

CALIFORNIA ApparelNews

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POST POP-UP: Security guards remained in front of the Louis Vuitton X Supreme storefront 12 hours after crowds were dispersed at 4:30 a.m. on July 7.

Late-Night Crowd Closes Louis Vuitton Pop-Up in DTLA

By Andrew Asch *Retail Editor*

A pop-up shop for a highly anticipated **Louis Vuitton X Supreme** capsule collection has reportedly shuttered after Los Angeles police dispersed a large crowd in front of the pop-up shop at 4:30 a.m. on July 7.

The pop-up is located in an art-deco warehouse on the corner of Third and Garey streets in downtown Los Angeles' Arts District. Neighbors include the **Hauser & Wirth** art gallery and high-end **Shinola** boutique. There were no arrests when the crowd was dispersed. Tony Im, an LAPD spokesman, declined to give out crowd estimates. "It was a matter of too many people being there," Im said. "They called us to provide crowd control." He did not know whether it was a business owner or

a neighbor who called the police to complain about the crowd.

To disperse the crowd, police officers got in a scrimmage line and told the crowd to leave the area. The crowd peacefully complied, Im said.

The Louis Vuitton X Supreme pop-up opened on June 30. A group of security guards patrolled the block on Third and Garey by the store entrance as streetwear fans lined up to purchase backpacks, T-shirts and sweaters for the highly anticipated collaboration.

News reports photographed music stars Justin Bieber, Madonna and 2 Chainz wearing Louis Vuitton X Supreme styles. A **Google** search found Louis Vuitton X Supreme goods selling from \$460 to \$10,000 on resale sites. ●

Arts District: LA's Next Big Retail Area?

By Andrew Asch *Retail Editor*

Every major city has an "anti-downtown," said Sam Brownell, principal and partner of property developers **Blatteis & Schnur Inc.**

Examples include the SoHo/Meatpacking District in New York City, Wynwood in Miami and the Fulton River District in Chicago. "It attracts the creative class, where music, digital content, film businesses go," Brownell said of the model for the anti-downtown.

After an unprecedented construction boom in downtown Los Angeles, the city's downtown area is quickly developing its own "anti-downtown," Brownell said. It is going to be the Arts District, a formerly blighted area sandwiched in between the Little Tokyo neighborhood and Boyle Heights in East LA.

Blatteis & Schnur is wrapping up construction of **At Mateo**, a 190,000-square-foot development in the Arts District page 8

Hundreds Get Final Pink Slips at BCBG Max Azria Group

By Deborah Belgium *Senior Editor*

As operations wind down at the bankrupt **BCBG Max Azria Group**, nearly 500 layoff notices have gone out to employees of the contemporary brand founded in Los Angeles almost 30 years ago.

By the end of the month, the brand and its sister labels are expected to be taken over by **Marquee Brands** and **Global Brands Group**, the successful bidders to acquire the intellectual-property rights and assets of the company, which filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection on Feb. 28.

According to paperwork filed with the state Department of Employment Development on July 7, some 492 employees were given notice that they will be permanently laid off as of Sept. 5. The layoff notices did not include BCBG's

➔ **BCBG** page 3

TRADE SHOW REPORT

One-Piece Swimsuits a Popular Trend at Swim Collective

By Deborah Belgium *Senior Editor*

Trim models swiveled from front to back to show off the newest bikinis and one-piece suits created by swimwear designers. Serious buyers on the hunt for the latest in poolside fashions crowded into booths as an explosion of colorful prints and solid colors ran across the ballroom that housed the latest **Swim Collective** in Huntington Beach, Calif.

The semi-annual swimwear trade show, held July 11-12, took place at the **Hyatt Regency Huntington Beach Resort & Spa**, appropriately located across the street from the beach where the ultimate wearers of these fashions were hanging out.

This year, the swimwear show was held a few weeks earlier than normal and right before the big **Miami Swim Show** in Florida. Organizers said the earlier time slot did put a slight damper on exhibitors participating in the show and on buyer attendance.

Jane Preston, the show's vice president of sales, said the event had 165 booths, down about 40 booths from one year ago when it took place Aug. 8-10. This year there were 122

exhibitors showing 224 lines. "The drop in booths is date related," she said.

The earlier date was scheduled by the show's previous owner, Shannon Leggett, who nearly one year ago sold the Swim Collective and its sister **Active Collective** trade show to **Emerald Expositions**, an event organizer that also owns **Surf Expo**, **Outdoor Retailer**, the **Imprinted Sportswear Show** and the **SIA Snow Show**.

Next year, organizers said, the Swim Collective show will be held a few weeks later in the summer.

Swim Collective is a popular trade show for new as well as long-established swimwear companies and brands. **Manhattan Beachwear** occupied the largest booth on the floor to accommodate its growing stable of brands, which include **La Blanca**, **Ralph Lauren Swimwear**, **Nanette Lepore**, **Green Dragon**, **Kenneth Cole**, **Lucky Brand** and **24th & Ocean**.

The vast area was humming with activity as buyers viewed the Southern California company's latest offerings. "We've had a lot of traffic," said Kevin Mahoney, the company's chief executive officer, who recently had been at **Mode City**, the

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INSIDE

Where fashion gets down to businessSM



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Vans Unveils New HQ



Doug Palladini, Vans' global president, left, with Steve Van Doren, Vans' vice president of events and promotions. At Vans' new headquarters in Costa Mesa, Calif., there's an "Employee Achievement Bell" installed. The bell will ring every time an employee achievement is announced.

It was two years in the making, but footwear and apparel titan **Vans** recently unveiled a new headquarters in Costa Mesa, Calif.

In a nod to the brand's storied past, the exterior of the new 182,000-square-foot, three-floor building features a checkerboard graphic reminiscent of the pattern that appeared on an iconic sneaker that Sean Penn wore in the 1982 film "Fast Times at Ridgemont High." The headquarters is located at 1588 South Coast Drive in Costa Mesa, which is 13 miles south of Vans' former headquarters in Cypress. The city continues to be a headquarters for companies such as **Manhattan Beachwear**.

Plans for the headquarters were announced in June 2015. A company statement said that Vans outgrew its former headquarters and needed a place where it could handle more growth. 2015 media reports said that

Vans' revenues passed the \$2 billion mark. On June 12, 550 Vans employees working in marketing, design, sales and retail moved into their new digs. It is focused on being an environmentally sustainable building.

From the 405 freeway, the solar panels of Vans' one-megawatt carport solar-array installation are visible. More than 4,000 solar panels on the array will provide 50 percent of the building's energy needs. The headquarters will offer 38 electric vehicle charging stations. New water fixtures will increase water efficiency. The building's lighting as well as



Recently, 550 Vans employees moved into the company's new headquarters in Costa Mesa, Calif.

heating and cooling systems are forecast to boost energy efficiency by 48 percent more than California State building code requirements, according to a company statement.

The headquarters is currently undergoing a process by the **U.S. Green Building Council** to certify it as an environmentally friendly LEED building.

The new headquarters plans to build a friendly atmosphere into the building's design. There's a game room and a barbecue

area for corporate lunches. Yoga studios are available as is a gym. Outdoor **Wi-Fi** is offered so people will be able to work away from their desks when inspiration hits. Also featured, the **Waffle Works Innovation Center**, a space where employees are encouraged to brainstorm new Vans designs. In front of the building, an "Employee Achievement Bell" is installed. The bell will ring every time an employee achievement is announced.—*Andrew Asch*

NRF: Back-to-School Spending Forecast to Increase

Retailers might give the 2017 Back-to-School season an "A."

Total spending for Back-to-School and related Back-to-College spending is projected to reach \$83.6 billion, according to a survey released by the **National Retail Federation** on July 13. The Washington, D.C.-based retail trade group noted that 2017 forecasts are 10 percent higher than the 2016 Back-to-School season, when consumers spent \$75.8 billion.

Matthew Shay, NRF's president and chief executive officer, credited a solid economy for the season's forecasted gains.

"With stronger employment levels and a continued increase in wages, consumers are spending more and we are optimistic that they will continue to do so throughout the rest of the year," Shay said in a prepared statement.

According to the survey, each family with children enrolled from kindergarten to high school will spend an average of \$687.72. The Back-to-School shoppers are forecast to spend \$10.2 billion on clothing, \$8.8 billion on electronics, \$5.6 billion on shoes and \$4.9 billion on school supplies.

The survey gave a breakdown on where

consumers will spend Back-to-School dollars. It found that 57 percent will shop at department stores, 54 percent at discount stores, and 46 percent each at clothing stores and online.

Back-to-College spending is forecast to increase because there are more college students attending this year than there were in the past. College enrollment has steadily increased over the past five years, with nearly 21 million people projected to attend a U.S. college this year, according to the **National Center for Education Statistics**.

College kids and their families are forecast to spend a total of \$54.1 billion in the 2017 Back-to-College season, or an average of \$969.88. The 2017 total spending is greater than \$48.5 billion spent in 2016's Back-to-College season.

The Back-to-School season will do well despite a retail market that is rapidly changing, Shay said. During a July 13 conference call, a reporter asked him to comment on how NRF's forecast meshes with recent reports about retail closures, Shay answered that store closures only tell one part of the economy's story. Entrepreneurs are also opening stores, Shay said.—*A.A.*

Corrections and Clarifications

In the article "Raj, Sports Illustrated Team Up," published on July 10 in *California Apparel News' Waterwear* magazine, Brenda West's title was incorrect. She

is president of **Raj Swim**. Also, the story incorrectly listed the e-commerce address for the upcoming **Sports Illustrated** swim collection. It is *shopsiswim.com*.



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Gerber's Sam Simpson Retiring After 47 Years With Company

After 47 years with **Gerber Technology**, Sam Simpson announced plans to retire, but the longtime technology executive will continue to serve as a consultant to the Tolland, Conn., company as well as acting as a special adviser to Gerber Chief Executive Officer Mohit Uberoi.

"When someone spends more than 47 years in an

the **Hughes Aircraft Co.** AM-1 system. At Gerber, Simpson has held many positions, including vice president/general manager of the Americas, vice president of global sales and director/general manager of the international division as well as several technical and marketing roles. According to the company, Simpson was "integral in the expansion of Gerber's international business activities in the European, Asian and Latin America regions." "It has been a privilege to work alongside Sam and learn about the industry," said Peter Morrissey, senior vice president global sales at Gerber, in a statement. "Sam's knowledge of the industry, customers and markets is unparalleled, and we thank him for his years of service." Simpson will still hold his position as chairman of the **Sewn Products Equipment Suppliers of the Americas** (SPESA), an organization he has long supported. Simpson has been on the SPESA board since 2000 and was named chairman last year.

Based in Connecticut and owned by New York-based private-equity firm **AIP**, Gerber Technology supplies software and automation solutions to help apparel and industrial customers improve their manufacturing processes and manage their supply chain. The company has 78,000 customers in 130 countries, including companies in the apparel and accessories, home and leisure, transportation, packaging, and sign and graphics industries.

—Alison A. Nieder



Sam Simpson

industry, it becomes a part of them," said Simpson, who most recently served as Gerber's vice president of global strategic accounts.

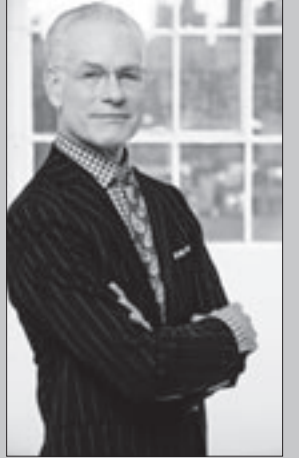
Simpson's roots in the apparel industry began at **G&H Manufacturing Co.**, a division of **Genesco**, where he was part of a team that developed the first automated grading and marking system and the first laser cutter for apparel applications. He joined Gerber when the company acquired

Gunn Coming to Ideation 2017 LA

Gerber Technology is preparing for its **Ideation 2017** conference, set for Nov. 1–3 at the **Sheraton Universal Studios** in Universal City, Calif. The event will feature a speaker series, focus sessions and collaboration activities as well as an interactive studio where attendees can get hands-on experience with Gerber products.

"Project Runway" co-host and mentor Tim Gunn will discuss the impact of digitization on design and manufacturing with Karsten Newbury, Gerber Technology's senior vice president and general manager, at the conference. Gunn rose to fame on the fashion reality show after a career spent in the fashion industry as design chair of the department of fashion design at **Parsons School of Design**. He went on to serve as chief creative officer at **Liz Claiborne Inc.** and now serves as fashion dean at Liz Claiborne's successor company, **Fifth & Pacific**. He is also the author of several books, including "Tim Gunn: A Guide to Quality, Taste and Style," "Tim Gunn's Fashion Bible: The Fascinating History of Everything in Your Closet" and "Tim Gunn: The Natty Professor: A Master Class on Mentoring, Motivating, and Making It Work!"

"Tim Gunn's energy and passion as keynote speaker at Ideation 2015 was both inspirational and entertaining. His dedication to design education and technology-led solutions will help attendees gain important knowledge and invaluable insights on how to navigate and thrive in an ever-transforming market," Newbury said. "Mr. Gunn exemplifies the dynamism, creativity and innovation of fashion, and we are honored to welcome him back to ideation." For more information or to register for Ideation 2017, visit www.gerbertechnology.com/ideation.—A.A.N.



Tim Gunn

Intertek Adds New Testing Services for Activewear, Leather Goods

Intertek, the Chicago-based quality-assurance provider, has expanded its textile testing services to meet the needs of the makers of activewear and leather goods.

For activewear makers, Intertek can now evaluate performance properties such as evaporation/drying rates, water-vapor transmission rates and antibacterial/antifungal properties. (The makers of furniture and outdoor fabrics are also looking to measure these properties.)

To provide the new services, Intertek invested in new equipment at its textile testing laboratory in Arlington Heights, Ill. The lab now has new machines to evaluate a fabric's performance properties, including water-vapor permeability and drying rates. The lab can now gauge how performance fabrics respond to changes in temperature and humidity to verify fabric breathability, quick-dry properties and antibacterial qualities. The Arlington Heights lab was already testing activewear for wicking, windproofing and UV protection properties. Antimicrobial properties can be tested at Intertek's antimicrobial center in Columbus, Ohio.

"At Intertek, our priority has always been providing our customers with innovative solutions to help support functional and performance claims of their products in order to improve their competitive position," said Gregg Tiemann, Intertek's executive vice president. "Bringing these textile capabilities to the U.S. and building off our existing textile services will help customers in the region leverage our services and expertise in order to bring in-demand fabrics to the industry more quickly and easily."

For the leather goods sector, Intertek recently launched the AP/APEOs Quick Test service to help textiles and leather-goods makers identify harmful alkylphenols (AP) and alkylphenol ethoxylates (APEOs) chemicals, which are commonly used in leather production during the dyeing and wet finishing processes. There has been growing awareness of the hazards of AP and APEO to human health and the environment.

Intertek's AP/APEOs Quick Test can detect the existence of AP/APEOs in water-soluble chemical samples, which allows companies to identify these chemicals early in the man-

ufacturing process rather than later in the mass production phase, according to an Intertek statement.

The AP/APEOs Quick Test is part of Intertek's chemical testing services, which include compliance with the Restricted Substances List (RSL), the EU REACH and California's Proposition 65.

"Leveraging Intertek's market-leading expertise in chemical testing and its in-depth understanding of the challenges faced by the textiles and leather industry, we developed the AP/APEOs Quick Test as a practical solution for our customers," said Calvin Yam, Intertek's senior vice president of global softlines. "Our AP/APEOs Quick Test offers an added layer of assurance throughout the supply chain as a result of the detection limit being lower than what is set by NGOs and industry organizations."

Intertek operates a network of more than 1,000 laboratories and offices and employs more than 42,000 people in more than 100 countries. For more information, visit www.intertek.com/textiles-apparel.—A.A.N.

NEWS

BCBG *Continued from page 1*

retail employees, sources said.

Prior to the most recent layoffs, BCBG issued pink slips to 310 employees between Feb. 22, 2016, and March 13, 2017.

"As previously announced, BCBG is selling a majority of its assets to a consortium consisting of Marquee Brands and Global Brands Group. The intent of the buyers is to offer employment to the majority of BCBG associates. The transaction is scheduled to close by July 31. Once the transaction closes, BCBG will begin winding down its operations over a 90-day period. Those selected for future employment with GBG or Marquee will be offered employment prior to the closing of the sale transaction or during the transition period," a company spokesperson said.

On June 23, the U.S. Bankruptcy Court in New York approved the \$165 million bid submitted by Marquee Brands and Global Brands Group to acquire the brand and its sister labels and operate about 20 stores as well as in-store shops located in major department stores. Liquidators **Hilco Glob-**

al and **Gordon Brothers** were also members of the bidding consortium.

Marquee Brands said it will seek to expand **BCBG**, **BCBGeneration** and the **Hervé Leger** brands into additional lifestyle categories on a global basis through existing and newly signed strategic partners and product licensees.

Marquee Brands, headquartered in New York, said it will maintain offices for BCBG on both the West Coast and East Coast.

Global Brands Group will serve as a licensee to Marquee to oversee the wholesale and retail platforms for the brand in North America.

At one time, BCBG employed 1,300 full-time workers and 1,400 part-time employees at its headquarters, warehouse and stores. Started in 1989 by Max Azria, the label was known for its contemporary clothing heavy on glamorous looks that sold from \$250 to \$750. BCBG—which stands for the French expression "bon chic, bon genre," meaning "good style, good attitude"—acquired French design house **Hervé Leger** in 1998.

For years, BCBG borrowed heavily to finance its opera-

tions and keep some of its unprofitable stores open. At one time, its debt totaled more than \$685 million. Much of that was held by **Guggenheim Partners**. Now Guggenheim Partners and affiliates carry more than \$324.4 million in BCBG loans and own 80 percent of the apparel company's common equity.

Marquee Brands is a relatively new brand-management company started a few years ago as a division of **Neuberger Berman** private equity. Its goal is to acquire brands with strong consumer awareness and grow them across several channels around the world.

Last November, Marquee Brands acquired the **Body Glove** brand and intellectual property from **Body Glove International**. The Body Glove label was started in Redondo Beach, Calif., in 1953 by twin brothers Bob and Bill Meistrell. The Meistrell family retains a minority interest in the Body Glove brand.

In 2015, Marquee acquired the **Ben Sherman** brand from **Oxford Industries**. That same year, it acquired the Italian luxury brand **Bruno Magli**, known for its high-end footwear. ●

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Curve NY 8/6-8
Office Show 8/13-15
SourcingMAGIC 8/13-16
Agenda LV 8/14-16
CureNY 8/14-16
POOL 8/14-16
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POOL 8/14-16
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Sleek LV 8/14-16
WWD/MAG 8/14-16
WWN 8/14-16
Liberty Fairs LV 15a

August 11
Cover: Runway
Technology
Denim Report
Street Scene
What's Checking
Made in America

Supply Chain Special
Section with Tech
Fashion Advertorial
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Cargo-Container Traffic Could Hit Record Numbers This Summer

Protectionist talk may be in the air, but imports are still arriving at our doors.

With the U.S. economy in its eighth year of recovery, cargo-container volumes at the nation's ports are expected to be at an all-time high as retailers head into the Back-to-School season.

According to the monthly *Global Port Tracker* report, released by the **National Retail Federation**, July and August should be two of the busiest months ever seen for cargo-container imports.

"We're expecting retailers to import some of the largest volumes of merchandise ever," said Jonathan Gold, the NRF vice president for supply chain and customs policy. "That's a good indicator of what could be ahead for consumer demand and retail sales, and it's a sign that retail is going strong despite what you might read in the headlines."

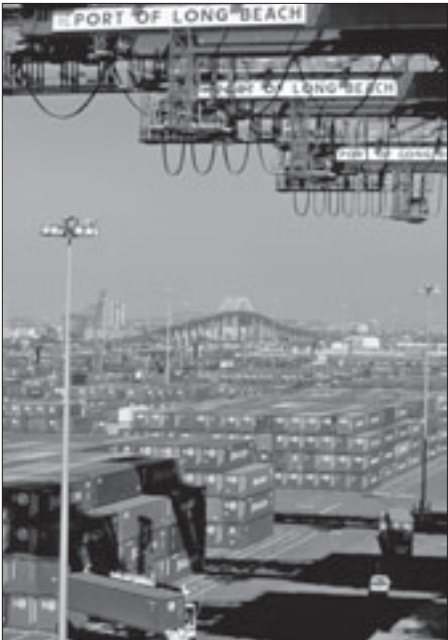
Major U.S. ports handled 1.72 million 20-foot containers in May, the latest month for which after-the-fact numbers are available, which was up 6.2 percent from the previous year.

It is estimated that in June, 1.66 million containers will arrive at ports, up 5.3 percent from last year. July is forecast to see 1.71 million containers hit the docks, up 5.1 percent from last year.

August will also see gains with 1.75 million containers being offloaded, up 2.2 percent from last year. As the Back-to-School season winds down, September should experience about 1.66 million containers being processed at ports, up 4.3 percent, and October should experience 1.71 million containers, up 2.2 percent.

On a different note, November could see a 2.7 percent drop from last year with 1.6 million containers.

The August figure could be the highest monthly volume recorded since the National



Retail Federation began tracking imports in 2000, topping the 1.73 million container mark seen in March 2015.

The 1.7 million-plus numbers seen in May, July, August and October represent four of the six busiest months in the report's history.

The first half of 2017 is expected to see 9.63 million containers coming in, up 7.1 percent from the first half of 2016. Cargo volume for 2016 totaled 18.8 million containers, a 3.1 percent rise from 2015, which increased 5.4 percent from 2014.

Economist Ben Hackett, founder of **Hackett Associates**, which prepares the *Global Port Tracker* report, said the increases in imports have come despite threats by the Trump administration to impose new limits on international trade.—*Deborah Belgham*

Calendar

July 16

Project The Tents
Project Sole
Vanguard Gallery
Javits Center
New York
Through July 18

July 17

Texworld USA
Apparel Sourcing
Homotextiles Sourcing
Avanprint
Javits Center
New York
Through July 19

Active Collective
Hyatt Resort & Spa
Huntington Beach, Calif.
Through July 18

Liberty Fairs
Javits Center
New York
Through July 19

Capsule

Javits Center
New York
Through July 18

July 18

Première Vision
Pier 94
New York
Through July 19

July 19

DG Expo
Penn Pavilion
New York
Through July 20

July 20

Swim Miami
W South Beach
South Beach, Fla.
Through July 23

Art Hearts Fashion
Funkshion Tent
Miami Beach, Fla.
Through July 22

July 22

SwimShow
Miami Beach Convention Center
Miami Beach, Fla.
Through July 25

Cabana
Tents in Collins Park
Miami Beach, Fla.
Through July 24

Hammock
W South Beach
South Beach, Fla.
Through July 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.

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Edgemine Goes Premium With Evidnt Los Angeles

After more than 20 years in fashion, the **Edgemine** company launched its first denim line intended for a women's premium-denim market.

The line, **Evidnt Los Angeles**, was picked up by **Nordstrom** and **Anthropologie** for its first delivery, June 30, said Michelle Bartlett, the contemporary sales director of Edgemine, headquartered in Los Angeles.

Edgemine executives brainstormed the idea for Evidnt after finding what they believed to be ample room in the denim market. It's a denim line with a premium look that is retailed under \$100 and has a point of view, Bartlett said.

"It's LA style with a European substance. Edgemine is always looking on the runway for inspiration, but it's wearable and comfortable," she said.

Detailing is kept simple. The debut delivery's nods to fashion include high-waist sil-

houettes and embroidered styles. Evidnt's significant pieces include the "Hermosa" crop pant. The paneled jean features a single seam going down the middle of both legs. Bartlett said that it looked like a denim pant that had been pulled apart and reconstructed. The brand will offer many different washes but just a few silhouettes for each category. One "Hermosa" pant comes in a basic light wash with light whiskering and abrasions. Other looks include denim shorts with a relaxed fit.

Evidnt is designed in Los Angeles and manufactured overseas. The brand is forecast to produce 40 to 50 SKUs a month. The collection also includes T-shirts, jackets, dresses and jumpers. There's a dress with a striped print, tops with asymmetrical necks and hems, and a top with a cowl neck that can be unbuttoned and styled in several ways.

For more information, email hello@shopevidnt.com.—Andrew Asch



COURTESY OF EVIDNT LOS ANGELES



NEWS

LA Event to Pay Homage to the Ebony Fashion Fair

In a nod to the **Ebony Fashion Fair**, the **Fashion Legacy Association for Industry Recognition**—or FLAIR Inc.—will host a two-day event in July honoring supermodel Pat Cleveland as well as actors Richard Roundtree ("Being Mary Jane" and "Shaft") and Judy Pace ("Cotton Comes to Harlem").

The event will also honor Shayla Simpson, a former model and fashion consultant who spent 16 years with the Ebony Fashion Fair, the event founded by *Ebony* and *Jet* magazine publisher **Johnson Publishing Co.**

The Ebony Fashion Fair was a traveling fashion event that ran from 1958 to 2009, featuring predominantly African-American models showcasing the latest designs from European labels such as **Yves St. Laurent**, **Givenchy** and **Valentino**.

Cleveland and other former Ebony Fash-

ion Fair models will walk the runway at the July 21–22 event at **Los Angeles Trade-Technical College** in downtown Los Angeles. The catwalk show will feature designers and labels Kevan Hall, **Custom Cut Couture**, **LSO Designs**, Theodore Elyett, **Kilgour & Sweet**, **Yukimuli**, **Winston & Lee**, **Madeline K. Couture**, **Arturo Rios** and **Wachtenheim Furs**.

Founded by former model and businessperson Faye Clerk Moseley with Simpson and Le Nece Nichols, the nonprofit Flair event will help diverse, economically disadvantaged students pursue fashion-industry careers through a mentoring and scholarship program.

For more information, including tickets and sponsorship information, visit www.flairinc.org or call (323) 687-3358.

—Alison A. Nieder

ALT

ATHLEISURE X LIFESTYLE TRADESHOW



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Vuori's Performance Clothes Are Made for Versatility and Comfort

Football, lacrosse, yoga. Joe Kudla was game for almost any sport and fitness regimen.

At yoga studios around Encinitas, Calif., the former model noted a style imbalance between men and women. Women were equipped with performance clothes that were made for the rigor of exercise but also looked good.

The guys at his studio were wearing boardshorts—no big surprise in surf-centric Encinitas, the home of **Hansen Surfboards**, one of California's oldest surf shops. But what was good in the water didn't feel good in the yoga studio. After years spent wearing workout clothes made out of synthetic fabrics, Kudla wanted to wear something that felt more like cotton.

In 2014, he started working on a line that men could wear to the gym, to yoga, to **CrossFit**, as well as to a coffee shop. It would be performance clothing with a coastal California feel.

Fast-forward to the present, the brand **Vuori** is sold at 600 doors, including **REI** and **The Shop at Equinox**, the boutique at the high-end fitness center national chain. There's also a Vuori boutique in Encinitas. The brand is on the move. In July, it opened a pop-up shop at the **Malibu Country Mart** in Malibu, Calif.

The brand is for gym rats, yoga people, anyone who exercises. But there is also a lifestyle element that is very California, Kudla said.

"In coastal California, people are going to yoga in the morning, surfing in the afternoon and then meeting friends. It's aspirational coastal California performance clothing," he said.

One of its top-selling items is the "Kore Short." It is constructed with a four-way stretch fabric and supportive boxer

brief-style liner. The lining was intended to give support without being overly compressive or squeezing too much.

Another top seller, the "Banks Short," looks like a boardshort with a scalloped leg hole. It has no liner. The quick-dry style is made from an antimicrobial fabric and is intended to be used in water and out.

Vuori also makes sweatpants, jackets, T-shirts and caps. Kudla said that 10 percent of the line is manufactured in California. For Fall 2017, the company worked with **REI** on a Vuori women's collection. But Vuori's focus will remain on men's styles. There isn't as much competition in the field, Kudla said. He forecasts there is a lot more growth. Vuori shows at the **Move** segment of men's trade show **MRKT** as well as at **Active Collective** in Huntington Beach, Calif., and **Outdoor Retailer**.

Vuori works with a fabric made by a brand called **V4 Technology**. The custom four-way stretch fabric has anti-odor, moisture-wicking and quick-drying properties. The brand's tops use a **Seacell** fabric made out of algae and wood pulp. The eco-friendly fabric has a cotton-like feel. Other sustainable fabrics used in the Vuori line include fabrics made from recycled plastic bottles and coconut husks.

"The brand is on a very fast growth trajectory," Kudla said. "When we look to the future, we want to inspire people to lead healthy, happier lives."

At the Encinitas flagship and the Malibu pop-up, Vuori offers yoga and other fitness classes during the week and also provides gallery space to local artists.—*Andrew Asch*



Joe Kudla



TRADE SHOW REPORT

Swim Collective *Continued from page 1*

lingerie and swimwear show in Paris, where he found a European distributor for the **Polo Ralph Lauren** line.

Buyers at the Manhattan Beach-wear booth were from big stores such as **Nordstrom** as well as e-commerce sites such as **Zappos.com**. "We've seen all the West Coast swimwear stores such as **Sylvia's Swimwear** in Seattle and **Diane's Beachwear**," Mahoney said.

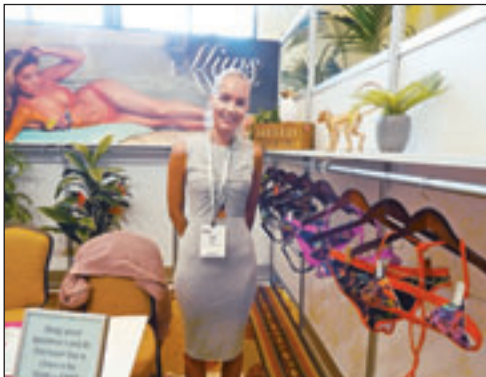
All throughout the show, exhibitors said that one-piece suits were a big draw. That was true for **Mia Marcelle**, the swimwear line based in Napa Valley, Calif. "We have our staple of two pieces that have been successful, but we have gotten a lot of response to our one-pieces. Also our cover-ups are doing well," said Danielle Felzer, the Mia Marcelle sales representative.

She observed that buyers were often taking extensive notes then deciding later about what orders to place. "But if they see something that catches their eyes, they write it," she said.

Buyers were being drawn to the vibrant colors in the Mia Marcelle collection, which took its inspiration from the colors and designs of Morocco. People were attracted to the label's palette of burgundy, dusty rose, dark green and gray blue.

Color was also a big draw to the **Bleu by Rod Beattie**

swimwear label, created by Los Angeles designer Rod Beattie. Sales representative Ric Hulsey said buyers were particularly attracted to the aubergine hues in the collection as well as the bright solid colors of red, blue and turquoise. Also hot sellers were one-piece suits, Hulsey said.



SWIM IN REVERSE: Anna Knight, a graduate of the Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising, recently launched her first swimwear line, called **MIWS**, which is swim spelled backwards.



BOHO FEEL: Kimberly O'Connell, head of sales for Surf Gypsy, displays some of the cover-ups and tops the New Jersey company makes for poolside and the beach.



MOROCCAN INFLUENCE: The Mia Marcelle line, based in Napa Valley, Calif., was inspired by colors and designs of Morocco, said Danielle Felzer, the line's sales representative.



DIRECT FROM HAWAII: A model wears a long-sleeve one-piece suit from the new swimwear line **Elle Mer**, based in Maui.

a new two-piece **Arena** collection that was meant for the athletic woman. The **RuleBreaker** mix-and-match collection had an abbreviated silhouette but had drawstring chords on the tops and bottoms to make sure bikinis didn't ride up

when playing volleyball or surfing. It, too, was attractively priced at \$30 a piece at retail.

Price was a big draw to the **Surf Gypsy**. "My line is price conscious and retails for under \$100 for all our cover-ups, dresses and rompers that are high fashion and have cute trends," said Kimberly O'Connell, Surf Gypsy's sales manager for the company, based in New Jersey.

The boho influence in the line was emphasized by the Moroccan ottomans and textiles scattered around the large booth. O'Connell said buyer traffic was a bit slower than normal because of the earlier show date. It was also a challenge to designers who are still working on their Resort collections coming out in the next couple of weeks.

Swim Collective is always a good launch pad for new swimwear labels trying to get a toehold in the retail world. Anna Knight, who was showing her first collection called **MIWS**, which is swim spelled backwards, had a small array of bikinis with triangle tops that had very small triangles—the better for sunbathing. "I've met quite a few retailers, who have given me good feedback, but I think you have to have appointments at this show to be successful," said the graduate of the **Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising in Los Angeles**.

Also new to the swimwear game was **Elle Mer**, a luxury collection of one-piece and two-piece swimsuits and cropped rash guards whose owners, Keri Ogden and Stephen Hauge, are based in Maui, Hawaii. This was their first trade show for the line made of Italian fabric containing recycled polyamide that is chlorine resistant and has an Ultraviolet Protection Factor of 50.

Hauge said they were invited to the show at the last minute and decided only two weeks ago to attend. Because they hadn't set up any appointments before the show, they didn't see many buyers. "I feel people are destination bound," he said. ●



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RETAIL

Arts District *Continued from page 1*

District. Brownell and Blatteis partner Marc Guth are betting that affluent creatives will want to open offices at At Mateo, as will boutiques and restaurants, which will feature 100-year-old brickwork that will blend in with the still-gritty environs of the Arts District.

High-end retailers also have been taking a risk on the Arts District. **Dover Street Market**, the avant-garde retailer from **Comme Des Garçons'** Rei Kawakubo, confirmed that it is scheduled to open a store in the Arts District in 2018.

Leading streetwear retailer **Bodega** is scheduled in September to move into the **Row DTLA** creative office, retail and dining compound, which is a two-minute drive from the Arts District. In the 1970s and 1980s, the district was known as a place where musicians, performance artists and visual artists maintained sprawling work/live lofts.

The Arts District was also the location for a recent pop-up shop produced by the collaboration line **Louis Vutton X Supreme**. It ran June 30 to July 7 on the corner of East Third and Garey streets.

In May, the **Phillip Lim 3.1** brand opened a boutique on the main drag of the Arts District on East Third Street, between East Fourth Place and South Vignes Street.



DISTRICT INTERIORS: Pictured at top, the interior of the Arts District store Rogue Collective. At bottom, Apolis Common Gallery

Lim's flagship in West Hollywood closed late last year. In late 2016, the **Shinola** brand opened a boutique in the area. **Rogue Collective**, a Los Angeles brand, opened a shop on the former site of a punk-rock club called **AI's Bar** around the same time. A few months before Rogue's debut, high-end camping lifestyle store **Hatchet Supply Co.** opened in the district.

Upscale retail started in the enclave around 2011–2012 with the opening of **Apolis** on East Third Street and **Guerilla Atelier**.

Guerilla Atelier operated a couple of different addresses in the district before it found its home in a sprawling space across the street from **Hauser & Wirth**, a 10,000-square-foot art gallery. Hauser & Wirth opened in December 2016 and has attracted international tourists as well as visitors from all over Los Angeles County. Another attraction, the **Museum of Ice Cream**, took a bow in April.

Popular restaurants have also opened in the Arts District in the past six years. **Soho Warehouse**, a project from **Soho House**, a popular international club with celebri-

ties and the affluent, is scheduled to take a bow in 2018. **Warner Music Group** also is scheduled to open a big office at the **Ford Motor Factory** compound, the site of a former **Model T** plant. It is slated to be transformed into creative offices.

More housing units are scheduled to be built in the area. **Camden Property Trust** is scheduled to build 344 live/work units in the Arts District. In 2015, the **One Santa Fe** development opened with 438 residential units and high-end retail, such as the **Wittmore** boutique.

There's a lot of momentum in the Arts District, but there's another reason David Fishbein of **Runyon Group**, consultants for Row DTLA, are bullish about the Arts District. It's a walkable place like Abbot Kinney. Over the last decade, the once-blighted area on Los Angeles' Westside evolved to become a popular retail enclave, earning the title "the coolest block in America" in 2012 from *GQ* magazine.



ARTS DISTRICT SCENE: Pictured at top, the exterior of the Arts District Co-Op shop. Pictured at center and bottom, exteriors of the At Mateo development

"There are structures with great integrity [in the Arts District]," Fishbein said. "You got one- to four-story buildings rather than 20-story buildings. You have infrastructure that can create walkable street grids. It's what Los Angeles people are craving. That's why Abbot Kinney was popular."

Even with this momentum, the jury is still out on retail in the Arts District. Jay Luchs, a prominent player in Los Angeles' real-estate game, said he often includes the Arts District on tours of top retail streets in LA but retail executives rarely request it.

"I think it is important that my own clients see it," Luchs said. "The word on the street is that restaurants do so well there and

Arts District Continued from previous page

people want to be near that. But there is nothing to say that retail is there yet," said Luchs, the vice chairman of **NewmarkGrubbKnight-Frank**.

Luchs said a square foot of retail space costs \$5 per month around the main drag of the Arts District.

Brigham Yen, a real-estate broker and publisher of the "DTLA Rising" blog, said the area has a way to go. "I think the Arts District is 'arriving.' It's definitely on people's radar, but it doesn't have enough concentration of shops yet to make it into a full-on shopping destination. That'll change within the next several years, I believe. It'll be critical to make the roads more pedestrian friendly as well as to incentivize people to explore the Arts District on foot," he said.

In April, the state of California awarded the

city of Los Angeles more than \$14 million in grants to improve foot and bike areas in the Arts District.

The transition from blighted area and artist zone to a district of offices and shops is not resulting in a mass exit of artists so far, said Johnny White, a photographer, filmmaker and art director who has been living in the district since 2004.

"There are still artists in the Arts District. Look at all of the empty spaces here," he said of extra real estate in the area. "There are a lot of non-artists moving into the neighborhood, but there are no fewer artists."

Other fashion businesses beside retail are taking interest in the Arts District. Japan's **Edwin Jeans** opened a North American headquarters in the Arts District in April. Vince Gonzales of Edwin said that people would have called him crazy up until a year ago. "Now they all say, 'Cool! What a cool space,'" Gonzales said. ●



ARTS EDGE: The Urth Caffé at the edge of the Arts District

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fitness/yoga studios. The show runs in conjunction with LA Fashion Market, hosted by the CMC and other LA Fashion District buildings. ALT believes in quality over quantity and therefore is smaller, intimate show presenting a tightly curated selection of likeminded brands. Show dates are Oct. 9-11.

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