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NEWS

Coconinno: Eva Franco's Big Change

No casual looks. No casual fabrics. That has been Eva Franco's modus operandi for 10 years.

She built a reputation for designing an uncompromising look with her self-named **Eva Franco** line, based in Los Angeles. She sourced high-quality fabric, sometimes at \$20 a yard, to make woven dresses that were crafted with a whimsical elegance and a tailored style. This look has attracted buyers from retailers such as **Anthropologie**.

In 2013, she changed course. Franco introduced **Coconinno**, a diffusion line with a lower price point. It is made with casual fabrics, yet it still strives for an unconventional, high-minded style.

Trying something new and working with fabrics she had not used in the past was important to her. However, Franco also was looking for a growth vehicle for her self-funded company. While the Eva Franco line has grown steadily in the past decade, she hopes Coconinno will provide fast growth. So far it is off to a good start. After a soft launch in March, it has been picked up by prominent e-commerce retailer **ModCloth** and about 100 other boutiques.

For her Resort '14 line, Coconinno offers styles such as the "Dakota" dress. It's a sweat-shirt dress with embroidered cotton and an exposed zipper and wholesales for \$58. The "Ginny" and "Emma" dresses feature perforated chiffon lined with a technical fabric called scuba. This fabric serves to give the dress structure. The line's "Rose" and "Beal" tops, both wholesaling at \$38, are made from jersey.

Both Eva Franco and Coconinno are made in America. "It's my mission to keep jobs in America," said Franco, who immigrated with her parents from Romania. "It's why I choose to produce my clothing in Los Angeles. When you're an immigrant and come to America, you want to give back to a country that has so much freedom and opportunity."

For more information, contact **T. Riddle** showroom at (213) 488-3371 or visit www.triddleshowsroom.com.—Andrew Asch



Eva Franco



Emsig Introduces Unbreakable Button

New York trim supplier **Emsig Manufacturing Co.** has introduced an unbreakable button the company promises can withstand a compression test of 2,000 pounds per square inch.

Made in Emsig's U.S. factory in Putnam, Conn., the UBD is a pearl-finish button available in four colors—white, two shades of off-white and smoke—and in two sizes. The buttons are **UL**-approved and are manufactured from 100 percent U.S. materials.

"It took us about a year to develop it, but that's what we do—we innovate," said Emsig President Larry Jacobs. "We've been in this business since 1928, producing our product and selling directly to the apparel industry."

The UBD is about 40 percent thicker than typical buttons—making them easier to button—and because they are not made from a petrochemical material, the UBD buttons do not

burn or support combustion, the company said.

"The majority of buttons are made of polyester, which burns with a hot flame and gives off toxic smoke," Jacobs said. "This material—you can hit it with a blow torch, and it will glow red like a piece of steel. It is truly unbreakable."

The family-owned business has operations around the world, including manufacturing facilities in China and India—where Emsig can quickly deliver product to its customers' overseas factories. Since 1940, the company has been supplying the U.S. military with product manufactured in its U.S. facility.

"In December, I will begin my 60th year with the company," Jacobs said, adding, "I've been president for only 40 years. I've been in this business a long time."

For more information, visit www.emsig.com.—Alison A. Nieder

Swedish Designer Designs Global, Produces Local

Ulf Andersson designs his easy-to-wear dresses with fabric that has been printed in India according to his color selections and designs he culls from clothes once found in his grandmothers' closets, on wallpaper or any other inspirational point.

But when it comes to making his dresses and tops, he relies upon patterns he has crafted himself and on seamstresses who work in Los Angeles.

"I tried making samples in China a couple of times, but I never liked the way they came out," said the Swedish designer, who has a studio in Los Angeles on Melrose Avenue. "I have a lot of details in my designs, and sometimes that is hard to transfer to a Chinese factory. ... I can't afford to have huge mistakes."

Andersson started his self-named label in 2000 under the name **Punch Phashion**, but it was later changed to his own name in 2005. With a degree in patternmaking from **Stockholms Tillskärarakademi**, a vocational school in Stockholm, Andersson uses his years of studies to make his own patterns, which account for the level of detail in his creations. His samples are sewn in the back of his studio.

Once orders are placed at the 30 to 40 stores he



sells to in the United States, his array of **Ulf Andersson** dresses and smock-like tops are cut by the same woman he has employed for more than a decade. "I tell you, I treat her like my wife," the Swedish designer said jokingly, declining to give her name. "You have to be careful. People can be sneaky and could steal her away."

Once his garments are cut, they are sewn by several sewers in Los Angeles.

For his collection, Andersson uses primarily viscose rayon for Spring and Fall and sometimes silk velvet for Holiday. "I like the way the velvet flows," he noted.

His styles, which retail for around \$220, are reminiscent of the 1940s and the 1950s with a contemporary influence. "They are full-figure friendly," he explained. "It looks good on women and very feminine."

If a particular style sells well, he keeps it in his collection and updates it with new prints and colors. He has one style inspired from the 1940s, which has been bought by the same store for the past 10 years.

Andersson's customers range in age from 26 to 70, and his collection comes in sizes 2 to 14.

For more information, go to www.ulfandersson.com.—Deborah Belgium

Made in LA/Designed in LA Show Launching at CMC

Buyers looking for "made in Los Angeles" and "designed in Los Angeles" apparel have a new trade show. The **Los Angeles Apparel Show**, organized by the **Korean American Apparel Manufacturers Association**, will debut Sept. 9–11 on the 13th floor of the **California Market Center**.

Brands signed on to show at LAAS include **Annabelle, Ark & Co., Aryn K, Cecico, Damo, English Rose, Esley, Mak, Mystree, I.C.U, Idea Collection, Love Letter, Monoreno, Paper Moon, C. Luce, Very J** and **Wow Couture**. Organizers will host a pre-party on Sept. 5 and a sample sale, followed by an after-party on Sept. 11.

For more information, visit www.laapparelshow.com.

Maker's Row Brings Made in America Concept to Sourcing at MAGIC

Founded late last year in Brooklyn, N.Y., **Maker's Row** is a one-stop resource site for entrepreneurs and established brands looking to connect with U.S. factories and suppliers.

Owners Tanya Menendez and Matthew Burnett launched the website last November and already have about 2,000 manufacturers on board with factory hubs in Los Angeles, New York and Chicago.

Currently, **Maker's Row** focuses primarily on apparel and accessories, but Menendez and Burnett plan to expand the company's services in the future. For now, they help designers throughout the manufacturing process, from sourcing materials to patternmaking.

At the upcoming **Sourcing at MAGIC** show, set for Aug. 18–21 in Las Vegas, the company is expanding beyond the digital

environment into the physical.

"We wanted designers to look at manufacturers and see what we offer in person," Menendez said. The team created a micro-site, **Maker's Row Pro**, which will provide expertise and guidance in the manufacturing, marketing and public-relations industries. The fee for a 30-minute session is \$30.

Maker's Row MAGIC was also installed, specifically for the Sourcing trade show and potential customers to view textile manufacturers, tanning-leather companies and mills.

"We have had a really great response since we launched, and we are excited to see how the [Sourcing] partnership goes," Menendez said.

For more information, visit www.makersrow.com.—Sarah Wolfson

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Impulse California

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Los Angeles, CA 90015
Attn: Emil Ganjian
(213) 683-1010
www.impulsecalifornia.com
Products and Services: Emil Ganjian, president and founder of the Impulse California women's clothing company, along with brother Jack, knows exactly for whom he is designing. She wants to look stylish, she is not afraid to make a bold color or design statement, and she wants clothes that accentuate the positive—clothes that make her feel good. These are the tops and bottoms that the 20-year-old Impulse California produces. "The silhouettes are always flattering, always very

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detailed, and the fabric we use makes a lot of difference," Ganjian says. Another advantage Impulse California has is that its entire manufacturing process is done in Los Angeles and all cutting is done at the downtown factory, and all sewing is completed within five miles of downtown. Even the hangtags are printed in California. "It's much easier for us," says Ganjian. "We can respond quickly and we can quickly bring product to market in two weeks. Our customers love that. That's why they come to us—they know they are guaranteed in season they will have replenishment quickly."

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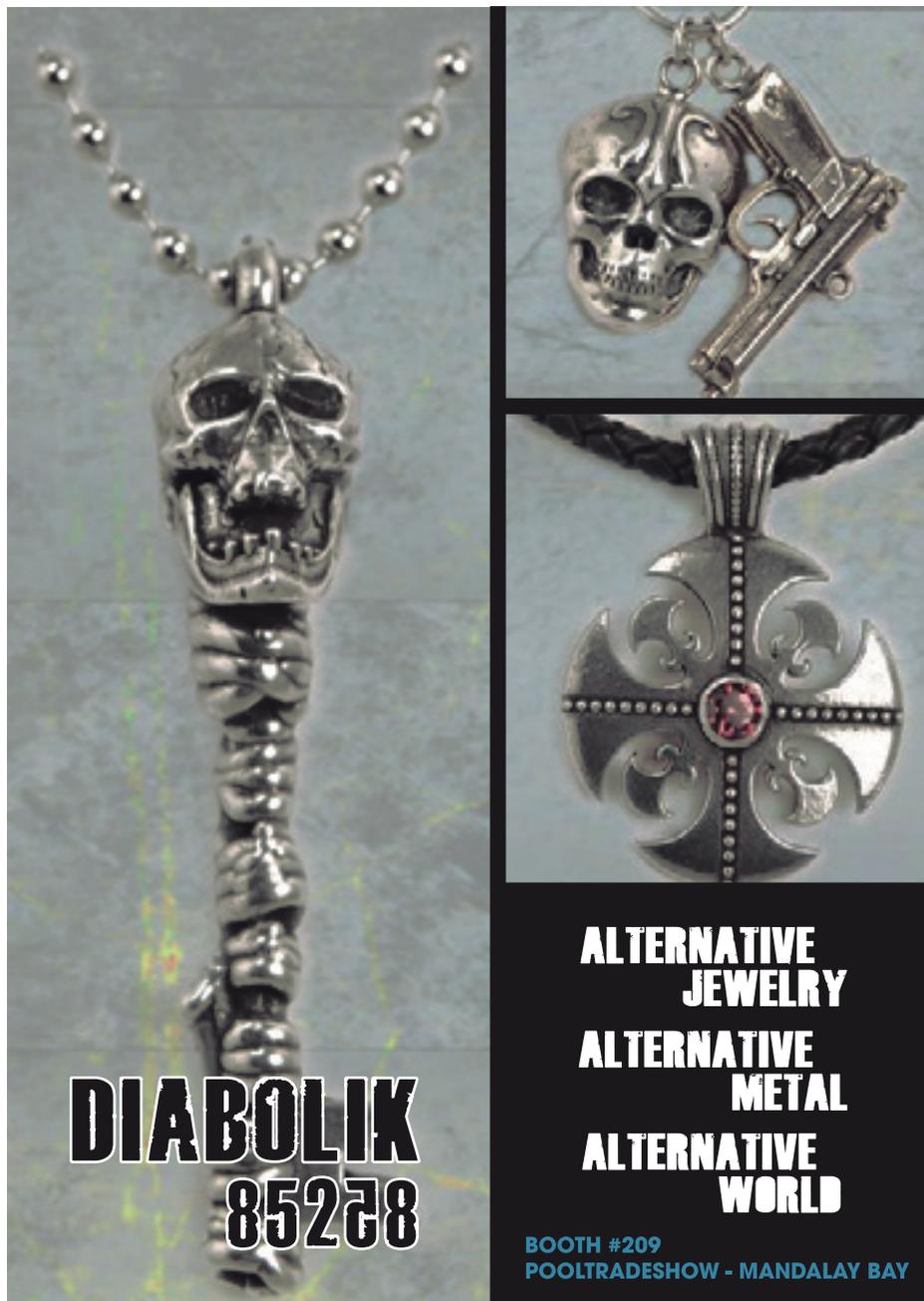


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