

CALIFORNIA ApparelNews

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DAYLIGHT INTO THE BRIGHT NIGHT

With his Fall 2020 collection, Kevan Hall encourages clients to find joy in a new normal through shining brightly in his garments that were inspired by the beauty and wonder of the night sky. For additional styles, see page 2.

ROCHELLE BRODIN

LEGAL

State Senate Bill Seeks to End Garment-Industry Standard of Piece-Rate Pay

By Andrew Asch Retail Editor

A standard for how the garment industry pays sewers may be outlawed in California. SB 1399, the Garment Worker Protection Act, was passed by the California Senate in a 25-11 vote on June 25. The bill seeks to guarantee a minimum wage for garment workers and end the industry standard of the piece-rate system by which workers are paid by how many garments they produce during a shift. The bill is still in the legislative process but is scheduled to be submitted to the State Assembly on July 29 by the bill's coauthor, Lorena Gonzalez, a Democrat who represents the 80th Assembly District, which covers southern San Diego. Gonzalez is the chair of the Latino Legislative Caucus and helped raise the state minimum wage in California.

➔ SB 1399 page 3

INSIDE

Where fashion gets down to businessSM



3



9

Textile Trends ... p. 6

Functional Fabric Fair goes virtual ... p. 8

Liberty Fairs on-site shows canceled ... p. 9

Retail sales ... p. 9

Resource Guide ... p. 10

TRADE EVENTS

As More Trade Shows Go Online, Fashion Companies Also Seek Digital Alternatives

By Andrew Asch Retail Editor

While a few in-person trade events such as **L.A. Market Week** have reopened, many other high-profile happenings have announced that their summer 2020 events have been canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The situation has left many trade-show producers and vendors going virtual.

Seeking alternatives to on-site events has pushed fashion companies to develop new methods that can temporarily replace the in-person meeting. Italian denim brand **Diesel** is one such company developing new meeting platforms. On June 25, it introduced **Hyperoom**.

➔ Trade Events page 4

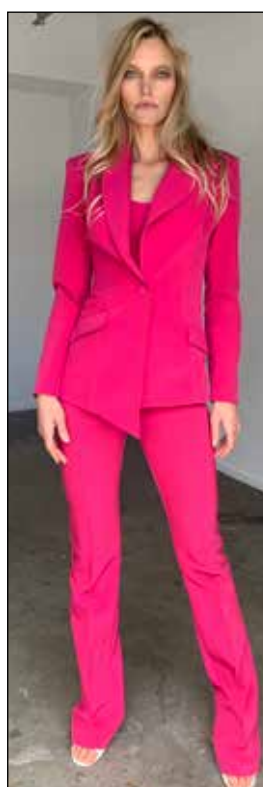
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ROCHELLE BRODIN



SARAH DEANNA, ANASTASSIJA MAKARENKO



Kevan Hall Fall 2020 Elevates Fashion Into the Reaches of the Night Sky

Fashion in the time of coronavirus has experienced hardship, yet there has also been an enormous amount of hope generated during this difficult period. Kevan Hall has been at the forefront of protective-mask production and personal-protective-equipment enhancement for healthcare workers. He also has adhered to the fashion calendar by developing a new Fall 2020 collection of formal garments. Inspired by the deep, dark midnight sky and its extraordinary sparkling starry elements, Hall wanted to unveil a collection that would afford elegance to his clients as life goes on.

"For me, even though people are trying to be safe and so many events have been canceled, there are still those legacy moments where there is an opportunity for people to have something beautiful, because the photographs are forever," Hall said.

Using beaded tulle that yielded a pattern similar to constellations in the sky, galaxy twill, crinkled cloqué that includes metallic accents, sequins and stretch crepe, Hall created striking formalwear that relied on hues of lapis, navy, midnight, gunmetal, silver, raspberry, ruby and charcoal—his favorite due to its seasonless characteristic.

"Sometimes I'll have a concept and I'll find things that fit into the concept. This time, as I was shopping for textiles, I kept becoming attracted to things that looked like the galaxy, the night sky, the starry night," he said. "I fell in love all over again with colors such as navy, lapis, midnight with touches of gunmetal and silver in some of the beading. There were also all the splashes of color, but the anchor is the beautiful sky."

Noting the continued importance of remaining safe, Hall also designed masks to complement the garments. While the collection is available by appointment at his atelier and on kevanhalldesigns.com, face coverings are also available through his **KevanCares** initiative, etsy.com/shop/KevanCares, which commits to donating one mask to an essential or frontline worker for every protective piece that is sold.

While grounded at home, after noticing a few of his favorite models posting to **Instagram**, Hall reached out and suggested they manage a shoot. He sent garments to the models—whom he has referred to as his "QuaranTeam"—comprising Sarah DeAnna and Anastassija Makarenko of **LA Models Runway** and photographer Rochelle Brodine. The women delivered through a photo shoot that adhered to safety measures to thwart the spread of the coronavirus.

"They were very conscious about the social distancing. They even set up the shoot with two separate dressing areas. There was a separate area where the photo shoot would be and where the clothes were," Hall explained. "I made masks to go with some of the things that matched, and others were a classic black mask. I let them have fun with it, and they did a great job."

With this collection, Hall sees an opportunity for his clients to safely find joy again in life's milestone moments. He encourages mindful planning for organizing smaller events, including weddings, yet Hall also wants women to enjoy feeling special.

"Maybe you do it with a few of your dearest and best, but you still want to have a beautiful dress for the mother or a fabulous dress for the bride. Maybe she doesn't want a white or ivory gown. Maybe she wants something that looks more elevated or glamorous," he said. "It's creating things that are beautiful for those legacy moments that will be photographed and go down in their memories forever."—Dorothy Crouch

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SARAH DEANNA, ANASTASSIJA MAKARENKO



Unprecedented Times. Unprecedented Learning.

By Nick Verreos Contributing Writer

During these extraordinary times, everyone's lives have been upended in many ways. Like everything else, academia and higher learning have been disrupted, forcing educators to come up with creative and diverse methods of teaching and learning in this new remote environment. While much of the news is focusing on more-traditional universities, as the co-chair of fashion design at the **Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising**, naturally, my focus has been on how we can adapt in the world of fashion education.

Fashion, and the fashion industry, thrive on adapting and looking into the future—what is fresh and new, what is the next? The COVID-19 pandemic has added a wrinkle into what is normally the polished satin finish of the industry. In my position, I have given much thought as to how we adapt to the changing times, especially in a fashion academic field that thrives on a tactile learning environment: How do we **Zoom** our way into fashion learning?

Little did I know that five years ago, when my partner and fellow co-chair David Paul and I started filming our fashion **YouTube** tutorial videos, that we were ahead of these unprecedented times! It was certainly unbeknownst to me when I started filming those videos that they would become a supporting source of fashion education in higher learning. While the footage is all prerecorded, the time spent filming the videos, in addition to the hundreds of hours dedicated to editing, afforded a unique perspective and maybe some helpful advice regarding what could make for good remote teaching when it comes to fashion.

So, how do you turn a traditional curriculum into something that is taught remotely? The following information includes tips that I feel are essential in creating a smooth transition from in-person to online education and what would normally be taught in a studio environment.



Nick Verreos

Get tech savvy—quickly

A huge aspect of teaching remotely involves the savvy use of technology. How does an instructor show a fashion-drawing demonstration or conduct a patternmaking session when the students are not hovering in front of you while taking notes? Instructors who have been new to this Zoom classroom environment have quickly learned that they need to be technically prepared. For fashion education, there are three things that are essential.

First, a laptop is necessary to act as your main camera source; it becomes your new classroom. A second device, such as a cell phone or **iPad**, works as your visual aid for your students. Positioned overhead or over your shoulder, this additional camera allows the students to view your sketching demo or patternmaking instructions from a bird's-eye view and works as the perfect teacher's aide.

Last, but not least, that secondary camera needs support via a tripod or boom-like contraption. While it does not need to be sophisticated, it just needs to get the job done. The laptop-phone-tripod tech trifecta can go far in helping make the remote in-studio class a success.

Be visually creative

When teaching remotely, educators must remember that they are more limited in the scope of instruction. How do you get—and keep—the attention of your students when they are not physically there in front of you? Instantly, your normal 3-D presentations become two dimensional and limit your ability to maintain the focus of the student.

Visual aids will be essential in keeping everyone interested in your demonstration. Whether it is a class covering how to sketch fashion or create patterns for a bustier, the use of images, **PowerPoint** presentations and videos will be essential to relaying information in a creative and strategic way. In this remote-teaching environment, more than ever—*think visually to support your verbal curriculum.*

Communicate but do not overcomplicate

The best educators are also good communicators. Being an excellent communicator has become increasingly relevant and important in this Zoom academic age. Remember: You might be an expert in your field, but those who you are teaching are not, so work on being engaging and do not overcomplicate. Keep it simple, or as simple as it can be, but always focus on the primary learning objectives.

High standards and realistic expectations

Whether teaching in a traditional setting or a remote environment, an educator should always conduct class in a professional manner. Consistently adhering to high standards when it comes to instruction also gives the students a sense of security and reassurance that they are, indeed, still getting the highest standards of education as in the traditional version. In tandem with having high standards, you should also have realistic expectations. Remote teaching—and learning—is an adaptable experience. As an instructor, you might have to reconfigure your approach to a traditional demonstration that would normally take place within a three-hour, in-studio session and divide up the lectures in a way that can be engaging and not tedious, allowing time for the students to digest the information.

Be patient

My last tip involves patience—and lots of it. Remote teaching can be daunting, especially for instructors and educators who are completely new to this. Be patient with your students as well as yourself. Things may—and probably will—go awry. Technology can be a wicked beast with major “mood swings”; one day everything will work perfectly while the next you are spending an hour trying to unmute yourself. So, yes, remember to be patient. This is new for most of us, and adapting to this new remote way of teaching and learning is surviving, and, in the end, could be very educational for students and educators. ●

LEGAL

SB 1399 *Continued from page 1*

The bill was introduced to the State Senate by Sen. María Elena Durazo. She represents the 24th district, which represents East Los Angeles, parts of downtown Los Angeles and neighborhoods surrounding downtown. Durazo said that SB 1399 addresses longstanding grievances by garment workers against the piece-rate system, which has been used in garment manufacturing for decades.

“I am grateful to my Senate colleagues for approving the Garment Worker Protection Act of 2020,” Durazo said. “It is time that we demand better working conditions for women and just hourly pay for garment workers who, when paid by the piece, earn on average \$5.15 per hour.”

The bill also closes what Durazo has criticized as a legal loophole. Retailers and companies who order apparel made in California factories will be responsible for the wages of people employed by contractors who produced the goods. During past wage disputes, retailers have argued that contractors are solely responsible for wages for items sold at retailers' stores. Labor advocates criticized the argument as allowing retailers to duck responsibility for paying garment workers' wages.

Apparel-industry and business groups were strongly opposed to the bill. The trade group **California Fashion Association** and the California Chamber of Commerce called SB 1399 a job killer. Ilse Metcheck, CFA's president, said that the bill would crush opportunities for good sewers to make more money.

“It means that good sewers won't get a bonus. What they have done is taken money away from the best of them. They have penalized the expert sewers,” she said.

In an already struggling domestic apparel industry, Metcheck feels that the bill will impede recovery.

“What they've done is penalize the legitimate shops,” she said. “It will drive more businesses underground.”

The California Chamber of Commerce has issued statements urging legislators to vote against SB 1399. The chamber believes that the bill will not only increase costs and bureaucratic burdens on California's garment-manufacturing industry but will also duplicate law that is already on the books.

“Eliminating this form of payment is unnecessary,” Jennifer Barrera, executive vice president of the CalChamber pol-



icy staff and executive team, said in a June 4 statement. She contended that California law already requires workers to be compensated at no less than minimum wage, she said. Even if workers are being evaluated on a piece-rate system, law requires that they be compensated at a minimum wage. Barrera also stated that the bill would force unreasonable standards onto nonunion employers and would punish companies that are not union.

Some manufacturers already pay their sewers minimum wage. Rodolfo Ramirez is co-owner of **Top Hand Manufacturing**, located near downtown Los Angeles. It had been paying the shop's 12 sewers minimum wage since Ramirez and his business partner, Andrew Cheung, acquired the factory from the previous owner in 2019.

Ramirez and Cheung also started the brand **Pocket Square Clothing**. Both of their mothers worked as sewers in Los An-

geles' garment industry.

“I see a lot of sewers as my family. It's only fair to pay them fair wages,” Ramirez said. “There's a human element in how clothes are made. It's always been our philosophy for a brand and now as a manufacturer to have mutual reciprocity. As we grow, we want you to grow as well in pay and benefits.”

Since Top Hand Manufacturing has been enjoying an uptick in business this year because it manufactures personal protective equipment, the company has been able to be generous. Ramirez said that a business owner's skill can be judged on how the entrepreneur can find ways to continue to reward workers and safeguard their pay, even during tough times.

Marissa Nuncio, director of the downtown Los Angeles-based **Garment Worker Center**, a cosponsor of SB 1399, said that the bill would ensure that every company follow employment laws of paying the minimum wage. She feels too many companies take advantage of not paying sewers sufficient amounts.

“The piece-rate system in the garment industry is strongly associated with the high level of wage-theft violations,” Nuncio said.

Nuncio maintained that increased enforcement is required in a market where too many workers are not being paid according to what is legally required. In 2019, the state provided \$16.3 million to the **Garment Restitution Fund**, which was created by AB 633, a 1999 law passed so California garment workers are guaranteed fair wages.

In 2021, the minimum wage is scheduled to increase to \$15 an hour in California. The higher wages are going to force factory management to cut jobs for workers whose productivity is lagging, said Randy Youngblood, president of **Apparel Resources**, a Yorba Linda, Calif.—headquartered consultancy that advocates for contractors to labor commissioners.

“You're going to lose workers on margins,” Youngblood said. “The powers that be who have been agitating for minimum wage didn't have that in mind at all.”

However, he forecasted that a need for domestic-apparel production will continue.

“I'm convinced that sewing trades will survive domestically because the manufacturers are so close to market,” he said. “Everyone is trying to compress the time from manufacturer's design to the cash register.” ●



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TRADE EVENTS



Hyperoom platform entrance and exhibit of Diesel Holiday styles

Trade Events *Continued from page 1*

"One must look for silver linings whenever and wherever possible," said Massimo Piombini, Diesel's chief executive officer. "2020 has sparked an urgency to accelerate what we can offer and accomplish in the digital space."

Diesel executives invite buyers to visit Hyperoom's digital showrooms, which offer three-dimensional displays of Diesel collections with two-dimensional closeups of items with product descriptions.

Buyers can make orders on the platform through a live chat with a Diesel representative. The representative handles the virtual meeting like a trade-show appointment, showing off the collection and, if the meeting goes well, taking an order.

Cotton Heritage, a premium apparel-blanks company headquartered in Commerce, Calif., has developed a new meeting procedure for retailers and companies who may not want to take a live meeting, said Ken White, Cotton Heritage's vice president of sales. The virtual meeting procedures were announced at the beginning of July, with the first meetings taking place the week of July 6.

With this new protocol, Cotton Heritage's staff encourages buyers to schedule a meeting with a Cotton Heritage representative on the scheduling app **Calendly**. Once a meeting is confirmed, buyers talk to a Cotton Heritage representative through the **Zoom** video-conferencing platform. The first Zoom meeting is basically a 15-minute meet-and-greet to find out what categories of blanks interest the buyer.

Once the interests in blanks are confirmed, Cotton Heritage delivers samples to the buyer and schedules a longer meeting over Zoom.

"The key is to get product in the customers' hands," White said. "Our T-shirts are known for having a great hand and a great printability. So even people in lockdown mode should be able to interact with the

product."

White stressed that Cotton Heritage intends to exhibit at in-person trade shows once the events run again. However, the company has been developing its virtual-meeting protocol for a while. Many buyers have been requesting virtual meetings in the past few years. The COVID-19 crisis simply impelled Cotton Heritage to try out the digital protocol.

"This puts us with our customers in the way they want to work. This is our world now," White said. "We're not going to walk away from trade shows. The interaction with new customers at trade shows means more than anything to us."

Cotton Heritage sales representatives and executives have held detailed discussions of how Zoom meetings should be handled. Technical issues of how to connect have been handled along with tips on how to make sales representatives' home offices look a bit like showrooms. However, the success of these virtual meetings is not guaranteed, said Dean De Costa, a Cotton Heritage sales representative who handles the company's accounts in such locales as Orange County, Calif., California's Central Coast and the Pacific Northwest.

"It's uncharted waters for us. The benefit is that it will allow us to reach out and connect with customers in a more personal way compared to a phone call," De Costa said.

It's also not guaranteed that every buyer will feel comfortable handling business online.

Fraser Ross of the Los Angeles-headquartered boutique company **Kitson** said that he would prefer to see new lines at an in-person trade show. He has not made orders at a virtual trade show because he had questions about privacy at these meetings. As a buyer in a competitive field, he did not want rivals to know what he was ordering. "Will there be 12 people on these Zoom meetings?" he joked. ●

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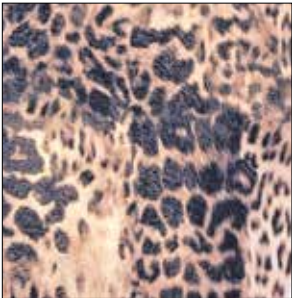
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Untamed Threads

Still wild about animal prints, fashion is maintaining its dedication to designs that honor the beauty of creatures such as leopards, tigers, cheetahs, snakes and zebras.



Asher Fabric Concepts



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Tiss et Teint

Deep Into Denim

Ubiquitous, yet a crucial component of the elements of style, denim returns to blue-jean basics in mid-wash or darker, with grays and black gaining momentum.



Global Denim



Global Denim



Twin Dragon Denim Mills



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Orta Anadolu



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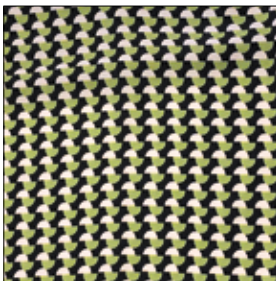
Twin Dragon Denim Mills

Falling for Patterns

Seasonal patterns include paisley, geometric shapes, refined twills, plaids and—still—tie-dye in autumnal hues of sienna, cranberry, milk chocolate and royal blue.



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Gilded and Glittering

Whether taking center stage on a golden garment or simply enhancing a textured fabric with flecks of glittery accents, shining brightly in gold or glitter adds joy to any occasion.



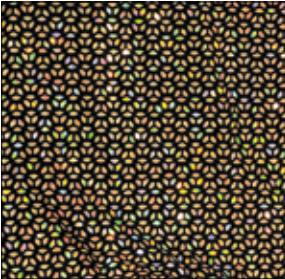
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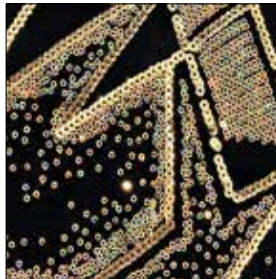
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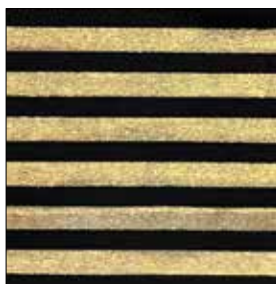
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Daring Delicates

Often a signature of old-world charm, lace retains its classic appeal yet transforms in bright colors and updated patterns that renew the look of this traditional textile.



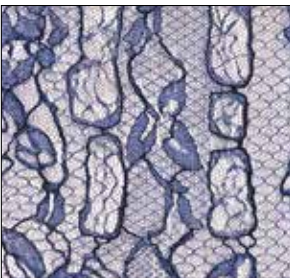
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Beyond Black and White

Creating chic garments relies on black and white or tiny pops of color that allow geometric patterns, animal prints, unique prints or updated stripes to tell the story.



Confetti Fabrics



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Botanic Blends

The garden of floral textiles regenerates in autumn with an array of flowery fabrics that includes dainty daisies in mustard and crimson or fall foliage in cool blues.



Bennet Silks



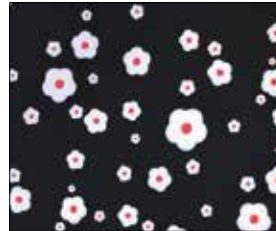
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TRADE EVENTS

Virtual Functional Fabric Fair Series to Launch With Mindful Trade-Show Mission

By Dorothy Crouch *Managing Editor*

The **Functional Fabric Fair Powered by Performance Days** is preparing to launch its virtual offering as digital trade events gain momentum due to COVID-19 cancellations of physical shows. Hosted July 20-23, **Reed Exhibitions'** Functional Fabric Fair will unveil the Expert Talks Live Webinar Series online with a 12-session schedule covering topics such as "Microfiber Analysis for More-Sustainable Product Development," "Verification and Validation: Communicating Sustainability Efforts to Consumers," and "Sustainable Sourcing and Supply-Chain Management" by the **Hohenstein Institute**; "Collaboration Is Key" with the **American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists** and "Inspired by Nature: The Evolution of Sport & Textile" with designer Nora Kühner.

"I want each session to spark an idea," Marketing and Industry Development Director Chadaé Bowler explained. "Even though our series covers sustainability and the focus topic, which is 'Inspired by Nature,' I want them to walk away with something valuable that helps them become more sustainable or collaborate with a speaker."

For Bowler, organizing a digital strategy means more than simply trying to fill the time that would have been occupied by the July 20-21 Functional Fabric Fair at the **Javits Center** in New York City.

"It is really important for me to put my customers first, but, for me, my customers aren't just the people on the other side of the screen," she said. "It's really important, for the relationships, to have these conversations

and not always be about the bottom line or 'How do I get ahead?'"

Within the current climate, Bowler is forging conversations regarding inclusivity in the fashion and trade-show spaces, which she hopes will inspire attendees to consider and implement actionable, progressive changes within their businesses. A session titled "Social Impact Is the New Black: Where the fashion and apparel industry is going wrong with diversity" will feature commentary from Brittany Sierra, founder of Portland's **The Sustainable Fashion Forum**, and Gus Harris, who is the director of product design and sourcing at **Mizzen+Main** and will share the company's perspectives as Black fashion professionals.

"Brittany Sierra has learned so much in the space and grown an incredible following to become a leader in educating consumers and brands regarding the direction we are going with sustainability," Bowler said. "It's important to have that diverse voice because it is a conversation that hasn't really been amplified enough to include the Black community."

Tactile experiences are crucial to the apparel industry, an important point that Bowler still considers when planning events. With an on-site trade-show foundation, she does see an opportunity to build additional virtual components in the future.

"This audience is very smart. Because it is a technical audience and our messaging for the overall series is not so much how to survive the COVID-19 pandemic, it's how we can create a more-sustainable future in fashion," she said. "Our physical events have to have some virtual aspect, whether a livestream or virtual showrooms. I am exploring all those options." ●



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Liberty Fairs Cancels Late-Summer Shows, Names New Exec

The **Liberty Fairs** contemporary trade shows scheduled to take place in Las Vegas in August and New York City in September have been canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, according to an announcement made July 8 to the high-end shows' vendors and buyers.

"We believe it is our ethical responsibility to revisit physical trade shows at a safer time and with the best practices in place, and so we are looking toward 2021 with high hopes," the Liberty statement read. "The decision was made with our community's health and safety in mind. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the future of group gatherings

through the end of this year remains unclear even as we closely monitor reopening timelines and border restrictions."

In place of the in-person Liberty Fairs, the trade-show company will produce a digital event in partnership with the wholesale platform **Joor**. **The Liberty Fairs Virtual Marketplace** is scheduled to make its debut on Aug. 3.

Liberty Fairs has been running a biannual Las Vegas trade show since 2013. It focuses on menswear ranging from streetwear to denim to suiting. Over the years, Liberty has also showcased women's styles, accessories and other products. Brands that have exhib-

ited at past Liberty Fairs include **Karl Lagerfeld Paris**, **John Varvatos**, the domestically made denim brand **Railcar Fine Goods**, the heritage leather outerwear company **Schott NYC** and the knits brand **Vince**.

Liberty Fairs' sibling trade show, **Ca-bana**, has also canceled its in-person trade event in Miami Beach, Fla., this month. In its place it will run a virtual trade show July 20.

Along with its trade-show announcements, Liberty Fairs also announced a new executive, Edwina Kulego, who was named Liberty Fairs' vice president. Kulego formerly served as international sales director for **Informa Markets**.—*Andrew Asch*

Trinidad3 and Vidalia Mills Launch American Selvedge

During the United States' Fourth of July celebration last weekend, Los Angeles-based, military veteran-founded **Trinidad3 Jeans** unveiled its selvedge partnership with Louisiana textile maker **Vidalia Mills**. Following the July 4 launch, demand skyrocketed, and certain sizes sold out, so the brand quickly moved to create more product.

"We have been making more to keep up with demand all week," said brand partner and **United States Marine Corps** veteran Joe Lafko. "I've made so many runs to the **UPS Store** that they gave me my own corner to put all of our boxes in so I can get in and out more quickly!"

This New American Selvedge jean relies on the work of Vidalia's antique **Draper X3** looms and includes details that speak to the Trinidad3 brand, including its signature red-bar tack on the left seam. The link to American heritage through working with Vidalia

Mills, creating a textile on the same machines that once yielded **White Oak** denim, is a facet of the project that Trinidad Garcia III, the brand's founder and former U.S.M.C. sergeant, finds extraordinary and in which he takes great pride.

"We knew we wanted to be able to have a classic feel and character to the jean, but we didn't want to just make something that was run of the mill, so to speak," Garcia III said. "We had to have our touches, our thoughts and our personal heritage ingrained in it. It preaches our story to the world, and we're stoked to be able to bring this to life after months and months of development."

From farm to finished piece, the collection relies on domestic resources. Farmed in Texas and Louisiana, the cotton used to create the selvedge-denim fibers is grown from **BASF** sustainable E3 cottonseed. For Eric Goldstein, business development leader at

Vidalia Mills, undertaking this project was an experience he valued as more than simply making denim.

"It's such an honor to work with Trinidad and Joe on this amazing project—they truly understand quality and appreciate the finest details," he said. "They are passionately making great product and changing veterans' lives at the same time."

Trinidad3's values connect consumers and veterans of the United States Armed Forces. The brand's longtime model, actor and veteran Rudy Reyes, appears in the campaign for Trinidad3's New American Selvedge. Trinidad3 is also known for providing financial support from the brand's profits to veterans' groups such as **Merging Vets and Players**.

Available online at *trinidad3.com*, the New American Selvedge collection is sold in sizes 28 through 40 at a retail price point of \$185.—*Dorothy Crouch*

NPD Survey Shows Extent of Digital-Commerce Growth

An increase in digital shopping could have been predicted during the COVID-19 pandemic. **The NPD Group** released survey results on July 9 that reveals the size of the online shift.

The New York market-research company found that more than half of survey respondents said that more than 50 percent of their planned apparel purchases for June would be made online, said Maria Rugolo, an NPD apparel-industry analyst.

"The pandemic forced an increase in on-

line shopping out of necessity, and the result was a stronger connection with the apparel consumer," she said. "Consumers have embraced new shopping habits."

Bricks-and-mortar stores have been slowly reopening; however, they have to follow new rules to ensure safety. In a May survey, almost one-third of consumers told NPD that they would be uncomfortable shopping bricks-and-mortar spaces after shelter-at-home orders were relaxed. Rugolo suggested further

development of customer-service practices would be necessary to attract consumers.

"Online shopping is one of many new behaviors and routines developed while under stay-at-home restrictions that are likely to have some staying power, but bricks-and-mortar retail can continue to bridge the consumer confidence gap with things like improved contactless services, sanitizing practices and personal appointments," Rugolo said.—*A.A.*

RETAIL

Levi's, Macy's Sales Results Reflect Ongoing COVID-19 Challenges

By **Andrew Asch** Retail Editor

Levi Strauss & Co. and **Macy's Inc.** recently released results from the past financial quarter, which was dominated by store closures due to the pandemic.

On July 7, denim giant Levi's announced a net loss for the quarter of \$364 million, which included restructuring charges, inventory costs and other charges related to the COVID-19 economic freeze. Its net revenues declined 62 percent to \$498 million compared to \$1.3 billion in the same quarter the previous year.

Because of the economic freeze, the denim giant would lay off 700 people, or about 15 percent of nonretail and nonmanufacturing workforces, said Chip Bergh, president and chief executive officer. But, according to Bergh, an annualized savings of \$100 million is expected from the downsizing move.

"We started the year with strong momentum, but the global pandemic and economic crises had a significant negative impact on our second-quarter results as our stores and most wholesale doors were

closed around the world for the majority of the quarter," Bergh said. "I'm proud of how the team stepped up, accelerating our activation of key e-commerce and omnichannel capabilities, proactively cutting costs, and managing cash smartly—and finding innovative ways to connect the Levi's brand with its fans."

Like many colleagues, Macy's has been dealing with store closures caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Macy's closed all of its 775 stores in March and started reopening them in late May. All except six locations are back in business, albeit operating at reduced hours, Jeff Gennette, chairman and chief executive officer, said.

As part of a restructuring plan to deal with the COVID-19 economic slowdown, Macy's announced that it would eliminate 3,900 jobs in its corporate and management sectors. These expected job cuts and its restructuring would contribute to savings of \$365 million this year.

The jobs-cuts announcement on June 25 was a harbinger of the July 1 announcement of results for the first fiscal quarter of

the year, which ended May 2. Net sales were \$3.017 billion, down more than 45 percent compared to \$5.5 billion in the first fiscal quarter of 2019. The company reported an earnings per share loss of \$11.53. Macy's withdrew its 2020 sales and earnings guidance and declined to provide an updated outlook.

During a July 1 call with analysts, Gennette said that Macy's Inc.'s digital business showed resilience. "The digital half of our business has shown very strong performances, and we expect this to continue at a healthy double-digit growth rate through the back half of the year," he said.

This type of retail downturn is not unique as every retailer deemed nonessential was forced to close during the first quarter of this year. The toll taken by the pandemic was exhibited in the **NRF's** "2020 Top 100 Retailers List," which was also released on July 1. Some 16 of the retailers are apparel focused, though the announcement also noted that two of the retailers, **Neiman Marcus** and **J.C. Penney Company, Inc.**, announced bankruptcy this year. ●

Inside the Industry

Virgil Abloh, artistic director of Louis Vuitton's menswear collection and chief executive officer of the Off-White fashion label, announced July 9 that he had raised \$1 million for scholarships for Black students. The Virgil Abloh "Post-Modern" Scholarship Fund will be managed in partnership with the New York-headquartered Fashion Scholarship Fund. Abloh named the initiative "Post-Modern" because recipients will not only receive funds but will also be given career support services and mentoring. "I've always been passionate about giving the next generation of students the same foundation for success that was given to me," Abloh said. "That's why I'm excited to launch this fund in partnership with the FSF, which has an outstanding track record of helping college students achieve successful careers."

Informa Markets Fashion recently announced that it would cancel several of its in-person trade shows scheduled to run in New York City in September due to continuing concerns over COVID-19. Among the in-person shows canceled are Project New York's Sept. 22–24 run and the Coterie trade show, which was also scheduled to run concurrently. The Coterie cancellation includes trade events Fame, Sole Commerce and Moda, said Nancy Walsh, president of Informa Markets Fashion. The Coterie team will produce a digital trade show scheduled for Sept. 1.

Supima, the nonprofit that represents U.S.-grown American Pima cotton, announced July 9 the final line-up of designers for its 13th Annual Supima Cotton Design Competition. The competition calls for student designers to create capsule collections by using fabrics made from Supima cotton. The student collections will be presented and judged in a digital runway show in September. Student designers selected to compete are Amanda Forastieri of Drexel University, Sakura Mizutani of the Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising, Jenny Feng of the Fashion Institute of Technology, Jennie Nguyen of Kent State University, Terrence Zhou of the Parsons School of Design and Koa Buenviaje of the Rhode Island School of Design.

Boohoo, a prominent United Kingdom fast-fashion retailer, has been accused of wage theft. The British newspaper *The Sunday Times* investigated Boohoo and alleged that the retailer was paying sewers the U.S. equivalent of \$4.40 per hour, well below the UK's minimum wage. On July 8, Boohoo's board released a statement that it has requested an independent investigator to review its supply chain.

Sanuk, a footwear division of the Deckers Brand, headquartered in Goleta, Calif., released its SustainaSole collection of vegan footwear on July 9. Sanuk said the SustainaSole is the most eco-friendly offering in the brand's 23-year-history. In the past, chemical foams to provide comfort and foot support were heavily used by the industry. Sanuk partnered with foam-sole manufacturer Blumaka to integrate its recycled-foam technology into the SustainaSole collection. It features slip-on silhouettes such as the woman's Donna and Chiba. Both styles retail for \$65.

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