

CALIFORNIA ApparelNews

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LEARNING BY DESIGN

For over two centuries educating students in fashion design, Los Angeles Trade-Technical College, Otis College of Art and Design, and Woodbury University have celebrated their design students at graduation fashion shows, and this year was no exception. Drawing inspiration in a range of categories, this season's offerings lit up the runway. For more looks, see page 3.

Andres Enomoto
Otis College of Art and Design

INDUSTRY FOCUS: SUSTAINABILITY

Continuing Responsible Manufacturing Amid Tariff Confusion

By Dorothy Crouch Contributing Writer

The supply-chain chaos resulting from the Trump administration's tariff policies in the United States has upended sourcing and supply-chain planning in the apparel industry. Implementation of tariffs in April, their subsequent pause and the recent court cases in which their legality has been debated have rendered brands, designers and manufacturers unable to make sound long-term decisions regarding how they should make their garments.

Amid this turbulent time, sustainability might seem to be an afterthought, but the importance of manufacturing apparel responsibly remains crucial for brands and designers. Authenticity remains top of mind for consumers, and they are holding brands accountable by demanding companies maintain their sustainable commitments.

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Where fashion gets down to businessSM



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TRADE-SHOW REPORT

Efficiency, Sustainability, Technology at Forefront of Techtextil, Texprocess

By Kathleen Sturgeon Contributing Writer

The 2025 editions of **Techtextil North America** and **Texprocess Americas** were held May 6–8 at the **Georgia World Congress Center** in Atlanta. Every biennium the shows unite to give attendees the chance to see both sides of the show floor. This year's event focused on innovation in the textile industry.

Nearly 400 exhibitors from 28 countries attended the shows, which were replete with product displays, demonstrations and networking.

The **Sewn Products Equipment & Suppliers of the Americas** coproduces Texprocess Americas. Maggie McDonald, vice president, communications, for SPESA, said show organizers prioritize information and innovation.

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EVENTS

Authenticity, Community Lead Second Edition of Here | After

Here | After returned to **NeueHouse Hollywood** in Los Angeles May 8, welcoming denim insiders for an evening of cultivating meaningful community connections. The event was produced by industry veterans Erin Barajas, formerly of **Kingpins**, and **Denim Dudes**, the denim consultancy and forecasting firm founded by Amy Leverton. This recent edition of **Here | After** was sponsored by **Calik Denim**.

Attendees included executives and established artists in addition to emerging creatives and the next generation of decision-makers from the denim industry.

“Because we’re not a trade show, the stakeholders aren’t there to sell. They’re there to make connections and be part of this community,” said Barajas. “How can we serve this community but really acknowledge that we’re all a bunch of creatives? Yes, we’re trying to make money, and yes, we’re trying to build these brands, but really—at heart—we’re creatives and we want connection.”

Denim Dudes’ Shannon Reddy joined Leverton to present the Denim Dudes Fall/



Cem Ozan Sari of Calik Denim, Benjamin Talley Smith of Talley Creative, Paige Adams-Gellar of Paige and Gerald Ortiz of GQ magazine discuss variety in denim silhouettes during the **Here|After** panel “Fit Fatigue: Brands vs. the Infinite Scroll of Silhouettes.”

Winter 2026/2027 Forecast, which afforded trend direction for the upcoming season as consumers continue to value individuality and authenticity.

During “Fit Fatigue: Brands vs. the Infinite Scroll of Silhouettes,” Benjamin Talley Smith of **Talley Creative**, Paige Adams-Gellar of

Paige, Cem Ozan Sari of **Calik Denim** and Gerald Ortiz of **GQ** magazine discussed current challenges of the fit landscape, where anything and everything goes in silhouette trends.

Leverton sat with Elisa Goodkind, who co-founded media company **StyleLikeU** and the video series “What’s Underneath” with her daughter Lily Mandelbaum during a session titled “Unfiltered: Elisa Goodkind and Amy Leverton.” During the session, Leverton and Goodkind discussed how people’s opinions of themselves project outward, including how these feelings connect to the need for authenticity through self-expression.

Authenticity is also a driver for Barajas while planning **Here | After** events as she and Leverton build a unique event brand where creatives rely on one another to share industry-shifting ideas.

“It’s not a trade show,” Barajas said. “It’s a community. We can come together and have these interesting, valid, nontraditional conversations that apply to our business and our personal creativity.”—*Dorothy Crouch*

TECHNOLOGY

Kornit and MAS Holdings Form Strategic Partnership

At the individual level, making fashion more sustainable comes down to donating unwanted clothes instead of sending them to the landfill. At the corporate level, it’s a lot more complicated, which is part of the reasons why **Kornit Digital Ltd.**, a pioneer in sustainable, on-demand digital-fashion and textile-production technologies, is working to build a broad coalition of companies to expand its ecosystem.

The company recently announced a strategic partnership with **MAS Holdings** through its subsidiary **MAS ACME USA**, a holistic

supply-chain hub serving sustainable apparel brands. The two companies, along with AI provider **Syrup Technologies**, will present together at the **Outdoor Retailer** show June 18–20. The agreement formalizes the companies’ commitment to building a viable production alternative for an industry plagued by overproduction, unplanned markdowns and supply-chain inefficiencies.

“The supply chain is broken and outdated. It’s just not possible to adapt to any changes,” said Scott Walton, Director Global Business Development Brands. “The need is now to inject



The strategic agreement provides brands and retailers with on-shore supply-chain flexibility, working-capital efficiency and profits, and sustainable growth.

agility into the market—the ability to design, produce and deliver in real time. The rule of the day for retail and fashion is a model that is fast, flexible and on-demand. For more than 25 years Kornit has been dedicated to making fashion more sustainable, but we cannot do it alone.”

Uniting Kornit’s digital on-demand production prowess with MAS’s supply-chain excellence and precision data diagnostics will allow brands to avoid missing sales, optimize inventory levels, minimize waste, maximize full-price sell-through and free up working capital.

“Retailers must begin to realize the benefits of on-demand production,” Walton added. “Manufacturing products only when they are ordered by customers reduces the risk of excess inventory, especially for seasonal products or niche markets, and eliminates the need for warehousing and related costs.”

MAS Holdings is the largest apparel-technology company in South Asia, collaborating with brands including **Victoria’s Secret**, **PVH**, **Gap**, **Marks & Spencer** and **Nike**. MAS ACME USA touts itself as not merely another division of MAS Holdings but “a strategic orchestration hub, channeling MAS’s global expertise into end-to-end supply-chain transformation.”—*Christian Chensvold*



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Inside the Industry

Functional Fabric Fair is pleased to announce a new partnership with the Future Fabrics Expo. This strategic collaboration brings together two leading global platforms with a unified mission—to spotlight innovation in functional textiles, accelerate sustainable solutions and inspire progress across the textile industry. The partnership will debut during the summer 2025 edition of **Functional Fabric Fair**, held July 21–23 at the Javits Center in New York. This year’s event will kick off with the Day 0 Sustainability Workshop on the show’s first day. Future Fabrics Expo will have a dedicated space near the **Functional Fabric Fair** exhibition hall showcasing its Innovation Hub, a curated selection of innovative and next-gen materials. In addition, FFE will contribute to the education program with a presentation during the Expert Talks series. For more information, visit www.functionalfabricfair.com.

The annual **ASU FIDM** Fashion Council Brunch, **Mimosa Mode**, will take place June 27 at the **ASU FIDM** Museum at 919 S. Grand Ave. in Los Angeles. Special guests will include Larry McQueen, Hollywood costume historian and author, and Coleen Scott, costume designer, educator and author. The theme for the interview and panel discussion is “Costumes of Hollywood: Highlights from The Collection of Motion Picture Costume Design.” A gallery tour will follow the event, and McQueen and Scott will be available for book signing. Tickets are \$100 per person and may be purchased by visiting eventbrite.com and searching “mimosa mode FIDM.” For further information, contact Kevin Jones at kevin.leslie.jones@asu.edu.

Dallas Market Center has announced the creation of the **Bill Winsor Retailing Scholarship**, a new endowed scholarship at Texas A&M University honoring the legacy of Bill Winsor, former president, CEO and chairman emeritus of Dallas Market Center. The scholarship will support upper-class members in the Mays School of Business and the Center for Retailing Studies who plan to pursue careers in retail or wholesale and is planned to be endowed at \$100,000 or more. Administered by the Texas A&M Foundation, donations toward the scholarship are welcome and are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law. Contributions may be made online, by mail or by contacting the Texas A&M Foundation directly. More information, including giving options, is available at www.dallasmarketcenter.com/billwinsor.

Kingpins China-Hangzhou, which ran May 22–23, has successfully concluded, drawing more than 600 attendees. “Many outside the industry don’t realize the level of innovation, craftsmanship and technology behind a pair of jeans,” said Vivian Wang, chief executive officer of the **Kingpins** Show. “Our goal is to create a space where professionals and consumers come together, where newcomers can learn, seasoned experts can share and denim lovers can be inspired. We’re here to support our exhibitors in telling the full denim story and to show the world that denim is much more than just a pair of jeans.” The **Denim Talks** seminar series included discussions on circularity, innovative denim disruptors and an overview of wash and upcycling trends. Learn about future events at kingpinsshow.com.

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Woodbury Students Design to Their Own Voices

Woodbury University honored its talented fashion-design students with the “La Reverie”—themed runway show May 8 at the **Alex Theatre** in Glendale, Calif.

The event invited guests into dreamlike fashion landscapes, highlighting innovative student work that blended storytelling with design.

Renowned Los Angeles-based designer Adolfo Sanchez was the guest of honor and received the Creative Inspiration award for his achievements in custom eveningwear, bridal couture and menswear. Known for his bold, glamorous style, Sanchez said, “Creativity has always felt like second nature to me. I draw inspiration from everything—people, places, music.”

Anna Leiker, program director of the Fashion Design department, emphasized Woodbury’s unique approach: “We like our students to design to their own voices rather than having a mentor in mind, so we allow them to develop their design philosophy.”

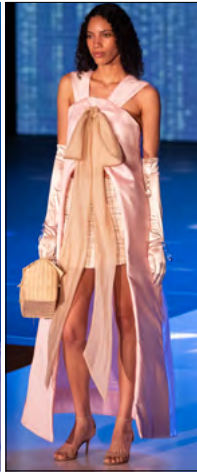
Woodbury’s Fashion Study Collection contains 3,000 pieces, including couture, ready-to-wear, childrenswear, menswear, accessories, paper patterns and textile designs. It serves to enhance the learning experience of fashion-design students and serious researchers by collecting pieces on all aspects of dress.

The show spotlighted senior collections from:

- Alexandra Garcia—winner of the Fashion Innovator award for her Porcelain Maison collection, which brought porcelain dolls to life through couture methods and hand sewing.



Adolfo Sanchez



Alexandra Garcia



Esther Chandra Wang



Grecia Salinas - Grace Bonds



Mariam Mujahidah



Woodbury Fashion Study Collection

“I see fashion as storytelling and representation,” she said. “I want to bring what I’ve learned back to Mexico.”

- Grecia Salinas/Grace Bonds—winner of the Rising Star award for her collection Torito. Born in Tijuana, Salinas created a collection inspired by a child’s migration journey, blending folkloric Mexican elements with Western Chola culture for a bold, hybrid aesthetic.

Recent alumni were also recognized with Alumni Inspiration awards:

- Mariam Mujahidah, class of 2018, is a “denim reimag-

iner” who transforms old denim into unique, custom pieces through upcycling and sustainable design. Fueled by her passion for sustainability, she has established her own brand, **Mujahidah Denim**.

- Esther Chandra Wang, class of 2020, is the founder and designer of **Chandra**, a Los Angeles-based bridal label known for its chic yet classic gowns and inspired by the “transformative magic of wedding gowns.” Wang won the Most Creative Senior Design award upon her graduation.

—Alexandra Romero

Otis Enters the Realm of the Kaleidoscope at Its Annual Fashion Show

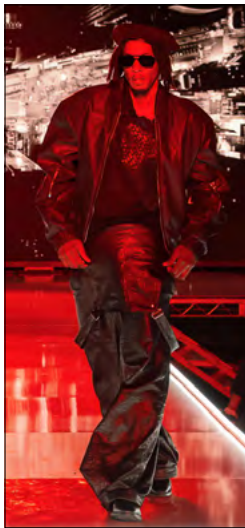
Otis College of Art and Design held its annual fashion show on May 10 in the campus commons in Los Angeles before an audience of over 4,000. The 2025 theme, “Kaleidoscope,” flaunted designs with sparkling patterns and vibrant colors intertwining with a variety of fabrics and their movement across the runway.

Each year, Otis pairs Fashion Design juniors and seniors with professional mentors, who guide their vision into the future of fashion. The seniors are assigned to work on tailored garments and eveningwear for the luxury market.

This year’s senior mentors included Zaid Affas; Jack Burns, design director, **AGOLDE**; Jonathan Cohen, co-founder and creative director, and Sarah Leff, co-founder and CEO, **Jonathan Cohen**; Julie de Libran and Vanessa Khatrar, **West Coast Exports**; David Meister; and David Rimokh, founder and CEO, **RTA**.

Six of the 34 seniors won awards from each of these mentors and brands. The winners were Victoria Ciavarella, RTA; Andres Enomoto, David Meister; Evangelina Gamberdella, Jonathan Cohen; Shota Higuchi, Zaid Affas; Van Le, AGOLDE; and Lena Lee, West Coast Exports. Higuchi also was honored with the Designer of the Year award.

To embody the theme of the show, West Coast Exports challenged the seniors to design a collection of gowns



Victoria Ciavarella



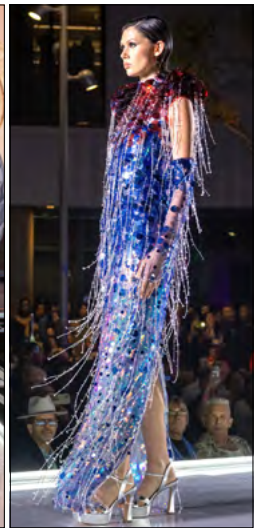
Evangelina Gamberdella



Shota Higuchi



Van Le



Lena Lee

that dazzled with multi-faceted brilliance, where crystals and intricate embroideries transformed each piece into

a work of art—as if being seen through a kaleidoscope. —A.R.

LATTC Celebrates 100 Years of Fashion at Gold Thimble Fashion Show

Los Angeles Trade-Technical College hosted its spring 2025 **Gold Thimble Fashion Show** on May 30, presented by the Design & Media Arts Pathway.

The evening celebrated 100 years of fashion at LATTC, showcasing innovative designs from the graduating class and offering an inspiring glimpse into the next generation of fashion talent.

The event set the runway with eight categories—eveningwear, swim, children’s, gender neutral, men’s, athleisure, avant-garde and a special 100 years of fashion starting from the 1920s and making its way up to the 2000s.

Graduating senior Rosario Gordillo won five of the eight awards, four of which were first place in swim, men’s, avant-garde and the 100 years of fashion and was the sole winner in the children’s category. “It was a lot of work and there were endless nights. I wanted the other students to win, but it’s a competition, so I’m very proud of myself. I didn’t expect it at all,” Gordillo said.

Other students recognized for their outstanding designs were Suzie Kim, who took first place in the eveningwear category, Jesus Muñoz in gender-neutral and Jeffrey Pascal in athleisure, rounding out a diverse group of winners whose work reflected the creativity and tech-



Jeffrey Pascal



Rosario Gordillo



Suzie Kim



Jose Munoz

nical skill fostered in LATTC’s Design & Media Arts Pathway.

Karen Chao, professor of the graduating class and a 1980 LATTC alumna, said, “After having been in the industry for

over 30 years, my experience has expressed to them what they needed to do to be successful. Every day they must have grit and they must have talent. Talent gets noticed, but the grit gets remembered.”—A.R.

What steps can designers and manufacturers take to remain aligned with their sustainable goals amid the current uncertainty surrounding tariffs, sourcing and supply chains?

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Sustainability *Continued from page 1*

California Apparel News asked experts in apparel sustainability: *What steps can designers and manufacturers take to remain aligned with their sustainable goals amid the current uncertainty surrounding tariffs, sourcing and supply chains?*

Tayfun Akbay Chief Commercial Officer ISKO



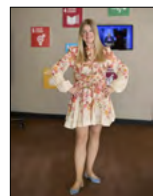
Sustainability doesn't have to take a back seat when the landscape gets complicated. If anything it should be a stabilizing force. For designers and manufacturers, the challenge is balancing creative ambition with practical, long-term thinking, especially around sourcing and materials.

One way to stay grounded is by prioritizing partnerships that offer consistency, transparency and a track record of innovation. That's what enables you to respond to short-term pressures without drifting from your long-term goals.

At ISKO, we've embedded circularity into our design and production processes, incorporating recycled fibers like those from RE&UP and investing in fabrics made to last. This gives brands options that are not only sustainable but also built for real-world challenges.

Creativity and responsibility don't need to be at odds. With the right choices upstream they can reinforce each other even when the external conditions are shifting.

Kerry Bannigan Managing Director PVBLC Foundation Co-Founder United Nations Fashion and Lifestyle Network



Designers and manufacturers must lead with agility, integrity and long-term vision. Regional sourcing reduces environmental impact and builds resilience against global volatility. Circular design and zero-waste strategies strengthen sustainability while lessening dependence on unstable raw-material markets. Technology should be leveraged to enhance traceability and anticipate supply-chain disruptions.

Internally, continuous education ensures teams stay aligned with evolving ethical and regulatory standards. Engaging with global platforms such as the United Nations Fashion and Lifestyle Network amplifies shared learning and industry-wide action. Transparent communication with consumers, especially during uncertainty, reinforces trust and brand purpose. Sustainability cannot be conditional. It must remain a core principle

that drives innovation, uncompromised by disruption.

Oya Barlas Bingul Senior Manager, Business Development and Marketing TextiMag



First, diversify and localize. Overreliance on one region or supplier is too risky today. Building relationships with multiple, regionally diverse partners, especially those closer to home, reduces transport emissions and lowers exposure to unpredictable tariffs.

Second, embrace circularity and low-impact materials. Recycling and reuse aren't just buzzwords—they're essential strategies to stabilize supply and meet environmental goals.

Third, transparency and labor practices are nonnegotiable. Consumers and partners demand accountability. That's why I advocate for robust audits, certifications and clear communication with suppliers.

Fourth, leverage technology. Data-driven tools like AI and IoT can identify bottlenecks and streamline operations, turning sustainability into a real competitive advantage.

Finally, don't underestimate the power of collaboration. Working with industry peers and adapting to evolving policies strengthens your sustainability efforts and helps future-proof your brand.

Meredith Boyd Chief Product Officer UNIFI, makers of REPREEVE



To stay aligned with sustainability goals amid ongoing tariff and supply-chain uncertainty, designers and manufacturers should diversify sourcing through trusted, innovative partners; invest in regional and circular supply chains; and prioritize transparency through traceability.

UNIFI, makers of REPREEVE, is uniquely positioned with agile, regional manufacturing that delivers both flexibility and a broad product portfolio to support textile and apparel manufacturers, brands and retailers. The global economy is ever-changing—and so is sustainability. We deliver adaptability and differentiated value where it matters most.

Paola Corna Chief Financial Officer, Sustainability and HR Manager Laura Corna Sales Manager ACM



Ours is a family business that has been riding the unpredictable waves of the industry for more than 40 years. What our father taught us, and what we have learned ourselves in recent years, is that to navigate change successfully you must know how to evolve.

It is not about changing your identity; for us, sustainability has been a priority since 1992—when we built a forward-thinking water-recirculation system inside our button factory—and it always will be. We do not yet know what the real and tangible impact of tariffs will be or how they will affect the supply chain and, above all, the purchase of luxury goods, which is the sector we primarily serve.

What we do know is that facing change requires courage, agility, a bit of luck and a willingness to invest in new business relationships, sourcing strategies and markets. National and supranational institutions have an essential role in protecting their producers, industries and centers of manufacturing excellence. If the tariff situation becomes permanent we may well see increased demand within Europe, which could balance any potential decline from other parts of the world.

Claudia de Witte Marketing and Sustainability Director of Textiles Eastman Naia



In today's shifting world, being sustainable means being adaptable. Since our launch of Eastman's Naia cellulosic fibers in 2017 we have built adaptability into our foundation while always striving to make sustainable style accessible to everyone. Our approach is grounded in five core sustainability pillars: responsible sourcing, safe and environmentally sound chemical use, molecular recycling, low-impact manufacturing, and product biodegradability and compostability. These pillars guide every stage of our product journey.

We recognize that some may question whether the business case for sustainability still holds. We believe that now more than ever sustainability must remain front and center. It is about collaboration, celebrating small wins and scaling impact. For us, sustainability is not just a framework, it is a journey. In 2025 we will celebrate the completion of our Naia sustainability goals. This milestone marks the progress we have made

and the beginning of the next chapter as we set new targets with renewed ambition. While the global landscape presents challenges, our goals serve as a strategic road map, helping us remain versatile in an evolving industry.

Andreas Dörner General Manager RE&UP



In times of uncertainty, whether it's tariffs, policy shifts or supply-chain disruptions, designers and manufacturers should focus on what they can control. Material choice is a powerful tool. Choosing recycled, traceable inputs helps brands stay aligned with their sustainability goals while building resilience into their supply chains. It's not just about being responsible, it's about being ready.

Regulations are evolving, and circularity is moving from optional to expected. The key is working with suppliers who offer reliability, transparency and scale. At RE&UP, we provide next-gen recycled fibers made from end-of-life textiles, with full traceability. That way, our partners can keep circularity at the heart of their product, even in volatile conditions. In short, sustainable progress doesn't need to stop when the market shakes. It needs to get smarter.

Betsy Franjola Founder PREFACE Chief Executive Officer Hocking Hills Garment Center



Designers and manufacturers can stay aligned with their sustainability goals by staying educated on the latest textile innovations and building strong, transparent relationships with suppliers. In times of uncertainty—like shifting tariffs or supply-chain disruptions—diversifying sourcing and exploring local or regional partners can offer both stability and a lower environmental impact. Events like PREFACE help brands connect directly with both international and domestic suppliers who prioritize innovation and traceability.

Alyn Franklin Chief Executive Officer Oritain



Designers and manufacturers are navigating a complex landscape of geopolitical uncertainty, shifting trade policies and supply-chain disruptions, meaning that understanding their supply chain just became more important than ever to stay aligned with sustainable goals.

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From high-performance textiles engineered for movement and durability to trend-driven fabrics that blend fashion and function, this must-attend event is where designers, product developers, buyers, and materials managers come together to source the latest innovations. Engage in one-on-one conversations with industry leaders, experience exclusive special events, and gain invaluable education and training to stay ahead of the curve.

Day 0 Sustainability Workshop – July 21

Kick off your Functional Fabric Fair experience with our debut of the Day 0 Sustainability Workshop on July 21, one day before the exhibit hall opens. Join industry experts as they explore key sustainability topics with a practical, real-world approach. Throughout the day, manufacturers will share insightful case studies,

showcasing sustainable textile innovations in action. Attendees and exhibitors will engage in interactive roundtable discussions and hands-on activities, gaining valuable insights and actionable strategies to integrate sustainability into their business models.

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What steps can designers and manufacturers take to remain aligned with their sustainable goals amid the current uncertainty surrounding tariffs, sourcing and supply chains?

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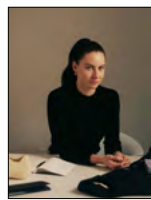
Sustainability *Continued from page 4*

To do this, proving the true origin of products and raw materials is essential. Companies need advanced traceability tools beyond blockchain and supply-chain mapping to verify sustainability claims. Typically, we find that with reliance on self-submissions, organizations gather as much information to derive a sense of compliance, but this is all subject to human error and misrepresentation. A clear way to validate the data points being captured is to perform physical testing.

At Oritain, we harness the power of science to improve traceability and transparency for businesses. With an extensive database of all core cotton-producing territories, Oritain's unique science-based approach underpins sustainability principles by verifying the true origin of products and raw materials. This allows major brands and retailers around the world to identify fraud, which could be linked to unethical practices in supply chains.

Ultimately, in an environment of heightened regulatory pressures and evolving consumer expectations, this level of proactivity and traceability becomes fundamental, not just for compliance and mitigating risk but for building enduring brand trust and achieving long-term sustainable goals.

Chelsea Franklin **Head of Advanced Concepts** **PANGAIA**



Amid today's uncertainty around tariffs, sourcing and supply-chain disruption, staying aligned with sustainability goals requires both resilience and adaptability. Designers and manufacturers must rethink how and where they source.

The first step is diversifying suppliers, localizing production where possible and building trusted relationships with those who share their environmental and ethical values.

We need to design with agility in mind, creating products that are modular, repairable and made to last. Flexible design approaches reduce dependency on specific materials or regions and support circular business models. Logistics, too, must evolve. More-efficient packaging, reduced shipping volumes and sustainable transit options all play a role in reducing a product's environmental impact.

Sustainability is not a static goal, it's a continuous process of recalibrating in response to a changing world. By embedding flexibility, transparency and collaboration at every level, we can not only weather disruption but move closer to a responsible industry by design.

Jen Hodo **Business Development Manager** **Birla Cellulose USA**



Stakeholders across industries are facing the same reality: Supply chains are shifting and agility is no longer optional. With tariffs and trade policies in flux, overreliance on a single region is a strategic risk. Being locked into one

country or supplier not only increases exposure to geopolitical volatility but also limits

your capacity to scale and innovate.

To stay resilient, brands should diversify their vendor base and begin evaluating, costing and sampling across multiple regions, especially those perceived as lower risk, which, admittedly, is hard to predict these days. Adaptability is a core tenet of sustainable business, and proactivity is key.

Tariff engineering is another useful lever. Factoring in material composition, origin rules and assembly location early in the design process can reduce duty impact and deliver measurable cost benefits without compromising quality or intent.

At Birla Cellulose, our global-manufacturing presence enables us to support brands with regionally diversified sourcing, fast sampling and local troubleshooting. We don't just provide fiber, we support a broader, more resilient textile ecosystem. Notably, our New York studio has seen a sharp rise in India-based suppliers visiting and actively seeking to engage U.S. brands, offering a wide range of talent, quality and sustainable innovation.

In an industry where conditions can change overnight, working with globally integrated partners can help future-proof both your sourcing and sustainability goals and turn uncertainty into a strategic advantage.

James Huang **Chief Executive Officer** **Kingwhale**



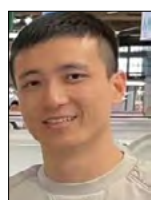
In the face of supply-chain and tariff volatility, designers and manufacturers must embed sustainability into their operational DNA—not as a reactive measure but as a foundational strategy.

This begins with forging partnerships with suppliers—such as Kingwhale, which specializes in high-performance recycled textiles—who prioritize ethical innovation. Sustainability isn't a trend, it's a responsibility. True innovation means rethinking every thread in the supply chain.

Brands should focus on localizing supply chains to mitigate tariff shocks, invest in circular materials like recycled polyester or regenerative fibers, and demand transparency through certifications and traceable sourcing.

The lesson is clear: Uncertainty isn't an excuse to deprioritize sustainability; it's a catalyst to double down.

Jimmy Jin **Director of Sustainability** **Dry-Tex**



As global trade uncertainties, tariff fluctuations and sourcing challenges continue to disrupt the textile industry, Dry-Tex's forward-thinking approach demonstrates that environmental responsibility and supply-chain resilience are

not mutually exclusive—they are essential partners in long-term success.

Relying on a single supplier or geography is no longer viable. By cultivating relationships with ethical partners worldwide, we protect our production timelines without compromising our environmental standards.

The brands that thrive in this new era will be those that treat sustainability as a driver of innovation, not just compliance. At Dry-Tex,

we're proving that responsible manufacturing isn't a constraint—it's the foundation of lasting success.

Katrin Ley **Managing Director** **Fashion for Good**



To remain aligned with sustainable goals during this period of tariff uncertainty and supply-chain volatility, designers and manufacturers must adopt three core strategies.

First, build strategic partnerships that enable collective purchasing power and shared risk as pooling demand for sustainable materials makes them economically viable even when traditional supply chains are disrupted.

Second, invest in comprehensive supplier mapping and traceability systems that provide real-time visibility into your entire value chain. This isn't only about compliance, it's about maintaining integrity when external pressures tempt shortcuts.

Third, treat sustainability as an operational discipline, not a marketing initiative. Embed environmental and social metrics directly into procurement decisions, performance evaluations and risk assessments. When uncertainty hits, companies with sustainability hardwired into their operating systems adapt faster and emerge stronger than those treating it as an add-on.

Dr. Cindy Lin **Chief Executive Officer** **Hey Social Good** **Board Member** **Climate Advisory Board to City of San Diego**



Right now it's vital to distance emotionally from the roller-coaster changes happening externally. With the drastic uncertainties around tariffs, sourcing and supply chain, the most strategic action to take now is creating stability in your

internal business and people operations and reinforcing your core functions.

This is a fantastic time to reflect on your business and identify and fix gaps. This may be the time to reassess your suppliers, diversify your sourcing options and identify a longer list of local and regional options. These may even bring new efficient and cost-effective options.

One of the key players in all of this is our customers. Keep in mind that we are all experiencing this together, and it is time to bolster, nurture and strengthen all business relationships with your designers, retailers and suppliers. Strong relationships help create new opportunities and even allow for flexibility. Creating or maintaining a strong sustainable business requires us to establish relationships with our partners authentically.

Prioritize transparency and enhance visibility across your supply chain. Assessing your social impact may endear you to your customers. Customers today are all aware of greenwashing and often misunderstand the complexity of business operations and the hundreds of steps it takes to work on sustainability.

Steve McCullough **Event Vice President** **Functional Fabric Fair**



Don't put all your eggs in one basket. The brands that are sleeping well at night have relationships with suppliers in multiple regions. I'm talking about Turkey and Portugal, even bringing some production back to the United States.

It's not about abandoning your go-to partners, it's about having options.

Get specific about what you need from your materials. Instead of saying "I need this exact fabric from this exact mill," focus on the performance specs and sustainability standards that matter. If three different GOTS-certified mills can hit your targets, you've got backup plans when tariffs shake things up.

The smartest brands I know are also investing in supply-chain visibility tools right now. It costs money upfront, but when you can see what's happening two or three tiers down, you're not scrambling when problems hit.

Philippe Mignot **Project Manager** **NextPrinting**



Economic, logistical and commercial challenges can reveal valuable opportunities for the market. They can accelerate the shift toward solutions that reduce the number of raw materials and processes needed to manufacture products. Digital

printing is a highly effective tool in this respect.

By printing and applying finishes directly onto roll fabrics, our technology allows us to bypass multiple production steps and go straight to cutting, assembling and garment construction. We have no minimum-order quantities and can print on demand, eliminating the issue of unsold stock and excess warehouse storage. The market is increasingly looking for smart solutions like this, not as a replacement for traditional s but as an additional tool to streamline and optimize production while still achieving a high-impact aesthetic result.

Ngozi Okaro **Founder and Executive Director** **Custom Collaborative**



Seek flexibility wherever possible. Long lead times and overseas sampling are no longer compatible with our current trade climate nor the existing, fast-moving trend cycles.

Leverage virtual garment-design software and local sampling to streamline development, and be intentional about establishing a library of bestselling fit blocks to enable faster turnarounds. During production, consider opting for versatile greige fabrics that can be customized with trending colorways to avoid wasting hundreds of yards of stock that will not move.

Similarly, focus on engaging your community to help make design decisions. If your team is considering a novel print or bold new colorway, let your most dedicated followers

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What steps can designers and manufacturers take to remain aligned with their sustainable goals amid the current uncertainty surrounding tariffs, sourcing and supply chains?

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Sustainability *Continued from page 6*

make their opinions heard to gauge interest. It might just save you a whole lot of money and heartbreak later.

The bad news is that fashion is in a very chaotic moment. The good news is that many of the same changes that can help designers avoid paying unnecessary tariffs are the same ones that can help reduce production waste overall. For example, initial iterations of a garment can be planned out, reviewed and edited using digital design software. If you have more confidence in your design going into sampling, paying more to work with local manufacturers and avoiding steep tariffs starts to look like a smarter investment. Designers who want maximum flexibility and minimum fabric waste should shift to an on-demand production model and utilize versatile greige fabrics that can be dyed and printed on an as-needed basis.

Dr. Anna Sammarco **Senior Director Business Development** **and Strategy** **Circulose**



With rising instability around global tariffs and trade regulations, it's more important than ever for designers and manufacturers to stay true to their sustainability goals—while remaining agile by adopting a more resilient and future-forward approach to sustainability.

One key strategy is supply-chain diversification—not just geographically but also by prioritizing materials that are less exposed to tariff volatility. Diversifying supply chains to reduce reliance on a single region is essential, not only to manage disruptions but to support more-responsible sourcing.

Transparency tools such as digital traceability platforms also play a crucial role in ensuring accountability and building trust with consumers. These platforms can also support compliance with shifting regulatory demands, offering visibility into every tier of the supply chain and enabling quick pivots when needed.

Sustainability is not just a trend or a checkbox. It's a strategic imperative. Brands that embed circularity at the core of their operations and supply chains will not only lead but endure in an increasingly unpredictable world.

Adele Stafford **Chief Growth Officer** **Worldly**



Staying the course on sustainability is more important—and possible—than ever. While at first glance the increasingly complex trade environment can feel daunting, businesses can make the most of this moment. For designers and manufacturers, the key lies in viewing sustainability data as a critical lever to proactively manage supply-chain risk.

Businesses have a growing desire to connect supply-chain sustainability data with broader-risk and scenario-planning tools—enabling companies to get a fuller, more accurate picture of their vulnerabilities so they can

plan smarter for the future. Converging these datasets enables brands and manufacturers to better anticipate disruptions, respond with agility, and ultimately better support business growth and resilience.

Amid volatility, companies should prioritize supply-chain visibility to protect their operations and reach growth milestones. Real-time emissions and production data from suppliers are crucial to help identify bottlenecks, ensure ethical sourcing and improve efficiency. Leveraging primary data—not estimates or third-party averages—enables faster, more-accurate decisions, allowing companies to identify inefficiencies and carbon hot spots while ensuring compliance with evolving regulatory and trade environments.

The companies that successfully weather the regulatory storm will be those that use this moment as an opportunity to prioritize supply-chain visibility and operational resilience—and look to primary data as a catalyst for impact and business growth.

Andrea Venier **Managing Director** **Officina39**



Our vision on the subject is very simple—sustainability goals are not something we add to our processes and products after they are developed, it is the foundation that drives our research and development from the outset. In recent years, amid

COVID, wars, supply-chain disruptions, rising energy and transportation costs, and a variety of geopolitical crises, we have certainly faced challenges and difficulties, meeting them with the creativity that sets us apart.

However, these circumstances cannot alter our goals; on the contrary, we believe that only by staying true to our values can we continue to stand out as the ideal partner for those seeking concrete solutions for responsible change in the fashion industry.

Of course, this path is not and will not be easy. We must first understand whether price increases related to tariffs will have a greater impact on the supply chain, on consumers or on the brands themselves. This could influence both the quantity and quality of consumption. Some markets will benefit more than others, opening new opportunities and reshaping the geopolitical dynamics of fashion.

Luciano Vivolo **Founder and President** **Vivolo**



One of the qualities that sets us apart, beyond creativity and uniqueness, is our speed in responding to customer requests, creating prototypes in under 24 hours. To achieve this, it's essential for us to always have the specific raw materials on hand that we know are needed by the brands that rely on us.

In nearly 50 years, we've built an exclusive and reliable supply chain through a network of Italian manufacturers. We can confidently say that supply is one of the things about which we are least worried right now. Tariffs are a different matter. We've already seen how the luxury market has come under seri-

ous pressure in recent years, and this added factor certainly won't improve the situation.

Unfortunately, the ones who suffer in these cases are the supply-chain players who are unable to offer a clear economic or qualitative difference compared to their competitors. We, of course, focus everything on the uniqueness of our products and the values we infuse into our work every day. Among these, sustainability clearly plays an important role, both in terms of the environment and human relationships as well as in the development of our region and support for young designers. These are all key pillars of the business model we proudly carry forward.

David Williamson **Chief Executive Officer** **Modern Meadow**



To survive the uncertainty of trade wars, designers should look to maximize efficiency in manufacturing workflows, savings from which can help mitigate the impact of tariffs. This is easier said than done.

Making products that are sustainable has required designers to make heavy investments in bespoke supply chains, workflows and hard-to-source materials. The significant costs that come with this have forced designers to compromise on their values to maintain efficient and profitable manufacturing.

Thanks to advances in biomaterials, designers need not compromise—they can have a sustainable material and an efficient workflow, even in the face of changing tariffs.

For example, Modern Meadow is a bio-design maker of leather alternative INNOVERA—derived from recycled rubber, biopolymers and plant-based proteins. INNOVERA's drop-in capabilities means tanneries can use this material without building new infrastructure, reducing cost of adoption.

Sherry Wood **Director of Merchandising and Design** **Laguna Fabrics**



Laguna Fabrics is in a unique position as we took the initiative to stock our bestselling yarns to help shield us from some of the disruptions surrounding tariffs. Lenzing fibers is one of our most important sustainable partners as the

majority of our collections are based off TENCEL Lyocell, TENCEL Modal and TENCEL Lyocell with Organic Cotton styles.

We prioritize suppliers that adhere to environmental standards and social responsibility. Investing in local and regional sourcing helps with lower emissions to reduce our carbon footprint and allows agility and control to audit and monitor local supply chains for sustainability compliance.

Preeminent is designing fabrics that can be easily modified or updated while being efficient reducing waste during production and improving end-of-life recyclability. Consumer engagement is a priority for us to communicate our sustainability efforts to encourage responsible consumption. Taking proactive steps, we can stay aligned with environmental and ethical goals, even in the face of geopolitical and economic uncertainty. ●

Responses have been edited for clarity and space.



TRADE-SHOW REPORT



Buhler Quality Yarns Corp.



Aptean



Computer Generated Solutions



Eton Systems



SEAMS



X-Rite

Techtextile *Continued from page 1*

“Whether that’s less waste, less time that it takes, time is money,” McDonald said. “So, if you’re building a product that takes less time and requires less manpower, it’s an efficient model that a lot of people are seeking right now as they’re trying to lean down their production.”

On the Techtextil side, Olaf Schmidt, vice president of textiles and textile technologies for show producer **Messe Frankfurt**, said sustainable fabrics are important for the industry.

“The demand and market potential for natural fibers and recycled fabrics is huge,” he said. “It’s important they invest in sustainability because the buyers are looking for it and the total industry is looking for sustainable solutions.”

The **SEAMS** Supply Chain USA product showcase highlighted approximately 20 sustainable products created by 40-plus SEAMS members. Four awards were given at the Tech Talks area for Innovation Awards hosted by both shows.

The awards were:

- Best New Technology: **UNIFI**—REPREVE Takeback
- Best New Technology & Digitalization: **Automatex**—Automated Fitted Sheet Sewing and Folding
- Best New Technology: **JUKI**—JUKI DX-01
- Best New Concept: **Aptean**—Aptean Shop Floor Control

Exploring fresh tech

Lectra North America hosted a tour of its Innovation Center. One of the company’s highlighted products was Valia Fashion, a digital platform powered by Industry 4.0 technologies, including artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things and big-data analytics. The platform connects, automates and streamlines the garment-production process, from order pro-

cessing to fabric cutting, which in turn boosts efficiency and reduces waste, according to Carlos Jimenez, sales executive for Valia Fashion.

X-Rite showcased its suite of textile color-measurement solutions, said Donna Picarello, North America sales director.

“Our goal is to help manufacturers achieve more-accurate color, shorten time to market and build a more sustainable process,” Picarello said.

Methods Workshop’s ETC is a predetermined time system for setting production rates. This is also the brand’s best-seller, according to Kelly Riley, U.S. sales director.

“It’s an engineering tool that is used to set production standards,” Riley said. “There are international standards already set for every movement that a person can make. So instead of timing them, you film them, watch every movement and then code that into the system. It arrives in time so you can set production rates.”

Daniella Ambrogio, senior global marketing director for **Computer Generated Solutions**, which offers its BlueCherry suite of solutions, highlighted the company’s manufacturing-execution systems, which allow full visibility of production systems.

“We don’t sell just the technology, we sell the industry expertise,” said Ambrogio.

Another company offering solutions was **Aptean**, with its ERP system, which essentially keeps everything running.

“It connects everything from sales and finance to your inventory, your warehouse,” said Emily Scales, marketing-programs specialist. “It’s like the heart of the company.”

Eton Systems brought its material-handling system for manufacturing, which is a one-piece operation, said CEO Jan Molin. The material is transported efficiently as it eliminates the need for manual transportation. An included software allows for control and real-time information.

What’s new in fibers and fabrics

One company utilizing smart textiles is **Lenzing**, according to Jason Elder, who manages business development for the brand’s protective offerings. He said the company makes fibers for a variety of uses, including for firefighters, solderers and welders.

“If you’re in a high-performance or protective application and you need moisture-management capability, we’re a natural-type fiber that inherently doesn’t burn,” said Elder. “It’s not chemically treated but still has that protective capability. On top of that, we are a sustainable fiber, biodegradable fiber.”

American & Efird sells everything from apparel and non-apparel thread to technical textiles, said Jacob Blackburn, global brand marketing manager.

“We can help them [clients] figure out how to make their things work the way that they want,” said Blackburn. “We have a variety of products that can help do that and also have the technical knowledge to help them. We want to make sure we can help get to a final result that is not only satisfying but also exceeds expectations.”

B2B product supplier **Aditya BIRLA Group** wants to expand into the U.S. market, so attending the shows helps connect them with fabric manufacturers, according to Prasanna Joshi, global head of technical textiles.

Mike Allen, vice president of sales for **Buhler Quality Yarns Corp.**, said a lot of their customers attend the shows so they get to catch up.

The next edition of Techtextil North America will be located at the **Raleigh Convention Center** in Raleigh, N.C. Aug. 4–6, 2026. Texprocess Americas will return to Atlanta May 11–13, 2027, again co-located with Techtextil North America at the Georgia World Congress Center. ●



Aditya BIRLA Group



Methods Workshop



Lectra North America



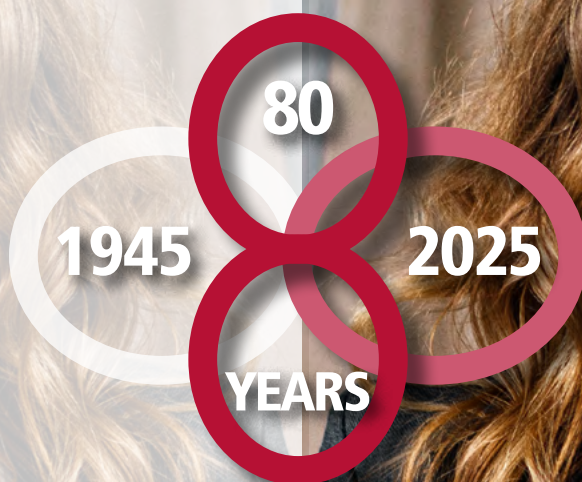
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Name Brands, Collaborations and Big Business at Las Vegas Licensing Expo

By Kelli Freeman Contributing Writer

The **Mandalay Bay Convention Center** in Las Vegas was the pop-culture mecca for **Informa Markets'** annual **Las Vegas Licensing Expo**, held May 19–21. The show attracted the world's largest companies and brands in all categories such as **Coca-Cola**, **Mattel**, **Netflix** and **Sony Pictures** to foster relationships and forge new collaborations through licensing. Some 370 exhibitors from 29 countries and over 5,000 brands conducted big business at the world's largest licensing trade show.

"The **Licensing Expo** is the perfect place to come to create new connections and to ink new deals. So much business is done at this show. People meet, deals are formed, contracts are signed," said Elizabeth Foster, VP content and communications at **Licensing International**.

"Licensing has the ability to inject newness in more ways than any other strategy can," said Sarah Jackson, global director of licensing for international fashion retailer **Primark** during the keynote, "The Future of Retail: Trends, Technology and the Evolving Consumer."

"Creating a better experience with the product in stores transfers to the social-currency generation," said Ada Dou, executive vice president and chief product officer of the **MINISO Group**. "In the future, the physical store will become the offline gathering place for interest-based communities," added Dou.

Apparel plays key role

Licensing International's Global Licensing Industry Study reported that in 2024 sales of licensed products and merchandise reached \$369.6 billion, with the leading category being apparel, at 55.6 percent.

New, fun and innovative partnerships in apparel and footwear show massive growth in terms of licensing, with collaborations across all categories like the unordinary **Dr. Martens** limited-edition collection celebrating the Netflix character Wednesday's trademark midnight black hues. Another unordinary matchup: **Kate Spade** and **Heinz** ketchup.

"We do shows all over the world, and this licensing show

is one of our best to meet new retailers who are into collaborations and other people who just want to license from us," said Rick Wormell, art director at **Maui and Sons**. The Pacific Palisades, Calif.-based surf and skate line known for its signature designs and iconic logo has been licensed in over 100 countries since the 1980s.

Disney Consumer Products made its exhibit exciting with displays from several films including the "Toy Story" franchise celebrating its 30th anniversary this year. The company created a splash to connect with its partners and plan the launch of five films next year including "Toy Story 5."

"Everyone loves to wear their favorite character. We have some of the highest affinity with Buzz and Woody at the front, so I think making sure we're partnering with our great apparel partners is really a basis of our success," said Robyn Tiehen, director of global brand commercialization for **Disney PIXAR**.

Airstream iconic travel trailers launched its Dreamer lifestyle brand in collaboration with the iconic Peanuts brand to create unique outdoors meets fashion apparel including sleeping bags transformed into wearable garments.

"We wanted to make apparel that was transformational for people who can wear it in so many situations outdoors—fashion things that are very wow, in your face, that people are going to know it's Airstream," said Bonita Segall, retail sales consultant for the brand.

Jan Sussman, director of sales at the Fullerton, Calif.-based **All Pacific Apparel**, was surprised to see so many people needing its blanks. "The business has changed a lot, and there are people coming here to do their deals and they may be the same guy that may be manufacturing or need a blank, so it's been good."



Airstream



All Pacific Apparel



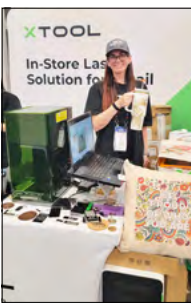
Dependable Solutions



Maui and Sons



Disney PIXAR



XTOOL

Technology leads the way

Apparel brands diving into licensing should check out **Dependable Solutions**. Based in Los Angeles, it streamlines the process for licensees, licensors and agents with tools for contract management, royalties, approvals and asset sharing.

"Our software also connects with systems used by authentication label providers and sales or finance teams," said Rhys Fleming, sales and marketing director.

China-based the **XTOOL** retail studio with warehouses in Northern California empowers retail experiences with on-site customizations such as its in-store laser solution that can engrave on practically any material.

"The software is free to use; you don't need a license. Just connect your USB cable to your laptop to connect without the internet," said Chloe Fu, XTOOL marketing specialist.

Changing dynamics and trends

- Nostalgia is ever evolving with new styles. Consumers often turn to brands they know, love and trust.

- Music is an enormous growth category. Music-inspired fashion taps into that emotional connection between the fan and artist.

- Experiential retail and location-based entertainment embraces the fandom to create excitement and energy. Consumers want more-exciting in-store immersive experiences and **Instagram**-able moments.

- Video games capture the loyalty of the gamer in fashion collaborations. ●

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www.lasvegas-apparel.com

ANDMORE, producer of Atlanta Apparel, presents Las Vegas Apparel. Buyers and exhibitors come together twice year in Las Vegas to do business in the industry's growing categories of young contemporary, accessories, and more, plus buyers can visit gift showrooms on campus for even more options. And now buyers can source from even more top brands and categories with the co-location of Womenswear in Nevada (WWIN), which runs concurrently in the same location at The Expo at World Market Center. This collaboration creates a new buying destination, filled with world-class amenities for buyers and an elevated and exciting environment for order writing every February and August.

SPINEXPO

www.spinexpo.com

SPINEXPO is organized by independent international textile specialists from the European Union and presents a truly international top-level show in the field of fibers, yarns for knitting, circular knit and weaving (fabrics and upholstery), socks, laces, labels and technical textiles, creative machinery for knitwear and circular knits from world leading suppliers is also covered at the show. SPINCLUB New York and Los Angeles, are selective presentations of the best exhibitors of SPINEXPO Shanghai who wish to present ahead of SPINEXPO their collections for the season.

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