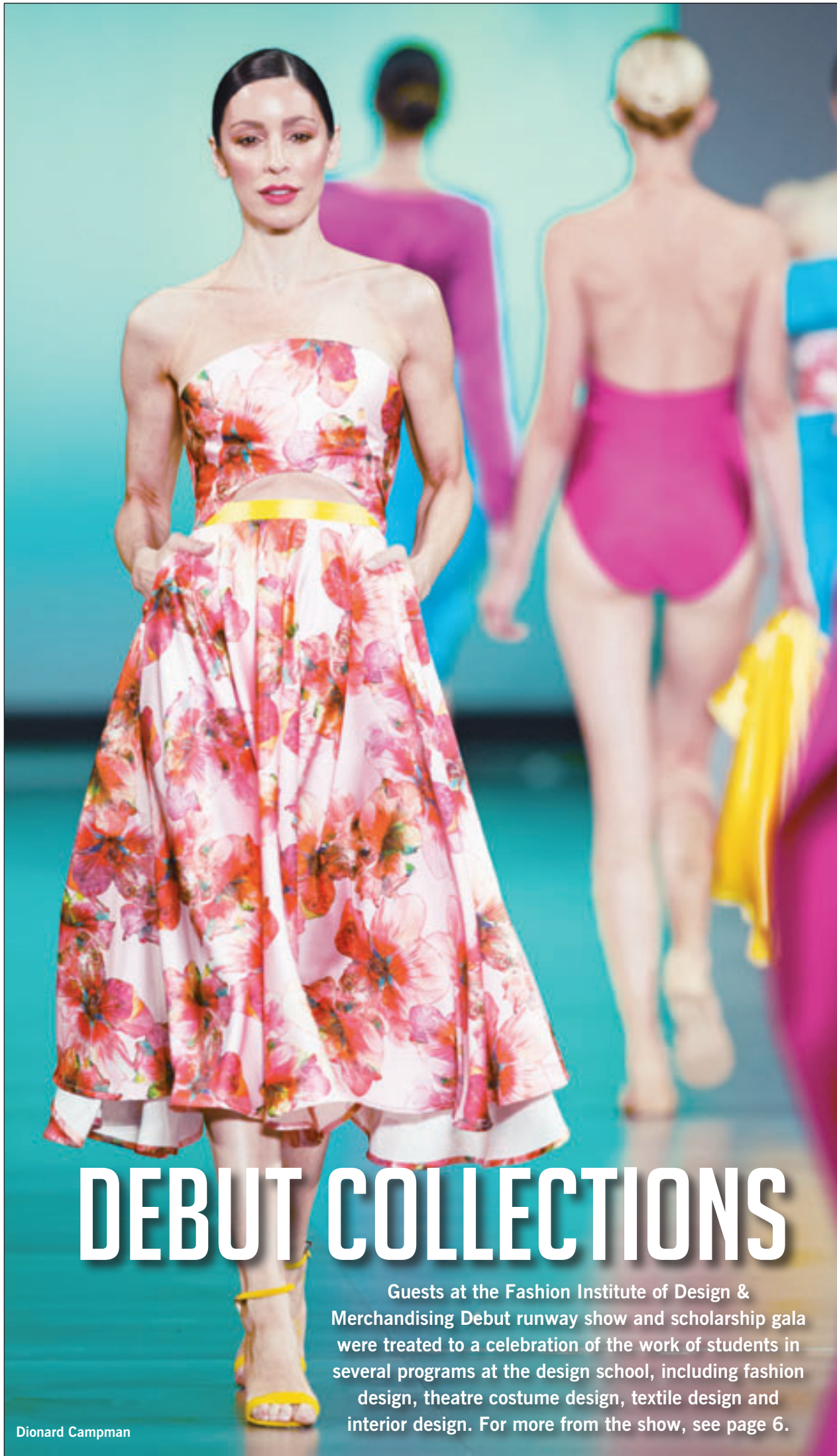


# CALIFORNIA ApparelINews

THE VOICE OF THE INDUSTRY FOR **72** YEARS

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## DEBUT COLLECTIONS

Guests at the Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising Debut runway show and scholarship gala were treated to a celebration of the work of students in several programs at the design school, including fashion design, theatre costume design, textile design and interior design. For more from the show, see page 6.

Dionard Campman

## American Apparel and Los Angeles Apparel: A Tale of Two Labels Starting From Ground Zero

By Deborah Belgum *Senior Editor*

On one side, you have **American Apparel**, the decades-old label produced in Los Angeles that went bankrupt twice and is now owned by a Canadian T-shirt company that is starting production with a new business model.

On the other side, you have **Los Angeles Apparel**, the new label started by American Apparel founder Dov Charney, who is starting all over by building a new clothing company from the ground up—much the same way he did with American Apparel until he was pushed out in 2014 as the company's chief executive officer.

Charney has set up shop in South Central Los Angeles, where he is manufacturing basic T-shirts and sweatshirts with 200 workers who are churning out about 250,000 units

➔ [American Apparel](#) page 3

## Dodging Retail Blues, LA Designer Tries Amazon e-Boutique

By Andrew Asch *Retail Editor*

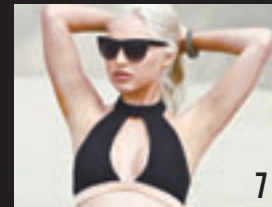
Maya Reynolds recently wrapped up a gig creating costumes for the **Backstreet Boys**. The 1990s hit makers are wearing her white leather jackets for a residency at **Planet Hollywood Resort & Casino** in Las Vegas.

Outfitting the Backstreet Boys is one of Reynolds' long line of jobs designing clothes favored by prominent rockers such as Lenny Kravitz, Steven Tyler and Chris Martin of **Coldplay**. But even in the best of times, independent designers must scramble for funds to finance their ventures.

Reynolds said that even retailers with a taste for unique and adventurous styles have been playing it safe recently. The tough state of retail compelled her to become more entrepreneurial. She recently launched a basics line called **Uncommon Thrds**, which she intends to sell direct-to-

➔ [Uncommon Thrds](#) page 2

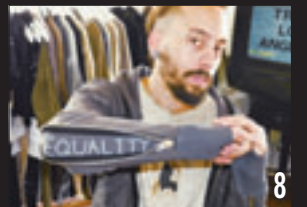
### INSIDE

Where fashion gets down to business<sup>SM</sup>

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[www.apparelnews.net](http://www.apparelnews.net)

# Bebe Stores Dismissing Hundreds of Employees

**Bebe Stores Inc.**, which has been in financial hot water for some time, is laying off more than 700 employees at its two business offices and at its stores.

In notices filed with the state Department of Employment on March 27, Bebe said it would be laying off 136 workers at its headquarters in Brisbane, Calif., and another 160 employees at its Los Angeles design office.

More than 400 retail workers at 35 California stores in cities such as Brea, Camarillo, El Segundo, San Diego, Torrance, Concord, Glendale, Irvine and Los Angeles were issued pink slips. The layoffs are effective May 27.

Emails asking for a comment from the company's president and chief operating officer, Walter Parks, were not returned.

But the move is not surprising. In March, Bebe Stores announced that its board of directors was exploring strategic alternatives and had retained **B. Riley & Co.** as its financial adviser. It also hired a real estate adviser to determine what to do with its leases.

At the time, Bebe operated 134 retail stores, 34 outlets and its online website.

In a *Bloomberg News* report, Bebe Stores executives were quoted as saying they wanted to close all their retail outposts and concentrate on online sales to avoid bankruptcy.

Bebe has been a familiar name in shopping malls since the 78-year-old Manny Mashouf, born in Iran, founded the company in 1976. In recent years, the company has been going through financial difficulties with a revolving door of executives trying

to find the golden formula for success for a company that lost nearly \$220 million in the last five years.

Last year, Mashouf returned to his post as chief executive officer. But his return didn't help the bottom line. For the second quarter of fiscal 2017, net sales were \$101.9 million with a net loss of \$5.23 million. For the same period one year earlier, net sales were \$122.4 million with a net loss of \$5.45 million.

Revenues for the company in fiscal 2016 were \$393.6 million, down from \$484.7 million in fiscal 2013.

Last year, Bebe sold nearly half of its brand to **Bluestar Alliance**, a brand-management company. The move raised \$35 million and was intended to help Bebe develop a wholesale licensing business.

Bebe is just one of several big-name California retailers falling on hard times. **BCBG Max Azria** filed for bankruptcy protection in February and is closing 120 unprofitable stores in the United States, leaving 70 locations open.

Los Angeles-based **American Apparel** filed for bankruptcy protection last year and sold its brand name for \$88 million to Canadian T-shirt manufacturer **Gildan Activewear**, which chose not to take over the more than 100 American Apparel stores in the United States.

**The Wet Seal**, another California retailer that had been on the financial ropes for years, filed for bankruptcy for a second time in February and recently closed all its stores.

—Deborah Belgum

## Uncommon Thrds

Continued from page 1

consumers. But she is not entirely going at it alone. She is selling Uncommon Thrds on **Amazon.com**. In March, she introduced her Amazon e-boutique at [www.amazon.com/shops/uncommonthrds](http://www.amazon.com/shops/uncommonthrds).

Since the venture is new, Reynolds made no forecast on how much she will earn from the new enterprise. But she believes it will support production of her 6-year-old "artisanal" brand, **Clade Man**, which has drawn attention from stylists and rockers. Headquartered in downtown Los Angeles, the line features unique looks in limited quantities, sometimes fewer than 20 garments per style. Performers also work with her brand's **Clade**

**Custom** division for one-of-a-kind pieces.

The Amazon venture started in late 2016 when buyers from Amazon contacted her and pitched the idea of running a direct-to-consumer store for Clade. Reynolds demurred but pitched them doing a store for Uncommon Thrds, on which she was already working.

In the following months, Reynolds gave Amazon a lot of content, including pictures, text describing the clothes and information on sizing. A lot of her information was for the proverbial front end of the shop. Amazon provided the back end of the store, such as the Web hosting to produce the store and shipping.

Although Clade made its debut just as e-commerce was beginning to skyrocket, Reyn-

olds didn't consider the burgeoning market as an appropriate forum for Clade. The brand was more of a couture experience that required a visit to her downtown Los Angeles atelier or a boutique run by one of her partners. Also, e-commerce seemed like another full-time job for the already busy Reynolds.

But a basics line, even one with an avant-garde edge, seemed more of an easier fit online. The elevated knitwear line is made in Los Angeles. Among the debut collection's silhouettes are T-shirts and hoodies with details such as scooped hems and contrast panels. The retail price point for the line ranges from \$97 to \$110, which includes shipping.

Reynolds said the basics line is not exclusive to Amazon. So far, Reynolds is pleased with Amazon doing the back-end grunt work for the e-store. "It's completely transparent on a certain level," Reynolds said. She said that she can view her store's sales reports online. She also can see how many people shopped her line by getting a report on the clicks. Amazon sales managers are also frequently available to consult on how to increase sales, she said.

The Seattle-headquartered Amazon is one of the giants of retail and is often considered a rival to **Walmart Stores Inc.**, the biggest retailer in the United States. Amazon has made headlines with its ventures into prestige TV and technology. In 2011, it made a bigger move into fashion. It hired traditional merchandisers such as Amy Glick, formerly of **Nordstrom Inc.**, to work as merchandise managers for its fashion division. According to Glick's **LinkedIn** profile, she worked fashion at Amazon until October 2013.

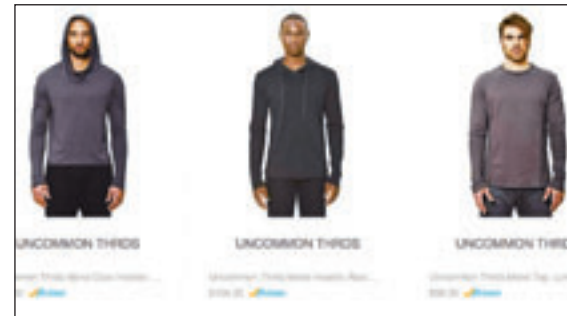
Amazon also signaled a deeper dive into fashion in 2012 with full-page ads in glossy magazines. In 2013, Amazon division **Shopbop** introduced a contemporary menswear e-commerce emporium, **East Dane**. Amazon sells fashion from brands such as **Tommy Hilfiger**, **Calvin Klein**, **Jessica Simpson**, **Vince Camuto** and **Ivanka Trump**. The company's own labels include women's labels **Lark & Ro**, **Society New York**, **James & Erin** and **North Eleven**; men's lines **Franklin & Freeman** and **Franklin Tailored**; and children's line **Scout + Ro**.

Amazon is building a bigger presence in California in July. It announced that it would open a fulfillment center in Sacramento. The compound will serve as the company's

10th fulfillment center in California. It currently runs other centers in Moreno Valley, Patterson, Redlands, Rialto, San Bernardino and Tracy.

Amazon might just be getting started as a big player in fashion.

Lenny Gordon, co-leader of account-



AMAZON THREADS: A screenshot of Amazon.com's selection from Uncommon Thrds brand. Image via Amazon.com.



A detail from an Uncommon Thrds piece. Picture courtesy of Uncommon Thrds.



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# TPC: LA's Networking Group for Industry Professionals

It's a group that includes factors, bankers, lawyers, certified public accountants, insurance agents and other members of the professional services community that specialize in working with apparel businesses.

For nearly 60 years, **The Professional Club** has been hosting events for this group around Southern California.

"It's a networking club of professionals in primarily the apparel space in Los Angeles, and it's always been that," said Nicholas A. Rozansky, a partner in **Brutzkus Gubner Rozansky Seror Weber LLP**,

a Woodland Hills, Calif.-based law firm. When it was founded in 1958, the group was called the **Textile Professional Club**, in recognition of members' ties to the Los Angeles textile and apparel community. In 2005, TPC changed its name to The Professional Club to better reflect the group's focus.

TPC hosts about six events annually, including a large networking mixer in Las Vegas each February during the apparel and sourcing trade shows.

"The big event is in February," Rozan-

sky said. "We get a huge amount of people from New York who are networking with California professionals. We typically have 200-plus people there. It's a couple hours of great networking."

The rest of the year, TPC hosts networking events around Los Angeles, which typically draw about 130 attendees, said Marco Valverde, senior manager of **Moss Adams**, a national accounting firm with offices around the country, including several in Southern and Northern California.

Rozansky and Valverde are members of TPC's board of directors.

"We keep a very extensive invite list of past participants," Valverde said. "You don't need to be affiliated with TPC to attend an event."

Occasionally, apparel manufacturers or retailers will attend TPC events, but Rozansky said the group is primarily focused on the professional services side of the apparel business.

"There have been some people who have come over the years to 'speed date' with investment bankers or CPAs. But manufacturers and retailers don't have a hard time meeting professionals," he said. "Typically it is truly just professionals and people who are looking into being a professional service provider within the industry. It's a very good place to start and meet people."

TPC was membership-driven in the past, but in recent years the group has shifted to a focus on sponsors. For a \$1,500 annual

fee, sponsors are recognized at events, on the TPC website ([www.theprofessionalclub.com](http://www.theprofessionalclub.com)) and in the emailed invitations for events.

"We're always looking for more sponsors," Valverde said. "The more sponsors we have, the better events we can host. When we first started getting sponsors I think there were about 15. Now we're up to about 33 sponsors, which is a pretty good number to be able to have the financial resources to have the events we have. The TPC has been around since 1958, but it wasn't until seven or eight years ago that we started doing the Vegas event in February. That was mainly due to the sponsors."

TPC has considered expanding to open a New York chapter, Rozansky said, describing the expansion effort as "in the works" but still on the horizon. In addition to the Las Vegas TPC event, East Coast professionals will also attend TPC events in Los Angeles when they're in town.

"We're coming up on our 60th year, and we've never been stronger," Rozansky said. "We hope to get more quality professionals at events. It's great meeting the younger people who are getting started. They get to network with people who've been around for a while."

TPC's next networking event will be held April 27 at the **Pez Cantina** in downtown Los Angeles. For more information, visit [www.theprofessionalclub.com](http://www.theprofessionalclub.com).

—Alison A. Nieder

## CFF, TALA, YMA to Host Annual Scholarship Luncheon

The **California Fashion Foundation**, the philanthropic arm of the **California Fashion Association**, will host the 2017 annual scholarship luncheon on April 27 at the **California Market Center**.

Held in partnership with the **Textile Association of Los Angeles** and the **YMA Fashion Scholarship Fund**, the event will grant scholarships to students from **Art Center College of Design**, **California State University—Los Angeles**, **California State University—Long Beach**, **California State University—Northridge**, **Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising**, **Long Beach City College**, **Los**

**Angeles Trade-Tech College**, **Mt. San Antonio College**, **Otis College of Art and Design**, **Pasadena City College**, **Saddleback College**, **Santa Ana College**, **Santa Monica College** and **Woodbury University**.

The CFF scholarship is funded by industry donations. Each student will receive a scholarship in the name of the sponsor. Tickets to the luncheon are \$50 each. All proceeds from the luncheon support regional fashion design students.

For more information, call (213) 688-6288 or email [info@calfashion.org](mailto:info@calfashion.org).

—A.A.N.

## American Apparel *Continued from page 1*

a month, Charney said.

As part of his apparel comeback, Charney recently signed an exclusive partnership with **TSC Apparel** in Cincinnati, Ohio, to distribute his Los Angeles Apparel collection to screen printers and embroiderers in need of well-made blanks.

For Bob Winget, president of TSC Apparel, it is like déjà vu. He was one of the first companies to distribute American Apparel when it was a new line known for being completely manufactured in Los Angeles at a time when T-shirt makers were going to China and other Asian countries to make goods at rock-bottom prices.

"We were one of the original distributors of American

"There is a pretty good market out there for people who want a 'Made in USA' product," Winget said.

While Los Angeles Apparel is being produced in Los Angeles, the new owners of American Apparel are breaking with the past and planning to produce the bulk of the label's T-shirts in Gildan's factories in Honduras and Nicaragua instead of in the now-shuttered American Apparel factory near downtown Los Angeles, which employed thousands of workers for years.

"In mid-summer, we are introducing a collection of price-centric American Apparel products that will be focused on style, fabric and a tighter price point," said Garry Bell, vice

to sell American Apparel," Bell explained.

For decades, American Apparel has been a strong brand name in the garment industry. In 1997, Dov Charney moved his T-shirt production from South Carolina to Los Angeles and started working in a modest office near downtown Los Angeles.

Three years later, he moved into an enormous seven-story factory on Alameda Street that at one time employed as many as 4,500 workers, making it the largest clothing factory in the United States. By 2003, Charney launched his own retail chain, which grew to 200 stores worldwide.

American Apparel in 2006 became a publicly traded company on the American Stock Exchange that at its height had \$633 million in revenues. But by 2009, the garment company stopped making a profit. Five years later, the board of directors ousted Charney as the chief executive officer. He was replaced by Paula Schneider.

By that time, the company had some big loans to pay off and in late 2015 American Apparel declared Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection to regroup, close some stores and try to come back as a viable enterprise.

That only lasted a year. American Apparel again declared Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection, opting to sell its brand name and

inventory in an auction where Gildan Activewear was the winner.

Gildan decided to close the large American Apparel factory in downtown Los Angeles, where 3,500 workers were laid off. Instead, it is manufacturing American Apparel in Central America, where it has its own large concentration of fabric and sewing plants, which also manufacture the Canadian company's other brands.

While Gildan is going outside of the United States to manufacture its clothing, Dov Charney is dedicated to keeping production domestic and employing garment workers in Los Angeles.

"We are very interested in supporting the workers that lost their jobs," Charney said. "We plan to scale up to 1,000 people as soon as we can." ●



Inside the Los Angeles Apparel factory



Apparel," Winget said. "We dealt with that company for 20 years, and we had a lot of success with them."

When Los Angeles Apparel was launched early this year, TSC Apparel didn't hesitate to be part of the new enterprise. "It was a good fit for us," Winget said. "Dov was always a good partner to us."

At the same time, TSC Apparel is distributing what is left of the old American Apparel merchandise acquired by **Gildan Activewear** when it bought American Apparel in February for \$88 million.

TSC Apparel distributes several other T-shirt lines—some made in the USA and some outside the U.S. They include **US Blanks**, **Bella + Canvas**, **Izod**, **Sierra Pacific** and **Van Heusen** as well as Gildan Activewear's other labels such as **Anvil** and **Gildan**.

president of corporate marketing and communications at Gildan Activewear, based in Montreal. "There is a lot of competition in the soft-fashion basic."

The collection, which will be made of yarns spun in Gildan's mills in North Carolina and Georgia, will focus for the time on the screen-printer business and blank-T-shirt market, wholesaling for around \$4 a T-shirt.

The company is also making a number of T-shirts at four factories in the Los Angeles area for the quick-supply needs of companies. "We continue to evaluate what the bigger picture and longer-term manufacturing supply chain will be," Bell said.

To that end, Gildan is setting up a marketing and merchandising office in Los Angeles to help retain that stylistic and merchandising design side that made American Apparel a strong brand. "We are going slowly with the consumer-side strategy

# U.S. Cargo-Container Imports to Rise Steadily This Year

With retail sales predicted to inch up around 4 percent this year, cargo-container traffic should also see healthy growth.

According to the "Global Port Tracker" report released on April 10 by the **National Retail Federation**, the nation's major ports should be pretty busy this spring and summer as the economy improves and shoppers won't be shy about making purchases.

"Consumers are spending more, and these import numbers show that retailers expect that to continue for a significant period," said Jonathan Gold, the NRF's vice president for supply chain and customs policy. "This is a clear sign that the economy has long-term momentum regardless of month-to-month fluctuations."

Ben Hackett, founder of **Hackett Associates**, which prepares the monthly NRF report, said his surveys show that cargo-container volumes coming into the United States will remain stable despite the uncertainties with the new Trump administration's threats to change trade policies and curtail imports. "Despite pre-election promises, there has been little real change in trade policy so far, and little change is expected for the greater part of the year," Hackett said.

For the first half of 2017, cargo-container

imports are expected to rise 7.3 percent with a total of 9.6 million 20-foot containers coming through U.S. docks.

Cargo import volume for 2016 totaled 18.8 million containers, up 3.1 percent from 2015.

February's volumes, the last month with complete numbers, were off by 7 percent from last year, but that was due to a lull in retailers stocking their inventory for summer, the report said.

The "Global Port Tracker" report predicts that container traffic in March will see a 21.5 percent jump to 1.61 million containers from the same period last year, when the Chinese Lunar New Year came a week later than this year.

April volumes are forecast to rise 10.3 percent to 1.59 million containers. May should be up 10.3 percent from last year to 1.68 million containers, and June will see a 5.3 percent rise. That will be followed by a 5.1 percent increase in July's volumes and a 1.6 percent decline in August traffic.

The National Retail Federation is forecasting that retail sales this year—excluding automobiles, gasoline and restaurants—will expand 3.7 percent to 4.2 percent over last year, driven by job and income growth coupled with low debt.—*Deborah Belgm*

## Calendar

### April 18

**Première Vision Designs**  
Metropolitan Pavilion  
New York  
Through April 19

### April 19

**Kingpins**  
Westergasfabriek  
Amsterdam  
Through April 20

### April 20

**Graduation Show Preview**  
ArtCenter College of Design  
Pasadena, Calif.

### April 23

**Fashion Market Northern California**  
San Mateo Event Center  
San Mateo, Calif.  
Through April 25

### April 26

**DG Expo Fabric & Trim Show**  
Crowne Plaza  
Dallas Market Center  
Dallas  
Through April 27

### April 27

**The Professional Club's Networking Event**  
Pez Cantina  
Los Angeles  
**Scholarship Awards Luncheon, presented by the California Fashion Foundation and the Textile Association of Los Angeles**

California Market Center  
Los Angeles

### April 30

**IFJAG**  
Stewart Hotel  
New York  
Through May 3

### May 6

**35th Annual Scholarship Benefit and Fashion Show, presented by Otis College of Art and Design**  
Beverly Hilton  
Beverly Hills

### May 7

**Accessorie Circuit Intermezzo Collections Pooltradeshow Accessories The Show Fame Moda**  
Javits Center  
New York  
Through May 9

### May 10

**Kingpins**  
Basketball City  
New York  
Through May 11

### May 14

**Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week Australia**  
Sydney  
Through May 19

### May 16

**Modama**  
Expo Guadalajara  
Guadalajara, Mexico  
Through May 18

### May 18

**ISS**  
Nashville Music City Center  
Nashville, Tenn.  
Through May 20

### May 23

**Licensing Expo**  
Mandalay Bay Convention Center  
Las Vegas  
Through May 25

**Apparel Sourcing Show**  
Grand Tika Futura Hotel  
Guatemala City, Guatemala  
Through May 25

### May 24

**Kingpins**  
Innocent  
Hong Kong  
Through May 25

### June 3

**Black & White Ball, benefiting National Jewish Health**  
The Langham Huntington  
Pasadena, Calif.

There's more  
on [ApparelNews.net](http://ApparelNews.net)

For calendar details and contact information, visit [ApparelNews.net/calendar](http://ApparelNews.net/calendar).

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

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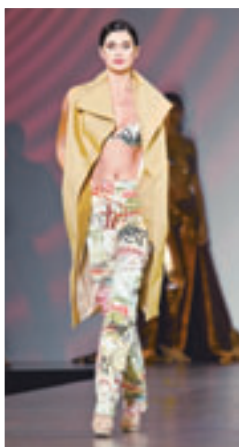
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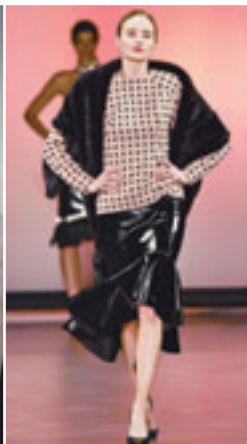
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Chairing Styles

# FIDM Debut 2017

The annual **FIDM Debut** runway show and scholarship gala is a celebration of the work of students in several programs at the **Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising**: advanced fashion design, advanced study theatre costume design, textile design and interior design programs.

Guests at the event, held on April 8 at **Barker Hangar** in Santa Monica, Calif., were treated to a night of design that spotlighted all four programs. Nick Verreos, co-designer of the **Nikolaki** collection and FIDM spokesperson, emceed the event, which featured a cocktail hour, dinner and a runway show in the cavernous space.

The evening kicked off with Chairing Styles, FIDM's design project that combines the work of fashion, interior and textile design students. Together, they create an original print, a dress and a chair, which are featured on the runway at FIDM Debut. **Se7en LLC**, a division of **Burlington Technologies**, produced the fabrics. The chairs were created by 10 furniture manufacturers: **Cisco Home/Cisco Brothers**, **The Flemming Group**, **Form + Function Design Studio**, **Haute House**, **Lola's Interiors**, **Magni Kalman Design**, **Michael Taylor Designs Inc.**, **Pacific Hospitality Design Inc.**, **Sardo Interior Services** and **Vitality Furniture**.

The 2017 Debut designers presented several denim looks in recognition of FIDM's "Business of Denim" Advanced Study Program.

Students in FIDM's Advanced Study Theatre Costume Design program—including Sean Brewer, Allyson Crocker,



Nick Verreos

Jennifer Gonzalez, Jade Antoinette LeBlanc, Jillian Nofziger, Alexandra Peña and Chiara Zalewski—created a series of costumes inspired by the theme of "Beat." The models sashayed and danced down the runway to a soundtrack that ranged from Jerry Lee Lewis' "Great Balls of Fire" and **The BeeGees'** "Staying Alive" to songs from "Footloose," "LaBamba" and "Grease."

The Advanced Study Fashion Design students showed everything from glamorous evening gowns to cheery childrenswear to edgy menswear in bold, graphic colors.

Dionard Campman, winner of the Jack and Joan Bonholtzer Scholarship, paired jewel tones of turquoise, fuchsia and magenta with a painterly floral print.

Mahkam Khaki's menswear in bold shades of black, white and yellow combined several oversized houndstooth patterns. Khaki received the FIDM Merit Scholarship. Zahra Marchand's eveningwear paired red and fuchsia with a sophisticated leafy floral pattern. An off-the-shoulder gown featured a scattering of floral blooms across the full skirt. Marchand received the Karen Kane Scholarship and the Petrol Advertising Scholarship. Lilit Markosyan, winner of the Bob Mackie scholarship, showed ultra-feminine pieces ranging from candy-colored cocktail gowns to embroidered gowns in pastel tulle. Christian John Miller's edgy menswear paired metallics with animal prints and plaid. Miller received the Debut Scholarship. Peivand Mirzaie's white and bright-orange collection played with proportion with oversized ruffles and voluminous sleeves and pants. Mirzaie received the Nolan Miller Scholarship. Ashley Neville, winner of the Rose Morbit Bolognone Scholarship, showed separates in copper metallic paired with a graffiti print. Jasmine "Yasi" Sakak's collection paired an abstract print in shades of burgundy and pink with copper accents. Sakak received the **Guess Inc.** Scholarship. Nancy Elizabeth Hennessey's collection of ladylike silhouettes evolved from demure mauve and black styles to curve-hugging designs in vinyl, lace, faux fur and feathers. Hennessey received the John & Victoria Hill Scholarship and the Jerry Epstein Scholarship. Eva Yang's cheerful childrenswear collection featured color-blocked polka dots mixed with brights, neutrals and pastels. Yang received the FIDM Merit Scholarship.—*Alison A. Nieder*



Designs by the Advanced Study Theatre Costume Design students



Designs by the Advanced Study Theatre Costume Design students



Karen and Lonnie Kane



Octavius Terry-Sims and Jamal Terry-Sims



Kevan Hall



Victoria Hill, John Hill and Barbara Bundy



Mary Stephens and Tonian Hohberg

# Raj's New VYB Collection Defies Conventions

Raj Swim's newest collection, VYB, is set to bow this month with a Spring Break 2017 collection.

The line is designed by a 12-person team with the millennial shopper in mind. Alex Bhathal and Lisa Vogel, co-chief executive officers of the Tustin, Calif.-based swim company, tasked the VYB design team—the "VYB tribe"—with creating a collection with "authenticity from a true millennial perspective."

"Collectively we have a ton of swim experience amongst our VYB tribe," said Holly Swope, VYB senior designer. "Combined with our resources on hand, it has been a creative's dream come true. We are able to create without restrictions or micro-management. We use our instinct to do what is right for the brand. It happens organically, and revelations and ideations occur constantly."

VYB—pronounced "vibe"—is made using dead-stock fabric from Raj's manufacturing facility. The luxury fabrics are excess inventory that would otherwise be destined for a landfill, according to the company.

"It puts an end to this massive trend of overconsumption and waste in the fashion industry," Swope said. "Plus, the VYB tribe is super-passionate about recycling and buying eco-friendly."

Fabric quantities are limited, which means VYB styles are produced in limited quantities, giving the line a sense of exclusivity and non-commodity, Swope said.

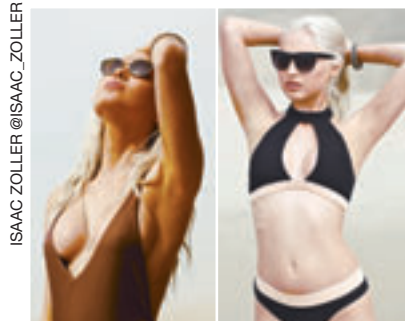
"In a sea of sameness and me-too product that exists with the fast-fashion world we live in, it is important for us to make sure our consumer feels like she is getting a high-end, quality product that might not be on everybody on the beach," she said.

Using fabrics in inventory also helps the VYB team turn out new product quickly, Swope said.

"The product itself is unique in the aesthetic and speed to market because we have eliminated the design lead times by using dead-stock fabric," she said. "We are able to hit the market and appeal to the trends of the evolving millennial consumer at a much faster pace than most competitors because the fabric is easily accessible and ready to be manufactured from our Orange County factory."

The launch collection includes mix-and-match separates, including triangle and bandeau tops and side-tie and high-cut bottoms. There are unique pieces such as the "No Chance Crop Bikini Top," a strapless style with a T-back and a band that wraps the shoulders. The "Lively Halter Bikini Top" has an asymmetrical cutout that exposes the décolletage. The "Cold Shoulder Crop Bikini Top" is a bandeau style with a dropped-shoulder silhouette. There are also one-piece styles, including the "Aventura V-Back Maillot One-Piece," which features ruching at the hips and a pair of straps that run down the back, and the "Desperado One-Piece," a strapless monokini.

The made-in-America collection includes an elevated premium assortment, which features five "vibes"—edgy, romantic, beachy,



ISAAC ZOLLER @ISAAC\_ZOLLER

boho and sassy. Retail prices range from \$60 to \$120. There's also a core assortment of styles, which features clean styles and simple finishes. Those styles are retail priced from \$30 to \$50.

"We believe that since current brands in the market have very specific genres, we wanted to craft VYB

Swim to capture all of these moods," said Holly Harshman, VYB's marketing director. "Some days we wake up wanting to be edgy wearing a leather jacket or other days we feel romantic and would prefer a floral top. We dress according to our vibes. Our collection is uncommon and expresses our current mood."



VYB TRIBE: Krissy Moyer, Rebecca Labarba, Sarah Dunn, Britt Kuhn, Marissa Frantz, Holly Swope, Shara Cook, Holly Harshman, Brittney Hertel, Candace Larson, Yvonne Macias and Melissa Joseph

The Resort 2018 collection of VYB will show in July at **Swim Collective** and the **Miami SwimShow**, but the first launch to consumers happens this month with a social-media influencer campaign.

"Not only are we changing the market with our approach to product, but we are also shifting

the way we market the product," Harshman said. "Our VYB tribe of college ambassadors and micro influencers will hype up and represent VYB as we know our consumers trust and rely on people they know and follow above all else."

For more information, visit [vybswim.com](http://vybswim.com).

—Alison A. Nieder

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# One T-Shirt Line's Trash

When Tal Mir quit a design job for a private-label company, he resolved to devote all of his creative energy to making a clothing line that would stand for quality and creativity. He called the line Trash. Its full name is **Trash Los Angeles**.

Mir said his brand name was meant to shock but also describe a creative process.

"We made the shirts look old and worn down, but there's an art to it," Mir said. "It doesn't look like a machine made it."

Mir's Trash found takers. He's landed orders for the line in high-end men's boutique **Traffic**, the pop-culture-focused **Kitross** and **Flasher Melrose**, all in Los Angeles.

Using scissors, **X-Acto** knives and even buckshot, Mir gave Trash's unisex T-shirts a distressed look. But it was a thrashing crafted by an artisan. Mir frequently makes the holes and cuts in the T-shirts. He wanted an authenticity to the shirts that could represent downtown Los Angeles. It's a place that is an address for fine art and urban blight. He lived in the district for five years.

The Los Angeles-made line is made from a fabric of organic cotton and green bamboo. Mir said that he also developed washes and different treatment for the shirts. One treatment, called "The Divorce," features a smooth wax coat on the upper half of the shirt. This treatment is diametrically opposed to the lower half of the shirt, which is defined with a lighter-colored oil treatment marked with holes.

The designer also wanted to offer T-shirt silhouettes that would provide an alternative. For the past few seasons, T-shirt silhouettes have accentuated form-fitting



COURTESY OF TRASH LOS ANGELES



ANDREW ASCH

Tal Mir in Trash Los Angeles "Equality" hoodie

looks and long hems.

For silhouettes, Mir looked back to classic T-shirt styles—think James Dean's 1950s looks. The silhouettes are boxy. The sleeves are rolled up. But Trash Los Angeles goes for an alterna-

tive. In the front of the shirt, hems go high enough to show a belt buckle. In back, the hems hang low enough to cover half the seat of the pants.

In another departure from the classic tee, the seam is placed off-shoulder to give the garment an artfully disheveled, hanging-off-the-shoulder look. T-shirts wholesale for \$24 to \$44.

Trash Los Angeles also offers hoodies. The hoodies' French terry fabric goes through the same distress that T-shirts do. Some pieces feature vegan-leather detail. Trash's "Equality" hoodie features a panel on the right sleeve. The hand-written word "Equality" appears when the sleeve's zipper is undone.

The word was intended to make a political statement. Mir also hopes to use 10 percent of proceeds from his brand's sales to start a foundation to aid homeless people. "A lot of them don't like shelters. They ask for toiletries, blankets," Mir said.

He intends to start the organization to distribute aid to the homeless by the second half of 2017. For more information on the line, contact [sales@trashlosangeles.com](mailto:sales@trashlosangeles.com).—Andrew Asch

# Never Elsewhere's Locals Only

When the **Never Elsewhere** brand started business in 2010, the Oakland, Calif.-based label sought to pay tribute to hot spots only locals would know about.

"It's tourist T-shirts for locals," Angela Tsay said. She is the chief executive officer and creative director for Never Elsewhere.

To her surprise, she found that plenty of people around the United States wanted T-shirts bearing names of California locales. To spread the wealth, the brand also makes graphics of hot spots in locales across the country.

The shirts are wholesale priced around \$15. Never Elsewhere works with in-house graphic artists. It also works with artists who have developed a local fan base, such as Adam Smith in Philadelphia and the San Francisco muralist Sirron Norris.

The brand has developed shirts paying tribute to locals-only hot spots—or places that should be locals-only hot spots. One of its shirts portrays a place called **Taqueria California**. There is such a restaurant in San Marcos, Calif., but Tsay and her friends have yet to go there. "The T-shirt celebrates burritos," Tsay said. "It's more pertinent to a California lifestyle."

But localism only goes so far. The brand started business with a mission to sell only T-shirt blanks made in America. With the bankruptcy of Los Angeles-made **American Apparel**, the brand has been forced to look around for other T-shirt makers. Tsay found that her shoppers didn't care where a T-shirt was made. "The general consumer just wants something that looks cool and will last," Tsay said. Never Elsewhere continues to work with **American Apparel**, but the label also works with blanks from **Bella + Canvas** and Australian label **AS Colour**.

But heart remains in the home for Never Elsewhere. Every month, the label donates 10 percent of proceeds from its Web sales to an Oakland-based nonprofit such as the **Child Abuse, Listening, Interviewing and Coordination Center (CALICO)**. For more information, contact [tess@blackcircleagency.com](mailto:tess@blackcircleagency.com).—A.A.



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# Vissla and Billabong's Big Night at SIMA Awards

Vissla and Billabong racked up trophies at the 14th annual SIMA Awards, produced by the trade group Surf Industry Manufacturers Association.

The Vissla Upcycled Boardshorts by Vissla won the honor for Men's Boardshort of the Year during the awards night, March 31. The 3-year-old Vissla also got the award for Men's Apparel Brand of the Year. It is the second year in a row that Vissla has been honored with the award.

Irvine, Calif.—headquartered Billabong's women's division had a

private estate located a short drive from Whiting Ranch Wilderness Park in Orange County, Calif.

SIMA's award for Breakout Brand of the Year went to Slater Designs, a new surfboard brand helmed by Kelly Slater, one of competitive surfing's biggest stars. It marked the first time a hard-goods brand won the category, according to a SIMA statement.

Veteran surfing shops also were honored at the awards show. Mitch's Surf Shop of La Jolla, Calif., and Wave Riding Vehicles of Virginia Beach, Va., received the SIMA Surf Shop Gold Wave Award.

The award honors core surf shops that have been in business for more than 50 years.

More than 400 people attended the awards show, according to a SIMA statement. Emceeding the event were action-sports personalities Rosy Hodge, a South African-born pro surfer and sports commentator, and Greg "GT" Tomlinson, the founder of the Von Zipper eyewear brand. He also had a gig working as an announcer for the X Games. The event was sponsored by the Surf Expo trade show and German auto manufacturer Audi.

In other SIMA news, the trade group announced it will introduce The Float Collective. SIMA members will make special products for The Float Collective. The sales will support the SIMA Humanitarian Fund, which is the charitable arm of SIMA. This fund raises money for nonprofits such as the John Wayne Cancer Fund and Surfers Healing. Participating brands will include Electric, Nixon, Quiksilver, Raw Elements, Rip Curl, Roark and RVCA. The Float Collective goods will go on sale at surf shops and boutiques in June.—Andrew Asch



WINNERS CIRCLE: Billabong crew poses with the Women's Apparel Brand of the Year trophy.



Vissla staff poses with the Men's Apparel Brand of the Year award.

great night. It won trophies in three categories: Women's Apparel Brand of the Year, Women's Swim Brand of the Year and Women's Marketing Campaign of the Year for "A Bikini Kinda Life."

The event was a time of change for the SIMA Awards. The name of the awards show was changed from its previous moniker, the SIMA Image Awards. It also made a change of venue from its long-time home at the City National Grove of Anaheim in Anaheim, Calif. In 2017, the awards show decamped to Rancho Las Lomas, a

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COORD./MERCHANDISER Highly motivated person with 2-3 years exp. in the junior/special sizes denim bottoms market needed to assist in import production. • Must have well rounded knowledge of overseas garment production & construction • Know how to read TECHPACKS and understand technical garment terms. •

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Min 5 yrs experience for established, stable apparel manufacturer in business 19 years. We are looking for a responsible, detail oriented person. This multi-tasking position includes purchasing trim, fabric, issuing cutting tickets and work orders to sub-contractors for embellishment. Must be good with follow up. Computer skills such as Outlook, Excel and Word are required. Must speak and write English. Spanish speaking is considered a plus. Background check required. Please fax resume to

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Denim Report  
FMNC Coverage

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**May 5**

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Denim Report  
Made in LA  
Fiber & Fabric  
Technology

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