Tom Ford has issued a bullish open letter about next September's New York Fashion Week, in which he confirmed that he will stage his own live runway show in the city.

“New York Fashion Week is always a celebration of American fashion, but this will take on a whole new meaning in September. After two challenging seasons with no in-person gatherings, we anticipate a significant return to live shows. This season’s shows are an opportunity to reaffirm the resilience and independence of American fashion and New York City as a global fashion force,” said Ford in a letter issued on behalf of the Council of Fashion
Designers of America (CFDA).

Ford has been the chairman of the CFDA, which controls the runway season in New York, since June 2019.

Pre-pandemic, New York could boast over 150 runway shows, making it the world’s busiest catwalk week. However, it remains to be seen if the number of designers who will actually stage shows will be more than a score in September. So far, only Gabriela Hearst, Pyer Moss, Markarian and Jonathan Simkhai have said they plan to stage live events, while major players like Ralph Lauren, Marc Jacobs and Michael Kors indicated they had yet to make a decision.

“The Met Gala for the Costume Institute exhibition “In America: A Lexicon of Fashion” will close New York Fashion Week, further cementing this moment for our industry, and I am excited to be an Honorary Chair of the Benefit,” Ford added.
This year the Met Gala has been pushed back from its traditional slot in May, in part to support the renaissance of catwalk week in New York. Besides Ford as honorary chair of the next benefit; co-chairs will include Timothée Chalamet, Billie Eilish, Naomi Osaka and Amanda Gorman. That event is planned for Sept. 13.

“I started my career on Seventh Avenue and while I spent most of my working life in Europe, I am incredibly proud to be an American designer and a part of our community and New York Fashion Week,” said Ford, who was creative director of Gucci in Milan for 15 years and creative director of Yves Saint Laurent in Paris for five years, before being fired from both positions in 2004.

Since launching his eponymous label, Ford has staged shows primarily in New York, though he did come in for some criticism for lack of esprit du corps after deciding to stage his February 2010 show in Los Angeles, during the New York season. However, this fall he will be back in NYC.

“New York Fashion Week is set from Wednesday, September 8 to Sunday, September 12. The talent lineup will be strong with designers returning to the week and, in some cases, to New York. I look forward to presenting my Spring 2022 collection during the week,” the 59-year-old Texan concluded.