

# stylewatch

## koolthing

> BY AMY LU

**WHAT:** B2 dancer shoe  
**WHERE:** B2 (1112 Robson Street)  
**PRICE TAG:** \$98  
**WHY:** High heels seem to have gone on hiatus for the past few seasons, and store shelves have been overflowing with flats. B2 has taken a different approach to the traditional ballet flat we've been seeing a lot of. With a three-buckle detail reminiscent of early-20th-century baby booties, the shoe fits perfectly with trends like shirtdresses, tunics, and crocheted details. The bone colour is original, fashion-forward, and a welcome change from fall footwear's usual browns and blacks. These flats would dress up any pair of leggings and would look stunning with bright tights and a sweater dress. Sure to be your new fave, they come in black too.



## stylenotes

> BY CHARLIE SMITH

### Gene Simmons of KISS connects with local designer

Here are four things you may not know about KISS cofounder Gene Simmons: his mother survived a Nazi concentration camp; he once taught Grade 6 in Spanish Harlem; his partner, Shannon Tweed, recently wrote a letter to his former girlfriend, Cher, asking her to stop contacting Simmons; and he is a business partner with Vancouver fashion designer Jason Dussault.

Then there is Simmons's widely reported claim that he has gone to bed with 4,800 different women. "I didn't always sleep," Simmons quipped in a recent phone interview with the *Straight*.

Simmons, star of the TV-reality series *Gene Simmons Family Jewels*, was speaking in advance of a public appearance on Friday (September 14) at Vancouver's L2 Leone fashion boutique in the Sinclair Centre (350 Howe Street). He'll be there from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. to sign autographs and to promote his line of MoneyBag streetwear.

Leone carries MoneyBag, which is designed by Dussault, who brings a high-end rocker's polish to the label. Simmons said that he has owned the MoneyBag logo for 28 years and has used it in book publishing, comics, clothing, and musical instruments. Earlier this year, Simmons formed a partnership with Dussault Custom Ink, which has designed hoodies for Nelly Furtado, Rob Zombie, and Prevail of the Swollen Members.

"It's a nice, small operation," Simmons said. "Small operations can rule the world, like the two guys in a garage who created Google."

The first product was a line of limited-edition T-shirts, US\$40 to US\$250. In an interview at the *Straight's* office, the chatty and charismatic Dussault said that his company has a 50-percent partnership in the Moneybag line. Dussault said that as well as T-shirts, he is designing luxe hats, luggage, a laptop bag, belts, and hoodies. In addition, he designs many of these products as well as jewellery and jeans for his own company.

"There is no really high-end, cool rocker gear," Dussault said, adding that he makes the best hoodies in the world. He put one on the table that featured a silk lining, faux mink cuffs, and an embroidered silkscreen patch, \$450.

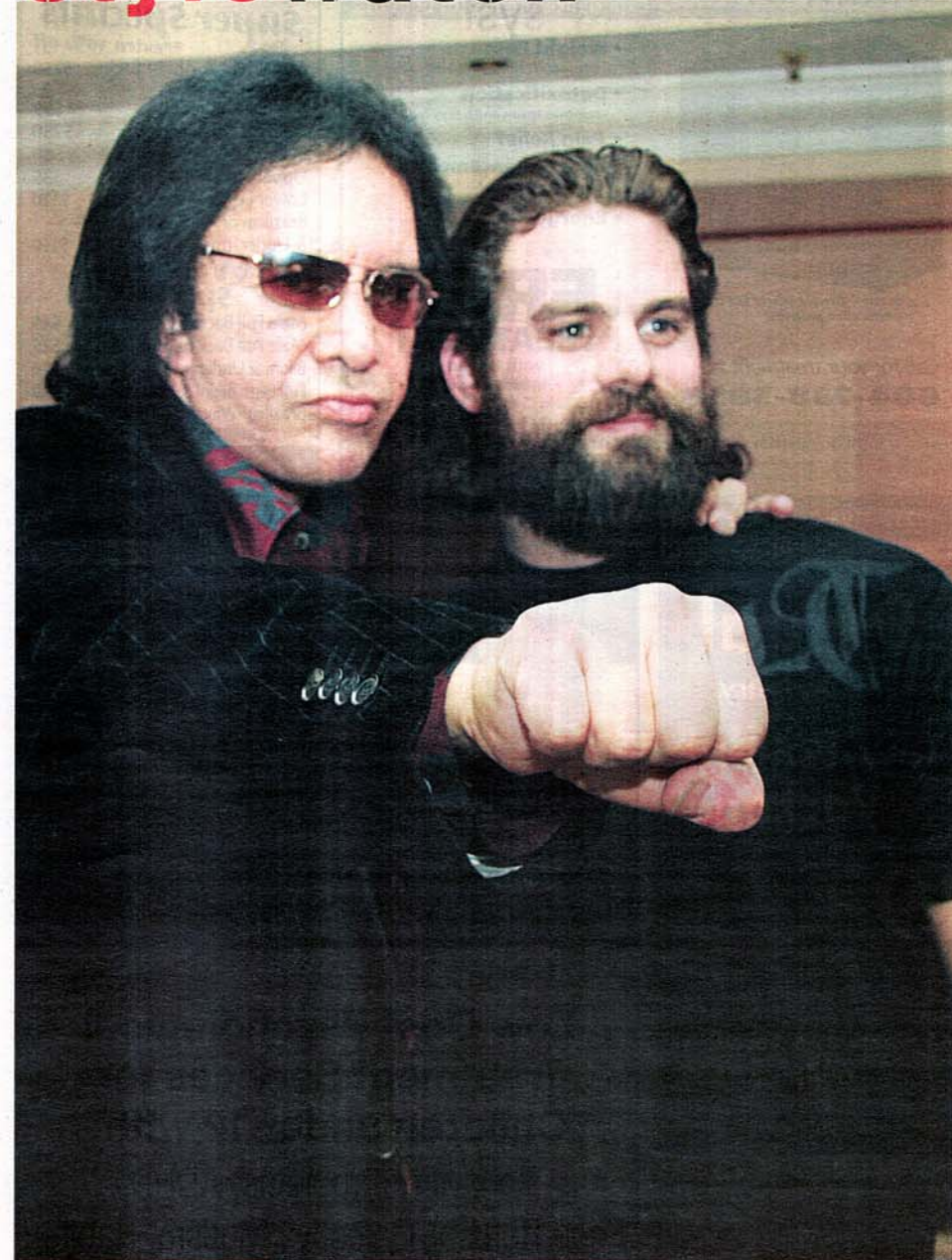
Dussault said he met Simmons about nine months ago, and describes him as a friend and mentor. According to Genesimmons.com, Simmons has many business interests, including a partnership in Simmons Abramson Marketing, which handles outside marketing for the Indy-car series. Simmons told the *Straight* that his company is "about to get involved with the National Hockey League".

When asked to elaborate, he replied, "Not allowed to say."

Broadcaster Howard Stern recently declared that Simmons, who is also chairman of NGTV.com, is worth US\$250 million. Simmons would only acknowledge to the *Straight* that he is wealthy enough to buy a pastrami sandwich.

Simmons said he learned his business skills by reading articles in *Barron's* and the *Wall Street Journal*. He added that he is "astounded" the Beatles never took out a trademark on their mop-top haircuts, or that the names of North American cities have not been trademarked by politicians. "As an example, Vancouver could have picked up, oh, an extra trillion dollars if the city fathers had trademarked the name as a business," he said.

When informed that Mayor Sam Sullivan actually took out a trademark for the term *EcoDensity*, the rock star scoffed in disgust. "Stupid word. It's a stupid word. It's a stupid word," Simmons said. "You're not going to make a penny out of that. Nobody is going to be walking down the street going, 'EcoDensity'." ♦



KISS bassist and businessman extraordinaire Gene Simmons plays tough guy with local fashion designer Jason Dussault, who created MoneyBag T-shirts and a MoneyBag laptop bag, as well as what he calls the "best hoodies" in the world.