

Window Shopping

Sylvia Rubin, Laura Compton

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Keneuoe

After years of making elegant career wear for private clients, East Bay fashion designer Keneuoe (pronounced canoe-way), has opened her first boutique. Housed in the former 1,500-square-foot Elmwood Hardware store, her line of tailored, timeless clothing is sold three ways: ready to wear, fitted and custom. A sleek wool jacket with covered buttons that comes in at the waist is \$499 (off-the-rack), \$599 (tailored) and \$999 (made to order with choice of fabric).

A South African native who goes by her first name only, she has lived in the Bay Area for 15 years and is a graduate of the Academy of Art University in San Francisco.

She favors soft neutrals, no prints and no embellishments. "I like comfort, classic looks, and I like gray," she says. Nina Taylor, the longtime window designer for the Molly B. boutiques, stages the windows for the shop, which also carries an assortment of Bay Area-designed accessories.

2951 College Ave., Berkeley,

*(510) 708-2758, KeneuoeVivere.com. 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Wed.-Sat.; noon-6 p.m. Sun.
By appointment Mon.-Tues.*

- Sylvia Rubin

Lia kes

Israeli-born Lia Kes arrived in San Francisco from New York a few months ago and opened her new Cow Hollow boutique just before the holidays.

After formal fashion training in Israel, the up-and-coming designer began her

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career in New York crafting tees with a twist - replacing one cap sleeve with soft spiral fringe or a burst of feathers - which she sold from her midtown showroom. Her new boutique - with its blond wood floors, white walls and rows of track lighting - looks like an art gallery, which, in fact, it once was. The label says Lia Kes New York (because all the production is done there), but she designs everything from a small workshop in the back of the store. Her signature bias-cut silky, soft and feminine tunic/dresses (\$242) fall softly from the shoulders; they have subtle touches of leather, fringe or exposed zippers and can be worn with a low back or in reverse.

3024 Fillmore St. (at Union),

(415) 829-2225, LiaKes.com.

11 a.m.-7 p.m. Mon.-Sat., noon-6 p.m. Sun.

- Sylvia Rubin

Acrimony

Jenny Chung always believed that if she carried the right product, "people will come," but that turned out to be only half the story. She also needed the right location. After two years on Gough Street, in September she relocated Acrimony to a former art gallery on Hayes Street. The funky space features her hand-picked emerging designers, displayed to encourage mixing and matching. Swedish designer Ann-Sofie Back's arresting one-off "Dreamcatcher" skirt hangs near a jewelry case with tough, unusual rings by Made Her Think and Bliss Lau's body jewelry. Odyn Vovk's leather coats complement fellow men's brands Wings + Horns, which makes a black quilted chambray vest and flannel shirts, and Gitman Brothers shirting (\$175). "The thing about San Francisco is that there are so many stylish men here, and so few places to shop," Chung notes.

333 Hayes St., No. 100,

San Francisco; (415) 861-1025,

Shop Acrimony.com. 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Mon., Wed.-Sat., noon-6 p.m. Sun.

- Laura Compton

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Harputs union

The Harputs 30-plus-year history ranges from selling Adidas of all stripes to cult designers like Martin Margiela and Yohji Yamamoto, but its current incarnation in Union Square may be its most radical yet. Owner Gus Harput and his design crew have transplanted the Harputs Own label they started on Fillmore Street to the high-ceilinged confines of the former Prada store. In the loft-level studio, they whip up garments that can be worn multiple ways using pristine dead-stock wools and plaids, as well as silks, cashmere and knits. Exhibit A: the swacket (sweater + jacket; \$350-\$1,000), a creation that can be scrunched, snapped and belted into endless variations including a shorter coat, an asymmetrical wrap or backward cape. It looks especially chic over the line's long Spies dress (\$400-\$450). Throw on a pair of Martha Davis' arty shoes and vintage sunglasses, and you're ready to turn heads wherever you go.

140 Geary St., San Francisco;

(415) 922-9644, HarputsMarket.com. 11 a.m.-7 p.m. daily.

- Laura Compton

To submit a new boutique for consideration, e-mail sfis@sfchronicle.com or send information to SFIS, 901 Mission St., San Francisco, CA 94103.

<http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2010/02/01/SBTU1BDGEH.DTL>

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