

FLASHBACK PART 10

20th Century Fashion History Los Angeles

BY RONALD S. FRIEDMAN, CPA

Hello Again! Here we are in March, and Spring is just around the corner. This month's issue of the Fashion Manuscript released during Women's History Month. In the spirit of women in the fashion industry, I would like to take you back to the 1970s and 1980s.

Once upon a time in the bustling fashion district of Los Angeles, there lived a remarkable woman named Teddi Winograd. Teddi was not just any ordinary fashion enthusiast; she was the driving force behind the iconic brand known as Teddi of California. Her story is one of passion, innovation and a deep love for the vibrant world of apparel.

Teddi's journey began in the golden age of Californian fashion when the sun-kissed streets of LA were brimming with the allure of new styles and endless possibilities. With an eye for design and a heart filled with entrepreneurial spirit, Teddi decided to leap into the fashion world. She wanted to create clothing that was not just beautiful but also accessible, embodying the laid-back yet sophisticated vibe of California.

In the 1960s, Teddi brought her dream to life by establishing Teddi of California. It was a bold move, especially in an industry dominated by male entrepreneurs, but Teddi was not deterred. She believed in her vision and was determined to make it a reality. Her brand quickly gained recognition for its chic blouses, which became a staple in the wardrobes of women who desired a blend of comfort, style and affordability.

Teddi was known for her hands-on approach and could often be found on the factory floor, working closely with her team to ensure that every piece met her high standards. She led by example, never afraid to roll up her sleeves and dive into the nit-

ty-gritty of production. Her employees respected her deeply, not just as a boss but as a mentor and a friend.

As the years went by, Teddi of California grew in popularity, and so did Teddi's reputation as a pioneer among women in the apparel industry. She was celebrated for her innovative designs that fused elements of the burgeoning counterculture with classic elegance. Teddi's ability to anticipate and set trends made her brand a favorite among fashion-conscious consumers.

The first time I met Teddi in the early 1970s, she gave me a tour of their facilities on Broadway in downtown Los Angeles. We came to a room that was a bank vault with a real lock on the door. Upon opening the door, I walked into a room that had a sample of every blouse Teddi ever manufactured.

There must have been thousands of one-of-a-kind pieces and I asked her why she saved them all. The answer was simple: blouses come into style and then they are gone for years, but they all come back into fashion and Teddi wanted to be ready to repeat her great styles.

But Teddi's influence extended far beyond the realms of style. She was an advocate for women empowerment, often speaking at events and encouraging other women to pursue their entrepreneurial dreams. Her success story was an inspiration, showing that with tenacity and creativity, one could overcome any obstacle.

As Teddi's brand flourished, she never lost sight of the core values that had guided her from the beginning—quality, integrity and a connection with her customers. She often said that each blouse was not just a piece of

clothing but a message of confidence from the woman who wore it.

Teddi Winograd's legacy lives on. She remains a symbol of the innovative and free-spirited nature of LA's fashion scene. Her story is not just about the clothes she created but about the lives she touched and the barriers she broke. Teddi of California was more than a brand; it was a testament to the indomitable spirit of a woman who dared to dream and, in doing so, clothed the dreams of many.

Teddi was a legend in the industry and many other great women followed in her footsteps. Nancy Johnson started a company called Sunglow, Carol Little started a company with her namesake brand and then there is Karen Kane, still going strong today.

Don't forget!

The Marcum Retail Symposium is coming to Los Angeles on April 18, 2024, and I hope many of you can join us to hear from two experts in the industry, Marshal Cohen and Andrew Rotondi.

Until next time, remember what I always conclude with...if you are not having fun, then do something else!

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