Milan menswear Saturday: Versace, Dolce & Gabbana and Fendi

By Godfrey Deeny - 19 June 2022

In a busy day in Milan menswear, the stand-out show was Versace, where Donatella Versace was engulfed in applause and heroine worship after a triumphalist show.

Versace: Donatella owns Milan

"Versace, Versace, Versace," boomed out the classic Prince track after a gripping Versace show inside the family palazzo. But given how great this show was, it should have been "Donatella, Donatella, Donatella!"
It felt very much that Donatella Versace was back. And in very big way. After many seasons and the pandemic when Madame Medusa had a closed back stage, this Saturday night in Milan, she marched out into the courtyard and embraced her buddies in the courtyard where the show was staged.

A stellar show staged in a cobbled courtyard with five-meter high glass columns topped by statues of many an Adonis.

Repeated in the cast, with a brilliant new series of male models with molded golden wigs.

Mega-stripe suits and blazers; dynamic silk shirts with images of gothic gargoyles or Ancient Greek savants. Many dudes carrying vases, coffee cups and saucers – like those sent as show invitations.

In a word, Donatella is back, and in charge.

Dolce & Gabbana: Re-edition and Roll

It was hard at times to know what was brand new and what a re-edition in the latest Dolce & Gabbana menswear show, so crammed it was with stock clothes, or exaggerated new takes of classic looks.

Entitled 'Dolce & Gabbana Re-edition 1991 S/S 2023', where the runway listed each year right back to when Stefano and Domenico launched their menswear business, 27 years ago.
Pre-show, the gents telegraphed the concept by including an all-black T-Shirt with their invitation. Artfully mock moth-eaten with scores of holes, as if they might have been taken from an old stock wardrobe. Or then again, maybe not, which was part of the insider joke.

The holes continuing with a series of torn and shredded, oversized jeans, cargo pants and trousers, albeit paired with sleek tuxedos and crisp blazers. And in a series of men’s underwear and long-johns, as if grandfather hand-me-downs.

Few Italians love Italy as much as Stefano and Domenico, whose backdrop was a mash-up of old show videos and picturesque images of the peninsula – Mediterranean ferries; Portofino harbor; Aeolian fishing boats. While T-Shirts informed us quite simply that Sicilians are Sensational. Though the most sensational ideas were the pirate boots made out of scraps of patchwork denim jackets, or the mechanics boots trimmed in strass and crystals.

Riffling through their greatest hits: from gilded embroidered tuxedos to rock god motorbike jackets. Precisely because it spanned so many eras, this was a long rambling show, backed up by a remix of First Class by Jack Harlow. Nonetheless, they garnered a huge cheer as they took their bow.

Even if one could not help feeling their attention was probably elsewhere – focused on their next Alta Moda collection to be staged in early July in, well, of course, Sicily, and the ancient Greek colony city of Siracusa.

In a busy day, the boys finished off the evening with a rousing cocktail party in their very own Bar Martini on Corso Venezia to celebrate their latest eyewear. A link-up with Persol starring that brand’s famed D-frame shades in Havana brown and black, but also in Dolce & Gabbana hues of sorbet and zebra.

Fendi: Multiple materials alla Moda

All about materials, in all their multiplicities at Fendi, where noble, casual and atypical fabrics met in a great statement of casual chic from the house’s men’s creative director, Silvia Fendi.

A collection centered on the key garment in today’s well-dressed men’s wardrobe – the over-shirt – handled by Silvia with more imagination and wit than any of her contemporaries.
"I wanted something very simple, working on the idea of a shirt; shirt jacket and shirt coat. Now we are going back to life, we understand we need to take time for ourselves and for our own pleasures. Even formal wear has the same easiness. To me the materials that most represent freedom is denim. But I printed it on cotton to make it different. It’s a new fake denim,” explained Silvia.

Taking a banal material like denim, yet cutting it into arty gent pants, before then printing denim on cotton, and then taking it somewhere very new with a shaven fur denim print duster. Denim logo totes; denim loafers and even denim surgeons’ shirts.

Blending lavish luxury with hipster ease.

While a blotchy calf print was used in cotton cabans; pony skin safari jackets or canvas redingote. Or a broken blue and tobacco print was reinvented twice –mink explorers coat or as cashmere top coat.

Silvia also took plenty of risks with the silhouette – most paying off, especially the roomy dusters. While on the bag front, Silvia also showed a great new barrel shape, surrounded by a cut-out leather Fendi harness.

“I love the dialogue she has with Kim Jones. They are like a family who work together. One way we define the brand is master of materials. So, the shapes may not change so much, but the materials can be 1,000 versions,” enthused Fendi CEO, Serge Brunschwig.
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Speaking of shapes, slim Serge revealed that he keeps trim by cycling in the hills north of Rome.

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