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BLOG CALENDAR CLASSIFIEDS

TRADE  
Steady  
By Andrew

The January 2018 Fashion Market ran from Jan. 15-17 and is typically one of the smaller of the five LA Fashion Markets, which take place in downtown Los Angeles. However, most showroom owners and trade-show vendors at the **California Market Center**, **The New Mart**, the **Cooper Design Space**, **The Gerry Building** plus **Designers and Agents** and **Brand Assembly** said traffic was solid, if not strong, with retail buyers shopping for Summer and Pre-Fall.

While showroom owners described a bullish round of buying during the market, fashion retailers said that business remains a fight for dollars. “Retail is still rough,” said Lisa Kline, president of **Lisa Kline Inc.**, who walked the market. “People are spending more money on feel-good items—beauty products and low-ticket items—rather than apparel.”

### CMC bids adieu to Select

The LA Fashion Market began with a farewell at the California Market Center.

It marked the swansong for the **Select** trade show. For around 10 years, the contemporary trade show had been exhibiting mostly women’s fashions, footwear and accessories in the Fashion Theater on the lobby level of the CMC. When the show wrapped up on Jan. 17, CMC management said it would be folded into a new show, called **Label Array**, which will be making its inaugural run at the CMC’s Penthouse March 12–14.

“We wanted to keep one show location instead of having buyers zip around the entire building,” said Yvette Beltran, a spokeswoman for the CMC. “We plan to design [Label Array] as an elevated trade show with curated brands. Vendors will be carefully screened.”

Veteran Select vendors said that they would miss the show. “This has always been a good show for us. It draws a national audience,” said Dan Butler of **Lines of Denmark**, which distributes Danish brands in the United States.

Dora Molina of **The Charity Wrap** brand exhibited her brand’s fair-trade blankets and scarves at Select. “It’s a slow show, but everyone who comes through is interested in bringing new stuff to their stores,” Molina said.

Janelle Apaydin of the **Chikirina** brand said the networking at the Select shows had value. “I was expecting more foot traffic. But it was great. It put my brand out there.” Chikirina is a swimwear brand influenced by lingerie and activewear. It is manufactured in Turkey.



The New Mart’s Gig Showroom



Janelle Apaydin of Chikirina at Select



Jaga Buyan shows her line Jaga at D&A.



Apaydin forecast that she would open an office in the San Francisco Bay Area in the middle of this year.

The CMC's showrooms reported a wide range of reactions to the market's business. Rose Marie Migliazzo of the **Romy M** showroom said that this January market was slower than a typical January market. "We were hoping for a better outcome. A lot of buyers did not travel to market," she said. Her showroom debuted several jewelry and accessories brands during the market including **Lulu Dharma, Soul Stonz, Trussed Fun'd** and **Melania Clara**.

Both Migliazzo and Ernesto Mantilla of the **Betty Bottom Showroom** started hosting appointments on Sunday, a day before the official start of the LA Fashion Market. Mantilla said that the show started off well. "We had a fantastic Sunday; more and more buyers come in on Sunday. The building ought to consider opening the show earlier." The Betty Bottom showroom exhibited lines such as **Effie's Heart, Cocoon House** and **Moonlight**.

Taylor Fisher, cofounder of the CMC's **Outset Collective**, said traffic was good but that showrooms had to work for their appointments.

"We got walk-by traffic. But the days of people walking around and looking for the next big thing are not happening anymore. But if you are proactive and you make appointments, you will get retailers into your showroom," Fisher said. Outset represents brands such as **Alpha Industries, G-Shock, 40s & Shorties** and **V/sual**.

#### Growth at Brand Assembly, solid traffic at Cooper

**Brand Assembly** had a growth spurt when it ran Jan. 15–17 on the 11th floor of the **Cooper Design Space**. Hillary France, Brand Assembly's cofounder, said the recent show marked Brand Assembly's largest January show. About 50 brands exhibited during the show. During Brand Assembly's January 2017 show, more than 30 brands exhibited, France said.

Solid traffic greeted the larger show, she said. "At intermediate markets, you never know what you're going to get. But we've had consistent traffic," she said.

Retailers ranging from **Revolve** to **Nordstrom**, and leading boutiques such as **Ron Herman** and **Fred Segal**, shopped the show.

Ben De Luca, brand manager/designer of **Brooklyn Hat Co.**, said that business was better than expected. "It's been steady," he said. Business was an improvement over the October 2016 Brand Assembly. Many retailers shopping the October show did not commit to orders and preferred to wait for a later show, he said.

Karen Meena of the **Ron Robinson** boutiques shopped Brand Assembly. She placed orders for the Spring/Summer and Pre-Fall seasons. "There are still a lot of fun prints. The **Gucci** influence of mixing florals and stripes is still strong. Metallics are still strong. I was happy to see pops of color. Fabrications are light, soft and cozy. People want to be cocooned in comfort," she said.

Cooper showroom owners said that traffic was steady during the January market. Sylvana Lankshear of the **Focus Showroom** said January is typically a quiet month but that traffic was good for the recent show, and she estimated that it was bigger than the 2017 January show. Some of the retailers visiting her showroom were comfortable enough to place orders far in advance, including June 30 deliveries and even Sept. 30 deliveries for jackets made by the **Soaked in Luxury** brand, made in Copenhagen, Denmark.

During the show, **the Room** showroom debuted Summer lines. The showroom typically shows Fall/Winter and Spring lines for its clients such as **Zhivago**, said Marilyn Rodriguez of Room.

The **Land + Sea** showroom moved to suite 201 in the Cooper from its former space in

The new Madame Methven showroom at the Gerry, from left, Elodie Duchamp, Cherie Noel, Brooke Barneto, Kaila Methven and Jason LeBra



Meeting at the Siblings showroom at the Cooper



Taylor Fisher of the Outset Collective with Alpha Industries jackets



Brand Assembly's Hillary France

suite 639, said Mona Sangkala, the Cooper's leasing director.

### Gig Showroom Moves to New Mart

After 17 years in The New Mart, **The Gig Showroom** moved spaces in the fashion-showroom building.

In the first week of the year, the veteran showroom moved to suite 503. The Gig represents lines such as **Calvin Klein Men's**, **Tommy Hilfiger Men's Women's and Sleep**, **Splendid Intimates and Lounge** and **Conturelle**. Joel Gossman of The Gig said the new location helped pave the way to some deals during market. "The new location really drew people in," he said. It's located adjacent to a well-trafficked staircase in the showroom building.

In another first, veteran CMC tenant and exhibitor Don Reichman marked his first LA Fashion Market trade show outside of the CMC. He rented space in the **Jackie B Showroom** and showed lines such as **Katherine Barclay**, **Elana Kattan**, **Karissa & Me** and **Arianne**.

"It's a good market," Reichman said. "[Retailers] are here for a reason. They need to write immediate goods or they're writing for Fall. Basically, the bottom line is that they are not here with dour faces. They are here with a positive mind."

Eme Mizioch of the **Joken Showroom** said that the January market brought in new accounts and some international buyers. About 20 percent of her buyers were looking for immediates, which are scheduled to be in stores by the end of March.

Also joining The New Mart before the January LA Fashion Market were **Westside Sales/Nicole Miller Denim** in suite 505 and the **Julie Walls Showroom** in suite 1005, which represents lines such as **NYDJ** and **Kinross Cashmere**.

### D&A's buyer traffic steady

Mudslides shut down parts of the 101 Freeway in Santa Barbara County, so many boutique owners from Santa Barbara didn't make it to the Jan. 15-17 run of **Designers and Agents** at The New Mart, said Mattie Iel of the **JP & Mattie** line.

But the small show kept its vitality. Iel, a veteran of D&A's Los Angeles shows, said that her regular buyers kept their appointments to see the Summer 2018 looks for JP & Mattie, which features bags made out of repurposed leather jackets.

The show represented a continued Los Angeles engagement for the **Jaga** line. Until October, Jaga Buyan showed her Los Angeles-headquartered line in New York and Paris. In October, she started exhibiting the line at D&A. Many California buyers don't travel to New York and Europe, she said. "I get to see them in Los Angeles. I picked up several good accounts," she said of this D&A. "There are some stores that buy very close to season. These are the ones that I saw. It turned out well."

Barbara Kramer, a cofounder of D&A, said 26 booths exhibited 40 brands at the show, which was about even with the number of booths exhibiting at the January 2017 D&A. Reportedly seen at the show were Los Angeles-area boutiques **Stacey Todd**, **The Piece Collective**, Fred Segal and **Love Adorned**. Buyers from **Wright's** in Manhattan Beach, Calif., and **Gilda's Boutique** from the Boston area were also said to have dropped by the show.

D&A's lounge area maintained a bohemian flavor with beanbag chairs covered in wax paper and colorful rattan benches from India.

### Madame Methven to Gerry

Kaila Methven grew up and learned fashion design in France, but she came to Los Angeles to manufacture lingerie.

Her company, **Madame Methven**, started business in 2016 to make high-end lingerie in a city that was once best known for denim and T-shirts. In early January, Madame Methven opened her 1,100-square-foot showroom in suite 806 of **The Gerry Building**. Methven plans to knock out a wall of suite 806 and expand into the adjacent suite.

The showroom will exhibit four Madame Methven lines: **Made to Adore**, **Latrodectus**, **Mademoiselle** and **LBKM**, said Elodie Duchamp, executive manager for the company. Madame Methven manufactures domestically to ensure the highest quality. "[The brands] are for every woman. It ranges from a girl buying her first nice bra to a princess," Duchamp said.

Next door to Madame Methven, the offices for **Now** public relations held demonstrations for **Help Jess**. Projected on a big screen on Now's office walls, the e-commerce app offers

what it calls Show & Sell e-commerce, said Simon La Barrie, the San Clemente, Calif.-based founder of Help Jess.

Help Jess' interactive, real-time video chat between shoppers and boutiques can help consumers potentially shop anywhere in the world. With chat and advice from boutique owners, consumers can get exactly the sizes they need, reducing the number of returns.

Tash Greizen, creative director for Now, said that the big-screen app demonstration for Help Jess would only run through market week. However, she hopes to bring the demonstration back for a return engagement at an unspecified time.

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