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AUGUST 2014



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- For Noe Undergarments, Made-in-LA Lingerie Is Just the Foundation •**
- OTB: Building a Better Tee • Serendipity at the Heart of Necessities**



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Farr West: California Heritage, Classic Designs

By Alyson Bender *Contributing Writer*

When Manuka Clarke purchased **Farr West** in January, she wanted to reinvigorate the company's classic designs while keeping all production in the United States at the highest quality with ethically sound standards.

Founded by the Farr family, the lingerie brand has been produced in California since its launch in 1968.

"Farr West started and grew at a time when American manufacturing was thriving," Clarke said. "This company has slowly watched the decline and extinction of so many American producers. I continue to source from the States as a matter of principle because American craftsmanship is important to support to keep this country stable."

New Zealand-born Clarke was raised in Los Angeles and London. She studied costume design in the San Francisco Bay area and had always admired Farr West from a distance while professionally designing lingerie and undergarments for her own line. In 2012, she collaborated with Farr West to design the **Sophia** and **Lace Sensation** lines for the company. When the Farr family members decided to retire from the business, they signed the company over to the care and direction of Clarke.

"As a longtime admirer of Farr West and its legacy, I'm committed to keeping its integrity intact, its made-in-America philosophy and—most importantly—its unparalleled devotion to quality," Clarke said.

Beginning in February 2014, all lace for Farr West is now sourced from New York-based **Klauber Lace Inc.**, one of the last American family-owned lace mills. The lace

is then dyed in Los Angeles at **Brothers Dye House**. All cutting, sewing and manufacturing is done in a facility in Watsonville, Calif., which only produces for Farr West and is owned and operated by one of the original Farr West sewers from 1968.

The Farr West corporate office recently relocated from Santa Cruz, Calif., to Los Angeles.

Farr West is currently in more than 250 specialty boutiques across the United States, with plans to expand to the European market in 2015. Wholesale prices range roughly from \$15 to \$50.

Since acquiring the brand, Clarke has also started designing slips for HBO's "Boardwalk Empire," which she plans to add to Farr West's offerings by the end of the year. Clarke plans to incorporate shape wear into the company's offerings. She also is starting to use ecologically friendly textiles, such as bamboo and Modal, which are all sourced domestically.

"Farr West is immensely proud to be an American company whose lines are designed and made in the USA," Clarke said.

For more information, visit www.farrwest.com. ●



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TUKA3D Virtual Prototyping Supports Voler's Made-In-America Produce-on-Demand Mission



When Voler, the custom-cycling-clothing company, hired Aaron Barker as its eCommerce director seven years ago, the then-21-year-old company was at a turning point. Known for its custom designs, often for teams or cycling groups, Voler increasingly was focusing on a broader semi-custom retail market, providing all cyclists with the same superior cycling gear available in its full custom line.

"They knew they had to shift their business to do online ordering for direct-to-client—everything from individual cyclists to bike shops to someone ordering thousands of units," Barker says. "Everything was moving online in general, and they brought me in to build up the order-management side."

For Barker, making sure that Voler's jerseys and shorts, which are hand-cut and entirely made in the USA, could be produced quickly was key. "We have a high number of SKUs, but we don't carry the inventory on all of those," he explains. "Our process is produce on demand. We take the order one day and have it delivered in less than seven days."

At the time, Barker noted that for its garment production Voler was using software from Tukatech, the apparel industry's leading provider of fashion software and hardware technology solutions. Voler's designers worked with TUKAcad software for their patternmaking, marking, and grading, and with a Tukatech plotter to print the markers. Tukatech's innovative founder and CEO, Ram Sareen, continued to work with Voler's president, Michelle Costanzo, as new capabilities developed. Two years ago, he introduced Costanzo to SmartMark, Tukatech's software module that maximizes marker placement with near-surgical precision.

"It sounded a little too good to be true at first," Barker admits. "Our guy had been doing it by hand for 20 years. They showed us how it worked, they let us use it for 30 days, and the lightbulb went on. It was a no-brainer. Once we saw it in action, it became clear that their software would do a better job no matter how much experience someone had."

SmartMark "was able to save us a ton of money on fabric utilization by smartly nesting the pieces," Barker notes. "It increased our efficiencies and raw materials costs. It definitely paid for itself pretty quickly."

Recently, Voler worked with Tukatech on another major project, this time a custom software program to better communicate and collaborate with clients online in the design process. Called TUKA3D, the software is "a virtual product development tool," as Sareen explains it. The artwork is developed on CAD, patterns for the jerseys are done on 2D TUKAcad, the artwork is imported on 2D patterns, the fit model is virtual, and the garment is sewn on TUKA3D virtually. The result is a 3D sample of a client's order, with exact measure-

ments per size, that can quickly be converted into an actual garment.

"They are not some sketches or Photoshop output," Sareen says. "They are based on real CAD data for that exact size. With the motion simulator you can see the actual drape of the fabric in motion, such as on a runway or, in Voler's case, on a bicycle. This enables the final garment to be approved digitally and made on demand."

Once one garment is completed and approved, hundreds of virtual samples can be made using different combinations of artwork and colors.

"This software turns a design into something 3D that someone can make sense of," Barker says, "allowing us to share the design online without having to stitch up a sample. Previously we didn't have a way to do this. We would create some kind of 2D sketch of a jersey. Now we can actually have graphic representation of every garment we are going to sell to that person before they place their order. It's huge that they can be part of it this way."

And that, Barker says, is a big competitive advantage. "If you know what you are buying, you will buy more, right? It allows us to sell more and provide a better service all around."

"While most eCommerce retailers take six to eight months from concept to consumer, with TUKA3D, they can go live with a new collection in less than 30 days," says Sareen. "New styles are developed, corrected, and approved digitally. Once approved, the digital image is transferred to the eCommerce site and offered for sale. **No samples, no photo shoot, no inventory in this business model.**"

"What we make," says Voler President Michelle Costanzo, "is a product that fits the body like a glove, leaving very little tolerance for mistakes. Besides fit, the process of development is complex, and Tukatech customized our system to simplify our manufacturing process."

What impressed Barker the most was the Tukatech staff's willingness to roll up their sleeves and immerse themselves in Voler's process to achieve a common goal. "The 3D imaging was a very specific thing that we needed for our business," Barker says. "There was no off-the-shelf program that could do it. They saw that and thought they had the capability to help us out. **The responsiveness, the customer service, the desire to see their customers succeed at what they are doing are what I think makes them stand apart from others.**"

Tukatech, Sourcing at MAGIC, Booth #SP91010. Ram Sareen will be on the panel of the "Cool Technology for Fashion-Savvy Companies" seminar, Aug. 19, 2:30 p.m., Las Vegas Convention Center Sourcing Hall.



With TUKA3D, Voler is able to design a garment incorporating graphics, test-fit it on a virtual body with the ability to simulate motion, and sell it online before having to sew the actual garment.



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TUKA3D



Necessitees: The Necessary Knit Line Made in Los Angeles

By Deborah Belgum *Senior Editor*

Sometimes a clothing line pops up out of a serendipitous moment no one was expecting.

That is how **Necessitees** came about 12 years ago. Hallie Shano was sitting in her self-named multi-line showroom at the **California Market Center** in downtown Los Angeles when a man in a baseball cap, T-shirt and shorts walked in and asked if she was interested in starting a T-shirt line.

That man was Han Chung, who had a business making a cotton/Lycra ribbed knit fabric using flying saucer-size machines in a small warehouse near the **Los Angeles Fashion District**.

Shano—whose showroom represented labels such as **Joan Vass**, **Chava**, **Babette Ballinger** and **Nina Leonard**—knew the misses and knit-wear markets well. So she thought she could take her knowledge and create a different kind of T-shirt line. “I was hearing from customers that there was a void in the market,” Shano said. “It was that one size does not fit all boobs.”

With a fashion market coming up in a few weeks, Shano put together a few basic silhouettes in a handful of colors and asked Chung to make some samples in a few weeks.

He took the ideas back to his wife, Debbie—who wears many hats as designer, pattern maker and sample maker—and they cut and sewed a few samples in no time flat. Meanwhile, Shano searched around for a cute name for the label and put together some clever hangtags while incorporating vertical labels instead of horizontal labels to be slightly different.

That first LA market, Shano said, she sold \$3,500 worth of merchandise at prices that ranged from \$7.50 to \$9.50 per T-shirt. Some of her specialty-store buyers were willing to test the misses T-shirt line, which was made of 94 percent cotton and 6 percent Lycra, providing some extra room for the bustier woman searching for a fashionable top to wear



ALL SHADES: The Necessitees line is known for its wide array of colors in all its silhouettes.

with the new premium-denim trend that was sweeping the country. “There wasn’t a misses T-shirt line out there like this, and the denim market was just starting to hit,” Shano recalled.

Her first array of colors ranged from baby blue, baby pink, yellow and lavender to red, black, white, navy and brown. Now the label is offered in 60 hues in stock year-round at the company’s 10,000-square-foot warehouse not far from the LA Fashion District.

After that first year, the Necessitees brand got more attention and more sales reps. The brand offered all its T-shirts in six different sleeve lengths and 10 neck silhouettes.

Shano took the line with her when she was traveling with her other labels to trade shows and various markets. She also enlisted **Ambrosia & Co.**, a multi-line showroom with spots then in Atlanta and Dallas, to pump up sales. “They were on

fire and got the word out,” Shano recalled. “And one of our first reps was Patty Witt in Seattle. She was so good at promoting the line in that territory.”

The new label hit a nice niche. It retailed for under \$20, delivered quickly and was made in Los Angeles. The shirts were selling at **Nordstrom**, **Dillard’s**, spas, hotel gift shops, gyms, catalogs and with private-label concerns. “The volume was getting insane,” Shano said.

Two years after launching, Shano and her partners got some additional customer input about the line and starting expanding into other silhouettes and incorporating more jersey.

Shano dropped her multi-line showroom and dedicated herself to developing and designing Necessitees, which now includes dresses, jackets, pants, skirts and tops with wholesale prices ranging from \$16 to \$40.

One of the best-selling items is a long jersey skirt with an elastic waistband and tiered layers that end in raw edges. Called the “Soho” skirt, it wholesales for \$26. Other top sellers are maxi-length knit dresses that are shirred on the side and a knit jacket with

shirred sleeves. “The volume that we do in these jackets is mind-blowing,” Shano said.

They all come in bright colors, which is probably why Florida is one of the company’s top markets.

As the company grew, Chung decided to sell his knitting machines and concentrate on his cutting-and-sewing operations. But the fabric still comes from Los Angeles factories.

The line is sold in catalogs and at more than 500 specialty stores across the country.

One of those stores is **Etcetera Etc.**, a small womenswear boutique on Balboa Island in Newport Beach, Calif. “We do like them,” said Susan Ferguson, the store’s assistant buyer and salesperson, who said they carry some basic T-shirts, tops and jackets. “They are made in America. They have a bigger fit, which appeals to our customer, and their prices are very fair.” ●

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Noe Undergarments: Lingerie Is Just the Foundation

By Sarah Wolfson *Contributing Writer*

When twin sisters Bonnie Rae Boyes and Shelah Jean founded **Noe Undergarments** last year, they wanted to create a line that would fit in both lingerie stores and contemporary boutiques.

"The line came about from a desire to create a hybrid collection of innerwear meets ready-to-wear. Both of us have always dressed utilizing lingerie as more wearable exterior pieces, so we wanted to create a brand that had the philosophy of 'innerwear exposed' at its core design aesthetic," said Boyes, who serves as creative director for the line.

Boyes has a background in fashion marketing and served as a marketing director for nine years at a sports/swim apparel brand before launching Noe. The sisters grew up near the beaches of Kauai, Hawaii, but Noe is based in Laguna Beach, Calif., and produced in Los Angeles.

The Spring/Summer 2015 collection includes a mix of bras, panties, bodysuits, leggings, slips and lounge-style pieces. Stand-out items include the bustier, knee-length boxer short, sheer tops with matching bottoms, sweeping slip dresses, garter belts and jumpers.

"We really looked at everything from menswear to architecture as we designed the collection and found bits of influences from across a multitude of environments. Each piece was designed to have an ironic or unexpected element—denim in bras, silk mixed with rubber neoprene straps, mesh in [ready-to-wear] silhouette pieces," Boyes said.

Each season, the line is developed so that Noe consumers can interchange their pieces from innerwear to outerwear and mix pieces from season to season. The bras can be layered, tights used as leggings and slips worn over jeans, suggested Boyes. For example, the silk long-line bra can be worn with a chic blazer and vintage **Levi's**.

Actress Jaime King was spotted wearing the "Ryan" silk bustier bra as a top combined with an open-jacket look. Noe's leather bras are perfect with a high-waisted pencil skirt, and the slips dresses can be used as coverups over a swimsuit or bodysuit.

The current collection includes four new capsule groups, each with its own fabrication and aesthetic but that fits alongside the entire

Spring/Summer 2015 collection.

"The Mick capsule is primarily our leather and mesh capsule, crafted of Italian lambskin and a soft power mesh from Belgium. We played with these two fabrications to create a very progressive and unique look," Boyes said. They also feature a cropped leather tee, leather mini skirt with mesh slip under-layer, leather flutter shorts and a mesh racer chemise.

There are fine trims and unique cutouts



and fits that contribute to a modern sensibility. "We don't use prints in our fabrications, so it really allows a great open palette to work with brilliant trims to make a statement without making the garment too complicated or distracting," Boyes said. There's a Japanese herringbone elastic trim that is used for straps, as well as sporty rubber and neoprene trim for strapping and waistbands. Noe uses custom-developed square gold hardware for straps and hook closures, as well as a custom-designed wide black and white mesh eye hook and soft-seam closure, which is used on some of the bras and bodysuits. Plus, all of Noe's interior panty lining is a citrine yellow color, as well, Boyes said.

Everything is manufactured in Los Angeles. As for fabrics, the meshes and patented nano Lycra are sourced from Belgium, silks are from Asia, lambskin leather is from Italy, and the rayon/Lycra is made in the States. Most of the elastics are from Japan.

Wholesale price points range from \$50 to \$220. Noe undergarments are currently sold at a number of retailers, including **Ron Herman, American Rag, Journelle, Maison Simons, Revolve, Anthropologie, The Celect, Guild, The Montauk Beach House, Largo Drive and For Artists Only.**

For more information, visit www.noeundergarments.com. For sales information, contact Jenna Woodhull at jenna@bandofmartians.com. ●

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OTB: Old-School-Cool Graphics

It is relatively easy to get into the T-shirt business, said Eric Byrne, who spent a good part of his career selling T-shirts. You just need screen-printing equipment and some blank T-shirts. The hard part is making good-quality shirts and putting the right graphics on them.

After years of observing what others have gotten right and wrong, Byrne thought he would give his idea of the perfect T-shirt a try. He called it OTB, the **Only Tee Brand**. He hopes that the new, made-in-Los Angeles line will be something that will be embraced by T-shirt connoisseurs because of its quality. He is previewing the new line in Las Vegas during **MAGIC Market Week**.

If there's a lot of swagger to the moniker Only Tee Brand, Byrne hopes to back it up with materials he considers the best. For the line's debut, it's 100 percent, 40-single cotton. The fabric breathes more easily than

other T-shirt fabrics and would work well for anyone who lives in a place lucky enough to have T-shirt weather. "I'm making T-shirts for hotter weather," he said. "It lays nice, it breathes, it is thinner, it is not so clunky," he said. Upcoming seasons will offer thicker tri-blend fabrics for cooler weather.

He also offered some variety with silhouettes. OTB offers V-necks, crew necks, raglans and zip-up hoodies. Some of the T-shirts will come with graphic art that Byrne called "old-school cool." For guys, much of it is inspired by the car culture that comes from his native Detroit. For women, its graphics include images such as butterflies. The graphics are created by Grand Rapids, Mich.-based artist Brian Moss and a collective of mostly Michigan artists.

Wholesale price points range from \$12 to \$17.75. For more information, contact Byrne at eb3only@gmail.com.—Andrew Asch

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Products and Services: Men's and women's sportswear and activewear. Quest Apparel is a lifestyle brand created out of a passion for accomplishment. Our designs are a contemporary take on timeless pieces, meant to be a staple in your wardrobe for years to come. Every garment includes a discreetly placed philosophy meant to motivate you on your Quest.

Rich Honey

info@richhoney.us
(213) 905-3205
www.richhoney.us
Products and Services: Producing the best garment-dyed blanks for all the brands. Rich Honey is one of the first companies to offer designer quality T-shirt blanks to all of its customers. The product is the same T-shirt that you find in all the department stores and boutiques worldwide from some of the biggest brands to date. We do not just dye up fabric on a roll and cut and sew it like 99% of our competitors!! We choose the best quality yarns and manufacturer prepared for garment dye blanks. We dye and wash our blanks to create a super-soft product that will give your brand the edge over any other company in the market. The product is made from high-end 100% organic combed ring spun cotton, modal and tri-blend fabrics. Rich Honey is all about manufacturing high-quality T-shirt blanks in the USA by supporting the local economy .

Single

2324 Hunter St.
Los Angeles, CA 90021
info@singledress.com
(213) 239-9933
Products and Services: Single dresses stylish, independent, women who possess a zest for life and a whimsical side. Women who wear the Single Collection are dreamers and doers, they have a clear vision of life, and strive to dress the part in garments crafted with the finest fabrication and attention to detail. From a day at the office, to a night flight out of the city to a romantic beach getaway, our garments dress the Single customer from day to night to flight. Dream and be bold in Single.

Spirit Activewear

Showroom contacts:
Michele: (213) 622-0697
Dena: (213) 949-7005
California Market Center, A302
Los Angeles, CA
Corporate: Main: (213) 236-4750
www.spiritactivewear.com
Products and Services: Spirit Jersey®. AUTHENTIC. FAMOUS. ORIGINAL. Made in the USA. #1 bestseller coast to coast.

Texollini

2575 El Presidio St.
Long Beach, CA 90810
(310) 537-3400
www.texollini.com
sales@texollini.com
Products and Services: We at Texollini use state-of-the-art technology to supply the fashion and garment industries with innovative and trend-driven fabrics. Speed-to market, trend insights, and quality control have been the cornerstones of our Los Angeles-based facility for over 20 years. Our in-house vertical capabilities include knitting, dyeing, finishing, and printing, and our development and design teams are unparalleled. Contact us to find out how our quality-driven products will enhance your brand.

Tukatech

5527 E. Slauson Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90040
(323) 726-3836
Fax: (323) 726-3866
<http://tukatech.com>
tukateam@tukatech.com
Products and Services: Tukatech is the garment and apparel industry's leading provider of fashion technology solutions. Founded in 1995 by garment-industry veteran Ram Sareen, Tukatech offers award-winning 2D pattern making, grading and marker making software, automated marker making software, 3D sample making/virtual prototyping software, as well as garment plotters, and automatic cutters and spreaders for production. All systems include unlimited training, consulting, process engineering, and implementation of our technologies. The capabilities of Tukatech's technology remains unparalleled in the fashion industry, and all of our products are offered at affordable prices. Some systems available for rent. Contact us to learn more. Visit Tukatech at Sourcing at MAGIC in Las Vegas, Booth #SP91010. Also in Las Vegas, Tukatech owner Ram Sareen will be on the panel of the “Cool Technology” for Fashion-Savvy Companies” seminar, Aug. 19, 2:30 p.m., Las Vegas Convention Center, Sourcing Hall.



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A man and a woman are sitting closely together, looking at the camera. The woman is on the left, wearing a blue t-shirt, and the man is on the right, wearing a white t-shirt. They are both looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a simple, light-colored wall with a metal frame visible behind them.

RICH HONEY

GARMENT DYED BLANKS

MADE IN LOS ANGELES

PRODUCING THE BEST GARMENT DYED BLANKS
FOR ALL BRANDS

richhoney.us