

# WWD Dallas

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## the FIG five

Fashion Industry Gallery opens a handful of permanent showrooms.

By Holly Haber

If three are good, five are better.

A trio of permanent showrooms opened in January on the second floor of Fashion Industry Gallery, and they'll be joined by two more tenants in March, according to FIG director Shelli Mers. The five spaces represent the first permanent showrooms built on the

L'Atelier, which reps True Religion, opened in January, as did Jennifer Lazarus Sales, which shows Joe's Jeans, Da Nang, C&C California and Dream Society.

Joann Fiske took the third showroom to rep Juicy Couture women's and men's lines along with accessories, fragrance, shoes, swimwear and watches. Fiske also shows Peter Jones, Twill 22 and Tyler Speed.

The five rooms face the Shop temporary show, which is expected to have close to 100 exhibitors in March, Mers said.

"It's amazing the energy [the new rooms] created on the second floor this past market with the flow of buyers," Mers said. "It definitely brought more buyers to the second floor to have the permanent showrooms and also to have these great lines."

In other news at FIG, Mers hired Joe Scroggins to manage Shop. Previously, Scroggins was manager of the Savvy contemporary department at Nordstrom at Galleria Dallas. He also has a background in visual merchandising and men's wear, a category that Mers hopes to grow at FIG.

"I'm very excited to have him here," she said. "We're working on putting together a men's show in the temporary show."

second level of the venue, where the Shop temporary show is held.

"We had temporary showrooms [in the two rooms] in January, but I have a list of people who want the space, so by March I should have that as permanent space as well," Mers said.

The five rooms have the asset of views overlooking Beck Park.

FIG hosted its third FIG Finale Feb. 16 and 17, drawing more than 20 retailers who came to unload their end-of-season goods at 75 percent off the retail ticket price.

"We want all the better boutiques: men's, women's, children's and accessories," Mers said. "Basically, the people who shop our building during market are prospects for FIG Finale."

Forty Five Ten has been on board with the sale since the beginning, and other stores in the sale last month included Elements, Sheers, Turtletique and Billy Reid.

FIG Finale drew 1,100 shoppers at the first cash-only show last February and 2,000 in August. Mers expected bigger attendance this year. The sale is good for business, not just for the stores, she said.

"It builds a great relationship with our retailers and gives them an opportunity to get to know their peers and come together and do some great business," Mers said.



L'Atelier opened permanent space in January.



FIG's temporary exhibitors include Charlotte Tarantino (left), Leah Woodcock, at Shop, 425am Fashion Weekends (top right).

## FIG market calendar

Women's Apparel and Accessories Market, March 17-20, Fashion Industry Gallery, 1807 Ross Avenue

Saturday, March 17

11 a.m.-2 p.m.: Relax

De-stress with a chair massage from Origins.

3-5 p.m.: Indulge

Free makeup tips provided in the lobby by Neiman Marcus' Laura Mercier specialist.

5:30-7:30 p.m.: Revel

Cocktails With Designer Rachel Pally

Gather in Beck Park for cocktails, hors d'oeuvres and music with clothing designer Rachel Pally, who will participate in a live Q&A.

Sunday, March 18

9 a.m.-5 p.m.: Review

Check out the new showrooms and guest designers on the second floor.

11 a.m.: Revive

Start Sunday on a high note with FIG's own special-recipe Bloody Mary.

3 p.m.: Rejoice

Warm, fresh-baked cookies.

Monday, March 19

9 a.m.: Rise and Shine

Wake up and smell the coffee and tea, courtesy of Globes.

2 p.m.: Reback

Enjoy the special cocktail of the day, served on the second floor.

Tuesday, March 20

11 a.m.-2 p.m.: Taste

Lunch and snacks served in the first floor lounge.

2-5 p.m.: Relax

Stop by Origins to indulge in the latest skin care and beauty products.

## jersey girl

Designer Rachel Pally will be feted at Fashion Industry Gallery.

By Holly Haber

Not many designers in business for four years can say they've dressed every celebrity they'd like, except Oprah.

But that's the case with Rachel Pally, who will be the featured designer at Fashion Industry Gallery during March

market. The 26-year-old is considered the go-to girl for jersey, a fabric she began using in a costume class as a requirement for her minor in modern dance at the University of California at Berkeley.

"I just loved it," said Pally, who had never designed anything before. "I bought myself a sewing machine, and that's it."

Well, not exactly. Working with only \$300 in baby-sitting funds, the young designer slaved around the clock, seven days a week, to launch her Los Angeles company.

"I sewed in my bedroom, which I think is totally illegal," she said.

Pally worked with Modal Jersey, which is made from spun beechwood cellulose, because it was easy.

"I didn't know how to sew or make a pattern or construction, and stretch is easy if you are going about throwing things together," she said. "Obviously, it has evolved immensely. But that way, I didn't have to put in zippers. At the time, nobody was doing jersey. It was so immediately successful. And now everybody does it, but I've been around so long, and my fit is perfect."

Only recently, after sales climbed to nearly \$15 million in 2006, did Pally hire an MBA and begin feeling that maybe she had time to dance again.

Pally loves dresses — Martha Graham is a big influence — and does a killer halter, plus lots of baby-doll and blousy styles. Her caftan, a mainstay of the line, received megawatt exposure when it was worn by Sarah Jessica Parker.

"We make sure that every single possibility is covered for thin women, clubby girls and more conservative moms in Dallas," she said. "There are definitely pieces that are body-conscious. The caftan dress fits up to a size 14."

Pally also offers versatile separates, including a piece that can be worn as a dress, top or skirt, and plenty of flowy tops and palazzo pants in both solids and prints. Wholesale prices run from \$16 for a headband to \$145 for some dresses.

This fall, for the first time, she's stretching into lightweight cashmere that has a drape similar to jersey. "We did a bishop sleeve and a dolman style — a couple of our bodies that we've done for a long time," she said.

Pally said she has added 20 to 40 new cuts in jersey each season, and fall's palette includes mustard, paprika, deep green, dark purple, deep red and cocoa. She's experimenting with piping for the first time, trimming some of the black styles with cream and other hues that hadn't been set at press time.

Pally's distribution is wide, including Nordstrom, Bloomingdale's, Macy's, Anthropologie, shopbop.com and 400 specialty boutiques, The Shak in Dallas among them.

Represented by the Laurie Hasson showroom in Dallas and Los Angeles, Pally will be the belle of a cocktail party March 17 at FIG. "We're so excited," said FIG director Shelli Mers. "She's a hot young designer, and her product is so popular right now. One of the reasons we love having Rachel come in March is she has so many great dresses in her line, and they are so hot right now."



Rachel Pally's Modal Jersey line and logo.



Rachel Pally's Modal Jersey dress.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE PEOPLE OF THE DALLAS FASHION WEEK: TOP: LUCY PARKER FOR SHOPS; BOTTOM: JENNIFER LAZARUS SALES; STYLING BY GABRIEL BARRON; HAIR BY JEFFREY MATHIAS