What were the key trends during Haute Couture and Men's Fashion Weeks based on data?

By Triana Alonso

Before London Fashion Week kicks off the women's fashion weeks in Europe on Friday, February 18, we would like to take a look back at the latest fashion events to discover the key data and trends identified by the industry's expert analysts, from the evolution of physical shows to inclusivity and identifying the shows that garnered the most attention.
The first significant figure is none other than the slight increase in the number of menswear shows presented during the last edition of the fashion weeks. The Fall/Winter 2022 season saw a total of 47 physical fashion shows (including those held in the absence of the public) compared to the 43 that had been organized for the Spring/Summer 2022 season. Of these, a total of 22 shows featured both menswear and womenswear, despite being held during the men’s weeks. In the French capital’s case, the last to hold its fashion week, the event saw 76 brands registered in the official calendar: 17 physical fashion shows, 29 in-person presentations and up to 30 digital-only events. On a global scale, Paris, London and Milan accounted for a total of a hundred shows.

According to the latest report conducted by the fashion search engine Tagwalk, the ranking of the most demanded brands on the platform, between January 14 and 27, was relatively predictable considering the context. Kenzo came on top, its popularity driven by the debut of the brand’s new Japanese designer, Nigo, and the presentation of his first collection. Staged in the Parisian Galerie Vivienne, the event reached a wide audience in the media and on social platforms, probably driven by the always controversial attendance of Kanye West accompanied by his new girlfriend Julia Fox. The silver medal was awarded to Louis Vuitton, which presented an emotional show displaying Virgil Abloh’s final collection, who passed away last November.

Casting matters too: movie stars and models of all ages and sizes

The creative duo, Miuccia Prada and Raf Simons, took third place after counting on two exceptional models for its last Milan fashion show: the iconic actors Jeff Goldblum and Kyle MacLachlan. Without going any further, the video posted on the Italian brand’s official social media profile of the “Twin Peaks” star strutting down the runway has already accumulated a whopping 260,000 views. Likewise, the presence of both established actors underscored the emerging trend of including older models in men’s fashion shows. Prada had a total of seven senior mannequins, Y/Project had three older models, while Japan’s Yohji Yamamoto included a total of five.

The French brand Ami also joined the initiative of bringing actresses on the catwalk, inviting Isabelle Adjani...
The French brand Ami also joined the initiative of bringing actresses on the catwalk, inviting Isabelle Adjani, Rebecca Dayan and Laetitia Casta to parade down the runway. The garments not only aroused the attendees’ fervor but also garnered attention in the media and social platforms and was even broadcasted in the Paris metro’s screens where Alexandre Mattiussi chose to display excerpts from his show at the Palais Brongniart.

The ranking conducted by the French data analyst for the Haute Couture Spring/Summer 2022 collections, which presented in Paris between January 24 and 27, was also unsurprising. The list was led by Christian Dior, Chanel, and Valentino at the top, which accounted for 13.3 %, 12.3 % and 11.1 % of the searches respectively. However, Schiaparelli’s fourth place (7.7%) underlined the growing interest in Daniel Roseberry’s unique Dadaist collections, whose revision of the maison’s origins, launched by Elsa Schiaparelli in the 1930s, is earning him a place in contemporary couture agendas. Jean Paul Gaultier’s show ranked fifth, a popularity particularly affirmed thanks to his artistic collaborations with other designers. Glenn Martens basked in the glory of his collaboration with Gaultier as well as for his own Y/Project show, which both received extensive praise by the press and influencers alike.

As with the men's shows, the question of how to address inclusivity on the runway was part of Pierpaolo Piccioli’s objectives for Valentino this season. The Italian house's show featured a diverse cast of models and included men for the first time in a Haute Couture show as well as older women, such as Marie Sophie Wilson and Lynne Koester, and models such as Apollo Yom and Devyn Garcia. The collection presented in the luxurious salons of Place Vendôme represented “a new canon that reflects the richness of the contemporary world, promoting an idea of beauty that is not absolute” according to the Italian designer. A renewed aesthetic was also reflected in the makeup sublimated with feathered eyelashes devised by Pat McGrath and even in the Swarovski crystal inlays created by Peter Philips for Kim Jones’ Fendi.

In terms of menswear trends, the French fashion trend forecaster Heuritech indicated a boom in the “New Age explorer” style after analyzing more than 8,000 photographs of the collections published on Instagram and in the media. Brands such as Hermès, Brunello Cucinelli, and Isabel Marant incorporated this theme to their collections by fusing vintage outdoor references with a futuristic vision of contemporary sportswear. The analyst also noted the rise of an irreverent youth-oriented style given the notable presence of bright colors and absurd humor as seen in the Loewe and Bluemarble shows.

The body takes center stage: from nudity in the form of trompe l'oeil prints to full-body covering

The elegance of the classic dandy along with an abundant presence of fur, leather, turtlenecks and layering was a constant trend according to Heuritech, citing the Casablanca, Ernest W. Baker, Zegna, and Erdem collections as references. However, this archetypal view of masculinity also explored feminine elements, especially in accessories, where there was no shortage of “Mary Jane” shoes, skinny scarves, and choker necklaces.
Tagwalk saw an increase in searches for faux fur coats (with a growth on the platform of 644.3%), while the trend for pinstriped looks was down 64.3% compared to the previous season. Among the rising trends, the company founded by Alexandra Van Houtte identifies ski looks, given the increase in searches for quilted or feathered looks, as well as the “preppy” style which made up Kenzo's latest collection. In terms of color, violet was used in 27 shows and burgundy in 32 while comfortable fashion was reaffirmed on the catwalks through an increase in leisurewear looks. Birkenstock and Crocs shoes even made an appearance in the Dior Men and Louis Gabriel Nouchi shows.

The Tagwalk data also reflected a dual trend around bodies, which were either left bare or covered almost entirely as was the case in some looks from the Rick Owens and Y/Project shows. The brand’s collection for this past season featured trompe l’oeil prints of the naked human body, a theme that was also seen in Loewe’s show. On the other hand, the fully covered element was featured in the omnipresent accessory of the season: the balaclava which was the protagonist in a total of 20 shows. The beret, which made a comeback in trends due to the success of the Netflix series “Emily in Paris”, settled for a somewhat more timid participation, appearing in a total of only five fashion shows.

By Triana Alonso
Translated by Roberta Herrera