

CALIFORNIA ApparelNews

THE VOICE OF THE INDUSTRY FOR 72 YEARS

\$2.99 VOLUME 73, NUMBER 19 MAY 5-11, 2017



FASHION'S FUTURE

Woodbury University's fashion design student Haibert Keshishi received the Judith Tamkin Fashion Award for most innovative senior collection at the college's recent annual fashion show, held in downtown Los Angeles. For more from the show, see page 6.

VOLKER CORELL

Analysts Talk Retail Survival in a Time of Change

By Andrew Asch *Retail Editor*

Attorney Jed Ferdinand has been worried for his fashion clients.

"It's been a challenging time," Ferdinand said. He is senior managing partner of the **Ferdinand IP** law office with headquarters in New York City. "I've been working in fashion licensing for many years. I've had a lot of deals fall through at the last minute recently. It's not as bad as 2008, but I'm starting to have the same feelings. Sales are slowing and business is getting more difficult for all of the downstream entities like manufacturers and brand owners."

Here's his advice for clients with deep pockets: "I'm telling many companies to forget about the great deals that you got a few years ago. It's not what they want to hear. What is a good deal under these circumstances? If manufacturers are well capitalized, my advice is take that deal

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Bachrach Clothing Stores File for Bankruptcy Protection in Los Angeles

By Deborah Belgum *Senior Editor*

In the wake of several recent retail bankruptcies, the wave of clothing store troubles just keeps coming.

The latest chain hitting financial problems is **Bachrach** men's stores, whose parent company, **B&B Bachrach LLC**, based in Los Angeles, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in U.S. Bankruptcy Court on April 28.

The company—which has 24 men's stores across the country that sell suits, dress shirts, tops, pants, shoes and accessories—said in court papers that business was profitable until 2016, when its consumers started gravitating more toward online shopping. Even though Bachrach's e-commerce sales grew from \$1 million in 2015 to \$1.2 million in 2016, that was far from enough to make up for a number of less profitable stores based primarily in shopping malls.

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West Coast Longshore Workers to Vote on Three-Year Contract Extension

With political and economic change in the wind, longshore workers have agreed to vote on a three-year extension of their current contract, expiring July 1, 2019.

On April 28, after 90 **International Longshore and Warehouse Union** delegates representing 29 West Coast ports met in San Francisco to discuss several contract issues, the caucus recommended that ILWU members vote on whether to extend the five-year contract.

Sources said it is expected to take several months for the approximately 10,000 full-time ILWU members who work at ports from San Diego to Bellingham, Wash., to discuss and vote on the issue.

"The rank-and-file members will make the best decision when they have the facts and an opportunity to decide for themselves, and that's how this will be decided," said ILWU International President Robert McEllrath in a statement. "The rank-and-file membership always has the final say on any contract—including this non-precedent-setting proposed

extension."

Extending the labor contract was a topic that has been bandied about since the beginning of 2016 and comes after West Coast ports were crippled with a labor slowdown and a chassis shortage during the 2015/2016 holiday season. The paralysis at the ports led to importers, manufacturers and retailers losing millions of dollars in sales during the crucial holiday season, which accounts for 20 percent to 30 percent of retailers' annual sales.

The **Pacific Maritime Association**, which represents the port terminal operators and shipping lines that hire the longshore workers, said that it proposed talks on a contract extension to provide stability on the West Coast waterfront.

"This is an extremely fair and reasonable proposal that demonstrates our commitments to longshoremen, their families and their futures," said PMA spokesman Wade Gates. "Extending our contract would maintain stability on the waterfront for the next

five years—a crucial time as the West Coast waterfront faces increased competition from other North American ports and as the maritime industry continues to battle global economic challenges."

Under the extended contract, workers would see a 3.1 percent-per-year wage increase from 2019 to 2022, taking their base rate of pay from \$42.18 an hour to \$46.23 by 2022.

Longshore workers would be eligible to retire early during the three-year contract extension. Instead of a minimum retirement age of 62, they could retire at 59.5 without an early-retirement discount. Workers would be eligible to retire after 13 years of employment.

No change would be made to the ILWU's topnotch health plan, meaning workers don't pay monthly premiums, only make a \$1 co-pay for prescriptions and have limited deductibles. Employers would also make additional contributions to workers' pension plans.

West Coast ports and longshore workers are following in the footsteps of similar

actions taken by East Coast and Gulf Coast ports and the **International Longshoremen's Association** to extend their labor contract, scheduled to expire Sept. 30, 2018.

A possible contract extension for West Coast ports was good news for importers who rely on a stable port environment to get their goods unloaded and shipped to stores. "We are really excited and hopeful that this comes to fruition," said Mark Hirzel, past president of the **Los Angeles Customs Brokers & Freight Forwarders Association**. "The hardest thing for all our customers is uncertainty."

He noted that uncertainty brings added cost to the supply chain. "You have to set up alternative routes that are not the most cost efficient if problems occur on the West Coast. You can't put all your eggs in one basket. So you may have basket A that is going 80 miles per hour and basket B that is going 70 miles per hour. But you can't put everything in the same basket going 100 miles per hour."—*Deborah Belgium*

Paula Schneider Steps Down as CEO of Three Contemporary Brands

After only seven months on the job, Paula Schneider has relinquished her post as chief executive officer of Los Angeles-based clothing labels **7 For All Mankind**, **Splendid** and **Ella Moss**.

Schneider resigned last year as CEO of **American Apparel** to take charge of the three contemporary brands sold by **VF Corp.** last year to **Delta Galil**, an Israeli clothing company.

Fashion United, an online fashion news site, reported that Delta Galil sent employees at **DG Premium Brands**, the umbrella group for the three contemporary labels, an email saying that Schneider resigned May 1. "We wish her the very best in her future endeavors," the email read.

In Schneider's absence, a senior leadership team that consists of Marty Marsteller and Jenna Habayeb are running things and

reporting to Isaac Dabah, the chief executive of Delta Galil Industries.

"We can confirm Paula Schneider's decision to leave her position as chief executive officer of DG Premium Brands, a division of Delta Galil Industries," the company said in an email. "We are conducting a search for a leader for DG Premium Brands who can help realize its full potential. We wish Paula well in her future endeavors."

Until last October, Schneider had been the chief executive of American Apparel. During her two years there, she served during a tumultuous time when the company fired American Apparel founder Dov Charney and then filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. American Apparel emerged as a

reorganized company that never made it back on its feet.

American Apparel filed for bankruptcy protection again last November and sold its brand name to **Gildan Activewear** early this year for \$88 million.

Schneider has a long history of heading up big-name clothing companies. She was the president of **Warnaco Swimwear Group**, whose principal label was **Speedo**, and she was president of **Laundry by Shelli Segal**.

When **The Gores Group** purchased Los Angeles juniorswear maker **Big Strike Inc.** in 2011, the private investment group gave the top executive position to Schneider, where she remained for almost two years.—*D.B.*



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TECHNOLOGY

Simparel Acquires Shopfloor Support LLC

New York-based **Simparel Inc.** has acquired **Shopfloor Support LLC**, an Alpharetta, Ga.-based solution that collects production data and provides real-time visibility on the factory floor.

The two companies have been working together for the last two years as Simparel developed the **Simparel SFC** real-time production management solution around core technologies provided by Shopfloor Support. With the acquisition, Simparel will be able to add Shopfloor Support's Android-based productivity app and cloud-based management dashboard and analytics solution to its existing portfolio of end-to-end business solutions.

"Since we first saw the fresh thinking that Shopfloor Support was bringing to manufacturing, we knew that we had to be a part of taking this exciting technology to the fashion market," explained Simparel President and Chief Executive Officer Roberto Mangual in a company statement. "After partnering and sharing tremendous success over the past couple of years, we found not only a great fit with our other products but with our people and cultures. We all feel even stronger now about the absolute value and proven return on investment that we are bringing to the industry through both standalone SFC deployments and as an integrated component part

of our Simparel Enterprise suite. With the full global resources of Simparel now behind the product, we look forward to accelerating the success of Simparel SFC."

Shopfloor Support partners and developers will move to a new Simparel office in the Atlanta area, where they will continue to provide product development, customer support and sales for Simparel SFC.

"After working closely and so successfully with Simparel, we realized that the best option for taking the product to the next level was through their strong organization and market reach," added Shopfloor Support Partner Justin Hershoran. "We are pleased to have the significant resources of Simparel behind the product and look forward to accelerating the development and sales of Simparel SFC."

Simparel provides solutions for brands, manufacturers and retailers in the apparel, footwear, accessories, home furnishings and other soft-goods industries. The Simparel Enterprise Solution combines enterprise resource planning (ERP), product lifecycle management (PLM), sourcing and supply-chain management (SCM), materials requirements planning (MRP), shop floor control (SFC), electronic data interchange (EDI), warehouse management (WMS), financial management (FMS) and other tools in a central business system.—*Alison A. Nieder*

Bachrach *Continued from page 1*

From 2010 to 2015, the company was in the black, with gross sales growing from \$11 million in 2010 to their peak of \$18.8 million in 2014. Along with that revenue boost came 17 new stores in 2012, according to court documents.

This store-expansion plan was part of a package deal with mall owner **Simon Properties Group**, court papers said, which required that Bachrach lease certain retail space at Simon's less desirable Class C malls in order to get into better locations at some of Simon's topnotch malls. Initially, this expansion plan worked well but eventually started to drag on revenues when the stores at Class C properties started underperforming.

Now Bachrach wants to shutter 13 unprofitable stores in its 24-store chain and keep 11 lucrative outposts up and running.

In court papers, Brian Lipman, chief executive of Bachrach and its principal owner, said that in 2016 revenues were \$18 million but EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization) dipped to minus \$100,000 compared to a positive \$740,000 the previous year. "Despite the size of e-commerce sales relative to the retail stores, the company's e-commerce revenue is stable and growing as opposed to the retail store sales, which have decreased," Lipman wrote in a court statement.

In the bankruptcy, filed in Los Angeles, the company listed \$11.3 million in assets and \$12.4 million in liabilities. Bachrach's biggest creditor is **Israel Discount Bank of New York**, which is owed \$10.57 million.

"We are looking to be out of bankruptcy in four months, which is a fairly quick timetable," said Brian Davidoff, the bankruptcy attorney at **Greenberg Glusker Fields Claman & Machtinger** representing Bachrach. "Many of the retailers who have been restructuring or filed bankruptcy had the idea that they would sell the company or restructure, but they haven't been able to survive because there were no buyers for them. Bacharach is different. The good stores are actually good and profitable."

The downhill slope for revenues at Bachrach's stores started last summer. By the end of 2016, Bachrach's locations were seeing an across-the-board 10 percent dip in sales. With sales tanking, Bachrach closed four stores in Illinois, New Jersey and New York. But that still left 13 stores that weren't making the grade but were too costly to close outside of bankruptcy. Bankruptcies allow retailers to break store leases without paying a penalty.

Bachrach said it would like to emerge from bankruptcy, keep its profitable stores and beef up its e-commerce site, which currently employs seven people out of a staff of 151.

The e-commerce site is supplied by a Los Angeles warehouse.

"Sales from *bachrach.com* have grown over the years, and the company sees the e-commerce business as a fundamental component of the success of the company going forward," Lipman wrote in court papers.

This is not the first bankruptcy for Bachrach. In 2005, the retail chain was acquired by **Sun Capital Partners** when the company had 79 stores throughout the United States—mostly in the Midwest. But many stores were located in underperforming markets, putting a drag on revenue.

By 2006, Sun Capital partners had filed for bankruptcy, selling the business to **Bachrach Acquisition**, whose owners included Brian Lipman, the current CEO.

Bachrach, founded in 1877 in Decatur, Ill., joins a growing rank of troubled retailers seeing increasing competition from online shopping sites. In the first four months of this year, 14 chains have announced they will seek court protection, according to an analysis by **S&P Global Market Intelligence**, almost surpassing all of 2016. Those who have filed for bankruptcy this year include **BCBG Max Azria**, **The Wet Seal**, **Limited Stores**, **Eastern Outfitters**, **Gander Mountain**, **Gordmans** discount department store and **Payless ShoeSource**.

Bebe, based in the San Francisco area, expects to close all its 168 stores and liquidate its inventory by the end of May. This will result in a \$20 million charge. The company said it wants to concentrate on e-commerce sales, but some experts expect it to head to bankruptcy soon.

At this rate, 2017 may turn out to be one of the worst years for retailers since 2008, when the recession took hold of the economy.

Online sales are the beast that is eating up retailers' revenues. And increasingly, **Amazon.com** is becoming the top e-commerce monster forging its way into the apparel business, taking over like it dominated the book-selling market and then expanded into other categories.

Recently, Amazon has launched a number of its own private-label clothing brands and is talking about providing custom-fit clothing within days of an order.

Howard Davidowitz, a retail expert who is chairman of **Howard Davidowitz & Associates** in New York, said we are a country of too many stores. "We have five times more square footage per person than England, France, Japan and Canada. We are gigantically over-stored," he said.

Pile on the competition of online shopping sites, and you have a recipe for more store closures down the line. "There is going to be a five- to seven-year adjustment for retailers and malls, and there will be an awful lot of pain," Davidowitz said. "We are only in the second inning of this problem." ●

Calendar

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 Pooltradeshaw AccessoriesTheShow
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
Various venues
Sydney
Through May 19

May 16

Modama

Expo Guadalajara
Guadalajara, Mexico
Through May 18

May 18

Imprinted Sportswear Show
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 Tikal Futura Hotel
Guatemala City, Guatemala
Through May 25

May 24

Kingpins
Innocentre
Hong Kong
Through May 25

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.

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RETAIL

Retail *Continued from page 1*

and run with it."

The point is, get your products out there and make sure they stay there. Better deals are on the horizon.

It's a time of disruption, according to many retail analysts. Rapid change calls for reactions that require creative thinking and good judgment, many retail analysts have been counseling their clients.

For the past few months, fashion websites have been passing around forecasts that more than 3,000 stores are scheduled to shutter in the United States. Jeff Van Sinderen, a retail analyst for **B. Riley & Co.** in Los Angeles, predicts the number of store closures will be even higher.

"This peak will exceed the Great Recession," he said. "It will be a monumental year for closures and bankruptcies. It's a cleansing of excess square footage of retail in the U.S. There are too many brands that have not been relevant enough. There are too many domestic stores and too little differentiation. Some of these have not been relevant enough to survive the migration to e-commerce and omni-channel retail as well as the ongoing consolidation in malls."

His view is echoed in analyst circles, which predict this is a time of great retail change. The change has already upended the way fashion does business, and it is difficult to predict how it will end up. Recently, **Credit Suisse** published a research note that stated the traditional leaders of the fashion and apparel business are no longer quite as important.

"We now see digital commerce and marketing as the primary and most effective mechanisms for building softlines brands, replacing the historical gatekeepers of third-party retailers and mass-media marketing," the company said in

the March 17 note, titled "Revolution in the Softlines Brand Landscape: Digital Is the New Wholesale."

According to the report, Credit Suisse analysts are "increasingly cautious" on traditional specialty retailers running huge fleets of stores as well as retailers with a heavy reliance on third-party brands that are forecast to embrace a direct-sales model.

"The rise of online-only marketplaces like **Amazon.com**, **Backcountry**, **Wish**, **YOOX** and **ASOS** as well as subscription-based models like **Birchbox** and **Trunk Club** creates a new distribution channel for brands whose primary relationship with its customers is digital," the report stated.

Don't give up on bricks-and-mortar

While e-commerce and commerce from mobile phones is forecast to continue to skyrocket, Mercedes Gonzalez, director of **Global Purchasing Companies**, a New York-headquartered consultancy and buying office, counsels people to not give up on bricks-and-mortar retail. She owns a boutique in upstate New York to

test out ideas. She thinks the time is ripe to open her second bricks-and-mortar boutique.

"It's a perfect storm to start something new and to be brave," she said. Retail is changing, she said, but anxiety over the fate of many retailers is blinding people from other issues.

"They are going out of business because they are not giving consumers choices," she said. "People have stopped shopping because it is so boring."

The U.S. economy is performing well. The national unemployment rate is low—4.5 percent in March—according to the **Bureau of Labor Statistics**. Consumers have money,

Gonzalez said. They're just not spending it on fashion.

To survive, apparel people will have to take risks. Gonzalez recommended taking inspiration from slow fashion and fast fashion. "Slow fashion is all about quality and the story about the brand. That is what consumers are looking for. The idea of fast fashion is designing for the sake of putting new product out there, and if it doesn't work forget about it and do something else."

Opportunities are rising in retail real estate, Gonzalez said. There's a lot of vacant space, many landlords are more willing to negotiate, and there's a talented pool of unemployed retail workers looking for jobs.

Retail analyst Marshal Cohen also said that retailers have been missing the point about consumers. In a recent blog for **The NPD Group**, Cohen wrote that retailers need to focus on new consumer outlooks. "It's now about customer engagement, not customer acquisition. Rather than a multichannel strategy, the strategy now needs to focus on the customer and finding new ways to deliver the products they want, when they want them, whether online or at a physical location. It's no longer about brands, big logos and price promotions, it's about engaging consumers with experiences, personalization, quality, service and value," Cohen wrote. He is chief industry analyst, retail, for NPD.

Robert Greenspan, founder of Los Angeles-headquartered **Greenspan Consult Inc.**, said the secret to survival in a time of tumult just makes good sense for manufacturers. Only do business with partners who have good credit and are willing to pay for items through methods such as "cash on delivery."

"You still have to make goods, you still have to sell goods. The basic concepts have not changed," Greenspan said. "You might not be able to grow in the next year, but be smart. Make money at whatever level business you are at, and watch your inventory levels and overhead levels." ●



Jed Ferdinand

Sister Act in Creating the Fenini Collection

When Fei Yang was a little girl growing up in Taiwan, she was constantly drawing on anything that had a flat surface—napkins, notebooks, newspapers and walls.

She even once drew on her sister's homework, which didn't make the math teacher very happy.

Many years later, Fei and her sister, Sandra, are partners in a misses sportswear company called **Fenini**, launched in 1993 a few years after Fei graduated from **Otis Parsons School of Design**, now part of **Otis College of Art and Design**.

At first, the company specialized in plus-size womenswear that sold at **Nordstrom**. But over the years, the collection has morphed into misses clothing that sells at mostly specialty stores.

Despite the transformation in sizing, one thing hasn't changed. The company continues to manufacture everything they make in the Los Angeles area with two factories basically dedicated to creating their line.

Using factories in El Monte, Calif., helps Fenini maintain quality control for the primarily garment-dyed styles that encompass mostly tops and bottoms. "Manufacturing here gives us better control over fabric, quality, shrinkage and the quality of the color," said Sandra, who graduated with a degree in electrical engineering from the **University of Southern California** before her sister tapped her to start Fenini. "We work very closely with the factories, and whatever we need, they will cooperate with us."

Today, Fenini, based in Baldwin Park, Calif., has 12 employees who are busy keeping up with the collections, which come out five times a year.

Fenini's trademark is clothing that is simple



Fei and Sandra Yang

but stylish. Silhouettes are cut loosely and drape nicely. Principal fabrics are cotton, linen and rayon for a more natural feel.

"Our styles are simple but have more details such as shirring at the waistline to accent a woman's shape or diagonal zippers," Sandra said. "Fei likes to make

the design look more interesting with different fabrics."

Many people compare Fenini's styles to the **Eileen Fisher** collection, except the price points are more reasonable. Fenini's wholesale



prices range from \$35 to \$65. Eileen Fisher's line retails in the \$100 to \$280 range.

For more information about the collection, visit www.fenini.com or contact the **Kristine Cleary Lifestyles** showroom at the **California Market Center** at (213) 622-3733.

—Deborah Belgum

RETAIL SALES

April Sales Bring Better Biz

After a tough beginning of the year, April proved to be a good month for retailers.

The companies followed by a *California Apparel News* index reported better-than-expected performances for April and beat many Wall Street forecasts.

Some of the most encouraging news came from Nebraska. **The Buckle Inc.**, a Kearney, Neb.-headquartered mall retailer, reported 22 months of declines, including a 3.5 percent same-store-sales decline in April. However, last month's drop registered only in the single digits. It was the smallest decline since August 2015, and it beat a Wall Street consensus estimate of a decline of 6.2 percent, said Ken Perkins, president of market-research firm **Retail Metrics**.

Cato Corp., a Charlotte, N.C., retailer, reported a same-store-sales decline of 2 percent. Perkins said that the performance broke a five-month string of double-digit declines. **L Brands Inc.**, the parent company of **Victoria's Secret** and **Henry Bendel**, also beat forecasts. Retail Metrics predicted that the company would post a decline of 3.3 percent. But it reported a same-store-sales

April Retail Sales

	\$Sales (in millions)	% Change from yr. ago	Same-store sales % change
The Buckle	\$62.60	-3.9%	-3.5%
L Brands Inc.	\$719.60	-2.0%	-5.0%
Zumiez Inc.	\$56.50	10.3%	+7.8%
Cato Corp.	\$80.60	-2.0%	-2.0%

Information from company reports

increase of 5 percent.

Zumiez Inc. also beat Retail Metrics' forecast of a same-store-sales gain of 4.5 percent. Zumiez reported an increase of 7.8 percent.

However, beating forecasts did not mean executives were thrilled with their company's performances. John Cato, chairman, president and chief executive officer of Cato, said that his company's first-quarter earnings would reflect a tough year.

"Our negative sales trends persisted throughout March and April as we continued to work through our merchandise assortment missteps. We still expect first-quarter earnings to be significantly less than last year," Cato said. The company is scheduled to release its first-quarter earnings on May 18.

—A.A.

Joyce Azria: Market Upheaval Is Good Time to Launch

By Andrew Asch *Retail Editor*

Joyce Azria is a child of Los Angeles' fashion industry. She grew up working at **BCBG**, the fashion label founded by her father, Max Azria. After serving as creative director for **BCBGeneration**, she introduced her first solo line, **Avec Les Filles**, in 2016. Billed as a fashion label for millennial women, **Avec Les Filles** has made some moves counterintuitive for that social-media generation such as opening 155 doors at traditional department store **Macy's**. Azria talked to *California Apparel News* on introducing a new fashion label during a time of great change, leadership and why she chose to do business with Macy's when the retailer is cutting back.



Joyce Azria

Retail and fashion are going through big changes. Did you have any hesitation starting a new brand?

Not for a minute. I find this an opportunistic time to lead a new fashion brand. I think when things are declining rapidly there is room for people to rise. Fashion has been a place that has been very hard to infiltrate in the past. Now there is more room. Leaders must shift their mindset and not see this as a sad time in retail but rather look at it as a changing time in retail. Change is difficult, and a lot of companies have a hard time changing. Change takes intuition, excitement and vision. Fact is, people see what they want to see and I see opportunity.

Could you talk more about Avec Les Filles' business strategy and why you chose to sell at department stores during a tough time for department stores?

I am a millennial. I grew up with the Internet. I saw many of my friends start direct-to-consumer businesses. There was a lot of action, quick rises, and all of these brands worked up to making \$50 million—then they hit a ceiling. They were not able to grow. They were not able to tell a cohesive story off of the screen. Once they would come to realize they needed a retail footprint the customer wouldn't buy into the storytelling, as it fell short of the constant change and excitement online. I felt it was wise to start with both and allow them to coexist in parallel.

Macy's leadership and its team really sees the future. And for me fundamentally, I have to align with people before I begin a business. It seemed like a good fit. For Macy's [it's about] going after millennial customers. For **Avec Les Filles**, aligning with a voice that goes across the country was what I was going after. They have an unbelievable executive team. It is the power of Macy's and the power of the department store. It was so important for me to have a direct-to-consumer pricing

strategy in front of America's retail consumer. We also were blessed to launch at **Revolve.com**, which continues to prove that it is a millennial playground. When the brand launched with **Revolve**, we sold out of goods daily. It was exciting testing the brand in front of the true millennial audience. Seeing how it performs at **Revolve** has also been very exciting for me and for the future of **Avec Les Filles**.

What did you learn at BCBG?

One thing my BCBG schooling taught me is what kind of leader I wanted to be and what kind of corporate culture I wanted to create. I got to learn people skills at BCBG. Business starts with heart and starts with people. People are business. It was one of the biggest

gifts I took away from BCBG. How to keep a team of people inspired and aligned with a vision. People who lead with ego give themselves a quick climb and a hard fall. People who appreciate their team and the amount of work it takes to make it happen—they are the people I want to emulate. When I saw people over the years with a team spirit, for me I always felt that they were going to win, and they did. They were the successful ones who knew how to maximize people's assets and how to achieve on an operations front. I saw so many fantastic people come

in over the years at BCBG and really make things happen. They were the ones who built timeless items or created a business from the ground up. They could surround themselves with like-minded people and work with a lot of humility and kindness. It comes back to a lot of simple things—loving your job, inspiring others, making beautiful product and leaving something tangible that continued to grow past its potential.

What is next for Avec Les Filles?

We are very excited for our handbag and outerwear launch at the end of this year as well as our jewelry and intimates Spring takeoff. The brand will continue to embrace the millennial girl and extend into all parts of her lifestyle. We are exploring some fun initiatives—as well as the opening of our Los Angeles pop-up shop this month. We are really excited to run the business every day and continue to get faster at getting great product to the floor in record time.

Will you open a permanent Avec Les Filles shop?

I like pop-ups for right now. If I dive into bricks-and-mortar, it would be later with an eye on experiences. I have five kids, and between the world of **Avec Les Filles** and our pop-ups I think I will just hold for a minute and smile. ●



Avec Les Filles' Herald Square shop



RED CARPET

Dazzling Denim



CALIKDENIM
www.calikdenim.com

Woodbury Celebrates Two Anniversaries on the Runway

When fashion design students from **Woodbury University** presented their creations on the runway on April 30 at **The Reef** in downtown Los Angeles, the university, located in Burbank, Calif., was celebrating two anniversaries. Woodbury's fashion program was celebrating its 85th year and the school was celebrating its 53rd year hosting an annual fashion show.

Kicking off the runway show were pieces from Woodbury's Fashion Study Collection, an archive of 4,000 garments and accessories spanning from the 1800s to 20th-century designs by Christian Dior, Geoffrey Beene, Thierry Mugler, Yves Saint Laurent and Jean-Paul Gaultier.

The show included designs from several sophomore-class projects, including pieces inspired by the Bauhaus art movement as well as swimwear for women and men. Woodbury's Denim Class presented looks that took a tailored approach to the classic workwear fabric.

The junior class presented looks that ranged from separates and suitings to stylish streetwear and more-glamorous evening looks.

Kicking off Woodbury's senior collections was Emily Buelow, whose childrenswear designs were inspired by the "Emily the Strange" books. Buelow's whimsical designs also had a functional aspect. They were designed for children with cancer. The cozy and comfortable pieces also were designed to accommodate medical devices.

Junior Collections



Alejandra Marroquin Alice Ramirez Basma Alkadi Heather Baughman Joelle Haiek Kentajia Smith Mariam Aleem August Chow Melissa Zarate Merced Jackson Nawf Alhazmi Satenik Kalyan Stephanie Zarate Yvan Tran Sophi Melikian

Senior Collections



Rachel Hwang Alejandro Rodriguez Ariana Nazarian Emily Buelow Haibert Keshishi Lucy Ochoa

Ariana Nazarian's collection was inspired by her Armenian culture and featured hand-worked details "passed from generation to generation in my family." Nazarian mixed matte and shiny fabrications in a collection that featured styles that wrapped the body.

Lucy Ochoa hopes to design custom pieces for musicians and performers and took inspiration from music and the music scene for her men's and women's collection, which mixed tie-dye and bleach-dye fabrics with sequins and a luxe jacquard fabric. Her finale piece was a black and silver men's jacket embedded with LED lights that lit up when the model reached the end of the runway. Ochoa said designing the jacket was a challenge, but she wanted to create a dramatic performance piece.

Rachel Hwang created a bridal collection that added a touch of color, such as floral details on a tulle skirt or a pale-blue lining on a lace gown. Hwang included a few nontraditional silhouettes as well, including a jumpsuit with a tulle train and a two-piece style with pants in champagne satin.

Alejandro Rodriguez was inspired by her family's heritage. Her father is Mexican, her mother is Colombian and she is American. Her collection combined the silhouettes and color-

blocked details of activewear with softer, draped pieces in hammered satin.

Haibert Keshishi's menswear pieces featured suitings in velvet trimmed in leather and used a chunky sweater knit for a tailored jacket. Keshishi's women's styles were also tailored but included some surprising details, such as a blue backless satin dress with a ruffled collar. Keshishi received the **Judith Tamkin Fashion Award** for most innovative senior collection from this year's honoree, beauty blogger Sazan Hendrix.—Alison A. Nieder

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Premium-Denim Brand Paige Charts Stylish Path With New Stores

A few months after the **Paige** brand introduced its first design collaboration, **Rosie HW X Paige**, the Los Angeles-headquartered premium-denim brand, is embarking on a retail rollout.

On April 27, the company celebrated a grand opening of a new boutique in Los Angeles' exclusive Brentwood section. In May, it is scheduled to produce a soft opening of a boutique at the **Malibu Country Mart** retail center in Malibu, Calif. Also this summer, it is scheduled to open a boutique in Austin, Texas, said Paige Adams-Geller, the brand's cofounder and creative director.



Paige Adams-Geller

In a time of great change and tumult in retail and apparel, Adams-Geller said that her privately held company was enjoying stable growth. She declined to state her company's sales. But she said sales enjoyed a double-digit increase in the first quarter of 2017 in a year-over-year comparison with the same quarter of the previous year. The new stores will add a dozen or so new employees to a company with a staff of around 208 people. The brand will continue traveling the same course that it has been traveling.

"We're happy with our partners, **TSG Consumer Partners**," she said. "I am grateful that we've had partners that have let us continue to see our vision come to life and have been supportive. It's been a blessing to have like-minded partners investing in the company."

Adams-Geller started Paige in 2004 during the premium-denim boom in the Los Angeles and California fashion business. During those days, new denim brands seemed to be introduced weekly. While many of those brands folded, Paige thrived and has been sold at department stores such as **Nordstrom** and **Bloomingdale's**, e-commerce emporiums



Rendering of Paige Brentwood store

such as **Revolve.com**, and her line of boutiques. When the Austin Paige store opens, the brand will run eight physical stores and one e-commerce boutique (www.paige.com).

"I think as a brand and as a company we have been resilient," she said. "The resilience has taken us a long way. We pride ourselves on focusing on great-fitting product and being dedicated to detail. Yet we still have the cutting edge of design. We focus on fit for men and women. Fit never goes out of style. We pay attention to what the customer

wants while being innovative enough to be forward thinking in trend and fabrication while never being complacent."

Paige has recently expanded its lifestyle product and has increased its selection of men's styles. Paige brand will offer more sweaters and outerwear as well as wovens, silks and expansion of non-denim bottoms.

For Fall/Winter 2017, it will offer another season of the Rosie HW X Paige collection. The Spring/Summer collection was more what a model wears after work. "For fall, it's a focus on 'model on duty.' There's a lot of shimmer and shine, metallic sequins, and splashier pieces that you'll want to be noticed in."

—Andrew Asch



Debut party at Paige Brentwood

the Rosie HW X Paige collection. The Spring/Summer collection was more what a model wears after work. "For fall, it's a focus on 'model on duty.' There's a lot of shimmer and shine, metallic sequins, and splashier pieces that you'll want to be noticed in."

—Andrew Asch

Twin Dragon Introduces New Eco Initiatives for Denim

Gardena, Calif.-based **Twin Dragon Marketing Inc.** has introduced several new environmental initiatives for 2017 for the company's denim facilities in Mexico and Asia.

"After three years of development, we are proud to introduce pre-reduced liquid indigo and eco-finishing, which, when used together, has achieved an 85 percent reduction in environmentally hazardous chemical discharge, which could become the new gold standard in the denim textile industry," said Dominic Poon, chief executive officer of Twin Dragon, in a company statement.

By using pre-reduced indigo and adding eco-finishing processes, Twin Dragon has reduced chemical and water usage compared with typical dyeing and finishing methods, Poon said, adding that the new processes have helped the company save water, minimize chemical usage and speed up the garment production process. According to the company, using eco-finishing at the Twin Dragon mill in Mexico will result in an annual savings of 40 million gallons of water. By using pre-reduced liquid indigo, the company eliminates 700,000 pounds of sodium hydrosulphite from the process.

Plus, the new methods have improved the appearance of the final product, Poon said.

"It stabilized the shade of indigo, increased the colorfastness in both dry and wet crocking, and the final denim product has a 3-D appearance," he said.

Over the last decade, Twin Dragon has invested in several eco initiatives, including using eco-friendly fibers, such as **Lenzing's Tencel** and **Modal**. The company developed its own trademarked **Forever Black** process for black jeans, which reduces the environmental impact of the traditional black dye process.—Alison A. Nieder

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www.calikdenim.com
Products and Services: Calik Denim brings innovation and modern fabrics to the high street with its Interactive Denim AW 18/19 Collection. Fabric is no longer just a material that covers the body and looks good to the consumer; it must have a positive property. It requires a smarter solution to brand's fashion problems, always dealing with washing and developing new styles. This is the best way to interact with customers and consumers, supporting them with emerging problems and engaging them on the product's benefits. So the story of "Interactive Denim" is being part of a team with all your business partners to create innovative solutions. With this collection, Calik take innovation a step further—with not only its Raw Stretch, Denovated, Curve, and Circular Elastech concepts but also with Red Carpet and Circular 100. For some people, an extraordinary look is irreplaceable. Calik Denim's Red Carpet is just the right ticket.

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ac production and QC managers facilitate additional screen printing, embroidery, fabric dying, and all operations with necessary outside contractors. From development to delivery, plus trim supply, tb/ac is prepared to be the reliable supply chain resource for your brand's garment production.

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Jobs Available



PATTERN MAKER

Karen Kane is seeking a 1st thru production pattern maker for its established better sportswear division and emerging contemporary divisions. Strong communication skills, attention to detail, great organization skills, self-motivated, energetic. Computer literacy a must, knowledge of Gerber system is beneficial. Bilingual a plus. Min 2 yrs experience. Fax resume with salary history to 323-277-6830 or email in PDF or Word format only to: resumes@karene.com

PATTERNMAKER

We are currently looking for a Patternmaker with Sportswear or Activewear experience. Ability to organize work, manage time and schedule projects to meet deadlines. 1st through production patternmaking for the creation and execution of Sportswear product. Expertise at

Jobs Available

APPAREL BOTTOMS COMPANY SEEKING INDIVIDUALS TO FILL THE FOLLOWING POSITION. INCREDIBLE OPPORTUNITY FOR THE RIGHT INDIVIDUALS

IMPORT 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. • Experience with measuring garments as well as approving finished garments, lab-dips, fabrics, etc. • Must be a self-starter, detail oriented individual and have strong written and verbal comm. skills. Email to hrdept229@gmail.com or fax resume with salary history to: (323) 657-5344

TRIM ASSISTANT

Karen Kane is seeking to fill a trim assistant position. The person will be responsible for filling trim orders for cuts •Data entry of cut tickets, POs, receipts •Prior experience in a Trim dept.

Jobs Available

PRODUCTION ASST

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 888-677-5579 or email to info@kingsburyunifor.ms.com. Do NOT send your resume as an attachment, please cut & paste your resume into the body of your email. Location: Torrance/ So Gardena area. * Compensation: \$ 15-19/hr Full Time + health benefits



A man with short dark hair and a light beard is wearing a blue t-shirt. He is leaning forward and pointing his right index finger towards a black rectangular area on his chest. The background is a dark wood-grain wall.

SAY GOODBYE TO PIECE DYE!

Get with the program.
Get Garment Dye.

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