

S·T·I·T·C·H·E·S

Embroidery's Voice & Vision

EMBER/OCTOBER 2015

THE FASHION ISSUE

**REINVENT YOUR APPROACH
TO COLOR AND DESIGN**

- ✦ Reinterpret '70s silhouettes
- ✦ Embrace florals and rainbow patterns
- ✦ Use foil, wash transfers and metallic thread
- ✦ Sell more layered looks

*This Byron Lars dress
boasts seven decorating
techniques.*

Cornflower Blue pashmina scarf (PASH 145-050) from Wolfmark (asi/98085)



+ Spend a Day With Two Designers ✦ Women's Wear Showcase

the nano collection | FLEECE

+ core colors
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deep red RE

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ABOUT THE COVER

That's a Wrap By Sara Lavenduski

Each fall, *Stitches* magazine proudly presents its Big Fashion Issue, in which we feature elegant, eye-popping, creative work from veteran designers and decorators.

This year we bring you creations from Byron Lars, Pamela Ptak, Conrad Booker, Jane Swanz, Todd Hirshman and Pilar Briceño Cárdenas, a Colombian designer who was recently featured in Epson's Digital Couture show during New York Fashion Week.

"I was so impressed with the beauty and high quality of the garments we received for this year's Big Fashion Shoot," says Senior Writer Theresa Hegel, who worked with the designers to select the apparel for the shoot. "Clearly, our featured designers and decorators

are at the top of their collective game, displaying unmatched creativity and craftsmanship. I hope our readers enjoy looking at these outfits as much as we enjoyed working with them."

During the shoot, the staff at *Stitches* took an accessory available in the promotional industry and incorporated it with one of the looks. Wolfmark (asi/98085; circle 114 on Free Info Card) contributed a beautiful cornflower blue pashmina scarf (PASH 145-050), which was used as a headpiece to accessorize a dress from designer Byron Lars. The elegant piece pairs well with the dress that incorporates embroidery, lace, fringe, appliqué, sequins, beading and rhinestones on the floral embroidery front panel.

Dress to Impress

"Pashminas are an ideal wearable piece because they're both lightweight and warm," says Jason Harttert, digital marketing director at Wolfmark. "They're also versatile. They can be worn as a functional shoulder wrap or neck scarf, or simply as a fashion accessory."



Multi-Faceted Uses

Among the most popular functions for pashminas, says Harttert, include gifts for corporate staffs and clients, hotel and resort guests, college staff and alumni, and guests at charity or special organization events. They're also ideal for incentive programs and as uniform accessories.

Decoration Tip

Pashminas offer a diversity of embellishment locations for embroiderers' work, including the center and any of the four corners, says Bruce Everakes, president of Wolfmark. "Subtle tone-on-tone designs are also gaining popularity," he adds.



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About the Cover
Design: Hillary Glen
Photography: Mark Prickett
Model: Sherita, Major Models Management
Stylist: Conrad Booker
Hair and makeup: Simon Group Stylists
Dress by Byron Lars and pashmina (114) from Wolfmark (asi/98085)



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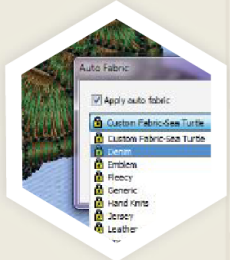
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In this month's "Expert Weigh-In" section of our "Interact" department, we hear from **SAMANTA CORTES**, executive director and international consultant for the Tx Institute, about the importance of textile education. "Education in specific decorating methods can markedly improve business," she says. "The only garment-related market that has stayed strong in the U.S. is the printing and embroidery business. It's important to understand your equipment and use it productively so that you can create designs at a good price point."



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In this month's fashion shoot cover story, "Back in Bloom," we show work from **BYRON LARS**, a veteran fashion designer whose New York City-based brand Byron Lars Beauty Mark is well-known in the Big Apple. While creating high-end garments, Lars stays production-minded. "A lot of the fabric we buy in New York has to be brought back down with stuff from China, but we structure it in a way to look more expensive than it is," he says. "I try to keep things as reasonable as possible on the sourcing end, but sometimes you just have to go for it." Lars is also profiled in the "A Day in the Life of a Designer" feature in this issue.

In this issue's "Ask an Expert," **SHIRLEY CLARK**, president of Madeira USA, offers tips on how to run metallic thread without the stress and struggle sometimes associated with the specialty thread. "Start with a good-quality metallic embroidery thread," she advises. "As important as quality thread is in your daily work, investing in a reliable source for your metallic threads will eliminate lots of stress. Then, start small. Go with a thin metallic, like a 50 weight. Most times, this smooth metallic thread can be substituted right into a stock design or a logo digitized for 40 weight, with no change to the machine, no needle change and no re-timing; simply choose a gold or silver to replace a yellow or gray, and watch your embroidery design grow more sophisticated, with additional fashion appeal."



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Put Your Fashion Foot Forward



Welcome to the Big Fashion Issue! *Stitches* teamed up with amazing designers (the iconic Byron Lars, former *Project Runway* contestant Pamela Ptak and more) to bring you another wow-worthy fashion spread. Editorial Advisory Board member Conrad Booker (also a multifarious artist) conceptualized the many faces of the “Me Decade,”

giving ’70s silhouettes and styles a modern makeover. Check out the stunning results in our cover story, “Back In Bloom.” Plus, we spent the day with New York-based designer Lars and California costume designer Camille Jumelle for “A Day in the Life of a Designer” – learn how their incredible minds create memorable decorated apparel.

For decorators, staying on top of fashion trends is more than a fun pastime – it’s a solid way to keep clients coming back for current looks and innovative decorating techniques (without chasing flash-in-the-pan trends). We asked our board for their advice on incorporating fashion trends into your repertoire:

Lee Romano Sequeira, Sparkle Plenty Designs (asi/88442): “Colors are fun to play with (especially when it comes to rhine-

stone designs), but you can never go wrong with the classics. Basics are a staple for those who aren’t as adventurous.”

Joanna Grant, Affinity Express (asi/33149): “Knowing what’s current (styles and fabric types) is key to ensuring customer satisfaction and repeat business. Clients happily buy again if they feel their embroiderer knows where to find cutting-edge styles at reasonable prices and decorates those products flawlessly.”

Joyce Jagger, The Embroidery Coach: “Understand newer fabrics – they require different techniques as far as design settings, and for embroidery applications: underlay stitching, pull compensation and hooping.”

Anna Johnson, Super Embroidery and Screenprinting: “Keep ahead of the wholesale wave so when customers start asking for something new you already have a source.”

Howard Potter, A&P Master Images (asi/702505): “We research new processes and fashion styles trending globally. We also try to create hot trends to make us stand out. You get the sale with no competition.”

Enjoy the issue!

Nicole M. Rollender

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Get Your Stitch Report

Stitches Senior Staff Writer Theresa Hegel shares some tips on creating a successful garment layering program for your clients.



Podcast: That '70s Shoot

Philadelphia-based designer Conrad Booker talks with Theresa Hegel, *Stitches* senior staff writer, about his process and how this year's Big Fashion Shoot came together.



Go Behind the Scenes

Get an exclusive look at how the *Stitches* Big Fashion Shoot came together from hair and makeup, to styling and photography. Plus, you'll see the *Stitches* team having fun. Watch the video on *Stitches.com*.

SOCIAL FEEDS



WE POSTED

Some great advice on finding professional and personal happiness from Parks and Rec actress Rashida Jones: "My dad [Quincy Jones] gives really good advice, but he told me to pick two things to pursue. Just get really good at those things and learn everything you can about those things." read. bit.ly/1GlapW7

Just two more days until the 2015 Power 75 survey closes. Have you weighed in yet on the most influential people in the industry this year? svy.mk/1J5wqPn

This mixed-media artist also uses colored pencils and "a lot of seed beads" in her embroidered art: bit.ly/1JellTo

Vantage Apparel adds two to its sales team: bit.ly/1GIVxLm

Promotional products supplier SnugZ is using Epson's digital label presses and sublimation printers: bit.ly/1NtoGP6

It's not embroidery, but it IS pretty amazing. Clearly, he didn't use any cheat codes to complete this geeky masterpiece: bit.ly/1LquDEM

In her latest "Newbie Digitizer's Diary" blog, Geri Finio helps fellow beginners navigate the screen and toolbars of Melco Design Shop V10: bit.ly/1BshA5J

Social media is increasingly an influence on B2B sales, a new survey finds: bit.ly/1R93dVI

Check out the latest trends in swimwear: get tips on diversifying corporate outfitting programs; and more in the latest edition of the *Stitches Business* newsletter: bit.ly/1IIN7nA



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#BREAKING: Judge orders cancellation of #Redskins trademark registration: <http://bit.ly/1KOENIM>

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"People on smartphones are not anti-social. They're super-social." <http://bit.ly/1LWD3Hq>

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This custom-built tumbler features a designer surprise! <http://4impr.it/7jth> #SpiritTumbler #Promotions

@CNNI

Will you be rocking the Maasai look this fall? <http://cnn.it/1S8kcYS>

@THERESAHEGEL

These dresses are made of fake nails. Wild! Regram from goswam1 <https://instagram.com/p/417ATTF-gb/>

@ASI_STITCHES

Beleaguered American Apparel announced several new management hires, \$30 million in cost-cutting measures and more: <http://bit.ly/1KP4cu8>

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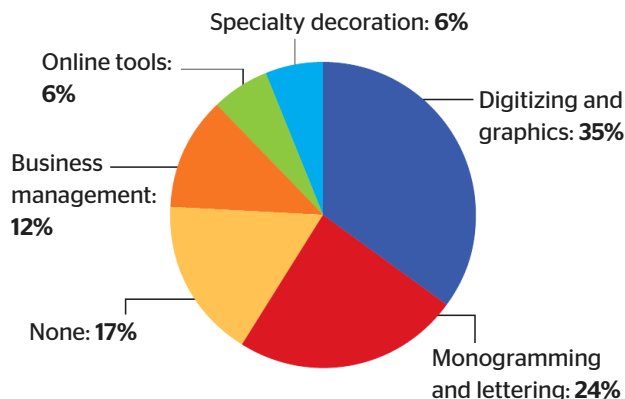
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It's 2015 - You'd Think We'd Have Figured Out How To Measure Web Traffic By Now <http://53eigh.t/1S3OUce>

INDUSTRY POLL

At *Stitches.com*, we recently asked:

What kind of software do you plan to purchase for your shop in the next 12 months?



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BLOG EXCERPT

DecQuorum Are Your Products Ready for Their Close-Up?



One thing every business owner wants is publicity for his or her product, and it's a bonus if the publicity is free. A great way to get free publicity is to contribute product pictures for articles in magazines. As a writer, I rely on my colleagues in the industry to supply me with images when I need them for an article. It's a win-win scenario – I get the art I need for the article, which makes my editor happy, and the business that supplies the photos gets publicity for their work.

I, and most writers I know within the industry, are blessed by the fact that, when we've asked, many of our colleagues were willing to supply us with the images we needed. The only problem is that the images sent often don't meet the necessary requirements for print photography. In general, to be usable for print, an image should be at least 300 dots per inch (DPI). It is also helpful if the image is relatively large.

Pinterest

Check out the following designs that we pinned on Stitches' Pinterest page – from the **Cool Embroidery Designs** and **Sequins, Rhinestones & Bling** boards.

Visit Stitches' Pinterest page – and all our great boards – at Pinterest/stitchesmag.

From the Board: Cool Embroidery Designs



This embroidered wall hanging measures 8" and features sustainable bamboo fabric backing, from Cabo Pickles, cabopickles.com.



These embroidered tea towels come in a set of four, from Pretty P & Mama B Designs, prettypmamab.com.



This linen tote features nine embroidered cat breeds, from Coral & Tusk, coralandtusk.com.



This Lucille Shift Dress features all-over embroidery, from Francesca's, francescas.com.

From the Board: Sequins, Rhinestones & Bling



This canvas tote combines lime green embroidery and sequins, from Vanessa Bruno, vanessabruno.com.



This T-shirt features a horse silhouette made of rhinestones, from Originals R Best, originalsrbest.co.uk.



This leather belt has rhinestone crystals, silver studs and fleur-de-lys accents, from Conchos, conchos.com.



This koi-shaped evening clutch comes in four colors, from Milanblocks, milanblocks.com.

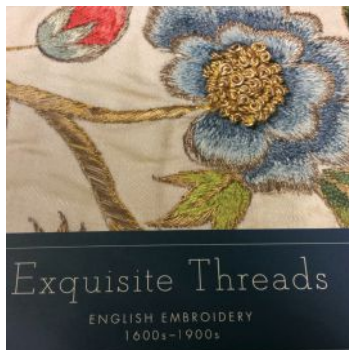
Instagram

Check out the following photos from Stitches' Instagram page.

Visit Stitches' Instagram page: [@stitches_mag](#).



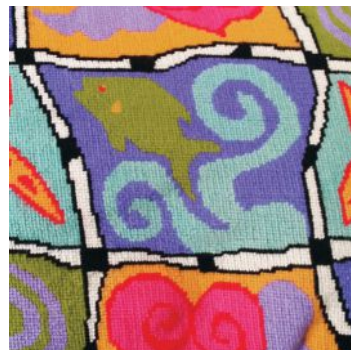
Lovely [#beadwork](#) from the late 19th century. Regram from [@ngvmelbourne](#). [#embroidery](#)



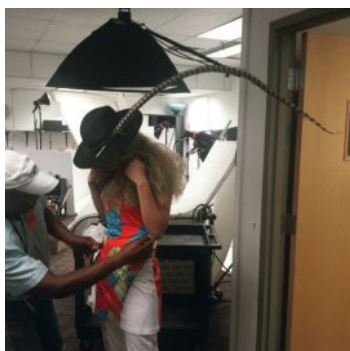
Received this very cool booklet from [@ngvmelbourne](#) the other day on their [#embroidery](#) exhibit. The title says it all!



More awesome entries in the 2015 [#BigDecoratingChallenge](#)! Who will make it to the next round of judging? [#bling](#) [#embroidery](#) [#screenprinting](#)



Love this sea-inspired [#needlepoint](#) pillow created by Geri Finio. Understanding hand [#embroidery](#) will help you figure out the mechanics of digitizing software, she says.



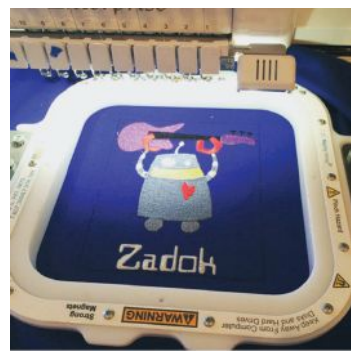
A feather in our cap. [#fashion](#)



The judges are hard at work. [#BigDecoratingChallenge](#) [#embroidery](#)



Stitches Editor Nicole Rollender gets her Sophie Blue on. [#BigDecoratingChallenge](#)



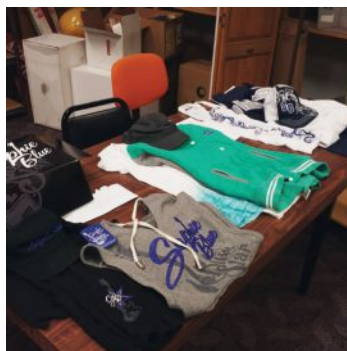
Fun robot [#embroidery](#). [#regram](#) from [@belindaleedesigns](#).



Sherita gets a winged eye, thanks to [@jessicasainthaus](#). Love it.



Roxanne puts on another [@byronlarsbm](#) dress. [#fashion](#)



Everything is set up for judging of the 2015 [#BigDecoratingChallenge](#). Who designed the best look for our fictional pop star, Sophie Blue? Can't wait to find out.



Another hat break during judging of the [#BigDecoratingChallenge](#)!

Expert Weigh-In



Samanta Cortes, executive director and international consultant for the Tx Institute, talks about the importance of textile education, her support for the Garment Center in New York City and new design trends hailing from Europe.

I like to keep my designs fresh throughout the year.

I vary between seasons, but for the most part I've been incorporating mixed media and textiles and adding a lot of dimension in my recent designs.

I've used many different materials in my recent designs.

I like to mix embroidery, rhinestones, laser-etching and burning techniques. A soft combination of different techniques is perfect for finishing off your masterpieces.

Education in specific decorating methods can markedly improve business.

The only garment-related market that has stayed strong in the U.S. is the printing and embroidery business. It's important to understand your equipment and use it productively so that you can create designs at a good price point. Understanding how to decorate your textiles – or even just your basic tee – can ease off on production lead times and lower your price points.

Attendees can benefit from classes at the Tx Institute.

The Tx Institute is an educational program that's customized for each individual company in attendance, from training staff, to setting up a sewing room, to implementing branding and marketing strategies.

Strong manufacturers can survive here on American soil.

But they need support. The two industries that have stayed strong in the U.S.

are screen printing and embroidery, as well as the textile mills that concentrate mostly in the home goods market and composites. A strong operation will do what it takes, including bringing on additional personnel, and will know how to manage them and how to run a mass production operation.

We need to educate the fashion industry on the importance of textile manufacturing.

Textile manufacturing is the actual making of the fabric from the thread to the weaving. As designers, we can collaborate with these textile mills to create a vertical operation that offers decorative fabrics with a short turnaround. However, the fashion industry often doesn't understand or respect our line of work. With education, we can surpass all obstacles.

European trends are gaining momentum in North America.

In the European textile decorating industry, manufacturers are selling finished decorated fabric to designers. While they've always done embroidery and printing for the promotional market, they're now making the design more pronounced and the colors are bright and bold. In the U.S., there are robust knitting operations that offer softer textiles, but when they're done for home goods,



the textiles are a little bit more harsh and heavy for furniture and decor.

The Garment Center in New York City is worth preserving.

The people in the industry create the backbone of experience that's needed for manufacturing in the U.S. to stay here. This is not to say that the industry won't survive if the Garment Center is dispersed, but we will lose momentum as well as valuable people.

E-commerce stores have been working for many up-and-coming designers.

Online shops have been a popular way for new designers to drive traffic to their work. The only disadvantage is that you have to have enough garments and sizing to satisfy your clientele.

My favorite designer right now is Ralph Lauren.

He's been one of my favorite designers for many years because of his knowledge and changing branding. He adjusts his company when he needs to without losing his artistic touch.

Stitches readers sound off:

Mother Dearest

My mother, who's 84, lives with me and tries to find the needle before I even see the magazine. A couple times she even hid the magazine so I wouldn't be able to find it. I have a small business doing embroidery and custom sewing. I enjoy sewing for the disabled/handicapped, military, kids and the elderly. My mom checks everything I do. She's my quality control department.

Robin Burch

Robin Burch's Sewing Nest, Albion, PA

For the Kids

I'm the owner of a small home-based embroidery business where I focus primarily on children's items. I currently have two single-needle embroidery machines. I enjoy reading your magazine to see what others are doing and to gain insight into how the industry is doing. My goal is to add a multi-needle machine to my business in the next 12 months.

Kristin Rohde

SugarPlumMonkey, St. Cloud, MN

Imagination Takes Flight

With my subscription to *Stitches*, I'm learning to fly without coming too close to the sun. I can stretch my creativity and imagination while finding ways to make my ideas work within my budget. Thanks, *Stitches*!

Sandy Roberts

Indy Accent Embroidery, Indianapolis, IN

12 Years and Counting

We've been in business since 2003 and offer custom embroidery, digitizing and heat-applied items. We continue to grow slowly. Thank you, *Stitches*!

Regina Cassidy

It Takes a Stitch Custom Embroidery, Arlington, VA

Path to Greatness

I've sewed all my life (making most of my clothes when I was in high school), and embroidery always interested me. I had been job-eliminated in 2008 and started quilting. I visited a quilt show and watched embroidery machines in action, including a Brother PR650 (six

needle) that I then purchased from a dealer. After purchasing a second Brother PR1000 (10-needle) and using those two machines for five years, I decided I was ready for a commercial machine. Long story short, I bought a SWF 1501 T and a SWF 1501C. My business is growing! My PR650 is like an old friend and my PR1000 is my "Energizer Bunny."

Recently, I joined ASI to pick up some decorator business. I also have a fully customized vending trailer that we take to dog shows (breed shows, and agility, rally and obedience trials). We also do business logos on horse coolers and saddle pads, and for first responders and government clients. Everything in my shop is custom, and we're always busy!

Susan Zeh

Suzy Q & Richie Too, Lake Luzerne, NY

TALK TO US!

Tell us what challenges you're facing in your shop. React to a story you've just read in *Stitches* or on our Facebook page. Email us a shot of the latest and greatest embroidery design you've just run. We can't wait to hear from you, so send letters to the editor to nrollender@asicentral.com.

VOILA!

The best piece I ever embroidered

"I digitized this design for Bannersandcards.com to promote their brand at trade shows. I digitized the logo with ARTISTA software from Bernina. I used 15 different colors of SYLKO poly and stitched it out on an HCA HAPPY

single-head 15-needle machine. The final stitched-out design is made of 32,040 stitches and 160.65' of bobbin thread. The overall size is 12.1" wide and 4.1" high. Originally, the company's owner told me that this design couldn't be embroidered. That was all the challenge that I needed."

Submitted by Bill Beck, owner of imaginative EMBEL-LISHING, McLoud, OK; simrbittlebill@mcloudteleco.com; www.appareltozipperpulls.com



Phil Stitch Answers

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Got a question for Phil?

If you can't find what you're looking for in the 2015 Sourcing Guide, write to: *Stitches*, Attn: Phil Stitch, 4800 Street Rd., Trevoze, PA 19053. Or fax your question to (215) 953-3107. For the quickest response, email askphil@asicentral.com. For RN inquiries, visit www.stitches.com for the RN Database link.

P.S. If you join ASI with the brand-new *Stitches* Membership Package, you'll be able to immediately source imprintable products from every ASI supplier member with ASI's ESP Buyer's Guide. Plus, increase sales with your own e-commerce website full of T-shirts, blankets, caps, bags, plush toys and other embroidery-ready items. Call (877) 276-0292 or visit www.joinstitches.com to get started!

I'm looking for a wheelchair tote bag that hangs on the back of the handles. Any ideas? - Gus

Check out the Wheelchair Tote (4058) from Aprons, Etc. (asi/36558); (800) 467-1996; www.apronsetc.com. Made of PVC-coated waterproof polyester, this product has 15 1/2" nylon handles to fit over a wheelchair's hand grips. Alternately, go to Fabriko (asi/53450); (800) 558-0242; www.fabriko.com; for the Wheelchair Bag (770-7C), made of 7-oz. medium-weight cotton canvas with 22" polyweb handles at the corners. Eight colors are available.

Last but not least, bag the Wheelchair Tote (CD1100) from Ecorite (asi/51654); (800) 265-2740; www.ecorite.com; measuring 17 1/2" x 12" x 3. Choose from cotton, a poly/cotton blend or poly canvas.

Hunting for a camo baby blanket. Do you know a supplier for this? - Charlie

Target acquired: the Camouflage Baby Fleece Blanket (B103) from Country Line Inc. (asi/46764); (800) 310-7880; www.countryline.ca; measuring 38" x 28", it contains anti-pill polar fleece with finished serged ends and matching or contrast-color thread.

You could also go to Hanco (asi/59490); (800) 621-4454; www.hancotee.com; for the Camouflage Receiving Blanket (1642) with 100% cotton thermal knit, measuring 28" x 40". Finally, aim for the Infant Camo Receiving Blanket (2456) from Rothco (asi/83708); (800) 645-5195; www.rothco.com; it's made from cotton thermal material and available in three different camo colors/designs. Happy hunting!



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American Apparel Announces Strategic Changes

Top 25 apparel supplier American Apparel (asi/35297) has hired a new president of wholesale – the division that encompasses its promotional products sales. It was one of many changes the company announced in July as part of its ongoing strategic turnaround plan. The company also plans to cut expenses by roughly \$30 million over the next 18 months, and launch a redesigned clothing line in the fall.

As the president of wholesale, Brad Gebhard will focus on increasing the company's imprintable and business-to-business sales. The wholesale side of American Apparel has been one of the few bright spots, with the company seeing year-over-year increases in the North American ad specialties space, reporting to *Stitches* that its 2014 promo products sales were \$105 million, 6% higher than in 2013. Gebhard has served as a consultant to American Apparel for the past four months and has held senior leadership positions at apparel companies, including Nike, Speedo USA, Columbia Sportswear and Adidas.

American Apparel also hired Christine Olcu as general manager of global retail. Olcu has a background in building retail businesses.

Among the \$30 million in cost-cutting measures announced will be workforce cuts and the closure of underperforming retail locations. "We are committed to turning this company around," says CEO Paula Schneider.

As American Apparel looks to the future, it continues to deal with its past, defending itself against approximately 20 lawsuits and administrative actions initiated by company founder and former CEO Dov Charney and his associates. Charney was fired in December by American Apparel's board of directors for alleged misconduct and violations of company policy. Charney has since been seeking millions of dollars in damages in a series of defamation lawsuits. In a press release, American Apparel executives called the cases initiated by Charney "meritless" and say they intend to "vigorously defend" them.

Industry Suppliers Halt Confederate Flag Sales



In the wake of the June mass shooting at a historic African-American church in Charleston, SC, flag makers in the promotional products industry have decided to stop selling Confederate flags. Quinn Flags (asi/80228), Eder Flag Manufacturing Co. (asi/51678), Valley Forge Flag Co. (asi/93250) and Annin Flagmakers (asi/36256) are among the companies that have pulled Confederate flags from their stocks.

"It's morally and ethically appropriate to make this announcement showing that

the historical symbolism of this flag needs to be just that – history," Matthew Quinn, president of Hanover, PA-based Quinn Flags, said in a statement. Oak Creek, WI-based Eder Flag released a statement expressing similar sentiments.

Mary Repke, senior vice president of sales and marketing at Annin Flagmakers, says the Roseland, NJ-based company has halted all sales of the Confederate Battle and Confederate Field Artillery flags in all sizes and materials. "Flags are very powerful symbols, and these flags have come to represent a very negative aspect of our nation's past," she said.

The decision has drawn a mixed response. "We've had

an equal amount positive and negative reaction," Repke says. "Some of our customers told us they would have done the same thing, and others haven't been happy. Everyone has a right to their opinion. But we have the right to manufacture or not manufacture particular flags."

Overall, Confederate flags were a small portion of industry flag makers' business, with most purchased by historical reenactment groups or historical associations, manufacturers say.

Sports Authority Offers Exclusive Champion GEAR

Sports Authority has teamed up with Champion Athleticwear, a division of Hanesbrands (asi/59528), to offer an exclu-

Event Calendar

Sept. 10-12, Orlando, FL
ISS Shows
(508) 743-0532
www.issshows.com

Sept. 16-19, Las Vegas
Las Vegas Souvenir & Resort Gift Show
(678) 285-3976
www.lvsouvenirshow.com

Oct. 15-17, Fort Worth, TX
ISS Shows
(508) 743-0532
www.issshows.com

Oct. 23-24, Manhattan
Manhattan Vintage Clothing Show & Sale
(518) 852-2415
<http://manhattanvintage.com>

sive line of premium performance and lifestyle apparel, dubbed Champion GEAR.

The activewear line for men and women features seamless construction and quick-drying Champion Vapor technology for comfortable workouts. The collection includes tanks, T-shirts, pants, shorts and more. Sports Authority is also selling a broad assortment of youth athletic and performance apparel through the GEAR line.

"This collection raises the bar in terms of high-quality, innovative athletic apparel," says Stephen Binkley, executive vice president and chief merchandising officer at Sports Authority.

Scandinavian Man Crochets Detailed Video Game Blanket

Kjetil Nordin, 31, of Denmark, channeled his love of video games into his other hobby: needlecraft. Originally from Norway, the computer programmer spent the last six years hand-crocheting a blanket depicting a scene from *Super Mario 3*.

The blanket measures about 7 feet 2 inches by 5 feet 10 inches. It took Nordin about 800 hours to recreate in yarn a screenshot from the popular classic Nintendo game. "The hardest thing has been to accept that it took such a long time," he told Norwegian media outlet, *NRK*.

Nordin's attention to detail delayed the painstaking project by about a week. He unraveled a portion of the blanket after realizing he'd chosen the wrong yarn color for the water. "[The yarn] was almost purple, and very ugly, so I had to undo all of it," Nordin says.

Of course, the last six years haven't been just about crochet. He also made time to win the Norwegian Sky Diving team championship twice, earn two university degrees and launch his programming career.



Embroidered Insects a Hit for Japanese Firm

Takahiro Harada, president of Harada Embroidery in Japan, turned his childhood love of insects into art, creating freestanding ladybugs, ants and other creatures out of embroidery for an Osaka department store in 2010.

Since then the "Ikimono Series" has been exhibited in Paris, New York and Tokyo, and orders for the lifelike embroidered insects poured in from shops in France and Belgium.

Harada Embroidery has



been in business since the 1970s, but has struggled in recent years as clothing production shifted out of Japan and into countries like China. Harada told Japanese newspaper *Asahi Shimbun* that he wanted to show off his company's techni-

cal capabilities by focusing on small pieces. Harada studied ladybugs and other insects, considering which embroidery techniques and machinery would work best to create replicas with bendable leg joints. Through trial and error, he created five or six styles, including an ant less than an inch long. The series has grown to around 30 creatures; it has raised the company's profile with the public and has even brought in more orders for conventional embroidery projects, Harada says.



Tapestry Recognizes Medieval War Hero

An English church unveiled a detailed tapestry that reflects the life of Sir Thomas Erpingham, who fought in the Battle of Agincourt in 1415. The village of Erpingham is marking the 600th anniversary of the battle this year with a series of events. Sir Thomas was commander of King Henry V's longbow archers at the famous battle and once owned a manor in Erpingham.

The Erpingham Tapestry, revealed during a medieval-themed flower festival at St. Mary's Church, was stitched mostly by members of the Erpingham and Calthorpe Women's Institute. Committee member Lynn Bryan, 59, told British newspaper the *Eastern Daily Press*: "The idea was to inspire people to use their gifts to create a commemoration of an important year. We are absolutely thrilled. People's reaction to it has been fabulous. Some of the detail blows me away."



SALES

Fair Winds for Nautical-Themed Apparel Line

Kyle Sayler recently made the leap from the garage to a storefront, opening Sayler Screenprinting in Kearney, NE, this May, and the 26-year-old decorator couldn't be happier. "So far, it's been like a dream come true," Sayler says.

The vast majority of Sayler's business is custom work, servicing a range of clients from medical centers to sports teams. "I've been doing a ton of tractor pull shirts," he adds. One of the shop's biggest jobs so far has been for an Omaha church's annual "Cruise Night" event, with Sayler Screenprinting churning out close to 1,500 shirts on two manual presses for the client. "We're working on those right now," Sayler says. "It's keeping us busy."

Sayler is also trying his hand at the retail side of the business, launching a small line of nautical-themed apparel, Mudhook Clothing. Sayler, who holds a graphic design degree from the University of Nebraska at Kearney, believes the key to great apparel artwork is simplicity. It's a design aesthetic he's carried into his clothing line. Mudhook's fashion tees are "trendy and basic," and many feature nothing more than a simple, bold anchor design. "An anchor almost speaks for itself," Sayler says. Other shirts display a touch of humor, like the one bearing the slogan: "Talk nautical to me." The idea was to create clothing that is easily layered up and reflects the lifestyle of local residents. So far, Sayler's strategy is working. Mudhook Clothing has been a big hit, and Sayler plans to expand the line in the near future.



Mudhook Clothing offers simple, nautical-themed apparel.

WEB

Texas Decorator Launches T-shirt Fundraiser

After massive flooding swept across central Texas in late May, leaving towns like San Marcos devastated, RiverCity Sportswear (asi/309087) kicked into gear. The decorator, which has offices in Austin and San Marcos, wasn't directly affected by the storms, but wanted to do something to help the victims. More than 700 homes in San Marcos were either damaged or destroyed in the floods, according to reports.

"When the flood happened, I had the idea of selling T-shirts in order to fundraise money for all of those affected in the area," says Richard Lopez, director of sales at RiverCity Sportswear. "There are obviously a lot of people and organizations that are in need. ... We also know that funds are going to dry up for a lot of nonprofit organizations pretty quickly due to damage in the area." The shop fast-tracked the creation of an e-commerce page and designed a T-shirt, featuring the image of Texas composed of words related to the flooding: "record storms," "Texas strong," "swept away" and "pull together," for example.

RiverCity hasn't set a specific goal for the impromptu fundraising effort, but within 12 hours of launching, the company had already sold 80 shirts. All of the proceeds are being funneled into rebuilding the community, funding various regional nonprofits.

THERESA HEGEL is a senior staff writer for *Stitches*. Follow her on Twitter @theresahegel. Contact: thegel@asicentral.com.



RiverCity Sportswear (asi/309087) created a T-shirt fundraiser to help rebuild its central Texas community after severe flooding earlier this year.

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Zip Hooded Sweatshirt
18700FL Ladies Vintage
Full Zip Hooded Sweatshirt

Gildan® Vintage Hooded Sweatshirt has OLD-SCHOOL COOL

The Gildan® Heavy Blend™ 50% cotton/50% polyester full zip hoodie, style 18700, is made with cross-dyed colors for a vintage look. Its air jet yarn offers a softer feel and reduced pilling. Features include an unlined hood, a contrast dark grey flatcord and zipper trim, pouch pockets and double needle stitching for durability at the waistband and cuffs. This retro-cool sweatshirt is quarter-turned to prevent a center crease. It comes in Adult sizes S-3XL and a ladies' companion style is also available in sizes LS-L2XL. Eight matching colors are offered.

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Create a Wash Transfer For Caps

As an embroidery substitute on headwear, World Emblem International (asi/98264) shows how to use a wash transfer.

STEP 1. Select the type of transfer best suited for your client's needs. In this case World Emblem (asi/98264) used a standard domestic wash transfer called Trimax.

STEP 2. Choose logo placement. The front of the cap was chosen simply because it's the most common placement and large enough for the desired design.

STEP 3. Prepare the heat press for application. Set the temperature to 356 to 375 degrees for both the top and bottom platens, depending on how thick the cap material is.

STEP 4. Fit the front face of the cap on the bottom platen. Make sure the bill of the hat is pulled firmly over the edge of the platen so it doesn't get in the way of the actual application. Fit the transfer with the design face-down on the front face of the cap and the release paper facing the top platen.

STEP 5. Set the pressure between 40 lbs. to 60 lbs., depending on the thickness of the cap material. Close the top platen over the bottom and apply pressure over the cap for 10 to 15 seconds. Once pressure is removed, let the design cool and carefully peel the release paper from over the top of the design.

TIP: Most of these types of heat-seal machines have a grip below the bottom platen in which you can hook the opposite end of your cap. In this case, World Emblem pulled the back of the cap over this grip to keep the cap firmly in place during the application process.

TIP: Smaller designs are good for placing in other more constricted areas around the cap (i.e. the back of the cap). World Emblem offers six standard placements.

WORLD EMBLEM INTERNATIONAL
(ASI/98264); CIRCLE 76 ON FREE INFO
CARD OR CALL (800) 766-0448.

Safety Bright Is Right for Fall

With September, daylight lessens, and joggers, outdoor workers and others are engaged in activities at dusk. Offering fluorescent apparel paired with high-visibility decoration is a smart win-win.

When Drew Coufal, owner of Kent, OH-based Sew & Sew Embroidery, was tasked with creating something special for his client, Swenson's Drive Ins, the goal was for fun, not just function. "They needed a set of high-visibility runner jackets for a special event, and wanted to add their corporate logo in reflective material, [so] we used 3M for best quality," Coufal says. "They wanted the logo in two locations for greater visibility and brand promotion, so we decorated the jackets on the back yoke and right-sleeve areas."

The logo had to be at scale for its imprint locations, which required a slight alteration to the layout, enlarging smaller text so the 3M material could be properly cut. "Overall, it looks true to the client's standard logo," Coufal says. Because the client had chosen a thin and lightweight runner's jacket that doesn't stand up well to heat, Coufal had to adjust his heat press to a lower setting with slightly longer press times to avoid scorching the material. "It's a careful balance between too much heat and time pressed vs. too little and improper cure times," Coufal explains. It's also important, he says, to place the logo transfer carefully and ensure the garment has no wrinkles before pressing.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SEW & SEW EMBROIDERY; CIRCLE 77 ON FREE INFO CARD.

More Monogramming

In the summer, Trend Finder from *Accessoriesmagazine.com* highlighted monograms as a strong trend for fall. It recommended using "initials, words or even



CLIPARTBOOM; CIRCLE 78 ON FREE INFO CARD.

numbers to represent something important and make a lasting statement." On cue, ClipArtBoom released a Monogram Mini Pack with the vector art you need to take monograms to a new level of customer appeal. The new offering makes it easy to tailor monograms to clients' interests while streamlining the design process to provide a professional look and give your company an edge. The Monogram Mini Pack contains 15 black-and-white and color interactive monogram vector design templates, 15 clip-art elements, 15 frames/backgrounds and 15 vector patterns that can be mixed and matched to create production-ready art, quickly and easily.

Matte Is Where It's At

You see it in electronics, car design and even nail polish – a matte finish vs. shine and luster. To create this elegant look, try Madeira USA's Frosted Matte 40-weight embroidery thread and go for a tone-on-tone design. Alice Wolf, marketing/communications director, says: "While some embroiderers will try using sewing thread for a matte finish look to embroidery, the look isn't the same, since sewing thread



MADIERA USA; CIRCLE 87 ON FREE INFO CARD.

is meant for construction and not embellishment. Achieving a tone-on-tone effect is as easy as first choosing your fabric. Then, using a color card, or the actual thread, find the color that comes closest to the fabric. You wouldn't want to start out with a shiny fabric. Think an Oxford cloth cotton shirt with a small monogram on the pocket or cuffs." Visit www.madeirausa.com.



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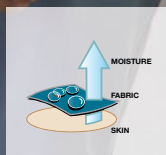
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DECORATING SOLUTIONS

Machine & Software Updates

Green Light for Safe Dye-Sublimation Inks

Roland DGA (asi/18201) has received OEKO-TEX Standard 100, product class I certification for its Texart SBL3 dye-sublimation inks. This Nissenken Quality Evaluation Center certification provides assurance that these inks, made for use with the company's new Texart RT-640 dye-sublimation printer, are safe for inkjet printing on polyester fabric to create a wide variety of sublimated items, including products for babies and toddlers.

"Our Texart SBL3 dye-sublimation inks are formulated to bring out the best in the RT-640 and our Texart Sublimation Transfer Paper to produce textiles, sports and fashion apparel, interior décor, promotional items, personalized gifts and more," says Lily Hunter, Roland DGA's product manager, textiles and consumables. The Texart RT-640 printer incorporates a host of technological advancements that optimize sublimation transfer output while minimizing running costs. One of the



ROLAND DGA CORP. (ASI/18201); CIRCLE 79 ON FREE INFO CARD.



RT-640's major innovation is its ability to take full advantage of Roland's new SBL3 inks, which are available in both four-color (CMYK) and eight-color (Light Cyan, Light Magenta, Orange and Violet).

"In the past, colors sublimated onto fabric would appear somewhat vibrant, but at times were off. Blacks looked dull, grays

had a green tone and there was a general lack of detail," Hunter notes. "Roland's RT-640 printer, with variable droplet technology and rich, high-opacity SBL3 dye-sub inks changed all that. RT users can expect vivid colors and velvety blacks, as well as smooth gradations and exceptional detail." Visit www.rolanddga.com.

Work Fast With Workhorse Flashback

Maximize your printing space. The new Flashback Express from Workhorse Products is made to work with the new small-diameter, entry-level Freedom Express automatic press. This Flashback has a smaller/sleeker design to fit within the footprint of the press, yet offers all the standard flash configurations as the standard Flashback.

This patented flash-cure unit allows for printing, flashing and cooling all on the same print head. A print station no longer has to be sacrificed for flash curing only, and all heads can be used for printing. After the print stroke, the thin quartz element tray automatically slides in between the garment and the screen. The garment is instantly flash-dried and then cooled. The shuttle-in/shuttle-out speed is adjustable, and four flash modes are available to set up the unit to accommodate a variety of print jobs. Visit www.workhorseproducts.com.

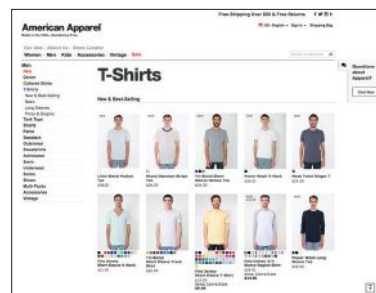


WORKHORSE PRODUCTS; CIRCLE 80 ON FREE INFO CARD.

Easier Online Design For American Apparel

American Apparel (asi/35297) has collaborated with InkSoft to make garment selection and imprint design easy.

Its entire product catalog is now available in InkSoft Design Studio, InkSoft's online designer program. Customers can choose from American Apparel's collection of premium fashionable styles for men, women and children, directly from an InkSoft webstore. American Apparel is a well-recognized brand that offers similar styles in a range of prices making it easier for decorators to meet the demands of any budget. For more information and instructions on how to upload the catalog to individual InkSoft websites, go to www.inksoft.com/american-apparel-product-catalog-now-available-in-inksoft.



INKSOFT; CIRCLE 81 ON FREE INFO CARD.

Increase Curing Efficiency

Adelco incorporates the latest technology in its new Duplex textile dryer. Offered by Hirsch International, this curing system is a double-decker oven designed for high-production digital tex-tile printers that need a long cure time on minimal floor space. Screen printers also can benefit from the Duplex dryer concept to reduce the footprint of conventional dryers.

This machine provides 20 feet of oven-curing capacity in the same footprint as a 10-foot oven. The Duplex is very efficient with low-energy consumption due to its single gas burner and seven electrical connections. Due to the reduced energy consumption, the Duplex drastically cuts running costs, the company says.



HIRSCH INTERNATIONAL;
CIRCLE 82 ON FREE INFO CARD.

PRODUCT PICK

Imprintables Warehouse (asi/58475) announced the launch of a new line of performance-wear garments called Myogrid. Designed for sports, training and everyday wear, it's a good choice for a variety of fitness activities, such as CrossFit, running, yoga and more. Myogrid is a performance apparel company new to the heat-applied graphics industry, having made its debut across the UFC organization before branching out to online retail distributors. The garments are engineered for targeted muscle performance.

The men's and women's lines are offered in two apparel series. The compression series is designed for targeted muscle support while exercising, and the training series offers post-workout wear with built-in vented heat zones to offer a lightweight, breathable feel. Sizes vary from small to triple XL. Available colors are heather blue, heather gray and heather pink in the training series and black and gray in the compression series.



IMPRINTABLES
WAREHOUSE
(ASI/58475);
CIRCLE 83 ON FREE
INFO CARD.

Quick Tips



STAHL'S
(ASI/88984);
CIRCLE 84 ON
FREE INFO CARD.

TIP: Make number selection easy. Use Pre-Cut Number Style Display Books from Stahl's (asi/88984). Offered in baseball, softball and soccer editions, the soft flipbooks contain samples of the top 10 precut styles for each sport. Every jersey fabric page features a 6" Thermo-FILM precut sample number with the font name and displays the numbers 0 through 9 for that style. The front header is suitable for customizing with a company name or logo.



DALCO ATHLETIC;
CIRCLE 85 ON
FREE INFO CARD.

TIP: Expand your sublimation transfer applications. Try DalSub fabric sheets. Simply print on transfer paper using dye-sublimation ink, then tape the print face-down on the adhesive-backed DalSub fabric sheet. Heat press according to the ink manufacturer's instructions.



HOTRONIX;
CIRCLE 86 ON
FREE INFO CARD.

TIP: Increase your workspace. The Heat Printing Equipment Cart from Hotronix is designed for decorators in need of additional counter space or a way to transport equipment around the shop or off-site. Although the cart was designed to hold the Dual Air Fusion, it is also fits other heat presses, laser printers, direct-to-garment printers, laminators, small vinyl cutters or heat printing accessories. Use it to double as an extra layout table.

Look Book

Trend Alerts

By Patricia Cangelosi and Alissa Tallman

APPAREL

Berets

Hats off to the beret! “Berets are such an icon in fashion and uniforms that they’ll never go away,” says David Goldman, vice president of Philadelphia Rapid Transit (asi/77945). He explains that there’s always a core market for berets, including fashionistas and people in uniform: security officers, those in the military, marching band members, and hotel and restaurant staffers.

“Berets are very easy to decorate, easy to hoop, and always a fun item to receive as a gift or promotional item,” Goldman says.

Typically unisex and one-size-fits-most, berets are durable, attention-getting, universally popular and functional. According to Goldman, wool is by far the most popular material for berets, and black and red are the most common colors ordered. As far as decoration, clients prefer embroidery, followed by pins, buttons and patches.

From an advertising specialty standpoint, the beret really shines when paired with European-leaning promotions. He cites a recent television show and French wine and cheese companies as examples. Suggest berets to clients as a fun and unique option to promote their brand in style.



This fully lined Wool “Service” Beret (4035) from Philadelphia Rapid Transit (asi/77945; circle 93 on Free Info Card) is made in the Czech Republic and features vinyl trim, eyelets and badge support.



Assertive Creativity (asi/37166; circle 91 on Free Info Card) offers this comfortable knitted wool-polyester mix beret hat (EP-WW-004-12), perfect for the cold winter; decorated by Jane Swanzy, owner of Houston-based Swan Marketing LLC (circle 92 on Free Info Card).



Get the 11 1/2” Wool Beret (4011) from Philadelphia Rapid Transit (asi/77945; circle 93 on Free Info Card); choose from a variety of colors for this one-size-fits-most hat; decorated by Jane Swanzy, owner of Houston-based Swan Marketing LLC (circle 92 on Free Info Card).

Available from Philadelphia Rapid Transit (asi/77945; circle 93 on Free Info Card), the Wool Boucle Beret (4170) is made of wool and available in six color options; one size fits most; decorated by Jane Swanzy, owner of Houston-based Swan Marketing LLC (circle 92 on Free Info Card).



This Black Director’s Beret is available from Beistle, (asi/39540; circle 94 on Free Info Card).



2015

Specialty Printing & Imaging Technology

SGIA EXPO

Atlanta, GA • November 4–6, 2015

“The show floor was jam-packed with attendees seeking knowledge, equipment, market position, and a bigger slice of the “future.””

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“The best networking hub for all screen and digital printers.”

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SGIA.org/garment

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Apparel. Screen. Digital. Expo.

The 2015 SGIA Expo (Atlanta, November 4–6) will offer qualified and educated attendees (like you!) the unparalleled chance to experience the hottest technology, the hottest markets and the hottest opportunities. (And we're not talking about the weather.) This dynamic show, in one of the East Coast's most dynamic cities, is where leading imaging professionals will showcase their best products, methodologies and innovative applications.

Don't miss the equipment, innovation and solutions from industry-leading exhibitors on the expansive show floor. You'll see:

- Digital Direct-to-Garment Inkjet
- Screen Printing
- Finishing
- Textiles
- Textile Finishing
- Embroidery
- Soft Signage
- Dye Sublimation

Mix & Mingle: 'Brave' New World of Networking

And, as usual, the Expo will offer critical networking opportunities at the Expo's community receptions and educational presentations. Attendees can gain international acclaim by entering the prestigious Golden Image competition, which is judged by imaging experts and awarded onsite.

“The SGIA Expo is an excellent opportunity to see the new technology.”

“For our first time there, it was very overwhelming and the product knowledge was incredible. The exhibitors were very knowledgeable, friendly and eager to assist. Wonderful Expo!”



Register Now!
SGIA.org/garment

Hot in Hotlanta

SGIA's Featured Events at the Expo

10-Hour OSHA Training **NEW**

November 3-4

Cost: Members: \$99.00; Nonmembers: \$132.00

If you're not meeting OSHA regulations or if you're not sure about your compliance status, you're at risk for costly penalties during an OSHA inspection. Be proactive, be prepared with SGIA's 10-Hour OSHA Training Workshop at the Expo.

Expo Dream Teams **NEW**

November 4-5

This year, SGIA has brought together the ultimate leaders in specialty imaging to form the all-new Dream Teams, where expert panelists convene to tackle the most

pressing topics. Bring your questions to these one-of-a-kind sessions to get the most out of your Expo experience.

Golden Image Competition

Display hours: 9:30 am-5:00 pm, Wednesday, November 4 and Thursday, November 5; 9:30 am-Noon, Friday, November 6

The esteemed contest celebrates industry-leading excellence and covers almost every item, no matter how complex, created by specialty imaging.

Back by Popular Demand

The Garment Zone: All garment, all the time.

Get first-hand, in-depth experience with apparel decoration technologies, and identify a solution that fits your needs, in the highly interactive and sales-free SGIA Garment Zone (Booth 3469).

Wide Format 101

November 3

Cost: Members: \$30; Nonmembers: \$33

SGIA's half-day, four-part workshop is designed to help you understand today's expanding wide-format inkjet opportunities, and gain valuable knowledge and strategies to help you make the best decisions for your business. This course's four parts are: Introduction to Wide-Format, Understanding Color Management, Mastering Finishing Technologies, and Pricing & Selling Wide-Format.

“I'm a T-shirt guy, and was extremely impressed with the entries for the Golden Image awards. They were flat out amazing: Incredible detail, fantastic use of high density or other special effects and all of them had killer artwork that just made them stand out.”



Zone Out in Atlanta

One thing is clear in Atlanta: The SGIA Zones are unparalleled in the industry, offering sales-free education that you're free (keyword: FREE) to explore with no pressure to buy or make decisions. And, since they're strategically placed among the packed Expo floor, you can get unbiased (or at least well-rounded) opinions about applications, techniques and equipment — and then head to specific booths to make any big decisions.

SGIA's Sustainability Zone (Booth 4471)



SGIA's Sustainability Zone offers inspiration and tools to help you on your sustainability journey. Improve efficiencies in your operation — hear from your peers on integration of energy efficiencies, development of robust recycling programs, and most importantly, how these programs can save you money!

The Garment Zone (Booth 3469)



One Zone, all garment, all the time. Get a first-hand look at digital garment decoration technologies and identify a solution that fits your needs. See the latest screen printing and special-effect techniques, and add a little flare to your business.

Digital Textile Printing Zone (Booth 627)



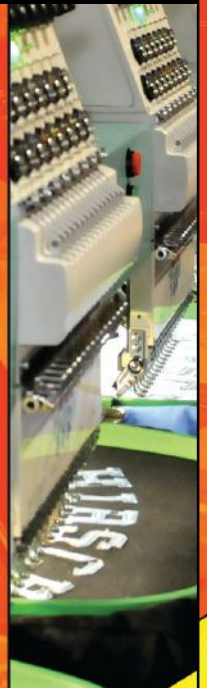
Consider this the Textile Printing course you never knew you needed. You'll hear about the technical and design requirements, recommended workflows,

color management tips, finishing techniques, and recommended best practices for a variety of ink and fabric combinations.

💧 SGIA is always a great bet if you are looking for the newest technology and trends in the printing industry. It's a must-attend, in my book. 💧



💧 There's NO better way to keep up with the growth of the industry than to attend the SGIA Expo. None! 💧



Simplifying **SGIA** Expo Travel

Book Your 2015 SGIA Expo Hotel Now!

SGIA has excellent rates for Atlanta hotels during the Expo — offered exclusively by our official housing partner, Travel Planners.

We guarantee:

- Automated rate checks to make sure you're getting the lowest rate
- No prepayment — you pay when you check out!
- No change or cancellation fees up to seven days prior to arrival
- Onsite support if needed



Please note: Please be aware that SGIA has carefully chosen Travel Planners as the official, exclusive, housing partner of the 2015 SGIA Expo. Please disregard any solicitation from other companies claiming to be SGIA's housing company. Unfortunately we have no authority over these unethical companies, and entering into financial agreements with such companies can have costly consequences. These solicitations may happen more frequently as we get closer to the Expo.

Transportation from the Airport

Taxicabs: The cost for a taxicab ride from the airport to the Georgia World Congress Center or hotel in our block ranges between \$35.00 and \$45.00. There may be additional fees if there are multiple passengers in the vehicle. The Georgia World Congress Center is about 35 minutes from the Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport.

Shuttle: SuperShuttle, the official Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport Shuttle Service (a shared-ride shuttle transport system), will get you to your hotel.

Make your shuttle reservation now and receive a special SGIA discount.

Hotel Shuttles

Shuttle service will be offered to and from the Convention Center for the following hotels. All other hotels in the SGIA block are within walking distance of the Convention Center. Flyers will be available at the front desk of the hotels that are part of the shuttle service to the Convention Center.

Schedule:

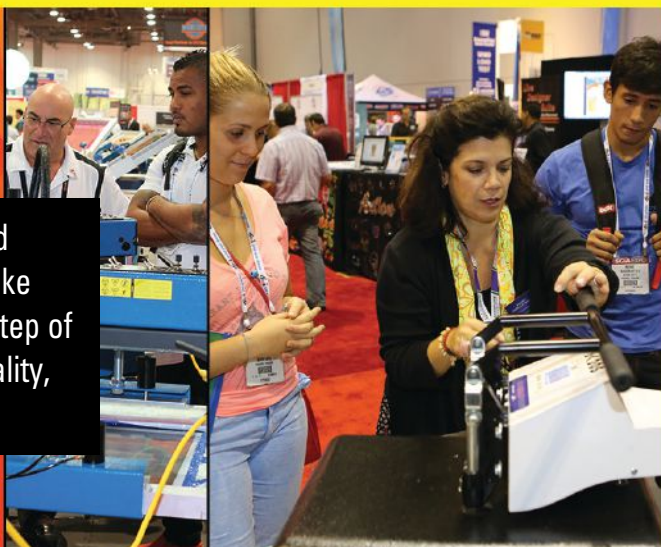
Monday, November 2	11:30 am–5:30 pm
Tuesday, November 3	7:00 am–6:30 pm
Wednesday, November 4	7:00 am–6:30 pm
Thursday, November 5	7:30 am–5:30 pm
Friday, November 6	7:30 am–5:00 pm

Shuttle service will be offered to and from the Georgia World Congress Center (GWCC) for the following hotels. All other hotels in the SGIA block are within walking distance of the Georgia World Congress Center. Flyers will be available at the front desk of the hotels that are part of the shuttle service to the GWCC.

- Atlanta Marriott Marquis
- Courtyard by Marriott Atlanta Downtown
- Doubletree by Hilton Downtown
- Hampton Inn & Suites Atlanta
- Holiday Inn Express & Suites
- Hyatt Regency Atlanta
- Ritz-Carlton Atlanta
- Westin Peachtree Plaza

* Shuttles run every 10–15 minutes.

“I came, I saw, and I learned exactly what I needed to take my business into the next step of profitability, innovation, quality, and turnaround.”



Top Technology, Top Markets, Top Tips

Expo education is the best way to explore the industry's top technology, top markets — and get the best tips for both. Choose from:

- Expo education sessions with industry experts (\$)
- Presentations in the exciting Zones presented by the people who do it the most (FREE)

And don't discount the incredible networking opportunities — you'll be at the Expo with some mix of more than 18,000 of your industry peers — making it easy to discuss your new-found imaging acumen with colleagues and potential clients. And, then you can seek out exhibitors on the show floor!

SGIA's Ticketed Expo Sessions (\$)



Wednesday and Thursday,
November 4–5

SGIA's professional-level educational sessions offer the perfect mix of

topics to meet the needs of your business. Customize your education line-up or choose from one of SGIA's educational tracks tailored for your imaging community.

Zone Presentations (FREE)



Wednesday–Friday,
November 4–6

Our sales-free Zones with educational theaters are the perfect place to ask

questions, hear about new equipment and even attempt new applications. Presentations will be updated regularly.

OSHA 10-Hour Training Workshop



Tuesday and Wednesday,
November 3–4

All employers have the responsibility to know and implement applicable

OSHA rules. With the recent changes to some of the top OSHA regulations, employers need to be sure they understand the new requirements and how they apply to their operations. Achieving compliance will keep you and your employees' safe, and save your company money. This OSHA 10-Hour training workshop is designed to explain the applicable OSHA regulations, discuss how to incorporate OSHA programs and provide clear compliance strategies. Upon successful completion of the course, participants will receive an OSHA student course completion card.

Wide-Format 101: Four Steps to Profitability (\$)



SGIA's half-day, four-part workshop is designed to help you understand today's expanding wide-format inkjet opportunities, and gain valuable knowledge

and strategies to help you make the best decisions for your business. This course's four parts are: Introduction to Wide-Format, Understanding Color Management, Mastering Finishing Technologies, Pricing & Selling Wide-Format.

“We always learn something new and exciting at the SGIA Expo. The SGIA Expo is the best.”

SGIA's Social Events

SGIA social events offer the perfect platform to talk with industry peers, compare notes with colleagues, and maybe even meet new business contacts. Come mix and mingle with your community at SGIA's Keynote and Reception Row!

Keynote Breakfast with Garrison Wynn



Wynn helps people make the jump from being great at what they do to developing the qualities it takes to be consistently chosen for the job. He gets them to understand why their products, services, or leadership styles — or those of their competitors — are selected. As he

says, "If the world agreed on what's best, everybody would choose the best and nothing else would be considered. Decision making doesn't work that way." His presentations help people become more influential regardless of circumstances. Come see him at the Expo, and get breakfast, too!

As built-in happy hours for attendees, these receptions are designed to give you networking time without the... you know, networking "schmooze."

Once you've had your fill of the first day, head over to one of the community-building receptions for seven of the core sectors of the specialty imaging industry:

- PDAA/Graphic Installers
- Latin American
- Garment Decoration
- Graphic Printers
- Canadian
- Printed Electronics & Industrial
- Pro Imaging Expo and Golf Championship

“SGIA is the best overall resource for all of my printing and graphic needs.”

SGIA's Reception Row



We think it's usually more fun (and possibly easier) to talk honestly about business while enjoying a cocktail. So when you're mind is crammed full of

information after a day of education sessions, Zone presentations and the crazy-busy Expo floor, we think it's important to find yourself mixing and mingling with your peers at SGIA's one-of-a-kind Community Receptions.

“I was blown away by this year's show. I had to attend two days to see it all!”

“Not just an Expo, but an all-out Exposition. We learned a lot and loved it like kids in a candy store.”



Specialty Printing & Imaging Technology
2015 SGIA EXPO
 Atlanta, GA • November 4–6, 2015

The Expo of Your Dreams

SGIA has brought together the ultimate leaders in specialty imaging to form the all-new "Dream Teams," where expert panelists convene to tackle the most pressing topics. Bring your questions to these one-of-a-kind sessions to get the most out of your Expo experience.

Garment Decoration Business

Dream Team

Wednesday, November 4 — 3:00 pm

In today's marketplace, operating a competitive business means making the right choices. Share your experience, discuss and learn!

Meet the Team:

Vince DiCecco, President & Owner, Your Personal Business Trainer Inc

Marshall Atkinson, COO, Visual Impressions Inc

Tom Davenport, Founder & CEO, Motion Company

Greg Kitson, Founder & President, Mind's Eye Graphics Inc

Chris Bernat, Partner, Vapor Apparel

Garment Decoration Production

Dream Team

Thursday, November 5 — 1:00 pm

Learn to maximize the production side of your garment decoration business by attending this moderated panel discussion. Bring your questions and prepare to discuss.

Meet the Team:

Johnny Shell, Vice President of Technical Services, SGIA

Charlie Taublieb, Owner, Taublieb Consulting

Lon Winters, President, GraphicElephants.com

Syd Northrup, Inkjet Division Manager, Gans Ink and Supply Co

Josh Ellsworth, General Manager, Stahls

Tiffany Rader, Co-Owner, Allusive Butterfly

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SGIA.org/garment

Prices increase October 14!



Specialty Graphic Imaging Association

10015 Main Street

Fairfax, Virginia 22031

COLOR

Pantone's Biscay Bay

A deep, mysterious teal, Pantone's Biscay Bay is one of the top colors for this fall. According to Leatrice Eiseman, executive director of the Pantone Color Institute, "The cool and confident Biscay Bay inspires thoughts of soothing, tropical waters, taking us to a place that's pleasant and inviting."

Ashley Nielsen, marketing manager for S&S Activewear (asi/84358), sheds light on the color's importance in the promotional industry and beyond. "This is a great eye-catching color that can be paired with nearly every color palette," she says. "Just because teal isn't the color of the company or organization that you're promoting doesn't mean it can't be used."

Men, women and children can wear this flattering shade effortlessly. "The color itself is fresh and bright without being over the top and allows a variety of colors to pair with it without fighting one another," Nielsen says. Depending on how adventurous your clients get, teal can pair with nearly any color. However, she adds, "generally you see it paired with something within the blue, green, black or white families."



The Ogio Ladies' Leveler (LOG119) from SanMar (asi/84863; circle 99 on Free Info Card) features a subtle micro stripe. It's made with 100% poly jersey with wicking technology and features a banded hem with ruching.



Consisting of 50% polyester/25% cotton/25% rayon for a fitted look, the Bella + Canvas Unisex Triblend Short Sleeve T-Shirt (3413) from Americana Sportswear (asi/35722; circle 101 on Free Info Card) is available in 20 colors and in sizes XS-4XL; decorated by Howard Potter, CEO of Utica, NY-based A&P Master Images (asi/702505; circle 102 on Free Info Card).



Shown in navy/aqua, the polyester Sail Tote (A234) from Vitronic (asi/93990; circle 100 on Free Info Card) includes front and slide slip pockets and measures 16" x 14" x 3 1/4".



With leatherette construction, the Lola Clutch Wallet from Gemline (asi/56070; circle 103 on Free Info Card) measures 7" x 4 1/4" x 1 1/4" and features a hand strap, snap closure, interior zippered pocket and three card slots.

Look Book

Trend Alerts

EMBELLISHMENT

Foil

Consisting of metallic paper applied by heat, foil decoration gives promotional items a distinctly “metal” look. Whether used alone or in a mixed-media design, foil is a hot way to freshen up your client’s brand. “It’s inexpensive, adds a nice sheen to your garments and is simple to do,” says Greg Gaardbo, owner of Shockwaves Promotional Apparel (asi/87144).

This trend appeals to just about all demographics. “There’s no gender,” Gaardbo says. “Males and females can appreciate foil decoration. It all depends on the clientele.”

T-shirts, tank tops and almost any other piece of apparel can be decorated using foil for a shiny, fun impression. “The possibilities are endless,” he says. Use your imagination – and ask the client which aspects of the design he or she would like to highlight most. This will help guide the embellishment process.

Foil decoration can be mixed with a lot of different processes, including discharge printing, sublimation, sequins and other multimedia designs. If your client can envision it, it can probably be done, though more complicated designs will cost more. Bring samples of foil-decorated items when meeting with customers to make a memorable impression.



The Women’s Woodland Camo Long Sleeve Top with Gold Foil Star (8519) from Rothco (asi/83708; circle 104 on Free Info Card) is made of a cotton/spandex blend with a foil star in a circle design. It’s available in sizes XS-XL.

Shockwaves Promotional Apparel (asi/87144; circle 105 on Free Info Card) decorated this tank top for a customer’s athletic line. The ribbed top features a stretchable design including foil.



This lightweight VarsiTee Slub (T17) from Boxercraft (asi/41325; circle 106 on Free Info Card) is a long-sleeve top with athletic stripes on the sleeves. Made of a cotton/poly blend, it features Next Generation Decoration transfer in silver foil.



In Your Face (asi/62494; circle 107 on Free Info Card) offers this gray short-sleeve all-over sequin-print design on the shirt front.

EMBELLISHMENT

Rainbow Patterning

A stunning current fashion trend, rainbow patterning offers a stand-out contrast to the enduring popularity of neutral apparel. This trend exists in a number of varieties, from gradient patterns and traditional stripes to knit apparel and tie-dyes.

"This trend is significantly unique because there are so many different ways in which each designer or company can achieve their own variation," says Yvette Corona, wholesale marketing representative for American Apparel (asi/35297). "From varying methods of layout and design to the colors that are used, the possibilities are really endless."

Tim Tousignant, president/owner of Kerr's Cotton Creations Inc. (asi/64510), agrees. "There's a high level of interest in bright rainbow colors for apparel," he says. In addition, tie-dye designs are especially applicable to wearable promotional items. "Tie-dyed apparel, especially shirts, makes the perfect choice for staying in tune with this high-fashion trend," Tousignant says. "They're great for a promotional campaign aiming to incorporate a solid area for decorating on the center or left-breast area of a garment while also featuring bright, bold rainbow colors." —AT

This tie-dye crewneck sweatshirt (PNARBBWCS) is from Kerr's Cotton Creations Inc. (asi/64510; circle 108 on Free Info Card); screen printed by Milwaukee-based Visual Impressions (circle 109 on Free Info Card).



This rainbow-striped tote (A97342) is from Vitronic Promotional Group (asi/93990; circle 100 on Free Info Card).



These rainbow-print side-zipper shorts (RSACS301GR) are from American Apparel (asi/35297; circle 110 on Free Info Card); screen printed by Milwaukee-based Visual Impressions (circle 109 on Free Info Card).

Look Book

Showcase: Women's Wear

Red is the new black – according to Jennifer Tsai, the designer behind Tri-Mountain's (asi/92125) Lilac Bloom line for women. “The colors we see women gravitating to are reds, pinks, magentas and corals,” she says. “These colors are bright, feminine and flattering to most skin tones. It is the color that suits every type of woman, and it can boost confidence and make one feel in control.”

Tsai points out that tailored, feminine fits are much preferred over “boxy polos and bulky sweaters of the past,” and it's critical to show up with physical samples when trying to sell women's wear.

“Details like princess seaming, narrow plackets and ¾-sleeves can all offer a slightly more feminine feeling to your average button-front shirt and polo,” says Catherine Tremblay, a merchandiser for alphabroder (asi/34063). She adds that layering pieces, such as cardigans and full-zips, are popular with female wearers, as well as active-inspired polyester pieces.

In order to sell to this market, Tremblay recommends “offering a comprehensive selection of women's styles that women can feel comfortable in.” She also cites heathered colors and deep jewel tones as top sellers.



Sail on with the Sheer Jersey ¾-Sleeve Boat Neck (6344) from American Apparel (asi/35297; circle 110 on Free Info Card). Made in the USA with 100% sheer jersey cotton, this form-fitting top includes a contoured waist; decorated by Howard Potter, CEO of Utica, NY-based A&P Master Images (asi/702505; circle 102 on Free Info Card).



Stay active with the North End Ladies' Excursion Concourse Performance Shirt (77047) from alphabroder (asi/34063; circle 89 on Free Info Card). This 100% polyester top features a moisture-wicking finish, a hidden button-down collar, adjustable cuffs and lower cuffs with a hidden zipper.



A full-zip jacket, the Anna (LB674) from Tri-Mountain (asi/92125; circle 111 on Free Info Card) is made with 60% cotton/40% polyester fleece. It features a wide rib collar, cuffs and sweep.



The Addison (LB683) two-button blazer from Tri-Mountain (asi/92125; circle 111 on Free Info Card) consists of 57% cotton/39% polyester/4% spandex and is accented with a matte satin lining inside the front panels and upper back. It also features front darts, back princess seams, two welt pockets and single-buttoned cuffs; decorated by Howard Potter, CEO of Utica, NY-based A&P Master Images (asi/702505; circle 102 on Free Info Card).

Niche: Charity-Related Gear

Why do so many people and organizations focus on planning events to raise money and awareness for a cause? “Fundraising is wonderful – it brings people together for causes they care about, and raises funds the group may not otherwise generate,” says Lee Sequeira, owner of Sparkle Plenty Designs (asi/88442). Promotional items fit right into this industry. “I really like the idea of donors having a reminder of the charity/foundation/team/event they believe in, plus it allows the wearer to show concern for issues close to their hearts,” Sequeira says.

Animal shelters, children’s charities, walks for cancer awareness and veterans’ organizations are a few examples of causes/events that could benefit from ad specialties.

When a company affiliates with a cause, it raises goodwill for the company, and it also helps the organization, as a corporate sponsor provides clout to raise more money or awareness, says Bruce Everakes, president of Wolfmark (asi/98085).

Everakes believes end-users will keep products of this nature near and dear: “It gives people the sense that they are supporting a cause that has a positive end-goal. Everyone appreciates an item that is affiliated with an organization that is trying to help people.”

Shine on with the Crystal Ribbon Cap from Sparkle Plenty Designs (asi/88442; circle 112 on Free Info Card). A stylish way to show support, it’s made with Swarovski crystals, and hot-fix designs are available from this supplier on caps and shirts in various colors.



Show your support in Dyenomite’s (asi/51185; circle 113 on Free Info Card) colorful tie-dyed all-cotton shirt, the Stock Awareness Ribbon tee (200AR). Get a colorful, textured look with this crinkle style tie dye with ribbon-dye pattern on the bottom right.



The Novelty Ties – Pink Ribbons Pink Background (PNKR-116-058) from Wolfmark (asi/98085; circle 114 on Free Info Card) are made of silk, measure 3 7/8” x 58”, and a matching women’s version is available.



Consisting of laminated, nonwoven polypropylene, the Breast Cancer Awareness Bags (LN8410) from American Ad Bag (asi/35290; circle 115 on Free Info Card) include side gusset pockets and a 12” carrying handle.



Measuring 60” x 25”, the Infinity Scarf – 80/20 Cotton Silk – Pink Ribbons on Pink (INF8020-116) from Wolfmark (asi/98085; circle 114 on Free Info Card) – is made with 80% cotton/20% silk with a tone-on-tone pink ribbon design



This Pink Ribbon Cap (5503) from Philadelphia Rapid Transit (asi/77945; circle 93 on Free Info Card) is a cotton twill, six-panel, low-crown cap with an adjustable slide strap.



PATRICIA CANGELOSI and **ALISSA TALLMAN** are contributing writers to *Stitches*.



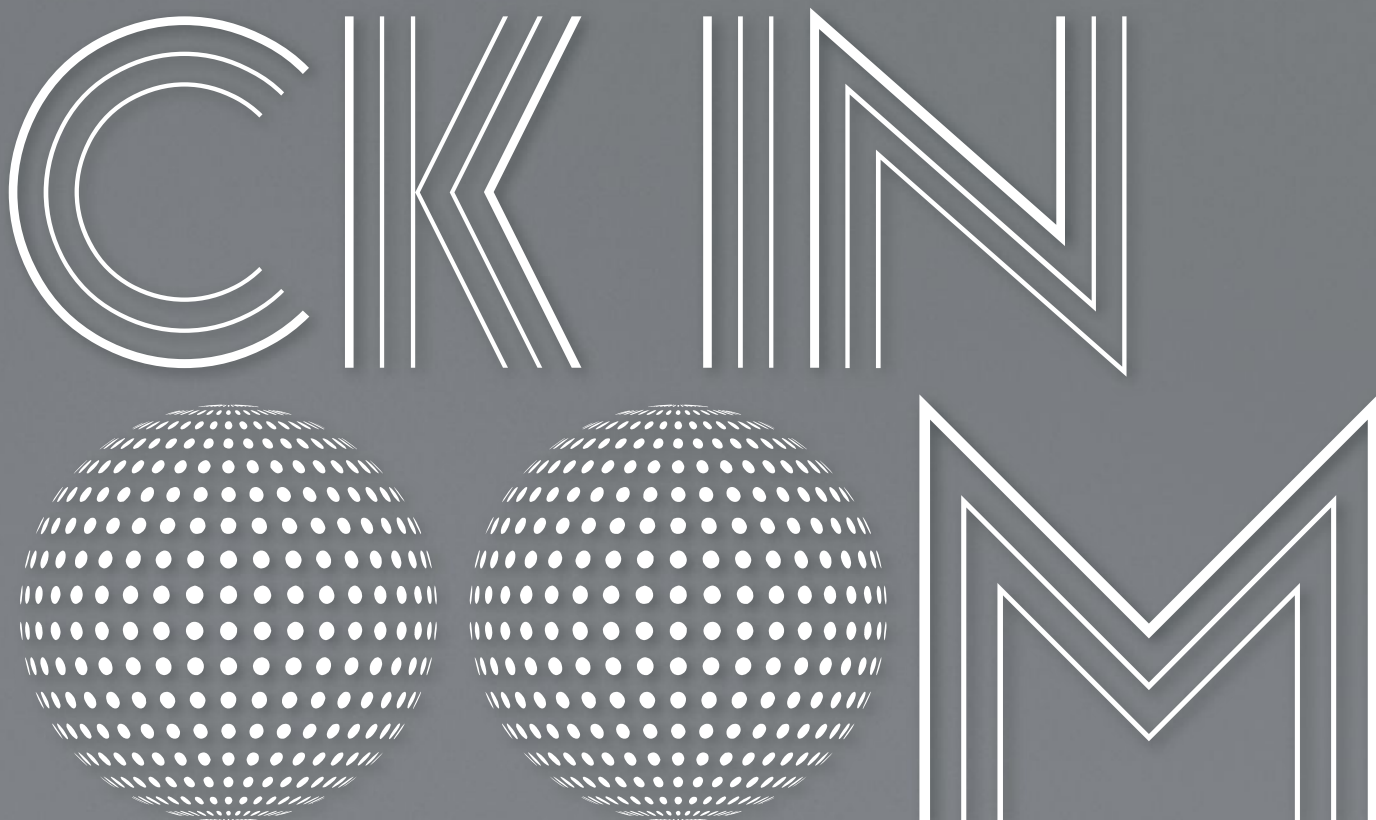
BABY

LASER FOCUS

This tailored “kirigami” vegan leather trench on Roxanne by Byron Lars stands out with its laser-cut, lace-like pattern and bold metallic belt buckle.

SALES TIP: Meet your client’s price points by suggesting faux-leather alternatives when applicable.

DECORATION TIP: Sometimes good design is about taking something away, rather than adding on. With a sharp pair of scissors and a creative plan, a decorator can manipulate even the most mundane T-shirt into something unique.



Hippie chick. Boho baby. Glam rocker. Disco darling. The many faces of the “Me Decade” get a makeover – with our talented designers and tireless decorators adding a modern twist to the shades and silhouettes of the ’70s.

By Theresa Hegel and Alexandra Steel / Photography: Mark Pricskett

The fashion world is always ripe for a comeback. While few of us are eager to break out macramé minis and powder blue leisure suits, it’s hard to deny the timeless appeal of a glamorous halter dress or the effortless chic of a flowing maxi dress. For fall, hints of the ’70s are everywhere – from lush, floral embroideries to floppy, bohemian-style hats.

In this year’s spread, veteran designer Byron Lars – honored last year with the Pratt Institute’s Visionary Award – rubs elbows with relative newcomer Pilar Briceño Cárdenas of Colombia, with each sharing a bold aesthetic that transcends our broad ’70s theme. Designers Pamela Ptak

and Conrad Booker bring a unique take on recycled fashion – Ptak breathing new life into a delicate, vintage Japanese obi and Booker finding the luxe appeal of commonplace items like metal door hinges. Industry decorators also flexed their creative muscles: Vapor Apparel (asi/93396) took on our commission to get groovy with sublimation, and embroidery expert Jane Swanzy, owner of Swan Marketing LLC, released her inner flower child on a blindingly white blouse and leggings.

Prepare to be inspired – and pick up a few sales and decorating tips – as you peruse their outstanding work.

Models: Sherita, Major Models Management, and Roxanne, Wilhelmina NY; styling: Conrad Booker; hair and makeup: Simon Group Stylists; shoes provided by Machi Footwear

HIPPIE CHIC

Byron Lars says he was inspired by “Malibu Barbie” when he created this knit maxi dress for his Byron Lars Beauty Mark line. It features a delicately embroidered net base with inset body-mapping knit panels, machine embroidery that mimics crochet at the side-front skirt seam and a gradation of appliquéd doilies on the side skirt panel.

SALES TIP: A commitment to quality is key, Lars says. Your customer might not notice all those extra touches when she purchases the garment, but once she wears it and realizes how good it makes her feel, she’s hooked, he adds.

DECORATION TIP: Flatter the figure with a sexy silhouette, but leave some mystery to keep it interesting, Lars says: “I’m always thinking about what looks best on a woman’s body.”





BOLD MOVE

Created by designer Pilar Briceño Cárdenas for her “Natural Folk” collection, this bright, bold outfit on Sherita was inspired by the ancestral iconography of her native Colombia. The dye-sublimation patterns on the faux fur-lined vest and cropped pants were handmade by Cárdenas.

SALES TIP: Pique a client’s interest with creative full-color, all-over prints. “Designers can translate whatever they want to a textile,” Cárdenas says.

DECORATION TIP: Dye sublimation allows designers to create handmade patterns in a modern, cost-effective way – digitally transferring their vision onto fabric. “The quality of colors and definition that you can find in sublimation inks are really amazing, so don’t be shy when choosing your palette of colors,” Cárdenas says.



EMBELLISHED TRUTH

Designer Byron Lars was inspired by an “African princess” when he embellished this fit and flare dress. It features a hand-beaded front neck with faceted 3-D flowers, white faux-raffia fringe at the decollate, a shredded print chiffon appliqué on the front bodice, machine embroidery in rayon thread on the front skirt panel, swirling sequin embroidery on the black net side-skirt panel and a hand-beaded side front seam. A light blue 100% pashmina wool scarf (PASH-145-050) from Wolfmark (asi/98085; circle 114 on Free Info Card) completes the look.

SALES TIP: Pashminas work for an array of markets, says Jason Harttert, digital marketing director at Wolfmark. They’re a versatile luxury item, perfect for corporate gifts, resorts, college alumni and charity events.

DECORATION TIP: A little luxury goes a long way. “A lot of the fabric we buy in New York has to be brought back down with stuff from China, but we structure it in a way to look more expensive than it is. I try to keep things as reasonable as possible on the sourcing end, but sometimes you just have to go for it,” Lars says.



FLOWER POWER

Taking inspiration from trippy music videos, designers at Vapor Apparel (asi/93396; circle 117 on Free Info Card) sublimated a blindingly bright lotus flower pattern onto the supplier's spun polyester fashion fit V-dress (\$290WH), echoing the design on Cherokee luxe low-rise scrubs (1066) from Pella Scrubs, a division of Pella Products Inc. (asi/76810; circle 116 on Free Info Card). The retail wide-brim hat was embellished by Conrad Booker.

SALES TIP: Mock-up a quick virtual sample of a garment bearing your client's logo to help seal the deal. A picture is worth a thousand words.

DECORATION TIP: Choose design location carefully when sublimating to avoid crease marks. They're prone to occur on areas that don't lie flat in a heat press, particularly in the underarm area.

A RARE VINTAGE

This couture pantsuit is constructed from a vintage 70-year-old silk embroidered obi that designer Pamela Ptak purchased a decade ago from a fifth-generation Japanese antiques dealer. “These prized obis are highly decorated on both sides, end to end,” says Ptak, founder of the Arts and Fashion Institute in Riegelsville, PA. “I designed it to use every inch.” The suit is paired with a kimono coat of dotted organza, slit for movement and embellished with enameled jewels.

SALES TIP: Not every garment is constructed of vintage silk embroidery, but every piece has a story behind it. Be sure to have talking points prepared to help pitch higher-end pieces to clients.

DECORATION TIP: Use an under-layer of silk organza to add strength and draw wearing stress away from delicate fabrics like silk embroidery, Ptak says. It’s a technique she learned when working at Chado Ralph Rucci on Rucci’s Paris Haute Couture collection.

MIRROR IMAGE

Philadelphia-based designer Conrad Booker caught disco fever with his sheer gold lace halter dress with a high front slit. The dress is embellished with irregular rectangles of mirrored Lucite. He added metal door hinges to the belt and heels for a modern twist; an animal-print purse and a faux “Afro puff” headpiece top off the ensemble.

SALES TIP: Don’t forget accessories, like purses and belts, when putting together an apparel solution for clients. They help unify a look and can be a great opportunity to upsell.

DECORATING TIP: Look beyond an item’s intended use; with an artist’s eye, everyday items like door hinges or soda straws can be repurposed and reimagined into something chic and wearable.



WHITE ON

Jane Swanzy, owner of Houston-based Swan Marketing LLC (circle 92 on Free Info Card), decorated these cotton-spandex jersey yoga pants (8300) from American Apparel (asi/35297; circle 110 on Free Info Card) and long-sleeved jewel neck blouse (2408) from Executive Apparel (asi/53418; circle 118 on Free Info Card) using a floral motif from Urban Threads and a handful of rhinestones for extra sparkle. Patent leather stiletto boots embellished by Conrad Booker complete the look.

SALES TIP: Pitch nontraditional design locations, like the front leg of pants, to freshen up a client's stale logo.

DECORATION TIP: Use polyester thread, rather than a cotton blend, when embroidering flimsier, unstructured fabric, Swanzy says.



BEHIND THE FASHION

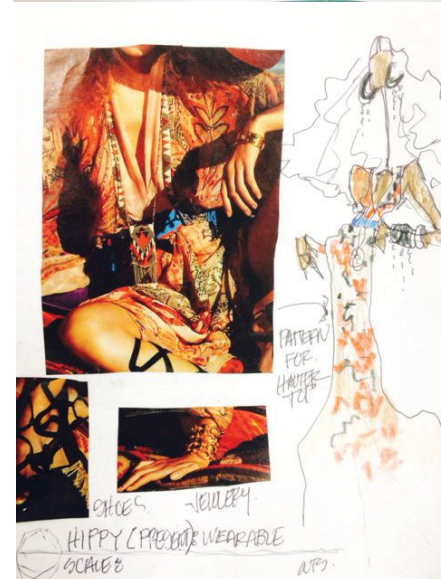
Philadelphia-based artist Conrad Booker lived through the '70s, so when *Stitches* approached him with the idea for a photoshoot revisiting the iconic looks of that decade – from the flowing bohemian and hippie styles of its early years to the glitz and glam of the disco era – his initial reaction was: “Oh, let’s not do that again.”

It only took a few moments for his creative mind to run with the concept, however. For each '70s theme, Booker created a literal – but not “costumey” – translation of the look and a companion piece that incorporated '70s flavors – perhaps a wide-brimmed hat or a loosely tied headscarf – into a more modern palette. “I was thinking about how we could put a new spin on the '70s for the people who have lived through it, but then also respect the fact that there’s a young demographic that hasn’t lived through it and might be experiencing the decade’s styles for the first time,” Booker says.

Booker developed concept sketches for eight distinct looks, and *Stitches* staff sought out designer pieces that matched his vision, like the gorgeous, hippie-hot maxi dress from Byron Lars’ Spring 2015 collection or the bold, polychromatic vest and paisley pants, designed by Pilar Briceño Cárdenas and featured in Epson’s “Digital Couture” show during New York Fashion Week earlier this year. We also commissioned pieces from industry decorators, asking embroiderer Jane Swanzy, owner of Houston-based Swan Marketing LLC, to add floral embellishments to a white blouse and leggings, and the groovy gurus at Vapor Apparel (asi/93396) to sublimate a splashy, psychedelic pattern onto a tunic and loose pants.



For his own contribution to the shoot, Booker drew inspiration from the decadent disco dancers of Studio 54 and an image he dug up of Blondie frontwoman Debbie Harry in an all-gold pantsuit. “I gave it a modern twist with the materials and hardware overlaying the outfit,”

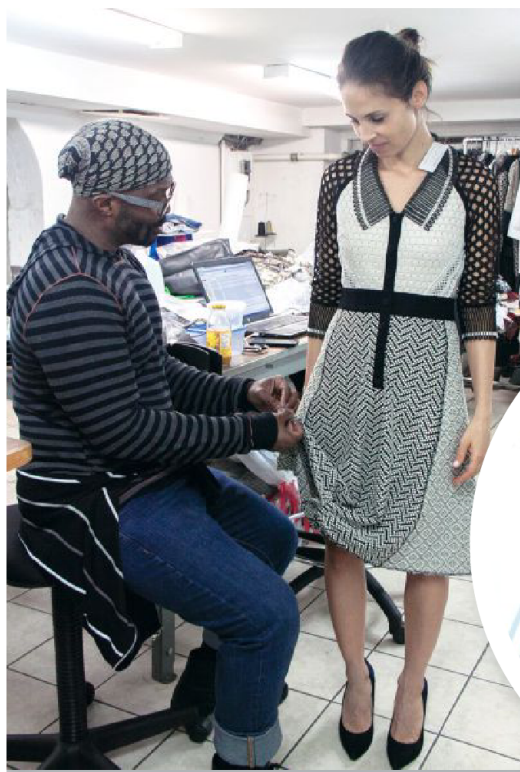
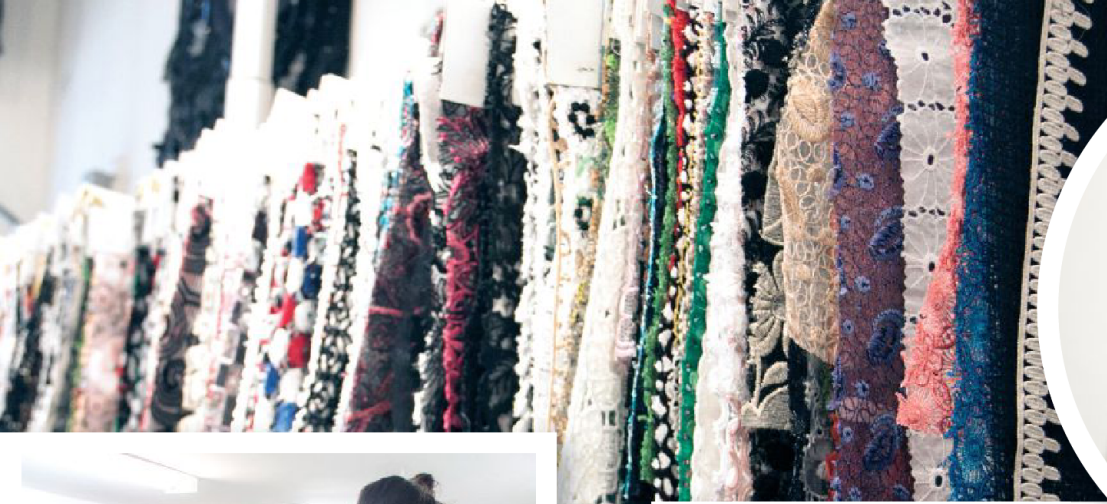


he adds. His gold lace gown shimmers with dozens of Lucite mirror fragments; repurposed door hinges on the wide belt and stiletto heels give the look a hard edge. “I really like to challenge my thinking and look at ready-made, everyday elements in an artful way,” Booker says.



Tag along with two super-busy apparel designers to learn how they conceptualize and churn out stunning embellished work – couture, movie sets, high-end retail stores and more.

A DAY IN THE DESIGN



LIFE OF A SEWER

Ever wonder what a fashion designer does all day? Or a Hollywood costume designer? It's not all glamorous runway shows and hobnobbing with celebrities. Just as in any business, designers spend many of their working hours meeting, planning and figuring out logistics. To get a glimpse of the inner workings of the fashion world, *Stitches* teamed up with two very different designers on opposite coasts of the U.S.: In New York, we shadowed veteran designer Byron Lars as he planned out his whimsical, heavily embellished holiday collection; and in Los Angeles, we followed costume designer Camille Jumelle while she pieced together the wardrobe for an independent movie.

DAY IN THE LIFE: BYRON LARS

An expert at pattern-mixing and what he calls “embroidery problem-solving,” veteran fashion designer Byron Lars creates flattering garments with a woman’s figure in mind.

By Theresa Hegel / Photography: Mariana Leung

It’s a crisp, spring morning in the middle of April, but you wouldn’t know it in the textile agent’s office in the heart of Manhattan’s Garment District, where fashion designer Byron Lars perches on a utilitarian rolling chair, sifting through a rack of sumptuous Indian embroidery samples, mentally piecing together his upcoming holiday collection. Lars’ casual style – a fitted hoodie in dark stripes with subtle burnt orange piping, cuffed jeans, combat boots and a black paisley bandanna – is in stark contrast to the sparkling sea of sequins and stones at his fingertips, but his sure hands never falter, plucking an ivory ribbon, strung accordion-style with crystalline beads from the dazzling array.

“This is really great,” he says, turning to James Molina, owner of Tex Appeal Inc. “How much is this one, James? Do you have it in black with jet beads?”

As Molina checks on price and availability, Lars explains that the ribbons would be the perfect addition to a black dress he’s planning – a series of necklace-like embellishments embroidered together into a kicky cocktail creation.

Lars pulls another header from the rack: a glistening field of bugle beads, sewn together in a chevron pattern. He gently tugs at the silk organza backing. “It would be on a very tight shirt,” he muses. “This feels very rigid, no stretch. That’s the thing that scares me about it.”

“Beads are always fragile,” Molina agrees. But Lars shakes off the hesitation, ordering a 24” sample of the beading, three rows wide – all in black – switching the base fabric to a cheaper polyester organza. The beaded fabric won’t be touching the skin on the finished garment if it goes into production, so there’s no benefit to the added cost of a luxury fabric. “If it’s going to be real, it’s going to be on poly organza,” he adds.

“That’s just a waste of silk.”

Over the course of half an hour, Lars orders several other embellishments, including a length of rubberized chain trim atop leather. “Just the idea of rubberized chain makes me want to rubberize everything,” Lars says with a grin. Next to him, stylish and efficient in a black-and-white dress, fishnets and green-rimmed glasses, his longtime assistant, Sheila Gray, writes up purchase orders and snaps quick smartphone pics of headers he’s interested in, but not yet ready to buy.

“I think that will do it for us today,” Lars says, and the pair head across the hall of the office building on West 37th Street – right into the Byron Lars Beauty Mark showroom – to drop off some goods and take a quick break before their next vendor appointment. As he waits, Lars looks over garments from his spring 2015 collection and ponders the role embroidery techniques play in his work. “We do quite a bit of embroidery, but I don’t usually approach it like that,” he says. “A lot of it is more like embroidery problem-solving.” He points to a black taffeta trench that morphs mid-way into a gray sweater coat. Lars used embroidery to soften the fabric transition, so there wouldn’t be a visible seam on the piece.

He grabs another spring garment from the rack: a chic, fitted jacket that includes “everything and the kitchen sink.” Lars pulled inspiration from some multicolored textural Guatemalan fabric he found in China, which he paired with a slightly more muted Italian textile for the sleeve. “The two just spoke together,” he says. He added various trimmings and embellishments along the way, including hand-stitched sequins and a column of tiny worry dolls parallel to the buttons. The inner lining features a machine-embroidered Mexican sugar skull: “It’s the kind of thing when you own some-

thing and you open it, even though you’re the only one who knows it’s there, it just makes it that much more special to you.” Lars also used machine embroidery to create some elastic smocking to make the jacket’s narrow fit less restrictive.

Considered piece by piece, the jacket shouldn’t work, but it’s more than the sum of its parts: transcending the potential for gaudiness to become classy and elegant. “That was something I learned a long time ago,” Lars says. “To quiet garments down, you have to make them super-busy, so your eye doesn’t know where to go and it almost becomes solid activity. People say, ‘You need a focal point.’ And I’m like, ‘No, I need so many focal points that it becomes a solid carpet.’”

Blast From the Past

At 10:49 a.m., it’s off to the next vendor meeting, just down the hall from the showroom. Like Tex Appeal next door, the Textile Portfolio Co. is small, but full of finery. The walls are lined with clothing racks, three deep, hung with rich fabric samples – lace, sequins, embroidery, eyelet, jacquard and more. Textile agent Elayne Aschkenes greets Lars and Gray at the door, wearing a pair of metallic-toned oxfords that Gray immediately covets. “Everybody likes these,” Aschkenes says. “I got them in Paris.

BYRON LARS’ TIMELINE

10 a.m.	Meeting at Tex Appeal Inc.
10:49 a.m.	Meeting at Textile Portfolio Co.
11:30 a.m.	A quick walk to the studio
12:28 p.m.	Lunch while checking email
2:06 p.m.	Choosing fabrics for his holiday collection
4 p.m.	Appointment with a fit model
6 p.m.	Finishing work for the day



Each season, fashion designer Byron Lars covers a large corkboard with a slew of fabric swatches, creating an easy reference and inspiration point as he pieces together his collection.

They weren't even expensive."

Lars and Gray apologize for having set up their appointment with Aschkenes at the last minute, but she waves them off. "I love you guys. You're like my easy customers. You help yourselves."

Lars heads to one of the clothing racks and begins pulling samples onto the broad, black table in the center of the room: sequined "O" shapes in white, black, silver and gold; a gold and black sequined leopard pattern; a double flower appliqué in black; a wisp of black lace made of a "spongy tech fabric."

At 11:09 a.m., a bald man walking down the hall outside the Textile Portfolio Co. does a double-take, then knocks on the glass-front doors. Aschkenes lets him in, and the man heads straight for Lars: "You're Byron Lars, aren't you? You're terrific," he gushes. "Years ago, you had that blouse. You were hot for blouses."

Turns out, the man used to be a neighbor of Lars' previous assistant. They spend a few minutes reminiscing, as Gray writes up purchase orders, consulting with Aschkenes to ensure their custom requests won't be misinterpreted by the factories in China that produce the textiles.

By 11:30 a.m., Lars is ready to make the trek to his studio on the east side of 37th Street. The studio, he says, "is always a mess," but also the place "where we make real decisions and talk about the next place to take things." The encounter with the man from his past has put Lars in a contemplative mood. As he drags a zebra-print roller bag down the bustling street, past tourists lounging at outdoor tables set up on Broadway — "Now that Broadway's a park, you scarcely ever have to wait for a light" — across Fifth Avenue, past food carts and



Lars and his longtime assistant Sheila Gray pick through embroidery and beading samples at Tex Appeal Inc., seeking the perfect embellishments for Lars' holiday collection.

men in gray overalls squeegeeing picture windows, he tells his origin story. Lars got into fashion in high school, when he coveted a pair of designer pants that were out of his financial reach. He asked a friend who sewed to make them, but she declined, offering instead to teach him how to sew, so he could make the pants himself. The pants were a hit, and he started designing and sewing his classmates' prom dresses.

When he graduated, Lars moved from northern California to New York to study at the Fashion Institute of Technology, launching his first collection in 1991. "I made the samples myself out of my apartment," he recalls, as he dodges passersby, squeezed into a narrow, scaffolding-covered sidewalk. "I carried them on my back and took them to stores." Henri Bendel, an upscale women's specialty store on Fifth Avenue, was the first to order his clothing, giving Lars the chance for a window display. He borrowed money from his grandfather to fulfill that first shipment. Orders from stores like Bergdorf Goodman and Saks Fifth Avenue followed, launching Lars into the spotlight.

Back in the Studio

At 11:52 a.m., Lars steps into an unassuming beige building, a few doors down from the Polish Consulate, and heads down a dark, rickety staircase. "The only thing missing from this entrance is a guy on the other side with chloroform," Lars jokes, before unlocking the door to his small studio. Paperwork and fabric are piled high on several long tables in the center of the narrow room. The walls are lined with metal shelves; a few sewing machines sit at the far end. Near the door, a large corkboard is draped in the tones and textures of Lars' Fall 2015 collection: here a scrap of deep blue lace butts against a bold black-and-white houndstooth print, there a gold appliqué daisy is pinned over a subdued blue and gray plaid.

Lars sweeps a bag of walnuts and a few stray ketchup packets from a table, replacing them with a handful of gold findings: swooping birds, fluttering insects and various mechanical gears. The insects and birds will be connected to the gears, perhaps with elastic thread to create movement; and the gears will be arranged over

“To quiet garments down, you have to make them super-busy, so your eye doesn't know where to go and it almost becomes solid activity.”

Byron Lars, fashion designer

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- * Studied at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York
- * First collection came out in 1991
- * Designed a limited-edition line of couture Barbies for Mattel
- * Clothing has been sold in Saks Fifth Avenue, Bloomingdale's, Bergdorf Goodman, Neiman Marcus and over 100 specialty stores
- * First Lady Michelle Obama has worn several of his dresses
- * 2014 recipient of the Pratt Institute Fashion Visionary Award

a sheer heart shape on a basic black sheath dress. “The ultimate idea of this is that the heart is the motor and these natural elements get animated by that,” Lars says.

Lars doesn't do much sketching or sewing while he's in New York. “I have a vague idea of everything in a collection, then work it all out in China,” he says. Lars spends three months of the year in Shenzhen, developing catalog samples and overseeing production. Creating samples at the factory where the clothing will be produced helps to keep costs down and ground Lars' “pie in the sky” concepts. “We get the factory involved in problem-solving,” he says. Because the holiday collection is on a tighter development

schedule than the fall and spring seasons, Lars does more of the planning in New York. The mechanized heart dress, for example, will be mocked at his New York studio and sent with a pattern to the factory in China. “The schedule is too aggressive,” Lars says.

“At the end of the day what my customer has come to appreciate are the touches that really make them look better.”

Byron Lars, fashion designer

schedule than the fall and spring seasons, Lars does more of the planning in New York. The mechanized heart dress, for example, will be mocked at his New York studio and sent with a pattern to the factory in China. “The schedule is too aggressive,” Lars says.

At 12:28 p.m., Lars and Gray sit down to lunch in the studio, sipping green smoothies and munching salads. Lars flips open his laptop to check his emails and “put out fires.” Gray sits opposite him, typing away on her own laptop. Lars starts to ask her a question, but she shushes him: “Hold on,

The Messy Art of Fabric Mixing

At 2:06 p.m., Lars abandons his email and heads over to a heap of swatches he's considering for the holiday collection. The mess, he says, is part of his fabric-mixing process. He sees which patterns and textures play off each other, and “there's no way for it to be

orderly.” Lars picks up a strip of ivory and gold floral lace, wincing: “This is hideous. I hope I didn't buy it.” Then, he tilts his head. “It would be nice if I dyed it for spring.”

He opens a yellow DHL envelope and unpacks some headers: knit fabrics in shades of pink, orange, black and white with of metallic thread. The samples are from a Turkish mill Lars discovered. “Their prices are really great, and the quality is really great,” he says. “That's a nice combination.”

At 4 p.m., Carolina Rommel, a leggy, brunette fit model arrives at the studio. Lars

pulls out a sparkly gray sweater dress with subtle striping that just arrived back from the factory. Yanking at the zipper, he frowns: “I can't even unzip this, so that's a problem.” Once the zipper unsticks and Rommel is dressed, Lars examines her from all angles, tugging at the hem. He points to few flaws in the fabric, where the stripes are uneven. “That's something to watch for,” Lars says. If the fabric has enough similar flaws scattered throughout the run, it could affect garment cost and production. As Lars notes areas where the fit needs to be tweaked, Gray shoots video of the session, recording Lars' notes so he can relay instructions to China.

Another issue Lars sees is that the zipper is ever-so-slightly too long, which could cause discomfort and fit issues for wearers. For Lars, the underlying structure and fit of his garments is just as important as the embellishments on the surface. “At the end of the day what my customer has come to appreciate are the touches that really make them look better,” he says. His dresses are a clever interplay of sexiness and modesty. That means enhancing and supporting the bust and rounding out the hips, but also including a nude lining to mask the sheer parts of a garment. Even the lining is thoughtfully executed: scalloped at the bottom to soften and conceal its existence, with a layer of taupe or black netting over a rose-toned base. “It's much more flattering than flesh-toned lining. That doesn't look like real skin. It looks like a Barbie doll under there,” he says, adding: “Not that there's anything wrong with Barbie.” After all, Lars once designed a line of limited-edition couture outfits for Mattel's iconic fashion doll.

By 6 p.m., Lars is done for the day, a few steps closer to finishing his holiday collection – he wants it to be ready by the end of September. There's a lot of work to be done before the dresses make the leap from his mind to a store hanger, but Lars isn't too worried. “We're just going to go full throttle and hope they finish the bridge before we get to the chasm,” he says with a laugh.

THERESA HEGEL is a senior staff writer for *Stitches*. Contact: thegel@asicentral.com; follow her on Twitter at @TheresaHegel.

DAY IN THE LIFE: CAMILLE JUMELLE

When she's not designing custom beaded gowns for red-carpet clients, Camille Jumelle brings her keen eye for detail to movie sets – putting together realistic, thoughtful costumes for independent films.

By Carlo Panno / Photography: Kimberly Metz

The residential parts of North Hollywood are solid and no-nonsense, the streets filled with postwar middle-class homes with kids playing in their yards and the hum of backyard pool filters filling the air. But on a busy street two blocks from the Ventura Freeway, in costumer Camille Jumelle's condo, it's Paris. The building's deceptively unexceptional entryway leads to an atrium courtyard with a fountain, and Jumelle's *pied-à-terre* is an oasis of quiet elegance with high ceilings and dusty-rose walls, recessed indirect lighting, period furniture and specialized art. One half expects Coco Chanel to come around a corner smoking a Gauloises and offering you a flute of Veuve Clicquot.

Jumelle, followed by her dogs Coco and Tiffany, glides through the condo, which is in mid remodel. The white-on-white bedroom and extensive in-transition wardrobe area with shoe storage and vanity with light-haloed mirror contrasts with the stainless-steel-and-black-granite kitchen where she pours coffee.

"How I live represents how I treat my work," she explains. "To a level of beauty, of class, of sophistication. Well-appointedness. That's what people expect from my work. When a director of a low-budget project says 'Just go get it at Target,' it's a dagger in my heart. Yes, I get that you just want me to get it at Target, but not everything there is going to work. Once you show people the difference, they like it, and they'll always opt for the better."

It's also how she operates when she designs pieces for her own fashion line, Couture Junkie, or when she creates custom gowns on commission. "I'm used to doing red carpet gowns for the Oscars,"



For Camille Jumelle, there's a lot more to being a costume designer than picking a pretty outfit for an actor. When she works on a film, she reads the script at least four times to get a better sense of the characters and determine sartorial needs.



Jumelle sorts through Western outfits at the United American Costume Co. in North Hollywood. She's on the hunt for the perfect cowboy costume for the independent film *Po*.

she says. "What women are looking for in their gowns is something that no one else is going to have. My gowns can start at \$3,000 for a sheath dress and go all the way up to \$100,000, depending on the beading. Some of the beaders I work with come from [the house of] Lesage in France. These women are artisans, and they can take a fabric panel and put it on a rack, and it's like needlepoint with beading. It's an art form."

Ride 'Em, Cowboy

Today, however, Jumelle is assembling a cowboy costume. Her first stop of the day is to the United American Costume Co. Also in North Hollywood, in a light-industrial building near some railroad tracks, it specializes in Western and turn-of-the-century costumes. "The man who founded it did all the big Westerns with John Wayne and John Ford. He and his daughter pride themselves on the history of costumes and the history of filmmaking," Jumelle says.

The history of filmmaking is on display starting at the front door at United American Costume, with props in glass display cases and full-size movie posters framed on the walls, many of them autographed. The small entry leads to large warehouse-like rooms, where costumes hang in racks that stretch up to the ceiling 20 feet above.

"You know where the cowboy stuff is," a United American employee says, walking Jumelle past a worktable filled with sewing equipment. "You have your cowboy vests, you have your rough shirts and your pants,

and your boots. Everything you need is here at your fingertips. Let me get you a rack to carry stuff and a ladder."

"I love it here because everything is organized," Jumelle says. "Everything is clean, and very detailed." Signs on a nearby rack say "Loincloths, Wool," "Loincloths, Leather/Suede," and "Indian Tunics." One large rack marked "Doubles and Triples" holds identical shirts and pants in sets of two and three for backup in case of on-set mishaps.

"The reason things cost more is because of the oil, dirt, the time it takes to distress something. That's what brings the character to the garment and to the actor. I'm looking for a realistic costume. I usually have a notebook with the actor's sizes," Jumelle says, consulting it. "He's 6'4", 176 pounds, his waist is 34" but he likes it to be between a 33" and a 34". Size 11-1/2 shoe. He told me if I go to an 11 it's too tight. I always ask an actor what their hair color is and their complexion is. It helps me figure out what will look good on them."

The cowboy costume is for actor Andrew Bowen, who plays multiple roles in *Po*, an independent movie in production. "What I try to do is look at a shirt, and picture a dark-haired good-looking gentleman, and what's going to make him pop on screen. I want him to be vivid," she says, flipping through a rack of well-worn cowboy shirts. "If I used a muted color like this beige thing, I don't think it would pop as much. I can make this pop with a vest. I also try not to get itchy fabrics for my actors if at all possible – they're in it for

CAMILLE JUMELLE'S TIMELINE

- 10 a.m. Head to United American Costume Co. to put together a cowboy costume for the movie *Po*.
- 1 p.m. Move on to the *Po* shoot at Avenue Six Studios in Van Nuys, a no-frills working studio for independent films, commercials and audience-participation infomercials.
- 3 p.m. Arrive at Studio Services office of Bloomingdale's in Sherman Oaks Fashion Square. This branch of the department store offers entertainment-industry costumers professional services including show-specific billing and delivery.
- 4:30 p.m. Jumelle heads home after selecting the final costumes for the day.

eight or 10 hours at a time. I think of that. Sometimes it can't be helped to be true to the period, so I'll either back it or line it.

"A good costume designer will bring things to an actor and a director that they haven't even thought of. I did a detective movie, and the first thing I asked my actors was, 'Where are you going to pack your gun?' That's going to alter how I'm going to dress them. A good actor appreciates that. I'll read a script four or five times, so I get acclimated to the characters, and I'm tabulating what it's going to cost me. I may just use the best and fudge what's underneath it, which kills me, but sometimes you can't achieve that. I like when an actor knows that I went to the ends of the earth for them, to make them happy. If you feel right in your clothes, you're going to perform better."

Quiet on the Set

After two hours assembling the perfect cowboy outfit – shirt, vest, pants, belt, hat, duster coat – Jumelle takes it to the *Po* set in nearby Van Nuys, arriving just as the crew is breaking for lunch. The production caterers have laid out a feast, with large beef ribs grilling on a barbecue and

a buffet of salads, hamburgers, vegetarian lasagna, side dishes, desserts, bottled waters and soft drinks.

Jumelle greets writer-director John Asher, then heads off to her colleagues in the costume trailer to hand over the cowboy outfit. Asher's film is about a single father raising an autistic son on his own. The boy spends much of the movie in an imaginary place, called the "Land of Color," where he interacts with several characters – a pirate, a cowboy, a knight, an astronaut – all played by the same actor. "A lot of people aren't sure if autistic kids have typical behavior, but in their heads, [autistic kids] don't know if they're typical or not. They're just enjoying life," Asher says. The characters *Po* meets, he adds, need to look authentic and not in a "cheesy way or a cheap way."

The bulk of the costume budget is going into those costumes worn in the Land of Color. "It's all about subtleties, in everything from production design to costume design," Asher says. "Camille and I had a discussion ahead of time, and we decided on earth tones for the real-life stuff. That way, when you go to the Land of Color, things will pop. By design. If you were to look at everybody's wardrobe right now, it's mostly earth tones."

Studio Services

As the cast and crew get ready to shoot the first scene after lunch, Jumelle jets off to buy a new wardrobe at Bloomingdale's in Sherman Oaks, near Van Nuys, for later scenes in the movie. This suburban Bloomingdale's has a separate, unmarked street entrance for Studio Services. Jumelle rings a doorbell and is buzzed in, and welcomed by the staff. The walls are covered in ribbed dark gray cloth, with a pod coffee machine near a closet for jackets and tote bags, so studio buyers can travel light. Above a couch is a collection of framed original designer sketches, in bright splashes of color, with fabric swatches attached. A large Bob Mackie signature adorns a sketch of a gown worn by Cher.

Affixing a small, but noticeable "Studio Services" sticker to her black top – "This

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- ✱ Studied at Parsons School of Design and the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York
- ✱ Member of the Costume Designers Guild
- ✱ Member of the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences
- ✱ Film credits include *The Prince* and *Psycho Beach Party*
- ✱ Celebrities have worn her gowns on the red carpet of many awards shows, including the Golden Globes and the Academy Awards.

way I won't get approached by salespeople" – Jumelle spends the next 90 minutes walking the clothing sections, seeking outfits for unshot scenes in *Po*. She's careful to match the colors to the earth tone palette and the characters, rejecting a flowered cotton nightgown as "too cute for a mother, this is for a teenager" and

door and back on the street, Jumelle reflects on the duality of being a costumer and a costume designer.

"My background is to create and make things. I know where to get things dyed, where to get things cut. I know how to get things done for the industry. Little things add up to a lot. It's great to be

“When a director of a low-budget project says, ‘Just go get it at Target,’ it’s a dagger in my heart.”

Camille Jumelle, costume designer

riffling through the bargain racks for hidden treasures that can catch the eye and keep the costume budget down.

After selecting several pieces, Jumelle takes them back to the office, through a doorway marked with a discreet "Studio Services" sign near the ceiling, and hands them to a clerk.

"Is this for *Po*?" the clerk asks, sizing up the clothes.

"Yes, *Po*, you're right," Jumelle replies, flipping through envelopes in a small wire rack. The envelopes bear the names of soap operas, episodic dramas, sitcoms and studios. "Is there anything for me in here?"

"I don't think so," the clerk says, removing the antitheft tags from the clothes. She gestures to a register: "You need these right now?"

"No, in a couple of days."

"There'll be a bill in there for you next time then," the clerk smiles.

Leaving the store through the unmarked

able to go into a store and do a *Po*. It's a whole other thing when you're creating it," Jumelle says. "Clothes can look new if it's for a magazine, but if you're doing a movie, everyone is supposed to think these clothes are of that person you're seeing on the screen. If they're not distressed properly, if they don't look worn, you just did a major disservice to yourself as a costume designer, but also to your director. If you're looking at a war movie and the guys are supposed to be in the trenches but they look clean, would you believe they were really in the trenches? A lot of girls call themselves 'stylists,' and that's what they are. They're not costume designers. They think that all it is is picking up a pretty shirt and putting it on somebody.

"But it's so much more than that. My job is to make people comfortable in who they're portraying," she says.

CARLO PANNO is a contributing writer for *Stitches*.



Sales

ALL TOGETHER NOW

Double the sales and
twice the versatility?
Just look to the
rising demand for
layered looks.

By Sara Lavenduski

Consider the dedicated volunteer, who welcomes visitors to the Chamber of Commerce's annual 5K, while alternately freezing or roasting, even both in a single day. One year, it's in the upper 70s with a baking sun; the next, the thermometer hovers in the low 40s. Surely that basic cotton T-shirt giveaway won't get the job done.

The best solution? A functional outfit which consists of a crew-neck tee as a base layer, a quarter-zip mid-layer and a water-resistant, hooded shell layer, all branded with the event and Chamber logos on the back and left chest. Wearers get much-needed versatility with the changing temperatures by the year – even by the hour.

The phenomenon at work is called layering, and it's earning the spotlight precisely for this kind of application – granting the wishes of wearers who want versatility, flexibility, comfort and freedom of movement for different settings and activities. “The layered style of dress involves multiple garments worn at the same time,” says Danny Tsai, vice president of merchandising at Tri-Mountain (asi/92125). “It allows the wearer to make adjustments based on changes in temperature, weather and activity.”

Suppliers, recognizing the value and demand for layered items, now offer myriad options, including long-sleeve tees, quarter-zips, vests and soft-shells. “People want comfort and freedom of movement, and layering offers that,” says Gina Barreca, director of marketing at Vantage Apparel (asi/93390). “You can go with a more formal look, like a quilted vest under a dress coat, or more casual and activewear-inspired, such as performance tees paired with quarter-zips.”

In the promotional space, layered programs offer an intrinsic benefit: Several complementary pieces, each one embellished with the client's logo, have the potential to increase impressions tremendously.

By Popular Demand

Anytime one garment is worn on top of another, it can be considered layering. But the notion as it applies to industry is something more purposeful: pairing garments that give the wearer flexibility, no matter the situation.

Elson Yeung, director of private label design & merchandising at alphabroder (asi/34063), sees the most practical applications in “functional layering.” “Layering for warmth includes fleece and insulated pieces,” he explains, “whereas layering for climates involves water-resistant or waterproof outer layers. We've seen huge momentum behind layering as three-piece suits have resurfaced, and pro golfers regularly layer on the course.”

Trends in retail strongly influence promotional styles, so it makes sense that this also includes apparel suitable for layering. “Layering is big at retail because it caters to different tem-

peratures, climate changes and unpredictable weather,” Barreca says. “If it's going to warm up, you want items that will take you through the day. People want thin, lightweight fabrics so they can be worn comfortably together.”

Lest it's tempting to compartmentalize layering as a look only suitable for outdoor applications, consider professional layering for the office. “Workplaces now welcome a business casual style, as opposed to requiring suits and ties,” says Carla Dabiero, account executive at Lasting Impressions (asi/249926). “The right layered look allows the wearer to look professional, yet keeps them stylish and comfortable.”

In addition to style, versatility and comfort, layered branded items add yet another advantage: increased impressions with multiple logo locations. “We look at layering as an opportunity to add some fashionable choices for our customers,” says Ashley Mauldin, key account executive/outside sales at The Icebox (asi/229395). “We're giving them additional opportunities to promote their brand.”

“Layering is going to play a role in almost every presentation we do this year.”

Gina Barreca, Vantage Apparel (asi/93390)

Take Your Pick

An ideal layering program features functional pieces that complement each other, whether it's for booth staff at an indoor tradeshow or an outdoor 5K. “A good base layer, especially for sports, is a polyester moisture-wicking compression top,”

Tsai says. “It wicks perspiration away from the skin, so the wearer stays drier and the shirt dries faster afterwards.” Tsai adds that an insulating layer, such as a mid-weight microfleece jacket, is often placed on top of the base layer, because “they're lightweight, breathable and insulate even when wet. Finish it off with a lightweight shell layer that protects from wind and water.”

Quilted vests and jackets in particular are coming into their own as a prevalent choice for layering. “They're great as either an under- or overlayer,” Barreca says, “and they're often packable. Consider the younger generation for performance pieces, because they don't do jackets anymore. They prefer a long-sleeve shirt with a sweatshirt. Activewear-inspired looks have really changed things.”

When a corporate team is in the market for a trade show or sales meeting ensemble, think quality easy-care items with fitted silhouettes. “Some of the most popular garments for a business casual look are quarter-zips with an open-collar button-down underneath,” Dabiero explains. “Often, it's finished off with a tie. It transitions well from formal to business casual when the quarter-zip replaces a sport coat.”

If a client requires uniforms or employs multifunctional staff, they could potentially benefit from several-piece outfits as well. “Customers looking for uniforms often require a whole ensemble,” Yeung explains, “and companies often want options so their

“We’re giving them additional opportunities to promote their brand.”

Ashley Mauldin, The Icebox (asi/229395)

employees can represent the company at the office, in the warehouse or on the road. Insurance companies, for instance, have support staff, a sales force and claims adjusters who represent them in various settings.”

The options for creating versatile layered outfits are legion, but the question remains: How much does a quality ensemble cost? Barreca approximates price using a popular example: a bonded vest paired with either a plaid woven or a quarter-zip. “The estimated cost for two of these three pieces is around \$48 net,” she says, “so the buyer pays about \$96 for the outfit.” Another go-to combination is a quarter-zip under a compressible jacket, an estimated \$65 for the decorator and \$125 to \$130 for the end-user. “In both situations, the price for two pieces is either a little less or equal to the cost of a bulky, heavier jacket, which can be around \$150,” she says, “and the end-user ends up with double the items that they can also wear separately.”

Send a Message

The multiple garments that make up a layered outfit allow for several impressions with just one ensemble. “Ideally, each piece can be traded out at any time as needed,” Tsai says, “so it’s important to decorate every garment.”

With the number of possible placements, planning optimal embellishment locations can seem daunting. However, consider it an opportunity to keep the brand front-of-mind rather than a task to be feared. Yeung, for instance, recommends pairing a long-sleeve base layer with a vest, and decorating the sleeve and the vest’s left chest for double brand exposure. “It’s important to know how the garments will be used,” he adds. “For customer-facing staff, the traditional chest location is always a go-to. For a charity run, cross-back decoration helps identify support staff.”

Perhaps a construction client needs new on-the-job garments for their crews; Dabiero suggests a logoed T-shirt, zip sweatshirt embellished on the left chest, and bonded or quilted vest with a full-back logo. “An executive would benefit from a button-up with a logo on the collar or wrist, paired with a quarter-zip with the logo on the back yoke, sleeve or chest,” she adds. “You can’t pigeon-hole matching ensembles. It’s ideal for anyone looking to advertise a logo.”

As layering gains increased popularity, it’s becoming more important for decorators to distinguish themselves from the competition. “Anyone who wants to offer fashionable options, along with multiple brand opportunities, should be open to it,” Mauldin says. “I always try to think outside the box. Consider a ringspun cotton piece with a distressed screen print as the base layer, for instance.”

While layering offers the opportunity to show off a brand in unexpected places on a garment, it’s important to maintain balance. “People don’t want to feel like a billboard, unless it’s a sponsorship opportunity,” Barreca explains. “Consider a quarter-zip with a tonal etch on the sleeve underneath a vest with left-chest embroidery. You could also put left-chest embroidery on that quarter-zip so it’s branded twice. Make sure no logos are fighting for attention, but also that you’re not missing any branding opportunities.”

Make the Sale

You’ve pored over catalogs, finally selecting the perfect ensemble with logos in all the right places. Now, how to make the sale? Fortunately, it might not be as challenging as you think – as long as the presentation is planned strategically.

Once the wearer’s needs have been assessed and options chosen accordingly, make sure to impress the client by match-

ing each layering piece to their brand. “There has to be color coordination and consistency, especially in corporate outfitting,” Yeung says. “This could be either matching colors to tie into the corporate logo, or creating a layered outfit with complementary colors to create a professional appearance.”

At the sales call, presentation can make the difference between wowing customers and missing the sale. If a decorator fears the client will balk at buying three items presented individually, Dabiero says, they should present them simultaneously. “The garments should look as if they’re meant to go together, and show off their company colors and logo,” she says. “Many suppliers have garment lines with similar colorblocking or palettes that can be paired together. These are great to present as one piece, or separately if necessary.”

Pitching one item at a time might prove overwhelming, says Barreca, who echoes Dabiero’s suggestion that compiling garments on a hanger is the best way to unveil an outfit. “You don’t want to show one at a time and then say, ‘Now, buy all three,’” she says. “When they’re together, buyers say, ‘Wow, I never would have thought of that’. Try to start with three and only go down if you have to. Remind them that two lightweight items might be about the same cost as one piece from the year before.”

As suppliers continue to expand the already wide breadth of potential layering items up for grabs, the versatility, functionality and affordability of ensembles, not to mention the multiple impressions per outfit, make layering a sure bet for distributors. “It’s everywhere right now,” says Barreca. “Layering is going to play a role in almost every presentation we do this year.”

SARA LAVENDUSKI is an assistant editor for *Stitches*. Contact her at slavenduski@asicentral.com and follow her on Twitter at @SaraLav_ASI.

Levels of Layering

We asked suppliers, decorators and distributors selling decorated apparel to give us examples of popular layered outfits. Here's what they suggested:

Button-Down Shirt + Performance Quarter-Zip + Soft-Shell = Business Casual Officewear



▲ Wrinkle-resistant dobby striped shirt (87041)

▲ Stretch Tech-Shell quarter-zip (DG440)



▲ Soft-shell technical jacket (88138)



From **Lasting Impressions** (asi/249926; circle 88 on Free Info Card) and **alphabroder** (asi/34063; circle 89 on Free Info Card).

Tech Tee + Twill Shirt + Fleece Jacket = Entertainment Event Staff Uniform



▲ Performance pique crew neck (88182)

▲ Colorblock twill shirt (87042)



▲ Colorblock fleece jacket (88201)



From **alphabroder** (asi/34063; circle 89 on Free Info Card).

Tech Tee + Performance Quarter-Zip + Quilted Jacket = Sporting Event Staff Uniform



▲ Mélange tech tee (2656)



▲ Performance quarter-zip pullover (3471)



▲ Hybrid jacket (7328)



From **Vantage Apparel** (asi/93390; circle 90 on Free Info Card).

Button-Down Shirt + Performance Quarter-Zip + Soft-Shell Vest = Trade Show Ensemble



▲ Easy-care gingham check shirt (1107)



▲ Quarter-zip flat-back rib pullover (9175)



▲ Quest bonded vest (7315)



From **Vantage Apparel** (asi/93390; circle 90 on Free Info Card).

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COMING NEXT ISSUE

What's coming up in November *Stitches*

by Nicole Rollender



Big Decorating Challenge

See what decorator takes home the gold in *Stitches'* Big Decorating Challenge, where shops competed to create a logo and complete stage outfit for a fictional up-and-coming female pop/hip-hop star. The competition was fierce, and you'll want to see the creative ways the top decorators pushed their skills to the limit.



Socially Aware Shops

Spectrum Designs in Port Washington, NY, is a T-shirt shop and a social enterprise – helping young adults with autism gain meaningful work experiences. A handful of decorators across the country are also seeing the benefits of employing individuals with developmental disabilities.

Plus ...

- * *Easy in-bound marketing strategies for decorators*
- * *Hot decorative embellishments on athletic wear*
- * *The latest from Stitches' Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest and Instagram sites*

And much, much more!

needle watch

Needle Patrol

Our friend Slick (an embroidery machine needle) has hidden himself somewhere in this issue. He might be in an editorial photo, graphic or text – he's not in an advertisement. If you find the needle, send us a note that says, "I found the September/October needle on page XX," along with your name, company, address and phone number (or email address) so we can contact you if you're the winner. Mail or fax it to us at *Stitches*, Attn: Needle Patrol, 4800 Street Rd., Trevose, PA 19053; fax: (215) 953-3107. Also, tell us a little about your business. No phone calls please; you must respond in writing. Hurry! Responses for the September/October needle are due by October 31, 2015. From the correct responses, we'll randomly select one winner who'll receive a \$100 gift certificate, courtesy of Madeira USA, Laconia, NH. Please submit only one entry per drawing. We'll announce the winner in the December issue.



Slick Loves Software

In the July issue, Slick hid on page 44 in the "2015 Software Guide" between screen shots of the Kornit QuickP Designer 2.1 and ShopWorks OnSite 8.1 programs. Lois Diederich of Meldrim, GA-based Southern Charm Embroidery was chosen at random from a grand total of 21 responses. As this issue's winner, Lois will receive Madeira USA's gift certificate. Keep your eyes peeled for the industry's favorite game of hide and seek!

ASK AN EXPERT

By Shirley Clark

LOOKING FORWARD

In the next issue, you'll learn some new marketing ideas to grow your business. See you next issue!

Q *I try to stay on top of trends and offer my customers fashion-forward embroidery that will really impress. But I have to admit, when it comes to running metallic thread, I cringe. Is there anything you can suggest to help me run designs without the stress and struggle?*

First of all, you are absolutely correct to consider adding metallic threads in order to keep on top of trends. From online blogs like “The Fashion Spot” referring to “metal mania,” to such trend-setting fashion publications as *Harper’s Bazaar*, *Glamour*, *Elle*, *InStyle* and *Marie Claire* all pointing to metallic as one of 2015’s top 10 fashion trends, you really do need to master the sparkle and shine that metallic embroidery thread can bring to everything from corporate logos to caps.

Designers from Altuzarra to Versace see metallics as “no longer exclusive to the holiday season (or the eighties),” and the metallic look is ubiquitous on runways and red carpets. As *Harper’s Bazaar* points out, “once relegated to cocktail dresses on New Year’s Eve and cocktail waitresses in Las Vegas, sparkles are starting to see the light of day.” And so, given the need to include the ability to offer, and even suggest, the addition of sparkle to your embroidery customers, where do you begin?

Start with a good-quality metallic embroidery thread. As important as quality thread is in your daily work, investing in a reliable source for your metallic threads will eliminate lots of stress. Then, start

small. Go with a thin metallic, like a 50 weight. Most times, this smooth metallic thread can be substituted right into a stock design or a logo digitized for 40 weight, with no change to the machine, no needle change and no re-timing; simply choose a gold or silver to replace a yellow or gray, and watch your embroidery design grow more sophisticated, with additional fashion appeal.

special effect. To incorporate it into a design, you may need to reduce the density by about 20%, from 4.0 to 6.0, or, you could increase the size of the design by 10%. A final hint: Lighten your top tension for this twisted thread since it’s more pliable.

You may want to slow down the machine to 600 stitches per minutes for the 30-weight twisted metallic, but no major changes are necessary for the

can follow at your own pace. Mastering just these two threads can set you apart from your competition and make you the go-to embroiderer in your community. Thread manufacturers are more than willing to offer samples and help you to run their metallic threads, and videos and webinars that highlight these two desirable metallic threads are readily available on YouTube.

“Mastering just these two threads can set you apart from your competition and make you the go-to embroiderer in your community.”

The next metallic thread you should master is a heavier 30-weight thread that’s twisted, rather than wrapped, in its production. As you can imagine, the twisting makes for more foil surfaces that reflect the light, and the result is an additional sparkle to the shine that a smooth metallic provides. With this heavier metallic, you do need to change your needle to a 90/14 for best results. And because it’s thicker, you may choose to use it for a highlight, using longer stitches, like running stitches, or as an overlay for a

shiny 50 weight. Remember, it’s a good idea to change to a new needle when you begin a design with metallic thread – what are the chances you’ve changed your needles recently? Any embroidery, but especially metallic, will benefit from a fresh new needle and a bobbin case that’s free from lint.

While the selection of metallic embroidery threads can seem overwhelming, once you’ve mastered the smooth, easily running 50-weight and the sparkling 30-weight twisted metallics, the rest

SHIRLEY CLARK, president of Madeira USA, comes from a background in marketing and sales for the cable/telecommunications industry. With experience running businesses, and as the former national sales manager for Madeira USA, she keeps watch over this market leader with an eye toward excellent customer service, top quality products and partnering with customers in order to ensure their success. Contact: sclark@madeirausa.com.

GOT A DECORATOR DILEMMA?

Email your question to nrollender@asicentral.com. We'll request your permission to print your question and our expert's response in *Stitches*. Note: Unfortunately, we're unable to answer each individual question.

Puzzling Over Gift Ideas?



Aprons



Kitchen Towels



Spa Essentials



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Totes & Bags



Neoprene Insulators



Chevron Cosmetic Bags



Acrylics & QuickStitch Paper



Holiday Items

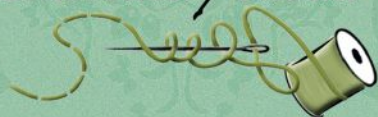


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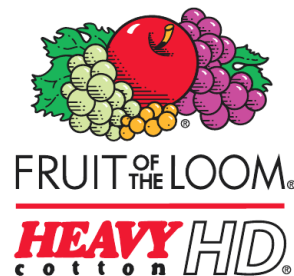


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