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The Prospector, March 27, 2018

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ASSAYER OF STUDENT OPINION

THE

PROSPECTOR

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

MARCH 27, 2018



Gesuina Arianna Legaspy arranges clothes at her boutique GAL Fashion. The boutique is located at 5860 N Mesa St. and is open Monday-Saturday from 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.

GABY VELASQUEZ/ THE PROSPECTOR

BY ELENIE GONZALEZ

The Prospector

Fearless fashionista Gesuina Legaspy has made her mark in El Paso's fashion scene by styling countless clients through her emerging career as a business owner and personal stylist.

At only 27 years old, she has owned multiple businesses including Dry Blow-Dry Bar and most recently, GAL Fashion.

Legaspy always had a passion for fashion, but never realized that she could turn it into the career of her dreams until she received a life-changing opportunity about eight years ago. Determined to learn more about the business, she knew what she had to do.

She got her start when she was 19 at Tres Mariposas, a high-end women's clothing and jewelry store and West-side institution, which recently closed its doors.

"They didn't want to hire me because I didn't have a degree or any fashion experience," Legaspy said. "But the moment I walked into the store, I knew that was me. I was in my element, my environment, so I requested an internship."

She worked as an unpaid intern for a few months, learning everything she could before being hired as a sales person. It was at that job that she learned how boutiques and specialty stores operate.

According to Legaspy, department stores and most other clothing stores will sell clothing based on reports and trends. But when it comes to boutiques, there is a buying process. When she found out that there are markets where buyers go to pick clothing to sell at their boutiques, her excitement grew.

Curious about how the process worked, she convinced her employer to allow her to accompany them to New York City to attend a fashion market and observe what they do. She even paid her own way to assure them that she was serious about the business.

"That was when my eyes opened and I was so inspired," Legaspy said. "I said to myself, this is what I want to do with my life, this is the career that I choose to take."

She continued working for Tres Mariposas for six years, transitioning her position as a sales person into a buyer. Although she began by being unpaid, she knew that her hard work would pay off eventually and it did.

Two years ago, Legaspy was finally able to open up her own high-end contemporary boutique, GAL Fashion.

GAL Fashion is a women's clothing store and is known as "The most eclectic mix of known and emerging designers in El Paso, Tx." GAL, which stands for her initials, Gesuina Arianna Legaspy, is also a play on the word "gal."

GAL features multiple name brands, including Versace by Versace, Frame, Mason by Michelle Mason and Veronica Beard, among others.

Legaspy prides her store on being different than many of the other boutiques out there. She wanted to separate her store from being in a competitive atmosphere, where commissions are important.

"We're not going to sell people things just to make sales," Legaspy said. "We're really going to do things with integrity and style people and make them feel beautiful, because that's the ultimate satisfaction and gratification is to see your clients in pictures or out at social events looking fabulous because we helped them do that, to build their confidence."

She believes that creating a culture in her store of being team-oriented is what has made her business a success.

"I made sure everybody was like a team, no one had their own clients, we all share, we all help each other—that way it's a team effort," Legaspy said.

Paulina Seyffert, sophomore media advertising major, has been working at GAL as a photographer for seven months and loves coming to work every day.

"Honestly, the environment is super friendly, super fun and everyone is super nice. I never complain about coming to work, I love it," Seyffert said.

Seyffert has been able to learn a lot working at GAL and under the direction of Legaspy. You can see her pictures featured on GAL's Instagram and Facebook accounts.

GAL and Legaspy's craft for styling have done so well that she has even gained a list of celebrity clients.

Those clients include Shiva Hadid, cast member on the E! television show "Second Wives Club," and who is also stepmom to fashion supermodels Gigi and Bella Hadid. Meghan King Edmonds from the "Real Housewives of Orange County" has also made an appearance at the store and has become a frequent shopper at GAL.

Although Legaspy has built a solid reputation outside of El Paso, it's her clients in the city that truly matter to her.

Women aren't the only ones asking for special pieces. She says that every day she gets asked if she will ever sell clothing for men. At first, she didn't believe there was a market for men, but she has started researching and will begin to incorporate men's clothing later this year.

Legaspy strives to make sure that all her clients feel special, not only when they shop in the store. GAL offers personal styling for anyone who walks in the doors. She says that her favorite clients are those that walk in asking for styling help. The store also offers a

shopping service that is delivered free of charge.

The store recently expanded and now offers an evening department, with one-of-a-kind dresses for formal occasions.

The expansion also inspired other ideas that Legaspy has turned into reality. She began the Cinderella Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to helping young girls find dresses for prom and other occasions, but are unable to afford them. She asks her clients to donate their gently worn formal dresses to the foundation.

Always wanting to give back, Legaspy also started a fun event called GAL brunches.

"Each brunch has a special theme, and it's fun to see my clients dress up and mingle and enjoy themselves," Legaspy said.

Legaspy's go-getter attitude and passion for the business has really been a factor in her success and it only continues to grow with each idea.

Another goal of hers is to one day branch out and create specialty stores in larger cities, but for now she is focused on El Paso.

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MARCH 27, 2018

OPINION

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
MICHAELA ROMÁN, 747-7446

The thrift shop effect

BY CLAUDIA HERNANDEZ
The Prospector



Thriftng is a unique experience. Whenever I see something I like, while digging through crammed racks and shelves, I feel like I'm truly finding a treasure.

I used to think thrift shops were for people who couldn't afford new clothes, but these stores hold so much more. There is history in every single garment.

The first time I bought something from a thrift shop was a few years ago. I was traveling and went to a kilo shop (buying clothes by weight) because the store looked interesting from the outside and I was curious. When I entered the store, I saw some pants and fell in love. They were \$5 and appeared to be new, so I bought them. Every single time I have worn them I get compliments, which I call the thrift shop effect.

The thrift shop effect is a term I came up with after noticing these clothes gather people's attention. Maybe it's the fact that I know I am wearing something with a past that gives me confidence, but the effect is real. I now regularly go to thrift shops around El Paso and buy clothes, and the effect remains. I always get compliments.

Since they are so cheap, I can experiment and buy certain clothes I would normally never dare to wear. I've become more adventurous with my style, and I think it's because I end up liking the unique clothes. If I were to buy something very expensive, I would feel like my money was being wasted on the item. However, I've learned to appreciate the quality of things, instead of the brand, thanks to thrifting.

Another important part of the thrift shop effect is the impact that it has on the environment. Re-wearing clothes is a fun way of helping the environment.

Every time you purchase something used, it means one less new product is produced.

This is important because no matter the material, the production of clothing is costly to the environment. Second-hand clothes are less likely to end up in landfills. These clothes somehow survived their first wearer, which means they are made of high-quality materials and there's a good chance that the item is hardy. It is better to have clothes that won't rip or tear easily, because they are less likely to end up in your trashcan.

These past few years have been great for thrift shops. They've become trendy among millennials and has caused an economic boost for local businesses. This resurgence has had a huge social impact on society because people know where their money is going. Most thrift shops are owned by local business people. When you buy something from them, you are supporting local businesses.

This is also part of the thrift shop effect because it promotes localism. The best way of doing that is turning something common, such as buying second-hand clothes, into something trendy.

I'm not saying I don't buy any clothes from the mall anymore, because I still do, but it is good to know the perks of thrift shopping. I don't mind accepting that I like to feel unique and I've found so many crazy shapes and prints that are a treasure while thrift shopping. And it always feels good telling people who ask about my crazy pants they were \$5, and that I've worn them a hundred times, yet they still feel new.

You don't need to spend thousands of dollars for good clothes. Thrift shopping helps me save money and I feel like I'm getting clothes worth my money. It helps my community and it helps save the planet. The thrift shop effect is real—it's the new black.

✉ The Prospector may be reached at
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Recap at theprospectordaily.com
MICHAELA ROMÁN/ THE PROSPECTOR
Hundreds of marchers pass Southwest University Park as they march around Downtown El Paso during the national March For Our Lives movement on Saturday, March 24.

How Supreme turned into the monster it is today

BY ADRIAN BROADDUS
The Prospector



James Jebbia's goal in 1994 was to open up a skater-oriented apparel store in New York City for the sole purpose of selling clothes and skateboards.

A little over two decades into its existence, Jebbia's Supreme clothing brand has emerged as the world's hottest label for any 18 to 25 year old.

No, it's not making Louis Vuitton-like handbags or mass supplying a flashy name-brand wear. Supreme capitalizes on a simplistic look, featuring its staple of a box logo. This simplicity has engineered a massive cult following.

Each time Supreme decides to drop its newest line of clothes or collection, people camp out in the streets, where pop-up shops are available, or go to the extent of downloading server proxies to ensure they get the product online.

The brand's prices range from \$58 for a t-shirt, to \$298 for a jacket to \$1,000 in some cases for special products. Again, these items aren't readily available and when they are resold on the internet, items can

range from \$500 to over \$2,000 for a single item.

Nonetheless, most new Supreme apparel is sold out within hours or days and is rare wherever you can find it.

But how did Jebbia transform a brand from word-of-mouth skater clothes to a global fashion staple that reigns above all? How can this company sustain such high financial gain without pairing with a single department store or having celebrities endorse it?

The answer: guerilla marketing—the first of its kind.

Jebbia designed the distinctive red box logo with "Supreme" letters in white, using Futura heavy oblique as a font. It was mainly based off of Barbara Kruger's propaganda art.

It was in the late '90s, where the brand mysteriously popped up around the streets of New York, stickers were placed around neighborhoods and its following literally grew from the ground up. In its early stages, Supreme briefly marketed through a magazine, featuring its brand with models.

Flash forward to present day and celebrities sport Supreme on a daily basis. When Supreme opened its second store in Los Angeles, it paved the way for urban hip-hop group Odd Future to sport the brand wherever they went, not as a sponsorship play,

but with a deep admiration for fashion culture.

The occasional celebrity who would rock Supreme led to more and more growth of the brand. Artists such as Kanye West and Frank Ocean are often seen wearing Supreme, while even athletes such as J.R. Smith of the Cleveland Cavaliers have incorporated Supreme in their game day wear.

This led to what is common now in Supreme, that of collaboration with other name brands. In recent years, Supreme has collaborated with the likes of Nike, Air Jordan, Vans, Clarks, North Face, Champion, Hanes, Playboy, Levi's, Timberland, White Castle and Louis Vuitton.

There really is no stopping the movement of Supreme, despite the above-average price. It continues to make high-demand clothing items that will reign superior over just about any new clothing line released today.

And Jebbia—a humble mastermind that will never accept selling out his founded brand—will continue to grow the brand for years to come, making Supreme a rare gem in the fashion world.

Follow Adrian Broadus on Twitter @adrian_broadus

ACCURACY WATCH

The Prospector is committed to the accuracy. If you think we have made an error of fact, e-mail the editor at michaelairoman@gmail.com

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Submit a letter to the editor!









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IN BRIEF

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH CONFERENCE

More than 100 experts will participate in talks and presentations during the 8th annual Women's History Conference on Tuesday, March 27 and Wednesday, March 28 in Union Building East. This year's theme is "She Persisted: Celebrating Herstory." The free conference is from 9 a.m. - 9 p.m. on Tuesday and 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday. The first day will end with the second annual Femme Frontera film festival from 6-8:30 p.m. in the Union Cinema.

SUMMER AND FALL 2018 REGISTRATION DATES

Military Affiliated students can register for classes on March 26. Graduate, post-baccalaureate and seniors can register starting April 2, while juniors and sophomores may register April 9 and April 16, respectively.

STUDENT FARMWORKER DAY

UTEP will host a day of embracing student voice, creating a safe space for farmworker students to share their stories on campus. The event is on Tuesday, March 27, at the Union Breezeway from 12-3 p.m.

DÍA DE LA MUJER CAMPESINA

A panel of young women that have left the fields to pursue a higher education and are proud daughters of migrant farmworkers will be held at Union East Building at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, March 28.

CESAR CHAVEZ DAY

A day to unite the community in a peaceful march around the historic Paso Del Norte to remember Cesar Chavez and all those who have fought for our people will be held at 1 p.m.

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Is the way you dress for school important to you?

CLAUDIA HERNANDEZ, SERGIO MUÑOZ / THE PROSPECTOR



BEATRIZ PENA

Sophomore biology major
 “Just dress however makes you feel happy and confident. It should matter to you.”



CORTEZ DUCKSWORTH

Sophomore mechanical engineering major
"As you can see, no. Because I don't come for looks, I come to learn and improve on life, so no."



BROOKE CRISP

Senior graphic design major
"I think for me personally it doesn't really matter that much as long you're not looking very crusty or anything."

**GAEL FUENTES**

Sophomore engineering major
 “For me it does because what I wear is more for the day that goes on like if I’m cold, I’m obviously going to wear something that is warm. But in terms of society no.”



STEPHANIE FLORES

Freshman biology major
 "It's not that important, unless of course you are doing something important for class, like a presentation or such. But I'm more of a relaxed kind of person."



TRISTAN GRIEGO

Sophomore physics major
"I think it does matter because I believe in professionalism within the school setting. My fashion sense is like 19th century colonial era, so I kind of wish someone came dressed like that, but that doesn't happen."

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SUCCESS WITHIN REACH.

UTEP to light up blue for autism awareness month

BY RENE DELGADILLO

The Prospector

Music has a significant meaning in the lives of many, but for a teenager with autism, it can mean everything.

“I think it’s a better way for me to express myself than with words,” said Darío Barrera, a student at Americas High School. “(Autism is) a different ability that others don’t have.”

Darío, who was just offered a music scholarship from the University of Texas at San Antonio, is an academically active teenager, who in the month of February participated in live auditions in New York at the Julliard School and the Manhattan School of Music to pursue his dreams.

According to the Center for Disease Control’s Autism and the Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network, about one in 68 children

have been identified with the autism spectrum disorder.

Some of the symptoms of autism include difficulty with communication, difficulty with social interactions, obsessive interests and repetitive behaviors.

After Darío was diagnosed with autism at the age of 5, his mother, Maria Fuentes, said she and her son experienced a lot of problems that seemed impossible to overcome.

Fuentes, who is a graduate student in the UTEP master’s program of public health, decided to buy her son a classical guitar when he turned 7.

Since then, Darío’s life has revolved around music. He started his own rock band, Frenzi, and has a Facebook page, where he uploads videos of himself performing with his guitar.

“He didn’t speak at all, but he was always humming to music. Music was the way to help him connect to the world,” Fuentes said. “It was the way he was able to show his feelings, emotions, rants—whatever he felt.”

With a guitar in his hands, Darío has been able to overcome the bullying and common stereotypes against people with autism. He said autism is not important because all he needs is music.

“I remember a lot of parents telling their kids to not play with my son and to stay away from him, so there is a lot of misunderstanding of what autism is,” Fuentes said. “We just tend to label everything, but we should focus on what the best resources are and to educate people.”

Fuentes said that the support from her husband and family was a key factor to helping Darío to become a successful student.

“My son has this ability to speak seven or eight languages. You always see him with a different book learning a new language,” Fuentes said. “My son is very smart and people shouldn’t think that autism is going to stop people from having a good and productive life.”

Fuentes also said that she had to talk to people to try to educate them about autism because there are common misconceptions about what this disability holds.

This is why she, who is also the vice president of Students for Public Health at UTEP, decided to create a one-day event to help break the stereotypes and misinformation about autism.

“Of course my Darío was my inspiration,” she said. “I wish I could have that type of dedication that he has to his music.”

Fuentes said that she wants to send a message of inclusion and of acceptance to people who fall on the spectrum of autism disorders and their families. She said that one of the main



GABY VELASQUEZ/THE PROSPECTOR

Maria Fuentes, a public health graduate student, hugs her son Darío Barrera who has autism. She was inspired to create the event UTEP Lights Up Blue for Autism Awareness.

goals is to spread education among everyone at UTEP and El Paso.

SPH is now getting ready for UTEP Lights Up Blue for Autism Awareness during Autism Awareness Week, March 26 to April 2. The event will be held on April 2 at the Health Sciences Building, room 206, from 1:30-5 p.m.

During the event, speakers will talk about success stories of people with autism and the current research on the disorder. The Autism Society of El Paso and the Paso del Norte Children’s Development Center will share local resources available in the region.

Oralia Loza, associate professor and faculty advisor for SPH, said that she is proud of the work and efforts that her students are doing for UTEP and El Paso.

“They want to bring awareness about the needs for more services for people and families with children on the spectrum,” Loza said. “We want to provide information, resources and also share what UTEP is doing in terms of autism research.”

Loza said that the last hour of the event will be used as a networking space between the parents, students, faculty and the agencies that will attend the event.

“Sometimes that communication, as simple as it seems, can spark solutions and new ideas and new approaches,” Loza said.

The CDC estimated that the total cost per year for children with autism in the U.S. is between \$11.5 billion – \$60.9 billion.

Fuentes said that families should not give up on the lives of people with autism because they have great abilities that others simply don’t understand.

“Autism is not a disability to achieve great things and that’s the message that we want to give everyone,” Fuentes said. “We want our students to have acceptance for these people.”

Follow Rene Delgadillo on Twitter @rdelgadillonews




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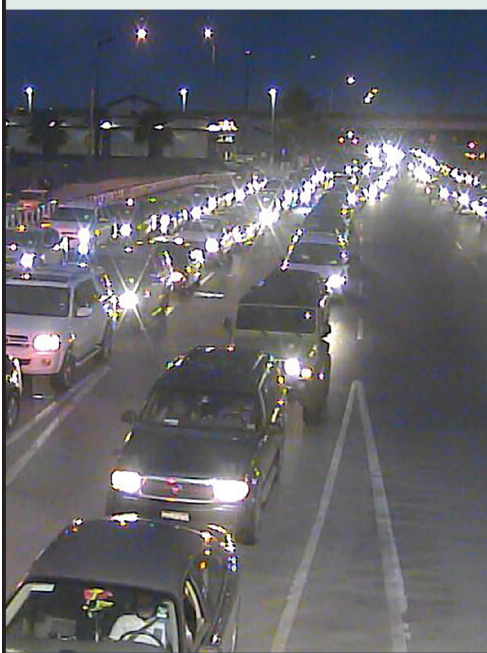
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MARCH 27, 2018

Lalo Élan encourages locals to revitalize their sense of style



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE LALO ÉLAN

Elena Ruiz creates unique jewelry pieces that are on sale at her store, Lalo Élan, located at 200 S. Santa Fe St.

BY PAULETTE VILLA

The Prospector

Located at 200 S. Santa Fe St., Lalo Élan is a bohemian café/boutique, specializing in original new-age jewelry. The space is a representation of Elena Ruiz’s personality—a 33-year-old self-taught jeweler designer, who strives to keep her passion alive every day.

Ruiz graduated with an associate’s degree in graphic design at El Paso Community College and decided to study anthropology and linguistics at UTEP. After transferring from EPCC, Ruiz was in a political science class taught by professor Richard Gutierrez around 2013.

“They were all younger kids on their cellphones and I felt old, and they

would not listen him,” Ruiz said about why Gutierrez gave a speech during class for students to consider if college is really for them.

It opened her eyes and she never went back.

“He has no idea who I am, but I was going to write him and tell him he has no idea what he did to me. It was the best thing and I’m pretty happy about it,” Ruiz said.

Ruiz was born in Las Cruces and moved to El Paso at the age of 12, which was the same time that she started making jewelry.

“On Christmas, my stepdad gave me a set of hardware pliers for my jewelry,” Ruiz said. “I have been using them for

15 years. They’re my favorite thing.”

Ruiz sold her jewelry exclusively at local markets and events. She later sold her work at the Dream Chaser’s Club gallery.

“I was kind of like lost and I saw this ad to sell jewelry there (at DCC). I met Jam (the owner) and showed my jewels and he’s like, ‘yeah, this is great, I love your stuff, and we became friends,” Ruiz said.

The opportunity to have her own store came during a low time of her life, while she was working with a beer company.

“I’m driving home and Jam from DCC calls me, and he’s like ‘I wanted to ask you a serious question, the guy who owns a smoke shop next door, it’s closing, and I just wanted to see if you’re interested in opening your own store,” Ruiz said.

Her jewels were selling well at DCC, so she decided to open Lalo Élan on Nov. 5, 2016.

Since Ruiz did not have enough merchandise to sell at the time, she decided to also include vintage thrift clothes from her own closet, garage sales, estate sales and clothes on consignment or donations from friends and customers. The idea stuck around ever since.

The name Lalo Élan comes from Ruiz’s favorite book “Jitterbug Perfume” by Tom Robbins, a best-seller fantasy comedic-drama published in 1985. Lalo is the name of a character who is a fairy nymph, and Élan comes from a word the god Pan uses to describe two characters frolicking.

“I was like, well that’s a cool word, what does it mean?” Ruiz said. “I looked it up and it means energy, style, and enthusiasm.”

Ruiz describes her jewelry’s style as “earthy,” “minimalistic” and “bohemian.” Some of it is also inspired by the tones of the desert. The jewelry consists of real materials, such as quartz, crystals, stones, metal and more. The making of her jewelry has evolved with her growth of style throughout the years.

“In high school, I was this hippy chick and started making hemp necklaces, then I did raver bead jewelry with my friend,” Ruiz said. “Later I got obsessed with making epoxy jewelry, and also did beading with glass beads and tiny seeds, but I got tired of that.”

The process of making her jewelry consists of cleaning her workspace, gathering materials, creating pieces and making a mess again.

“Some pieces take around 10 minutes, others need 30 minutes to dry because I use glue, or if I’m casting jewelry, it could take like a week of process,” Ruiz said. “I’ve gotten really good with using the tools. They’re like my second hands. So when I do something, I just do it like really fast, such as fixing people’s jewelry.”

Her jewelry ranges from earrings costing \$12 to necklaces up to \$38, depending on the materials. The purpose of each piece at Lalo Élan it’s to be a one-of-a-kind custom handmade piece, rarely made twice.

“I made one for my friend’s mom, whose horse passed away, and my friend gave me some of the horse’s hair to make a memento mori jewelry piece,” Ruiz said. “I put it in shadow box in a necklace, with flowers and a lace, and she gave it to her mom on Christmas. It’s really cool someone trusts you with something they treasure.”

Ruiz’s best-selling pieces are custom hand-stamped pieces, most with Spanish pet names, insults or poems. She got the idea after somebody called her a “huevona” (slang for “lazy” in Spanish) and decided to have it written on a necklace.

“I have a sense of humor and I like vulgar things. I love taking those orders because they’re hilarious,” Ruiz said.

Not only has Ruiz worked on making special pieces, but also for special occasions with costumers.

“Some people are like ‘oh my god, I love this, but I can never wear something like that,’ and I say ‘who said you can’t wear it? You said it, you’re literally limiting what you want to do.’

see LALO ÉLAN on page 6

Obscurity Designs brings fashion to El Paso

BY CLAUDIA FLORES

The Prospector

For Lizette Arenas, what started out as creating dresses out of her mom’s curtains, became a dream come true when she became a fashion designer.

Today, the 29-year-old artist is owner of her own fashion brand, Obscurity Designs.

“It was strange because I never realized it until I was already older. When I was 17, I started going back and realizing that it started from a young age,” Arenas said. “I used to get my mom’s curtains and pin them on my sister and just make dresses out of it, and little by little I started picking up that that’s what I wanted to focus on and I ended up enrolling at the El Paso

Community College for the fashion program, and it was worth it I learned a lot.”

Arenas said that the reason behind the name of her brand is due to the moments of obscurity everybody has experienced. She wanted to sport a meaningful name, as well as represent her designs.

“My signature and my aesthetic is a form where I find darkness within everybody. It’s something I try to project in the way that people always think, that when it is obscure or dark, it’s negative,” Arenas said. “That darkness within them—I want to mutate it and transform it into something that has more of a light, which is showing and expressing it with mysteriousness, elegance and uniqueness.”

Arenas says the best way to form a collection is to draw a lot of sketches, which

inspire what the collections means for her by always keeping the aesthetic and focus on the obscurity within it.

Building a collection is not just about fashion to Arenas, but also about growth.

“I see myself growing more than ever as a person and not only growing, but learning within myself when I’m making my designs, and I’ve seen that happening from day one to now. I’ve changed and I learned a lot about my techniques,” Arenas said. “Every collection that I do, they’re based more on my emotions and I transform it into garments, and I guess the only motivation that I have is when I’m working on something. I won’t feel satisfied until I’m creating something.”

see OBSCURITY on page 6



CLAUDIA FLORES/ THE PROSPECTOR

Lizette Arenas, owner of Obscurity Designs, works on one of her most recent clothing designs.

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Do not dump waste, chemicals, paint, custodial waste, and general rubbish items (tires, old car parts, shopping carts, etc.) into storm drains, channels, or ditches.

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Recycle oil, antifreeze, and other vehicle fluids, or dispose of them properly to prevent the pollution of stormwater, groundwater and the Rio Grande.

Recicle aceite, anti-congelante y lubricantes o disponga propiamente de ellos para prevenir contaminación del sistema de drenaje pluvial, mantos acuíferos y el Río Bravo.

LALO ELAN from page 5

Lalo Élan also sells coffee for a mobile-café company from Ohio named Chicken Switch. The menu consists of café de olla, iced coffee, hot coffee and includes basic flavors such as hazelnut and vanilla.

“I always wanted a coffee shop because I’m a barista, I love working at cafés,” Ruiz said, who previously worked at Joe Vinny & Bronson’s Bohemian Café and Nomu Café. “Those things make me super happy, it’s the same satisfying feeling as when I make jewelry.”

Besides her own experiences, taking a studio casting class and looking for information online, Ruiz has also learned from the creative friends she has surrounded herself with. One of them is Cynthia Evans, who studied

printmaking and metals at UTEP.

“She’s been so amazing to share her time and knowledge, such as showing me techniques and what kind of supplies to get,” Ruiz said. “I own some of her stuff and she believes in my work, which I think it’s cool to have friends like that.”

Ruiz said she has grown a lot for just a year and half of owning Lalo Élan. Her advice for people starting their own business is to always be nice to customers and never lower themselves.

“We all put a lot of work, care and love into what we make. I want people to like at least look at it,” Ruiz said. “Even if you’re not buying anything, just appreciate what is in your city because there’s a lot of cool gems around, so take your take time.”

✉ Claudia Flores may be reached at gigibertaflores43@gmail.com.



PHOTO COURTESY OF LALO ÉLAN

OBSCURITY from page 5

In 2014, Arenas presented her first collection, “Fallen Angel,” at the El Paso Fashion Week. Since then she has released her “Crimson Collection,” Stargaze Collection” and her most recent collection, “Memento Mori.”

Depending on how simple or complicated a piece is, Arenas said that it takes between two to five days to complete the final product.

“As an artist, I think I matured a lot. I know that my focus is now more centered than before,” Arenas said. “I used to have more ideas and they were all scattered and I didn’t know how to put them together, and it’s funny that throughout that time you end up having that focus.”

Arenas said that when it’s a custom job, it takes at least a month to complete the order. She not only has to make the sketch, but also buy all the fabric and make the piece itself to bring the client’s idea to life.

As an El Pasoan, she is thankful for events such as El Paso Fashion Week and the Mercedes Benz Fashion Week, and she believes the fashion scene in El Paso is making a statement, little by little.

“I see a lot of people are fashion forward now, and it’s something that’s barely constructing,” she said. “A lot of fashion designers have been stepping out and showing their stuff and that makes me happy because it gives people opportunities for others to understand that they’re people who work hard for they believe and what they create,

As a fashion designer and artist, Arenas said that she will enroll at UTEP this summer to pursue a career in psychology and business to help her become a counselor. She wants to help young designers have a better idea about how the fashion industry works.

For more information visit obscuritydesigns.bigcartel.com.

✉ Claudia Flores may be reached at gigibertaflores43@gmail.com.



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Brands of El Paso helps local artists

BY JAKE DEVEN
The Prospector

When you hear the words “El Paso,” a few things might come to mind. For some, El Paso represents a beautiful growing border city, full of culture, history and Chico’s Tacos. For others, it represents something else: a boring city with nothing to do and a place where creatives are laughed at.

Recently, the city has been able to shake off this second image.

Brands of Americas is a start-up company that many local entrepreneurs have partnered with to sell their products via e-commerce. Much like Etsy, which is an app that allows business owners to sell their products right from their homes, the website fosters an environment for artists or business owners who produce handmade items. What makes Brands of Americas stand out is that they cater specifically to Latin American communities.

“For some, when they leave their country, they feel nostalgia for the products they were raised with: sofrito, adobo, local candies. You can’t get those products everywhere in the continental US. We saw the opportunity to create a bridge between the local entrepreneurs,” said Alan Taveras, co-founder and marketing director, in an interview with Forbes magazine.

Many local business owners have partnered with Brands of Americas to develop Brands of El Paso .

Brands of El Paso allows artists to sell their products to anyone in the world. Many of the artists have chosen to partner with Brands of Americas mainly because they feel the need to share El Paso’s culture all over the world. “Everything is online now and I do sell a lot of my art to people out of town, so I think it’s a good idea to be able to have a marketplace where everyone can shop,” said Candy Mayer, a local full-time artist, who specializes in landscapes and still lifes of the Southwest and the borderland in pastels, acrylics and mixed media collage.

Brands Of Americas is unique in that they give emotional and cultural fulfillment to their customers. They do this by hiring a local team in each location—for them, it’s vital to have partners that share their vision and values. So far, Brands of Americas has partnered with 13 local business owners. They are intentional in the way they speak to their customers and understand that replicating the same marketing in each location isn’t effective.

The Brands of Americas story has also been successful at capturing the attention of people around the world. They’ve been featured on platforms such as CNN and Al Jazeera because of their ability to connect so authentically with their audience.

“We feel we have a responsibility, with both our consumers and local businesses, to be an efficient technological tool that helps them on their daily lives and growth,” Taveras said.

Follow Jake Deven on Twitter @jakadeven

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MARCH 27, 2018

SPORTS

EDITOR
JEREMY CARRANCO, 747-7446

Magee’s style translates to his game on the court



BY MIKE FLORES
The Prospector

For freshman guard Kobe Magee, his appearance plays a crucial part to how well he performs on the basketball court.

The San Antonio native owns close to 40 pairs of basketball shoes. “RIP Smooth” is written on every pair of shoes he owns. These words that Magee carries with him throughout every game of his career mean something to him.

Magee had a close childhood friend who went by the nickname “Smooth.” The two grew a deep bond over basketball, but unfortunately, Smooth passed away in high school.

Magee will always remember how Smooth helped him get to where he is now—a Division I basketball player.

“As long as I have Smooth’s name written on my shoes, I feel comfortable. I can’t wear a shoe that doesn’t have something with him on there,” Magee said. “It was hard to go through it and I really miss him, but that’s my tribute to him.

“I always look down at my shoes and remember him. He rubs off on me in the sense that life is short and

GABY VELASQUEZ / THE PROSPECTOR

UTEP freshman guard Kobe Magee owns close to 40 pairs of shoes that range from the styles of Michael Jordan to Kevin Durant.

to work hard for everything because not everything is given.”

Another thing Magee wears every day, game day or not, are his tattoos. Magee’s tattoos are also a huge part to who he is. All the ink on his body has meaning behind it.

Most of his tattoos represent his relationship with his mother, who is Magee’s biggest inspiration and role model.

“Most of my tattoos are for my mom, but there’s other things I believe and follow. I’m Christian, so I have a lot of scriptures on my arm,” Magee said. “I have a lot of stars on me because my mom’s last name is Star. My mom and I are really close.”

Although Magee’s father is there for him for whatever he needs, whether it’s timely advice or just someone to talk to, Magee’s mother, Darci, raised him as a single mother.

“I love my dad. He’s always there still, but my mom has raised me by herself for my whole life. She does everything for me. She had to work sometimes two to three jobs at a time just for me to play AAU (Amateur Athletic Union basketball),” Magee said. “I see the love she has for me, and she works to give me everything she can. When I have kids, I want to be able to do the things she did for me, with the little she had.”

Magee also has other tattoos, such as an hourglass on his arm, representing that “time is money.”

Growing up, Magee said he did not have a lot of money, but found out many ways to grow his shoe collection. Owning more pairs of shoes than the average person, Magee said he had to do a lot of two-for-one trades to get the shoes he wanted.

Out of the nearly 40 pairs, there are some shoes he rarely ever touches because they’re too special to be worn on a daily basis, like his Michael Jordan sneakers.

His favorite shoes to wear off the court are the Jordan 4s, in any color. Jordan’s Toro 4s are on Magee’s radar. He’s never owned a pair, but the Toro 4s are his favorite.

But when it comes to basketball shoes, Kevin Durant shoes are Magee’s go-to, having worn them since the seventh grade.

As an NBA fan, Magee likes the different styles of many NBA athletes. Although Magee looks up to the styles of Brooklyn Nets point guard D’Angelo Russell and Washington Wizards forward Kelly Oubre. Magee’s favorite player is Houston Rockets point guard Chris Paul because of his stellar guard play on both ends of the floor.

see MAGEE on page 8

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MAGEE from page 7

Magee makes matching his number one priority with his style. For example, if he buys a Tommy Hilfiger shirt, then he'll match that by purchasing Tommy Hilfiger pants and maybe a hat to go along with it. As big as Magee is into fashion, there's one store that stands out when he's looking to add to his look. "It's tough to call, but I would say Urban Outfitters is my favorite place to shop. They have different and weird stuff that I like to put all together," he said. While Magee believes he is on top of the leaderboard when it comes to fashion on the UTEP basketball team, he says that Deshaun Highler,

Evan Gilyard and Corbin Stevens' styles are up there in the higher echelon of the Miners. "For me, if I feel good, I feel like I play good. What we wear on the court, we feel better about ourselves and it adds to our confidence," he said. "But really, it's just how you rock what you're wearing." Magee's style doesn't just add to his appearance, it has also translated to his game. In Magee's freshman season with UTEP, he finished the season with a team-high 42.5 percentage from 3-point land, second in total assists (53), top four in 3-pointers made (31).

Follow Mike Flores on Twitter @mikey_flores

Color change coming to UTEP Athletics



FILE PHOTO / THE PROSPECTOR

UTEP Athletics is expected to lighten their shade of orange in athletic gear beginning this fall.

BY ADRIAN BROADDUS

The Prospector

UTEP will transition its colors in the near future to a lighter orange. Different athletic programs will undergo the phasing out of uniforms to match with the new colors coming up within the next couple years, according to Athletic Director Jim Senter. The current orange is a darkish red-orange that has been used by UTEP since the early 2000s. In the past, the orange color of the university was often confused in the early 2000s and had varying shades. They will change to a new orange to ensure more "sophistication" for the brand, according to

Senter and to implement a stable color that is unchanged. At his recent town hall, Senter, who was wearing the new orange color that night, was asked by an attendee, "Why do you have that color of UTEP on? I think it looks tacky." "Look around, everyone has different shades of UTEP orange. We are trying to change that so we have one universal color," Senter said. He went on to talk more about the "new era" in UTEP athletics and the importance of rebranding the colors. The color restoration process will undergo a transitional period with all athletic programs. "We can't just spend seven figures right off the bat on new uniforms for all our programs," Senter said. "It will be a process, where we bring in new uniforms as time goes on." There has been no official word on which teams will get new uniforms with the new colors yet, but fans can expect to see new uniform changes as soon as next season. Fans took to social media to voice their opinions on the new color changes. Some embraced the color change and called it a fresh look, while others argued it sways away from the school's original colors. "We have been transitioning into the official university color since

2000," said Executive Vice President Richard Adauto in an interview with KVIA. "As we continue to work toward a cohesive image, we are careful with our resources and do not buy new materials until they need to be replaced." The UTEP Bookstore already implemented some new apparel that features the new color. Luke Martinez, a sophomore political science major, believes that changing the color could have been a good idea, but he did not agree with the shade of orange that they will transition to. "It looks like an exact copy of Tennessee orange," he said. "I wish the school would have gone with a Syracuse orange or a Florida orange instead. That would look a lot cleaner. No one is going to want to buy an almost neon orange shirt like these colors." Eduardo Cabrera, a sophomore accounting and finance major, thinks that this uniform change was smart and a good marketing move by the school. "I work for the Chihuahuas, so I know how important it is to keep your brand and colors fresh," he said. "I think these new colors will look good once they're implemented."

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