

# CALIFORNIA ApparelNews

THE VOICE OF THE INDUSTRY FOR 74 YEARS

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## RETAIL

### Black Friday Weekend Sales Break Records

By Andrew Asch Retail Editor

Black Friday shopping broke records, according to the **National Retail Federation**. In a Dec. 3 conference call, the Washington, D.C., retail trade group said that 189.6 million U.S. consumers shopped during the Black Friday Weekend. That reflected a 14 percent increase in consumers shopping compared to the 2018 Black Friday Weekend. During that weekend, 165.8 million Americans shopped, according to Matthew Shay, the NRF's president and chief executive officer.

"There was strong momentum as we went into the past five days. Retailers reached into that momentum and offered great deals," Shay said. "Consumers responded by getting into the holiday spirit earlier than normal."

The NRF's research found that 52 percent of consumers surveyed started their gift purchasing during the 2019 Black Friday Weekend. This was compared to 44 percent who

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## NEWSMAKERS 2019

Over the last year, there has been an atmosphere of certainty that nothing is certain in the apparel industry. As the apparel industry embraced technology and navigated through tariffs, business continued along, while buildings were renovated, a new type of mall took shape, fresh opportunities arose and California Apparel News made an important move ahead of its anniversary. Join us as we take a final look at 2019's newsworthy issues and admirable leaders within the apparel industry. For additional Newsmakers 2019 coverage, turn to page 4.

## NEWSMAKERS 2019

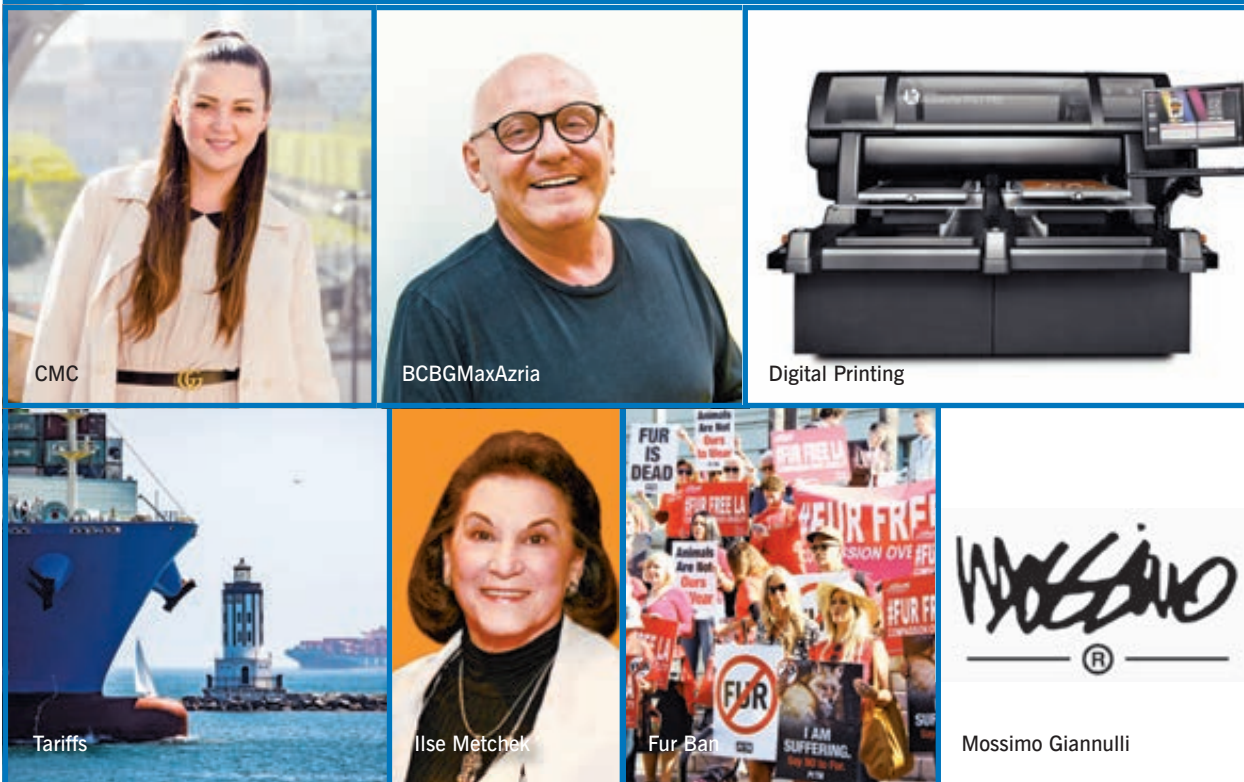
### Ahead of Anniversary, California Apparel News Makes a Move

By Dorothy Crouch Managing Editor

Nearing the milestone of reaching its 75th year in publication, *California Apparel News* will begin its anniversary in a new space. At the end of November, the media firm relocated to **The New Mart**, located at 127 East Ninth Street in Los Angeles' downtown fashion district.

Launched on July 6, 1945, as a weekly newspaper headquartered at 210 West Seventh St., *California Apparel News* has served the state's fashion-and-garment industry by reporting on stories from Los Angeles, throughout the nation and around the globe, sharing how these issues impact the local apparel business. Prior to its move into The New Mart, the media company was located in the **California Market Center** for approximately 30 years. In 2013, the publication was bought from **MnM Publishing** by industry veteran Terry L. Martinez, owner of

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## INSIDE

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# Continental Business Credit, Fast A/R Funding Acquired by Republic Business Credit

As **Republic Business Credit** continues its California expansion, the financing-and-factoring firm announced its acquisition of factoring and asset-based lender **Continental Business Credit** as well as **Fast A/R Funding**. Headquartered in Sherman Oaks, Calif., CBC and Fast A/R Funding represent crucial pieces in Republic's strategy to build a greater presence in California as it adds products to support entrepreneurial finance, such as traditional non-recourse factoring, asset-based lending and a technology-enabled small-ticket factoring platform to add onto its ledged line of credit and factoring offerings.

Continuing to serve as CEO of Republic, Stewart Chesters and President Robert Meyers welcomed CBC Chief Executive Officer Matt Begley to fulfill the role of Republic's chief operating officer.

"It is a rare opportunity to align yourself with another founder that shares your vision such as Matt," Chesters said of Begley. "Robert and I are thrilled to continue this journey together with the addition of Matt to our executive team."

Speaking on the acquisition of the 30-year-old CBC, Begley looked forward to forging this new path for Republic, which was founded in 2011 in New Orleans.

"Republic has built a strong foundation and reputation in the commercial-finance industry," he said. "Together, we represent a formidable force, and I am excited to work with Stewart and Robert."

In addition to the appointment of Begley, Republic also promoted Jason Carmona to the role of executive vice president, Western regional manager. Vanessa Johnson will now step into the role of executive vice president, asset-based lending, for Republic.

"We are proud to invest in our company's future. The addition of Jason, Matt, Vanessa and their teams add significant ABL and apparel-factoring expertise to our team," Meyers said. "With more than 70 years of asset-based lending and non-recourse factoring experience, Matt, Jason and Vanessa are the right leaders as we enhance our client solutions"—*Dorothy Crouch*

## Apparel News *Continued from page 1*

**TLM Publishing Inc.**, and a member of the *California Apparel News* staff since 1998.

"We are thrilled to be a part of The New Mart's fashion legacy and future plans and are proud to have been a part of establishing the CMC as a fashion destination," Martinez said.

*California Apparel News's* move into The New Mart is the beginning of a new partnership between two of the Los Angeles Fashion District's most recognizable names, hailing from an era defined by robust apparel manufacturing. Built in 1926 by **Curlett & Beelman**, The New Mart originally opened as the **Harris Newmark Building**, a homage to the Los Angeles businessman whose children wanted to honor his philanthropic efforts.

Over the years, the building has housed retail, manufacturing and financial businesses. In 1980, the building was purchased by Joyce



Front reception desk at the new California Apparel News office

and Ben Eisenberg, who renamed it "The Newmart Building." The title of the building was transferred to the couple's philanthropic organization, **The Ben and Joyce Eisenberg Foundation**, which receives net profits from the property as donations to fund medical research, education and community programs. Recognized as a historical landmark in 1998, the building now serves as a home to wholesale fashion showrooms.

"Over the last 35 years, we have not only had a great partnership with CAN, but we have made lifelong friends with the people who publish the news about our industry, and we are thrilled to have

CAN start the next 35 years inside our doors," Joyce Eisenberg, the foundation's president, said.

With the beginning of 2020 drawing near, Martinez looks forward to the fresh start for *California Apparel News* during its anniversary year.

"As we approach our 75th anniversary, we remain committed to sharing with our readers the regional, national and international news that influences the apparel business in California as our industry continues its exciting evolution," Martinez said. ●

## LVMH Acquires Tiffany & Co.

In what is being called the biggest deal in the history of the luxury-goods market, Paris-headquartered **LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton SE** acquired **Tiffany & Co.** for \$16.2 billion, it was announced Nov. 25. For the New York-headquartered Tiffany, the deal will support future growth, said Alessandro Bogliolo, Tiffany's chief executive officer.

"Tiffany has been focused on executing on our key strategic priorities to drive sustainable long-term growth. This transaction, which occurs at a time of internal transformation for our legendary brand, will provide further support resources and momentum for those priorities as we evolve toward becoming the next-generation luxury jeweler," he said in a press release.

Bernard Arnaud, LVMH's chairman and CEO, said that Tiffany will be an important part of LVMH, the world's largest and most influential luxury-goods company. Its brands include **Dior**, **Louis Vuitton**, **Fendi**, **Celine**, **Pucci** and **Marc Jacobs**.

"We have an immense respect and admiration for Tiffany and intend to develop this jewel with the same dedication and commitment that we have applied to each and every one of our maisons," Arnaud said in a statement. "We will be proud to have Tiffany sit alongside our iconic brands and look forward to ensuring that Tiffany continues to thrive for centuries to come." —*Andrew Asch*

## Week in Review

**Macy's Inc.'s** Hal Lawton stepped down from his role as the company's president on Dec. 6. On Jan. 13, Lawton will join Tractor Supply Co. as the president, chief executive officer and a member of the board for the rural-lifestyle retailer, which is headquartered in Brentwood, Tenn. It was announced Dec. 5 that Lawton would helm Tractor Supply, said Cynthia Jamison, Tractor Supply's chairman of the board. "Hal is a proven leader with unique omni-channel experience to deliver on our customers' evolving expectations as we look to the future of retail," she said. On Nov. 21, Macy's Inc. reported results for the third quarter of its 2019 fiscal year. Net sales were \$5.1 billion; comparable sales for the quarter declined 3.5 percent.

**Balmain** Chief Executive Officer Massimo Piombini left his job helming the French luxury brand this week. Piombini left for personal reasons, according to media reports. He had led Balmain since April 2017. The departure comes shortly after Balmain introduced a boxing-inspired streetwear collaboration line with the Puma brand. Supermodel Cara Delevingne has served as the face of the line, which includes tracksuit separates, bra tops, boxing shorts and sneakers.

**Reebok** announced Dec. 3 the introduction of the sustainable sneaker Forever Floatride GROW. Instead of using plastics in the running shoe, plant-based materials are used to construct it. The sneaker's midsole is built from sustainably grown castor beans. A natural rubber outer sole was sourced from rubber trees rather than petroleum-based material, said Bill McInnis, vice president of Reebok Future. "With Forever Floatride GROW, we're replacing oil-based plastic with plants," he said. Matt O'Toole, president of the Reebok brand, said the Forever Floatride GROW is the most sustainable performance running shoe on the market.

**VF Corp.**, the parent company of Vans, The North Face and Timberland brands, announced Dec. 5 targets for sustainability in its "Made for Change" report. The company pledged to reduce its environmental impact while developing new opportunities with a circular business model. This model has become popular in sustainability circles. It aspires to reduce waste and cut pollution while improving how supply chains function, according to the group Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. The report said that 50 percent of VF's distribution centers are zero-waste facilities. It is also working to improve the lives of people working on its products in developing nations with VF's Worker and Community Development Program.

The **Pantone Color Institute** announced the 2020 color of the year will be Classic Blue. Leatrice Eiseman, executive director of the institute, said that the 2020 color will challenge the people around the world to broaden their perspectives. "We are living in a time that requires trust and faith," she said. "Imbued with a deep resonance, Classic Blue provides an anchoring foundation. A boundless blue evocative of the vast and infinite evening sky, Classic Blue encourages us to look beyond the obvious to expand our thinking." For more than 20 years, Pantone has been introducing colors of the year. In 2019, the Pantone color was Living Coral.

# Designer's Atelier

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# After Sale, Agenda Retains Show Director Shellman

After six years of running **Agenda, Reed Exhibitions** has sold the streetwear-focused trade show for an undisclosed amount to **AZTQ Corp.**, a Toronto-headquartered show producer that started business in 2019.

Despite the change in ownership, Agenda's Las Vegas show will continue to be helmed by Tony Shellman, who has served as show director since July 2018. He will run the show with fashion-business veteran Laurent Huttinot.

Shellman said that Agenda veterans such as Monique Rice and JC Puebla will also continue working at the show. The upcoming Las Vegas show is scheduled to run Feb. 4–6 at the **Sands Expo and Convention Center**, where it has produced most of its Las Vegas shows since 2013.

Shellman forecasted that the upcoming show would have the same number of vendors if not slightly more than the August 2018 Las Vegas show. He and Huttinot will aim to cre-



Tony Shellman

ate a focus on core streetwear brands. For the time being, it will not focus on action-sports brands, which Agenda has worked with in the past. The upcoming Agenda also will not focus on entertainment as past installments have.

"It's back to basics," Shellman said. "We're building a show where brands can create dollars and cents. People will be able to enjoy themselves. But they will be able to get some work done."

In future shows, Agenda also will focus on developing special sections and a strong showing of new brands and international labels. There's also been talk about developing Agenda shows outside of Las Vegas.

Entrepreneur Aaron Levant started the show in 2003 in Long Beach, Calif. "It's such an incredible brand that Aaron Levant created," Shellman said. "It's only fair to give it legs and go back to being a disrupter," he said.

Shellman attended Agenda shows before Reed acquired it

in 2013 for an undisclosed amount. Shellman then worked as a co-founder and creative director for the **Enyce** brand. Agenda was an independent streetwear show that competed against the then-dominant trade show for surf-and-skate clothes, **Action Sports Retailer**.

ASR went out of business in 2010, and Agenda found itself as the major trade show for streetwear as well as action-sports styles on the West Coast. It produced a bi-annual show in Long Beach and a biannual show in Las Vegas.

Levant continued directing the shows, developing the **Agenda Festival**, a music and consumer day for Agenda Long Beach. Levant left Agenda in 2018 to focus on separate entrepreneurial ventures such as digital retailer **NTWRK**. The Agenda Festival was shuttered in 2019 due to flagging interest on behalf of vendors, according to an Agenda statement.

Shellman said that he would focus on Agenda's future. "The beauty of Agenda is its spirit of youth and bringing new brands to the culture and cultivating the culture of fashion and lifestyle," he said.—*Andrew Asch*

## FIBER AND FABRIC

# Lenzing Announces First Virgin Lyocell From Post-Consumer Cotton

After the September announcement of an upgraded **Refibra** technology that increased upcycled cotton-scrap pulp composition, Lenzing, Austria-headquartered **Lenzing** revealed another advancement with the product. Building upon the existing process that relies on the upcycling of pre-consumer cotton scraps, which are a byproduct of cotton production, the company announced that it had increased up to 30 percent the composition of upcycled cotton-scrap pulp used in the product. On Dec. 3, it announced the completion of its second phase, which allows for up to 10 percent of post-consumer cotton waste to be used in manufacturing.

"For several years, we have witnessed a rise in eco-consciousness amongst consumers. Consumers have been demanding more-sustainable product options in their shopping list," Florian Heubrandner, Lenzing's vice president of global business management textiles, said in a statement. "If a company wants to truly improve its sustainability practice, it needs to reexamine its current business model and consider introducing new products or technologies with recyclability and reusability in mind."

As it seeks to further contribute to a circular economy, Lenzing remains committed to examining ways in which it



Lenzing wood chips

can utilize fibers from recycled sources. The company recognizes that this type of technology will help reduce its reliance on wood sources to create its textiles. Its most recent initiative has gained the recognition of environmental-conservation

groups including Vancouver's **Canopy**, which focuses on the preservation of forests.

"Our world's forests and climate need these kinds of next-generation solutions at both scale and speed in the cellulosic-fiber sector," Nicole Rycroft, executive director of Canopy, stated in a press release. "Canopy applauds Lenzing for the vision of making textile-waste recycling commonplace and for launching this commercially available product line with the first steps of post-consumer recycled content."

Over the next five years, Lenzing hopes to create Refibra products that utilize up to 50 percent post-consumer cotton waste as it promotes fiber recycling. Lenzing's work in this arena is based on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)12, Responsible Consumption and Production as the company increasingly relies on post-consumer textile waste as a source for its raw materials.

"We look forward to Lenzing's leadership as they work to significantly increase the volume of raw material that comes from next-generation feed stocks, and we know brands and retailers are looking to preference producers who hit the goal of a 50 percent post-consumer recycled-fiber line first," Rycroft said.—*Dorothy Crouch*

## RETAIL

### Black Friday *Continued from page 1*

shopped during 2018's Black Friday Weekend. The NRF conducted its Black Friday research with **Prosper Insights & Analytics**.

The increase in people shopping during Black Friday was rooted in a good economy, Shay said. Unemployment is low—3.6 percent in the U.S. in November—and consumer confidence is relatively high.

"Consumers are in a good place," Shay said. "The consumers are happy, and they are in a mood to spend."

Fashion and apparel categories and department stores were two of the winners during Black Friday. Cold, wet weather across much of America sparked a demand for winter clothing. In Los Angeles, the weekend's weather was the coldest in more than 20 years, and demand for jackets in the city increased 5 percent during the weekend in a year-over-year comparison, according to **Planalytics, Inc.**, which measures how weather affects business and has offices in Berwyn, Pa., and London.

The survey of Black Friday shoppers found that 58 percent of shoppers looked for apparel during the five-day weekend. It also found that 50 percent of shoppers visited department stores during the weekend, and 36 percent of those surveyed reported shopping at clothing stores.

During the call, Shay forecasted that retailers wouldn't experience a lull between the frenetic shopping periods of Black Friday Weekend and the weekend before Christmas. A lull has marked past holiday seasons.

"This year the economy is in a better place. I think that



Uniqlo at South Coast Plaza on Nov. 30.

we're going to continue the momentum of the season," he said. "There will be a sprint to the finish. There will be a lot of robust activity."

The NRF was not the only group to announce vigorous sales during Black Friday Weekend. **Adobe Analytics** reported Dec. 2 that retailers made \$7.4 billion in online sales by the end of the shopping period, which was Dec. 2, according to media reports. **Salesforce**, a San Francisco-headquartered customer-relationship management group, reported that retailers made \$8 billion in digital sales during the weekend. Digital sales enjoyed an increase of 11 percent compared to the same time period the previous year.

The weekend also enjoyed a boost in the amount of money consumers spent. The survey found that the average consumer spend was \$361.90 during the Black Friday Weekend compared to \$313.29 in 2018.

During the NRF conference call, a reporter asked about the missed NRF forecast during the 2018 holiday and if there were a possibility that the forecast would be missed this year. In 2018, retail sales increased 2.9 percent. Earlier in 2018, the NRF had forecasted holiday sales to grow 4.3 percent to 4.8 percent.

Jack Kleinhenz, the NRF's chief economist, replied that the 2018 holiday season was affected by interest-rate increases that shook the stock market at the end of 2018.

"It was an unusual December," he said. "There would have been a much higher performance if we hadn't seen several factors. We don't have the same set of factors that we saw a year ago."

Southern California retailers described big business during the weekend. Debra Gunn Downing, executive director of marketing for **South Coast Plaza** in Costa Mesa, Calif., said that shoppers had queued up big lines in front of the center's **Macy's** at 5 p.m. on Thanksgiving. She expected crowds to continue to be strong at the luxury mall. "We had a strong year and fourth quarter," she said. "We have strong expectations going into the holiday season."

Fred Levine, who co-owns eight **M.Fredric** boutiques around the Los Angeles area, said that his shops experienced the best Black Friday Weekend in its history because of pent-up demand for winter clothing and because of a presale. On the Monday and Tuesday before the Black Friday Weekend, his stores offered Black Friday deals to its VIP customers. By the weekend, the M.Fredric stores offered the deals to the wider public.

"We got a burst of business," he said. "Normally there's a lull before Black Friday. We wanted to reduce the slow days by getting creative."





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## NEWSMAKERS 2019

## Forever 21 Files for Bankruptcy

Los Angeles-headquartered **Forever 21** was one of the architects of fast fashion, but, after three decades of growth, the family-run business, which enjoyed more than \$3.4 billion in revenues in 2017, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy. In the filings, the company revealed that it owes between \$1 billion and \$10 billion to more than 100,000 creditors including the **Simon Property Group**, **Brookfield Properties**, **FedEx** and Los Angeles-based **A&E Clothing Inc.**

It obtained \$275 million in financing from existing lenders such as **JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A.**, as well as \$75 million in new capital from **TPG Sixth Street Partners**, according to a September 29 statement. Linda Chang, Forever 21's executive vice president and daughter of founders Do Won Chang and Jin Sook Chang, said that the \$350 million in financing was a lifeline.

"This was an important and necessary step to secure the future of our company, and it will enable us to reorganize our business and reposition Forever 21," she said.

Blame for the giant retailer's bankruptcy has been leveled at the once-innovative com-

pany for not getting more heavily involved with digital commerce.

"Forever 21 is overexposed in bricks-and-mortar," said Syama Meagher, chief executive officer of the Los Angeles-headquartered **Scaling Retail** consultancy.

The fashionable company also has been criticized for not changing with consumer tastes. Forever 21's modus operandi of wearing a garment a few times and disposing of it has been increasingly critiqued by sustainability advocates.

Media reports also found fault with the Chang family's management style. The family let few outsiders into the decision-making process for the multibillion-dollar operation. Without equity analysts and a board of directors giving crucial management advice, the company made mistakes. As part of its bankruptcy, Forever 21 is scheduled to close 87 of its stores, but it continues to develop new projects. Last month, it released a collection with Latin pop group **CNCO**. In September, it opened an emporium at the **Hollywood & Highland** retail center in Los Angeles.

—Andrew Asch

## Designer Mossimo Giannulli Charged in 'Operation Varsity Blues' Scandal

One of the most notorious criminal cases of 2019 was the "Operation Varsity Blues" college-admissions scandal in which a number of wealthy parents were accused of crimes ranging from bribery to money laundering in a scheme to guarantee their children's admission into renowned universities. On March 12, a criminal complaint was unsealed in a Boston federal court and included accusations from prosecutors in Massachusetts, California, Texas, Florida and North Carolina alleging that a number of academic-examination administrators and test takers, 13 coaches and 33 parents were involved in the scheme.

Two of those parents accused of, and later charged with, paying bribes were Los Angeles fashion designer Mossimo Giannulli, founder of the **Mossimo** brand, and his actor wife, Lori Loughlin. While other parents attempted to purchase their children's paths into schools including **Yale University**, **Stanford University**, the **University of California**, **Los Angeles** and **Georgetown University**, Giannulli and Loughlin were charged with paying \$500,000 to secure

admission into the **University of Southern California** for their two daughters, Isabella Rose and Olivia Jade.

Money-laundering charges filed on April 9 stemmed from contributions the couple made to a Newport Beach, Calif., nonprofit organization named the **Key Worldwide Foundation**. In tax documents, it is described as an association that helps underprivileged children gain access to otherwise unattainable options in education.

William "Rick" Singer, president of the Key Worldwide Foundation, is the consultant who coordinated with parents, coaches, and examination administrators and test takers in order to facilitate phony academic scores and extra-curricular participation for prospective university students.

In October, after maintaining their innocence in response to the previous charges of fraud and money laundering, Giannulli and Loughlin were charged with conspiracy to commit federal program bribery. The couple pled not guilty to these new charges.

—Dorothy Crouch

## Calendar

### Dec. 10

#### WWSRA Intermountain December Show

Utah State Fairpark  
Salt Lake City  
Through Dec. 12

#### WWSRA Northern California December Show

McClellan Conference Center  
Sacramento, Calif.

Through Dec. 12

#### WWSRA Northwest December Show

Oregon Convention Center  
Portland, Ore.  
Through Dec. 12

### Dec. 11

**Blossom Première Vision**  
Carreau du Temple Paris

Paris

Through Dec. 12

There's more  
on ApparelNews.net.

For calendar details and contact information, visit [ApparelNews.net/events](http://ApparelNews.net/events).

Submissions to the calendar should be emailed to the Calendar Editor at [calendar@apparelnews.net](mailto: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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# Digital Printing Remains on the Rise

The digital-printing business has been a contender for more than a decade in the T-shirt industry, but in 2019 it started to become more dominant. Digital printers made by companies such as **Kornit Digital**, **Epson** and **Roland DGA** can be used to make increasingly complex images on T-shirts, hoodies and other imprintable clothing.

Industry veterans such as Michael Sanders of **True Value Fabrics** in Carson, Calif., noted that digital printers were taking more trade-show real estate at the January **Imprinted Sports-wear Show**, which has been renamed the **Impressions Expo** for 2020.

“This used to be a show about blanks,” Sanders said of ISS. “Now it’s more of a digital show,” he said.

The reasons for the boom in this business come from technological advances in digital printing and prices decreasing for printers. It also comes from changing consumer demands for customized T-shirts.

Companies working with digital printers developed a niche working with brands looking for small runs of clothing and unique orders. This business is important for e-commerce businesses, which often make small runs of clothing to fulfill the orders they receive online. New and emerging brands have been important customers for this niche, said Ian Gruber of **Apliiq Inc.**, with offices in the San Diego area.

“Working with direct-to-garment printing opens up possibilities of doing business with brands that may not be able to afford minimums that conventional screenprinting bulk buys demand,” said Gruber. “For a startup brand, having to pay upfront for 100 to 300 units can be a huge obstacle to business.”

While digital printing is becoming more important, other ways of creating images on T-shirts are not going away. The traditional silkscreening process can produce superior images on garments, offer more colors and generally be used for jobs where large T-shirt volumes are printed, said Eric Basangan, the founder of **Polymer** in Long Beach, Calif. “Silkscreening is an art,” he said. “Silkscreening is never going to go away.”—*Andrew Asch*

# Black Design Collective Recognizes Underrepresented Creatives With Year of Firsts

Throughout 2019, the **Black Design Collective** maintained its commitment to highlighting the accomplishments of black fashion creatives by hosting a number of events and building a community within the fashion industry. As the brainchild of veteran designers Angela Dean of **DeanZign**; Kevan Hall, known for his high-end eponymous label; and Thomas “TJ” Walker, co-founder of **Cross Colours**, the BDC was founded in October 2018 but debuted a number of inaugural events during this year including an awards gala, speaking engagements and a designer pop-up shopping experience.

“When you think about black designers, a lot of people don’t have a reference for them—they don’t know some of the great designers that changed fashion, and they don’t know a lot of the current designers,” Hall, the organization’s vice president, told *California Apparel News* in April. “You can work for a company freelance for 15 years and not get a post as a designer. That is ludicrous.”

During its inaugural scholarship celebration, held in April at the downtown Los Angeles campus of the **Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising’s FIDM Museum**, the BDC celebrated the work of Ruth E. Carter. The **Academy Award**-winning costume designer has enjoyed a career of more than 30 years and, in 2019, became the first African-American artist to win an Oscar in the best costume-design category for her work on the film “Black Panther.”

Attended by Hollywood heavyweights, fashion-industry veterans and political players, the event’s guestlist included notable names such as Loretta Devine, Rep. Maxine Waters, Gabrielle Union, Beverly Johnson and Tina Knowles-Lawson.

Speaking at the gala, Union, who worked with Carter on the television series “Being Mary Jane,” saw the Black Design Collective as an opportunity for the support that diversity is supposed to afford.

“What it should mean is to not use the buzzwords ‘diversity’ and ‘inclusion’ but put your money where your mouth is and actually support, put on, amplify and center designers of color and black designers specifically,” she said during the event.

Though the night was held in honor of Carter, the organization also recognized the next generation of designers, awarding FIDM student Devert Monet Hickman with the Black Design Collective’s \$10,000 scholarship.

“Getting this Black Design Collective scholarship will allow me to bring that out of my soul and show you what I have,” he said, addressing the crowd. “I really want to pass the torch just like she did. I am sure there are other black designers out there in the backwoods of Kentucky where I am from that want to be just like me and look up to me. I want to carry that torch and show them that they, too, can be right here in front of FIDM, where it all started.”—*Dorothy Crouch*

# Volcom Inks Deal With Authentic Brands Group

Action-sports brand **Volcom** is back to making deals and producing new styles. The Costa Mesa, Calif.-headquartered brand made headlines in November when it announced that it would outfit the U.S. snowboarding team for the 2022 **Winter Olympics** in Beijing, but in mid-2019 Volcom started a new chapter in its more than 25-year history. It was sold by French luxe conglomerate **Kering S.A.**, the home of brands such as **Saint Laurent**, **Balenciaga** and **Brioni**, for an undisclosed amount.

**Authentic Brands Group**, a New York-headquartered brand manager, licensing and entertainment company, announced that it had acquired the intellectual property of Volcom. In the April 2 statement announcing the deal, ABG also said that it had taken a minority stake in **Liberated Brands**, Volcom’s operating company, created in 2019. Todd Hymel, Volcom’s chief executive officer, and Volcom’s management team hold the majority stake in Liberated.

According to the statement on the deal, Liberated will maintain Volcom operations in the U.S., France, Australia and Japan. It will have oversight of the brand’s product devel-

opment, athlete marketing, as well as its retail and wholesale business worldwide.

ABG’s job will be to build brand awareness and create business-development opportunities for Volcom. It also will develop Liberated Brands’ retail and wholesale operations as a platform for the international expansion of complementary ABG-owned brands.

ABG’s family of brands includes action-sports brands such as ski label **Spyder**, skate brand **Vision Street Wear** and mixed-martial-arts brand **Tapout**. It also handles brands such as **Aéropostale**, **Frederick’s of Hollywood** and licensing for Muhammad Ali and Elvis Presley. In addition, ABG has made deals to acquire *Sports Illustrated* and **Barneys New York**.

A statement from ABG and Liberated said that the companies will invest and develop Volcom’s men’s and snow business as well as continuing to build the brand’s women’s and kids’ categories in the U.S. and certain international markets. ABG also will develop targeted digital campaigns and influencer partnerships to reach Millennial and Gen Z audiences.—A.A.

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On the Cover: Black Design Collective: from left, TJ Walker, Ruth E. Carter, Devert Monet Hickman, Angela Dean and Kevan Hall, photo by Alex J. Berliner/ABImages. Forever 21: store at the Americana at Brand in Glendale, Calif. The Gap: The Gap store on Ocean Avenue in San Francisco, circa 1969, photo by The Gap. Volcom: exterior of Volcom at Westfield Century City, photo by Ryan Boyes. Barneys New York: Barneys New York logo. 2nd & PCH: artist rendering, photo by 2nd & PCH. CMC: Moriah Robinson, director of events at the California Market Center. BCBGMaxAzria: Max Azria, photo by Volker Corell. Digital Printing: The Kornit Avalanche Poly Pro printer, photo by Kornit. Tariffs: photo by the Port of Los Angeles. Ilse Metchek: photo by California Fashion Association. Fur Ban: photo by PETA. Mossimo Giannulli: Mossimo company logo.



# BCBGMaxAzria Founder Passes Away but Legacy Lives On

In May 2019, the apparel segment lost an influential Los Angeles fashion veteran whose designs shaped trends within the industry for decades when Max Azria passed away at the age of 70, reportedly succumbing to lung cancer.

Born in Tunisia in 1949, Azria was raised in France, starting his fashion career in Paris, and moved to the United States in 1981. Despite his relocation to Los Angeles, the influence of French culture would be found in his designs throughout the remainder of his life, including his work for the **Jess** boutique chain and his own brand, **BCBGMaxAzria**. Founded in 1989, the label's name included the acronym "BCBG" meaning "bon chic, bon genre"—"good style, good attitude."

The label became a favorite of Hollywood notables and expanded to include a strong retail presence at **Nordstrom**, **Bloomingdale's**, **Macy's**, **Saks Fifth Avenue** and **Neiman Marcus**. BCBGMaxAzria also grew into a global brand, opening more than 550 bricks-and-mortar locations around the world.

Inspired by his French roots throughout his life, the culture also influenced Azria's business decisions when he acquired **Hervé**

**Léger** in 1998, the same year he was inducted into the **Council of Fashion Designers of America**. Eventually, Azria expanded BCBG to include a West Coast-inspired brand designed for trend-driven girls, **BCB-Generation**.

Even after Azria sold his company to **Marquee Brands** in 2017, the designer's influence would continue to inspire future collections. Explaining the company's current mission of female empowerment—portrayed in a Fall/Winter 2019 campaign by supermodel Adriana Lima—and how this is blended with Azria's elements of style, Diane Bekhor, senior vice president of the **BCBG Group**, reflected on the founder's influence in an August *California Apparel News* story.

"To be your own muse is to look within and to use what you find to inspire all that you do—from choosing an outfit to running a business to living a fulfilling life," she said "This year is the 30th anniversary of BCBGMaxAzria, and the campaign with Adriana Lima is the first since the passing of its founder. As we end our 30th year, we pay tribute to Max Azria with a timeless Fall/Winter collection."—*Dorothy Crouch*

## 2nd & PCH Unveiled in Long Beach

One of the most familiar sights in the California landscape is the mall, but Long Beach, Calif., despite being the seventh largest city in the state, has been traditionally "under-malled."

The downtown areas of Long Beach, as well as the city's well-off neighborhoods of Belmont Shore and Naples, have mostly been served by standalone boutique retail in the past. But in 2019, when development of traditional malls and lifestyle centers has been at a low ebb throughout the state, a mall was unveiled at the southeastern tip of Long Beach on Oct. 14.

**CenterCal LLC**, based in El Segundo, Calif., developed **2nd & PCH**, an open-air retail center located on the corner of Pacific Coast Highway and 2nd Street in Long Beach. In an Oct. 31 interview with *California Apparel News*, Jean Paul Wardy, CenterCal's president, said that the absence of traditional malls in Long Beach attracted the company to the city.

"There was a lot of data that showed the customer was there. But there were no stores

serving these customers," he said. "There was a long list of retailers that had never landed in Long Beach for one reason or another."

Built on the former grounds of the **Seaport Marina Hotel**, the 2nd & PCH retail center is anchored by a **Whole Foods** supermarket, and fashion will be an important part of the new mall. Fashion tenants for the 215,000-square-foot retail center include **Urban Outfitters**, **Lululemon Athletica**, **Johnny Was**, **Free People** and a location for **Linne's**, a Seal Beach, Calif., boutique. 2nd & PCH is located by a boating marina and also features community areas for hanging out.

The Long Beach retail center was one of the few malls developed in California in 2019. In March, the **One Paseo** retail center in Del Mar, Calif., opened. The **Paseo Nuevo** retail center in Santa Barbara, Calif., completed the first phase of a \$20 million remodel in November. It is anchored by a **Nordstrom** and also includes a **Gap** and a **Pacific Sunwear**.—*Andrew Asch*

## California Passes Fur Ban

Faux fur has enjoyed wide popularity during 2019, but it was a tough year for businesses working with real fur. California became the first state to ban the sale and manufacture of fur. On Oct. 12, Gov. Gavin Newsom signed into law Assembly Bill 44, which made it unlawful to sell, display or distribute a fur product for monetary or nonmonetary consideration. The bill also made it unlawful to manufacture a fur product in the state for sale.

Leather, cowhide and shearling as well as fur products used for religious purposes are exempted from the law. Taxidermy is also exempted as is vintage fur and fur taken by an individual with a legal hunting license.

Bill author Laura Friedman (D-Glendale) said that the law made an important statement about California.

"With the stroke of his pen, Gov. Newsom took a principled stance in support of the values made clear by Californians at the ballot box, namely, that we won't support the inhumane treatment of animals," she said.

The law goes into effect Jan. 1, 2023, and was the culmination of years of work on the

part of anti-fur activists working to pass fur bans on the local level. West Hollywood, Calif., passed a fur ban in 2011, and Berkeley, Calif., San Francisco and Los Angeles followed. Friedman proposed a statewide ban so fur sales would be illegal across the state and various localities would have a general law to guide them.

Opponents of the ban criticized it for limiting consumer choice and criminalizing a business that is legal everywhere else in the United States. San Francisco's ban will be challenged in court in 2020 when the city law takes effect, said Keith Kaplan, director of communications and public policy for the **Fur Information Council of America**. If a judge finds fault with San Francisco's municipal fur ban, FICA might challenge other cities' fur bans as well as the California-state fur ban, saying that the ban hurts California retailers and designers.

"It won't have the intended effect," Kaplan said. "It won't cut into fur sales. The luxury customer will buy fur when she travels."

—A.A.

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# Ilse Metchek Remains an Industry Ally

With a fashion career that has spanned decades, beginning in New York's garment district and continuing in Los Angeles' fashion district, Ilse Metchek's role within the industry is legendary. Always in the know regarding what is going on and knowing the who's who of the apparel industry, Metchek leads the **California Fashion Association**, as she has since 1995.

Throughout 2019, Metchek has continued to remain a fount of knowledge upon which the industry relies during its brightest and darkest hours. From the **Forever 21** bankruptcy to the sale of **Barneys New York Inc.**, she has provided a strong voice devoted to representing the interests of the industry amid an uncertain yet evolving environment.

Regarding the decline of Forever 21, toward the end of the summer, she told *California Apparel News*, "They were like what Zara is now. They sold small runs of new and fresh clothing. If you didn't get them then, you were never going to get them. They were brilliant."

Her presence at industry events and trade shows is well known as she moderates panels and leads discussions. Whether speaking at

**Womenswear In Nevada** or at local events, Metchek's name continues to draw attendees from the apparel segment who seek the inside scoop supported by years of experience.

At the **City of Hope** "Fashion + Brunch: A Women's Leadership Panel," held in September, Metchek led other female leaders from the apparel industry during a discussion focused on the theme of "We've broken the glass ceiling! Now what?"

While she has remained a fixture at apparel-industry events, Metchek is also engaging with audiences through new platforms. The November launch of fashion-technology provider **Tukatech's** "Tukataalks" web-and-podcast series saw Metchek as one of the first guests.

In addition to representing the California apparel industry through the California Fashion Association, the organization's philanthropic arm, the **California Fashion Foundation**, continues to host events such as its 2019 Scholarship Luncheon at the **California Market Center**, benefiting the state's student designers. It will also continue its community outreach through its annual Christmas party for downtown kids.

—Dorothy Crouch

# CMC Reinvents Its Space and Image

After its owner, **Brookfield Properties**, embarked upon a \$170-million renovation at the end of 2018, the **California Market Center** in downtown Los Angeles was not only redesigning its interior but also its image. While the CMC adhered to the calendar of standard events such as **LA Market Week**, **LA Kids Market**, **LA Men's Market** and **Label Array**, it took an experiential approach to trade-show production with opportunities for buyers to relax and educational seminars that encouraged learning how to navigate an evolving apparel business.

Throughout 2019, the CMC also continued to add new offerings and event partnerships. In February, a new **CMC Farmers' Market** brought together an array of vendors who provide a variety of products including farm-fresh produce, baked goods and cuisine from different cultures. An April pop-up shop featuring sustainable brands was hosted in the site's lobby in observance of Earth Day. There was also a partnership with the **American Contemporary Ballet** company that brought the artform to the CMC over the summer with productions of "Variations on Raymonda" and "Death and the Maiden."

"It's great to be in the Fashion Theater. We do all live music, and it is perfect acous-

tically," the company's artistic director, Lincoln Jones, told *California Apparel News* in June. "Brookfield and the CMC have been some of the most wonderful people we've worked with."

Following the departures of Senior Marketing Manager Becca Dawson on Oct. 4 and Director of Events Emilie Lewis, who left in August, the CMC announced the appointment of Moriah Robinson to replace Lewis.

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

Continuing to serve the community in which it exists is a priority for the CMC. With a fresh, updated appearance at the location and new events being produced, Robinson encourages buyers to experience downtown Los Angeles.

"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.

# Big Changes for Gap Inc.

Observing its 50th anniversary during 2019, **Gap Inc.** experienced a year of major change for one of the biggest specialty retailers in the world.

In February, Gap Inc. announced plans to spin off its best-performing division, **Old Navy**, into a separate, publicly traded company. A Gap statement said that the spinoff would allow Old Navy to be more profitable and give it opportunities to be more focused. Gap's other brands, the namesake Gap brand, **Athleta**, **Banana Republic**, **Intermix** and **Hill City** would continue to function together in an unnamed, publicly traded company.

But Gap Inc.'s sales seemed to get stuck in a rut in 2019. The company runs 3,938 stores in 44 countries, of which 3,396 are company owned. Same-store sales declined 4 percent for its first, second and third 2019 quarters. However, it still was making money. Gap Inc.'s net sales for its third quarter were \$4 billion.

Art Peck, Gap Inc.'s chief executive officer and president, left the company on Nov. 7. Robert J. Fisher, a son of Gap Inc.'s founders and a nonexecutive chairman of the board, assumed responsibilities as the retail giant's president and CEO. When Gap reported its third-quarter earnings, Fisher attributed the poor showing to back-office issues that were dragging down the company's performance.

"We are not pleased with the third-quarter results and are focused on aggressively addressing the operational issues that are hindering the performance of our brands," he said.

During 2019, Gap Inc. also acquired **Janie and Jack**, a children's and infants' clothing brand, from the **Gymboree Group** for \$35 million. Janie and Jack operates over 100 bricks-and-mortar stores in the U.S. along with an e-commerce site, [www.janieandjack.com](http://www.janieandjack.com). —Andrew Asch



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# Tariffs in 2019: As the Trade War Turns

One of the largest newsmakers of 2019 was neither a person nor a company but rather a largely impactful issue faced by the apparel industry. In a rocky 2018, the United States implemented 25 percent tariffs on \$50 billion in imports from China, and the latter responded with its own reciprocal duties on products from the U.S. The 2018 chapter of the trade war hit the apparel industry through inclusions of China's tariffs on cotton from the U.S. and the former's implementation of duties on Chinese fabric and handbags.

As 2019 progressed, the tariff issue was shrouded in confusion as businesses attempted to read between the lines of President Trump's **Twitter** account, eventually facing any ultimate decisions that would be announced by the **U.S. Trade Representative's** office. With June approaching, the apparel industry braced for an additional 10 percent tariff to be implemented on textile imports from China. Known for its specialty textiles including hemp and silk, China had become a trusted

resource for certain fabrics used by California-based businesses.

"There is no place we can purchase hemp fabric," **Jung-maven's** Robert Jungmann told *California Apparel News* at the time. "We can't purchase it from Europe, Vietnam or the United States. Only China does what we purchase. There is no option."

By the end of summer, additional tariffs were announced to be implemented by the United States on Sept. 1 with subsequent rounds scheduled for October—which were canceled—and Dec. 15. While many businesses in the United States scrambled to import their goods ahead of the tariffs, resulting in record August cargo numbers at the **Port of Los Angeles**, the founder of **Tianello by Steve Barraza**, a made-in-the-USA brand that relies on Chinese silk, was disappointed yet optimistic.

"The good news is that the price of silk has fallen approxi-

mately \$3 per meter since 2018," said Barraza. "There is no doubt that the tariffs have slowed consumption there."

A recent shift in focus by the White House toward duties on imports from France, Brazil and Argentina, in addition to a nonchalant update from the president regarding tariffs on Chinese goods, has left many wondering where the United States stands regarding the proposed Dec. 15 tariffs and exemptions on certain products.

On Dec. 2, during the **NATO Summit** in London, Trump commented on the current status of the United States-China trade negotiations, revealing that there might be a stall in progress.

"The China trade deal is dependent on one thing—do I want to make it," he said. "I have no deadline, no. In some ways, I think it's better to wait until after the election if you want to know the truth. I think in some ways I think it's better to wait until after the election."—*Dorothy Crouch*

# Barneys' Dramatic Deal for Its Future

**Barneys New York** served as an influential American retailer since the 1920s, but in 2019 it went bankrupt and its remaining five stores started a liquidation process.

New owner **Authentic Brands Group**, a brand manager, marketer and entertainment group, wrapped up a deal for ownership of Barneys on Nov. 1. ABG said that it would selectively license the Barneys New York name. According to media reports, the Barneys name will be licensed to retailers such as **Saks Fifth Avenue**; however, no formal plans have been announced on what shape a Barneys at Saks initiative would take.

The bankruptcy created a huge outcry on social media as

well as in the press. In both formats there was a sense that an era had passed. Ilse Metchek, president of the **California Fashion Association**, told *California Apparel News* that fashion had lost a great forum.

"We will mourn the loss of Barneys as one of the last places one could investigate new brands, new lines and new ideas at the couture level," Metchek said.

The sense that fashion was in danger of losing a crucial forum led to a dramatic showdown for the ownership of Barneys after it declared Chapter 11 bankruptcy in August. ABG was named the stalking-horse bidder and placed a bid of \$264 million. It looked

like a done deal, but Sam Ben-Avraham, founder of the **Liberty Fashion & Lifestyle Fairs** and a co-founder of the influential retailer **Kith**, was wary of ABG taking over Barneys.

Ben-Avraham mounted a social-media campaign, *save-barneysny*, and gathered a group of investors, including Ron Burkle of **Yucaipa Companies LLC**. Ben-Avraham collected 19,000 signatures supporting the bid.

Former Barneys owner David Jackson also put together a bid for the company, but his group's bid did not pull ahead of ABG, which ended up paying \$271.4 million for the iconic retailer.—*Andrew Asch*

## FOOTWEAR

# Allbirds Expands Into Slipper Category

Following a number of holiday product launches spanning the weekend of Black Friday through Cyber Monday, **Allbirds** is now preparing to release its first slipper, keeping shoppers interested as the holiday gift-purchasing timeline decreases. In lieu of discounts for the busy shopping days, the company decided to instead release limited-edition collections to drive consumer interest and demand.

The **Certified B Corporation** and **Forest Stewardship Council**-certified company led by Tim Brown and Joey Zwillinger relies on more-natural materials to create its products. Its wool is **ZQ**-certified merino that is sourced from reputable partners who treat their animals in an ethical manner. In its products, the company also uses **Tencel** Lyocell and sustainably sourced SweetFoam, the company's proprietary, sugarcane-based, sus-



tainable alternative to foam from Brazil that it uses to make the soles of its footwear.

On Nov. 29, the company released its limited-edition Tree Runners, and, on Dec. 2, Allbirds introduced new shades of its original Wool Runner. For the Tree Runner launch, Allbirds designed the shoes with colorful hues and funky pat-

terns such as the blue Pebble, pink Lava and brown Fungi. Its Wool Runner hues were desert inspired with colors named Peach Cobbler, Birthday Cake and Berry Pie.

Now, the San Francisco-headquartered company that is known for its ethical and ecologically sound approach to footwear manufacturing, is launching its Allbird Wool Dwellers on Dec. 9.

Relying on an open-heel design, the Allbird Wool Dwellers are manufactured in a light gray and a deep blue with neon-green accents, a hue the company refers to as Garden Blue. Manufactured in Korea using the merino wool and

SweetFoam sole, the slippers are unisex. Its S-L sizes fit a women's size 5-11, while L-2X are based on men's 9-14.

With a retail price point of \$65, the new slipper product will be released exclusively at the San Francisco and New York Allbirds locations.—*Dorothy Crouch*

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**Products and Services:** R.C. International Fabrics, Inc. has been inspiring the fashion industry since 1990. We are an importer and converter of domestic knit and woven fabrics carrying novelties and basic items such as gauze, voile, lawn, poplin, twill, corduroy, denims, tencel, chambray, rayon, embroidery, linen, and much more. We have solids, yarn dyes, and textures in Stretch and non-stretch. ALL IN STOCK in Los Angeles with low minimums. We also specialize in PFD (Prepared For Garment dye) fabrics and stocking woven fabrics is our niche.

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[www.texline-global.com](http://www.texline-global.com)

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