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## In The News

### A Retailer Shops the New York Market

July 23, 2010

Gary Drinkwater, of *Drinkwater's* in Cambridge, Mass., was profiled in our September, 2009 issue in the *Under the Radar* feature. His 1,200 sq. ft. store has been slowly replacing much of its tailored clothing stock with sportswear and workwear-inspired contemporary lines like *Engineered Garments* and *Universal Works*. We asked Gary what he saw during New York's market week, and he obliged with the following thoughts.



Usually we don't get charged up about spring/summer because we sometimes don't experience that season here in the northeast, if you know what I mean. But we had a field day this time and found some very good new lines and were happy to see others who we already carry, presenting wonderful items. Our biggest gripe is that there are so many shows. We get weary from the schlep.

Saturday, we reluctantly attended the Warwick show (Designers Collective) only to see **Hertling Trousers** and **New England Shirt Co** (we need to applaud Bob Kidder for resurrecting this factory and bringing a great product to fruition). We took time to visit with Ron Rider from **Rider Boot Co.** who had visited me at the store a month ago to show me his newest creations which were hand-sewn mocs from Maine. I was so pumped up about these, I needed to show Teresa (my wife and partner in crime) what I had been babbling about. We both feel very strongly about what we saw and have ordered a brown suede beef roll penny with plantation crepe sole for A/O.

Sunday, we attended the MRket show (thumbs up and bravo to Lizette and her team) and effortlessly saw all our appointments and then some. The highlight was **Luigi Baldo**. Sebastian Leta caught up to us in one of the aisles and suggested we take a look, we did and he had what we were looking for: soft coats and a solid collection to support them. This is one to watch. We normally do not like to launch a collection in spring/summer for the reason previously suggested but somehow, whatever Sebastian touches turns to gold.

That evening, we visited our friend Jennie Arnau at Peregrine showroom to see **Universal Works by David Keyte**. This British brand has a very nice interpretation of the workwear/streetwear esthetic that we like so much. Be it his Bakers jacket or workshirt, he has nailed it at the right price point. This esthetic has been a feature in our store since we opened in 2004 with **Engineered Garments by Daiki Suzuki**. We bought UW for fall/winter 2010 and we are anxious for its arrival.

Monday, we attended the ENK/Blue shows for some appointments with



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ongoing collections. The highlights there were with old and new friends.

**Benson**, which is the old MacHay at the Blue Agency, was fresh, colorful and at a very attractive price point for a well thought out collection. **What Comes Around Goes Around by Seth Weisman** was the stellar presentation at this show. His mixture of authentic vintage collections and his interpretations of such with his wholesale line is mind-blowing. Fabrics that he has chosen to represent historic models is amazing. His enthusiasm about what he does permeates your fashion soul. The new boy on the block is **Grown and Sewn by Rob Magnus**, a Ralph veteran who has nailed the new khaki trouser that will be attractive to the denim-minded world. It's a small, tight collection with all the right details. All I can say is Bill Thomas, watch out.

During the day on Monday, we left Blue to visit my long-time friend Daiki Suzuki at the **Engineered Garments** showroom. His inspirations of Urban "Americana" Workwear has infiltrated every fashion venue in the marketplace. We are going on our sixth year with his collection and the model and fabric selection gives me goose bumps every time we get in the show room.

Tuesday, by far the most exciting day, we attended Capsule. This is a great show if you want to feel young again. Everything was fresh, the people were upbeat, the music was great and the amenities were always present. Our visit was to see **Post O'Alls designed by Takeshi Ohfuchi**. We carried this line in fall/winter '09 and did very well with it. It merchandised well with Engineered Garments. Again, reinterpretation of Americana with a play on unusual fabrics and findings. This is one to watch! We also visited with Christopher Hascoat from Brooklyn who designs **Taylor Supply**. Again, it's workwear. Their inspiration for this collection is Nautical work wear. The line is small but very focused and every item merchandised well with each other. Attention to detail is right on. There were a few collections that inspired us and we took notes on. I have to say that the Japanese really get it and they have this passion for what they do that I don't see very much when attending other shows. As I've said before, it's *fashion soul* that is lacking in the American market and we need to find out how to create this.

The one thing that pissed me off was the re-emergence of American hand sewns. Here is an industry, that flourished quite well until Nike acquired Cole Haan. Then it all went away to the Dominican Republic and Brazil. Now, because of the brilliant designer **Yuki Matsuda from Yuketan**, who has brought attention to this styling with his incredible footwear, everybody who was somebody, now wants back in the game. All I can say is shame on them for leaving behind many workers in that industry, who were born into their field from generations of craft, who were thrown to the gutter for greed. Sorry for the rant, but it shames me as an American. —Gary Drinkwater

*Any other retailers want to share their thoughts and favorite items from the trade shows? E-mail MRketplace.com's web editor Harry Sheff at [harrys@mrketplace.com](mailto:harrys@mrketplace.com).*

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