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Season in review  
*Autumn/winter 18-19*

Season in focus  
*Spring/summer 2019*

Forward view  
*Autumn/winter 19-20*

# Fibres and fabrics

By PHILIPPA WATKINS

## 2017 – A good year for UK manufacturing

We're starting the year with good news, for the UK at least, where the textile and manufacturing industries are experiencing something of a resurgence. According to the annual survey conducted by **Make It British**, UK textile manufacturing is currently booming - production is up 25% and 50% of businesses reported an increase in turnover in 2017, compared to the previous year.

And all this despite economic uncertainty, which includes, in particular, the availability of skills for an industry with an ageing workforce. For, while its days seemed numbered during precarious years of severe competition from abroad, the textile industry was not an attractive proposition for job seekers.

But, more recently, parts of the industry – the woolen industry in Yorkshire for example - often small scale and with small start-ups, are not only surviving, but thriving. So a key challenge for 2018 is to attract more young people into the industry – and quickly.

Kate Hills, founder and CEO of **Make it British**, which supports British-brands that make in the UK, explained that the survey revealed the good news for UK manufacturing in general. Nearly 100 manufacturers from across the fashion and textile sector were surveyed, ranging from small workshops producing luxury womenswear to textile mills producing millions of metres a year.

"There is increased interest" she said, "from overseas and more companies are looking to source locally. As a result, more factories are opening or working longer hours and taking on apprentices to keep up with demand."

Among these were also yarn producers, principally for the knitting industry, with many British made hand-knitting yarns offered by smaller companies, particularly in wool where spinners are including local fibres from British sheep or alpaca. But the most surprising and heartening of all is the return of industrial cotton spinning to



Tower Mill

Lancashire, once, of course, a key industry in North West England, because of its proximity to the Liverpool docks, where the cotton arrived from the US.



Compact spun Supima yarns by English Fine Cottons

**Cotton's come back** A good year for UK manufacturing - but none more so than for **English Fine Cottons** which in 2017 brought industrial cotton spinning back to its origins in in the North East to Greater Manchester. Tower Mill, where the 150-foot-tall chimney and water tower are still prominent on the skyline, is again spinning cotton, 130 years after it was built for cotton spinning and more than 50 years after it was last used for

cotton spinning. **English Fine Cottons** had begun the multi-million-pound refurbishment programme in 2013 to restore the building to its former glory and the restoration is still on going. But they have the first products of fine quality cotton yarns, extra long staple (ELS), from Sea Island to Supin and Supima, from a variety of sources.

The project is also intended to enable a whole local supply chain from cotton bale to retail - including textile production and garment manufacturing. The mill is working with its partners, weavers and finishers, to produce samples for a variety of market sectors, including shirting and bed linen, fabrics for printing and eventually a range of printed fabrics. First off is the fine shirting fabrics made with EFC's superpima fine cotton yarn. The yarn, dyed at **Blackburn Yarn Dyers**, is then woven into shirting cloth at **John Spencer Textiles** and stitched into a shirt at Manchester garment manufacturers **Private White V.C.** who recently opened a shirt-making unit. EFC is also working with a number of garment and fabric knitting companies,



to develop yarns for making fine jerseys for T-shirts and underwear. Luxury jersey tops specially developed to trap heat and reduce wind-chill are the latest products made from EFC cotton yarns, made by **Ashley Watson** – British motorcycle clothing and fashion brand. EFC hope the project will encourage a growing revival of even more local and regional industries.

**Celebrating 25 years of a textile success story** It was also a good year for woven textile design company **Wallace Sewell**, who in 2017 celebrated their 25th anniversary in business with an exhibition at the **Fashion & Textile Museum** in London. The display highlighted a brilliant textile success story, in a partnership founded by Royal College of Art graduates, whose global success is rooted in British design education and UK manufacturing. And they did it at a time when graduating designers, who were unable to find jobs in the declining textile industry in the early 1990s, resorted to producing their own exclusive, highly creative products, often hand made. But as demand increased for these exclusive products, somewhere had to be found to produce them.



Designs from Wallace Sewell

The Wallace Sewell partnership and woven design studio, founded in 1992, did just that; it discovered a mill in Yorkshire short of work, and persuaded them to take the risk and commission weave their products. The move developed into a thriving business in woven fabrics and accessories, to which has been added a very successful home furnishing collection and commissioned design work, including moquette designs for Transport for London in the London Underground. Combining rich colour palettes with colourful geometric forms, their bold patterns adorn everything from scarves, throws and cushions to TFL moquettes. Today Wallace Sewell can be found in over

200 stockists worldwide, and museums from the Tate to MOMA. Thus a factor stimulating the resurgence of textile production in the UK is the industry's recognition that it had to change, be more open to ideas and take more risk, which, in the cycle of things, helped save them.

#### Early Spring/Summer trends

There's a feeling for next spring/summer that 'much' has become 'too much', that we might be looking to pare down, create with a more more minimal approach, with naturally simple yet quietly sophisticated ideas.

#### Cariaggi takes the simple approach:

cashmere specialist **Cariaggi** has taken this approach for S/S 19, with a quietly sophisticated proposal for serene elegance, but rich and soft to the touch. The yarn collection establishes different interpretations of cashmere, emphasizing the strength and natural lightness of the fibre, and transforming it into an even finer item, thanks to processing, where effects are created with extreme volumes and a soft, fluffy consistency.

One yarn stands out, **Brisk combed yarn** (74% cashmere/26% silk) because of the high quality cashmere fibres and the finest silk, which are specially wound together, creating a gathered surface giving it a surprisingly fresh appearance.



Cariaggi Brisk combed yarn

Parts of the collection, however, still sparkle, highlighted by games of light, created by Lurex and micro sequins – such as **Gritty brushed yarn** (59% cashmere/25% silk/16% lurex + Sequins), the pride of the collection, which combines fine cashmere with silk and micro sequins, the smallest on the market, to achieve a shiny elegant effect. A notable yarn for summer is Cariaggi's cotton **Mizar** (100% Belize Cotton) with

crepe effect. The superior properties of this ELS cotton lies in its sustainable cultivation, which produces a fibre with unique characteristics – silky and shiny, which places the fibre in a category of its own.

Colours for S/S 19 focus on pastel nuances conjuring a delicate image, back to nature in springtime. Alongside are bright, vibrant tones, inspired by traditional Indian clothes, with a vibrant energy.



Cariaggi Gritty brushed yarn

#### Tollegno highlights authentic simplicity:

**Tollegno 1900** is concentrating on the authentic quality of its yarns, focusing on its original form to highlight the 'material' nature of its yarns. Thus the S/S 19 collection is pared down to its purest and simplest variants (pure cashmere and extrafine merino wool) and blends (silk, viscose, linen, cotton) rejoicing in their simplicity. Colours and workmanship live through a process of subtraction, with the clear objective of highlighting the essence of materials.

**Classic & Luxury collection One Collection:** 100% combed cashmere is either pure, or combined with silk (*Jasmine*); extrafine merino wool is pure or with viscose (*Vicky*), silk (*Sultano* and *Délice*) or silk/cashmere (*Feeling*); 100% ultrafine merino wool (*New Royal*, *New Royal Top wash* and *Charme*) for stylish, precious knitwear.



Tollegno Woolcor

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Tollegno Flaxwool

There are also blends of superfine merino with cotton, (Woolcot), where the elasticity and softness of the merino wool marries the freshness of cotton, and with linen (Flaxwool 65% linen/35% superfine merino) with its ability to adapt to different climates.

Performance collection (technical and practical): Tollegno 1900 also offers yarns, which perform for activewear and underwear. Thanks to the characteristics of the merino wool itself (thermal insulation, elasticity, high absorption, antibacterial and hypo-allergenic actions), the best performing yarns combine naturalness with technological innovation, without compromising on comfort, resilience and practicality. A Teflon fabric protector enhances the performance of some these.

Jersey collection: finally, completing the Tollegno 1900 collection for summer is a "nonpareil" collection designed for the 'jersey-addicted' (already presented at Filo), also ideal for the accessories of runway and on-the-road fashion trends.

#### **A sustainable route to production:**

Continuing to pursue its route towards fully sustainable production, spinner **Botto Giuseppe** for S/S 19, is focusing on schappe silk and organic linen in its range of luxury yarns. The processing of schappe silk is sustainable and cruelty free, as the silk is obtained by harvesting the cocoons after the moths emerge. Linen is included in the collection in blends with natural fibres cotton or silk, and in a light bouclé yarn.

These yarns are manufactured in the Tarcento factory in Friuli, which operates solely on sustainable energy such as hydroelectric dam-generated energy and solar energy obtained from large expanses of photovoltaic panels fitted on their roof.

**Filmar's new spin on cotton:** Fine cotton specialist spinner **Filmar**, which combines the finest of raw cottons, has reached an important point in production, integrating sustainable innovation and social responsibility directly onto its products, thanks to a controlled supply chain. Cotton and raw materials are selected, in compliance with stringent environmental, social and qualitative criteria – and manufactured in line with the Greenpeace Detox Protocol to ensure no harmful chemicals are used during the production process.

Filmar's branded cotton yarn **Filoscozia**, made from ELS Egyptian cotton, is known for its unique high quality, linked to state-of-the-art manufacturing processes. Versatile and reliable **Filoscozia** is suitable for many high performance processes lasting through numerous washes.

From weaving to knitwear and hosiery, twisted, combed and plated, **Filoscozia** does not pill and thanks to mercerisation, provides a uniform degree of colour and brilliance, and is particularly suitable for delicate skin. Available in different formats, new yarns for knitwear are branded **Filoscozia** with holographic labels.

To ensure that **Filoscozia** attracts not only its classic market, but a younger, more experimental one, **Filmar** started a collaboration with the Fashion & Design School at the Politecnico di Milano, where young designers are working on creative research projects to enrich and extend the use of **Filoscozia** to various fields of fashion and design.

#### **Tintex presents "NATURALLY ADVANCED" innovations**

Portuguese fine cotton knitter, **Tintex**, is expanding into fabric innovations for sportswear and athleisure, as well as fashion and underwear sectors. But, as a dynamic company with its eye on the future, it is also focusing on making a truly sustainable range of modern hybrid jersey fabrics that offer better, *Naturally Advanced* choices to its customers.

The new 'Naturally Advanced' position means "advancing beautiful, organic and natural materials to the next level combined with unique, hybrid 'nature-tech' smarts, with advanced, added value and creativity, thanks to dedicated investment that serves and secures customer demands both now and in seasons to come," says CEO Mario Jorge. The collection uses up to 90% smart and



sustainable materials, including Tencel, modal & micro-modal, organic cotton, supima cotton, Seacell fibres, and natural organic linen – and the new ECOTEC yarns by Marchi & Fildi, made from pre-consumer cotton waste. Tintex is also introducing the new ECOTEC yarn Phoenix (50% ECOTEC/50% recycled polyester) for open, dry textures, and new fabrics using the ROICA Eco Smart family of eco-sustainable stretch yarns which are made with at least 50% recycled pre-consumer waste.

**'Sensitive' brings new combinations for athleisure** A new feature from Eurojersey, with its versatile Sensitive knit fabric, is a collaboration with leading wool weaver Lanificio REDA, a byword for innovation and eco-sustainable technology, which has led to the creation of a new fabric designed for applications for various sports and urban fitness activities. A functional and contemporary look, between fashion and performance, the fabric is made up in the new Sensitive Plus fabric backed with merino wool. Breathable and temperature regulating with a soft hand-feel, this fabric guarantees an excellent fit to athleisure garments, and optimal comfort at any time of the day. Made for tailoring styles, the fabric is fully reversible with triple needle stitching in contrasting colours, combining functionality with aesthetics on a sporty looking outfit.

**Jersey Lomellina expands range of ribbed fabrics:** Italian jersey company Jersey Lomellina (specialist in warp knits and circular jersey) has expanded its range of ribbed fabrics designed to offer a tactile experience to people who like



Jersey Lomellina Brighton quality

"feeling" the fabric on their skin. Soft, compact, comfortable, ideal for sports and athleisurewear, two new ribbed



Carvico and eco-commitment

fabrics have been added, **Bristol and Brighton**. With mini ribs, Bristol is compact, soft and light (only 250 grams), designed for energetic fitness garments, which need to support muscles with the right level of compression - perfect for leggings and shorts. Brighton has a more sophisticated allure, with a glimmer for understated glamour, designed for both beachwear and lingerie. Soft with a rich hand feel, it is suitable for beachwear with a hint of vintage glamour.

**Carvico's sustained eco-commitment:**

Sister company Carvico is developing further its Vita range of fabrics, made with EcoVyl polyamide yarn, from recycled nylon. Vita has already stood out as a technologically advanced fabric in Carvico's collection, because of its versatility – it is hyper-resistant, thin, elegant, elastic and soft – as well as its green credentials. Two new variants are added - **VITA Power**, which as its name suggests, is stronger, heavier with good recovery, but still soft, compact, breathable and perfectly fitting. It is also pilling and abrasion resistant, UV protective (UPF 50+) and ensures muscular compression levels, while offering maximum freedom of movement – ideal for sportswear. **VITA Suede** is matt and brushed, but with the same performances and features of VITA Power with the extra benefit of the feel of comfortable suede, suitable for many end uses.

**Fibre Developments**

**Sustainable Stretch Innovations**

Stretch for the Active Wardrobe with ROICA: The latest ROICA premium stretch innovations were presented at ISPO in the BrandNew arena, a new concept inside ISPO. In the context of "The Modern Wardrobe" new stretch solutions were brought to life targeted at different end uses.

First, the **Active Wardrobe**, which includes the ROICA Eco Smart and the ROICA Feel Good families, with latest textile performance innovations from partner mills to inspire more brand creativity. Second **ROICA Innovation** presented performance innovations from partner mills to inspire, with the revolutionary ROICA Eco Smart family of sustainably designed stretch yarns, which are either GRS certified or have the Cradle-to-Cradle Innovation Institute GOLD LEVEL certificate, plus the Hobenstein Environment Certificate, where at its end-of-life it breaks down releasing less harmful substances. These solutions are for intimates, athleisure, sportswear, and more.

And finally the new **ROICA Stretch Energy**, a heat-generating system that combines a ROICA polymer with fabric structures where the stretch and recovery action produces real warmth, maintaining support during exercise.

**Hyosung focuses on Sustainable fibres:**

Showing for the first time at ISPO, Hyosung highlighted its sustainable