

2003 Press Releases

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 7, 2003

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Highest Retail Attendance Ever for Fashion Market at the California Market Center

Highest Retail Attendance for Fashion Market in Past Six Years at California Market Center, The New Mart, The Cooper Building Design space, and the Gerry Building, Draws Top Retailers and International Press to Spring '04 Runway Show, Events & Tradeshows

* L.A. Mayor Hahn Cuts Ribbon for the "Intersection Oasis" Buyers' lounge at the corner of Ninth & Los Angeles Streets in the Fashion District

* ENK Debuts "Brighte Companies" at CMC

* "Agenda" Draws Leading Surf and Skate Retailers to CMC

* L.A. Shoe Show Expands

* Designers & Agents Show now in three locations

LOS ANGELES (November 6, 2003) - Against the bustling backdrop of L.A. Fashion Week Spring '04, which featured more than 80 runway shows and events throughout the city, retail attendees from 46 states and 25 countries made the Fashion District's more than 1,800 showrooms their destination for fashion, gift & home. In fact, executives at the California Market Center noted the highest retail attendance for a fashion market in six years, supported by a 24 percent increase in first-time attendees, and an overall 17 percent increase in Western States' attendance alone.

The action-packed week kicked off with a ribbon cutting by Mayor James K. Hahn, inaugurating a new communal lounge for the downtown fashion community at the corner of 9th and Los Angeles Streets. Council Member Jan Perry (district 9) and Council Member Antonio Villaraigosa (district 14), flanked by a parade of Otis College fashion design students, were also in attendance.

Packed showrooms and exhibit halls, supported by hourly bookings, exemplified a spike in attendance for the Spring '04 fashion market, held October 31-November 4 at the California

Market Center - the West Coast's leading fashion wholesale facility for more than 35 years. Similar attendance increases were noted in the Cooper Building Design Space, the New Mart, and the Gerry Building; all part of a growing complex of design, showroom, and manufacturing space in downtown Los Angeles.

"Seldom does a team get to experience the quality of and tremendous increase in retail attendance every market, as we have for the 2003 year," said Cecil Strickland, executive director of retail relations. "This Spring market simply caps off a remarkable year of coordinated efforts among CMC, our tenants, exhibitors and valued retailers, confirming again that the California Market Center is not only the destination for current and future trends, but solidly the business center of the West Coast fashion industry."

A sampling of retailers attending the market included: Anthropologie, Cache, Golden Bear, Julian Gold, Holt Renfrew, Mark Shale, Marshall Fields, Selfridges & Co., England, and Up Against The Wall.

"For five days we wrote orders continuously for spring bags," said Sheila Kubik, sales representative for Robert Aruj Associates, located on the 10th floor of the California Market Center. "I think the combination of having lines such as Francesco Biasia handbags from Italy, and the eagerness on the part of our retailers to find exciting new resources for spring, was the key to this successful market."

On the 5th floor of the CMC, retailers enjoyed a catered lunch by L.A. hotspot Pane e Vino, along with the use of the Cyber Lounge and other amenities at a well-attended "On 5" promotion.

"There was a positive attitude this season, a lot of newness in the market, and we had a great reaction to the bold palette for Spring '04," said Liza Stewart, owner of the Liza Stewart Showroom on the CMC's 5th floor. "We saw a lot of out-of-territory stores, and buyers mentioned that they found resources in L.A. that they simply couldn't find anywhere else."

The California Market Center's Direction Spring '04 fashion show at the historic Orpheum Theatre down-town on November 1, defined the trends for buyers, press and fashion insiders in segments that featured many of the West Coast's top lines. Show sponsors included Aveda and Cloutier Agency. Guests at the pre-show cocktail party enjoyed beverages provided by Hypnotiq and the recently launched water brand, Ethos. Among those lines heralding the Spring '04 trends were: Corey Lynn Calter, Sue Wong, Joey + T, Frankie B., Sharagano, Femme Arsenal, BCBG Max Azria, Charlotte Tarantola, Harveys, Fork, Laundry and Nathalie Chaize.

The Designers & Agents Show, newly expanded onto two floors of the Cooper Building Design Space, and continuing its successful third floor presence at the New Mart, also saw a constant stream of significant retailers, as part of its one-the-edge fashion focus. Buyers and stores such as Shauna Stein and Henri Bendel were seen working with exhibitors.

One of the most vivid success stories of the week was the successful debut of ENK's Brighte Companies, a bold, yellow and white themed show featuring more than 90 leading fashion resources and accessories, in the California Market Center's Fashion Theatre and Exhibit Hall from October 31-November 2.

"The show was everything we wanted it to be," said an ecstatic Elyse Kroll, president of ENK International, who noted the presence of retailers including: Bergdorf Goodman, Ron Herman, Neiman Marcus, H. Lorenzo, Maxfield's, Bodhi Bazaar and Fred Segal. "We got the highest compliments from delighted retailers - all happy to be in this exciting setting."

The 'Agenda' show enlivened the young men's category this season with a group of young men's streetwear resources exhibiting at the CMC during LA Fashion Week. Held on the newly designed Floor 8C, this innovative show featured lines such as Stussy, Fresh Jive, 55 DSL, GreenAppletree and PF- Flyers. According to Aaron Levant and Luis Pulido, who co-own the new trade show, Agenda attracted top retailers from major surf and skate chains in Southern California. Among them were Becker Surf and Sport, Val Surf, Jack's Surf Shop and Active. This show was complemented by Wahine, a collective of women's contemporary resources from New Zealand also located in a neighboring showroom on Floor 8 C.

The market wrapped on another upbeat note as retailers crowded the sold-out LA Shoe Show. Held November 2-3 on the 13th floor Pavilion of the CMC, and in adjoining showrooms, the show, which saw many expansions from last year, featured nearly 200 exhibitors representing America's top resources. Among the recognized names were: Skecher's USA, Na Na, BCBG, Steve Madden, Diesel, Yellow Box, Donald Pliner, Via Spiga, and Charles David.

Located in the revitalization zone of downtown Los Angeles, the California Market Center, the New Mart, Cooper Building Design Space, and the Gerry Building encompass 4 million square feet of fashion apparel, accessories, textiles, and business centers.

The California Market Center itself is a three 13-story buildings -- currently with six floors of gift and home accessories showrooms, as well as over 1,000 apparel, fashion accessories and textile showrooms.

In a city that looks to the future for inspiration, the Fashion Center of Southern California represents the next era in fashion and style. A one-stop shopping experience for lifestyle resources, the area is the largest marketplace in the USA for fashion, gift and home.

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