

CALIFORNIA ApparelNews

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TIM REGAS

COACHELLA COOL: Influencer Evangelie Smyrniotaki was in Palm Springs for the various music-oriented Coachella events, wearing an outfit that was perfect for the hot weather in the desert. For more trends from Coachella, see page 6.

Oak NYC Moves to Row DTLA

By Andrew Asch *Retail Editor*

After a four-year run in the Beverly Boulevard shopping district of Los Angeles, **Oak NYC** closed its 4,500-square-foot boutique earlier this month and relocated to the **Row DTLA** enclave in downtown Los Angeles.

Oak's lease for its Beverly Boulevard store had expired, cofounder Jeff Madalena said, and the shop's multi-brand selection of merchandise had changed to being more vertical. It doesn't take as much space to showcase a single brand as opposed to many.

Its 2,000-square-foot space at Row DTLA will devote some square footage to other brands, but the majority of the industrial-chic space will be devoted to the Oak brand.

Madalena and Oak cofounder Louis Terline were interested in opening a downtown Los Angeles store, but they wanted a place that offered parking. Row DTLA offers a sprawling, multilevel parking structure and is in a retail neighborhood where prominent streetwear boutique **Bodega** is located and the highly anticipated restaurant **Tartine** will

be opening its first downtown LA location.

In a way, this new location is a bit of déjà vu. That's because the New York-headquartered brand had a store on Broadway and Ninth Street in downtown's Fashion District that ran for a couple of years before closing in 2015.

The store's traffic plummeted after a parking lot next to the store closed to make way for a new apartment complex called **Broadway Palace**.

The new Oak shop has a view of the brand's old headquarters. From 2013 to 2015, Oak was owned by **American Apparel**, which manufactured Oak garments at its downtown LA factory.

American Apparel sold Oak back to Madalena and Terline in 2016 during its first bankruptcy filing. At the beginning of 2017, **Gildan Activewear** acquired American Apparel's brand name and moved its manufacturing out of downtown Los Angeles.

Madalena said it was funny being given a tour near his old offices. "During all the meetings, real-estate developers would explain the site. I would say, 'Well, we had offices over there for years.'" ●

American Rag Talks About Its New Retail Path

By Andrew Asch *Retail Editor*

American Rag Cie is going to the Persian Gulf and possibly points beyond.

Mark Werts, cofounder and chief executive officer of the retail chain, which has been an important part of the Los Angeles scene since the 1980s, is planning in September to open a 9,300-square-foot emporium in **The Dubai Mall** in the United Arab Emirates with other locations in the Persian Gulf to follow in places including Abu Dhabi, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

Also on his retail roadmap are proposals to open stores in India and China. Meanwhile, he is reorganizing his Japanese operations, which means closing his last five stores, where once there were 17. That leaves room to open a Tokyo emporium sometime in 2019 while American Rag's Japanese e-commerce operations will continue.

The overseas growth is taking place while American Rag's domestic stores are scaling back. The company's 12,500-square-foot store in the **Fashion Island** mall in Newport Beach, Calif., closed in January after a 12-year run, and

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Upcycle Stands Up for Sustainable Manufacturing

By Dorothy Crouch *Associate Editor*

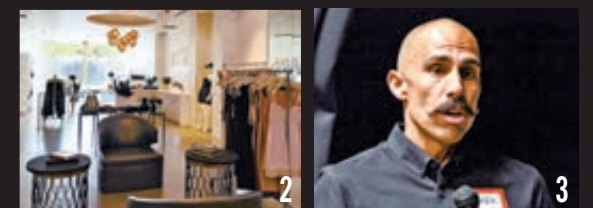
After 16 years at **American Apparel**, Tabitha Vogelsong and John Chung were on a mission to create a responsible apparel brand.

In February 2017, the two launched **Upcycle** based upon a mutual desire to reshape garment manufacturing and the perceptions by consumers about how their clothing is made. Right now, Vogelsong and Chung, the brand's chief executive, are making premium blank T-shirts as well as fleece tops and hoodies.

"I think one thing that has happened is fast fashion and people don't understand that you shouldn't be able to buy a shirt for \$5," explained Vogelsong, who was the vice president of sales and merchandising at American Apparel and has the same title at Upcycle. "You should not be paying less for your shirt than you do for a latte."

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The Kardashians Take Down Their Retail Sign

After a 12-year run, the Kardashians are closing up shop and getting out of the retail-store business.

The reality-TV family made the announcement on social media, saying their two **Dash** stores—one in Miami and the other in West Hollywood, Calif.—will be closing on May 28 and their e-boutique, www.shop-dashonline.com, is scheduled to close May 20.

“As all good things must come to an end, thank you to all of our fans, customers, our team and partners for the incredible love and support! It took a lot of hard work and commitment from Kim, Kourtney and Khloé to have been around this long,” the family said on the shop’s **Instagram** and **Twitter** accounts.

A call to a Kardashian family-business office, **Momager Inc.**, requesting more information on the closures, was not answered by press time.

The first Dash store opened in 2006 in Calabasas, Calif., the same neighborhood where the Kardashians grew up. Later a store was opened in New York City but closed in 2016. A reality-TV show called “Dash Dolls” ran for one season in 2015.

When the first store opened, there was a shopping frenzy at the boutique, but the Kardashian women lately have been busy raising families and engaging in other busi-

ness endeavors. “We’ve loved running Dash, but in the last few years we’ve all grown so much individually,” Kim Kardashian West wrote in a post. “We’ve been



busy running our own brands, as well as being moms and balancing work with our families. We know in our hearts that it’s time to move on.”

Kim Kardashian West is managing a makeup line called **KKW Beauty** while Khloé launched a jeans line last year called **Good American**, and Kourtney Kardashian is about to launch a new line with younger sister Kylie Jenner called **Kourt x Kylie**.

The stores’ demise follows declining ratings for the family’s show, “Keeping Up

With the Kardashians.” Ratings began to fall last year, and there was a flurry of media stories on whether the fashion cachet of the reality-TV family was slipping. But some believe the women are still important to fans.

“The brand is not irrelevant. The name remains aspirational to many,” said Leslie Ghize, executive vice president for trend forecasters **TOBE**.

But she wondered if the Kardashians’ brands have kept pace with a generation of young women who, in the last 19 months, have developed a bigger interest in social activism. “The success of the Kardashian name capitalizes on a specific worldview. Today, a brand needs to evolve with their customer rather than stay rigidly on brand as was once prescribed,” Ghize said.

The West Hollywood Dash was located across the street from the ritzy Melrose Place designer enclave where top-tier fash-

ion houses—including **Marc Jacobs**, **Isabel Marant**, **Monique Lhuillier** and **Balmain**—were located.

However, Dash didn’t quite fit in, said J’Net Nguyen, creative director of **The Right Brain Studio**, a trend-forecasting group.

“It was more of a novelty,” Nguyen said. “It was always filled with tourists. They just wanted to take photos. They didn’t want to buy anything. They were there to immerse themselves in a celebrity experience.”

Contemporary fashions with a similar silhouette could be found for cheaper prices at stores further east on Melrose Avenue, Nguyen said. Dash focused on its self-named house brand, Dash. It also sold some third-party brands including **Kendall + Kylie**, owned by younger sisters Kendall and Kylie Jenner; **Norma Kamali**; **Nookie**; and **Young Fabulous & Broke**.

The West Hollywood Dash store is located in a neighborhood with low vacancy, said Jay Luchs, vice chairman of **Newmark Knight Frank**, who put the less than 2,000-square-foot space on the market. Monthly rents in the neighborhood range from \$7 to \$12 per square foot.

—Andrew Asch

NEWS

Maui and Sons Announces American Eagle Collaboration Line

With the help of **Maui and Sons**, **American Eagle Outfitters** is going surf.

On June 1, the denim-focused American Eagle will debut a collaboration line, called **American Eagle x Maui and Sons**, with the heritage surf brand, said Blake Harrington, executive vice president of licensing and business development at Maui and Sons, headquartered in Los Angeles’ Pacific Palisades neighborhood.

The collaboration line will be available exclusively at all American Eagle doors, which number more than 1,000 stores in North America, China and Hong Kong.

Looks will include hoodies, French terry sweatshirts and denim shirt jackets with Maui and Sons’ logo embroidered on the back, Harrington said. Following Maui and Sons’ roots in 1980s surf and skateboard styles, there will be T-shirts with bright colors.

Some of the T-shirts and other garments will have a worn, vintage look. There also will be a few looks for women, which include tank tops and crop tops. The collaboration’s tops are intended to be merchandised with the retailer’s denim. American Eagle, based in Pittsburgh, will manufacture most of the clothes.

Maui and Sons will manufacture swimwear and the collaboration line’s accessories, including skateboard decks, **Frisbees** and caps. Maui and Sons snacks, including coconut chips, will be sold at various American Eagle flagships.

“It was tied together in a nice way,” Harrington said. “It gives us more of a consumer base. It will attract more people to Maui and Sons and American Eagle,” he said.

Maui and Sons has been selling surfwear since the Reagan administration. Its various logos—which include a muscular man with a shark’s head and a round dark circle filled with the brand’s name and colorful, geometric figures—have been common sights around surf

areas for years.

The brand’s clothes have been sold at **Macy’s**, **Pacific Sunwear**, **Zara** and **The Buckle** as well as action sports-friendly retailers including **Tilly’s**.

In 2017, Maui and Sons made a licensing deal with Irvine, Calif.-headquartered **Z Supply’s Icons of Culture** division to make a women’s line. Harrington said that Icons of




Culture for the Spring/Summer 2018 season is currently available in stores, including **Tilly’s** and **Jack’s Surfboards**.

Licensing and collaborations make up 10 percent of Maui and Sons’ business. “It’s a great business driver and a great way to mix products,” Harrington said. “It’s very important to us.”

The American Eagle collaboration started in September 2017 when Harrington met with American Eagle executives at the **Licensing Expo** in Las Vegas.

After the two companies agreed to collaborate, American Eagle sent five of their designers to scour Maui and Sons’ archives in a warehouse in Rancho Cucamonga, Calif. They went through original artwork from the 1980s and selected a dozen graphics and prints to reproduce.

“They were very hands-on,” Harrington said. “I flew over there. It took nine months to put it together. It was a big effort for everyone.”—A.A.



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Orange Coast College Launches an Apparel Sustainability Program

The future of the fashion job market is green, said Lauren Becker, the fashion department coordinator at **Orange Coast College** in Costa Mesa, Calif.

It's why her institution recently announced it will be offering an Apparel Industry Sustainability certificate program next fall. While other colleges offer degrees in sustainable design, OCC will be the first community college in Southern California to offer a standalone certificate program, which starts in September. "This is a field of growth in job placement," Becker said. "If you're paying attention to the industry, it's a must."

OCC is located only 15 minutes away from a number of action-sports labels in Orange County.

Earlier this month, the certificate program's instructor, Derek Sabori, taught a two-day seminar to introduce the program to potential students. It was filled to capacity, Becker said.

Sabori, who started **Volcom**'s sustainability initiative more than 10 years ago and holds a master's of business administration from the **University of California, Irvine**, will be a principal part of the program.

He has been a part-time instructor at the college since 2005 and was Volcom's vice president, global sustainability, until 2015, when he left to start a consulting career and launch the sustainable men's yoga brand **Kozm**.

When French luxe conglomerate **Kering** acquired Volcom in 2011, Kering started an ambitious program to make its products and operations as eco-friendly as possible.

Under Kering, Sabori frequently worked with people at the leading edge of sustainability studies who consulted or worked with Kering's family of brands, including **Gucci** and **Saint Laurent**.

Earlier this year, Kering announced it planned to sell Vol-

com, which said it intends to continue to embrace sustainability.

In February, Volcom was accredited as a member of the **Fair Labor Association**, which Sabori helped with his advice. A handful of companies in Costa Mesa and Los Angeles embrace sustainable manufacturing, including **Outerknown**, **Vissla** and **Reformation**.

Much of the information on sustainability studies is so new that there is not much written about it in academia, Sabori said. "This is coming straight from the industry. It's hard to find in a textbook," he said.

Students in the certificate program are eligible to learn about sustainability in a real work environment through internships at companies including Volcom. Field trips to brands working in sustainable fashion will be scheduled and speakers from those companies are anticipated to lecture.

Classes in the certificate program include "Introduction to Sustainability in Business and Fashion," which looks at the elements of sustainability, the effects of material used in the process and supply chains. Another course will be "Apparel Industry—The Environment, Ethical Business Practices and The Law."

Becker and Sabori started working on the certificate program's curriculum in September 2017 after receiving in-

terest from students and faculty suggestions to offer more classes in sustainability. Students must take three separate sustainability classes to complete the program.

While courses about apparel sustainability are rare, demand is increasing, said Lindsay Fox, fashion instructor and department chair at **Saddleback College** in Mission Viejo, Calif. "The industry and marketplace is becoming more aware of the practices of sustainability, and specific companies are making this a cornerstone. We are trying to meet this need," she said.

Saddleback has run an occupational skills "award," or mini certificate, in sustainable fashion and social entrepreneurship for more than seven years. It requires 15 to 17 class units and can be completed under a year.

In addition, **San Diego Mesa College** is in the process of creating an 18-unit, cross-discipline fashion sustainability certificate.

Also, the **University of Delaware** offers a graduate certificate in being socially responsible and in being socially responsible and sustainable in the apparel, textile and footwear business. It consists of nine, one-credit courses offered online.

And the **London College of Fashion** has a center for sustainable fashion where a master's degree in fashion and the environment is offered to graduate students.—*Andrew Asch*



Derek Sabori

New Hire at SPESA as Texprocess Americas and Techtextil North America Plan Events

The Raleigh, N.C.-based **Sewn Products Equipment & Suppliers of the Americas** (SPESA) has hired Michael McDonald, the former manager of government relations for the **American Apparel & Footwear Association**, as its new executive director, a position he assumed March 15.

In this role, he will work with the trade association's president, Benton Gardner, and managing director, Dave Gardner, until they retire at the end of 2018, at which time McDonald will be heading up the organization.

In addition to his new role, McDonald has served as **North Carolina State University**'s adviser for the textile apparel technology management student advisory board, an adjunct professor, teaching assistant and guest lecturer while pursuing a doctoral degree in textile-technology management.

During this transition, SPESA's trade-show production partner, **Messe Frankfurt Inc.**, announced additional offerings for the fourth edition of its equipment expo, **Texprocess Americas**, and 15th annual **Techtextil North America**, which showcases technical textiles and nonwovens.

Held concurrently in Atlanta's **Georgia World Congress Center**, the events will run May 22–24 and feature more than 500 exhibitors from different regions of the world.

At various sessions, **Techtextil North America** will explore topics such as "Emerging and New Developments in Nonwovens," "New Fiber Technologies," "Smart Textiles" and "Technical Textiles: Enabling Future Mobility in Electric & Smart Cars."

At **Texprocess Americas**, attendees can attend sessions that cover "Automation, Smart Machines and Robotics in Sewn Products Manufacturing," "Wearable Tech and Textiles: Communication through Clothing?" and "Tariffs, Duties and Barriers—Oh, My!"

In collaboration with the **Nonwovens Institute**, **Techtextil North America** will again feature Tech Talks—which were popular at the 2017 show—as **Texprocess Americas** introduces its own version of these sessions in partnership with the **Fashion Institute of Technology** and performance streetwear brand **Voice of Insiders**.

At **Techtextil North America**, the "High-Tex from Germany" exhibition will showcase 66 of Germany's textile, textile-machinery and garment-technology companies.

As part of this year's **Texprocess Americas 2018**, **Gerber Technology** will unveil its replica costumes created from designs featured in the **20th Century Fox** film "The Greatest Showman." Partnering with **Global Garment Engineering**, Gerber was able to fulfill a request by 20th Century Fox to efficiently create lower-cost replica costumes to support the film's 2017 release. During its presentation, Gerber will show how these replicas were created using technologies such as **YuniquePLM**, **YuSnap**, **Silhouette Table**, **Accu-mark**, **Accumark 3D**, **Accunest**, **XLs125 Spreader** and

Paragon Cutter.

Micro-factory demonstrations will feature the **Omron** Autonomous Mobile Robot, an autonomous intelligence vehicle whose abilities promote efficiency through automation. In collaboration with Gerber Technology, **Henderson Sewing Machine Co.**, **Kornit Digital**, **Nextwave** and **Zund America Inc.**, their micro-factory demonstrations will showcase methods for more efficient product design, digital printing, automated vision-aided cutting, material transport and robotic sewing.—*Dorothy Crouch*

Guess? Inc. Joins the Movement to Make Better Denim Jeans for the Environment

As an apparel brand whose denim products represent 20 percent to 25 percent of its business, **Guess? Inc.** hopes to reduce the environmental threats that often result from making its jeans.

After calculating its denim water footprint, the company on April 18 announced its partnership with the **Better Cotton Initiative** (BCI). The move came as the Los Angeles company developed its sustainable-practices plan based on its 2016–2017 sustainability report.

Guess discovered that the processing of cotton was responsible for 64 percent of the water used during the production of one denim jean, said Victor Herrero, Guess's chief executive officer.

"The Better Cotton Initiative is a wholistic program that includes water stewardship as part of its production principles but also includes additional environmental and social focus areas for cotton farmers," he explained. "This is an organization that has shown great results for making true positive impact and scalable, industrywide change."

In addition to working with BCI to examine its total cotton sourcing use, Guess is exploring other methods of water preservation, such as identifying solutions through innovation in technology and product development for its denim business. A company supported by 14,000 employees globally, Guess's initiative must include the cooperation of everyone who works in denim development.

The company has educated many of its employees regarding its commitment to support sustainable apparel manufacturing. It has also enrolled some of its designers and patternmakers into a Guess-sponsored class at the **Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising**, which includes

coursework in sustainability through focusing on zero waste and circular design.

"Many of our employees—particularly those in denim production, have been briefed and support this initiative," Herrero said. "But we need to train all members of our design, sourcing and production team on BCI so that we can work together to increase our sourcing efforts and communicate involvement to our vendors."

Communicating this message to its vendors is a major part of the Guess pledge to decrease unnecessary water usage during the manufacturing process for its denim. The new challenge lies in examining how its sources processed cotton and working with those suppliers who have not yet adopted best practices.

"Increasing our sourcing of Better Cotton will be an added step to our process where we must determine who in our supply chain is already a member of BCI and, if not, how we can encourage them to become involved," Herrero explained.

With \$2.4 billion in annual revenues for fiscal year 2018 and premium denim that retails at \$100, Guess has no plans to increase its price points for goods in this category despite its partnership with BCI, which is good news for consumers. As the new generation of Guess customers becomes increasingly conscientious regarding protecting the environment, Herrero believes the brand's efforts will be embraced by its clientele.

"Our customers, in general, are millennials and increasingly Gen Z, who are known for caring about social and environmental responsibility," he said. "We are confident that our customers will be excited about our shift to more-sustainable practices."—*D.C.*

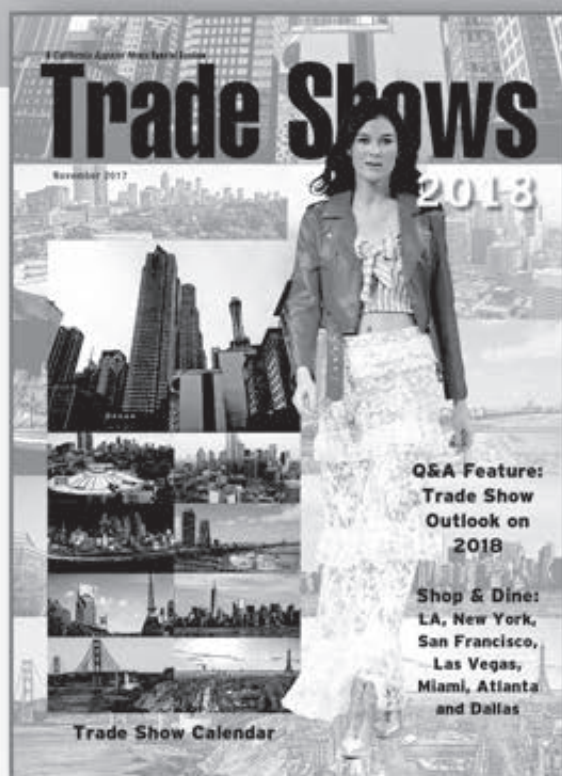


Michael McDonald

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NEWS

Bebe Selling Its Main Office in Los Angeles

Long-time retailer **Bebe**, which was based in Northern California but had a major presence in Los Angeles, said it is selling its main LA office building for \$28.5 million.

A buyer was not disclosed for the building at 10345 W. Olympic Blvd., where the retailer's design studios once were located. The deal is expected to close on May 21.

Last year, the publicly traded company shut down all 168 of its retail stores, laid off 700 employees and now is making money from licensing its brand name.

The strategy was part of the remake of Bebe, a once fashion-centric retail chain started in San Francisco in 1976 by Iranian-American businessman Manny Mashouf.

The shuttering of stores and closing the company's design studio and offices helped the retail chain avoid bankruptcy after selling half the brand for \$35 million to **Bluestar Alliance**, a New York brand-management company that has snapped up labels

such as **English Laundry**, **Nanette Lepore** and **Catherine Malandrino**.

The stores might have been dead, but last August, Bluestar Alliance came out with a new collection of sexy dresses with new sizes and new categories. Later, the Bebe brand opened its first lifestyle store in New York City, located near the **Empire State Building** at 1 W. 34th St.

Licensing revenue for the second quarter of this year totaled \$2.1 million from **BB Brand Holdings**, Bebe's operating subsidiary. Bebe plans to distribute its share of licensing income, minus company operating expenses, to shareholders starting in the first quarter of 2019.

In addition, Joe Scirocco, the company's managing director, treasurer and principal financial and accounting officer, resigned from his job, effective April 20. Company executives said Scirocco's resignation further streamlines company expenses.—*Deborah Belnum*

Mountain Hardwear Names New Marketing Director

Mountain Hardwear, the Northern California outdoors wear company owned by **Columbia Sportswear**, has named a new head of marketing.

Snow Burns is coming on board as the global vice president of marketing and will be responsible for all aspects of the brand's integrated marketing strategy. Part of that strategy will be to engage a worldwide community of climbers and inform them about the brand's commitment to its technical equipment, outerwear and sportswear for people who spend a lot of time in the mountains or the outdoors.

"We are excited to have Snow bring her expertise to our brand and industry," said Mountain Hardwear President Joe Vernachio. "We feel there is a more

modern way of communicating that outdoor brands fail to tap into."

Burns has several years of experience with companies in Silicon Valley and beyond.



Snow Burns

Prior to joining Mountain Hardwear, she led the strategy, social media and analytics teams at **John McNeil Studio**, a marketing agency in Berkeley, Calif. Before that, she was head of global social content strategy at **CA Technologies**, a large independent software company.

Mountain Hardwear, based in Richmond, Calif., was founded in 1993 to make tough outdoor gear. Its expedition tents have summited some of the world's tallest peaks, and its clothing and other gear employs technology in all its designs. It was acquired by Columbia Sportswear in 2003.—*D.B.*

Calendar

April 29

Midwest Apparel Trade Show
1445 Lake Cook Road
Deerfield, Ill.
Through April 30

May 3

TPC's Spring Networking Event
Pez Cantina
Los Angeles

Imprinted Sportswear Show
George R. Brown Convention Center
Houston
Through May 5

May 4

Fashion and Sustainability Summit
Maxwell Hall, LIM College
New York

May 5

Woodbury University's 54th Annual Fashion Show
Millennium Biltmore
Los Angeles

Otis College of Art and Design's 36th Annual Scholarship Benefit and Fashion Show
Elaine and Bram Goldsmith Campus
Los Angeles

May 11

The NBM Show
Oregon Convention Center
Portland, Ore.
Through May 12

May 15

Apparel Sourcing Show
Grand Tikal Futura Hotel and

Convention Center
Guatemala City, Guatemala
Through May 17

May 21

Apparel Textile Sourcing Miami
Mana Wynwood Convention Center
Miami
Through May 23

Coast
Seagate Country Club
Delray Beach, Fla.
Through May 22

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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New Style Fair in Bangkok Has Something for Everyone

By Deborah Belgum *Executive Editor*

BANGKOK, Thailand — Inside the vast international exhibition center that houses the newly created **Style** fair, the brightly colored hand-painted dresses and tops that make up the **Yodyoko** collection were a standout.

The swirls of lines and bursts of colors have been a staple of the brand since it was created 10 years ago by Sirus Fantiyapong. This was the designer's second time exhibiting at the fair—which combines fashion labels, textiles, furniture, gifts, skincare products and home accessories under one roof.

He was exhibiting his creative designs to gain more international attention. "This is a good opportunity to show the world our product," Fantiyapong said.

At last October's show, he received a 500-piece order from a company in Singapore and a 200-piece order from a venture in Germany. He was hoping for more this time around.

For years, Thailand organized just one trade show for fashion and leather goods and then several separate trade shows around other locally made products, which included furniture and gifts.

But over the years, the smaller shows were not attracting as many buyers because fewer people were attending the events. Instead, they are opting to find merchandise online or visiting individual manufacturers.

So, last year the Thai government decided to combine three fairs into one to give customers more bang for their travel buck. The new show—called **Style**—recently held its second edition on April 19–23 in the large **Bangkok International Trade & Exhibition Center**. The first edition of the show was last October.

This year, about 630 companies occupied nearly 1,700 booths in a fair that gives retailers and company buyers a one-

stop opportunity to pick up clothing, textiles, jewelry, candles and soaps as well as throw pillows, furniture, lamps, pet products and pottery. About 2,000 buyers were expected to pass through the exhibition hall for the show.

Chantira Jimreivat Vivatrat, the director general of Thailand's Department of International Trade Promotion, said the smaller, individual trade shows that were one- or two-products centric tended not to attract as many people as larger shows. For example, the smaller fashion and leather goods show only had 400 booths.

"There was the realization that people travel less to shows

At the October show, U.S. buyers from **Crate & Barrel** bought home accessories. Several companies that supply **Disney** with products shopped the floor too.

For the April show, the Thai government sponsored the attendance of 600 buyers, who either had their hotels paid for or had both their airfare and hotel covered.

Still, the show seemed to be sparsely attended. "This show should be jam-packed," said David Lamey, a buyer who was looking for backpacks and furniture and other items to sell online for his **Magic I Solutions**. "Where are the customers?"

One of the more frequented sections of the show was the area where many of Thailand's artisans based around Chang Mai in the north were showing indigo-dyed clothing, organic-cotton scarves, handmade dresses and jewelry.

Panja Suwanich was showing his colorful jewelry and clothing that he and his partner, Decha Mengthaisong, have been making at their store in

Chang Mai under the label **Heritage**. He is relatively new to exporting but would like to expand beyond his orders sent to Santa Fe, N.M., and Europe. "A few buyers have come by, and we have exchanged cards," he said.

As soon as he said that, Ritchie Philibert from Quebec rounded the corner and stopped at the artfully displayed booth to take a look at the silk necklaces and beaded necklaces that were handmade. Philibert concentrates on fair trade and ethically sourced items for his two stores in Quebec.

He visits Thailand twice a year to work with manufacturers that do crinkled-cotton items for him. "We have some established manufacturers we work with, but we are always looking to add new products," he said. "Thailand definitely has its own style." ●



Panja Suwanich and Decha Mengthaisong of Heritage



Sirus Fantiyapong of Yodyoko



Creative fabrics from northern Thailand

and the shows have to be unique for people to attend," she said. "The shows were not big enough, and Thailand is very diversified. So it becomes a little bit of everything."

Buyers these days are also looking more for lifestyle items instead of just one kind of item to fill their stores as it gets harder to attract shoppers. In addition, the show is concentrating on more naturally made products, including organic cotton, silk, organic skincare products and furniture made from ethically harvested forests.

Because Taiwan and Japan are two markets that Thailand is targeting, there was special attention paid to products that would cater to the senior-citizen market. Products included lightweight fabrics for garments and purses, scarves with collagen and anything with a soft fabric.

FASHION

Coachella Spawns Tons of Parties and Fashion

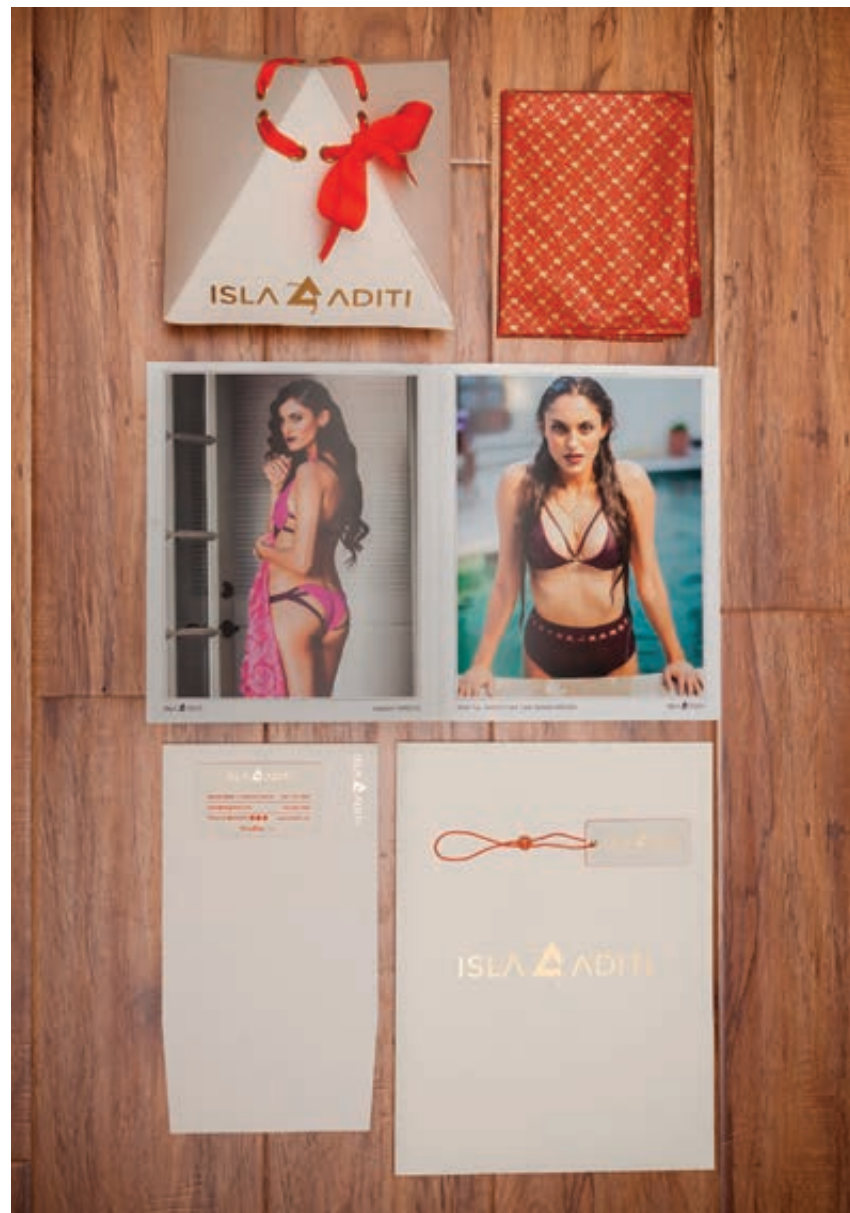
What would the **Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival** be without a flood of fashion that gives designers a clue as to what styles are trending?

The 10-day festival in Indio, Calif., wrapped up on April 22 with the conclusion of a number of concerts and beaucoup parties that dotted the desert scene. Many of the parties—mostly in Palm Springs—were hosted by fashion and style concerns including **The Zoe Report**, **Lucky Brand**, **Adidas**, **Revolve Clothing** and **Vamped.com**. Hot hotel spots included the **Ace Hotel**, **Parker Palm Springs** and the **V Palm Springs**.

Short shorts, anything in denim, cropped tops, flowy dresses and very large sunglasses were in. Here's a look at some of the styles and trends that were popular at this year's festival.—D.B.



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NEWS

Upcycle *Continued from page 1*

The growing Los Angeles-based company has already expanded from its 5,000-square-foot headquarters on 31st Street to an additional 10,000-square-foot showroom space on East 11th Street. Its products are made in Southern California. Upcycle keeps its manufacturing local, which helps the company practice what it preaches regarding sustainability as it partners only with businesses that share its mission.

"Everything that we do from knitting and dyeing to sewing and washing is done within a 25-mile radius, so that keeps our footprint very small," Vogelsong said.

At the core of its wholesale and manufacturing business is Upcycle's focus on reused materials to create many of its pieces. Behind the East 11th Street location, a 20-foot-long shipping container sits, overflowing with two weeks' worth of scraps from the company's finished products.

Each container holds approximately 7,000 pounds of textile waste that will not be discarded in a landfill. Instead, it will be processed to produce new fabrics used by Upcycle's 100 sewers, who are able to make 100,000 pieces per week. Currently, the



Models wear Upcycle while standing in front of a scrap-filled shipping container

Giving new life to unwanted fabric scraps isn't Upcycle's only method of responsible manufacturing. Through using recycled water bottles and postindustrial cotton, the company in January launched its Recycle Collection—which wholesales from \$7 to \$10—by following a closed-loop manufacturing plan that yields yarns used exclusively by Upcycle.

Spun by an East Coast-based mill, the yarn also includes the spinner's excess postindustrial cotton. With this material, Upcycle is able to manufacture a T-shirt that comprises the equivalent of five recycled water bottles.

"The yarn is proprietary to us, and it is 60 percent RPET (recycled polyethylene terephthalate). So it's the recycled water bottles, and all that poly comes from the U.S.," Vogelsong said. "The postindustrial cotton is actually from our mill spinning its yarn. It's all the waste that comes off that nobody uses. So they took that 40 percent postindustrial cotton, and we spun the custom yarn for ourselves."

Many of Upcycle's clients hail from the streetwear segment, which serves the company's goal of representing the nontraditional, conscientious consumer. Emphasizing that its customers don't have to fit into the mold of an eco-warrior hippie or yogi

to care about how apparel manufacturing affects the environment, Vogelsong wants to make sustainable clothing more approachable for everyone. "We want to always keep LA as the backdrop of everything, and we wanted to be a little bit more forward, not that typical organic-looking, sustainable company," she said. To expand its reach, Upcycle is incorporating the theme of responsible manufacturing in all of its messaging, such as its #AskHowItsMade social-media campaign, which launched on Earth Day, or reusable shopping bags created from recycled water bottles, which feature the words "I practice responsible manufacturing." While Vogelsong plans to expand the Recycled Collection, she is also excited about taking Upcycle's offerings beyond water bottles by exploring other recycled materials.

"Whether it's recycled water bottles or recycled anything ... the reality is everything that is polyester could really move to that world," she said. "Instead of using traditional poly, just use the RPET version." ●



Tabitha Vogelsong

sewers are making 60,000 to 75,000 pieces a week.

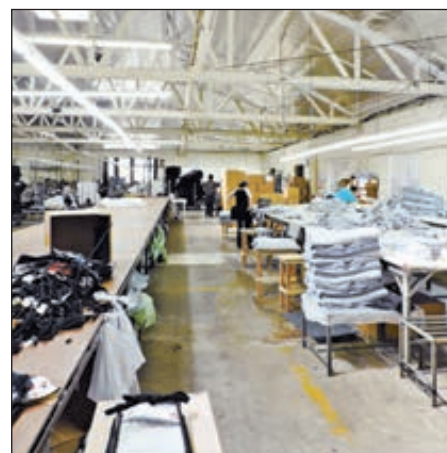
"Basically, as we're producing everything, we gather all the scraps from the manufacturing process," Vogelsong explained. "All those scraps are then upcycled back into yarn. So, really from this whole process, we're taking everything and recycling it to use wherever it's needed."

This dedication isn't reserved for Upcycle's manufacturing process but also includes convincing its partners to join the movement toward sustainability.

"They'll say, 'Okay, I'll do it, but does it cost more money?' and it doesn't," she said. "People don't know about it. It's kind of an antiquated industry where people just think waste is the norm. It goes out in the dumpster and it gets thrown away."

From dye houses that have adopted responsible waste-management practices to knitters who are now returning pallets to yarn houses for reuse, Vogelsong explains how the shift toward more-sustainable apparel production required changing long-standing assumptions prevalent throughout the industry.

"We want people to take notice. We don't care if you're a competitor or not—everybody just needs to be responsible," she explained. "We want to pretty much set the bar in the industry to show people it can be done and it can be done in the right way."



Upcycle's factory space on East 11th Street

American Rag Continued from page 1

Werts has quietly shuttered his company's **Industrie Denim** division with locations in San Francisco and Scottsdale, Ariz.

Werts was one of several speakers at the second annual **Marcum Retail Symposium**, held April 19 at the **JW Marriott** hotel in downtown Los Angeles.



Sherwin "Ace" Ross and Ron Friedman



Mark Werts

Accounting and advisory firm **Marcum LLP** produced the symposium to chart how fashion and retail are navigating tough markets. Speakers discussed subjects encompassing retail, fashion, technology, logistics, retail real estate and factoring.

During the symposium, Werts explained why American Rag was expanding overseas. "Would you rather open up in a market that has 9 percent to 10 percent growth or one that has extreme competition and an economy that the government says is growing 2 percent to 3 percent?" he asked.

Opening stores in air-conditioned malls in places such as the Persian Gulf makes sense for people who want to take a break from the region's heat. In the United States, there is still a lot of growth for e-commerce, Werts said.

Ron Friedman, head of Marcum's retail and consumer-products industry group, moderated the retail panel, which

included Werts. He asked panelists Josh Goldman, senior vice president of **Brookfield Properties**, retail, and Brendan Kotler, development director for **Westfield**, about the direction of retail centers.

Goldman said there's still a lot of business in retail centers. "Anybody who says retail is dead doesn't know the real story. Retail is transitioning," he said. "But it is transitioning from being transactional to being experiential."

He believes that consumers will continue to need places to gather and be social. Malls will offer those places, and developers who thrive will be the ones creative enough to change shopping centers into places that offer unique experiences.

Goldman also mentioned Brookfield's project to redevelop the **California Market Center**, a showroom building that is an important anchor in downtown LA's Fashion District.

"Here is a historic fashion mart based on the transaction. There is a great opportunity to take advantage of the underlying real estate and transition it to a grand experience. It's an experience that will speak to people in downtown LA. It will speak to the history of the project and be a place where people want to gather," Goldman said.

The partially Brookfield-owned project features 2 million square feet of classic office space with 200,000 square feet of ground-floor retail and restaurants.

Kotler discussed Westfield's \$1 billion remodel of **Westfield Century City**. He agreed that retailers need to develop experiences and new ways to deliver retail excitement. One way to do that at Westfield Century City was with a permanent space used to host new pop-up shops every six weeks. The **Hermès** fashion house produced a laundromat-style pop-up in November.

Ilse Metchek, president of the **California Fashion Association**, led a panel on technology, logistics and factoring. Panelist Marc Heller, president of **CIT Commercial**



The Marcum panel, from left: Leslie Ghize, Josh Goldman, Brendan Kotler, Mark Werts and Ron Friedman

Services, said that a lot of business opportunity remains for bricks-and-mortar stores. They might serve as distribution centers for retailers. He also believes the retail industry needs to find a way to bring back fashion, enticing consumers to buy more clothing.

Panelist Andrew Rotondi, chief operations/information officer of **Dynamic Worldwide Logistics USA Inc.**, said that inventory management is becoming more crucial than ever. He forecast a market where an increasing number of retailers will look to technologies, including RFID, to manage their inventory. "Stores are going to get smaller, inventories will get more accurate and vendor management of inventories will be critical to the success of bricks-and-mortar," he said.

Panelist Javier Carreras, an executive director at **JP Morgan Chase Bank**, talked about rising interest rates affecting retail. "Since 2015, the Fed has raised rates six times. We expect to see two more rate increases for 2018. If there's a greater push to have more inventory levels, it means companies have to borrow, which will put additional strain on manufacturers and a lot of distributors," Carreras said.

To start the symposium, Beth Goldstein, **The NPD Group's** executive director and industry analyst for accessories and footwear, discussed the changing market for fashion retail. She said consumers were seeking comfort, convenience and curation from retailers and fashion.

Leslie Ghize, an executive vice president of the lifestyle think tank **TOBE**, also talked about consumers' changing tastes and what they want from retailers. They're interested in more-unique products, which will benefit retailers confident in trusting their gut to make merchandising decisions. ●

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