



Once Upon a Time at Fairyland
By C.J. Hirschfield



Photo by Maria Rodriguez

Fairyland provided the setting for up-and-coming fashion company ModCloth's photo shoot for their spring collection.

Fairyland: Fashion Forward!

Indie. Retro. Vintage. That's Fairyland, right? Well that also describes the second fastest-growing company in the Bay Area, according to the SF Business Times. ModCloth is hotter than hot, and they chose Fairyland as the location of their fashion shoot for the upcoming spring line.

ModCloth's website offers this company history: "Founded by high school sweethearts Eric Koger and Susan Gregg Koger, and built on a foundation of love for vintage and retro clothing, ModCloth.com is an online clothing, accessories, and decor retailer that aims to provide a fun and engaging shopping atmosphere for

you, our customer."

Apparently folks are both having fun as well as seriously engaging, because the business (founded in Pittsburgh but now based in San Francisco) that began as a labor of love at Carnegie Mellon University now boasts an annual revenue of \$15.59 million and 214 employees – a growth of 2,946% over one year's time.

When they first contacted us, we did our homework. Dangerous, it turns out, because we discovered we love their clothes, and just after their shoes. We gave them a tour, and they particularly enjoyed the healthy number of decorative mushrooms that grace

our park; ModCloth features mushrooms as company icons.

They decided that Fairyland's distinctive, one-of-a-kind structures and bright colors would provide a great backdrop for their distinctive special occasion dresses.

We chose a day when the park was closed, but we had to explain that we do let our animals out when we're not open to the public. Thankfully, we only had to gently shoo away our curious goats, Tina and Mr. Bean, and Twinkle, our sheep, who frankly are more interested in food than fashion.

The crew included the creative team, two models (and a model's mom and grandmom), and of course the photographer. They used our reading room for hair and makeup preparation, a process that took a couple of hours.

They chose a perfect day – sunny and lovely. Sets that they selected include our Jolly Trolley train, Mary, Mary Quite Contrary, Crooked Man, and the Bubble Elf (on a mushroom). From what we saw, we think that the shoot will result in a whimsical and compelling catalog.

We really liked the ModCloth team, and hope we can partner with them in the future. Part of their innovative approach to retail involves interacting with their fans via social networks, requesting feedback from their ModCloth Blog, and asking customers to vote on potential inventory.

"Running a fashion business in a democratic style," is how they describe it. Their company motto is "We want to be the fashion company you're friends with!"

And while we've never before befriended a fashion company, our shared appreciation of mushrooms and reasonably priced clothes is a darn good place to start, we're thinking.

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