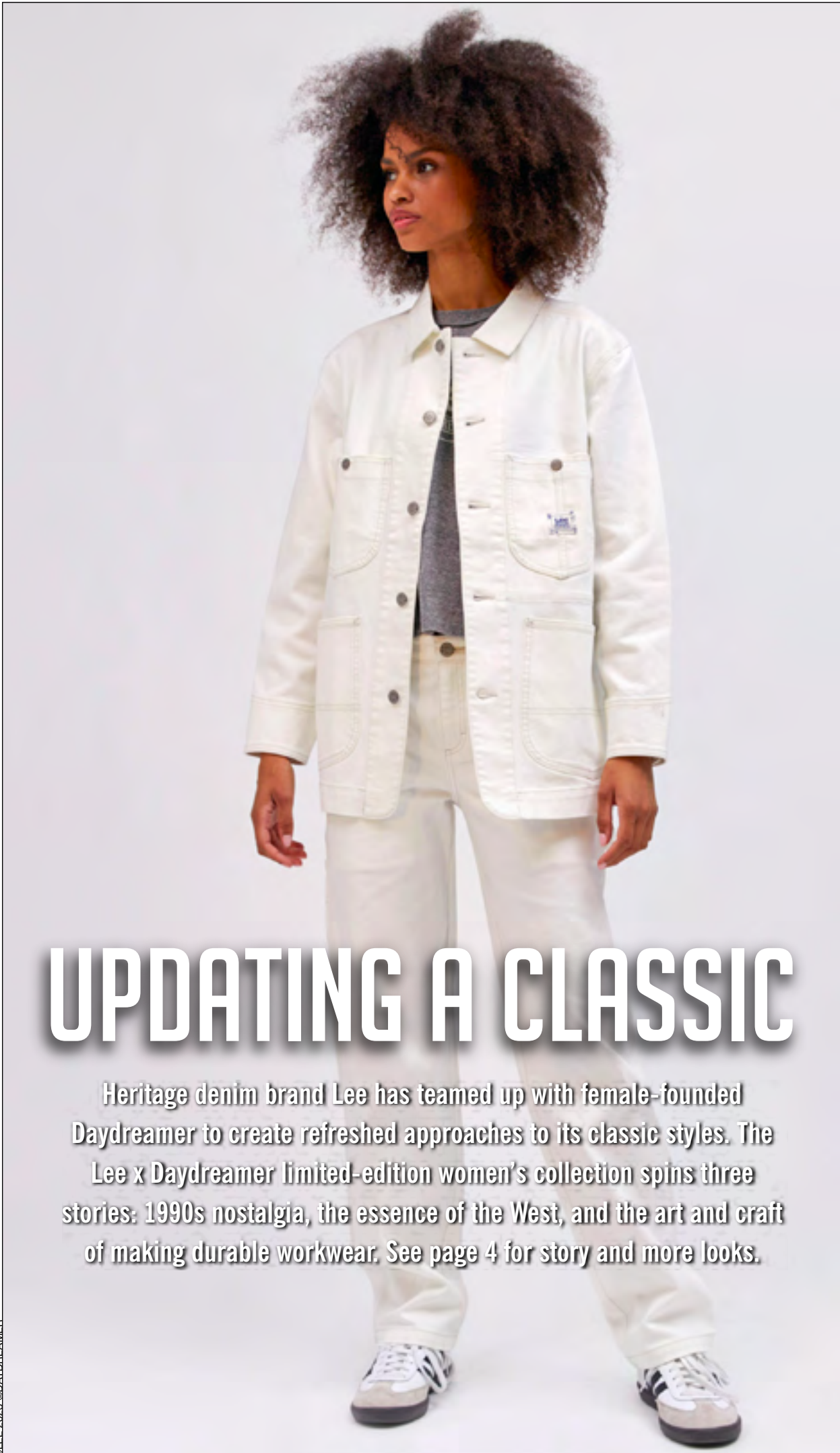


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UPDATING A CLASSIC

Heritage denim brand Lee has teamed up with female-founded Daydreamer to create refreshed approaches to its classic styles. The Lee x Daydreamer limited-edition women's collection spins three stories: 1990s nostalgia, the essence of the West, and the art and craft of making durable workwear. See page 4 for story and more looks.

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TRADE-SHOW REPORT

L.A. Market Week Sizzles With Delights for Resort/Spring '24

By Kelli Freeman *Contributing Writer*

Sultry summer days during **Los Angeles Market Week**, held July 30–Aug. 3, had buyers ready for Resort/Spring '24 and proved once again why the L.A. Fashion District is the place to be for global fashion trends, from colorful and up-cycled collections to garments with mixed-fabric usage.

Buyers were treated to complimentary amenities including the newly opened buyers lounge with lunch and Wi-Fi at **The New Mart**; coffee, catered lunch and an ice-cream bar at the **California Market Center**; and an all-day “sip and shop” at the **Cooper Design Space**.

“This is a great market,” said Camille DePedrini of **Camille DePedrini** in South Pasadena, Calif. “I’m always finding new and fun things.”

➔ **L.A. Market** page 3

FINANCE

Inventory Doesn't Age Like Fine Wine and Other Financial Wisdom

By Christian Chensvold *Associate Editor*

Fashion never stands still—in fact, nothing in the world does. And the best-designed garments sitting in a warehouse are like flowers blooming where they can't be seen, their life cycle fading in the dark.

In the wake of challenging and uncertain times, which look to be the new normal, the *California Apparel News* reached out to Marco Valverde, partner in **Moss Adams**, to discuss the most pressing issues facing apparel companies right now, which include the tangled web of unsold inventory, enterprise solutions, direct-to-consumer sales tax and what to do if you're ready to sell your business.

CAN: Let's start with everyone's favorite subject: taxes. Is there ever any good tax news?

➔ **Moss Adams** page 3

INSIDE

Where fashion gets down to businessSM



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Luxury L.A. Brand Grayscale Debuts Womenswear Collection

Grayscale, the luxury bespoke suit brand designed and founded by Los Angeles native Brandon Gray, has debuted a womenswear collection at its new Grayscale Showroom. The showroom's grand opening—which is full of eye-catching mod prints, velvets, patterns and bold stripes tailored with feminine appeal—takes place Aug. 26 alongside some of Gray's most popular works featured on celebrity clientele, all with the “exquisitely tailored, striking aesthetic” the brand has become known for.

“My mother and sisters were major influences in my life,” said Gray, who goes by the nickname BJ. “They each are multifaceted and have different styles. I design my collections through their eyes pulling bits and pieces from each of their perspectives and cohesively blending them together. Designing for women is fun as there is always a way to add a feminine touch to a suit.”

Occasionwear, embellished suiting, outer-



The collection debuts at the recently opened Grayscale Showroom in Downtown Los Angeles.

wear and more have all been tailored to the female form with the signature Grayscale touch. “The timing just seemed right,” said Gray. “I’d dropped a few women’s pieces here and there after having received requests from celebrities for women’s pieces. Once realizing that, it just seemed like the next logical step.”

Grayscale’s aesthetic is inspired by art, architecture and international travel. The brand has become a go-to source for men’s tailoring, geared at individuals with a strong sense of personal style and knack for flare. Celebrity fans of Grayscale include Sterling K. Brown, Cate Blanchett, Jay Ellis, Derek Hough, Lady Gaga, Yvonne Orji, Lance Gross and many more.

Founded in 2014, Grayscale initially launched as a styling service before developing into a luxury boutique fashion house specializing in eveningwear, suits and outerwear. Gray is a Los Angeles native who studied design in Paris, where he began to devise what would become his signature color blocking and pattern mixing. The Grayscale Showroom, located in Downtown L.A., officially opened this month and can be viewed by appointment only. Select Grayscale pieces can be purchased online by the general public at www.grayscaleic.com.—*Christian Chensvold*

SUSTAINABILITY

tasc Names Professional Golfer Eric Cole as Brand Ambassador

Premium activewear brand tasc has signed PGA-tour player Eric Cole as the label’s brand ambassador. According to the agreement, the Palm Springs, Calif.—born Cole will have the tasc logo featured on his right collar and yoke of all apparel that he wears during competitions. Cole will also wear tasc apparel while off the course and at the gym.

As part of New Orleans-based tasc’s marketing initiatives, Cole will participate in dedicated advertising and social-media campaigns to promote the partnership in addition to making appearances on behalf of the brand.

“As part of our efforts to bring our active-

lifestyle apparel products to a wider audience, we think golf is an ideal showcase for our brand and products, which transition perfectly from the gym to course and any activity,” said Todd Andrews, CEO and co-founder of tasc. “Eric Cole is a perfect partner to represent our brand on and off the course.”

The 14-year-old tasc is a family-founded brand that promotes sustainability starting with its greener fiber sourcing, which includes organic cotton, beechwood and bamboo. It is also committed to reaching at least 85 percent sustainable materials to create its products by 2024. This commitment to sus-



tasc has partnered with Eric Cole who will serve as the company’s brand ambassador. The professional golfer has said that tasc’s sustainable practices align with his lifestyle.

tainability and ecological practices resonated with Cole.

“[tasc has] a unique and innovative approach to creating high-performance products for athletes in natural and sustainable ways that are great on and off the golf course,” said Cole. “It is perfect for my lifestyle.”

Within its supply chain, tasc relies on ecological practices such as powering its sewing facility through solar and wind resources in addition to recovering, treating and reusing 95 percent of the water used to dye its fabric. The remaining 5 percent evaporates naturally. All the brand’s products are shipped using corn-based biodegradable bags.

—*Dorothy Crouch*

CORRECTION

Recent coverage of two textile shows making their debuts in Los Angeles was placed on our website apparelnews.net under LA Textile. We regret any confusion this may have caused for the LA Textile show, which runs Sept. 27–29 at the California Market Center.

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Inside the Industry

If you’re thinking of donating clothing to the citizens of Maui, that window has already closed, according to state officials. With the focus on sustainability, upcycling and recycling, many fashion brands responded almost instantly to those who lost their homes and businesses in the recent fire. But the island quickly received more than enough, according to a report by Hawaii News Now. “No more clothing donations,” the website wrote. “There is a surplus of donated clothing items, and the organizations are still working their way through these items.” Monetary donations are much appreciated and can be done through such organizations as the Maui United Way, Hawaii Community Foundation, American Red Cross of Hawaii and Hawaii Salvation Army. GoFundMe.com also has a page of verified families who’ve been displaced.

Mimaki USA, a leading manufacturer of wide-format inkjet printers and cutters, has announced the global debut of its latest innovation, the TxF300-75 direct-to-film printer. In response to the resounding success of the initial DTF printer offering, the new model addresses the market demand for even more increased efficiency to address these amplified productivity needs. The addition of a second printhead allows the TxF300-75 to increase productivity by 300 percent while still promising safe and stable operation. The DTF printing system enables intricate designs on an expansive range of fabrics, including cotton, mixed textiles and polyester and even on darker shades. The TxF300-75 is set to launch in late August 2023.

Leading technology provider Tukatech has introduced the TUKAstudio software suite for print and textile design, which includes the optional addition of the TUKA3D Designer Edition. The combination provides a complete digital workflow for fabric design, including 3D visualization on a garment, designed as a complement to companies’ existing graphic-design programs. The tools and features in this print and textile software were created specifically for textile and apparel product development, which would otherwise typically include time-consuming tasks. The TUKAstudio 3D & Print Design Suite is available for only \$99 per month per user on a monthly subscription without any long-term contracts. ROI can be calculated on project time alone, with savings that may exceed 50 percent for some projects. The suite is compatible with most other graphic-design applications.

Alibaba has announced its first-ever in-person Co-Creat conference scheduled for Sept. 7–8 at Resorts World in Las Vegas, billed as an essential event for all B2B professionals and industry experts. The event will include the debut of smart sourcing, with Alibaba leaders discussing the next era of digital trade with over 10 new enhanced tools and services. Over 50 keynotes, workshops and showcases are scheduled, which will deep-dive into such challenging topics as supplier diversity and supply-chain risk. Daymond John, founder of Fubu and star of TV’s “Shark Tank,” will be the headline speaker. Over a thousand top suppliers and like-minded peers are expected to attend for ample networking opportunities.

TRADE-SHOW REPORT



The Nu Vintage



Charlene K Jewelry



Blue Star



Daniali



People of Leisure



Michael Stars

L.A. Market *Continued from page 1* European vibe at The New Mart

“The August market is important because it’s the first place on the planet you can see Spring ’24 European lines,” said Tom Keefer, general manager. Brands such as the made-in-Italy **European Culture** at the **FashionLink** showroom specialized in mixing natural fabrics—woven and knit—using cottons, linens and silks, some with elastane, into a single piece to create striking fashion-forward garments that wholesale between \$65 and \$185. German brand **Beate Heyman** produced its intricately designed collection utilizing fabrics primarily from Italy and Japan, including viscose, linen and cotton offering a super-thin, luxurious feel, priced at \$75–\$300.

The Nu Vintage in the **Rande Cohen Showroom** is a one-of-a-kind, rock ’n’ roll meets soft and flowery garments line made in Los Angeles. Highlights included long flannel hoodies with patchwork and hand-embroidered denim jackets. “We’re for that chic bohemian woman who likes a little bit of vintage in her life with high-quality fabrics,” said Karen Drotar, head of sales for the brand. Top-of-line jackets were priced at \$120.

“I’m looking for new and beautiful lines for my very fashionable clientele,” said Nora Robles of **La Boutique** in Sinaloa, Mexico.

“Every woman wants to be pretty and attractive; when you add a few pieces of jewelry it makes a big difference,” said

Teong Kay, designer and founder of **Charlene K Jewelry**, who created the brand for his daughter. Gemstones are the stars of this classic yet trendy line of earrings, necklaces, cuffs and rings priced at \$30–\$300.

Making connections at the CMC

“The CMC showrooms had a steady July/August market connecting with key boutique buyers across the U.S. including **Nectar Clothing**, **Ban.Do**, **Revolve Vintage Apparel**, **MAC Collection** and **JB Elliot** among others,” said Moriah Robinson, director of CMC events.

Tanks were blowing out at **Stone Age Designs** in the **Sharon Koshet Sales** showroom, where stores could customize the style and images on these comfy shirts, made in L.A. “We can have two customers located next to each other, but the icon for each store is unique to that store,” said Sooz Chenetz, Stone Age Designs sales manager. Tanks were priced at \$20, T-shirts at \$22 and fleece at \$29.

The **Blue Star** line was back at the **Fern Liberson & Company** showroom after taking a pandemic break. The hottest items included handmade scarves from India made with silk and modal and silver studded with dangling tulip designs along with fun cotton scarves with pompoms priced at \$24–\$32. Also in the showroom was **Daniali**, made in Los Angeles. “This is right up our alley,” said Robert Rodriguez, a first-time L.A. Market buyer from **Impressions by Design**

in Colorado Springs, Colo., who loved the brand’s high-low fishnet jackets priced at \$42.

Spring previews at the Cooper

The **Michael Stars Showroom** featured made-in-L.A. packable one-and-done looks and matching sets, including new transitional linen, crinkle knit textures and waffle stitching. New additions also included an embroidered cardigan with heart-shaped buttons priced at \$198 and a ruched tank at \$88. “Our ideology is to make quality clothing so you are moving through life with that piece and also passing it along to the next generation,” said Savannah Bigley, brand and PR marketing manager.

Fresh for Spring was **Cali Dreaming** in the **New West Showroom** in shades of honeydew and apricot. “The line is representative of the beach lifestyle, with layering to wear to the beach and also to enjoy the California lifestyle,” said Alexandra Faay, wholesale representative. Silk dresses were priced at \$98.

At the **ICA Showroom**, Los Angeles–based **People of Leisure** was pairing a soft and chunky hoodie priced at \$59 with a cargo vest at \$63.

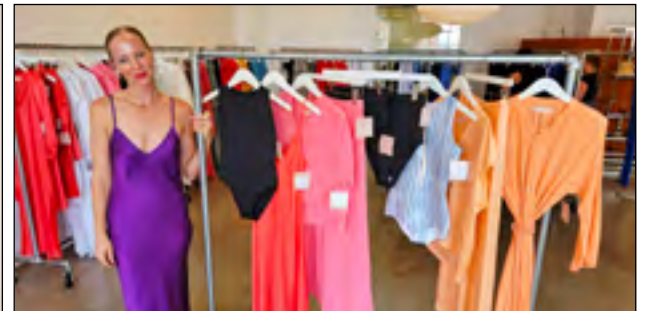
“Overall, August market was successful in that we had plenty of energy at the Cooper Design Space. We’re looking forward to Spring showing in October,” said Margot Garcia, general manager of the Cooper. ●



Beate Heyman



Stone Age Designs



Cali Dreaming

FINANCE

Moss Adams *Continued from page 1*

MV: Yes, if you’re ahead of things. In the last few years the growth of the direct-to-consumer sector has brought a lot of challenges where apparel companies don’t know what their sales-tax footprint is. When you sell online, the customer can be in any of the 50 states, and each one has a different tax nexus. A lot of companies don’t start collecting state sales tax until much later in the game, and if they don’t collect it from the customer then they’re on the hook for it later down the road—and we’ve seen it to the tune of a few million dollars.

CAN: But shouldn’t their e-commerce platform be taking sales tax based on the state the order comes from?

MV: Yes, but even in 2023 it’s not always accurate. In a related tax issue, since the pandemic many employees are working remotely, and you don’t just owe state income tax based on where you operate but also where your employees work. We recommend companies do what we call a nexus study to find out sales-and-income-tax exposure, which is a lot easier to do before your company gets too big.

CAN: What else should companies look out for when it comes to the growth of the DTC sector?

MV: To run an efficient company you need a platform where everyone can talk to each other, and a lot of the enterprise solutions we see are outdated. Mostly what we see is that the point-of-sale software is not aligned with the inventory-management or accounting systems. We recom-



Marco Valverde

mend you have them all talking to each other so you can make decisions in real time.

CAN: We’re seeing a slowdown in acquisitions. What should owners who are considering selling their company be most aware of at the present moment?

MV: During the pandemic, people were not traveling so they were staying at home and shopping online. A lot of companies took the opportunity to sell their business, but that’s slowed down in 2023 with the economic uncertainty. So if you want to sell, we recommend producing a quality-of-earnings report, which answers the enterprise value of the company, which will make you more likely to have a successful transaction.

CAN: It’s sounding like the best protocol is following the old advice that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

MV: Yes, all these points interconnect with each other. A company may want to be acquired but hasn’t addressed the sales-tax issue, which can be a heavy negotiating issue between a buyer and a seller. I was involved with a transaction where there was a sales-tax obligation close to \$3 million. The company ended up selling, but an amount had to stay in escrow for seven years, until the expiration of the review period.

CAN: With uncertainty now the norm, what’s your most up-to-the-minute advice on keeping one’s head above water?

MV: I would say in the apparel space to remember that inventory is not like wine and doesn’t get better with age. So make sure your numbers are adequate to run your business, and do not overextend or overbuy. Think of it as money sitting in your warehouse if it’s there for a long period of time.

CAN: Companies are certainly aware of this, but is there a false step they often make?

MV: It comes down to reviewing their supply-chain and sourcing strategies. If you’re sourcing from overseas with a 12-week turnaround, you need to have a really good system internally to manage what that’s going to look like. The better information you have, the better decisions you can make. Data are so available now, but you need to have them to make use of them.

DENIM FASHION



Lee x Daydreamer Honors Denim Heritage With Updated Classics

Heritage denim brand **Lee** has chosen Los Angeles-based, female-founded brand **Daydreamer** as a partner to create refreshed approaches to its classic styles for a limited-edition women's collection. The Lee x Daydreamer collection spins three stories: 1990s nostalgia, the essence of the West, and the art and craft of making durable workwear that becomes more beautiful with age.

"This collaboration is the first exclusively female for Lee, and working with Daydreamer was exciting for the team," said Betty Madden, vice president of global design at Lee. "Generations of women have worn Lee, from rock stars to moms, cowgirls to college students. Blending our original icons with Daydreamer's aesthetic creates a very cool fit that will inspire a whole new generation of fans."

The Lee x Daydreamer collection features T-shirts, crews, sweatshirts, denim jackets and jeans. Daydreamer has spent more than 10 years focused on responsible manufacturing as a cut-, sewn- and made-in-L.A. brand of T-shirts that are vintage inspired, many of which touch upon the legends who have shaped music.

Lee, the 134-year-old denim maker owned by the Greensboro, N.C.-headquartered **Kontoor Brands**, sought to update a selection of its classics such as its workwear pant and chore jacket, now available in an ecru hue.



Also offered in a Rogue Waves indigo color, the chore jacket is made in an oversized fit that features a worn-in look. The complementary pant in a straight carpenter-jean design features a mid-rise, looser-fit straight pant with workwear details such as a hammer loop and large pockets. By reimagining these pieces, Lee is celebrating its longstanding workwear heritage with seasoned fans of the brand while sharing its legacy with a new generation.

The classic Lee Rider Jacket has been reimagined in an oversized silhouette as the Loose Rider style in a lighter blue

denim shade called Mid Storm.

Additional denim pieces in the collection include the Western Carol Cropped Boot, a high-rise flare jean in a slim fit.

Nodding to Daydreamer's mission to create pieces in Los Angeles, some of the Lee collaboration's T-shirt and crew designs are made in the city. The Highest Quality Sound BF Crew, 90s Shrunken Thermal and Doodles Reverse are all made in L.A. The Workwear Girlfriend Tee—Daydreamer features the Lee workwear logo in a co-branded graphic in puff-ink doodles.

"We are beyond excited to be offering our first co-branded product collaboration," said Laura Glover, founder of Daydreamer. "Daydreamer historically partners with icons. To have now co-designed a product assortment with an iconic American heritage brand such as Lee is an incredibly proud moment for me and the brand."

Pieces from the collection range in cost from \$75 to \$138 and are sized XS–XL for jackets and tops with jeans sized 24–35. Lee x Daydreamer is available online at daydreamerla.com and lee.com/lee-x-daydreamer.html. The brands have also partnered with select retailers including **Fred Segal** and **Revolve** to sell the collection.

—Dorothy Crouch



TRADE-SHOW REPORT

ANDMORE Successfully Completes Overlapping August Markets

Atlanta Apparel and **Formal Markets**, held July 31–Aug. 5 at **AmericasMart Atlanta**, showed healthy buying across the contemporary, children's, bridal and prom categories.

"The energy of the overlapping formal and apparel markets could be felt across all 14 floors, and buyer enthusiasm is showing no signs of slowing," said Caron Stover, ANDMORE senior vice president of apparel.

Strong attendance from the combined markets drew attendees from 47 states as well as 26 countries. ANDMORE also reported 20 percent of buyers as first-time attendees. A breadth of new styles was showcased across more than 450 temporary exhibits and 410 permanent showrooms. Buyers praised the overwhelming ease and product range as well as the market's signature Southern hospitality, while brands experienced strong order writing, with many buyers beginning to source early Spring while wrapping up the last of their immediate and holiday orders.

First-time exhibitor Katie Walters, CEO of the contemporary women's brand **Francis + Benedict**, said, "We've only



The combined markets drew attendees from 47 states as well as 26 countries.

been in two boutiques in Charleston, S.C., and this is our first time trying to sell wholesale. We exceeded every expectation and even had our first \$10,000 order, which I never expected to get."

Formal Markets showcased over 180 individual collections

across AmericasMart's permanent showrooms and temporary exhibits, making it Atlanta's largest-to-date formal showcase and the biggest social occasion market in the country. Brands reported having incredible markets with large-scale orders from national and international buyers.

"Social occasion is an electric category, and the proof is in the number of buyers and brands we welcomed to Atlanta this August," said Stover. "Retailers are hungry for new and trendy products across all price points, and exhibitors continued to exceed expectations with inventory."

Buyer Jennifer Fox, marketing director of **The Bridal Collection** in Centennial, Colo., brought her largest team ever. "We get to see all of the brands we want in Atlanta, which is why we bring such a large team," said Fox. "We are placing our largest orders to date this week."

Beyond the exhibits, the Formal Markets signature fashion show had standing-room-only attendance to view the 83 looks featuring bridal, quinceañera and prom bestsellers.

—Christian Chensvold

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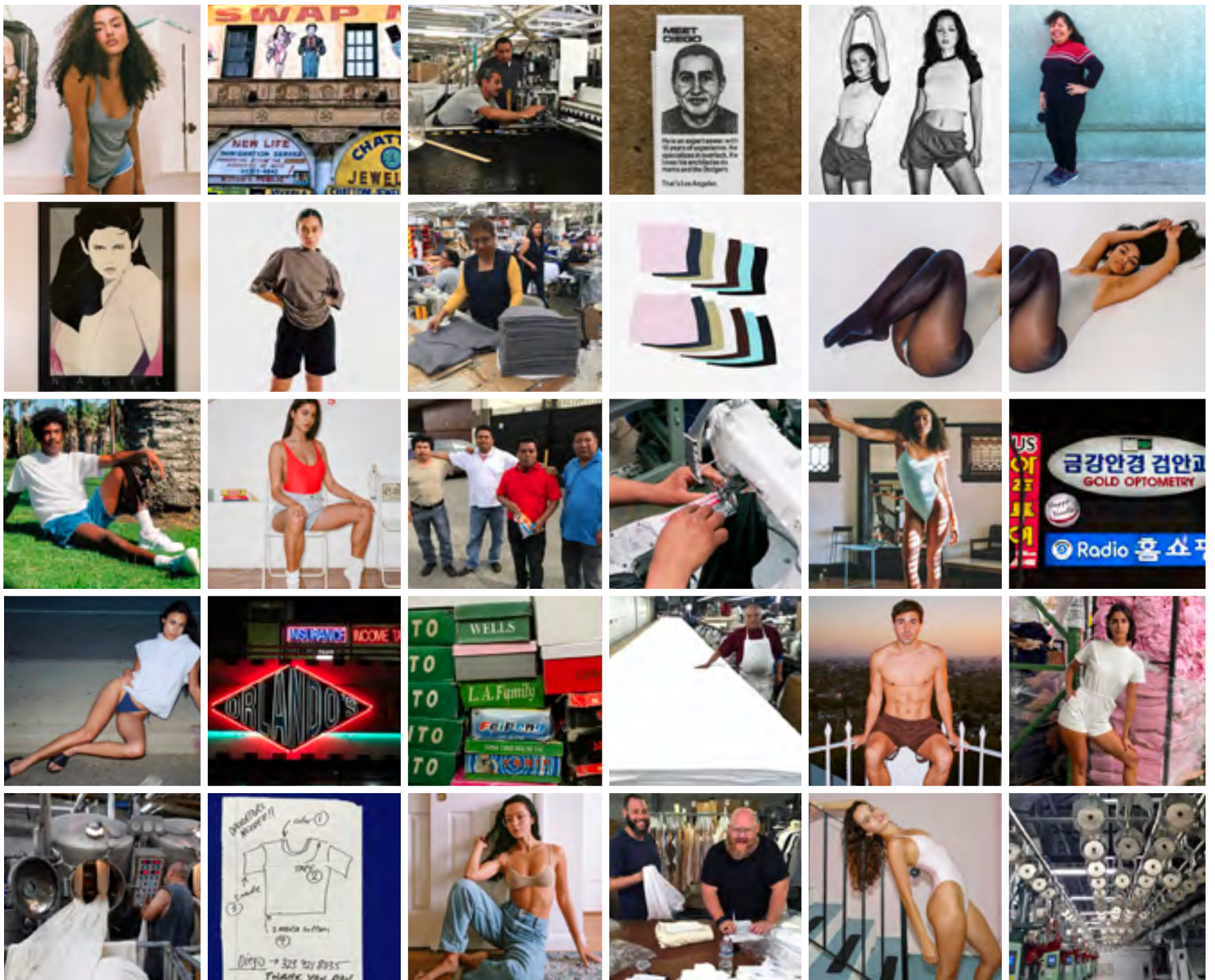
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