

# Sourcing the Future

## Taipei Innovative Textile Application Show (TITAS)

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### TALKING POINTS:

1. From the recent NBC's interview with fashion designer Stella McCartney: 150 million trees cut every year to make rayon. And, fashion industry causes more toxic emissions than the entire maritime shipping and all international flights combined!
2. According to Elon Musk, "...what's going to happen is robots will be able to do everything better than us. Better, faster and cheaper - there will be abundance of things." This means that we, humans, will have MANY MORE material possessions per capita than ever before, including clothes, footwear, accessories... everything!
3. The global population has grown from 1 billion in 1800 to 7,616 billion in 2018. Thus we currently add 80 million or more people to the planet each year. This means, we are en route to a population of 9 billion by 2050, and 10 billion by 2100, which is a maximum carrying capacity for Earth, many scientists think. This is all the Earth can SUSTAIN!

What does it mean? In plain English, *buckle your seatbelt, Dorothy, 'cause Kansas is going bye-bye...* unless we stop sawing off the branch we're sitting on in regards to natural resources. Instead, we must find alternative sources that will be at least as good (or better) and environmentally safe.

This is the reason I have huge respect for the Taiwan Textile Federation - for their visionary decision made back in 1990's to invest in R&D of an entirely new generation of sourcing materials and manufacturing processes that would better serve the needs of the rapidly evolving world.

Today Taiwan's textile industry is a major provider of functional fabrics for well-known international outdoor and sportswear brands and is widely recognized across the globe. Taiwan accounts for 70% of the world's output of functional fabrics, with nearly 50% of all fabric made from recycled materials.

Taiwan is a home of the Taipei Innovative Textile Application Show (TITAS), a trade only sourcing event where people come from all over the world for the latest in advanced textiles, technologies and high performance sewing machinery.



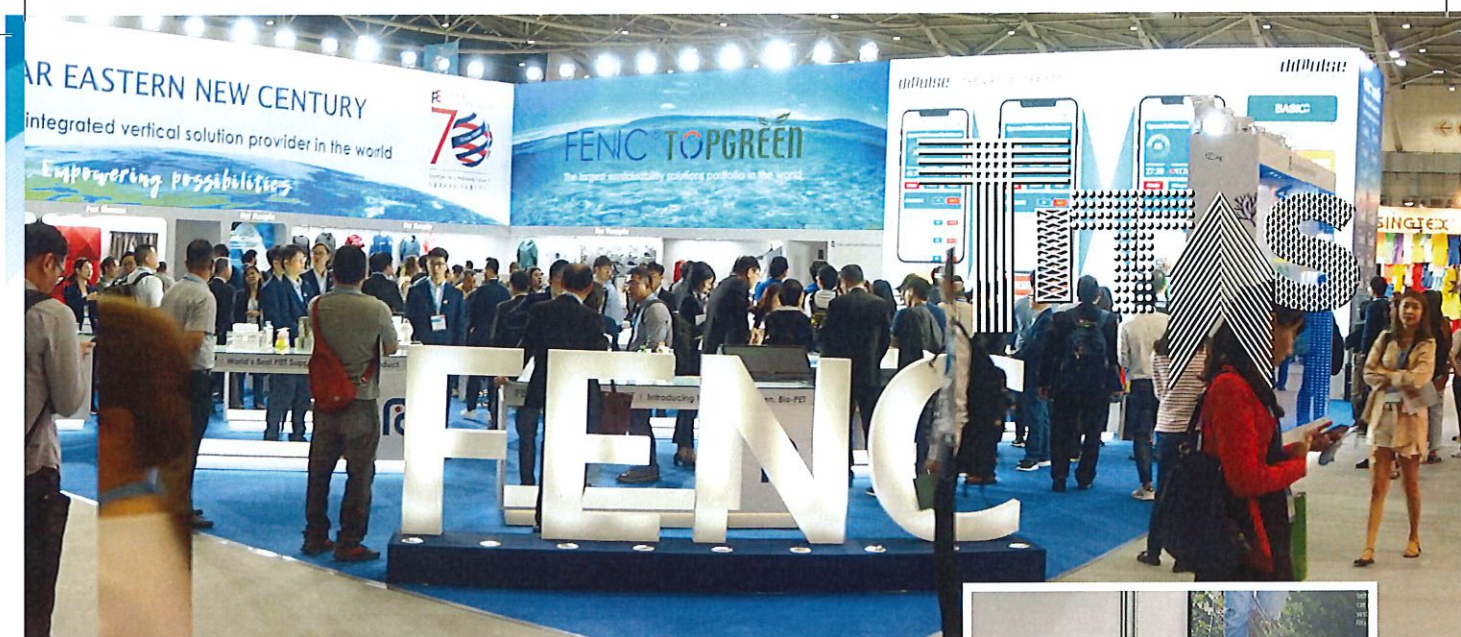
The recently concluded 23<sup>rd</sup> edition of TITAS was held under umbrella of the Taipei Fashion Week, whose theme "NOWism" emphasized the idea that NOW is the future for Taiwan. The show hosted 423 exhibitors from 12 countries, plus 20 trade organizations representing Taiwan's range of suppliers and manufacturers. The four main pillars of TITAS 2019 were *Functional Applications, Sustainability, Smart Textile, and Intelligent Manufacturing*.

If I had to choose one word to describe what TITAS show is about, the word would be **OPPORTUNITY**.



Simply put, innovative materials and smart functional clothing is what the future will be made of. This is a fact! Yet, it's all still relatively new and not many people fully comprehend the gargantuan size of changes that will follow. So, *If you want to become rich and successful, seek*





*insights that few others know about!* Get into this growing industry early on and strive to solve a problem in a big market.

I hope and wish that innovations revealed at TITAS will inspire next generation of Jeff Bezos(es), Elon Musks, Mark Zuckerbergs to shout "Eureka!" with a vision of a new product, or service, or fashion style that will change the world. This is why TITAS is an OPPORTUNITY, or a gateway to it!

With that being said, here's what I saw and learned at the TITAS 2019 for you:

TITAS 2019 focusing on sustainability.



### FUNCTIONAL APPLICATIONS

According to organizers, some of the highly demanded products and innovations currently trending deliver functions such as windproof, water repellence and moisture wicking, super lightweight, downproof, tearproof, and durability. Such features have "enabled a brand new lifestyle" that crosses over sports, outdoor, fashion and healthcare. One example from Taiwan is *Sunmor by Erictex* – a "game-changing" fabric that provides UPF 50+ UV blocking ability with great ventilation, moisture-wicking and anti-odor abilities. According to Erictex, it protects skin from 98% of the sun's harmful rays and blocks out 75% of infrared radiation by utilizing special yarn and structure. "This sun-blocking ability not only prevents skin damage and ageing but regulates body temperature. Moreover, it's permanent," the company says. In addition, Sunmor is lightweight and offers air permeability >200 CFM as well as unidirectional moisture transport. Plus, the product's anti-odor technology stops 99% of odor-causing bacteria.

### SUSTAINABILITY

When it comes to sustainability, Taiwanese companies are "learning, sharing and exchanging their concepts, experiences and technologies in green and circular textiles to reengineer, redesign and redefine the textile product chain", and adopting a new kind of business model that can "optimize resource efficiency, cut waste and prevent pollution". From recycling PET bottles to reusing fishnets and waste materials from the ocean, the latest advancements help to eliminate and recycle to produce textiles for circular economies.

### SMART TEXTILES

Many exhibitors at TITAS are using innovative fibers or wearable devices, cloud data and wireless transmission devices to integrate temperature control functions for textile products and smart garments that are comfortable and functional. Examples of these devices include A+ Smart thermoregulation clothing and iQmax.



### INTELLIGENT MANUFACTURING

The development of technologies and facilities for Industry 4.0 will help the garment industry step up to automated production and intelligent manufacturing. Technologies presented here include intelligent spreading systems that consolidate all production stages in one stop and technologies that integrate digital applications for online enterprises and database systems.

### GENERAL INDUSTRY TRENDS

**Athleisure** is a trend which continues to grow, as consumers enjoy the benefits of functional apparel and comfort in their day to day clothing. But athleisure is made using synthetic materials that contain microfibers – and it is well known that laundry of these garments allows tiny particles of plastic to enter our oceans and harm marine life.

**Comfort** is a key benefit of athleisure and apparel in general. As well as being incorporated into clothing, it is also receiving attention from the →



## SHOW REVIEW

home textiles sector. Songbeam is a Taiwan-based company, which produces bedding, pillows, mattresses and furnishings for shops and franchises within department stores in Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia and Japan.

One of Songbeam's latest product innovations is Tempwiser, a range of bedding made from Tencel Lyocell and Modal cellulose fibers and using nano-technology to apply fish oil collagen into the fiber. The company claims that the bedding is soft to the touch and has moisture management and temperature regulation properties which keep the skin cool, smooth and comfortable. The company also offers bedding which contains Iceland seaweed material that provides minerals and vitamins – used in cosmetics because they contribute to skin beauty. It also has a range of mosquito-repellent bedding which uses materials that were originally intended for military and mountaineering products.

**Durability** is an equally important quality when considering textile products. Taiwan Textile Research Institute (TTRI) has been working with Taiwan-based company Niching to develop a range of abrasion-resistant fabrics, for use in socks and workwear.

Niching designs and prepares nanoparticles to create nanomaterials which have high functionality. Niching claims that the durability of its product is 2.5 times that of a standard equivalent fabric.

**Natural ingredients in fabrics** is driven by the shift towards a more sustainable textile supply chain, and companies such as 3C Tex, a fabrics manufacturer based in Taiwan, offers a sustainability range of fabrics which include natural materials such as fish oil, oyster shells and seaweed. The company offers fabrics ranges which are categorized as eco-friendly, recycled, and biomass, and claims that the natural materials provide the fabrics with moisture management and cooling properties which do not wash out.

**Transparency** in the industry is increasingly recognized to be important as brands seek clear information about their choices of materials for their products – taking into consideration the specification, quality, and environmental sustainability, while also reducing their environmental damage to the planet – but it is challenging because of the long and complex supply chain.

**Water consumption** is an area of concern for the industry because many processes – including dyeing – consume vast quantities of water. Solution dyeing (dope dyeing) is offered by a number of companies – where the pigment is applied at the masterbatch (plastic chips) stage and therefore no water is required for dyeing and subsequent processes – and therefore the amount of energy, resources, time and cost – are reduced.

**Materials.** New synthetic fibers can stretch or shrink, repel or completely absorb moisture,



provide anti-microbial and odor protection and control body temperature. Modern materials made with such new fibers can reflect light and glow in the dark, they breathe, manage odors, and more. And they FEEL good too!

Such hugely important factors as water consumption, water, air and soil pollution, recyclability, anti-microbial functions, shrinkage and fading, etc, etc, etc- the TITAS and it's international exhibitors seemingly address all that. Materials of the future are here today! New fibers, yarns, textiles and materials existing today are far superior and far more advanced than ever before. Of course, synthetic fibers are not fully equal natural organic materials, but they can be. Will be! And choices for synthetics soon will be made.

**Consumers.** Today's consumers are becoming increasingly aware and conscious and altogether, very SELECTIVE about how, where and by whom their clothes were made- we want clothes that we will be proud to wear. Looking into the future, consumers will want their clothes (as everything else) being SMART: smart phones, smart appliances, smart watches, ... as well as smart clothes and shoes. Why not?

If this is about ADDED VALUE, where multiple options are easily available, then why not combine everything that our hearts desire: comfort, fashion, plus beneficial extras: bio monitoring, protection, heating, cooling, color change?

**Trade War.** Wary of the imminent impact of fresh US tariffs on imports from mainland, many Taiwanese production companies started relocating from mainland to Taiwan, because the United States does not apply its tariffs to Taiwan, which is self-ruled but regarded as a renegade province by Beijing. Having said that, the last show demonstrated nothing but positive attitude, full attendance, the number of exhibitors and attendees seems unchanged from a year before.

I didn't notice any impact of the trade war on the TITAS show. ❖



**The 24<sup>th</sup> Taipei Innovative Textile Application Show (TITAS) 2020** will be held from October 6-8, 2020 at Taipei Nangang Exhibition Center.

### More information:

Taipei Innovative Textile Application Show (TITAS): [www.titas.tw](http://www.titas.tw)

Taiwan Textile Federation (TTF): [www.textiles.org.tw](http://www.textiles.org.tw)

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