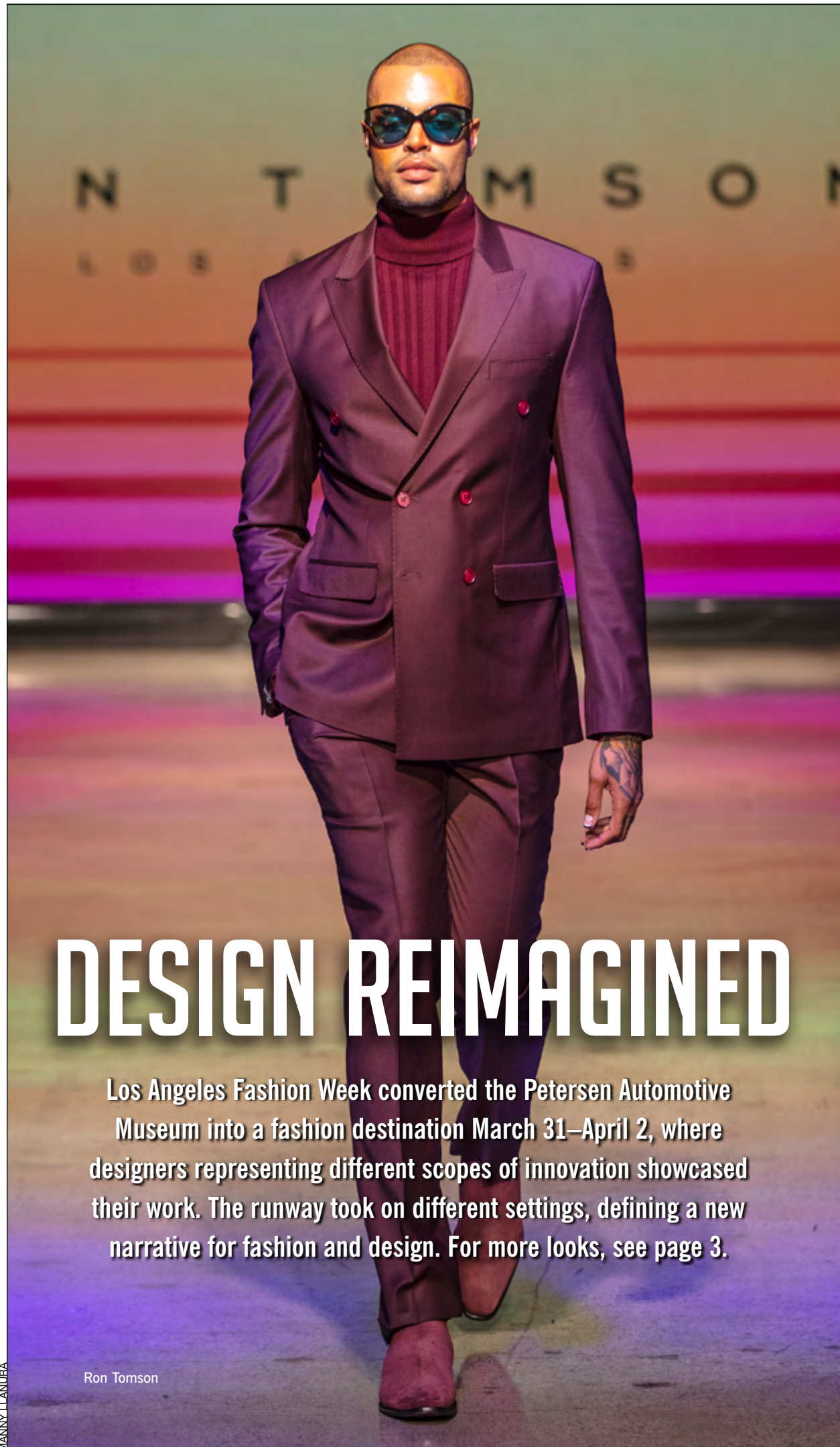


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DESIGN REIMAGINED

Los Angeles Fashion Week converted the Petersen Automotive Museum into a fashion destination March 31–April 2, where designers representing different scopes of innovation showcased their work. The runway took on different settings, defining a new narrative for fashion and design. For more looks, see page 3.

Ron Tomson

MANNY LLANUJA

FIBER AND YARN BY CARVED IN BLUE

Carved in Blue Checks In With Its Community Two Years Into COVID

Carved in Blue®, a denim community blog by the TENCEL™ denim team from **Lenzing**, collected community thoughts about COVID-19 and the indelible changes it has made. The resulting Blue Lenz video series “Headspace” allowed the team to connect over a shared experience happening many miles apart.

Two years later, Carved in Blue® got in touch with **Jeanologia**’s Carme Santacruz Zaragozá, Lucia Rosin of **Meidea**, Lenzing’s Michael Kininmonth, Mohsin Sajid of **Endrime**, denim consultant Salli Deighton and Sinem Celik of **BluProjects**, all of whom took a moment to reflect on their impressions since early 2020.

Carved in Blue: When you look back on the early days of lockdowns, how would you describe your headspace? How has this changed two years later?

Carme: I remember my early lockdown days lived with fear and confusion of the unknown new situation. But at the same time I remember being united and connected to my family, friends and colleagues, despite being apart.

➔ **Lenzing** page 5

RETAIL

DTLA Retailers Poised to Experience Strong 2022

By Tyler Shultz Assistant Editor

While the COVID-19 pandemic remains a challenge in retail, businesses have been reopening and attempting to resume business as usual. Independent retailers who were initially hit the hardest have been rebounding and experiencing success in different ways, whether through online sales or by having dedicated and loyal customer bases. While business is being conducted a bit differently these days with the increase in on-line and digital sales, retailers in downtown Los Angeles are navigating the new normal with success as they learn to adapt on the fly.

➔ **DTLA** page 6

INSIDE

Where fashion gets down to businessSM



Techtextil highlights international pavilions ... page 2

Avery Dennison helps brands reduce waste ... page 2

Dallas Market breaks pre-pandemic records ... page 4

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Fashion Industry Gets Set to Do Its Part for Earth Day



This Earth Day, the fashion industry is taking steps to not only support and highlight environmental protection but also reduce its environmental impact on the earth.

Earth Day is a worldwide event held every April 22 that aims to remind everyone to love and take care of the planet. The day highlights the need for accountability across all sectors regarding their roles in the environmental crisis, including the fashion industry.

This Earth Day, brands are doing their part to help make the earth a better place by recycling clothes or participating in clean-ups.

Sustainable apparel brand **Bella Dahl** is leading a beach cleanup April 19 at Zuma Beach in Malibu, Calif., where volunteers including celebrities, families and influencers will pick up trash to help preserve California's beaches. The brand will provide gloves and trash bags as well as gift bags as a thank-you to those who participate.

Retold Recycling is partnering with Cal-

ifornia-based **Jenni Kayne** to help shoppers clean out their closets for Earth Day while keeping their used clothes out of landfills, where an estimated 85 percent of clothing ends up. Retold is a sustainable mail-in service that recycles clothes and other household textiles and to date has recycled and diverted 18 tons of waste. On April 20, shoppers will be able to bring in their pre-loved clothing to any Jenni Kayne store to receive a discount off their next purchase.

In an effort to change the trajectory of the fashion industry, **Earthday.org** launched its Fashion for the Earth campaign last year to educate the public on sustainable fashion. With more than 150,000 partners in 192 countries worldwide, Earthday.org is the largest recruiter to the environmental movement.—*Tyler Shultz*

SUSTAINABILITY

Avery Dennison Adds New Eco Features to Its Connected Product Cloud

Avery Dennison Corporation has announced new features to its atma.io connected product cloud that will help change how brands reduce waste across the entire supply chain.

Currently over 22 billion items are managed by the platform across the apparel, retail, food and healthcare industries. Six of the top 20 apparel brands globally by revenue use the platform, including **Adidas**.

The atma.io spring release focuses on sustainability and waste management by including a new feature, Real-time Carbon Impact Analytics, which provides data-driven insights into the carbon footprint of a brand

and its products. The Real-time Waste Elimination Tool uses artificial intelligence and machine learning to analyze problems and inefficiencies in the supply chain, including movement of product at the pallet level or at individual items in a warehouse.

"We live in an ever-changing, data-driven world where constant access to timely, accurate insights is key to driving productivity and sustainability goals. The atma.io spring '22 release will empower businesses to get meaningful insights from data that have often been in silos, allowing them to make informed decisions in real time that can dramatically



Avery Dennison has announced new features for its atma.io platform that will help brands become more sustainable across all aspects of the supply chain.

transform their business agility and accelerate their performance across the bottom line, people, planet and profit," said Max Winoograd, vice president, connected products at Avery Dennison Smartrac.

Other features in the spring release include Sustainability Facility Assessment and Expiration Callouts, a Global Inventory Trace that tracks inventory along the supply chain, and Loss Prevention and Purchase Order Tracking.

The company recently launched its latest full-service ecosystem for on-product branding called Embelex, which provides a range of embellishment products and services to fashion and apparel brands as well as to sports organization and teams.

"Speed and scalability are at the heart of Embelex. Brands and organizations want to customize products, but they also want on-demand manufacturing, just-in-time delivery and as little waste as possible to meet their sustainability credentials," said Steve Mason, vice president and general manager, EMEA and Americas @ Avery Dennison and Embelex lead.—*T.S.*

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Inside the Industry

The OC Apparel Show has announced its inaugural OC Surf & Golf Show, a new trade event dedicated to the surf, golf and swimwear categories, according to Show Coordinator and President of the OC Apparel Show Jim Iwasaki. The inaugural event is set to take place June 27–28 in Irvine, Calif., at the Irvine Embassy Suites. The OC Apparel Show launched in May 2021, and the new OC Surf & Golf Show is designed to give surf and golf reps a show that works with their schedules. Salty Crew, Seavee's, iSea Sunglasses, Z Supply, Daniella Manini, American Needle and Reyn Spooner are some of the brands that have signed on for the first show.

Artistic Milliners has partnered with Star Fades International to create custom-designed uniforms for the staff to wear at the April 20–21 edition of the Kingpins Show in Amsterdam. The three-piece uniform features a jacket and pants made from Artistic Milliners' recycled cotton fabric using raw materials from its recycling facility, Circular Park, in its Pakistan facility, and the fabric was produced at the new ArtMill facility for non-denim fabrications. The uniforms were completed with a 100 percent cotton T-shirt that was dyed in Los Angeles at SFI using PureColor dyes. The tees were printed using sustainable Bio Black pigment, which is made from wood waste rather than petroleum by Natural Coatings.

Los Angeles shoemaker Tieks, known for its ballet flats, launched #TieksForUkraine, a virtual auction and raffle that allowed fans of the brand to purchase bygone and limited-edition styles while also supporting people in Ukraine. The auction was open to all U.S. residents and featured past limited editions and exclusive pairs that have never been sold, including a new one-of-a-kind style. #TieksForUkraine featured eight total pairs of exclusive Tieks styles, including the one-of-a-kind pair that was available to win via raffle. Within the first two hours, thousands of bids were placed with one going as high as \$4,500 over the four-day campaign. Tieks raised almost \$88,000, with 100 percent of the proceeds being donated to the World Central Kitchen's #ChefsforUkraine initiative, which aims to provide meals 24/7 to families at all eight border crossings. Tieks has also been involved with women empowerment and has become the largest individual lender on Kiva through the Gavrieli Foundation.

The Daily Front Row hosted its sixth annual Fashion Los Angeles Awards on April 10 at the Beverly Wilshire hotel. Hosted by Derek Blasberg, the Fashion Los Angeles Awards celebrates the visionaries and influencers in the fashion industry. Brandon Maxwell received Designer of the Year, Russell James received a Lifetime Achievement Award and Lisa McKnight received an award on behalf of Barbie for Fashion Influencer. Other awards were given out for Fashion Visionary, Style Curator, Hair Artist of the Year, Fashion Entrepreneur and Music Stylist of the Year. Presenters included celebrities Brie Larson, Christina Aguilera, Kendall Jenner, Machine Gun Kelly and Tiffany Haddish among others.

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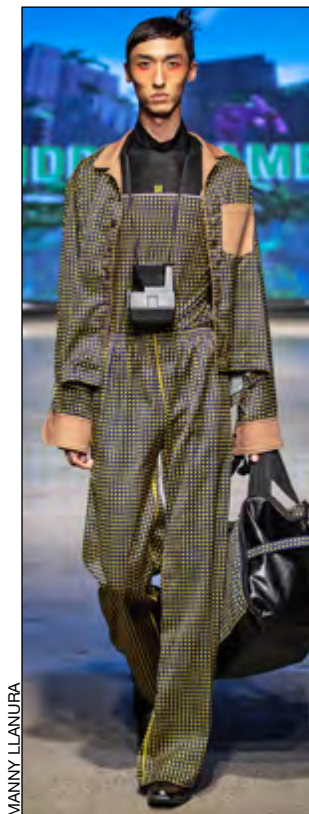
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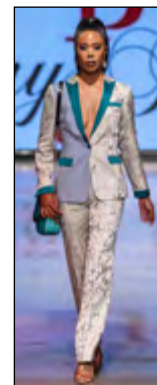
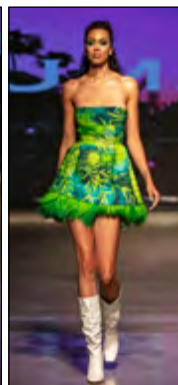


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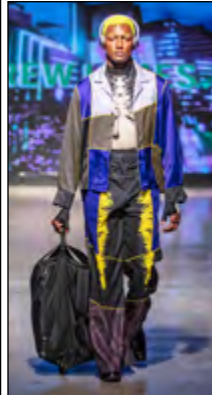
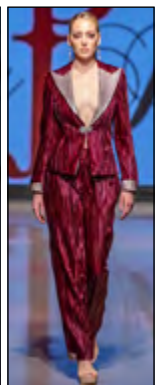
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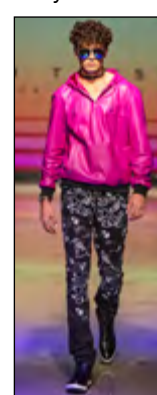
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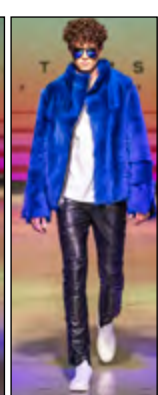
Perry Jones



Puey Quinones



Ron Tomson



LAFW Returns to Petersen Automotive Museum for Fall/Winter '22

Making its return to the **Petersen Automotive Museum** in the mid-city area of Los Angeles March 31–April 2, **Los Angeles Fashion Week** presented new levels of innovation from around the world, with five California designers showcasing their collections on the runway.

The second night of the show redefined contemporary, opening with the Andrew James collection tapping into the essence of uncertainty as models emerged from the shadows to express boundless levels of creativity in the collection's fabrications.

Puey Quinones created a velvety experience when female models embodying the Victorian era with its silhouettes and colorways evolved into a picturesque version of the modern woman.

The Saturday runway shows were dedicated to streetwear, with the Los Angeles-based **Humans** brand bringing a new take on puffer jackets and vests to the runway as well as new interpretations of pants, gowns and skirts.

Bless Mazarura, designer of **Bless by Bless**, said LAFW was like a coming-out party as it was the first runway show

for the brand on a major platform. "We've received a lot of feedback so far. For the most part, I think a lot of people resonated with the spiritual aspect of the brand and the messages of unity, self-empowerment and honoring your heritage," Mazarura said.

The show closed on Saturday night with a surprise guest appearance by Justin Mensinger, winner of the first season of **HBO Max's "The Hype,"** a reality show designed to showcase and highlight upcoming designers in the streetwear space.—Tyler Shultz, Betti Halsell

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The Dallas Market Center saw a lot of activity across its apparel, footwear and accessories categories for everything from Immediates through Fall/Winter.

Dallas Market Posts Double-Digit Attendance Increase Over Pre-Pandemic Shows

By Tyler Shultz Assistant Editor

The **Dallas Market Center** held the **Dallas Apparel & Accessories Market** March 22–25 concurrent with the **Total Home & Gift Market**. As the DMC continues to recover from the pandemic, it also continues to grow as a destination for the Southern region to source the latest styles and trends.

Prior to market, the DMC offered a peek into what it expected to be trending for the Fall/Winter 2022 season, including natural, earthy tones; fabrics such as woolen flannel, cozy shearling, rustic marled knits, waxed canvas and cable knits; and rustic argyle, layered color blocking and brushed plaid patterns.

“Our March market always welcomes the widest array of buyers from across the country including apparel stores but also gift and lifestyle boutiques. For this edition, we enjoyed a double-digit increase in attendance versus pre-pandemic shows, and we presented a record number of brands in expanded temporary space. We’re thrilled with our momentum going into the warmer months and two summer shows,” said Eva Walsh, EVP of retail development and leasing, Dallas Market Center.

Buyers at Dallas Market were able to see products from a variety of brands across the apparel, footwear and accessories

categories, taking in products from both the Spring/Summer and Fall/Winter seasons. Attendees were also invited to attend a fashion show, *The Crystal Ball*, which featured Fall lines from Dallas Market Center exhibitors.

Cami Krablin, contemporary buyer for **Gus Mayer**, said she has been attending the Dallas Market for over 20 years on both the buyer and wholesaler side. She was attending the March market to finish what she couldn’t get to in New York and noted that she saw a lot of vegan leathers as well as trends that represent classic styles but with an updated twist.

Alysa Cascio, owner and buyer of the **Alysa Rene Boutique** in Leawood, Kan., and Naomi Snow, buyer, said Dallas Market was the best it has ever been and catered to a wide variety of retailers with its different options in styles, price points and ages. They noted that there was a lot of color throughout the market as well as many different patterns. Cascio said they were looking for a variety of price points and wrote several orders.

“We cater to mid to higher price points, although I have two departments for my Open To Buy. On my OTB, I buy tops that cost under \$75 and tops that are over \$75. That way I cater to both price points,” Cascio said.

Lacey Snyder, founder and CEO of the **Lace Collective** showroom in the DMC, said that market was great and

mentioned that the show has become a hot spot for stores to attend. Lace Collective opened in February of 2020 and celebrated the grand opening of its new atrium spot at the March market. The showroom has grown to a team of five full-time employees and represents the brands **Shu Shop Shoes**, **Sahira Jewelry**, **Girl Dangerous**, **Reset By Jane**, **The Laundry Room**, **Peixoto**, **TheNow**, **Ringstreet Designs** and **Cream Yoga**.

Snyder said that buyers were looking for Immediates in sneakers and other shoe styles as well as graphic T-shirts and matching sets for Spring/Summer. She added that buyers were placing a lot of orders as they were looking to get product in as soon as possible.

“A lot of our stores are having record-breaking months and years, and a lot of them don’t know what to attribute it to,” Snyder said. “I think people learned to shop small over the last two years, and our stores are definitely feeling the love from local customers. We have stores needing Immediates weekly, which is always great for us and our brands!”

Snyder also noted an increase in dressier styles and pieces as people are excited to go out again. “We have definitely noticed an increase in occasion wear. I think people are excited to travel again and are planning their outfits ahead of time,” Snyder added. ●

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Carme Santacruz Zaragoza, Jeanologia



Lucia Rosin, Meidea



Michael Kininmonth, Lenzing

Lenzing *Continued from page 1*

Lucia: I have realized during these two years that we are vulnerable, both for the general health of the people but also, and above all, for a matter of mental health. The connection between people—the contact between human beings—is fundamental for well-being. After two years I have a physical need to see and meet in person.

Michael: In our daily lives we seem to be encountering increasing complexity and decreasing control. So, it is difficult not to feel somewhat overwhelmed—a feeling that has not diminished two years on. At the same time, there is definitely a feeling of privilege in terms of being born and living in a wealthy, democratic country and working for a company that has supported its employees throughout the pandemic.

Mohsin: I was so shocked by the full stop—how it happened. I was traveling in Japan as I saw the news explode. When we got home, we went into full lockdown. I was very concerned about my family and elderly parents and how we would pay our mortgage. It was also a fast way to find out which of our clients would take care of us. In the last two years, the concerns are still the same, but I'm just thankful we have been too busy and adjusted very quickly to working from home. A few years prior we moved our studio into our home, so we were the lucky ones.

Salli: I had been working in Italy most weeks before COVID, so it felt very surreal to be grounded at home for the foreseeable future. There was a panic, getting my family safely back in the nest, and an eerie sense of the unknown ahead. I have to admit, I think I'd been heading for burnout at the pace I'd been living. I wondered if that schedule had converted into real work value, and I realized I really didn't need to travel so much. Two years on, learning to pace myself is a challenge. It's in my nature, and there's always so much to learn! I try to ensure I bring real value to every given task and try to focus on what projects will really make a big difference long-term.

Sinem: I think the biggest challenge and change for me was to be okay with uncertainties. I think I've personally developed and now even enjoy the endless possibilities in the unknown. Another big change for me is, instead of traveling almost every week in pre-COVID life, I live continuously in a small area nearby the woods. Living in harmony with nature's cycle has changed my perception of time and how to spend it.

Carved in Blue: *What are the top things you've discovered—about yourself or the world around you—as a result of the pandemic?*

Carme: I think that COVID-19 has shaken our way of living completely, and this new situation has made us reassess our priorities. Now we embrace technology as an ally to be more efficient in our workspaces and as a great tool to be close to our loved ones, despite the distance. Sustainability is the only option, and it is not just for the planet but also for our own well-being.

Lucia: I found that I have a lot of friends all over the world, and I look for their support and friendship. I feel like a better person despite the dramatic period we have been through—and are still going through. I also discovered that traveling is important but we can also work online if we establish relationships in person to understand each other first.

Michael: The first thing that I would say is that there can be no return to "normality," because normality has got us where we are today. Secondly, it is difficult not to be pessimistic. However, we must counter what I would describe as "unthinking pessimism"—that is, an insistence that social problems are so beyond our control that we cannot avoid catastrophe. Thirdly, clearly the situation is serious—as witnessed by the recent sixth IPCC Assessment Report, in which the UN Secretary General António Guterres describes it as "an atlas of human suffering and a damning indictment of failed climate leadership." Climate change is an even greater and more complex global challenge than the pandemic. By its very nature, this task requires concerted international action.

Mohsin: An I-can-do-anything attitude—I think it came out more over this period. I've always had a belief that I could do anything when it comes to being creative. We straight away stopped designing collections and moved into creating digital content—from webinars, podcasts and hosting events with 600-plus people, it was immensely fun. I found all of a sudden I had access to many people who were difficult to get access to pre-COVID. People's calendars were open. We all become experts on Zoom. I actually taught hundreds of students online, and I think in some way it actually helped them. Students who sometimes are too shy to speak had 15- or 30-minute slots with me one-on-one.

Salli: I have too much denim in my house, and most of it doesn't fit me! With samples redirected to my home and my loft office developing a bowed floor under the weight of hangers and samples, I realized how we have to work smarter. We're sustainable, but only when it's convenient! The "every man for himself" approach from retailers was shameful, and I felt embarrassed for my industry. We need to implement measures so this can never happen again.

Sinem: About myself—discovering new possibilities and creative solutions and what's really essential in my life. About the world—that we are all connected.

Carved in Blue: *Looking ahead, what makes you most hopeful?*

Carme: I would like to think that after everything that has happened, we can learn from our mistakes. But now, after fighting the pandemic, we are fighting a war. I think that what brings hope is, precisely, that we are more empathetic and we are able to adapt to whatever happens.

Lucia: Surely young people—how much awareness they have gained, their depth of thought. The ease in the use of new technologies inspires and encourages me to learn new things that I do not know to improve myself.

Michael: How often in the last two years has it been said that the world will never be the same again after the COVID-19 pandemic? If so, how might it change? Might it not change much at all? The questions have given rise to speculative debate, with optimists and pessimists offering their predictions. One lesson from the pandemic is society's ability to rapidly adapt to changing circumstances such as working from home, meeting online, social distancing, and large-scale financial support for vulnerable sectors and populations. Effective action against climate change will no doubt require similar resilience and an even greater capacity to innovate. Some aspects of the fight against this pandemic give reason to hope that this is possible.

Mohsin: I am hopeful that it's more acceptable to work from home. I used to be shy and embarrassed that we had a home studio. I now know many are trying to achieve the same thing. We were the lucky ones.

Salli: We have had to think about the supply chain differently, and this has opened the gateway for new business models and better working practices. COVID times gave me the opportunity to refine business plans for a U.K. denim hub, which will support U.K. brands and retailers and enable us to work smarter, de-risk, and, most importantly, educate the next generation of designers, buyers and techs. Sustainability has accelerated with consumers. When people can't shop for a few months, they start to think about fashion in a much healthier way. Also, we have all learned to do our jobs better. We all Zoomed and learned so many new things. Lockdown was kind to me, and I emerged with a greater network of denim friends and connections who share a united passion to learn and drive positive change.

Sinem: Gen Z, including my daughter, is here to question, act to improve and transform everything we know. A quote I repeat a lot lately is: "I can shake the world in a very gentle way."

This report has been lightly edited for space.

Get connected at <https://carvedinblue.tencel.com> ●



Mohsin Sajid, Endrime



Salli Deighton, denim consultant



Sinem Celik, BluProjects

DTLA *Continued from page 1*

Virgo

216 E. 9th St.
(213) 988-8899

Tucked around the corner from the Los Angeles Fashion District's **Cooper Design Space** is **Virgo**, where owner, designer and buyer Rana Shoar has been selling vintage apparel in addition to her own creations for more than a decade.

Shoar has been involved in the fashion industry for years, starting with her family, who works in manufacturing, to graduating from the **Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising** and working for other people. Virgo opened in November 2009 and exclusively carried vintage men's and women's styles. The store has shifted to contain a bit of trend but is rooted in vintage, where it is a noted destination for its vintage **Levi's** collection and vintage original band T-shirts.

"It's mostly women's now, but at the same time if it fits you and looks good on you then go for it," Shoar said. "We're not really exclusive to any gender, and vintage is very unisex anyway. It's like a mixed bag between someone who can oscillate



Virgo was opened in 2009 by Rana Shoar, who is the owner, buyer and designer of the shop, which is rooted in vintage but also carries some trend and Shoar's own line of products. (center) Vintage '70s-'90s Levi's 501s. (right) Vintage French workwear coveralls.

between their vintage 501s to a summer dress to something like an oversized suit."

Shoar also designs a collection every season with inspiration coming from whatever she is feeling at the time, such as reconstructed vintage or her linen line, which she launched in 2021. Sustainability is her core, and she reflects those values in her merchandise. Prices at the shop range from \$12 for accessories to \$350 for Levi's 501 single-stitch denim with the

desirable big E on the tab. Shoar also offers in-store tailoring for the vintage jeans.

"Light tailoring is offered with each pair of jeans—it's included in the price. I think that extra [touch] makes the customers feel good. It's tailored to their bodies, and it's something we wanted to provide. The jeans aren't often perfect, so that's what we're trying to provide—the perfect pair of jeans," Shoar said.

The store currently has a website in the works but sells on **Instagram** and other social media through direct messaging. Shoar said social selling was important during the pandemic and allows the shop to provide the customer service it is known for in a digital capacity.

Although the store has been open for over a decade, new customers are always happening upon it due to its unassuming location. A large part of the customer base includes stylists and others who work in the neighborhood's showrooms, often shopping on their lunch breaks.

"It's kind of fun that there's this youthfulness with people just discovering us, and we have people who have been shopping here since high school who are then in college and then get married and we have this history with our customers and it makes us feel really good," Shoar said.

Pamela V

111 E. 9th St.
(562) 212-1633

pamelavjewelry.com

Pamela Vilchez has been running her boutique, **Pamela V**, in DTLA since 2019. After spending time in the television industry and working in showrooms, Vilchez was inspired by her mother, who owned a boutique on Santee Alley for 20 years, to return to her roots and open her own store.

The shop sells a mix of clothing, jewelry, accessories and home-décor items while also being the home for Vilchez's own line of handbags, which she sells both wholesale and retail. Accessories go for \$8 to \$12 while bags go for \$200 to \$300. Products are handmade and manufactured in Peru with the same group of artisans who have been working with Vilchez's family for years.

When the pandemic hit, Vilchez had to close the store for five months but continued selling her products online by



Pamela Vilchez has had her boutique on 9th Street since 2019, despite having to close for five months during the pandemic.

bringing the items home, taking pictures, and posting on websites and social media. She offered a delivery service to drop products off at customers' doors after purchase.

"I have a customer who has been buying throughout the entire pandemic and up to today all through Instagram," Vilchez said. "She is one of my best customers, yet she has never been

in-person to the store due to the pandemic. When I post something or make a video of products is how she buys."

Crochet and bright colors have been selling well lately in addition to the fanny packs Vilchez has been making since the pandemic began. She mentioned she has also been seeing the evil-eye design everywhere in both clothing and jewelry.

"We've been selling a lot of fanny packs. I create bags, but during the pandemic I was thinking people weren't carrying as many bags. I felt women needed their hands to deal with masks and sanitizers and stuff and not deal with big, bulky bags. I'm still selling fanny packs, and they've definitely been a bestseller," Vilchez said.

Vilchez mentioned that even these days she gets customers who remember her mom's boutique. "I have customers who come in and say they used to go to my mom's shop when they were like 12 years old and now they are in their thirties. They mention how much they loved the handmade products and how my mom inspired them to even open their own stores," Vilchez said.

pskaufman...

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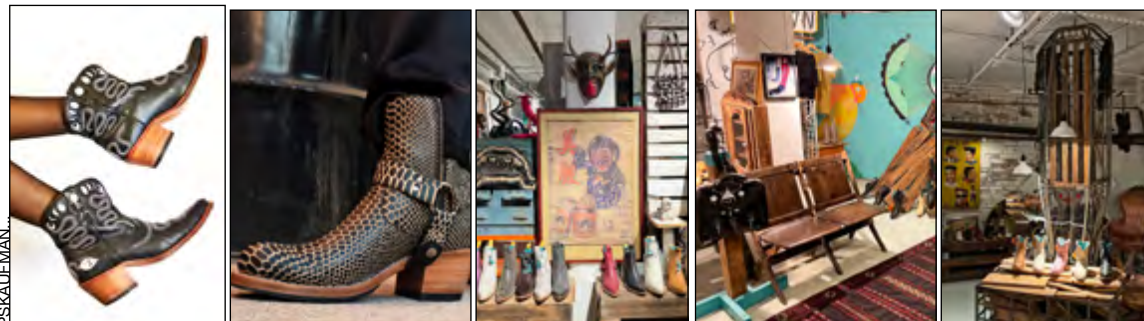
pskaufman.com

Since 2014, **pskaufman...** has provided "Goodyear-welted shoes for stylish individuals" in downtown L.A., bringing a fun and unique flair to footwear that allows a person to look and feel cool for a long time.

Paul Kaufman, owner and designer at pskaufman..., started the brand in 2010 and had previous success as one of the owners of **NaNa**, which was one of the first retailers to bring **Dr. Martens** to the U.S. from England. With a background in design but not specific to anything in particular, Kaufman became enamored with the shoe-making process after taking a tour of a factory and seeing that it incorporated a lot of different aspects he was interested in such as sculpture and even chemistry.

As the brand continued to grow, it eventually outgrew its original space—Kaufman's house in Santa Monica. Downtown L.A. was a perfect location as the area was buzzing at the time and was a centralized location for a lot of different L.A. regions.

"It seemed like a great location where you're not too far



pskaufman... has been providing "Goodyear-welted shoes for stylish individuals" in downtown L.A. since 2014. The shop offers a wide range of men's and women's footwear with options to customize products in-store.

from anyone, whether it be Pasadena or the San Gabriel Valley or even the beach cities. Nothing was more than maybe a half an hour, so it just made perfect sense for us," Kaufman said.

The shop offers a wide range of men's and women's footwear, from shoes to boots in a variety of styles and heights. Kaufman also offers options for customization, all done in-store, such as adding different outsoles and different color finishes, allowing the opportunity for a customer to end up with a unique product. He uses materials such as recycled tires and other upcycled materials to create the looks and customizations available.

Kaufman mentioned he doesn't get too involved in trends

the brand is able to have an effect financially, culturally and environmentally then he is doing something positive.

"We spend a lot of time making sure that the shoes fit properly. We do it really old school. We don't have a scanner to find someone's foot shape or anything, but we spend a lot of time online, on phone calls and in the store to make sure that the fit is correct. Obviously that ensures a happy foot, which makes a happy customer and perhaps a nicer human," Kaufman said. "My goal is to make an amazing product at a very fair price. Something that is irresistible from a design point of view and a functional point of view, something that will last a long time and can be repaired." ●

because he makes shoes that are meant to last a long time and can be repaired if needed, but he acknowledges that he does have to sell shoes to remain in business. He follows his instincts and creates what he believes fits both what he likes and what he thinks other people would like. He said he wants the brand to represent something beyond making shoes and believes that if

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