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Artistic images on prints and trendy silhouettes were part of the fashion show held at the Mash Gallery in downtown Los Angeles. For more looks from the show, see page 6.

CoutureMash

DIETMAR KOHL

Agenda Scales Back Trade Show to Focus on Consumers

By Andrew Asch *Retail Editor*

Just six weeks before it was scheduled to run, **Agenda** postponed its Jan. 3-4 trade-show dates at the **Long Beach Convention Center** in Long Beach, Calif.

Show owner **Reed Exhibitions** announced Nov. 19 that it would focus its energies on making Agenda in Long Beach a consumer-oriented event. Trade shows have no choice but to concentrate on consumer events, said Ron Walden, Reed's group vice president of fashion and festivals.

"The business of fashion for our customers has changed dramatically over the past five years," Walden said. "While large brands are focused on fewer, more meaningful retail relationships, small startup brands are utilizing technology and digital platforms to market and sell directly to the consumer. This makes meaningful experiences with consumers more important for our customer brands both large and small."

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London Fashion Week Co-founder Eyeing Los Angeles for New Projects

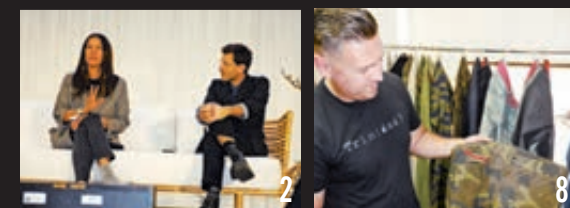
By Deborah Belgum *Executive Editor*

After helping to launch **London Fashion Week** in the 1980s and nurturing the careers of several well-known designers, British fashion-industry icon Mikel Rosen is setting his sights on Los Angeles for his next fashion projects, which could include his own version of a Los Angeles-style fashion week.

In the last two years, Rosen, who helped mentor John Galiano, Stella McCartney and the late Alexander McQueen, has seen a bubbling up of fashion importance in the city where fashion designers have always been abundant but often not

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Retailer Rebecca Minkoff Talks About the Human Connection

Rebecca Minkoff believes that retail is more than technology. It is that human connection that keeps customers walking through the door.

Minkoff was speaking on Nov. 13 at the inaugural **ReMode** event at the **Los Angeles Convention Center** where she was interviewed by Fabrice Nadjari, who co-founded **Studio 55**, which provides content for brands, educational institutions and other groups.

While the panel was called “Driving In-Store Engagement Through Storytelling and Touchscreens,” both speakers also touched upon building loyalty between brands and consumers. Minkoff advised fostering a community with consumers. “Build a community before you have a product to launch,” she advised.

One way to do that is by creating a social-media presence or blogs that will foster discussions with consumers. When it is time to introduce a product, consumers will feel comfortable with the brand because the brand spent time trying to know them. “It’s about the emotional connection you have with her,” Minkoff said of building brand loyalty.

In a way, Minkoff was ahead of her time when it came to retail technology. She developed a reputation as being an innovator in the bricks-and-mortar space. In 2015, she infused a digital sensibility in her **Rebecca Minkoff** flagship on Melrose Avenue in Los Angeles. The shop features a “Connected Wall,” which is the size of a large screen. It shows images of Rebecca Minkoff products and can be used to search for products in the store and request services, including setting up a dressing room.

Nadjari also emphasized community building and building store experiences. These steps are crucial for sophisticated consumers who do research on brands before making a purchase. One new retail experience he mentioned was **Cadillac House**, a store and events space in New York City set up by the auto manufacturer.

He said that thousands visit Cadillac House even though many of them have had no previous experience with the brand. Because Cadillac House offers events to the public, it puts Cadillac on the radar screen of many people who might not have given the car label any thought.

—Andrew Asch



Rebecca Minkoff and Fabrice Nadjari

Gap Inc. Reports Third-Quarter Earnings Results

During its third-quarter earnings results, **Gap Inc.** said it expects its same-store sales for the year to be flat or up slightly as some brands are thriving and others aren’t.

Overall for the quarter, Gap Inc. had net sales of \$4.1 billion, an increase of 7 percent over last year. Net income was \$266 million compared with \$229 million last year.

But Gap brand’s global revenues for the period were lackluster, totaling \$1.28 billion compared with \$1.3 billion during the same period last year.

Executives said the **Gap** brand has been a particular drag on the San Francisco company’s revenues as its same-store sales declined 7 percent during the third quarter compared to last year. In comparison, **Old Navy** was doing well with comparable-store sales up 4 percent, and **Banana Republic** was seeing a 2 percent increase in comparable-store sales in the third quarter over last year.

“Clearly we are disappointed [with Gap] and we need to do better,” said Art Peck, the company’s president and chief executive.

In February, Jeff Kirwan, president and chief executive of the Gap brand, stepped down after taking over that job in late 2014. In June, he was replaced with Neil Fiske, from Australian clothing brand **Billabong**, where he was CEO of **Billabong International**.

During the third quarter, Peck said the company was forced to make some drastic cuts in its Gap-brand inventory, particularly in tops. Traditionally there are three times as many tops to every bottom, but that ratio was cut by half. “That impacted our conver-

sion rate, driving us to sharply discount items to clear inventory,” he said. “I know we now have the benefit of hindsight, and the decision we made was the best financial decision.”

Peck said that in the fourth quarter, the ratio for tops at Gap stores will move from 1.7 tops for each bottom to 2.8 tops per bottom.

The company will be cutting back its fleet of Gap stores as it examines the productivity of each one. “There is a healthy and growing Gap online business, which is 22 percent of revenue. There is a profitable business in outlets, with 500 stores globally, which is 30 percent of revenue,” he said.

But there are a number of Gap specialty stores that are not doing well. “There will be a cash cost to exit some of these stores, but I plan to exit those that do not fit the future vision of our company quickly,” Peck said.

Old Navy, the company’s bargain-basement line of stores, was the company’s star. Its revenues during the third quarter were up 11 percent to \$1.95 billion globally. “In women’s dresses and woven tops, we saw some softness driven by fabrication and choice of prints, which the team recognized,” Peck said. “But we continue to be pleased with Old Navy’s consistency and positive results.”

Banana Republic, the chain that caters to a more contemporary crowd, has been slowly making a comeback. In the third quarter, its global sales totaled \$601 million compared with \$557 million last year.

During the third quarter, Gap Inc. opened 86 stores and closed 24, ending up with 3,688 stores around the world.—*Deborah Beltrum*

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Levi's Sues Yves Saint Laurent America for Trademark Infringement

The famous trademarked red, blue or white tab found on **Levi Strauss & Co.**’s products has led the San Francisco denim maker to bring legal action against **Yves Saint Laurent America**, the American segment of the Parisian fashion house founded in the early 1960s.

According to court documents, the tab has become a distinctive feature that distinguishes Levi Strauss & Co. apparel from other companies’ products.

Filed on Nov. 16 in U.S. District Court in Northern California, court documents show that Levi Strauss & Co. believes a similar tab included on YSL pants is an infringement of the brand’s tab feature for which the nearly 170-year-old company has owned rights for decades. Appearing for the first time in 1936 on the company’s overalls, the tab has become an important component of the brand’s identity, Levi’s maintained.

The complaint claims the YSL products caused “trademark infringement, unfair competition and dilution.” Court documents cite potential confusion for customers who recognize the tab on YSL products as a

Levi’s feature, which could result in incorrect assumptions by consumers regarding the relationship between the two apparel makers.

In addition to blurring the lines between products manufactured by the two companies, the complaint mentions possible infringement in the future by other designers or clothing manufacturers. If the court allows YSL to continue manufacturing its products with the feature and profiting from the sale of the goods that include this tab, other manufacturers could potentially view the decision as a green light to infringe upon this specific component of Levi’s branding, according to the complaint.

Levi Strauss & Co. is asking the court to recognize the infringement and take action to force YSL to stop using the tab, an action that has been deemed “willfulness, wantonness, malice

and conscious indifference to the rights and welfare of LS&Co.”

Additionally, Levi Strauss is seeking damages and financial recovery of any profits made from the sale of the YSL products in question.—*Dorothy Crouch*



A Levi's-brand tab



Yves Saint Laurent's tab

Building a Sustainable Business in the Age of Eco Fashion

By Dorothy Crouch Associate Editor

Many sustainable-fashion experts discuss ethics, manufacturing innovations and research, but outlining how to navigate the economic shift toward greener fashion is often left out of the discussion.

During its inaugural Nov. 13–14 event, **ReMode**'s organizers included panel discussions for industry professionals to “ReMarket” and “ReInvest” in ways that align with the mission of “ReThinking” and “ReMaking.”

For some attendees, this first ReMode, held at the **Los Angeles Convention Center**, was laying the groundwork to become the type of sustainability conference the industry needed.

“Everyone was willing to do the concept phase. Now we’re shifting toward doing it in a way that is real,” said Rachel Arthur, chief innovative officer at the consulting firm **The Current**. “Only through a multidisciplinary approach will real change happen. This conference has achieved that. It has quite a long way to make an actionable impact, but it’s a good starting place.”

To guide designers who want to enter this new, uncharted segment of the fashion industry, ReMode hosted a discussion centered on “The Role of VCs in Growing Early-Stage Fashion Brands.”

Moderated by Joshua Goldberg, director of investment banking at **Threadstone Advisors**, the panel included **Assembled Brands** founder and Chief Executive Officer Adam Pritzker; Gary Wassner, chief executive and principal of **Hilldun Corporation** and chairman of **Interluxe**; and Lawrence Lenihan, co-founder and chief executive of **Resonance**, who identified a major hurdle for emerging brands.

“A fashion brand is not a technology company. The entire infrastructure for this industry has to change,” Lenihan said. “It would be great to have everything handcrafted, but in the end you’re competing against **Amazon** and **Zara**.”

According to Lenihan, designers are tasked with creating designs, not manufacturing goods for a consumer market. Through partnering with a company that can provide both capital and operating solutions, emerging brands can function in a competitive startup culture within the creative world of fashion and avoid losing the identity for which they are known.

“Venture is probably the wrong funding source for these types of brands. The analysis they do is relevant,” Pritzker said. “The problem is, if you’re successful you need to make more stuff. More stuff costs more money, and, if you keep doing this, eventually you will not own any of your own company.”



ReMode founder Pierre-Nicolas Hurstel

During this shift toward a more ecologically sound fashion industry, consumers from Generation Z are making their voices heard by demanding an authentic sustainable message from the brands they buy. As emerging brands navigate these demands, many are relying on consumer faith in their sustainable-fashion message. If this branding is diluted by financial partners, the original mission of the designer is lost.

“What young brands need more than anything is the relationship and support to help build an infrastructure, determine strategy,” Wassner said. “Young brands can’t afford consultants to tell them what their brand is about and their DNA. They have to create it themselves, so they have to build that support structure around them.”

Launching a design house, cultivating a brand and maintaining control over their established companies is an extraordinary task for designers. Rather than partnering with a venture-capital firm, which could potentially derail a designer’s original mission, he or she should consider all options, including reliable, trusted resources for brand investment.

“The bank and factor solutions are closer to the right answer,” Pritzker explained, noting that banks and factors are unlikely to chip away at a brand’s business as it grows. They are interested in lending, not consuming the business.

Financing for online apparel businesses

With the move toward a more sustainable apparel-manufacturing industry, many brands have invested in a strong or exclusive e-commerce presence that relies on a direct-to-consumer model. During the “Challenges of Financing

Direct-to-Consumer Inventories” panel, moderated by *Sourcing Journal* founder and President Edward Hertzman, apparel-finance experts Wassner and **HSBC Bank USA**’s National Head of the Apparel and Retail Sector Eric Fisch revealed how direct-to-consumer brands can finance inventory without compromising shares of their businesses.

“We’re very entrepreneurial. We look at startups as opportunities, not as businesses that should be feared,” Wassner said. “We advise brands to diversify their distribution and not be just direct-to-consumer because there are challenges.”

To gain funding, Wassner advised designers to seek out a third party that can support a loan through a high net worth.

“There are many ways to collateralize a loan if you don’t have the cash or the capital on your balance sheet or a receivable,” Wassner said. “Direct-to-consumer is more challenging because it’s not based upon preexisting orders. It’s based upon what you hope is going to come in each month, so it varies and fluctuates.”

Remaining conscious of customers’ shopping preferences is crucial to a brand’s success, especially when designers want to remain exclusively direct-to-consumer. While e-commerce provides the convenience of clicking a button to buy on a website, Wassner sees a return to more-traditional retail experiences.

“People are reinventing bricks and mortar,” he said. “The digital platform is not going away. It’s a great way to shop, but we’re differentiating why you go to bricks and mortar or why you buy online by looking at the products that work best in each venue.”

Discussing the ways in which his firm examines new brands, Fisch said emerging designers are able to show potential financial partners they are ready for the next step in business despite the challenges of being a fresh presence in the industry.

“We are looking on a collateral basis. There are usually limited or no receivables, but we’re looking at the inventory to move quickly,” he said. “If last year they were able to grow at that trajectory, sell through inventory, and, on that basis, they are looking to buy more and sell more—that is our best proving ground.”

In the cyclical business of fashion, prospective lenders must see evidence that for every financial low a brand is able to rebound by reaching a higher peak.

“Just like a patient in the hospital, we don’t want a flatline. We want some bumps in it,” Fisch said. “If they’re financing inventory because they need to build it for a season, production cycle or a launch, and it’s going to cycle up and down, that is something we can finance.” ●

Textile Science and Technology Shape the Future of Apparel Manufacturing

Innovations in textile and design are two subjects that go hand in hand with sustainable manufacturing.

At the recent **ReMode** event at the **Los Angeles Convention Center**, a Nov. 14 seminar called “Engineering Next-Gen Fabrics” took a look at integrating some new textile innovations with sustainable fashion.

David Breslauer, who is the chief scientific officer and co-founder at **Bolt Threads** in Emeryville, Calif., discussed how the company is using the new field of biological engineering to “study nature and mimic it.”

“Biology is the most powerful technology on the planet. It reproduces itself, it repairs itself, and it reintegrates itself back into the environment,” he said. “We try to understand nature on the molecular level so we can build upon nature for tomorrow. We are betting that it can free us of our reliance on 19th-century technology.”

One of the most pressing issues that Breslauer cited is the apparel industry’s reliance on man-made, petroleum-based textiles such as polyester, nylon, acrylic and spandex. He explained how Bolt Threads was working toward alternatives to potentially harmful synthetic materials by using solutions such as thread made through a scientific process that mimics the way a garden spider creates silk.

“Every day, she spins fine spider silks that are stronger than steel and able to stretch more than spandex. They’re also biodegradable, antimicrobial and hypoallergenic,” he said. “It’s not just one silk. She makes six different kinds of silk from six different glands in her tiny little body.”

Through learning how to recreate the processes by which the spiders create their silks, he now makes similar threads that will be used to manufacture clothes, which will decompose, eventually



David Breslauer of Bolt Threads



Euveka technician Lionel Roupioz at the company's ReMode booth.

providing food for the smallest organisms. Through this technology, Bolt Threads has created fibers that were used to make winter hats and **Stella McCartney** dresses.

By examining solutions at the design stage, smart-dress-form company **Euveka** developed its Robot Mannequin—Emineo that expands to large sizes and contracts to the smallest. The French company received the 2018 ReMode Fashion Award for Best Design Technology.

“ReMode is a place to promote ethical fashion in all forms, and we wanted to highlight our innovation to show the global fashion industry that creating clothing to the real size of customers is necessary to limit unsold pieces and extend the life of apparel,” explained Andréa Gilet, the company’s marketing and communications director.

With this technology, Euveka helps to limit textile waste along the supply chain, which supports a more sustainable apparel-manufacturing industry—D.C.



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NEWS

Agenda *Continued from page 1*

In July 2017, Agenda unveiled the **Agenda Festival** as a consumer day with a pop-up market, food trucks and music, which took place in the Long Beach Convention Center on the heels of the two-day trade show.

Reed promised that Agenda would continue to look for opportunities to promote events with retailers and brands through the Agenda Festival. Agenda's upcoming Feb. 5-7 show dates in Las Vegas will continue to be in a trade-show format, according to a Reed statement. Earlier this year, Agenda announced it is moving its trade show from the Las Vegas Strip to **The Pavilions at World Market Center Las Vegas** downtown.

Aaron Levant, Agenda's founder, left Reed in March to start a new digital venture called **NT-WRK**, but he continues to work as a consultant for the Agenda trade show.

"It's the right path," Levant said. "It's a continuation of the direction I started with innovative, progressive events such as **Agenda Emerge** [TED-style talks and panels on industry topics] and **ComplexCon**."

Levant co-founded ComplexCon in 2016. Like the Agenda Festival, it's a retail pop-up market that also features art, food trucks, industry panels and hip-hop concerts.

Levant said that there is still a viable trade-show market for apparel and fashion in Las Vegas. But direct-to-consumer events are on the rise. They are absorbing some of the elements of business-to-business trade shows.

"I saw as many trade people at ComplexCon as I did at trade shows," he said.

Inviting the public to the shows might better serve manufacturers and brand owners. They'll be able to witness firsthand which brands and products their customers prefer. "It's not a trade show, but it has a trade edge," Levant said of the consumer-

focused events.

For the past decade, Agenda's January trade show overwhelmingly exhibited Fall styles. It was one of the big events on the West Coast trade-show calendar for streetwear and action-sports brands such as **Vans**.

But in the past few years Agenda started to stumble when a number of prominent surf brands bowed out of the show. At the last run of Agenda, in June, there were only a handful of surf brands.

Joel Cooper, chief executive officer of **Lost International**, said that surf brands continue to be loyal to **Surf Expo**, an **Emerald Expositions** show that runs biannually in Orlando, Fla.

But the scheduling of the Agenda show in January was poor, Cooper said, because brands often did not have their samples ready and grumbled about working at a trade show a few

days after the New Year holiday. The June trade show is being replaced with the Agenda Festival.

Brian Boles, co-founder of the **WVS BRGDE** brand, had a booth at the January Agenda show. "There were no sales. It was absolutely just crickets," he said. "We're focusing direct to consumer and e-commerce now. We have more margin. We can deal with customers themselves and get more feedback."

But he was interested in exhibiting at the consumer-focused Agenda Festival.

Patrik Schmidle, president of market researcher **ActionWatch**, said the wholesale market for the skate and streetwear markets, which comprise some of the show's prime exhibitors, has been struggling for years.

Since 2014, the panel of retailers charted by ActionWatch has seen business decline by 5 percent in 2017 over 2016. However, the wholesale channel experienced an uptick in 2018 with sales rising 1 percent from January to September compared to the same period in 2017. ●



A recent Agenda show

Calendar

Nov. 27

DG Expo

San Francisco Hilton Hotel
San Francisco
Through Nov. 28

Nov. 28

Kingspins

Pier 36 Basketball City
New York
Through Nov. 29

Nov. 29

Jewelry, Fashion & Accessories Show

Renaissance Schaumburg Hotel & Convention Center
Schaumburg, Ill.

Through Dec. 2

Dec. 1

Unique LA

California Market Center
Los Angeles
Through Dec. 2

Dec. 4

Webinar: Less Becomes More. Responsible Textile Consumerism
online

WWSRA Northern California

McClellan Conference Center
Sacramento
Through Dec. 6

Dec. 6

Art Basel

Miami Beach Convention Center
Miami Beach
Through Dec. 9

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

Maison H Debuts at CoutureMash



CoutureMash



CoutureMash



Laura Byrnes in
CoutureMash



CoutureMash



Haleh Mashian



Maison H



Maison H



Maison H



Maison H



Maison H

Art and fashion collided at **CoutureMash**, an art/fashion show held at the **Mash Gallery** in the Arts District of downtown Los Angeles.

It was a showcase for three designers: Monah Li of **Monah Li Designs**; Laura Byrnes of **Pinup Girl Clothing**; and Haleh Mashian of **Maison H**, who is also the gallery's owner.

Also participating were custom-hat brand **Batcakes Couture** and independent designer Shpetim Zero, who is also an instructor at the **Otis College of Art and Design**.

The Nov. 17 show, conceived by curator Lisa Derrick and produced by Mashian, was the place where the art-gallery owner unveiled her new line and showcased a collaboration with Byrnes in which the two combined Byrnes's silhouettes with Mashian-designed fabric in a made-to-order label called **CoutureMash**.

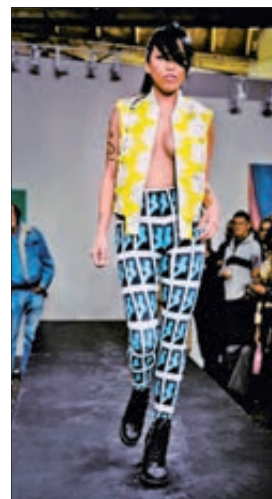
Veteran designer Li showed several of her designs matched with Maison H accessories

and also presented her first men's shirt, made of black rayon.

Instead of models, artists walked the show, which ended with six looks from the Maison H line. Those looks included A-line skirts, leggings and bomber jackets with Mashian's art. She described the line as a mix of streetwear and high-end styles. "There's something for everybody," Mashian said. "It's not serious, but it is stylish. It should bring joy to people."

The CoutureMash show was produced weeks before Li is scheduled to move to Santa Fe, N.M., to be closer to her family. Li will continue to work with private clients as well as with the Los Angeles boutiques that sell her clothing, she said.

The CoutureMash line will be sold exclusively at the Mash Gallery. Maison H will be sold at the e-boutique *maisonh.art* and at the Mash Gallery.—Andrew Asch



Maison H

Mikel Rosen *Continued from page 1*

recognized beyond the world of casual creations.

Finally, Los Angeles is being recognized as one of the top spots in the world for culture, art, technology, design and innovation. "There is something going on here, and I want to pick up on it," said Rosen, who graduated from the **St. Martins School of Art** in London with a degree in fashion and textile design.

The city's fashion importance recently got a boost when the international retail style haven **Dover Street Market** opened in the Arts District in downtown Los Angeles. Started by **Comme des Garçons** designer Rei Kawakubo and her husband, Adrian Joffe, this is the international store's first West Coast outpost, and news of its arrival ricocheted through the fashion world. Stories about its opening appeared in national magazines including *GQ*, *Architectural Digest* and *Flaunt* as well as *The New York Times*. Its other locations are in London, New York, Tokyo, Singapore and Beijing.

"The fact that Dover Street Market has chosen here as a destination says something," said the bespectacled Rosen, who eight years ago moved from London to San Francisco. He has been keeping his eye on Los Angeles, where he has set up an office.

He has seen Tom Ford doing his women's collection from Los Angeles and Hedi Slimane, the artistic director for **Celine** and formerly the creative director of **Saint Laurent**, establishing a base in Los Angeles. Designer Jeremy Scott opted to show the **Moschino** men's and women's collection he designs in Los Angeles during the past three seasons.

By contrast, Rosen maintains San Francisco, where he worked with the soon-to-close **Art Institute of California—San Francisco**, has gotten too tech oriented and fashion and creativity have taken a back seat to Silicon Valley.

But Los Angeles is a different story. Rosen was in Los Angeles recently to visit two venues that could be spots for some kind of fashion event or fashion week showcasing emerging designers or designers that need help advancing to the next level. "In the 1980s, a lot of the companies I was behind or instigated had an explosion of success, but they wouldn't keep it going," he said. "Now, if something is set right from day one, it can go very quickly."

He also was meeting with Katherine Ross at the **Los Angeles County Museum of Art**. In 2012, Ross launched the

art-meets-fashion **Wear LACMA** program, which is an art and fashion project featuring unique pieces created by L.A. designers and inspired by the museum's exhibitions and permanent collection. She is married to LACMA Director Michael Govan.

The **Academy of Fashion Arts and Sciences**, a digital



Mikel Rosen

awards ceremony started two years ago, contacted Rosen about four months ago, he said, to talk about a potential project.

But his main goal is to assess the Los Angeles fashion scene and identify those emerging designers he feels have potential but not a lot of money or know-how in running a business. "My interest at the moment is to find more of those people who are doing something critical in the way of thinking and can emerge into what I feel is a good designer," he said.

Emerging designers were the people who made up the "Antwerp Six," a group of young designers, including Dries Van Noten, who had studied at the **Royal Academy of Fine**

Arts in Belgium and arrived by bus in the 1980s to show at London Fashion Week. "I was on the committee of the London Fashion Week Council to interview people who wanted to come from outside of England to show," Rosen recalled. "Six young people came in with their clothes and said they wanted to be in the exhibition and show together. Each had a different collection, but they had a synergy."

He believes that same kind of synergy is in Los Angeles, where emerging designers as well as other creatives including artists or ceramists could band together and have a show or some sort of event. "The goal would be to promote new brands that deserve to be promoted," he said. "It doesn't take a lot of people. About 10 to 15 to 20 good brands would help get this started."

Los Angeles does have its share of fashion-week events already, but it has been more scattered ever since New York events producer **IMG** stopped organizing a cohesive **Los Angeles Fashion Week** in coordination with **Smashbox Studios** in Culver City. Since that event ceased operations in 2008 after 10 seasons, three other organizers have stepped in to present their own fashion-week events: **LA Fashion Week**, **Art Hearts Fashion** and **Style Fashion Week**.

Rosen is considering other fashion-week formats besides runway shows that start at an appointed time. "The way things operate in fashion weeks has not changed since I started London Fashion Week in 1982," he explained. "If you have a good product and a good concept, why does it have to start at 7 at night and finish at 7:45?"

He won't say exactly how he would organize a future event, but it would be more like performance art and would be continuous. "Changing the procedure and the visual formatting of it is important," he explained.

He also believes there needs to be some central organization in Los Angeles to help emerging designers, much like there is a **British Fashion Council** in London and the **Council of Fashion Designers of America** in New York with its scholarship program established in 1996, which gives two scholarships a year worth \$25,000 each to undergraduate talent. "Who is doing that in L.A.?" he asked.

While there is no central organization helping young designers, the **Textile Association of Los Angeles** with the **California Fashion Foundation** award annual scholarships to local design students, and the local design schools have scholarship programs in place. ●

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Trinidad3: Serving the Marines and Premium Denim



Trinidad3 jeans with "blood stripe"-inspired waistbands



Trinidad Garcia holds a camouflage bottom from his line.

By Andrew Asch Retail Editor

Fashion designer Trinidad Garcia III, a former sergeant in the U.S. Marine Corps, believes military-inspired fashion gets it all wrong.

Those insignias in fashion, even camouflage patterns and fabrics, don't have an authentic look.

That is why Garcia set out to correct that with his independent denim line **Trinidad3**—a collection he launched in 2017 with a crisp military style.

For Spring 2019, Trinidad is offering 48 styles, which include jeans with a waistband made with red denim. It's reminiscent of the blood stripe on a Marine's dress pants. Buttons are made with gun-metal plating.

Going against the current trend, Trinidad3 doesn't offer relaxed styles, but his raw denim will have a crisp look reminiscent of military dress-uniform pants. "I call it refined ruggedness," he said. "The base of the pants is a sharp, rigid denim."

The fabric is made from Japanese selvedge denim, inspired by the time Garcia was stationed in Okinawa, Japan. The brand also uses **Cone** denim, manufactured in Mexico from U.S. cotton, and denim from **Mount Vernon Mills** in Georgia.

Other unique details include eliminating the coin pocket, a staple of typical five-pocket jeans. In its place, the jeans have a wider and deeper cell-phone pocket.

Trinidad3 also offers canvas and twill pants made with camouflage patterns inspired by Marine Corps designs as well as T-shirts, hoodies, woven shirts and jackets. His collection retails from \$120 to \$375.

Garcia is making his trade-show debut this January at the **Liberty Fashion & Lifestyle Fairs** in New York City.

The line already has gotten approval from vintage-denim star Eric Schrader of **Junkyard Denim**, based in Boise, Idaho. "It looks good, but it is not loud like other

brands. What is behind Trinidad3 makes all the difference to me," he said. "[Most denim lines] are trying to tell a story that will separate them from others. But it's all about them. Trinidad is the opposite. It's all about doing for other people," he said.

Along with offering a unique military style, Trinidad3 has a social purpose. Garcia eventually hopes to employ veterans to make his jeans. Vets have worked on some of the brand's special projects, and the line has raised funds for veterans' nonprofits, including those that help wounded veterans deal with post-traumatic-stress disorder.

Trinidad3 is made at **M.E.K. Pattern Making Inc.** in Huntington Park, a short drive south of downtown Los Angeles. M.E.K.'s president, José Argueta, is the chief operating officer of Trinidad3.

One reason Garcia manufactures in Los Angeles is rooted in his belief in service. He wants to help build the local economy and pay higher wages to domestic apparel workers. "Yes, it is more expensive," he said about manufacturing domestically.

"But we should do the right thing. I'd rather get paid less and pay people more."

Garcia is scheduled to work with Schrader next year on a special **Prisoner of War** line. The denim line also will focus on wovens and raise money for veterans with PTSD.

Before joining the Marine Corps, Garcia signed up for high-school sewing classes in Oxnard, Calif., but his dad demanded he drop the classes, he said.

After high school, the budding designer tried to launch a T-shirt and outerwear collection called **TG3**. To support the brand, he started a trucking company. But his used trucks were always breaking down. In three months, he racked up \$57,000 in repair bills as the price of diesel fuel was also steadily increasing.

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Trinidad3 Continued from page 8

In 2008, he shuttered the trucking company, dissolved the TG3 brand and joined the U.S. Marine Corps at the age of 31 after being granted an age waiver for being over the maximum enlistment age of 27.

Trained as a machine gunner, his first deployments included training Marines for the Thai and Philippine armed forces while he was based in Okinawa. From 2012 to 2013, he was assigned to inspector-instructor duty, which included informing families when their loved one were killed in combat.

In 2016, he was honorably discharged even though Garcia loved the service and the camaraderie of the Marines, but he never forgot his dream to start a fashion line. While stationed at a Marine-reserve training base in Pico Rivera, Calif., he took classes at the **Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising** in Los Angeles and earned an associate degree in apparel-industry management and then earned two advanced-study degrees in menswear and the business of denim. At FIDM, he was president of the design school's chapter of the **Student Veterans of America**, which had grown to 60 people when he left earlier this year.



Details from Trinidad3 jeans



Trinidad Garcia at his office in Huntington Park, Calif.

He started his brand while studying at FIDM last year and started doing pop-up shops for it around California, in Santa Barbara and Ventura and at the **Rose Bowl Flea Market** in Pasadena.

Currently there's a display of Trinidad3 at the **Handcrafted LA** emporium for independent brands at **The Bloc** retail center in downtown Los Angeles. It's also sold at his e-boutique, Trinidad3.com. ●

Informa Names New President of Menswear Shows

Informa, the British company that acquired **UBM Fashion** this year for \$5 billion, has chosen a new president of menswear.

Lizette Chin will be in charge of the growth and evolution of the company's menswear trade shows, which include **Project** and **MRket**.

She replaces Tommy Fazio, who left UBM Fashion in October. Fazio had worked for UBM and its predecessor companies for six years with positions including vice president of retail fashion, president and fashion director of the UBM Fashion Group.

Chin is no stranger to the MRket show. When it was owned and organized by **Business Journals**, she was the advertising director at the company overseeing ad sales for *MR* magazine. Later

she led a small team launching MRket, which grew and later was acquired by UBM Fashion.

She moved to UBM after it acquired Business Journals. She then transitioned to working at the **Liberty Fashion & Lifestyle Fairs** trade show, where she was vice president of Quest, a special section within the show.

"As president of menswear, I'm in a position to effect change that the menswear industry is looking for," Chin said. "It's a mission my colleagues and I are passionate about. Over the course of my 20-plus years in this business, it has been and always will be a customer-first mentality, so I'm looking forward to strengthening and evolving our relationships with the brands and attendees."—*Deborah Belgum*

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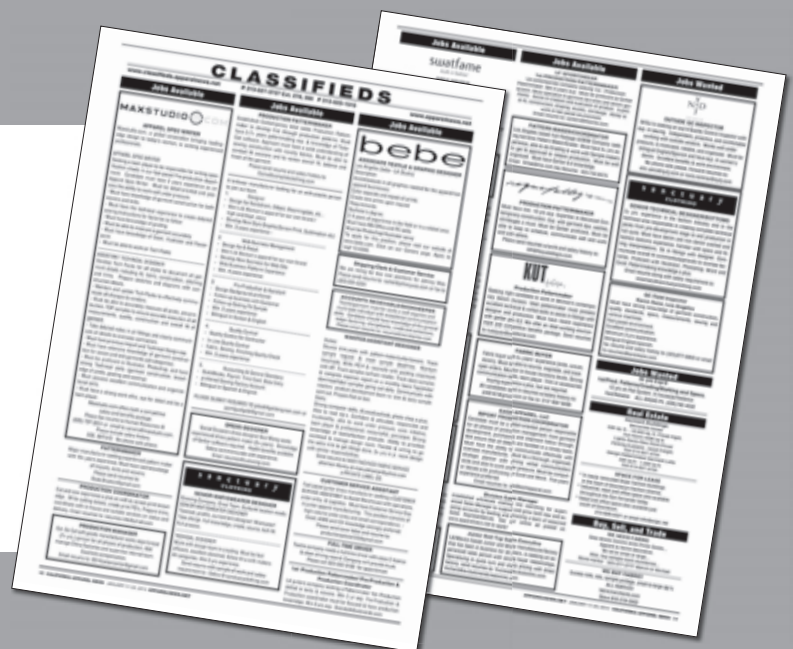
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