

Company Info

Profile

René Geneva Design is owned by founder and designer entrepreneur, René Geneva. The company offers EcoChic ready-to-wear apparel. René Geneva Design is striving to make the world a better place. From certified organic fabrics to fair trade labor, every aspect of the business is eco (and human) friendly. René Geneva Design garments promote sustainability at every touch point beginning with the earth, throughout production and delivery to the consumer.

Celebrating their 10th year, René Geneva Design began as Faernyn's Grove in 1997. The eco friendly Sustainables™ line was released in 2005. Faernyn's Grove today has evolved into the brand name of the successful corsetry line.

Additionally, the company produces events and provides Green Business Consulting in related fields. Designer René Geneva has been handcrafting original fashions since 1994, and is personally involved in the integrity of each order, as well as every aspect of the business.

History

1997: René founds Faernyn's Grove (now the brand name of corsetry line)

2002: René relocates to Austin, Texas, opens design studio, begins eco production

2005: Launch of eco friendly line "Sustainables™"

2005: Initiates work with women's fair trade sewing cooperative in Nicaragua

2006: Commences work on Sun Power Project to provide solar energy for the Nicaraguan cooperative

2007: Establishes relationship with indigenous Central American tribe and a small village in India to work with their hand crafted textiles.

2007: Introduces Fashionably Neutral Carbon Program™ in partnership with Carbon Neutral Clothing initiative

2007-2008: Showcases clothing line on The Mercedes Benz Fashion Week runway for two consecutive seasons.

2008: Introduces the clothing line SoCá (Sustainable Organic Contemporary Apparel) that promotes the benefits of eco-friendly dry cleaning, developed alongside the International Association of Professional Wet Cleaners.

2009: Mulukuku project slated to break ground in Nicaragua together with the Whole Planet Foundation.

Participants

CEO: René Geneva

Director of Operations: Nicole Himmertzhaim

Business Size

Two assistants

Three Interns

Contracted as needed are patternmaker, screen printer, sample maker

500 square feet of design and showroom space

Distribution

Wholesale is at the heart of René Geneva Design in order to provide eco-fashion worldwide. Through fashion forward and design driven styles, boutique owners can consider the environmental impact of their inventory and offer consumers an Eco Chic fashion choice. All lines are marketed to specialty boutiques, and can also be found in select Wholefoods Market, nationwide.

Retail is offered through the website, mycorset.com as well as custom bridal through the showroom, located in Austin, Tx.

Shows

East Of Indica™ Productions is a side project of René Geneva Design and designates the efforts of Ms. Geneva in the production of fashion shows. The self-produced shows include performance and gallery art, fire and belly dancing, stilt and circus arts, live music, and of course, fashion. Ms. Geneva has been producing shows for 13 years and taken them on tour from Key West to Orlando, San Francisco, Las Vegas, New Orleans, Austin, and more. These shows have managed to bring much attention to the community efforts and help merge fashion in the arts community.

Mercedes Benz Fashion Week™ in Los Angeles has featured René Geneva Designs consistently since the Spring/Summer 2008 season that showed in 2007. They have had multiple shows and received massive amount of press (see website or press kit for references) both in industry press, print, online, and in Television. This has not only created a mass-market appeal for the RGD brands, but has led to invaluable industry contacts, more prestigious boutique accounts, and the opportunity to get noticed and picked up by sustaining clients such as Wholefoods.

Apparel Lines

Sustainable~Organic~Contemporary~Apparel™ (SoCá) is our newest label. This line was designated to label all dry cleanable product through our team efforts with EcoClean Austin to help spread awareness to the public regarding eco-friendly dry cleaning. The entire SoCá brand is labeled "Wet Clean Only" with appropriate, explanative hangtags. The International Association of Professional Wet Cleaners™ was created with the help of Ms. Geneva, as a certification body that is also represented on the wash tags of the SoCá designs. This line is marketed in Wholefoods.

Faernyn's Grove is the corsetry line. Not intended as an undergarment, each corset is as funky, unusual and unique as the person wearing it. This season incorporates elements of appliqué, embroidery and screen printing to culminate in a work of art for the body. Beautifully paired with a hemp silk skirt or a favorite pair of organic denim, Faernyn's Grove corsets are perfect for any occasion.

SoFi is a collection of soft, unique, yet structured outerwear, eveningwear and dresses made from hemp blends, silk and tencel. It includes elements of embroidery and in house screen printing with homemade, eco friendly dyes. The collection is aptly named for the funky artist's area where the studio is located.

René Geneva Design Bridal; René Geneva Design is the leader in custom made, eco friendly bridal. Her famous Lotus wedding gown, made from hemp silk with a twinkling fiber-optic lit train, has been featured in Dwell magazine and a recent FIT fashion show. Dresses for the complete bridal party are on offer.

Sustainables™ was René Geneva's first eco friendly release, inspired mainly by Japanese architecture. Fashions were introduced on runways in Austin, Texas and New Orleans, Louisiana through shows incorporating elements of performance art, fire dancing and live music in 2005 - 06.

Headquarters

509 W. Elizabeth Street
P.O. Box 41313
Austin, TX 78704
Phone: 512.448.0690

Websites

reenevadesign.com Upcoming designs, wholesale information and portfolio.

mycorset.com Retail website and wholesale inquiry for past or current lines.

Biography

In 1993 René Geneva received an inheritance that would change her life: a 1982 Singer sewing machine. Working as a freelance photographer at the time, René found that her clothing designs brought new inspiration to her work in the studio. Self-taught in design, sewing and patterning, with many mentors along the way, she landed her first gig in 1994 with an Orlando designer whose style and philosophy was quite different from her own, though it managed to pique her interest in the world of fashion as an art form.

From there, René was contracted by Entertain Fla., Inc to design and manufacture costumes for Universal Studio's parade performers.

Desiring to explore fresh directions in her own work, René started Faernyn's Grove (now the brand name of her corsetry) in 1997.

She moved to Austin, Texas in 2002 where she opened her first design studio. Focusing on custom-made clothing, she and her assistants worked with individual customers as well as producing limited wholesale orders for boutiques around the world. René also picked up where she left off with costuming, working on such films as *The King* (w/Gael Garcia Bernal, 2005), and *Dot* (Burnt Orange Productions, 2005).

As René's skill as a designer grew, so did her awareness of the world around her. She realized that her business needed to account for its impact on the environment – both ecological and social. That meant a commitment to materials, production methods and business practices doing the least possible harm to the environment – and its inhabitants.

In November 2005, René headed to Nicaragua (the second poorest nation in the Western hemisphere) to work with a fair wage, fair trade women's textile cooperative. Training them in the elements of corsetry and appliqué enabled them to produce René's latest designs – and to expand their capabilities beyond T-shirt production. This partnership reflects René Geneva's commitment to support fair wage and fair trade practices.

Currently, Ms. Geneva is working on the preliminary details with The Whole Planet Foundation on a project to bring together the experience and knowledge she has gained while working with several Central American projects in the past.

Her collections, include a line of luxury fashions inspired by Japanese architecture and made of sustainable materials such as organic cotton, wildcrafted silk, hemp, rare indigenous textiles, tencel and recycled textiles. Her intention is to promote traceability and focus on fabrics that come directly from weavers who live in the villages where the cotton is grown, where the silk is gathered, and where the money is needed most.

Much of René's inspiration comes from the field of sustainable architecture and green design. Instead of searching for ideas in fashion magazines, she feeds her creative fire with the latest issues of *Dwell* or *Eco-Structure*.

When René isn't working, she's enjoying her six-year-old son and seeking inspiration through traveling, snowboarding, motocross, wake surfing, stilt walking, fire dancing, and finding time to sleep.

Be human.

Account List

Specialty Boutiques:

The Lotus Boutique, Santa Barbara, Ca
EcoWise, Austin, Tx
Moxie and the Compound, Austin, Tx
Unbridaled, Austin, Tx
Storyville, Austin, Tx
Brandie Mannon, Portland, Or
Delicious Boutique, Philadelphia, Pa
Maya, Sante Fe, Nm
Exude, Ashland, Or
Out on a Limb, Redington Shores, Fl
Carol Dean El Paseo, Palm Desert, Ca
Sapphire Designs, Whitefish, Mt
Azzaria, Encinitas, Ca
Arboretun Apparel, Healdsburg, Ca
Elan Fashions, Scottsdale, Az
Beauty and Wisdom, LA, Ca

Large Accounts:

Wholefoods Market

Eco-Chic Facts

History

René Geneva Design began as Faernyn's Grove in 1997. Celebrating their tenth year, Faernyn's Grove has evolved into the brand name of their popular corset line.

Environmental and Social Responsibilities motivate and inspire René Geneva Design. Corporate actions are motivated and inspired by these concerns.

Materials

René Geneva Design works exclusively with eco friendly materials including Certified Organic cotton, bamboo, formaldehyde-free and wildcrafted silk, hemp blends, and many rare textiles that are hand made by small villages across the world, including unique cottons, loose woven silks, and bark fabrics.

Fair Trade

René Geneva Design offers "Sweat Free" clothing through the use of Fair Trade Labor. René Geneva has personally trained a certified, fair trade women's cooperative in Nicaragua to sew her designs.

Manufacturing

René Geneva Design manufactures its large runs at the source of the textiles and works with fair trade labor in developing nations. Smaller quantity runs or designs requiring more than one source of textile are manufactured in the USA.

Fashionably Neutral

René Geneva Design offers carbon neutral designs through their Fashionably Neutral Carbon Program™.

SoCá

RGD's newest brand, Sustainable~Organic~Contemporary~Apparel™ was released under a teaming with EcoClean Austin, at the Mercedes Benz Fashion Week in Los Angeles, to help bring awareness to the public regarding the eco-friendly dry cleaning process called "Wet Cleaning"

Scraps for Schools™

Scraps for Schools™ recycles unused René Geneva Design fabric scraps and donates them to pre- and elementary schools to help fund and bring eco awareness to children through their art.

Sun Power Project™

René Geneva Design headed the Sun Power Project™, providing solar electricity to their women's sewing cooperative in Nicaragua. The solar array will also help by providing power to the surrounding communities' emergency water supply.

Whole Planet Foundation

René Geneva is currently working on the preliminary details of a project together with the Whole Planet Foundation to bring together the experience and knowledge Ms. Geneva has gained working with several Central American projects in the past with a new women's sewing project in Nicaragua. This project is slated to begin mid to late 2009.

Green

The company car at René Geneva Design runs on 99% bio-diesel. They use eco-friendly printing, wind-power webhosting, and their office is wind-powered through Austin's Green Choice Energy Program.

Co-op America

René Geneva Design is certified "green" by Co-op America!

Ethics

Carbon Neutral

Fashionably Neutral Carbon Program™

As “Carbon Neutral” gains popularity with savvy green consumers, René Geneva Design offers styles with an environmental impact rating.

René Geneva Design has a program to show the customer the footprint of each item of clothing. It's called the Fashionably Neutral Carbon Program™, and its design is simple and clear:

Each item is assigned a carbon value or 'CV'. This number is calculated by combining various factors, including the textile's origin and ingredients, the country of manufacture and the final destination; it indicates the approximate amount of CO2 invested in each design. René Geneva Design is working with Carbon Neutral Clothing to scientifically calculate the values. The program ultimately helps the consumer understand the carbon footprint of each design and donates a corresponding dollar amount for each Carbon Value to organizations specializing in greenhouse gas offsets.

Fabric

Certified organic **cottons** are sized with sanforization, finished with cornstarch, and if dyed, done so with low impact dyes.

Hemp fabrics carry a Sustainable Biodegradable Product, or SBP™ rating that rates the percentage of biodegradability the textile carries. SBP 100 = 100% of that textile will biodegrade in the earth.

Tencel, which is also fully biodegradable, is made from the cellulose found in wood pulp. It is produced in a closed-loop production process that leaves a solvent, which is then used in the spinning process, making the waste recovery to reuse ratio 99%.

Bamboo, one of the fastest growing trends in the industry, is made from one of the fastest growing renewable resources in the world.

Silks are formaldehyde-free and many of them are wildcrafted peace silks where fibers are extracted from the cocoon after the moth hatches.

Bark Fabric: A native craft of the indigenous Central American's, a unique fabric is made by beating the moisture out of the bark of various trees. During a recent visit, Geneva formed a fair wage agreement and partnership with the tribal peoples to produce this fabric for her designs.

Hand Woven Fabric from a small village in India: Geneva also formed a fair wage agreement and partnership with a small village in India. They produce hand spun and hand woven silks and cottons for her designs that have a beautiful hue when left undyed.

Each textile is hand picked by Geneva who has the highest level of commitment to the environment. René is constantly searching for new and innovative fabrics and technologies to ensure the sustainability of the environment and the future of our children's children.

Sun Power Project

René Geneva has provided leadership to facilitate the design and installation of a 19 kilowatt solar electrical system into the Fair Trade Zone of Nicaragua. The system will alleviate the 4 to 12 hours per day of blackout conditions suffered by the women's fair trade sewing cooperative there.

René has rallied a team of industry experts including Solar Energy International, Douglas Gonzalas of Suni Solar, Joseph Marino of DC Power Systems to make this worthwhile project possible.

Fair Trade Policy

Beauty may be the business of the fashion industry, but often the way garments are produced is far from beautiful.

Many René Geneva Design garments are made in the USA. Apparel manufactured offshore is produced as close to the source as possible and stitched in factories with ethical work standards.

Geneva, or a personal associate of hers, inspects the fair trade co-operatives that produce her garments to make sure that workers receive a fair wage and work under proper conditions. This means that, regardless of what's allowed by law, René Geneva factories will never use child labor, demand unreasonable hours or pay less than a living wage. René Geneva Design clothing helps build healthy families, communities and economies both at home and abroad.

René Geneva Design is a green business approved by Co-op America.

Scraps for Schools

René Geneva Design is bringing eco-awareness to children through art projects. Fabric scraps are a byproduct of the fashion industry. In her "Scraps for Schools" program Geneva donates these scraps to pre- and elementary schools to be recycled in unique art projects.

Sustainable~Organic~Contemporary~Apparel™ (SoCá)

This line was designated to label all dry cleanable product through our team efforts with EcoClean Austin to help spread awareness to the public regarding eco-friendly dry cleaning. The entire SoCá brand is labeled "Wet Clean Only" with appropriate, explanative hangtags. The International Association of Professional Wet Cleaners™ was created with the help of Ms. Geneva, as a certification body that is also represented on the wash tags of the SoCá designs. This line is marketed in Wholefoods.

Mulukuku Project

The temporarily named "Mulukuku Project" will bring much needed work to this community, and create a tri-state commerce, in Nicaragua. Slated to begin in late 2009, Ms. Geneva is supported by the Whole Planet foundation to help bring it to fruition.