

CALIFORNIA Apparel News

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THE FUTURE OF FASHION

FCI Fashion School students came up with some creative designs shown at a recent runway show. For more looks, see page 7.

These Days Those Secondhand Threads Are Big Business in Los Angeles

By Andrew Asch *Retail Editor*

More than 10 years ago, the idea of wearing secondhand clothes or vintage garb carried a certain stigma, according to some style watchers, but that no longer holds true. The fashion market is changing.

While traditional retailers have been shrinking their store footprints as fast as their leases run out, boutiques that carry used garments are experiencing an uplift with a 7 percent annual growth rate in 2016 and again in 2017, according to the **Association of Resale Professionals**, located in the Detroit area.

Jolie Mittleman of **TOBE** trend forecasters said part of this uptick in recycled apparel is a function of fashion. "There is a big resurgence of over-the-top individuality expressed through the way people are dressing. It's exploding and vintage and thrift are growing in direct relation to that," Mittleman noted.

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The Future in Retail Leadership Lies in Discovering Its Core Customer and Technology

By Deborah Belgum *Executive Editor*

For retailers, it should be more about millennials.

This generation—between the ages of 15 and 35—is just entering its prime shopping years as millennials start families and ramp up purchases of homes, which need to be filled with furniture, home accessories and clothes to fill their closets.

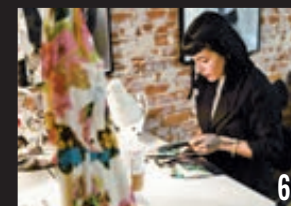
But retailers are not integrating those millennials into their army of merchandising leaders to figure out what millennials want to buy.

In fashion and apparel, only 10 percent of retailers' merchandising leadership are millennials while 74 percent of those merchandisers belong to the Gen X generation, between the ages of 35 and 55, according to a report by **Retail**

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Where fashion gets down to businessSM



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How Millennial Parents Shop Differently Than Other Generations

Now that millennials are becoming parents, their way of shopping for their families varies wildly from their parents. The phone is practically the command center for this generation, born between 1981 and 1994.

In a report released by the **National Retail Federation** in Washington, D.C., phones are at the center of millennials' shopping universe with 78 percent saying they use their phones to research products compared to 58 percent of other parents. Another 75 percent use their phone to check prices compared with 58 percent of other parents and 71 percent use their phones to pay at checkout.

"The millennial generation has at turns

confounded, inspired and challenged researchers and analysts with their spending habits," said Katherine Cullen, the NRF's director of retail and consumer insights. "As many millennials move into parenthood, we are beginning to see how their expectations and shopping preferences compare with those of previous generations. Whether it's using a subscription service to make sure diapers don't run out or going online to research the best crib or car seat, millennials shop differently than other parents."

Millennials are parents to 50 percent of today's children, and they are often in a hurry, with 86 percent having used same-day ship-

ping compared with just 67 percent of parents from other generations. They are also willing to pay for convenience. Only 53 percent expect free shipping on small orders under \$50 compared with 66 percent of other parents. Subscription services, which can supply automatic refills and discounted prices on items, are used by 40 percent of millennials compared with 18 percent of other parents.

Millennials are also better educated than other parents. According to the report, 40 percent have a graduate degree, which is twice as many as the 19 percent in other generations. And 69 percent of the respondents earned more than the national median

income of \$59,000 a year, compared with 53 percent of other parents.

Importance of where they shop is also a key factor in millennials' lives. Forty-four percent said they only shop at brands that reflect their social or political values, a factor cited by only 23 percent of parents from other generations.

"To keep parents of any generation happy, brands and retailers must deliver on both price and quality," Cullen said. "But millennials are very concerned about good customer service and are twice as likely to back out of a purchase for lack of it. For millennials, service ranks ahead of convenience, selection and loyalty."—*Deborah Belgum*

Retail *Continued from page 1*

Systems Research, a Miami company that collects data on the retail industry and focuses on the impact of technology on retail.

Winning retailers have more millennial customers (20 percent) than less successful retailers (9 percent), the report said. Successful retailers count 51 percent of their customers as Gen Xers while less profitable ventures said 58 percent of their consumers were from that age group.

"Like any generation gone before them, millennials want people speaking their language and offering them products they want to buy," said Steve Rowen, a managing partner at RSR. "This sort of dismissive idea that millennials are into sharing and the gig economy and won't buy anything is not true. These kids are not teenagers anymore. They are settling down, have homes and are filling them with stuff. It is a tremendous missed

opportunity."

Rowen recommends getting millennials into some kind of leadership program or retail career path to help stores make the transition to catering to those consumers.

Another drawback for retailers is their sourcing programs. "We have long believed that sourcing product from half a world away from the point of demand has three impacts: It's a slow way to get product to market, it forces buyers to place 'big bets' to get the best price from far-flung factories, and since they are placing big bets those bets tend to be conservative," the report said. "It takes so long for product to arrive that once it does, if it proves to be a poor seller, the only choice is an immediate and painful markdown."

Retailers still haven't come to grips with the idea of being speedier and more agile in making product decisions, and it is unlikely that most retailers will source in the United

States any time soon.

Some 55 percent of those retailers surveyed did not believe that the reliance of imports makes them too conservative. But conservative and boring products, which often are a result of long-range planning, make retailers more dependent on lower price to sell their goods.

That leads to price wars—a never-ending battle that is starting to lose a bit of its luster. Close to half the retailers surveyed by RSR said they believe the race to the bottom is over because businesses are charging so little for their products that it is difficult to go lower.

A recent comparison between **Walmart** and **Amazon.com** showed Walmart's in-store prices were 10.4 percent lower than those of the e-commerce powerhouse.

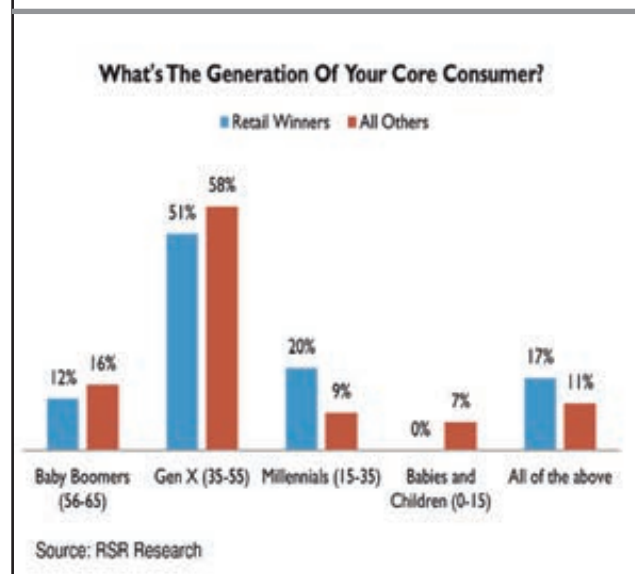
One of retailers' biggest concerns is the fact that everyone is selling the same or similar products. Sixty-five percent of retailers said they face this difficulty, which launches a series of price wars, while 60 percent of retailers fear that shoppers are still sensitive to higher prices.

To get beyond this, retailers need to match demand with product supply to improve their margins. They also need to start providing better customer service, holding fewer doorbusters and stocking innovative products that are different.

Some 55 percent of fashion and apparel retailers said their in-store merchandise is broad to cover multiple lifestyles and ages while 48 percent of their online merchandise fell into that same category. But everyone is trying to tweak the model to see what works best for them.

Increasingly, technology is being employed to provide a solution for some of these merchandise problems. Recently teen retailer **Rue21** said it would be using predictive analytics to better determine merchandise sell-through. It selected **First Insight's** predictive analytic tools to help designers and buyers decide which products to source for apparel, footwear and accessories. The struggling retailer will test a new range of products to determine what will best drive speed to market and help eliminate underperforming merchandise.

This is all a part of retailers moving away



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Ghost Flower Blends Apparel Innovation With Eastern Medicine

By Dorothy Crouch Associate Editor

When avid tennis player and marathon runner Susie Peebler woke up one morning unable to move, she couldn't understand the cause of her injury. After her doctor recommended back surgery, she instead self-healed through yoga. As a geophysicist, Peebler wanted to know the scientific reasons behind her relief and sought answers through Chinese medicine.

"Stretching away pain and changing the fascia and allowing what is called 'qi' [in Chinese medicine] to run smoothly is so powerful," Peebler explained. "It's this whole web, not unlike your nervous system, where you don't even know it's happening. It's like an operating system running behind the scenes but you only recognize it when it goes wrong like when you have a pinched nerve."

To help women avoid injuries similar to her own, Peebler set out to create activewear designed to aid women in identifying different pressure points on the body, which will release energy through channels called meridians. After searching for yoga apparel designed according to the body's meridians, she found nothing but decided to draw lines denoting these channels on her own yoga apparel. This prototype became the foundation for her **Ghost Flower** brand, which launched in March and is named for the flower that Peebler witnessed blooming in the California desert while driving with her husband, Bob, during a rainstorm.

"Ghost Flower, with its translucent petals, is both beautiful and resilient," she said. "This resonated with our idea of having activewear that is more than skin deep—it also provides a deeper understanding of the body."

Yoon Chung, former chief design and merchandising officer for **Carbon 38**, who now serves as Ghost Flower's chief executive officer and is an avid skier, shared Peebler's dedication to natural methods of healing the body. But she also sees a large opportunity for apparel makers to expand into clothing that contributes to maintaining health by blending advanced manufacturing methods and innovative fabrics.



"Fashion meeting activewear was a thing four years ago. Now I think the industry is evolving," Chung said. "It's not about the fashion. It's about the wellness. What is lacking in the industry is wellness wear. I think there is a big void in the wellness industry."

The sports bras, tank tops, leggings and jackets in the Ghost Flower line include the brand's logo strategically printed on the clothing to represent the places where customers press to access the body's acupressure points, which can alleviate potentially injury-causing stress.

"You can press and gently massage targeted acupressure points to release muscle tension and unblock and reactivate restricted energy," Peebler said.

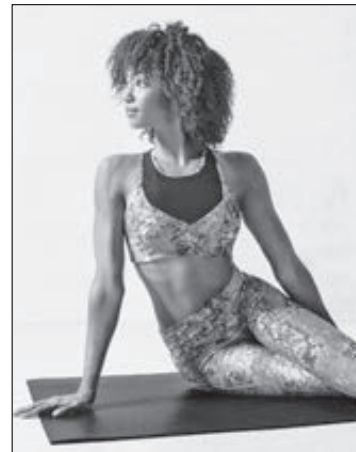
Taking inspiration from Eastern medicine's five elements of water, wood, fire, earth and metal, each with yin and yang channels, Peebler and Chung designed different lines within the Ghost Flower collection to reflect these concepts. Healing the body requires a comprehensive understanding of the complex network of fascia and muscles, but creating a line of clothing that aids in wellness demands innovative fabric and skilled manufacturing.

"We had to do a lot of problem solving with manufacturers too, because some of these lines are very tricky to make all the meridians and corners," Chung explained. "We had to go to the sample room, work with them and figure out how we were going to manufacture them."

Through their Los Angeles-based manufacturer, the women ensured that the body's channels would be represented through detailed flatlock seams sewn into the clothing at the 10,000-square-foot factory, which employs 100 sewers.

"The intricate seams went through a rigorous process through a flatlock machine to ensure they were as precise as possible and followed the organic lines in the body's energy channels," Chung said.

In addition to creating seams that help their clients visualize the body's meridians, Peebler and



Chung added details such as double mesh and keyhole designs on Ghost Flower's sports bras. Jackets were designed to feature pockets with hidden zippers and thumbholes.

Despite the varying shapes of women's bodies, Ghost Flower's designs accommodate different sizes. The designers carefully plotted the location of the body's pressure points and meridian channels for each size offered by the company.

"As everybody varies in size, so do the locations of these energy channels and acupressure points," Chung said. "In order for the flatlock seams to be as precise as possible, following the body's energy channels, Ghost Flower's design team created custom templates for every size from XS through L."

In addition to the innovative methods necessary when sewing the pieces, using fabric that afforded compression and drying capabilities was a priority. The Italian nylon used to make the pieces is 84 percent polyamide and 16 percent elastane, yielding a four-way stretch that provides comfortable compression without feeling restrictive.

"Everybody loves the material. It's the kind of material where you put it on and it feels like light compression. It makes you feel a size smaller, but then you sit in it and you forget you have it on," Peebler explained.

As Peebler and Chung focus on building a Ghost Flower community through partnerships with yoga studios such as New York City's **Sky Ting** and Santa Barbara, Calif.'s **Yoga Soup**, their partners are grateful to have additional resources that will help educate their clients. "It has reminders of this dimension of ourselves built into the seams and details of the pants and tops," said Luca Cupery, instructor and manager at Yoga Soup. "I don't know of any other company that has had the inspiration to educate, empower and inspire in this way."

Ghost Flower's pieces, which wholesale from \$17.50 to \$92.50, are available online at www.ghostflower.com. ●

NEWS

Shopping Center Owner Macerich Shows Net Loss for the Quarter

Macerich Company, the owner of retail centers **Santa Monica Place** in Santa Monica, Calif., and the **Westside Pavilion** in Los Angeles as well as other properties, had a \$33.6 million net loss for the first quarter ended March 31, 2018, compared with a profit of \$69.2 million for the same period last year.

Revenues were also down from a year ago. For the first quarter of this year, revenues declined to \$236.7 million compared with \$247 million last year.

Despite these lackluster financial results, the company, based in Santa Monica, said its mall tenants saw their annual sales increase by 7.4 percent to \$686 a square foot compared to \$639 for the year ended March 31, 2017. Mall occupancy rates declined slightly this year to 94 percent compared with 94.3 percent last year while average rent per square foot went up 3.8 percent to \$58.44 during the first quarter of this year compared with \$56.31 last year.

Arthur Coppola, chairman and chief executive of the company, said he is excited about the re-leasing spreads, which were up 14.7 percent for the year ended March 31.

Recently, Macerich formed a joint venture with **Hudson Pacific Properties** to transform the Westside Pavilion shopping center to creative office space. The mall, built in 1985, had difficult parking and was facing increased competition from the nearby revamped **Westfield Century City** shopping center, which snapped up the **Nordstrom** store that used to be located at Westside Pavilion. Also, **Macy's** closed its department store at Westside Pavilion and beefed up its store at Westfield Century City.

In its quarterly earnings, Macerich said that the total cost of reconfiguring Westside Pavilion would be between \$425 million to \$475 million, with the project to be finished some time in 2021. Macerich will own 25 percent of the project and Hudson will own the rest.

Macerich continues to sell its non-core assets and recycle the capital into higher-quality assets. During the quarter, Macerich and a joint venture partner sold a portion of an office building next to **Fashion District of Philadelphia** for \$42 million. Since 2013, the company has sold 21 non-core retail centers for \$1.8 billion.—*Deborah Belgum*

Nordstrom Rack Headed to New Porter Ranch Mall

A **Nordstrom Rack** will be coming to **The Vineyards**, a shopping center under construction in Porter Ranch, which is nestled in the northwest section of Los Angeles' San Fernando Valley.

Shapell Liberty Investment Properties has been developing the \$150 million mixed-use center by the Ronald Reagan Freeway. Developers broke ground on the project in 2017, with completion slated for early 2019.

Other tenants confirmed for The Vineyards include **AMC Theaters**, a **Whole Foods** market and beauty shop **Ulta Beauty Inc.**

The layout of the center will include a Main Street and a central green area. Sustainability also will be a focus of the retail center, which will have solar panels as well as a rainwater capture and reuse system.

A residential section is scheduled to be completed in 2020, which will include a 110-room



hotel and a 266-unit apartment complex, said John Love, a vice president for **Shapell Properties Inc.**

The project is a partnership between Shapell and **Liberty Building Co.** "We're beginning to realize a vision for bringing together an exceptional mix of shopping, food and beverage experiences, entertainment, residential living, and professional medical offices," he said.

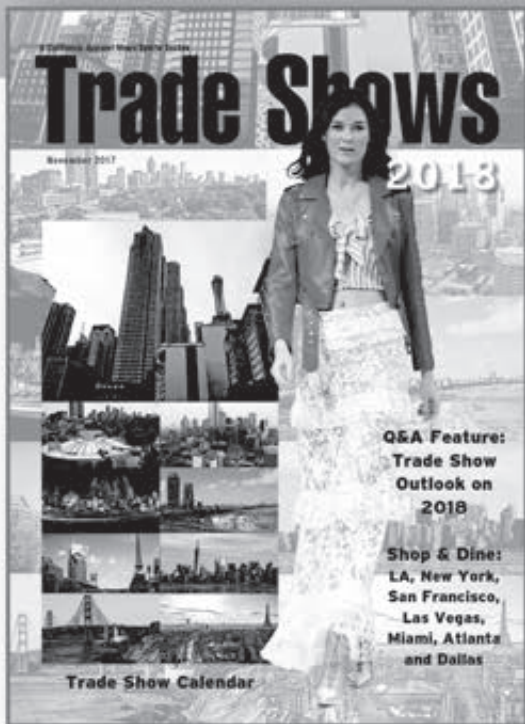
The project will include a **Kaiser Permanente** medical office building scheduled to open in early 2019.—*Andrew Asch*

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Former Liz Claiborne CEO Named to Deckers Brands Board of Directors

William McComb, who headed up **Liz Claiborne** for eight years and was there when the label changed its name to **Fifth & Pacific Companies**, has been named to the board of directors of the California shoe company **Deckers Brands**.

During his tenure as chief executive between 2006 and 2014, McComb led the company's transition to the name **Kate Spade & Co.** after completing an extensive financial turnaround at the company. McComb also served in various management positions at **Johnson & Johnson**, including company group chairman.

"In Deckers, I see a company with great opportunities," McComb said of the Goleta, Calif., company, which makes **Ugg**, **Teva**, **Sanuk**, **Koolaburra** and **Hoka One One** footwear. "For years I admired their marketing and merchandising; I aim to help them achieve their vision and distinguish them-

selves in today's omni-channel marketplace."

McComb's appointment coincides with the resignation of John Perenchio, who had been on the board since 2005. Perenchio was the managing member of **Ultimatum Music**, **Fearless Records** and **Fearmore Publishing** until 2015. Since late 2009, he has been with **Club Ride Apparel**, a privately held sports apparel company in which he has a controlling interest.

Marcato Capital Management, which has an 8.5 percent stake in Deckers and has been critical of how the company has handled the management of the Ugg brand, called for the board of directors to be re-elected. Last year, the company's stockholders voted to reelect the entire board.

In the past few years, Deckers' annual revenues have dropped from \$1.8 billion in 2015 to \$1.79 billion in 2017.

—Deborah Belgum

Calendar

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

May 22

Texprocess Americas Techtextil North America
Georgia World Congress Center
Atlanta
Through May 24

Licensing Expo

Mandalay Bay Convention Center
Las Vegas
Through May 24

May 26

"The Wonderland: Mad Fashion Show," LBCC's 38th Biannual Fashion Show

Long Beach City College
Long Beach, Calif.

June 3

Denver Apparel & Accessory Market
Denver Mart
Denver
Through June 4

ITMA Showtime

Suites at Market Square
High Point, N.C.
Through June 6

June 6

Kingpins
Basketball City
New York
Through June 7

Dallas Apparel & Accessories Market

Dallas Market Center
Dallas
Through June 9

FIG

Fashion Industry Gallery
Dallas
Through June 8

June 8

IFJAG
Stewart Hotel
New York
Through June 11

June 10

Fame Moda AccessoriesTheShow [Pre] Coterie
Javits Center
New York
Through June 12

June 12

CALA
Fort Mason Center
San Francisco
Through June 13

June 13

Atlanta Apparel Market

AmericasMart
Atlanta

Through June 16

June 18

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 June 20

Designers and Agents

The New Mart
Los Angeles
Through June 20

LA Kids' Market Select

California Market Center
Los Angeles
Through June 20

June 24

Midwest Apparel Trade Show

Embassy Suites
Deerfield, Ill.
Through June 25

Fashion Market Northern California

San Mateo Event Center
San Mateo, Calif.
Through June 26

June 28

Agenda
Long Beach Convention Center
Long Beach, Calif.
Through June 29

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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Designer Candice Cuoco Sees Inspiration in Her Move to Los Angeles

By Dorothy Crouch Associate Editor

In the past, Candice Cuoco's connection to Los Angeles was when she traveled down from her native Bay Area eight times a year, spending two weeks in the city during each visit to source materials. Now a place she calls home, Los Angeles provides a lot more than valuable manufacturing and fabric sourcing.

It's a place that offers many opportunities but only to those designers who are willing to work hard. "Anything that is worthwhile takes a minute," she said. "It's an inviting thing, but it's a scary thing that brings people in and pushes them out. It's a great place to be if you're okay with that feeling."

While some designers might allow this type of environment to affect their work negatively, Cuoco uses the city's challenges to fuel her determination and finds inspiration in the styles of Los Angeles that contrast with her own.

"My work and my brand are dark, but it's very romantic. In LA, everything is really cool. Streetwear is massive here and it's really hip. It lent that hand into my work," she explained. "It was something to breathe a little bit of different kind of life into my designs."

Cuoco's designs were seen last March at **Art Hearts Fashion** presentations at **The MacArthur** near downtown Los Angeles. Her **Belladonna** collection was infused with her signature dark romance in long, flowing dresses; black leather pieces; studded embellishments; avant-garde details



Candice Cuoco dresses Dru Acosta in a rose-pink, pleated-ruffle gown.

and an overall noir feel, capped by large black hats draped with black veils.

A fourth-place finalist on the 14th season of "Project Runway," Cuoco recently competed in the sixth installment of "Project Runway All Stars."

Now that **Candice Cuoco** has evolved into a brand, the woman behind the name has accepted her role and is ready to expand. This September, she will launch a ready-to-wear collection with **NYX** cosmetics founder Toni Ko. Named **Lily James LA**, the collection will offer lower retail price points for consumers starting at approximately \$80 for apparel and \$125 for shoes.

In addition to this new venture, Cuoco is working on her own ready-to-wear line for fans of her couture collections who would love to own a piece but are unable to afford a \$650 pair of black velvet-and-chiffon pants or \$1,600 leather-and-fur coats.

With a tentative Summer 2018 launch, she envisions the line as having pieces from T-shirts that wholesale for \$15 to a higher priced vegan-leather jacket wholesaling at \$75—an effort to reach admirers of her brand who might not share her love of genuine hide. The challenge lies in finding ways to reduce cost without compromising the integrity that Cuoco feels has been the foundation upon which her brand has been built.

"Instead of thinking, 'How do I dumb myself down?' which isn't the right way of thinking, it's, 'How do I make



Working on the Bree design from the Bad Butterfly collection



Creating a leather-and-tapestry coat from the Sirens collection

this effortless and wearable and obtainable but still have that brand identity stamped into it?" she said. "If I want it for this price point, maybe we'll take a bit of fullness out or rework the design to make it right for the customer and the label."

While she is between design studios and working out of her home in South Pasadena, Calif., the designer made the decision to shift from her in-house operation to an outside manufacturer—**NANA Atelier**—located in downtown Los Angeles.

"The woman who owns it worked for **Parsons [School of Design]**. It's a little hidden gem. For so long, I looked for manufacturers and you get people who say, 'Send us your samples and then we can talk.' No, I want to talk now! That was a struggle for me, too. It's like letting your babies out," Cuoco said.

In addition to two ready-to-wear collections, new manufacturing partnerships and moving into a yet-to-be-revealed design space, Cuoco is also partnering with her boyfriend, Yuri Moreira, on a sock subscription

service named **Dolla Sock Club**. During this project, the designer will manage the creative aspects but with no attachment to her brand identity.

"Nothing is enough, but isn't that how all designers should be?" she asked. "If it was enough, I guess we would stop. If we're good, then that would be it. What is there to look forward to? Why move on? You're fully satisfied. You're full. I hope I never come to that point." ●

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Kentaro Kameyama Leads FCI Fashion School Show

After producing a fashion show at last February’s **New York Fashion Week**, “Project Runway” winner Kentaro Kameyama went back to class. He produced a fashion show at the **FCI Fashion School** in Los Angeles, where he works as an instructor.

Kameyama not only produced the show but presented 10 looks from his Fall/Winter 2018 season.

The April 26 event provided a runway for students, instructors and friends of the downtown Los Angeles school, which offers a three-month crash course on fashion, to showcase their creations. It took place at the edge of the Los Angeles Fashion District at the **A List Music & Co.**, a chic industrial space featuring exposed brick walls.

With a classical-music soundtrack composed by Kameyama, models in his designs walked the show in what Kameyama described as luxe streetwear, which ranged from sweatshirts to denim pieces and flowy dresses.

Other looks at the show encompassed inspirations of cowboys, Victorian women, pharaohs and some gender bending.

FCI student Christina Peng presented five looks. Her pieces included a long-sleeved organza shirt—featuring cowboy-like leather suede fringes—and joggers that looked like faux-leather pants.

Student Bryanna Riley took inspiration from women of the Victorian era. Her designs included a black leather dress with a tight bodice and a bubble skirt.

Student Davonte Saive showed menswear pieces that included a drop-crotch pant. Before the show, Saive had female models try on the clothes. He liked their look so much that he changed course and had the women walk the runway in his menswear.

Natalie Salvador, another FCI instructor, had looks that adhered to an eco-friendly zero-waste credo. Looks included

navy-blue track suits made of a shiny nylon material.

Recent graduate Simay Belur showed 10 looks inspired by mythical women. The dresses and leather pants were accessorized with jewelry made by Belur.

Shaina Mangoli, another alumna, returned to the school to continue a theme she began as a student—making womenswear that is modest yet colorful and unique.

Alumna Sophia Elly presented styles from her **Tiger’s Eye Clothing** label, which were inspired by the world of ancient Egypt. Looks featured capes and corsets made of palm-tree husks.

Friends of the school exhibiting at the show included Krista Mae Griffin, whose designs included sequined pieces on vegan leather. Kenta Tanaka showed streetwear inspired by Los Angeles culture, which included leather jackets and some dresses.—*Andrew Asch*

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MADE IN LA

A Clothing Label to Fill in the Gaps

By Andrew Asch *Retail Editor*

After years of being surrounded by pixels and algorithms in the tech industry, Scott Carter was ready for a change. His next career move was to transition to the fashion industry and start a new label called **Kiln**.

The womenswear and menswear brand, headquartered in downtown Los Angeles' Arts District, was designed to fill a hole Carter saw in the fashion world.

He felt there wasn't enough of a middle ground between casual and formal styles. It stemmed from his Silicon Valley years, when he only had two looks in his wardrobe: either casual T-shirts or business suits for meetings.

"There must be something in between. I could never find it. I assumed that a lot of people had the same issue," Carter said.

He set out to find a design partner with a similar quest. Friends and consultants introduced him to Sandy Fleming, who had spent a pattern-making career working for brands including **Alternative Apparel** and **Proenza Schouler**.

Last month, they opened an office in a converted warehouse at the edge of the Arts District on a street going through a revival with boutiques and restaurants. The Kiln space houses offices, mood boards, racks of samples and unique furniture, including a table that once was a bookbinding press that is more than 90 years old.

Like Carter, Fleming had been brainstorming ideas about creating clothing that had a casual but fashionable vibe to it. It needed to be something that endured and held up, much like pottery being taken out of a kiln, hence the inspiration for the brand's name.

The clothes also had to follow the "plus or minus 10 rule."

"If you lose or gain 10 pounds, it will still flatter you," Fleming said of the clothing she wanted to make.

Many of Kiln's women's pieces have straps, buttons and elastic to give the wearer the ability to follow the plus or minus 10 rule. For example, you can tighten or loosen fabric straps to allow the garment to give a lot of space or be form fitting.

Function is important on one pair of women's shorts, which comes with leather tabs in the pocket to hold phones. Style is a big deal too. A three-quarter-sleeve button-down shirt features a vent, which gives the T-shirt a unique hem on the top's back.

A middle ground between dressier clothes and casual clothes can also be found in Kiln's men's line. There's a button-down hoodie, which has the light feel of a hoodie but has coat pockets for a dressier look. Men's T-shirts have a signature stitching on the shoulder.



The men's line also follows the plus or minus 10 rule. Waists on pants and other bottoms are elastic.

Both the men's and women's collections go large, with men's sizes being offered up to a 2X and women's sizes going up to a 16.

While Kiln's garments are manufactured in limited runs in Los Angeles, the company sources fabrics—including jersey, canvas, washed silk, rayon georgette and linen—from around the world.

Kiln's 90-piece Spring/Summer 2018 collection includes dresses, fashion overalls, shorts, loose-fitting pants and T-shirts for women, and T-shirts, pants, shorts, short-sleeved, collared shirts, hoodies and jackets for men. Retail price points range from \$115 to \$650.

Retail's transformation is another reason Carter wanted to try his hand at fashion. "There is an opportunity to take part in a change in the way that consumers buy their apparel," he said. "We're all learning as we go along."

With that idea in mind, the line is being sold, starting May 10, at the company's website at www.kilnapparel.com.



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Secondhand *Continued from page 1*

For luxe, designer and unique clothes, Los Angeles is fast becoming a hub for shoppers because of a flurry in high-end vintage stores popping up in LA.

Some of those new outposts located on prominent retail streets include **Entre Nous**, which opened on Robertson Boulevard in December. Another newcomer is **Sophie of Beverly Hills**, which debuted in April near the corner of Brighton Way and Rodeo Drive. At about the same time, **Golden Age**, a vintage shop that popped up on Melrose Avenue last year, added a second location in Silver Lake.

Depop.com, an online community focusing on secondhand clothes, recently introduced a physical store in Silver Lake, a short walk from the bustling Sunset Junction intersection, filled with cafés and boutiques.

The popularity and fashion desirability of used and vintage clothing has hit the mainstream market. **What Goes Around Comes Around**, a New York-based purveyor of authentic luxury apparel and accessories with flagship stores in Manhattan and Beverly Hills, currently runs a pop-up shop at the **Macy's** flagship on New York's Herald Square.

High-end e-emporium **The Real Real** made headlines this year when it was rumored it was trying to raise \$100 million in new funding. This is on top of the \$170 million the San Francisco-headquartered company has raised since opening in 2011.

Ludovic Orlando, Golden Age's cofounder, said Los Angeles is an important center for high-end vintage with a history based in the entertainment industry. Sellers of high-end vintage have been coming to LA for years to sell unique garments and vintage fashion to film and TV companies.

Later, these sellers opened warehouses filled with these unique garments so they could work with film shoots. Orlando said a good part of his business is selling his merchandise to stylists working on movies and TV shows. Another part of his venture is selling Golden Age's line of new clothes, which is influenced by the glamour of Hollywood's Golden Age. The collection sells sweatshirts with the names of actors, such as Gary Cooper, from the Golden Age of cinema.

Randi Wood, the owner of Entre Nous, said e-commerce and a new generation of shoppers is fueling high-end vintage and secondhand clothing sales right now. "If a 60-year-old woman comes in and finds out it is consignment, she'll walk

She said her store is different from others because of the consumer experience it offers. "It's like a personal styling appointment," she said of the shop, which features wallpaper from designer **Kelly Wearstler**.

E-commerce is a new frontier being explored by vintage clothing sellers, particularly on e-commerce sites, including **Etsy** and **eBay**.

And online shopping sites are expanding. Depop started as an online community in Italy where people share their collections, whether it be vinyl records, paintings or whatever is in one's closet. The community quickly focused on vintage clothing, said Maria Raga, Depop's London-based chief executive officer.

"The way we look at it, we have unique inventory that is not on the high streets," she said, using the British term for boutique neighborhoods. "You find things that are very unique that you cannot find anywhere else."

Many of Depop's community members take old clothes and put their own stamp on them by adding new graphics or retooling the fabric to create something new.

Doris Raymond, the owner of the Los Angeles-based vintage store **The Way We Wore**, said the market is being hurt by its success. "There are too many people. When you flood a market, you depress the value," she said.

It also confuses the public about the nature of high-end vintage. There's a difference between the mass-market clothes of yesteryear and what is defined as quality vintage. The items found in **The Way We Wore** are close to their original condition. Often she has experts repair leather and jewelry to return them to their original glory and then sells them from \$65 to \$6,000 with an average price of \$295.

"It's not just about labels," Raymond said. "It's about how well a garment is made and how a piece can transcend time." ●



The Depop store in Silver Lake



Randi Wood of Entre Nous

right out," Wood said. "The 20-year-olds are fine with it. It's like **Airbnb**. The older generation typically wants to stay in a hotel. The younger generation will want to stay in an apartment and live like the locals do."

Last October, Wood acquired Entre Nous, which ran a storefront business on Third Street, and moved it to Robertson Boulevard while opening an e-commerce site at the same time.

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