

THE MEDIA BRAND FOR DENIM AND FASHION TRENDS

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USA: 18,50 USD

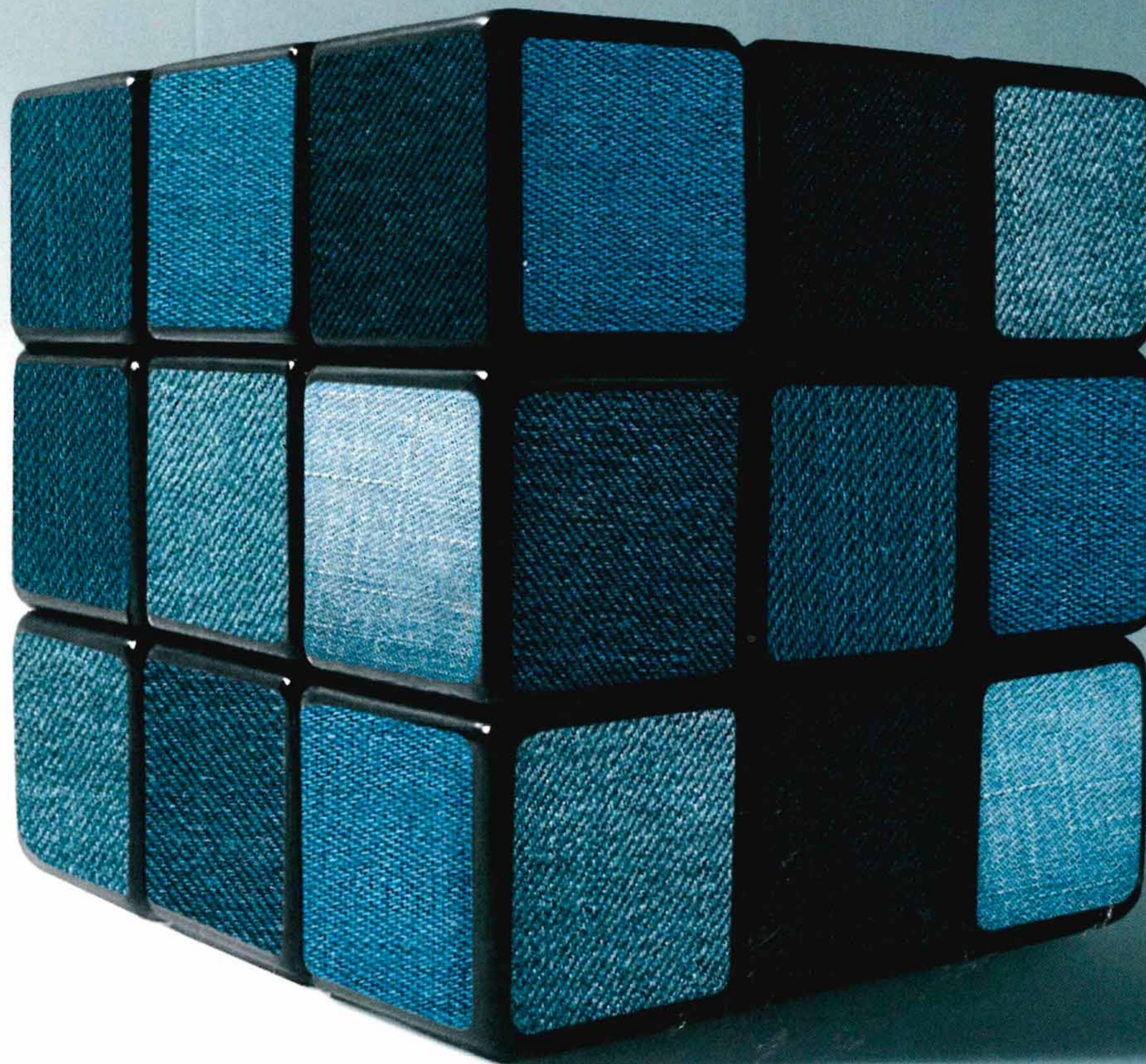
THE DENIM SOURCING ISSUE

*WHAT TRENDS ARE
SHAPING THE FUTURE
OF DENIM SOURCING?*

*JASON DENHAM
TALKS DENIM DETAILS*

*THE RISE AND SHINE
OF DENIM DEADSTOCK*

*RETAILERS'
DENIM FAVORITES:
THE LABELS & LOOKS*



ONE WO-MAN DENIM SHOWS

THEY ARE ALL DENIM EXPERTS IN THEIR OWN RIGHT AND CULTIVATE THEIR PASSION FOR MODERN RETRO JEANS COLLECTIONS. AND THEY DO IT BASICALLY ON THEIR OWN. HERE ARE SOME OF OUR FAVORITE ONE MAN AND WOMAN (!) DENIM SHOWS.

Antonio Di Battista: The denim cultivator

Antonio Di Battista, an expert jeanswear insider who worked for jeans brands including Dolce & Gabbana, Sixty Group, Meltin'Pot, Tommy Hilfiger and Lee Europe, and is now collaborating for Roy Rogers, Yen Jeans and Merz B. Schwanen, cultivates many passions, including a brand of his own, Blue Blanket. In addition to managing an over 3,000-piece vintage apparel collection, and taking photographs, he founded his own jeans brand in 2010. He started it after he visited Inspiration Los Angeles, a show only hosting products inspired by apparel pieces from the past and US iconic personalities. "After I visited that show I wanted to be part of that world and the only way for doing that was to create my own brand," explains Di Battista.

Blue Blanket is an authentic jeans brand mostly aimed at men, though it also includes some pieces for women. It aims to offer high-end jeanswear pieces 100% made in Italy using practically only Japanese and Italian denims of which 90% are selvedge ones. They are produced with extreme care according to a US taste, though characterized by great fits and Italian culture because, as Di Battista likes to say, "Jeans is a serious matter."

"Sourcing is the most important topic for me as a good pair of jeans depends upon the ingredients one uses for making it," he says. "For this reason I only work with small Italian companies which work with high-end brands and produce a few pieces though of very good quality. It's something that will never change as it is part of my brand's philosophy," he explains.

Di Battista sells to 35 stores—mostly in Northern Europe, Italy and in smaller quantities in the US, where he soon wants to start offering a Made in The USA capsule collection. "Origins are important. And in

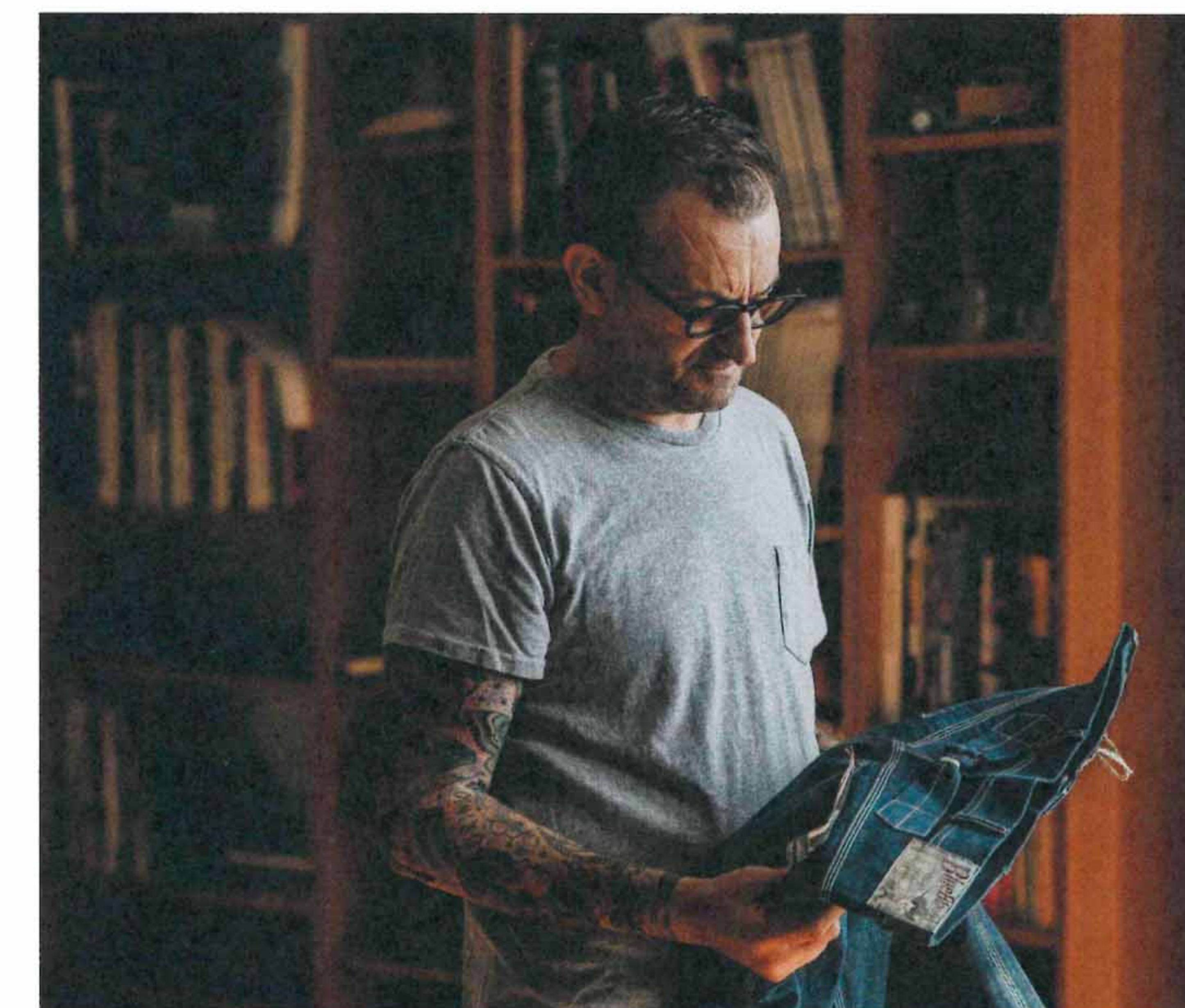
countries like these quality and attention to detail are key." Blue Blanket offers about 50 pieces such as jeans, worker's aprons, suspenders (as many jeans carry buttons for suspenders), tote bags and—ça va sans dire—a double-sided blue blanket made of blue mohair on one side and deadstock jacquard denim on the other. Other piece-dyed fabrics items in gabardine, canvas and Made in Italy wool fabrics are part of the offer.

Like his customers, Di Battista cares little for trends. He is rather very careful when choosing materials as he works with limited quantities of fabrics and his customers are very demanding in terms of quality, fabrics and fits. "Trends have absolutely no importance," he says. "Inspiration comes from what jeans were originally, while I try to give more attention to fit and manufacturing." Thus he seldom visits fabric trade shows and usually sees fabric collections in his office with agents.

He is also very keen about ordering materials in advance as he prefers to avoid last minute surprises. Often working on small quantity orders he sometimes has to deal with problems of minimum quantities, which he can only solve by paying more for fabrics.

He believes there is more talking about sustainability than facts. "I think everyone is talking and trying to do something in order to reduce one's impact, though in the end it turns out to be always some half-way solution mostly based upon gaining some certification," he says. "Plus generally all of this attention to sustainability is not much compatible with what is done when producing and washing jeans. For my brand I use 100% unwashed cotton fabrics dyed with vegetal indigo. Hangtags are made with cardboard and labels with cotton. For these reasons I'm truly sure my products are eco-sustainable." (MCP) >

PRODUCTS BY BLUE BLANKET
(PHOTO: MARCO SVIZZERO)



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—Antonio Di Battista, Blue Blanket

ANTONIO DI BATTISTA
(PHOTO: MARCO SVIZZERO)