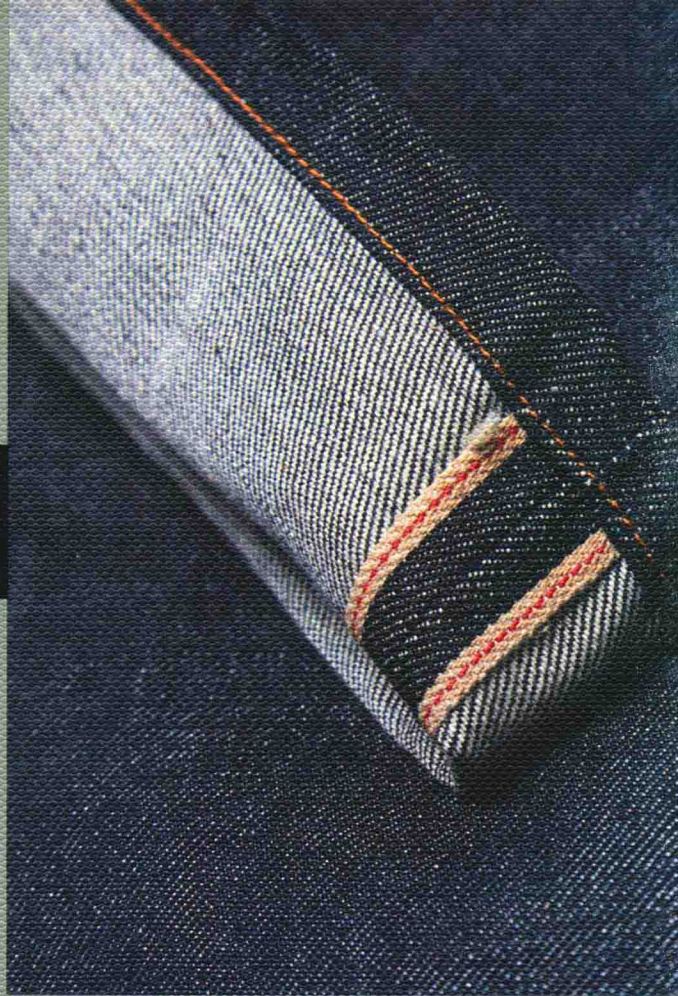


ICONS
OF
STYLE



DENIM

The
**DAILY
STREET**

MITCHELL BEAZLEY

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STYLE

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STREET**

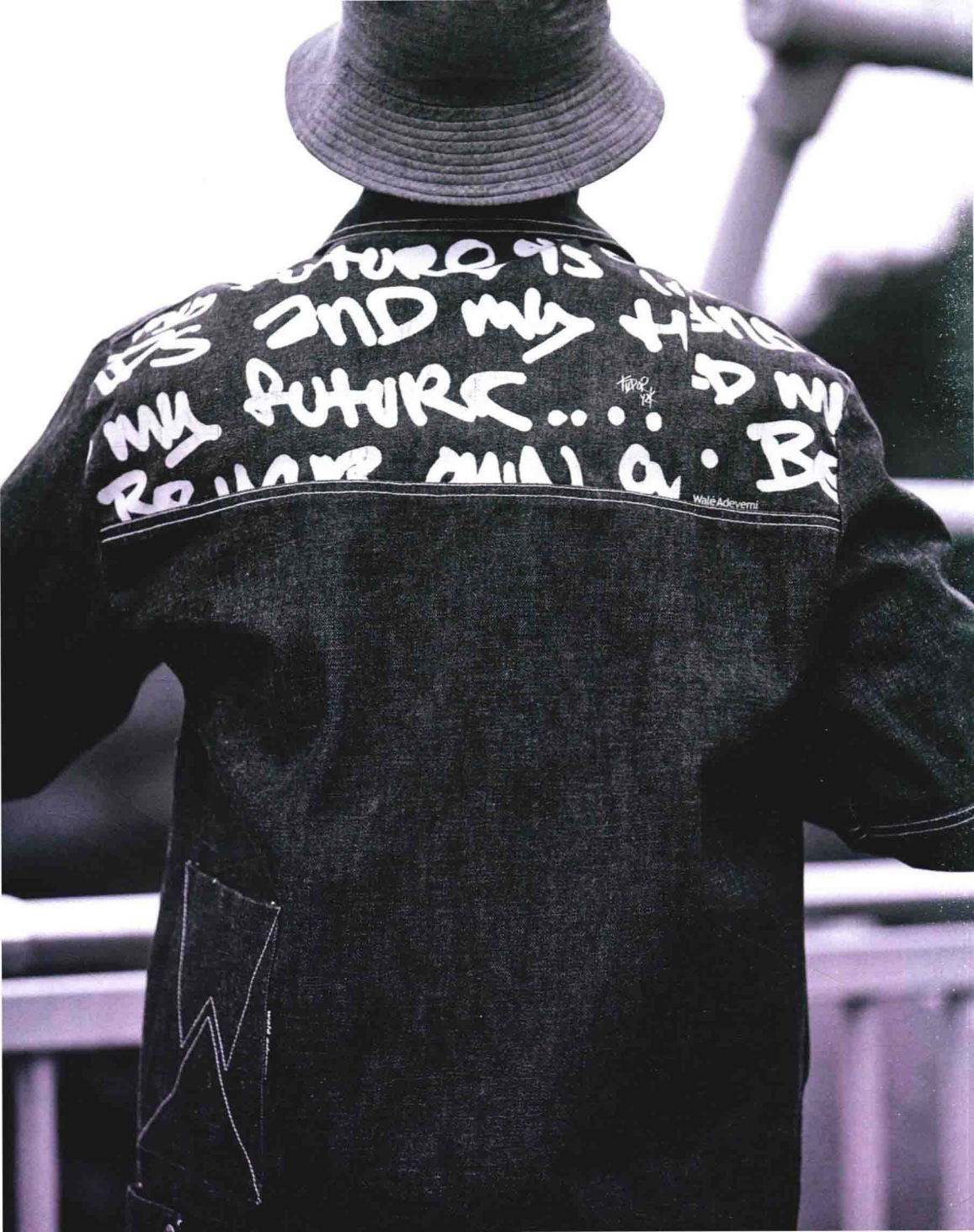
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ICONS
OF
STYLE

DENIM



MY FUTURE IS IN MY HANDS
AND MY FUTURE... I WILL BE
A MILLIONAIRE

Wale Adeyemi

MITCHELL BEAZLEY

ICONS
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The
**DAILY
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- 6 The world of denim is steeped in history and innovation. The further you dig into the topic, the more you begin to understand the impact denim has had and why it has managed to build a cult following. It's a source of seemingly endless fascination to the fashion and textiles fan, as well as those interested in cultural movements.
- With this in mind, writing a book on some of the most iconic denim to have impacted style isn't as black and white as some of the other topics in our *Icons of Style* series. Some jeans have had a huge effect on style purely due to their innovations in the most basic of forms, such as the addition of belt loops in 1922 (can you imagine jeans without belt loops these days?). Others have had an effect thanks to those who wore them, often on the big screen, such as Hollywood icons James Dean and Marilyn Monroe. Some brands and styles made a huge impact and then vanished from pop-culture memory, such as Rifle Jeans and the acid-wash craze of the 1980s. Regardless of what they did or why they have been featured in this book, all of the denim moments you will find in the pages that follow have played an important role in the story of denim so far.
- It's a story that is rich in innovation, experimentation and even revolution, and, as old as denim is, we still can't get enough of it. Some people regard the denim jean as the most important creation in fashion history to date, and by the end of this book you should, we hope, be able to understand why they feel that

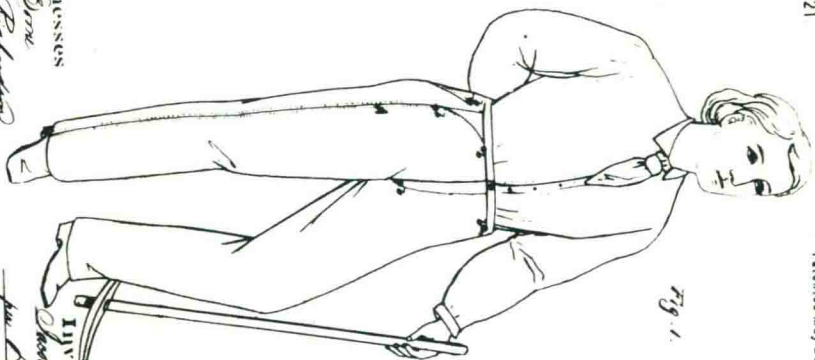
Introduction

way. From mineshafts to catwalks, from dance floors to billboards, denim has infiltrated every level of society and culture across the globe and it continues to do so.

Our taste for denim and its varying price tag fluctuates over the years, but it never dies. In the 1970s and 1980s designer denim boomed thanks to Calvin Klein, creating a whole new market for the material and opening it up to a new audience. It was a market that continued to do well throughout the 1990s, helping to change the general perceptions of denim and denim products as the indigo seeped further into popular culture. By the late 2000s our love affair with highly priced designer denim would subside, mainly thanks to the economic crisis, but it's a market that is rising once again. One side effect of the recession was that we turned our attention back to quality and value for money, something that can easily be distinguished in good denim.

For those who are well versed in denim history and culture, there will be several familiar names in this book, but, we hope, with a few surprise entries and facts along the way as well. For those who love their jeans but have yet to begin the long dig into the history of the topic, this book should be an eye-opener and a great place to start on your journey to becoming a denim specialist.

J. W. DAVIS.
Fastening Pocket-Openings



Winnipeg

Edw. Dickinson

INVENTOR
Jacob H. Brown
per Samuel G.
Atty

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JACOB W. DAVIS, OF RENO, NEVADA, ASSIGNS TO HIMSELF AND LEVI STRAUSS & COMPANY, OF SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

IMPROVEMENT IN FASTENING POCKET-OPENINGS.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. 11,809, 1871, dated May 30, 1873; application filed August 9, 1872.

To all whom it may concern:

[illegible]

In order to more fully illustrate and explain my invention, reference is had to the accompanying drawing, in which my invention is represented as applied to the pockets of a pair of pants.

Figure 1 is a view of my invention as applied to pants.

A is the side seam in a pair of pants, draw-
ing or other article of wearing apparel, which
terminates at the pockets; and b represent
the rivets at each edge of the pocket opening.
The seams are usually ripped or started by
the pulling of the hands in the pockets and
the pulling of the hands in the pockets and

[illegible]

As new article of manufacture, a pair of pantaloons having the pocket-openings secured at each edge by means of rivets, and substantially in the manner described and shown, whereby the seams at the points named are prevented from ripping, as set forth.

JACOB W. DAVIS. [L.S.]

WITNESSES:
JAMES C. HOGREWAY
W. BERGMAN.

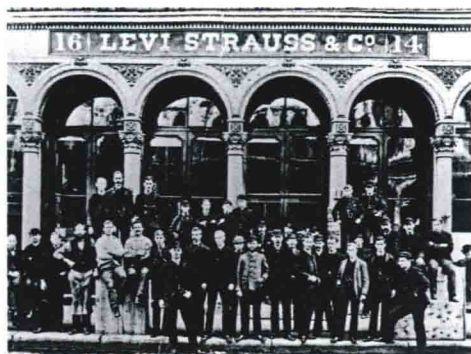
Although denim had already been around for hundreds of years, it was a singular moment in 1873 that created the denim jean as we know it today. Rewind to 1853, when the Bavarian-born Levi Strauss founded his dry-goods business called Levi Strauss & Co., aimed at cashing in on the Gold Rush in San Francisco. As successful a businessman as Strauss was, he owed a great deal to a man named Jacob Davis, a tailor from Nevada who created the copper-riveted workwear for which the brand would become world famous.

The partnership between Strauss and Davis created its first products in 1872: riveted workwear made from either cotton duck or true blue denim. However, it wasn't until the following year, on 20 May 1873, that Levi Strauss & Co. and Jacob Davis received patent #139,121 from the US Patent and Trademark Office on the process of riveting denim waist coveralls – officially marking the creation of the blue jean or, as it was called then, the 'XX'. The name was a reference to the best ('extra, extra strong') denim manufactured by the Amoskeag Manufacturing Company of Manchester, New Hampshire, where the original jeans were made.

Opposite: The story of the blue jean starts here, with US patent #139,121. Below: Workers stand proudly outside the original Levi Strauss & Co. in the 1890s.

Levi's 'XX' – birth of the blue jean

1873





BLUE EYES
MINE

A lesser-known part of the early history of Levi's is the 'Nevada' jean. One of the earliest designs from Levi Strauss & Co., this jean was subsequently nicknamed the 'Nevada' after a pair dating from between 1880 and 1885 was discovered at the bottom of a mineshaft in Nevada in 1998, put up for auction on eBay on 24 May 2001, and purchased by Levi Strauss & Co. Archives for \$46,532. Research by Mike Harris has even suggested that the 'Nevada' could actually be a predecessor to the 'XX'.

The Levi's 'Nevada' looked very much like any early Levi Strauss & Co. jean, with a single back pocket, a selvage waistband, crotch rivet, a cinch and suspender buttons. The 'Nevada' also included a unique 'knife' pocket on the rear outer of the left leg. As these jeans were created before the invention of the double-stitch sewing machine, the distinctive arcuate (bow-shaped) stitching on the rear pocket will have been stitched twice using a hand-mechanized, single-stitch machine, giving it a charming character.

In 2001 Levi's Vintage Clothing reproduced the 'Nevada' jean to celebrate its return to the company, painstakingly replicating the shape and distressing of the original. The LVC team in Europe studied the original pair in order to best replicate the fit, fabric construction, labelling, rivets and buttons, with the manufacturing taking place by hand at its Valencia Street premises in San Francisco, then the oldest existing Levi Strauss & Co. factory (built in 1906). With only 501 pairs created, these limited-edition replicas have become a sought-after collector's item.

Opposite: Two miners pose outside a mine in 1882. Miners were some of the earliest adopters of Levi's jeans, back when they were designed solely as workwear.

Levi's 'Nevada'

1880





Early Levi Strauss & Co. advertising played on the product's strengths (literally, in the form of the rivets), depicting scenarios that the clothing was designed for. This advert is from the 1880s.