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NEW GENERATION

Saudi Project

Academy of Art University presented innovative collections by its graduating students at the Palace of Fine Arts in San Francisco. More on the fashion show and this year's honorees, Max and Lubov Azria of BCBGMaxAzria, can be found on page 3.

Marine Rongrong Wei

Affliction Clothing Expands Internationally

By Andrew Asch Retail Editor

"Live Fast" is the motto of **Affliction Clothing**, which was highly popular with the mixed-martial-arts crowd. But the company, born in 2005, now sees its future in department stores as well as gyms and boxing arenas both in the United States and internationally.

That's the strategy as some of the co-founders retake the reins of the company.

Before, a focus on athletics and MMA fighting was responsible for the company's fast growth. In 2009, revenues reportedly were \$100 million after the start-up company set down roots in Seal Beach, Calif., with a 70,000-square-foot headquarters building.

But a few years ago, the clothing company with an edgy feel started to go corporate, which ended up landing the company on the ropes, said Affliction co-founder Clif Chason.

In February 2012, Affliction partnered with an investor group led by Bob Meers, a former **Reebok** and **Lululemon Athletica** executive, and **New Evolution Ventures**, a privateequity firm that specializes in fitness and sports ventures. Affliction page 4

MADE IN LA Sourcing Companies Boost LA Apparel Production

By Sarah Wolfson Manufacturing/Technology Editor

In a lofty space in the industrial area of downtown Los Angeles, David Perry has a business that is a matchmaker for fashion companies focused on producing clothing in the United States.

Housed in an airy building with high-beamed ceilings, **The DSP Group**, which stands for "design and development services and production," can find a factory for a new T-shirt label or determine the right showroom for a budding contemporary brand. Searching for a special kind of fabric? Perry and his crew can locate a mill to help.

"Now that a lot of brands are returning to the U.S. to produce, they do not know the language of production," Perry said. "You would be surprised at the breadth of existing brands that are moving back to the U.S. that are completely sideswiped because they have forgotten how to do it or they never Made in LA page 3



True Religion sold ... p. 2 Launch LA cancelled ... p. 2 Billabong designer exits ... p. 2 Made in LA Resource Guide ... p. 5

Billabong's Star Designer Leaves for Volcom

Star Billabong International designer Mandy Fry has jumped ship and joined rival action-sports brand Volcom, it was announced May 16.

She becomes Volcom's vice president of women's, a new position in the company, which is hoping to strengthen that division.

Fry will supervise women's merchandising and design teams, said Jason Steris, chief executive officer of the Costa Mesa, Calif .based Volcom. "Mandy's creative vision and business insight is just what we need to take Volcom women's to the next level," he noted.

During Fry's 12-year career at Billabong's office in Irvine, Calif., the company's swimwear and juniorswear divisions received a lot of attention.

Billabong's bikinis were featured in the 2012 and 2013 swimwear issues of Sports Illustrated. And Billabong was honored with the Surf Industry Manufacturers Association's Image Award for "Women's Apparel Brand of the Year" in 2010 and 2011.

Fry's job announcement comes at a time of

heavy turmoil for the Australian-headquartered Billabong. For more than a year, the surfwear giant has been negotiating with several different suitors who want to buy the company.

Billabong has lost other executives, too. Steve Lake, founder of Billabong's skate company, Sector 9, recently resigned, media reports said.

However, one Billabong executive said the departures are overblown. "It is not as bad as everyone is making it out to be," said a Billabong sales chief, who did not give his name because he was not authorized to speak to the press. "Mandy had a great opportunity, and Steve's contract was up and he wanted to spend more time with his family. It has nothing to do with the brands," the sales chief said.—Andrew Asch

Launch LA Goes on Hiatus to Retool Show

GLM, the organizer of Surf Expo and more than 20 other trade shows, announced it is putting its 1-year-old Launch LA trade show on the back burner while it rethinks the concept.

"We are putting Launch LA on hold," said Roy Turner, senior vice president at GLM Shows. "We still feel strongly about starting a show with premium brands, but we were not getting the traction we wanted. I think we will retain the project. We're just figuring out a better way to highlight those brands.

Launch LA's concept was designed to serve a mix of better activewear, fashion and emerging brands that epitomize the spirit of California. The next Launch LA show had been scheduled to start on July 17 at a location in Santa Monica, Calif.

Last year, Launch LA was held at Barker Hangar at the Santa Monica Municipal Airport. Companies occupied some 125 booths inside the spacious hangar, which has been used in the past by Barneys New York for its semiannual warehouse sale. Exhibitors included swimwear brand Mara Hoffman, Skargorn denim, and Tallow, a surf lifestyle brand from Australia.

"We got really good reviews, and I so love

the Barker Hangar," Turner said. "We will continue to evaluate the best way to highlight these brands in a venue that maximizes all the resources that GLM brings to the table.'

But the show did compete with Agenda, a predominant surf and streetwear trade show that takes place July 25–26 in Long Beach, Calif.

Right now for California, GLM is concentrating on The Boardroom, a surf-oriented show for consumers and the industry at the Orange County Fair Grounds in Costa Mesa, Calif., that will feature surf-oriented hardware and software during its Oct. 5-6 run.—Deborah Belgum

True Religion Selling the Company for Top Price

True Religion Apparel, Inc. has agreed to be acquired by TowerBrook Capital Partners L.P., a New York- and London-based investment management firm, for \$835 million.

Under the terms of agreement, which were unanimously approved by the True Religion board. TowerBrook will acquire all of the outstanding shares of True Religion common

stock for \$32 per share in cash, which represents a 52 percent premium of the denim company's share price on Oct. 9, 2012, the day before the company announced it was exploring strategic alternatives and looking for a buyer. Most recently, the stock was trading around \$31.60 a share.

The \$463.7 million upscale denim brand,



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based in Los Angeles, sells its products to better department stores and boutiques globally, including 124 of its own stores in the U.S. and 31 international locations.

Lynne Koplin, the company's interim chief executive and president, said she believes this agreement offers significant value to True Religion shareholders. "At this critical inflection point in our business, global growth and product-development effort, TowerBrook's support and experience will be a true differentiation," she said in a statement. "Tower-Brook's long-term approach toward investment and brand stewardship will best enable True Religion to maintain its leadership position in the marketplace. We are confident the next chapter for True Religion will be a successful one for our employees, customers and all other shareholders.'

Seth Johnson, lead director of True Religion, said, "Having considered alternatives over a seven-month period, the special committee believes TowerBrook's \$32-per-share cash offer for the company is in the best interest of our shareholders.'

Andrew Rolfe, managing director of Tower-Brook, said his company is excited to combine its retail and apparel expertise with the True Religion team to help the company with brand building and international opportunities.

TowerBrook has made investments in companies such as Jimmy Choo, Odlo, BevMo! and Phase Eight.

The merger is subject to approval by True Religion's shareholders and subject to regulatory approvals. The transaction is expected to close in the third quarter of 2013.

True Religion was co-founded by Jeff Lubell in 2002. In March he stepped down from the company as chief executive, serving instead as chairman emeritus and creative consultant.

Last year, True Religion formed a special committee to "evaluate possible strategic alternatives." The company retained Guggenheim Securities LLC as its financial adviser and Greenberg Traurig LLP and Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Field as its legal counsel to help with the strategic review process.

–Sarah Wolfson

Wet Seal Agrees to \$7.5 Million Settlement for Employee Discrimination

To settle a class-action lawsuit alleging racial discrimination against African-Americans, The Wet Seal Inc. agreed to pay \$7.5 million, including \$5.58 million in relief and damages, to its African-American staff that was fired in its King of Prussia, Penn., store in 2009.

Under the settlement, Wet Seal, based in Foothill Ranch, Calif., also agreed to change the way it will do business, according to a statement from the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund and co-counsel law firms Gallagher, Schoenfeld and Lewis Feinberg, which represented the plaintiffs in Cogdell v. Wet Seal Inc. The lawsuit was filed in U.S. District Court in Santa Ana, Calif., in July.

Wet Seal must track applications to ensure diversity in applications and hiring, make sure Wet Seal's human-resources department better investigate complaints of discrimination, and maintain a diversity and inclusion council that will advise the company on topics such as equal employment in recruiting, hiring and compensation. The company also must regularly review and make reports on hiring, promotions and termination of minority employees.

The case started in 2009 after a visit to the King of Prussia store by a former senior vice president who discovered that then-manager Nicole Cogdell is an African-American. Soon after, Cogdell was fired.

The lawsuit charged that former executives at Wet Seal directed managers to get rid of African-American store management employees for the sake of the company's brand image and to hire more white employees.

Cogdell said she had been appalled to learn she was being terminated because of her race but was glad change had taken place. "It was important for me to be a force for change, but I could not have done it without the support of other employees who spoke out against discrimination," she said. "Wet Seal has now committed to strong, fair policies because we took a stand. I hope these changes will create opportunities for all deserving employees, regardless of their race."-A.A.

2013 Graduation **Fashion Show at the Academy of Art University**

What: 2013 Graduation Fashion Show and Awards Ceremony

When: May 9

Where: Palace of Fine Arts, San Francisco The scene: The Academy of Art University's

2013 graduation fashion show and awards ceremony included a portfolio review, cocktail reception and fashion show that took place under the cavernous rooftop of the Palace of Fine Arts.

The event honored Max and Lubov Azria of Los Angeles, who were awarded honorary doctorates by Elisa Stephens, president of the Academy of Art University.

Max Azria is the founder, designer and chief executive of BCBGMaxAzria Group. Lubov, his wife, is the company's chief creative officer.

Awards and internships were presented by the Azrias, H.R.H. Princess Reema Bandar Al-Saud of Saudi Arabia, Craig Olman of Abercrombie & Fitch and Neil Gilks of the Council of Fashion Designers of America.

The fashion show and awards ceremony followed two days of events, including a luncheon at the Cannery; a tour of the university; and "Bon Chic Bon Chat," a conversation with Gladys Perint Palmer, executive director of the university's school of fashion, the

Azrias, and Suzy Menkes, fashion editor of the International Herald More news and photos at Tribune.—N. Jayne Seward



ApparelNews.net

Lili Pham, Kaitlin Anne Perkins, Youngjin Hsin Lee Fay Xinz u Liu Leslie Dilloway Kittiya Punprapun Ashley Lagasse

MADE IN LA

Made in LA Continued from page 1

did it in the first place because their model was based on overseas production."

That is why The DSP Group is one of a number of fashion-oriented companies getting a boost in business by an increase apparel companies looking for that "Made in USA" edge

With labor and material costs increasing overseas, brands are recognizing that overall operations can be more cost-effective if made domestically. And speed to market is a primary factor.

When Perry started his company nine years ago, he recognized there were holes in the fashion market and felt that the traditional fashion model was not fitting everyone's needs.

"I am part of a local economy, and it always seemed counterintuitive to send things somewhere else when it could be done here, with so many factories [locally]," he said.

His full-service company does everything from consulting, branding, marketing and design expertise to concept planning, delivering samples and sales strategy.

DSP currently is designing collections for five companies, some of which are high-end womenswear lines. Another is a Japanese selvage premium-denim line. "We have been committed to domestic design, development and production since our inception," Perry noted, "long before 'Made in USA' became trendy."

If garments are expected to be delivered within 60 days, Perry can source fabric from a mill, find trim in various places and locate a knit factory or a wash house for denim treatments. "Before you know it, you have a lot of moving parts that we help manage; we

are like the in-sourced version of outsourcing," Perry said.

Helping hand

Jacqueline Dadon, owner and creative director of Los Angeles-based Designer Consulting Co-op, said she, too, finds that professionals in the fashion industry are seeking outside assistance in the apparel and manufacturing industry.

Dadon, who specializes in conceptual design and retail forecasting, helps designers translate their fashion sketches into products and launch their brands. She has four full-time employees and works with contractors around Los Angeles, employing sewers, pattern makers and production facilities.

"I see us like an architectural firm where a designer will have an idea and come to us with a style of a house, for example. We then help design, like an architect would do a blueprint, and we find the right contractors and materials to make sure it's done correctly," Dadon said.

It doesn't come cheap, though. Dadon recommends that designers start with \$25,000 in seed money to launch a label.

Dadon, whose father had a denim line years ago, said she noticed that when the recession hit, new life was born for the garment industry. "People were looking for ways to make money. They took their savings and started new businesses, bringing manufacturing and employment back to Los Angeles," she observed.

Two of her clients made a go of it. Ani Lee womenswear has seen its styles worn by celebrities such as Selena Gomez and Eva Longoria, and Mattison menswear, which was recently featured in GQ magazine, opened a retail store on Melrose Place.

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Fashionphix's Tech Solution for Independent Showrooms

With no formal background in technology, Paula Saunders last year started Fashionphix (www.fashionphixpro.com), an online developer of virtual showrooms.

Even though there is lots of competition in the field, Saunders believes she has an advantage. She knows the fashion showroom business from the inside after having worked for

FASHIONPHIXOC

Fashionphix homepage

first tech venture.

preneurs from pitching the fashion business on virtual showrooms and online trade shows.

Saunders said she developed Fashionphix to adhere closely to the basic business of a showroom. "For our industry, it's more about the content than how complex people can build their websites," she said.

On FashionPhix's showroom websites,

pages offer essential information such as line sheets, which are password protected; showroom art and photos of collections; and a page for showroom contacts.

Fashionphix client Don Reichman posted his first website in April for his veteran California Market Center showroom. Reichman Associates. "I'm not a tech person. I am busy selling to retail stores. I wouldn't take the

time to learn everything involved," he said of developing online showrooms. "The way [Fashionphix] worked, it would be something that would fit our needs and make our showroom more visible."

For a fee. Saunders also manages clients? websites. Fashionphix will soon offer online shopping carts where businesspeople can pay for orders online.-Andrew Asch

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Photoshoots

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vears in multi-line fashion showrooms around

downtown Los Angeles. Fashionphix is her

businesses in this industry," Saunders said of

her company, which opened in October 2012.

the last to embrace technological change. But

that hasn't stopped scores of computer entre-

"It's closing the digital divide for small

The fashion industry traditionally has been

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CALIFORNIA

Affliction Continued from page 1

Affliction co-founders Chason, Eric Foss and Courtney Dubar disagreed with their corporate partners taking on a larger staff, their bureaucratic decision-making process and larger focus on athletics. "It was starting to affect design, production and the way we do business," Chason said.

By October, New Evolution Ventures and Meers were history. "Affliction operates better as a pirate ship than the Navy," Chason observed.

Since then, Affliction has been trying to overcome its reputation as solely a fight T-shirt brand and has been branching out into a lifestyle collection of jeans and woven tops for men and jeans and dresses for women. Wholesale prices range from \$19.50 for a basic T-shirt to \$297 for a leather jacket.

Its Sinful label is geared toward juniors.

Reaching a wider retail realm is even more important iacket. for Affliction these days because many of the boutiques and sports clubs that Affliction sold to were tapped out by the Great Recession of 2009. However, Affliction

continues to have a strong business relationship with national specialty chain The Buckle Inc. The Nebraska-based chain now accounts

for more than 10 percent of Affliction's sales, according to Chason, who declined to reveal the company's current revenues.

With growth in mind, Affliction hired a new president of sales, E.T. Southard. He joined the company to further develop the line's business with majors.

A new director of sourcing, Nabad Reynoso, was brought on to improve the company's factories as higher-quality fashion and better fits will be needed for a wider lifestyle collection. Foss, who runs the design team, has a few new designers.

MMA clothing's popularity skyrocketed in 2007 when the category seemed to burst onto the clothing scene. Selling MMA clothing to enthusiasts still remains competitive.

MMA has a reputation for being a tough sport, but its fans have remained loyal to it, which has helped the business grow. Frank

and now sports commentator who still follows the business, said MMA apparel customers demand that brands maintain a genuine connection with the sport and are fashion savvy. "The sport grew and got smart. We got

Trigg, a former MMA apparel manufacturer

more fashion-oriented about what we were doing," said Trigg, whose Los Angeles cloth-

ing line, Triggonomix, closed in 2010. "We're not Michael Kors. It's not Ralph Lauren yet, but it is starting to go there.'

Along with increasing its presence at major retailers, Affliction intends to further develop its overseas business. The company's foreign partners, who are wholesale distributors with the option to open stores, currently run 11 boutiques, including four stores in Moscow, two shops in South Africa and one in Japan.

In June, Affliction distributors are scheduled to open two boutiques-one in Dubai and

another in Seoul, South Korea-with more shops on the way in Bangkok and Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

In the next five years, Chason forecasts, foreign business will make up more than 25 percent of Affliction's revenues.

While the company is venturing out into the global retail world, the brand has put its own U.S. retail expansion plans on the back burner. It continues to run flagship boutiques in Las Vegas; Miami; and Paramus, N.J., as well as a flagship store it opened in 2011 at its Seal Beach compound.

But it did not renew its lease last year for a boutique on Melrose Avenue in Los Angeles. And it did not execute a 2011 plan to roll out five flagship boutiques across the United States because of the struggling economy.

But the company doesn't want to move away from the company's roots and the customers who have supported it all these years. "We want to be involved in very edgy lifestyles-fighting, motorcycles and metal music. Those audiences support our brand," Chason said.

But for growth it has to move beyond the MMA world for a knockout.

May 17 California College of the Arts' annual fashion show California College of the Arts campus San Francisco May 21	May 29 FIG Fashion Industry Gallery Dallas Through May 31 May 30 Dallas Apparel & Accessorie	NW Trend Show Pacific Market Center Seattle Through June 4 ITMA Showtime High Point, N.C. Through June 5
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St.-Pierre, an MMA fighter sponsored by Affliction, wears an Affliction leather







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Jobs Available

FIRST PATTERNMAKER

Van Nuys based manufacturer is looking for a first patternmaker for our Junior Woven Sportswear & Dress Division. Must have extensive knowledge of woven fabrics. PAD experience a Plus but will train the right candidate as long as they are proficient on one of the current computer systems. Must have minimum 3 years' experience making computer patterns, be self-motivated and be able to work in a busy environment. Will be tested.

Please fax resumes to davidz@kandykiss.com

FULL-TIME 1ST THRU PRODUCTION PATTERNMAKER

SANCTUARY CLOTHING LLC (Burbank Location) Fulltime 1st thru Production Patternmaker -Minimum of 10 years experience -must be proficient on Gerber system -Knowledge of knit and woven fabrics -attend fittings and able to execute Designer's vision -spec and fit driven, detailed, ability to prioritize and meet deadlines. Email resume with salary requirements to rosemary@sanctuaryclothing.com

PATTERNMAKER

Growing Jr./Contemporary Co. seeking expd. 1st-prod. patternmaker. Min. 5 yrs. Send resume to info@nicolette-la.com or Fax to (213) 746-0990

PATTERNMAKER

FIRST - PRODUCTION UPDATED MISSY SPORTSWEAR. DOMESTIC AND IMPORT PRODUCTION. VERNON LOCATION

hr@kimandcami.com

OC Based Young Men's Fashion Brand and Private Label Co. seeks the following position:

Pre-Production Coordinator

- Minimum 3 Years Experience
 Works in close coordination w/ Designer; Assist Head
- Designer in all areas
- Responsible for ordering sample fabrics and trims, maintaining record, sending out samples and follow up.
 Coordinates heavily with overseas factories.
- Works mostly with private label sending emails, preparing production samples, tech packs, assigning style number, following up, etc.
- Kohls & Sears private label experience a plus
- Knowledge of knit and woven fabrics; familiar with grading and specs
- Proficient in Microsoft Office especially Excel, Photoshop and Adobe Illustrator.
- Needs to be hands-on, organized individual and must have a strong technical background
- Ability to prioritize and meet deadlines. Great communication skills with vendors.

Excellent pay with possible advancement. Qualified candidates, please email resume to ownedbrands@gmail.com or fax to (714) 241-7199

Jobs Available

PRODUCTION MANAGER Leading apparel mfr./importer located in Hawthorne is looking for experienced Production Manager. Email resume to with salary requirements to: hmkcpa@jps.net



Production Assistant

Sanctuary Clothing in Burbank is seeking a Production Assistant. This individual's activities will include: import purchase orders; WIP; OTS analysis; email communication; delivery of import shipments; trim & accessory management; actualization of costs by style.

Strong skill set in math, computer literacy, and communication. Hardworking team player, who is eager to learn. A high sense of urgency to manage time and to accomplish multiple tasks simultaneously. A problem solver, who can manage a daily work load according to deadlines. Experience using TAPS a plus. Email resume and salary requirement to gerry@sanctuaryclothing.com

J BRAND

Q. C. LAUNDRY INSPECTORS Q. C. SEWING INSPECTORS 5+ years exp req. Inspect garments from manufacturing Work to improve product quality

> SAMPLE SEWER 5+ years exp req. Ability to work with denim

SHIPPING & RECEIVING ASSOCIATES High school diploma required Must be able to follow deadlines, be reliable, & impeccable attention to detail.

All applicants required to speak, read & write in English. Apply online: jbrandjeans.com/careers Or in person at Reception: 1214 E. 18th Street, Los Angeles 90021

QUALITY CONTROL

Parc & Pearl Inc looking for Q.C. with 3 yrs experience must have reliable transportation with insurance and a CA driver's license. Strong communication skills and detail oriented. Bilingual a +. Email resumes to jose@parcandpearl.com



Fashion Print Sales Consultant

Karolina york is an Australian print design studio that has recently set up in downtown Los Angeles. We are seeking a full time print sales consultant with preferred fashion showroom or fashion sales experience that can travel regularly to NYC and other States.

If you have fashion sales background with 2 years experience and a zest for travel please email your CV to info@karolinayork.com

Jobs Available

Sales Person

Better Sweater Co. is looking for in-house Sales Person with existing clients, majors and specialty stores, with at least 5 years experience. Resume: info@lovetokenus.com

T-SHIRT SALES REP

Seeking T-shirt Sales Rep for resort and gift shops with established accounts in the Los Angeles, San Diego, Palm Springs and Las Vegas areas. Send resume to dfloridia@aol.com or Call David at 714-290-1559

SWEATER DESIGNER

Wilt seeks full time designer capable of overseeing a new contemporary sweater division. Min 8yrs exp w/overseas, tech packs, construction, spec writing, Photoshop, Illustrator & excellent communication skills. Email parcandpearl@parcandpearl.com

TECHNICAL DESIGNER

Fast growing company expanding its product line seek experienced motivated team player for the Technical Design position. Ability to spec garments with accuracy and attention to detail. Strong knowledge of garment construction. Import background preferred with working knowledge of pattern making, minimum 4+ years technical design experience. Must have excellent Excel skills, be highly organized as well as having excellent communication skills. hr@jayallc.com

SALES PARTNER

We are Los Angeles base high end jeans manufacturer and looking for well experience sales partner. Please e-mail your resume/ questions to irene.americanwear@gmail.com

Real Estate

Garment Buildings Mercantile Center 500 sq. ft. - 16,500 sq. ft. Priced Right. Full Floors 4500 sq ft. Lights-Racks-New Paint-Power Parking Available - Good Freight. Call 213-627-3754

Design Patternmaker Garment Lofts 300 sq ft - 1,000 sq ft. Call 213-627-3755

Buy, Sell, and Trade

WE NEED FABRIC

Silks Wools Denims Knits Prints Solids... Apparel & Home decorative. No lot to small or large... Also, buy sample room inventories... Stone Harbor 323-277-2777 Marvin or Michael

Manufacturer Wanted

Established Sales Team seeking JR & Young Contemporary Lines (Domestic & Import). Proven track record with Majors & Dept Stores. Based in LA w/ NY showroom. Contact: 213-596-0213 or LookingForLines@gmail.com

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