

Milano Unica Unveils July Edition

- More than 6,000 visitors attended the trade show, which showcased the fall 2018 collections of high-end textile companies.

BY ALESSANDRA TURR

MILAN – The first edition of Milano Unica held in July pleased exhibitors showing their fall 2018 collections and drew more than 6,000 visitors. The three-day textile trade show moved from early September and closed on July 13, boosting the number of international buyers. The winter edition of the trade show will continue to be held in February.

According to data released by the fair's organizers, although the number of visitors didn't increase compared with September 2016, the average time spent

"We are happy with the results of the trade show and we registered an increase in orders compared to the previous season," said Botto Giuseppe chief executive officer Silvio Botto. "I think it was a smart move to anticipate the fair even if it was a challenge for manufacturers to get ready with collections so early."

According to Botto, his company managed to complete the production of the woven collection, while it completed 70 percent of the jersey range. "The remaining 30 percent of the jersey collection will be presented at Première Vision in September."

ble-digit increase in buyers from outside Italy, including the Netherlands, Portugal, Germany, Russia, Spain, United States, United Kingdom, France and Turkey.

According to Alessandro Vitale Barberis Canonico, coo of Vitale Barberis Canonico, the U.S. is delivering satisfying performances, especially in the made-to-measure category.

"We are surprised by the U.K. market, which we expected to slow following the Brexit, but actually the drop of the pound sterling stimulated international tourism and international luxury shopping," he said, adding that, conversely, Japan and Korea are registering a slight downturn.

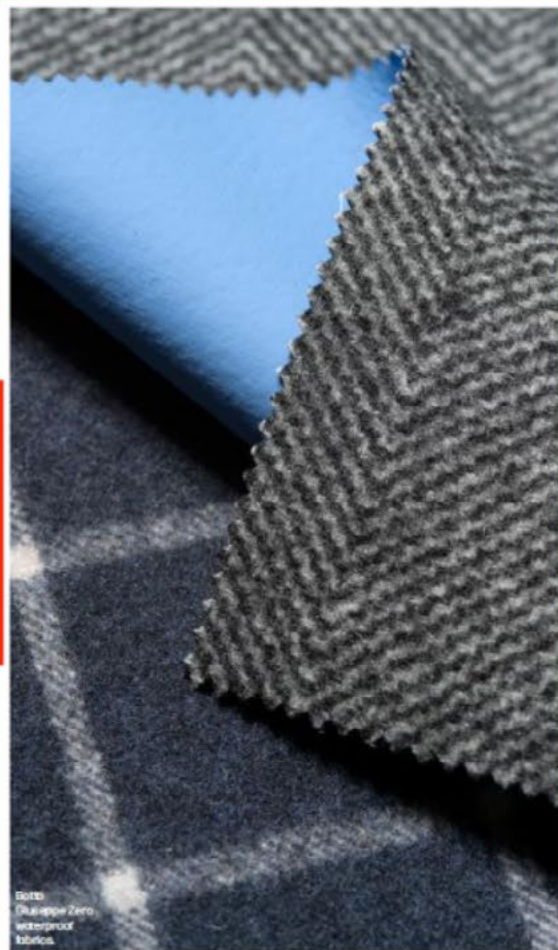
Asked about the possible upcoming scenarios, Vitale Barberis Canonico said "a lot will depend on the effects of the current devaluation of the dollar." His company closed 2016 with revenues of 152 million euros and expects to grow between 3 and 5 percent in 2017 compared to the previous year.

"All the different markets are currently performing well but we have to look carefully to the United States because we have to understand what the impact of the dollar devaluation and Donald Trump's protectionist politics will be," agreed Lincoln Germanetti, coo of Tollegno 1900.

The States are definitely a target for cotton specialist Albini Group which is gearing up to open a direct office in New York to boost its business in North America. The firm, which posted revenues of 148 million euros in 2016, is expecting to close 2017 in line with the previous year.

"The results of the trade show are very positive," said Zignone managing director Matteo Panti, who highlighted that the number of visitors at the booth, especially European, North American and Japanese clients, increased between 5 and 10 percent compared with the same season last year.

Despite the positive mood, the dollar's



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instability emerged as one of the main concerns among the exhibitors, already facing another problem in the first quarter of the year – record wool prices. As a consequence of the increased value of the raw material, all the exhibitors were forced to apply a 10 percent increase to their products' prices.

Easy-care and comfortable fabrics, textured surfaces and a high-tech spin were definitely the key trend at Milano Unica

For example, Botto Giuseppe, along with expanding its offering of stretch cashmere, also launched "Zero," a collection of wool and wool and cashmere fabrics matched with polyurethane membranes which make them water resistant, windproof yet breathable.

specific needs of modern men with their dynamic lifestyle," said Vitale Barberis Canonico.

In particular, the company delivered the Montecarlo suiting fabric, crafted from 21-micron wool, which guarantees an antibrinkle effect.

"We also expanded our Vintage range with wool and silk and wool and linen textiles for jackets and suits featuring effortless sophisticated patterns, which make them suitable for different occasions," said Vitale Barberis Canonico.

In keeping with the booming luxury-active trend, the company introduced a range of textured silk and wool fabrics matched with a colorful membrane guaranteeing high-end outdoor performances.

For fall 2018, Tollegno 1900 expanded its offering of classic fabrics featuring

lycra and elastic fibers for a comfortable, stretch effect. Tollegno 1900 also treated the cloths included in the Multiperformance range with a special finishing that renders them anti-UV, antibacterial, stain and water-proof.

Different types of yarns were combined to create textured, 3D surfaces on the textile products, including wool and linen blends, designed for blazers, while the Rainmaker line featured traditional fabrics matched with high-tech membranes for performance, sporty-chic garments.

In addition, as part of the high-end Tollegno Luxury collection, the company combined camel hair and silk for upscale fabrics.

Comfort was the key word at Zignone, where the company presented a wide range of stretch fabrics. While some of them combined traditional yarns, including wool and cashmere with elastic fibers and lycra, the company also showcased a selection of natural stretch cloths.

Ermeneegildo Zegna put the focus on sustainability with the launch of "Ecol'orlano," a collection of fabrics dyed without chemicals but only with natural elements, including walnuts, catechu – an extract from acacia trees – poppy and indigo. While in the past this kind of naturally dyed fabrics used to lose color with washing, as a company's spokesman explained, the new range was treated with advance fixing techniques guaranteeing both beautiful shaded effects and durability.

The company also showcased superfine wool doubled fabrics for lightweight coats, as well as an easy-care wool cloth actually resembling denim. Wool was also garment dyed for a fabric designed to manufacture warm chinos for the fall season.

The company's women's wear division, Agnola, unveiled "Only One," a collection of scarves and blankets decorated with hand-painted floral motifs.

In the shirting section, color, lightness and sustainability were the pillars of Ratti's Rcollection, focused on silk and eco-friendly viscose fabrics. These were mainly printed with patterns with a 3-D effect, as well as motifs from Ratti's rich archives.

For the company's high-end collection, which serves mainly as inspiration for designers' customizations, Ratti director Mario Ratti said that for the first time the different companies under the Marzotto umbrella cooperated to deliver exclusive products.

For example, he showcased a Prince of Wales wool cloth by Delfino, which Ratti treated with a bleaching pigment.

The beautiful, luxury collection also included a quilted fabric featuring silk matched with a padding and a thin film; a flannel treated with a metallic pigment, as well as a cloth with a shiny, glossy finishing obtained with a glass dust treatment.

"The fil rouge running through the lineup is the idea of innovating across all the steps of the productive chain, from yarns to finishing," said Albini Group coo Silvio Albini.

The company introduced a range of shirting fabrics where its signature high-end cottons were combined with several materials, including wool, Tencel, modal and chenille to obtain textured, unconventional effects. Bright colors, stripes and garment dyed finishing emerged also as key features of Albini's wide offering, which also included easy care shirting fabrics for contemporary business men.