Many people regard New York as the ultimate urban jungle; Michael Kors sees it more as a charming oasis. On Thursday, Kors became the latest designer to unspool his newest collection virtually, with spring-summer 2021 clothes designed to reflect nature through an urban lens.

Underlining the theme, Kors released a video entitled 'Up on the Roof,' a portrait of the designer, his city and his inspiration by filmmaker Haley Elizabeth in which he spent more time in the community gardens of the New York Restoration Project (NYRP) than in his studio.

“Even in a very dark moment, I am an optimist. I am still convinced that people will do the right thing. That we can work to a better future. So, when we did take a walk in a neighborhood, I lived in all my life. I saw spring coming into bloom; whether it was a little tulip flower bed,” explained Kors, as he marched, mask on, in the West Village, by the well known liquor store sign at Grove Street.

Ranging about the city with shots of its iconic landmarks – from the Statue of Liberty to the Freedom Tower – Kors meets Bette Midler and introduces Samantha Diaz, or “Just Sam,” the American Idol winner.
His goal, Kors said, was to make fashion that is “thrilling to wear now, but also good to be worn for 20 years…. Natural colors… Things that feel artisanal. So, even if machine made you know that human hands have touch it.”

The result was a far more touchy-feely collection that opened with knit dresses with extended tassel hems; loose prairie dresses worn under mannish double-breasted redingotes; elegant Grecian goddess dresses, with hand-rolled fabric belts, or enormous grandfather shorts, casually belted. For more va-va-voom moments, a series of great off the shoulder big bold cable knits, paired with asymmetrical skirts showing plenty of thigh.

In a co-ed collection, guys got linen pajama pants and chunky woolen tanks; posh hippie woven leather satchels; or crisp light-gray chalk-stripe suits worn over to-the-knee white Nehru-collar shirts. With several gals wearing the exact same fabrics in similar outfits – from the country gent waistcoats to the granddaddy shirts to the feminist bra tops, a key look this season.
The entire cast shot in a Bronx community garden, clutching bunches of flowers; or strolling underneath tomato trestles; just five blocks from where Kors' grandfather was born.

All about casual chic in the Covid-lockdown, as the soundtrack to his show video featured Just Sam singing a great version of New York singer Carole King’s classic tune, You Got a Friend.

Kors extolling the joys in this no-voyage moment of “travelling through live performances,” as Just Sam’s full-throated chords echo in a Central Park passage, before Kors catches up with Midler, who recalls buying 52 NYRP community gardens for people to grow their own food back in 1999.

“You are a great New Yorker and you step in,” Bette says to Michael, a NYRP board member and long-time supporter.

“When I see a garden come to bloom, I immediately feel in love with idea of community gardens. It’s the perfect culmination of this collection which is about nature in the city. How do we find that balance… In fashion we crave texture and things which make you feel better,” explains Kors, scissors in hand at a basil plant, before exiting the scene in a “Vote” T-shirt.