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JOHN ECKMIER

BACKSTREET GLAMORAMA: Reunited pop band Backstreet Boys performed at the Orpheum Theatre in downtown Los Angeles at the annual Macy's Passport Presents Glamorama fashion fundraiser. For more from the event, see page 5.

Bringing the Sexy Back: Bebe Outlines Turnaround Strategy

By Andrew Asch *Retail Editor*

Contemporary mall retailer **Bebe Stores Inc.**, headquartered in the San Francisco Bay Area, hired a new slate of executives earlier this year to orchestrate a turnaround. The first order of business is bringing back the sex appeal.

"The clothes got more conservative," said Liyuan Woo, Bebe's chief financial officer, during an analysts/investors day hosted by the retailer on Sept. 12 in New York. "We really walked away from sexy."

During the investors day, Steve Birkhold, Bebe's chief executive officer, formally introduced the slate of executives as well as new strategies to reinvigorate the 37-year-old retailer, which has with a fleet of 235 stores—with nampelates **Bebe**, **Bebe.com**, **2b Bebe** and **2bstores.com**—across America, ➔ **Bebe** page 5

Vassallo: Modern-Day Elegance

By Sarah Wolfson *Contributing Writer*

Los Angeles designer Javier Vassallo draws inspiration from his Puerto Rican heritage and his 18 years of experience in the fashion industry, working with such well-known names as Oleg Cassini and Vera Wang.

Vassallo's experience at **Oleg Cassini** and **Vera Wang**, where he served as design director for the **Vera Wang Lavender Label** for nine years, taught him what women want to wear and how they want garments to fit.

Last February, the designer debuted his own **Vassallo** collection at **New York Fashion Week**. The high-end line offers feminine, classic pieces favoring an American sports-

wear feel. His collection favors a modern elegance with finely tailored dresses and coats, slimming pants, and embellished blouses.

Wholesale prices start at \$125 for tops and go up to \$550 for a wool coat with leather details. Vassallo is currently sold at **Hu Wear**, located in the Georgetown neighborhood of Washington, D.C., as well as its online shop (www.husonline.com).

The collection includes a mix of structured and loose fits, with cinched waists and pleated, flared skirts. Vassallo incorporates leather and velvet trimmings with the line's lace, silk, wool and chiffon fabrics. There is a regal feeling in his ➔ **Vassallo** page 3

Unionmade to Open at The Grove

By Andrew Asch *Retail Editor*

For much of its four-year history, San Francisco's **Unionmade** represented hip shopping on urban retail streets, but it was announced recently that it will open a location at one of California's most prominent luxury retail centers, **The Grove** in Los Angeles.

Unionmade co-founder Todd Barket said he doesn't expect much change from his store's urban style when it moves to The Grove in spring 2014. It will take the real estate of a standalone space currently occupied by a **Chico's FAS**. The 1,900-square-foot space is adjacent to the Los Angeles landmark **Farmers Market**. ➔ **Unionmade** page 2

Macy's Plaza: Big Changes Detailed

By Andrew Asch *Retail Editor*

Macy's Plaza, get ready to turn into **Rockefeller Center**.

Developer Wayne Ratkovich, president and chief executive officer of Los Angeles-based **The Ratkovich Co.**, made headlines when he acquired the 1970s-era Macy's Plaza mall for \$241 million in June. On Sept. 19, he made comments on his plans to redevelop the mall into a mixed-use development reminiscent of New York landmark Rockefeller Center. Ratkovich said the renovated center will be a vibrant part of downtown Los Angeles. He made the comments at a **Downtown Center Business Improvement District** event held at the **Market Lofts** building at Ninth and Hope streets.

"It's to urbanize it, humanize it and open it to the street," Ratkovich said of his company's plans for Macy's Plaza, which takes up the block of Seventh Street between Hope and Flower streets in downtown Los Angeles. The 1.8 mil-

lion-square foot complex houses a **Sheraton** hotel and office space, as well as major tenants such as a **Macy's** department store, a **Victoria's Secret**, post office and an **LA Fitness** health club.

Ratkovich will invest \$160 million in the property. Construction is forecast to start at the end of the first quarter of 2014 or the beginning of the second quarter of that year. Construction is anticipated to finish in 2015.

The project will be renamed **The Bloc**, and the brick, fortress-like complex will get a completely new look. For the development's centerpiece, which will be a three-story mall, Ratkovich said the building's roof will be torn off, turning the Nixon-era mall into a modern open-air complex.

The Bloc's ground floor will be devoted to restaurants and food markets. Ratkovich said the Macy's will remain at the ➔ **Macy's Plaza** page 4

INSIDE

Where fashion gets down to businessSM

Port of Long Beach up in August ... p. 2
New president for Teva ... p. 2
New Resources .. p. 3

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INSIDE **Textile Preview** with Tech Focus and LA Resource Guide

A CALIFORNIA APPAREL NEWS SPECIAL SECTION

Holiday Sales Will Be Up and Shopper Traffic Down This Year

Retailers will have to work harder for their money this holiday season.

The holiday shopping season will be shorter than last year, and Hanukkah starts the day before Thanksgiving, which means that stores may feel compelled to launch their promotions in late October, according to **ShopperTrak**, a Chicago company that analyzes and predicts retail sales.

Apparel and accessories sales are forecast to rise 2.8 percent this year compared with last year, which saw a 3 percent uptick over 2010. But shopper traffic is expected to decline 1.2 percent from the 2012 holiday season.

"Although the economy continues to recover slowly, consumers remain cautious about spending and are not ready to splurge," said ShopperTrak founder Bill Martin. "Even

though online buying increases each year, bricks-and-mortar sales remain retail's largest profit opportunity. Retailers who deliver a seamless experience both in-store and at every customer touchpoint have the chance to capitalize and grab their share of the wallet when shoppers visit the stores."

Retailers have a shortened holiday season to tackle. There are only 25 days between Black Friday, on Nov. 29, and Christmas this year. That total is six days less than last year.

Hanukkah begins on Nov. 27, 11 days earlier than last year. Martin noted that while an early Hanukkah won't affect holiday sales, it will shift the time retailers anticipate traffic increases. As a result, ShopperTrak expects promotions will begin as early as the day after Halloween.

"Nobody can afford to procrastinate," Martin said. "Re-

tailers must have their holiday marketing and operations ready to go when November begins, as consumers will be ready to take advantage of those deals."

While apparel and accessories sales will move up 2.8 percent, electronics and appliance sales are predicted to rise only 2 percent over last year.

More than 90 percent of sales still take place in bricks-and-mortar stores. "Keeping a close eye on their in-store shopper analytics will help retailers succeed this holiday season," Martin said.

The holiday sales forecast mirrors what many retailers have been reporting—that lackluster sales are still taking place despite the U.S. unemployment rate dropping to 7.3 percent in August.—*Deborah Belgum*

Unionmade *Continued from page 1*

Barket believes Unionmade will blend right into The Grove, best known for its **Disney**-esque retail main street and its range of high-marquee retail names, including **Nordstrom**, **Barneys New York**, **Forever 21**, **Michael Kors**, **Gap** and **Vince**.

"The Grove is the downtown for that neighborhood," Barket said of Los Angeles' Fairfax District and Mid-City sections. "From a foot and a volume perspective, we want to be in a place that could get more traffic. In Los Angeles, [that traffic] is in a mall rather than a small street."

Barket does not forecast that Unionmade will ever run a big fleet of stores. Rather, he's interested in opening a few more stores in the United States, then eventually opening a store in Tokyo, where there are a lot of aficionados of Unionmade's Americana look. The boutique's merchandise mix includes brands such as **Gitman Vintage**, **Filson**, **Wolverine**, **Levi's Made & Crafted**,

as well as the store's Unionmade label. "We do a good job of finding brands that are classic or up-and-coming brands," he said.

The Grove founder Rick Caruso had shopped at Unionmade in Los Angeles' Brentwood neighborhood and had contacted Barket about opening a store at The Grove. After a year of talks and securing the right location, Barket and Unionmade co-founder Carl Chiara signed a five-year lease to move into The Grove.

Unionmade has built a reputation for the Americana look, according to many fashion-industry people who have shopped there. "Unionmade is a great representation of the current trends toward better quality," said Shaheen Sadeghi, chief executive officer of **Lab Holding LLC**, which runs specialty



GROVE BOUND: San Francisco's Unionmade will open a location at The Grove.

centers such as **The Lab** and **The Camp** in Costa Mesa, Calif.

"The aesthetic is classic," said Jason Bates, owner of the **Derelict** showroom, headquartered in New York, which represents lines such as **Gul & Blå**, **FiveUnits**, **Gram**, **Farah Vintage** and **Farah 1920**. "The Grove is the most sought-after real estate in Los Angeles. If they can produce good numbers there, they can go to New York and other cities."

While Unionmade started and gained popularity through the toughest days of the Great Recession, it has been opening stores at a steady pace. In April 2011, it opened an 800-square-foot store at the **Brentwood Country Mart**. In summer 2011 it opened a store at the **Marin Country Mart** in Larkspur, Calif. In 2012, it opened **Mill**, a sister store, in San Francisco's Noe Valley neighborhood, which represents an Americana sensibility but through women's fashions.

Barket declined to forecast Unionmade's sales at The Grove. ●

Deckers Outdoor Names New President for Teva

Deckers Outdoor—the California company known for its shoe brands **Ugg Australia**, **Teva**, **Sanuk**, **Tsubo**, **Ahnu**, **Mozo** and **Hoka One One**—has appointed Jeffrey Bua as the new Teva brand president.

Bua will be responsible for all aspects of the Teva brand, an outdoor water sandal, and will report directly to Angel Martinez, Deckers' president, chief executive and chair of the board of directors.

Bua replaces Joel Heath, who left the company to pursue other opportunities, the company said.

Prior to joining Deckers in 2011 as Mozo brand president, Bua worked at several footwear companies, including **RG Barry Corp.**, **Hi-Tec Sports**, **Umbro** and **Reebok**.

"Jeff has demonstrated the ability to take brands to the next level during his 30-plus-year career in the footwear industry," Martinez said. "Over the past several years we've made good progress repositioning the Teva brand to attract a younger, more active consumer. Jeff's broad range of experience will be incredibly valuable as we look to leverage the brand's sandal heritage to create new growth vehicles within the outdoor space."

Teva's sales have declined recently. In 2012, they were \$115.5 million, down 7.4 percent from \$124.8 million in 2011.

The company said it is concentrating this year on growing its international Teva sales to Asia and Latin America.

In the United States, the Teva brand is sold at sporting goods stores such as **REI**, **Dick's Sporting Goods** and **The Sports Authority**.—*D.B.*



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Local Ports See Mixed Cargo-Container Volumes in August

It was a tale of two ports when the tally for cargo-container volumes came in last month.

The **Port of Long Beach** saw a 16 percent jump in the number of cargo containers passing through the docks in August compared with last year.

But it was a different story across the water at the **Port of Los Angeles**, where cargo-container volume was up less than 1 percent.

When the numbers were parsed, imports at the Port of Los Angeles were down 1.41 percent to 360,000 20-foot containers while

exports declined 3.84 percent to 164,819 containers. What did increase, by 8 percent, were empty cargo containers loaded onto ships.

Overall, August volumes at the Port of Los Angeles edged up 0.4 percent to 706,669 containers.

However, the Port of Long Beach was particularly active in August.

"I think for the first time you are starting to see that slow economic improvement," said Art Wong, a spokesman for the Port of Long Beach. "It is starting to turn into something significant."

Wong thought Long Beach's cargo-container volume was up because more merchandise is being loaded onto larger megaships, which need deeper berths to dock. The Port of Long Beach has several deep berths to accommodate megaships.

In August, cargo-container imports were up 19.2 percent to 327,817 containers compared with last year. Exports jumped 20.2 percent to 154,118 containers, and empty cargo containers increased 5.8 percent to 148,357 containers. Overall, August volume at the Port of Long Beach was up 16 percent to 630,292 containers.—*D.B.*

Corrections and Clarifications

In a Sept. 13 story about **Planet Blue's** same-day delivery service, the range of delivery areas was incorrect. The retailer will offer same-day delivery to zip codes within a set geographical radius in the Los Angeles area, ranging approximately from Santa Monica in the west to Pasadena in the east and Burbank in the north to Manhattan Beach in the south.

Vassallo *Continued from page 1*

collection, featuring mosaic patterns with gold inlay pressed against red velvet, solid gold sequin dresses and pencil skirts, as well as a contemporary take on a Victorian-style riding suit.

"After a trip to Brittany, France, I was inspired by the traditional costumes of the region," Vassallo said. "The rich brocades, the mixtures of fabrics, the elaborate embroideries, and the mixing of masculine and feminine [appealed to me]. I studied them and saw that if you peeled the layers, the women could be going to a



party in LA or NY."

Vassallo credits his business-owner father for his entrepreneurial spirit.

"He was a great boss and people loved working with him; it was like a family. I thought one day I could do the same," he said.

But it was the women in Vassallo's life who taught him the importance of style.

"Growing up in Puerto Rico, I was surrounded by women who loved to dress—my mother, aunts, girlfriends," he said. "They were always put together and always elegant. Even something as simple as a trip to the market would warrant looking good. When you live in NY and Paris, that elegance is taken to another level. The streets become a catwalk. Then you come to LA and the elegance becomes more casual. So I try to design between the two extremes, where a gold sequin top can be worn with a gold sequin skirt or a tight pair of jeans."

For more information, email sales@vassallortw.com. ●

Harlyn: Contemporary Apparel With a Vintage Twist

Maria Stanley uses her Midwestern background, its dreamy landscape and her mother's treasure trove of clothing as inspiration to produce her feminine, ready-to-wear collection, **Harlyn**.

"I am so lucky to have an amazing mama, who introduced me to the wonderful world of fabulous vintage clothing at an early age," she said. "I spent a lot of my childhood playing dress-up in her trunks of clothing, so it was only natural for Harlyn to have a vintage influence."

The Minnesota native moved to Los Angeles to attend the **Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising**. In 2011, she launched Harlyn.

Harlyn includes tops, bottoms, shorts, rompers and dresses—and, most recently, outerwear and jumpsuits—inspired by Stanley's vintage sensibility and featuring fun patterns, pops of color and seasonal hues. The Fall '13 collection, called "Sweet Little Sirens," features wine shades, a hint of gold and rich blue. The silhouette is sophisticated and loose for bottoms, while dresses range from A-line to shift styles to high-waisted and wraps.

"Every collection starts with printed silks, which come from artwork I create myself or is sourced from different artists around the world," Stanley said. "I like to add a bit of texture to the line with silk tweeds and different washes with the solid colors. I've also just recently dabbled into knits for Spring 2014, which has been a crazy new adventure for me."

For inspiration, Stanley envisions the Harlyn muse in different cities and eras. "We started [the Harlyn girl] off at the **Beverly Hills Hotel**

in the 1950s, and now she's running through Metro stations in Paris in the 1960s for Fall," Stanley said.

Wholesale prices start at around \$69 for a tank and go up to \$139 for party dresses. Har-



lyn is currently sold at **Anthropologie** and **Revolv** and will soon be sold at **Neiman Marcus** and **Bona Drag** (www.bonadrag.com).

For more information, contact Ravid Levy at ravid@emprds.com or (213) 614-9292 or Nicole Gallo at nicole@emprds.com or (212) 228-2428.—Sarah Wolfson

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Retail/Fashion Merchandising Math

1:00PM - 2:00PM

Presented by Henry Cherner

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NEWS

Billabong Changes CEO, Refinancing Plans

Beleaguered surf giant **Billabong International Ltd.** shifted gears in its bailout.

On Sept. 19, the Australian-headquartered company, with a division located in Irvine, Calif., scrapped a refinancing deal made in July with **Altamont Capital** for a deal that the company deemed superior.

The \$294 million deal with Altamont would have required that Scott Olivet, former chairman of eyewear and fashion brand **Oakley**, would become the chief executive officer of Billabong. According to a Billabong statement, the surfwear company revised its agreement with Altamont in August. The revision said that Billabong had the right to enter into an alternative financing agreement if Billabong's board determined it necessary to satisfy its "statutory or fiduciary duties." Billabong will pay a fee of \$5.6 million to Altamont for break-

ing the agreement. Olivet will not become Billabong's CEO.

Billabong struck a deal with **Centerbridge Partners L.P.** and **Oaktree Capital Management L.P.** The agreement will allow Billabong to repay Altamont \$294 million. Billabong also will retain a credit facility of up to \$140 million from **GE Capital**.

The new deal will offer Billabong a lower cost of debt and additional upfront liquidity, according to a Billabong statement. Part of the new deal with Centerbridge and Oaktree requires that Neil Fiske will become chief executive officer and managing director of Billabong. Fiske served as chief executive officer of the **Eddie Bauer** fashion label from 2007 to 2012. Since then he has worked as retail and restaurant industry partner for **Onex Corp.**, a Toronto-based private-equity investment firm.—*Andrew Asch*

Macy's Plaza *Continued from page 1*

center. The development is scouting for retailers not currently doing business in downtown Los Angeles to fill up the other floors.

The Sheraton will also remain at the complex. The hospitality business will be remodeled into a four-star, 485-room hotel focusing on conventioners and others with business

veiled its Downtown Los Angeles Demographic Study 2013. The study found that median household income in downtown Los Angeles is \$95,800. The median age of the area's residents is 34, and most of the people surveyed for the study want new retail. Fifty-eight percent want more mid-level restaurants, 55 percent want more mid-level department stores, 46 percent want discount

fashion retail such as **Hennes & Mauritz** H&M, and 48 percent want more book and music stores.

Angie Biggs, a district manager for **Urban Outfitters**, also appeared at the event and spoke about the Urban Outfitters



NEW LOOKS: The Ratkovich Co. will invest \$160 million to renovate Macy's Plaza in Los Angeles. When the new looks debut in 2015, the center will be renamed The Bloc.

at the **Los Angeles Convention Center**.

Before Ratkovich spoke, the Downtown Center Business Improvement District un-

store that is scheduled to open in December at the former **Rialto Theater** at 812 S. Broadway in downtown Los Angeles. ●

Calendar

Sept. 23

Las Vegas International Lingerie Show

Rio All-Suite Hotel & Casino
Las Vegas
Through Sept. 25

Sept. 24

"Working Successfully Across Borders & Cultures" webinar
online

Sept. 26

Simparel's complimentary breakfast event
California Market Center, C804
Los Angeles

Sept. 27

Designers and Agents

Espace 5 Bis
Paris
Through Sept. 30

Sept. 30

LA Textile
California Market Center
Los Angeles
Through Oct. 2

Oct. 1

Fashion Business Inc. networking mixer
California Market Center, A792
Los Angeles

"Launch Your Line" free Q&A presented by the Evans Group
500 Molino St., Suite 102
Los Angeles

Oct. 4

Driven by Design
LA Mart
Los Angeles

There's more on ApparelNews.net.

For calendar details and contact information, visit ApparelNews.net/calendar.

Submissions to the calendar should be faxed to the Calendar Editor at (213) 623-5707. Please include the event's name, date, time, location, admission price and contact information. The deadline for calendar submissions is the Tuesday prior to Friday publication. Inclusion in the calendar is subject to available space and the judgment of the editorial staff.

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Macy's Passport Presents Glamorama: Fashion, Music and Festivities—for a Good Cause

Macy's Passport Presents Glamorama took stage at the **Orpheum Theatre** in downtown Los Angeles on Sept. 12 with spectacular visual performances. The star-studded event hosted its annual affair—which is also held in Minneapolis, Chicago and San Francisco—to raise funds and awareness to help combat cancer, childhood illness and HIV/AIDS.



Sharon Stone

This year's theme, "Fashion in a New Light," brought music and fashion together to help support the event's long-standing nonprofit partner, **AIDS Project Los Angeles (APLA)**.

The evening included performances by pop sensations **Backstreet Boys** and members of the avant-garde circus **Cirque du Soleil**, as well as fashion presentations from some of Macy's best-selling brands.

Passport Glamorama and other programs have donated more than \$30 million to AIDS/HIV charities—"standing strong three decades later, steadfast in our commitment to help raise much-needed funds to eradicate HIV/AIDS," according to Terry J. Lundgren, Macy's Inc.'s chairman, president and chief executive officer. Lundgren and actress Sharon Stone paid tribute to those who have lent their financial and emotional support to researching a cure to the AIDS epidemic.

Late movie idol and founding chair Elizabeth Taylor was one of Glamorama's ambassadors, and now Stone succeeds her, helping to spearhead the campaign against HIV/AIDS. "I



Terry Lundgren



Tommy Hilfiger



Calvin Klein



Mason Jules



Rachel Rachel Roy



Macy's Impulse



Macy's Impulse

JOHN ECKMIER

know as time goes on we will continue to find cures and a vaccine and we will end this virus," Stone said, giving APLA credit for the 11,000 people the organization helps annually. "[That's] where the financial gains of tonight's evening go. That's a lot of people. You are changing lives by your presence."

Between music sets, a high-production fashion presentation highlighted men's and women's Fall collections. **Tommy Hilfiger** featured a rock 'n' roll, layered schoolboy/-girl look with argyle prints, varsity jackets, and knee-high socks with mulberry, navy, plum and green colors.

Impulse for women, Macy's in-house brand, took a gypsy/rocker/boho-style approach with lots of animal prints accented with shine and shimmer.

Tallia Orange dressed men in tailored suits and jackets, some accessorized with bow-ties. Colors were subtle with fall hues such as burnt red and brown.

Rachel Rachel Roy used a gold and black color scheme

with a mature yet fun theme, featuring floppy hats, full-pieced outfits and a tweed pattern suit.

Macy's new **Maison Jules** collection featured youthful, French-inspired pieces such as pleated skirts, baby-doll dresses and denim.

Calvin Klein brought a classic, demure collection fit for day or night with reds, blacks and whites, while **Diesel** brought out a slew of men in underwear.

After the show, Macy's produced an after-party for patrons at the **California Market Center**, which was transformed into a pink-lit, festive affair. Gourmet food was served by Joshua Whigham, chef de cuisine of **The Bazaar by Jose Andres**, in addition to specialty cocktails by **Patron Spirits**.

Guests had the option of partaking in a bit of photo-booth action and enjoy sweets at the **LA Times Cotton Candy Cart**, and celebrity DJ Brandon Olds kept the party going.

—Sarah Wolfson

Bebe *Continued from page 1*

Puerto Rico, Canada and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The new initiatives will guide Bebe back to its roots and go beyond them, Birkhold said.

"Repositioning our merchandising [offering], we clearly know that the key reason a girl shops at Bebe is to find something sexy to go out in. So although we sell lots of other products and she comes to our store for a lot of other reasons, clearly we have to over-index on our greatest strength."

Birkhold told investors that Bebe will bring back the sex appeal with an emphasis on body-conscious styles and clothes for going out as well as with new omni-channel marketing, new physical prototype stores, new merchandising and sourcing, and an overhaul of the Bebe LA Design Studio in Los Angeles.

Under the guidance of founder Manny Mashouf, Bebe rose to prominence in the 1980s and 1990s as the go-to place at the mall for contemporary women's fashions with a playful, risqué edge. The retailer suffered during the Great Recession, and Mashouf, who currently serves as chairman of the board, hired Birkhold in January to bring Bebe back to its place at the top of the mall.

The old spirit of Bebe informed the recently unveiled fall 2013 ad campaign, starring *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit model Nina Agdal. Nicknamed "be9to5," the campaign's theme is that the Bebe woman's "9 to 5" is actually 9 p.m. to 5 a.m., a time marked by romance, fun and adventure.

But the retailer has got a lot of ground to cover in its comeback. The fourth-quarter results were released Aug. 29, and net sales were \$119.2 million, which was a 9.4 percent decrease from \$131.5 million last year. The fourth quarter's same-store sales showed a 7.1 percent decrease compared with a 2.5 percent decrease in the same quarter last year.

Business declined throughout the fiscal year. Net sales for the fiscal 2013 year were \$484.7 million, a decrease of 8.7 percent from 530.8 million last year. Same-store sales decreased 8.8 percent, compared with an increase of 5.3 percent in the prior fiscal year.

For the first quarter of the fiscal 2014 year, Bebe forecast same-store sales to be in the negative low to mid-single-digit range.

While the retailer's cash and investments were listed as \$180 million in an Aug. 29 financial release, Birkhold said the sales performance declined during a year of great change for the brand. However, he was encouraged by consumer reaction to some of the first new products made under the direction of the executives who joined the retailer earlier this year.

Wall Street analyst Jeff Van Sinderen said Bebe's recent results came in above consensus estimates, and he reiterated a "buy" rating for Bebe's stock, which he follows for Los Angeles-based financial-services firm **B. Riley & Co.**

In an Aug. 30 research note, Van Sinderen wrote that Bebe was making progress with its new team and new merchandising. "As merchandise content improves ... and with a new ad campaign/branding initiative, we believe that consumer interest in the brand is being renewed."

37-year-old start-up

While Bebe aims to continue its tradition of being a contemporary clothier for fun and romance, the way to contact its customer has changed. Ben Baum was named Bebe's chief digital officer in November 2012. After serving as chief of business development for multichannel retail at **Google**, Baum told the audience at the recent investors day that he considered Bebe a 37-year-old start-up; it was burgeoning with possibilities. In building Bebe's omni-channel functions, he was focusing on

increasing sales traffic from mobile devices and also to bring back the retailer's most loyal consumers with a strong loyalty program.

For the physical part of the Bebe omni-channel experience, Birkhold recently hired Mikel Bowman for the newly created position of senior vice president of visual merchandising and in-store marketing. Bowman, former vice president of visual merchandising-store design for **Lacoste** (Birkhold formerly served as chief executive officer for Lacoste), will develop a new Bebe prototype store at **The Mall at Short Hills** in Short Hills, N.J. The prototype store will be unveiled in spring 2014. The retailer will open four other prototype stores in the upcoming year. Birkhold also forecast that Bebe will open more outlet stores in the near future.

Another new executive, Katrina Glusac, joined Bebe in April as its chief merchandising officer. She told the investors-day audience that the retailer had increased its speed-to-market capabilities and that it had reintroduced logo product. It was testing T-shirts with the Bebe logo, and it was reintroducing proprietary prints.

Birkhold noted that Bebe would bring much of its sourcing in house. In the past, Bebe sourced 30 percent of its work from outside vendors. Its goal was to bring 10 percent of its sourcing from outside vendors.

"We're still going to work with our outside vendors to give us great, unique products, but the merchants and the designers will make sure that everything has a Bebe take on it."

Birkhold also told the investors that changing seating arrangements would make Bebe's Los Angeles design studio a catalyst for ideas. The merchandising, design, production and technical departments were formerly separated. In early September, these individual departments were put on the same floor, without separations. "So they are living, breathing the products," Birkhold said of the new arrangement. ●

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Search Committee: Full-Time Faculty/Fashion Design
Attention: Connie Martinez, Academic Coordinator,
Fashion Design Otis College of Art and Design
110 East 9th Street, Suite C201 Los Angeles, California 90079

Electronic submissions equivalent to the materials requested above may be sent to Connie Martinez at: cmartinez@otis.edu Please include: "Fashion Design Full-Time Faculty" in the subject heading.

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SENIOR TECHNICAL DESIGNER/ BOTTOMS

5+ yrs. experience in the fashion industry and in the technical area responsible in creating complete technical packs from pre-development stage to end production in full cycle. Must have denim and non denim washed and fashion bottoms experience. Familiar with specs and fitting interpretations. Sit in fittings with designer. Communicate overall fit comments/approvals to oversea factories. Proficient with Illustrator, Photoshop, Word and Excel. Patternmaking knowledge a plus.

Email resume along with salary requirement to: rosemary@sanctuaryclothing.com

DESIGN ASSISTANT

Van Nuys based company looking for energetic and self-motivated assistant for Junior & Missy Knit Dress Division. Candidate must have minimum 2 years' exp. working in a Design Room, be detail oriented and have excellent organizational skills. Responsibilities include but not limited to; process garments for costing, tagging and taking photos of samples, follow up with fabric, trim and garment development, communication with Shanghai office, organizing and maintaining libraries, follow through with buyer request, and the ability to multitask and work efficiently. Photoshop & Illustrator is a big plus.

Send resumes to ericab@kandykiss.com

Jobs Available

CUSTOMER SERVICE COORDINATOR

Samsung C&T America in Commerce, CA
5 yrs of customer service experience req'd.
(budget retailer customers preferred)
3 yrs of garment experience req'd
Email resume to: recruiting@scta.samsung.com

IMPORTS COORDINATOR

Downtown dress manufacturer looking for an Imports coordinator, responsible for working with overseas factories in all aspects of planning and communication. Must have good understanding of garment construction and production process. At least five years' relevant experience and excellent communications skills required. Email: hr@kkcpa.com

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Email resume to: AngieMedina@pvh.com

EXPERIENCED HIGH END SEWER

Looking for exp'd sewer at high end evening wear company. Must have exp. in working with high end materials such as chiffons, corsets, boning, embroideries, & tulle. Draping skill are also a plus. Company is small with great benefits & friendly work environment. Email resume to: Lisa@lorenasarbu.com

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Contemporary Women's Apparel is seeking a highly skilled 1st Production Patternmaker w/ experienced in PAD or Gerber System. Specializing in garment dye, spec'ing & testing knits & woven. Fax resume to: (323)231-5231

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Carson Area Manufacturer looking for Pattern Maker. 5+ yrs of experience, must be proficient on Tuka-tech system. Main duties are 1st Pattern, Grading and Marking. Must be detail oriented with ability to prioritize and meet deadlines. E-mail resume to unleaded_92@yahoo.com

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with **Tech Focus** and **LA Resource Guide**

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September 2013

TEXTILE TRENDS

**Indigo Mood
Lineup
Everything's Rosy**

TEXTILE NOTES

**Supima's Man of the Year
Taiwan Brings Technical Textiles,
Fashion Fabrics to the CMC**

TECH NOTES

**Vertical Textile and Apparel Maker Grupo
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Robert Kaufman Fabrics
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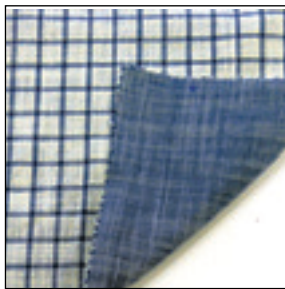
Ciabatti Serico "Sissi"
jacquard



Robert Kaufman Fabrics #SRK-14277-62 "Nautique Chambray Print"



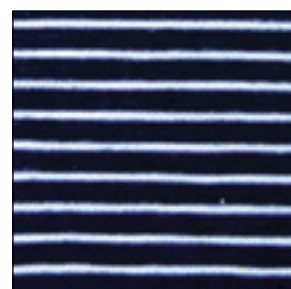
Robert Kaufman Fabrics
#SRKF-13937-190 "Shetland Flannel"



Robert Kaufman Fabrics
#CCCX-14183-62 "Double Cloth Cotton"



Home Fashion Fabrics "Magic"



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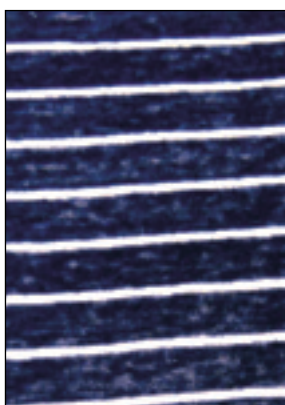
Colorway by Nasrin "Diamond Plaid Foil" chambray Tencel



Colorway by Nasrin
#CWF96398-3 "Nostalgia"



Asher Fabric Concepts
#MM170 "Bleed Stripe"



Asher Fabric Concepts
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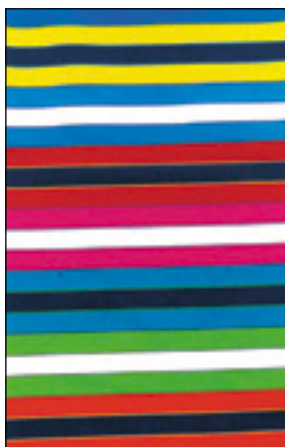
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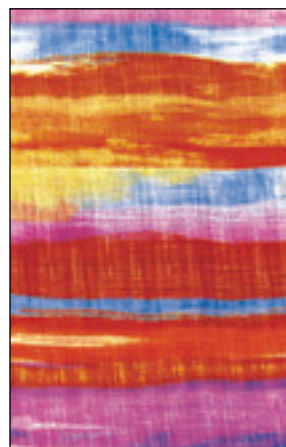
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TRENDS



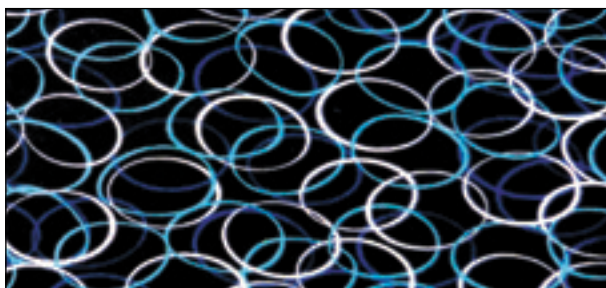
Taiana Blu #H260560
"Fox12"



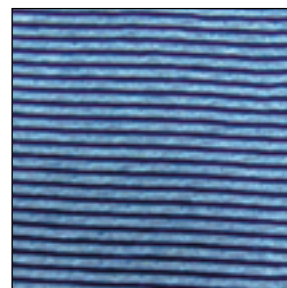
Cinergy Textiles Inc. #HMC-1278A



Taiana Blu #S880003
"Kalfix"



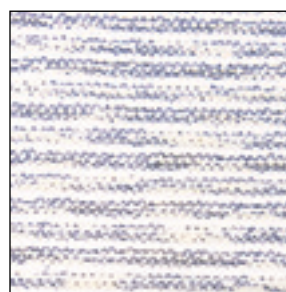
Triple Textile Inc. #RSP-6-M



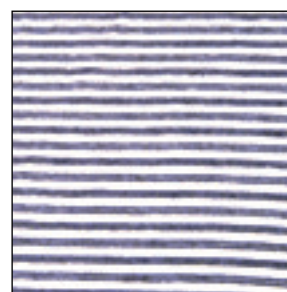
Asher Fabric Concepts
#CPD50



Cinergy Textiles Inc. #Bhatchi-MX3300G



Asher Fabric Concepts
#VPX20



Asher Fabric Concepts
#CSJ132

Lineup

Striped patterns range from geometric abstracts to free-form conversations and to nautical stripes in traditional and candy-colored variations.



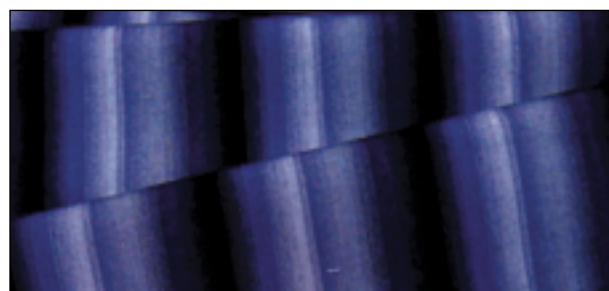
Philips-Boyne Corp. #P/P0S77R/B



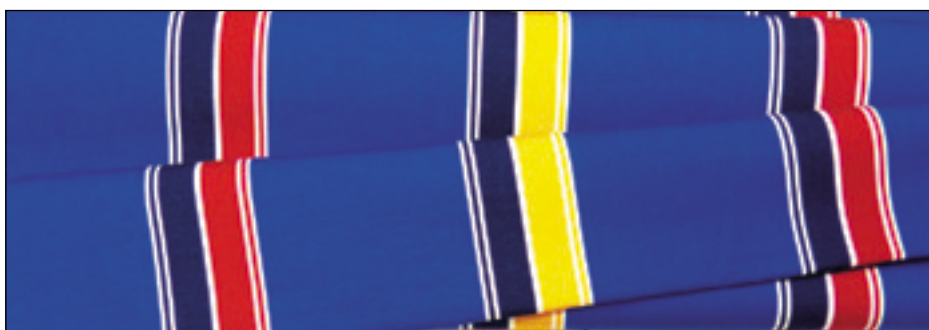
Sportek International
#MIR278-09



Colorway by Nasrin "Liberty Stripes"



Philips-Boyne Corp. #Y/D1005GRY



Philips-Boyne Corp. #Y/D8009MU6

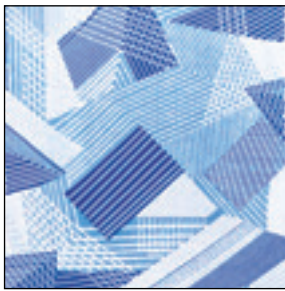
TRENDS



Asher Fabric Concepts
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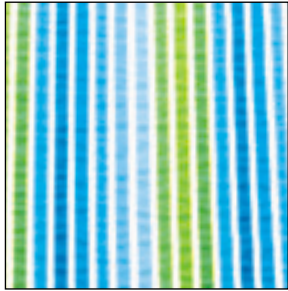
Designer Fabric Warehouse
"Peek-A-Boo" jacquard knit
stripe



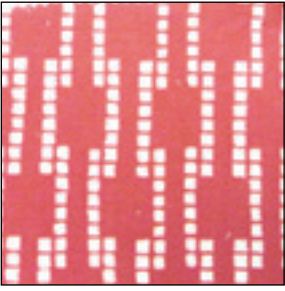
Cinergy Textiles Inc. #HMC-
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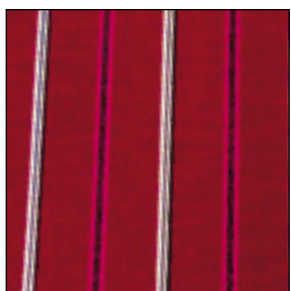
Taiana Blu #1210467
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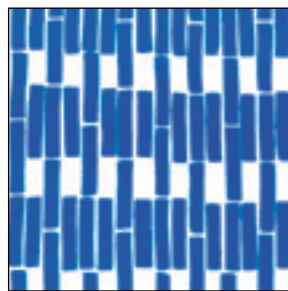
Taiana Blu #2010149
"Paxon"



Home Fashion Fabrics "Chain
Gang"



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Home Fashion Fabrics
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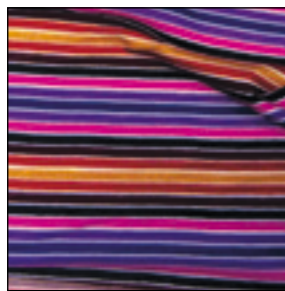
Home Fashion Fabrics "Manic
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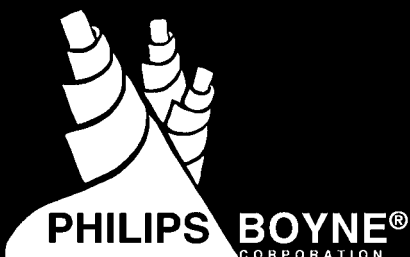


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TECH NOTES

Vertical Textile and Apparel Maker Grupo Karim's Selects NGC for PLM and SCM

Vertical textile and apparel maker **Grupo Karim's** has tapped **NGC Software's** product lifecycle management (PLM) and supply chain management (SCM) solutions to help the company manage its operations in the U.S., Central America, the Caribbean, Mexico and Pakistan.

The move takes Grupo Karim's from using many processes to a single end-to-end solution that allows for integration and collaboration across divisions and locations.

"We had no PLM software, and we were still using spreadsheets and isolated databases for certain processes," said Luis Mejia, executive vice president of Grupo Karim's. "We recognized that we needed to be streamlined, fast and accurate in order to deliver the best quality products at competitive costs and shorter lead times."

The new PLM and SCM systems will allow Grupo Karim's to improve productivity and reduce costs throughout the product development and production process, and Mejia predicts the company will shorten lead times from concept to delivery.

"We'll also be able to manage compliance and testing requirements under one platform for real-time access," he added.

Based in Miami, NGC Software is a provider of PLM, SCM, Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) and Shop Floor Control software and services for brands, retailers and consumer-products companies. Cus-

tomers include **AX Armani Exchange**, **Aeropostale**, **Billabong**, **Carter's**, **Destination XL**, **Hugo Boss**, **Jos. A. Bank**, **Marchon Eyewear**, **Spanx**, **Swatfame** and **VF Corp.**

Grupo Karim's divisions include **Jomar Spinning** in Belmont, N.C., which produces more than 1 million pounds per month of NAFTA- and CAFTA-certified yarn; **Honduras Spinning Mills**, which produces more than 600,000 pounds per month of ring-spun cotton and ring-spun cotton/polyester yarns; and **Pride Yarn**, which sells cotton, synthetic and blended yarns in Central America, the Caribbean and Mexico.

The company also operates **Pride Denim Mills**, based in Nicaragua, which produces more than 25 million yards of denim annually in a vertical facility; **Pride Performance Fabrics**, which produces synthetic and cotton fabrics for the athletic, active and fashion markets; Honduras-based **Pride Manufacturing**, which produces apparel through full-package, cut and sew, and 807 programs; **Ammar Apparel**, a high-tech manufacturing facility in Mexico; **Karim's Textile & Apparel**, also based in Mexico; and **Lucky Knits**, a vertically integrated apparel-manufacturing facility in Pakistan. Grupo Karim's also has a textile chemical division and textile recycling operation in Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean.

—Alison A. Nieder

StyleShoots Aims to Simplify the Process of Online Product Display

Visitors to the recent **Liberty Fairs** trade show in Las Vegas had a chance to demo a new system designed to make e-commerce easier.

Netherlands-based technology company **StyleShoots** recently introduced its product in the U.S., starting in New York, with plans to expand to the West Coast soon.

StyleShoots is an all-in-one system that includes a light table, daylight-simulation lamps, a **Canon 5D Mark II** DSLR camera and an embedded **Apple** computer that can be run using an **iPad**. StyleShoots users can shoot product and automatically removes the background imagery, making the photo ready to be uploaded to a company's website.

"This tries to automate as much of the process as possible," said John Williams, vice president of sales for **Focal Media Group**, the company that is distributing StyleShoots in the U.S. "It's a 15-to-20-second process per item. That means you can get the product in by morning and have it on an e-commerce site by afternoon."

StyleShoots uses a two-shot process to automatically cut out the background imagery—one with LED backlighting and one without. The software is then able to analyze more than 20 million pixels, cut out the background imagery and deliver "true alpha transparency," even for products that are particularly difficult to silhouette manually, such as lace, fringed items, fur and delicate jewelry.

Already, **Tommy Hilfiger**, **Marks & Spencer**, **Perry Ellis**, **Valentino**, **G-Star** and

Macy's have begun using the StyleShoots machine, according to the company.

There is also a companion product—the **CircleShot**, which can shoot a series of 360-degree imagery to allow customers to rotate the image to see all sides of the product.

The company was founded in 2011 by Maurits Teunissen and Bartel Huibregtsen, who were looking to simplify the photography process for online display. "We wondered how we could put a man on the moon in the '60s, yet we were still manually cutting out the background from product photos," Teunissen said "Thousands of hours are spent on this tiresome task every

single day. It's all about giving way to creativity by removing boring steps and chores in a smart, engaging and effective manner. Designers, wholesalers and retailers can sit back and focus on what they're best at."

For a video demonstration, visit www.styleshoots.us.

The StyleShoots system costs \$84,995. The price includes hardware, software, delivery, installation and training. There are also 36- and 48-month leasing options starting at \$2,500 per month.

The system can also be rented per hour in New York. The hourly rate is \$250, and the day rate for a 10-hour day is \$2,000.

According to a Focal Media Group spokesperson, the company will open a showroom in Los Angeles sometime later this year.

For more information, visit www.focalmediagroup.com or email Mark Duhaime at mduhaime@focalmediagroup.com. —A.A.N.



WEB-READY: StyleShoots creates background-free high-res product shots for companies looking to quickly shoot and silhouette merchandise for display online.

Taiwan's Technical Textiles, Fashion Fabrics on Display at the CMC

By Alison A. Nieder *Executive Editor*

Fabrics made from recycled polyester, crushed oyster shell and nano-tech particles were among the offerings in the Fashion Theater at the **California Market Center** in Los Angeles during a two-day business matchmaking session organized by the **Taiwan Textile Federation**.

The Aug. 22–23 event featured 17 exhibitors representing Taiwanese mills.

Taiwan is well known for its synthetic fibers and its recycled polyester fabrics, and several of the exhibitors show their collections at **Outdoor Retailer** in Salt Lake City. Still, organizers wanted to show Taiwan's fashionable side, as well, said Michael Chang, section chief for strategic marketing for the Taiwan Textile Federation.

Margaret Ng, fabric product manager for **TRLA Group Inc.**, a subsidiary of **Tex-Ray Industrial Co. Ltd.**, was showing Tex-Ray's eco-friendly and colorfast solution-dyed polyester, called **ECO-lor**, which uses less water and less energy during the dye process than piece-dyeing.

"We can do fashion colors," Ng said, showing a rainbow range of polyester chips and some garments dyed in neon brights.

Tex-Ray has a mix of activewear and fashion customers, including **BCBG**, **Sag Harbor**, **Adidas** and **Puma**.

Ng was showing some of Tex-Ray's technical developments, including two fabrications that regulate body temperature using nanotechnology. Fabrics made from **THot** nanotechnology absorb and store near-infrared rays, while fabrics made with **TCool** nanotechnology reflect nearly 70 percent of near-infrared and UV rays, according to the company.

Tex-Ray is headquartered in Taipei, Taiwan, but has operations in Shanghai and Yancheng, China; Vietnam; Cambodia; Swaziland; Mexico; and the U.S. Ng is based in the company's office in Baldwin Park, Calif. Tex-Ray also has an office in New York.

Tainan City, Taiwan-based **Hans Global LLC** specializes in research and development.

Hans Global Vice President Yo-Jung Chang was showing functional fabrics with some special properties, such as yarn-dye fabrications dyed with a piece-dye process, as well as functional flannel made from recycled PET with an oyster-



ECO-FRIENDLY COLOR: Tex-Ray's ECO-lor solution-dyed polyester uses less water and energy than piece-dyeing and comes in fashion colors, including neon.

shell additive to give the fabric anti-static properties. Chang is based in the company's U.S. office in Monrovia, Calif. ●

Supima's Man of the Year



Werner Bieri, left, former chief executive officer of Buhler Quality Yarns, was named Supima "Man of the Year" at the organization's 59th annual meeting in Coalinga, Calif. The honor came as a surprise to Bieri, who said it was a particular honor because Supima has only bestowed the title on six other textile executives in the organization's history. Bieri is pictured with Supima President Jesse Curlee. Supima was founded in 1954 to promote the use of American Pima cotton. The name Supima—an abbreviation for Superior Pima—is a licensed trademark, used by more than 300 mills, textile and clothing makers, and retailers who are certified to be using Supima cotton supplied by about 500 growers in California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas.

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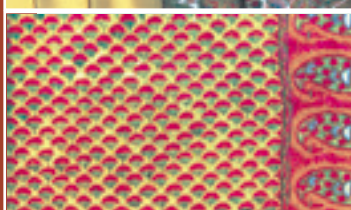
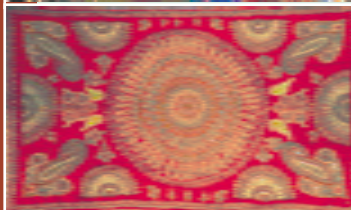
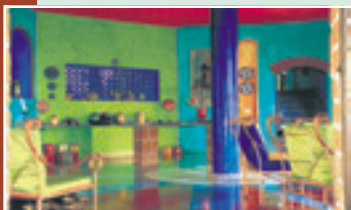
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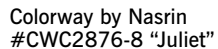
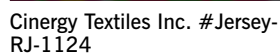
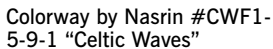
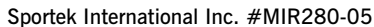
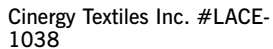
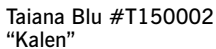
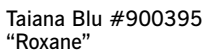
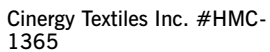
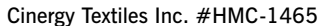
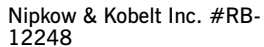
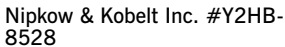
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FASHIONABLE: Taiwan is well known for its performance fabrics, but Taiwan Textile Federation representatives wanted to show the country's fashionable side, as well. (Pictured: Poly/cotton/rayon fabric by Merr)



Textiles designers head to the garden for inspiration, adding a dash of romantic rosy shades to florals, laces, animal patterns and abstract prints.

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➔ Resource Guide page 10

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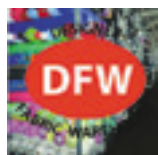
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➔ **Textile Resources** page 12



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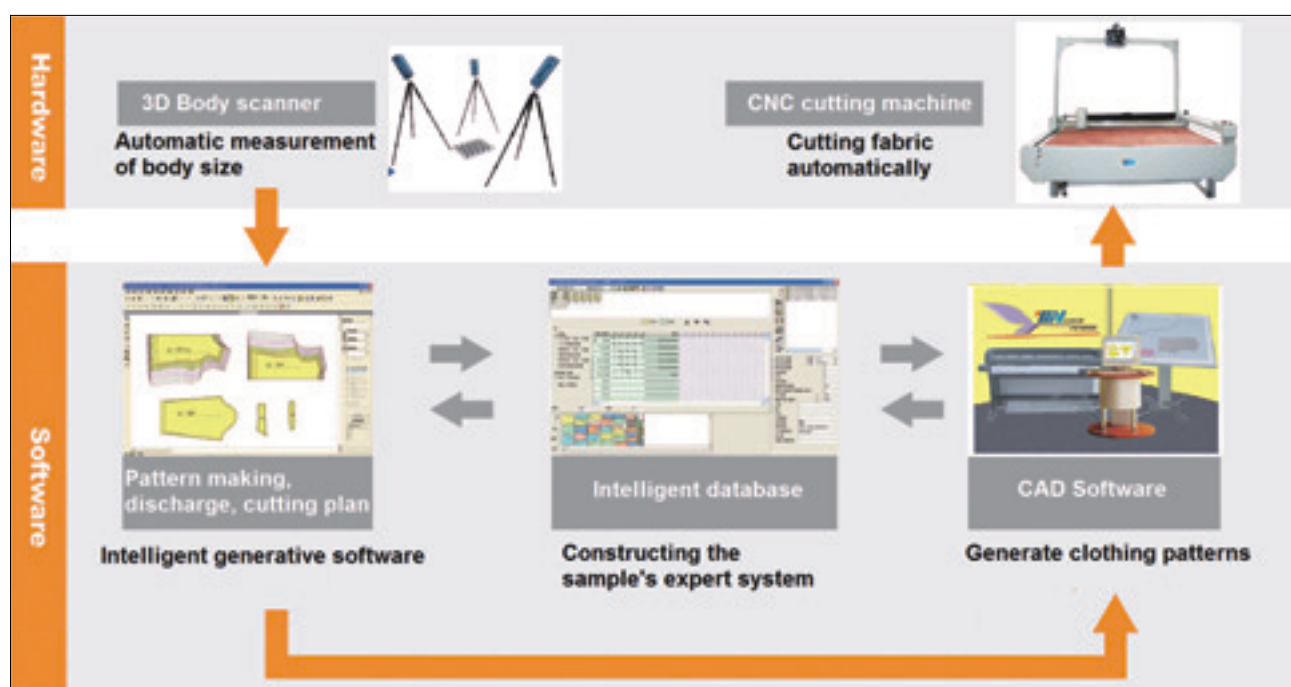
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Flow chart of the Made to Measure solution from Yin Group

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Design Knit's Creative Team Process

The group gathered around the conference table is proudly showing off the fruits of a challenging—many would say daunting—photo shoot, the new ad campaign for Los Angeles-based fabric company Design Knit Inc. The ethereal image is of an auburn-haired model seemingly floating in space, gracefully leaping, arms beautifully extended. The focal point, however, is not the lovely model but the cloud of tawny fabric gorgeousness billowing around her.

The striking photo was shot underwater in the backyard pool of Design Knit's marketing and sales associate Sarvey Tahmasebi Rector. The fact that the photographer was Rector herself, who also designed and sewed the flowing multilayered gown from a Design Knit Tencel fabric, gives insight into the workings of a company in which everyone is encouraged, like the model, to take a leap.

"Some may think this is stock photography," says Shala Tabassi, Design Knit's CEO. "But everyone needs to know that our creative process—not only fabric, but everything related to our fabric—is thanks to the talented team that we have here, and that's what makes our fabrics unique."

"We like to show that we can push boundaries as a company," continues daughter Pat Tabassi, head of product development and marketing.

The gathering at the table—Tabassi senior and junior, Rector and sales representative Jennifer Mehranvary—comprises the think tank of Design Knit. The younger members bounce ideas and

quality knit-to-order fabrics, sheer to sweater weight, in a variety of materials and blends. The company is a Supima licensee, using a majority of Buhler's yarns, including Supima cotton and Supima micro-Modal, and yarns made from Lenzing fibers. Other fabrications make use of mélange yarn dyes, rayon, wool, Tencel, linen, cashmere and silk blends, double and single knits such as novelty, jersey, pointelle, piqué, thermal, fleece, French terry and sweater knits. With samples numbering about 1,000, plus archived fabrics, the showroom at its 50,000-square-foot downtown Los Angeles facility is fairly bursting. Design Knit produces about 30 to 50 new fabrics each season, but "continuously we are making new styles," Shala says. "Our customers are constantly asking, What's new?" She estimates that "about 60 to 70 percent of contemporary brands in better department stores" include Design Knit fabrics." As Rector explains, "Our priority is to help our customers stand out in the market."

Prior to expanding the creative team, Shala was running everything from production to sales to accounting. The pride she takes in her creative team, whom she has taken under her wing, is evident as she listens to them discuss the process. "We've learned everything from her," Pat says simply, and the others nod. "We're at the point where we can be creatively independent. But we go to her to ask, What do you think?"

"And," says Shala, "sometimes I say no, I want to change it to something else. We want to have the best and most interesting product in the market."

Design Knit's team dynamic is readily apparent in the clutch of samples on the table, a study in fabric design evolution. The group had looked at a delicate slubbed tri-blend jersey in teal, a perfect color and weight for early fall. It might look nice, they decided, in a heavier weight rib knit with stripes—Mehranvary had the size of the stripes in mind. How would it look in an even heavier French terry solid? How about striped French terry? "One person will say something and it will spark an idea," Mehranvary notes. From this basic fabric, Shala explains, "we end up with six or seven different fabrics."

The buzz of the creative process is echoed in the hum of Design Knit's 45 knitting machines, visible from the conference room window, which stretch a full block. The majority of Design Knit's business is in pfd—prepared for dye—with the remainder yarn-dyed. Customers can order up to 20 yards for sampling before placing an order. It is Shala's particular pride that all of her company's production and finishing is done locally, and a majority of its yarn is produced in the U.S.A.—a

business model that often raises eyebrows. "At shows, people will ask, 'Where are you based?'" Pat recounts. "I'll say, 'Los Angeles.' They say, 'No, where do you knit?' I say, 'Los Angeles.' They say, 'No, really, where is your production done?' I say, 'Los Angeles.' People are shocked."

Promoting Made in America is part of Design Knit's mission, and the staff will help those

looking to manufacture locally with references to reliable cut-and-sew and dye houses. Design Knit's teamwork concept extends to its many fiercely loyal customers as well as new ones, Pat says. "We are very involved with their process," she notes. "They trust our expertise, and they seek our opinion."

Design Knit also partners with design schools, donating yardage to students for their shows and offering eye-opening tours and lectures to students who,

Rector notes, need to understand that "fabric is the start to everything in the industry."

Back at the table, the talk moves to the showroom design for the upcoming L.A. Textile Show. The theme, not surprisingly, is "our creative team process and how it works"—and, also not surprisingly, everyone is working on



A few new styles for Fall/Winter



The Design Knit creative team at work

inspirations off one another like skilled volleyball players, overseen, and only occasionally vetoed, by their coach and mentor, Shala. A trained physicist with a lifelong passion for fashion design, Tabassi seamlessly merged both interests in starting up Design Knit in 1985. Daughter Pat, who had gone into international trade as a profession, was drawn back into the company seven years ago when her mother was sidelined with neck and spine issues. She's never left.

"I grew up at Design Knit but didn't really understand the specifics of what my mother did until I was in this position," Pat says. "I thought, this is not my background. But my other work was very regimented. This is about touching and feeling and creating. I had the best mentor possible, and we have such a great team."

Design Knit specializes in high-end, high-



The front entrance of Design Knit

it. "We're the Martha Stewarts of the fabric industry," Rector laughs. "We really do everything ourselves—set up the showroom, even make the signs. We love the creative process."

Watching her team in action, a contented Shala Tabassi turns reflective. "We want to say, design, from beginning to end, is done with a passion, a pride, in a happy mood. Now I am really happy, proud of the results I see at the end."

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