

Rowland.

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together in the creation of S2's beautiful retail space. In a touch that illustrates her love of all things design, the ever-changing gallery space featured a food art installation by renowned local artist Bridget Waters earlier this year.

Bridget was lucky enough to have Chrissie dress her when she toured San Diego, New York and Los Angeles as part of the Federal Government-sponsored GDay USA, an event designed to showcase Australian wares and innovation to the US market. In return, Bridget created a striking red food art installation in the S2 store, featuring 60 kilograms of hand-dyed scarlet rice.

"It's very much about adding pieces to your wardrobe and growing your own collection in a way that disregards obvious trends in the market."

"To combine with other artists is great," Chrissie says. "Bridget has done two installations in store for us now but the fantastic one she did at the start of the autumn-winter season looked amazing. Customers would come in and do a double take. We'll keep doing that within the shop, to keep the space changing and interesting."

The new store and label represent a new chapter for Chrissie. The determined entrepreneur spent a furious 10 weeks gutting and refitting the shop space after a year-long hunt for the perfect retail area. The new polished concrete floor, bleached walls and rust finish are testament to the design principles that are carried throughout the self-taught couturier's work, which has a timelessness and minimalist Japanese-inspired aesthetic which is almost Zen.

It is easy to see why the S2 retail concept is appealing to customers with a lust for contemporary chic. The store's selection of gorgeous throws, cushions, home fragrances and luscious body care products from around the globe illustrate the Chrissie's simple design agenda. The new S2 Spring-Summer 2008-09 collection marries well with Italian fragrances Antica Farmacista, knitwear from Lorinda Gram, jeans by Turkish label LTB and designs from Australian labels Kendra Tricot, Est Hoshika and Found. There is also a basics range in organic cottons and wools by Juicy Bear.

"My garments have a directional look that isn't in one minute, out the next," Chrissie says. "I'm inspired greatly by the Japanese designers who have done that so successfully for a long time and the Martin Margiela, the Zambesi, all of those who have very cleverly followed their own ethos in creating a look. That is what I hope to do, create a look that stands on its own."

The design ethos behind S2 is refreshing, based around presenting a blend of well constructed, high quality, trans-seasonal pieces that can be built upon from winter to spring, summer to autumn. S2 pieces show a pared-down originality that is independent of momentary market trends and all the garments are made locally with carefully selected wools, silks, cotton jerseys and linen cottons, reinforcing a 'slow fashion' ideal that goes against the growing trend for fast-paced mass consumerism.