

BUSINESS NEWS



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NY MEN'S SHOW REPORT: LIBERTY

The theme for the fourth edition of Liberty New York, which had a three-day run at Pier 94 last week, was "To the moon and back." While the show was not as thrilling as the famous Apollo 11 mission of 1969 or a "giant leap for fashion-kind," the vast majority of those who landed there declared it a success.

The show, created and produced by Sam Ben-Avraham and his team, featured approximately 250 brands, all of which showed in uniform cardboard-lined booths that again created "a level playing field" where product, instead of loud signage or other distractions, was the sole eye-catcher. This display homogeneity continues to serve the show and the brands in it well. Although the aisles were relatively quiet on the show's final day (as is, admittedly, almost always the case with any trade fair), most exhibitors said that the prior two days were steady and that attendance was more about the quality of attending buyers versus their quantity.

LIBERTY NY FALL/WINTER '15

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Brandwise, Liberty again showcased mostly small- to mid-sized contemporary labels— Ben Sherman, Converse and Spiewak are arguably the biggest and best-known names that were there. Up-and-comers such as Tellason and FDMTL were again spotlighted in Freedom Hall, a special area of 28 creative brands curated by industry expert Ouigi Theodore.

Liberty's exhibitors also included two "reborn" names: Punk Royal and JNCO. The former is now designed by seasoned designer Scott Langton (who showed his own eponymous line alongside it). Langton has transformed Punk Royal into a sporty, fashionable collection, perfect for the "health goth" trend. JNCO, meanwhile, has been resurrected in the wake of the 1990s fashion tsunami, and is led by industry veteran and brand managing director Steven Sternberg. Its latest looks will be shown at Liberty Vegas next month and will be sure to include its famous wide-legged jeans.



Favorite items at Liberty included the amazingly inexpensive yet detailed outerwear at Civil Society, the sweatshirt print inspired by a seating chart of a NYC-to-London flight at Scott Langton, the ingenious "Two-Way Jogger" twill pants at Descendant of Thieves (the ankle cuff can be tucked in or out to create a standard pair of slacks or a fashion-forward "jogger" look) and pretty much everything from the new line Curated.

This new line, with its sharp looks and great pricing, totally gets our vote as "Best in Show."

Christopher Blomquist