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SWIM SCENE: New looks, new lines, new business at Swim Collective in Huntington Beach, Calif. Top left: Body Glove's Nineteen89 "The Look" suit. Bottom left: Cabana Anna bikini. Right: Vitamin A by Amahlia Stevens

2016 FINANCIAL FORECAST

Retailers Face a Challenging Year in 2016 as U.S. Economy Chugs Along

By Deborah Belgium Senior Editor

Financial gurus and pundits agree that 2016 will probably be an economic twin of 2015. There will be slow but steady growth and unemployment will remain low.

But clothing retailers and department stores will face a taxing year as consumers continue to release their pent-up demand for going out to dinner, taking in a movie, booking a weekend trip or splurging on a massage. Some are even hiring back their gardeners laid off during the recession.

"For the last year or six quarters, consumers have been spending more money on services than goods," said Jack Kleinhenz, the chief economist of the **National Retail Federation** in Washington, D.C. "They also have to spend more on healthcare costs and on rents, which have been increasing."

Retailers' tug of war over shoppers' disposable income was seen during the holidays, when there were winners and losers during a challenging season that saw roses blooming in New York City as the thermometer reached 72 degrees the day before Christmas.

Macy's attributed its 4.7 percent slip in same-store sales during November and December to unseasonably hot weather, which had consumers shunning winter coats, scarves, knit hats and gloves and donning shorts and T-shirts.

However, **JCPenney** didn't have the same problem even

though it was influenced by the same unseasonably warm weather right before the holidays. The mid-tier retailer's same-store sales during the November/December period inched up 3.9 percent as shoppers snapped up JCPenney's private labels and combed through racks with a wide assortment of clothing.

"This year was a disaster for winter apparel," said Britt Beemer, a retail analyst and founder of **America's Research Group**, which polls 1,200 consumers a week to take the pulse of their retail-spending attitude. "Twenty-six percent of Christmas transactions are winter apparel items."

While an increasing number of sales were being made online, 91 percent of shoppers made a purchase in a bricks-and-mortar store during the holiday season, said the **International Council of Shopping Centers**.

So going forward, the trick for many retailers will be to find ways to reel in those shoppers. Creating a cheery, upbeat shopping environment is critical. Beemer said he advised one of his clients with a chain of 100 stores to amp up holiday decorations at one-half of the chain's stores instead of being conservative with the seasonal cheer. "He took 50 stores and bought all kinds of Christmas decorations and then really decorated," Beemer said. "His sales went up 23 percent at those stores."

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TRADE SHOW REPORT

Agenda Attendance Up

By Andrew Asch Retail Editor

Attendance increased 6 percent at streetwear and action sports-focused trade show **Agenda**, held Jan. 7-8 at the sprawling **Long Beach Convention Center** in Long Beach, Calif.

For Aaron Levant, Agenda's founder, the news of the increased attendance over last year may be proof that the brands and retailers attending the biannual show can say goodbye to the soft business of the holiday 2015 season.

"It had great energy and optimism," Levant said of the show, which was held in more than 250,000 square feet of space at the Long Beach Convention Center, located by the busy **Port of Long Beach**. "People were ready to do business again." The vendor count and the number of booths doing business at the show were about even with the January 2015 show, Levant said. Along with streetwear and action sports, Agenda also focuses on categories such as men's fashion, women's fashion, apothecary, backpacks and phone accessories.

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TRADE SHOW REPORT

Swim Collective Dives Into Summer at Huntington Beach Show

By Alison A. Nieder Executive Editor

Southern California got a break in the El Niño rainstorms just in time for the Jan. 8-9 run of **Swim Collective** at the **Hyatt Huntington Beach**, a seaside resort in Huntington Beach, Calif.

It was clear skies and big waves outside while inside the swimwear trade show the news was strong Spring/Summer sales and the importance of crossover merchandise.

It was back-to-back appointments on opening day for **L*Space**, according to Debby Martin, national sales manager/retail marketing for the Irvine, Calif.-based swim brand.

"We did get a nice group of walk-bys, too," she said.

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Where fashion gets down to businessSM



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www.apparelnews.net



Bid to Return Charney to American Apparel Made More Attractive

At the last minute, two investment companies that bid in late December to buy **American Apparel** out of bankruptcy and return founder Dov Charney to the company have sweetened the deal to make it more enticing.

Hagan Capital Group and **Silver Creek Capital Partners** announced on Jan. 11 they have upped their bid from \$200 million to \$300 million to acquire the Los Angeles clothing company, which filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in October.

The American Apparel investment would be managed by **Press Play Group**, the private-equity arm of San Francisco- and Shanghai-based **PressPlay Global**, which is backed by Hagan and Silver Creek.

Charney said he has developed a business plan that he and the investor group believe will rapidly improve the company's business performance. "I am confident that given the

opportunity I will successfully turn around the company's fortunes, return it to profitability and to a market-leading position again," said American Apparel's founder—who was ousted as the chief executive and president more than one year ago—in a statement.

However, *Bloomberg News* is reporting that American Apparel's board of directors has rejected Charney's latest proposal.

The Charney-supported proposal includes \$130 million from the investor group, with \$90 million of new stock and \$40 million from a term loan. American Apparel would exit bankruptcy with \$160 million in cash and new equity and a \$50 million credit line, according to the statement. It also would have a cushion of \$90 million in equity, compared with about \$75 million under the earlier debtor plan.

The Charney-backed bid is much higher

than the \$180 million to \$270 million plan put forth in a prepackaged bankruptcy-filing plan.

That prepackaged plan was unanimously approved on Jan. 7 by all voting classes. American Apparel said it intends to submit the plan to the U.S. Bankruptcy Court on Jan. 20 for approval. "The company remains focused on pursuing the completion of its financial restructuring following its planned Bankruptcy Court hearing at the end of this month," said an American Apparel spokesperson.

The approved plan means that the secured lenders would convert \$200 million in bonds into equity in the reorganized company. They would also provide \$90 million in debtor-in-possession financing as well as \$70 million in new liquidity. The plan includes an additional \$40 million in capital through an asset-based credit facility from a third-party lender.

American Apparel's debt would be reduced

from \$300 million to no more than \$135 million and annual interest rates would be decreased by \$20 million.

The secured creditors are **Standard General**, **Monarch Alternative Capital**, **Coliseum Capital**, **Goldman Sachs Asset Management** and **Pentwater Capital Management**.

"This is an important step forward in emerging from our restructuring process as a stronger, more vibrant company," said Paula Schneider, who stepped in as American Apparel's new chief executive one year ago. "We remain focused on executing our turnaround plan and positioning American Apparel for the future by creating new and relevant products, launching new design and merchandising initiatives, growing our e-commerce business, and creating exciting and creative marketing campaigns to share the story of our progress."—*Deborah Belgium*

Finance One's Shanghai Office Assists Local Importers, Provides Networking Services

Finance One opened its first international branch last fall in Shanghai after a five-year process to secure new business partners in China and ensure that the Los Angeles-based factor has done its due diligence regarding international laws and regulations for overseas trade and financing.

The new office was founded to help facilitate business between the U.S. and China. For U.S. companies, this means Finance One can issue guarantees on behalf of U.S. buyers (rather than requiring a steep down payment).

"In essence, the importers save money in the form of nonpayment of interest charges and improve cash flow from delayed payments," said Kee H. Kim, Finance One presi-

dent and chief executive officer.

The guarantees will also provide Chinese manufacturers with an incentive for providing extended payment terms. That means U.S. companies will have extra time to inspect the goods after receiving them before payments need to be made, Kim said.

"If there are commercial disputes—such as inconsistent quality, incorrect quantity or late delivery—the importers can dispute the invoices and withhold payments until a resolution is reached," he said.

If necessary, Finance One can also arrange a lender for the exporter in China to receive funding against invoices that Finance One has guaranteed, Kim said.

The Shanghai office of Finance One also offers services such as collections as well as access to its networking platform, which con-

nects U.S. importers with Chinese exporters.

For more information, visit www.finone.com.—*Alison A. Nieder*

Manufacturer Starts Rent-a-Desk Program

A block or two from Santee Alley in downtown Los Angeles, Michael Harb believes that he can build an incubator and a post-college program for beginning manufacturers.

Earlier this month, he opened space at his company, **M. Anthony Inc.**, located at 1510 S. Santee St., for beginning manufacturers to start putting together their styles. At its most basic, he rents space and tools to beginning manufacturers. His program, called **Rent a Fashion District Desk**, provides office rental, which ranges from \$250 to \$400, Harb said.

"Instead of investing in space and machinery, they are able to come in and start here. It's a good steppingstone for the young entrepreneur," said Harb, who has more than 30 years of experience in fashion manufacturing.

Renting creative office space is an increasingly popular business. Harb believes that his company offers a point of difference by also offering the experience of working

manufacturers. The businesspeople and executives working at M. Anthony Inc. would be available to the new entrepreneurs renting space there. The renters also could consult with the international wholesalers who also work with the company, Harb said. If participants in the program want M. Anthony Inc. sewers to make samples for them, it would be an added cost, Harb said.

"I'm trying to guide them through so they don't make mistakes; it will cost them less money in the long run," he said of his program.

Along with showing people the ropes in manufacturing, Harb could see the possibility of his service acting as a business incubator.

"The ideal goal is to get a dozen designers from different categories—Web designers, graphic artists, for example—everyone would work together, and this place is a phenomenal area to start our business," he said.

For more information, call (818) 445-5655 or email michaelssjeans@sbcglobal.net.—*Andrew Asch*



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Calendar

Jan. 15

Active Collective
Hyatt Regency
Huntington Beach, Calif.
Through Jan. 16

Jan. 18

Los Angeles Fashion Market
California Market Center
Cooper Design Space
The New Mart
Gerry Building
824 Building
Lady Liberty Building
Primrose Design Building
Academy Awards Building
Los Angeles
Through Jan. 21

Designers and Agents

The New Mart
Los Angeles
Through Jan. 20

Select

Transit
California Market Center
Los Angeles
Through Jan. 20

Brand Assembly
Cooper Design Space
Los Angeles
Through Jan. 20

LA Kids' Market
California Market Center
Los Angeles
Through Jan. 21

Agenda
Mana Wynwood
Miami
Through Jan. 19

Hong Kong Fashion Week
Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Center
Hong Kong
Through Jan. 21

Jan. 19

Première Vision New York
Pier 94
New York
Through Jan. 20

Jan. 20

DG Expo Fabric & Trim Show
Hotel Pennsylvania
New York
Through Jan. 21

Jan. 22

Imprinted Sportswear Show
Long Beach Convention Center
Long Beach, Calif.
Through Jan. 24

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.

Sales Representative Mitch Stedman, 90

Longtime sales representative Mitch Stedman died on Dec. 30 at the age of 90.

A familiar figure in the **California Market Center** (previously called the **California-Mart**) and a fixture in the California apparel industry, Stedman and his late wife, Susan Barry, are remembered as consummate professionals who loved the apparel industry.

The Brooklyn, N.Y.-born Stedman moved to Los Angeles as a young man and joined the Los Angeles apparel industry as an independent sales representative for better misses sportswear collections. For more than 50 years, he kept an office at the CMC—or the CalMart, as it was then known.

Mike Bowling, who runs the **Sympli** showroom on the CMC's third floor, recalled Stedman as "one of the last great ones," who always had "a smile, a kind word, an open heart and a caring ear."

Margaret Cox, who represents **Lindi** on the third floor, described Stedman as "an icon."

"He was always very professional, always in a shirt and tie," she said. "He was a lost breed. Just an old pro—and I don't mean old in that way. I mean in the era-gone-by."

Fred Postal, who also has a showroom on the CMC's third floor, agreed that Stedman was a born salesman.

"Mitch was a very sharp New York salesman," he said. "He and Susan made a powerful sales team. It was something they enjoyed doing. You could see it."

Stedman and Barry were both very active in **Pacific Coast Travelers**, a sales association that wielded considerable clout in the industry.

"At one time, PCT was a very strong salesman group," Postal recalled. "We set up our own markets independent from the Mart. [CalMart owner] Sid Morse finally came



Mitch Stedman and Susan Barry Stedman

along with this building and said, 'We have a home for you.'"

Over the years, Stedman served as a mentor to many in the industry and fought for the rights of independent sales representatives, Bowling said.

"Even in his older years, Mitch was so in love with this business," Postal said. "He made the trips to New York to work with **Nordstrom**."

And the buyers loved seeing him, Cox added.

Stedman was known for always having a story or a pithy quote. One of Bowling's favorites was "If you keep looking back, you're just going to get a neckache."

"He will be sadly missed but will always be in our hearts," Bowling said.

Stedman's wife, Susan, passed away in 2014. He is survived by his daughter, Gail, and son, Craig.—*Alison A. Nieder*



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T-SHIRTS

Life Clothing Co.

After a gig selling lingerie, Bobby Banafsheian shifted fashion gears.

He started T-shirt and basics line **Life Clothing Co.** Since its 2009 debut, some of his styles have sold at **Urban Outfitters**, **Topshop**, **Nordstrom** and **Bloomingdale's**. He's also expanding three additional T-shirt-focused lines: **Beyond Modern**, **American Jukebox** and **People of Leisure**.

People of Leisure is for the woman who does yoga and hikes. The line's fitted silhouettes are made with soft fabrics, neutral colors and nature-inspired graphics. It also features thermals, hoodies and leggings. Wholesale price points range from \$18 to \$30.

American Jukebox is devoted to rock 'n' roll graphics. Some of the graphics are band logos licensed from the companies **Epic Rights** and **Warner Bros.**

Artists working with the American Jukebox line hand draw logos from 1960s San Francisco Bay Area bands such as **Jefferson Airplane** and the **Grateful Dead**. The artists' work gives the logos a new look and the T-shirts an artisanal feel, Banafsheian said. Other artists and bands handled by American Jukebox are Joan Jett, Billy Idol, **Chicago** and the **Doobie Brothers**. The line also does graphics such as skeletons, snakes and tattoo-style drawings. Wholesale price points range from \$16 to \$25.

Beyond Modern offers clothes to contemporary markets. A point of difference are

the T-shirts' silhouettes. The T-shirts' back hems hang very low, below the wearer's seat. The T-shirts are 44 inches from neck to the low hem, Banafsheian said. Wholesale price points range from \$14 to \$18. Banafsheian's original brand, Life Clothing Co., is devoted to trend-driven graphics. Wholesale price points range from \$12 to \$16.

Banafsheian wanted to get into the T-shirt business in order to participate more fully in the made-in-Los Angeles manu-



facturing movement. The market has been tough for domestic manufacturers recently. But Banafsheian said that Los Angeles manufacturers can take more market share.

"A lot of people are discouraged and are telling younger people not to go into this field," he said. "But there is a lot of business out there. With the right partnerships, with the right creativity, we can catch a lot of the market. We have the resources, the technology and the textile factories. There is still a culture of manufacturers," he said.

For more information, email bobby@lifeclothingco.com.—Andrew Asch

Linda Carmello Sibio

Linda Carmello Sibio got into the T-shirt business through teaching art to homeless and mentally ill people.

"What I'm trying to do is make mental-health issues palatable to the public," said Sibio, a fine artist based in the high-desert town of Twentynine Palms, Calif. "How can I get this message across and make it playful? By making the T-shirts."

Her T-shirt lines are called **Octa Root** and **Hip Madness**. Some of the graphics on her T-shirts portray the people she met through teaching art. One, titled "I Got the Blues," was inspired by a friend who had been clinically depressed. It shows a cartoon-esque figure in a fetal position. Then it shows that figure being reborn. "It's coming out of a depression," she said. Another graphic is called "Trauma Hole," which is inspired by the soldiers she met who returned from war with post-traumatic-stress disorder.

Sibio will be producing her first pop-up shop for her T-shirt line Feb. 13-14 at **Rachel Rosenthal Co.**, the studio for the ensemble

started by pioneering performance artist Rachel Rosenthal. It is located at 2847 S. Robertson Blvd.

Sibio's graphics are printed on blanks made by companies such as **Next Level Apparel**. She noted that the T-shirts she works with typi-



cally are soft and have a good drape. She's sold shirts through her website (www.crazyforaday.com). The shirts wholesale for \$27.50.

The T-shirts are not just to create awareness of mental health. It's also to spark creativity. "I'm saying do something wild and new. I'm encouraging people to be creative. Wear a wild T-shirt," she said.

For more information, contact (760) 808-5326 or sibio@lindasibio.com.—A.A.

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Effie's Heart
Eucalyptus
Flutter & Squeak
Moonlight
Peacock Designs

PUMA
Moved from C423 to B427
Puma

NEW SHOWROOMS

JANELLE MOORE
A323
Aluick Contemporary
Jane Basch Contemporary jewelry
Jessica Elliot Contemporary
La Hola Contemporary
Luxe Junkie 2 Contemporary
Marcia Moran Contemporary jewelry

COCO MELODY
A381
Coco Melody Bridal

LITO CHILDRENS WEAR
A640
Blossom Children's
Swea Pea & Lilli Children's

MAC & LOU
A1082
Mac & Lou
Milan Franeta
Murcia Martin
Nolabel Italia
Rockertype
Sheen

LUCY PARIS
B507
Lucy Paris Contemporary

STRATEGY LA
B520
Articles Contemporary
Aum-Couture Contemporary
Capote Contemporary
Edista Contemporary
Gypsy Daisy Contemporary
Julian Chang Contemporary
JVL Los Angeles Contemporary
La El Couture Contemporary
Nu Construction Contemporary
Rare Trends Contemporary
Skinny Minnie Contemporary
Vanilla Sugar Contemporary

HART DENIM
B585
Hart Denim Contemporary
T & A SHOWROOM
B588
T & A Showroom Contemporary
KINETIX
B591
Kintetix Women's contemporary

36PIXCELL
C277
36Pixcell Contemporary
GOTOMYAPARTMENT
C700B
GoToMyApartment Creative office space

ACCESSORIES

UTE WEGMANN/ JIM ROWLEY
A318
Cargo IT! Fashion accessories
Caribbean Joe Fashion accessories
Guy Harvey Fashion accessories
STRUT L.A.
A320
Cascata Scarves Fashion accessories
Stoned By Q Fashion accessories
ROXSTAR
A342
Alissa B
French at Heart Fashion jewelry
Groove Footwear Footwear
Montana's Heart Fashion jewelry
Panache Fashion jewelry
BY DEBBIE OF CALIFORNIA
A1098
Ruyi Fashion accessories

UPDATED WOMEN'S

FRED POSTAL
A301
Masumi Updated

SHARON KOSHET SALES
A303/304
Forgotten Grace Updated

Javie Shoes Updated
Knit Riot Updated
OC Jewelry Updated
Ruby Updated

WELLS INTIMATES & APPAREL
A309
Andres Silk Intimate apparel
Cossard Foundations Intimate apparel
Frances Smily Silk Intimate apparel
Moda Luxe Intimate apparel
Sol and Selene Intimate apparel

MELODY FAST SALES
A313
Luukaa Updated

FERN LIBERSON & CO
A317
First Updated
Personal Touch Updated
Ultimate Mik's Updated

SHU-SHU
A333
Kerri Kesey Updated

DORIS JOHNSON
A380
Lasting Memories Updated
KAREN GEORGE & CO.
A394
Mythique Updated
Rebecca Elliot Updated sweaters

WOMEN'S CONTEMPORARY

THE PARK SHOWROOM
B477
Alternative Apparel Contemporary

PERLMANREP
B535
Sugarbird Contemporary

DAKOTA SHOWROOM
B567
523 Contemporary
Blaine Bowen Contemporary
Lisa Maree Contemporary swimwear
Silvian Heach Contemporary jewelry
Urban Bliss Contemporary

MEN'S

THE PARK SHOWROOM
B477
Alternative Apparel Men's contemporary
Ames Bros. Men's contemporary
Man X One Teaspoon Men's contemporary
Mvmt Men's contemporary
Taylor Vintage Men's contemporary
Unnown Men's contemporary

PROPER BRANDS SHOWROOM
B479

Entrée Men's contemporary
Street Dreams Men's contemporary
Unknown Men's contemporary

SEASON AFTER SEASON
B498
J. Shoes Men's footwear
Peregrine Men's contemporary

929 SHOWROOM
C481
Buckaroo Jeans Men's contemporary
Eight X Men's contemporary
Truth, Substance & Common Sense Men's contemporary

KIDS' AND MATERNITY

MINI MOD MODE
A601
Blune
Coccoli
Lali Kids
Mini Shatsu
Stylenoriter

TERESA'S ROOM
A603
Cheeky Chompers
First Steps Moccasins
Lemon Vines Amber
Maniere Accessories
Puma Kids Silver Jeans

ROCHELLE SASSON PERLMAN
A604
Kanya

THE DRESSING ROOM
A610
7 For All Mankind
Baby Jar Bela Nuni
Bestarou
Butter California Vintage
Chicaboo
Glitter Tots

➡ New Lines page 6



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Fashionably Stylish Luxury at Atlanta Apparel Market

Atlanta Apparel is justly proud of its Premiere Luxe category, its juried and highest-priced group at the February market. While the sampling of lines below evidences the wide range of products on display, what they all have in common is a dedication to producing for their clients what they want: the highest-quality goods with unique personality at a reasonable price.



Daniel Wellington

Daniel Wellington is committed to delivering what everyone wants in a great timepiece: style, dependability, and affordability. Named by founder Filip Tysander after an “intriguing” and “genteel” man of “impeccable style” he met, the company strives to bring to its watches “a timeless style of fashion” inspired by Daniel Wellington himself. The 5-year-old company has shown strong growth based on giving its customers — men and women — a classic, quality product that transcends age groups. With designs that complement a wide customer base, Daniel Wellington watches easily travel from casual day-to-day life to black-tie events. One of the keys to the company’s success is its dedication to maintaining an affordable price point while providing on-trend watches that add style to whatever the occasion calls for.

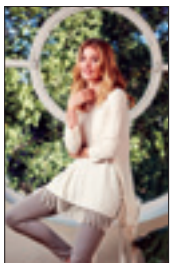
Diana Rosh

“Color and novelty furs are retailing like crazy,” says Diana Rosh. That is good news for the high-end couture company that specializes in unique fur designs for a discerning clientele. Her customers, who fall between 30 and 60 and have an eye for designer looks, are taken by Rosh’s blend of fashion and versatility as well as her price points: under \$1,000 for a fur coat or jacket and under \$350 for a vest or shawl. Rosh’s signature is her highest-quality furs and fabrics coupled with her innovative designs, which offer uncommon pairings of exotic furs blended with lace, silk, knits, leather, and cashmere. Diana Rosh furs hang in the finest specialty stores, but she also does private label for Neiman Marcus and Nordstrom.



Repeat Cashmere

Repeat Cashmere is all about the highest-quality luxury yarns fabricated into stylish, sophisticated pieces that stand the test of time. “Repeat” means reinventing classic styles each season with a new and fashion-forward twist. With a palette worked around neutrals,



Repeat offers four sub-collections under its label: Repeat Cashmere, novel knitwear for customers ranging from their mid-20s to mid-60s; Easy Knit, for customers looking for classic, luxurious basics; Silver Edition, the more sophisticated group and the “epitome of luxury with more attention to detail using fine yarns and embellishments”; and Dtlm, the contemporary trend-driven collection “coveted by up-and-coming fashionistas.” For 2016, the focus is on layering. Repeat promises many new takes on the classic poncho and travel wraps, plus new yarn combinations in classic styles that feature “a touch of novelty.”

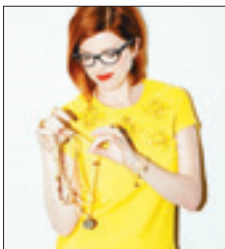
Suzi Roher

Toronto-based Suzi Roher is known for her fabulous belts, worn by fans ranging from the Duchess of Cambridge to Joni Mitchell to Kim Kardashian. Now in its 35th year, the company is becoming equally well known for its line of fabulous scarves. Original prints offer stunning, unique images that mark them as something special. “Our scarves are especially autobiographical,” says Roher, “mimicking our recent travel experiences, newest muses, and our freshest feelings about the evolving and often ironic world around us.” Targeted at “a sophisticated, modern woman who appreciates great quality and an artistic sensibility,” the Spring 2016 collection is a fascinating mix of prints in silk and Modal, woven and printed in Italy’s finest mills—perfect for Roher’s retail customer looking for “something that is both unusual and gorgeous.”



Virgins Saints & Angels

The handcrafted jewelry line Virgins Saints & Angels (or VSA as it is known) is for “sophisticated, spiritual, fun, and cheeky women who have personal style and who appreciate luxury and artisanal jewelry.” Produced by skilled artisans in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico City, and Rhode Island, the pieces combine timeless flair with the Gothic and edgy, using traditional symbols of protection and good fortune for unique jewelry that has a personality of its own. This year brings the Eye of Fatima collection inspired by Middle Eastern Hamsa and Fatima charms; the M medallion collection with gemstones and hip, trending color beads; and Lil’ Bennie from the San Benito collection, which has four crystals surrounding a medallion serving as a “compass, always guiding to the light for those who wear it.”



The next edition of the Atlanta Apparel market takes place Feb. 4–8.



SHOWROOM PROFILES

The NTWRK Agency

California Market Center, Suite B413
(213) 223-5113
www.thentwrk.com

The NTWRK Agency is on the move. In December, the showroom started a massive remodel of its space in the “B” wing of the **California Market Center**. It also embarked on an expansion. A wall of the adjacent showroom, B-405, was knocked down and The NTWRK added additional real estate.

Now, stretching out over a 5,200-square-foot space, Kellen Roland, NTWRK’s president, has scheduled a wrap-up of the remodel when the **Los Angeles Fashion Market** begins on Jan. 18.

The showroom will keep its open-loft/gallery style. But it will get a spacious conference room, communal office space—which looks out onto the corner of East Ninth and Main streets—and additional room to show its client



Kellen Roland

brands **Herschel Supply Co.**, **Native Shoes** and **Brothers Marshall**, an independent surf-wear label headquartered in Malibu, Calif. The additional space is crucial to exhibit all of the product from NTWRK clients, Roland said.

“The showroom is our stage,” Roland said. “We are a sales and brand-building company, and we tell great brand stories.”

More than 35 people work for NTWRK, including independent sales representatives who work outside of the office. However, Roland keeps the client roster small.

“We want to do a few brands really well,” he said. “We want to give the highest level of service to brands and retail partners.”

Wholesale price points range from \$10 to \$200 for wallets, accessories, caps, backpacks and luggage for Herschel Supply Co.; \$25 to \$65 for Native Shoes’ footwear; and \$20 to \$60 for the caps, boardshorts and T-shirts for Brothers Marshall.—*Andrew Asch*

Mystree

The New Mart, Suite 609
(213) 622-3553
wexlersales@sbcglobal.net

On Jan. 1, Jerry and Judy Wexler moved into their new showroom on the sixth floor of **The New Mart**. At 1,200 square feet, the new space is more than 400 square feet larger



Judy and Jerry Wexler

ler said. “Mystree has a tremendous amount of product.”

The Wexlers spent about 25 years in the CMC, moving from the 12th floor to the eighth floor, then the second floor. The new space at The New Mart has an airy feeling with high ceilings and a wall of windows overlooking the **Los Angeles Fashion District**. The Wexlers added hanging racks to the space and added built-in desks and a partial wall to create a storage area in the back of the showroom.

“We wanted an open-floor feel to it,” Jerry Wexler said. “We’re excited. We think business will do well here, especially with the temporary stores we do business with.”

The Mystree showroom is open on the Sunday before **Los Angeles Fashion Market** officially starts for appointments with retailers who prefer to shop over the weekend.

“We’re very optimistic,” Jerry Wexler said.—*Alison A. Nieder*

New Lines *Continued from page 7*

Hobie Swim
Nanette Lepore Swim
Iscream Joy
Joy Watches
Kid Them All
Living Royal
Les Tout Petits
Micros/Indigo Star
Mimobee
Ox Moccas
Penelope Wildberry
Rebel Yell XSI
Virus Jewelry

ELEPHANTS & AMPERSANDS
A660
Ollie & Bess

TIFFANY STRICKLETT
SHOWROOM
A670
Lili Collection
Tutu Du Monde

RANDEE'S SHOWROOM
LLC
A679

Fiona Walker England
ALLISON SHOWROOM
A682
Hoot Kid Hoot Baby Lali
Pin Pon
Sapling Organic

JULIE SMITH KIDS
A686
Petit Oh!
Petit Pas

SHAYNA MASINO
A689
1+ In The Family

RENEE FRASCA
NAVARRE
A696
Embe
Mack & Co.

The New Mart

127 E. Ninth St.

NEW LOCATION

A LA MODE
SHOWROOM: MOVED
FROM SUITE 711 TO
SUITE 407
Cleokai
Dirtee Hollywood
Frenzii
Hidden Heart
Hourglass Lily
IDI
Lily

NEW SHOWROOMS

MICHAEL BUSH LA-
APPAREL
Suite 406
Insight
Maude-Vivante
Nikki Jones

THE M SHOWROOM
Suite 406
Inoah
Luii

Olive Hill
WYLDSON
Zaria

DIESEL USA, INC.
Suite 412
Diesel

SALT & PEPPER SALES
Suite 505
Banana Blue
Bryn Walker
Eleven Stitch
Gerties
North Star Base
Pacific Cotton
Zzan Jewelry

CRAYOLA SISTERS
Suite 505
A2MINA
Barbosa
Caraucci
Ethyria
Hanna
Hipstirr
Rising Tide
Saga
Styles Ever After
ULF Anderson
Vanila Couture

NEW LINES

New Lines

Continued from previous page
What Would Susie Wear

KARMA SHOWROOM
Suite 600
Down East
Loyal Army
Neesha
UB Handbags

MYSTREE
Suite 609
MYSTREE

SUSAN BURNETT SALES
Suite 807
La Natural
Luna Luz
Redwood Court
Sophie Sabatini

DOUBLE AGENT
Suite 1104
Double Agent USA

NEW LINES

NICHE SHOWROOM
Suite 400
Chaudry
Drew
La Fee Verte
Lisa Freede
Parker Smith

KUT FROM THE KLOTH
Suite 408
CJ by Cookie Johnson

BOB DITCHIK AND ASSOCIATES
Suite 508
Anama
Beyond Harmony
Lapis

JOKEN STYLE
Suite 607
Amedeo
Dominie
Hipanema

E. VICTOR GABRIEL
Suite 706
Absolu (France)
GW
Kontatto (Italy)

DIAL M SHOWROOM
Suite 715
Garbe Luxe
Grey State
Mac

CORINA COLLECTIONS
Suite 807
Natasha Grasso

KATHY WALKER SHOWROOM
Suite 808
Damselfly
Oliver & Frank
One Teaspoon Swimwear
Roc Me Baby
Talia

THE VILLAGE SHOWROOM
Suite 809
Kivari
Stevie Sister

BERNADETTE MOPERA & CO.
Suite 813
Ginger and Soul
Love Dove
Oh Yeah!
Sock It Up

SHOWROOM 903
Suite 903
Maven West
Only Hearts
Threads 4 Thought
Twenty
YFB Clothing

LA RUE SHOWROOM
Suite 904
I The Wild
Love Token

THE RESIDENCY SHOWROOM
Suite 921
Morrison Grey

REPRESENTING SHOWROOM
Suite 1002
Elizabeth Gillett Accessories
Heather Pullis Designs

LIVEFREE SHOWROOM
Suite 1003
Bench

JACKIE B SHOWROOM
Suite 1004
u-Fling

T. SMITH & CO.
Suite 1005
Nikki Poulos
Solitaire Sun

RANDE COHEN SHOWROOM
Suite 1103
Wooden Ships

SHOWROOM 1205
Suite 1205
Dive
Kalypso7
Ruby Yaya

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NEW SHOWROOM

Suite 417
Nicasa

NEW LINES

SEAMLESS SHOWROOM
Suite 401
34° N 118° W

FINDINGS
Suite 608
Free City

GERRY BUILDING

910 S. Los Angeles St.

NEW LOCATIONS

ROBIN RUTH WEST COAST
Moved from Suite 205 to
Suite 305
Nygard Slims
FAMMA GROUP INC
Moved from Suite 207 to

Suite 507
Coco & Jameson
Shine
Taylor & Sage

ELEVENAFTERELEVEN
SHOWROOM
Moved from Suite 203
to Suite 508

AAPE
BLC
Edwin Watch
Fool's Day
Indispensable
Just Hype

ZELDA ENTERPRISE
Moved from Suite 701 to Suite
807

NEW SHOWROOMS

NOW SHOWROOM LA
Suite 406
Gold Philosophy
Kat Ong
Lotuz-Jakarta
Michael Maven
Oraceo Castro

VIVIENNE ATELIER
Suite 708
Vivienne Atelier

LINE UPDATES

ELEVENAFTERELEVEN
SHOWROOM

Suite 508
AAPE
BLC
Edwin Watch
Fool's Day
Indispensable
Just Hype

MIRIANA OJEDA
Suite 702
Match
Vigorella

LAUNCH USA INTERNATIONAL
Suite 801
Anna Seravalle
Beatrice.b
Max Volmary
SFIZIO

ARLENE HENRY SALES
Suite 902
Georgina Estefania

JULIE & STUART MARCHER, LTD
Suite 903
Clara Sunwoo
Nygard Slims
Putorti Sweaters
Shine

JAMIE PRINCE SALES
Suite 904
Testimony

BARBARA NOGG
Suite 905
See Concept

KAREN KEARNS SALES
Suite 906
Avant-Garde
Ioanna Kourbela

STEVE LEVINSON
Suite 907
Pure Linen

CAROL HERZOG
Suite 907
April Marin
Delight London
Pico Vela

JULIE WALLS SHOWROOM
Suite 908
Alex and Ava
Bobeau Collection
Dora Landa

CORNER CENTER

206 E. Ninth St.

NEW SHOWROOMS

MELT MANAGEMENT
Showroom 8

Assali
Cooper St
Dcer
Fate
Jessica A
Madame X
Minty Meets Munt
Nightwalker
Premonition
Sass
State of Georgia
Three of Something
Urge Footwear

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Succarra

Cooper Design Space, Suite 309
(213) 612-0986
www.succarra.com

The **Succarra** showroom is in New York, Dallas and Atlanta, but until six months ago it did not have a home in Los Angeles. That changed with the opening of the newest Succarra location at the **Cooper Design Space**.



Succarra represents about 30 lines across all its showrooms. The Los Angeles showroom has about 11 accessories collections and two apparel collections, Los Angeles-based contemporary collection **Natalia Romano** (which also keeps a showroom and design space at the nearby **Gerry Building**) and New York-based athleisure line **West56**.

The newest accessories collection is Florida-based **Stephanie Kantis**, a high-end collection that sells in upscale stores including **Neiman Marcus** and **Nordstrom**.

"We're their first showroom, which is really exciting," said Haley Barcus, showroom coordinator for Succarra Los Angeles.

Succarra also represents several Califor-

nia-based collections, including Los Angeles-based **Criscara**, a boho line known for body chains and hand chains, which is wholesale priced from about \$19 to \$39. The newest collection from **Ayana Designs**, also based in Los Angeles, also has a boho aesthetic and is wholesale priced from about \$9 to \$38. San Francisco-based **Margaret Elizabeth** is known for its bangles with precious stones. "You can stack them together," Barcus said. Wholesale prices range from about \$35 to \$130. **Gazel** is a San Francisco-based, Turkish-inspired collection of jewelry that is wholesale priced from about \$14 to \$54.

New York-based **Fairchild Baldwin** features beaded statement pieces with leather straps and

magnetic closures. Prices are between \$146 and \$227 wholesale.

Based in Dallas, **Charmed Circle** features chunky chains wrapped in stingray and leather. The latest collection includes more-dainty pieces, Barcus said, and is wholesale priced from about \$20 to \$410.

Australian collection **From St. Xavier** includes tribal jewelry styles with crystals and beaded and metal handbags. Wholesale prices range from \$18 to \$64.

Masachusetts-based **Sisco + Berlutti** features thick hammered-metal statement pieces with stones and beading that are wholesale priced from about \$20 to \$60.

—Alison A. Nieder

Now Showroom LA

Gerry Building, Suite 406
(213) 892-1615

Couture, contemporary and ready-to-wear styles from designers around the world fill the new Now Showroom LA, opened recently by Natasha Greizen, a Los Angeles jewelry designer and entrepreneur.

In her sparsely decorated showroom with polished concrete floors and white walls, there are five sales representatives for nine lines of clothing, jewelry and handbags.

The brands are created by designers in Nigeria, Indonesia, South Africa, Australia and the United States for store owners looking for something with a fresh, sophisticated edge.

One of the more fashion-forward labels in the showroom is **Lotuz**, a brand from Jakarta, Indonesia, that encapsulates the modern woman. The collection, designed by Yosep Sinudarsono, focuses on high-quality materials that can take a woman from day to evening. The ready-to-wear wholesales for \$60 to \$90 and is filled with peplum tops, peplum dresses and sculpted-waist dresses in mostly black and white and royal blue. The line offers bespoke creations of evening gowns and cocktail dresses that wholesale for \$500 to \$900.

From Johannesburg, South Africa, is the contemporary women's collection **Michael Maven**, established in 2013 by siblings Natasha, Nadia and Mihkael Michael. The collection embraces minimalism and understated

elegance and is carried by **Dash**, the popular contemporary women's store chain owned by Khloe, Kourtney and Kim Khardashian.

The Michael Maven line for Spring/Summer 2016 is heavy on black and red creations seen in column dresses, palazzo pants, cut-out dresses and shift dresses. Wholesale



Kristin Perry, Natasha Greizen and Sierra Moder from the Now Showroom LA

prices range from \$70 to \$174.

The **Oroceo Castro** line from Melbourne, Australia, is heavy on feminine looks that are classic with swing skirts—some in neoprene—cropped palazzo pants and plaid dresses and shirts. The collection wholesales from \$125 to \$180.

Morin. O is a handbag line from Nigeria that makes purses out of leather and animal skins found in Nigeria, India and Italy. They wholesale for \$300 to \$1,200.

The showroom also reps five jewelry lines: **Gemma Azzurro**, **Gold Philosophy**, **Kat Ong**, **Alicia Mohr** and **Natasha Morse**. —Deborah Belgum

TRADE SHOW REPORT

Swim Collective *Continued from page 1*

"We've been strong at retail. We've been getting a nice response to the new collection."

Martin said she primarily saw West Coast accounts but said "quite a few" retailers from the East Coast and Midwest shopped the show as well.

Many were looking for easy apparel pieces such as cover-ups and palazzo pants to include in their product mix. "The apparel has definitely grown—it's probably double," Martin said.

According to Shannon Leggett, Swim Collective executive show director, retailers in attendance came from California, New York, Chicago, Miami, Seattle, Hawaii, Canada, Mexico and Japan.

Swimwear designer Mara Hoffman is known for her detailed tribal prints, but this season Hoffman included a broader selection of prints, including floral patterns as well as more solids, said Megan Peters, senior account executive for the New York-based collection.

Peters said she primarily met with local retailers but added she did see a few from the Caribbean and Canada. For the most part, retailers remained cautious, Peters said, but many have shifted their buying patterns.

"I've seen a big shift from Resort to Spring/Summer," she said. "It used to be a huge Resort business, but now Spring/Summer is growing. It's more buy now/wear now."

Brenda West, president of **Manhattan Beachwear** in Cypress, Calif., said retailers were optimistic about 2016, calling swim "the shining star." West estimated that sales have grown by about 20 percent over last year.

This season, Manhattan Beachwear took an L-shaped

collection of booths along the show's back wall to accommodate all its brands, including **Trina Turk**, **Kenneth Cole**, **Polo Ralph Lauren**, **La Blanca**, **Bikini Lab**, **24th & Ocean**, **Pink Lotus** and **Green Dragon**.

Quebec-based **SGS Sports Inc.** also had a large booth showcasing its lines **Body Glove**, contemporary label **Skye** and juniors brand **Eidon**.

Most of the retailers shopping the show on the first day were local, including **Diane's Beachwear**, **Tilly's** and **Pacific Sunwear**, said Todd David, SGS national sales manager.

Body Glove introduced several new groups and two new colors, black plum and flamingo pink. Among the new groups is the "Nineteen89," a collection of retro-styled suits that recall the brands '80s-era roots.

SGS was also showing pieces that worked for a variety of activities. Groups included stand-up paddle board suits and surf capris that double as yoga paints.

"Our paddlesuits have been unbelievable," David said. "The crossover segment is the fastest growing group. It's for activewear, stand-up paddle boarding and lifestyle. I can't stress how well these crossover pieces are doing."

For Body Glove, SGS also developed a new fabric called "Smush Smush," a lightweight, breathable polyester that looks and feels like a lightweight, stretchy neoprene.

Amber Delece-Forge, founder and creative director of San Diego-based **PilyQ**, had the "first lull of the day" in late afternoon on opening day. Delece-Forge said she had a full day of appointments with "great accounts" such as Diane's Swimwear and **Amazon.com**.

The company recently launched a line of yoga apparel and towels.



SGS Sports developed a new fabric, called "Smush Smush," which feels like lightweight neoprene, for Body Glove.

"Everything started by incorporating prints from swimwear to yoga fabrics," Delece-Forge said.

Pieces that crossed over multiple categories were key, she said. "You can run in them, you can swim in them, you can do yoga in them, you can do whatever you want."

"Beach-to-street" pieces were popular at **Vitamin A by Amahlia Stevens**, according to designer and founder Amahlia Stevens.

The brand was showing coverups in a cotton honeycomb mesh, crochet styles and coordinated pieces in a perforated fabrication.

Stevens said the appointment schedule was "max to capacity," but the company still saw some "drop-ins by very special retailers."

Vitamin A has been "consistently 30 percent ahead in bookings since August," said Chief Executive Officer Chris Staff. "Our reorders have been great."

Staff said there are two significant drivers for consumers: sales and new arrivals.

"Instead of coming to market with three huge deliveries, we have 10," he said. "We have new arrivals every month. We're able to say 'new' every month. We're all domestically



Manhattan Beachwear

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Financial Forecast *Continued from page 1*

Price-conscious season

Beemer said shoppers' budgets are as stretched as ever even though prices at the gas pump are down as much as 3 percent from last year, adding a few hundred dollars to everyone's pocketbook. But mandatory healthcare coverage costs are in the thousands, which completely wipe out the gas bonus.

For the average shopper, bargain-basement prices have won out over pricier goods when it comes to hitting the malls. Beemer calculates that the five winning retailers this holiday season were **Walmart, Dollar Tree, T.J. Maxx, Ross Dress for Less** and **Marshalls**.

Those stores cut into sales for other low-cost retailers such as **Old Navy**, which saw its same-store sales plummet 7 percent in December versus a positive 8 percent last year and fall 9 percent in November after a positive 18 percent the previous November. In the past, Old Navy has been the jewel in the crown of parent company **Gap Inc.**, accounting for 40 percent of sales.

Gap Inc.'s other nameplates didn't fare much better with same-store sales at **Banana Republic** falling 9 percent in December and dipping 2 percent at the Gap stores.

Cutting costs will be one way retailers survive this year. **Aéropostale Inc.** recently announced it is trimming 13 percent of its staff—or 100 jobs—by the end of fiscal 2015 and is implementing an aggressive new cost-reduction program to generate \$35 million to \$40 million in pretax savings in fiscal 2016. Last year, the New York-based retailer catering to young men and women lost \$206.5 million on \$1.84 billion in revenues.

While consumers may be changing their shopping habits, shoppers remain on a fairly solid footing as the unemployment rate in the United States stands at only 5 percent. It is slightly higher in California at 5.7 percent but down from 7.2 percent the previous year.

"The fact that we have had strong employment numbers is a good base going forward into 2016 and should keep consumers really engaged," said the National Retail Federation's Kleinhenz. "The challenge we have is that wages have not been all that superlative. But they should lift in 2016."

Despite all the economic turmoil in China, which is roil-

ing Wall Street markets, the United States' GDP is expected to grow between 2.6 and 2.8 percent in 2016, up slightly from the expected 2.5 percent in GDP growth in 2015.

The devaluation in China's currency, the renminbi, means that importing clothing from that country will be cheaper, adding to the annual falling price of apparel in the United States. Last year, clothing prices were down 1.7 percent, jewelry prices dipped 2.6 percent, and furniture and home furnishings dropped 5.7 percent, according to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Golden state

California's economy is poised for positive growth in 2016, following in the footsteps of the United States. "We are not looking at any breakout growth but slow and steady," said Robert Kleinhenz, the chief economist at the **Los Angeles County Economic Development Corp.** His brother is Jack Kleinhenz.

In 2015, for the fourth year in a row, California added more jobs at a faster clip than the United States. The number of new jobs in the United States rose 2 percent in 2015 while they were up 3 percent in California, Robert Kleinhenz said.

Construction jobs in California have been the winners—up 6.6 percent in 2015, followed by professional, scientific and technical service jobs rising 6.3 percent.

With tourism at a record high in Los Angeles County—climbing 2.8 percent to 45.5 million visitors last year—the

Apparel and Textile Employment		
California	Nov. 2015	Nov. 2014
Apparel manufacturing	51,500	51,100
Textile mills	8,100	8,300
Wholesaling	39,000	38,000
Los Angeles County		
Apparel manufacturing	42,600	42,000
Textile mills	5,800	6,400
Wholesaling	26,400	25,900
Source: California Employment Development Department		

hospitality and leisure sector will continue to add workers.

The only sector that might take a hit is trade because a strong U.S. dollar and weaker economies in developing countries mean less demand for U.S. exports. "It is going to be a pretty steady ship moving forward for the next 12 months," the LAEDC's Kleinhenz said. "And we are expecting to see wages increase in the Los Angeles County area." ●

Swim Collective *Continued from page 8*

produced and they're reordering throughout the season."

There were several new brands showing at Swim Collective as well.

Cabana Anna Swimwear is a 3-year-old, made-in-Los Angeles collection designed and founded by Anna Finch.

This was Finch's second time showing at Swim Collective. This season, Finch carried over and updated several of her best-selling styles and added new styles, including reversible styles and the brand's first coverup.

Finch said she was meeting primarily with local retailers at the show but said she hoped to land a few new boutiques and

larger retailers.

This was the first season at Swim Collective for Rachel Sprague Janda, designer of **Raz**, but her third swimwear trade show since launching the line in August.

The Northern California-based company is produced in Southern California from Italian fabrics. Janda said the line is focused on fit, quality details and "help[ing] women feel beautiful."

"I like to work with spas and hotels—they promote wellness and health," she said.

Janda recently added a line of hand-painted silk coverups, which, she said, is a good fit for resorts as well as contemporary boutiques. ●

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A stylized fashion illustration featuring four models walking in profile from left to right. The models are depicted with long, slender limbs and are wearing a variety of contemporary fashion items. The first model on the left is a woman with long brown hair tied in a ponytail, wearing a black and white striped top and a long black skirt. The second model is a man wearing a black fedora, a plaid shirt, a tan jacket, and black pants. The third model is a woman with long blonde hair, wearing a black and white striped dress. The fourth model is a man with a beard and short dark hair, wearing a white shirt and dark pants. The text "TELL YOUR FASHION STORY." is centered over the models in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

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TRADE SHOW REPORT

Agenda *Continued from page 1*

The show took place after a period of doldrums for the action-sports market. **Action-Watch** is a market-research company that focuses on specialty retailers serving surf, skate and action sports. It found that sales for these retailers declined 1.7 percent in the January-through-November time period compared with the same period the previous year, said Cary Allington of ActionWatch. Some of the biggest action-sports retailers reported tough winter holiday sales. **Zumiez Inc.**, a mall-based retailer of action-sports fashions, posted a same-store-sales decline of 8.9 percent in December 2015 compared with last year.

Bobby Kim, a cofounder of prominent streetwear brand **The Hundreds**, did not mince words about 2015 business in a Dec. 28 article he wrote on the state of streetwear in **Hypebeast**, a forum and e-tailer: "This was one of our worst years on record."

Despite anxiety about the health of the streetwear market, the show reported many high-end specialty retailers sent delegations of buyers to Agenda. Attendees included buyers from **Nordstrom**, **Lord & Taylor**, **Urban Outfitters**, **Tilly's**, **Target**, **Zumiez** and **Active**. Boutique and e-commerce retailer **Nasty Gal** also reportedly shopped the show. Influential boutiques such as **Jack's Surf Shop** also sent a delegation to Agenda. The show is a destination for core boutiques and retailers located away from the continental United States. **Toda Moda**, a boutique from Puerto Rico, was also spotted at the show.

There seemed to be consensus among vendors on the two-day show's pace of buyer traffic. The first day of the show, Jan. 7, was busy. The second day, Jan. 8, was slower, although meetings were held and orders were placed, according to vendors.

For Eme Mizioch of the **Joken Style Showroom**, Agenda business was spectacular, despite a series of powerful El Niño rainstorms, which soaked much of California a few days earlier. She estimated that her sales increased 80 percent over last year. "The rain and the weather did nothing to dampen the spirit of the buyers at the show," she said. Many of the sales for her clients—**Gypsea Swim**, **Teeink** and **Lux-LA**—were geared toward "at-once" orders. Larger orders with later delivery dates are typically placed once retailers develop a stronger relationship with a salesperson, she said.

Joel Cooper of **Lost Enterprises** said that he was pleasantly surprised that the pace of attendee traffic was much busier on the first day of the show than he predicted. He was also surprised that traffic at the show seemed to be equally divided between **Lost** and its sister line, **Sea Gypsies**. At previous shows, 80 percent of the traffic had gone to Sea Gypsies.

Exhibiting at the show were prominent streetwear brands such as **Obey** and **Crooks & Castles**. **Vans** marked its 50th anniversary at its sprawling booth. Established surfwear brands such as **Billabong**, **Hurley** and **Quiksilver** also exhibited at the show. However, Hurley's booth served as a gallery space to show its new **Cryptik Collection** line. Quiksilver, which is going through a bankruptcy, only exhibited its **Quiksilver Originals** line. Josh



EQUAL TIME: At previous Agenda shows, Sea Gypsies, Lost's sister line, typically did not get as much attendee traffic as the Lost brand. For the January show, the sibling brands received equal amounts of traffic, said Lost's Joel Cooper. The Sea Gypsies booth is pictured above.

Rush, its global creative director, described the line's style as the "organic, grassroots Quiksilver." Major retailers were not able to buy into it. It was intended for the core surf shops and the youth and lifestyle markets.



THE ORIGINAL: Josh Rush showed the Quiksilver Originals line at Agenda.



THE MEETING: The first day of Agenda was reportedly busy. The second day was slower. However, many booths were busy with meetings. Pictured above is a meeting at the RVCA booth.

Also making an Agenda debut were the brands **Cheap Monday**, an influential Swedish denim company; **Kook of the Day**, a new surf brand; and **Incase**, a luggage and accessories line. **Hoonigan**, an action-sports line headquartered in Long Beach, increased the space of its booth for this edition of Agenda. It did business at a 20-by-20 booth. At Agenda's last show, in August, it ran a 10-by-10 booth. Agenda also introduced a new section to the show, called **Enclave**, for premium street and men's contemporary fashions.

A major trend at the show was blending performance, technical fabrics and fashion. The **RVCA** booth featured clothes made for sports such as a jiu-jitsu and coaches' jackets that wick away moisture. The **Tavik** line exhibited its "Ruger Parka." It keeps out the elements, according to a Tavik statement, but also can be zipped into other Tavik garments as well as accessories made by the company.

For Neely Shearer of the boutique **In Heroes We Trust**, based in LA's Venice Beach neighborhood, one of the main fashion trends that she saw at the show was men's long-sleeve, button-up shirting. Most shirts were presented in basic colors.

"There seemed to be a lot of artist collaborations, too," she said of capsule collections offered by the brands.

Paulina Castelli of **Venice Heights**, another Venice-area boutique, reported that unisex athleisure styles seemed to be popular at the show. "I saw a lot of denim with an American heritage look and chinos styled with legs rolled up way past the ankles," she said.

After the show closed on Jan. 8, many of the attendees and vendors walked to the convention center's **Center Theater** for the **Agenda Emerge Conference**. Presented by **Project Cobalt**, **Group Y** and **Nice Kicks**, the conference features **TED**-style talks where business leaders and artists speak on their careers. Speaking at the Agenda Emerge Conference was Jeff Kearn, cofounder of **Stance**; Nic Galway, a global design vice president of **Adidas Originals**; Jon Wexler, a marketing chief at **Adidas**; and Mark Gonzalez, a pioneering skateboarder.

Next up for Agenda is its first trade show in Miami. It takes place at the **Mana Wynwood Production Village** Jan. 18–19. ●

AAFA Names Helfenbein as New President and CEO

The **American Apparel & Footwear Association**, the trade group in Washington, D.C., comprising 530 apparel and footwear members representing 1,000 brands, has selected apparel and footwear veteran Rick Helfenbein to become the new president and chief executive of the organization.

Helfenbein will assume his new job on Feb. 15 after Juanita Duggan, the current president and CEO, steps down on Feb. 8. Duggan came on board in the summer of 2014 to head the AAFA. She is leaving after being named the new president and chief executive of the **National Federation of Independent Business**.

For the past two years, Helfenbein has been the AAFA chairman and has served on the board since 2008. For 16 years, he has directed



Rick Helfenbein

the USA operations for Hong Kong-based apparel and footwear giant **Luen Thai** and was one of the key executives who helped grow the company into a large publicly listed apparel, accessories and footwear manufacturer on the Hong Kong Exchange.

Prior to Luen Thai, Helfenbein had extensive experience in apparel and textile manufacturing in the United States and sourcing in Central America.

"It is a great honor for me to have been selected to lead AAFA," Helfenbein said. "Having worked in the industry my entire career, I understand the important issues that we face and will continue the fight to expand and protect opportunities for all our member companies."

During his time on the AAFA board, the veteran executive has spent countless hours on Capitol Hill helping to secure passage of the Generalized System of Preference Update legislation, the first significant change to the GSP program in 40 years.

Helfenbein has been active in all of AAFA's key events, including AAFA's annual executive summit in Washington, D.C., and the **American Image Awards**, the industry's fashion, policy and business gala in New York. He has also been active in promoting AAFA's global presence, appearing several times on national television with commentary about international trade and other industry-related issues.

Helfenbein holds a bachelor of science degree in economics from **The Wharton School** at the **University of Pennsylvania** and participates annually in the Consortium for Operational Excellence in Retailing (COER) at Wharton and **Harvard University**.—*Deborah Belgun*

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