

CALIFORNIA ApparelNews

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ANDREW ASCH

BRAND BUILDING: The newly remodeled store for Los Angeles streetwear brand The Hundreds features a neon sign with a quote from co-founder Bobby Hundreds' book "10 Rules of Brand Building." For more about the remodel, see page 7.

MADE IN AMERICA

Karl Kani: Made-in-LA Capsule Collection Blends Heritage With High-End Details

By Alison A. Nieder *Executive Editor*

Streetwear designer Karl Kani is coming home, so to speak. The Brooklyn native, who has been based in Los Angeles since the 1990s, recently launched an American-made capsule collection for men and women.

"Everything is made in the USA, the same way we started back in the early '90s when everything was made here," Kani said.

Originally launched in 1993, the **Karl Kani** brand started as a U.S.-made brand, but as the company grew, production shifted overseas. For the new line, the designer sourced everything with local contractors—including a few who produced for Kani back in the '90s.

"A lot of factories that we did business with back in the day—whether it's the original owners or they passed it down to their family members—still exist," Kani said. "They were very supportive because they knew the success that we had before."

The new capsule collection, which recently bowed at

Wildstyle on Los Angeles' Melrose Avenue, features some of the signature pieces Karl Kani was always known for but reinterpreted for a modern customer.

"We brought back some of the vintage pieces that Karl Kani was known for, [like] the traditional two-piece sweat-suits, and we altered the fit to fit today's marketplace," Kani said. "Our goal from the beginning [was], if we're going to do a sweatsuit, we're going to do more of a luxury item."

Pieces are made with high-end fabrications and feature special details such as Italian **Riri** zippers and gold-plated metal trim.

"It's high-end, special [and] very exclusive," Kani said.

Wholesale price points will run about \$65 for bottoms and \$80 for tops. Kani said he worked to keep prices moderate to make the line accessible.

"We don't want to be too priced out of the market," he said. "But what we find is domestic production prices are not much more than importing nowadays. It's not that far off."

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Longshore Union Wants to See More Shipping-Line Honchos at the Negotiating Table

By Deborah Belgium *Senior Editor*

Talks between longshore workers and their employers have been slogging along since last May with no end in sight for a new contract that would replace the last one, which expired July 1.

The employers, represented by the **Pacific Maritime Association**, would like to see federal mediators come in and nudge the negotiations along.

But the **International Longshore and Warehouse Union**, which represents nearly 20,000 workers at 29 West Coast ports, said it thinks having more top executives from the PMA board at the negotiating table would produce a better dialogue between the two sides.

The ILWU complains that during months of negotiations, the PMA's principal decision makers have not had any direct participation in the negotiations since bargaining began. "Both sides need the right people in the room to get things finalized," said Robert McEllrath, ILWU president and chairman

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Buyout Firm Lion Capital Urges American Apparel Sale

By Deborah Belgium *Senior Editor*

The pressure keeps mounting for **American Apparel** to put itself on the auction block.

British buyout firm **Lion Capital**, at one time a major lender to the Los Angeles-based clothing label, recently sent a letter to the American Apparel board of directors urging them to look at various strategic options, including a sale, to help turn around the company, which has a mountain of debt, according to the *Wall Street Journal*.

Lion Capital still has outstanding warrants to purchase 12 percent of American Apparel's stock, which could give ousted Chief Executive Dov Charney a negotiating advantage to return to the company. Charney and New York hedge fund **Standard General** control nearly 44 percent of American Apparel's stock.

However, the American Apparel board has enacted a

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Made-to-Measure for the 21st Century

By Alyson Bender *Contributing Writer*

Custom made-to-measure clothing has been a luxury few could afford until recently, when a renewed interest in craftsmanship over disposable fashion gave rise to another side of the fashion industry: companies that offer made-to-measure tailoring and custom design at relatively affordable prices and timely turn times.

Customized in every way

Inspired by the principles of custom color theory and form design by Edith Head, **Pioli** (pioldress.com) has adapted the costume designer's philosophy with advanced made-to-measure technology to bring women the perfect go-to dress. Pioli

is exclusively online, where the customer actively participates in the making of her own dress, based on her hair, skin, eye color and desired fit given five classic silhouettes. From there, she enters the "design room," where she picks her own fabric, neckline, skirt style and length, and sleeves.

The entire process is unique, built specifically by the company. As a result, even though the company was founded in May 2012, after taking time to perfect the online system and developing it into what it is today, the company graduated from beta mode and officially launched in September.

Pioli works directly with mills in Italy and Japan to offer a wide range of prints, colors and fabrics because "everyone's idea of fabric is personal," said Anne Dayton, the founder of Pioli.

All dresses are cut, sewn and shipped out of New York's

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INSIDE

Where fashion gets down to businessSM



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Frederick's of Hollywood Losing Lease on Flagship Store



OFF HOLLYWOOD: The flagship store for Frederick's of Hollywood has lost its lease.

Since 2005, **Frederick's of Hollywood** has had its flagship store sitting appropriately enough at 6751 Hollywood Blvd., one block away from the **Hollywood & Highland** retail center and in the heart of the well-trafficked tourist district.

But the lingerie store with a beautiful chandelier in the middle of the shop has lost its lease and has to move out by April 27, store staffers said. So far, they don't have a new location lined up.

The multi-storied building is being converted into a hotel, one employee said. So the retail chain—with more than 90 stores—has started its store-clearance sale with 30 percent off everything.

Calls to the company's New York headquar-

ters found no one answering the phone and the voice mailbox full.

The sexy-lingerie company, started by Frederick Mellinger in 1947, has been a Hollywood institution for more than seven decades. For 50 years it was located farther east on Hollywood Boulevard, on the ground floor of the company's former headquarters.

It was at this flagship store that **The Lingerie Museum** was located, containing a collection of underwear worn by Hollywood celebrities, such as Madonna's pointy-breasted corset. The museum did not make the move to the latest Hollywood Boulevard location.

For many years, Frederick's of Hollywood was the queen of sexy lingerie. And then, in the 1980s, **Victoria's Secret** came

along and proved to be a tough competitor. In 2001, Frederick's of Hollywood filed for bankruptcy protection and came out of bankruptcy protection in 2003.

But it has been a struggle. In 2006, Frederick's of Hollywood merged with publicly traded New York sleepwear manufacturer **Movie Star**, and the company headquarters moved to New York. At that time, Frederick's of Hollywood had revenues of \$139 million during its fiscal year ended July 29, 2006, while Movie Star's revenue topped \$51 million for its fiscal year ending June 30, 2006. In 2008, the company was renamed **Frederick's of Hollywood Group Inc.**

This year, the shareholders of Frederick's of Hollywood Group approved a sale to **HGI Funding LLC**, a wholly owned subsidiary of **Harbinger Group**, and to a group of shareholders who owned 88.7 percent of the stock. The transaction was valued at \$24.8 million.

The lingerie retailer's last financial filings as a public company showed that in recent years it was having a tough time making a profit. For the six months ending Jan. 25, the company had net sales of \$43.3 million with a net loss of \$12.8 million compared with net sales of \$46.7 million with a \$15.2 million net loss for the same period last year. Same-store sales were down 7.7 percent.—*Deborah Belgun*



YG & RVCA Bring Back Retro Street for PacSun Exclusive

The music of tattooed rapper **YG** shot up **Billboard** charts in 2013. In 2015, he's starting on a fashionable note thanks to a partnership with **RVCA**, one of the leading lifestyle, fashion and action-sports brands to come out of Orange County, Calif., in the past decade.

The rapper and the lifestyle brand put together a capsule collection called **YG X RVCA**. Beginning on Jan. 15, the line will be sold exclusively at select stores for **Pacific Sunwear of California**, a mall-based

trade show in Long Beach, Calif.

YG is scheduled to perform Jan. 5, after the first day of the show, and some of the capsule collection's pieces will be on display at the concert.

RVCA also will be exhibiting at Agenda, and on display will be the Fall '15 collection. It was the first collection entirely overseen by Lohr, who joined the brand on Feb. 28, 2014.

The Fall '15 collection will feature many RVCA looks that have become part of the

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LA-INSPIRED: The nine-piece YG X RVCA capsule collection is inspired by '90s LA street style and will arrive in Pacific Sunwear stores on Jan. 15.



retailer known as one of the most prominent retailers for action sports and streetwear.

The inspiration for the nine-piece line is the Los Angeles street look of the mid-1990s, said Rick Lohr, RVCA's vice president of merchandising and design. "It's crisp chinos, coach's jackets and nice flannel," Lohr said. What gives the collection a special RVCA and YG look is the bandanna print with the YG logo, designed by the brand's design staff and repeated throughout the collection.

Other looks include chino pants, a baseball jersey and T-shirts. Retail prices for the capsule collection range from \$36 for T-shirts to \$75 for pants and \$90 for coach's jackets. After it's sold out, there will not be a second capsule collection for YG X RVCA, Lohr said. But there will be an opportunity for previews for those going to the **Agenda**

DNA of the brand. It also will offer collections and styles that will be completely new.

RVCA will introduce a new denim program at Agenda. In the past, RVCA denim only offered one fit, which was updated once a year. However, for Fall, it will unveil a denim program with five fits for men and women. Its washes will be updated every season, Lohr said. One of the fits is called "Daggers," and it is a clean, straight leg with a light taper.

At Agenda, RVCA also will be introducing a women's loungewear line called "The Sunday Collection." It's an 11-piece line that features bralettes, non-denim shorts called soft shorts, knit pants and leggings. RVCA tested some pieces in Spring '14 and deemed the tests a success. "It's a complete collection," Lohr noted.—*Andrew Asch*

Business Journals Steps Up Partnerships With Co-location Plans With ENK for April Shows

Business Journals Inc.—the New York-based organizer of the **Moda**, **Accessories The Show** and **Fame** trade shows—announced plans to shift its May show dates and co-locate with **ENK's Intermezzo** and **Accessorie Circuit** at the **Jacob K. Javits Convention Center** in New York.

The shows will be held April 27–29, a move from BJI's traditional Fall/Winter schedule of the first week of May. Although the date change was initially prompted by a scheduling conflict with the Javits Center, when BJI polled its attendees, retailers told the trade-show organizer they preferred the earlier dates, which allow them to be in their stores in the lead-up to Mother's Day.

"Mother's Day is second only to the Christmas holiday season in terms of sales in the women's market," said Britton Jones, president and chief executive officer of BJI. "It's usually the owner who is coming to our shows and doing the buying. They really like to be [in their store] with their customers [during holidays]. It probably generates more sales

because they're on the floor working with customers, many of whom they know. So it turned out to be a win-win situation."

The decision to co-locate with ENK's show was similarly prompted by retailer input. BJI's **Moda**, **ATS** and **Fame** shows already coincide with ENK's **Intermezzo** and **Accessories Circuit** shows in February, September and August in New York. In addition to the new April dates, BJI and ENK will coordinate dates for their August Holiday/Resort shows.

"We have come to realize over the years of running in the same markets at the same time that having more cohesive market weeks benefits everybody," Jones said. "Our No. 1 goal is how can we create a more productive, a more compelling, a more enjoyable experience for the retailers. The retailers are not bashful about telling us what they think. They really like it when they can shop the shows without having to get on a bus to go five blocks away or try to get a cab or get around the city either in the wintertime, when it's often cold,

or the summertime, when it's really hot. The quality of their life improves a great deal. It was really the same thing we were hearing in Las Vegas that led to the creation of **Modern Assembly**."

In Las Vegas, BJI's **MRket**, **Stitch** and **ATS** shows are part of the **Modern Assembly** partnership with the **Liberty**, **Capsule** and **Agenda** trade shows at the **Sands Expo & Convention Center** and **The Venetian**.

BJI recently struck a third partnership with trade-show organizers **Messe Frankfurt** and **Olah Inc.** to form **NYC Textile Week** in New York featuring BJI's **MRket** show, **Messe Frankfurt's Texworld USA** textile and sourcing trade show and **Olah Inc.'s Kingpins** denim supply-chain trade show. The event is designed to be a "destination for textile and sourcing professionals in the global fashion, home and related industries." The event will soft launch during the January run of the three trade shows but will hold the official launch in July.—*Alison A. Nieder*



CENTRAL LOCATION: Business Journals' **Moda**, **Accessories the Show** and **Fame** trade shows in New York will be co-located with **ENK's Intermezzo** and **Accessories Circuit** in May.

NEWS

Ports *Continued from page 1*

of the union's negotiating committee. "Sure, my counterpart, Jim McKenna [PMA president and chief executive], has been involved in negotiations from the start, but all the decisions are made by the carriers sitting on PMA's board of directors."

The board's 11 members are primarily shipping carriers and the chief officers of the largest West Coast port terminals that employ the dockworkers. "Indirect negotiations won't get us over the finish line. The few issues that remain unresolved relate directly to the carriers, and these key carriers need to come to the table," McEllrath said.

But the PMA said the two sides have more than just a few issues to work out. "Significant issues remain unresolved, including wages, pensions, jurisdiction and work rules," the PMA said in a press release. "The only major coast-wide issue on which we've reached tentative agreement is the healthcare plan—already one of the most generous in America. Even with the tentative healthcare agreement—identified by the ILWU as its No. 1 priority when negotiations began in May—the union has engaged in debilitating work slowdowns over the past two months at terminals up and down the coast."

The PMA maintains its board and coast committee members have been intimately involved in the negotiations, starting months before talks began in May to establish a new six-year contract.

Traffic Jam

Meanwhile, the congestion problem at the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach shows no sign of going away even

though the big push to bring in holiday merchandise is over.

As of Dec. 31, there were five cargo-container ships anchored off the breakwater of the nation's largest port complex, which handles more than 40 percent of all the cargo containers arriving in the United States. Anchored ships beyond the breakwater almost never happen at this time of year and is indicative of the slowdown on the waterfront.

"The delays we have been experiencing are still happening," said Lee Peterson, a spokesman for the **Port of Long Beach**. "Reports are of one- and two-week delays."

A shortage of chassis to transport the cargo containers to rail yards and warehouses has been a problem for months as shipping lines got out of the chassis business. Now four companies lease out most of the chassis, but there have been kinks in the system at the **Port of Long Beach** and the **Port of Los Angeles**. At some terminals there are not enough chassis, and at others there are too many.

In October, the **Port of Long Beach** directed its staff to come up with a plan to introduce 3,000 more chassis into the 100,000-strong chassis pool, but that still isn't meeting everyone's needs.

Starting Feb. 1, the four principal chassis suppliers will start phasing in a new operation called the "gray chassis pool," or a neutral chassis pool. This chassis pool means that truckers can pick up and drop off chassis at any of the 13 terminals in the port complex without being concerned about which company serves which terminal or shipping line.

The idea is that trucker drivers won't end up at one terminal that has no chassis, travel to a nearby terminal that has chassis and then back to the first terminal with a chassis in

tow. The assets of the four chassis companies—**Direct ChassisLink**, **TRAC Intermodal**, **Flexi-Van** and **SSA Marine**—will be interoperable.

The executive directors at the Long Beach and Los Angeles ports believe this will help solve the chassis problem, which has been a major factor in getting goods off ships.

On Dec. 29, the **Port of Long Beach** opened a temporary storage facility at Pier S on Terminal Island. The idea is to provide more space to place empty cargo containers, remove their chassis and use them to pick up new loads of incoming cargo containers.

The 30-acre site is operated by **Pasha Stevedoring & Terminals** and open until March 31. On the first day of operation, no one was using the temporary facility, Peterson said. It costs \$5 a day to store empty containers, no matter what size container is being stored.

The **Port of Los Angeles** has been working individually with terminals to lease extra storage space for empty containers. **APL** and **Yusen Terminals** have taken advantage of this arrangement, **Port of Los Angeles** spokesman Phillip Sanfield said.

The **Los Angeles** port also has extra land available on Terminal Island to have more space to repair and maintain chassis, but the **ILWU** contract must be in effect for that to happen. "Everyone thought the [labor] contract would be in place by now," Sanfield said.

Also, everyone thought the congestion problem would be under control by now, but it will probably be heating up again. "In the next few weeks," Sanfield said, "we will be looking at the pre-push for the [Chinese] lunar new year." ●



LOADED UP: Larger ships, a shortage of chassis and work slowdowns at the **Port of Los Angeles** and **Port of Long Beach** are keeping the port congestion problem going into the new year.

American Apparel Continued from page 1

one-year stockholder rights plan, or "poison pill," to prevent a takeover attempt by anyone who tries to purchase more than 10 percent of the company's stock or 0.1 percent of outstanding shares if they already own 10 percent of the stock.

In addition, Lion Capital, which still has the right to nominate two people to the nine-person board of directors, wants to withdraw its nomination of Gene Montesano, the co-founder of **Lucky Brand** and **Civilianaire** jeans, and replace him with Lyndon Lea, one of Lion Capital's founders, who was on the American Apparel board until 2011.

Meanwhile, news reports noted that American Apparel has hired investment bank **Moelis & Co.** to explore strategic options.

Along that line, the American Apparel board said it received a bid on Dec. 22 from **Irving Place Capital** to acquire the Los Angeles clothing company for \$1.30 to \$1.40 a share. On Dec. 31, American Apparel stock was trading at around \$1.03 a share.

American Apparel, which runs the largest apparel factory in the United States and has a fleet of 245 stores, is in a state of chaos

right now.

In June, the board suspended Charney from his job as president and chief executive even though he founded the company in 1998.

The board said it was conducting an investigation into his alleged misconduct and violations of company policy. The board hired **FTI Consulting** to conduct the investigation, concluding that Charney should not get his job back.

The board then turned around and hired veteran Los Angeles apparel executive Paula Schneider to take over the top executive spot on Jan. 5.

Since then, Charney has been waging an aggressive campaign to return to the company, which for years has been struggling financially. The brand's net losses have totaled nearly \$300 million in five years. For the first nine months of the fiscal year ending Sept. 30, net sales were \$455.4 million with net losses totaling \$40.8 million.

Following Charney's firing, a group of 30 managers and directors wrote a letter saying they wanted the controversial founder to stay on in some capacity. ●

Calendar

Jan. 4

Accessories The Show Fame Moda

Jacob K. Javits Convention Center
New York
Through Jan. 6

Jan. 5

Agenda

Long Beach Convention Center
Long Beach, Calif.
Through Jan. 6

Intermezzo Collections

Piers 92/94
New York
Through Jan. 7

Jan. 8

Surf Expo

Orange County Convention Center
Orlando, Fla.
Through Jan. 10

Jan. 11

Los Angeles Fashion Market

California Market Center
Gerry Building
Los Angeles
Through Jan. 14

Retail's BIG Show, NRF's Annual Convention

Jacob K. Javits Convention Center
New York
Through Jan. 14

Jan. 12

Los Angeles Fashion Market

Cooper Design Space
The New Mart
824 Building
Lady Liberty Building
Primrose Design Building
Academy Awards Building
Los Angeles
Through Jan. 15

Designers and Agents

The New Mart
Los Angeles
Through Jan. 14

Select Transit

California Market Center
Los Angeles
Through Jan. 14

DG Expo Fabric & Trim Show

Hotel Pennsylvania
New York
Through Jan. 13

Brand Assembly

Cooper Design Space
Los Angeles
Through Jan. 14

Jan. 13

Première Vision New York

Indigo
Pier 92
New York
Through Jan. 14

Printsource New York

Metropolitan Pavilion
New York
Through Jan. 15

Jan. 14

SoCal Materials Show

California Market Center
Los Angeles
Through Jan. 15

Jan. 15

Swim Collective

St. Regis Monarch Beach Resort
Dana Point, Calif.
Through Jan. 16

Jan. 16

Imprinted Sportswear Show

Long Beach Convention Center
Long Beach, Calif.
Through Jan. 18

Jan. 19

Agenda

Jacob K. Javits Convention Center
New York
Through Jan. 20

Texworld USA Apparel Sourcing

Jacob K. Javits Convention Center
New York
Through Jan. 21

Project

Jacob K. Javits Convention Center
New York
Through Jan. 21

MRket

Jacob K. Javits Convention Center
New York
Through Jan. 21

Liberty Fairs

Pier 94
New York
Through Jan. 21

Capsule

Basketball City
New York
Through Jan. 20

Hong Kong Fashion Week

World Boutique
Hong Kong
Through Jan. 22

Jan. 20

Kingpins

Skylight Clarkson Square
New York
Through Jan. 21

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on ApparelNews.net.

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

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Daniel Rainn
Dantelle
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Fraiche by J
Fredd and Basha
Free Heart
Freeloader
Freeway
Freida Rothman
for Belargo
French Connection
Frenzii
Frock Shop
Gentle Fawn
George Loves
Gig Showroom
Giles & Brother
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Global
Green Dragon
GreenLee
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by Jan Tran
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Ji Oh
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Johnny Was
Johnny Was Collection
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Josie
Joules Uk
Jude
Judith Autumn Mann
Sales
JWLA
Kaftan by Asak Soltan
Kaos (Italy)
Karen Capil
Karen Kane
Karen Klein
Karlita Designs
Karma Kreations
Kathy Walker Sales
Kaya Di Koko
Kelly Wearstler
Kerisma
Kersh
Kid Tails
Kira Grace
KLA/Karen L. Anderson
Kling
Knitted Dove/Love Dove
KOA Swim
Kokun Cashmere
Kopal
Koral - Activewear
Kray
Kut from the Kloth
Kutula Kiss
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A Peek at the Hundreds' Flagship Remodel

In a business where the remodel of a flagship store can take more than a year, **The Hundreds**, a high-profile streetwear brand, wasted no time in getting its flagship back in the game.

It recently reopened its flagship at 7909 Rosewood Ave., in Los Angeles' Fairfax District, just a couple of months after closing it for renovations.

Ben Shenassafar, a brand co-founder who also goes by the name of Ben Hundreds, said that the Rosewood store tripled in size, from 400 square feet to 1,200 square feet. It closed in September but reopened on Black Friday, Nov. 28. He said that it was important to add new elements, such as a library, which is lined with pop-culture tomes such as an encyclopedia on the '80s rock band **The Smiths** and "Not That Kind of Girl" by



THE RETURN: The Hundreds recently remodeled its flagship in Los Angeles' Fairfax District.

Lena Dunham. But they wanted to preserve the soul of the flagship, too.

"The goal was to keep the feel of the shop the same," Shenassafar said of the store's unique vibe, which has new amenities. "We got some air conditioning finally."

The exterior of the flagship is black with the brand's logo riding above the store's doorway. The inside of the store is lined with a dark-wood paneling. In bright neon lettering above the cash wrap there's a sign that states "Childlike in Wonder. Romantic in Revolt," which is a quote from the missive "10 Rules of Brand Building" by Bobby Hundreds, Shenassafar's business partner, who was born Bobby Kim.

The Hundreds also runs stores in Santa Monica, Calif.; San Francisco; and New York and wholesales the line to high-end boutiques and core skate shops. The brand began in 2003 as an apparel line and an online magazine.—*Andrew Asch*



Sunset.Vintage.Flex: The Brand Starts With the Hat



Eventually, **Sunset.Vintage.Flex** will offer all categories of clothes, said Rico Curry, the Los Angeles-area line's founder. Yet since it started in 2013, the nascent brand's focus is on headwear.

"If I make a T-shirt, I'm competing with your whole closet," Curry said of his line's strategy to gain a foothold in wardrobes.

The brand's snapback caps, beanies and ski masks have been sold at **Tradition**, a leading streetwear store in Los Angeles' **Beverly Center** mall, among other boutiques. Curry often goes to nightclubs frequented by celebrities such as Chris Brown and Rihanna, and those musicians have been photographed wearing Sunset.Vintage.Flex's headwear.

A graphic on one snapback depicts hands spelling out the word "Gold" in sign language. Gold happens to be the moniker of a Sunset.Vintage.Flex sub-collection. The sign language also is a symbol of Curry's life story as a boy growing up

with profound hearing loss in his left ear.

The label's Gold line also has a provocative side. A white ski mask features the brand logo emblazoned upside down. It looks like something a stylish burglar would wear, Curry said. However, the ski mask is only meant to be a symbol of single-minded determination. "We don't promote negativity," he said. "But if you go crazy for your dreams, you put on your ski mask."

Other looks are snapbacks with a 1990s retro theme. When the 1992 film "Malcolm X" was released, baseball caps bearing the letter "X" were very popular. Curry does his own version of the cap, with a graphic of the African continent on the right side of the cap and

the name of his brand on the back of his cap. Wholesale prices range from \$18 for beanies and \$22 to \$25 for snapbacks. For more information, contact sunset.vintage.flex@gmail.com.—*A.A.*



MADE IN AMERICA

Karl Kani *Continued from page 1*

[But with domestic production,] we don't have to worry about the big minimums. We can turn goods in 45 days, which a lot of people can't do if they're importing. There



WILDSTYLE LAUNCH: In December, designer Karl Kani (center) celebrated the launch of a new made-in-America capsule collection at a party at the Wildstyle boutique on Los Angeles' Melrose Avenue.

Karl Kani is going—means a lot for us."

Tom Hirota, owner of Wildstyle, praised the brand for its classic style and its roots in hip-hop culture.

"Karl kept the classic baggy look of his menswear and innovated the women's line, which includes sports bras, leggings and jersey crop tops to expand the market," Hirota said.

The Karl Kani collection is a good fit at Wildstyle, which carries high-end street fashion brands from mainly Europe and Japan, Hirota said.

"Karl Kani is an American legendary hip-hop brand that has influenced a lot of people who love fashion and American hip-hop culture," he said. "I feel I can hear the

music from just looking at his clothing."

The brand's made-in-America ethos is also part of the appeal for customers.

"America is where the hip-hop culture was created, and Karl Kani is a legendary hip-hop brand that was born in the United States," Hirota said. "Nowadays, a lot of brands are manufactured in China or some other places like Vietnam. Made in USA not only ensures the quality of the clothes but also gives customers the sense they were made in the hometown of hip-hop."

For sales information, call (917) 553-0298 or visit www.karlkani.com. ●



Karl Kani women's



Karl Kani men's



are a lot of advantages to making [product] in the USA."

The new Karl Kani line will officially bow at the Las Vegas trade shows in February. But for the retail launch, the line will sell in just a handful of better boutiques in key markets for now. In Los Angeles, the line will be carried exclusively at Wildstyle for the first few months, Kani said.

"For us as a brand to launch at a store like Wildstyle, they only carry the top, high-end designers," Kani said. "For the store owner to understand the [brand's] history and what we meant to the marketplace—and where

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Made-to-Measure Continued from page 1



CUSTOMER CHOICE: Piol allows customers to pick their own fabric, neckline, skirt style and length, and sleeves to create a custom dress based on specific hair, skin and eye color as well as desired fit.



Matrushka design

Garment District within three to four weeks from the order date and have a 100 percent guarantee behind them. If the customer is not happy with her dress, she is offered the option to return it for a full refund. Returned dresses are then donated to nonprofit organizations for women in need in New York. Orders are taken from and shipped to anywhere in the world.

Based on the chosen fabric content, price points range from \$525 to \$565, with the exception of stretch silk, which runs \$625. “We like our price points—we are the contrarians to the sample sale, flash sale, buy-it-cheap mentality, which is so prevalent today,” Dayton said.



Everyday menswear

Custom-made menswear company **Trumaker** (www.trumaker.com) started with a simple question: “Why can’t a company simply take my measurements, and then everything I buy online comes built for and sized for me?”

Mark Lovas founded Trumaker in 2012. While made-to-measure companies did exist, he felt they were all very similar: “books of mostly dress fabrics, too many choices and high prices. They were commoditized and over-complicated things.” He set out to create an easier purchasing process while offering “shirts guys could wear everyday, not just for business.”

While the business does offer a ready-to-wear line and accessories that can be purchased online and shipped anywhere, Trumaker has more than 300 outfitters throughout San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, Denver, Seattle, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., Atlanta, Nashville and New York who go to clients to collect measurements and store them within Trumaker’s online database, making for easy reordering.

Trumaker is based in San Francisco, where it receives and ships everything. Its belts are made in San Francisco, tees are made in Los Angeles, leather goods are made in Italy, and shirts and blazers are



Trumaker designs

made in Asia.

“Our made-to-measure is done overseas in Asia. We selected partners based on quality and ability to execute on fit at scale, not necessarily cost,” Lovas said.

Shirts retail between \$98 and \$185, blazers start around \$400, basic T-shirts are sold for \$28, belts retail between \$108 and \$128, and cashmere sweaters are between \$128 and \$368.

“By connecting the dots between the offline and online experience, we have created an entirely new kind of experience. Trumaker takes a curated approach, offering a sleek set of fabrics and cuts that can carry any man successfully from work to play,” Lovas said.

Made-to-Measure

Continued from previous page

Leveraging the local market

With a fine-arts background, Laura Howe followed in her grandmother's seamstress footsteps to offer customized garments to women. **Matrushka** (*matrushka.com*) opened in 2002 as a made-to-measure bricks-and-mortar retail location on Sunset Boulevard in Los Angeles.

While the base of her company is ready-to-wear, her slogan is "size is relative."

She has a sewing machine in her store that allows on-the-spot alterations to create the perfect fit for customers, which range from infants' to petites to plus sizes and everything in between.

"If a customer sees a style she likes in a fabric that is not offered, we can easily make that for her in a day or two, cut to measure," Howe said. "Part of what makes us unique is nothing is mass produced. Our clients appreciate the custom fit, and as a result we have retained a very loyal customer base over the years."

Howe sources internationally made textiles in downtown Los Angeles. All cutting, sewing, screen printing and hand dyeing take place in her work studio, located in Silver Lake, less than a mile from her retail store. Although most of her clients are local, she does work with women who live elsewhere, keeping all clients' measurements on file.

While her bricks-and-mortar location has been essential to the way her business was created, she has started exploring how to translate her success online via social-media channels.

And even though the bulk of her business is in dresses, she also offers wraps, pants, tunics, tops and skirts. Bridesmaid parties have also been a huge part of her business, with women appreciating custom-fit dresses as opposed to buying off-the-rack generic sizes.

Price points typically range from \$150 to \$300 with in-store alterations included in the price. ●



Matrushka designer Laura Howe



Trumaker founder Mark Lovas



Piol founder Anne Dayton

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Submit resume w/ salary requirement to: submitresume@sanrio.com, Job Code - AN-LD-1214

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