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RETRO ECO: Small Axe Clothing founders Collette and Natalie McGuire created vintage-inspired styles made from eco fabrics.

Small and Focused at Global E.C.O. Trade Show

LAS VEGAS—The **Global E.C.O. Trade Show** returned to Las Vegas for its third season, again showing with the **ASAP Global Sourcing Show**. Like ASAP, the E.C.O. show opened a day early, running Feb. 11-14 at **The Venetian** hotel, and again, the show kicked off with an eco runway show held in partnership with the **International Academy of Design & Technology—Las Vegas (IADT)**.

This season, the E.C.O. show featured about 20 exhibitors showing everything from organic apparel for men, women and children to textiles, bedding and other home décor items. The broad mix is all part of organizer Howard Gabe's plan. Gabe hopes to add other environmentally conscious items ranging from organic beauty products to green building materials such as solar panels. "Anything that's eco or green—because fashion isn't everything," he said.

Gabe said he would like to keep about 80 percent of the exhibitor mix in apparel and the rest in beauty, home items and other green products.

"A lot of the people here are very well-educated [in eco design]," said Darren Friedman, president of **Fortune & Redemption**, a men's and women's line based in Los Angeles. This was Friedman's first time at the Global E.C.O. Show, after showing at the **Project Global Trade Show** last season. The line includes organic cotton and bamboo tees printed and dyed using water-based and low-toxicity dyes.

"I'm trying to be as green as possible," said Friedman, who worked as a graphic designer before launching the line.

The collection for men and women is cut, sewn, dyed and printed in Los Angeles, and each silk-screened item is hand printed, making it one-of-a-kind. The company's hangtags are made from paper embedded with wildflower seeds. Rather than discarding the tag, consumers can plant it instead, Friedman explained.

For now, **Fortune & Redemption** is limited to T-shirts and two dress styles, but Friedman is planning to expand the line to include hoodies, sweat shirts, cropped pants and thermals. Both dresses are adjustable to give the wearer a few options.

This was also the first time **Small Axe Clothing** showed at the E.C.O. show. The line had a small debut last season at **WWD MAGIC**.

"We got a little lost in the shuffle [at MAGIC]," Collette McGuire said. "The green [movement] hasn't reached the masses yet. We wanted to be in a focused trade show. People here understand eco."

Collette McGuire and her sister, Natalie, decided to launch the line after searching for dressier items made from eco materials. The collection draws inspiration from the 1940s through the 1970s and features luxurious eco fabrics such as hemp/silk, hemp/Tencel and soy/cotton. Pieces include tailored jackets, swing skirts, rompers and dresses as well as a few swimsuits made from hemp with a little spandex for recovery. The sisters have been selling their line through their Web site (www.smallaxeclothing.com) but landed their first wholesale order from a store in Pennsylvania on the opening day of the E.C.O. show.—Alison A. Nieder