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Michael Seiter/Atlantic Mills John-Randy Anthony/Tejidos Royo TRINHBECX/Advance Denim

DENIM CENTER STAGE

Denim designers and mills were in the spotlight in Amsterdam during the second annual Global Denim Awards, which ran concurrently with the Kingpins show. For more from the show, see page 6

Elyse Walker: Westside **Doyenne Opens Showroom** in Downtown LA

By Andrew Asch Retail Editor

Elyse Walker is best known for running an influential, selfnamed boutique in Los Angeles' exclusive Pacific Palisades neighborhood, but she is making news in downtown Los Angeles, which is a long freeway trip away from the Palisades. Walker recently opened a new design office and showroom for the fashion lines she designs in the rapidly changing district

The impact of the showroom opening is more than the story of Walker overturning conventional wisdom about Los Angeles—that people from the city's Westside never come to the metropolis's downtown or the Eastside. Her move could help change Los Angeles Street, where her new offices are located.

For decades, Los Angeles Street was best known as a gritty place to buy discount men's suits. Walker is part of a vanguard of showroom owners who are moving onto Los Angeles Street. For the past five years, the city's Fashion District show-

Los Angeles Street page 8

TRADE SHOW REPORT

Kingpins Amsterdam Encompasses the Denim Industry From Fiber and Fabric to Design Development and Finishing

By Alison A. Nieder Executive Editor

AMSTERDAM—Now in its second year in Amsterdam, Kingpins organizers have determined a few keys to success in running the boutique denim-sourcing trade show.

The first is the location, the Westergasfabriek, a late-19th-century gas factory. The trade show is held in the venue's circular "Gashouder" space, which creates a dramatic setting, but more importantly, said Kingpins founder Andrew Olah, it creates an even playing field for the ex-

'With the round room, there is nothing in the corners," Olah said, adding, "Everyone has the same [size] booth."

As a result, Olah said, the focus is on the product on

■ Kingpins Amsterdam page 5



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Fashion Resources ... p. 9

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Oaktree Capital Working on Buying Quiksilver

Oaktree Capital Management, the Los Angeles-based investment firm, is ramping up its effort to buy Quiksilver Inc. out of bankruptcy.

According to Bloomberg News, Oaktree is getting ready to hire AlixPartners, a Los Angeles consultancy, to do research into the retailer's assets and map out an operational plan. In 2014, AlixPartners advised on the merger between Jos. A. Bank Clothiers and Men's Wearhouse.

In a filing with the U.S Bankruptcy Court in Delaware on Sept. 9, documents show that the maker of brands such as Quiksilver, Roxy and DC Shoes had total debt of \$826 million and \$337 million in assets. In the filing, Quiksilver said about \$500 million of its debt would be cut under the restructuring plan.

The bankruptcy filing does not affect Quiksilver operations in Asia or Europe.

Senior lender Oaktree Capital Management, which owns 73 percent of the company's senior debt, will convert that to equity and take majority ownership of the company, based in Huntington Beach, Calif. Oaktree won court permission to provide \$175 million in bankruptcy financing after it agreed to drop a \$20 million breakup fee.

The retailer is expected to close at least 30 stores to be in a better operating position.

Quiksilver has gone through a revolving door of executives lately trying to patch up its financial problems.

Chief Executive Pierre Agnes, who months ago replaced former CEO Andy Mooney, said the bankruptcy and financing from Oaktree will allow the company to "satisfy our ongoing obligations to customers, vendors and employees" and "re-establish Quiksilver as the leader in the action-sports industry."

The company, which has about 680 stores that sell its beach and skateboard-oriented clothes and shoes, saw its sales last year drop 13 percent, which contributed to its net loss of

Last year, Quiksilver sold its licensedapparel subsidiary Hawk Designs Inc. for \$19 million.

As the financial situation got worse, cofounder Bob McKnight, who led the company for many years, returned to Quiksilver

While many people believed that Quiksilver's merchandise and company plans didn't keep up with changing consumer tastes, others cited past financial mismanagement decisions made when the U.S. economy was roaring, saddling the company with high debt that continued to plague it for years.

—Deborah Belgum

Port Clerks Get Early Start on Contract Negotiations

It seems like only yesterday that the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach were clogged with container ships after contract negotiations with the workers of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union dragged on for nine months.

Many manufacturers and retailers lost millions of dollars when time-sensitive merchandise for the holiday season never made it on time to store shelves as port activity up and down the West Coast was affected.

Now the office clerks at the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach are negotiating a new five-year contract to replace the current contract, which expires on June 30, 2016. with the Harbor Employers Association.

Starting eight months before the contract ends might be a good start, but the clerks' last contract negotiations with shipping lines and terminal operators lasted for two years. The process is complicated because individual

negotiations take place between 15 shipping lines and terminal operators at the two ports.

Nonetheless, major progress has been made since the bargaining started on Oct. 26. said John Fageaux, president of the Office Clerks Unit of ILWU Local 63.

Contract talks have already wrapped up with three of the 15 parties, Fageaux said. "So far, there has been mutual interest in getting the deal done to provide that security that everyone is looking for," he said. "We were able to sit down and work out a deal that is fair for both sides.'

The new contracts' terms will not be revealed until everyone in the 900-strong clerks' union ratifies the contract. The office clerks handle much of the vital paperwork needed to process goods through the ports. The clerks handle bills of lading and documents to transfer cargo containers from the ships to railcars and trucks among other things.

When the clerks' last drawn-out negotiations went beyond the contracts' deadline, they continued to work but at one point staged a strike in 2012 marked by a picket line keeping other unionized workers out.

The clerks' negotiations come on the heels of contract negotiations that concluded earlier this year with more than 20,000 longshore workers represented by the ILWU at 29 West Coast ports.

Those nine months of negotiations put

a major kink in getting merchandise to the docks for the critical holiday season. Because cargo was taking so long to be unloaded at the Port of Los Angeles and the Port of Long Beach—due to work slowdowns and chassis shortages—cargo-container ships were stacked up beyond the ports' breakwater waiting for empty berths.

In February, a new five-year contract was agreed upon and ratified in May, clearing the way for port activity to return to normal.—D.B.

LINGERIE

Curvy Couture: In the Adaption Biz

Los Angeles' Curvy Couture label is on a mission to open lingerie fashion to plus-sized women.

This summer, Curvy Couture put its own mark on the "Spacer Bra." a lingerie favorite. The Spacer distinguished itself as being a summer

bra, or one that provides relief from the heat. It features smooth, padded cups that not only give support but also are made with breathable fabric. The breathable fabric and smooth cups means that the wearer stays cool even on hot days, according to marketing reports on the



But the popular bra wasn't available in plus sizes, said Dora Lau, president and chief executive officer of Curvy Couture.

Lau resolved to make a bra for a market that she said had been ignored. Her firm focuses on making bra sizes from C cup to H cup. Plus-size bra shopping can be an exercise in bland, she said. "You never see anything glamorous," she said.

Before introducing Curvy Couture's Spacer in May, she worked with a fabric mill to build a Spacer bra with a minimal amount of stretch. A garment with a lot of stretch won't hold a big breast, she

When Curvy Couture took a bow in 2013, it started business by offering other fashion bras to the plus-size market. There was the "Classic Matte and Shine" T-shirt bra, which provided both matte and shine fabric on the garment. It continues to be among the label's top sellers. She also looks to use high-end and performance fabrics for her line's lingerie.

Before 2013, Lau ran an eveningwear line called Dora L. She sold the now-defunct line's gowns and cocktail dresses to high-end department stores such as Saks Fifth Avenue. She switched gears in the late 1980s and focused on designing private-label lingerie.

She hopes that her lingerie designs will offer some of the glamour of eveningwear. She said that 85 percent of her

manufacturing work is made up doing private-label work for other companies. Her private-label business of Dora L funded the launch of Curvy Couture.

This August, her label started a special line with actress Vivica A. Fox. One of Lau's upcoming projects includes another effort at adapting a popular style to the plus-size market. It's the sports bra. For more information, call (855) 882-8789.—Andrew Asch



Vivica A. Fox for Curvy Couture

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Corrections and Clarifications

Black cotton Lux

In the coverage of the **Shape** show at the **California Market Center** in the Oct. 16 issue, the story said there were 24 brands listed as exhibitors. A CMC spokesperson said there was a total of 31 brands showing during the activewear show's Oct. 12-14 run.

Denim Maven Adriano Goldschmied Turns His Focus to Knits With Acynetic

AMSTERDAM—Adriano Goldschmied's career developing brands including Diesel, Replay, AG Adriano Goldschmied, Citizens of Humanity men's and Goldsign has earned him the nickname "the Godfather of

Denim."



For his next act, Goldshmied is leaving the denim loom behind in favor of the circular knitting machine.

"Sometimes innovation is an evolution and sometimes

it is a revolution," he said, speaking at the recent Kingpins denim-sourcing trade show in Amsterdam. "This is a time for a revolution. You don't start from something you did yesterday."

Goldschmied's latest product launch, Acynetic, is a collection of knits that look like denim but have the stretch, comfort and performance of activewear.

"The future is about knit denim," he said. "It has the look of denim but the performance of sport fabric."

Goldschmied described Acynetic as a denim collection "that doesn't have one single denim in the line—it is only knits.'

Acvnetic launched in Paris in September, and Goldschmied is look-

ing at a very specialized distribution for the collection. He expects just a handful of U.S. retailers to carry the line. The collection is produced in China—"China today is the right place to develop high-tech product," Goldschmied -and retail prices range from \$90 to \$140.

"It's limited distribution, but we want our customers to sell a lot of product," Goldschmied said.

The idea for Acynetic came to Goldschmied when he accompanied a friend who was picking up her daughter from school in Beverly Hills. Five years ago, all the mothers were wearing jeans, Goldschmied said. When he went

back to the school recently with his friend, half of the mothers were wearing activewear brands such as Lululemon or Nike.

"A lot of women just throw on a zipper jacket and leggings," Gold-

"The idea of comfort is going in a radical direction," he told a group of Kingpins attendees. "It's going to be a tremendous change in the industry.'

With his new focus on knits, Goldschmied was at the Kingpins Amsterdam show to speak on several panels and to meet with others in the industry to work on special projects.

"I have a lot of collaborations with mills," he said. "[This is] an opportunity to talk to the very influential people who are here."

For more information about Acynetic, visit www.acynetic.com.

-Alison A. Nieder

Final Text Released for the Trans-Pacific Partnership Trade Deal

After years of negotiating a trade agreement between the United States and 11 other Pacific Rim countries, the U.S. government released the final text outlining the deal.

Many had a general idea of what the Trans-Pacific Partnership would look like, but this is the final word that puts everything into a clearer light.

For the apparel and textile industries, the trade accord is structured like other trade agreements. That means there is a varn-forward provision that will keep Chinese textiles out of the equation unless they are in short supply within the free-trade region.

The National Council of Textile Organizations, based in Washington, D.C., and representing U.S. textile mills, said in a statement that it would start an exhaustive review of the agreement.

'Based on our generalized understanding of the final agreement reached last month, we believe that many of the U.S. textile industry's key objectives have been met, including a yarn-forward rule of origin for most products and reasonable duty phase-outs for sensitive textile and apparel items," NCTO said. "While we need to thoroughly familiarize ourselves with the fine details of the agreement, we feel that the U.S. government was able to achieve a well-balanced outcome for all parties, including U.S. textile manufacturers and our partners in the Western Hemisphere.'

The Retail Industry Leaders Association—a trade association in Arlington, Va., that represents more than 200 retailers, product manufacturers and service supplierssaid the TPP agreement will save American families hundreds of millions of dollars on tariffs and taxes that will be eliminated under the accord.

The free-trade agreement must be ratified by Congress before it can go into effect.

"Every member of Congress and their constituents now have the opportunity to read the text of the TPP agreement in its entirety. Retailers look forward to educating consumers and Congress on the benefits of free trade in the months ahead," RILA said.—Deborah Belgum

Italian Denim House Candiani Opening R&D Center in Los Angeles

AMSTERDAM—Early next year, downtown Los Angeles will have a new center for denim research and development when Italian denim mill Candiani Denim opens a new showroom and of-

fice space.



Alberto Primo Candiani

"More than 30 percent of our business is in LA," said Alberto Primo Candiani, global manager for the Milan-based denim mill. "The laundries want innovation [and] we know our product better than anybody.'

Located near

the intersection of Pico Boulevard and Hope Street, the R&D facility will be spread across 11,000 square feet with space for offices, a showroom and room to host workshops for Candiani customers and laundries.

Candiani was recently in Amsterdam attending the Kingpins denim supplychain trade show. At the show, he spoke on a panel regarding premium denim and sustainability. During the panel discussion. Candiani discussed the new R&D facility and the opportunity it will provide to work more closely with brands and wash houses on sustainable developments.

"I can provide a collection that uses less water," he said. "I'm willing to share everything in terms of technology.'

Candiani added that his company's commitment to sustainability will extend to the LA center.

'We are green for real," he said. We're not going to be there and do crazy stuff.'

Candiani said he expects the R&D center to open in March.—A.A.N.

INDUSTRY VOICES

The Only Thing Foreign About the TPP Is the American Perception of Export Trade

By Ken Wengrod Contributing Writer

What I have experienced as an entrepreneur is that generally American businesses have been reluctant to ship offshore. They found it safe to conduct business on our shores and compete with demographics they know and understand. This has been par-

ticularly true over the last 25 years, especially with U.S. retailers forcing their suppliers to absorb part of their costs, causing further reduction of the supplier's margins.

As a result of a trade policy that makes it exceedingly difficult for businesses—especially small businesses—to find new markets overseas and compete with domestic companies in other countries, many U.S. companies are re-

luctant to get into the export game. This represents lost potential: More than 70 percent of the world's purchasing power and nearly 95 percent of its consumers are located out-

Ken Wengrod

The 21st-century global economy will create further competition for those U.S. com-

panies who play it safe and stay within our borders. We need to stop making excuses why we can't export and find ways to do so. Otherwise we will lose our global leadership and, more importantly, lose our competitive advantage. Gone are the days when each country had its own, isolated economy. There is one economy now-the global economy-and

numerous submarkets.

I have found a huge demand for apparel and luxury items designed and manufactured in the U.S. around the world, especially in Europe, Asia and Africa. Young, growing companies that have niche businesses have been very successful in doing the reverse spin—initially gaining market traction and power branding in foreign markets, which has created further demand in the U.S

The importance of the Trans-Pacific Partnership to our exporters is to create a level playing field by reducing

their barriers of entry to these markets and give them intellectual-property protection as well. This particular deal will allow a counter effect to China's economic stronghold, where the U.S., Japan, Australia and the other countries included in the pact can put into place their own guidelines for Pacific commerce. Basically there are 18,000 tariffs employed against U.S. exported goods that would finally be lifted due to these countries moving forward with this deal. Simply put, an increase in the ability to make sales abroad creates new jobs in many facets of industry and, in some cases, higher-paying jobs. Also, small- and medium-sized businesses have the potential to benefit from this trade agreement because previously they did not have the scale and resources that larger companies do to manage the challenges associated with entering new markets

The big companies are using their clout, which small and medium companies don't have, to influence the TPP. For example, U.S. pharmaceutical companies are pushing against having their patent licenses lessened from the current 12-year standing. However, because of other countries entering into this pact, there are compromises on all sides and for the betterment of all. Pharmaceuticals did finally concede to having their patents released at a five-to-eight-year mark in order to create generic drugs sooner and create an avenue for more-cost-effective healthcare for all countries involved. This is all more evidence how nations are coming together to benefit a greater future in commerce

Throughout the debate over TPP, I have heard the opposition quoting all these unverified statistics saying how many millions of jobs have been lost to free-trade agreements. This fear mongering has to stop. While no agreement is perfect, it's imperative that we have a strong agreement that protects the open flow of goods, workers and the environment. After recently returning from a White House briefing, I felt assured our negotiators were tackling those specific issues and creating a level playing field with the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement. One specific item that I raised was the importance of having a yarn-forward restriction covered in the agreement in order to create a more level playing field for the apparel industry.

It's about time for us to wake up and realize we need to expand our sales offshore and continue our global leadership. This is not a Republican or Democratic issue or union vs. business matter; this is about our strength and values as Americans. Let's not make it a spe-

Kenneth L. Wengrod is the president and cofounder of FTC Commercial Corp. in Los Angeles.



American Apparel May Shutter Its Oak Stores in LA and NY

Two years ago, American Apparel founder Dov Charney snapped up a small high-end specialty-store chain called Oak.

With Charney ousted last year as the company's chief executive and American Apparel now in bankruptcy, the struggling Los Angeles clothing company has decided to shutter its Oak stores to save money.

That means the two stores in Los Angeles—one on Broadway in downtown LA and another on Beverly Boulevard in Beverly Hills—could be closing their doors as well as the two outposts in Williamsburg in Brooklyn, N.Y., and in Manhattan's SoHo district.

In addition, American Apparel will be shutting down nine American Apparel stores that have been losing money.

The store closings were announced in documents filed in U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Delaware outlining the company's road to emerging from Chapter 11 protection. But American Apparel also reserved the right to sell the four Oak stores if there were a buyer.

On Nov. 2, U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Brendan Shannon gave final approval for American Apparel to use \$90 million of its debtorin-possession financing package to continue operations.

The financing, which is being provided by investment firm **Standard General** and other investors, includes \$30 million in new capital while refinancing \$60 million in American Apparel debt owed to investors.

Under terms of the loan, American Apparel must receive confirmation of its bankrupt-

cy-exit plan within four months of its Oct. 5 bankruptcy filing. The plan provides that more than \$200 million in senior bond debt will be exchanged for equity in the reorganized company.

On Nov. 19, Judge Shannon is set to consider a request for American Apparel to conduct store-closing sales at the four Oak stores and the nine American Apparel stores.

The company is also requesting approval for a \$2.3 million bonus plan to retain 82 critical employees.

American Apparel's purchase of Oak—an edgy store with expensive fashions that center on the color black—seemed a surprise when it was announced in 2013. Oak had only two stores in the New York area. The purchase price was low enough that Ameri-

can Apparel did not need to include it in its filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

At the time of the purchase, Charney said that the small retail chain—started by Jeff Magdalena and Louis Terline—had \$5 million in annual revenues but could benefit from American Apparel's retail know-how and manufacturing facilities that could grow revenues rapidly.

After the American Apparel acquisition, Oak opened two stores in Los Angeles. Last year, it also briefly opened stores in Tokyo and Paris, but those soon closed.

Oak operated as a separate division within American Apparel with Magdalena and Terline continuing to run Oak store operations.—Deborah Belgum

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RETAIL SALES

Zumiez Inc.

October Sales Tough

Retailers reported a tough market in October.

Business for most retailers fell short of Wall Street forecasts, according to analysts such as Ken Perkins of **Retail Metrics**, a Boston-area marketresearch firm.

In a Nov. 5 note, Perkins wrote that disappointing sales have been part of

a soft trend in 2015. "Our Retail Metrics Monthly Same Store Sales Index has now mixed expectations in seven out of the first 10 months in 2015," he wrote. He blamed the soft performance on unseasonably warm weather during October as well as stagnant income growth and slow sales for the U.S. auto market.

All of the retailers followed by *California Apparel News*' index posted declines in their October retail sales. **L Brands Inc.**, the parent company of **Victoria's Secret**, and **Stein Mart Inc.**, an off-pricer, reported declines in their same-store sales of 2.5 percent and 2.8 percent respectively. **The Buckle Inc.** reported a same-store-sales decline of 5.8 percent. **Zumiez Inc.**, a mall-based seller of action-sports styles, reported same-store-sales declines of 8.1 percent. **Gap Inc.** is typically

October Retail Sales			
	\$Sales (in millions)	% Change from yr. ago	Same-store sales % change
The Buckle	\$81.40	-4.7%	-5.8%
L Brands Inc.	\$735.60	-0.5%	- 2.5%
Stein Mart	\$97.30	-1.8%	-2.8%

\$48.90

included on *California Apparel News*' index, but it will report its October sales on Nov. 9.

-5.4%

-8.1%

Bebe Stores Inc. postponed a Nov. 5 conference call on its first-quarter earnings of its 2016 fiscal year. The mall-based retailer announced that it was still in the process of preparing its financial statements.

In a Nov. 5 research note, Adrienne Yih Tennant of **Wolfe Research** wrote that the company had excess inventory heading into its fourth quarter and Zumiez would probably offer deeper promotions for the remainder of the third quarter.

In a preview note of October's business that was published on Nov. 2, Yih Tennant wrote that October is historically an unimportant month. "[It] is only important in so far as it signals how clean inventory is exiting the quarter," she said. —Andrew Asch

Calendar

Nov. 10

CALA Denver Mart

Denver Through Nov. 12

"Textiles 101: Is It Knit or Woven?" webinar by Fashion Business Inc.

Nov. 12

"Starting a Business Plan" by Fashion Business Inc. California Market Center, A792 Los Angeles Nov. 15

Fashion Speaks show featuring WantMyLook by Lilly Ghalichi Le Meridien Delfina hotel Santa Monica, Calif.

Nov. 17

"The Social Media Formula" webinar by Fashion Business Inc. online

Nov. 18
Denim Première Vision

Fira Montjuic Barcelona Through Nov. 19 Nov. 19

Shop for Success, benefitting Dress for Success 8767 Wilshire Blvd. Beverly Hills, Calif. Through Nov. 22



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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Kingpins Continued from page 1

display—everything from fiber and fabric to garment manufacturing, trim and packaging resources and all tailored for the denim industry.

"People come to work the show; they visit a lot of booths and they ask a lot of questions," Olah said. "There's a lot we've learned here. This is our flagship."

The recent Amsterdam show, held Oct. 28–29, fell immediately before Kingpins' New York show, where many exhibitors from the Amsterdam show were also planning to exhibit.

While the Amsterdam show predominantly draws European brands, there were a handful of U.S. and international brands in attendance, including **Ralph Lauren**, **Timberland**, **All Saints** and **Superdry**.

Adriana Galijasevic, who works in styling and design for Dutch denim brand **G-Star Raw**, said the recent Amsterdam show was "as always, great."

Galijasevic spent both days at the show meeting with G-Star's existing mills and looking for new sources of inspiration.

"We come with open eyes and ears—it's always inspirational," she said.

But there's another draw for Galijasevic and her denim-industry colleagues.

"You see most of the people from our industry from all parts of the world coming to get inspired," she said. "Everybody knows each other. We are here for the love of denim. It's the binding glue. It's the coming together of all walks of life— the designers, the mills, the students."

Inspiration at the heart

At the center of Kingpin's circular exhibition space was a workshop area for **Jeans School**, Amsterdam's three-year vocational training program for denim design and development. Throughout the two-day trade show, students worked on their designs on the show floor. There was also an exhibition area for a recent collaboration between the Jeans School students and **Crailar** flax.

The center of the hall also featured an indigo-dye dem-

onstration by Spanish dye house **Tintes Egara**, which also showcased laser finishing using a tabletop **Iberlaser** machine. There were also vintage denim garments on display in **The Vintage Showroom** and a booth highlighting the "Denim India Made" project between denim mill **Arvind** and Indian artisans.

Denim city

Among the returning exhibitors at Kingpins Amsterdam was Greensboro, S.C.-based **Cone Denim**.

"There's a nice clientele in Europe; we get to meet them



Calik Denim

at this show," said Kara Nicholas, Cone's vice president of product development and marketing. "Amsterdam is an inspiring city as well. We call it a denim city. There are so many brands based here."

Cone is continuing to highlight its performance denim products, which include **ConeGard**, a durable and water-repellant denim. The company also has moisture-management denim made with fibers such as **Sorbtek**, **Dri-Release** and **Coolmax**. The mill's **ConeStrong** collection is made with high-strength fibers such as **Dyneema** and **Toughmax**.

There are also denim products made with recycled **Repriev**e fibers.

"We want to take a stance on performance denim," Nicholas said. "We don't see it as a trend; we see it as a natural evolution of denim."

The mill is also continuing to offer a wide range of stretch-denim products, Nicholas said. The challenge is to make sure the end product always looks and feels like a traditional denim.

"When you take performance characteristics and move them into denim, you still want it to look like denim," she said. "There's a lot of dials to tweak to maintain that."

Walnut Creek, Calif.—based **Nexgen Packaging** was another returning exhibitor at Kingpins Amsterdam.

"When we come to this show, the customers are very serious," said Kent Pellegrini, a company partner. "They come early and they have an agenda."

Debbie Bougas, Nexgen's creative director, agreed, adding, "They really try to understand what each vendor has to offer."

Among Nexgen's offerings are tags with RFID (radio-frequency identification) as well as sustainable solutions in labeling and packaging.

"Our customers want a solution to be sustainable, but it still has to be at a competitive price," Pellegrini said. "Both sides have to come together from operations to creative—the left brain and the right brain—especially on RFID."

Another key issue for Nexgen customers is omnichannel and addressing the challenges of having a seamless inventory strategy in place.

"The care label is the passport for garments moving around the world," Pellegrini said.

For Bougas, that brings another challenge: "I have to make it pretty," she said.

Turkish mill **Calik Denim** was another returning exhibitor at Kingpins Amsterdam.

"Amsterdam is getting to be a European hub of denim," said Ebru Ozaydin, Calik's sales and marketing director. Ozaydin primarily met with European brands at the show but said a few U.S. brands, including **Levi Strauss & Co.**,

➡ Kingpins Amsterdam page 6



Global Denim Awards: Denim on the Runway

AMSTERDAM—Innovation in fabric and design was on the runway at the second annual Global Denim Awards, a fashion competition organized by HTNK Fashion recruitment and consultancy, the House of Denim, and Kingpins and sponsored by e3.

Held in Amsterdam's Westergasfabriek a 19th-century former gas works, the runway show drew a standing-room-only crowd of denim designers, mill representatives and fashion follow-

A panel of judges included denim pioneer Adriano Goldschmied, G-Star designer Pierre Morisset, denim blogger and author Amy Levinson, and Menno van Meurs, co-owner of the

fashion boutiques Tenue de Nimes.

Eight designers worked with fabrics from eight fabric mills, Candiani Denim, ITV Denim, Calik Denim, Tejidos Royo, Prosperity Denim, Atlantic Mills, Berto Industria Tessile and Advance Denim.

Designer Sartoria Diletto's tailored fashions, featuring Italy-based Candiani Denim, took the top prize. Diletto received a €10,000 (\$10,867) prize. His designs will be featured at Kingpins shows in Amsterdam, New York and Hong Kong. Italian mill Berto Industria Tessile, whose fabric was featured in the Studiopretzel collection, received an award for most innovative fabric.

—Alison A. Nieder







Alexandra Frida featuring ITV Denim



Prosperity Denim



John-Randy Anthony featuring Tejidos Royo



Sartoria Diletto featuring Candiani Denim



Michael Seiter featuring Studiopretzel featuring Berto Industria Tessile



Gülçin Çengel featuring Calik Denim

Kingpins Continued from page 5

attended as well.

One of the new developments Calik was highlighting was a technology called Elastech, which eliminates puckering along the waistband and back pockets in garments made

from high-stretch denim. Elastech also "stabilizes" shrinkage across different washes," said Hakan Anuk, Calik's U.S. representative, who is based in Los Angeles.

"You can use the same pattern for different washes," he said.

New to the show

There were also several new exhibitors at the show, including São Paulo-based denim mill Canatiba.

Ninety percent of Canatiba's customers are based in Brazil, with the rest split between other South American countries, the United States and Europe, said Fábio Augusto Covolan, whose father and uncles founded the company nearly 50 years ago.

Of its U.S. customers, most are based in California, where Canatiba has a sales office.

"We have always positioned ourselves as premium denim," Covolan said. "Our factories are state of the art."

Canatiba produces 10 million meters per month, Covolan said.

"From weaving to finishing fabrics, we're fully vertical," he said.

Another new exhibitor was Milan, Italy-based luxury fabric mill Carlo Bonomi.

"Indigo is only a part of our collection," said company representative Fabio Pariani.

Pariani said he primarily met with existing Dutch ac-

counts at the Kingpins show, but he was on the lookout for potential new customers.

"Always this is the target," he said.

Fiber minded



Nexgen Packaging



One of the Jeans School students working at Kingpins





Among the fiber makers showing at Kingpins was Lenzing, the Austrian company that produces Tencel and Lenzing Modal.

Tricia Carey, Lenzing's director of business development for denim, said her company's products were well represented at Kingpins Amsterdam.

"Eighty-eight percent of the mills here offer denim with Tencel or Modal," she said. "It's no longer one fabric or two. It's full collections in Tencel."

Invista, maker of Lycra, was another returning exhibitor. (Lycra and e3, Bayer CropScience's sustainable cotton initiative, were sponsors of the trade show.)

This season, Invista hosted a panel discussion at Kingpins Amsterdam highlighting knit denim. The panel included Eva Shih, U.S. agent from Knitdigo; Enrico Forin from Advance Denim; and designer Adriano Goldschmied, who is currently launching a new knit denim collection called Acynetic (see related story, this issue).

"Today is a very good day for Invista," Goldschmied said. "If you think about where we are today in denim, they own the present and they own the future.'

Goldschmied said stretch denim has been an important part of denim collections since it first was introduced in the early 2000s.

"In the year 2000, originally it was in Los Angeles. We came out with the idea of making jeans comfortable and sexy and desirable to wear," he said. "The big change today in denim is going in a different direction: Indigo yarns on a circular machine. The next future is about knit denim [with the] look of denim but the performance of sport fabric."

Another Kingpins Amsterdam exhibitor, Unitin, has been spinning denim yarns for circular knits for years. The Barcelona, Spain-based company's yarns are sold around the world,

said Xavi Subirates, Unitin's indigo product manager. The company also produces knit fabrics, including jersey

and fleece, made from its yarns. Subirates praised the turnout at Kingpins Amsterdam.

"The top brands of the market are coming here," he





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Los Angeles Street Continued from page 1

room owners and retailers have been trying to take contemporary and high-end projects onto Los Angeles Street. They have reported mixed results, first because of the gritty milieu of the street, which, some denizens of the street jokingly say, scares Westsiders away.

Another issue is Los Angeles Street also happens to be a short walk from the main strip of Los Angeles' Fashion District-Ninth Street between Main and Los Angeles streets.

Many worry that buyers won't want to make the short trek from the main strip of the Fashion District onto the street, despite colorful street-level showrooms that have been opening on the thoroughfare.

Walker moved operations for her fashion lines THEPERFEXT and elysewalker Los Angeles into the 12th floor of the Mercantile Exchange Building at 719 S. Los Angeles St.

She and design partner Sable Banoun, who works with her on THEPERFEXT, which is sold at Saks Fifth Avenue and Bergdorf Goodman, were looking for a place where they could design in a space separate from the Elyse Walker shop. Walker must schedule a lot of her time to be on the shop floor in the Palisades boutique.

The showroom also serves as the site for showroom meetings with major retailers. Walker saw distinct advantages to being located a few blocks off of the main Fashion District streets.

Walker said that one of her sales executives joked that they would have to arrange Uber taxis to bring buyers to their showroom, a fiveminute walk up Los Angeles Street.

But she believes that the buyers who make the extra effort to visit her showroom will be willing to invest more into her lines. Those who are willing to walk a few blocks off of the main Fashion District strip will be the retailers who buy the entire collection of THEPERFEXT, not just a few pieces of the contemporary women's collection. "We might

lose walk-up traffic," Walker said of the showroom division of her 2,100-square-foot

Chris Josol recently opened a 2,600-squarefoot showroom for Flagship Agency at 721 S. Los Angeles St. It is closer to the Fashion District's main drag than the former address of Flagship's main showroom in Los Angeles' Chinatown. But Josol and Adam

Ahdoot, Flagship's administrative partner, are mindful that it is still off of the Fashion District's main strip. They will have to make an extra effort to bring buyers to their new showroom. It is adjacent to the Mercantile Exchange Building, where Walker set up shop.

"We're trying to make a destination," Josol said. "We're going to do big fashion and marketing events.

Josol was encouraged to take a gamble on the street because more Fashion District-style businesses are moving up the street. Blends, a high-end sneaker boutique, opened at 725 S. Los Angeles St. during Valentine's Day weekend in 2014. The showroom Money Ruins



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Independent designer Henry Duarte opened a showroom and events space, Drop City, at 715 S. Los Angeles St. in early 2014. He and designer Beth Orduña originally envisioned the address as a work studio. Duarte's plans for the space changed when a retailer suggested that Drop City be used to showcase independent designers as well. Fast forward 18 months or so, and several designers—including Calleen Cordero, Peter Cohen and Elaine Kim as well as Duarte and Orduña—frequently show their lines at Drop City. Designers renting space at Drop City are

responsible for bringing retailers to the showroom. It continues to act as something of an alternative space. It's also open late. Buyers make the trip up there after many showrooms close for the night, Duarte said. "They come willingly, but they come at the end of the day," he said.

Los Angeles Street has a checkered history. A number of showrooms have tried their luck on the street and called it quits.

In 2013, the T & A Showroom closed its operations at the 824 S. Los Angeles St. building and relocated to the California Market Center showroom building at the center of the Fashion District's main strip, said Timothy J. Padilla, the showroom's coowner.

Padilla and his business partner, Alfred Davis, ran the T & A showroom on Los Angeles Street for six years. They operated on two floors of the 824 S. Los Angeles St. building. They were able to produce big parties, where seemingly hundreds of people danced to DJs spinning records in the sprawling showrooms. The events were good for spreading the word on a growing business. But despite the building's close proximity—it is located just a few doors away from the Cooper Design **Space**—Padilla said that buyers weren't interested in going north of Ninth Street.

"We got 10 percent of our business from 'luck-of-the-draw' foot traf-

fic," Padilla said. He and Davis resolved to move to the CMC.

"We would pound phones like crazy," he said of his former address. "We would have to work harder than showrooms in one of the main buildings." Showroom workers need every advantage they can get, he said. "Even at trade shows, leading a buyer from one aisle to anotherjust one row away—can be challenging. It can be like pulling teeth."

Eric Martin of The Park Showroom moved the men's division of his wholesale operation from the Lady Liberty Building to the CMC earlier this year. He also shuttered his contemporary men's boutique Seven Points from the Lady Liberty at the same time. However, The Park's women's division will remain at the Lady Liberty, which

is home to other womenswear showrooms. The Park space also will introduce a new service. It will rent out creative offices with a focus on fashion-industry people. Martin believes that Los Angeles Street has a long

"We thought we were on time," he said of his retail and showroom efforts on the street. "We were way too early."

He doesn't believe that the street will change much until the thoroughfare and downtown Los Angeles shed their last ves-

"Until they make downtown Los Angeles a more pleasant experience, it will never be a great downtown," he said.

The tough look of the street is partially responsible for The Park's move and the closure of the Seven Points men's boutique.

High-end boutiques have moved on and off the street. A boutique for the MartinMartin collection shuttered in the past 12 months. The sneakerhead shop Blends moved into a space that once housed The Cooper Store, a boutique run by the management of the Cooper Design Space showroom building.

Los Angeles Street's issues could be solved with the right real-estate moves, said Julio Martinez Jr., manager for Blends. "It needs more businesses," he said of the street. "It has a lot of potential; we need more people to come down here," he said.



tiges of being a gritty, urban enclave.

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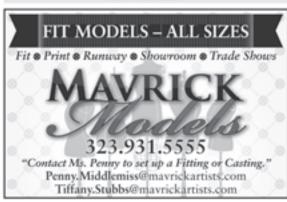
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