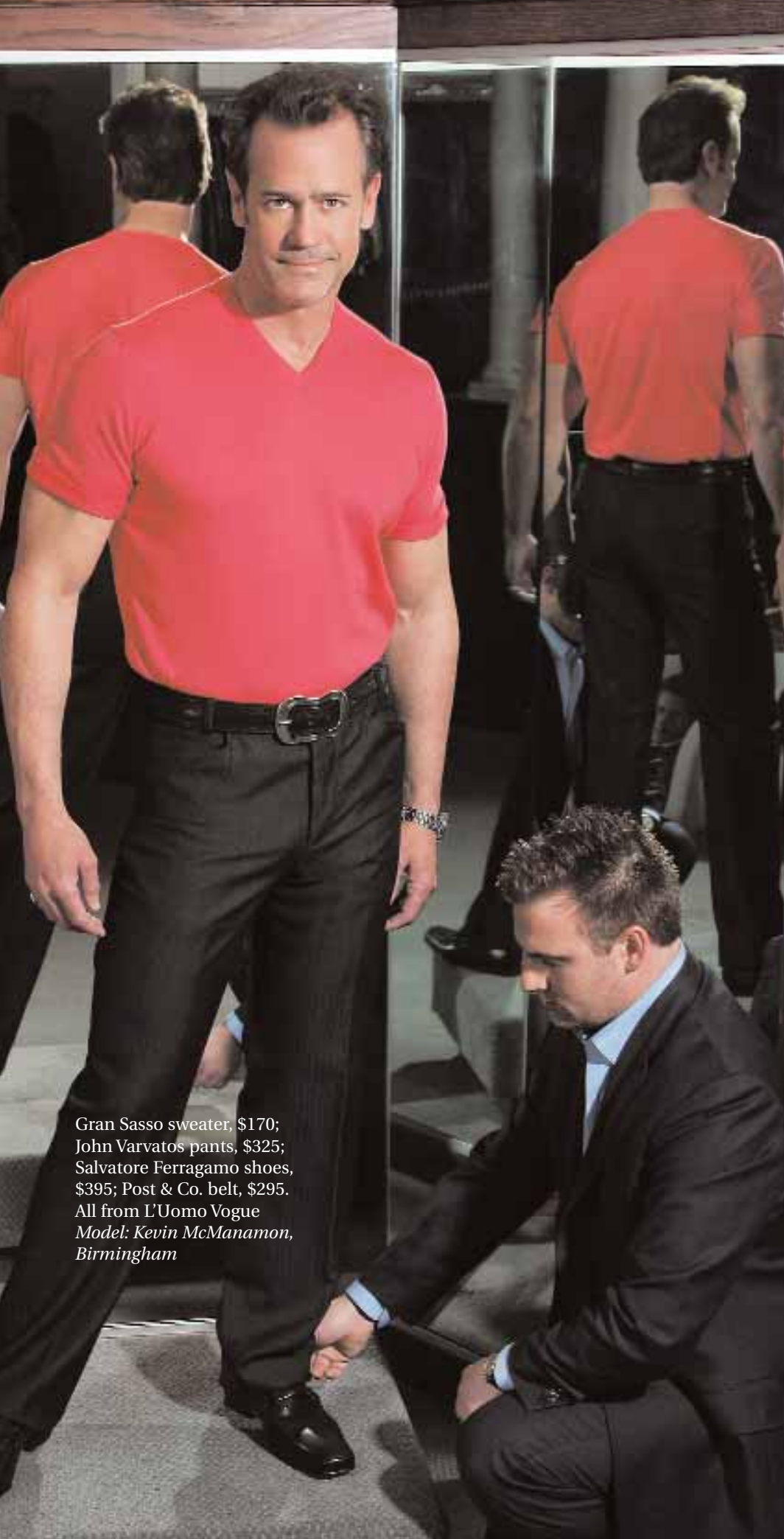
“ The little black dress should be a staple in every woman's wardrobe, but you want to make it fresh. One way is the dress itself. This season, you can address things like shape and volume. Volume is big in many lines, and the great thing about wearing something voluminous is it's very forgiving, so many people can utilize shapes like this. And it's fun, too. It's a modern slant on dressing. You have to do it the right way, but it can be very effective, and you can make a statement.

If you have an existing little black dress, the way to make that fresh is to add a component like a legging to it, which makes it very modern. And rethink the all-black approach. It's about wearing a fun, colorful shoe. It's about combining that with an animal-skin purse, and using colors and patterns that aren't necessarily related to the black dress, which pop out as a result. Even something as simple as red lipstick or great oversized accessories makes it fresh.

It's all about proportion, and it's about being fun and thinking out of the box. You're taking a classic fashion concept and making it new. ”



Osman Yousefzada dress, \$855; Tender clutch, \$495; Lanvin necklace, \$1,195; earrings, \$470 and ring, \$470. All from Tender



Gran Sasso sweater, \$170;
John Varvatos pants, \$325;
Salvatore Ferragamo shoes,
\$395; Post & Co. belt, \$295.
All from L'Uomo Vogue
Model: Kevin McManamon,
Birmingham

UP THE COOL FACTOR ON CASUAL

Jordan says:

“ This is my take on casual. To be honest, if I see another guy in designer jeans with an untucked striped shirt ... You can think about casual in different terms. A great pair of fitted trousers with a modern cut and a neutral color is a great look – it's really a year-round pant. Now combine that pant with a lightweight sweater, because sweaters are for summer.

The shoe is very classic but still sleek. It's appropriate for a lot of applications, but that's what you do when you pick a shoe. Choose something that you could do with a suit or a pair of jeans. If it looks great in many circumstances, it's a better fashion bargain.

The belt is about being age-appropriate, not being distracting. The bling thing is really over. It's about making interesting choices at this point. Like a pinky ring. It's not about overkill with accessories, especially for men. A little ring is just interesting enough to be cool, but it doesn't look like you're trying too hard.

Men are generally afraid of color, but they shouldn't be. Color, especially in the summertime, flatters skin tones. It's a great way to make your outfit interesting and exciting without having to rely on stencils and graphics and fringe and fraying, and all of those crazy details that are distracting instead of enhancing. Color is the best accessory you can choose. ”

MODERNIZE THE SUMMER SUIT

Jordan says:

“ This is a great example of the modern suit that’s appropriate for summer; in a lightweight fabric and a neutral color. The suit is more body-conscious. It’s a trimmer cut, narrower through the shoulder, with a higher armhole and trimmer through the waist. The pants are flat-front and narrow. And the jacket is one-button.

The trimmer look is really where menswear is headed long-term, so in terms of suit investments, this is the look.

For summer, we took the light, neutral color, and we punched it up with color. In this case it’s the shirt, which is pattern-on-pattern. It’s a great way to make a suit casual. You can transition from office wear to evening wear just by ditching a tie, putting on a casual belt and a casual shoe, like a sandal, and the result is amazing.

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Canali suit, \$1,750; Etro shirt, \$325; Paul Smith sandal, \$160; Island belt, \$95. All from L'Uomo Vogue