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Robotic Models Will Make Debut During London Fashion Week

By Dorothy Crouch Associate Editor

When **London Fashion Week** starts this year, there will be something new on the runway: robots showing some of a Los Angeles designer's collection.

Los Angeles-based designer Honee is collaborating with Silicon Valley's **OhmniLabs** and its subsidiary **Kambria** to bring robots to the runway for the first time in the event's history.

The **House of Honee** runway shows will have 22 human models and four robotic counterparts from OhmniLabs showcasing designs during the **House of iKons**—produced event scheduled for Sept. 15 at the **Millennium Gloucester London Hotel**.

"We are marrying two industries that are completely on two opposite ends of the scale to do this show," said Savita Kaye, chief executive officer of **Lady K Enterprises** and **House of iKons**. "OhmniLabs is this new, innovative company."
➔ **Robotics** page 8

How Three Sisters Launched a Multimillion-Dollar Business With Very Little Money

By Deborah Belgum Executive Editor

When the Kaviani sisters started their online clothing company from their parents' home six years ago, they never imagined that their \$7,500 investment would mushroom into a multimillion-dollar enterprise selling mostly simple knit basics that have been seen on celebrities including Lady Gaga, Jennifer Lopez, Khloe Kardashian and her sister Kylie Jenner.

Today, the three Kaviani sisters employ a staff of 25 and are ensconced in a 15,000-square-foot office/warehouse in an industrial park not too far from their parents' home in Northridge, Calif., and driving some pretty fancy cars—two **Tesla** sedans and a **Porsche Carrera**.

The interior of their offices is pure sophistication, with all-white walls, white furniture and large black-and-white photos in the hallway of models wearing **Naked Wardrobe**, the brand they founded in 2012.

➔ **Naked Wardrobe** page 7

DEBORAH BELGUM

RETAIL HEALTH: After many retail chains crashed and burned, retail business is starting to improve. Retail sales for August, which includes the Back-to-School Season, were just released. Above, The Bloc in downtown LA. To see retail-sales results, go to page 2.

Downtown LA Garment Factories Cited for Labor-Law Violations

By Deborah Belgum Executive Editor

Six factories that allegedly were operating under one contractor's license will have to pay \$573,704 in fines for various violations cited by the state Department of Industrial Relations.

The state Labor Commissioner's office said it started its investigation in July after receiving a tip about possible violations taking place at a business located at 1365 S. Broadway in downtown Los Angeles.

Investigators visited the worksite, operating under the name of **Pure Cotton Inc.**, whose owner Kyung Ho Choi told them he collected rent from other businesses but was not involved in making clothes.

His brother-in-law, Kuong Chan Kim, claimed that all the workers there were employed by his company, **Union Supply Inc.**, which was registered as a garment manufacturer.

The state Industrial Relations department said that later investigation revealed that four other garment-manufacturing contractors were working in the same building but operating without garment licenses or workers' compensation insurance. Kim of Union Supply allegedly charged each contractor a fee for the use of his license and workers' compensation insurance coverage, investigators said.

The Labor Commissioner's office said it discovered that most of the 57 employees at the site worked up to 65 hours a week for less than minimum wage, which in Los Angeles is \$13.25 an hour for companies with more than 26 employees. Two workers, who were 15 and 16 years old, were operating

industrial sewing machines in violation of California's child labor laws, inspectors said.

"Shared use of a garment-manufacturing registration is illegal, and it gave these contractors an unjust economic advantage over law-abiding garment businesses," said Labor Commissioner Julie A. Su. "Sweatshop operators attempting to game the system at the expense of their competitors often do so on the backs of their own workers."

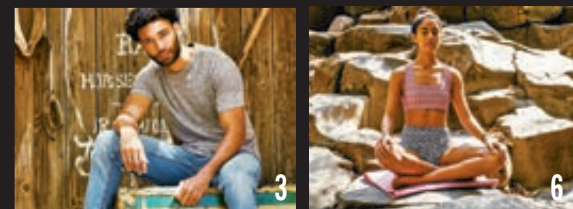
Stop-work orders by the Labor Commissioner were issued to the four contractors operating illegally under the Union Supply license and their inventory was confiscated. They were cited for violating wage-statement and garment-registration provisions and for failure to cover employees with workers' compensation insurance.

The Labor Commissioner's office is currently pursuing wage-theft investigations of the contractors.

Those named in the investigation were:

- Cindy Soon Yun, with 20 employees, who was cited for \$118,600. She was also cited for child-labor laws.
- Sun Park, with 10 employees, who was cited for \$158,855.
- Pil Chang, with eight employees, who was cited for \$37,450.
- Francisco Tecum Son, with four employees, who was cited for \$18,000.
- Union Supply Inc., with 15 employees, which was cited for \$240,300.
- Pure Cotton Inc., with no employees, was cited for \$500. ●

INSIDE

Where fashion gets down to businessSM

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Face Brand Looks Into Wholesale Market Again

The message of the Los Angeles streetwear brand **Face** begs people to look deeper into themselves.

"If people face themselves and inspire themselves, they can face anything," said Gil Jay, who was born Gilbert Juarez.

Face is currently sold on the brand's direct-to-consumer channel at faceclothing-usa.com. But in August, he reintroduced the brand to the wholesale market with a 10-by-10-foot booth at the **Agenda** trade show in Las Vegas. It was the brand's first trade show since 2014.

Along with trying the wholesale market, the brand has a new executive. Rosibel Hurst became a partner in February. Together,

they finance the independent venture. Along with designer Michael Metatron, Jay plans to eventually develop the T-shirt and caps line into a full collection, eventually offering pants, footwear and accessories.

The current line mixes streetwear with what Jay and Metatron call "science fiction" looks. "We wondered what youth would be wearing in 2045," Metatron said, noting that video gaming and e-sports are an influence. Face's marketing and sales chief, Logan Castellanos, said the brand aims in the future to exhibit at e-sports events.

Some of the line's caps are studded with spiked grommets while others have aluminum panels bearing the brand's logo, which

is the word face spelled backwards. It's reminiscent of a mirror reflection, or looking at oneself in a mirror.

Women's and men's tops are inspired by a slim, European-style silhouette. Logos are also screen-printed and embroidered in non-traditional places. The Ramo hoodie features the Face logo printed on the stomach area, not the typical placement on the chest. The Stoic hoodie features the brand logo turned over on its side, appearing as a column.



However, Jay also makes room for popular T-shirt silhouettes. There is the baseball-style Henley, called the Mantle, named after baseball legend Mickey Mantle. Also offered is a standard woman's tank top, called the Magna. There also is the woman's boat-neck top called the Jesser. Wholesale price points for tops range from \$24 to \$35.

The brand's caps, tees and hoodies are manufactured in Gardena, Calif.

—Andrew Asch

Indie Source Selects Bobo Design Studio as the Winner of Sourcing at MAGIC Award

Apparel manufacturing and consultancy firm **Indie Source** announced the winner of its Indie Fashion Contest, held during **Sourcing at MAGIC**, the industry trade show held Aug. 12–15 in Las Vegas.

"One of the biggest hindrances for a new designer is they are not vocal about what they want to do, who they're trying to reach and they don't get the help that they need," Indie Source founder and Chief Executive Officer Zack Hurley said.

Contestants were asked to post a selfie to **Instagram** from the Indie Source booth and pitch their business ideas. The Los Angeles-based Indie Source awarded a \$5,000 credit to **Bobo Design Studio's** Angie Chua, whose apparel-and-accessories brand is located in downtown San Jose, Calif.

"Angie did a really good job of clearly stat-

ing what she was up to, what she wanted to use the money for and who her customer was. It was very clear that she had a clear intention of how she wanted to use the money," he said.

While she started creating goods in 2008, Chua only went full-time in 2017 with her collection of "wanderlust-inspired" apparel and accessories. Excited about the future of independent design in the apparel industry, she is now trying to learn how to elevate her business.

"As someone who would classify herself as a maker, I've been very hands-on in the creation of all of my goods," she said. "This is the first year where I am figuring out how to scale and how to work with this industry."

Envisioning a future with Indie Source as a partner, Chua is looking forward to the level of education she will receive.

"My whole idea of thinking about how I

could work with them is really to find my Sherpa in the industry who can show me what questions I could be asking," she said.

"The resources that they provide are invaluable to people like me who are ready to scale and just can't." —Dorothy Crouch

WESA Will Be Dallas Bound in 2021

Beginning in January 2021, the **Western & English Sales Association (WESA)** will host its **International Western/English Apparel & Equipment Markets** at its new home at the **Dallas Market Center**.

As the equestrian industry's largest trade-event producer, WESA produces International Western/English Apparel & Equipment Markets every January and a second event during the summer months. The markets are currently held at the **Denver Mart** in January and September, but the second show will shift to June in 2019. Once the show arrives in Dallas, the summer installment will be held in August.

"After extensive conversations and with a shared mission of supporting the industry, we are working with the Dallas Market Center to create new opportunities for sales representatives, manufacturers and market attendees," said Gerald Adame, president of WESA, which was formed in 1921 as the

Men's Apparel Club of Colorado.

In addition to equestrian equipment and tack, the event features Western- and English-style apparel, fashion accessories, footwear and headwear. In its new home, the International Western/English Apparel & Equipment Market will occupy the 11th and 12th floors of the **World Trade Center** following work to update the areas. Manufacturers of certain Western brands will be able to enjoy permanent showroom spaces on the 14th floor.

"For retailers from around the world, we will work to deliver an inspiring market with a fresh mix of bestselling Western brands and new products across more categories," said Cindy Morris, president and chief executive officer of the Dallas Market Center. "For leading Western and English manufacturers and sales representatives, we will provide first-rate facilities and services, and we will help deliver loyal and new buyers to expand their sales opportunities." —D.C.

RETAIL SALES

August Sales Strong

August was a strong month for retail sales.

L Brands Inc. was one of companies riding a robust economy during August. It beat forecasts and reported a 1 percent increase in same-store sales. Market-research company **Retail Metrics Inc.** reported a consensus forecast of a 0.3 percent increase, said Ken Perkins, Retail Metrics' president.

Mall-based action-sports retailer **Zumiez Inc.** reported great net sales, \$107.40 million in August. Its same-store sales increased 9.5 percent. Rick Brooks, Zumiez's chief executive officer, also announced results for Zumiez's second fiscal quarter. Net sales were \$219 million. Same-store sales increased 6.3 percent for that quarter. "We delivered our strongest second quarter in several years," he said.

Value retailer **Cato Corp.** also beat forecasts. Retail Metrics forecast a 2 percent increase in its same-store sales. However, Cato reported a 5 percent increase in its comparable sales. In a prepared statement, John Cato, the retailer's chief executive officer, said that while the last month's business was strong, it benefited from being compared to tough business in 2017.

"Same-store sales in August were positively impacted by Hurricane Harvey last year, which caused store closures and business disruption,"

August Retail Sales			
	\$Sales (in millions)	% Change from yr. ago	Same-store sales % change
The Buckle	\$75.20	-6.3%	-0.7%
Cato Corp.	\$56.40	0.0%	+5.0%
L Brands Inc.	\$856.30	+1.0%	+1.0%
Zumiez Inc.	\$107.40	+9.0%	+9.5%

Source: Company reports

Cato said.

Same-store sales dipped 0.7 percent at the mall-based denim retailer **The Buckle Inc.** Retail Metrics' Perkins said the news was the latest in a tough stretch for The Buckle. It has posted negative same-store sales in the past 34 of 37 months.

August retail reports are riding the momentum of a robust economy. Perkins said that 80 percent of the companies covered by Retail Metrics exceeded earnings forecasts. "Any way you slice it, temporarily at least, retailers have their mojo back," he said in a Sept. 4 note.

Consumer confidence is riding high, said Lynn Franco, director of economic indicators at **The Conference Board**. It's a nonprofit, business-research organization. "Consumer confidence increased to its highest level since October 2000," she said. "Overall, these historically high confidence levels should continue to support healthy consumer spending in the near-term." —A.A.

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Project Social T: Looking for a Difference

By Andrew Asch *Retail Editor*

In the early days, **Project Social T** made its reputation with women's T-shirts, but now, in search of new business, the Los Angeles-headquartered label is introducing a line of men's tees.

Mike Chodler, the company's founder and chief executive officer, said he jumped into the men's market because the industry expects it. Retailers are always looking for brands with dual-gender lines, and Chodler and his team wanted to flex their creative muscle.

It's a crucial move in the basics business. Fred Levine, co-founder of the **M.Fredric** boutiques, said the basics business is lucrative but crowded. "It's always in style, especially now that layering is so popular," he said, adding that he recommends basics brands develop "must-have" fashion lines to complement their high-end crew-neck and V-neck shirts.

Project Social T started out in 2014 as a juniors label selling tops to the major department stores. In 2016, it changed gears and started making women's contemporary tops. While it continues to work with the majors, its retail focus also changed to sup-



feel like cashmere."

Basic T-shirts currently in vogue feel soft and have a vintage look. "We're trying to develop and change yarns to give different looks by mixing new yarns together. We're creating new fabrics. We're also working with stripes and knits," he said.

Popular looks for Project Social T's new men's line include the Baker raglan hoodie, which Chodler describes as being made out of a soft, brushed Hacci fabric. Hacci is a loose sweater knit more loopy than a typical cotton fabric.

Another popular look is the Sequoia hoodie. The fabric is made of a lightweight Japanese slub fabric, which makes it look like a T-shirt shaped into a hoodie silhouette.

The great majority of Project Social T's goods are made without graphics, but they feature hangtags that list details of nonprofits the company supports, such as **Waymakers**, a Huntington Beach, Calif., group that provides shelter and services to the homeless and at-risk youth.

Supporting charity and maintaining a social consciousness are a big part of the brand's mission and was the inspiration for the brand's name.

Also, supporting nonprofits appeals to the brand's consumers and makes for a better clothing line. "I think it resonates in the product and underscores a very compelling story," Chodler said. "Compassion and consumerism are harmoniously working together for the better—a better world, a better life. I believe that it gives the product a soul, and that is something to be proud of." ●

plying independent boutiques.

Chodler forecasted that the company's boutique revenue will grow 55 percent over the label's 2017 revenue. "With boutiques you have more creative control," the CEO said. "You're driving what you believe the fashion should be."

Making a unique tee is serious business. Chodler employs a staff of three full-time designers who research and develop new fabrics.

The women's tops business has taken the privately held Project Social T a long way. The brand has grown from a staff of 10 in 2014 to a work force of 50. A few years ago, its operations were run from a 5,000-square-foot space. Now its headquarters in Boyle Heights encompasses three warehouses that stretch out over 30,000 square feet.

For the women's line, Project Social T starts with a loose-fitting V-neck top. For guys, the standard shapes are crew necks and V-necks that sell from \$48 to \$118.

The silhouettes are the foundation for any basics line. However, the competitive edge is in the details. Change the fabric of a T-shirt, the market gets something new.

"The tee has become synonymous with jersey fabrics," Chodler said. But try a new brushed fabric and the average T-shirt can



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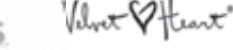
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NEWS

Activewear Moves to the Head of the Class Through Herbalife and FIDM Partnership

This week, the apparel industry found an unlikely partner as **Herbalife Nutrition**—distributor of nutrition, weight-management and fitness products—unveiled an activewear competition it is sponsoring with the **Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising** in downtown Los Angeles.

The opportunity will challenge students of the school's advanced-study program in International Manufacturing & Product Development to show-case their skills in activewear design. Students will design an activewear line for independent distributors of Herbalife Nutrition's products.

"FIDM is one of the top design and fashion schools in the world and shares a like-minded commitment to innovation and excellence, making them an exciting partner for this design challenge," Herbalife Nutrition Chief Executive Officer Rich Goudis said in a statement. "Our collaboration on this project provides an opportunity for the next generation of creatives to develop apparel inspired by our entrepreneurs and employees, who are purpose-driven to help people lead a healthier and happier life."

After being organized into teams, students will work together to create an activewear collection that aligns with the Herbalife Nutrition mission of leading healthy and active lifestyles. A panel of the Herbalife Nutrition team and FIDM faculty members

will judge the students' use of theme, color and fabric as well as production methods, sourcing and merchandising. Individual students will also be allowed to create their own designs, separate from the team project.

"This is the 26th year that FIDM has partnered with a global brand to create a design competition for our students," FIDM Vice President Barbara Bundy said. "Herbalife Nutrition joins companies such as **Nike**, who

have educated and challenged our students in new and inspiring ways, and we are excited to work with the Herbalife Nutrition team to develop activewear that underscores the optimism and empowerment consumers garner from living their best, healthy and active life."

In addition to participating in working sessions with Herbalife Nutrition as part of their research to grasp the needs and demands of the millennial consumer, students will be invited to attend the company's annual meeting in Houston and have the opportunity to travel to fashion cities, such as Milan and Paris.

FIDM faculty and staff chose 15 students to participate in the International Manufacturing & Product Development program to gain the experience of working with this global brand. The program will wrap up sometime during the spring 2019 semester.—*Dorothy Crouch*



International Manufacturing & Product Development students

Calendar

Sept. 7

Denver International Western/English Apparel and Equipment Market

Denver Mart
Denver
Through Sept. 9

Kingpins

HCDC Hangzhou Creative Design
Center C-Box
Hangzhou, China

Sept. 11

OC.Mix

Z Supply showroom
Irvine, Calif.
Through Sept. 12

Sept. 12

Brand Assembly

201 Mulberry
New York
Through Sept. 14

Sept. 13

Designers and Agents

Starrett-Lehigh Building and Cedar Lake
Through Sept. 15

Sept. 15

FAME

Moda

Coterie

Stitch @ Coterie

Sole Commerce

Sourcing @ Coterie

Javits Center
Through Sept. 17

Sept. 16

Midwest Apparel Trade Show

Embassy Suites
Deerfield, Ill.
Through Sept. 17

Sept. 17

Texworld Paris

Apparel Sourcing Paris

Le Bourget
Paris
Through Sept. 20

Sept. 19

Première Vision

Paris Nord Villepinte
Paris
Through Sept. 21

Sept. 24

International Lingerie Show

Westgate Las Vegas
Las Vegas
Through Sept. 26

Sept. 25

Lineapelle

Fieramilano
Milan, Italy
Through Sept. 27

Las Vegas Souvenir & Resort

Gift Show

Las Vegas Convention Center
Las Vegas
Through Sept. 28

Sept. 27

California Fashion Association's

luncheon benefiting the

California Fashion Foundation

California Market Center
Fashion Theater
Los Angeles

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For calendar details and contact information, visit ApparelNews.net/calendar.

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Finding Body Confidence in the Foundation of Sheer's Little Black Dress

By Dorothy Crouch Associate Editor

Many consumers often battle personal insecurities about their bodies and make apparel purchasing decisions based on how a piece of clothing makes their bodies appear—not simply how a garment looks on a hanger.

This was the issue that Sheer Sebag was trying to overcome as she developed her line of little black dresses. After launching **Sheer** dress designs in early August, Sebag explained that through personal struggles with body image, dressing and shapewear, she developed the concept for her new business.

"I found that the current shapewear products available on the market were not good enough," she explained. "I decided to create an all-in-one piece that would basically provide women with a more innovative solution to that everyday struggle that we go through with our bodies and image."

The all-in-one solution that Sebag refers to as her "magic dress" is a little black dress that has been redesigned to include shapewear within the garment. Available in two styles—the Sheer Classic and Sheer Mini—the dress was created as a versatile piece that fits different ages, careers and body types. From twentysomethings who are planning a night out to professionals who are attending work-related events, Sebag designed the three-layer dress to appear elegant.

"You have the outer layer, which is the simple shell seen from the outside," she said. "You also have two layers on the inside that provide the compression, similar to traditional shapewear—but better. It's very thin and entirely invisible from the outside. You have that extra double layer of support on the inner garment."

To help create Sheer, Sebag enlisted the guidance of tex-



Sheer Sebag

tile veteran Tosha Hays, formerly of **Spanx**, as her product adviser. Currently serving as the chief product officer for **Advanced Functional Fabrics of America** (AFFOA), Hays's insight allowed Sebag to understand the need for different fabrics to address each body issue.

"She comes with a great background and experience. We just serendipitously connected and she loved the idea," Sebag said of meeting Hays. "I was really fortunate to have found her. I was relentless. If I was going to create this product, it had to be someone of that caliber."

The women set out to create a dress that included foundation pieces and a seamless appearance without the discomfort

of fabrics that pinch and squeeze skin, often resulting in bulges.

"This is a solution to a serious problem that we deal with every day as women," Sebag explained. "It's more than just a product—it's a tool that will help them look and feel their best."

Citing Italian-style design inspiration, the women decided to use a ponte fabric on the outside for a luxurious feel. A middle layer includes a jersey-fabric bra built into the design. Extending down from the bust there is a light tricot fabric that affords stretch and recovery, which gives a stronger and more comfortable alternative to traditional materials. The final component is a satin panel that alleviates the notorious paunch in the abdominal area.

"We launched with a traditional classic and mini, which is the everyday little black dress in two lengths," Sebag said of the designs, which retail for \$375 and \$325, respectively.

The Calabasas, Calif.-headquartered company manufactures its pieces in Vietnam and is going to expand its offerings by building on the initial design to accommodate a growing clientele.

"We are going to come out with many different colors in these two styles," Sebag said. "The No. 1 request I've been getting is 'Are you going to have sleeves? I want to hide my arm fat.'"

To meet this demand, Sheer will release dresses with different cuts to alleviate other body issues women face. In addition to dresses, Sheer will expand this fall into offering other shaping solutions to solve wardrobe problems, as Sebag has big plans for her growing line.

"It's going to be more than just dresses," she said. "I plan on getting into activewear and a lot of other things. Right now, I want to focus on one thing at a time, not overwhelm my consumer, and just prove my concept and quality first." ●

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Atlanta Apparel's Spring/Summer '19 Offerings Celebrate Comfort, Elegance, and Style

Unique products, engaging brands, interesting stories—these are the hallmarks of every Atlanta Apparel trade show, and Spring/Summer '19 is no different, as creative exhibitors such as the ones below vividly reflect.

Able

Producing ethical fashion made by women for women—from leather goods, handmade jewelry, denim, clothing, and footwear crafted in countries spanning the globe—Able works to end the generational cycle of poverty by providing women with job opportunities and a market for its high-quality goods. With the mantra “Elevated Every Day,” Able’s wares are well appreciated by customers who value both style and story and 24/7 comfort. Key pieces this season include the Abera Backpack (“a must!”), now also in neutral bone in addition to black and cognac; walkable heels the Estefani Wedge and Mary Sandal, perfect for Spring/Summer; the Sara Relaxed T-Shirt Dress, of softest Pima cotton; the Naibi Cropped Jacket and Yuli White-Wash Jacket; and Italy-sourced acetate jewelry in fresh shades and clean lines.



Cocobelle

Cocobelle specializes in quality-crafted, timeless-design leather sandals at a competitive price point. The husband and wife duo of Lucy Peglar and Ignacio Bussy love nothing better than to travel and surf the world, and Cocobelle affords them the perfect business to benefit from, and accommodate their lifestyle. Sourced from both Bali and Southern Italy, Cocobelle sandals are inspired by “wanderlusting women who need sandals to transition from day to night and beach to street.” All of Cocobelle’s sandals are handmade in a classic tradition that survives “coming-and-going fads.” Neutrals and metallics are must-haves. Expected bestsellers: the double-strapped, slip-on Perline Sandal slide with metallic embellishments; the neutral or metallic slip-on Leather Slide; the multi-strapped Live Sandal with braided and flat leather straps; and the minimalist, thin-strapped Crescent Sandal.



Draper James

“I started this company to honor my Southern heritage and in particular my grandparents, who were, and still are, the greatest influences in my life.” So says actress Reese Witherspoon about Draper James, named after her grandparents and inspired by “the modern Southern woman and the many



facets of her life.” To that end, Spring/Summer 2019 is all about dressing her in style for every occasion. Chambray continues to be one of Draper James’s favorite fabrications, with Nassau navy and sugar coral the two colors that will lead the season and complement its chambray styles. Chambray and linen, also strong, “are very on brand, great for warmer weather, and are casual yet elevated.” Important silhouettes include a flattering fit-and-flare, as well as feminine button-front skirts and dresses.

Lillian & Co.

Lillian & Co.’s jewelry collection of bracelets, necklaces, watches, and now rings “speaks to the soul—it’s all about inspiring women to remember that they are worthy of the life they desire and that we’re all on a beautiful journey.” For Spring 2019, the theme is “Diamond in the Rough,” highlighting “the beauty of the journey, though sometimes hidden. It will be a reminder not to despise the process, for we are all just diamonds in the rough.” The ring collection—“what our customers have been asking for since we launched”—makes its debut, while the inspirational bracelets and necklaces remain perennial favorites. The rose-gold finish has been the hottest color for the last few seasons, “and it does not seem to be slowing down!”



Parker Smith

The ideal Parker Smith customer “has it all—she’s ambitious, confident, powerful, and likes to invest in timeless pieces.” No wonder Parker Smith’s Spring/Summer 2019 collection is inspired by “the power women of the ’90s.” Great mid- and high-rise fit—including contour no-pinch waistbands and booty-lift construction—are “the foundation of our line.” Designer Selina Tahmasian has translated sportswear trends into standout denim pieces that meld embellishments, stripes, and frayed hems with Parker Smith’s signature silhouettes. The pieces to buy? “Everything with side stripes,” Tahmasian reports. “Our Twisted Seam Skinny in eternal white is already on track to be a bestseller with its flattering twisted seam, high-low hem, and black side stripe.” Also key: the open end-weave denim/Modal DA fabric blend that has the salt-and-pepper characteristics of vintage rigid with Modal’s soft hand and stretch.



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NEW RESOURCES

Nubia Natalie's Approach to Activewear Reflects Appreciation for Indigenous Artisans

By Dorothy Crouch Associate Editor

Not simply another activewear line, **Nubia Natalie** celebrates the artisans of Mexico’s Huichol community, located in the country’s Sierra Madre mountain region.

After two years in the making, Natalie Arribeno’s activewear line launches Sept. 24, following a presale on Sept. 15. For Arribeno—who has enjoyed a career in fashion working with companies including **Trina Turk**, **Splendid** and **Ella Moss**—the project is a reflection on past experiences that shaped her life and a future defined by helping indigenous artisans around the world.

“I started brainstorming regarding how I could give a voice to the artisans,” said Arribeno, who is the company’s chief executive officer. “The reason I chose activewear is because it’s a vehicle that is very close to me. I believe a healthy lifestyle is very important.”

After researching the region’s indigenous cultures, Arribeno connected with anthropologist Susana Valadez, who 30 years ago founded the **Huichol Center for Cultural Survival and the Traditional Arts** in Huejuquilla el Alto, Jalisco, Mexico. The organization not only offers food, clothing and medicine to the local indigenous population but also provides opportunities through education, agriculture cultivation and employs artisans known for their colorful yarn paintings and beaded artwork.

“The reason I started with the Huichol is because my family is from Nayarit,” Arribeno said. “I wanted to start somewhere that was close to my heart. My family is from the location close to the Sierra Madre mountains, where the Huichol still continue to live and continue their culture.”

For her launch, Arribeno will release three silhouettes: leggings, a sports bra and drawstring yoga shorts. While the patterns are based on traditional Huichol artisan work, Nubia Natalie includes features accommodating modern active lifestyles. The leggings offer two pockets—one in front and another in back for a key and identification. The shorts were designed with diagonal drawstrings and the sports bra features a wide back and crisscross straps.

Three different Huichol designs—El Camino (the pathway in Spanish), the Spiritual Mirror and Mystic—will be part of the first collection. Carefully considering every detail during the development process, she wanted to recognize the important women who were integral to the collection’s launch. Leggings are named “Susana” for the Huichol Center founder, the sports bra is called “Lupita” to honor her late mother, and the

shorts are named “Valerie” to recognize her sister.

“My sister and I started doing yoga 10 years ago right after my mother’s passing,” she said. “For us, it was a mindful, spiritual exercise. Going through that journey 10 years ago with her was how I fell in love with yoga.”

As a Los Angeles-based fashion professional, Arribeno is familiar with different methods of apparel production, but after learning about the significance of nature in the Huichol culture she was determined to create a collection that would reduce environmental impact.

“Diving deep into their culture as I started the project made me realize how important Mother Nature is and how to respect that,” she recalled.

Using **Repreve** fabric sourced from recycled plastic water bottles and doing sublimation printing at **Pop Click Design** in Eagle Rock, Calif., Arribeno’s apparel is cut and sewn in Los Angeles at **BB&S Cutting Services**. In addition to adhering to production practices that reflect the ideals of the Huichol people, Nubia Natalie will be manufactured in small quantities.

“We are doing low minimums,” Arribeno said. “I didn’t want to create excess inventory and be harmful to the environment.”

The partnership between Nubia Natalie and the Huichol Center is more than a business venture. Through creating pieces with an authentic connection to the culture of indigenous people, Arribeno wants to show the difference between appropriation of culture and appreciation. Before choosing designs for her activewear, Arribeno consults with Valadez to ensure certain patterns will not be interpreted as disrespectful to the community.

“The designs could get distorted and making activewear is different. Having recycled water-bottle fabric is different than a cross stitch on muslin,” Arribeno explained. “The mission of the brand is to champion artisans and be very aware of not distorting their culture.”

While an exact dollar amount has not yet been determined, a portion of Nubia Natalie sales from the inaugural collection will be donated to the Huichol Center. In addition to these proceeds, Arribeno will donate her size run, or the preliminary run of samples for each size, to **Galeria Tanana**, Valadez’s gallery in the surf town of Sayulita, Mexico, which supports the Huichol Center.

With leggings retailing for \$88, the sports bra for \$58 and the shorts for \$68, the Nubia Natalie collection will begin as a direct-to-consumer venture through www.nubianatalie.co, but Arribeno hopes to eventually expand her business to include retail partners. ●



Natalie Arribeno



Naked Wardrobe Continued from page 1

"We are so proud and blessed to be in this place," said Shideh Kaviani, who, at 31, is the youngest of the three sisters and a graduate of the **Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising** in downtown Los Angeles.

The essence of the brand is effortless, comfortable dressing in mostly knit apparel that hugs the body and comes in affordable prices. This is not for the body shy but embraces the curvy customer who flaunts every inch of her being. Not much sells for more than \$40, and there is a constant barrage of special sales cutting those prices by 50 percent or more.

The collection includes knit biker shorts, bodysuits, rompers, dresses, midi and miniskirts, cropped tops, swimsuits, and the recent introduction of maternity wear under the **Baby Mama by Naked Wardrobe** label. Fabrics are often viscose or rayon with a touch of spandex. "We are known for our basic pieces. That is our bread and butter," Shideh noted. "Our bodysuits and dresses are very body-conscious, sexy and comfortable."

The path to comfortable clothing made mostly in Los Angeles started as a way for three clothes fanatics obsessed with online shopping to find a way to get clothing for free. At first, they were buying up other people's brands and selling them online. But soon they transitioned to manufacturing their own line. The idea was to be simple but make their products look chic and fashion-forward. Viscose was their go-to fabric with knit items making up 75 percent of the collection.

"The fabric is very versatile. The clothes you can take from day to night and from your desk to dinner," said Shida Kaviani, who, at 35, is the middle sister.

For the first two years, the three siblings kept their over-

head very low by working out of their parents' 2,000-square-foot house and concentrating on getting everything right. "The first couple of years, we had 20-to-21-hour days. We didn't date or have a social life. Some of our friends faded away because we had to make this our priority," Shida said. "People think starting a business is all rainbows and butterflies, but it is dedication."

With Shideh's FIDM degree in fashion design and business administration, they started to work as a team to create their line; find factories in Vernon, Calif.; and source as much fabric locally as they could. Sourcing locally is very important to them.

Shirin, the oldest, at 37, likes to push the team to create trends that are not there yet, and Shideh prefers to be more on trend. On an average week, they introduce 20 new bodies and never have more than about 500 SKUs on hand.

When they started Naked Wardrobe, the concept of selling clothing online was just starting to hit the Internet, and it was an idea that major retailers were just beginning to address.

But the Kaviani sisters, being millennials who understood millennials, knew that young women would be enthusiastic about the idea. "It is so easy. You order online and it shows up at your door," Shideh said.

Each sister has a specialty. Shirin, who studied graphic design at **California State University, Northridge**, also has Internet-technology expertise from her years working at **Jacobs Engineering** in Pasadena, Calif., where her mother works. Shirin handles Internet technology and graphic design for the company.

Shida, who also graduated from California State University, Northridge, with a bachelor's degree in communications, is in charge of public relations.

While the company has eschewed traditional forms of

advertising, it does spread the word about the company the millennial way—by posting on **Facebook**, **Twitter** and **Instagram**. While the company does not reveal its annual revenues, the Kavianis noted that they made more than \$2 million in sales their first year.

This was helped by the fact that the sisters are experts at getting their clothes on some pretty high-profile celebrities. Carmen Electra was the first celebrity to wear their brand, but from there it went to Kim and Khloe Kardashian, Lady Gaga, Kylie Jenner, and Jennifer Lopez. For a while, Naked Wardrobe was carried by the Kardashians' store **Dash**.

Naked Wardrobe sends the celebrities a box with some of their pieces and hope they post on Twitter, Facebook or Instagram. "Items fly off the shelf quickly when a celebrity posts what they are wearing," Shida said. "We got a dress on Lady Gaga, and we sold 500 to 750 dresses in a week."

Also, fashion influencers and customers post the unveiling of their "haul" on **YouTube**, being honest about what they think. In one post, Kristina Reiko talked about how the company constantly has sales, such as a 50-percent-off Friday. She liked the clothing for its double-lined knit fabric but warned that if you order white, you might be showing off your underwear. She also noted that some of the knit fabric snags.

Another customer, Alexandra Altagracia, who also was on YouTube, raved about the price of her Naked Wardrobe clothing, noting she got a denim crop top for \$17 and khaki pants for \$25.

As the company expands, so does the Naked Wardrobe product line. One year ago, the sisters introduced a cosmetics line called **Dope Cosmetix**, which is also made locally and carries an affordable price with lipsticks selling for \$12 and pressed bronze blushers going for \$20.

And for the past two to three years, the sisters have been dabbling more in fashion to fill the needs of their far-ranging demographic. They have introduced denim shorts and a bit of sparkle and glitz to the collection. A rack of colorful faux-fur and puffy jackets for Fall 2018 hangs in their conference room and images will soon be on the Web.

No matter how skilled they have become, keeping up with the fast pace of the Internet and fashion is a constant challenge. "I see social media as a blessing and a curse," Shideh said. "It is so fast and makes you move at such a rapid pace, but we do our best to keep up." ●



Shida, Shirin and Shideh Kaviani

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Robotics *Continued from page 1*

ny that thinks outside the box and is willing to take on new ideas. Honee is a fashion designer, but she is a creative, artistic genius.”

Known for dramatic, vibrant styles, Honee built her Spring/Summer 2019 collection upon the same foundation of creating artful pieces in vibrant colors, but for this season she is making them more wearable.

“Most of my pieces that I’ve done before were more artful and out of the ordinary in terms of everyday wear,” she said. “I think this time—because I want to showcase the ability to interact with the now and present—most of my pieces are still ultra-hyped but commercially viable.”

An industrial designer by trade, Honee studied at **The Art Institute of California** but was born in China and raised in Vietnam and New York City. She values language, a focus evident in this collection, which she has named AI as a nod to the artificial intelligence that will be found on the runway but also the word *ái*—the Chinese and Vietnamese word for love.

“Fashion is a language that is common to all,” Honee said. “We can all speak the same language of fashion. I am using it to voice my thoughts on various topics. Mostly it’s social commentary to get my voice across through the medium of fabrics.”

During her upcoming shows, Honee hopes to show the public that technological advancements such as AI aren’t futuristic concepts. These resources are here, reaching the level of importance in contemporary human life that the designer feels is similar to a beloved deity.

“We get addicted to our smartphones,” she said. “That is the new god. We are ushering in the new god through our time at the altar of these tablets. We are ushering in a new dogma.”

While she emphasizes human reliance on technology, Honee hopes to show that robotics should be embraced. When used properly, she feels robotics can provide tools for completing menial tasks and chores, thereby affording more freedom for humans to engage in activities that they love, which produces greater joy.

As a manufacturer of robots that have traditionally aided in healthcare, OhmniLabs

and Kambria are now ready to move into this unfamiliar but welcome new space.

“We launched the OhmniLab robotic product line about two years ago and the original launch was to connect people,” said Dhana Pawar, OhmniLabs’ marketing director.

The robot uses technology similar to video conferencing to create a telepresence of a remote human user who is located in a different location than the machine. Through a tablet positioned at the top of the machine, serving as the head and face, humans can interact with each other through the robot, simulating an onsite meeting.

Use of this technology was originally intended for healthcare purposes, providing assistance to seniors and mobility to ill children. Through outfitting robots in clothing from a Spring/Summer 2019 fashion collection, Pawar sees an opportunity to expand the potential of her company’s products.

“When we were asked if we would be willing to have our robots walk down the runway at London Fashion Week in Honee’s one-of-a-kind designs, we just jumped at it,” she said. “It was an extension of what we were already doing, connecting people with technology and making it available to everybody. What better way to do it than with fashion?”

Despite her affinity for technology and the excitement surrounding her upcoming show, Honee has no intention of exclusively using robots on her runway in the future.

“There is something fascinating about the way a body moves,” she said. “There is no way a robot can give us that. The energy from a robot is always very synthetic. The energy from human beings—it’s living, breathing, different. You can never replace that.”

As for her designs that will be featured in this collection, Honee was keeping most of the details confidential. The designer revealed that she will contrast the appearance of her high-tech models with natural textiles by using cotton, silk, leather and feathers in bold colors and an array of silhouettes.

“People will expect something that is high tech. I am trying to say that we are going to marry the inorganic with the organic,” she explained. “When you wear a piece of Honee, you should feel that you’re wearing a piece of artwork.” ●




Ohmni robot design



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ReMode Adds Speakers to Its November Event

The fashion-sustainability event called **ReMode** has added a number of top fashion leaders to its speaker lineup at the conference scheduled for Nov. 13–14 at the **Los Angeles Convention Center**.

Joining a long line of speakers are Rebecca Minkoff, co-founder and creative director at **Rebecca Minkoff**; Anna Gedda, head of sustainability at **H&M**; Jennifer Silberman, vice president of corporate responsibility at **Target**; Nina Farran, founder and chief executive at **Fashionkind**; and Patricia Ermecheo, chief executive and founder of **Osom Brand** and **Osomtex**.

Other added speakers include Jifei Ou, researcher at **MIT Media Lab**; Adam Pritzker, chairman and chief executive at **Assembled Brands** and co-founder of **General Assembly**; David Breslauer, co-founder of **Bolt Threads**; Erik Bang, innovation lead at the **H&M Foundation**; and Arti Zeighami, global head of advanced analytics

and artificial intelligence at **H&M**.

Working toward a more sustainable industry, the event will focus on four pillars of sustainability: ReMake, ReThink, ReInvest and ReMarket, which will help businesses become more environmentally conscientious.

For this inaugural event, Remode has organized more than 75 sessions to help companies become more omni-channel in a sustainable way.

Topics to be discussed include building a sustainable brand, on-demand manufacturing, sustainable sourcing, transparent by design, the role of venture capitalists in early-stage fashion brands, and winning and wholesaling.

To learn more about the event, go to www.remode.com.

—Deborah Belgium

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Lineapelle

www.lineapelle-fair.it

Products and Services: An international exhibition of leather, accessories, components, fabrics, synthetics, and models. On Sept. 25–27, Lineapelle95 is going to open a new window onto innovation. We are talking about Lineapelle Innovation Square, a three-day event, going on simultaneously with the fair, during which they will present new and selected technologies along with innovative solutions of paramount importance in the leather industry. Focus on innovation.

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TEXTILE PRODUCTION MANAGER

Los Angeles based Textile Company is seeking for Import Fabric Production Manager. Must have Imported fabric purchasing experience and be highly organized. The candidate will work closely with the owner, design staff, salespeople and customers therefore strong verbal and written communication skills are essential. Working with overseas vendors on deliveries and pricing are a daily demand. Understanding logistics, international shipping and US Customs is the Import Manger's responsibility. Please send resume to: ramin@richlinetextiles.com

SALES REP

Looking for exp'd apparel trim & packaging Sales Rep. 3k MONTH PLUS GREAT COMMISSION.... 401k, Pension plan, health AND DENTAL 'ONLY APPLY IF YOU HAVE EXPERIENCE!' SEND YOUR RESUME TO INFO@REVGRP.COM

Jobs Available

SALES/BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Sewing Collection, based in LA, is the leading provider of packaging & shipping supplies. Our objective is to increase our acct. base & increase sales. We are seeking a very serious, goal oriented individual to join our team as a sales person. Email to 72@scicorporate.com

INDEPENDENT SALES REP

Needed an energetic salesperson who is working with dept. & specialty stores. With 5-6 yrs. exp. We are a manufacturer of men's & women's sportswear lines. Preferably working in showroom. Email: amsportswear@verizon.net

Buy, Sell and Trade

WE BUY ALL FABRICS AND GARMENTS

Excess rolls, lots, sample yardage, small to large qty's. ALL FABRICS! fabricmerchants.com Steve 818-219-3002 or Fabric Merchants 323-267-0010

•WE BUY ALL FABRICS AND GARMENTS

WE BUY ALL FABRICS AND GARMENTS. No lot too small or large. Including sample room inventories Silks, Woolens, Denim, Knits, Prints, Solids Apparel and home furnishings fabrics. We also buy ladies', men's & children's garments. Contact: Michael STONE HARBOR (323) 277-2777

Jobs Available

CONTROLLER

LA apparel co. is seeking a financial controller. Apparel industry exp. with large chain retailers is req'd. Duties include prep. of fin. stmt., general ledger maint., month end & inventory closing, acct. & bank rec., accts pay & rec., payroll, mgmt. reporting. Must be able to track & analyze returns and discounts. Knowledge of QuickBooks req'd. / AIMS preferred. Submit res. & salary reqmnts. to: genrhumanresources@gmail.com

Real Estate

SPACE FOR LEASE

•In newly renovated Anjac Fashion Buildings in the heart of Downtown Fashion District •Industrial, retail and office space also available throughout the San Fernando Valley. Retail and office space also available just south of Downtown. 213-626-5321 or email info@anjac.net

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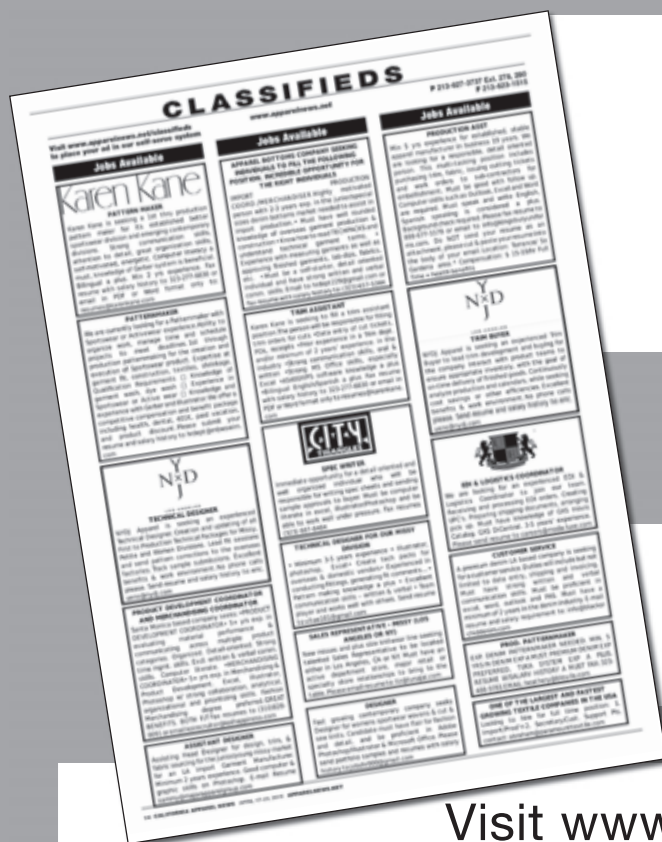
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Made in America Advertorial

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September 21

Cover: Fiber & Fabric
Technology Industry Voices: 3-D Technology
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**Textile Preview with Tech
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Designers & Agents LA 10/8-10
LA Fashion Market 10/8-10
Label Array 10/8-10
Coast Nashville



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Denver Apparel & Accessory Market 10/14-16
Atlanta Apparel 10/16-20



October 5

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Lingerie
Activewear/Athleisure

Education in Focus
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