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MEDITERRANEAN CHIC

Designer Kevan Hall took inspiration from the island of Capri for Spring/Summer 2016, which he unveiled in an intimate runway show at his Beverly Boulevard Atelier in Los Angeles.

For more from the collection, see page 7.

Holiday 2015: Decent Economy, Weak Christmas Forecasts

By Andrew Asch *Retail Editor*

Solid growth is forecast for the upcoming holiday season, but don't count on seasonal cheer coming from retail economists and analysts.

Anxiety over a host of matters, including warm weather cutting demand for outerwear and sweaters, has put a damper on forecasts, but retailers are still looking for ways to make the best of the holiday season.

The **National Retail Federation**, the Washington, D.C.-headquartered trade group, issued a forecast that said sales in November and December (not counting business of autos, gas and restaurant sales) will increase 3.7 percent to \$630.5 billion. Last year, holiday sales grew 4.1 percent.

Business consultants **Deloitte** forecast that sales will increase between 3.5 percent and 4 percent. When receipts are tallied up, consumers will spend \$434 billion during

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Men's Sock Trend Leads to Sale of California Sock Company

By Deborah Belgum *Senior Editor*

When former President George H.W. Bush was seen a few years ago sporting bright pink socks with a gray suit, you knew the "statement sock" craze had thoroughly taken hold of the men's fashion scene.

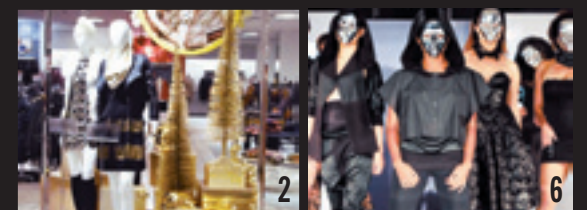
Men's socks have been one of the bright spots on the retail scene as dudes—hipsters or not—are finding they can dress conservatively for work but maintain a subtle splash of rebellious color by sporting bright socks under dark suits or khaki pants.

With sock sales on the upswing, it was only a natural step for **Shoes.com**, a multimillion-dollar online shoe retailer based in Canada, to recently acquire **Richer Poorer**, a small 5-year-old sock company in San Juan Capistrano, Calif. Terms of the deal were not disclosed for buying the sock company, whose revenues are under \$10 million a

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Where fashion gets down to businessSM



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LA Private-Equity Firm Buys Specialty Store Chain

Classic styles with a touch of fashion have been the mainstay of **J. McLaughlin**, a small specialty-store chain founded in New York by two brothers in 1977.

After nearly 40 years in business, J. McLaughlin has been acquired by private-equity investment firm **Brentwood Associ-**

site, where shipping and returns are free.

"J. McLaughlin is an emerging lifestyle brand with an impressive following of loyal customers in sophisticated urban neighborhoods, affluent suburban main streets and resort destinations," said Roger Goddu, a partner at Brentwood Associates. "We are thrilled to be partnering with the company and plan to leverage the strength of the brand to accelerate the company's growth."

J. McLaughlin was founded by brothers Kevin and Jay McLaughlin when they opened up their first store on Manhattan's Upper East Side. The stores carry traditional clothing that is color- and print-driven. Price points for dresses run at about \$225, and sweaters are priced between \$135 and \$198.

The McLaughlins describe their retail chain as a purveyor of lifestyle brands rooted in the American traditions of sport, work and play. The company, headquartered in

Brooklyn, N.Y., produces much of its merchandise at its Greenpoint factory at its corporate base.

"We are extremely proud of what we have achieved in our 38-year history, and we're excited to partner with Brentwood to usher in the next phase of J. McLaughlin's journey," said Kevin McLaughlin, the company's chief creative officer. "Brentwood has proven through prior investments to be a value-added partner, and their experience in both

the direct-to-consumer and retail channels will be a unique resource as we continue to grow our brand."

Brentwood has invested in clothing retailers and restaurant chains as well as other industries. In 2012, it acquired **Soft Surround-**

ings, a women's clothing-catalog company that has branched out to retail stores.

Also in 2012, Brentwood acquired **Sundance**, the clothing catalog and retailer started by actor Robert Redford in 1989.

—Deborah Belgium



The J. McLaughlin store in San Marino

ates, based in Los Angeles. Terms of the deal were not disclosed.

J. McLaughlin, with 103 stores, has a major presence on the East Coast, but it is a popular shopping spot in several well-heeled California neighborhoods including San Marino, Montecito, Newport Beach and Palo Alto. It has a wide range of women's and men's clothing sold in a store environment that evokes a Main Street in an affluent neighborhood. It also has an e-commerce

Venue's Canares to Launch New Trade Show in January

Venue Trade Show founder Miles Canares announced **Silk Show**, a new event that will take a bow at the sprawling **Asian American Expo**, which is scheduled to run Jan. 16–17 at the **Pomona Fairplex** in Pomona, Calif.

More than 1,000 businesses run booths at the giant expo, where 113,000 attendees are forecast to visit the event, which has run annually since the early 1980s. But so far it has not produced a section for street fashion and lifestyle.

Silk Show will be open to the public and

retailers, Canares said. "For brands, it is a chance to sell directly to the public, clear out inventory and also market their name to a whole new customer base," Canares said. He also promised exposure to attendees and exhibitors from all over the Asia/Pacific region.

Prices for booths will run from \$1,300 for a 10-by-10 booth to \$4,200 for a 10-by-30 booth located in a coveted corner space. For more information, contact Canares at miles@ccyp.com or Alex De Leon at alex@ccyp.com.—Andrew Asch

Macy's Reopens DTLA Location

In California, **Macy's** will be unveiling huge remodels of some of its stores.

On Nov. 21, the major department-store chain will reopen its flagship store at **The Bloc**, formerly **Macy's Plaza**, in downtown Los Angeles. This retail center will unveil its own major renovation in 2016.

Macy's remodeled its Bloc location into a four-floor, 250,000-square-foot selling space. A focus of the remodel was extending the location's selling space into the department store's lower levels.

The lower level of the store, which is being called the Plaza Level, will offer soft home- wares such as bedding. The Street Level of the store will be devoted to women's shoes, men's fashions and cosmetics. Some new cosmetics vendors will be **Bobbi Brown**, **Laura Mercier**, **MAC**, **Benefit** and **Impulse Beauty Shop**. The space's Level 2 serves as the location for the women's fashion department. A furniture store will open on Level 3 at The Bloc's Macy's in December. It will also host a kids' department.

Starting at 9 a.m. on Nov. 21, Macy's will give away gift cards to the first 200 customers to enter the store. It will show a Motown costume exhibit from the **Grammy Museum**, and **Mandi Line**, a costume designer and stylist, will host a fashion presentation at noon. Line has worked on television programs such as "Pretty Little Liars."

On Nov. 20, the Macy's in Walnut



COURTESY OF MACY'S

From Macy's at The Bloc



Creek, Calif., in the San Francisco Bay Area unveiled an additional 57,000 square feet to its store. New areas include appearances of new brands such as **BCBG**, **Max Mara**, **The North Face**, **Roberto Rodriguez**, **CeCe**, **Polo Sport**, **Bass Sport**, **French Connection**, **Tadashi**, **Sue Wong** and **Aidan Mattox**.

In November 2016, Macy's will unveil a new 155,000-square-foot store at **Westfield Century City** in Los Angeles. It will be built on the site of a 136,000-square-foot Macy's department store that will be closed in January.—A.A.





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Mode City Shifting to Lyon in 2016

After eight years in Paris, French lingerie and swimwear trade shows **Mode City** and **Interfilière** will temporarily return to Lyon, France, for their July 9–11, 2016, run.

The final games for the 2016 **UEFA European Championship** soccer match will be held in Paris on July 10, which will affect availability and pricing of hotels, airline tickets and taxis, Mode City organizers said.

According to a statement released by Mode City organizer **Eurovet**, prices in accommodations near the **Porte de Versailles** exhibition park, where Mode City and Interfilière are held, have already increased considerably. The group consulted several exhibitors and determined that it would be best for the intimates and beachwear shows to return to Lyon, where both launched in 1984.

Since leaving Lyon, the city has increased its hotel capacity and accessibility, including the opening of public transportation lines connecting the city center to the **Lyon Eurexpo** exhibition park as well as access to the exhibition center from the Lyon Part Dieu rail station and the **Lyon Saint Exupéry International Airport**. Lyon now offers nearly 15,000 hotel rooms, and there are 115 direct flights to Lyon from European capitals and other French cities. **Emirates** and **Turkish Airlines** also operate flights from Asia and South Africa though Dubai and Istanbul, according to Eurovet. Lyon, the third-largest city in France, is also an hour and a half from Geneva.

For more information, visit www.modecity.b-network.com and www.interfiliere.b-network.com.—*Alison A. Nieder*

Holiday Preview *Continued from page 1*

the holiday season. Last year, Deloitte measured sales growth at 5.2 percent.

Liz Pierce, an analyst at **Brean Capital**, said that the season would not be robust. “Expectations have come down,” she said. “At this point, I think it will be a tough holiday. But I don’t think it will be the worst ever.”

A winter holiday season hobbled by low expectations is starting to play out while the U.S. economy is relatively strong, said Kimberly Ritter-Martinez, an economist with the **Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation**. Retail sales were up in October, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. It was an increase of 0.1 percent over the previous month. Unemployment is relatively low, 5 percent in October, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. While consumer confidence has dipped recently, sentiment that the economy is headed on the right track is still relatively strong, according to **The Conference Board**, a research group.

However, the sales performance for major retailers seems to be on a seesaw. Retail stocks declined when **Macy’s Inc.** and **Nordstrom Inc.** reported third-quarter earnings reports below Wall Street expectations. Retail stocks recovered a few days later when **Wal-Mart Stores Inc.** reported its third-quarter earnings. The retail giant beat analysts’ estimates.

The disconnect between a relatively strong economy and anxiety over the holiday season may be rooted in predictions of a soft performance for apparel. However, there also is a mixed forecast for apparel sales.

Deloitte predicted that clothing will be the top gift given during the holiday season, with 48 percent of shoppers planning to give a gift of clothing. (That figure is up from 45 percent last year.) Apparel retailers sometimes make up to 22 percent of their annual revenue from winter holiday sales.

However, Jeff Van Sinderen, a veteran retail analyst at **B. Riley & Co.**, also forecast that many apparel retailers would have a tough season ahead of them.

There are a long slate of reasons why apparel is forecast to have a tough winter holiday season, Van Sinderen said. There are no “must-have” fashion items this Christmas. There are no major trends attracting people to boutiques and stores, he said.

The major problem has been the weather.

Temperatures soared in 2015, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the U.S. agency that tracks worldwide temperature, announced in October that 2015 was going to be ranked as the hottest year on record.

Sales of outerwear and sweaters, a focus of fall and winter business, has been postponed again and again this year. There’s a lot of outerwear inventory out there, Van Sinderen said, and retailers will be in a race against time to sell it. After Dec. 25, it’s likely that it will all go on sale.

“It will be extraordinarily promotional, even more promotional than last year,” Van Sinderen said, adding that heavy discounts will cut deeply into retailers’ margins and their profits for the crucial season.

“There’s not a lot of interest from consumers unless it is 40 percent off,” he said.



TREE LIGHTING: The Citadel Outlets retail center, located outside of downtown Los Angeles, produced a gala tree-lighting ceremony on Nov. 7.

Only the most spectacular items will stand a chance of being sold at full price.

Deloitte also found that off-pricers and discounters will have the busiest winter holiday seasons; 45 percent of shoppers surveyed by Deloitte said they planned to shop at a discount department store during the holidays while 30 percent said they would shop at a full-price department store. Furthermore, 22 percent said they would shop at outlet stores, where discounts typically range from 20 percent to 70 percent off full price. According to the survey, 17 percent said they would shop at specialty clothing stores.

All analysts interviewed for this story noted that since the Great Recession of

Nov. 20

Splendid/Ella Moss sample sale
Cooper Design Space, 11th floor
Los Angeles
Through Nov. 21

Nov. 22

DG Expo Fabric & Trim Show
San Francisco Hilton Hotel
Financial District
San Francisco
Through Nov. 23

Nov. 25

Tissu Premier
Les Halls de la Filature
Lille, France
Through Nov. 26

Calendar

Dec. 5

“Fashion Illustrator Using Photoshop CS6,” presented by Fashion Business Inc.
California Market Center, A792
Los Angeles

Dec. 12

“Line Sheets in Photoshop CS6,” presented by Fashion Business Inc.
California Market Center, A792
Los Angeles

Dec. 15

Speed Consulting at Fashion Business Inc.
California Market Center, A792
Los Angeles

Dec. 16

TALA Annual Christmas Party
Cooper Design Space
Los Angeles

There's more
on ApparelNews.net.

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

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

TEXTILE NOTES

Hyosung Launches Creora Fit2 for Denim

Creora spandex producer **Hyosung** will launch its new **Creora Fit2** at the Nov. 18–19 run of **Denim by PV** in Barcelona.

Creora Fit2 was created to give consumers a “second-skin fit” with “360-degree comfort.” The fiber also offers reduced shrinkage and improved recovery.

“For 2017, we see continued demand for super-stretch denim for women and men. Today’s consumers expect denim to fit better and with more comfort,” said Ria Stern, Hyosung global marketing director. “We will be working with retailers and brands to promote Creora Fit2 technology as it delivers on those consumer needs.”

Hyosung has partnered with Karachi, Pakistan-based denim mill **Soorty**, which will introduce a new collection using Creora Fit2.

“Creora Fit2 technology has allowed us to create a new collection of four-way stretch denim with higher stretch but without the typical warp shrinkage and instability issues,” said Levent Korkmazer, who oversees R&D for Soorty. “The new collection is more affordable than previous four-way stretch technology and, therefore, more marketable. We are calling the collection **Zumba** to capitalize on today’s strong athleisure inspirations”—*Alison A. Nieder*

Global Distribution: Giant Care Label

By Alison A. Nieder *Executive Editor*

Apparel makers tell the story of international distribution on a very tiny canvas: the care and content label. As apparel brands increasingly sell their goods around the world, care labels become ever more complex.

“We started printing care labels over 30 years ago—back when it was dot-matrix printing and there weren’t any regulations,” said Emily Garcia-Velasquez, licensing and apparel account manager for **Progressive Label** in Commerce, Calif. “It was just a 1-inch-by-2-inch label—very simple.”

In addition to wash instructions, today’s labels also must include such information as fabric content, country of origin, and chemical disclosures and warnings. For example, California’s Prop. 65 requires manufacturers to include a warning label if the product contains certain chemicals such as lead. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission requires flammability warnings for apparel, and there are similar requirements in the European Union. Both the U.S. and the EU allow manufacturers to specify whether some of the fabric content includes recycled materials, but each requires that information be presented differently.

“The U.S. has a set of requirements. Japan has some similar requirements, some of the same requirements and then some additional requirements. That’s pretty much the case, country by country. And, of course, there’s the local language,” Kim Schneider, senior director of global compliance solutions at Glendale, Calif.-based **Avery Dennison**, said. “It’s really a key dilemma that the entire industry is facing. There’s a desire for a supply chain with maximum flexibility and the abil-

ity to ship products into any country, which would mean a lot of different languages and meeting all of the different requirements. That can result in a very long care and content label. Depending on where you’re selling, you could be looking at 30 or more languages.”

Last month, three trade organizations, the Brussels-based **European Branded Clothing Alliance** and two Washington, D.C.-based associations, the **American Apparel and Footwear Association** and the **United States Fashion Industry Association**, published a joint position paper regarding the proposed Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) between the U.S. and the EU. In the paper, the groups recommend “harmonisation of regulations on labeling” to resolve the difference between the U.S. and the EU. The position paper suggests simplifying the labeling requirements based on **International Organization for Standardization (ISO)** standards and eliminating U.S. state and Member State requirements (such as Prop. 65) in favor of U.S. and EU federal-level requirements.

Robert Loop, a founding partner and chief strategy officer for Santa Barbara, Calif.-based **NexGen Packaging**, said this is one of the “forefront issues” in the industry.

“We have customers considering moving up to 32 [languages] to increase the footprint of their label,” Loop said. “It would be a very complex label that would allow you to make one garment in Asia and ship it anywhere in the world. That’s the challenge: understanding all the laws of all the countries and then understanding all the care-label languages and all the symbols requires all the key components. You’d need a Ph.D. basically to figure it out. I feel for our customers.”

And while label providers try to give their customers some guidance, Loop points out that information about the countries where the garment will be sold ultimately comes from the manufacturer.

“It’s really the obligation of the importer of record for the accuracy of the care label,” he said. “As the label provider, we’re the execution phase, but the retailer or brand owns the complexity.”

Typically, the initial inquiry comes from a brand’s trim department, but “very often their legal department takes it over and says, ‘This is what we’re going to do with the care labels,’” Loop said.

It’s a similar process at **Progressive**, where all the care-label information is provided by the manufacturer.

“Since we’ve been doing it for so long, we are able to give advice on how to lay it out so it doesn’t seem so long,” Garcia-Velasquez said. “We do folding techniques to make it seem like a shorter label—when really it’s an 8-inch label that we fold down to a 3-inch label. They get all of the information that’s needed, but it’s not hanging down half of the shirt.”

Garcia-Velasquez also recommends customers include additional languages on the care label—even if they are not yet selling in those countries.

“I have customers that are just getting started, and if they think they might be selling in Canada and Mexico, it’s really not costing them anything else at all to just go ahead and include those two options,” she said. “It’s no cost but all value added, just in case.”

NexGen’s Loop also suggests manufacturers plan ahead.

“Have a plan to understand what the requirements are for that country and then work with a global label company,” he said. NexGen has a database of content information translated into about 32 languages. When new requirements arise—“as they often do

each season,” Loop said—NexGen works with an ISO-certified translation company to get an authorized translation, which then has to be reviewed and approved by the brand or retailer.

Avery Dennison doesn’t recommend brands add additional languages to their tags “unless they have a firm plan to enter [those] new markets,” Schneider said. “We do have solutions that are flexible in re-engineering care labels to either meet global requirements or regional requirements. We [can] help our brands come up with multiple layouts in different ways so we can optimize space and get the care labels as small as possible.”

Companies looking for guidance on care-label requirements around the world can find some information

from the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Office of Textiles and Apparel (OTEXA), which publishes a table of international care-label requirements. However, OTEXA says this information is only a guide and recommends companies consult “your importer or the appropriate authorities to confirm the current labeling requirements.”

Avery Dennison publishes its own compliance guide for its customers.

Schneider said that as brands and retailers streamline their operations to keep competitive, some are reducing the resources they put toward care-label compliance.

“Brands that used to have an entire department that would deal with global care-label requirements—we find that those teams are either significantly reduced or their resources are being focused on other areas of the business,” she said. “That’s why we started putting together a whole legal compliance guide to help support our customers. As they enter new markets, the sorting and sifting through all the legal requirements can be an absolute daunting task. We find our customers are relying on us for our guidance in that area. And that’s something that we do really well.” ●



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RETAIL

Massimo Dutti Opens First West Coast Store in Southern California

Zara stores seem to be in every major U.S. city, but its more-upscale sister store, **Massimo Dutti**, had been a stranger to this country.

That seems to be slowly changing. Massimo Dutti opened up its first West Coast store on Nov. 20, selecting **South Coast Plaza** in Costa Mesa, Calif., to debut its California outpost.

Massimo Dutti took over a former **Gap** store located on the second floor near **Bloomingdale’s** in an area increasingly populated with what is called high-street retailers—shops with trendy clothes that won’t break the bank.

Surrounding stores in the high-street area include **Madewell**, **COS**, **Scotch & Soda**, **Banana Republic** and the soon-to-arrive **& Other Stories**, a division of Swedish fast-fashion retailer **H&M**.

The new Massimo Dutti store, which is a division of **Inditex Corp.**, based in Spain,

encompasses 8,891 square feet. The interior—which houses men’s, women’s and accessories—is finished with walnut wood, brass, leather and dark marble designed in a modern style.

The first Massimo Dutti store in the United States opened a few years ago on Fifth Avenue in New York City, occupying a vast 13,670 square feet that had been occupied by a **Zara** store, also owned by Inditex. Soon a store opened in Washington, D.C.

Massimo Dutti clothes have a trendy, European vibe to them but at prices that are above fast-fashion selections but way below designer goods.

Women’s sweaters sell for around \$54, women’s trousers go for \$65, and dresses generally range from \$65 to \$86.

The retail chain, launched in Italy in 1985 as a menswear store, was acquired by Inditex in 1990.—*Deborah Belguim*

PAD System Launches New Plotter, Releases PAD Pattern Update

PAD System Technologies, the Hong Kong-based software solutions company, is getting into the hardware business with the introduction of the **PAD Plotter**.

There are two **PJET** models, which feature two thermal inkjet heads and built-in memory to store plotting parameters. Maximum plotting widths range from 47 inches to 80 inches, depending on the model.

The plotters are solidly built, quiet and easy to install, said Kristine Gloviak, who oversees computerized custom pattern design sales for PAD from her Los Angeles office at the **California Market Center**.

"People can install it themselves with a video," she said, adding that the PAD plotters are also easy to maintain. "This doesn't need a trained technician."

PAD also recently released the latest

version of its patternmaking software. PAD Pattern v6.0 has time-saving features such as an intelligent characteristic tool that allows users to quickly add multiple darts, pleats and shirring.

"PAD can do more with less [mouse] clicks when compared in performance tests," Gloviak said.

A template and seam allowance library allows users to access preset information easily. PAD Pattern also features a Pattern Assistant feature, which allows users to fix and repair imported foreign files created using other patternmaking software.

"There are a lot of different systems talking to each other," Gloviak said. "When you pull in the DXF files, sometimes the pattern is full of extra points or there are points on top of points. Pattern Assistant will tell you where there are extra points."

PAD Pattern's Clone View allows users to make changes in the Plan View and the Piece View, which means all changes will automatically be carried over to all pieces in the pattern such as multiple layers of self fabric, lining, fusing and facing on one unit.

"[In some styles], if you make a change, there are so many layers—the self, the fus-

ing, the lining," Gloviak said. "A ski jacket might have 22 pattern pieces in the Plan View and 37 pieces in the Piece View when you include the **Pellon**, insulations and the lining. They are all changed at the same time."

This is particularly useful for manufacturers and contractors who are making made-to-measure and made-to-spec patterns from tech packs.

"Made-to-measure is the sleeping giant in PAD," Gloviak said. Manufacturers can customize patterns to a retailer's fit specifications. "When you can change five pattern pieces at the same time, it's a big deal," she said.

Another change is remote connectivity. PAD Pattern can be accessed through an online login. New users can also now download the software from the PAD website (www.pad-system.com), and the company offers a 30-day free trial to new users.

"PAD has become a company that markets and trains its clients by Internet," Gloviak said. "We do most of the training remotely, and PAD is currently preparing recorded training [sessions] so you can watch it over again."

PAD Pattern is currently used by more than 45,000 companies in 54 countries. The software is preloaded in nine languages, which are accessed through a dropdown menu.

"When you train someone, you can revert to their language and it's instantaneous," Gloviak said. "This helps the learning curve significantly."

Trained as a designer and patternmaker, Gloviak specializes in made-to-measure and computerized patternmaking. She has been with PAD since 1992, when the company was based in Montreal. In 2007, the company was acquired by **Netsoft Group** and relocated to Hong Kong, although it maintains support teams in Canada and the U.S. In addition to PAD Pattern, the company also offers **PAD Marker Design** software and **PAD Auto-Mark Nesting Engine**.—*Alison A. Nieder*



PADSystem's PJET plotter

Epson's SureColor Sublimation Printer Wins SGIA Award

Epson's **SureColor F9200** sublimation printer landed the product of the year award within the "roll-to-roll dye sublimation on textile" category at the recent **Specialty Graphic Imaging Association (SGIA)** expo in Atlanta.



SureColor F9200

Introduced in August, the F9200 is a 64-inch dual-printhead printer capable of continuous printing at high speeds for production printing.

"We are honored to receive this signifi-

cant industry award from a prominent association, representing leaders in the digital and screen-printing community," said Tim Check, product manager, Professional Imaging for **Epson America Inc.**, based in Long Beach, Calif. "This award underscores the impressive results customers can expect from the SureColor F9200—exceptional reliability for true industrial-level production while keeping costs at a minimum."

The F9200 is part of Epson's SureColor F-Series line, which includes the 44-inch SureColor F6200 and 64-inch EpsonSureColor F7200. All use Epson's UltraChrome DS ink, which includes the company's new high-density black ink. The F9200's dual Epson PrecisionCore TFP printheads enable high-speed, industrial-level, roll-to-roll printing with superior dot control, according to Epson. The printer's high-capacity three-liter ink tank and post-platen heater also contribute to high-speed production printing.—*A.A.N.*

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1950s

1970s

2000s

1980s

1990s

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Holiday and Fantasy Looks at Fashion Speaks Show

After months of blazing temperatures, Southern California finally became chilly on Nov. 15. The cold was appropriate weather for Los Angeles-based label **Want My Look**'s holiday styles, which were part of the debut of the **Fashion Speaks** event at the **Le Meridien Delfina Hotel** in Santa Monica, Calif.

Want My Look, which focuses on offering red-carpet styles for under \$100, showed 20 of its looks at the show. Many of the Holiday looks were silhouettes from the label's Fall line—but they were dressed up in holiday colors and fabrics, including Christmas reds. Some of the jersey and the spandex fabrics of the Fall line were re-



Merlin Castell



Want My Look



Maor Luz



CM2K by Cheryl Koo

placed with a festive lace, said Oscar Uti-erre, creative director of Want My Look.

The slate for the rest of the Fashion Speaks show focused on emerging de-

signers, who were inspired by fantasy and whimsy. The event set the stage for a return for Los Angeles-based **Merlin Castell**. He had not produced a runway show for a year, but he created a 16-look show at Fashion Speaks. His collection was inspired, in part, by the Green Man, a mythical figure seen in many sculptures as a face surrounded by leaves. For the show, Castell made green masks to match the green silk dresses.

Cheryl Koo presented an 11-look runway show for her brand **CM2K by Cheryl Koo**. Instead of the typical show where models walk the runway, Koo's models showed her streetwear-inspired

clothes with hip-hop dance routines. Her collection focused on clothes allowing an ease of movement. Leggings and harem pants were a major part of the line's looks.

Fashion Speaks gave time for a "special presentation" for the **Andrew Christian** label. It showed some of its men's fashion underwear, many with pastel colors and bearing playful words such as "Twerk" in the underwear's band.

Also taking the stage were the **Dan Richters** and the **JNG Couture** labels. One part of the Richters show was inspired by women's gowns with a strong edge. They were reminiscent of medieval armor. JNG showed a wide array of looks ranging from women's gowns to guys in distressed walking shorts. Rounding out the night was the **Maor Luz** label. After a show, which showcased lines with some fantasy looks, Maor Luz presented its version of athisure and casual looks for men, which included plaids and gray sweats.—*Andrew Asch*



Andrew Christian



JNG Couture



Dan Richters

finotex

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Kevan Hall Signature Spring/Summer 2016

Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis and her sister, Lee Radziwill, strolling the streets of Capri, the Mediterranean resort island in the Gulf of Naples. That was the inspiration for designer Kevan Hall's Spring/Summer 2016 collection, which he presented on Nov. 17 at his atelier in Los Angeles.

The Los Angeles-based designer mixed glamour with a relaxed ease to create gowns, day dresses and separates in sun-drenched shades of turquoise, coral and emerald, accented with shimmery silver shades and pearlescent whites.

Ladylike dresses in lean silhouettes had a deceptive simplicity, featuring special details such as a ring of beading at the neckline or a mesh overlay across the shoulder. Pants and jackets were impeccably tailored and mixed pale neutrals and a black-and-white tweed with pops of color. A watery butterfly print on silk gazar appeared on a full-skirted dirndl dress as well as a ball skirt and a crop top paired with a curve-skimming mermaid skirt. A turquoise and coral crochet turned up in a strapless sheath dress as well as a tunic paired with crisp white cropped pants.

There were also plenty of knockout sexy styles, including a black lace jumpsuit with a capelet and a plunging neckline and a rosegold halter gown suspended from a pair of delicate spaghetti straps.

—Alison A. Nieder



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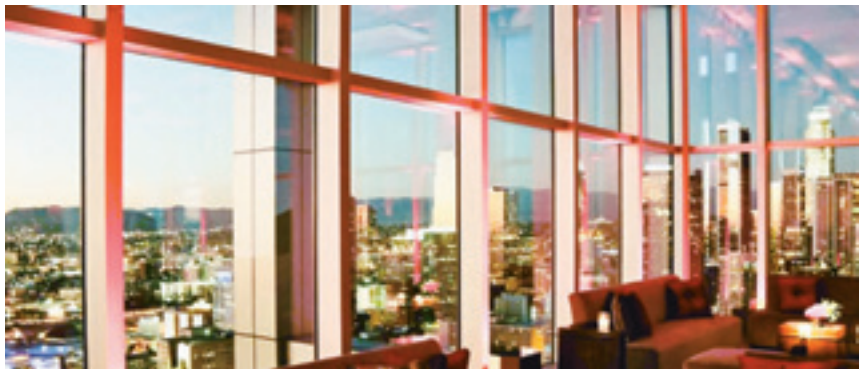


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Richer Poorer *Continued from page 1*

year.

"Richer Poorer has built a culture founded on hard work and hustle and a brand that resonates with the Shoes.com customer," said Shoes.com Chief Executive Roger Hardy, whose online company has about \$250 million in annual revenues.

"Over the past several years, the apparel and accessories categories have transformed from everyday commodity items such as socks and underwear to fashion statements—bright patterns, technical-quality material and a high level of detail. This transition presents a great opportunity for Shoes.com to diversify beyond footwear into a high-growth category."

Marshal Cohen, a retail analyst with **The NPD Group**, said this is a nice marriage for Shoes.com. "For them, it takes them beyond shoes. They are doing some serious soul searching to round out their portfolio of products. They have to become a lifestyle retailer," he said.

While Shoes.com has been around for nearly two decades, Richer Poorer wasn't launched until late 2010 by Iva Pawling and Tim Morse—two people with no knowledge of the sock industry. Pawling had a lot of experience in brand building. Her first job after college was as a minion in the public-relations department at **Kate Spade**. Eventually, she became the vice president of brand development for jewelry line **Gorjana**.

Morse's background was in the tech world, where he spent about a decade working in Northern California. But starting a fashion company was always on his mind. Growing up in Laguna Beach, Calif., he had worked in the marketing department of **Gotcha** sportswear and rubbed shoulders with friends working at **Quiksilver** and **Volcom**. "I had a real passion for fashion and surfwear," he said.

Morse and Pawling met in a spin class, soon becoming friends and, later, business partners, deciding to pursue a dream to start their own venture. They noticed that not many companies seemed to be addressing the men's sock category with creativity. "We started looking at socks, and we thought it was a really good idea," Pawling said.

The men's sock craze got a push in 2008 by **Nike**, which released the "Elite" sock collection, an athletic sock that came in various colors and prints and sold for \$14 to \$18 a pair.

Also in 2008, Swedish brand **Happy Socks** jumped into the category with an array of bright colors for every man, woman and child. But the sock craze was still basically uncharted territory, except for **Stance**, which was founded in San Clemente, Calif., in 2009 and started shipping fashion socks in 2010. During Stance's first four years, it sold 15 million socks and this year was named the official sock of the **National Basketball Association**.

In April 2010, Pawling and Morse worked on their business plans for their sock company, launched in December 2010.

Their timing was good. The economic recession was over, but people were still trying to get back on their financial feet. Socks were relatively inexpensive but added a touch of luxury shopping. Most Richer

Poorer socks are priced at \$12.

The socks are manufactured primarily in South Korea, which has a free-trade agreement with the United States. That means the normal 13.5 percent tariff on socks is waived.

"We launched with 30 accounts in December and grew the business from there," Pawling said. Major retailers that have carried Richer Poorer socks include **Bloomingdale's**, **Nordstrom**, **Free People**, **American Rag** and **Trunk Club**. It is now sold at more than 800 retailers internationally.

Richer Poorer started with men's socks and two years later added women's socks to the mix. By the end of 2013, children's socks were woven into the merchandise lineup, and nine months ago Richer Poorer added men's underwear as well as athletic socks. Soon, the Orange County company will be launching basic T-shirts.

The company's rapid growth in the last five years has been helped by the fact that men's fashion is on an upward trajectory, and socks have become the new power tie.

"Socks last year were a hot category, particularly in the men's market, and it has migrated over to being hot in the women's market," said The NPD Group's Cohen.

Cohen said men's socks started clicking on the athletic side of the category about 18 months ago and then moved over to the fashion side

12 months ago. Lately, men's sock sales have leveled off as women have taken a new interest in the category. During the 12 months ending in September, men's sock sales were down 1 percent to \$2.9 billion while women's sock sales inched up 3 percent to \$1.8 billion, according to The NPD Group's research department.

With their company growing with the sock trend, the two Richer Poorer founders recently started looking for more funding to expand the business. They approached Shoes.com about investing in the sock company, and the conversation went from there. "We were originally trying to get funding, and the acquisition conversation came up a month or two later," Pawling said.

The combination of the two—socks and shoes—seemed like a natural. Morse said Shoes.com is perfect to work with because the website has so many customers, with 85 percent of them are in the United States. "We are pairing the cool of our company with someone who has an understanding of the transactional relationship with 10 million to 12 million consumers. That can create lightning in a bottle," Morse said.

With new resources, Richer Poorer is getting ready to grow quickly. Already the staff of 12 has been boosted to 15, and another six employees are expected to come on board by the end of the year.

Shoes.com's first goal is to introduce Richer Poorer socks to the Canadian market.

"We have some pretty robust plans," Pawling said. "Each year we are going to try to double our revenues."

Shoes.com, with its online expertise, has a treasure trove of resources to grow Richer Poorer's e-commerce site and expand its retail stores. "We are building a lifestyle brand that started in socks," Pawling said. ●



Richer Poorer socks

Petri Joins ...Lost Holdings

Leading surfwear and fashion company **...Lost Holdings** announced that Rick Petri, a surf-industry veteran, will join the company as its president on Dec. 1.

It will be a new position of the more than 23-year-old Irvine, Calif.–headquartered company, said Joel Cooper, Lost's chief executive officer. Petri will be in charge of merchandising, marketing and sales for both Lost's men's and women's divisions. The executive vice presidents running sales and marketing for those divisions will report to Petri.

"We are thrilled to have Rick join the team," Cooper said. "He is well respected in the industry, has an impeccable track record and brings the kind of leadership that can help grow our business."

For future growth, Lost plans on working with its retail partners. "We plan to grow business within our existing distribution," Cooper said. "We do plan on capturing more floor space within our existing distribution."

Lost is sold at core surf shops such as **BC Surf Shop** in San Clemente, Calif., and at specialty retailers such as **Tilly's Inc.** and **Pacific Sunwear of California Inc.**

Petri's last worked at the **Rip Curl** label as its executive vice president and chairman of men's surfwear. He also worked as vice president for men's merchandising and design for the **O'Neill** label.

Lost also sells hardgoods and is ranked as one of the surf industry's top surfboard makers. Petri said that it gives the company an edge in a competitive market. "The strength of Lost Surfboards gives us authenticity at a core level that is unmatched," he said. "I see a big growth opportunity."

...Lost designs and produces men's and boys' styles as well as accessories such as sandals, beach towels and hats. In 2014, the label launched **Sea Gypsies**, a contemporary line for women.—*Andrew Asch*

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