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Trends at Bluezone Highlight Denim's Constant State of Change

By Angela Velasquez



From circular concepts and waterless dye technology, to a return of oversized shapes, the denim industry's evolution from just the basic five-pocket jean was all on display at Bluezone in Munich, Germany Tuesday.

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Rather than focus on mills' latest stretch constructions or seasonal "it" items, Bluezone's creative consultant Tilmann Wröbel curated the show's trend section to educate attendees about denim's latest innovations and to highlight new concepts he believes will likely push the industry forward.

Denim, Wröbel said, is moving at a constant pace. "There's a lot of pessimists in the denim industry that say denim is not moving forward, but I believe there are always new opportunities and ideas," he told Rivet.

Contrary to what many believe, Wröbel says there's more to denim than just low cost jeans from East Asia. Companies like Tavex from Spain and Berto in Italy are essentially "right around the corner" for the German and European market to benefit from, he said, and brands like Swonne, Ullac and Denim Atelier are just some Wröbel touted for

bringing fresh ideas to the market.

Wröbel's goal for the trend area at the tradeshow is to put the naysayers to rest and present ideas that all brands—from high end to high street—can capitalize on. "We're taking more of an activist approach," he said, adding that mills are in a unique position to influence where denim goes next.

Here's a look at four key trend stories moving denim forward into the future.

Cradle to Cradle fabrics

Recycled and upcycled fabrications are becoming more mainstream, thanks in part to innovations like Lenzing's Refibra fiber made from recycled cotton scraps and wood pulp, and Repreve fibers derived from recycled plastic bottles. Soorty, Bossa, Orta Anadolu and Royo were among the mills offering fabrics made from pre-consumer waste. The key, Wröbel noted, is to explain the story and benefits behind the technology. "Otherwise, we won't believe it," he said, referring to the general consumer.



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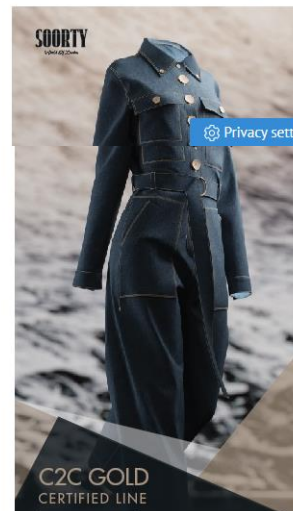
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Laser finish and no water concepts

The denim supply chain is developing washes, finishes and fabrics using little to no water—and with superior results. Sustainable processes like Royo's exclusive [Dry Indigo](#) technology and Master Textile Mills' Zero Water Indigo Denim, cuts water consumption in the manufacturing process by 99.9%, achieves vintage and authentic denim looks that rival traditional methods.

Oversize fits

Fashionistas and streetwear enthusiasts have already discovered new voluminous shapes, but mills at Bluezone keyed in on oversized styles that will appeal to a broader, high street market. Bodybuilder silhouettes from the '80s and a mix of fits—like an oversized jacket with a super slim bottom—are among the looks presented by mills like Prosperity Textile and Artistic Milliners, as well as gaucho pants, boxy jumpsuits and button fly flare jeans.

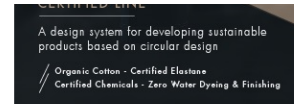
Back to grains

After seasons of super flat finishes, mills are revisiting denim fabrics with grainy surfaces and thick low torsion threads. The look is heavy and sturdy, but fabrics feel soft and have a drapery feel. The fabrics come from a global mix of mills, from Italy's Berto to Gediz Kumas San Ve Tic in Turkey and Raymond Denim in India.

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