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GREEN SCENE

Los Angeles designer Michael Costello freshened up his Spring/Summer '19 collection with vibrant colors and flowing styles. For looks from other Los Angeles designers during Art Hearts Fashion, see page 6.

Michael Costello

ARUN NEVADER/GETTY IMAGES

U.S. Tariffs on Textile Imports From China Lead to Trade Opportunities Elsewhere

By Dorothy Crouch Associate Editor

With new tariffs being placed on textiles coming from China, many U.S. fabric importers are scrambling to find new textile trading partners whose goods are not subject to the recently imposed 10 percent tariff that could rise to 25 percent at the beginning of the year.

"I would expect to see sourcing shifts away from China to other countries or an increase in prices for goods that either can't be sourced elsewhere or for which the cost of shifting is greater than the increase in duties," said Elise Shibles with the San Francisco-based international law firm **Sandler, Travis & Rosenberg**.

For Alen Lahiji, who owns **Solid Fabric Textile** and **Islands Fabric** in Los Angeles, the financial threat is immediate, and he is currently trying to change the companies with whom he does business. His textile partners currently include suppliers in the United States, India, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Korea, Japan, Pakistan and China.

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National Stores Is Closing Remaining Locations

By Deborah Belgum and Andrew Asch

After filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in August, **National Stores** announced it is holding store-closing sales at its remaining 184 locations.

The store-closing sales announced Oct. 15 are being held at the company's **Factory 2-U** and **Fallas** locations around the country and in Puerto Rico.

In a press release, the company said that after "conducting a store rationalization process," these stores will be shut down. The store-closing sales are being conducted by **Hilco Merchant Resources**, **Gordon Brothers** and **SB360 Capital Partners**.

The closures come after the company, based in Gardena, Calif., held store-closing sales at 74 of its stores in August. It was unclear if the shuttered stores would include the company's **Anna's Linens by Fallas**. Calls to attorneys went unanswered.

National Stores, owned primarily by Michael Fallas, who took over the company from his father, Joseph, caters to the

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Where fashion gets down to businessSM

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Obituary

Jonathan Skow, the Designer Behind Mr. Turk and Husband of Trina Turk

Jonathan Skow, who started out as a photographer and stylist and branched out to designing the menswear line **Mr. Turk**, passed away on Oct. 13 at **Cedars-Sinai Medical Center** in Los Angeles. He was 55.

Skow, whose wife is well-known Los Angeles designer Trina Turk, died from complications from a body-surfing accident two weeks ago in Hawaii that paralyzed him from the neck down, according to reports.

Trina Turk started her self-named line in 1995 with bright colors that epitomized the casual but sophisticated area around Palm Springs, Calif., where she and Skow opened the first **Trina Turk** store. Over the years, their stores expanded across the country.

By 2002, the couple had launched Mr. Turk, for the man who wasn't afraid to wear bold colors.

Just this year, Mr. Turk teamed up with homeware designer Jonathan Adler to devel-

op a capsule menswear swim collection.

Los Angeles swimwear designer Rod Beattie first met Skow when Skow was doing the photography campaign for the **La Blanca by Rod Beattie** swimwear collection produced by **Apparel Ventures** many years ago.

"He was just a force of energy and creativity," Beattie said. "He was such a passionate person about anything he took on. He was larger than life, literally. He was 6-foot-5. He was an individual with his own style, perspective and design."

"When that light gets blown out," Beattie added, "it is very sad."



Jonathan Skow and Trina Turk

Skow met his wife of 33 years at the **University of Washington**, where the two attended the same textile-science class. He was a fashion stylist for 12 years, then transitioned to freelance fashion and advertising photography. In 2008, he began to devote all of his time to their apparel company.

The couple helped put Palm Springs back on the trendy map with the opening of their store there in 2002 and their focus on the desert community. "He and Trina changed the landscape of Palm Springs," said Sally Daliege, the managing director at **Emerging Blue**, a fashion, home and beauty recruiting company. "They made desert living cool."

The creative man, known for his oversized eyeglasses and love of color, grew up in the state of Washington, born to Harold and Barbara Skow in Seattle. His childhood was spent in Washington in Horizon View and on Lake Sammamish.

Besides his wife, Trina, Skow is survived by his mother, Barbara, his brother, Nathan, and was preceded in death by his father, Harold.

A celebration of life will take place at a future date. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to the **Los Angeles Conservancy** (laconservancy.org); the **Palm Springs Modern Committee** (psmodcom.org), the **Palm Springs Art Museum Architecture and Design Center** (psmuseum.org), the **LACMA Decorative Arts and Design Acquisition Committee** (lacma.org/DA2), the **Trident Swim Foundation** (tridentswimfoundation.org) or **ActBlue** candidates (secure.actblue.com).—Deborah Belgium

Blended Retail Will Be the Hallmark of Holiday 2018

It looks like shoppers and retailers have taken down the old boundary between bricks-and-mortar retail and e-commerce.

About 60 percent of consumers plan to shop online and in physical stores, according to **The NPD Group**, a market research company in Port Washington, N.Y., which recently released a survey about holiday shopping. This is an increase of 3 percent over last year's survey.

"The traditional division between online and in-store retailing continues to shift and blur," said Marshal Cohen, NPD's chief industry adviser. "Traditional-store retailers are upping their online games these days

while they are also finding ways to drive traffic to stores with improved efficiency, more-entertaining shopping experiences and better value. Online retailers are also finding ways to blur the retail divide in their own ways, offering lower prices and shipping options that get products to consumers faster than ever."

Those responding to the survey revealed where they would shop. About 70 percent of consumers anticipate shopping at online-only retailers such as **Amazon**. About 45 percent will shop in the physical shops of mass merchants and discount stores. Twenty-four percent said they will shop at national

chains, and about 23 percent said they will shop at department stores.

Online-shopping intent has risen 4 percent over last year and 6 percent over 2016. The average online shopper expects to spend \$748 this holiday season, roughly 50 percent more than the \$492 bricks-and-mortar-only counterparts were planning to spend.

The NPD Group conducted the survey

online in September and crunched numbers from 3,605 respondents.

The upcoming holiday season is forecast to be strong. The **National Retail Federation** predicted holiday sales would increase to 4.8 percent over last year's 4.3 percent. Total sales for the season could reach \$720.89 billion compared with \$687.87 billion last year.—Andrew Asch

National *Continued from page 1*

Latino market with bargain-basement prices. Its first store opened in downtown Los Angeles at Broadway and Fourth Street in the 1960s.

The retail chain, in its bankruptcy documents filed on Aug. 6 in U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Delaware, said it had \$111.4 million in liabilities. Assets were listed between \$100 million and \$500 million.

Previously the company had said its bottom line had suffered setbacks from some underperforming stores, which was exacerbated by severe weather in various regions, including in Puerto Rico, which was badly hit by and is still recuperating from last year's Hurricane Maria.

The company also suffered financial losses from its acquisition of 44 **Conway Stores** in 2014 for an undisclosed price.

Last year, the computers at the various stores in the National Stores chain were subject to a malware attack that lasted from July 10 to Dec. 11, 2017. The affected payment-card information may have included names, payment-card numbers, expiration dates and security codes. Because of the attack, the company said its access to its operating funds diminished.

In court documents, the company said it has between 200 and 999 creditors. Some of its major creditors, all located in New York, include **Armouth International**, owed \$15.6 million; **One Step Up**, owed \$10.3 million; **Louise Paris**, owed nearly \$4 million; and **Seven Apparel**, owed \$3.9 million.

National Stores was started in 1962 by Joseph Fallas with one downtown Los Angeles store. The retail chain is known for its value-priced clothing, which often sells below \$10 to \$20.

National's store-closing announcement hit the press the same day that **Sears Holdings Corp.** made its long-anticipated Chapter 11 bankruptcy filing after not making a \$134 million loan payment.

Sears received approval for \$300 million in debtor-in-possession financing to help operate the company during the bankruptcy. The retailer is scheduled to close 142 stores

by the end of the year after previously announcing it was closing 46 other stores.

Analysts following the bankruptcies of Sears and National Stores said the public and the retail market shouldn't be concerned about a wave of retail closings similar to 2017. That retail apocalypse was greatly exaggerated, said Paula Rosenblum, managing partner of **RSR Research**.

"There never was a retail apocalypse. It was always baloney," she said. "When **Radio Shack** closed, it was no surprise. When **Payless** closed, there was no real surprise there."

Store closings from long-troubled retailers should come as no shock, said Ronald Friedman, a partner in **Marcum LLP**. Profitable retailers should anticipate strong business. "Retail bricks-and mortar is not dead. But it is being reinvented. It will be different from what we have seen in the past. I expect this will be a very strong holiday season."

These two bankruptcies spell opportunity for other stores. Rosenblum forecast various retailers will take some of Sears' market share. "People will get tools and appliances from **Home Depot** and **Lowe's**. **JCPenney** will get a bump from apparel," she said.

Another big matter is what will happen to Sears' real estate. Edward Lampert, Sears' chairman and until recently its chief executive officer, formed a real-estate investment trust called **Seritage Growth Properties** some years ago, which takes in around \$49 million a year in rent from 82 Sears stores it currently owns, according to **Bloomberg News**. If the properties are sold off, landlords will have a chance to redevelop the land into more-attractive real estate, said Mercedes Gonzalez, director of retail consultants at **Global Purchasing Companies**.

The land could house retail models currently favored by consumers instead of locations occupied by giant stores, which consumers have complained are too big and goods too hard to find, Gonzalez said.

"Consumers are looking for convenience. They are willing to pay for it. People are not money poor—they are time poor," she said. "Time is more valuable to them than getting a dollar off of a can of beans." ●

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How Trends Are Driving Innovation and Cooperation in Textile Manufacturing

By Jim Andriola *Contributing Writer*

Let's update our college terminology: Daylongs, Dages and Dalties.

Daylongs denote fraternity/sorority parties occurring during the day. Dage? A daylight rager, and the Day+Party ends up being Darty.

Personally, I find Darty to be the worst of the three—it just sounds so unappealing. I'm going with Dage from now on. Besides, dages have been the talk of the university world for a few years now.

Now that we're all on the same party page...

Dage-a-Vu

When I attended an *ahem* dage five years ago at my son's university, there were leggings and jog bras on nearly every woman there. But something has changed in just a few short years.

Last weekend I visited my daughter's university for a dage. I didn't see a pair of leggings or a single garment containing **Lycra**.

What was the fashion rage at the dage? DENIM. Denim was in full view in bottoms and tops and dresses. College students are declaring that they will not wear their mothers' leggings everywhere, everyday, anymore.

Trends this well-defined will redefine the market for years to come. It's time to recognize that true *activewear* is finished leading. The trend has plateaued.

However, those textile trends within activewear are very much alive. Mills must embrace and focus on *innovation and speed* with an eye on the denim world, which is leading again.

The perennial question for Lycra textile and garment producers is again upon us—how to adjust and what to create? Creative mills that embrace a collective approach to innovation in their textile-development processes will adjust to those trends that ripple throughout the wider fashion world.

Three Evolutions

What was once a trend of comfort-enhancing textiles has become an insistence on more-structured style. Trendsetters see it. Today's consumers want performance, they want easy-care enhancements, and they want *comfort with more structured style*.

Performance fabrics continue to matter. Fashion leaders have reimagined performance-fabric components into street, lounge and intimate apparel.

Designers and developers in both mens- and womenswear are now seizing upon this technical evolution. Brands and innovative mills, in concert, are creating the next wave of low-Lycra content blends with cashmere, **Tencel**, **Modal**, cotton, wool, poly and nylon.

One fast-moving example: Some have identified and reimagined fine-gauge, low-Lycra content, patterns and textures with technologies including stay-cool tech, easy-care, anti-odor, stain resistance, soil release and wicking, to name a few. These are game-changers in the tops market.

A second, clear trend is the divestment in activewear from synthetic-rich yarns (polys and nylons) to cellulosic blended yarns (cotton feel/natural feel) with tech infused for easy care and comfort.

A third area of evolution is the clear move to a more tailored pant (not always denim, but anything made on the cutting edge—fine-gauge, stretch, double-knits) away from

the leggings that dominated for many seasons. These tailored pants are made of tech-performance fibers/fabrics and have a sportier look than pants of old, easily dressed up or down.

Milling It Over

Over the past few years, designers and developers have looked to textiles with increasing frequency to set themselves farther apart from their competition, driving what can best be described as an “industrial revolution” in textile development and production. Now, participating mills must be able to produce both smaller *and* larger runs of more-personalized, high-performance textiles and do so with speed and efficacy.

The challenge is how to incorporate evolutionary tech capabilities in our mills into comfortable, natural textiles for dage-ready fashion categories. Today's key fashion attitude is expressed by an interaction of surprising and incredible design and technology combinations, which are hybrids of street fashion and activewear—with “relaxed and free” as our collective mantra.

All players (yarn producers, dye and chemical producers, textile/findings/apparel manufacturers and designers, et. al.) must serve as muses to one another—working in concert to produce and continue to drive the market forward. ●

Jim Andriola of JBA Textile Sales & Consulting is an international textile sales and marketing executive with more than 25 years of global textile experience. A stretch-fabric specialist, Jim's unique focus on activewear and apparel technical fabrics enables his invaluable guidance and access to the textile and apparel manufacturing matrix—from startups to well-established brands and retailers alike.

Textile Imports *Continued from page 1*

“It's going to hurt the manufacturers. Everyone is going to get hurt by this,” he said. “Everyone is going to be paying more in the end—way more.”

His cotton, poly/cotton blends and rayon are sourced from China, but, with the looming 25 percent tariff increase on Jan. 1, he is wasting no time finding new textile partners. He also has seen a rush to import fabric from China before the January tariff increase.

“All the containers have been booked right before January. Everyone is ordering as much as they can,” he said.

While textiles are included in the current tariff increase, apparel has not yet been added to the list of affected products. Taking advantage of this loophole, Lahiji is planning to expand his business to include finished products.

“Because there is no tariff on clothing, I am one of the people who is starting to add apparel to my offerings,” he said.

Due to the apparel exemption, textile manufacturers in countries other than China are hearing from American business partners who want their fabrics shipped there for clothing production.

“We sell to a lot of American customers who still manufacture in China, and they are asking us to deliver fabrics there, so I look at this as a global market,” said John Gomes, who works in sales for the Portuguese textile company **Sidónios Malhas**. “As a corporation, you have to take advantage of the potential for the future of the industry and make it work.”

In addition to circumventing the textile import tariffs through importing finished apparel products from China, U.S. businesses could save money by buying fabrics from Chinese-owned factories in Africa. Depending on how products are labeled with the country of origin, this could be another loophole for businesses in the United States.

“The Chinese have been moving operations to different countries in Africa as they look for their own China for their own needs,” said Deanna Clark-Esposito, founder of the **Clark-Esposito Law Firm** in New York City.

China is also transferring its own Chinese way of manufacturing to these countries. “With this aspect, I would see

the Chinese moving deeper into Africa with respect to textile manufacturing,” she said.

If China loses its position as a major supplier of textiles to the United States, countries such as India could fill in the gap. India's prime minister, Narendra Modi, launched a “Made in India” campaign, which could help nurture its textile-import relationship with the United States. India is moving to produce more synthetic fabrics rather than its well-known natural cotton-based materials.

“Because of India's Ministry of Textiles former Secretary Anant Kumar Singh, and the way that they decided to allo-

try move up to the top three.

“We've invested a lot in our technology, and it's quite a big industry that we are eager to carry. Turkey has a big potential in the United States,” she explained. “We are very strong in prints, jacquard fabrics, knits and lace.”

Not everyone in the industry is convinced that U.S.-based businesses will shift their textile sourcing from China. Arturo J. Rodriguez of fashion-technology firm **Audaces** feels there will be increased business with international textile partners other than China, but he doesn't think the changes will be significant.

“Once those tariffs come into place, will India grow a bit? Yes, it will. Will Mexico grow a bit? Yes,” he said. “Will it have an impact on the amount imported to the U.S. from China? The number of units in SME [square meter equivalent] of textiles from China will drop a bit but not a lot.”

While tariffs on Chinese products have been a hot topic for weeks, other trade-related issues are now surfacing.

The White House on Oct. 17 said it would withdraw from the Universal Postal Union treaty, which provides discounted shipping rates on small packages sent to the United States from other countries—including China. As the trade war intensifies, customs officials will become more stringent regarding their surveillance of shipments arriving in the United States.

“U.S. fabric importers should anticipate increased scrutiny from U.S. Customs and Border Protection for non-China imports, especially if part of a visible shift in trade patterns,” Shibles said. “CBP may suspect that some of the shift is the result of illegal transshipment.”

To more efficiently conduct trade with textile partners, Shibles advises importers to practice detailed recordkeeping for all transactions with their suppliers, as shifting trade from established Chinese partners to new sources could raise red flags with customs agents.

“I recommend that textile importers review their record-keeping practices as well as those of their suppliers to be able to substantiate the origin of the goods to CBP's rigorous standards,” she said. “This exercise should be part of setting up any new vendors as well as reviewing existing non-China vendors.” ●



Textile factory in Turkey

cate funds for their textile industry, they are moving farther and farther away from natural fibers and embracing man-made fibers,” said Smita Paul, owner of Oakland, Calif.'s **Indigo Handloom**. “They are following the rest of the crowd.”

Turkey, which has historically had a strong textile-manufacturing industry, is another country that could swoop in and replace some of China's business. In 2017, \$378 million in textile imports were sourced from Turkey, according to Pinar Tasdelen Engin, the president of Turkey's **Uludag Textile Exporters' Association**.

“We've always been quite strong in the American market. This is going to improve, not just because of the tariffs but because of how we look at the business,” she said.

While Turkey ranks ninth within the United States' top-ten textile-export partners, Engin would like to see her coun-

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NEWS

Major Retail Construction Company Names Executive to Help Expand on West Coast

Shawmut Design and Construction has constructed retail flagships in top fashion areas including Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills and in Manhattan.

With more work on the West Coast, the Boston-headquartered construction-management firm recently promoted Greg Skalaski to vice president of Shawmut West to oversee the company's Los Angeles and Las Vegas offices. The newly created position was developed to support increased growth in the firm's projects in the region, which have expanded since the company opened its Los Angeles office in 2013.

Previously, the company directed its West Coast retail projects from its Boston headquarters and its New York City office.

David Margolius was named to take over Skalaski's previous position as vice president of retail.

Shawmut's current West Coast projects include remodeling the **H&M** flagship in **South Coast Plaza** in Costa Mesa, Calif. Last month, Shawmut wrapped up construction of a flagship for the **Pomellato** jewelry brand on Beverly Hills' Rodeo Drive, and it is also working on a number of hotel projects.

One of Skalaski's goals for Shawmut West includes developing more projects for healthcare and academic clients. However, retail continues to be a thriving practice at

Shawmut.

Despite headlines about how the market for bricks-and-mortar stores is becoming smaller, there continues to be opportunity for construction because top brands remodel their flagships about once every decade, Skalaski said.

"They've got to stay hot. Every five to 10 years, new trends happen. You've got to have shiny new things to continue to have people coming to the stores. You've got to think of ways to enhance the stores," he said.

More than 60 percent of Shawmut's retail projects are remodels or adaptive reuses of buildings constructed in the 1970s and 1980s. It's up to Shawmut to figure out how to seamlessly add on

contemporary additions to foundations constructed decades ago.

Like fashion, store architecture goes through trends and styles. Currently en vogue are brightly lit stores as well as natural elements such as stone flooring. "Stone is a natural product," Skalaski said. "We cull the cleanest of stones. We employ the most skilled tradespeople to work on this challenging detail."

But these stones are not made in factories and often do not fit together easily. It's up to tradespeople to smooth over the flaws. "Any imperfection stands out like a sore thumb," Skalaski said. "It's like wearing a white shirt and having a spot on it."—*Andrew Asch*



Greg Skalaski

Calendar

Oct. 19

Malibu Fashion Weekend
Cure Spa
Malibu, Calif.
Through Oct. 21

Oct. 21

Stylemax
theMART
Chicago
Through Oct. 23

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

Oct. 24

Kingpins Amsterdam
Westergasfabriek
Amsterdam
Through Oct. 25

Brand Assembly

Dallas Market Center
Dallas
Through Oct. 26

Apparel & Accessories Market

Dallas Market Center
Dallas
Through Oct. 27

Oct. 25

Jewelry, Fashion & Accessories Show
Donald E. Stephens Convention Center
Rosemont, Ill.
Through Oct. 28

Oct. 28

NW Trend Show
Pier 91, Smith Cove Terminal
Seattle
Through Oct. 30

Nov. 13

ReMode
LA Convention Center
Los Angeles
Through Nov. 14

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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FASHION

Art Hearts Fashion Delivers Four Days of Runway Shows

This season, **Art Hearts Fashion** selected the **Majestic Downtown**, a historic former bank building in downtown Los Angeles, as the site for its showcase of Spring/Summer 2019 fashions held Oct. 11–14.

A large sprinkling of Los Angeles designers were on the catwalk as were collections from Seattle, Miami, New York, Italy and the Philippines.

The shows featured nearly 30 designers during the fashion week organized by Erik Rosete. Here is a look at what Los Angeles designers had to offer.—*Deborah Belgum*



Candice Cuoco

Candice Cuoco Grayling Purnell

Grayling Purnell

Kentaro Kameyama

ARUN NEVADER/GETTY IMAGES



Jonathan Marc Stein

Jonathan Marc Stein

Nathalia Gaviria

Nathalia Gaviria

Kentaro Kameyama



Usama Ishtay

Usama Ishtay

Michael Costello

Michael Costello



Michael Ngo

Michael Ngo

Mister Triple X

Mister Triple X

Action-Sports Vets Introduce New Denim Line

By Andrew Asch *Retail Editor*

Fashion gurus can quibble about whether the athleisure trend has run its course. But for two entrepreneurs from Orange County, Calif., athleisure packs a lot of momentum.

Danny Kurtzman and Ryan Mark believe the athleisure customer's quest for style and comfort will be best realized through their new jeans line **Alday Denim**, which bridges the territory between work and loungewear.

The bottoms feel like sweatpants, but they look like premium denim, said Kurtzman, who is also the co-owner of **3Point Distribution**, the parent company of action-sports brand **Ezekiel**.

Mark is the director of marketing for Ezekiel, which is sold at retailers including **Nordstrom**, **Tilly's** and **Revolve**. "The basic idea was that a lot of guys want to be comfortable and look good, but we can't wear joggers to work," Mark said of the tapered sweatpants.

After working for years in wholesale, Kurtzman and Mark chose to introduce their new independent brand through a crowd-funding campaign on **Kickstarter**, which met its \$15,000 funding goal on the first day, Kurtzman said. By press time, the fund-raising project had raised more than \$36,000 and is scheduled to wrap up on Nov. 10. The two entrepreneurs hope to deliver 500 pairs of jeans by April 2019.

Kurtzman and Mark mounted a Kickstarter campaign because they're pitching Alday to those Silicon Valley types who value that kind of funding, not Ezekiel's core customer of skateboarders and action-sports fans.

The two said the majority of people supporting the campaign were people they did not previously know and were not part of the Orange County action-sports scene.

Part of their pitch is that they'll succeed where other Kickstarter campaigns have failed. They said Alday Denim won't fumble when it comes to manufacturing because their operating partner will be 3Point Distribution, which will be in charge of making the pants and has been managing the manufacturing for action-sports brands for more than 15 years.

Eighty percent of 3Point Distribution's revenue comes from making private-label goods. Kurtzman declined to state the company's revenues.

3Point Distribution started in the 1950s when Kurtzman's grandfather, Mervin Kurtzman, manufactured men's suits in Los Angeles under the **American Fashion** nameplate.

Around the turn of the century, the company's name changed when it started focusing on action-sports clothing and managing manufacturing operations rather than owning factories.

The idea of mixing athleisure and denim is not new. Italian premium-brand **Diesel** started selling its **Jogg Jeans** in 2011 and continues to sell the bottoms, which mix softness with distressed-denim looks.

Ezekiel has mixed athleisure

styles and denim looks. It sells a hybrid jean that looks like denim but feels like fleece.

Alday uses a similar fabric, but it is a premium version, which is like fleece. It is an open-knit fabric made of 68 percent cotton, 33 percent polyester and 2 percent spandex.

Like a sweatpant, the waistband and the body of the pants are stretchy. But the five-pocket jeans have the minimal styling and the tapered legs of a premium-denim pant.

For the first season, the pants will come in black and gray and retail for \$98. They will be sold on the direct-to-consumer site aldaydenim.com. Eventually the brand might produce pop-up shops. ●



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Cantiq LA: Lingerie for Everyone

Lingerie is among the most beautiful garments anyone can wear, said Chelsea Hughes, founder of the **Cantiq LA** lingerie label.

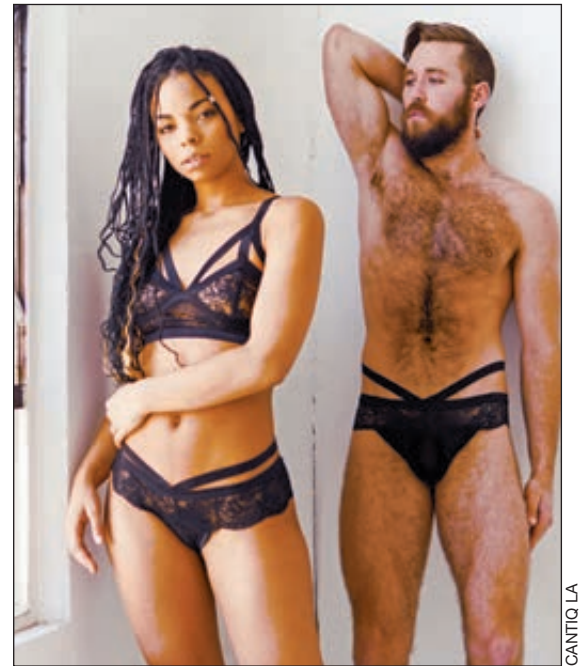
She believes everyone should have the opportunity to wear it, including plus-size women and even men. “I’m making lingerie for everybody,” she explained. “The sky is the limit. We actively depict every variation of folk.”

Cantiq is one of a handful of lingerie labels manufactured in Los Angeles. It may be one of the few that actively strives to be widely inclusive. This year, it introduced two major extensions of the line for plus-size people and for the gender fluid. The label’s sizes go up to 3X. For those born with male anatomy, panties have more room in the front.

Hughes stressed that her line is body positive. She said there is a large demand but not enough supply of lingerie for people who may not have perfect bodies and don’t resemble the conventional lingerie fit model.

just adding more fabric. Unless real folks try on the samples, you don’t know how they’ll fit.”

Cantiq LA lingerie does not use padding or underwire, things that Hughes said give



CANTIQU LA



Chelsea Hughes

an unnatural lift and can constrict the body. In their place, the label uses straps, which look similar to garter belts. For bras, they are attached around the chest and collar area to provide lift and call attention to curves, and they are placed slightly above and below the panties.

The garter belt-like straps lend an exotic style to the garments, Hughes said. Fabrics used include lace and mesh, and silhouettes range from boy shorts to bodysuits. The label’s most popular silhouettes are the bandage-boy shorts to the triangle-cutout bralette.

Market researchers **The NPD Group** agree that there is an untapped demand for full-figure and plus-size categories.

“The underserved full-figure and plus-size market continues to be one of retail’s major merchandising mistakes,” said Marshal Cohen, The NPD Group’s chief retail analyst. “With retailers focusing on assortment productivity, brands adding new styles become a harder sell, but size extensions are a straightforward way to expand on successful existing assortments.”

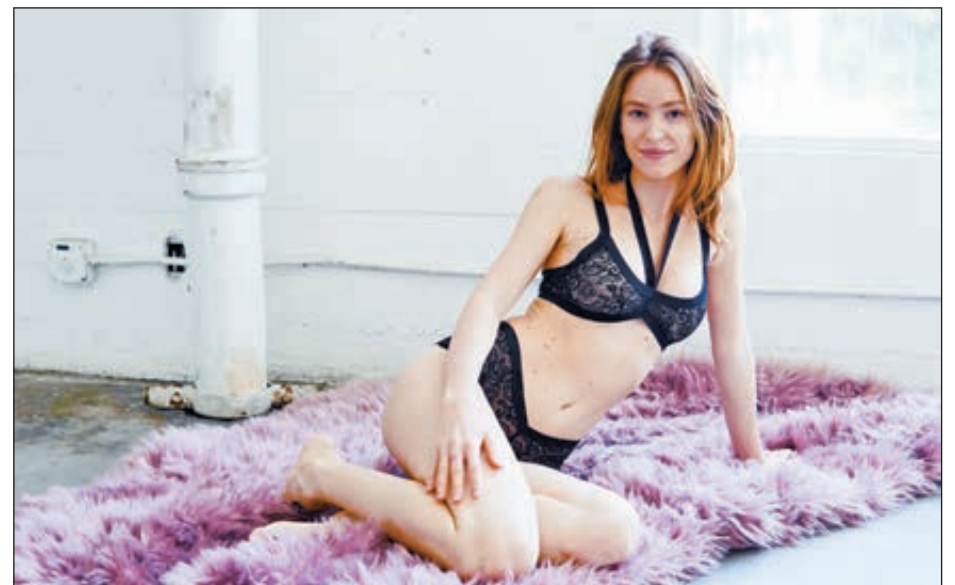
To make lingerie for people who don’t fit into standard-sized lingerie, Hughes sought differently sized fit models. She hired three fit models for the plus-size line and 11 fit models for the gender-fluid line. “It’s not


The garments come in eight different color ways, including snow white, sage green, dusted rose as well as bright reds and dark blacks.

Retail price points range from \$30 for panties to \$150 for bodysuits. Currently, the brand is available at *cantiqela.com* and on **Instagram** at *cantiq.losangeles*.

Eventually, Hughes would like to wholesale the brand. She has exhibited at previous **Los Angeles Fashion Markets** in Los Angeles as well as at last September’s **Capsule** in New York City.



Earlier this year, Hughes opened a brand boutique in her studio near the intersection of La Brea Avenue and San Vicente Boulevard.—*Andrew Asch*





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L.A. Designer Pawan Kumar and Lenzing to Debut Midnight Blues at Kingpins

By Dorothy Crouch Associate Editor

At next week's **Kingpins Amsterdam**—the denim trade show that runs Oct. 24–25—attendees will see the unveiling of a new collaboration between global textile company **Lenzing** of Austria and Los Angeles designer Pawan Kumar.

While a preview of key women's pieces from the collection was held during **Couture Fashion Week** in New York during September, this is the first time the entire 25-piece women's and men's Midnight Blues collection from the **New Miuz** designer will be seen.

Lenzing's Tricia Carey, who is the director of global business development—denim, partnered with Kumar to design clothing that would showcase the potential of the company's **Tencel Lyocell** with **Refibra** technology.

"We wanted to carry through the story of sustainability from fiber to factory," Carey explained as she discussed the Refibra fiber, which is made from post-industrial cotton waste. "Pawan did the designs, and we used **Saitex** as a manufacturing partner because of their strong belief around sustainability."

Tapping into the artistic talents of the emerging designer from Los Angeles—who was raised in Mauritius—and a responsible manufacturing partner based in Vietnam, Lenzing drew together a global team for its latest capsule collection. Beyond the collection's denim, for which fiber is sourced from facilities in the United States, the United Kingdom or Austria, the reach of the project expanded into a larger worldwide initiative to create dresses, T-shirts, sweaters and jackets.

In addition to its core denim pieces, Midnight Blues' complementary wovens and knits were produced through a network of mills that included **Artistic Denim Mills** and **Artistic Milliners** in Pakistan; **Orta** and **Barutcu** in Turkey; **Blue Diamond**

and **Prosperity** in China; **Candiani** in Italy; **Cone Denim** in Mexico; **Hallotex**, **Tejidos Royo** and **Textil Santanderina** in Spain; and **Tintex** in Portugal.

Long before Midnight Blues was designed, Carey met Kumar during his time working with Spanish apparel manufacturing—technology firm **Jeanologia**. At the time, Carey had admired a work of art displayed on one of the company's walls, which was created by the clothing designer.

"Pawan has a very interesting background. He was born in Mauritius, trained in Spain and now works in the U.S.," Carey said. "To bring together his connection and vision from Mauritius to create Midnight Blues came off really well."

While he understands the technical aspects of recent innovations in textiles, Kumar is also able to interpret his vision into a collection that allows the characteristics of Lenzing's material to shine through.

Inspired by the rich indigo shades of Mauritius's sky, he sought to elevate the Refibra brand by creating strong, beautifully crafted pieces, which include an impressive spaghetti-strap, sweetheart-neckline indigo gown whose skirt features eight layers of pleating.

"Instead of going for a casual look, I used a clean, sophisticated

denim wash in order to enhance the beauty of the Refibra denim," he said. "I used different shades of indigo but also added some sparkle to add more richness to the Tencel fabric."

Within the Midnight Blues collection, there exist three distinctive themes—"Floral Enigma," "Textured Blue" and "Timeless Stripes." While the hues that appear in the collection were inspired by the colors of Mauritius, the designer admits that living in Los Angeles for nearly three years has influenced the intricate work of his pieces.

"Being in L.A., which can be called a 'denim city,' allowed me to learn more about the design aesthetic of America and what people really like here," he revealed. "I have a global vision and design aesthetic, but being here helps me to diversify further."

It is the designer's global design aesthetic that has yielded a new look in Refibra, adding another facet to Lenzing's technology. Through this collaboration, Refibra has been lifted up to a new level of fashion that expands the potential for this product, which was introduced in February 2017.

"Some of the showcased pieces, like the dress with the pleating, were pushing it to new areas," Carey said. "We've done pleated before, but I don't know if we've done indigo fabric in that way."

In addition to the women's pieces, Carey also sees potential for this collection to increase the possibilities for the men's Tencel denim market.

"Some of the men's pieces show where the market is now for menswear," she said. "Men also want a touch of softness without the clothing being drape-y."

Building upon the important work of established designers is important at Lenzing as it looks toward the future. For Carey, the collaboration with Kumar represents the artistic, technical work of the next generation of designers, but she continues to connect with the past.

"Our last capsule that we did with Refibra was with Adriano Goldschmeid. I loved working with him from a heritage standpoint in denim," she said. "Working with Pawan, he is bringing in a lot of new ideas, and when you see this next generation of designers coming into market it's very refreshing."

As he prepares for the first Kingpins event, where he will show his own work rather than admiring the collections of other designers, Kumar is proud to debut under his partnership with Lenzing.

"The only way to survive is to move. We wanted to show that we are moving forward," he said. "I am getting the opportunity to show my designs under the **Carved In Blue** label with Tricia, so it's a big step for me."

The collection was developed as a concept capsule, but Kumar will consider special orders for pieces from the line, which is priced from \$350 to \$3,000. ●



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