

CALIFORNIA ApparelNews

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WE'RE BAAACCKKK

Founded in 2005, L.A. Fashion Weekend returned after a COVID-19 hiatus. Los Angeles brands on the runway at the I|O Rooftop at The Godfrey Hotel in Hollywood included Lovlei, Malibu Road, Peelers and Ragdoll. For more looks, see page 3.

Malibu Road

JOHNNY

TRADE-SHOW REPORT

October L.A. Market Week Delivers on Celebrity, Energy, Buyers

By Kelli Freeman *Contributing Writer*

The vibe was positive as buyers converged on the L.A. fashion district for **Los Angeles Market Week**, held Oct. 9–12. By all accounts, the largest and busiest market of the year was well attended as buyers shopped for Spring '24.

The energy was decidedly upbeat with an abundance of amenities and opportunities for attendees to enjoy, mingle and shop traditional, top-tier contemporary and on-trend luxury collections.

There was a buzz on every floor at **The New Mart**, which also hosted **Designers and Agents**; at the **Cooper Design Space**, which hosted **Brand Assembly**; and at the **California Market Center**, which hosted the fifth annual **Vegan Fashion Week**.

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FINANCE

UCLA's Anderson Forecast Delivers Good News

By Christian Chensvold *Associate Editor*

Nothing's more welcomed these days than surprise good news. And that's what came in the latest UCLA Anderson Forecast—the prominent economic report put out by the **University of California Los Angeles'** Anderson School of Management—which is cheerfully titled, "The Unexpected Robust Economy."

Recessions follow boom times, but according to the same law that ensures autumn follows summer, the good news is that while 2024 will see a slowing in the national and state economy, no immediate recession is on the horizon.

The *California Apparel News* listened in on a recent Anderson School symposium and afterward spoke to Jerry Nickelsburg, economics professor and faculty director of the

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INSIDE

Where fashion gets down to businessSM



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L.A.-based Frank & Eileen Takes Home 2023 MAFI Award

In 2009, Audrey McLoughlin first sourced responsibly crafted Italian menswear fabrics with the idea of reinventing the women's button-front shirt, an apparel item previously devoted almost entirely to men. The Los Angeles-based **Frank & Eileen**, as her brand came to be known, is now a global, omni-channel retail brand in addition to being a certified woman-owned and women-led business that has worked with the same ethical and sustainable manufacturers for over a decade.

Now it has received the 2023 Moss Adams Innovator Award, or MAFI. Meant to be lived in and loved, **Moss Adams** said in a release, Frank & Eileen's shirts also meet the Oeko-Tex Standard 100 global certification for the absence of harmful chemicals.

"I am thrilled and honored to be the 2023 Moss Adams Fashion Innovator Award winner," said McLoughlin, CEO and founder of Frank & Eileen. "Using our ability to be innovative as a force for good has long been



Marco Valverde, partner and apparel national practice leader at Moss Adams, with MAFI Award winner Audrey McLoughlin, CEO and founder of Frank & Eileen

core to everything we do. Our intentional approach to innovation has not only scaled our sustainable-from-the-start business and built an incredibly loyal customer base but it's also led to us receiving the highest impact score for any woman-owned, globally recog-

nized apparel brand in the U.S. This award celebrates our commitment to slow fashion, made sustainably. And we're just getting started."

Frank & Eileen joins an exclusive list of designers who have been honored with the MAFI award. Presented annually to a California-based company, the award goes to winners that exhibit exceptional creativity and innovation, from design to marketing to commerce as well as sustainability and diversity over the past 12 months.

"Frank & Eileen is certainly deserving of this year's Moss Adams Fashion Innovator Award based on the innovation and growth achieved by the company over the last year," said Marco Valverde, partner and apparel national practice leader. "The company exemplifies our two newest criteria—sustainability and diversity—by being woman owned, having an all-woman-led executive team and attaining B Corp certification."

—Christian Chensvold

FASHION

Citizens of Humanity x Billy Reid Collab Reimagines the Classics

Southern California meets just plain Southern in a new collaboration between L.A.'s **Citizens of Humanity** and Alabama-based, four-time **CFDA** award winner **Billy Reid**.

The premium-denim powerhouse partnered with the genteel Americana-inspired brand in the creation of three custom washes exclusively for the brand.

"The Billy Reid brand brings its sensibility to the world through standout clothing crafted with integrity and authenticity, making clothing that is built to last," said the new

duo in a joint release. "Billy Reid takes classic wardrobe staples and improves them through unexpected, high-quality detailing, carefully considering every button, every thread and every stitch. The edited assortment of the Citizens of Humanity x Billy Reid collaboration follows with both brands' belief in creating fewer, better things to balance sustainability and artanship."

Added Citizens of Humanity Creative Director Marianne McDonald, "Signature to both Citizens of Humanity and Billy Reid is our dedicated approach to reimagining the



The collaboration follows with both brands' belief in creating fewer, better things to balance sustainability and artanship.

classics. When we were conceptualizing this collaboration, we wanted to be sure to create a small range of styles perfect in fit, feel and wash."

Citizens of Humanity denim jeans are the only jeans distributed at Billy Reid, both online and in-store. "Citizens of Humanity is a leader in U.S.A. manufacturing with admirable ongoing sustainability efforts," said founder Billy Reid. "We have shared some manufacturing facilities with Citizens at times and really had a ton of respect for their expertise in the category. Our shared approaches and love for American denim set a great foundation for our relationship. You'll find that our pieces are designed to live and made to last." The collaboration launched on **BillyReid.com** and in Billy Reid stores on Oct. 26, priced at \$278.

Citizens of Humanity travels the world sourcing superior fabrications and finding inspiration from vintage markets and is known for its impeccable fits and textural washes. Designer Billy Reid draws inspiration from the South and his childhood growing up in Amite, La., where he worked in his mother's clothing boutique.—C.C.



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Inside the Industry

Apparelsoft.com founder David Stern has created new traceability software with the ability to verify the history of any garment's components, origins and production methods with documented identification. RFID R'us (rfidrus.com) tracks all aspects of sustainable production, bringing increased transparency and accountability to the supply chain. "We have figured out a way to embed traceability in each product through RFID," said Stern. "Our software enables the supplier to go to a manufacturer's systems and match our order and packing list with encrypted security and print labels or tags with a manufacturer's unique product number, producing a unique serial number. It will forbid any counterfeiting, and you can also take inventory with a push of a button rather than going about your facility scanning products."

Joor, one of the world's leading digital wholesale ecosystems, has raised \$25 million in new funding led by Brightwood Capital and Tamarix Capital Partners, allowing it to deliver an increasingly enriched platform experience in service of its extensive global network of brands and retailers. Alongside new data-led initiatives, the company plans to enhance its Joor Pay solution as well as expand its footprint in categories such as footwear, sports and outdoors. "Joor has a proven track record of enabling growth for world-class brands and retailers," explained Kristin Savilia, CEO of Joor. "Amidst a tough macroeconomic environment, we're thrilled that our investors recognize the value that Joor's solution provides and share our vision of accelerating the platform's growth through additional innovation and enhanced platform capabilities."

Aptean, a global provider of mission-critical enterprise software solutions, has announced the publication of its Fashion and Apparel 2024 Trends and Outlook Report for North America. Key findings include that 71 percent of respondents cited higher operating costs as the most significant barrier to growth. To combat this challenge, brands are increasingly embracing automation. On average, automation of critical business tasks increased by over 20 percent from 2022 to 2023. The adoption of cutting-edge technologies such as shipping software, enterprise resource planning and product lifecycle management is proving instrumental in driving this progress. Additionally, digital transformation is taking center stage as one in three brands have already completed their digital transformation projects while 63 percent are well on their way.

PTC Retail, in response to customer and market demands, has announced the availability of Flex Insights, a low-code platform designed to help brands and retailers unlock the power of their data to drive faster and better decision-making during planning and product development. Flex Insights extends the industry-leading capabilities and feature-rich functionality of PTC's retail product lifecycle management platform, FlexPLM, and is available through simple, visual, easy-to-use and intuitive apps. "We're constantly striving to improve business processes to drive speed, collaboration and efficiency," said Corina Brügger, service transition manager at Intersport. "The Flex Insights Critical Path Management app shows everyone the status of each product and the steps that need to be completed to get our products to market faster."

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FASHION



JOHNNY
Lovlei Lovlei Lovlei Lovlei Malibu Road Malibu Road

L.A. Fashion Weekend Aligns With L.A.'s October Market Week

Endless Road Entertainment hosted a soft relaunch of its **L.A. Fashion Weekend** Oct. 11 at the 12,000-square-foot **I/O Rooftop** space at **The Godfrey Hotel** in Hollywood, Calif. The event blended a Spring/Summer 2024 fashion runway with opportunities to shop brands in a party atmosphere to promote networking and a beauty bar to give attendees a glamorous experience.

California-based brands included **Lovlei**, **Malibu Road**, **Peelers** and **Ragdoll**. Trends included short dresses paired with shorts shown in bright-pink-and-citrus-hued floral prints. Streetwear inspiration featured prominently on the runway in button-down shirting with tailored shorts in gunmetal gray contrasted with a red crop top, in addition to a take on the puffer vest in black worn over a bright-yellow T-shirt and black denim, topped by a classic baseball cap. Athleticwear also appeared on the runway, promoting style coupled with ease of movement.

The recent **L.A. Market Week** in downtown Los Angeles,

held Oct. 9–12, which drew buyers to the **California Market Center**, **Cooper Design Space** and **The New Mart**, allowed the L.A. Fashion Weekend team to attract buyers to an event that featured the style of a runway production while generating opportunities for apparel professionals to plan business for the upcoming seasons.

Scheduling L.A. Fashion Weekend amid the Spring/Summer 2024 market was intentional, according to the production's founder, Endless Road Entertainment CEO Mikey Koffman, who explained her team's strategy.

"L.A. Fashion Weekend is about the business of fashion, utilizing the runway as a buying tool for retailers during L.A. Market Week," said Koffman "We focus on consumer-driven brands that lend themselves to the California lifestyle."

L.A. Fashion Weekend will return March 15–17 to showcase Fall/Winter 2024 and Oct. 11–13 for a glimpse at Spring/Summer 2025.—*Dorothy Crouch*



YOUNG SSFE
Lovlei Peelers Peelers

FINANCE

Anderson Forecast *Continued from page 1*

Anderson Forecast, to have him help break down the key takeaways on the current state of the Golden State.

CAN: What should businesses most know about the present economic climate?

JN: The most important takeaway from an analysis of all the data and what we know about the impact of economic policy, which is the increase of interest rates, is that we are not in a recession, and there's no indication that we're about to start into one. I think the underlying message about the outlook in California is that the things that are going to hold up the best in the coming two years are things that are disproportionate in California. And those are going to be technology, the construction industry, and leisure and hospitality. So we're expecting to see here less impact of any weakness in the U.S. economy and for California to continue to grow faster than the U.S., as it has for some time.

CAN: For a long time California has boasted one of the largest economies in the world. Why is that?

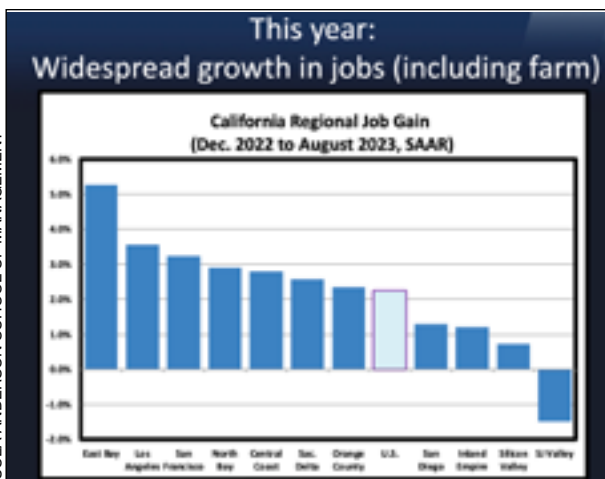
JN: There are a number of elements, starting with the fact that California tends to be an entrepreneurial state where people come to start businesses. There is also a large secondary education system, so there's a deep workforce and a lot of innovation and experimentation that goes on here.

CAN: What trends are you seeing for the nondurable goods manufacturing sector, which includes the apparel industry?

JN: This sector is much more oriented toward lower-skilled manufacturing, much of which left the U.S. a long time ago. That which remains serves specific purposes, such as the garment industry in Los Angeles.

CAN: In the retail sector, your findings show that people want to be out and spending money.

JN: Retail is interesting because for a long time brick-and-mortar was dead in the water because of the shift to online shopping. But one of the things that came to the fore during our pandemic lockdown was that we wanted to be out with people. So retail, which is not just commoditized but also a



UCLA ANDERSON SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT
Top: Jerry Nickelsburg, director, UCLA Anderson Forecast. Bottom: California maintains robust jobs growth, with Los Angeles exceeding that of the nation.

little bit more experiential, is doing well, and we're even seeing investment in more retail establishments.

CAN: The symposium said we've entered the stage of a post-industrial society. How do people begin to understand what that means?

JN: A post-industrial society runs on information. Automation, robotics, artificial intelligence—these are things that are transforming goods and services. We're actually

making more goods than before, but we're doing it in a very different way. So Rosie the Riveter doesn't exist anymore, but Rosie the Robotics Technician does. As for something like sustainability, what we're seeing nationally through the Inflation Reduction Act, and in California, are policies that encourage the use of alternative energy, and that has created a demand for innovation and production of new equipment and new ways of doing things that weren't there before.

CAN: The symposium also had an interesting section that may be confusing for the layperson, and that is the relation between recession, inflation and unemployment. Can you explain their connectedness?

JN: If one looks back at history, one finds that dramatic drops in inflation rates have been associated with recessions. The reason is that recession is caused by a decline in demand for goods and services, and when demand is in decline businesses will typically lower their prices, and that's what brings high inflation down to lower. What we've seen recently is that high inflation was related to supply-chain interruption, and as that has gone away we've had a decline in inflation without having a recession that, for example, in 1981 brought down very high inflation rates. Unemployment gets triggered when there is slack demand for a firm's production—it doesn't hire and many times lays off people. So the three things are really all kind of simultaneous.

CAN: However, you say that while recession is inevitable, because of the cyclical nature of the economy, we're not immediately headed into one.

JN: Based on history, you can expect one at least sometime between now and 2034. The point of saying a recession is inevitable is because economies build up imbalances over time, of which there aren't any right now, and recessions are a correction of imbalances. So that's bound to happen sometime, and saying it's inevitable is an attempt at humor regarding all those who say it's coming next quarter.

CAN: Closing on a somewhat lighter note, how do you personally modify your behavior in the wake of all the information you have at your fingertips?

JN: I think it's important for everyone to look at data, and look behind rhetoric, and then make the best decisions that they can based on the best available data. ●

TRADE-SHOW REPORT



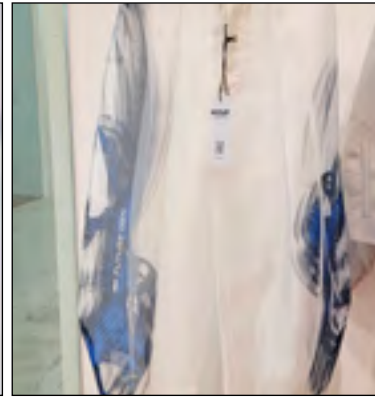
Asher



Jaga



Roncarati



Global Brand Solutions



Hope for Flowers by Tracy Reese

L.A. Market *Continued from page 1*

High-tech fashion at New Mart

Global Brand Solutions, which offers high-tech digital showrooms to view lines with headsets and joysticks, introduced the Turkish brand **KNTLGY** at the show with unique styles and color groupings. “I believe the U.S. market is very interested in having innovative ideas for sustainability, 3D sampling and using AI technology, so we are proud to be here,” said Tamer Tamturk, a GBS partner. Its technology recorded the voice of the knitting machines to create the blue design on the legs of KNTLGY’s slouchy-cut organza pant.

This edition of Designers and Agents attracted some of the best independent retailers in the country looking for inspiration from brands such as Los Angeles-based **Jaga**, a luxury satin and linen California-lifestyle collection in neutral colors with a pop of turquoise. A Lilly dress with a raw-edge finish was priced at \$295. “The show is very selective who they choose to go with; it’s amazing, that’s why I come back!” said designer Jaga Buyan.

“We maintain creative integrity, originality and brands that our retail audience can buy and be excited about,” said Meryl Mandelbaum, D&A managing and creative director.

Made-in-L.A. brand **Asher**, a contemporary fashion-basics collection and collaboration between **Simon Miller** and **Asher Fabric Concepts**, was receiving good reaction to its cropped silhouettes. “People are looking for something that’s more basic yet interesting,” said Lori Lindsay, Asher global sales director. Cropped tanks and T-shirts ranged from \$28 to \$30.

The show’s other exhibitors included Detroit-based **Hope for Flowers by Tracy Reese**, which offered an animal-print boiler suit in Tencel and linen priced at \$204; France-based **Diega** displaying a sheer button-up blouse with pleated sleeves priced at \$75 and a cotton viscose and silk patchwork skirt at \$130; Los Angeles-based and -designed **G1**, which showed lawn-cotton button-up shirts in solids and in blue with printed bird designs priced at \$105; and Italian-made **Roncarati**, which displayed a vintage vegetable-leather crop-top jacket with fringe priced at \$690.

“It’s exciting to see the building full and robust,” said Tom Keefer, New Mart general manager.

Cooper a-buzz with an eclectic mix of brands

A hot Spring seller for Japan-based **Mousy Vintage** was its short with ripped-in pockets lined to expose the branding, priced at \$225.

“There’s a good and bigger energy here with more happening,” said Kristn Tarnol and Michelle Gagnon from the **Emerald Forest** lifestyle and gifts store in Studio City, Calif., who were picking up plenty of unique products at Brand Assembly.

“It’s awesome, traffic is up, energy is high, said Hillary France, founder and CEO of Brand Assembly. “We love to produce an environment that people enjoy being in and do their business.”

A lifetime passion came to fruition for musician Gavin Rossdale, who created **Sea of Sound**, a made-in-L.A. collection of elevated streetwear for adults and children with a punky London attitude. The hoodie with a play on nutritional labels was priced at \$78; a red and black mohair-sweater hoodie at \$225. “I want people to wear these clothes and feel empowered, feel strong, use my years of curation, travel and international life to develop a style so when you put on this mohair you feel different about life,” said Rossdale.

“For a celebrity to get out there to promote their line is pretty big,” said Fraser Ross, founder of **Kitson**, who recently opened a new store in Beverly Hills. “Retailers are up against a much bigger battle, particularly in Los Angeles between the smash and grabs and strikes in the entertainment industry. There’s a better ebb and flow at the Beverly Hills store with much more foot traffic,” added Ross.

“This is the fun part of retail—the buying, shopping on a grand scale, and I love it!” said Jennifer D. Harris, manager of **Adorn** in Portland, Ore.

Huntington Beach, Calif.-based **Cleo Bella** received a lot of love with its crochet placement prints with an organic-linen blend priced at \$127.

After exiting the market in 2003, New York-based **Esprit** relaunched its brand for Spring ’24 with a collection that included sweats, bags and black jeweled-denim pants at \$47.60

with a matching jacket at \$67.60.

In addition to viewing a variety of top-tier contemporary fashion ideas and products, buyers, creators and designers enjoyed time to share thoughts and ideas through unique and fun food and drink offerings,” said Margot Garcia, general manager of the Cooper.

CMC wraps up on a high note

“Buyers represented a higher quality mix of department stores, chain stores and independent boutiques mainly from California and the Southwest,” said Moriah Robinson, CMC director of events. “Buyers expressed their appreciation for a fresh mix of brands.”

New additions since March included **Milio Milano**, a classic contemporary collection of sweaters, linens, slipdresses and cozy soft knits made in Italy. “Our tiered linen pants, priced from \$22–\$50, do well and are on nearly every order,” said Brittany Burroughs, corporate sales.

The **Sea & Grass Showroom** featured Los Angeles-based and women-owned **Bali Prema** in figure-flattering sizes inclusive of Bali-inspired resortwear. “We’re excited to offer our Ingrid Bergman hybrid dress/caftan priced at \$42,” said Diana Clark, brand director.

Vegan Fashion Week included a designer pop-up shop to browse plant-made vegan leather as well as sustainably made collections from participating apparel, handbag and footwear brands. The runway show focused on reducing the impact on the environment and proving that luxury does not have to equate to cruelty. Designers **Guillaume Larquemain**, **Nikki Green** and **A Perfect Jane** cowboy boots made from apples and bottle tops were highlighted.

Dominique Side developed the Los Angeles-based **Nikki Green** with business partner Anthony Hall and designer Christian Allen. “I’m a serial entrepreneur in the executive space. I go on speaking engagements, but I’m also an entertainer and recording artist going from the board room to the red carpet,” said Side, who added, “I want to find all of the ways to make vegan clothes luxury.” Side uses organic cotton, viscose, which can be responsibly sourced from tree fiber, along with different plant-based textiles. An iconic piece from her signature collection was the green suit play on a tux. ●



Cleo Bella



Mousy Vintage



Sea of Sound



Esprit



Milio Milano



Nikki Green



Nikki Green



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Nov. 17 issue

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