

Phillip Lim Warms to Miami

Designer takes a grassroots approach to stores.

By [Sharon Edelson](#) on November 22, 2016



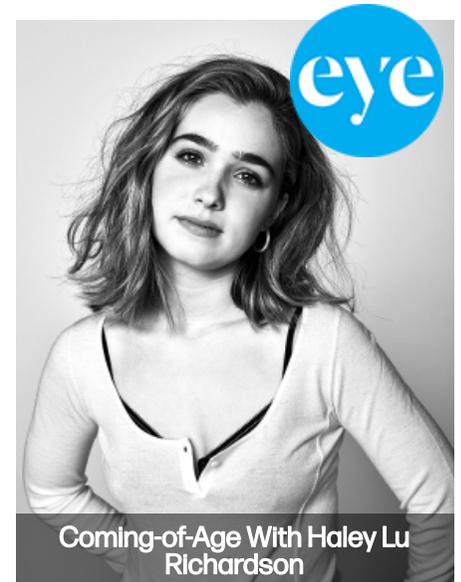
Phillip Lim in Bal Harbour, Fla.

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[Phillip Lim](#) has opened an 1,800-square-foot [3.1 Phillip Lim](#) store at the Bal Harbour Shops in Bal Harbour, Fla. Including the designer's international stores, the Bal Harbour unit marks 16. It offers women's ready-to-wear, accessories and footwear, opening with pre-spring 2017, a collections filled with bright colors and kaleidoscope florals, an homage to the vibrant energy of Miami and South Florida.

Bal Harbour represents Lim's third freestanding store in the U.S.

Bal Harbour represents Lim's third freestanding store in the U.S. and the designer's first mall unit. At the same time, the brand has decided to close its store on Robertson Boulevard in Los Angeles. Lim in January will begin testing a new yearlong concept in L.A.'s burgeoning Arts District. The other U.S. store is on Great Jones Street in Manhattan.

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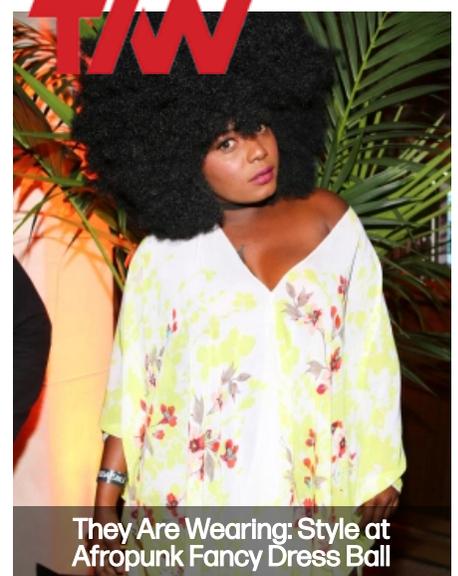


Lim said the message he wants to get across is "how we offer online and emphasize brick-and-mortar and strong human contact. The idea of building up stores is to give the clothes a context and home. These are the kind of color palettes where the clothes live. The kindness of sales staff is part of the brand's culture. For us, the term global and local is grassroots and goes against the grain of this whole Internet thing."

The Bal Harbour store is the evolution of Lim's studio luxury concept, which can be seen at the New York store and several others around the world. "The concept is that if you were to be invited into a designer or artist's studio, it would be casual but with a purpose," Lim said. "We took this concept and made this more localized for Miami and Florida."

A stone, steel and glass storefront opens onto concrete floors with brass inlays. Art Deco informs the store design and the color palate is punctuated with native sun-drenched greens, pinks and blues. A custom palm tree rug is the focal point of the store. Instead of being green, the rug highlights magenta, pinks, navy and ivory.

"This shop will have similar collections to our other stores, but



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we'll do exclusive products for the Miami climate," Lim said. "Winter in New York is not winter in Miami. It'll be the same aesthetic direction, but it will be catered to the local clientele, which is a very global clientele."

"I know we'll do incredible business at Bal Harbour," said Wen Zhou, Lim's business partner. "It's one of the top malls in the world. The stores are busy, there's a palpable energy in the air. People are here to celebrate fashion and they're happy. It's a beautiful mall with a waterfall and koi pond. All my favorite brands are here under one roof. It's surprising that we feel Miami is a local destination. There's a global affluence and energy."

Zhou said she and Lim want to open a store in a place where there's a lot of local culture. "We're not just there for business, but to make meaningful connections," she said. "We want to learn from our customers and learn what they love. Sales happen in 360 degrees."

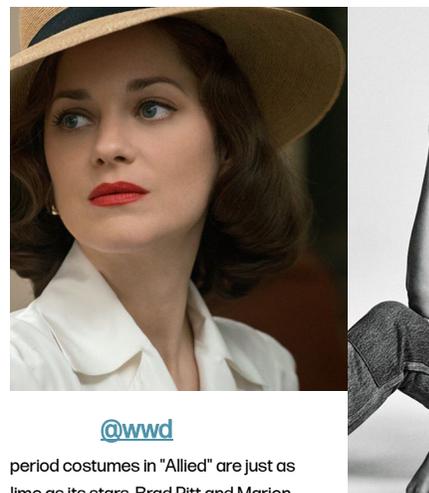
Zhou said additional 3.1 stores are planned. "There will be more, but everything is still in the works," she said. "We're expanding where it makes sense."

"L.A. is a whole new strategy," Zhou said. "I opened the Robertson Boulevard store two years after we started that brand. Robertson Boulevard is my baby, but the landscape has shifted. We have the potential launch and pop-up. I want to explore what that means. It will be for a year. Before I met Phillip, I had an office in the Arts District."

"I'm not looking to follow a cookie-cutter retail strategy there," Zhou continued. "I'm always looking. We always have to be curious."

Lim said the company is self-funded. "We're the last of the independents," he said of the label he founded with Zhou in 2005. "That's actually part of why we can do things our way. It's because we don't have to report to board members." Still, sometimes Lim feels the burdens of being small and feels like shouting, "Come on guys, root for the underdogs."

In addition to a flagship in London, there are six [3.1 Phillip Lim](#)



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locations in China, including two in Hong Kong, two in Beijing and units in Macau and Shanghai. There are two stores in Singapore, two in Bangkok, and units in Taipei and Tokyo.

 [3.1Phillip Lim](#) [Phillip Lim](#)

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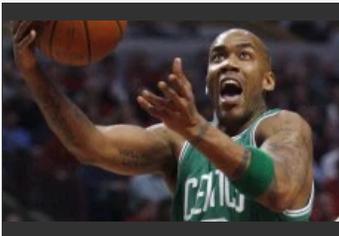
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