

Industry News

By Kirsten Mogg

Dawn Of A New Decade

The ten-year post recession expansion cycle is either imminently doomed or just getting started, depending on whom you ask. Global politics, climate change, and technology continue to disrupt. Consumer activism is on the rise. Trade policies are a question mark although the **USMCA** (NAFTA 2.0) agreement seems finally to have bi-partisan approval and can proceed to ratification. The **WTO** is in disarray and trade agreements will need to be rewritten when the **UK** leaves the **Canadian European Trade Agreement** (CETA).

Climate Change

Perhaps the most impactful challenge to the fashion industry, labeled as a significant global polluter, is a demand for urgent action on climate change led by sixteen year old **Greta Thunberg**. Consumers are responding by calling for political and corporate action.

United Nations

Mark Carney, the former investment banker and **Bank of Canada** chief is leaving his post as the head of the **Bank of England**. He has accepted a new role as **United Nations** special envoy on climate action and climate finance reporting to **Secretary-General Antonio Guterres**. Carney takes over from **Michael Bloomberg**, former Mayor of New York, and US Democratic Presidential candidate. Carney will build on the **Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures** (TCFD) initiated by G20 leaders in 2015. About 80 percent of top 1,100 global companies already disclose climate risks aligned with those guidelines.

Convincing companies to take up this global financial reporting framework is of great interest to investors who need to assess the corporate risks associated with climate change. Although there is heated disagreement over the price of carbon emissions, Canadian companies already operate in an environment that puts a dollar value on climate risk. The **Canadian Securities Administration** and the **Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions** issued new guidelines for accounting and reporting standards for public and regulated companies last year. Increasingly, taking climate related risks can reduce a company's ability to raise capital.

Preferred Fibre Production

The Textile Exchange defines 'preferred fibers' as materials with an improved social and environmental impact, an important requirement for the UN SDGs. In their latest **Preferred Fiber and Materials Market Report**, **La Rhea Pepper**, managing director, outlined the scale of the challenge that could become even more daunting.

"Global fiber production has doubled in the last 20 years, reaching an all-time high of 107 million metric tons in 2018. If business-as-usual continues, it is expected to grow to 145 million metric tons by 2030."

Polyester has the largest share, followed by cotton and man-made cellulose, while linen, leather, silk and wool are a small and shrinking part of the global fibre pie. The share of recycled polyester grew from 8% to 13% in just ten years, although China's ban on imported plastic waste caused a decline of 16% in 2017. More promising is the reported increased production of 'preferred' fibres. The share of other recycled synthetics and bio-synthetics remains very small. Preferred cotton more than doubled over 2013/14 to reach 22% of global cotton production in 2017/18.



Color of the Year 2020: Classic Blue 19-4052
Courtesy of Pantone Color Institute

Pantone Color of the Year

Pantone suggests that its **Color of the Year 2020, Blue 19-4052**, is both futuristic and classic. Darker than the optimistic and peaceful sky blue **Pantone** selected a decade ago, this blue is closer to cobalt derived pigments used for centuries to tint glass, ceramics and paint. Being neither masculine nor feminine it suggests a genderless trend while at the same time reflecting a trend toward highly contrasting points of view - either a refreshing yet peaceful colour referencing an oasis of calm in troubled times or a disappointing, moody safe choice more suited to cars, political parties, technology firms and conservative men's suits.

This blue will be successful in fashion when presented in modern materials in a contemporary way or enlivened by its complimentary colours of orange, black and white. Expect to see it in dark jeans, suiting, sportswear, shimmering metallics, lace or velvet and in beauty products for nails, lips and hair.



Juno Award winning artist Iskwe opened Canadian designer Lesley Hampton's runway show in February 2019
Hampton has Anishinaabe and Mohawk heritage
Photo : George Pimentel

Science Based Standards

The gold standards for textile sustainability are based on scientific measurements and broad-based industry collaboration. The non-profit **Textile Exchange** has facilitated working groups in specific textile sectors for years. Representatives from fibre to finished product within each specialized area work towards consensus and establish voluntary global standards for the industry.

The issues are many and complex, but there is progress and public corporate commitments have been made by global players such as **Kering, Ikea and H&M Group**. At the 2019 Textile Exchange conference held in Vancouver last October, over 900 international industry product developers, production and sourcing executives from fibre producers, mills, manufacturers, retailers, NGO's and standards organizations came together to discuss solutions and push forward toward the 2030 **UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.

Scaling up is a priority and it's clear that the leaders in the room were far ahead of the industry in general. Presentations emphasized how some fiber producers, textile and apparel companies and retailers are executing real, measurable changes to their individual and collective industries. Some, like Kering, are sharing open-source information and playing a leading role in convincing large players to sign up to the **Global Fashion Pact** launched at the **G7** in Biarritz, France in August.

The key take-away for a Canadian apparel brand or retailer is this: sustainability is no longer a single item, a marketing slogan, a compliance checkbox or a single department. Actual movement towards sustainability must be led from the top and operationally resourced with employees in every discipline who have empowerment, training and the tools to design a product that approaches carbon neutral or carbon positive status as it moves through the textile pipeline.

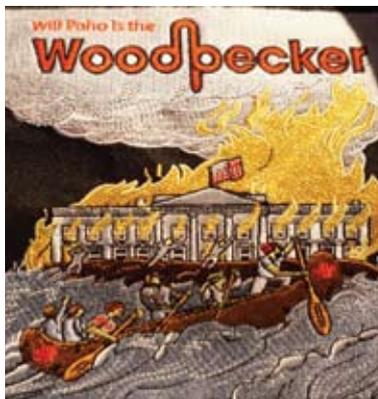
Canadian companies including **Arc'terx, Aritzia, Lululemon** and **MEC** sent representatives to the roundtables organized for specific fibres such as polyester, cotton, cellulose, wool and cashmere. There is much more to be done. The next **Textile Exchange Global Conference** will be held in Dublin, Ireland during the first week in November, 2020.



Ikea and H&M Group made joint public commitments on their SDG2030 goals at Textile Exchange

Golden Opportunities

There are already many quality and compliance standards for textiles and apparel. However, there is no single global standard against which all products designed with environmental concerns in mind can be measured. Over the next decade for-profit companies will move to create, license and provide policing of environmental standards required by retailers and government authorities. Apparel companies offering products on the cutting edge of climate change standards are enjoying expanded business opportunities.



Woodpecker makes a strong statement on giant new outerwear label
Photo : K.Mogg

Will Poho's new Woodpecker premium outerwear brand launched successfully last fall with custom camo, a variety of vegan friendly 'cruelty-free' insulated puffer styles with slick wet-look fabrics. Instead of typical external branding, animal insignias adorn the sleeves. The neck labels on men's coats sport a giant burning white house while labels on the women's line portray a more inclusive family of bears of all colours. Poho says the line did very well and he expects sales to catch fire for AW20/21.



Cruelty-free thermal fill insulates the brand against vegan activism
Courtesy of Woodpecker



Courtesy of Nudnik Inc.

Canadian children's brand **Nudnik** shifted from post to pre-consumer organic cotton to ensure a circular source, control of product quality and aesthetics, and the ability to scale.



Men's Bummaster Wet Black Gold & Women's red penguin coats
Courtesy of Woodpecker

THE UPSIDE OF DOWN

The implementation of standards and labeling for responsible down, recycled down and sustainable down alternatives is a tribute to progress over the pursuit of perfection.

Stuffing Regulations

Policy is easy to implement, but hard to reverse. **Quebec's** enforcement of antiquated **Upholstered & Stuffed Articles** regulations is “outdated, arbitrary and punitive” and “a barrier to free trade”. So says a report to the U.S. Trade Representative by the **American Apparel & Footwear Association** who worked for years with the **Canadian Apparel Federation (CAF)** to remove this regulatory requirement on apparel.

Bob Kirke, CAF executive director, puts it a little more bluntly, “It’s a zombie regulation. It serves no purpose for apparel and should be removed.” Quebec is the only jurisdiction that still has decades-old rules with an ambiguous and unenforced ‘health and safety’ rationale. What’s more, the restrictions represent a cost to Canadian manufacturers, importers and retailers. Rules require any product made for Canadian distribution using recycled materials such as polyester or down to have a label identifying the garment as a “second hand article”.

Most affected are companies creating and selling insulated outerwear such as parkas and puffer coats. The trend to more sustainable recycled options leaves the government of Quebec behind the times and out of sync with the industry and eco-conscious consumers. CAF is seeking an end to the requirement in early 2020 so that production of AW 20/21 winter outerwear can be unencumbered by outdated regulations.



RE:Down® email campaign, Sept 2019
Courtesy of Tommy Hilfiger



Recycled Down

Several European companies have developed methods to collect and produce recycled down. **Allied Feather** and the **Neokdun** brand from **Navarpluma SL** of Spain created a feather and down re-processing system sourced from the food industry in 2001. In September 2019, Navarpluma and **Applied DNA Sciences** announced a partnership for a DNA based traceability project. The same month, Japanese company **Toray** announced a collaboration with **Uniqlo** to reclaim and recycle down from apparel collected in Uniqlo stores.

Meanwhile, the French company **RE:Down** has built a commercial system that achieves 97 percent of their zero waste goal that did meet the **Global Recycled Standard (GRS)**. Re:Down partners with textile waste collectors, charities and retailers to collect post-consumer down products (clothing, stuffed articles, bedding). Their energy-efficient and re-usable water facility in Hungary separates, sterilizes and re-processes down without the use of chemicals to produce recycled down that retains its natural insulating properties. Other materials are recycled into non-woven insulation and broken feathers are turned into organic fertilizer. In 2019, brands such as **Tommy Hilfiger** began to promote the use of re:Down in their products.

Updated Responsible Down Standard

The **Responsible Down Standard** appears to be gaining global acceptance over the **Traceable Down Standard** and the **Downpass Standard**. The RDS first introduced in 2008 was written by the **Textile Exchange**, **Control Union** (a certification body), and **The North Face**. Last year, an updated RDS 3.0 standard was released with input from global stakeholders.

China is the source of 70% to 90% of the 270,000 metric tons of down produced annually. Supply is highly fragmented with many small and medium-size producers, however the Textile Exchange has certified over 6,000 farms and 904 processing sites in 2018, a significant increase since 2014. Over 70 brands have certified supply chains using RDS, including Canadian companies **Arc'teryx Equipment**, **Aritzia**, **Indygena**, **Lululemon Athletica Inc.**, **Mackage**, and **MEC**.

Patagonia remains a committed global leader when it comes to down traceability and standards. The company started to trace down in 2007 and today their fall 2017 virgin down-filled products meet the advanced Global TDS standard.

“It was neither cheap nor easy. And we had to re-examine our strategy and business operations in the process. But building a long-lasting product that helps you stay warm in good conscience is a legacy of which we are extremely proud.”

A proposal to merge RDS and Global TDS was dropped due to different stakeholders and areas of concentration.



Indygena is a sustainably-driven outerwear company founded in Montreal in 2014 by three design and outerwear veterans: **Jean-Pierre Ferrandez**, the former head of international development for **Orage** and co-founder of **Lolë** and **Paradox** labels; **Isabelle Vigneault**, the executive director; and **Stéphanie Noël**, who studied at Jean-Charles de Castelbajac in Paris, is vice president of creation. The brand is available at **MEC**, **Altitude Sports**, **Monod Sports** in Banff, **Trailhead Paddle Shack** in Ottawa and **Arthur James Clothing Company** in Newfoundland, among others. In August, the **Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions** granted a \$250,000 repayable contribution to Indygena to develop new markets in the U.S. The company places design at the centre of sustainable solutions while recognizing the challenges.

“The complexity of the supply chain and multiple components of a garment lay great challenges in our quest for sustainable measures.”

The company has published specific sustainability goals to be achieved by 2025. “Indygena is committed to replace synthetic fibers with recycled plastic polyethylene terephthalate (PET), recycled nylon, natural and/or organic fibers by 2025 in its entire collection. 100% of our materials contain polyester or nylon, where our greater environmental impact takes place right now in the supply chain.”

TOOL CHEST

Use The Free Library

Achieving sustainability may seem overwhelming for a small fashion company trying to do the right thing with limited resources. At the **World Ethical Apparel Roundtable (WEAR)** in 2019, the host and organizer, **Fashion Takes Action**, published **The Sustainable Fashion Toolkit** with the help of PWC. The online resource (sustainablefashiontoolkit.com) gives apparel companies

free access to a searchable library with extensive information from vetted resources that include reports, guidelines, standards, articles, podcasts and case studies. The goal is to make information ‘findable’, which will help companies and individuals in the industry make progress toward sustainability.



BCorp: A Fashion Status Symbol

At the **WEAR** conference in Toronto last October, **Ethan Song**, co-founder of **Frank & Oak**, explained why he took his company through the process to become a Certified B Corporation.

“From the beginning we were involved in sustainability, community involvement. We always felt we were doing the right thing as a business, but how do you know you are taking the right actions? BCorp offers a framework.”

Song was confident, but the process was tougher than expected. The fees were not substantial, but it required significant human and other resources to implement organizational improvements in order to achieve the points needed to reach the BCorp standard.

“It took us two years to get certified and it gets more challenging as you get bigger. The more complex your business, the more complex your supply chain and governance, the harder it is to get certified. I put together a cross-disciplinary squad and we met for 2-3 hours every single week until we got it.”

A growing number of Canadian clothing companies of all sizes have become BCorps, including **Kotn**, **Tentree**, **Grey Rock Clothing Co.**, and **Poppy Barley**, all of which have been part of previous **Trends Magazine** stories.

Trust Tools



Truepic is a secure imaging pipeline. At the moment a photo or video is taken, its origin, contents and metadata are verifiable. The company offers digital forensics to organizations in need of certainty throughout their supply chain.

Second Hand Stigma Fades

At **WEAR**, **Chris Homer**, co-founder of California-based reseller **ThreadUP** said, “We started with a mission to inspire a new generation of consumers to think second-hand first. When we started there was a stigma - over time it has evaporated.”

ThreadUP designed and built its own software technology and in-house processes and has the first data set in the world able to price items, add tags and put attributes on those items, and determine which products should be available online or at physical retail. ThreadUP’s success lies in the ability to offer shoppers a tailored treasure hunt covering 35,000 brands in 100 categories. Hot retail brand **Reformation** partnered with ThreadUP on a give-some-get-some **Reformation x ThreadUP** campaign to help burnish their eco-credibility. Over the past year, ThreadUP’s business in Canada has grown by 70% before its official launch.

EVENTS & AWARDS

Winter Sports Apparel & Gear Combo

Marisa Nicholson, **Outdoor Retailer**’s senior vice president and show director, announced in August the merger of the **Winter Market** and the **Snow Show**. Renamed the **Outdoor + Snow Show**, the combined trade shows for winter gear and apparel will run from **January 29** to 31, 2020 in Denver.

Fashion Career Fair Returns to Toronto in March

After a successful one-day event in 2018, the **Canadian Apparel Federation** and the **City of Toronto** will again co-host a **Fashion Career Fair and Expo** on **March 10**, 2020. They plan to expand on the event, which drew over 350 qualified candidates from area fashion schools and showcased speakers and exhibits from some of the leading industry employers in the GTA.

The seventh edition of the **LVMH Prize** for emerging designers is open for submissions until **February 2**, 2020. The most substantial award for emerging designer talent presents the winner with €300,000 Euros in financial support

and 12 months of business mentoring. Last year, two promising Canadians were short-listed: **3.Paradis** men’s streetwear brand and **Marie-Ève Lecavalier** the winner of the **CAFA/Swarovski Award** for Emerging Talent in 2019.

Canadian Arts and Fashion Awards has set **April 30**, 2020 as the deadline for nominations. The **2020 CAFA Awards** gala at the Fairmount Royal York will be held on May 29, 2020. The **Suzanne Rogers Designer Grant for International Development** is a \$20,000 prize that includes mentorship, one of the best financial opportunities for emerging designers in the country. However, it pales in comparison to similar prizes for similar talent such as the **LVMH Prize** or the **CFDA/Vogue Fashion Fund** in the U.S. which hands out US\$400,000 for the winner and \$150,000 to the two runners-up. A jury will select an outstanding Canadian fashion designer or brand that has demonstrated significant impact, growth, and maturity and is poised to expand internationally. In 2019, the Suzanne Rogers grant went to **Sid Neigum**, who also received the **CAFA Womenswear Designer of the Year Award**.

RETAIL TRENDS



Giant Tiger men's ACX reversible packable puffer
Courtesy of Giant Tiger

Digital Disruptors Weakening

For some time, bricks and mortar retailers have raced to join direct-to-consumer sales on digital platforms. To compete with lower overhead, endless aisles and free shipping, traditional retailers had to change their distribution platforms, reduce their store footprints, and build a seamless and exciting shopping experience.

Headlines still tout the death of traditional retail but now there are signs that Amazon, the king of digital disruption, has fallen on hard times as the costs of e-commerce returns, delivery, and digital marketing take a toll.

In addition, Quebec and Saskatchewan introduced new local sales taxes for foreign sellers a year ago, something the Retail Council of Canada and local retailers such as Larry Rosen have been seeking for a long time.

Super Winners

According to the 2020 State of the Fashion Industry report by McKinsey, only a few public global fashion companies are 'Superwinners' while the rest struggle to make a profit.

Increasingly, profit is gained at the retail extremes of luxury or discount. With the exception of Inditex (Zara, Massimo Dutti), those in the middle are weaker fiscal performers. The report identifies among the Superwinners LVMH on the luxury end with H&M and TJX (Winners, Marshall's) in the discount arena.

Giant Tiger celebrated 50 years since opening in Ottawa's Byward Market. The company has stepped up its fashion and moved into the void left by Sears, Target and Zellers by opening 201 stores in cost-conscious secondary markets. Its profitable business model competes with Walmart.

"By keeping our costs low, we compete on price and still make a profit,"

~ Andy Gross, President and CEO of Giant Tiger

High Cost of Returns

The volume and costs of returns are staggering. In the U.S. and probably in Canada, 11% of total annual retail sales are returned and of those returns 13% are apparel items and 9% are footwear, according to the National Retail Federation.

Another statistic from Shopify should give e-commerce retailers pause: in just four years, the total expected cost of return deliveries swallowed by U.S. retailers is up by over 75% and forecast to reach US\$550 billion.

Recovering expenses on returned merchandise sold at a discount costs retailers 4.4% of total revenue, according to DHL. That plus lost sales is why some retailers are reducing the window for returns from 30 to 14 days or less. Others are trying the subscription model or asking consumers to pay higher 'restocking' fees. These policies might help, but they may not go over well with customers used to more leeway. The competition is just one click away.

A Modern Underwear Index

Back in the 1970s, former U.S. Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan suggested an 'underwear index' to predict where the economy is headed. He based it on the premise that men buy new briefs when they felt confident about the future. The informal index tracked Hanesbrands stock against the Standard & Poors whereas the closest comparable public company in Canada today would be Montreal-based Gildan Activewear, which makes basic t-shirts and socks. If Greenspan were around, he might note a divergence in the performance of private high-end companies versus those dressing the middle market.

Despite the collapsing fortunes of Victoria's Secret, two Canadian underwear companies do provide promising predictions of the economic future.

Saxx men's underwear became the fastest growing underwear brand in North America. Founded in Vancouver in 2006, it is known for its patented 'ballpark' pouch. Trent Kitsch, Saxx founder, has moved on from underwear to construction, cannabis and wineries in the Okanagan after selling Saxx in 2015.

Knix (Knixwear) is a body-positive brand for women started by Joanna Griffiths in Toronto in 2013. She led her company's growth by acquiring highly engaged customers and adding a range of specialized wire-free products that address parts of the market previously ignored, like leak-proof fashionable underwear and a range of sizes more fitting for the whole population.

In the fall of last year, Knix opened its first retail locations as long-term popups in Vancouver and Toronto where it introduced loungewear, maternity and Knixteen, a sub-brand of underwear for teens.

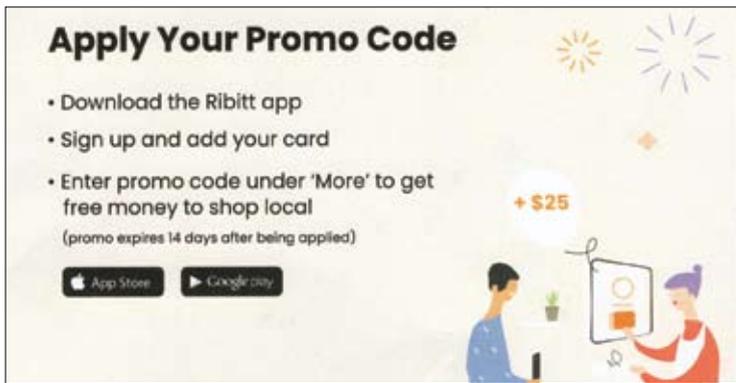
Griffiths has raised \$1 million through a record-setting crowd-funding campaign and small investments from advisors like Bravado Designs plus a partnership with Nordstrom. Last year she raised \$5.7 million towards the next phase of growth through Action Capital.

Cut To The Future

Graysha Audren, BA Textile Design, presented the design concept "Seamless Woven Workwear For The Automated Future" as part of the "Designing in Turbulent Times" exhibit at the University of Arts in London. The weaving techniques bypasses traditional cut and sew processes to create seamless garments of organic cotton and natural indigo engineered directly on the loom.

Seamless workwear design by Graysha Audren
UAL exhibit, London 2019
Photo : K. Mogg





Ribbit app used by BIA's in Toronto to encourage local shopping with rewards

Delivery Too expensive To Be Disruptive

In the online food marketplace, delivery costs are the reason 37% of people choose not to order. Where market demand exists but rental rates are prohibitive, restaurants are turning to 'cloud kitchens' to cook up better profits with no front-of-house and no wait staff. Similarly, shoppers abandon online shopping carts at clothing retailers when they see the additional shipping costs.

Amazon and **Shopify** are both building last mile distribution centres in proximity to some of Canada's larger markets, but free same day or next day deliveries is expensive. In search of a solution that lets the company stock more product and fulfill faster, **Nordstrom** has partnered with two robotics startups, **Attabotics** and **Tompkins Robotics**, in a test of a new type of automated distribution centre in San Jose, CA.



SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY
NOVEMBER 30TH

AMEX shop small campaign for the Saturday after Black Friday 2019

Digital Marketing Costs Soar

Search advertising has slowed globally, according to research by **WARC**. Global search ad spend will rise 9.6% this year (\$135.5 billion), the slowest rate since 2015. The share of search internet advertising remains about the same proportion at 45.8%. **Google** controls 95% of search in Canada, but increased search competition from Amazon has prompted testing of new revenue sources: increased ad prominence in search engine results page; increased number of ads in the same auctions; and forced search placements to other properties like **YouTube** and **Google Maps**.

That last trend could impact independent retailers. Implementing automated 'smart' formats for shopping and local campaigns takes control and transparency away from advertisers. Some retailers looking for shoppers with 'search intent' may do better by migrating their ad spend to **Pinterest**, **YouTube**, **Quora** or **Facebook** where consumers spend more time researching before making a purchase decision.

In November, Pinterest announced a new profile page in the U.S. called **Pinterest Shop**. Seventeen small brands were 'selected' to upload their catalogues as part of Pinterest's strategy to offer marketers an alternative to Google, Facebook and, increasingly, Amazon as a destination for their digital ad buys. If the initiative is successful the roster of businesses may expand to include both USA and international brands.

Stores With Nothing To Sell

Luxury brands display minimal stock in highly controlled environments. **Canada Goose**, for example, has opened a theatrically frozen but empty store at **CF Sherway Gardens** in Toronto. There is a crevasse, fake ice and a room resembling a snow globe, but almost no inventory. CEO **Dani Reiss** expects to attract customers in search of an experience who then shop and post online and tell their friends all about it. The new store is a marketing exercise to link the brand with the harsh, cold north and to distinguish it from the increasing number of premium coat competitors with high-end retail stores.

Reiss told the National Post, "You're entering a new world. You're entering the world of Canada Goose. You're entering the Arctic." He also explained that the store is not accountable for achieving the typical performance metrics at other stores.

"There are measurable objectives to do with this store, but they don't have to do with store performance or sales per square foot or any of that stuff. I think that would drive the wrong behaviour."

Luxury brands regularly introduce new, exquisite products and accomplish that by hiring star designers who inject new concepts and bring along their followers. So far, Canada Goose is taking a marketing approach.

Fast-growing luxury reseller **The RealReal** posts an annual list of the top 10 most-searched-for brands. **Gucci** and **Louis Vuitton** are the top two followed by third place **Chanel** with less than half the interest. Demand for Gucci increased by 78 percent but **Balenciaga** had the most impressive gains taking it to tenth spot for the first time. In the report issued in August, **Sasha Skoda**, category director for women's, said that when young visionary designers are brought on board it helps heritage labels reach the top ten.

"Balenciaga brought in **Demna Gvasalia**, Louis Vuitton brought in **Virgil Abloh** in men's, and Gucci brought in **Alessandro Michele**. They all re-imagined the brands in ways that speak to the Millennial and Gen Z customer base in a way they previously have not."

NRF 2020 Preview

Every January, the **National Retail Federation** hosts the "Big Show" in New York. Technology suppliers offer retail tools to improve every aspect of merchandise planning, store operations, e-commerce, distribution and delivery services to packaging, in-store display, consumer tracking and engagement.

One of the challenges retailers have is evaluating which tech is right for them and how to affordably integrate the new cloud-based 'big data' options into their legacy systems in a way that will give them a competitive edge. A full roster of candid guest speakers and an **Innovation Lounge** full of interesting startup ideas provide an opportunity to gather valuable retail insights.

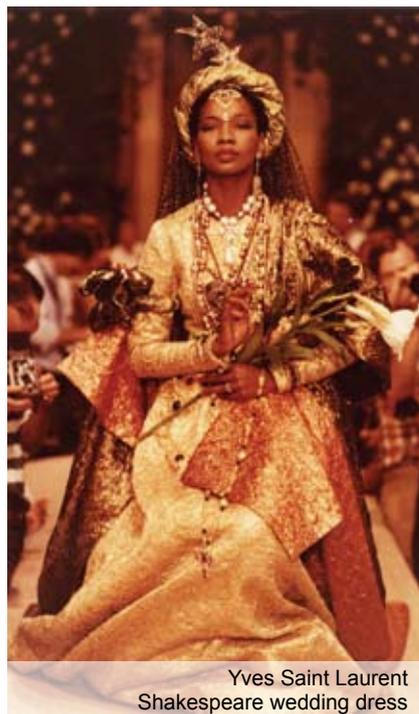
Food for Dinosaurs

Department stores and malls have been referred to as retail dinosaurs. Some are successfully avoiding extinction by selling off real estate (HBC) or battling back with smaller urban formats supported by smart warehousing and distribution (Ikea). Some profitably sub-let space to brands and other retailers. Events, private brands and 'discovery' merchandise help to draw traffic.

Food also draws shoppers as evidenced by fine dining at **Collette** inside **Holt Renfrew** at **Yorkdale Mall**. Even the smallest retailer can add hospitality to the shopping experience by setting up a beverage barista, offering packaged foods or take-out treats.

For inspiration look to the great food halls of the world like the one at **Harrods** with its robust multisensory experience. Harrod's Motorcar Garage and Workshops actually functioned as a warehouse from 1911 to 2016 when it was transformed into luxury residences, offices and small ground-floor retail in close proximity to **Chanel**, **Joseph, J. Crew** and **Stella McCartney**.

INSPIRATION & INSIGHT



Yves Saint Laurent
Shakespeare wedding dress

High Fashion Fabrics

A newly refreshed **Musée des Tissus de Lyon** has “reinvented itself as a place of inspiration and reflection celebrating the textile industry through fashion, design and digital technology” An exhibit on until March 8, 2020, showcases works of the late **Yves Saint Laurent** featuring a replication of his studio with colour charts and fabric sample books along with 25 pieces from his haute couture collections from 1962 to 2002.

The exhibit features sketches, muslins, photographs, and finished garments seen only on the runway. Stunning jacquards, chiffon, taffeta and velvets created by renowned silk weavers from the area will also be on display. The show stopper is a gold and jewel-encrusted ‘Shakespeare’ wedding dress from 1980 designed by YSL.



Yves Saint Laurent Cleopatra Dress
Spring Summer 1990 haute couture
© Yves Saint Laurent
Photo : Pierre Verrier



Yves Saint Laurent
Cleopatra dress (detail)
Photo : Sophie Carré



Christian Louboutin Pigalle shoe,
© Christian Louboutin
Photo : Jean Vincent Simone

Christian Louboutin

On February 26, the **Christian Louboutin L'exhibition[niste]** opens in Paris at the **Palais de la Porte Dorée**. **Olivier Gabet**, director of the **Musée des Arts Décoratifs**, with the financial sponsorship of **Nordstrom**, has curated an exhibit from the designer's private collection.

During his adolescence, Louboutin lived near the museum that was to play an influential role in his early designs beginning in 1991. Forms and motifs, such as the metallic leathers of his **Maquereau** shoe, were inspired by the iridescent fish in the museum's tropical aquarium. A cartoon of a shoe with a red 'X' forbidding visitors to wear high-heels was the inspiration for his iconic **Pigalle** shoe.



Yves Saint Laurent silk suit (detail)
Spring Summer 1990 haute couture
© Yves Saint Laurent
Photo : Sophie Carré



Silk and cotton sateen overcoat and silk plisse dress
SS20 collection by Canadian designer Avyn Omel
Photo : Marina Denisova Courtesy of Avyn Studio Inc.

Canadian Design Excellence

In 2017, **Avyn Omel**, in St. Mary's, Ontario, launched her brand of ageless apparel designed with a dancer's understanding of the body in motion and an approach to excellence in craftsmanship. In March 2018, she showed her first collection in Paris. In 2019, she won the **RBC Foundation Design Exchange (DX) Award** for an emerging Canadian fashion designer. The collection is produced in Veneto, Italy, using Italian and Japanese fabrics, leather and down. Avyn styles are a minimalist contemporary merge of masculine and feminine that draws on earlier work at conceptual fashion design studios in London and Berlin. Her collection for AW 20/21 will show in Paris in February. The collection is sold at **INK** in Hong Kong and **Zoven Boutique** in Shenzhen, China.