

# SANDY PARKER Reports

WEEKLY INTERNATIONAL  
FUR NEWS

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Dear Subscriber,

**T**HE CURRENT SEASON IS NOT SHAPING UP TO ANYWHERE NEAR WHAT RETAIL FURRIERS HAD EXPECTED DESPITE THE ONSET OF FAVORABLE WEATHER CONDITIONS AND AN EARLY MOVE INTO AN END-OF-SEASON CLEARANCE MODE. General disappointment with the normally big months of November and December – largely attributed to unseasonably mild weather – has not been offset by a major pickup in January so far and the furriers are approaching the end of their regular season with far more inventory than they feel comfortable with.

**BUT FURRIERS ARE NOT THE ONLY ONES EXPERIENCING A DISAPPOINTING WINTER SEASON.** Published reports from major department and specialty stores cite sharp declines in sales of all kinds of winter apparel, including gloves and other accessories. Major jewelry stores and other luxury businesses also are having problems. The announcement by Walmart that it is closing 269 stores worldwide is further evidence that furriers are not the only ones experiencing rough times. Last week's statement by the ceo of Tiffany's, in an announcement of a 9% drop in global jewelry sales, appears to sum it up. He said, "we believe overall sales results were negatively affected by restrained consumer spending tied to challenging and uncertain global economic conditions."

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- \*Weather, Economics Are Blamed
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- \*...Meaning Smaller Open-to-Buys
- \*Beijing Fair Described as 'Bust'

**ALTHOUGH PROMOTIONAL RETAILERS BEGAN QUOTING BIG DISCOUNTS AS EARLY AS LAST AUGUST, MORE TRADITIONAL OPERATORS HAVE JUST STARTED – ABOUT TWO OR THREE WEEKS EARLIER THAN USUAL.** Their offers of 40% to 60% off regular prices, some said, have brought customers in, but no great rush. They figure they have only about five or six weeks left to move out enough stock bought before the drop in skin prices to salvage much of their investments. At this point, however, indications are they'll be carrying over much more than they care to. This, of course, would translate into a much smaller open-to-buy position as they begin looking at the new collections for next season. And, although the prospect of lower replacement cost is always attractive, they still have to make room for the new merchandise while taking as little loss as possible.

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**MOST FURRIERS INTERVIEWED LAST WEEK ACKNOWLEDGED THE LIKELIHOOD OF A SMALLER OPEN-TO-BUY POSITION FOR NEXT SEASON.** And, therefore, a greater possibility that they will forgo a trip to one or more of the international fur fairs. Smaller purchasing plans, they point out, may not justify the high expense of a trip to Hong Kong or Europe. Last week, there already were reports of fewer American buyers at the Beijing Fur Fair. Several retailers even went so far as to say they may have enough inventory left over to carry them through much of next season, possibly having to fill in only on some accessories.

**THIS YEAR'S EDITION OF THE BEIJING FUR FAIR WAS DESCRIBED AS PRETTY MUCH A 'BUST'.** In the absence of an official report, first-hand observers agreed the event had declined further compared to last year's already smaller show. They estimated there were 30% to 40% fewer exhibitors and far fewer visitors. Only a handful of Americans, they reported, and even fewer Russians. There were some Koreans and Japanese, but far fewer than normal. Although the event traditionally has been geared to the export trade, the visitors were predominantly Chinese. What business there was appeared to be mainly in small items not attractive to Western buyers.

**SHOWTIME:** Copenhagen Fur will again kick off Copenhagen Fashion Week with a major international show featuring the creations of young designers from around the world. The event, sponsored by the Confederation of Danish Industry, starts Feb. 2 with the show, "Imagine Talents," showcasing the fur creations of 28 design students from 11 universities around the world. The garments will be produced by local manufacturers in cooperation with Copenhagen Studio, the auction company's creative workshop. The young designers are encouraged to give their suggestions for new fur styles. For further info, contact Nina Brønden Jakobsen at [nbj@kopenhagenfur.com](mailto:nbj@kopenhagenfur.com).

**MEN'S DEPT.:** London's autumn-winter fashion week put the spotlight on masculine furs at several houses. Burberry's fox coat evoked images of the hit movie, "The Revenant", while the late singer, David Bowie's, fashion influence was seen in an intarsia mink jacket, a two-toned bomber jacket and a long parka with a fox-trimmed hood. Baartmans & Siegel showed a calf-length fox coat, as well as full and sheared mink with leather trim. Astrid Andersen put a fox hood on a long parka, while Belstaff added fox-trimmed hoods to classic ski parkas and motorcycle jacket-parka hybrids.

**PEOPLE, PLACES & THINGS: SERENA KAPOOR** and **MARTYN PEARSON** have joined the **INTERNATIONAL FUR FEDERATION** as communications assistants to **GORANA STOJANOVIC**, director. Both come from a marketing and journalism background. They will be based full-time in IFF's office in Weybridge, England.

**FARM SPYING DEPT.:** An investigation by police in response to a complaint by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals of inhumane killing of mink and foxes at a Wisconsin farm found no violations. PeTA filed the complaint after a two-month investigation by an undercover agent who had obtained employment at the Dillenberg Fur Farm in Belle Plaine. PeTA gave detectives an edited video that appears to show employees putting as many as 30 mink at once into a metal chamber and using carbon monoxide to kill the animals. PeTA claims the process took more than 20 minutes for one mink to be killed this way and workers broke the neck of another mink that survived the gassing. The Shawano County sheriff's office inspected the farm along with a veterinarian who specializes in mink and requested PeTA provide a copy of the unedited video and make the witness available for further questioning.

## 2016 FUR FAIRS

(Corrected)

We have begun to receive inquiries as to the dates of next year's international fur fairs, so we have assembled the schedule as it now stands for the convenience of those who like to plan early. As of presstime, the following dates have been set:

**BEIJING FUR FAR** (Beijing): Jan. 14-17.

**PREMIER VISION PARIS** (Paris): Feb. 16-18.

**HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL FUR FAIR** (Hong Kong): Feb. 25-28.

**MIFUR, including Fur & Fashion Frankfurt** (Rho): Mar. 2-5.

**THE LOUNGE** (Montreal): Mar. 13-14.

**IBERPIEL** (Madrid): Mar. 13-18.

**FUR EXCELLENCE IN ATHENS** (Athens): Mar. 31-Apr. 3.

**INTL. LUXURY OUTERWEAR EXPO** (Chicago): Apr. 17-19.

**LE SHOW** (Moscow): Apr. 27-29.

**KASTORIAN FUR FAIR** (Kastoria): May 5-8.

**ISTANBUL LEATHER FAIR** (Istanbul): Nov. 2-4.

- New**  
 **Renew**

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## 2016 WORLD AUCTION CALENDAR

(Corrected)

	DEC. '15	JAN. '16	FEB.	MAR.	APR.	MAY	JUNE	SEPT.
SCANDINAVIA Kopenhagen Fur (Copenhagen)		8-11	17-23		14-21		22-29	21-29
Saga Furs (Vantaa)	19-21			8-18			6-16	14-19
NORTH AMERICA NAFA (Toronto)		30	4		5-11	31	5	13-15
American Legend (Seattle)				8-18 (Vantaa)			6-16 (Vantaa)	
*Fur Harvesters (North Bay)		25		8 (Vantaa)		25-26		
RUSSIA Sojuzpushnina (St. Petersburg)	14	29-31			27-29			17

\*Includes Western Canadian Fur Auction Sales

**AND, FOR THE RECORD:** Not that the international fur trade needed official proof, but world scientists last week confirmed that 2015 was the hottest year on record – by far. The higher temperatures, they agreed, were due in part to the El Niño weather pattern, one of the largest in a century, releasing an immense amount of heat from the Pacific Ocean. But the bulk of the record-setting heat, they said, is a consequence of the long-term planetary warming caused by human emissions of greenhouse gases.

Very truly yours,

