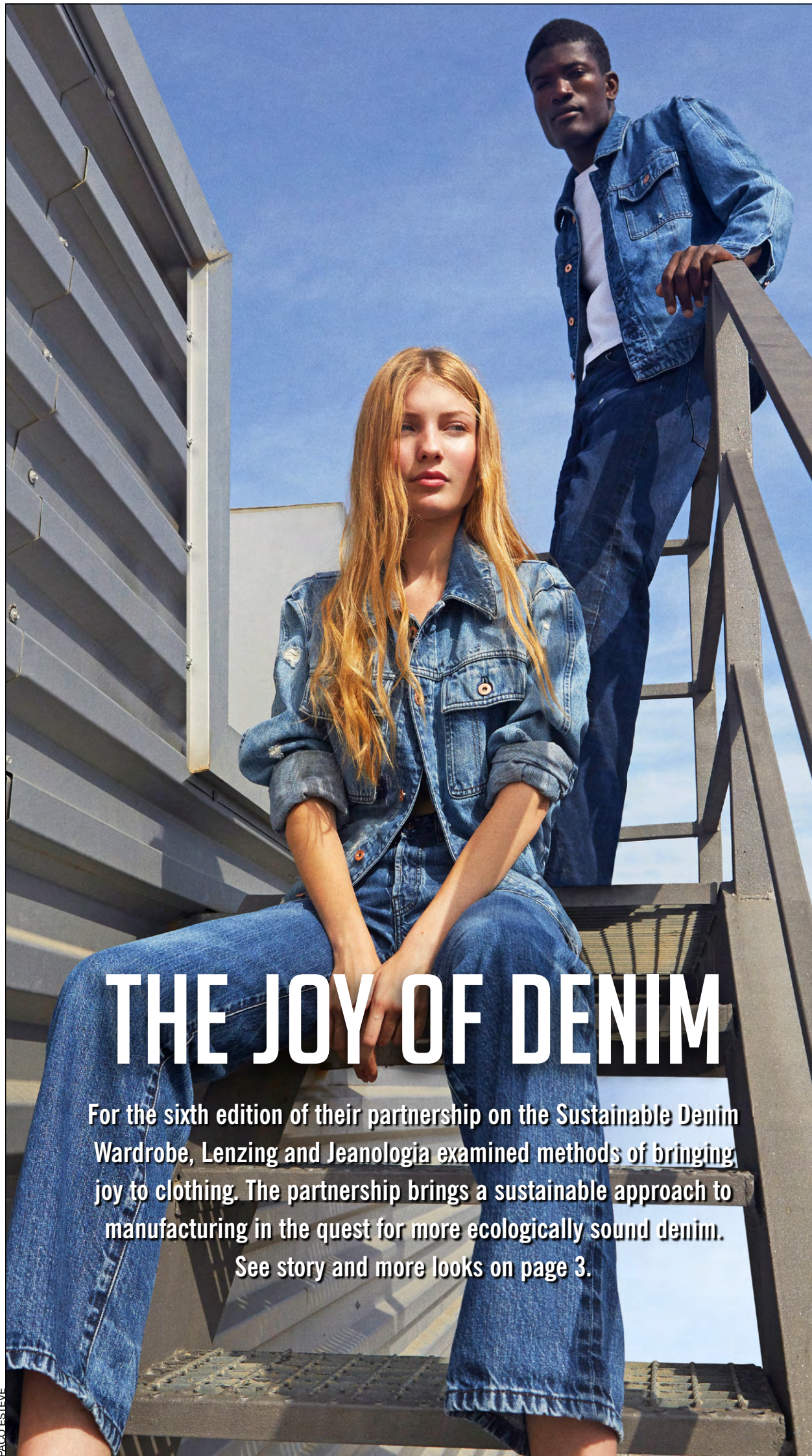


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THE JOY OF DENIM

For the sixth edition of their partnership on the Sustainable Denim Wardrobe, Lenzing and Jeanologia examined methods of bringing joy to clothing. The partnership brings a sustainable approach to manufacturing in the quest for more ecologically sound denim.

See story and more looks on page 3.

PACO ESTEVE

RETAIL

Downtown Center BID Reports Dynamic Resurgence of Retail

By Christian Chensvold *Contributing Writer*

Back in school you were probably drawn to math or, well, anything else. But the numbers for downtown Los Angeles are certainly compelling. The district generates \$5 billion in annual revenue from 743 businesses per square mile. Over 3 million people visit downtown each year, while 350,000 commute there to work each day, and 85,000 call it home.

Beyond the numbers, however, lie the dynamic reasons behind the district's vibrancy and tenacity, which are detailed in the 2022 Retail Market Report recently released by the **Downtown Center Business Improvement District** and come down to density, diversity and creativity.

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FASHION

House of Aama Reimagines Its Bloodroot Connections for A/W 2022

By Dorothy Crouch *Contributing Writer*

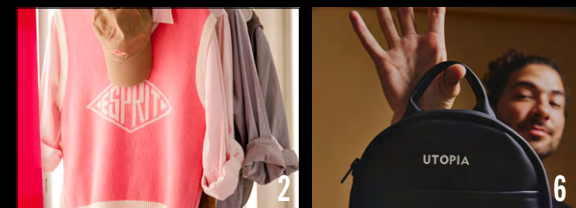
As Rebecca Henry and Akua Shabaka created the Autumn/Winter 2022 Bloodroot: Into the Archives collection for **House of Aama**, they were inspired by their previous work on the Autumn/Winter 2017 Bloodroot collection. Released during the week of Nov. 7, the Bloodroot: Into the Archives collection allowed the mother-daughter designers to revisit the foundation of their Los Angeles-manufactured and -sourced brand, which required them to look inward to the roots of their family, which can be traced back to African-American Louisiana root workers.

"House of Aama's mission is to explore the folkways of

➔ **House of Aama** page 4

INSIDE

Where fashion gets down to businessSM



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Esprit Brings Its Positivity Back to Bricks-and-Mortar

Esprit's origin is as Californian as the sunny sky. And now it is recementing its California cred with a new pop-up shop at 156 S. Robertson Blvd. near Third Street in Los Angeles. The opening marks the first physical U.S. retail store for **Esprit** since 2012 and coincides with a relaunch of the brand's e-commerce site.

The pop-up carries Esprit's current collection as well as special capsule collections that will launch throughout the fall, drawing on the brand's philosophy of positivity and including styles inspired by archival 1980s pieces given modern, sleek updates.

Managed by **Retail for the People** and designed by the **Eyesight Group**, the 2,500-square-foot space is an homage to the creativity and togetherness Esprit stands for. Drawing on the brand's California heritage, design elements evoke the colors, sounds and smells of the West Coast. Bone-white walls



Esprit was the world's first lifestyle brand inspired by the human spirit with a California twist.

direct attention to the space's focal point—six galvanized metal structures spelling out the iconic neon Esprit logo, which serve as

shelves and clothing racks arranged throughout the length of the store. Large, mirrored monoliths wrapped in neon-colored paper reflect colors from repetitive lights punctuated in the walls. Natural elements within the space, including moss surrounding the base of the logo structures, represent Esprit's commitment to the planet.

Founded in California in 1968 by Doug Tompkins and Susie Buell, Esprit was the world's first lifestyle brand inspired by the human spirit with a California twist: positive, upbeat and easygoing, embracing a larger-than-life attitude that is both experimental and pioneering, with a youthful state-of-mind fueled by creativity and a love of design. The first authentic brand of its kind, Esprit was also known for its revolutionary shopping experience, embodying its vibrant spirit in every way and in every detail.

—Christian Chensvold

ACCESSORIES

Katy Perry Launches Fiery Fine-Jewelry Line PLAY

California native Katy Perry has debuted a new jewelry collection called **PLAY** in collaboration with **Twila True Fine Jewelry**. It is available exclusively at Twila retail shops in Las Vegas and Newport Beach, Calif., and online at twilatruedefinejewelry.com. The colorful pieces give jewelry lovers a taste of Perry's world, with unique designs and bold styles that display the pop star's fiery personality. "A whimsical selection of charms suits every mood or fashion," said True in a release. "Elegant gold-chain necklaces and statement-making chunky chain bracelets add real fire-

works to any wardrobe."

"I loved being able to take my larger-than-life props from **PLAY** and turning them into fine, wearable pieces," said the singer perhaps most famous for the song "Roar." Perry has racked up 50 billion in song streams alongside worldwide sales of over 48 million adjusted albums and 135 million tracks. She boasts 40 million monthly listeners on **Spotify**. Perry's 2015 **Super Bowl** performance is the highest-rated in the event's history, and she was the first ever **Capitol Records** recording artist to join the elite **RIAA** 100 Million Certified



The jewelry line was inspired by the larger-than-life props from Katy Perry's **PLAY** concert residency in Las Vegas.

Songs club.

"It is such a pleasure for us to present Katy's new collection of fun, unique, fine-jewelry pieces," said True. "We share similar values, and it is a real inspiration to work with such a powerful woman who isn't afraid to share her creative imagination. As innovative entrepreneurs and philanthropists, we feel we've created a special line together for fans but also for everyone who loves to wear timeless, playful pieces."

Aside from being one of the bestselling musical artists of all time, Perry is an active advocate for many philanthropic causes. In 2021 she was given *Variety*'s Power of Women distinction for her work with her **Firework Foundation**, whose mission is to empower children from underserved communities by igniting their inner light through the arts.

—C.C.

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Inside the Industry

Bodidata is offering a green alternative to fast fashion with its Measure.Match.Manage size-matching solution, which helps apparel companies reduce returns and thus environmental waste while also improving wearer satisfaction. According to the company, it can help apparel brands reduce their size-related returns by over 90 percent. "As consumers become savvier about the environmental cost of fast fashion," said Tuoc Luong, CEO of Bodidata, in a release, "they are insisting companies be more environmentally conscious. We are proud of the role we're playing in reducing unnecessary uniform and retail apparel returns. We offer four measurement options that can be used interchangeably, ensuring the right size is shipped the first time, every time. The 'return, destroy, reproduce' cycle is dramatically reduced when an item fits right the first time."

3M has launched Thinsulate Flowable Featherless Insulation. This latest textile innovation from the Minnesota-based company is a lightweight, high-loft insulation made with 80 percent recycled content and is designed to be flowable for easy processing. It is especially ideal for puffy garments and also features high wash durability, meaning it can maintain its thermal performance after laundering. "We're focused on sustainability from the very beginning of the value chain so our materials and manufacturing practices must be responsible from the start," said Robert Polik, senior application engineer. "We're quite proud of the insulation's flowability as it can be applied using a variety of filling machines. And since all apparel is designed differently, the insulation can easily be shaped to fill a garment's unique quilting channels."

Biolo, a flexible-packaging company, has announced that it is first to market with home and industrial compostable bags made from a revolutionary new plastic alternative. Biolo uses PHA to manufacture eco-friendly bags that biodegrade in soil, freshwater and marine environments. A handful of companies have harnessed the power of PHA (polyhydroxyalkanoate) to produce compostable straws, but Biolo is the first company to successfully use PHA technology to manufacture fully compostable bags. Biolo's packaging solutions have a breadth of biodegradability that other eco-friendly packaging solutions simply do not, the company said in a release. "Biolo has developed the manufacturing processes necessary to bring companies reliable, eco-friendly packaging that provides the same experience as plastic but with none of the guilt." Biolo has locations nationwide.

Renewcell has strengthened its commercial team with the addition of Tricia Carey, who has joined as chief commercial officer. Carey is a seasoned fashion-industry executive with more than 25 years of experience promoting circular and more-sustainable materials in the apparel industry. She has also been a catalyst for the industrywide conversation around the shift to more-climate-friendly and -resource-efficient materials as a board member at Textile Exchange and Accelerating Circularity. Prior to joining Renewcell, Carey was director of global business development at the leading Austrian fiber producer Lenzing.

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Tencel and Jeanologia Define Simple Pleasures Through the Joy of Denim

By Dorothy Crouch *Contributing Writer*

As the world emerged from COVID-19 lockdowns, **Lenzing** and **Jeanologia** partnered on the sixth edition of the Sustainable Denim Wardrobe, examining methods of bringing joy to clothing. The mission of the two companies has long been a sustainable approach to manufacturing, with both serving as leaders in the quest for more ecologically sound denim.

“The point is that from the beginning with Tencel the unique selling proposition was always an environmentally responsible fiber, but for many years that fell on deaf ears,” said Michael Kininmonth, business development project manager at Lenzing, which is celebrating the 30-year anniversary of its Tencel Lyocell. “Now, we continue to push the idea of responsible processing, but working with Jeanologia and working with the premium mills that we do, everyone is trying to create best in class in terms of a sustainably responsible commercial collection.”

Designing with joy in mind

The denim leaders posed the question, “What makes you feel good?” to 50 people whose answers candidly described the people, experiences and destinations for which they had longed during the darkest days of the pandemic. The team found that those surveyed found the greatest joy in unexpected, seemingly basic experiences. These included waking in the morning and applying a fragrance, travel, a romantic dinner, exercise, laughing, spending time with loved ones, and exchanging a hug or kiss.

The most popular elements touched upon music and nature, while balance was also a popular theme. Lenzing and Jeanologia wanted to channel these feelings, emotions and experiences into a print created by freelance fashion designer and consultant Betina Grosser, who described the final design as a “dopamine trip.”

“We saw in the print the opportunity to foster an emotional connection and to carry the message throughout the collection. Nature is very important not only as it is but also having the opportunity to do our favorite activities surrounded by it,” said Grosser. “The inspiration for the print is based in surrealism with psychedelic overtones.”

Grosser’s design is featured not only in campaign materials but also on the garments in the Simple Pleasures collection, which relied on Lenzing’s Tencel Lyocell and Jeanologia’s technology. The print is featured in a number of different pieces such as a three-button vest, collared button-up Tencel shirting and reversible waistcoat. Design details from the print were applied to linings, and laser elements were included in areas such as the insides of blazer lapels, along the legs of jeans and on the back of a denim jacket.



“We transferred the concept to the garments from the print itself and through laser details. This micro level is represented by what we call ‘hidden treasures,’ explained Carme Santacruz Zaragoza, creative director at Jeanologia. “They are representations of everyday things lasered into the garments in unexpected places like in the selvage or hidden on the flaps of the garment. Our motto is: ‘Always look on the bright side of life,’ obviously a reference from ‘Monty Python.’ It’s a way of also extending this storytelling through the finishing details.”

The simplicity of sustainability in denim

Through this latest Sustainable Denim Wardrobe, the hope is that the inspiration to create more-timeless pieces will support a circular economy in fashion. By relying on sustainable processes that produce quality clothing, the life cycle of these garments can be extended, thereby reducing waste.

“My hope is that the philosophies behind this collection will encourage designers to create more-responsibly made garments and consumers to give a longer ‘first life’ to such garments as well as being reused in ‘further lives’ by new owners,” said Kininmonth.

The intention behind the Simple Pleasures collection was to create classic silhouettes that rely not on trends but style, according to Santacruz Zaragoza. Lenzing and Jeanologia enlisted textile partners that contributed to the collection. These included **Bossa**, **Cone Denim**, **Kaihara**, **Orta Anadolu** and **Prosperity**, while **House of U** served as a printing partner.

“This is a collection that could be a source of inspiration for creatives and also as a way of saying that we can do beautiful things with meaningful garments and with an approach not just from sustainability in terms of the technical and finishing and materials but also combined with an important concept of storytelling,” explained Santacruz Zaragoza.

Every sourcing element and process was considered for the potential impact on the environment, according to the Environmental Impact Measurement platform. The process measured the amount of water, chemicals and energy used to create the garments, and no resources that would yield a high score were used. Designs were created and reviewed digitally in order to reduce the waste that stems from physical samples. Notions including patches made from cork, laser logos, buttons featuring an eco finish and hangtags comprising recycled materials.

“We need to address sustainability in a holistic view. We have to take care of our footprint and look for materials and processes that are respectful to people and the environment,” said Grosser. “This collection [also] tells a story. It looks for value to have a connection to create connections between people—from the people who took the survey for the collaborative design process to people that are now seeing this process and relating with the project and the garments.” ●



RETAIL

DCBID *Continued from page 1*

California Apparel News asked executive director of the DCBID Nick Griffin to break it all down and refresh our understanding and appreciation for this slice of Los Angeles the fashion industry calls home.

CAN: Let's start by reminding readers of the DCBID's function and how it relates to local government.

Nick Griffin: We're a private, nonprofit entity created by the property stakeholders, which covers everything from an individual condo owner to a multinational property-development company that owns skyscrapers. Every one of them pays an assessment on their taxes that funds the operation. Two-thirds of our budget goes to security and maintenance—keeping the streets safe and clean—but we also do marketing, economic development and community engagement. It is not a public city agency, although it is chartered by the city, which approved of its creation, and the billing comes from the city down to us.

CAN: What were your key findings on the current state of retail downtown?

NG: Retail has been in a state of evolution for years before the pandemic with the rise of e-commerce and shifting industry trends. Top of our findings is that bricks-and-mortar retail is generally trending in directions having more to do with experiential objectives and with branding as opposed to being straight sales.

We wanted to look at the ways in which those overarching trends dovetail with what downtown has to offer and what we're seeing in some of the more-high-profile retail down here, such as the **Apple Tower** store, **Nike's Jumpman**, the **Dover Street Market** and Row **DTLA**. Each seems to be aiming at being a truly unique experience that you're not



Nick Griffin



going to get by ordering something online. It's also a way to communicate with customers in a rich sort of way. The Apple Tower is a perfect example of being much more than a store but a real hub for the creative community, with slews of workshops and presentations. I think we're seeing a lot of this as a reaction to the rise of e-commerce, yet also a complement to it, and also what the opportunities are for retail in a dense, diverse and creative urban center versus your average mall.

CAN: Let's go into each of these key bullet points in the report.

NG: Density is particularly the case in Los Angeles, where you have a region that is relatively suburban but with a center

that is a world-class big city; it really differentiates us from the rest of the region. In terms of diversity, the market here is super compelling because you have consumer segments across the board from which a wide range of businesses can target their audiences. As for creativity, although it's more intangible, I also think it's the most important ingredient. There is an energy to the creative community in downtown L.A. that is truly unique from an influencer and trend-leading perspective.

CAN: "Downtown" is a broad term that encompasses everything from the upscale to Skid Row. Has there been any talk of separating and rebranding the district to avert the homeless problem?

NG: We do continue to use "DTLA" as a brand identifier, but that goes back a ways and is not specific to issues on the street. Homelessness is what it is; it's a national issue that's significant, challenging, complex, with myriad causes and potential solutions. Because of our density and centrality, we have a more intense concentration of the issue, but we're also building more housing than anyone else in the state by far. And videos that go viral are certainly not indicative of downtown as a whole.

CAN: What about the fashion industry specifically?

NG: What downtown has to offer goes back to the ferment, energy and dynamism that come from the diversity of types of people here. What we hear most from fashion tenants, retail or industry, is similar to what we hear from people in tech, architecture or design, which is that the appeal of downtown is being in the midst of a highly creative and dynamic environment, where the people in those industries are rubbing shoulders and cross-pollinating, and you're getting the stimulation and inspiration that folks in those kinds of industries thrive on. ●

FASHION



House of Aama *Continued from page 1*

the Black experience by designing timeless garments with nostalgic references informed by historical research, archival analysis and storytelling," said Henry and Shabaka. "We aim to evoke dialogue, social commentary and conversations around heritage and remembrance and to shed light on nuanced histories."

Within the five years that have passed between the Bloodroot collections, House of Aama experienced a surge in success. The fashion house has shown at **New York Fashion Week** and developed Silhouettes Collectibles, a departure from its elegant pieces in luxurious fabrications into a more-affordable, comfortable collection of 100 percent-cotton hoodies and T-shirts plus tote bags created from recycled materials.

The Salt Water Spring/Summer 2022 collection explored the history of Black resort communities in the United States during the early 20th century. The women presented the collection through the lens of the fictional Camp Aama, their own vision of these historical enclaves whose stories often go untold.

"After our very artisanal Salt Water '22 Collection, we wanted to introduce our new, expanded audience to our Heritage Bloodroot collection with our core silhouettes in new colors and fabrications," the designers explained.

Both Bloodroot collections are centered on nostalgia for Henry and Shabaka's ancestors, who viewed the rare bloodroot herb as a guardian. Revisiting the origins of 2017's Bloodroot allowed the women to not only reconnect to the important elements of their family history but also to develop their own deeper design story.

"It also reconnected us to our core archetypes of the root worker, Southern lady and bluesman," noted Henry and Shabaka. "The Bloodroot: Into the Archives collection displays our core silhouettes and folklore narrative based on the original Heritage Bloodroot collection. The Bloodroot collection is an homage to our Southern maternal legacy and an ode to Creole spirituality and diasporic roots hidden in plain sight."

For 2022's Bloodroot: Into the Archives collection, Henry and Shabaka introduced a Lumber Jacket and Pants in denim. The set features Western details with a wide collar and pockets on the jacket, while pants feature a high waist and wide

leg. A twill version of the Lumber set is available in brown and yellow. The tie-neck shirt was created in a fresh brown-and-green stripe.

Classic styles from the 2017 Bloodroot collection include the Pussybow shirt, which was reimaged as the Rebecca Pussybow dress in silk charmeuse and embroidered silk dupioni. Halter and skirt sets were designed in pink and brown silk dupioni and a tan-crème jacquard.

The Oya Palazzo jumper is featured in a new tan and green cotton voile print. A coat featuring a white faux-fur bodice and cuffs stands out with a multicolor-floral-brocade collar and sleeves. The same primarily lime and coral brocade is featured in suiting comprised of a duster coat and high-waist pants.

The Southern Girl Victorian Dress was reintroduced in gothic black, peach, baby blue and mint hues in a Swiss-dot silk organza and chiffon. The Ogun Military Jacket and Pants were redone in tan-crème jacquard that features a floating-cherub detail. This design was also created in a brown-and-blue-paisley corduroy.

"We remain committed to our mission and realized with our artisanal Salt Water '22 Collection that we can tell many stories based on the centralized Heritage Bloodroot story," explained Henry and Shabaka. "The Bloodroot story lives throughout our other collections and serves as our foundation story; thus, it only made sense to develop Bloodroot: Into the Archives for a new audience for Fall/Winter '22."

Next for House of Aama is a collection for NYFW in February, where the designers will introduce new silhouettes in an updated palette with fresh fabrications. House of Aama's Bloodroot: Into the Archives collection is available at houseofaama.com. ●



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SUSTAINABILITY



UTOPIA BY CHO

Peder Cho Creates His Own Utopia to Create Never-Before-Seen Pieces

By Christian Chensvold *Contributing Writer*

Utopia is a centuries-old term for a kind of heavenly ideal, and in emerging designer Peder Cho's perfect world there's an endless supply of high-end handbags for him to repurpose for creative ends.

The designer recently debuted his first-ever capsule collection—**Utopia by Cho**—in partnership with the website platform **Squarespace** and livestream shopping app **NTWRK**. The collection consists of seven handmade, limited-edition pieces made from sustainable materials in batches ranging from 15 to 40 units each. Remaining items are available at *Cho.moda*.

The 29-year-old Los Angeles-based designer left a career in accounting to pursue his dream of being a full-time creative. When he began upcycling pieces from his closet in 2018, he leveraged social media to demonstrate his craft and share his creations with the world. He quickly went viral on social media, building a large following and ultimately his own community around the idea of taking existing items and turning them into something new, such as an old **Louis Vuitton**

bag transformed into a pair of sandals. The search term “peder cho fashion designer” has over 4 billion views on the social-media platform **TikTok**, and the designer has already received coverage by *Vogue* and *Complex*.

Cho's style is based on neutral tones and a streetwear vibe. From white parachute pants and a cropped baby tee to a vegan-leather tote bag and sleek mini black silicon backpack, the capsule collection exemplifies an upcycled utopia and doing what you want. “The inspiration behind Utopia is that it is a symbolic reference to live your best life possible,” declared the designer. “I switched my life from finance to art. I was able to create my own Utopian life.”

That dream world also includes collaborations with huge clients including **Atari**, **Reebok**, **Adidas** and even **Domino's Pizza**. The collaboration page on Cho's website encourages prospective partners to pitch him the wildest idea possible. “We can make pieces to highlight how your brand recycles and demonstrate creative outlets to do so,” he states. “I can offer extremely custom, never-seen-before pieces. The goal is to make something together that the world has never seen before.” ●



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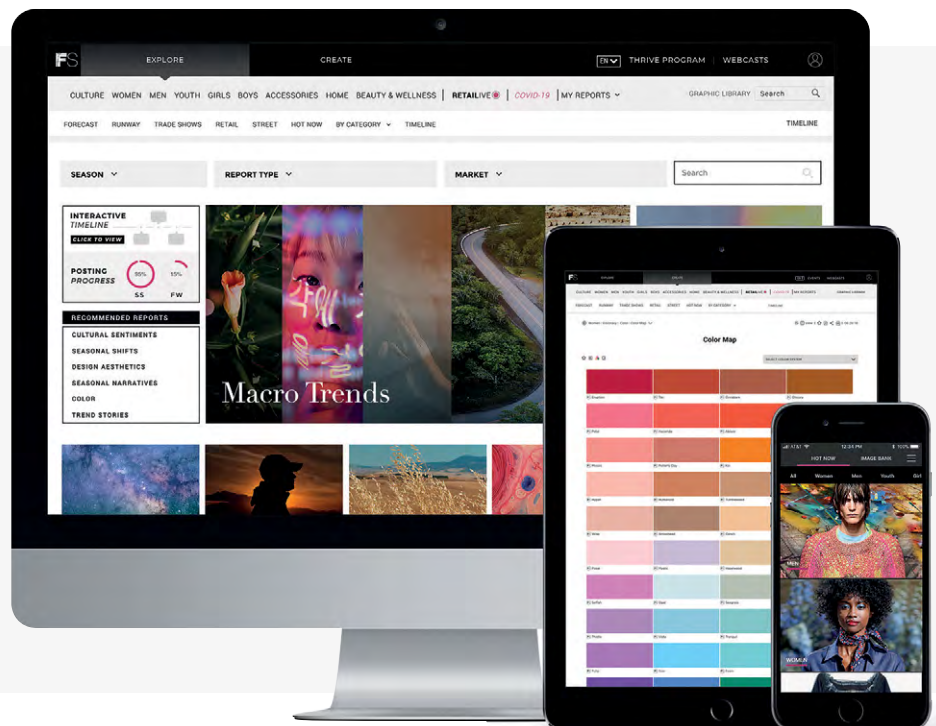
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