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features

15 Catch a Wave Dive in to the season's surf-inspired swim styles. By N. Jayne Seward

26 Making the Cut in Downtown LA

J&J Cutting & Marking Inc. carves a niche in swimwear with domestic production. By Rhea Cortado

departments

10 New Resources

24 Swim Trends

34 Swim Textiles

On the cover: (On her) SURFER by BEACH RAYS "Island Oasis" print "Jesse" top and "Nellie" bottom. CHAN LUU bracelets and yellow jade- and abalone-mix necklaces. (On him) O'NEILL WETSUITS neoprene "Reactor" spring suit. O'NEILL "Dakota" trucker hat. CHAN LUU turquoise knotted bracelet. Stylist's own neon bracelets. Photo by Ben Cope.

CALIFORNIA Apparel News

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Minimale Animale Dare to Bare

"I love that the onepieces are the sexiest," says Cassandra Kellogg about her swimwear collection, Minimale Animale. "There's just something about being just barely covered in the right places that I think is really sexy. It's a smarter way of being sexy than wearing an itsybitsy tiny bikini."

Kellogg's designs are a visual tease of skin that's seen and not seen—hip-

bones exposed in high-cut bottoms, shoulders covered on a midriff-baring top and mesh that's totally see-through.

As a stylist for clothing brands and music artists in Los Angeles, Kellogg made the first Minimale Animale prototypes to use in photo shoots and for her personal festival-going wardrobe. In 2011, she made the leap from samples to production, and Minimale Animale



found a niche of daring fashionistas in which the events Coachella and Burning Man are used as adjectives. Minimale Animale has shipped to Urban Outfitters and Revolve Clothing and will be on Nasty Gal (www. nastygal.com) in 2013. Retail prices range from \$200 to \$350.

"I'm interested in a unique customer—a fashion-conscious, confident girl who wears swim not

just to the beach, but it's a part of her every-day apparel. I wear my stuff as a bra; I wear it underneath as a bodysuit," Kellogg said. "She can live anywhere. She doesn't have to live by the beach. I shipped out an order to Kansas yesterday! Oklahoma, West Virginia, Kentucky. It's crazy."

For more information, email sales@minimale-animale.com.—Rhea Cortado

LuxSwim

Understated Elegance

Designer Nicole Vaughn is looking to incorporate an understated elegance with her LuxSwim collection.

"With my swimwear designs, I am trying to enhance the beauty of a woman," Vaughn said. "[Many] 20-year-old designers

produce swimwear for [youth] with bright, loud colors. My swimwear is more subtle and sophisticated."

With a background in graphic and interior design, Texas-born Vaughn is now based in Redondo Beach, Calif., and produces her swim collection in Southern California.

An initial debut in 2010 landed the line in a few Hawaii boutiques and a spot on the television series "Hawaii 5-0." After





a brief sabbatical, Vaughn returns for Spring 2013 with a newly relaunched collection of luxuryinspired swimwear with a focus on fit.

Wholesale priced from \$62 to \$72, the one-piece and two-piece suits offer moderate coverage featuring dramatic hardware and Italian fabrics. Bikinis are fully lined and feature soft, removable cups and adjustable straps. Coverups, including Missoni-inspired pants and an asym-

metrical crochet skirt, round out the collection. For more information, visit www.luxswim.com.

-Sarah Wolfson





Solar Swim's Design Team Takes the 2014 Challenge

Solar Swim, the almost-century-old company that has pushed the envelope of swimwear development into technical areas never thought possible, has its sights firmly set on fashion for 2014. The European makers of the renowned Tan Thru® collection, extra-life 100 percent Lycra line, and slate of Solar Dry Weave competition suits developed originally for the German swim team, are moving more deeply into style and trend, offering an eyepopping array of silhouettes and palettes.

"We are looking to target different age groups with more variety, without changing any of the technology that we are known for," says Joseph Hau, Solar Swim's U.S. Operations Manager.

Making their debut at the July 2013 Miami Swim Show, some 180 styles that work from juniors through misses will add fresh new looks to Solar Swim's tried-and-true technology. "There are styles and patterns for customers of every age," says Hau. "Young and sexy with interesting cutouts and nice bandeau details, or fashionable patterns for the more mature customer. The styles show all the important trends: bandeau tops, ruching, frills, asymmetric tops, cutouts, vintage boy legs, highwaist fuller bottoms, and underwire tops."

But you cannot talk about Solar Swim without beginning with Tan Thru®, its patented fabric revelation first introduced in 1992 to initial disbelief and then big success in Europe and the United States. Tan Thru® fabric, thin as silk, stretchy, and light as a feather, permits penetration of natural light, allowing its wearer to achieve an all-over tan without compromising modesty.

The delicate feel of Tan Thru® fabric belies its strength. Tan Thru® will not snag or tear, and is chlorine and salt resistant, guaranteeing long life and lasting quality. Solar Swim also offers a 100 percent Lycra line picking up on the fashion themes presented in Tan Thru®, with new body-conscious additions of push-up tops and tummy-control panels.

With its expertise and innovation in the knitting process, Solar Swim has long been a leader in performance sport design. Its patented Solar Dry Weave textile features fast-dry, long-lasting color qualities in addition to providing the competitive edge in minimum aquatic turbulence resistance. All three Solar Swim lines have styles for men as well as women.

For 2014, the Solar Swim design team has expanded its traditional lines of fine-grained, complex visual patterns necessary for Tan Thru®'s visual effect. Its new retro collection offers 25 styles that range from sweet ruffles and frills and pastel "ice cream and candy colors" with full bottom constructed underwire tops that hearken back to the '50s to cutout geometric brights of the '60s. Another line takes its cue from the tropics, with jungle, bird, and palm designs rendered in hot, exotic colors. A third line showcases the types of playfully complex, abstract designs such as hand-drawn confetti dots that Solar Swim has been known for, but in a brighter, stronger color palette. Even the competition Dry Weave line is offering striking color patterns.

In addition to the Miami show, the entire Solar Swim line will be on view at the major European trade fairs, including Mode City, Dessous Paradies, MTC Dessous Paradies, and OSFA.



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Catch a Wave

Get ready for an epic summer with this season's ever-so-chic, surf-inspired suits.—*N. Jayne Seward*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY BEN COPE

(On him) O'NEILL "Lopez Freak" boardshort. DREAM COLLECTIVE enamel claw necklace. CHAN LUU turquoise knotted bracelets. Stylist's own neon bracelets. (On her) ZIMMERMANN "The Vase" crop rashie and scoop bikini in "Geo Print." CHAN LUU thread bracelets.









O'NEILL WETSUITS "Epic" ultraflex neoprene wetsuit. Model's own bracelets.











SURF'S UP!

Swimwear takes cues from surf culture to create this season's hottest looks. From the deep-blue hues of the ocean to functional rash guards and globe-trekker chic, prepare to ride the fashion wave this summer.—*N. Jayne Seward*



GOTTEX "Electric" bandeau one-piece





Making the Cut in Downtown

Young swimwear Young swimwear designers and J. & J. Cutting & Marking Inc. find mutual growth in domestic production. BY RHEA CORTADO

> By the time the designer of Lolli swimwear, Vy Nguyen, arrived at J. & J. Cutting & Marking Inc. with her samples, she had already produced with two different swim manufacturers in Los Angeles but was "unhappy with the quality." Lolli is known for cutesy oversized bows and ruffle adornments that are tempered by skimpy, seamless lines and complicated cutout shapes.

> "Even if you give the manufacturer a sample and patterns, it doesn't guarantee the production will be exactly the same. The measurements may not be right, [or they cut]



Left, owner Jose Espinoza with daughter Jessica Espinoza, who oversees operations. Center and right, inside the J. & J. Cutting & Marking Inc. facility, the operators double-check every step to confirm quality control.

the wrong color," Nguyen said, tallying some potential headaches that could cost her the trust of one of her 70 specialty-store accounts.

These days, Nguyen can walk into J. & J. Cutting & Marking in downtown Los Angeles at any time to see that her production is on schedule and consistently perfect. "If they have a problem, they call me and tell me right away. They are really good on our quality control," Nguyen said.

J. & J. Cutting & Marking has become a valuable resource for many Southern California swimwear designers launching their first seasons. The factory offers cutting, marking, fusing, spaghetti straps and sewing all under one roof. Owner Jose Espinoza does not enforce production minimums and says he treats all his clients with equal importance and attention, regardless of volume.

Each brand's success is a win-win for both parties. "We have one [client who] three years ago [ordered] 50 pieces," Espinoza says. "Now I cut 2,000 to 3,000 pieces."

Cut and sew

The family-owned business started with one man and one table. Espinoza was a janitor at an apparel manufacturer, and his employer offered to promote him to spreading and cutting. He rented one table when markers and cutting tickets were made by hand. He has cut patterns for brands such as Catalina Swimwear and Body Glove. In 1988, Espinoza opened J. & J. Cutting & Marking, and his steady and precise blade has served a niche of swimwear clients that require extra care with slippery and delicate nylon/spandex fabrics.

Eight years ago, one of Espinoza's cutting and marking clients suggested that he expand his services to sewing.

"There was a lack of sewing contractors [in Los Angeles], and she said, 'If you are willing to invest in machines I will make sure you are able to pay off those machines by the work that I give you," said Jessica Espinoza, one of Jose Espinoza's daughters, who runs the operation. Another Espinoza daughter, Valerie, also contributes to the family business.

Jessica Espinoza says J. & J. still produces swimwear for that first swim client. But today, much of its production has moved to China and Mexico. At the height of the season, J. & J. employs up to 40 employees on about 30 machines. Jose Espinoza still cuts on the factory floor.

"We've seen that basic [styles are] going overseas. They are leaving the more complicated styles here ... so that they can keep a closer eye on them," Jessica Espinoza said. For example, she points toward padded underwire tops and styles with intricate trims and detailing that require multiple operation steps and must pass back and forth between five different sewing machines. "The cuts are not cuts that can run through the machine in a week," she said.

Although the younger brands are not producing in as high volumes as the established brands, Jessica Espinoza said many of their most basic designs can be in and out of the warehouse quickly. Most designers drop off the samples, patterns, bolts of fabric and trims and pick up









Seea Surf swimsuits and rashguards

Making the Cut

Continued from page 27

the finished product bagged and tagged.

"You're seeing a constant flow, turning them over faster," Jessica Espinoza said.

Amanda Chinchelli-Greer arrived at J. & J. with a small run of surf rashguards and swimsuits for her line, Seea. Her first season required a modest run of a few bodies, and local manufacturing was her only option. After researching and failed attempts with competitive swim manufacturers, she was referred to J. & J. Even as Seea's numbers rise and she learns more about overseas capabilities, Chinchelli-Greer said the mom-and-pop store buyers appreciate the "Made in the USA" label.

"In the boutique stores and surf stores, there is a love of detail and supporting economy and small businesses," Chinchelli-Greer said. The freedom to drive to the factory and call the floor manager in the same time zone, however, comes at a price.

"We want to be an affordable brand, [so] the margins are way lower," Chinchelli-Greer said.

Seasonal shifts

Specializing in swimwear—and in a seasonal market—has its benefits and challenges.

J. & J. is set up with multiple sets of six different sewing machines needed for swimwear and employees that are experienced in handling the delicate fabric and teeny pattern pieces.

Jessica said the breakdown of clients is

wasn't volume," she said. But today, "I have one customer that is established. For the most part, they are starting to do everything overseas, so we are not getting the volume that we used to get [from them] five to six years back. ... With the smaller customers, we see little by little; we see their cuts go up."

During the in-between season, J. & J. gets a head start on next year's trends and techniques with the first and second sample orders. The contractor continually adds T-shirts and activewear brands to its roster to keep the machines humming because the nylon/spandex and cotton/spandex fabric blends and stitching used in those categories are a natural transition from swimwear.

Still, Jessica says the season has become shorter and their rush period is concentrated in fewer months, making it tough to retain the same talent that keeps the factory quality top notch.

"Before, we were used to seeing the season starting in August and ending in April, but now it ends at the end of February. ... After that, we have to let go of half of our employees because we can't keep them on [during the off season]," Jessica Espinoza said. Some of her employees return; others have found work at sportswear contractors.

"Just to make sure I get everything done on time, I do produce year-round," Nguyen said of Lolli's schedule. In 2012, Lolli shipped every month.

"We've had more demand for swimwear in the winter months-mostly big accounts like Urban Outfitters, Shopbop, Diane's



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Aria by Kiki is a high-end contemporary resortwear label that is a fusion of modern lux and bohemian chic. Our collection is designed in the heart of Los Angeles consisting of coverups, kaftans, tunics,

blouses, dresses, loungewear, and accessories. Aria by Kiki pieces are flawless, elegant, and fashionable. Wear them at the beach, lounge in them at the pool, and then go day-to-night for an evening on the town. Comfortable and easy, the pieces are designed to make the customer feel sexy, glamorous, and sophisticated. Traveling to your next destination is simply not complete without an



Aria by Kiki piece. Customers love our simple, clean, and chic look as well as our beautifully handmade embellished and embroided designs that have a focus on intricate motifs inspired by exotic cities. Each embellished piece is specially made by a skillful artisan, fusing old culture with the modern silhouette. Both looks come in fun, colorful solids and prints. Our fabrics are soft to touch, breathable, and high in quality and design. www.ariabykiki.com

2Chillies offers the market young, fresh, vibrant prints and fashionable shapes—and always at an accessible price point. 2Chillies ensures that its product meets the highest-quality standards and places tremendous focus on the importance of fit. We are aiming at the 16- to 26-year-old market. The beach

babe who has a dozen bikinis in her wardrobe and loves living by

2Chilles,

the ocean and the coastal lifestyle. 2Chillies ladies' ranges also cater for different body shapes and comfort fits with DD cups, tankinis, and one-pieces with power mesh. 2Chillies is unique because we are a fashion-forward label that sits comfortably in surf stores and fashion boutiques; it is unusual for a swimwear brand to successfully appeal to both markets. 2Chillies has been well-established for over 10 years and is based in the glistening city of the Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia, famous for its pristine beaches, beach culture, and never-ending sunshine. From dawn till dusk the beach lifestyle and fashion-savvy girl is our inspiration. www.2chillies.com

Beach Rays, a division of JY Rays, Inc., has experienced a great response to its new direction and ex-

panded divisions for 2013! Our contemporary women's (collection)—Wet—for the girl who's heading to an exotic island—and our surfer girl (young contemporary—Ray—heads to the beach. The retro styling of highwaist two pieces, photo images, and the vintage tropicals in prints give a total "glam look" for Wet,



while its sister, Ray, uses these same themed prints in smocked tops and bottoms, midriff tops, and flirty shorts. Our children's divisions—Ray Ray (infant through youth) and Vroom Vroom (infant through

toddler) and Vast for juvenile/youth boys—continue to evolve. The little guys reflect the "cuteness" of babies (owl prints and stripes for guys and petite florals and checks for girls) while the juvenile-through-youth look mom/dad or big sister/brother. Boys have same themes as seen in Vast, and girls are a combo of retro and beach play! The "hottest" news is the licensing with Surfer Magazine for a young men's surf line, "Surfer," and young gals' line, "Surfer Girl," which previewed at Surf Expo in September with a line launch in January 2013, showing again at Surf Expo in January! www.beachrays.com

What is the secret to "Bikini Joe" Joe Clinard Jr. and "Crazy Hazy" Hazy Elia's three swimwear lines that are spreading across many of America's beaches like wild fire? Both are retailers, and Clinard

says: "We both have had stores through the years, and both of us do currently." Elia has surf shops and beachwear stores, and Clinard has swimwear boutiques. "It's not a big part of what I do," said Bikini Joe, but it's like a "lab." Fit, style, value-added, quality, and service stand out. Now



with three brands: H2oh! Colours™, Legal Beach™ and Clinard's new AQ-WA™. Mix-separates combined there are over 20 tops styles and over 18 colors with a strong focus on solids and mixed solids and stripes, combined with Legal Beach™ doing what Bikini Joe has long been known for—"items" like his "USA Fringe" or "Big Bow Back Bottoms with Bandeau Tops." Clinard says, "We service our accounts with reorders from December to July." Links to all brands' websites at BikiniJoes.com, info@H2ohSwim.com or Twitter.com/RealBikiniJoe

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Since creating the suit for Kate Upton that graced the cover of the 2012 *Sports Illustrated* Swimsuit Edition, Suit Yourself Bikinis by Kathleen Bruening has re-

branded to **Kate Swim** and set up high-quality American manufactur-



ing. The Kate Swim team has been hard at work, bringing their new Kapa Kala collection to life. Kapa Kala, or "forbidden color," is a line for women who can stand alone and free, feeling comfortable showing their true colors. The collection empowers women with the freedom to be who they are: sexy, savvy, and uninhibited. Kate Swim's 2013 lineup will feature one section devoted entirely to the suits that have been featured in Sports Illustrated plus one section of hot-off-the-runway, unique, high-quality designer fashions. Kate Swim offers impeccable customer service and only the highest-quality products. Call (800) 2-SWIM-33, email info@kateswim.com, or visit www.KateSwim.com.

La Lame, long known for its ability to forecast trends, has fresh new fabrics for this swim season. Its "Rolls Royce" stretch and rigid laces from its Premier Vision line from France have been met with

great acceptance. For the more priceconscious

LA LAME, INC.

manufacturer, La Lame offers laces from Asia that have a similar feel. As sequins are in demand, La Lame provides a large assortment of sequin fabrics and sequins with embroidery and prints. La Lame's 2012 line is not only suitable for swim but also for

SwimShorts page 32

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while still focused on the comfort and needs of real women. The theme ranges from playful to sporty to

timelessly classic, and we have incorporated lively and vibrant colors in textures and patterns. Whether a woman is wearing her swimsuit at the pool or beach with family and friends or just simply lounging and relaxing, we have something for her every mood and occasion. And our suits are engineered to give a woman's body the support, fit, and shaping she has come to know and love. www.miraclesuit.com

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Based in Miami and manufactured in Colombia, **Peixoto** is a line of contemporary swim and resort

wear that embodies today's fashion-forward and sophisticated women between the ages of 25 and 45+

who demand a stylish and comfortable swimsuit. The Spring/Summer 2013 Swim Collection, Color Me Lovely, is inspired by the roaring 1920s Palm Beach glamour, a time of prosperity and new opportunities for women. This season, Peixoto introduces a feminine.

playful-chic collection



of one- and two-piece swimsuits that focus on details—blending geometric shapes and decorative motifs with a fresh color palette. The brand continues to build on the philosophy of ultimate comfort by exploring different construction techniques to accentuate women's natural beauty for a feminine and slimming look. www.peixotostore.com

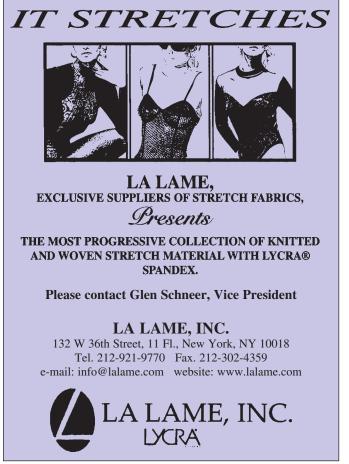
Snapper Rock Swim Wear from New Zealand has become the world's leading protective swimwear

brand for children newborn to 12+ years old. Our origins began in the juniors sailing market and now reaches children around the world. Snapper Rock's range blocks 98 percent of harmful



UVA and UVB rays. Our collection of stylish and fun UV50+ prints and patterns includes baby one-piece sun suits, girls' swim sets, boardshorts, rash tops, kaftans, and hats. We use the latest fabric technolo-





gies and design innovations to bring you gear that not only looks great but protects children both on and off the water. Kids love Snapper Rock! Visit us at the upcoming Surf Expo, Florida, Jan. 10-12, Booth #1211 to see our fantastic new collection of swimwear, after sun wear, and accessories. Please visit our website (www.snapperrock.com) for booth information and contact information.

We, the brand **Solar**, are based on a tradition springing from 1927. We started as a small family business

and have grown into a global brand. We are committed to our roots, combining attractive design with advanced technology to create products such as Tan Thru®, which allows



seamless tanning with UV protection, as well as products such as Dry Weave®, a fast-drying breathing fabric that treats your skin gently and reduces risks posed by dampness. Our high standards are manifested in design that is elegant, distinguished, colorful, vivid, graceful, and elaborated. There are styles and patterns for customers of every age: young and sexy with interesting cut-outs and nice bandeau details or fashionable female patterns for the more mature customer. The styles show all important trends as bandeau tops, ruching, frills, asymmetric tops, cut-outs, vintage boy-legs, highwaist fuller bottoms, and underwire tops. The 2014 collection will be shown in Miami in July. www.solarswim.com

Surf Expo takes place twice a year in Orlando, Fla., and offers more than 4,000 lines in the resort, swim, boutique, surf, skate, and dive markets; and now the

new Lifestyle Collective, where art, music, and fashion come together to promote a unique vibe. Surf Expo gives buy-



ers the opportunity to compare lines side-by-side and meet face-to-face with decision makers, both with the established lines and the new-to-market brands. Surf Expo's next shows will be held at the Orange County Convention Center, Jan. 10–12. For more information, visit www.surfexpo.com.

The California Swimwear Association presents The Swim Collective Trade Show Jan. 23–24, hosted at

the Hyatt Regency Huntington Beach Resort & Spa. The Swim Collective is recognized as the biggest West Coast swimwear trade show, offering buyers more than 1,000



lines across all swim categories. For more information, visit www.swimcollective.com.

SwimShow showcases over 400 exhibitors representing nearly 2,500 lines. The show draws over 2,500 buyers from the United States and 60 different countries. It's the largest swim trade show in the world and the first opportunity for buyers to see the

latest designs for the upcoming cruise season. Show dates are July 21– 24 at the Miami Beach Convention Center. www.swimshow.com



INVISTA has developed a fresh approach to fashion swimwear based on new consumer insights and technical advantages with XTRA LIFE LYCRA®

fiber. Global research commissioned by IN-VISTA reveals new perspectives on consumer priorities when shopping for fashion swimwear and beachwear, as well as behavior patterns and ex-



pectations in its use. Reinforced by these new findings, new technical advantages for XTRA LIFE LY-CRA® fiber have been demonstrated in the real-life swimwear environment, bringing to life how XTRA LIFE LYCRA® fiber protects from the damaging effects of perspiration, chlorine, sunscreen, or heat. The new global marketing campaign "Unstoppable" focuses on the confidence consumers feel in their swimwear with XTRA LIFE LYCRA® fiber, featuring three extreme themes to symbolize the fiber's technical advantages in the severe swim environment. For more information, contact Elana Page at *Elana*. Page@invista.com or (212) 512-9294.

LYCRA® is a trademark of INVISTA.

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Asher Fabric Concepts #ASH120736-D6

Artist's Palette

Swim and coverup textiles go Technicolor with painterly florals, freehand stripes and splatter prints in a palette that ranges from saturated brights to watery blues and greens.

-Alison A. Nieder

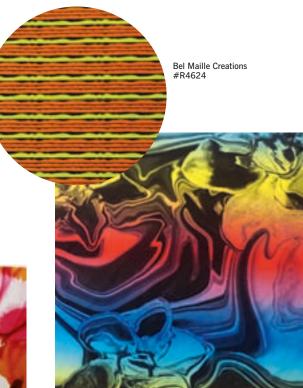


Bel Maille Creations #AL80



Asher Fabric Concepts #ASH120713-X1

Sportek International Inc. #SP-15681



Sportek International Inc. "Multi-Colored Tie Dye"

FASHION, p.15

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