

THE FASHION GROUP FOUNDATION PRESENTS

RTW COLLECTIONS

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TREND OVERVIEW BY MARYLOU LUTHER

NEW YORK • LONDON • MILAN • PARIS



RICK OWENS



COMME DES GARÇONS

Yes, it's a moment of change. Disruption. Chaos. Confusion. Fear. Fortitude. Love. Dystopia. Utopia. Minimalist. Maximalist. Past Perfect. Future Tense. Good. Evil. Genteel. Surreal. Sadism. Masochism. Comfort. Discomfort.

In this game of Presto Chango, woman is re-imagined. She can be a feminine feminist. She can express her sexuality any way she wants. Fashion's New Woman, ruffles extant, is also track-suit ready. She's still a sport, but her playing field now includes a trip to the moon, lunar boots and all.

So where does the street come in? It's Game On for making the ordinary extraordinary, in the words of Demna Gvsalia. Examples include Dries Van Noten's floral-printed satin bomber, Tommy Hilfiger's puffed-up varsity jacket, Yeohlee's waxed linen trench jacket, Tibi's high-rise paper bag pants by Amy Smilovic and Jun Takahashi's amazing reversible pants for Undercover. Side-striped track pants are "everywhere", running from the street to the club. Marc Jacobs does them in satin for evening.

Our color story begins with white, sanctioned for the first time by the prince of darkness, Goth king, Rick Owens. As he mused, “Nobody has celebrated doom more than I have, but the responsible thing now is to talk about hope and the way forward.” And white is hope. It is also pure and holy, somewhere between bridal and ghost. And it’s “everywhere”, importantly in accessories as well as apparel.

White notwithstanding, fashion is always chasing rainbows. For spring, designers watch clouds passing by in quiet barely-there shades. Then the sky lights up and shades begin to snap and pop. Even neons and psychedelic hues are back from The ‘60s.

The Short Circuit is a new electrifying presence, from men’s satin boxers at Louis Vuitton by Nicolas Ghesquière to casual day-and-night shorts at Olivier Theyskens’, to not-so-casual shorts for dressy evenings at Van Noten. Lengths range from thighs to kneetop.

Pants are lean at Narciso Rodriguez, cropped at Ji-Oh, paper-bagged at Tibi by Amy Smilovic and palazzo-ed at Balenciaga by Gvasalia, where they are jewel-encrusted.

Remember when we used to worry about “the right length”? No more. Tomorrow’s equality of lengths includes minis (a surprise at Chanel), knee toppers, mid-calf and ankle grazer. While all lengths are sanctioned, there are more minis ahead than at any time since their birth in The ‘60s. Refreshed from The ‘50s, when they ruled the roost, full skirts look especially buoyant, including balloons at Saint Laurent, dirndls at Calvin Klein by Raf Simons, tutus at Fausto Puglisi, embroideries and Stella Jean and genius spirals of slubbed denim at Derek Lam.



NINA RICCI



DRIES VAN NOTEN



TIBI



CHANEL



GUCCI



GIVENCHY

Jackets. The bomber stars once again, ready to explode for evening in the satin versions at Tom Ford and in the above-mentioned printed satin at Van Noten. The track jacket at Peter Pilotto, the utility at Fenty x Puma by Rihanna, the biker at Jacobs and the moto at Gucci by Alessandro Michele are all ready to hit the road again. And the blazer at 3.1 Phillip Lim looks right, day and night.

Tops. We stole the shirt off his back a long time ago. That shirt is still gender fluid. Givenchy's Clare Waight Keller gives it an almost-sleeveless tilt. The frilled or ruffled shirt, aka the blouse, also started with guys—centuries ago. New romantic blouses harken back, leap forward at Louis Vuitton. Both shirts and blouses on both men and women illustrate fashion's new duality.

Dresses. Like the mini skirt, the mini dress is major, especially at Saint Laurent by Nicolas Ghesquière, Jacquemus by Simon Porte Jacquemus and Tom Ford. Dresses also have a fashion life below the knee at Jason Wu and Raf Simons' Calvin Klein, and above the ankle, exceptionally at Urban Zen and Carolina Herrera.

The two best bet dresses of the season are Shirdresses (Derek Lam's are to-sigh-for) and Caftans (Tory Burch's are the most convincing updates.)

Coats. The trench is the coat of the season. Renovations include Christopher Bailey's "evening coat", with namesake check/plaid lining, for Burberry, Michael Kors' wrap-coat version and myriads of other remakes. The oversized overcoat is also an overwhelming favorite. John Galliano's version for Margiela is so menswear-inspired, it even buttons to the right.

Sweaters are big: Significantly oversized at Mansur Gavriel, Louise Trotter for Joseph, Coach (now, Tapestry) by Stuart Vevers and Balenciaga. It's a wrap: Missoni's latter-day kimono knit. Dimensional knits, aka 3-D knits, texture up — and down — at Ferragamo and Stella McCartney. Crochets open up, artfully at Altuzarra, Sander and Anna Sui.

In the fabricsphere, denim is denimite, appearing in shades from light-wash at Jonathan Simkhai to mid-wash at R13 by Chris Leba, to black-wash at Baja East by Scott Studenberg and John Targon, to Indigo at Sacai by Chitose Abe to evening jacket with zip-off peplum and ruffled-hemmed skirt at Sarah Burton for Alexander McQueen.

Not since The '50s, have so many designers cottoned to cotton. Yeohlee Teng suits up cotton twill in the luther jacket for Yeohlee. Others take us from gingham checks to broadcloth, terry, voile, seersucker, batiste and chambray. Lace, satin, brocade and velvet are also trending. And plastics, vinyl, PVC, patent leather are pending. When Karl Lagerfeld does a Chanel collection with plastic boots, hats, capes, bags, jewelry and gloves, you know Mr. McGuire was right when he told Dustin Hoffman in "The Graduate" that "There's a great future in plastics."

Designer-made fabrics look newer than off-the-bolt, offering protection from copyists. Standouts: Altuzarra's shredded tufts, Thom Browne's tulle triumphs and Christopher Kane's faux feathers.

Flower power is back. In a season of redefining femininity, woman as flower leaves an indelible mark. Petal prints at Anna Molinari for Blumarine look especially garden-worthy. The culture of horticulture also blossoms at Van Noten, at Vivienne Westwood by Andreas Kronthaler



YEOHLEE



MISSONI



MAISON MARGIELA



BLUMARINE



BALENCIAGA



CHRISTIAN DIOR

and at McQueen. And hothouse leaves add to the bouquets by Rodarte's Kate and Laura Mulleavy and Kors.

Stripes band together in unusual juxtapositions at Ji-Oh, Altuzarra, Rebecca Minkoff and Lam.

Plaids/checks meet at Balenciaga, Burberry (of course) and Marni, where designer Francesco Risso creates a new clan. Dots are still spot-on. Snake prints maintain their fashion bite. And animal prints from tigers at Prada and Cavalli to leopards at Balenciaga and Dean and Dan Caten for DSquared 2 prey on.

The logo has new mojo. Branding is back. Body texting is a good read. Look for wearable messages at Dior, Minkoff, Margiela and Balenciaga, where newspapers make headlines. And don't miss the cartoons at Moschino, Philipp Plein and Prada, where Miuccia strips the comics.

Evening. The Night Gown...is a nightgown. The first ones—believably something you might wear to bed if you could afford to sleep in chiffon, satin or organdy, appeared at Calvin Klein, and then designers in Europe took up the cause, especially Sander. Other evening choices include the short-and-sexy dresses at Mugler by David Koma and Saint Laurent, as well as the long and circumspect at Hussein Chalayan and Ralph and Russo. Day/night combos (leather jackets/tulle skirts) continue and the black-tie dress code ranges from Saint Laurent's new *le smoking* to Galliano's tuxedo redo. Somewhere in between are the razzle dazzle, glitz and glimmers. You know, sequin-spangled dresses, gold brocades and organza-glazed tributes to Dynasty.

And then—and then: Rick Owens' satin stunner in pillowy, marsupial forms, and Cavalli's covered-up navel-gazer are sure to sweep the red carpet.

Accessories. Travelers make a fashion landing. Margiela's plane-ready accessories include a neck pillow and a bag-cum-pillow. Toiletry bags were hand-held at Burberry and Jacobs. Hands-free belt and arm bags get logos at Gucci and Chanel as do the carry-a-lot totes at Fendi and Vuitton.

Sneakers stay in the game and flats are high, especially the crocodile flipflops at Kors. Platforms rose at Balenciaga in collaboration with Crocs. Kitten heels purred at Givenchy and Prada and pumps are powered at Beckham, Tom Ford. Cowgirl booties: Stirrup-ready in denim for day at McCartney, rhinestone-embellished at Margiela for night.

Socks are outed. Ankles and knee-highs, plain and fancy. If not built in to the shoe (Lim), they match it (Fendi). The Blade Runner effect is seen in the cat eyes on the catwalks at Vuitton, Prada and Miu Miu.

Jewelry gets all choked up. Leather collars at Hermès and watch straps at Wang. Pearls dress up sweatshirts at Gucci and Moschino and appear as single, double and multiple earrings.

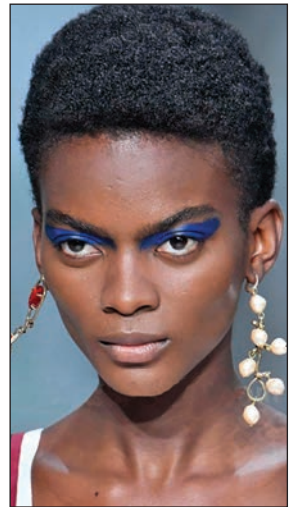
Hair and Makeup. Diversity rules in beauty, individualized not just by ethnic background but by size, gender and age. There is more playfulness, not just the no-makeup/just-woke-up vibe. For example: Rhinestones both as eyeliner and lipliner at Van Noten, hair feathered with real feathers at Margiela. Statement black eyeliner took flight as wings in all shapes and sizes. Several makeup and hair artists took a real shine to the face, eyelids and hair.



ALEXANDER WANG



STELLA MCCARTNEY



MARNI



CALVIN KLEIN



LOUIS VUITTON



DEREK LAM

BEST BETS:

- The Mini • The Full Skirt • The Shirtdress • The Caftan • The Shirt • The Blouse .
 Shorts • The Track Pant • The Bomber • The Blazer • The Trench
 The Oversized Overcoat • The Big Sweater • Denim • Florals • Stripes • Plaids
 Logos • The Night Gown • The Sequined Pantsuit • Crocodile Flip-Flops
 Power Pumps • Cowboy Boots • Plastic See-Thru Boots • The Belt Bag
 The Big Tote • Graphic Socks

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