

LONDON FASHION WEEK
19-24 FEBRUARY 2010

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ISSUE No.2, LONDON FASHION WEEK AUTUMN/WINTER 2010

MONDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2010



THE FASHION MOMENT Clip art backstage at yesterday's Richard Nicoll show. Photography by Anna Bauer. For more backstage photos, see The LFW Daily blog at lfdaily.com

A fine romance

REPORT BY JULIA ROBSON

The show notes read: "Low-fi glamour and utilitarian deconstruction." But who could have guessed that Richard Nicoll's presentation would be so utterly feminine and polished? Because Nicoll's fashion vision errs on the side of urban simplicity, what better candidate to come up with a wardrobe for the modern working girl? Even if – as it also said in the notes – this was inspired by Nicoll's own wardrobe. "I studied menswear, so I always reference it in my work," said the 32-year-old designer, wearing a plaid shirt over a white t-shirt and casual slacks post-show.

His get-up, in fact, couldn't have been further removed from the pale grey flannel jackets and pelmet skirts he sent out in his opening numbers. His slouchy and yet precision-cut tailoring showed why this London-born, Australian-bred designer recently won his Cerruti gig (he will present his first collection for the Italian giant at Paris Fashion Week next month).

This was followed by a series of ingenious slashed, pleated and draped separates gleaned from the construction of bin bags and off-licence carrier bags. (Where does he shop, Harrods?) He even did a skirt

that was inspired by a plane blanket.

Sinuous matchy-matchy suits – which came with either long or short trousers or skirts (this designer is all about democracy, remember) – echoed the Parisian feel of the soundtrack, which ended up rather fabulously with David Bowie.

Pleats and chiffon panels prettified sporty shapes, along with a colour palette that moved from grey to rust and petrol blue.

Although he referenced Seventies Parisian sensibilities (YSL with some sheer blouses) and slipped in his favourite Linder Sterling punk graphics on plain white t-shirts, there were also a few nods to the Eighties and Nineties – particularly with rucksacks, velvet, taffeta and the Eighties stylist reach-for-a-bulldog clip (Swarovski-crystal encrusted).

There were no real definitions between day or evening wear, but he did offer a new luxe ensemble that would be perfectly acceptable for both: a gravity-defying featherweight tulle shirt in smoky blue, which appeared to morph into opaque rust velvet trousers. Delicious.

Other highlights included Le Smoking jacket over a chiffon ankle-length skirt and the best sweater-over-chiffon-maxi yet (which surely

we'll all be wearing come September?)

"It was so beautiful and so now," said Susie Lau, blogger and Editor of *Dazed & Confused's* website. "No one has done utility in a pretty way until now." "I loved it," said *Grazia's* Paula Reed. "He did that man-woman thing in such a romantic way. There's been a lack of romantic and tender clothes in London, but Richard nailed it."

Photography by *catwalking.com*



Return of the shirt

REPORT BY EMMA SIBBLES

Blame it on Phoebe Philo's delicious white piqué shirts at Celine last season, but the man's shirt has replaced the blouse centre stage.

At Margaret Howell yesterday, blue skinny-stripe and crisp white shirts were worn under Aran and Fair Isle knits or with cravats. Liz Thody, *Easy Living* Fashion Director and self-confessed Margaret Howell groupie, was front row in a white slim-fit man's shirt. "This

is a departure for me," she said, "as I'm a massive blouse person, but it just felt right."

Although it's a signature for Howell, the man's shirt represents a departure for some designers, too. Holly Fulton showed shirts as dresses and blouses masquerading as shirts with *trompe l'oeil* collars and cuffs, while Richard Nicoll sent out sheer, diaphanous shirts cut to a man shirt's crisp silhouette.

These really are functional pieces that still have a kick. Back to Thody: "Part of the appeal is that men's shirts are androgynous yet sexy. And when they're well designed, as at Margaret Howell, they speak for themselves."

The Shaw effect

REPORT BY MOLLY GUNN

When the lights went down at Julien Macdonald's exquisitely elegant catwalk show last night, it wasn't only Macdonald's name being celebrated.

The moment also belonged to the rather self-effacing Damian Shaw, who has been working behind the scenes as the brand's Marketing and Merchandising Director since last October. "My role is to structure the business and designs from a commercial position," says Shaw. "It was the first show since I started

working with Julien, and for A/W 10 we wanted to return the focus to knitwear, as this is what he was originally known for."

Joining a team that includes super-stylist George Cortina, Shaw is the latest link in the reinvention of Macdonald from sparkly-dress designer to serious fashion player. Shaw has been honing his fashion-business nous as Merchandise and Marketing Director RTW at Chloé in Paris for the past six years – where he was rumoured to have been the brains behind many big-selling pieces – and before that, he cut his teeth at Liberty. "It's wonderful to return to London; the city has a fresh energy. It's an exciting place to work in fashion."

Thoughtful shopper

NOTED BY LINDA GRANT

Just before Matthew Williamson's show, I had to lend my reading glasses to a fashion editor who was having problems making out the name on a business card. Girls who wear Boho eventually turn 40, and what does fashion have to offer them? Often not a great deal. But of all designers, it is Williamson who seems to have got this message, because the phrase that characterised his collection was "grown-up".

Grey tweed coats with caped shoulders, fur wraps and beaded evening wear, who would wear these clothes? Middle-aged women who want their wardrobes to express the confidence they feel. It is a difficult trick to pull off, navigating two hostile currents: mutton-dressed-as-lamb bodycon; and the tweeds and fur that remind you of your grandmother. The only way to do it is to accept that middle age is the time when you deserve to be warm, dry and cosseted with beautiful fabrics next to the skin. We have earned the right not to have to pretend to be young. Now we need designers like Williamson to give us the clothes to be grown-up in.

The Thoughtful Dresser by Linda Grant (Virago, £11.99) is out now

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Catwalk highlights

Report by **MELANIE RICKEY**, Fashion Editor at Large, Grazia | fashioneditoratlarge.blogspot.com
Photography by catwalking.com



MEADHAM KIRCHHOFF

Jaws dropped when the Meadham Kirchoff show began. Used to seeing black, moody collections from Ed Meadham and Ben Kirchoff, the Arabic rugs, streams of tinsel on the floor and Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* should have been a clue that this would be a bit different. The first look was a celebration of colour with a red mantilla worn over the face, topped with a tinsel tiara. Beneath that were two layers of floral dresses and long-john trousers. I think... There was so much to take in at once! Among the best individual pieces in this riot of a collection were the hand-painted biker jackets; the embroidered long skirts; the piles of Indian-inspired bangles created in collaboration with Erickson Beamon; red "nightie" dresses, orange floral blouses and the long event gowns. Oh, and the tinsel-embroidered shrunken-wool cardigans and sweaters. "We wanted to do as many pretty, amazing things as possible and put them all together," explained Meadham. "It's a narrative that begins in southern India and ends in southern Spain." And success. Meadham Kirchoff has arrived.

TODD LYNN

A ripple of excitement went through the crowd as the lights went down for Todd Lynn yesterday – and then the paparazzi descended. Who were they here for? I spotted Marc Almond sitting next to Roland Mouret, but as the show commenced, a beam of light hit Mouret's other neighbour – Janet Jackson! The show went on to be what you'd imagine the undead in a fashionable bar in *True Blood* would wear. Forget studs and chains – these vampires would be wearing Todd Lynn while standing around looking serious yet sexy. Todd designs brilliant jackets and slim trousers – a modern urban uniform of androgynous cool. His outfits operate on a one-colour basis; the colours in this show were pale nude, honey, tobacco brown and grey. Fabrics included suede, leather, wool and canvas. Matching high-heeled Louboutins were worn, and fox fur sprouted dramatically from shoulders. "It was about the hunter becoming the hunted. And, as always, I studied military uniform through the ages," said Lynn. And the Janet connection? "We worked on her last video together. She flew over to see the show."

AQUASCUTUM

We've been keeping a close eye on developments at Aquascutum, holding our collective breath last season when the business was sold. Six months on, the brand, in the safe hands of fashion businessman Harold Tillman, is transformed, and its show last night was a pleasure to behold. Thus far, London designers have been treading safely when it comes to making new statements for A/W10. Not Michael Herz for Aquascutum. He went long, long, long in a colour palette of navy, grey and military green, alongside camel wool, gold jacquard and black leather. Think a long, tailored skirt with a white shirt and a short, belted jacket with flat, silver dance shoes. Or wide-leg trousers worn with a tiny, belted padded jacket, again with a white shirt. Throw in a cape, a long, slim, covered-up dress and a trench and you've got the collection in a nutshell. But it was Herz's confidence that made this a show-stopper. "It was inspired by *The French Lieutenant's Woman*," he said, "and it was my conviction to carry on the long silhouette I started for S/S. It's the way the girls walk, wearing long with flats. It just feels right." And it did.

JULIEN MACDONALD

In a grand setting in Whitehall, Julien Macdonald continued to set the pace of change in his label. Thanks to new backing, in the space of a year, he has revved it up to modern luxury status. From the off, we recognised that the equestrienne was an inspiration, as girls with bedroom hair and come-hither eyes strode out in tobacco riding capes bonded with black leather over leather and suede panelled jodhpur leggings; or extravagant looped Aran sweaters with a grey pegged trouser and fierce, high ankle boots. Then came the great coats, a biker-and-coat combo, and shredded knitted dresses only Julien can do best. The curveball? Sexy negligée dresses – and what fine filigrees they were in black and pink or navy and black; long and short-pleated and fluted. What was the sexy horsewoman doing with a bare breast on show beneath gauzy black lace under her riding cape? Backstage, Julien's inspiration became clear. "It was Jilly Cooper's novel, *Riders*," he grinned. "By day, they ride horses, and by night, they do naughty things to men in stables." Don't you just love Julien?



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BESPOKE FEATURE

H&M EDITOR'S CHOICE

JESSIE BRINTON
COLUMNIST, THE SUNDAY TIMES STYLE

Wears jacket £29.99, t-shirt £9.99, jeans £29.99,
headband £12.99, shoes £9.99

The best outfits are the ones that come with good stories and there's nothing wrong with making them up. Most of fashion is made up anyway, isn't it? Telling a grand tale is a great ice-breaker if you're introduced to someone very fashionable at a cocktail party and are feeling tongue-tied. Thankfully, H&M's S/S 10 offerings are rich pickings for weaving a fictional tale around an outfit.

My tale would begin with how these pre-distressed boyfriend jeans were passed down from my great-grandfather, a Texan cowboy who had them for 60 years without taking them off once. He was 7ft tall; that's why they're rolled up.

I'm working this season's double-denim look, but the jacket isn't cowboy era, it's from the Eighties. It was given to me by my godmother, who was briefly door bitch at the Wag. She was said to be Leigh Bowery's secret wife, but I probably shouldn't have told you that. The polka-dot top once belonged to Baby Spice's stylist, who gave it to me.

The shoes are a modern take on the classic pump, but this time H&M has added a new design element: a zip up the side, for when one's too busy to do up one's laces, which many fashionable people are.

We all know that this season is about head furniture. The bow, I will fib, was made by an unknown milliner working out of a skip in Hackney, who has just been commissioned to create something "very special" for Lady Gaga – although he made me his priority because we're close.

At the moment, people keep asking me whether I'm working the Eighties or Nineties look. I say both! Obviously I'm far too young to remember either decade, but that doesn't stop me channelling them and telling people about them – even if they don't believe me.

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRIS BROOKS

Woolly thinking

REPORT BY MOLLY GUNN

The big knit is fast becoming the perfect vehicle to tick off a host of new LFW trends, from goth (with a punky mohair twist at Kinder) to heritage (Aran at Margaret Howell) and layering (knits belted over coats at Charles Anastase). Thrown on over chiffon-pleat dresses (Julien Macdonald) or flirty tulle minis (Unique), the chunky knit is also a quick-fire way to de-prettify what might otherwise be a too-cutesy look. "Oversized knits are a big thing for us buyers for next season. They're cropping up in interesting

ways – over floor-length dresses or shorter tunics or under very cropped jackets," says Luisa de Paula, Buying Director for my-wardrobe.com. The Cooperative Designs duo Dorothée Hagemann and Annalisa Dunn are all about knitwear, and their show yesterday was a yarn-fest, featuring graphic layered knits worn head to toe. "We enjoy the challenge of making knits something more unusual and want to get away from the idea that they only accompany trousers," says Dorothée. "At the moment, I feel it's the bigger the better!"



Georgia, London Fashion Week A/W 10
Photography by **YVAN RODIC**, author of the forthcoming book **FACEHUNTER** (Thames & Hudson, £14.95), out on 15 March

Legs & co

REPORT BY MOLLY GUNN

"Legs are hot!" exclaimed Welsh Designer Collective's Emma Griffiths yesterday after her catwalk show, which featured leggings decorated with leather panels and studs. "The studs down the back reminded me of Forties stockings. Playful legs are fun, as you can be cheeky and OTT, even when covered." Moving on from previous seasons, when plain leggings or tights were all that were needed to highlight legs, this LFW has seen pins dressed up, layered up and accessorised as a feature in themselves. It's a case of more is more. Yesterday, *Vogue's* Market Editor Emma Elwick teamed calf-high boots and long grey socks with a YSL trapeze dress. "I like to get my Kermit legs out with a dress for a Sixties silhouette," says Emma. At Clements Ribeiro, legs demanded focus with socks, tights and ankle boots with sequin embellishments. Matthew Williamson did armadillo-effect trousers, while Jasper Conran offset voluminous tops with sleek leggings. After his show, front-row-er Jo Wood said, "You can't go wrong with dressing up your legs, but a good pair is all about exercise!" Call them the new "legcessories".

See inspired legwear images on *The LFW Daily* blog at lfdaily.com

Candy girl talks fashion and support

REPORT BY DAVID HAYES

"I love finding that little bit of the unexpected, that spark of genius you only get in London," says Lorraine Candy, Editor-in-Chief of ELLE. "We aren't even halfway through the shows, but I found it at Richard Nicoll today."

Not only is Candy an enthusiastic supporter of British talent, but this season ELLE, in conjunction with the BFC, is putting that enthusiasm into practice with their Talent



The cutting edge

REPORT BY HEATH BROWN

From old-school to too-cool-for-school, designers such as Louise Gray (above) are slashing and cutting like mad. Whether through precise panels or seemingly random cuts, a glimpse of skin, or a layer beneath, is a micro trend this season. Swedish-born Ann-Sofie Back slashed her black jersey catsuits to within an inch of their modesty, and sent out models who revealed the palest flesh in semi-sheer, lacerated skirts and dresses. At Danielle Scutt, cut-away mohair jackets lay the body open to the

elements; meanwhile, Jean-Pierre Braganza gashed and reconstructed his outfits. A more refined take on "cut and slash" came from Jasper Conran's sculptural collection, where surgically cut peek-a-boo looks revealed the skin, sometimes beneath an organza layer, sometimes not. "It is these glimpses that create the *frisson*," explained an exuberant Conran backstage. "Rather than a flashy show of leg or a bare midriff, a more controlled revelation is a lot more sexy, darling."

Photography by *Shaniqua Jarvis*

EMERGING DESIGNERS OFTEN DON'T HAVE THE RESOURCES TO SELL THEMSELVES... LAUNCHPAD WILL CHANGE THAT

behind them to create marketing material that can be used to promote their brands in store regionally, as well as internationally. But the primary aim is to ensure that they are connecting with a new audience of potential buyers as early as possible, so their fledgling businesses fly.

BESPOKE FEATURE

KAREN MILLEN



THE S/S 10 CAMPAIGN IMAGE

PATTERN CUTTERS WORK FROM THE INITIAL DESIGN SKETCHES

ARCHIVE IMAGES OF LACE PROVIDE INSPIRATION

LACE PANELS ARE CAREFULLY MATCHED TO CREATE AN INVISIBLE SEAM

THE SCALLOPED-EDGE EYELASH LACE IS A SIGNATURE OF LEAVERS LACE

Atelier Aflent

It's the high street's greatest secret and Karen Millen's stealth weapon. *The LFW Daily* takes a look behind the scenes at the brand's design atelier to witness the birth of Karen Millen's stellar S/S 10 collection

"We lavish a lot of love on our garments," says Gemma Metheringham, Karen Millen's MD and Creative Director. "We tend to go the extra mile." She's not exaggerating. Take S/S 10's hero piece jacket (pictured). Crafted out of an exquisite scalloped-edge eyelash lace, the fabric is woven on 200-year-old looms by a renowned Calais-based Leavers lace artisanal producer. "The lace is woven bespoke to fit the pattern of our jackets," says Metheringham, bashfully admitting such design indulgences are normally only reserved for rarefied ready-to-wear collections and haute couture. "I don't think there is any other lace that matches this. It's so beautiful. That's one of the joys of working at Karen Millen: we get to work with such beautiful fabrics."

Commissioning fabric mills that produce lace for the likes of Stella McCartney is not the only perk. Part of Karen Millen's design philosophy is that every garment is lovingly created and sampled in its design atelier, which functions like most Paris fashion house ateliers. "The reason we care so much about the details and the fit is that we are not about disposable fashion. We are producing pieces that possess design integrity, that you will be able to pull out of your closet in 10 years and still think are perfect."

Haute chic
"Jackets are a key fashion item, but they're not always that easy to integrate into your wardrobe. We wanted to create a jacket that was structured and had a great silhouette, at the same time as being light and easy to wear; the kind of jacket that would look effortless with a pair of jeans. But above all, we wanted to create an incredibly special piece that our customers could treasure."
Gemma Metheringham, MD and Creative Director, Karen Millen
Jacket £199. See the entire Karen Millen collection at www.karenmillen.com

THE BEAUTY SPOT Muted monochromes

REPORT BY ANNA-MARIE SOLOWIJ

Why does it suddenly seem as if make-up artists are broadcasting the beauty looks for A/W 10 in black and white rather than colour?

The neutral colour theme we saw towards the beginning of the week now looks positively Technicolor compared to the reductivist palette of black, grey and, er, black that has emerged as an overwhelming trend so far in beauty as well as fashion.

At Clements Ribeiro, make-up artist Makky shaded black pigment around the eyesockets to create a dramatic effect that complemented the marble prints and darkened colours of this elegant "Parisienne" collection. For Louise Goldin, make-up artist Val Garland worked a smudgy black eye pencil brushed into a wash of murky tones over the entire eyelid (right). Garland's references included "old Margiela", and there was certainly something late-Eighties Belgian about the slightly grunge-influenced beauty look. Then at Matthew Williamson – a man who quite possibly has the word "colour" engraved on his heart – a simple, softened line of dark

grey eyeshadow was the make-up statement by James Kaliardos for L'Oréal Paris. "It's very minimal," admitted Kaliardos, who talked about de-saturated colours on faces, while Williamson described his colour palette as "knocked back" – something of a trend this week.

It's worth noting that the unifying factor for all three of these designers – apart from monochrome make-up – is a fascination with detail and embellishment: swathes of sequins at Clements Ribeiro; architectural construction at Louise Goldin; soft pleating, beading and ruffles at Matthew Williamson. Clothes that are this intricate require the undivided attention of a fashion audience, and this should be a cue for a big-statement beauty look to step down and blend seamlessly into the background. "When clothes are this detailed, it would be wrong to do too much," says Kaliardos. Besides, with the beauty industry still relatively buoyant despite the recession, it can surely afford a brief moment on the sidelines.

Photography by *Anna Bauer*



YUM YUM NO 1
The delicious Mercedes-Benz hamper

BULLDOG CLIPS
The new brooch, courtesy of Richard Nicoll

YUM YUM NO 2
M&S Cheese Tasters. Naughty and nice

TICK
TREND WATCH
Powered by Baby-G

TOCK
BAFTAS
Bringing London to a standstill, literally

BROLLY SHORTAGE
Reached fever pitch, post-Betty

WEE ALLEY
The unfortunate aroma of a certain backstage entrance

No nip, just tuck

REPORT BY JESSICA HOGAN

The new accessory to the "real" hair seen on catwalks this season couldn't be simpler: the tuck. Think Preen, Alexander Wang, Narciso Rodriguez and Rodarte in New York, and David Koma, Hakaan, Betty Jackson and Vivienne Westwood Red Label (left) in London. Cos Sakkas, from Toni & Guy, who styled hair at both David Koma and Betty Jackson, stressed the tuck's importance. "It flatters the face shape and makes cheekbones more prominent in a young, modern way." At Hakaan, Luigi Murenu for John Frieda's

two-texture style was hemmed behind the ear, which was integral to achieving the androgynous effect he was after. Meanwhile at Vivienne Westwood Red Label, Vivienne requested hair stylist Peter Gray for L'Oréal Professionnel make the ears visible to bring a boyish charm to the wild updos. The fact that hair stylists are drawing attention to small details confirms beauty is in the minutiae of a look in a season that seems to be embracing a refreshing, pared-down naivety.

Photography by *Anna Bauer*

New model army

REPORT BY EMMA SIBBLES

A platoon of futuristic, uniform-clad models marched to Louise Goldin's beat yesterday wearing protective, quilted, felted-wool layers; think panelled, patent-leather sharp shoulders and combat minis, and treggings with jutting hips. "I was inspired by the future of the military and origami," said Goldin after her show. Using a camo palette of forest green, black and petrol blue, pleats and sculptural folds created cocoon-like jackets and coats with articulated sleeves, but these warrior women were no victims. With padding on

the elbows and ammunition arm-straps, they were taking no prisoners. Despite the defensive mood, Goldin has reason to be optimistic for the future after winning the BFC's 2010 Fashion Forward initiative and £30,000 prize, sponsored by Coutts & Co and supported by the London Development Agency (LDA), in January. "It was amazing to receive the support from the funding," she said. "It enabled me to put on this show, but the most important thing was the mentoring."

Photography by *catwalking.com*



Miller et Miller

REPORT BY HEATH BROWN

Eclectic is ever the watchword for sisters Savannah and Sienna Miller's fashion label Twenty8Twelve.

With Sienna as the poster girl for the mid-Noughties Boho look, a certain reckless style is apparent. However, her Central Saint Martins-trained sister provides a touch of restraint. "I'm a lot more classic," Savannah told *The LFW Daily*. "I'm more punky and a bit messy," replied Sienna before their show. "Together we create what we both love."

Held at a sumptuous Arts and Crafts mansion by the Thames, the

pair offered a "3D, multi-functional event", which included a louche film shot at Detmar Blow's country pile in Gloucestershire, a series of relaxed collection stills – with a decidedly morning-after-the-night-before feel to them – and models reclining on antiques-strewn podiums amid the invitees.

"It's Scottish mixed with Eighties Blitz Club with a nod to peace campaigner Johanna Lawrenson," explained Sienna of the collection (below). Very eclectic indeed.

Photography by *Marcus Dawes*



Pump up the volume

REPORT BY JULIA ROBSON

Where are your 3D goggles when you need them? Just imagine what all the extreme layering we're seeing on the LFW catwalks would look like if you were wearing them?

Over the past three days, we've seen stiff, cropped outer layers worn over lean *Blade Runner* bodycon silhouettes, which sliced, panelled or *strretched* the body to create brave new proportions for A/W 10. Yesterday's shows confirmed this as a hot trend: jackets had raised pockets, panels and sharp armadillo-style pleats on shoulders in textured

knits or Perspex, or huge fur sleeves with randomly placed panels.

"Layering is back but there's a new way of doing it because volume is involved," explained Betty Jackson, whose show exemplified how extreme layering can be extremely sensual. Like many designers this week – notably Richard Nicoll, Julien Macdonald, Todd Lynn and Twenty8Twelve – Jackson played with hard and soft fabrics to heighten the effect.

While some designers, including Matthew Williamson, settled for a middle ground, slipping short-

The in crowd

REPORT BY DAVID HAYES

Live streaming, endless Twitter updates and an army of bloggers – you may be fooled into thinking fashion has come over all inclusive of late. But don't be. The shows still operate on a system of cliques that would put the goings-on in an American high-podiums amid the invitees.

WE'RE ALL SANDRA DEES, BUT LET'S CALL KATE, SOPHIA AND LULU OUR VERY OWN "PINK LADIES"

school movie to shame. We're all Sandra Dees, but the three vying for "most popular girl in class" this season – let's fondly call them our very own "Pink Ladies" – are Love's Katie Grand, *10/Harper's* Sophia Neophitou-Apostolou and Fashion East's Lulu Kennedy. Between them, they lay claim to the designers, stylists and writers that make up the cooler strata of London fashion. Want to be in their gang? For clan Katie, try knocking a gap in your teeth and see where that gets you. For team Sophie, simply sharpen up that silhouette. And to muscle in on Lulu? Just move to Dalston and, er, become an uber-talented LFW designer in the making. Easy.



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Sisters are doing it for themselves (designing that is)

REPORT BY JULIA ROBSON
 It makes sense that women should design clothes for women. Even if historically it's often been a job for the boys.

Donna Karan led the way for a generation of female designers who were inspired to create clothes they wanted to wear because no one else was. Now a new line-up is emerging and many (yay!) hail from London.

By endorsing their own gear, which is in fact an extension of their personal style, Stella McCartney and Phoebe Philo are walking advertisements for their brands. And it is often the post-show bow that stands as testament to the designer as her own ambassador.

This week we have witnessed Hannah Marshall, Daniela and Annette Felder of Felder Felder, Holly Fulton and Louise Gray demonstrate just who is the muse behind their inspirations – them.

"I've done it since I was a little girl," said Louise Gray at her upbeat presentation in the Portico Rooms of Somerset House on Saturday. Along with her models, Gray was, as always, working her own look,

showing how versatile (and great) it looked on normal folk (if normal is how you describe a fiery Scot with Crazy Color red hair and blue eyebrows). "When you are clothes obsessed, like me, the way you design is working out the drop of a trouser crotch or the exact bagginess of a jacket on yourself. It's not just about how it will look. A woman will always care about how it feels.

"I design for myself," said Holly Fulton, wearing an own-design grey top with leggings post-show. "If you can't wear it, how can you endorse it?" Not every woman designer sees herself as her own muse, of course. "I don't design for me," said Betty Jackson. "I imagine how women will wear it. I wouldn't want to wear anything I'd struggle with. Volume and layering are suddenly important, so this collection is showing how you can wear both with a bit of colour and different textures."

Mind you, we have a sneaking suspicion that the buttery-soft black leather jacket, layered over more black, that Jackson wore for her final bow was nothing short of rocking, and no doubt one of hers.

Tyrolean hat trick

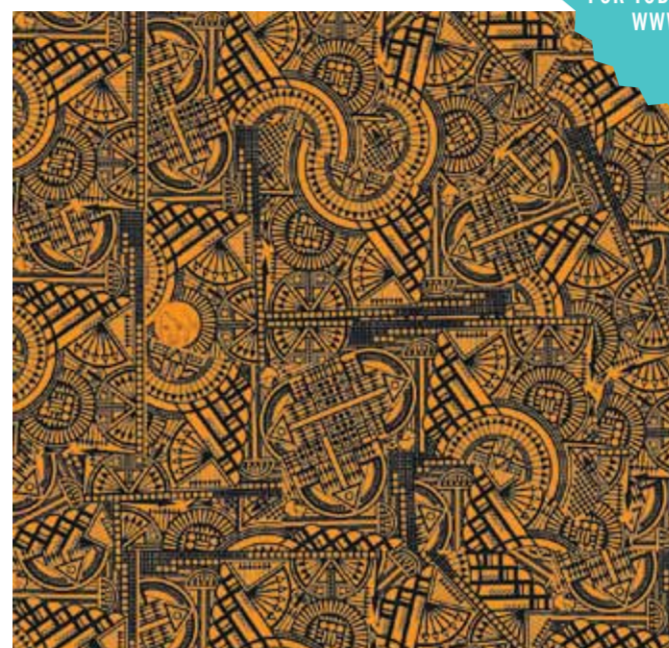
REPORT BY JULIA ROBSON
 It's raining. It's pouring. But this won't cramp the LFW pack's style. Not now they have a new reach-for in the shape of a Tyrolean hat. Donning the goat herder's favoured style, bright and early on the front row at Richard Nicoll, was *The Daily Telegraph's* Fashion Director Hilary Alexander, in a jaunty loden-green number by Jess Collett. Freelance fashion stylist Chloe Beeneay had taken one look at the weather and put on her failsafe Chanel black trilby: "It's great for wearing to shows first thing in the morning

because it shields the bright lights." Intriguingly, none of the feather-tipped or edelweiss-trimmed hats worn by the cognoscenti hails from the grassy mountain slopes of Austria. More likely Brick Lane, Savile Row or Tokyo. *The Sunday Telegraph's* Charlie Harrington's feather-plumed titer was from London's oldest tailor, Ede & Ravenscroft; and London Tokyo Style blog's Masaki Takida's was from the hip Harajuku district. Mad hatters unite!

See Tyrolean-inspired headgear on *The LFW Daily* blog at lfdaily.com

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WHERE'S HOLLY?
 CAN YOU FIND MISS FULTON IN HER A/W 10 PRINT?
 Holly Fulton's collection is at NEWGEN Stand 6 at the LFW Designer Exhibition space, East Wing, Somerset House
 ILLUSTRATION OF HOLLY BY BLUE BUSHELL

STAY ALERT!

AIR KISSING IS RIFE IN THESE PARTS



GUESS THE LABEL
 SQUIGGLE HEADS CREATED EXCLUSIVELY FOR RUBBISH BY ANTHONY ZINONOS
 Give us a clue? He's a really keen cyclist

FASHION ANAGRAM

OH JESUS! DARN! AN ANT!

TODAY'S TOP STORIES: THE BORROWERS

Fashion cupboards across the land of glossies are a Pandora's box of delicious sartorial treats. Unfortunately, certain assistants are savvy to this and have been spotted wearing all manner of next-season shoes, bags, tops, hats, frocks. But be warned, the RUBBISH FASHION POLICE are on radar this season. Anything too fashion-forward will be inspected by PC Trousers and his team of coppers. "Allo, allo, allo," say experts.

GIMP MASKS SOAR IN COLD-SORE OUTBREAK

In order to avoid the horror of a cold sore during LFW (a frequent occurrence for frazzled fashion femmes who should be taking more vitamins), Dalston has reported a 400 per cent increase in gimp-mask sales. "I'd rather make a statement Lady Gaga-style than inflict a weeping sore on the front row," Twitler's social correspondent, Tingle von Blister, commented yesterday. Pass the Zovirax.

COMING SOON

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THE LFW DAILY EDITORS WISH TO THANK WHISTLES FOR PROVIDING US WITH SARTORIAL ELEGANCE THIS WEEK

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CHIC AFRIQUE

With a pioneering new eco marketplace and bold collection of sustainable designs, ASOS.com is helping shape the future of fashion with a clear conscience



"It's a given that all fashion brands should be doing everything they can to be ethical," says Caren Downie, Buying Director of ASOS.com and the woman behind ASOS Africa, the e-retailer's latest own-brand collection launching this month. "But we were conscious that it's not enough to create ethical or sustainable or even organic clothing. It has to be beautiful, desirable, directional and wearable."

Cue ASOS Africa's tight edit of bold printed playsuits, simuous maxi vest dresses and panel-printed carrot-shaped trousers that tap into fashion's current love affair with globalism, graphic print and a warrior aesthetic.

The collection's starting point is the kanga (a printed rectangle of cloth traditionally worn by men and women in eastern Africa), which are designed, sourced and produced in collaboration with several small community groups in Africa. The kangas are reworked into chic jumpsuits, relaxed blazers and a fantastic mini dress with raised shoulders at Soko, a non-profit clothing-manufacturing workshop based in Kenya that ensures skills training and fair pay for its workers.

"Every two weeks a new kanga print is launched," explains ASOS.com's Sustainable Fashion Consultant, Claire Hamer, of the exclusive nature of many of the designs, which are packaged in their own pouch made from kanga fabric with a handmade coconut-button fastening. "Some of the fabrics are so limited that only 10 garments can be made from them. So the collection really is very bespoke and genuinely artisanal."

ASOS Africa is also the first own-label collaboration to be housed onsite within The Green Room, ASOS.com's new online marketplace launching this month. Functioning as a platform for brands with a social or environmental ethos, The Green Room is a showcase for all the very best ethical fashion and beauty brands, including Pants to Poverty and Emma Watson's collaboration with People Tree. ASOS Africa, prices from £15 to £75, available from mid February at ASOS.com. For a behind the scenes look at the making of the ASOS Africa collection or to find out more about The Green Room brands, visit the ASOS.com online community at <http://community.asos.com/>

BESPOKE FEATURE

TRAILBLAZER

WHOEVER SAID YOU HAD TO SIT UP STRAIGHT WHILE WEARING A BLAZER? I'M WORKING MINE WITH A BANDEAU TOP AND METALLIC SHORTS. I'M NO SLOUCH, THIS IS EFFORTLESSLY ELEGANT. CHIC, NON?

Blazer £89, bandeau top £12, shorts £29.50, in store from May
marksandspencer.com



BESPOKE FEATURE

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