

CALIFORNIA Apparel News

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LA FASHION WEEK SPRING COLLECTIONS ON THE L.A. RUNWAY

A mix of local, national and international designers hit the runway at L.A. Fashion Week. For more from the shows, see page 6.

MANNY LLANURA

Elie Madi

Sustainable Fashion Forum at L.A. Textile Brings Industry Leaders Into the Eco Discussion

By Dorothy Crouch Associate Editor

Sustainability is the buzzword swirling around the fashion and textile industries these days.

To help brands navigate through this world of environmentally sound apparel manufacturing, a Sustainable Fashion Forum was organized on Oct. 4 by Fashionindex founder Andrea Kennedy, who is also a professor at LIM College in New York City, in partnership with the L.A. Textile show and the California Market Center.

The forum is important to people such as Raheela Marniar, who has a womenswear brand called Trilinia. “You hear about sustainability a lot, and you want to have ethical production,” she said. “It’s a new space, and we’re building a community.”

Held at the CMC’s Fashion Theater, the second installment — Sustainable page 3

TRADE SHOW REPORT

Los Angeles Market Week Takes Off With Some Big Changes

By Andrew Asch, Deborah Belgum and Dorothy Crouch

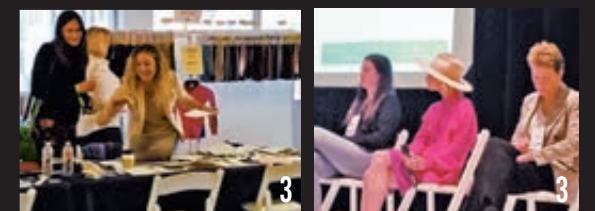
October ushers in one of the more important Los Angeles Market Weeks when showrooms in the downtown L.A. Fashion District are unveiling their Spring/Summer '19 lines but still filling in orders for late Fall and Resort.

This October, there were a few new things happening on the market-week scene. The California Market Center combined a number of stand-alone shows into Label Array, an event on the building’s top floor where exhibitors from the women’s, girls’, swimwear, activewear, accessories, gifts, beauty and footwear categories were spread out across the large penthouse with panoramic views of L.A.

The Los Angeles Men’s Market at the CMC saw a major expansion of exhibitors, and there was stronger attendance — L.A. Market page 7

INSIDE

Where fashion gets down to businessSM



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Levi's Sees Solid Revenue Growth in the Third Quarter

Levi Strauss & Co. has been on a roll lately, reporting its fourth consecutive quarter of double-digit revenue growth.

In a conference call about the San Francisco clothing company's third-quarter earnings, company executives noted that business grew for all four of the company's brands and in all categories.

"Our strategy to diversify the business continued with strong results," said Chip Bergh, Levi's president and chief executive. "Globally, we are selling a T-shirt every second, and we have done so for the last two years."

Levi's net income for the third quarter ending Aug. 26 grew 45 percent to \$130 million while its revenues inched up 10 percent to \$1.4 billion. Net income growth came from primarily lower income taxes, higher

operating income and gains on the company's hedging contracts compared with losses in the third quarter of 2017.

The strongest market for Levi's was the Americas, where revenues rose 7 percent to \$793 million. Direct-to-consumer business in the Americas was up 13 percent.

Europe was the company's second-largest market, where revenues were up a solid 17 percent to \$406 million. Strong sales were seen in the women's category and tops. Direct-to-consumer business grew 15 percent.

Asia's revenues jumped 8 percent to \$196 million.

Of the company's four brands—Levi's, Signature by Levi Strauss & Co., Denizen and Dockers—Dockers has been the most challenging in sales growth. But the brand is gaining a bit of speed and saw revenues rise

2 percent in the third quarter.

"Dockers was driven by setting the floors in the United States and strong performance in Europe," Bergh said, noting that the launch last year of the **Dockers Smart Flex 360** pant with four-way stretch fabric has boosted sales. "The reception from our customers has been positive."

Harmit Singh, the company's chief financial officer, noted that Levi's has 65 more stores today than it did one year ago. In June, the company opened a flagship store in downtown Toronto, and it is on schedule to debut a flagship store in New York City's Times Square by the end of the year.

The company now has RFID, or radio-frequency identification, in all its U.S. stores to manage inventory more effectively and hopes to expand that globally and with

its franchise partners within the next 12 months.

The San Francisco company has been busy developing new marketing and advertising campaigns and partnering with influencers. Levi's recently launched its second **Air Jordan** collaboration with two exclusive sneakers and two jackets, which Bergh said sold out online in minutes, and it recently announced a collaboration with celebrity Justin Timberlake for a 20-piece collection of menswear.

Levi's also partnered with the nonprofit **Rock the Vote** for a TV campaign that plays Aretha Franklin's song "Think" in the background to get more young people to vote on election day. "These things will keep the brand at the center of culture," Bergh said.

—Deborah Belgium

Despite Tariffs, Imports Are Hitting Record Levels

New tariffs on nearly half the goods imported from China haven't dampened retailers' zeal for bringing in merchandise from overseas factories.

Imports at the nation's major retail container ports are hitting their stride and are expected to surpass record levels notched last year, according to the monthly Global Port Tracker report issued by the **National Retail Federation** and **Hackett Associates**.

"Retailers are continuing to import merchandise in order to meet consumer demand even though tariffs are now in place on roughly half the goods imported from China, and the trade war is still escalating," said Jonathan Gold, the NRF's vice president for

supply-chain and customs policy. "Retailers are doing their best to mitigate the impact on their customers, but they are not able to quickly or easily change their sourcing. That means these tariffs will eventually mean higher prices for American consumers."

Last month, the Trump administration imposed an additional 10 percent tariff on \$200 billion worth of goods being brought into the U.S. from China. Those tariffs could increase to 25 percent at the beginning of the year, and the government is threatening to add another \$267 billion on Chinese-made products.

"The third round of tariffs is now in place, an increase in the level of tariffs is coming, and further tariffs have been threatened,"

said Ben Hackett, founder of Hackett Associates, which prepares the annual report for the NRF.

Still, the ports are busy. Cargo arriving at the major U.S. ports in August totaled 1.89 million 20-foot containers, up 3.4 percent over last year. September imports are expected to rise 2.7 percent to 1.84 million containers, and October will see a 4.3 percent jump with a forecasted 1.87 million containers.

November and December are also predicted to see brisk import numbers. Cargo arrivals should be up 2.3 percent in November, to 1.8 million containers, and December will see a healthy 4.0 percent uptick to 1.79

million containers.

The first half of 2018 saw cargo-container traffic up 5.1 percent over the first half of 2017, totaling 10.3 million containers, while import cargo volume for all of 2018 is predicted to increase 4.4 percent over last year to a record 20.5 million containers.

While most ports were experiencing aggressive import activity, the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach in August saw a slight dip in their imported cargo-container volumes. The **Port of Los Angeles** experienced a 2.75 percent decline over last year, and the **Port of Long Beach** saw a 3.6 percent drop in imported cargo-container traffic.—D.B.

RETAIL SALES

September Retail Sales Flummoxed by Calendar Shift

September sales were soft for many apparel retailers.

Retailers and Wall Street analysts placed much of the blame for the sales declines on a shift in fiscal calendars, which are used for accounting purposes and sometimes differ from calendar years.

Mall-based action-sports chain **Zumiez Inc.** noted that the fiscal-calendar shift was the driver of its 8 percent decline in net sales over September.

One crucial fiscal-year week of back-to-school business was shifted to August, said Darin White, Zumiez's director of finance and investor relations. However, the fiscal shift did not affect the retailer's same-store sales. Zumiez posted a 1.2 percent bump in its September same-store sales.

Warmer weather across the United States also put a damper on apparel sales, said Jeff Van Sinderen of **B. Riley FBR**. Fall clothes and cold-weather apparel are not appealing when the sun is shining, he said.

Extreme weather hurt sales for **Cato Corp.**, headquartered in Charlotte, N.C. It has stores located in North Carolina and South Carolina, areas lashed by Hurricane Florence in September, which resulted in billions of dollars in damages, said John Cato, the retailer's chairman, president and chief executive officer.

"September same-store sales were below our expectations," Cato said. "However, same-store sales in September had a slight negative impact from the net result of Hurricane Florence this year offset by Hurricane Irma last year, both causing business disruption and closed stores."

The Buckle Inc. also posted soft sales. The denim-focused mall retailer reported a 2.4 percent decline in same-store sales. **L Brands, Inc.** reported strong same-store sales in September. It saw a 5 percent jump in business.

L Brands also made news by announcing it is exploring sales for its **La Senza** division, a retailer that launched in Canada and was acquired by L Brands in 2006. La Senza's 2018 operating loss will be \$40 million, according to an L Brands estimate.

Other recent retail news included an imminent bankruptcy filing by **Sears Holdings**. Once a leading U.S. department store, Sears Holdings has been talking with banks about securing financing to operate during an expected

September Retail Sales

	\$Sales (in millions)	% Change from yr. ago	Same-store sales % change
The Buckle	\$75.40	-3.2%	-2.4%
L Brands Inc.	\$1,058.00	+8.0%	+5.0%
Zumiez Inc.	\$77.40	-8.0%	+1.2%
Cato Corp.	\$69.40	-1.0%	-1.0%


Information from company reports

filing, according to news reports.

Despite some tough headlines, Wall Street analysts are forecasting that the holiday 2018 season will be strong.

"[September] won't tell you how the holiday will be," Van Sinderen said. "We'll get a sense of how the holiday will be in November. All of the tea leaves point to it being a solid holiday season."

The **National Retail Federation** forecasted a robust holiday season, with sales rising between 4.3 percent and 4.8 percent over last year.—Andrew Asch



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A Fresh Look at the L.A. Textile Show Keeps Exhibitors Optimistic and Impresses Attendees

By Dorothy Crouch Associate Editor

Showcasing the latest trends in textiles, the **L.A. Textile** show at the **California Market Center** in downtown Los Angeles brought together vendors and buyers to conduct business for Fall/Winter 2019/2020.

From established industry veterans to new players who were planning to launch a brand, designers from every branding stage attended the Oct. 3–5 show.

Lawyer-turned-designer Brennan Manuel moved to Los Angeles from New York two years ago with his nearly 4-year-old brand **6AM Brennan Manuel** and plans to branch out and cultivate women's pieces from this established menswear line. He found fabric resources during his first time at the show, particularly from Japanese brands such as **Hokkah Co. Ltd.** and **Uni Textile Co. Ltd.**

"There are good resources here. I would tell other brands to give it a chance and be open to looking," he said. "I didn't know what to expect."

Exhibitors were taking notice of the shift in demand for textiles that fit within the new normal of luxurious yet comfortable clothing. At the booth for Farmingdale, N.Y.'s **Philips-Boyne Corporation**, owner David Haber said he noticed a shift in the fabrics his clientele seeks.

"Traditionally, they were doing custom men's shirts and now they're doing more casualwear, but they still want to have garments that are fitted to them," he said.

A show veteran, he saw the need for a change at the L.A. Textile show and was cautiously optimistic about the fresh atmosphere at this show, which he feels remains an excellent resource.

"This show has a different, hipper vibe. Now we need

to get people who will come to appreciate it. A change had to be made," he said. "This is the perfect show for small manufacturers and designers. Everything is here, from trim to knits. Just look around at the variety."

While several established brands and designers were in attendance, there were also newcomers who were planning to launch or wondering how to begin.

Former **New York Giants** wide receiver Chris Harper is planning to launch a men's ready-to-wear line in Los Ange-

les. While he is still laying the groundwork for the brand, he was attending the show to find partners.

"There are a lot of the manufacturers from the brands that I am really familiar with here, which is really helpful," he said. "I am getting a lot of answers regarding the things I need."

Another first-time attendee, Jacqueline Wells of Akron, Ohio-based **M/D Clothiers**, is a former finance executive who decided to start a second career by launching a women's contemporary line with her daughter. Satisfied with her show experience, which yielded meetings with **B. Black & Sons** and **Shindo**, Wells had advice for other first-timers as well as seasoned attendees.

"Stay focused and come in with a list because there is so much here," she said. "Ask a lot of questions, and don't be

afraid to tell them that you don't know about something." Senior trend and business consultant Jennifer Karulewta is based in West Hollywood, Calif., and represents **Peclers Paris North America**, whose artistic installations were seen throughout the show floor. She was pleased with how organizers channeled their new show vision through creative, artistic pieces.

"The people who took over the show did a really great job of reimagining it," she said. "I love the new creativity of the installations, but if they would have incorporated mood boards, the installations would really pop."

At **KenDor**, a Canadian firm that specializes in sustainable manufacturing and low minimums, sales representative Danielle Harrison was pleased with the show's production team and the traffic generated at the event.

"There are a lot of promising accounts that we might be able to work with," she said. "The people organizing it are nice and extremely helpful. If we said that we needed certain things, they were on it right away, which was awesome."

Rather than showcase his company's offerings with a standard booth, **Texollini** President and Chief Operations Officer Amit Bracha rented an entire room near the show's entrance, which turned out to be a successful move. Bracha was happy about the traffic through the space, where he showed his Long Beach, Calif.–manufactured fabrics. "I saw a lot of traffic," he said. "Business is good and positive."

When asked how the show remains a relevant component of his annual marketing plan, he revealed that exposure to industry decision-makers is key.

"You need it for longevity," he said. "You have to have your name out there so people know about you." ●



Texollini's show space



KenDor booth

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainable *Continued from page 1*

ment of the event that launched at LIM College in May was a full-day conference where attendees learned more about sustainable fashion from apparel-industry business leaders. Representatives from major fashion brands revealed how their companies are reducing negative environmental impact.

Throughout the day, the forum's 319 attendees heard from **Reformation's** Vice President of Operations and Sustainability Carrie Freiman and Director of Sustainability Kathleen Talbot; Mike Farid, the founder and chief executive officer of **Nature USA**; **Patagonia's** Senior Manager of Product Responsibility Elissa Foster and Director of Material Development Sarah Hayes; and Liza Schillo, manager of global product sustainability at **Levi Strauss & Co.**

Additional speakers from organizations focused on bringing greater attention to sustainability included Cindy Lin, founder of **Hove Social Good Intelligence**; Kestrel Jenkins, host and producer of the **Conscious Chatter** podcast; Scott Miller, director of business development at the Sustainable Apparel Coalition; Teresa Baxter, co-founder of Fair Trade Long Beach; and Deanna Clark-Esposito, founder of the **Clark-Esposito Law Firm**.

Attending the conference was important to Clark-Esposito because she recognizes the confusion surrounding the shift toward sustainability. "As consumers, the audience is familiar with issues in sustainability, but from a business perspective they don't know the questions they should ask to advance a sustainable agenda in a way that is meaningful for the company," she said. "I want to support sustainable brands, which is why it was important for me to speak from the business side."

Echoing this sentiment, Jennifer Gilbert, chief marketing officer of **I:CO**, explained that designers must recognize that attendance at these events is an integral component of their businesses.

"It's not just a side note," she said. "In the fashion-design schools, I wish they had more sustainable-fashion curriculum. This isn't an afterthought or an extra—it's critical to be able to have a circular economy."

Gilbert urged her peers to take notice of the growth within the sustainability sector. "If you don't start educating yourselves, you will be left behind," she said. "If you turn your head the other way, you're harming the industry because you're not helping it move forward."

Putting herself in the position of manufacturers and de-

signers, Clark-Esposito wanted brands to recognize the ways in which sustainable production methods could yield new business opportunities.

"People in the industry want to know that there is an emerging sales channel, because at the end of the day it's about what is on the bottom line," she explained. "Recognizing that sustainability could be an advancing sales channel is important."

The conference also offered more-intimate and collaborative opportunities to learn about sustainability in apparel manufacturing. A panel covering innovations in circular

textiles was led by **Fabscrap** founder Jessica Schrieber and included commentary from **Ciclo Textiles** and **Intrinsic Textiles Group** co-founder Andrea Ferris; Dee Dee Harris, national sales director for **Buhler Quality Yarns Corp.**; and **Eco-Life Yarns** by **R. Belda** agent Kathy Constantino.

Another important point emphasized during the event was the need for fashion to become more collaborative as an industry. While certain brands continue to keep all of their efforts under lock and key, there is room for manufacturers to work together toward a greener, more socially conscientious industry without threatening their own businesses by giving away too much.

While discussing her company's campaign toward greater environmental and social responsibility, Schillo discussed the manufacturer's Partnership for Cleaner Textiles initiative. Noting that approximately 80 percent of the company's production is performed with partners who work with other apparel companies that are dedicated to sustainability, Schillo emphasized the need for an industrywide effort to change the supply chain.

"The next step for us is putting pen to paper and figuring out how to engage our suppliers in this conversation. There is going to be a piece about collaborating with our industry peers," she explained. "That is great news for us because we don't have to do it alone."

Kennedy ended the event with a panel of most of the day's speakers. During this final "Ask the Experts" segment, attendees were given an opportunity to find answers to manage a sustainable fashion brand.

"As a brand, I wouldn't ask your consumers to buy less," Kennedy said during her closing remarks. "I wouldn't ask them to curate their wardrobe into six easy pieces. We need to change what we do so they can continue to buy. We just have to design like our world depends on it." ●



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NEWS

Obituary

Michael Glasser, Denim Innovator, 76

No one would ever say Michael Glasser was a shy man. People like to tell the story about how he was in Paris looking for design innovations when he saw a woman wearing a pair of patchwork Levi's. He quickly chased after her.

"He ended up buying the pair of denim jeans right off the lady in the street, and that began his love for denim," said Derek Glasser, Michael's son.

From that Paris experience, Glasser went on to start **French Dressing**, a denim line. It was the first of many denim companies that later went on to become legends.

Glasser passed away on Sept. 28 after being diagnosed a few months earlier with acute myeloid leukemia. He was 76. A private funeral was held Oct. 3 at the **Hillside Memorial Park and Mortuary**.

Ideas and energy were two main characteristics that defined Glasser, who helped start high-end denim companies including **7 For All Mankind**, **Citizens of Humanity**, **Rich & Skinny** and **CJ by Cookie Johnson**. "He brought premium denim to the forefront," said Suzie Hart, the owner of the **Niche Showroom at The New Mart**, who worked with Glasser at five of the 11 companies he started during his long career. "He was a mentor, a teacher, a visionary with

crazy, creative energy and probably one of the best salespeople I have come across in my career."

Glasser was born on Aug. 30, 1942, to Betty Fenster and Julius Glasser in the Bronx, N.Y., where he attended **Taft High School**. Instead of going to college, he immediately started working in the fashion industry and was soon designing knit dresses, said his son, Derek.

Then he partnered with a California manufacturer to start **Simply Pants**, a women's pant line whose revenues shot up quickly, but four years later it declared bankruptcy.

Never one to be discouraged, Glasser then set out to launch a number of companies including **Bronx Casual Clothing** and **Democracy**.

Then, in 2000, Glasser and blue-jeans designer Jerome Dahan hit upon an idea that

would take off like a kite on a windy March day. They wanted to start a premium-denim line just as premium denim was the newest must-have piece of clothing to reside in everyone's closet. They joined forces with Peter Koral of **L'Koral Industries** and the three launched **7 For All Mankind**, whose blue jeans were selling for the unheard-of price of \$200 or more. The blue jeans were an instant success and were soon stocked by hundreds of retailers.

But after a dispute a few years later over profit sharing, Dahan and Glasser took Koral to Los Angeles County Superior Court and were awarded a \$55 million judgment. From there, Dahan and Glasser went on to start **Citizens of Humanity**, which Glasser exited after a few years.

Later, Glasser met designer Joie Rucker, and in 2006 the two launched **Rich & Skinny** blue jeans, whose pants focused on color, unique washes and a wide variety of styles.

"The thing I loved about Michael is that he was full of life and energy and he never lost his passion for doing something new," said Rucker, who left **Rich & Skinny** in 2011 before it was sold to **Twin Dragon Marketing** in 2014. "He was a true entrepreneur at heart and a lot of fun. It was never all work with Michael. He found a way to play in every situation."

As a kid, Glasser was an athlete and basketball fan, which he passed on to his son, Derek, who played point guard at **Arizona State University** and is now the video coordinator for the basketball team at **Rice University** in Houston.

He shared his passion for design and creativity with his daughter, Aryn, with whom he was working on a new line at the time of his death, Derek said.

In later years, he valued quality time with friends and family, spending every holiday meal with his children, ex-wife Veronica, who was a friend for 36 years, and his dogs, Barney and Maddie.

Besides his children, Glasser is survived by his older brother, Gerald Glasser.

—Deborah Belgium



Michael Glasser

Calendar

Oct. 14

Denver Apparel and Accessories Market
Denver Merchandise Mart
Denver
Through Oct. 16

Oct. 16

Atlanta Apparel
Americas Mart
Atlanta
Through Oct. 20

Oct. 17

Interfilière
The Tunnel
Through Oct. 18

Oct. 21

Fashion Market Northern California
San Mateo County Event Center
San Mateo, Calif.
Through Oct. 23

Oct. 24

Dallas Apparel & Accessories Market
Dallas Market Center
Dallas
Through Oct. 27

There's more
on ApparelNews.net.

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

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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November 9



Get Into the Next Trade Shows Special Section with Advertorial

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FASHION

L.A. Fashion Week Mixes the Road With the Runway

For the past few years, L.A. Fashion Week has been bopping around the city, setting up runways at different locations that change from season to season.

But the 3-year-old show, organized by Arthur Chipman, found a permanent home at the **Petersen Automotive Museum**, where five nights of runway shows were held Oct. 6–10.

The event kicked off with the presentation of the Moss Adams Fashion Innovator

Award, or the MAFI Award, to Los Angeles-based designer Elie Madi, who is known for his extremely elegant and sparkly red-carpet gowns worn by various celebrities.

Other labels and designers from Los Angeles presenting their collections during the five days of shows included **Lakris** by Kristina Sutton, **Bomme Studio** by Bo Matthew Metz, and **Sav Noir** by Edwin Sav Noir.

—Deborah Belgum

Lakris



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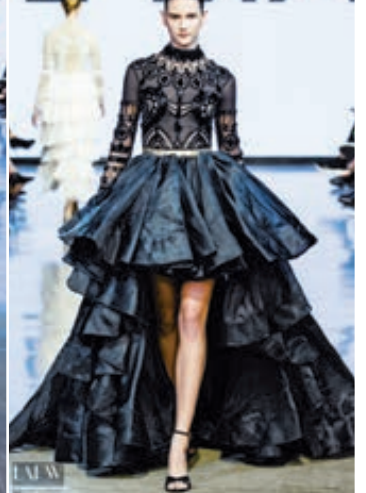
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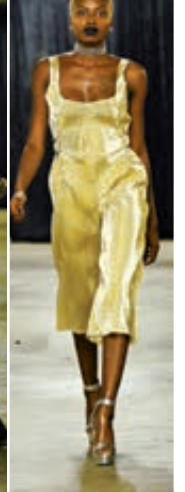
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L.A. Market *Continued from page 1*

at independent shows such as **Brand Assembly** on the top floor of the **Cooper Design Space** and **Designers and Agents** at **The New Mart**.

Overall, showroom owners said retailers were placing orders closer to delivery and still hunting for that special item that shoppers just couldn't resist.

Happenings at the California Market Center

Showroom owners at the California Market Center had various opinions about the recent Los Angeles Market Week, which ranged from good to great.

"Monday was packed. People were leaving orders," said Melody Fast of the **Melody Fast Sales** showroom. "They were writing **Immediates** and **Spring**."

Down the hall, Ernesto Mantilla, a partner in the **Betty Bottom Showroom**, believed sales at the market would be on par with last year.

"The market has been interesting. There was a little bit [of traffic] here, a little bit there. The traffic isn't what it was in past years," said Mantilla, who has worked at the showroom for more than three decades. "But every buyer who has come in has stayed to make orders."

From a retail perspective, Lucia Cutrone of the **Ellicie** boutique in Warrington, Penn., said her business has improved enough in recent years for her to feel comfortable increasing her prices by as much as 60 percent for popular items.

Shoppers are willing to spend for brands they perceive to have good value and style. "They want something that is new and fresh," Cutrone said.

Doing well during this market was the L.A. Men's Market, which was sold out during its Oct. 9-10 run on the 10th floor of the California Market Center.

Sannia Shahid, LAMM's show director, said 140 vendors exhibited at the show compared with 120 vendors last year. New exhibitors at the show focusing on streetwear, action



Outpost showroom at Brand Assembly



Favorite Things Wall at Brand Assembly



Focus showroom at the Cooper Building



Gerry Building hallway



Karen Kearns at the Gerry Building



Melody Fast at the CMC

sports and fashion included activewear brand **Vuori**, motorcycle and mixed martial arts-inspired brand **Affliction Clothing** and emerging brands such as **Ripnrr**. Los Angeles-based brand **Fact** made its North American trade-show debut. It is a line designed by Damon Way, who helped start the prominent skate brand **DC Shoes**.

LAMM veterans such as **The Hundreds**, **RVCA**, **Reyn Spooner** and **WVS Brgde** also had booths. Veteran surf brand **Katin** returned to the show after a four-year break, said Dale Rhodes, the brand's vice president of sales. "I saw five new accounts. I was super stoked," he said.

Retailers shopping LAMM included **East Dane**,

Bloomingdale's, **Saks Fifth Avenue**, **Zumiez**, **Blackmarket** and **Zebra Club**.

At the new Label Array show at the CMC, more than 70 brands exhibited offering a range of amenities.

Peri Donch, who runs the Los Angeles-made sustainable brand **PERI**, offered slipdresses and caftans that wholesale for \$58 to \$98. She took orders from retailers who previously had done business with her at the **Select** show, one of the predecessors to Label Array. "I had repeat business. It was great," she said. "The foot traffic could have been better. But I made some great contacts. I'll hound them later," she joked.

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TRADE SHOW REPORT

L.A. Market *Continued from page 7*

Solid showing at The New Mart

Steady was the pace of buyers moving through the showrooms of the historic 12-story building.

Ben Kaczor, vice president of sales at **Velvet Heart** and **Free Heart**, said there was a good amount of traffic at his showroom on Monday and Tuesday with stores writing orders for Immediate as well as Spring deliveries of 2/20 to 4/30. "A lot of our buyers want faster delivery," he noted.

He felt traffic was up a little more than last year's Spring/Summer '18 market, and there was new business to be made. He opened up a number of new doors at retail outposts in Southern California, Utah, New Mexico and Arizona.

What was different this year was that he saw more retailers using their credit cards to guarantee their orders instead of using factors or other financing.

At the **Jackie B Showroom** on the 10th

of how much of a budget they have left to spend and what they want to purchase. "Retailers are looking for things that are different, that don't look like anything else other people are carrying," she said.

At her booth was Trish Robinson, the vice president of fashion for retailer **Sundance**, who was carefully eyeing a pair of embroidered pants that had a cinched waist and billowy pant legs. "We are looking for new and different bottoms," she said. "We are always looking for romantic tops and new treatments with lace and ways to extend summer into fall with summer fabrics that have fall colors."

Also, maxi dresses that had a bohemian feel to be worn with boots was another favorite.

This was the first time that **Felicia**, a 2-year-old Miami clothing company, was exhibiting at the show. Its goal was to find new business on the West Coast. The Miami-based label has a collection of pre-washed linen dresses, tops, jumpsuits and shorts manufactured in Vietnam wholesaling for \$52 to \$90. "This has been a great



Subhabrata Sadhu at Label Array



Peri Donch at Label Array

floor, Jackie Bartolo also was opening up new stores, in Colorado, Illinois and New Mexico.

Some of them were buying the new lines she recently added to the showroom. Those lines included **Q&A** and **A.E. Ly**, both based in Los Angeles, and **A.B.S.**, a label by Los Angeles designer Allen Schwartz who licensed it to a Canadian company.

"The market has been consistent," Bartolo said. "Some of the retailers are a little cautious. They are just being very careful. They don't want to buy the same thing. If they have polka-dot dresses, why do they need another polka-dot dress? But the accounts I wrote were healthy orders."

Retailers were gravitating toward maxi dresses and minidresses and anything with a print. Animal prints were strong for Spring/Summer '19 as were stripes and polka dots. Dresses and tops with lace and embroidery were also selling well as retailers searched for novelty items.

At the Designers and Agents show, which is an open exhibition area on the building's third floor, there was a breezy, fun feeling to the event.

One of the vendors near the show's entryway was Luz Solarez, the director of sales of **Love Binetti**, a contemporary line of women's clothing and cloth handbags with a definite bohemian, artisanal feel. Wholesale prices range from \$220 to \$400.

This is the only West Coast show the New York label participates in. "I always make the dollars here," Solarez said.

She said by the time buyers reach Designers and Agents, they are pretty aware

show. We are opening more stores here," said Tina Villa, the company's marketing and sales manager.

The label's founder, Ani Ponce de Leon, said she will be returning to the show. "We think it is a well curated show," she said. "We like it."

Cruising the Cooper Design Space

The showroom owners at the Cooper Design Space had a positive feel for this October's market week. Sylvana Lankshear from the **Focus Showroom** estimated there was more traffic than last year. The showroom was packed with appointments. "We'll probably be seeing between 150 and 200 appointments," she said. "That's a conservative estimate."

Business has picked up for most of her retail clients. "There's demand for more product," she said, noting that made her more comfortable to recently take on new lines.

Retailers perusing the showrooms included independent boutiques **M.Fredric** and **Liv**, which has two separate boutiques in the Northern California towns of Ukiah and Santa Rosa.

Olivia Walton, Liv's founder, said she saw an ignored market for dresses. "Everything went to rompers. They're cute, but they replaced the dress," she said. "But we have all of these girls who still want dresses."

The Brand Assembly trade show expanded its exhibition space on the 11th floor of the Cooper. There were 175 vendors exhibiting compared with 150 vendors last year, said Hilary France, the trade show's co-founder.

New vendors exhibiting included



Sannia Shahid at LAMM



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TRADE SHOW REPORT

L*Space, jeans brand **Lee**, **Alpha Industries** and **Hedley & Bennett**.

Los Angeles-headquartered Hedley & Bennett helped produce the market's Culinary Corner, which served a free vegetarian/vegan menu from the Los Angeles restaurant **Yarrow Café**.

Just like every other trade show, there was a range of opinion on the pace of traffic. Ben De Luca of the **Brooklyn Hat Co.** estimated the show's traffic was double last year's. His company did not plan for so much business. Coming into the show, the headwear brand kept inventory lean, perhaps too lean. "We're going to have to do some scrambling to get more inventory," he said.

Shopping at the Gerry Building

At the **Gerry Building**, buyers were placing orders for Immediates through Spring 2019 with a focus on unique styles.

At the **Karen Kearns** showroom, sales representative Kathie Muni saw local retail partners from California and out-of-town buyers traveling from Oregon, Washington, North Dakota and

Colorado. While these buyers were placing orders for Immediates out to Spring, retailers wanted to find different pieces. "This is more of a positive market," Muni said. "Everyone was really upbeat, enjoyed what they saw."

Muni said that most of her traffic was from walk-in visitors. "We had more walk-ins than appointments because people don't want

to commit or know where they're going to be," she said.

With only one day to shop at the market, Claudette Myers of the **Desert Bloom Boutique** in Tucson, Ariz., was following the walk-in buying strategy as she shopped for artful women's clothing to sell in her 16-year-old shop.

After starting her day at 6 a.m., she was at the Gerry Building by mid-afternoon and ready to visit a few showrooms, place orders and head home. "I make an appointment for the first stop of the day," she said. "I come to see lines that I already know. If I pick up some good ones that I don't know, it's wonderful, and that is what we hope for."

At her eponymous showroom, **Miriana Ojeda** was happy to report that every retailer who reserved time on the calendar showed up for his or her appointment. "We had appointments with serious buyers from higher-end specialty retailers that we already know," she said. "They all came in for their appointments and placed orders for some Immediates and a lot of Spring." ●



Luz Solarez at Designers and Agents



Rimpel Lail at the Jackie B showroom

RETAIL NEWS

Vince Opens New Store at Palisades Village

Contemporary label **Vince** is opening a two-level shop at the recently unveiled **Palisades Village** retail center in Los Angeles' exclusive Pacific Palisades neighborhood.

The grand opening for the new store is set for Oct. 13 and will be the fifth Vince store opening this year. The brand will continue to focus on its direct-to-consumer business, said Brendan Hoffman, **Vince Holding Corp.**'s chief executive officer.

"Over the past several months, we have made excellent progress in advancing our direct-to-consumer channels by concentrating efforts on store openings in target markets," Hoffman said. "Our Palisades Village store will allow us to further serve our existing Los Angeles customers in a uniquely

California setting, offering them the opportunity to interact and engage with the brand in new and exciting ways."

The store's interior design features a neutral color palette and evokes a California coastal look, said Caroline Belhumeur, Vince's creative director.

The Vince brand was launched in Los Angeles in 2002 and still has a design studio in L.A. However, it is now headquartered in New York City. The brand operates 44 full-price retail stores, 14 outlets and the e-commerce channel *vince.com*.

Other apparel stores that recently opened in Palisades Village, developed by Rick Caruso, include **Towne by Elyse Walker**, **Anine Bing** and **A.L.C.**

—Andrew Asch



The new Vince store

Discount Retail Favored by U.S. Consumers Regardless of Age or Income

In the United States, shoppers of different ages and income levels are bargain hunting as consumer culture continues to demand discounted goods.

According to the **National Retail Federation's** quarterly Consumer View report released on Oct. 11, clothing is the most popular category for bargain-searching shoppers, with 75 percent of those surveyed likely to buy at a discount store or off-price retailer.

"Looking for the best price is a habit that cuts across almost every demographic," Mark Mathews, the NRF's vice president for research development and industry analysis, said.

The report shows that the recession-era rise in demand

for discount shopping has been retained by price-conscious consumers. Additionally, 63 percent of respondents currently purchase more sale items than they did five years ago. Sixty-six percent of respondents make a minimum of two visits per month to a dollar store, and 58 percent visit an outlet once a month.

"Off-price and discount shopping took off during the recession as price-conscious consumers looked to save on everything from brand-name goods to everyday household purchases," the report said. "Now, eight years into the economic recovery, consumers continue to hunt for deals and discounts."

In a survey of more than 3,000 adults in the United States,

the report found that 89 percent of those who make under \$50,000 a year are discount-retail shoppers, and 88 percent of those who make between \$50,000 and \$100,000 and 90 percent who earn more than \$100,000 hit the discount aisles. The survey also found that 93 percent of Millennials (born from 1981 to 1994) and Generation Z (born in 1995 or later) over the age of 18 are bargain shoppers.

"Regardless of income or generation, virtually everyone wants a bargain, whether it's for everyday necessities or big-ticket splurges," Mathews said. "Even those who can afford to shop elsewhere love finding a 'steal,' and it's a habit that's here to stay." —Dorothy Crouch

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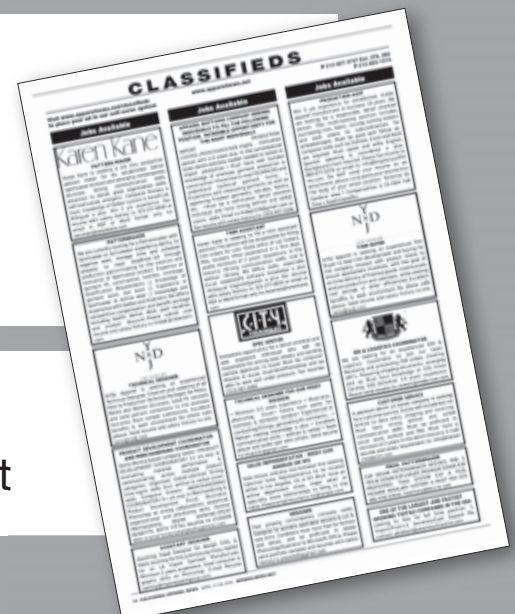
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A woman with her hair pulled back is the central figure, wearing a strapless, off-the-shoulder dress with a vibrant, multi-colored floral pattern on a white fabric. She is resting her chin on her hand, looking thoughtfully towards the camera. The background is a dark grey wall with a subtle, repeating floral pattern in a lighter shade. The overall aesthetic is elegant and fashion-forward.

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