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UNDER THE SUN

Trina Turk's latest collection embraces her signature colors and prints, "shining bright on all things summer—sandy beaches, cool ice pops on the boardwalk, fruity cocktails in a cabana, dancing in the warm summer night."

For more looks, see page 3.

TRINA TURK

TRADE-SHOW REPORT

FashionGo Debuts In-Person Trade Event With FashionGo Week Palm Springs

By Tyler Shultz Assistant Editor

B2B wholesale marketplace **FashionGo** debuted **FashionGo Week Palm Springs** at the **Palm Springs Convention Center** May 3–5, the first in-person trade event for the company. FashionGo held virtual events during the pandemic but aims to bring the trade-show experience into the new digital age by adding in the speed, convenience and efficiency of FashionGo's technologies and tools.

"The concept of merging both physical and digital markets into one impactful marketplace experience was both ambitious and new to our community that we are proud to have executed successfully," said Tom Nastos, co-founder of **FG Events**, a division of FashionGO. "It connects and creates

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FINANCE

Otis College Releases 2022 Report on Creative Economy in California

By Tyler Shultz Assistant Editor

Otis College of Art and Design in collaboration with economic-research and planning firm **CVL Economics** has released the "2022 Otis College Report on the Creative Economy," which shows jobs in California's creative industries have bounced back in a big way after initial numbers during the pandemic showed creative industries being hit among the hardest. Now in its 15th year being published, a survey of readers found 85 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the report is a critical resource for tracking California's creative economy.

The report covers five creative industries: entertainment and digital media, fine and performing arts, architecture and

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EVENTS

American Apparel & Footwear Association Hosts 45th AAFA American Image Awards

After hosting virtual events for two years, the **American Apparel & Footwear Association** hosted the **45th AAFA American Image Awards** at the **Plaza Hotel** in New York City. Hosted by journalist and media personality Segun Oduolowu, the event honored leaders, innovators and influencers in the apparel and footwear industries.

The AAFA American Image Awards gave out honors to Chip Bergh from **Levi Strauss & Co.** as Person of the Year, **Gap Inc.** as Company of the Year, Prabal Gurung as Designer of the Year, **ThirdLove** as Fashion Maverick and **The Ellen MacArthur Foundation's** Fashion Initiative as the Eco-Steward of the Year.

"The 2022 honorees are true visionaries, turning hard-learned lessons into new sources of strength to build a better industry and a better world," said AAFA President and CEO Steve Lamar. "AAFA thrives on the energy that our honorees bring every day and taps into the passions of all our members as we create educational and policy solutions for the industry. We are proud of—and eager to multiply—their impactful contributions around the globe."

Heidi Zak, co-founder and CEO of San Francisco-based ThirdLove, noted that if pre-worn bras they receive cannot be donated to other women, surprisingly, the bra closures are instrumental in helping turtles recover from injuries sustained due to accidents and

are donated to a wildlife rescue.

"We knew we could do better at ThirdLove, and that's what we did. Today, we are one of the largest donors of bras and underwear in the country, with more than \$50 million worth of product donated to date."

For the sixth year, the AAFA partnered with the **Council of Fashion Designers of America Foundation** as its beneficiary, with



Honorees at the 45th AAFA American Image Awards included California companies Levi's, Gap and ThirdLove. The awards honor leaders, innovators and influencers in the footwear and apparel industries.

the proceeds funding the industry and the development of philanthropic programs.

"As the CFDA commemorates 60 years of fashion this year, we reflect on the industry's evolution over the past six decades, recognizing the immense impact American fashion has created across the globe, including that of which has been created by tonight's honorees," said CaSandra Diggs, president of the CFDA.—Tyler Shultz

Inside the Industry

Dyntex, a developer and manufacturer of functional materials in Austria, has brought its first functional textiles made from recycled car tires to the market. Dyntex recovers a polyamide polymer from old tires using its thermochemical process to turn the polymer into fine yarn, which is then processed and used to make an ultra-light functional fabric. The recycled fabrics meet the same standards as fabrics made from newly produced polyamide, and the ultra-light aspect makes the textiles ideal for sportswear, lifestyle and workwear fashions. Dyntex originally put its first functional textiles made from biosynthetic yarn and biodegradable fabric on the market in 2020. "Our sustainable, functional textiles caused a commotion in the industry two years ago. Our collection that uses recycled car tires as a base material is going to be another milestone," said Alexander Gächter, head of sales at Dyntex.

Lucidworks recently surveyed customers who shop for apparel in the United States and the United Kingdom and found respondents observed a noticeable increase in "out-of-stock" messages during the pandemic but were open to relevant substitutions that matched their taste, preferred fit and price range. Some 76 percent of shoppers said they would sometimes or always buy a substitute but weren't always offered relevant substitutions, leading shoppers to a "no results" page, meaning they were leaving without purchasing anything. Nearly a quarter of shoppers said that even though they would shop for substitutes they would still like to know and are willing to wait for the item they actually wanted. The survey also said that proactive messaging and notifications, such as notifying when an item will be back in stock or alerting when an item is low in stock, can be effective ways to ensure shoppers can get what they want.

Product Innovation Apparel has revealed the agenda for its upcoming PI Apparel New York show, set to be held June 28–29 at The Metropolitan Pavilion in Manhattan's Chelsea neighborhood. PI Apparel New York will bring together leaders in the fashion, apparel and footwear industries to discuss digitization, scaling assets, sustainability and innovation strategy in an effort to advance digital-product creation. Attendees will be able to browse a floor of exhibitors as well as attend a variety of panel discussions and speeches on different topics in the digital space. The metaverse and digital products will be a hot topic at the event with such key speeches as "The Metaverse: Why the Fashion Industry Should Care and Fashion 2025: The Year Physical Clothing Becomes Obsolete" further explaining the capabilities the technology has in the apparel industry.

Archroma has launched its first-ever ready-to-use swatch book dedicated to creating sustainable black and dark-color basics for faster time to market to support its Deep Dive 2.0 system. The system results in a shorter dyeing process combining right-first-time productivity, improved fabric quality, and reduced water and energy utilization resulting in up to 31 percent less water usage and 34 percent less energy used. The new swatch book is meant to be a tool to help bridge the gap between "art and science" and help designers avoid issues with color that lead to lengthy delays

and compromises in function, performance and/or color. Medium to dark shades are popular with consumers, so the 48 shades swatched in the Deep Dive 2.0 book have been selected based on that information. Customers can use the colors as presented or as inspiration, whereby Archroma can create and match new customer colors using the system.

Future Fabrics Expo has announced the exhibitors for the 10th Future Fabrics Expo held at Magazine London June 28–29. Attendees will be able to see and source a variety of traceable yarns, sustainable initiatives and best-practices suppliers as well as explore emerging innovations in the textile and fabric space. Fabrics on display include regenerative agricultural farming systems; alternative skin materials; regenerated cellulose; recycled textiles, both natural and synthetic; textiles from pre- and post-consumer waste: organic cottons; low-impact wools and animal fibers; sustainable silks, linens and bast fibers; responsibly produced leather; innovations from mycelium and next-gen viscose; and fabric for small-order quantities. Core exhibitors include UPW, Bananatex, Recycetex, Bossa, Imbotex, Nova Kaeru and Clerici Tessuto.

Green Theme Technologies has launched EMPEL DSR with PFAS-free chemistry that provides durable stain protection across a wide range of textiles. Researchers applied stains such as mustard, red wine and coffee on polyester and acrylic fabrics and let them sit for 24 hours. After a laundry cycle, the post-laundry scores showed excellent results following the American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists' 130 stain standards. EMPEL DSR encapsulates each fiber in a yarn with a protective polymer that prevents stains contacting the fibers. The stains are actually more easily released in a cold-water laundry cycle. EMPEL DSR was certified by OEKO-TEX for general environmental safety and as PFAS-free by Bureau Veritas.

Noble Biomaterials has announced the launch of its latest collection, Wash Minus-, in partnership with Hong Kong-based Crystal International Group Limited. Crystal Denim, the international division leading the collaboration, uses Noble's Ionic+ Durable antimicrobial solution at denim's finishing stage. Wash Minus- aims to educate consumers on the power of antimicrobials by reducing water consumption. Applying the topical form of Ionic+ to denim reduces the need for frequent washing and saves energy and other natural resources while increasing the life of the fabric.

Tiare Hawaii launched its first sustainable collection on Earth Day 2022, Tiare Hawaii Naturals. The collection features products made with fibers created from banana, bamboo, eucalyptus, pineapple and mulberry-bark silk, resulting in soft, natural and breathable pieces. Piña, a textile fiber created from pineapples, provides a delicate but durable fiber that gives off vibrant colors. Mulberry silk is a 100 percent natural vegan silk that does not involve the use of silkworms to make the fabric. The resulting products are plant-based, vegan, cruelty-free and organic. All of the packaging is made from biodegradable materials—even the hangtags—to help others see sustainability in action as well as reduce waste.

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Trina Turk's Summer Collection Fully Embraces the Golden State

Inspired by California's multicultural mix, creativity, craftsmanship and architecture, the Trina Turk Summer '22 collection, *Under the Sun*, features the brand's signature bold prints and colors that combine American design with California confidence.

Turk founded the brand in 1995 as a contemporary line, and it eventually evolved into a print- and color-driven brand that celebrates and encapsulates the essence of California and has grown to include women's ready-to-wear and accessories, swimwear, eyewear, paper goods, a Mr. Turk menswear collection and residential goods.

The collection, which launched in March and is updated every month, features off-shoulder and one-shoulder dresses in a variety of colors, prints and fabrics in various lengths and silhouettes, offering "the ease of bohemian glamour with a dose of sunny optimism."

"Our customers are returning for their summer holiday wardrobes, and as the temperatures rise we stayed mindful to our commitment of using quality fabrics in our signature prints and colors," Turk said. "We are offering summer-ready silhouettes in our key prints like Playa de Flor in sun-washed sherbet florals; Desert Garden with whimsical cacti; Birds of Paradise with Day-Glo tropical florals; and Pineapple Paradise, which gives the vintage Hawaiian shirt a modern update with feminine florals and graphic pineapples."

Turk said that *Under the Sun* was a big inspiration and overarching theme for her Summer collection, fully embracing California and the Golden State nickname the state is known by and following the Palm Springs Eternal theme of her Spring '22 collection. Turk noted that she loves to incorporate new styles while also offering signature pieces,

with a wide range of categories from ready-to-wear and swim to pillows and home goods keeping things new and fresh for all customers. The Summer collection also features a sequin series using white and sparkling watermelon sequins available on beach-ready shorts, tank tops and cocktail dresses.

"Warm, golden summer rays shine bright on all things summer—sandy beaches, cool ice pops on the boardwalk, fruity cocktails in a cabana, dancing in the warm summer night. Celebrate all things summer with pops of bright solids like a summer ice-cream shop—watermelon, sherbet and lemon—it's a treat for the senses," Turk said.

The latest collection is available at **Trina Turk** retail locations and online. The brand recently celebrated its 25th anniversary and looks forward to continuing to share its optimism and California confidence.—Tyler Shultz





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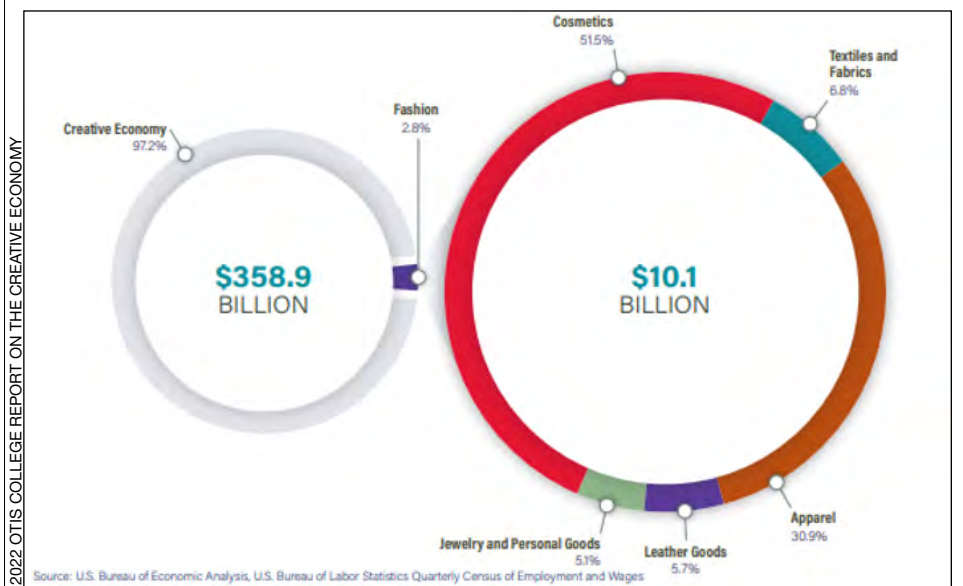
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FINANCE



Now in its 15th year being published, a survey of readers found 85 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Otis report is a critical resource for tracking California's creative economy.

Otis College *Continued from page 1*

related services, creative goods and products, and the fashion industry. Employment in those industries has dropped 85 percent since 2007 in Los Angeles County while California employment grew 15 percent, down from 22 percent in 2019.

The report pointed to a number of macro-economic conditions that had a profound effect on California's creative economy. Many sectors were affected by the recession during the second quarter of 2020, and the high price of inflation has continued to be a problem, although it doesn't affect all industries and households evenly. Supply-chain issues continue to plague the economy, driving inflation and mainly disrupting the creative goods and products of the creative economy, with the composition of the labor force having changed considerably due to the economic shutdown.

At \$358.9 billion, the creative economy in California collectively accounted for 11.8 percent of the state's total Gross Regional Product. Overall, wages for jobs in the creative industry in California more than doubled between 2007 and 2020, from nearly \$76,000 to \$158,000, compared to the 53.7 percent increase in wages across the overall economy. In Los Angeles County, creative economy wages increased 64.7 percent compared to 41.7 percent overall.

The fashion industry made up 2.8 percent of California's GRP. The industry has continued to lag in both California and Los Angeles County, mainly due to the long-term decline of manufacturing in the United States. Employment initially stabilized after losing a number of employees due to the Great Recession but began dropping again in 2014.

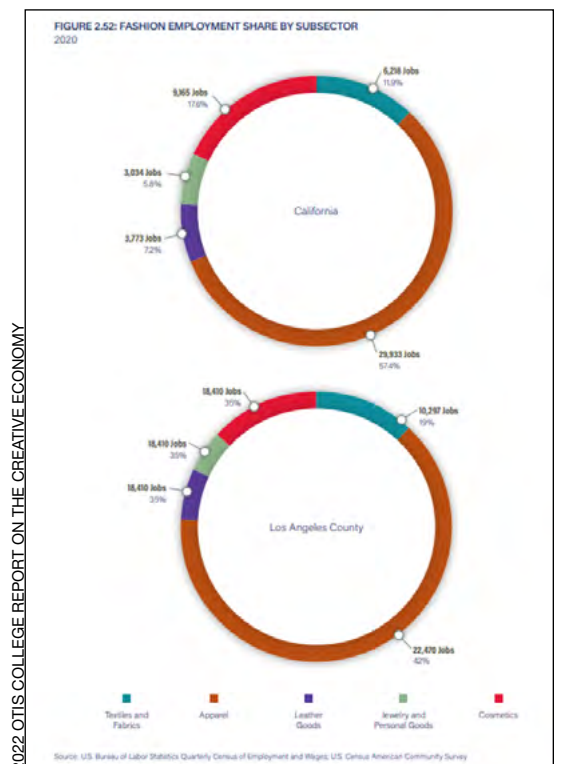
The industry employed 52,000 workers in 2020 and saw a contraction in jobs of 14.4 percent from the previous year due to the pandemic. In the report, the fashion industry is separated into five subsectors: textiles and fabrics, apparel, leather goods, jewelry, and personal goods and cosmetics. Of the five, the apparel subsector holds the largest share of fashion jobs and accounts for over three times the employment of cosmetics, the second largest subsector.

The apparel subsector lost jobs at a steady rate between 2007 and 2020 with a statewide contraction of 22 percent after the pandemic. Most of the job losses were among salaried employees and not self-employed workers, amounting to roughly 450 statewide across the entire fashion industry and changing the makeup of the workforce. Between 2007 and 2020, the rate of self-employed work-

ers in the fashion sector in California nearly doubled from 6.1 percent to 11.7 percent and more than doubled in Los Angeles County from 3.6 percent to 7.9 percent.

Employment in the textiles and fabrics subsector decreased by 49.7 percent and 54.7 percent in California and Los Angeles County, respectively, between 2007 and 2020; however, wages grew substantially with over 70 percent growth in the state and a 77 percent increase in Los Angeles County, resulting in an average annual wage of around \$52,000.

The leather goods subsector, mainly due to its standing as a smaller segment, showed the



most resilience in regard to salaried employees. Wages also increased between 2007 and 2020 by 65 percent in California and just over 40 percent in Los Angeles County.

Workers in the fashion sector tend to be female compared to workers throughout the entire creative economy. The jewelry and personal goods subsector serves as an outlier with 63 percent of workers identifying as male. The fashion sector displays a greater racial diversity than the general labor force in both Los Angeles County and California; however, Black employees are still underrepresented.

The report also highlighted innovations and technologies, specifically secondhand and resale platforms that capitalized on the shift toward e-commerce during the pandemic and how companies such as **Poshmark**, **DePop** and **thredUP** have converted advertised goods into purchases. Also noted were the alternate, augmented and virtual-reality technologies that have changed the way consumers shop, whether online or in person. ●

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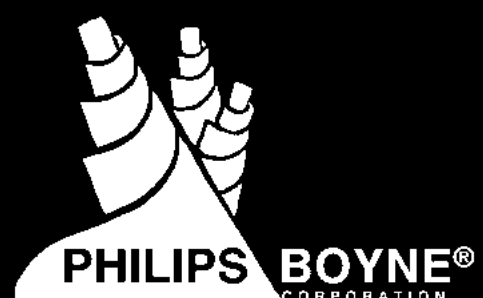
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Woodbury University Celebrates Fashion Design Student Collections

By Betti Halsell *Contributing Writer*

Woodbury University honored its fashion-design students by showcasing their impressive collections on May 1 at its 57th annual fashion show, this year called Odyssey, at the Petersen Automotive Museum in Los Angeles.

Due to the pandemic, its 56th show did not take place in 2020 but was presented online in 2021.

Anna Leiker, chair of the Fashion Design department, stated that “Woodbury celebrates the creativity, talent, innovation and dedication of the fashion designers of tomorrow. Odyssey, a long, eventful event or adventurous journey, defines the theme through which our students created design narratives reflecting their personal experience and stories of both trials and triumphs.”

Leiker also described the students that attend Woodbury as vessels of unique talent that hold a torch toward the excitement in the future of fashion.

The Animation, Filmmaking, Game Art & Design, and

Graphic Design departments were featured in the pre-show media and design exhibits from students who were inspired to construct fashion narratives that reflected their personal journeys while also anticipating future trends in the apparel industry.

Friends, family, alumni and senior faculty members experienced the very bright future fashion is heading toward as the museum was transformed into a white runway for young designers to create a world with a new culture of style. Asymmetrical silhouettes, lace, denim and intricate back details were predominant trends on the runway.

The senior collections included designs from 14 graduating students, including Natalie Arriaga for Willow, Anne Kyrsten Cruz Cananan for The Imperial Jewel, Joey Coward for Fatum Luminis, Jesse Garcia for Starscape, Siuneh Khachatourian for Forever Yours, Jessica Lemus for Untitled V.1, Amy Ma for Eastern Etiquette, Jenni Saengsri for UVII, Tajia Stroud for Bib&Tucker, Victoria Tavoukjian for her untitled collection, Melissa Urrutia for Divine Valentine, Emily Weise for Afterglow, Donny White for The Odyssey of the Dart Frog

and Alexa Zhukova for Hidden in the Forest.

Senior award winner Jesse Garcia said that his journey through his Starscape collection led him to space. “This collection is inspired by sci-fi and the universe, with an intention to take viewers through a space odyssey. Key aspects in his collection included punk streetwear, complete with spikes, zippers and metallic tones. Garcia described his line as “edgy and bold.” He also cautioned that the line is “known to make all wearers appear EXTRA-terrestrial and Earthlings will stare.”

Woodbury was founded in 1884 by educator and entrepreneur F.C. Woodbury, who recognized the rise in the needs of the Los Angeles business community. Formerly known as Woodbury College, the institution quickly gained recognition for accredited programs and honorable alumni such as William Travilla, whose muse was old-Hollywood icon Marilyn Monroe, and who designed the legendary white dress Monroe wore while standing on a New York City subway grate.

Woodbury University hosts its commencement ceremony for classes 2020, 2021 and 2022 on May 14. ●



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HAGOP KALAJIAN

Catherine Gee's latest collection has been successful with buyers at her Santa Barbara, Calif., shop and online, with many falling in love with the colors and the prints, which resonate with shoppers and create a personal connection.

Catherine Gee Expands the Horizon With Most-Recent Collection and New Designs

By Tyler Shultz Assistant Editor

Taking inspiration from her travels, her surroundings, and islands in Europe and the Mediterranean, Catherine Gee's Spring/Summer '22 collection's vibrant colors and prints bring to mind a vacation to Greece.

It features two colors as anchor points for the solids, a Mykonos royal blue and a bodacious tulip that she describes as in between a pink and a purple. The collection also features a variety of vibrant colors and prints that feature swirls and what she calls the Santorini print, further showing the influence of the Mediterranean on the collection. Gee said she also takes inspiration from how women dress in all the different places she has visited when designing a garment or creating a new silhouette. Her aim is to be inclusive and help women feel comfortable yet fully covered, elegant and confident.

"The collection has a very European feel to it and we shot the look-book campaign on Catalina Island, and I thought how fitting because the collection is deeply inspired by Mykonos and Santorini islands, the inspiration of the light in Southern California. So it was kind of a cool circular theme."

Gee's father was a career artist, and he instilled in her from a young age basic principles such as how to draft. Prior to starting her brand, Gee was the executive director of an

art gallery but had always held on to the idea of starting her own silk line based on the silk kimonos she would find in her grandmother's house.

After launching with product for the first time in 2016, Gee found success almost instantly, winning the Emerging Designers Showcase at the sprawling **MAGIC** trade show complete with a trip to **Paris Fashion Week** that same year.

Heavily inspired by the Santa Barbara, Calif., climate, Gee began the first collection of her eponymous brand with a line of travel-friendly pieces including linens, separates, matching sets, slipdresses and other core pieces that are still a big part of the brand to this day.

The latest collection has been successful for Gee with many falling in love with the colors and the prints. She said the response has been extremely positive from both buyers and consumers and that there is usually a personal connection involved with prints so it's nice to see customers come in and really have one or two of the prints resonate with them.

Gee said that while developing the collection it was hard to get an initial idea of what would sell or be popular so it helped to get opinions from buyers as well as customers.

"We're getting tons of reorders, we're selling through and selling out, which is ideal. So the demand has been excellent,"

Gee said. "For D2C, we have an e-commerce site and we have a store in Santa Barbara, and it's been incredible because I work in my store so I'm able to interact with the women in the shop. It's also fun because I go to shows and I meet and talk with buyers, but it's fun for me to see real women come in the store and transform because of the colors and prints. And they love how everyday it is."

Although Gee believes that she and her brand have found their niche in the market, she said that she still sometimes gets the urge to create something completely different and try something new. Her most recent experiment with jacquard jackets initially scratched the itch but now has her wanting to try something else new. For the more popular slipdresses and silk dresses, she likes to get a little more daring and has fun creating two to three new silhouettes each season.

"For a few years I thought I would really love a cool jacket. So I started thinking of different materials and something completely different for me was jacquard, whether it's a silk blend or polyester. So I started sampling, and now we have this really awesome category of jacquard jackets," Gee said. "That was one of the first times I thought to dive in and really try something different and I want to try again, and without revealing too much I think it will still be in the category of jackets and coats."



HAGOP KALAJIAN

Gen Z Designs Stretch Denim for Gen Z Based on Fibers by LYCRA

By Tyler Shultz Assistant Editor

In an effort to push the denim industry forward and further into sustainability, 30 design students have created a new denim collection that offers a glimpse into the future of the denim industry through the eyes of Gen Z.

The 14-piece collection, entitled *Stretch Yourself*, was produced by students from **House of Denim's Jean School** in Amsterdam in partnership with **The LYCRA Company** and displays the future of stretch denim through pieces created by Gen Z for Gen Z. The products use fabrics from seven denim mills around the world: **Advance Denim** from China; **Bossa Denim**, **Calik Denim** and **DNM Denim** from Egypt; **Kindy Enterprises** from Pakistan; and **Naveena Denim Mills** and **Orta** from Turkey based on fiber innovations by The LYCRA Company. The collection was showcased at the recent **Kingpins** show in Amsterdam and allowed those in the denim industry to get a look at what's in store.

A global fiber producer, The LYCRA Company has been working with Kingpins since the show first broke into the denim world. Kingpins Amsterdam has traditionally held a space for the Amsterdam-based Jean School to showcase works and pieces created by students. The new show venue, **SugarCity**, afforded a larger space for the students to truly display their pieces in the collection. Attendees were impressed with the craftsmanship and creativity shown by the students.

"They [the Jean School] have a really technical course that lasts three years where students learn how to make jeans in a really technical way and then they populate the industry going forward," said Helen Latham, senior strategic accounts manager at The LYCRA Company. "The reason why we collaborated with them this year is that we've noticed Gen Z is really reacting against the skinny-jean trend. Obviously Millennials wear skinny jeans, so Gen Z wants to be completely different from that, and every generation tends to show its personality through its jeans."

Latham said the students were briefed on the properties and functionalities of LYCRA fibers and innovations and then were given free rein to design what they felt really reflected the core values of their generation, which include sustainability and biodiversity, gender freedom, body positivity and



©SIRCONRAD



In partnership with The LYCRA Company, students from House of Denim's Jean School were tasked with creating stretch denim jeans that encompass and reflect the core values of Gen Z, which includes sustainability and biodiversity, gender freedom, body positivity and making decisions based in those values.

making decisions based in those values.

"They are the future, thank goodness, so listen to them and make sure what we're producing as an industry reflects these new, more positive values. Sustainability has been front and center in the denim industry for a good few years now," said Latham. "I think the denim industry is one of the most polluting industries in the textile industry, but it has also spearheaded the reversal of that. So in terms of all of the garment categories, I think the denim industry is the industry that's really focusing on sustainability, and that's really a value for Gen Z."

The LYCRA Company continues to create innovations in the textile industry and displayed two such innovations at Kingpins that aim to help the denim industry continue to create high-performance stretch denim in a sustainable way.

"We were proposing two new innovations at Kingpins. One is a completely new fiber that we've called LYCRA

ADAPTIV, and it's a new fiber we'll be putting into denim. It has a softer, longer and easier stretch to it while maintaining good recovery. It allows for these really body-positive fabrics to be made—really high-stretch denims that have a really soft and easy fit so you're not being sculpted or forced into a shape that's uncomfortable for you," Latham said.

"For the looser body fits we've launched something called LYCRA DUAL COMFORT, which uses our LYCRA T400 yarn to create a stretch denim that has no elastane in it. So it has our LYCRA T400 yarn, which is a sort of stretchy polyester, and it creates a very matte, cotton-like aesthetic but with no elastane at all so you can mechanically recycle that garment and get the polyester back out and the cotton as well."

All the fabrics used in the *Stretch Yourself* collection are available at **Denim City** in Amsterdam for design and sample purposes. The *Stretch Yourself* collection will also be on display through June. ●

RETAIL OPENINGS

Sustainable Retailer Toward Opens First Bricks-and-Mortar in Los Angeles

By Tyler Shultz Assistant Editor

As the fashion industry trends toward a sustainable future, many consumers are still grappling with finding truly sustainable apparel products. A lack of transparency and the effects of greenwashing by some in the industry have consumers calling for more standards to help define what is truly sustainable.

Doing its part by including thoroughly vetted brands focused on sustainability, **Toward** aims to help consumers make sustainable choices with its first physical storefront in Los Angeles.

The idea for Toward was born during the pandemic when founder Ana Kannan was struggling to find fashionable pieces that were truly sustainable without having to question the company's sustainable practices. The retailer launched in 2021 with the goal of promoting responsibility and sustainability in the fashion industry. The Melrose Avenue location opened May 10 and only stocks brands such as **AGOLDE**, **Reike Nen**, **Anna October**, **House of Sunny** and **Yuzefi**.

Toward thoroughly vets the brands it represents, looking into prospective labels and ensuring they align with Toward's Responsibility Framework, which is focused on transparency, emissions, materials, waste and chemicals, workers' rights, water management, animal welfare, biodiversity, and forestry and ethos. The retailer continues the process annually to ensure its brands are staying sustainable and requires proof and metrics in a lengthy questionnaire. Toward also features QR codes throughout the store that take customers to pages that display how the brands are working on building a sustainable industry and future.

"Toward is a brand dedicated to promoting responsibility in the fashion industry. Through our innovative, 100-plus-question Responsibility Framework, we vet today's leading brands for everything from the ethical treatment of workers in their factories to the ways they limit water usage. Toward was built around the principle of progress over perfection, encouraging shoppers to think critically about their shopping habits and purchases, all while making it easy for them to know that



TOWARD



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Toward's offerings are good for the planet," Kannan said.

Kannan also mentioned that Los Angeles is a great location as shoppers in L.A. are already doing their part to try and be more sustainable with their purchases and so she wanted to create a location here to connect with consumers directly. Toward has hopes of opening more physical locations on the West Coast in addition to expanding east.

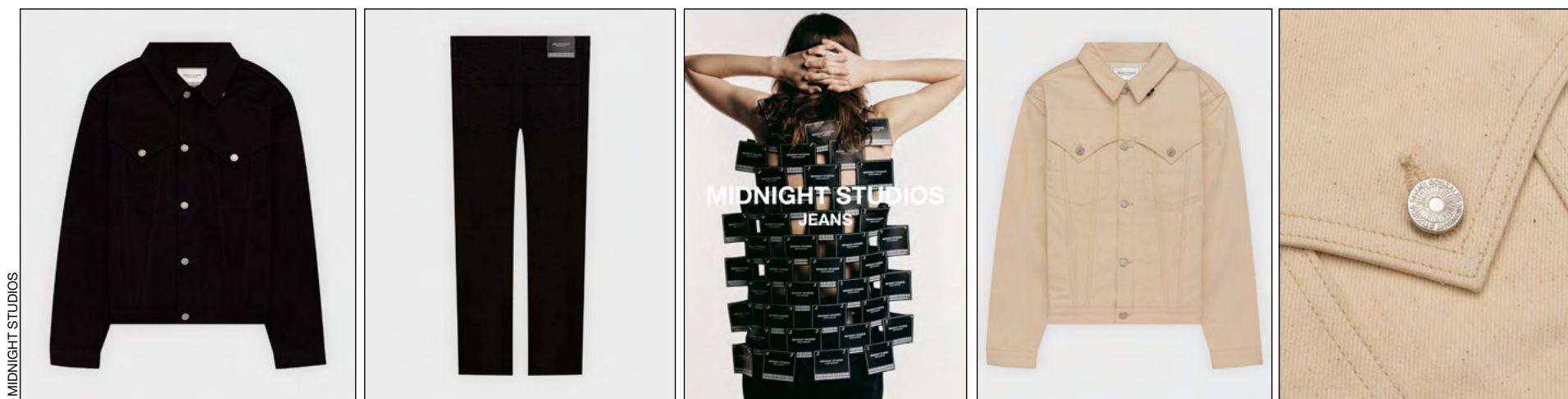
"We opened our first physical pop-up location in San Francisco in November and loved being able to connect with consumers and share our message of responsibility in-person. Now that we're in L.A., we are looking forward to connecting personally with those who are interested in making their shopping habits more eco conscious and sharing leading innovative brands in the responsible-fashion industry," Kannan said. "We love that L.A. shoppers are already doing the work to think critically about how sustainability should inform their shopping and fashion choices. We wanted to make it easy for those already thinking about new ways to encourage responsibility in their fashion choices to know that the brands they're shopping are not only environmentally and socially responsible but also commit-

ted to creating long-lasting change."

The retailer has committed to taking innovative measures with the aim of keeping consumers responsible regarding how they shop, such as limiting the number of orders per year to reduce the environmental impacts from shipping. The retailer is even committed to offsetting carbon emissions, including those produced by customers traveling to the store.

"Promoting responsibility is at the core of our mission. In January, we introduced an opt-in order-cap policy, which encourages consumers to think critically about the purchases they make and whether they *really* need to purchase an item every time they're looking for a wardrobe refresh," Kannan said. "We have committed to offsetting the travels of everyone who attends the store within 100 miles to demonstrate that even though there are emissions associated with traveling, we're committed to responsibility at every step of the Toward experience. Also, all of the furniture in the store is secondhand—we found it crucial to not contribute to production waste by using the pieces that are already out there rather than purchasing new." ●

DENIM



For its first denim collection, Midnight Studios worked with Los Angeles-based Saitex USA to create the garments using a sustainable production process. The resulting matching denim jacket and jean set is available in black, natural and raw indigo colorways.

Midnight Studios Launches Sustainably Made Denim Collection

By Tyler Shultz Assistant Editor

Midnight Studios has announced its first foray into sustainably made denim, **Midnight Studios Jeans**, a new collection featuring a matching jean and denim jacket revealed at its runway show's Spring/Summer '22 collection, *Welcome to the Machine*. It served as something of a re-launch point for the label originally founded in 2014 by Shane Gonzales.

"Denim is something that has been seen as a staple to the fashion industry for decades. We have done denim in the past, but when reapproaching it for the new Midnight Studios Jeans permanent program we wanted to make sure it was unique and bold while still sustainable and mindful of the environment," Gonzales said. "When working on this first denim collection, it was important to start with the basics and more-traditional washes while still implicating a Midnight Studios touch on them. Safety-pin zippers, Western-cut yolks, buttoned plackets at the ankle, hidden pockets, all went into this 'traditional' pair of jeans, but giving them a Midnight Studios twist."

The collection is available in black, natural and raw indigo colorways and features the details for which Midnight Studios is known. The Hollywood Jean features a slim-fit, tapered mid-rise in a Western styling with a button fly and four-button closure on the front center panel. The Hollywood Denim Jacket features button-cuff closures and a spread collar with the brand's signature flag label on it. Gonzales aimed to combine traditional denim pieces with the Midnight Studios flair to create a base for Midnight Studios Jeans to build upon.

Midnight Studios worked with **Saitex** in Los Angeles to produce the collection, ensuring it was made with the environment in mind and used a sustainable production process.

"After touring the Saitex facility just one time, it was very clear they were the right partner for us. Their commitments to using 98 percent recycled water, clean and renewable energy, as well as extracting all leftover waste and sludge and turning it into everyday household items—even bricks—to build homes really made the decision a no-brainer," Gonzales said. "In today's society, with the rapid growth of the fashion industry and high demands for garment production, it's important

to us to help where we can. Denim is one of the largest businesses within the fashion industry and one of the most harmful to the environment, so I think it is very important to take that into consideration and really aim to reduce waste when possible."

Saitex is a B Corp-certified company, meeting the highest standards for social and environmental standards. The Vietnam-headquartered Saitex opened its Los Angeles facility, **Saitex USA**, in 2021. The technologies implemented and the use of Saitex's Speed to Market system afford a conscientious approach to inventory management and made-to-order capabilities.

According to Sanjeev Bahl, CEO and founder of Saitex, "there is an appetite for just-in-time delivery. There is a market that can support this venture. It's not like we're trying to create a new avenue for consumer behavior. That behavior exists. People prefer eating organic and local food. The localized movement is here to stay. The government also is behind it. If you tried to do this 10 years ago it might have been more difficult. Today, the scenario is different, the landscape is different, and the opportunity center is different." ●

TRADE-SHOW REPORT

FashionGo *Continued from page 1*

relationships that continue beyond the show regardless of location and time, which has tremendous value. We now know our model for this show works, and we plan to show-case further what FashionGo Week has in store as we continue to expand our regional presence and tailor it to the needs that best fit our vendors and buyers both on-site and online." FG Events is dedicated to managing FashionGo Week and was founded by **BluEnsign** co-founders Nastos and Scott Chowan, who bring years of experience building and organizing fashion trade shows.

In addition, unique QR codes linked to each attendee's FashionGo account made the order process easy and the payment process safe and secure. Exhibitors would scan the QR code and attendees would confirm the order in their app, where it was able to be fully managed and tracked, simplifying the process of managing multiple orders at the show.

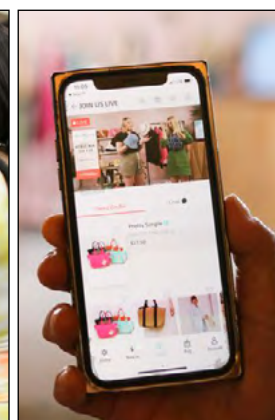
FashionGo Week Palm Springs ran concurrently with FashionGo Week online and offered the same digital benefits and promotions so that those who couldn't attend the Palm Springs event were able to enjoy and participate in it nonetheless. Attendees were also able to make use of FashionGo's Style Match+ digital tool and the FashionGo app, which allowed buyers to expand their discovery of the brands exhibiting at the show beyond a booth interaction.

"We are extremely excited to have successfully introduced a true omni-channel market experience, infusing technology with a physical market to progress the industry forward and reshape how B2B wholesale connects. With positive feedback from our attending retailers, we are ever excited to optimize, improve and add new features to the FashionGo app, which serves as the bridge for an online and in-person trade event," said Paul Lee, CEO of **NHN Global**, the parent company of FashionGo.

Caleb Westbay, owner of the **Westbay Showroom**, which



FashionGo Week Palm Springs ran concurrently with FashionGo Week online and offered the same digital benefits and promotions so that those who couldn't attend the in-person event were able to enjoy and participate in it nonetheless. The FashionGo app allowed buyers to expand their discovery of the brands exhibiting at the show.



represents the Los Angeles-based **Prince Peter Collection**, thought the event was a success, with an attentive staff catering to both the retailers' and exhibitors' best interests. Westbay noted that buyers enjoyed the laid-back atmosphere, with a lot of buyers coming from out of state and having a chance to "get away" to the warmer weather while also being able to take in what the show had to offer.

"The presentation of the show was elevated and impressive. The vibe was very 'Palm Springs' and had a relaxing yet professional and engaging atmosphere. We saw retailers we already work with but also met with many new stores we had not previously sold to in our own 'backyard,' which was so exciting! We also wrote a handful of great new accounts from Arizona, Colorado, Montana, Texas, Michigan, Wisconsin, Indiana, Oregon, New Hampshire and Montreal."

Katie Apple, owner of **Apple Blvd** in Frisco, Texas, made it out to Palm Springs to meet some of the boutique's top vendors in addition to finding a few new vendors.

"We were looking for in-stock items to fill in the holes we needed for summer. We wrote deep orders with 10 vendors. We loved how it was an intimate market so we could work one on one with vendors and be able to really get good work done and do live selling! Game-changer for us," Apple said.

"As a boutique owner who buys from hundreds of vendors at markets across the country, it was so nice to have my order in the FashionGo back office. Organizing orders is one of the hardest parts of boutique buying, and the FashionGo system made it seamless."

Shopping for the **Polkadot Alley Boutique** in Lubbock, Texas, Ashley White echoed the sentiments of others at the show that it felt like a natural and perfect fit for an industry that is transforming how it does business.

"I have been attending markets for close to 15 years as a buyer. Going to the first market put on by anyone is expected to be a 'trial' market of sorts. That is not what we found when we walked into the doors of the first market by FashionGo. Every minute of this market was well thought out, executed to a T and topnotch. I was impressed from start to finish," White said. "The buyers and vendors were treated as equals—partners in business—as it should be. The location was pure heaven on earth. I have never left a market finding so many new lines and feeling so much excitement for what I do."

FashionGo is set to hold the second FashionGo Week Palm Springs July 26–28 followed by an event in New York Nov. 6–8. ●

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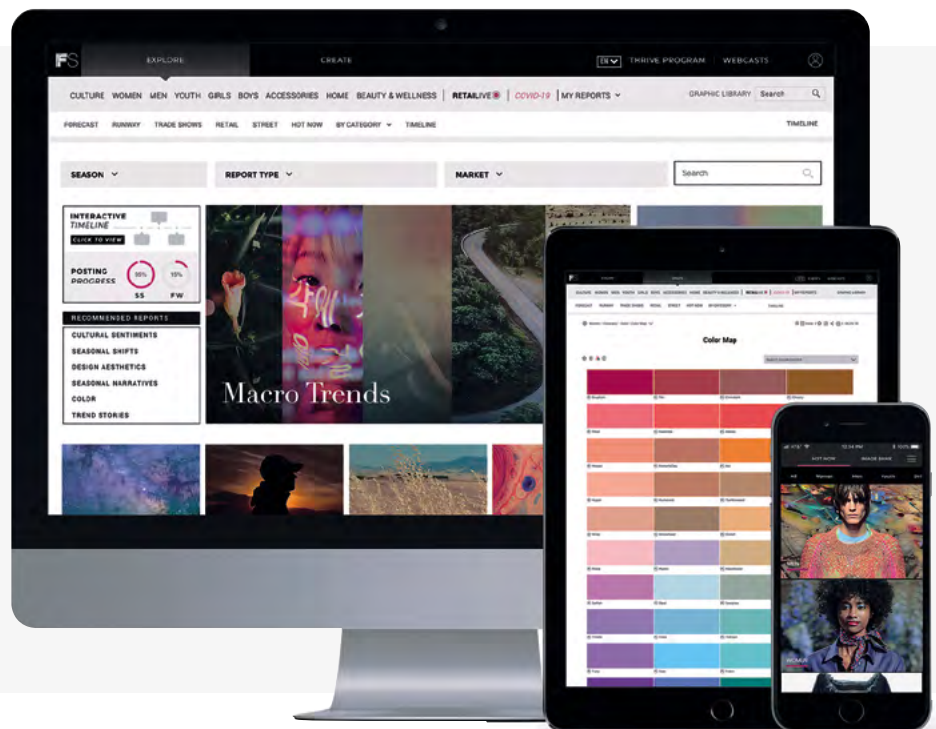
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