

AS SEEN IN

CALIFORNIA Apparel News

THE VOICE OF THE INDUSTRY FOR 78 YEARS

\$3.99 VOLUME 79, NUMBER 18 DECEMBER 1, 2023

FASHION

Fashion Techworks Revives the Iconic Comic Strip Mac Divot

By Christian Chensvold Associate Editor

No matter how well you play golf, the learning curve never ends. Sandy Mac Divot certainly knew that, which is how—as the hero of his own comic strip—he was able to deliver entertaining instruction on the game five days a week for 22 years. From the '50s through the '70s, the comic ran in the sports pages of 200 newspapers across the country, becoming a veritable mascot of the golfing industry. Now Mac Divot and his stylish entourage are making a comeback thanks to a special caretaker of intellectual property.

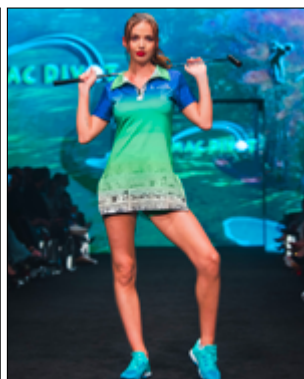
The *California Apparel News* caught up with the duo behind the brand's rollout: Tom Keefer, who is also general manager of **The New Mart** in downtown Los Angeles, and Cindy Ingraham-Keefer, founder and CEO of **Fashion Techworks**, who is serving as **Mac Divot's** creative director.

CAN: Tom, you have a very personal connection to this brand.

TK: Yes, I grew up as my father, Mel, illustrated the comic strip. He passed away a year and a half ago, and I made him a promise to relaunch the strip one way or another, and I have great ambitions for how it can translate into a number of products in apparel, publishing and other forms. From Nike to Penguin, there's not a lot you can do with a golf polo, but our concept is to integrate the actual art into fabric to create absolutely unique intellectual property that is both retro and contemporary in terms of style.

CAN: Why launch the clothing now? Why wasn't it done before?

TK: I actually started working on it 15 years ago in anticipation that some day the opportunity might arise, and I just think where we're at now is deeply into the fashion industry. Cindy and I are very proud of our accomplishments with Fashion Techworks, where we're very committed to sustainable apparel manufacturing. And along the way we've learned how to concep-



MAC DIVOT

Sustainability is a key aspect of the Mac Divot line, which is sourced in Southern California, produced using Kornit technology to produce fabric designed by Cindy Ingraham-Keefer and Tom Keefer, with very little eco footprint.

tualize, design and produce apparel. That's a relatively new skillset for me personally and a catalyst for launching the line.

CK: We'll be using Mac Divot as an example for others of the sustainable practices we've developed at Fashion Techworks while having fun creating it. What I really enjoy is starting with the black-and-white line art and making designs that will really look beautiful on fabric and the people wearing it. That was my main objective—to make beautiful pieces that people will love to wear.

CAN: Given the whimsical quality of the images and concept, where will the beauty come from?

CK: In the Mac Divot story line, they actually create apparel in the later years, and in the strip all the men and women were dressed at the height of style. Mel was a scholar of the style and culture of the moment, and he himself was extremely stylish, so I want this to be a line that he would be proud of and want to wear.

CAN: You recently unveiled Mac Divot in October during LA Fashion Week. What was that like?

CK: It was fantastic seeing these looks come

together and then be seen in the scenario of Art Hearts Fashion at the Majestic Theater. Their event is so dynamic and exciting, and it was an honor to have a sports line included in the schedule.

CAN: And where are you now with the launch?

TK: We're taking it one step at a time, with the website *macdivot.com* and then a direct-to-consumer Shopify account to open up engagement. But we want to be sustainable, and the fact that it can be sourced here in Southern California and produced using Kornit technology to produce fabric that we're designing ourselves with very little eco footprint is very important to us.

CAN: Golfwear is highly competitive, but it sounds like you're confident this iconic character can make a comeback and carry you forward.

CK: We're not going out and buying fabric, so this is very unique. And a lot of the womenswear transfers to tennis, and there's also what to wear to dinner after playing, and we want to continue to develop that so it's not just what you wear on the court or course but long dresses you can wear in the club afterward. ●