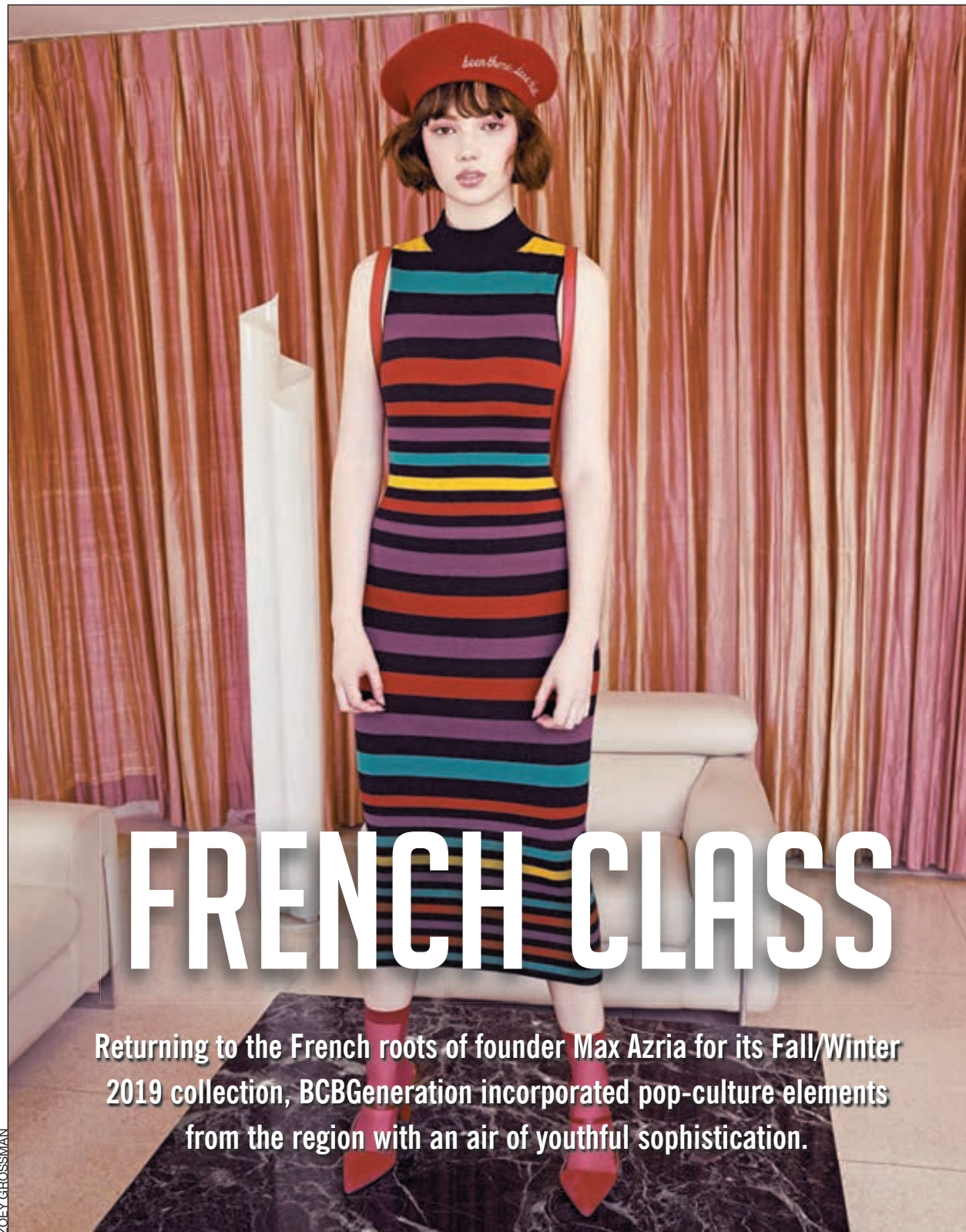


CALIFORNIA ApparelNews

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Returning to the French roots of founder Max Azria for its Fall/Winter 2019 collection, BCBGeneration incorporated pop-culture elements from the region with an air of youthful sophistication.

FASHION

Retro French Pop Culture Inspires BCBGeneration's FW19 Campaign

For its Fall/Winter 2019 campaign, the Los Angeles-founded brand **BCBGeneration** relied on influences from retro French popular culture to spread a message of empowerment for young women. Throughout the campaign, which was shot by photographer Zoey Grossman at a mansion in the Bel Air neighborhood in Los Angeles, references to a mischievous and whimsical style can be found in a collection that also nods to French sophistication.

"The Gen Girl represents the future, and we are proud to have her fearless personality embodied in such a definitive way," Diane Bekhor, senior vice president of the **BCBG Group**, said in a statement. "This campaign is the perfect

representation of BCBGeneration's adventurous, free-spirited and playful customer."

Styled by Rachael Wang, pieces feature hues of cranberry, maize, caramel, plum and emerald. Designers used colorful horizontal stripes in vibrant colors, while cozy sweaters feature animal prints and a softer, pale-sky tone. Fall plaids for suiting and mini-dresses combine black, gray and a light raspberry.

Warm, textured coats complete the looks in colors complementary to the collection with solid or patterned berets, one of which featured messaging declaring, "been there, done that," speaking to a confident, informed young woman.—D.C.

TRADE SHOW REPORT

More Than a Trend, the Search for Sustainable Materials Brings Buyers to LA Textile

By Dorothy Crouch *Managing Editor*

After evolving from a fringe trend among the hippie set, sustainability has taken a front seat in sourcing within the apparel industry. Nowhere was this more apparent recently than at the October edition of the **LA Textile** trade show, which was held at the **California Market Center** Oct. 2-4. While there were exhibitors who were featured exclusively as sustainable brands, many others joined the charge toward an ecologically beneficial supply chain by offering a selection of eco-friendly fabrics, notions and services.

At **Texollini**, Director of Merchandising Sherry Wood noted that consumer demand is driving brands to source
➔ **LA Textile** page 3

RETAIL

Ron Robinson to Phase Out Bricks-And-Mortar Business

By Andrew Asch *Retail Editor*

Pioneering boutique retailer Ron Robinson will be closing his bricks-and-mortar stores by early 2020. His digital shops, www.ronrobinson.com and www.apothia.com, will continue to do business. In a recent email to his vendors, he said that he is not retiring, the shops were thriving financially and relations with landlords were good.

"I am announcing the Farewell Tour of the Ron Robinson retail stores at the end of this year," Robinson wrote in an emailed announcement dated Aug. 20. His shops reached a 41st anniversary this year. Robinson held back a formal announcement because he did not want it to interfere with or affect Ron Robinson's annual sale, which takes place in September. He will make an official announcement after Oct. 15.

"We have been fortunate to have reached not only
➔ **Ron Robinson** page 9

INSIDE

Where fashion gets down to businessSM

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World's First Zero-Emissions Top Handlers Introduced at the Port of Los Angeles

Increasing its commitment to combat the detrimental environmental effects of carbon emissions, the **Port of Los Angeles** unveiled its new Taylor ZLC976 zero-emissions top handlers, which rely on battery-powered electricity. Manufactured by Louisville, Miss.-based **Taylor Machine Works, Inc.**, the pre-commercial, on-dock cargo-handling trucks are the first of their kind in the world. Through testing over the next year, the Port of Los Angeles will examine how the full capabilities of the machines aid in supporting more-efficient and cleaner cargo handling at the Everport Container Terminal.

"Today shows we are making good on our pledge to do the hard work of advancing commercially feasible solutions to meet our goal of transitioning all cargo-handling equipment to zero emissions by 2030," said Port of Los Angeles Executive Director Gene Seroka in a press release.

"We're excited to power up these battery-electric top handlers and test them under the real-world conditions of a working container terminal."

The top handlers—also known as top picks—were presented on Oct. 2 during California Clean Air Day, when citizens are encouraged to engage in energy-conservation practices that will lower emissions, such as utilizing mass transit. With the ability to perform two full shifts—or 18 hours—the truck is able to fully charge its one-

megawatt battery within five hours. Within each machine, a data logger will track hours of operation, charging frequency, energy usage and other performance indicators. Additionally, workers will provide feedback regarding maneuverability, noise levels and



The Taylor ZLC976

equipment safety.

"Today we mark another milestone in our drive toward a zero-emissions future," said Los Angeles Harbor Commission President Jamie Lee, addressing the crowd. "We're also proud to continue our tradition as a global leader in pioneering cleaner and more-efficient ways of moving cargo. These pre-commercial top handlers will undergo 12 months of testing under the rigorous operating conditions of a marine terminal."

—Dorothy Crouch

Brookfield Properties Appoints Moriah Robinson as Director of Events at CMC

During last week's **LA Textile** show and **Sustainable Fashion Forum**, **Brookfield Properties** announced its appointment of Moriah Robinson as director of events at the **California Market Center**. As a packed

October apparel-and-fashion events schedule continues with next week's productions of **LA Market Week**, **Label Array**, **Vegan Fashion Week**, **LA Kids Market** and **LA Men's Market**, Robinson is ready to lead the CMC's event team following the departures of Senior Marketing Manager Becca Dawson on Oct. 4 and, Robinson's predecessor, Emilie Lewis, who left the position in August.

"Emilie Lewis, who held the role prior to me, is a fantastic woman who did such an incredible job in the role. I want to live up to her standards. She was vastly talented and has an extensive background in fashion," said Robinson. "It was a project of hers and ours, as a team, to breathe new life into the fashion district."

As an events professional with an extensive background in the field, Robinson's career includes three years as the special events manager at **Madame Tussauds Hollywood** and five years with **Saks Fifth Avenue**, working in the company's public-relations and events department. Receiving the promotion, from senior events manager, to lead a team during a time when the CMC is undergoing a project that includes extensive upgrades is an opportunity for Robinson.

"For us it's less about the building, it's about our corner. We want our objectives to positively affect everybody in our neighborhood," she said. "The California Market Center has such a rich history. I am thrilled to be a part of the renovation project." When Robinson discusses her new role, she emphasizes a desire to blend her passion for events and fashion public relations with an effort to positively impact the area in which the CMC is located. A graduate of the **Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising's** Associate of Arts program, Robinson revealed that she is passionate about events and enriching the experiences of visitors to the Fashion District in downtown Los Angeles. In Robinson's opinion, the neighborhood receives an unfair reputation. Through her new role, she wants to change this perspective. "The Fashion District might have an antiquated reputation as a part of L.A. that is a little bit scary," she explained. "That might prompt buyers to go to the **Dallas Market Center**, Atlanta or New York, and I really want to change that image because it's a very lively, safe, historic and groundbreaking section that we're in."

Through highlighting the culture of the Fashion District, Robinson hopes her team's efforts will lead visitors to the CMC to embrace the opportunities available in the area.

"We're on the cutting edge of a lot of great art and creativity," she said. "I want to communicate to all of our buyers for trade shows and showrooms that they should be shopping in L.A."—D.C.



Moriah Robinson

Week in Review

LVMH led a \$1.5 million investment round in the Madhappy streetwear brand, which is headquartered in downtown Los Angeles' Arts District, according to media reports. Other investors include Tommy Hilfiger and the founders of the fast casual chain Sweetgreen. A Madhappy representative declined to answer questions on what the 2-year-old brand will do with the money. Madhappy manufactures T-shirts, hoodies and other basics for men and women. The brand achieved name recognition by producing parties at its pop-up shops.

The environmental group Extinction Rebellion put together a dramatic protest during London Fashion Week earlier this month. According to the *New York Times*, people associated with Extinction Rebellion produced a mock funeral march for fashion. They walked down the Strand, where some fashion week shows were taking place, and shut down traffic. The group has critiqued the fashion industry for not being good environmental citizens. It demands that the fashion industry, along with other businesses and governments, reduce their greenhouse gases to zero emissions by 2025.

The RealReal is working with the Burberry fashion house to promote a program that will encourage fashion sustainability. People who consign Burberry pieces at The RealReal will be offered a personal shopping experience in select Burberry stores across the U.S. Announced Oct. 7, Pam Batty, Burberry's vice president of corporate responsibility, said, "Through this new partnership, we hope to not only champion a more circular future but encourage consumers to consider all the options available to them when they're looking to refresh their wardrobes."

Bella + Canvas, a Los Angeles-headquartered basics brand, unveiled a direct-to-consumer retail website on Oct. 7. On shop.bellacanvas.com, shoppers can buy men's and women's Bella + Canvas fashions. Previously, the brand focused on business through its wholesale channels, said Danny Harris, the brand's co-founder and co-chief executive officer. "For us, a move into the retail space has never been a matter of if but when, and we're excited to announce that time has finally come," he said. Starting in 2020, the brand also will produce bricks-and-mortar pop-up shops.

Target Corp. announced a new chief financial officer on Oct. 9. Michael Fiddelke will direct financial planning and analysis, financial operations, accounting, investor relations, and taxes, among other initiatives. Fiddelke most recently served as Target's senior vice president of operations, said Brian Cornell, Target's chairman and chief executive officer. Target also announced that Mark Tritton, Target's chief merchant, will leave the organization. Christina Hennington and Jill Sando will temporarily replace him by directing the retailer's merchandising.



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Fashionindex's Sustainable Fashion Forum Addresses Solutions in Apparel Production

By Dorothy Crouch Managing Editor

This October's **LA Textile** show, held Oct. 2–4 at the **California Market Center**, featured the third Los Angeles edition of the **Sustainable Fashion Forum** by **Fashionindex**. Hosted on Oct. 3 in the Fashion Theater of the CMC, the event focused on production solutions. As consumers continue to lead more-ethical and eco-friendlier lifestyles, the sustainable movement has reached mainstream status in the apparel industry. Attendees were able to meet with companies that offer sustainable products and services while listening to industry experts on sustainability provide guidance through their visions for the future.

Offering a transparent approach to event production, the team at Fashionindex sought to build upon the progress made during previous installments of the forum. Founder Andrea Kennedy revealed that show operations supported an ecologically sound mission through using recycled badges, creating badge lanyards using donated downcycled fabric strips from the **Jessica Simpson** brand, reusing signs and banners, providing 100 percent certified-organic-cotton bags, locally sourcing show programs, and providing compostable cups and utensils during meals.

"We are committed to reducing waste at this forum, and when we cannot reduce it we are committed to offsetting it and trying to get to carbon neutral for this and all the events that Fashionindex is a part of," said Kennedy. "We're committed to sharing that information with you so you can do the same."

This movement to reduce the event's carbon footprint included a new initiative through which Fashionindex offset carbon emissions for speakers and attendees by partnering with the Shelburne, Vt.-based



From left, Nancy Miller, chair of fashion merchandising at LIM College, and Avedis Seferian, president and CEO of Wrap, discuss standards and certifications

nonprofit organization **One Tree Planted** to plant a tree for each person who was in attendance. With 378 trees needed to offset the carbon emissions created by speakers' transportation and more than 287 necessary to combat the impact of attendees, Fashionindex committed to planting a total of nearly 700 trees.

Working well together

A large problem within the fashion industry has been a lack of willingness on the part of professionals to collaborate. Fearful of becoming vulnerable by working with competitors, brands were once resistant to sharing better methods of production, but this antiquated point of view is changing.

Prior to introducing **Outerknown's** director of design, Bethany Mallet, Nicholas Brown of **Fashion Revolution USA** revealed a key element driving the industry toward greater sustainability.

"We often call ourselves pro-fashion protesters. We love fashion and we want

to see it become a force for good," he said. "Collaboration across the entire value chain from the farmer to the citizen is the only way to transform this industry."

For attendee Ladi Saka of downtown Los Angeles-based **Tekton**, a company that provides apparel printing and embroidery, the message of sustainable manufacturing is personal. His business partner, Christian Martinez, is the son of a screenprinting worker whose job exposed him to materials that caused him to return home each day smelling of potentially toxic chemicals. The event provided opportunities for Saka to meet with like-minded professionals who value collaboration.

"We need each other. People don't like to always share their secrets, but at least here you can get information to further your business and help each other," he said. "A lot of these speakers are encouraging each other to excel. This event is not about being flashy. People are actually talking about sustainability."

The ecological and ethical costs

During her presentation, which revealed the sustainable initiatives at the Culver City, Calif.-based **Outerknown**, Mallet took questions from members of the audience, one of whom asked about the greatest challenges faced by the brand. One of the largest sourcing-related hurdles for Mallet is finding materials created with natural and sustainable fibers. Of particular concern was the high minimums that are, at times, associated with these fabrics.

"Sometimes we fall in love with a fabric, but the minimums to get it converted to organic cotton are 7,000 yards, and we're not there yet," she said. "Sometimes we fall in love with beautiful recycled wool, but, for the price point, we want to deliver value and not

be unapproachable as a brand. Sometimes we do the math and it is unworkable."

On the bright side, Mallet reported that her company is working with suppliers to find a middle ground to remain at the forefront of sustainable-apparel production.

The constant conflict between producing clothing sustainably, through environmentally sound practices and ethical manufacturing, is a great challenge to the apparel industry. A large piece of the sustainable-apparel manufacturing puzzle requires manufacturers to examine ways in which they can produce clothing while creating a work environment in which employees are valued.

As a member of the Domestic Production Panel, led by **Study NY** and **Re:Source's** Tara St James, Lusine Mkrtchyan revealed the realities of producing apparel locally. The Los Angeles founder of the full-service apparel consulting firm **PremierSource** made a connection between the closure of manufacturing businesses in the city to job loss and poverty.

"It's sad to see people lose their jobs. Brands keep pushing prices down, and minimum wage is going up. It's a struggle out there and hard to see," she said. "The trend is in niche manufacturing and people caring more about where they are making their clothes."

Working in Los Angeles, Mkrtchyan has witnessed the economic devastation caused when brands fail to establish relationships and conduct business with local production partners. She encouraged designers to create goods in Los Angeles and use natural, organic materials.

"I am in the factories all day, every day, and I am seeing what is going on in the streets of Los Angeles. I would love to see jobs come back to L.A.," she said. "When you talk to someone at a factory, ask them, 'Are you looking for quality or quantity?'" ●

LA Textile *Continued from page 1*

sustainable materials. With the younger generation, she explained that the entire lifestyle is moving toward ecological mindfulness—"commute to work, food, composting, they're looking at it from the ground stages up through the supply chain."

The demand has moved into the apparel industry, where she noticed a new trend in next-generation fabrics. This shift now includes biodegradable materials, which the company has introduced.

"Now people want the whole story. At the consumer level, they are more educated regarding fibers and processes. They are asking questions that go back to the designers and brands," she said. "We've been carrying recycled nylon, poly and organic cotton for over 10 years now. Every year, you see a little more interest, but this year it's everyone."

At the booth for Los Angeles-based **Design Knit**, Pat Tabassi, who focuses on product development, noticed that companies are becoming more mindful. They not only want to contribute to maintaining the health of the planet, but they also don't want to spend money on materials that will be wasted. To meet this demand, the company introduced its **DK Studio** collection, which is offered at low minimums.

"There is a mindfulness that we want to make quality goods rather than a ton of stuff that is going to wind up in a landfill," she said. "We also, within the new **DK Studio** line, have a lot of sustainable items. Within the general collection it's always existed, but within **Studio** it's a category continuing to grow."

Exhibitors also included companies such as the **Poetronigirl Brand**, by designer Roni Walter, who is on a mission to "save the planet one garment at a time." Showcasing upcycled clothing designs from \$100 to \$1,500 retail, Walter utilizes dead stock and fabric scraps to

enhance old garments and create new pieces. She has relied on pop-up shops at retailers including **Williams-Sonoma** and **West Elm** to sell her pieces, which resemble works of art and have featured pictures of such luminaries as Sade, Nipsey Hussle, Bob Marley, Marilyn Monroe and Frida Kahlo.

"By day, I work at various showrooms. I am also a fashion dumpster diver searching for fabrics and scraps. I do army couture by taking scraps and trim, applying them on the backs of jackets or adding a vintage T-shirt," she explained. "The main thing is to reduce my carbon footprint. It's been a great show. The people who approach me want to collaborate."

In addition to greener exhibitor offerings and the third installment of the Los Angeles **Sustainable Fashion Forum** by **Fashionindex**, held on Oct. 3, the seminars at this LA Textile reflected the movement toward creating a more-sustainable apparel industry. Among sessions such as "Properly Prepare for the Launch: The Exact Step-by-Step Strategy of What You Need Before You Launch Your Line" and "Tariffs, Transportation & Sourcing: Your Questions Asked & Answered," there were others that spoke to the current demand for sustainability, including an "Industry Expert Panel on Sustainable Business: Why It Requires More Than Just Renewable Resources to Create Longevity in Today's Ever-Changing Market," "Save the Rain Initiatives: Why Clean Projects?" and a "Sustainability Panel: Viewpoints from Industry Leaders."

Shopping for her luxury, sustainable, hemp-based luggage brand **Urbane Luggage**, Los Angeles-based Nicole Mitchell was searching for eco-friendly fabrics to support her mission. A former travel-industry professional, Mitchell wanted to have face time with exhibitors such as **Carr Textiles**



Roni Walter discusses her collection with an LA Textile attendee.

and **Ken Dor**, whom she met at previous textile trade shows.

"I bought Ken Dor's **Tencel**, and she was trying to help me order sustainable lining," said Mitchell. "It's important because it's good to be able to feel the fabrics, the quality and who is selling it. For me, having a good relationship is important and being able to see the other sources. Just being able to network with other designers and brands puts you in a circle of good people."

Compared with larger trade shows, Mitchell appreciated the mindfulness that was dedicated to planning the event. With complimentary ride-share options, meals, and arts and crafts, she was able to focus on business while also having a bit of fun.

"It made it enjoyable to work and figure out what the next good fabric you want to use was. My favorite part was doing the arts and crafts," she said. "There was so much peace of mind. Usually I am overwhelmed, but having that mental break to enjoy myself was important and allowed me to bring good energy to everyone around."

Attendee Linda Zulaica of Pasadena, Calif.-based **White Duck Clothing** has

worked in the California apparel industry since 1985 within the sportswear segment and brands such as **Jessica McClintock**. While exploring the LA Textile show, Zulaica was focused on fresh, new offerings, particularly in the sustainable segment.

"I look for natural fibers and the new little hook that might be starting to gel, particularly what they're trying to do with denim and taking recycling to a new level," she explained. "In one area of the show, they were fusing different fabrics together, and you could sample little pieces."

Visiting from New York, Tara St James, owner of the **Study** brand and a member of the **Re:Source** sustainable-textile consulting company, was searching for more-eco-friendly fabric options.

"My brand, **Study**, only uses natural fibers such as organic cotton, linen and recycled cotton, recycled wool. I work with the **New Denim Project**," she said. "I also manage a sustainable-materials library in New York, so I also help other brands find materials. For them, it's across the board—recycled poly and recycled nylon."

During her first day at the show, St James was pleased to see established industry players adopting new, sustainable approaches to their businesses. She also noted that the sustainability shift is moving into the luxury segment, an important direction for a category infamous for conspicuous overconsumption.

"I spoke with **Dutel Creations**, and what I liked about them is that they had a small sustainable collection. They are an older mill that is trying to convert everything to sustainable options, and I really appreciate that effort," she explained. "They are doing it slowly to gauge interest and ensure the quality level stays the same as what they have put out for their customers." ●



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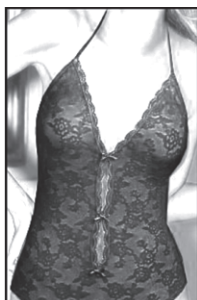
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EVENTS

Apparel Leaders Discuss Post-Glass Ceiling Business at City of Hope Fashion + Brunch

During its "Fashion + Brunch: A Women's Leadership Panel," hosted Sept. 26 at **The Line Hotel**, located in Los Angeles' Koreatown, the cancer-treatment-center **City of Hope** raised more than \$50,000. Organized by City of Hope's Fashion and Retail Council, the inaugural luncheon included sponsors **Rosenthal and Rosenthal, CIT, HUB International, Moss Adams LLP, The TJX Companies, Inc.** and **Wells Fargo & Company**. Attendees were invited to shop brands including **Michael Stars, Trina Turk, The Giving Keys** and **We Are HAH**.

While there were opportunities to shop these fashionable and philanthropic brands, the event was organized to cover a serious topic under the theme of "We've broken the glass ceiling! Now what?" During a panel discussion that included Sharleen Ernster, founder and chief executive officer of **We are HAH**; Suzanne Lerner, co-founder and president of **Michael Stars**; Trina Turk, founder and creative director of her own eponymous brand; and Janet Yamamoto-Concannon, senior vice president of **Wells Fargo & Company**, these female leaders participated in a conversation moderated by **California Fashion Association** President Ilse Metchek.

Through this discussion, the women shared ideas regarding how to continue the momentum of positive change after achieving success in their careers. While reflecting upon their careers, the panelists discussed the ways in which they are lifting up others to provide new opportunities through initiatives that promote social welfare, women's equity and positivity, and the environmental health of the planet.

For Yamamoto-Concannon, her most recent plan to contribute to the greater good was through her company's Community Support Month, which took place in September. The company-wide initiative allowed employees to participate in a Dedicated Day of Service, during which they dedicated their time on Sept. 20 to nonprofit organizations through volunteer work.

"[My colleagues and I] went to a nonprofit called **PATH** in downtown L.A. They provide affordable housing for the homeless," she



From left, Sharleen Ernster, Trina Turk, Ilse Metchek, Janet Yamamoto-Concannon and Suzanne Lerner

said. "We purchased and packed toothpaste, toothbrushes, shampoo, deodorant and **Chapstick** to make a hygiene kit for a couple hundred homeless people."

Looking back on her own career, Ernster recalled how she became driven by the idea of working toward change prior to founding her company. Years ago, as an executive, she was on the job hunt, interviewing with different companies. She had been searching for a role that would allow her to work toward eco-friendlier apparel and help women feel comfortable yet beautiful in their own skin.

"I walked into my home with my daughters after picking them up from school. I looked at them and had a moment where I thought, 'I can either continue to go about this and not take the plunge or I can open the business and try'," she said. "At least my daughters would see a woman risk that and know that they could also risk that for their dreams."

It is Ernster's hope that successful women continue to be driven by the potential to create positive change that can contribute to a better planet and elevate others who are still building their careers. By charting a path toward more-sustainable, ethical practices in the apparel industry, Ernster has brought visibility to these issues, but she admits that her success isn't the end of her story.

"We have to continue to lead with the same passion and blaze the trails to make the differences in how you make things and who you employ and how you treat your people in the whole pipeline," she said. "There is so much work to be done. The whole world is galvanizing around this as being important for the first time."—*Dorothy Crouch*

Calendar

Oct. 14

Vegan Fashion Week
California Market Center
Los Angeles
Through Oct. 15

Brand Assembly
Cooper Design Space
Los Angeles
Through Oct. 16

Designers and Agents
The New Mart
Los Angeles
Through Oct. 16

Label Array
LA Kids Market
California Market Center
Los Angeles
Through Oct. 16

L.A. Market Week
California Market Center

Cooper Design Space

Gerry Building
Lady Liberty Building
The New Mart
The Primrose Building
Los Angeles
Through Oct. 16

Oct. 15

LA Men's Market
California Market Center
Los Angeles
Through Oct. 16

Oct. 16

Interfilière
Javits Center
New York
Through Oct. 17

Oct. 17

Los Angeles Fashion Week
powered by Art Hearts Fashion
Majestic Downtown
Los Angeles
Through Oct. 20

Oct. 20

Fashion Market Northern California
San Mateo County Event Center
San Mateo, Calif.
Through Oct. 22

There's more
on ApparelNews.net.

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

Submissions to the calendar should be emailed to the Calendar Editor at calendar@apparelnews.net. 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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Melrose Remains a Capital for Independent Styles

Los Angeles' Melrose Avenue has been a hub for alternative-lifestyle clothing for decades. Approximately 40 years ago, Melrose east of Fairfax Avenue was the go-to place for punk-rock clothing and curated vintage rock 'n' roll looks that gave Los Angeles a unique style. Decades later, it's the address for designers who create looks appropriate for adventurous attendees traveling to the **Burning Man** festival, as well as streetwear styles and other idiosyncratic style tribes.

Jamie Rivadeneira, founder of the **JapanLA** shops, grew up around Melrose and runs a shop on the street. "You could find things you could not find other places," she said. "It's not so punk rock anymore, but it's still creative."

The street has strong pedestrian traffic, with a large mix of people from around the Los Angeles area and tourists shopping vintage emporiums, designers' ateliers and multi-line boutiques. A square foot of commercial space costs between \$4.50 and \$6, said Philip Klaparda, a partner in **Dembo Realty**. He said that Melrose is enjoying low vacancy and good business. "It's as strong as it has been since the financial crisis of 2008 and even the early 1990s," Klaparda said.

JapanLA

7320½ Melrose Ave.
JapanLA.com

JapanLA opened on Melrose Avenue in 2006 to serve as the go-to place for Japanese cute culture including clothing and collectibles inspired by Japanese characters such as Hello Kitty by **Sanrio**.

JapanLA founder Jamie Rivadeneira seeks to forge relationships with Japanese brands in order to get exclusives for her 1,900-square-foot Melrose shop. Her plan has been working. JapanLA often hosts parties and branded pop-up shops for companies producing Japanese anime, such as **Studio Ghibli**, which has produced animated classics, such as "My Neighbor Totoro," that enjoy a fervent fan base.

Selling clothing and collectibles produced by cute-culture brands is more than a business for



Tokidoki



Rilakkuma

Rivadeneira. Cute culture has been her main style obsession since childhood.

"I never grew out of it," she said. She would take Hello Kitty pencils to work and was occasionally admonished by her managers, who thought it didn't look professional, but she didn't want to give up the cute culture.

"I thought I should go full into it," she said. "I shouldn't try to hide it."

Initially, she opened a small JapanLA shop off of Melrose. Success came quickly, and she moved into her current Melrose space in 2010. In 2018, she opened a second permanent location

in downtown Los Angeles' Little Tokyo section. Since it's a destination shop, JapanLA could probably work anywhere, Rivadeneira said, but it especially fits on Melrose.

"The vibe is creative and open-minded," she said of the street.

Items selling well at JapanLA include **Original Kigurumi** onesies. Designed to look like licensed characters

and animals, the big onesies sell particularly well for Burning Man season and Halloween. Retail price points range from \$60 to \$80.

Los Angeles-based **Tokidoki's** Crystal Palace flight jacket has been selling well at the shop. It retails for \$95. People like it because of the juxtaposition of dark and pastel colors, Rivadeneira said.

Also popular is **Rilakkuma's** \$45 Let's Get Lazy gray sweatshirt. It features the Rilakkuma's title character, a lazy bear. "It's kind of like a boyfriend fit," Rivadeneira said of the loose-fitting top.

Nathalia Gaviria Black

7563 Melrose Ave.
Nathaliagaviria.net

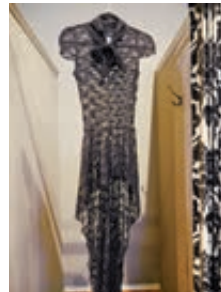
Designer Nathalia Gaviria has put together a significant presence on Melrose Avenue. This year, she opened the **Nathalia Gaviria Gold** boutique at 7403 Melrose Ave. More than 95 percent of the boutique's styles are made by Gaviria. In 2013, she opened Nathalia Gaviria Black.

It's a multi-line boutique for men and women, and most of the styles come in black or other dark colors.

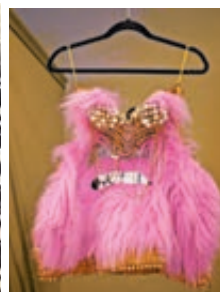
People shopping at the boutique are often stylists, performers, people going to the Burning Man festival and those wanting to make a statement. "It is outrageous, colorful, fun. You are pushing people to see you and what you are wearing. It is rebellious," she said of the 1,800-square-foot shop's styles.



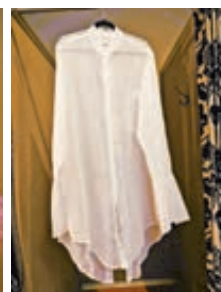
Clint coat



Coqueta top



George Styler



Merlin Castell



Top-selling items are one-of-a-kind bustier dresses by **George Styler**. Covered in sequins and jewels, they retail for \$4,700.

Merlin Castell is another popular designer, who makes a white shirt with long hems that drop around the knee and have a long slit up the back. The 100 percent linen shirt retails for \$565.

The Nathalia Gaviria label makes the denim Clint coat, which is inspired by Clint Eastwood's 1970s western films. They retail for \$420. The

coat, with a cowl neck, can be worn by men and women.

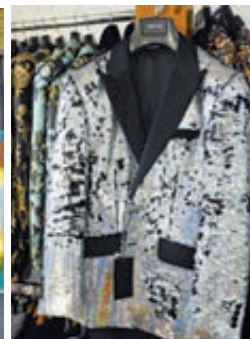
The shop also sells the Coqueta top, which retails for \$139. The Nathalia Gaviria label introduced the Coqueta in 2015, and the lace top has been sold every season since then.

"It's so versatile, it will never be out of style," Gaviria said of the Coqueta. "You can wear it as a cocktail dress. It can be a bathing-suit dress. You can wear it over pants or shorts."

Typhoon

7601 Melrose Ave.
facebook.com/pages/Typhoon-Fashion/136215023095172

Since 2001, Michelle Hyon, a partner and buyer at the Typhoon boutique, has been running the 1,475-square-foot shop on Melrose and North Curson avenues. Before 2015, Typhoon focused on contemporary men's merchandise. But competition from e-commerce shops was fierce, and Hyon decided to change the store's merchandise focus. It would offer clothes that could only be found at Typhoon. A big market are stylists looking for unique clothes for performers to wear on stage or people looking for flamboyant styles for the Burning Man festival or a party.



Angelino



Shrine



Tripp NYC



Asparagus

Popular items at the shop include punk-style bondage pants produced by the label **Tripp NYC**, which retail for \$109.99. "It's the new trend for a lot of rappers and singers," Hyon said.

Another popular look are coats and vests from the **Shrine** label, which seem to mix a 1967 Jimi Hendrix style with

colorful 18th- and 19th-century military uniforms. One Shrine coat retailed for \$549. Shoppers have also been picking up sequined tuxedo jackets from the **Angelino** label, which retail for \$499.90. A sweatshirt from the **Asparagus** label sells well and retails for \$149.

Wasteland

7428 Melrose Ave.
shopwasteland.com

Melrose is celebrated as an eclectic street, but there are currently a few dominant styles represented, and they often make Wasteland a regular stop, said Troy Kelly, the company's general buying manager. Around 90 percent of goods that it sells come from people selling their clothes to the shop. The rest come from other sources such as established vintage sellers and celebrity stylists.

Since Melrose neighbors Fairfax Avenue, considered a major hub of streetwear, kids wearing oversize hoodies

are one of the street's big style groups. Another style tribe is represented by the rocker kid who wears vintage concert T-shirts and jeans. There's also the It Girl, who favors contemporary brands such as **I.Am.Gia** and **For Love and Lemons**.

Kelly called the 25-year-old Wasteland a place that focuses on designer retail, where people shop for designer and other high-end brands. One of the top-selling categories at the shop is outerwear such as bomber jackets, leather jackets and other coats produced by European fashion houses such as **St. Laurent** and **Gucci**. At Wasteland, these pieces can command prices above \$1,500, he said.

Vintage concert tees sell well, with retail price points ranging from \$38 to \$500. Popular trending concert T-shirts range from those sold at shows where 1990s hip-hop heroes such as Tupac Shakur and Biggie Smalls performed. Also popular are shirts from classic rock bands from the 1970s. When popular public figures wear concert tees, there's a spike in popularity. Kelly remembered Justin Bieber wearing a piece from Metallica in 2018, and there was a big demand at Wasteland for the band's shirts.

Vintage **Levi's** 501 jeans are a big deal at Wasteland, especially in hard-to-find sizes such as waist sizes 24-27. Retail price points range from \$128 to \$150.



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Leisure Lab: Made in L.A. Brand to Debut at LAMM

Daniel Henson wanted to make leisure clothes that were not only simple and elegant but could hold up through any exercise regimen and any kind of weather. He and business partner Darren Chandlee put together what they believed was the best example of simple, elegant and sturdy clothes for hanging out. They introduced the first styles of the label **Leisure Lab** in April, which has been sold at the direct-to-consumer site www.theleisurelab.com.

They will introduce Leisure Lab to the wholesale market Oct. 15–16 during **LA Men's Market** at the **California Market Center** showroom building in downtown Los Angeles.

Leisure Lab will be the only made-in-California brand with an activewear edge exhibiting at the trade show, which focuses on streetwear and fashion, said Sannia Shahid, LAMM's show director.

Eventually, the Leisure Lab co-founders hope to see their brand sold at better department stores. They also hope to continue expanding the brand's reputation within the market as well as living up to the name of the brand, Chandlee said.

"We wanted to evoke comfort but also a sense of lifestyle," Chandlee said of the label, whose sense of ease belies the hard work that goes into the label's mission. "We're like a mini-lab here. We're trying to create something unique."

The line's styles include T-shirts with subtle design details such as a two-layer neck hem. Designing a front-neck hem shorter than the back hem creates a unique look, Henson said.

The inspiration for Leisure Lab came from an unlikely place. Henson's previous gig was in costume design, allowing him to work as an assistant designer to Marco Morante, who has made costumes for celebrities such as Nicki Minaj, Katy Perry and Britney Spears. In 2017, Henson was on a job for Morante, making costumes for performances of the final season of the now-defunct **Barnum & Bailey Circus** in Bradenton, Fla. The hot and sticky weather led him to recognize a need for something new in fashion.

"I was so tired of wearing woven shorts every day. Why don't I come up with comfortable shorts that do not look like gym shorts?" Henson said. "But they're versatile enough to look semi-professional."

After a couple of years making prototypes for the shorts, Henson and Chandlee found what they considered the best expression of what they were looking for. It was a polyester spandex short with a hem that falls above the knee. It feels and looks like a walk short, Henson said. "But I work out in it all the time," he added.

The shorts feature drawstrings and solid colors of matte black and a dark green. Other looks include a camo-like print and another design with wavy lines.

"We are giving an option of extra style with our prints. The rest are minimal designs and colors that will work everywhere," Henson said while adding that the shorts and pants feature pockets with extra stitching. "It provides a protective wall against things falling out of a pocket, such as a cell phone. It's a barrier. Items hit the stitch before they can fall out."

Price points range from \$45 for T-shirts and shorts to \$75 for pants with prints.

Next up, the brand intends to design a boxer short, which will be released on www.theleisurelab.com by the end of the year, Henson said.

Chandlee now handles operations for the brand after leaving a career in commodities trading to develop the label. He and Henson had been friends for a few years before launching. Chandlee saw custom shorts that Henson was making for himself and was posting on **Instagram**. Both co-founders intend to continue manufacturing in Los Angeles.

Working in the same town as their manufacturer not only gives designers more control over their product, but it also affords the opportunity to develop camaraderie.

"We want a family to grow with. We wouldn't have it if we were making \$2 tees overseas," Chandlee said. "We're still in an early phase of development. We're still trying to create something that can be improved on. We're always thinking, how can we make things better? We're constantly looking for better fabric."

Chandlee said that he wants to maintain close relationships with customers.

"We handwrite notes thanking them for their orders," he said. "We want them to know that we appreciate it. They're part of our growth. We want to be there for them."

—Andrew Asch



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Fashion Scholarship Fund Produces First L.A. Events

After decades of producing talent-acquisition events and annual galas in New York City, the **Fashion Scholarship Fund** produced its first events in Los Angeles.

While the nonprofit scholarship fund has long worked with design schools and colleges in California, last week was the first time that FSF produced a dinner for members, supporters and the Los Angeles fashion community. This was also the fund's first talent-acquisition event, or job fair, on the West Coast, said Peter Arnold, FSF's executive director.

Since 1937, FSF has identified top fashion students and sought to introduce them to employers at fashion companies and retailers. Arnold explained how FSF has provided internships, industry networking, mentorships with alumni and fashion executives, and professional-development opportunities.

"What we came to realize is that there is a huge opportunity on the West Coast," Arnold said. "We have a proven track record with the talent-acquisition event on the East Coast. Since 2014, we've held these events as part of our mission to help create career opportunities for our scholarship recipients. In combination with this event and our placement efforts, 100 percent of our 2019 undergraduate class of scholarship recipients secured internships."

On Oct. 3, FSF produced a dinner at the exclusive private club **San Vicente Bungalows** in West Hollywood, Calif. The event featured a panel discussion on the future of the fashion workforce and the skills needed



Fashion Scholarship Fund event at the Hotel Indigo

to succeed in a changing industry. Speaking on the panel were Arnold; Jill Higashi-Zeleznik, the chair of the fashion department at the **Otis College of Art and Design**; and Lawren Cappelletti, an FSF alum and designer of the **Lawren Michele** label. The discussion was moderated by Kate Betts, an author and former editor with glossy magazines including *Time* and *Harper's Bazaar*. Also in attendance were designers Heidi Merrick and Emily Current, Meritt Elliott, Barbara Tfrank and April Uchitel, chief executive officer of **Violet Gray**.

On Oct. 4, more than 150 students involved with FSF and FSF alumni participated in a talent-acquisition event at the **Hotel Indigo** in downtown Los Angeles. Students and



From left, Peter Arnold and Sydney Silver

alumni were looking for internships and full-time jobs. Companies with booths at the event included **Levi Strauss & Co.**, **Stitch Fix**, **Joe's Jeans**, **Macy's Inc.**, **Boardriders Inc.**, the **Centric Brands Group**, **Kohl's**, **Ross Stores** and the **24/Seven** creative-recruitment agency.

Jobs offered at the event included assistant designer, designer, product-development associate, assistant buyer, merchandise assistant, production coordinator and account manager.

Attending the event was also Sydney Silver, who recently earned a BFA in fashion merchandising from the **Academy of Art University** in San Francisco. Silver was the recipient of a \$15,000 FSF scholarship, which



From left, Peter Arnold, Lawren Cappelletti, Jill Higashi-Zeleznik and Kate Betts

she plans to help with a move to Los Angeles and paying down loans.

Part of the work in the scholarship included producing a 15-page case study on the subject of the globalization of fashion, as well as presenting her findings to a panel of executives and FSF directors, Silver said.

"It required brand and location research, an omni-channel launch plan, a merchandise assortment, a marketing plan, and a financial plan. It was a stressful, challenging and fun process to complete," she said. "I am so grateful that the Fashion Scholarship Fund offers this opportunity for students, and I am so happy I completed it. The intense case study was beyond worth it."—*Andrew Asch*

RETAIL

Ron Robinson *Continued from page 1*

a milestone but a pinnacle in the retail community, and this decision is made while we are at the top of our game," he wrote in the email.

In the note, Robinson promised that the brand would produce events and new collaborations through the holiday season. He also noted that he was looking forward to spending more time with family and friends and exploring new creative ventures.

"While this decision may come as a shock to some, rest assured it was made with great consideration and intention for the future. In this season of my life, the time feels right to make changes in order to make room for fresh experiences," the email continued. "Life, as they say, is a journey—not a destination—and I feel myself being pulled more and more toward the new adventures, new ways of reconnecting with family and friends, new ways of expressing my creative vision."

Robinson's decision to close his bricks-and-mortar stores is happening during a time of mixed fortunes for physical retail. Los Angeles-headquartered **LF Stores** announced in August that it would shutter its fleet of 26 physical stores but continue business with its digital channel, www.lfstores.com. **Forever 21** forecasted that it would close around 178 stores as part of a Chapter 11 bankruptcy that it declared on Sept. 29.

At the same time, formerly pure-play retailers such as **Everlane** are expanding their bricks-and-mortar fleets. Everlane opened its third physical shop on Aug. 22 in Los Angeles' Abbot Kinney neighborhood. On Sept. 12, it also opened a shop in Brooklyn, N.Y.

Syama Meagher, a retail strategist with the consultancy **Scaling Retail**, said that Ron Robinson shuttering stores could shed light on this moment in retail.

"There is a change of guard in retail, and bricks-and-mortar is feeling the hit



Ron Robinson's Santa Monica boutique

the strongest," she said. "Ron Robinson is one in a string of retailers that is rethinking how they will survive, let alone thrive, in the new retail economy. Unfortunately, just shutting down bricks-and-mortar doesn't solve the problem. E-commerce advertising is saturated, and simply adding more dollars to that channel won't increase the market share in a substantial way. We must rethink the future of retail, and the first step is to acknowledge that we have to flip the script on old models."

End of an era

The closing of bricks-and-mortar **Ron Robinson** shops marks the end of an era in Los Angeles boutique retailing. Robinson was one of a handful of Los Angeles boutique retailers who started business in the late 1970s and early 1980s, developing boutiques with celebrity followings that became influential around the globe.

These shops continue to hold a prominent place in Los Angeles boutique retail and include Tommy Perse of **Maxfield**, Mark Werts of **American Rag** and Robinson's neighbor on Melrose Avenue, Ron Herman, who runs the self-named **Ron Herman** stores.

Ron Robinson was a pioneer who helped to develop a unique way of organizing shop



Ron Robinson

floors in Los Angeles fashion, said Bernard G. Jacobs, a fashion stylist and image consultant. Jacobs said that Robinson was the first retailer that he was aware of who developed shops-in-shops. "Now there are boutiques-in-boutiques wherever you go," Jacobs said.

"Ron Robinson was a leader and a pioneer in making a bridge between new and old designers," Jacobs said. "He mixed high-end art books with low-end jeans. It was a whole shopping experience when you went to Ron Robinson."

Robinson's flagship in Santa Monica, Calif., is scheduled to cease operations by the end of October.

The 5,600-square-foot Ron Robinson shop in the former **Fred Segal** compound on Los Angeles' Melrose Avenue will remain open through January. Robinson said that he did not know what tenants would move into his shops after January. But he intends to make the last few weeks of running his physical stores a big party.

On Dec. 5, Robinson will host a farewell event, named the Happy Ending Party, for vendors, customers and those on the company's email list.

For the holiday-shopping weekends after Dec. 5, he will be hosting Happy Ending Hour. From Thursdays through Saturdays during those weekends, shoppers will be treated to drinks and conversation with

Robinson, his staff, as well as designers who sell wares at his shops.

"It's a chance for me to say thank you to the wonderful people who have supported us throughout the years," he said. "It's time to say thank you and farewell during a wonderful time of the year."

Not slowing down

Robinson promised that he wouldn't slow down for his last few months of bricks-and-mortar retail. Ron Robinson will be among a handful of stores around the world that will sell Spectacles 3 by **Snap Inc.** The augmented reality-enabled eyewear from the company behind **Snapchat** will be available after Nov. 15.

Robinson also will be selling high-end memorabilia such as limited copies of the photography book "Linda McCartney. The Polaroid Diaries," which are signed by Paul McCartney. Also available will be limited copies of "Before Easter After" by rocker and artist Patti Smith and journalist Lynn Goldsmith, which are signed by Smith and Goldsmith. There will also be images of the moon, which are signed by Apollo 11 astronaut Buzz Aldrin.

The digital channel www.ronrobinson.com will also will go through a transformation after January. Currently it remains a work in progress. "It will become very personal, very curated," Robinson said. "It will offer an opportunity to search and share things with people."

Apothia will continue to develop new product, Robinson said, and will be delivering new candles and fragrances designed with the **Missoni** fashion house holiday 2019.

At 1 p.m. on Oct. 16, Robinson; Stacy Robinson, his wife and vice president of **Ron Robinson Inc.**; and veteran buyer Karen Meena will host an open talk on retail at **The Reef**, which houses the **LA Mart**, near downtown Los Angeles. Admission will be free with an RSVP. ●

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contact Jeffery Younger
at 213-627-3737 ext. 280
or jeffery@apparelnews.net

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COMING UP!

Editorial, advertorial, special sections and bonus distribution for the next four weeks

October 18

Cover: LA Market Wrap
FMNC Coverage
Made in California
Denim
Men's Fashion
Accessories

Made in California Advertorial
Denim Advertorial

Bonus Distribution
Functional Fabric Fair powered by PerformanceDays 10/22-23

October 25

Cover: Fashion
New Resources
T-Shirts
Denim

T-Shirt Advertorial
Denim Advertorial

Bonus Distribution
ReMode 10/29-30

November 1

Cover: Denim
Real Estate

Import/Export
Performance/Active/Athleisure
T-Shirts
Technology
Footwear

Denim Advertorial
Fashion Advertorial
Performance/Active/Athleisure
Advertorial
Print/Online Sample Sales Special

Bonus Distribution
Coast Miami 11/4-5

November 8

Cover: Fashion
Surf
Sustainability

Trade Show Special Section+*
Sustainability Advertorial

Bonus Distribution
Kingspins NY 11/20-21



CALIFORNIA
ApparelNews

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OCTOBER 17-20, 2019

THE MAJESTIC DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES

www.losangelesfashionweek.com

www.artheartsfashion.com

Photo by: Premium Paris and Bianca Hughes

SAVE THE DATE

**LOS ANGELES
FASHION
WEEK**
POWERED BY
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OCT 22-23, 2019 | OREGON CONVENTION CENTER



DEFINING THE FUTURE OF PERFORMANCE

FUNCTIONAL FABRIC FAIR Portland—powered by **PERFORMANCE DAYS®**—will launch in the Fall of 2019 as a standalone event addressing a market need for a curated, sourcing platform dedicated to outdoor and performance functional textiles and accessories. Alongside expert-led education, the sold-out event hall will showcase products and technologies that will enter the market for the Winter 2021 season—all in a minimal-waste exhibition.

OPEN—FREE OF CHARGE—TO VERIFIED INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS

2019 EXHIBITORS INCLUDE:

37.5 Cocona
3M
Bodyknits
Brrr

CarolTex
Concept III
Devan
drirelease

Eurojersey SpA
Gehring Textiles
Halley Stevensons
Ideal Fastener

JRC Reflex
Klingler
Lenzing Fibers
Polygiene

Polartec
RE:Down
Schoeller
Thermore

Toray Int'l
Tough Knitting
Wideplus
and more!