Milan kickstarts its Women’s Fashion Week on Tuesday

By Dominique Muret - 21 February 2022

Milan Fashion Week starts this Tuesday evening until Monday, February 28 with an explosive program succeeding the New York and London fashion weeks. Presenting 10 to 20 physical shows per day, scattered throughout the city, the women’s ready-to-wear Fall/Winter 2022-23 season is back to its pre-pandemic frenzy as if nothing had happened. After two pandemic-ridden years, a strong return of buyers and journalists from all over the world, except for China, is also expected.
Nearly 170 events have been announced, compared to just over 200 in its more successful years. 67 fashion shows (of which 2 are hybrid, 57 in-person, and eight in digital format), 77 presentations and nine special events are on the schedule. There are additionally several fashion shows and presentations that are outside of the official calendar. More than 90% of the shows are concentrated in the span of five days, from Wednesday to Sunday.

"It is true that we don't have many days compared to Paris and the density of the program. We would ideally like to have an extra day, but the buyers are reluctant. We try to be synthetic by satisfying everyone," said president of the Camera della Moda (CNMI), Carlo Capasa. "Everyone wants to come to Milan! The demand for fashion shows is more than double that of the current calendar. With its 800 showrooms, the city is like an open-air fair. Even the big fashion houses that showcase elsewhere have their showrooms here. People come here to do business," he added.

On the program are of course the “Made in Italy” stars: Fendi and Roberto Cavalli will parade on Wednesday followed by Max Mara, Prada and Moschino on Thursday. Missoni, Etro, and Versace on Friday, Dolce & Gabbana on Saturday, and Giorgio Armani on Sunday. The lineup is only missing Antonio Marras, who chose to take his show to Moscow this season but will nevertheless organize a presentation in Milan. The Italian fashion capital can count, however, on the return of a slew of big names that had deserted its catwalks in recent seasons: Gucci, Bottega Veneta (revealing Matthieu Blazy’s first collection for the brand), Plein Sport, and Dsquared2, which is again presenting its menswear and womenswear separately during their designated weeks.

Trussardi will unveil Serhat Isik and Benjami A. Huseby’s very first collection as new creative directors of the brand on Saturday, the creatives who additionally head the German avant-garde label, GmbH. Ennio Capasa, founder of Costume National, will also mark his comeback on Tuesday evening with the debut of his new brand, Capasa Milano. Other highlights for this week include Diesel’s first fashion show in the Lombardy capital under its new creative director, Glenn Martens, and Ferrari’s presentation of its first ever high-end fashion line led by designer Rocco Iannone.

The spotlight will also shine on the week’s cohort of new names, including the very cool Japanese label, Ambush, which launched in 2008 by American-Korean designer, Yoon Ahn together with her partner Verbal (Japanese DJ, producer, and hip-hop star) who usually present their collections in Paris but opted for a change of scenery this season. Another noteworthy entrant to the women’s edition of fashion week is Francesco Ragazzi’s high-end streetwear brand, Palm Angels, which up until now would showcase its collections during the men’s week. Both brands are part of Farfetch’s brand portfolio of its New Guards Group. Both brands are part of the New Guards Group, Farfetch’s production and distribution holding company.

Another newcomer worth checking out is AC9, the brand launched in September 2019 by Alfredo Cortese. With a degree in chemistry and a passion for photography, the Sicilian discovered fashion while working in public relations for Alessandro Dell’Acqua’s N°21, and who later went on to create a capsule collection for the brand. His fluid style with a Nordic rigor, crossed with a sexy Mediterranean flavor, was quickly appreciated and is currently distributed by Tomorrow London.

British-Nigerian Ineyie Tokyo James, who has just been selected for the LVMH Prize semi-finals, also embarked on a similar, atypical career path. After graduating from Queen Mary University of London in mathematics, he branched out into a career as a fashion stylist, working for various international publications and brands, directing digital campaigns for the likes of Brioni, Iseey Miyake, and Puma Black Label. In 2015, he launched the monthly digital publication, Rough UK, and moved to Lagos, where he founded his eponymous brand Tokyo James. After presenting his past collections in London, his experimental and bold creations joined the Milanese men’s calendar in January 2021.
After graduating from the Academy of Fine Arts in Bologna, Andrea Adamo worked for Elisabetta Franchi, Roberto Cavalli, Zuhair Murad and Dolce & Gabbana, before taking the plunge in September 2020 with the launch of his own brand Andreādamo. The label has established itself these past few seasons as a must-have for sexy and comfortable knitwear. Equally passionate about knitwear, Jezabelle Cormio will debut on the Milanese catwalks on Sunday. A graduate of the Royal Academy of Antwerp, she collaborated with various brands before founding her maison, Cormio, in 2019 with a first collection for Fall/Winter 2020-21. She draws inspiration from the Austrian-Tyrolean world to create playful garments with unexpected details using experimental knitting techniques.

The newcomer Aniye Records will also debut this season, unveiling 70 music-inspired looks designed as concert costumes on Sunday. The designer, Alessandra Marchi, grew up in the fashion industry as her father and uncle, Vannis and Marco Marchi, are none other than the owners of the Liu Jo group. In 2000, Alessandra founded the Aniye By line in Carpi, offering rock-inspired clothing for unconventional women. Her new label will be distributed by Riccardo Grassi with the goal of reaching 100 top multi-brand retailers worldwide in its first season.

This week will be the opportunity to finally discover Onitsuka Tiger (Asics fashionable little sister brand) and the futuristic Danish house, Hans Kjøbenhavn, in the real world through their first physical runway shows in Milan, despite having participated through digital presentations since 2020.
British outerwear brand, Husky, owned by the Moschillo group, will mark its debut on the fashion show calendar but in digital format. As for the presentations, there are a number of new names: winner of the "Who is on next" 2020 competition Francesco Murano, Luciano Padovan, the London-based South Korean brand Miss Sohee (who will be hosted in the spaces of Dolce & Gabbana), Balestra, Durazzi (digitally), Cukovy, Andrea Incontri, Ramzen, Bloke, Sa Su Phi, Edoardo Gallorin, Tu Lizè and Vaishali S.

This stimulating Milan Week will also be an opportunity to discover new cultural venues in the metropolis, such as the new epicenter of Fashion Week, the ADI Design Museum in Via Ceresio. The National Chamber of Italian Fashion is moving its Fashion Hub and its many projects dedicated to sustainable and emerging labels to this location this season. Another notable venue is Mudec, a cultural hub dedicated to the world's diverse cultures in the Tortona district. It will host highly creative research collections selected by White Milano for the first time as part of its "Beyond the Norm" initiative from February 24 to 27.