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\$2.99 VOLUME 74, NUMBER 10 MARCH 9-15, 2018

Standouts Sell at LA International Textile Show

By Dorothy Crouch Associate Editor

Now in its 25th year, the **Los Angeles International Textile Show** at the **California Market Center** brought together manufacturers, designers and production specialists who attended the three-day show, which took place March 5-7.

Attendees could find fresh takes on materials for their lines and discover valuable information regarding topics such as branding, design and technology at seminars that took place throughout the course of the event.

Although they couldn't identify a clear reason for the change, many vendors and attendees commented on the decrease in the number of booths.

"We've noticed that this show is a little bit downsized."

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UCLA Anderson Forecast Sees Big Changes in Store for U.S. Economy

By Deborah Belgum Executive Editor

What a difference a year makes.

Last year, President Trump had just taken office and the economy was slowly slogging forward as unemployment rates dropped steadily, inflation was modest and interest rates were changing every so slightly.

One year later, the most recent **UCLA Anderson Forecast**, released March 7, sees benchmark interest rates increasing four times this year, inflation heating up, business investments becoming a prominent player in the faster-growing economy and trillion-dollar deficits on the horizon.

"Business investment is going to be driving the bus this year."

➔ **Forecast** page 11



DOROTHY CROUCH

LA INTERNATIONAL TEXTILE SHOW: Vibrant colors and welcoming expressions created an inviting atmosphere within the Alexander Henry Fabrics booth at the Los Angeles International Textile Show, which took place at the California Market Center March 5-7.

Skechers Makes Its First Wholesale Apparel Line

By Andrew Asch Retail Editor

With more than \$4 billion in net sales in 2017 and a fleet of 2,750 stores across the world—645 of them are company owned—**Skechers USA Inc.** has been ranked as the second-best-selling sneaker brand in America.

But even with that success, it has been looking for ways to expand and extend its profile. From its headquarters, located in affluent Manhattan Beach, Calif., Skechers came up with

the concept for **Skechers Apparel**, a new wholesale apparel line that was introduced at the **Active Collective** trade show last January in Anaheim, Calif.

About six months before the men's and women's wholesale apparel line was at the trade show, the company hired Lauren Martone to guide it to market. "It feels like a startup," said Martone, Skechers' national account manager, apparel. "There's a lot of firsts happening. We're working with cer-

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Westside Pavilion Shopping Center to Be Remodeled Into Offices

Facing a future as a mall with no traditional anchors, Los Angeles' **Westside Pavilion** will be undergoing a major revamp to turn it into creative offices.

On March 5, Westside Pavilion owner **Macerich Inc.** announced it had formed a joint venture with **Hudson Pacific Properties Inc.** to redevelop the 500,000-square-foot mall into 400,000 square feet of creative office space. The remaining 100,000 square feet will continue to operate as an entertainment/retail space housing the **Landmark Theatres**, which focuses on independent and foreign films.

The joint venture will be 75 percent owned by Hudson Pacific and 25 percent by Macerich. "Our joint venture with Hudson Pacific will enable us to maximize the value of this incredibly well-situated real estate with dynamic new uses—something Macerich has always excelled at. Hudson Pacific brings great expertise in the creative-office-space segment, and we are pleased to partner with them on this exciting, high-visibility project," said Art Coppola, Macerich's chair-

man and chief executive officer.

The project's cost is estimated to be between \$425 million and \$475 million. Construction is scheduled to be completed by mid-2021 on the mall, which opened in 1985. Hudson Pacific will act as the property's day-to-day operator and developer.

Victor Coleman, Hudson Pacific's chairman and chief executive officer, said there is strong demand for creative office space on Los Angeles' Westside. Other Westside developers have been remodeling retail properties into creative office space.

In 2016, the **Platform** bowed in Culver City, Calif., as a compound for retail, dining and creative offices. A year later, Platform owner **Runyon Group** took on leasing duties for the **Row DTLA** compound in downtown Los Angeles, which offers a mix of retail, dining and creative office space.

The **Sears** located on Colorado Avenue in Santa Monica, Calif., closed last year and is being remodeled by **Seritage Growth Properties** into **The Mark 302**, which will have

creative office space on the upper levels and boutiques and eateries on the lower levels.

The decision to convert Westside Pavilion into offices was made after the mall's two major department stores moved to Westfield Century City. **Nordstrom** was enticed to the mall after it underwent a \$1 billion renovation, and **Macy's** revamped its existing store at the mall, located only a few miles from Westside Pavilion.

Redeveloping malls and buildings into destinations with offices, retail and other uses such as fitness studios, civic buildings and doctors' offices is part of a trend called "blended uses," said Larry Kosmont, president of **Kosmont Companies**, a real-estate consultant to cities and retailers.

Developers want to build places with a multiplicity of uses. "It's a blending of destinations. It will convince people to leave their computers long enough to go to the blended-use destination," Kosmont said. "It's the future of where the development business is going."—*Andrew Asch*



The interior of Westside Pavilion

Fourth-Quarter Sales Climb for Ross Stores

Off-price retailer **Ross Stores Inc.** reported a very good fourth quarter in fiscal 2017.

Net sales for the fourth quarter were \$4.1 billion, up 16 percent from the same quarter the previous year. Net earnings for the quarter, which ended Feb. 3, were \$451 million compared to \$301 million the previous year.

Same-store sales for the fourth quarter increased 5 percent compared to a 4 percent increase last year.

Barbara Rentler, chief executive officer

of the Dublin, Calif.-based Ross, said that results, which were reported on March 6, beat the offpricer's forecasts. "Despite our own difficult multiyear comparisons and a very competitive retail climate, sales and earnings were well ahead of our expectations for both the fourth quarter and the full year," she said in a statement. "We are pleased with these results, which reflect our ongoing success in delivering broad assortments of compelling bargains to today's

value-driven shoppers."

In a March 6 research note, Wall Street analyst Adrienne Yih of **Wolfe Research** wrote that Ross has been reaping the benefits from a good plan of action. "[Ross] once again proved its winning strategy of chasing into known winners and providing incredible value that resonates. [Ross'] versatility extends to economic cycles as well, performing well in tough times as consumers traded down and taking outsized market share during good times," she wrote.

For its fiscal 2018 year, Ross is forecasting that sales will grow 1 percent to 2 percent. Rentler called the forecast "prudent."

"While we are encouraged by our recent strong sales and earnings results, we again face our own challenging multiyear comparisons as well as a very competitive retail environment," she said in a statement.

For the upcoming year, Ross plans to open 75 **Ross Dress for Less** stores and 25 doors for its **dd's Discounts** nameplate.—*A.A.*



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RETAIL SALES

Retail Sales Up in February

February was a very good month for retailers, who reported strong sales across the board.

Retail Metrics Inc., a market-research group based in Massachusetts, said its index rose 9.6 percent. It had previously estimated that retail sales would rise 7.4 percent.

Ken Perkins, president of Retail Metrics, credited a strong economy for the good showing. "Weekly initial jobless claims touched a low last week not seen since 1969," he wrote in a March 6 note. "Personal income increased in January. Tax cuts are putting more money in consumers' pockets. Consumer confidence is elevated. ... The consumer is spending."

However, he cautioned against thinking that the past month's sales will put retailers in the black. He wrote that February makes up the smallest percentage of monthly sales. Retailers ought to be much busier in March and April with Easter shopping. "We shouldn't read much into February results," he wrote.

L Brands, the parent company of **Victoria's Secret**, reported a successful February with same-store sales up 3 percent. However, Retail Metrics' Perkins said L Brands missed Wall Street forecasts.

The month's results were mixed for mall

retailer **The Buckle Inc.** and value retailer **Cato Corp.** These retailers reported net sales increases of 2 percent and 5 percent, respectively. But their same-store sales declined 5.3 percent and 5 percent, respectively.

John Cato, Cato's chairman, president and chief executive officer, said February same-store sales were below the company's expectations. "However, inventory levels are in line, due to strong inventory management."

Mall retailer **Zumiez Inc.** said it would report its February sales on March 15.

Retail analysts were cheered by news of successful fourth quarters recently reported by **Abercrombie & Fitch Co.** and **Urban Outfitters Inc.**

For Abercrombie & Fitch, net sales for its fourth quarter of fiscal 2017 were \$1.2 billion, up 15 percent from the same quarter in the previous year. Its same-store sales were up 9 percent.

On March 6, Urban Outfitters reported net sales for the fourth quarter of fiscal 2018 increased 5.7 percent to \$1.09 billion. Same-store sales increased 4 percent for the quarter. There was double-digit growth for its digital channel, offset by a decline in sales for its physical stores.—*A.A.*

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: CALIFORNIA APPAREL NEWS, Customer Service, PO Box 4419, Orlando, FL 32802. **CALIFORNIA APPAREL NEWS** (ISSN 0008-0896) Published by TLM PUBLISHING INC. APPAREL NEWS GROUP Publishers of: **California Apparel News**, **Market Week Magazine**, **New Resources**, **Waterwear**, **New York Apparel News**, **Dallas Apparel News**, **Apparel News South**, **Chicago Apparel News**, **The Apparel News (National)**, **Bridal Apparel News**, **Southwest Images**, **Stylist** and **MAN (Men's Apparel News)**. Properties of TLM PUBLISHING INC., California Market Center, 110 E. Ninth St., Suite A777, Los Angeles, CA 90079, (213) 627-3737. © Copyright 2018 TLM Publishing Inc. All rights reserved. Published weekly except semi-weekly first week of January, second week of July and first week of September. Periodicals Postage Paid at Los Angeles, CA, and additional entry offices. The publishers of the paper do not assume responsibility for statements made by their advertisers in business competition. Opinions expressed in signed editorial columns or articles do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the publishers. Subscription rates: U.S.: 1 year, \$89; 2 years, \$140. Foreign: \$180 U.S. funds (1-year subscription only). Single-copy price \$2.99. Send subscription requests to: California Apparel News, Customer Service, PO Box 4419, Orlando, FL 32802 or visit www.apparelnews.net. For customer service, call (866) 207-1448.



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In a Denim Town, Methven Wants to Manufacture Lingerie

By Andrew Asch *Retail Editor*

Los Angeles is known as the place where high-end blue jeans are made. But design newcomer Kaila Methven is setting her sights on manufacturing high-end lingerie in the nation's apparel-manufacturing hub.

After starting her fashion career less than two years ago with a pricy, jewel-encrusted, bespoke lingerie label called **Made to Adore**—where bras retail north of \$20,000—the newbie designer is focusing on selling to the average consumer with her more affordable label called **Lady Methven**, with bras retailing for \$30.

After spending her teenage years in Paris, where she was educated at the **International Fashion Academy Paris**, Methven returned to Los Angeles in 2014, where she had been born, and started her company. But her brand is still just getting started.

In January, she opened a studio and office in the **Gerry Building** in downtown Los Angeles for her company, **Madame Methven**. And on Feb. 17, she organized a runway show for Lady Methven and her ready-to-wear lines, **Latrodecus** and **Mademoiselle**, at the **Skybar** nightclub on the rooftop of the **Mondrian Hotel** in West Hollywood, Calif.

Manufacturing denim pants in Los Angeles is easy because of the number of factories that are skilled at making blue jeans. But there are not that many factories skilled in making lingerie. But there are talented sewers in the region capable of manufacturing lingerie, and it was up to the designer to find them.

"It was challenging finding these women. I interviewed 100, but I only work with 20," she said. The designer set up classes where she taught her sewers how to make lingerie to her specifications. For ready-to-wear, she makes a prototype. Then her sewers go through a practice run of making the lingerie.

After the practice run, Methven and her team go through

the garments. They evaluate what was done right and where mistakes were made. Then they go straight to making the line's lingerie.

While Los Angeles may not be the capital of lingerie making, it's getting easier to make lingerie in this area, said Stacy Anderson, founder of the Los Angeles-based lingerie line **Kent**.

"Lingerie is definitely not the largest category being produced in LA, or North America, though it's increasingly be-

rie manufacturing, she has also cultivated a niche for herself. She is one of the few designers who make bespoke lingerie in Los Angeles, according to Jason Amirmajdi, a veteran lingerie and swimwear retailer.

"Honestly, I don't know anybody else who does that in LA. She is a true visionary as far as that aspect goes," said the owner of **Le Bra Lingerie** in Beverly Hills, Calif. "She has a range now. She has the super expensive to a practical, everyday style where a woman can go to work and still feel sexy."

Currently, most of Methven's business is bespoke. For high-end pieces, for example, Methven handsewed gold bronze beads on the Latrodecus label's **Dominatrix** corset, which sells for \$5,849. She placed a gold chain around the neck and dyed peacock feathers and a silk tulle train on the back. Water-gel packets served as padding for the corset bra. It's more comfortable than fabric padding, Methven said. It also allows breasts greater movement in the corset.

With her new direction into more consumer-friendly styles, Methven plans to wholesale her ready-to-wear lines to major department stores and high-end boutiques. Methven models some of the ready-to-wear looks on the Lady Methven website (lbkminc.com). Looks include **La Petite Cachotiere** short robe, which retails for \$58 and features a lace back and silk sleeves.

Other styles include **La Dominatrice Pantie**, which are black satin panties featuring triangle cutouts by the waist and the back. It retails for \$26.

Another look is **Le Dangereux Bralette**, which is a triangle-style bra featuring black fabric with gold-colored details, adjustable straps and an elastic back. It retails for \$42.

She forecasts that Madame Methven will be a lifestyle company running a handful of boutiques around the globe. "It makes me happy," she said of her ready-to-wear direction. "It makes me feel more creative and fulfilled to cater to the mass market. It's not even a money thing. I want you to feel beautiful." ●



CRAIG BENNETT

coming more and more possible," Anderson said. "For many brands, going overseas to Asia or Europe may seem more feasible, given the broader number of manufacturing options with a history and heritage producing in this space. Scale is also a major consideration. For us, producing in LA has been a major source of pride, both in terms of provenance of the brand as well as being able to establish such a close relationship with those working on our pieces."

While Methven is reaching out to the masses in her linge-

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Handmade Classics at the Heart of Coeur Cofounder Lisa Elliot-Rosas's New Line

By Dorothy Crouch Associate Editor

Even though she is the owner of the **eM Productions** showroom and cofounder of the **Coeur** trade show, Lisa Elliot-Rosas has one more talent.

For Spring 2018, she launched her debut clothing line, called **Furo**, which means flow in Japanese. Now, the showroom owner is ramping up for the Fall season with a full-time team of nine people split between Los Angeles and New York.

With a background in event planning and her **e:oh** handbag line, launched in 2000, Elliot-Rosas explained that the progression toward designing a clothing line was natural.

The brand's demographic is women aged 28 to 45 and includes classic wardrobe staples appropriate for work, dinner and downtime. Tops wholesale for \$75 to \$90, dresses go for \$100 to \$120, and lifestyle pieces such as blankets and scarves wholesale for \$75 to \$120.

"For Fall, we are keeping most of these pieces in the line as they are core staples; plus, we added more in tops and dresses," explained Elliot-Rosas. "We added two jackets and one scarf. We now have a total of 18 refined classics."

Production for each piece within the Furo line takes three months, as hand-loomed goods cater to a clientele that values classic styles that transition easily through each season. The brand includes partnerships with Kirk Nozaki of **Cattywampus Crafts** in Ojai, Calif., who designs pieces in collaboration with Furo and sells the line at his store, and manufacturing with Ddev Sedani, whose handloom services in India provide ethical production for the line's designs.

"Handloomed fabrics and textures are pieces of art to me; they remind me of different cultures [and] traveling. I also loved the styles, easy to wear, unique and pieces that would work well with our collections and could easily be a favorite, treasured piece," said Becky Buford, owner of **Les Amis** boutique in Seattle.

This approach to classic styles that are handwoven is resonating with retailers as others are approaching Elliot-Rosas to create Furo pieces that are exclusive to their brands.

"We have certain stores we are proactively working to get into," Elliot-Rosas said. "There was a creative callout for **Lane Crawford**. They picked four out of the eight brands from eM Productions and they picked Furo. They are interested in the line and asked if we could do something exclusively for them with special fabrics."

While retailers might be approaching Furo for exclusive designs, Elliot-Rosas emphasizes the inclusivity of the brand when designing for her target audience. For Nozaki, who has known Elliot-Rosas for approximately 20 years, this line is reflective of who they have become and the easy, down-to-earth lifestyle of living with their respective families in Ojai.

"What has been refreshing for me has been doing simple, clean pieces that are easy to wear," revealed Nozaki. "It's a small col-

lection, and we aren't trying to be everything to everyone. In the past, I worked for some companies that were always chasing what was hot or would sell the most. I've always been my most creative when the point was to design something fresh and new with no consideration given to the current trends."

The ease and simplicity of the brand are features that attracted Laura O'Dell to buy the line for her Los Angeles-based **The Odells Shop**. "It's easy and comfortable. I



Lisa Elliot-Rosas



like that you can wear a lot of the pieces with sneakers and slides," she said.

Marketing for the line began in August 2017. The growth the brand is experiencing seems to have spelled success for Elliot-Rosas. Though this is a promising start for the brand, she is aware that Furo faces challenges that must be addressed properly to maintain this momentum.

"In 2018 there is room for new lines, but it is very competitive. There are several brands that have strong e-com, strategies and social," she said. "Furo recently launched and buyers said there was an actual need for this product category, so this is a good sign. We plan to do more in collaborations with the women we name items after and more social around this. We plan to launch our own e-com and do more events to build the end consumer." ●

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Skechers *Continued from page 1*

tain wholesale clients for apparel for the first time. We're figuring how we want to go to market with them. There's a lot of passion and energy. There's a lot on the line. It's a new piece."

Along with wholesaling, eventually Skechers Apparel will be rolled out in the company's 117 concept stores in the United States and made available at the company's 120 concept stores overseas.

It almost seems to be a requirement that major sports footwear brands expand into apparel. Nike, Adidas and Under Armour all make clothes. Skechers has manufactured some apparel lines in the past, but they weren't sold to other retailers.

Clothing was added to the running-focused **Skechers Performance** line in 2014. Some Skechers Performance pieces will be included in the wider Skechers Apparel line.

Like the brand's shoes, Skechers Apparel will offer an extended size range, going from extra small to 3XL. "We



Display of the Skechers Performance line at a company store

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want the line to be approachable and wearable," Martone said. "You are getting the same quality as other popular brands but for a lower price."

Tops will wholesale for \$12. Leggings will wholesale from \$22.50 to \$24.50, and the "Hoodigan" sweater will wholesale for \$27.

The apparel line is forecast to appeal to anybody who shops at Skechers. "We're selling items with multiple end uses. They wear it to run errands, go to yoga, have a nice supper," Martone said.

Some of the line's bottoms, such as the "GOWalk" bottom, which is a four-pocket pant, will be cut to specifically go over popular sneakers such as the "GOWalk."

Skechers is planning to invest in a lot of floor space for its new apparel line, which will occupy as much as 25 percent of the space at the Manhattan Beach concept store. There's a focus on convenience. "It's easy to grab and go," Martone said. "If it's a hoodie, they can throw it over a shirt. It's an easy step."

Some fabrics in the line have branded names. **Skechweave** is a four-way-stretch woven fabric that is wrinkle resistant. It is used in the "GoWalk Excursion" pant. The **Skechluxe** is described as a soft, stretchy knit used in the "GoWalk Monsoon" jogger bottom and the "GoEverywhere Hoodigan" sweater. There's also the **Skechtech** moisture-wicking poly-blend fabric. The **GoKnit Ultra** is a double-knit fabric.

Styles include track pants; jogger pants; the "Hoodigan," which features no buttons or zippers and two pockets in the front; and a men's jacket called the "Avalon," which features four pockets in the front and two pockets on the side.

With the expansion of its apparel line, Skechers is also expanding its real estate. The company will be building a 100,000-square-foot showroom and a 20,000-square-foot office building in neighboring Hermosa Beach, Calif. It also is remodeling its Manhattan Beach concept store.

Recently, the company signed a three-year lease for a 365,000-square-foot warehouse in Moreno Valley, Calif., where Skechers will expand from its adjacent 1.8 million-square-foot warehouse building. ●

Marine Layer Suits Up With New Activewear Line: Weekend Sport

By Andrew Asch *Retail Editor*

Anyone can see that the San Francisco label **Marine Layer** emphasizes comfort with a carefree California lifestyle in mind.

One of its graphics is a logo of a giant hammock hanging from the Golden Gate Bridge. Brand founder Michael Natenshon often talks about how his company makes the softest T-shirts on the market.

Last month, Marine Layer decided to branch out into activewear by introducing **Weekend Sport**. The new collection mixes performance fabrics with Marine Layer's lightly faded colors, retro 1970s-style graphics and an embrace of soft fabrics, Natenshon said.

"We're all about making what you want to wear during the weekends," he said. "Our customer is active. We want to make complementary pieces—coffee in the morning, then a hike."

When approaching this market, Natenshon thought it was crucial to provide a difference. The brand designed an activewear line in late 2014 but decided against releasing it widely because the line didn't have enough points of difference.

Maybe he had read Matt Powell, a sports retail analyst who in January wrote in a blog for activewear market researchers at **The NPD Group** that "a lack of new items or looks for apparel will also dampen results."

On the second try, Natenshon said, his company developed a technical fabric made from soft fabric. It wicks away moisture, provides four-way stretch and, for its design, bears retro-inspired striped details. "It's not generic sportswear," he said. "We are doing details in a way that is fresh in the market. We have a distinctive vibe."

The company makes its knits in the United States and manufactures its technical fabrics overseas.

Looks for men include tailored sweatpants with drawstrings. There's a hoodie, sport shorts, T-shirts, short-sleeve sweatshirts and a long-sleeve crew shirt made of lightweight active fabric bearing the logo of the Los Angeles nonprofit group **Protect Our Winters**, which advocates for protecting the environment from climate change. For each shirt sold, \$15 goes to Protect Our Winters.

Looks for women include leggings in colors including black and navy, jogging pants, zip-up track jackets, zip-up hoodies and racer-back tank tops. Retail price points for women's styles range from \$44 for tank tops to \$135 for a track jacket.

Marine Layer is sold on the company's website (www.marine-layer.com), but the company is a vertical retailer and currently has more than 30 bricks-and-mortar stores.

Twelve of those stores are in California, mostly located on retail streets and in buildings that have a unique look. The interior of each Marine Layer store is different with the retailer building all its store fixtures in-house.

Store fixtures are inspired by the surrounding city. In a few of the stores, such as Chicago and Portland, Ore., the retailer has built **Airbnb** rentals. Natenshon



Michael Natenshon, seated on van, with Adam Lynch, Marine Layer's COO



Weekend Sport's Murray Sport Jogger

claimed that the Airbnbs are busy and have been rented 320 days of the year. The company put together the Airbnbs for the fun of it, but there is no interest in getting deeper into the hospitality business.

"People have predicted the end of retail for years. It is just silly," said Natenshon, who plans to open five to 10 more stores this year. "We believe simply that shopping in stores is something that customers like doing. They will continue doing it. There's a ton of folks who shop online. We do a huge business there as well. People enjoy that experience. Ultimately, we want to give our customers options and make any shopping experience with us unique and enjoyable. Retail is not going anywhere."

Next up for Marine Layer, the brand will produce a denim line that Natenshon hopes will be ready for Fall. Like the activewear line, he said that the company would take its time to get the line right.—Andrew Asch



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LA Textile Show *Continued from page 1*

There seems to be less exhibitors and maybe a few less customers,” said Dan Rimmon of **Rimmon Fabrics**.

Certain exhibitors noticed a decline in customer traffic from clients who would travel from other regions to attend the show in the past.

“Overall, the show was good. We didn’t get that many customers from the East Coast,” said Sean Zarini, who is a manager at **Fabric Selection Inc.** “I don’t know the reason, but most were local from around here.”

Though competition might not seem as fierce with a smaller pool of manufacturers, the challenge lies in anticipating the designs that will attract business.

“Since we work on speculation, we bring what we believe people are going to like,” said Eli Khoubian, partner at **City Textile**. “Since there are vast kinds of customers who come in, they could all be looking for something completely different.”

Despite the noticeably smaller booth presence, many vendors were finding success, as customers sought more accessibility from Los Angeles-based suppliers.

“There are definitely a lot more options out here. Better prices in comparison to Italian fabric and Colombian fabric. Transportation is easier. Shipping from L.A., there are more options now, so clients are loving that,” said Zenda Ortiz of **EBI Fabrics Corp.**

With the Made-in-Los Angeles message being a useful selling point for many brands, overseas companies that were showing their lines faced the challenge of convincing attendees that they could provide competitive services that would rival domestic sources.

“We meet new customers every time we come,” said Jenny Crocker, a sales representative from Australian line **Martin & Savage**. “They are excited that we’re Australian, but they do think we’re too far away, so we have to convince them that we’re not so far away.”

Supporting local Los Angeles business is a priority for designers who want to contribute to the potential growth for materials sourcing in the region, but some were questioning whether or not the city’s industry is prepared for this opportunity.

“Five years ago everything was ‘China! China! China!’ and now we’re planning to bring back everything to the U.S., but are we ready for it to come back?” asked Stela Perez, executive designer of **A Cut Above the Rest L.A.**

Roller-skate designer Michelle Steilen is collaborating on a line of bags for her **Moxi Roller Skates** and attended the show with her business partner, Stacy Wright, who designs the **Trixie B True** accessories line. The pair was happy with their experience, which yielded many promising new partnerships.

“I live in Northern California and have been to a few of these sort of things up in San Francisco, and this is way bigger,” said Wright, who also took advantage of the sem-

thing that they have here—the notions, the buttons—it’s different,” he said.

Providing a unique experience to attendees at the show was an important tactic for manufacturers. In contrast to other businesses that weren’t pleased with the show, **Alexander Henry Fabrics**, the cotton-print supplier, received a lot of traffic coming through its colorful space.

“I am not saying that we definitely wrote business from it, but pretty sells,” explained Phillip de Leon of his brand’s booth. “Pretty attracts, so you make it pretty, they will come. So, at least they will come because they are interested in what’s going on.”

In addition to a visual experience that set apart certain



The Alexander Henry Fabrics booth



Fabric Selection Inc.'s booth



Robert Kaufman Fabrics' booth

inars that were offered. “This is just bigger. A lot more people.”

Designers who have returned each year feel the show remains an excellent resource to find unique materials to keep their designs fresh. San Francisco-based Rickie Lee of **Lee Rickie Collection** creates menswear using traditionally feminine fabrics, and although he noticed there were fewer vendors at the show this year it’s still an event that he values.

“To stay competitive and different from all the other brands you have to source fabrics that are not local. Every-

booths from others, promoting new services to attract the shifting needs of their clientele helped manufacturers increase booth traffic. As designers now request different production timelines and methods from their suppliers, vendors at the show found success in meeting these changing demands.

“We recently introduced a digital-printing program, so that has been one of the most popular things and that is perfect for the marketplace right now,” said Ron Kaufman, sales manager of the manufacturing division at his family’s 76-year-old company, **Robert Kaufman Fabrics**. “Everybody wants more flexibility right now.” ●



Forecast *Continued from page 1*

year,” said UCLA Anderson senior economist David Shulman. “The economy is going to be powered by investments from the tax cuts and a lag in capital spending from previous years.”

With a \$1.5 trillion corporate tax cut over the next 10 years and a faster timetable to write down depreciation of capital equipment, the country’s gross domestic product (which is the value of all goods and services produced) is expected to increase 2.9 percent this year, followed by 2.6 percent in 2019 and then a more sluggish 1.6 percent in 2020.

A slower-moving economy in 2020 is because the country will be reaching full employment and businesses can’t expand without more qualified workers, which leads to lower productivity.

Nevertheless, job growth in the country will continue with the unemployment rate in early 2019 hitting a low of 3.5 percent, which hasn’t been that low since 1969.

With lower unemployment, wages will undoubtedly rise, leading to inflation growth that in the past has been moderate. Last year, inflation was up 2.1 percent, which was on par with 2016 and the highest since 2011. It should continue to increase at that rate and even move up to see 3 percent growth by 2020.

“We are going to see inflation going up year over year in April and May because last year cellular carriers cut the prices of their data plans by 30 to 40 percent, which brought down the April and May consumer price index,” Shulman

said. “We also think we are going to see real wage gains of about 4 percent when you factor in benefits and bonuses.”

Inflation won’t be helped by the fact that budget hawks were sidelined by President Trump’s new tax cut and a push to increase spending.

On Feb. 9, the Republican-controlled Congress passed a two-year budget deal that raised spending by almost \$300 billion and gave the Pentagon an 18 percent boost in its new \$700 billion budget. “The era on contraction in that sector is over,” the UCLA Anderson economists wrote in their report.

This deficit spending broke a longstanding promise by the Republicans to balance the budget in 10 years. The U.S. Treasury Department reported that the budget deficit for fiscal year 2017 was \$665.7 billion, up from \$585.6 billion the year before, and it will only be getting larger.

One of the key drivers of the economy this year is going to be business fixed investment that can

be written off faster than in the past. All three categories of business fixed investment (equipment, intellectual property and structures) will be expanding robustly in 2018 with real equipment spending leading the way with an 8.4 percent gain. But growth will slow as the economy begins to operate at its full potential.

Even though President Trump is railing about unfair trade with other countries, the U.S. trade deficit is expected to grow even though there is talk of putting a 10 percent tariff on aluminum and a 25 percent tariff on steel. That’s because as the economy heats up U.S. consumers will be buying more goods and many of those items are imported. The UCLA Anderson economists expect the trade deficit to grow

from \$620 billion in 2017 to nearly \$800 billion in 2020.

With more workers looking for homes, housing activity will continue to grow through 2019, but it will be far from a boom as higher interest rates and higher home prices make housing less affordable.

In 2017, there were 1.2 million housing starts. That should inch up to 1.3 million starts in 2018, 1.38 million in 2019 and down to 1.36 million in 2020.

California still golden

California’s economy is the second-fastest-growing economy of all the 50 states, with Washington state being first with its tech giants including **Microsoft** and **Amazon.com**, coffee purveyor **Starbucks**, and **Nordstrom** department stores.

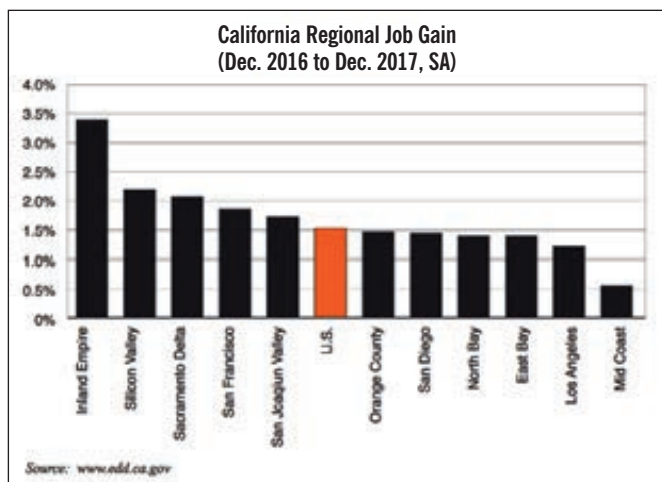
Employment in California is at record highs with more than 16 million jobs now in the state, which is 9.9 percent higher than the pre-recession peak.

Job growth has been rampant in San Francisco, San Jose and the Silicon Valley, but that is beginning to ease as high housing prices and limited office space take their toll. Job growth now will be seen more in the Inland Empire of San Bernardino and Riverside counties as well as the San Joaquin Valley and Sacramento.

With the new U.S. budget ramping up defense spending, California should be one of the winners as that infusion of cash beefs up manufacturing and engineering in Southern California and technological developments through the entire state. There are hundreds of Pentagon contractors from Santa Barbara to San Diego that will see a boost in orders for everything from fuselages to engines, drones to jets.

But Trump’s protectionist attitude toward trade may curtail imports, and that would affect the large Los Angeles/Long Beach port complex, which sees about one-third of all container traffic in the United States passing through its gates. According to UCLA economist William Yu, the local ports in Los Angeles would definitely be affected if a trade war were to break out between the United States and its trading partners.

Still, economists are forecasting that California’s unemployment will remain at 4.3 percent by 2020. ●



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MADE IN THE USA

Five Brands at Atlanta Apparel That Think Outside the Box

What does today's confident, modern woman look for when she shops? Expert craftsmanship, fine quality, and a look as individual as she is. Fall 2018 offers a treasure trove of distinctive pieces that are sure to please.

ABLE

Ethical shopping is an idea whose time has come if ABLE has anything to say about it. The company's mission is to end generational

poverty by employing skilled women in Ethiopia, Peru, and Mexico, manufacturing directly in communities "we wish to impact, both locally and globally." ABLE has grown from a group of handwoven scarves to include clothing, handbags, jewelry, shoes, and accessories. Fall 2018 is all about "deep hues, clean lines, and enriched details." Case in point: the deep-raspberry, high-quality jersey Trujillo wrap top, a bright upgrade from traditional burgundy. Shout-outs as well for the structured Suria tote, Knot tote, and Zip-Top bags, the Miriam Block Heel shoe, the Candela utility dress, and the Mina Wash denim jacket. ABLE's favorites: the Perez bootie, Rachel wristlet and tote, wrap dress, military jacket, "and all of our 14K gold-fill jewelry" in geometric shapes.



Latico Leathers

From its humble beginnings of naked-leather bags sold out of a car trunk that became faves of the Grateful Dead to uptown style with an eye on European trends, Latico Leathers has come a long, successful way. Attention to such details as unique artisan linings and unexpected leather treatments are signature Latico features. Fall 2018 delivers an earthy, rich color palette, hand-washed leathers, new textures, and artisan-crafted details such as weaves and braids with a bit of a modern, feminine edge. Witness the Rudi bag in dark brown or rich cognac, which offers a clean aesthetic, a versatile shape, and herringbone detailing, and the Felipe, a deep-olive laser-cut leather combined with washed tan. Bestsellers? "We will do well with medium-large satchels, totes, and shoulder bags that can be worn across the body."



Matisse Footwear

Matisse Footwear's approach is "a little bit country and a little rock 'n' roll." With an aesthetic "slightly rugged" and "road worn," each pair is hand-finished by artisans for an individualized look that has definite appeal to Matisse's sophisticated consumers, who aren't afraid to wear those leopard boots to a cocktail party. What's new for Fall 2018? "Statement-making



materials!" Matisse says, as well as new finishing techniques. Fall for Matisse is best represented by the Tinsel boot, with a new shape and futuristic pattern that is "the epitome of the vibe we're going for." Expected bestsellers are the Walk On bootie, a new version of Good Company, which features a peek of skin in the shaft, and on-trend mules for the perennial ease of throw-on-and-go. Catering to smaller retailers, Matisse always carries deep stock—"our cherry on the top for our customers."

Molly Bracken

In 2008, Julian and Catherine Sidonio named Molly Bracken, the apparel company, after Molly Bracken, the person—a strong, feminine Irishwoman from the early part of the last century who was Julian's grandmother. The line's mix of boho and retro chic with liberal doses of lace, tulle, knits, and sequins is a continuing

testament to her spirit. The brand is aimed at a "feminine, lively, eclectic" woman who is aware of the trends but has her own ideas of how to make them her own. Fall 2018 is "deeply inspired by the '70s," juxtaposing warm, vintage tones and icy-blue contemporary colors. Key palette match-ups for Molly Bracken are saffron yellow mixed with purple or emerald green for "the French couture style we love." A key piece includes a reversible faux-fur coat—"the perfect example of the duality of the new collection, glamour and casual, feminine and masculine."



Velvet Heart

Velvet Heart left its heart in California, having fallen hard for the "California-chic" casual lifestyle. Launched in 2008, Velvet Heart specializes in shirting and shirt dressing; casual soft bottoms and jeans; and toppers for women of all ages who seek trend-savvy, individual, and effortless style. Each season, the collection focuses on creating newness through novelty washes and updated colors and silhouettes. For Fall 2018, shirting takes on a new feel with super-soft plush brushed rayon and 100 percent silky cupro, with novelty details such as faux-fur trims and velvet and embellishments front and center. Ditto for the denim pieces, which feature trending racer stripes and lace-up details along with embellishments and embroideries. Key pieces include the best-selling classic Elisa shirt in menswear-inspired fabrications and flare-crop and wide-leg denim.



The next edition of Atlanta Apparel is April 10-14 at AmericasMart in Atlanta.



Two Important Textile and Fiber Organizations Merge

As of April 1, the **National Council of Textile Organizations** and the **American Fiber Manufacturers Association** will be one.

The two trade associations are hoping that together they will be stronger in influencing federal policy as it relates to textiles and fibers.

The merged entities will operate as the National Council of Textile Organizations, based in Washington, D.C., and NCTO President and Chief Executive Auggie Tantillo will continue in that role.

William V. McCrary Jr., chairman of the NCTO board and chief executive of **William Barnett & Son**, a global manufacturer of fiber, polymers and yarn in Spartansburg, S.C., said the merger will bring new members and financial resources to NCTO and extend the organization's political reach.

"It also cements NCTO's status as the voice of every facet of the U.S. textile production chain, a fact that will help NCTO to more effectively influence federal policies that affect U.S. textile investment, produc-

tion and workers," he said.

AFMA Chairman Mark Ruday, who is also the senior vice president of **DAK Americas** in Charlotte, N.C., said the merger will allow U.S. fiber producers to keep the sector's seat at the federal policy table. "As a multi-billion industry with tens of thousands of employees, it is critical that the U.S. man-made fiber sector stay engaged in Washington," Ruday said.

NCTO's leadership structure is made up of four councils—fiber, yarn, fabric and home furnishings, and industry support. Each represents a major sector of the U.S. supply chain and elects its own officers, who make up NCTO's board of directors.

NCTO executives note that the U.S. employed 550,000 workers in the textile supply chain last year, and that the U.S. exported \$28.6 billion of fiber, textiles and apparel in 2015, much of that to Central America and Mexico. The two regions have free-trade pacts with the United States.

—Deborah Belgium

Trans-Pacific Partnership Signed in Chile

The much anticipated Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, formerly known as the Trans-Pacific Partnership, was signed March 8 in Santiago, Chile, as member nations moved forward without the United States to build a stronger global economy.

The 11 member nations—Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam—finalized the CPTPP as the Trump administration sought to move forward with new tariffs on aluminum and steel imports to the United States.

Under the Obama administration, the United States was a member of the original Trans-Pacific Partnership, a deal that was met with ire from many of the country's legislators. Although President Barack Obama signed on with the 11 other nations, each country was awaiting approval from their legislators when U.S. participation in the agreement came to a halt after it became a contentious issue during the 2016 presiden-

tial election.

President Donald Trump pulled the U.S. out of the original version of the TPP, which excluded China and was set to lower tariffs imposed on a number of goods from member nations. Recently, Trump has backpedaled on his criticism of the new CPTPP, revealing that he would be open to further discussion regarding U.S. participation if the deal would provide greater benefit to the country. Currently, the United States has free-trade agreements with CPTPP members Australia, Canada, Chile, Mexico, Peru and Singapore.

As news of the CPTPP broke, U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer released a statement in response to Trump's presidential proclamations regarding tariffs on steel and aluminum.

"Under the leadership of President Trump, America has a robust trade agenda that supports our national security. The President is once again demonstrating he will protect our country, fight for American workers and strictly enforce our trade laws."—Dorothy Crouch

Calendar

March 11

ASD Market Week
Las Vegas Convention Center
Las Vegas
Through March 14

March 12

Los Angeles Fashion Market
California Market Center
The New Mart
Cooper Design Space
Gerry Building
Lady Liberty Building
Academy Awards Building
Primrose Design Building
824 Building
Los Angeles
Through March 14
Designers and Agents
The New Mart
Los Angeles
Through March 14

Brand Assembly
Cooper Design Space
Los Angeles
Through March 14

LA Kids' Market

Select

Transit
California Market Center
Los Angeles
Through March 14

Art Hearts Fashion

The Macarthur
Los Angeles
Through March 16

March 13

SAPICA
Poliforum León
León, Mexico
Through March 16

March 16

Los Angeles Fashion Week
Neuehouse Studios
Los Angeles
Through March 18

March 17

HelpJess Meet and Greet
828 Main St.
Los Angeles

March 21

Dallas Market Week
Dallas Market Center
Dallas
Through March 24

Brand Assembly
Dallas Market Center
Dallas
Through March 23

FIG

Fashion Industry Gallery
Dallas
Through March 23

March 27

DG Expo
Doubletree by Hilton Hotel Miami
Airport & Convention Center
Miami
Through March 28

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.

HelpJess's New App Connects Global Consumers to the City of the 'Angels'

Simon La Barrie, a garrulous Australian with the energy of a tornado, knows he has a good idea. Not just a good idea, a great idea, one that remakes the world of online shopping and offers a lifeline to Los Angeles designers struggling to find a market for their goods.

"I've been living here in L.A. since 2010 with a rock-star team focused on building the impossible," he says. "What I hear from designers is that no one is buying anything. It's sad, but I tell them, take a deep breath, we've got your back. We're going to fix this mess. I'm going to help you get sales."

Just how La Barrie plans to do this is an ingenious spin on common social-media technology—a patented application he has developed called HelpJess.

HelpJess, described broadly as an online virtual shopping mall, creates a space for apparel customers to connect and interact in real time with designers and salespersons—La Barrie calls them "Angels"—located in design studios and shops in cities around the world. It's a personalized shopping experience that replicates the kind of experience consumers have going to an actual bricks-and-mortar store. With the growth of online shopping and e-commerce-only vendors, that one-on-one contact and interaction between customer and seller is falling by the wayside, and, La Barrie says, something important is being lost.

"I love online, but I hate it," he says. "I love going to the malls, to the stores, but everyone's busy now and can't do it all the time. My application brings that experience back in your hand. You feel you are in the store even though you are on the other side of the world. You have that personal relationship with the sales associate or designer."

HelpJess, which offers a no-fee membership for buyers and sellers, is currently available through iTunes on iOS tablets and phones and is scheduled to be available on Android phones in April and desktop computers sometime after that. Targeted cities include Los Angeles, New York, Singapore, Paris, Milan, Hong Kong, Bali, and various sites in Australia. Members interested in shopping set up an appointment with the vendor, who provides a sales assistant, or even the designer him- or herself, to "walk" the shopper through collections. Purchases are made online.

There's much about HelpJess that returns the social aspect to shopping for consumers—for example, the app enables groups of friends to shop together at the same time, creating shopping "parties." With its enabling of true give-and-take between seller and consumer, it counters the isolation endemic to ordering online. For designers, the app holds the promise of reaching and developing a client base in far-flung areas of the globe, seeing in real time which designs are popular, gaining important feedback.

While HelpJess is admittedly a work in progress, La Barrie and the HelpJess Angel team has embarked on a series of demonstrations to show how the app can work, the last one in Los Angeles in December 2017, when he connected Los Angeles designers with buyers in Australia.

La Barrie's next local demonstration takes place on Saturday, March 17, in

downtown Los Angeles. At the demonstration, La Barrie will initiate through the app a real-time shopping experience with several local Los Angeles designers showing off their wares to consumers located in Australia, New York, and Singapore.

The demo is very much geared to attracting local designers, first and foremost, La Barrie says, so he can show them "how we can help you to sell to our growing global members" as easily as if they were shopping in Los Angeles. "I want people from around the world to shop in L.A." To that end, he is working with the L.A. Fashion District to put L.A. on the world's fashion radar even more.

As he works to build up a stable of reliable Los Angeles designer vendors, La Barrie has been encouraged by test runs he's had with other cities. He describes a buying party he set up between a group of Australian women and a designer in Singapore. "They wanted to shop," he explains. "The good thing was that the designer could see them. One girl was tall and skinny, one was big-busted, one was short. She was able to say to them, 'I will adjust this dress for you,

I will put up the hem, I will make the top bigger.' When the clothes came, they all fit the customer perfectly. You can't do that online. You have to talk to a human being."

La Barrie imagines that, for Los Angeles designers, personalized service and real-time face-to-face interaction with customers will build a label loyalty in cities on several continents that would be difficult to achieve otherwise.

From designers, he plans to move to include boutiques and eventually brands. The system works B2B as well as B2C. The process grows more complex as the global links expand. Multiple currencies have to be dealt with, and he is looking to incorporate the bitcoin as a form of payment.

"Building a massive shopping center in the sky that everyone can go to" is La Barrie's "passion," he says. And L.A. designers are his main mission, which is why he is eager to attract as many designers as possible on March 17.

"It's all about L.A.," he says. "I built this for you, guys. We have the world waiting for you. Better get on board."



HelpJess
SHOPPING MALL &
ENTERTAINMENT

HelpJess
"SNEAK PEEK"
VIP Showcase Events

OUR LA FASHION DISTRICT VIP MEET AND GREET OUR LOCAL LA DESIGNERS EVENT

HELPJESS IS LAUNCHING A WORLD-CHANGING SHOPPING TECHNOLOGY.
STOP BY FOR A SNEAK PEEK, SEE HOW A REVOLUTION IN SHOPPING CAN HELP YOU BEFORE THE WORLD DOES.

Date: Saturday, March 17, 2018

Time: 1 to 5 p.m. PDT

Place: 828 S. Main St., Los Angeles, CA 90014

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Cherokee CEO Says the Old Ways of Brand Management Are Over

By Deborah Belgum *Executive Editor*

When Henry Stupp became the chief executive of **Cherokee Global Brands** in 2010, revenues at the brand-management company had been declining for five years.

No longer was it possible for the enterprise to sit back, license a brand name and collect the royalty checks that rolled in from primarily **Target**, which had signed on as a Cherokee licensee in 1993. Cherokee executives used to joke about the paper cuts they were getting from the checks they were processing.

Those days have changed. “When I joined the company in 2010, Target’s retail sales in the United States for Cherokee had declined from \$2 billion to \$700 million, and it was declining in other pockets of the world,” said Stupp, who was speaking about how to monetize intellectual property and brands at a talk organized by the fashion and intellectual-property attorneys at law firm **Freeman Freeman & Smiley**. “Cherokee had great equity, but it was clearly struggling.”

In the past, Cherokee didn’t have the right to approve a product, decide which factories produced the label or even what a Cherokee label should look like. “Before brand management was simpler. A manufacturer could get a logo, slap it on a garment and sell it. Today it has become much more difficult. You can’t ride it until you go onto the next brand,” he said. “Before, retailers were cycling through brands, and it was confusing for the customers.”

So Stupp set out to give retailers more bang for the company’s brand names by helping them develop product, find factories, market the product and help with social media. “We were going to be engaged as opposed to being pure check collectors,” he said. “We were going to be a strategic partner with our partners.”

With retailers struggling more than ever, Stupp said there was a need for Cherokee to help them drive their business. “We were letting them do everything on their own,” he noted.

He analyzed the situation and set up three principal pillars to grow the company’s brands. Those pillars were vision, agility and skills. The vision part involved providing the licensees with product design, product sourcing specialists, category expansion, supply-chain development, marketing, and social and digital media bloggers.

Agility involved being nimble and being more responsive than ever before in this era of fast-fashion retail. “Retailers today are stretched thin, and the retail landscape is getting flattened,” Stupp said.

The skill part involves choosing good brands to buy. The chief executive said he probably gets a request every day to buy a brand. “I could sit there and say, ‘That brand is for sale. That brand is for sale, and that brand is for sale.’”

But he has a fine-tuned formula for selecting a brand that will make money. A good brand must be able to expand into all categories and retail departments: men’s, women’s, children’s, footwear, accessories, home and other products.”

Frederick’s of Hollywood made a pitch for Cherokee to buy its brand, but Stupp said the brand name did not have an extensive reach into children’s and men’s. “It was not multi-category or dual gender,” he said. “But it is the right brand for the right company.”

He said a multi-category brand helps retail-

ers maximize their budget when marketing various categories of a label. Brands also need to be omnichannel, being able to be sold online and at various stores.

Cherokee, which was founded in 1973 in Los Angeles as a footwear brand, now has 12 labels in its portfolio. They include **Carole Little**, **Liz Lange**, **Sideout**, **Tony Hawk**, **Point Cove** and **Flip Flop Shops**. In 2016, it acquired **Hi-Tec**, a Dutch footwear brand founded in 1974, which also included the **Magnum** brand.

Hi-Tec fit the formula. It has a good following and is easy to expand into other categories. Stupp observed that it is easier for a footwear brand to extend into apparel, but the reverse is more difficult. He referred to the less-than-stellar crossovers of **Under Armour** and **Champion** into footwear.

With multiple possibilities for the brand, Cherokee was expecting that Hi-Tec’s expansion into men’s and women’s apparel and accessories would generate in its first year about \$19 million in licensing revenues.

In 2017 Cherokee’s revenues totaled \$40.6



Henry Stupp

million compared with \$34.6 million the previous year.

Stupp advised that it is better to acquire a brand that still has some life rather than one that has been sitting in the bone yard because it’s hard to resurrect a dead brand. “And we would not step into a situation where a brand has a reputation for bad products,” he added.

Another factor to consider is whether a brand has global intellectual-property protection. “IP protection is your single most valuable asset,” Stupp noted.

Cherokee also selects brands that create synergy between each label and that work well together. “We would not go into the toy business,” he said. “That’s not what we do. We operate global lifestyle brands. We want brands that don’t overlap but sit well together. We operate like a mall that has big-box retailers, specialty stores for women and for men, and sportswear stores.”

With retailers being more mathematical these days, Stupp said it is more important than ever to educate retailers and licensees about why they have to have your brands. “Today it is more about science than art for retailers. It used to be a combination of art and science,” he said. “Bricks-and-mortar stores are suffering today. They have lost their merchandising sense and the ability to predict trends. A good brand supplier can teach them, but you have to have credibility to do it.” ●

Protecting Your Brand Is the First Step to Being Successful

One of the first things a new fashion company needs to learn is how to protect its brand. It is the lifeblood of the business.

While fashion schools provide an exceptional education to students, courses on brand protection aren't offered at all institutions. Prospective designers often enter the fashion industry unaware of the threats that can arise if they don't safeguard their brands. "It's not part of the curriculum, but it is part of the reality," said Michelle Landver, a client executive at the insurance company **Marsh & McLennan Agency**.

Landver was speaking on a March 5 panel organized by Ilse Metchek, president of the **California Fashion Association**, during the **Los Angeles International Textile Show** at the **California Market Center**. The topic was "Protecting Your Brand." The other panelist speaking was Aaron Renfro, a shareholder and attorney with the law firm **Call & Jensen**.

Attendees learned how they can protect their intellectual property, establish a brand and avoid accusations of infringement from other companies.

The panel also emphasized the importance of performing adequate research that covers the basics of branding. Renfro warned attendees of a problem that often occurs after a designer has invested in his or her brand identity only to have a competitor raise accusations of infringement.

"If you don't take the time to search and find out whether or not you can use it, there is a chance that someone is going to come

along and say, 'You can't use that name,'" he explained. "Now, you've invested six months or a year into that brand name and your customers know you by it and then you have to go into the expense of changing that."

In addition to introducing the basic concepts of trademarks, copyright, design patents and licensing that are the foundation of brand protection, Metchek also discussed the regulatory details regarding more recent trends of how celebrities and influencers use their recognition to promote products.

"The whole thing about social media—what is allowed and what isn't—that is evolving. The government is stepping in on all of it," Metchek said.

The seminar's large attendee turnout showed that new designers are beginning to recognize there is more to starting a fashion business than simply producing beautiful clothing.

"Coming from a business background, I understand the importance of making sure that you have a clear business plan in place as well as the creative side of things," said Julie Habelmann of Newport Beach, Calif., who wants to launch a resortwear line named **Noble Sands**.

Preparing designers with branding basics will only increase the chances that new ventures will succeed. "Helping people go into business with eyes wide open," Landver said, "providing that education so that they can be prepared is going to help them be as successful as they possibly can be."

—Dorothy Crouch

European Retaliation Tariffs Planned on U.S. Clothing

After President Trump signed an order on March 8 to impose tariffs on imported aluminum and steel, apparel makers were bracing for Europe to slap retaliatory tariffs on a variety of apparel coming from the United States.

The European Union issued a list of items that would be subjected to tariffs following the aluminum and steel tariffs, which go into effect in 15 days.

On that list were T-shirts, men's and women's blue jeans and shorts being shipped to Europe with an estimated value of \$88 million.

Several apparel trade organizations were livid about the steel and aluminum tariffs, which Trump has been threatening for some time and that followed recently imposed tariffs on solar panels and washing machines.

"We know these tariffs will be catastrophic for the U.S. economy and jobs," wrote the **U.S. Fashion Industry Association** in Washington, D.C. "While our members don't import a lot of steel or aluminum, these tariffs could result in disastrous consequences for them. Already, the European Union is calling out a variety of industries, including iconic American denim and T-shirts, as potential targets for tariff increases of their own."

The trade association noted that imports support high-quality jobs for Americans, help U.S. businesses to grow and encourage American companies to do good in other

parts of the world.

Steve Lamar, executive vice president of the **American Apparel & Footwear Association**, noted that putting tariffs on imported items ultimately puts a tax on consumers. "There is a direct cost that rolls into our industry. It is not like the can industry or the auto industry, but it is there," he said, noting that manufacturers, retailers and importers buy trucks to haul merchandise and manufacturers package their goods in aluminum cans.

"We have a member who is a lab company that uses steel and aluminum in its services," Lamar said.

The European Union's tariff on T-shirts, denim and shorts is reminiscent of five years ago when the EU increased a tariff on women's blue jeans made in the United States. That tariff went from 12 percent to 38 percent.

The tariff had some U.S. apparel companies considering whether they should leave their Los Angeles factories and move production to Mexico, which has a free-trade agreement with the EU.

Another concern is that Trump is also considering imposing a tariff on any intellectual property coming from China. This would affect apparel, footwear and consumer electronics, among other things. "This would be directly detrimental to us," Lamar said. "People are saying this could happen in weeks, not months. We are worried about it."—Deborah Belgium

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Lenchner & Kane Sales

The New Mart, Suite 603
(213) 514-5787
llenchnersales@gmail.com

Since 1987 **Lisa Lenchner Sales** had been a constant presence in the **California Market Center** showroom building.

On Feb. 1, the veteran showroom owner went through some big changes when Lenchner's daughter, Shannon Kane, joined

floor of the "A" building had moved.

The new showroom encompasses 1,200 square feet and is centered around two white chairs shaped like baseball mitts. The showroom focuses on "crossover" lines that appeal to a wide range of women.

The showroom represents **Side Stitch**, a Los Angeles-made label that offers sizes from extra small to extra large. The showroom also represents the New York brand

Krazy Larry; Lula Soul, an Australian line; New Jersey-headquartered **Maude Vivante**; and **Benares**, which is made in India. The showroom's wholesale price points range from \$30 to \$70.

As a kid, Kane often helped out in the showroom when growing up. After high school, she trained at **Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts** in Pasadena, Calif., and then worked as a chef at the **Playboy Man-**



From left: Shannon Kane, Lisa Lenchner and Madison Gable, who works in sales at the showroom

the business. With that addition, the business name was changed to **Lenchner & Kane Sales**, and the showroom moved across the street to **The New Mart**.

Kane said that she grew up in the CMC. "It was a rough decision for my mother," she said of Lenchner's move. "The old building is what she knew and where she started."

The business moved because showroom rents were raised, many of their clients wanted to go to a new building and some of Lenchner's longtime neighbors on the third

tion. From 2010 to 2015, she made meals for **Playboy** founder Hugh Hefner and his family. She also worked as a chef for the **SpaceX** aerospace company in Hawthorne, Calif. While she is in the showroom business now, Kane promised to cook for some showroom events.

She and Lenchner also relish being a mother-daughter act. "People love to see a family working together," Lenchner said. "It's been a great part of growing this business."—*Andrew Asch*

Trade Showroom

Cooper Design Space, Suite 514
(213) 228-1200
diana@trade-showroom.com

When Diana Oh gave birth to her daughter, Mila, in late 2016, she wanted to make some changes to the way she worked.

Instead of running a stable of brands, she wanted to focus on a handful of labels. Instead of taking direction from an executive, she wanted to call the shots.

So in January she made the move and opened her first business, the **Trade Showroom**. She called it the Trade Showroom because the name was simple, it was easy to remember and it defined the showroom's operations.

Like her previous fashion-sales gigs, Oh will focus on advanced contemporary lines. She represents four labels: **Smythe**, a Toronto-headquartered line of blazers and jackets for women; **Calvin Rucker**, a Los Angeles line of denim and day-to-night tops; **Label + Thread**, a New York-headquartered cashmere and basics line; and **S18terhood**, a New York label of dresses and tops. Wholesale price points range from \$90 to \$450.

The showroom's interior focuses on white walls, wood accents and plants such as cacti.

Oh wanted to keep the look understated. "I wanted to have a more focused environment for accounts, so they can stand out. I want to be supportive," she said. "This is like a marriage. I'm looking forward to building long-



Diana Oh

lasting relationships with my designers."

While the Trade Showroom will strive to keep a boutique-size group of clients, it will look for opportunity too. Oh is scheduled to open a Dallas showroom in mid-March.

—A.A.

Ten79LA

California Market Center, Suite B530
(213) 489-0846
ten79la.com

After a move from the California Market Center's 10th floor to the fifth floor last year, accessories brand **Ten79LA** has settled in.

Founder Amrita Ahluwalia and Samantha Serrano, a longtime friend who works in operations, are feeling the peaceful vibe of the new showroom. This easy feeling aligns with the core principles of the 10-year-old brand, whose jewelry, handbags and belts are handcrafted in India to create modern, hippie-inspired designs using traditional practices from the region. "The vibe is better. The energy is better down here," said Ahluwalia.

The women didn't have to do much to decorate the nearly 700-square-foot space. They kept the open ceiling that exposed the room's mineral insulation, which allows the brand's colorful handmade pieces to pop. Sitting at their glass-top, marble and mother-of-pearl-based table in the middle of the room, the women remember decorating this new showroom the weekend before another **Los Angeles Fashion Market**. "It's the way the room was when we got it. We just made it brighter. Added lights. White paint. White shelving,"



Amrita Ahluwalia and Samantha Serrano of Ten79LA discuss new designs.

Ahluwalia explained.

Ten79LA's products are arranged around the room with each of the jewelry lines—from gold-plated and vermeil with semiprecious stones to more-affordable festival-inspired pieces—occupying their own sections.

Leather and suede bags that feature beading and woven and mirrored accents are sectioned together and divided by style, such as clutches, backpacks and totes. Other accessories—including belts, brooches and coin purses—are displayed on white tables.

Ahluwalia and Serrano believe the room's raw aesthetic provides a simple appearance that allows the pieces to be fully appreciated. "It was a bit of a rush to get in. Thank goodness minimalism is in right now. It worked to our advantage," Serrano said. "The products are very unique. We might as well use a more minimalistic backdrop rather than distract from it [the line]."

With pieces wholesaling from \$15 to \$80, Ten79LA's previous partners have included **Gilt Groupe** and **HauteLook**. Despite her faith in selling in the digital marketplace, Ahluwalia still believes in the importance of having a showroom to meet with clients during Los Angeles Fashion Market.

—Dorothy Crouch

Impulse Moda

The Gerry Building, Suite 908
(213) 629-5666
www.impulsemoda.com

After four years of operating her **Impulse Moda** showroom on the eighth floor of the **Gerry Building**, Lori Marchand moved up a notch at the beginning of the year to the ninth floor, where there is a friendly vibe because all the showroom owners have known each other for years.

The light is more abundant with windows overlooking Ninth Street, and the space is larger, which leaves more room to display



Lori Marchand of Impulse Moda

the four high-end lines that Marchand represents. "This showroom has just opened up everything," Marchand said. "This is the floor to be on."

Racks on one side of the showroom display her main line, **Olvi's**, which is based

in Amsterdam. The cocktail dresses and evening dresses, which wholesale from \$375 to \$750, are heavy on frilly looks. So are the haute-couture pieces that wholesale for \$1,000 to \$1,800. Olvi's bridal gowns are displayed around the corner in a special bridal area with lots of white and lace.

Becca Kufrin, one of the finalists on ABC-TV's "The Bachelor," wore a black Olvi lace dress when Arie Luyendyk Jr. proposed to her in Peru.

On the other side of the room is another high-end collection called **Byron Lars Beauty Mark**. The eclectic and whimsical label has tops and dresses that can sometimes be made from 20 different fabrics and can be accented with beads or ribbons. Tops wholesale for \$75 while dresses go for \$385.

A label many locals may recognize is **Harari**, which is a Beverly Hills women's store that also wholesales tops, tunics and dresses. The line, which is made in the United States, uses luxury fabrics including 100 percent silk or silk blends. The pieces wholesale from \$65 to \$250.

For years, Marchand has carried the **Ball of Cotton** sweater line, which is manufactured in Commerce, Calif., and was touted as the line that

made **Ralph Lauren's** opening and closing ceremony sweaters for the U.S. Olympic team in 2014.

Ball of Cotton sweaters are made of luxury yarns, are handloomed here and wholesale for \$110 to \$180.—Deborah Belqum

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PUBLISHED BY
TLM PUBLISHING INC.
APPAREL NEWS GROUP
Publishers of:
California Apparel News
Waterwear
Decorated

EXECUTIVE OFFICE
California Market Center
110 E. Ninth St., Suite A777
Los Angeles, CA 90079-1777
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Fashion Market Northern California

www.fashionmarkethorcal.com

Contact: Mary Taft

Products and Services: Fashion Market Northern California is favored for its open-booth format and offers choices from 2,000 apparel and accessories lines in every category: European, contemporary, updated, casual, and junior. Buyers love the complimentary continental breakfast, coupons for lunch, and afternoon treats. Parking is free on Monday and Tuesday mornings for arrival before 10 a.m. The fun "Sip & Shop" continues late night Monday with complimentary beer and wine. The April show is full and will be busting with beautiful Fall product. Please join us and see why everyone loves to shop FMNC.

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Contact: Kevin Yoon

kevin.yoon@hanafinancial.com

Products and Services: Established in 1994, Hana Financial is a specialized nonbank financial institution that offers factoring, asset-based lending, SBA lending, home mortgage banking, investment banking, wealth management, and insurance services. Hana Financial evolved from a local startup serving a niche market of Southern California to a top 10 factor in the U.S. and a member of Factors Chain International, with offices in Los Angeles and New York.

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Kadyluxe®

www.kadyluxe.com

CEO Contact: Kady Zinke at kady@kadyluxe.com or (720)-295-KADY
David Zinke (Regional California/Nevada rep) at (303) 918-4917 and david@kadyluxe.com

Products and Services: Kadyluxe® is a new women's line of premium leggings, active tops, athleisure assortment and NCAA-licensed activewear. Fall in love with our in-house milled proprietary fabrics, happy price points and distinct styles designed by a professional dancer out of Denver. Discover Kadyluxe NCAA styles across 50-plus universities and our branded, premium label in Pure Barre locations across the U.S. Follow us on Instagram: @kadyluxe. Currently pre-booking SS '18 and ATS.

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dreza@milfac.com

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Paradise Ranch Designs

Emblem Showroom

The New Mart

127 E. Ninth St.

Contact: Eveline at

evelinem@emblemshowroom.com

or (310) 420-0125

www.paradiserranchdesigns.com

Products and Services: Kris Goddard's designs deliver what she promises—fresh shapes with a vibrant, youthful appeal yet offering comfortable coverage on the top and bottom. Paradise Ranch goes bold with prints, an array of exuberant tropicals mainly sourced from Italy and France, with solids produced in the United States. The line's success has enabled Goddard to start buying print designs exclusive to Paradise Ranch. "The custom prints in our line provide exclusivity of design and keep everything in the USA. I'm loving that." Beyond the bright look, however, Paradise Ranch is developing a loyal customer base for its smart silhouette choices and Goddard's meticulous attention to fit issues. "My collection is meant to be multifaceted," Goddard notes. "It's more than just swimwear—it's wearable to many places, it's interchangeable, it makes for easy packing. That's the mainstay of what we're doing that makes us different. It's coverage but still sexy."

Progressive Label

2545 Yates Ave.
Commerce, CA 90040
(323) 415-9770

Fax: (323) 415-9771

info@progressivelabel.com

www.progressivelabel.com

Products and Services: Progressive Label is dedicated to helping companies develop and showcase their brand identity. From logo labels and hangtags to care/content labels and price tickets, we will develop, produce, and distribute your trim items worldwide. We specialize in producing custom products that will meet your design and merchandising needs. We successfully launched production of RFID price tickets last year. This demand is being greatly driven by the big retailers such as Macy's and Target. Our growth and market dynamics have resulted in opening up a production center in Tijuana, Mexico. We have also added advanced die cutter technology in our Los Angeles production center to streamline our production efforts and to strengthen our packaging capabilities. A very important part of our business is FLASHTRAK, our online ordering system for price tickets, custom products and care labels. Our mission is to deliver high-quality products at competitive prices, wherever they are needed for production. We understand the rush nature of this industry and strive to meet the tight deadlines facing our customers.

swisstulle

Contact: Martina Callegari, Sales Director

+41 (0) 71 969 32 32

Fax: +41 (0) 71 969 32 33

m.callegari@swisstulle.ch

swisstulle.ch

Products and Services: Founded in 1912. We are one of the leading warp knit Tulle and Bobbinet Tulle manufacturers, producing in Switzerland and England. Our expertise is rigid and elastic warp knits for fashion categories such as bridal, haute couture, and lingerie as well as the embroidery markets, including technical applications that excel in performance and quality. We have the latest machinery with a staff that guarantees quality standards. We cover the whole range of widths with special focus on large widths, resulting in exclusive wide seamless fabrics. Integrated dyeing and finishing is an essential part of our quality and service strategy. swisstulle has just developed the world's thinnest tulle, made of delicate fabric, so thin that from a distance it can be made to look like it's not a fabric at all, just a layer of color! Reach out and let us work with you on your next collection.

Texworld USA

www.texworldusa.com

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Los Angeles, CA 90015

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www.newmart.net

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Long Beach, CA 90810

(310) 537-3400

www.texollini.com

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www.ubmfashion.com

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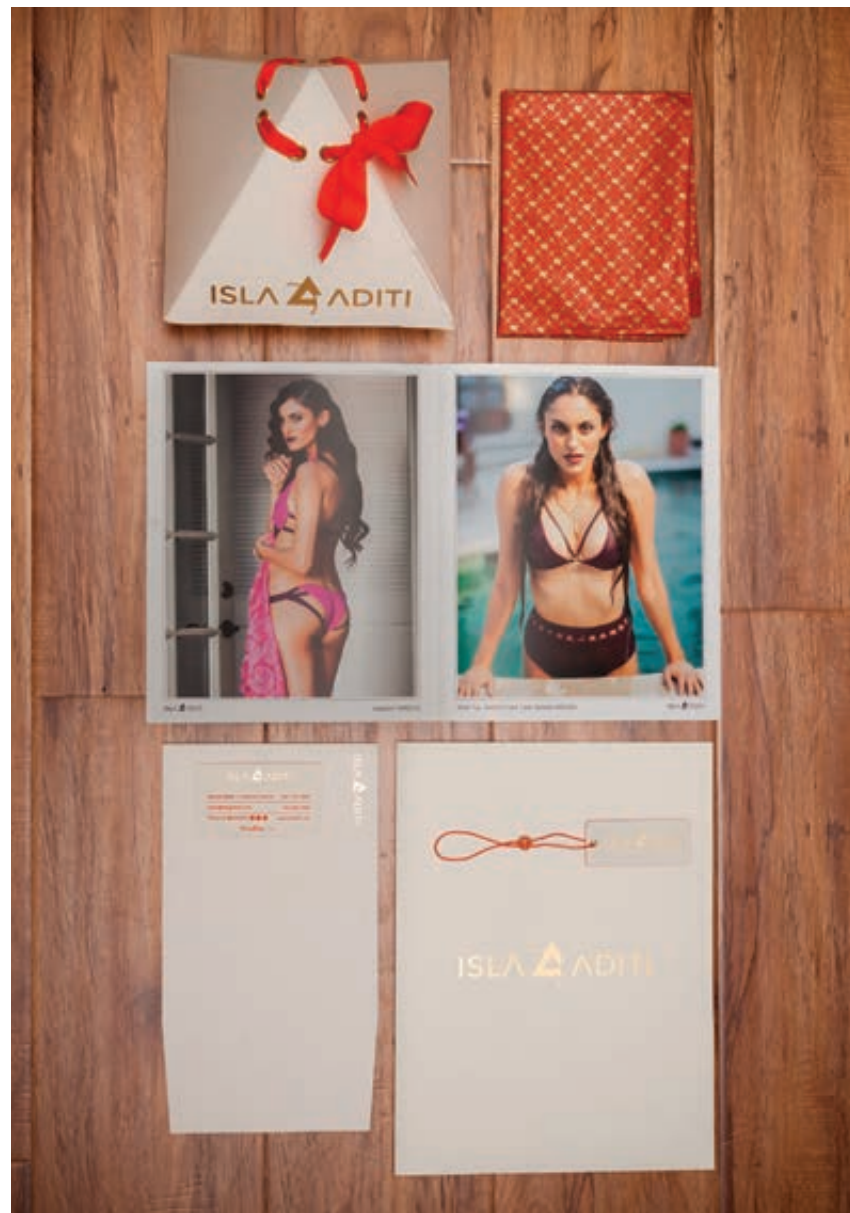
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