

FASHION ARTICLES TRANSLATED BY ISABELLA CULTRERA

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MFF MENSWEAR

Thom Browne comprende bene che un buon fashion show spesso funziona come un buon libro – una narrazione avvincente dove il significato essenziale e mozzafiato è sottinteso, e resta nascosto dietro le parole in superficie. La trama di questa stagione era una commedia tweedy ambientata in una foresta intorno a un giardino di statue di animali in lana, creati da 100 studenti di moda del Belgio da La Cambre. Anche se di per sé molto interessante, quando è stata unita ai bordi naturali della collezione, e ai cappelli e alle cuffie animalesche di Stephen Jones è diventato chiaro che gli uomini di Browne erano contemporaneamente predatori e prede. Questo gli ha attribuito lo stesso potere bestiale e primordiale che gli uomini, protagonisti delle serie “wilder mann” del fotografo Charles Fréger, mostrano. Fuori dalla foresta e dentro una mecca urbana, si svolge la storia del dominatore e del dominato, di Rick Owens. Owens si sentiva lunatico e pensava ai poliziotti, massimo emblema dell'autorità per un iconoclastico come lui. Avendo capito questo, a 50 anni, ora che anche lui è un'autorità nel suo regno, c'era qualcosa di particolarmente toccante nel modo in cui le sue riflessioni spirituali sono state tradotte in una tavolozza, vigorosa ma raffinata. Poi c'era il favoloso matrimonio tra arte e fashion, decostruzione e ricostruzione, di Raf Simons. L'integrazione di due estetiche, tra il designer Belga e l'artista Americano Sterling Ruby, ha portato in un senso organico di caos, dimostrando che la moda non ha bisogno di genuflettersi all'arte ma può essere arte in sé.

L'idea non è così strana se si pensa a quanti musei stanno puntando l'attenzione verso la moda, in questi giorni. La Sig.ra Prada e il Sig. Bertelli inaugureranno il loro Prada Museo di Arte Moderna a Milano, il prossimo anno, mentre Dries Van Noten aprirà presto la sua retrospettiva al Musée des Arts Décoratifs a Parigi. La collezione all'infuso di arte di Simons ha rappresentato una grande partenza mentre sostituiva le sue stampe identificative e ricami con nuance di sfumature, tessuti contrastanti immersi nella tintura, tra cui mohair, velluto, jeans e canapa. Una cosa che ho sempre apprezzato di Dries van Noten è che gli piace far sembrare gli indumenti vecchi, comodi e usati – lasciandoti con il dubbio che quel cachi che hai visto non fosse stato un vintage militare parte della sua più recente collezione “Rave e Rinascimento”. Reperti di un tempo ormai passato sono di scena presso la Maison Martin Margiela, con risvolti dilatati e camicie attorcigliate, trench avvolti in coperte militari e giacchette fatte in gommone, tende e gilet da sub. Da Christophe Lemaire, riferimenti multiculturali sono sempre stati mantenuti comodamente chic con indumenti da lavoro Cinesi dell'era Mao, e con riferimenti a nomadi e musicisti retrò mediorientali. La collezione era puro lusso ed eleganza senza sconfinare nel borghese.

Haider Ackermann era fissato con una surreale raffinatezza della sue troupe del Romantic 19° secolo.

Indossavano ampi cappotti e pantaloni dal cavallo basso, giacche morbide con tessuti sfarzosi, proporzioni languide e volumi stravaganti, che trasformavano i suoi uomini in creature attraenti e sensibili. Nel frattempo, da Junya Watanabe e Prada c'era un caratteristico revival del Teddy Boy. Watanabe ha unito la sartoria Inglese con l'utilità d'uso, e la sartoriale "ciliegina sulla torta" - un colletto e una cravatta. Prada ha mostrato uniformi militari di completi slanciati e sobri, con pantaloni cadenti su vivide scarpe da tennis.

Uno stile di strada sportivo e una sartoria super raffinata sono stati gli ingredienti star di Givenchy, Zegna e Dior, dove Kris van Assche ha fatto rivivere i tessuti classici dell'abbigliamento maschile, come il tweed, il principe di Galles, e il gessato. Sia da Andrea Incontri che da Lavine, le pennellate creative erano pulite, pure, moderne e austere, mentre Issey Miyake ha fatto grossi schizzi di colore e KTZ ha disegnato enigmatici codici di segni e simboli.

Nel complesso, la stagione autunno-inverno è stata incentrata sul trovare quell'elusivo equilibrio tra ciò che si può indossare all'istante e il desiderato in via eccezionale. Forse è per questo che i designers hanno sperimentato con cappotti in qualsiasi silhouette possibile. Anche se c'era una grande nostalgia sullo show, c'era anche un palpabile desiderio di battere nuove strade - anche se senza lasciar andare del tutto il comfort del familiare.

SOLO POSTI IN PIEDI

"Solo posti in piedi". Certo, è una frase vecchio stantio. Ma una ricca di significato. Di solito è un modo semplice per dire durante una performance popolare che ogni posto è occupato, lasciando il pubblico a spintonarsi per uno spazio in piedi. Come la maggior parte delle frasi innocenti tuttavia, quando è applicata al mondo singolare della moda, assume un significato del tutto nuovo. Soprattutto durante la stagione frenetica della passerella.

Francamente, mi è piaciuto il fatto che sia Raf Simons che Haider Ackermann abbiano deciso di buttare via tutte le politiche della moda e abbiano tenuto tutti in piedi a guardare i loro spettacoli. Sembrava come un sacrilegio – un delizioso sacrilegio, in realtà – nel vedere ad alcuni imperatori e imperatrici del settore moda negati i loro troni in prima fila, per una volta. Ma nel rifiutarsi di piegarsi alla gerarchia insita nel nostro business, Raf e Haider sembravano fare un punto leggermente diverso: che tutti sono diventati un po' stufi della frenesia dei social media che ha creato una nuova realtà in cui gli spettatori della moda a volte eclissano la performance principale. Non da Raf Simons; non questa volta. Bagnare il suo pubblico da "solo posti in piedi" con una luce rossa ha evidenziato la visione intensa Belga e ci ha anche un po' disorientato nell'oscurare ciò che stava camminando proprio davanti a noi. Tra la musica inquietante di Jonathan Glazer, con la colonna sonora Under The Skin, e l'atmosfera cremisi, lo stato d'animo era indubbio. Hanno marciato stampe di Katsushika Hokusai, squali e giacche sartoriali rattoppati con i collage in stile Tumblr ed astronauti.

In qualche modo mi ha ricordato di un vecchio show di Simons Raf, di un decennio fa, che ha omaggiato Space Oddity di David Bowie. Vai a capire. Haider Ackermann, invece, ha usato una bella luce pomeridiana per glorificare i suoi moderni dandy. Haider ha trattato la sua solita palette sensuale, e romantica eleganza con un po' di decadenza - cosa che sembra mancare nel nostro mondo contemporaneo in questo momento. Forse era ancora sotto l'incantesimo di Keith Richards e Mick Jagger che seducevano sul palco, perché abbiamo sentito che Haider aveva recentemente partecipato al suo primo concerto dei Rolling Stones. Non sarebbe la prima volta che una Rolling-Stones-vergine ha avuto un'epifania dopo essere stata finalmente esposta al pandemonio che quei vecchi rockers sanno ancora creare sul palco. Partner ancora più strani di Haider e Jagger sono Dries Van Noten e Rick Owens i quali, per coincidenza, questa stagione sono stati entrambi ispirati dalla danza. Nel caso di Rick, si è trattato di un'affascinante rappresentazione di Pomeriggio di Fauno coreografato da Nijinsky, il balletto che rappresenta un Fauno che si masturba con una sciarpa di ninfa. Le sue muse erano dipinte in gessose tonalità di bianco, malva, e verde sbiadito, ed indossavano grembiuli oversize, imbracature e moon boots futuristici. Disegni primitivi, stile graffiti, erano ricamati secondo una serie di disegni fatti da un amico, che ha catturato Rick e Michele Lamy insieme. L'effetto netto faceva apparire i moderni guerrieri di Rick come eroi Greci.

La collezione di Dries Van Noten è stata ispirata dai cupi ballerini di Rudolf Nureyev. A torso nudo in unitards o maglie a costine con un girocollo basso sul torso con camicie di seta pura aperte fino alla vita e pantaloni curvi, erano decorati con stampe tenui del disegnatore di New York Richard Haines. Come da Rick Owens, le imbracature enfatizzavano look su misura. Quando mi sono imbattuto in Dries dopo, al cocktail party in onore della sua mostra, gli ho detto che sono rimasta sorpresa nel vedere una collezione così sexy e sensuale. Dries ha semplicemente fatto spallucce e ha detto che si sentiva che era il momento di fare esattamente questo, soprattutto perché stava invecchiando. Come è rinfrescante vedere la vita che evolve in una sensualità amplificata quando invecchiamo, invece del contrario.

La seduzione non è finita a Parigi, in questa stagione. Craig Green ha incantato il suo show "solo posti in piedi" con uno strano senso maschile di fluidità. In quella che è stata probabilmente la sua collezione commercialmente più di successo ad oggi, la musica tratta da Struggle For Pleasure di Wim Mertens in sottofondo che infine, ha portato molti tra il pubblico alla commozione. Io, per esempio, non sono mai stata portata alle lacrime da nessuna collezione - non ancora comunque - ma era testimone dell'intensità delle emozioni che uno spettacolo di moda davvero eccezionale può ancora suscitare.

Da Ann Demeulmeester, Sebastian Meunier è entrato da solo in questa stagione con trasparenti giacche a vento, pantaloni di lino arrotolati, pantaloncini di cotone e ricamate scarpe dipinte. Broccati d'oro sono stati addobbati a cappotti lunghi che hanno reso la collezione sia forte che discreta. Brooke Taylor, designer del marchio Aganovich, ha proposto un guardaroba di pinze metalliche sottili ed eleganti - anche se è stato a volte palesemente ispirato da uno stile operaio blue-collar. La motivazione di Miuccia Prada sembrava ridefinire cosa significa essere fondamentale nella nostra epoca, prima di tutto. Nell'abbracciare consapevolmente un nuovo senso di "essenziale" e lusingamento di "semplicità", ha dato agli uomini un interessante strumento per domare il loro pavone interiore. E se questo non dice molto sullo stato dell'abbigliamento maschile oggi, allora non so che cosa possa. In realtà, tutta la stagione sembrava essere un dibattito visivo ancora più grande del solito, sul modo migliore per fare l'impossibile: distinguersi e confondersi allo stesso tempo.

OVERVIEW

Capita a volte che ciò che si verifica lontano dalle sfilate dica più sui giorni d'oggi rispetto a quello che vediamo sfilare sulla passerella. Tra sussurri in prima fila ed accese lamentele dietro le quinte, l'argomento di questa stagione è il circo fuori dai locali delle sfilate di moda. Per la precisione, è un continuo dibattito dove ci si chiede se l'atmosfera in stile paparazzi, creata da una nuova sottospecie di fotografi che immortalano una nuova sottospecie di celebrità in street style, abbia o meno un briciolo di integrità. Suzy Menkes ha così espresso il suo malinconico rammarico per un'era passata: "Non posso smettere di notare quanto fosse tutto così diverso quando i ragazzi in amavano vestirsi bene per gli altri – o anche solo per se stessi," ha pubblicato nel International Herald Tribune. Ciò a cui alludeva Menkes è l'idea che questi nuovi arrivati si vestano più per la macchina fotografica che per qualcos'altro... o per qualcun altro. Tim Blanks ha così criticato il movimento: "In modo ironico (il fenomeno dello street style) dà potere, ma nello stesso modo in cui un reality show dà potere. Crea Mostri, non Dei." Tra tutti questi scarti umani e clic fotografici, c'era qualcosa di veramente degno di nota sulle passerelle. Aniché diventare più volgari e concettuali – cosa che avrebbe aggiunto ulteriore ammonizione a questa nuova sottospecie di celebrità street style – molte collezioni hanno sfoggiato capi attenuati e dal taglio meraviglioso.

Christophe Lemaire ha proposto, sia per la collezione firmata da lui che per la linea Hermes, capi eleganti e senza tempo che rappresentavano più uno stile chic- informale che di alta società. Potremmo dire la stessa cosa per Dries Van Noten, le cui collezioni non passano mai di moda. Per questa stagione, Dries si è ispirato a "Fred e Ginger" e alla perfetta fusione tra piume di struzzo super femminili unite a tagli mascholini con sottili cinture e vistosi ricami. C'era una sensazione positiva per quegli enormi giubbotti e cappotti sartoriali e anche se nessun riferimento a Marlene Dietrich è stato fatto, mi sono comunque immaginata lei o Greta Garbo che indossavano comodamente quasi tutta la collezione. Era ricca di stile, ma di uno stile velato. Haider Ackermann avvolge in una maniera così nonchalant che è sempre la perfezione fatta a persona. In questa stagione molti dei suoi pantaloni e cappotti erano voluminosi ed enormi. Prada ha padroneggiato il look casual-chic con capi disinvolti e come se fossero stati indossati senza pensarci su troppo, ma apparivano perfettamente sensuali e, come ha detto lei stessa, "in-completi". La comodità, in tutte le sue forme, era ovunque.

La religione continua ad essere l'elemento del design DNA Italiano, apparso sia in Dolce&Gabbana che in Givenchy tramite Riccardo Tisci. Domenico Dolce e Stefano Gabbana hanno utilizzato i mosaici dorati del Duomo di Monreale (Sicilia) come riferimento con i famosi mosaici Veneziani e Bizantini sotto forma di stampe e ricami. Riccardo Tisci ha adottato un approccio diverso con una sorta di felpa trasparente e ricamata o con un insolito disegno di Bambi.

E c'era un'atmosfera gypsy per via dei lunghi tessuti e delle gonne di tulle, lunghe fino alle caviglie, trasparenti e ricamate.

Maison Martin Margiela ha esibito una forte collezione direzionale giocando con abiti da lavoro, uniformi e sartoria mascolina servendosi di dettagli come enormi polsini e strisce dipinte a mano sulle cuciture dei pantaloni eleganti. I dettagli erano semplici ed enormi e anche se tutti sappiamo che Martin se n'è andato da tempo, si poteva chiaramente percepire che c'era una sola visione dietro il brand. "Eroismo segnato dalla battaglia" è stata la definizione usata da Rick Owens per descrivere la sua semplice ma ricercata collezione. Owens ha quel modo di fondere i dettagli del couture con eleganti capi streetwear. È un'arte che a pochi riesce così divinamente. Il suo originale kimono ispirato a cappotti e giacche con filettati dettagli in pelle mi ha tolto il fiato. Le sue scarpe con tacchi ad ago e larghi polpacci con lacci in pelle avvolti intorno alle caviglie faranno di certo suonare i registratori di cassa. Era una collezione epica, raffinata e facile da indossare.

È uno spettacolo meraviglioso vedere l'evoluzione della collezione di Gareth Pugh ispirata alla couture. All'inizio della sfilata c'era una sensibilità in stile tardo periodo vittoriano ed una serie di look ironici in stile "cianfrusaglie da conservare" realizzati con spille da borsa - un chiaro riferimento alle sue prime collezioni esibite nel Kash Point club Londinese. Probabilmente l'oggetto più in voga della stagione è stato il giubbotto di pelle re-interpretato, di Givenchy e Undercover. Antony Vaccarello ha creato la sua personale variazione su una collezione ispirata al moderno punk con un'aggiunta di originali catene collocate strategicamente all'interno di piccole minigonne con orli asimmetrici rivestite con cd argentati. La collezione sembrava sia comoda che sexy, e forse quello era uno degli umori più spiccati della stagione.

Modernità, giovinezza ed un ridotto essenzialismo sono ciò che emerge dalle collezioni autunno/inverno 2013-2014. Leading designer stanno presentando rigorose nozioni per l'abbigliamento del futuro, cercando di bilanciare tra l'asceticamente severo e l'esteticamente raffinato. Il tanto atteso periodo di incubazione, durato sei anni, è finalmente terminato. Aitor Throup ha rivelato il suo primissimo outfit già pronto per essere indossato, della linea "New Object Research" (Nuova Ricerca sugli Oggetti), ispirata alla Mongolia, Induismo e ad un riguardo per i diritti umani contemporanei. Sempre a Londra, lo stilista di origini Coreane Jae Wan Park si è focalizzato sull'artigianalità meticolosa e ai piccoli dettagli e gesti, mentre J. W. Anderson ha mostrato una collezione provocatoria oltrepassando i confini di genere, dove gli uomini indossano magliette a busto con pieghe decorate e coordinate. Che stia sperando di ottenere la copertina di "Candy", la rivista di moda transessuale di gran moda? Il primo ministro inglese David Cameron ha dato il benvenuto al pubblico della moda al numero 10 di Downing Street per celebrare l'inizio dell'edizione maschile della London Fashion Week (la Settimana della Moda Londinese) nel tentativo di incrementare il sostegno ufficiale nei confronti di un settore - in crescita - dell'industria, che dà un contributo miliardario all'economia inglese e offre centinaia di migliaia di posti di lavoro.

Dall'altra parte del Canale, sembra che Kim Jones per Louis Vuitton, Rick Owens, Burberry, Vivienne Westwood e Neil Barrett avessero in mente attività come scalare il Monte Everest o affrontare leopardi, tigri e zebre dove si sono messi a sperimentare con tessuti tecnici e trattamenti tessili. Mi sono innamorata di un cappotto swing bianco firmato Rick Owens, che indosserei io stessa, senz'altro, se mi venisse offerto in nero. Lanvin, Bottega Veneta, Prada, Dior, Kris Van Assche, Mugler e Burberry hanno proposto una raffinata re-interpretazione del classico. La nuova insegna di Dior è un triangolo circoscritto dentro un cerchio apparso su abiti e maglioni che sinceramente mi ha incantata. Prada ha avuto il ruolo del "fashion DJ" questa stagione, con un mix di anni '50 e '90 dal tocco moderno con un abbigliamento maschile caratterizzato da tessuti, effetti e proposte eccellenti al passo con il cucito contemporaneo di tendenza.

Per coloro sono sordi ai richiami delle avventure all'aperto, stilisti come Dries Van Noten, Ann Demeulmeester e Raf Simons hanno proposto una versione moderna del Dandy. Charles Baudelaire definì il dandy come colui che eleva l'estetica al pari di una religione viva la quale, mentre siamo in tema di religione, è bene ricordare viste le due sfilate in questione. Dolce e Gabbana si sono divertiti molto a giocare con l'iconografia religiosa e, nonostante Riccardo Tisci fosse più ossessionato con l'America e i suoi uomini Latini nel mondo rock, c'era qualcosa nella presentazione della stanza illuminata da candele in cerchi che ti faceva sentire come se stessi partecipando ad una pratica religiosa.

Le collezioni più eccentriche ed antieroe di questa stagione mi hanno fatto pensare all'autore francese Joris-Karl Huysmans e al suo libro "Contro Natura" dove il personaggio principale è un esteta solitario ed eccentrico, restio nei confronti della società borghese del 19° secolo, il quale provò dunque a rifugiarsi in un mondo artistico ideale, di sua creazione. Al personaggio di Huysmans piace probabilmente poltrire indossando una giacca o un cappotto stile accappatoio firmato Dries Van Noten, trapuntato, cucito o con disegno cachemire, casualmente buttato addosso a ciò che sembra, ma non è, un pigiama. Raf Simons ha allargato i suoi pantaloni in modo che arrivassero a coprire le sue scarpe da ginnastica Adidas appena lanciate. Il suo dandy incompleto aveva un colletto svolazzante e polsini extra-lunghi con giacche di lana monobottone e cappotti senza maniche in un mix di colori tra ruggine, celeste, grigio talpa e giallo. L'esposizione degli autoritratti di August Strindberg è stata il punto di partenza della collezione Acne firmata Jonny Johansson. Qualunque sia il tuo stato d'animo per questa stagione, c'è sicuramente qualcosa in vendita che si adatti perfettamente. Blousons e perfecto jackets sono le star di Givenchy, indimenticabili in fotografiche tonalità di grigio, nero e bianco. Ma c'è anche la formalità Edoardiana, meticolosità minimalista, look militare, sartoria retrò o rilassata, e una valanga di soprabiti che lascia pensare all'alpinismo come lo sport da scegliere per l'inverno 2013.

Non dimentichiamoci di quelle meravigliose borse da uomo di Bottega Veneta, della valigia leopardata di Vivienne Westwood, del meraviglioso baule di Louis Vuitton e l'eloquente zaino con teschio firmato dallo stilista di moda in ascesa, Aitor Throup. E mentre siamo in tema di accessori, che ne dite di quegli scarponi da trekking e i guanti con pelliccia di yeti firmati Rick Owens, gli stivali bassi bi-colore e i guanti per guidare in stile La Bella e la Bestia di Lavin, le scarpe anni '50 con un tocco contemporaneo di Prada o le 'James Bond dalla Russia con amore' scarpe scozzesi di Raf Simons.

L'abbigliamento da uomo è stato sempre un fatto di dettagli e sembra che stia mantenendo la sua promessa visto che accessori e sartoria sono diventati sempre più influenti nel corso di questi anni. Ma ciò che offrirebbe reale speranza a molti nell'industria della moda sarebbe l'ascesa di Aitor Throup nel campo dell'abbigliamento maschile. Lui è un creatore genuino a cui non importa passare anni nella giungla della moda per perfezionare qualcosa tanto insignificante quanto un giromanica. È semplicemente quel tipo di qualità ossessiva che potrebbe rinforzare la sua reputazione come futuro leader nella creazione di abiti da uomo.

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Classeditori

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“TODAY, A DESIGNER MUST UNDERSTAND THE INTERNATIONAL CONSUMERS' NEEDS AND THEN INTERPRET THEM BY VALUING A TRADITION TO WHICH HE HAS PRIVILEGED ACCESS TO.” STATED FERRAGAMO'S CREATIVE LEADER.

BY CHIARA BOTTONI

“Italianism? It must not be considered a souvenir, but a virtue that needs to be reinvented in our everyday life.”.

Massimiliano Giornetti, Ferragamo's creative director, has no doubts on how a designer, during this new-media era, must behave in order to go along with a fashion that runs faster and faster on a click or like's edge. And this is harder to do for a brand with a history background that must not be denatured, rather than for a brand born during the globalization era. “To understand the international consumers' needs, and interpret them by valuing the roots of a tradition to which he has privileged access to, is a task that needs to be achieved by the leading designers of maisons like Ferragamo” has underlined Giornetti, illustrating the evolution of a creative journey inside a group where he began his story, 13 years ago: a group which he has been leading for the past 4 years, as womenswear and menswear's creative leader

Globalization and new media have changed the consumer's approach towards fashion. Has maison Ferragamo been influenced by these changes? Once, the approach to fashion used to have a precise registry target. To talk about a Ferragamo woman made you think of a certain type of femininity, well defined by precise standards and, from time to time, by a precise age group. Moreover, a designer's dialogue was limited to a few markets and a few buyers. Today, globalization and the concept of longevity, of time and taste, have deeply changed things. An example? A few weeks ago I was in Miami, in our Bal Harbour shop, and I saw a whole family walk in, where mother and daughter were ready to confront each other's taste and choices. And to catch different shades of the same brand.

This demonstrates how modern-day consumers have a cross relationship with luxury and are constantly responding to different stimuli, from the internet to the new media. Unlike in the past, those who enter our boutiques today are already aware of everything. Often, they have already seen the show on streaming, have examined every single look in detail and know very well the season's trends. They are much more informed than they were in the past. For what regards a maison like Ferragamo, every stimulus that comes from today needs to be then wisely combined to the brand's tradition, to those values of quality typical of the made in Italy. I love to quote last year's Louvre's Resort Fashion Show, that originated exactly from the concept of handcraft at its purest form. A form of luxury much closer to the haute couture than you would ever imagine.

How did you become creative director of the maison?

It all began 13 years ago. Starting from the men, I did a sort of training. Menswear, in fact, has a much narrower action potential, but it can also give great stimuli. I worked step by step, ferrying the maison's values of creativity and savoir faire into contemporaneity. Four years ago, when I was appointed creative leader of the womenswear, I seized a new challenge: creating a shared imaginary taste, common to both collections. Women began having a stronger stylistic identity and definition. Trying to understand the consumer's needs and enhancing some core elements, like the accessories, first of all, used to dress up the ready-to-wear with an apparent simplicity.

According to you, who are Ferragamo's women contemporary icons?

Ferragamo is one of the first brands that has ever linked its name to celebrities or a royal house character. It's very hard, today, to find a link with someone in particular... it was easier in the past. Of course, I am fascinated by many women's style and personality. The best one, Tilda Swinton.

If you could jump to the past, which of the women who wore Salvatore Ferragamo's shoes would you like to dress up?

Marilyn Monroe and Audrey Hepburn. I have always been fascinated by Marilyn's sex-bomb look, outcome of the 50s idealistic beauty, that actually hid a great fragility. On the other hand, I always thought Hepburn was a great modern character. For her social commitment, for starters. Modern-day stars and celebrities should take her as an example, and act as reference point for all the people who follow them through the new media. I'd like that a maison, like Ferragamo, could be approached by these types of celebrities, those committed at humanitarian level.

THE LAST EMPERORS

BY STEFANO RONCATO

Before everything: their gaze. Quick. Fast, it makes you like them straightaway. And immediately, we laugh. A joke that breaks the majesty of the meeting, held with two designer who are bringing new emotions to the fashion world. Winning the challenge of re-giving passion to Valentino Maison. Tracing the coordinates of a couture, DNA-respectful and cherished feminine sensuality. Which, surprise surprise, it even sells. A femme told through a high-class show. Painted by Maria Grazia Chiuri and Pierpaolo Piccioli with that attention which becomes a contemporary concept of fashion and of fashion-making. Step by step, bringing a winning approach into one of the most sacred temples of the fashion system, the runways' main protagonist all along – both inside and outside. To name Valentino is to open a precious chest. Glamour-soaked imagines and enchanted frames keep scrolling. Valentino Garavani, the founder, is a star loved by the stars. Arm raised to beckon after the fashion show, the awards, the supermodels, Capri along with Jackie Onassis and Gstaad with Madonna, Rome and Paris. The epic creativity lived under the spot light, all along... because nobody puts such a high-level maison in a corner. Valentino: The Last Emperor, was the title of a documentary film produced by Matt Tyrnauer – both moving and funny at the same time. But the story goes on, still at high-levels.

“The most beautiful praise? A few days ago, when Valentino told us that his name was in good hands”, say Chiuri and Piccioli, who speak by merging their individual sentences into a single thought, transforming an interview into a movie that plays in your mind, to be watched eyes closed. Because the two “Valentines” - as they have been nicknamed – are writing a new script.

A first analysis of your experience as leaders of Valentino? Seems like yesterday...

We are talking about October 2008. It might have seem as if time has gone by fast, but for us it has been a great commitment with a very positive appraisal. It is not impossible to come this far, but it's hard to keep up. It takes a lot of work, making it seem innate. Effortless without effort, this is the magic. And fashion is a bit tied to the magic created.

How did you work?

By building. We were a great brand with a high sense of tradition that had to be developed. We had to find a new concept, because times have changed, to convey contemporary values like beauty or couture employed as a culture. It's like when you have a fantastic house with a great heritage but it needs renovation.

Do you think you have created a new type of clientele, more sophisticated?

We believe that when we first started working, there were women who were not represented by the dominant values. Meaning either showing off too much or too undressed. There were women that wanted a more whispered sensuality, to be more elegant, with more gracefulness. We caught those less-represented characteristics. Couture as in culture does not mean to think only about the show, we are over this, it's a new era. But as in uniqueness, making someone feel special. Not even the premiere start with a default card. Our women are individuals, different from one another. It also means to transfer a culture in the subtle work that can be sensed through the white blouse, through the purest jacket. It's a virtue. It's not just an embroidered evening gown, it's private luxury. Like women are.

What does a fashion show represent? It's a moment of recap, like a movie editing. Speech is conveyed through music, editing and casting. We are focused on every detail. We are obsessive when it comes to this and Paris' occasion is fundamental.

No good luck rituals?

We are not superstitious. We don't have any problem whatsoever with ladders or black cats. Better to keep negative people away. We are optimistic. Tomorrow will be a better day. About this show, we have worked with much devotion. The hard part was to eliminate items. If we consider clothes pieces of our heart? No, our kids are our best show.

Valentino has grown and it's a whole new success. What's the secret? Much talent and much work. That goes for everything. You need to be aware of your talent and put all your effort in working on it and improving it – it takes rigor. There has to be emotion and aspiration, otherwise it remains cold and empty. You always have to be willing to start all over again, great artists tend to question themselves. Complacency is destruction.

Is fashion an art?

There's an analogy there, but the outcome is different. Fashion tells its time through a beauty and has similar a role to art, but art is an end in itself, it's a more individual expressiveness and not linked to an object.

Where does inspiration come from?

From the personal need to improve, through exhibitions, books, movies. A curiosity and a chance we have regardless of this job. All this contaminates you. Any reference from neorealism to Verneer, from Cindy Sherman to Roberto Rossellini. They are different stories but are filtered through the same language.

How would you define your artistic friendship, your creative pair?

(They laugh). Like an old couple, with stable gears. That you already know about. Like those old couples that have been together for forty years. There's no need to talk.

How did you get appointed?

(Chiuri) When they asked us, I was not convinced at all. I knew how hard it would have been. It was a big weight to carry. Should I accept it or turn it down? Man is more adventurous, I like to keep my feet on the ground. (Piccioli) Life offers you opportunities, and this one just had to be seized. My kids made drawings on posters to celebrate, back home.

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(Chiuri) At my place, just long faces. My husband complained that we barely got to see each, and this new position was only going to make things worse. No one says it, but there is a major difference between man and woman: it's harder for women to have some time off.

What's your best memory during your adventure at Valentino's, where you began following the accessory line? Definitely shooting Tyrnauer's film. Things happened live. Matteo Marzotto's outburst took place in our office, while we were pressed against the wall trying to calm him down. At Venice's premier, it felt awkward. I watched the scenes while in my mind I kept seeing the backstage. And we joke with Met. He says he'd like to make a sequel. He should probably make a soap opera, but we are not going to tell him this. More things have been going on here than during Beautiful.

How's the relationship with Mr. Valentino? What is your first memory with him?

It has been excellent since the beginning. We began taking care of the accessory line and worked together only during the shows. Fittings took a long time in Paris, we had to wait for the girls to be dressed and put make-up on. We spent many hours chatting, he would tell us those stories that you read on fashion books. Valentino is a brilliant orator. He talked about Halston, Bianca Jagger, and told those legendary fashion tales.

The best compliment ever?

Valentino's, the other night: "I am very happy that my name is in your hands". It was really touching.

What about Miuccia Prada's, last season?

She's the smartest one, the pioneer of contemporary fashion. Her compliment counts a lot. We have been following her since Prada was not yet today's company. Miuccia created a new figure, she was the first to convey fashion as the concept of beauty that comes with intelligence.

Would you parade men in Milan?

No. Our menswear is more in line with the French's couture and capital. The brand itself is linked to Rome and Paris.

Is there something you have done yet, that you would like to do?

Give this brand everything it deserves. The greatest ambition is to open a museum, since we have one of the most fantastic catalogues and it's already digital. Then establish an atelier school, to continue this important craftsmanship tradition we have always believed in. To allow young people to approach the handicraft work which is a great job, not less important or interesting than any other. It is not a second-choice opportunity. It's part of our roots. And the only way to make a difference in the world is to believe in your DNA.

WARRIOR QUEENS

EMPRESSES AT BATTLE. FROM THEODORA TO ELISABETH I. MAJESTIC ARMORS AND GOLDEN REFLEXES TO WRITE THE NEXT WILD WINTER. BY FABIO MARIA DAMATO.

Bloody and merciful. Queen and warrior. Saint and executioner. Ambivalent conscience and a coherent style outline the next cold season's fashion trend. Women born to take control are appearing on the runway, of nowhere. It does not matter if they are chosen for their royal lineage or for divine right. What matters most is to become a progenitor of one's own time, picking up the gestures of great characters, between a historical past or a fantastic present. The West is struggling to survive the economic crisis, of the sovereign and social debt. The East watches as the new economic nomenclature women jostle to sit on the chair that once used to be taken by fathers, brothers or husbands. And the luxury sector is thankful, and keeps growing with record numbers. 2012 closed with a 212 billion Euros turnover (+10%), tripled since 1995's standards. And we shouldn't be amazed by the fact that the new high quality consumer products king Midas are producing (during the 2013/14 year) opulent dresses to be paraded with nonchalance. Capable of conveying a different, majestic, woman. From Milan to Paris, from New York to London, a thin file rouge links the runways.

And since today's society is undergoing a renovated Middle Ages of cultural and structural transformation, why not look at that period of time, made of crusades and battles, of empresses and queens, to trace a strong and combative profile, emancipated and irreverent. So go ahead with the byzantine coronations, precious stones and ancient golden filigrees. From Monreale's mosaics (picture 15) reinterpreted by Domenico Dolce and Stefano Gabbana for their Dolce&Gabbana femininity (picture 13), to Empress Theodora, made immortal by the San Vitale Basilica tiles, in Ravenna (picture 12). In Christian Lacroix's artistic reinterpretation, for Sisis, her characteristics are transfigured to dress her with timeless references (picture 18). Iconographically alike to Sibyl, queen of Jerusalem. Interpreted by Eva Green in the Kingdom of Heaven movie (picture 17). And popular enough to run for co-star along with Helen Mirren in Trailer for a remake of Gore Vidal's Caligula, produced by Francesco Vezzoli (picture 14). Even Madonna is covered in gold, the new empress of the halftime Super bowl 2012 show (picture 16), set against the Elizabethan Beyoncé, who wears a golden gorget and crinoline in the promotional pictures of the Mrs. Carter Show World Tour (picture 09).

The Imperial decorativism quotes Gustave Klimt's art (picture 10) and Connie Nielsen's attitude in her interpretation of the Roman Empress, Augusta Lucilla (picture 11) in *The Gladiator*. History, pop culture, movies and art influence fashion world's language, scanning a special mood-board. Which opposes the courageous battlefields to the complicated court plots. They're the armors of the Virginal Elizabeth I of England, who has come back to life thanks to Cate Blanchett in the two movies about her (picture 08) or the war clothes jealously kept in the Plymouth city museum and art gallery (picture 04). Which are mocked on the gamme bleu Moncler platform inspired to Scotland's battles (picture 05). The images collage enlists Tilda Swinton in *The Chronicles of Narnia* (picture 02) or the warrior Snow White interpreted by Kristen Stewart (picture 06).

Roberto Cavalli's metal mash and suit of armor appear on the runway in an updated version (picture 03), for renovated wars of seduction. Which are visible through Steven Meisel's snapshots in an iconic Versace campaign dated 1997/98 (picture 06). All with a starting point, treasure chest of combative highlanders: the Linlithgow Palace of Edinburg where Chanel's Métiers d'art Paris-Édimburg collection paraded (picture 06). To mark a renovated Golden Age.

INTERVIEW NARCISO RODRIGUEZ

“DURING THE LAST FIVE YEARS WE HAVE REGAINED STRENGTH. I WANT TO DEVELOP BUSINESS BY DESIGNING LUXURIOUS MADE IN ITALY CLOTHES.” STATED THE AMERICAN DESIGNER. BY FABIO MARIA DAMATO

Narciso Rodriguez is back in action with a renovated creative force, and business. During the last few seasons, the designer - absolute protagonist of New York's 90s fashion euphoria - has obtained hearty applauses thanks to a brand-new sense of luxurious minimal chic. Revealed, season after season, but still remaining faithful to his aesthetics.

We can breathe a new energy from your collections... What's going on? It's a great moment for my career. Business has grown a lot during the last few seasons and I'm leader of an independent brand. We've launched an accessory line that is having a positive feedback and I believe that, overall, the quality of my work, today, is the best ever. These have always been dreams of mine, linked to both my personal and work life, so I feel I can finally say that I have indeed fulfilled my dreams.

One day you are in and the other you're out... is this fashion system cruel?

Fashion can be a cruel world, but when you believe in the quality of your work and you remain faithful to your old values, you succeed time's examination. Throughout the years you even learn to avoid nonsense and put an end to those relationships (personal or not) that could turn out being petty.

What creative approach did you use for the autumn-winter 2013/14 collection?

It's played on sharp contrasts. The graphic use of white and black, a very rich and violent palette, unusually matched. Everything is inspired by the work of Lygia Clark, the Brazilian artist, (one of my favorite) due to her modern-day and audacious approach. I am also sure of the importance of dressing a woman with a timeless clothes-and-accessories approach, items to be worn next winter, or in many years from now. I even meet with success amongst my clients, a great love towards my clothes, that drives them to come back to my shops.

What inspires you at every new collection?

Architecture and art are probably at the top of the list. I am also an avid photographer and I like the idea of documenting everything I see on the streets or in my everyday life. But I start from the assumption that women should always wear whatever they wish. Today, more than ever, style is super important, more than obsessively following a trend. Today, fashion is more connected to the individual freedom of making personal choices.

Today, finance language is fundamental in fashion. Do you agree?

I don't really believe in this modern obsession of signing everything with a brand. But I do believe in true consumers, those attentive to the quality of a made in Italy fabric, to a handmade cut or embroidery. I have always been a fan of their workforce, this is why I am honored to be producing my collection in Italian haute de gamme studios. This is what people expect from us, and I have no intention of sacrificing it for a low-cost collection that will increase business. And I don't want to appear on television, like some of my colleagues do, to increase turnover. I want to sell luxurious attires.

What should we expect from future seasons?

I have seen many changes and a strong growth in the last five years. I have renewed the license for our fragrances with BPI- Beauté Prestige International. We are working on an even better future. And I'm carefully examining a plan to grow in Asia and Latin America.

INTERVIEW FAUSTO PUGLISI

**“EMANUEL UNGARO'S KEYWORDS ARE SIMILAR TO MY WAY OF UNDERSTANDING FASHION. HE'S BEEN A RECKLESS, HE WAS INFINITELY FRENCH, SO MIDDLE-CLASS...A GREAT PIONEER”, STATED THE YOUNG ITALIAN ENFANT PRODIGE DURING HIS DEBUT AT THE HELM OF THE BRAND.
BY FRANCESCA MANUZZI**

Trinacria USA. The Stars and Stripes freedom culture oozes from his fashion and, starting this season, he has been asked to transpose it on Emanuel Ungaro. The mélange of Hollywood and chic parisienne depicts the brand's new story, today's Aeffe orbit's satellite, thanks to Fausto Puglisi's bold pencil. This is how Ungaro comes to life again, after eleven years since Monsieur's retirement and a long family tree. After Giambattista Valli, Vincent Darré, Peter Dundas, Estrella Archs and Lindsay Lohan, Esteban Cortazar, Giles Deacon and Jeanne Labib-Lamour now comes Puglisi, the star beater, with a crash of textiles and supervisual patterns. Between Los Angeles, Miami and Paris. Puglisi's designation is the third step of the Massimo and Alberta Ferretti Group diversification strategy, that is investing on the younger generation. A journey started with Cédric Charlier and continued with Nathalie Ratabesi from Philosophy, as Ferretti stated – president of the group worth 254 million euros: “Fausto has succeeded in making the maison's DNA his own, offering a new interpretation that projects it to the future. Choice which confirms a potential growth, considering the international clientele's welcome - especially for the accessory line - with orders from Italy and the American recovery. But the true speakers were the valkyrie, à la française, imagined by Puglisi for his Ungaro.

How does the perception of the collection change after the show? What parades on the runway is only chapter zero, an intro to my story as Emanuel Ungaro, as a tribute to freedom and freshness. I don't expect ovations, I might have done something that can be appreciated or not. But, in four words its fresh, fresh, fresh, fresh. Without taking into consideration the Ungaro or not Ungaro, Emanuel or not Emanuel dilemma, this journey will continue towards freshness. Not following New York, Milan and Paris' runways, but taking inspiration from a devotion towards color, erasing heaviness. Clean in a glamour kind of way, translating what I don't see, like it's happening right now here in Miami, with a car passing by with the volume up, the wind, the bright sun, beautiful and ugly people. Without overlooking the fact that Ungaro has been a reference point for the States, a bestselling brand. Right now, right here, I could easily see a girl walking around wearing the first dress of my fashion show, a one sleeved dress with yellow polka dots, or in Los Angeles. Total freedom. Just like Americans can be. Fat, skinny, old, young, muscular. This is will be my Ungaro's strength. Very Ungaro, very Puglisi. Because fashion is an act of pure passion, I do sex with fabrics. Plus, I always have in mind the Italian way of seducing clients, London's internationality and China, India, Brazil...

Very Ungaro, very Puglisi...

That's right. When Massimo Ferretti called me, I had already receive two other very interesting offers. But I had no doubts. Emanuel Ungaro's keywords are similar to my way of understanding fashion. He's been a reckless, he was infinitely French, so middle-class. But a great pioneer, who matched seemingly contrasting fabrics, like the Prince of Wales with polka dots and with leopard, flowers with menswear or not too much harmonious colors, a punch in the stomach, but if worn by the right woman they seemed like masterpieces.

Are there still muses like Anouk Aimée, today, for Ungaro?

There are no such strong characters anymore. Characters like Michael Jackson and Madonna are born one every thousand years. Just like Anouk Aimée. Today's top models and actresses are fragile. There is only one Naomi Campbell, there other ones are insecure, they end up asking to be quoted on newspapers like "The best of the World". But, if we think about Vogue's world, Emmanuel Alt, Franca Sozzani, Anna Wintor... they are all amusing and wonderful women, that can inspire an artist's work. Just like Anna Dello Russo. But instead of talking about muses, I'd rather talk about liberty, to be used to create a personal style. Then, I would like to see Ungaro worn by normal women. My partner is a dentist, today he received an order from a patient who wanted an item of mine and these are great satisfactions.

Are they the same satisfactions you get from Fausto Puglisi?

Puglisi is an industrial-artisan reality, a palace to build day by day. Emanuel Ungaro needs a new dimension, even for the marketing area, but it can count on a company like Aeffe - with solid grounds. It's my first time, and I want to keep my feet on the ground, don't act like a spoiled kid and the company will support me. Ferretti - the president - and I talk a lot, same thing with the marketing and production offices. Plus, whatever I do, I have to win and the aim is to be happy of doing what I love most. I'm living a dream, even though I have to be a tank.

INTERVIEW EMMA HILL

"WHAT TURNS A BAG INTO A SUCCESS? LUCK AND HOW YOU INTERPRET THE ZEITGEST", SAID MULBERRY'S DESIGNER. BY ALESSIA LUCCHESI

To say Mulberry is like condensing in a sole word the essence of being British: ironic, sophisticated, determined, smart. For British people, Burberry is synonym of trench and outerwear, while Mulberry has become (in less than 40 years) absolute synonym of bags desired by every English woman. From teenagers outside of school to grandmothers walking in the park... it seems as if every British woman has a Mulberry bag in their wardrobe. And credit for this success goes to Emma Hill: since 2007 she has been able to project this Somerset accessories plant into a real fashion phenomenon, capable of becoming London Fashion Week's diamond-point and catalyze the attention of a crowd of celebrity-fan. How's it working for one of the most iconic British brands of the world? Stimulating. In the USA, where I have worked for many years, the more you grow the more you drift apart from design. While with Mulberry I have the chance to do what I want, get engaged with a fantastic team and getting inspiration from the everyday life. Plus, England is my homeland and Mulberry is British inside. From where did the inspiration for the fall-winter collection 2013/14 come from?

I wanted to explore the brand's rural influences, which began its history in the Somerset countryside, where our plant is based and from which we often take inspiration. For the fall-winter 2013/14 collection we surrendered to the nocturnal countryside, to the mysterious wildlife and its flora.

Mulberry's ready-to-wear has always been famous for its ironic and funny touch, but during the last few seasons the approach seems more sophisticated and luxurious... How would Mulberry describe today's woman?

Winter is par excellence the most lavish season, especially for a British brand that understands the need for a practical outerwear with wonderful cuts to tolerate the cold temperatures! We wanted to focus on the quality and textures of the materials, using a lot of cashmere for the knitwear and double face wool coats and finishing touches with camelhair. Mulberry's woman looks for quality and we want to offer her a timeless, natural and luxurious wardrobe.

The Alexa and Del Rey bags are bestsellers. Why did you choose these two it girl to represent Mulberry's style? I don't aim at searching for a muse or a particular inspiration. I like to think that every woman who buys Mulberry is my muse, because I design for them and, basically, I take inspiration from them. It happens that one's style can be picked up by my radar and this is what happened with Alexa and Del Rey. I love Lana Del Rey's vintage glamour style and elegance, that's why we decided to dedicate a bag full of details to her, that conveyed the brand's personality. Before this, I saw Alexa Chung with a male model bag, the Elkington. The bag was a bit battered, but she seemed so natural and spontaneous while wearing it... I was enlightened on the spot.

What turns a bag into a success? Sometimes it takes luck. You can't decide to design an iconic bag at a table. It depends on the clientele's taste, but also on how it interprets the culture of time, the Zeitgeits. Bayswater has become an icon throughout the years, people now label it a Murberry because it represents who we are and what we represent.

Murberry also has a small men's accessories collection. Do you expect to expand it?

We are focused on creating a collection that fulfills Murberry's male clientele's desires. We have a few iconic bags, like Brynmore or Elkington, that are appreciated for their decorated leather and their understated handiness. We want to convey this attitude in every aspect of the male collections, from the small leather goods to the scarfs and travel accessories.

Fashion brands are worldwide phenomena and must satisfy different types of consumers. Do you think this could have a negative effect on creativity?

It's important to understand the context, the culture and the setting when opening new stores or when selling your products to a very variegated public. But, essentially, our clients respect us for being faithful to our roots and offering a point of view of our heritage that's not a mixture of our tradition.

INTERVIEW PETER DUNDAS

“MY PUCCI-GIRLS REPRESENT TODAY'S SWEET LIFE”. STATES PETER DUNDAS, THE DESIGNER WHO ARRIVED AT PALAZZO PUCCI FOUR YEARS AGO. WHO HAS BEEN CAPABLE OF REDEFINING A STYLE, BY FINDING AN APPROPRIATE COMPROMISE BETWEEN PAST AND PRESENT. BY MATTEO ZAMPOLLO.

Emilio Pucci, via dei Pucci 6, Florence. It's basically impossible to tell the story of a maison without starting from the point where it all began. And today, even after decades, it still has an important value for what regards the brand itself. Even though it has been acquired by the giant Lvmh back in 2000, Emilio Pucci remains closely tied to its family, as vice-director of Laudomia Pucci. Year after year, even Peter Dundas' role has been growing in parallel. The designer, who entered the Palazzo's doors in 2009, is defining an ad hoc beauty – which also includes the boutiques' restyling. And it has dressed up a whole generation of Pucci-girls. The secret? Always pay attention to the smallest details, even if it means facing an amount of work ever-growing. “Luckily, I'm an alcoholic! And above all I feel even more lucky because my job is also my favorite hobby ever!”. Emilio Pucci has been the pivotal point of the Italian fashion world since last century. And its palace has an important value. What was the first thing that came to your mind when you entered? I thought that that place was a part of a brand's history that many were not familiar with and that had to be absolutely included in the new DNA. A palace that makes you dream, that inspires and has been part of the maison's history ever since its establishment.

How did you feel about working for a maison with such important historical background?

Working for an existing brand means having to balance between a respectful and disrespectful behavior, balancing between past and future. I love Pucci's great history and I understand that it's my duty to bring the brand towards the future with new offers and solutions.

These new offers have always been directed to a particular segment of the public. By now we talk about Pucci-girls. How would you describe them? Personally, I see the Pucci-girl as an aristocratic-rebel. A good vivante who likes to feel desirable and unpredictable. Wearing unexpected colors, with a good dose of joy. I believe that the Pucci-girls represent the modern concept of the sweet life.” And what article of clothing must be considered wardrobe essential?

I believe that the short t-shirt dresses, a long embroidered and the printed dresses are essential for a Pucci-girl. The look is to be completed with high boots – just like in the new collection.

You said that there needs to be a balance between past and future, but your collections always show a hint of the 70s. How much is there really of your personal taste and how much is instead inherited by the maison's, that was undergoing its golden age at that time?

The 60s and 70s have been important years for the maison and they have always been a reference period for me, a part from the brand's history. I believe I was born too late, actually!

Talking about historical eras, this is not a happy moment for the overall economy. But it seems as if Emilio Pucci can always convey a positive attitude. Is optimism the ideal response to the crisis?

Absolutely yes! There is nothing worse than a depressive and negative collection to cure difficult times.

Fashion needs to convey happiness and pleasure. Let us dream. Always. You are taking care, first hand, of the new flagship store concept and your contract was renewed last summer. Do you feel a certain responsibility in representing Pucci's growing new international style?

Today, a brand must be successful at 360 degrees, it must be coherent and widespread, in the right way. A brand is like a person: it has to aim at being the best it can be. My job is to give Pucci its maximum importance, at every stage. Starting from the boutiques, for example, that are a fundamental part in the brand's perception because it's what the final client sees.

How's your relationship with the Pucci family?

It's great, I'm very lucky. The Pucci family has always given me full support.

How's your relationship with Florence, then? Would you picture yourself working in other cities? I'm a bit of a workaholic. I've worked in many different cities around the world. But I just love Florence and I really like working in Italy.

A short time ago you have joined your name with Rita Ora's, the star, creating the looks for her tour. How relevant is it being careful when it comes to modern-day celebrities in fashion, especially for the younger generations?

Collaborations like the one with Rita are a true pleasure and stimulus, both for my team and I. Today, celebrities are very important and exposed. Just think about all those fashion magazines that dedicate covers to them...they are everywhere. Looking at the future, how do you imagine the years to come, inside the maison? What projects are you working on?

Emilio Pucci is undergoing a great expansion retail moment. Besides planning new shop openings, we need to think about the contents inside these big spaces and everything else. Pucci's collections are richer in terms of clothing and accessories. The maison has changed a lot in the last four years: it's growing fast, dimensions are increasing but we always need, now more than ever, to pay the maximum attention to every detail. Luckily, my job is also my hobby!

INTERVIEW STUART VEVERS

“ONE OF THE FUNDAMENTALS THAT TURNED LOEWE INTO AN INTERNATIONAL LUXURY BRAND WITH A STRONG IDENTITY IS ITS IBERIAN DNA”, HAS STATED THE DESIGNER, WHO IS NOW READY TO OPEN THE BRAND'S FIRST ITALIAN STORE. BY CHIARA BOTTONI

He is defined as the Hermès of Spain. Because two words come into mind when pronouncing his name, as for the French maison: luxury and leather. Loewe is the deluxe brand par excellence. Synonym of Spanish fashion, just like flamenco is synonym of the cultural and musical history of the Mediterranean country.

Established in 1846 in Madrid, the brand has been revolving around Lvmh since 1996 and is now living a second youth thanks to Stuart Vever's work, the creative director.

Born in the north of England, he has worked for fashion brands like Calvin Klein, Bottega Veneta, Givenchy, Marc Jacobs, has been creative director for Mulberry and is now stylistic leader of the label (since 2008). He has been capable of giving a new freshness to the brand, by combining Spain's warm sensuality with a cool and young spirit. A recipe that has found its way into old clients' hearts and has conquered new fans. Italian women are among them. They will soon be able to live a Loewe experience inside the brand's first Italian store, that will be inaugurated in Rome at the end of April.

How has Loewe's appearance changed since you have been appointed creative director?

When I first arrived at Loewe, I wanted to focalize on the values that had turned this maison into a unique and special brand. Leather, first of all. It became the starting point of my collections' work, and the heritage connected to this brand.

I believe that one of the fundamentals that turned Loewe into an international luxury brand with a strong identity is its Spanish DNA. The maison's catalogues are full of proof of this country's culture, that I treasure, and which have become the starting point for my creative research. I am proud of everything we managed to do and we have great plans for the future.

What are Loewe's iconic ingredients that you reused in your collections?

The Amazona bag, for starters. The original model dates back to 1975, the end of the Spanish dictatorship. It was created to celebrate women's brand-new conquered freedom. Its modern design made it apt for every occasion and quintessence of a timeless charm. One of the aims I had since the beginning, was to bring this item to conquer an international awareness. So, to celebrate its 35th anniversary, I reexamined the style and allowed special women to wear it. Along with leather, the prints had the merit of spreading an important message in Loewe's world. This is why, even today, they take on a leading role in our collections, retelling from time to time a piece of Spain's history. Loewe has a catalogue of over 4 thousand printed silk scarfs where I could take inspiration from. I really like the contrast between the iconic references, like the Manton de Manila (the Manila silk shawl) or the Spanish ceramics, and the more urban touches that bestow to our silks a modern and young appeal.

How did you blend your British background with Loewe's mediterranean elements?

I always thought it was very important to play, combining this maison's values with fresher and more natural concepts. These ingredients are not necessarily British. I mean, sure... I have English backgrounds and the British funny spirit style is part of my roots. But I have worked in New York, London, Milan and Paris, putting together a very mixed experience.

The brand has grown a lot in the last few years and Italy is becoming increasingly strategic for you, with the opening of the first store in Rome...

I have lived in Milan for three years, when I used to work for Bottega Veneta, so I've had the chance to become quite familiar with Italy. We have big plans for this country: the opening of a flagship store in Rome, in piazza di Spagna, scheduled for the end of April and another mono-brand store coming in Milan, hopefully by the end of 2013. It was the right moment to enter a new market. People are getting to know Loewe and we've been having great feedback in multi-brand stores. This is why we felt the need to present the brand through our own shops, the right place where we can tell our story.

INTERVIEW ANTONIO BERARDI

«I DESIGN FOR A HEALTHY WOMAN...IF SHE CHOOSES GOOD FOOD TO STAY IN SHAPE, SHE'LL CHOOSE THE BEST CLOTHES EVEN FOR HER STYLE», STATED LONDON'S KING OF FASHION DESIGN. BY ALESSIA LUCCHESI.

Movement, greater fluency, features that soften the silhouette. And a new elegant beauty. Which examines and probes femininity's most daring meanders, with obsessive precision. This is the new signature that characterizes Antonio Berardi's style, though without erasing the sensual and intriguing approach that has always been part of his fashion. Meaning body conscious lines that emphasize, like a glove, the body's silhouette. An attitude which has fascinated many celebrities throughout the years, like Victoria Beckham or Lady Gaga or the new multitude of young Hollywood actresses, from Jennifer Lawrence to Elizabeth Olsen to Gemma Arterton. It's from these fundamentals that Berardi has added a new style page, contaminating his ultra shaped sheath dresses with deluxe and architectural inserts. Without leaving behind a touch of valued couture. From where did the new collection, shown in London, come from? In the past spring-summer collection I experimented a new sports-and-activewear approach. With the body conscious silhouette, typical of my clothes, that had been lightly yet lively traced. In this winter collection I was looking for an elegant beauty, with a certain visual strictness capable of concealing a great splendor. That's why I studied Oscar Niemeyer's work, his curved and future-like architectures. Clean and sharp. But also the surprises that the inside can unveil. Capable of a special and luxurious decorativeness, in contrast with the outside's cleanliness – at first glance.

It's a total flip or an evolution of the same message?

I don't think it's a turning point, but the persistence of a path. At every season I feel like I'm making a step forward, always a step closer to defining my style. I have no intention of dissatisfying my clientele, so I could never completely revolutionize all that I have created until now. Therefore it is also important to evolve, don't stay fossilized towards a sole direction. I have tried to breathe some fresh air through this new collection, bringing to life a new wardrobe – which I believe it's the most complete it could ever be and it's especially played on the occasion need. Just like it used to be with the high couture: when you used to buy all the items in the atelier to create your own personal wardrobe.

How would Antonio Berardi describe the woman?

Luxurious and sensual, for sure. Then I imagine her healthy, meaning that if she chooses good food to stay in shape, she'll choose the best clothes even for her style. You have been the protagonist of the London Fashion Week for a while now, which is strongly trying to stand out from the other fashion weeks...

London is home, for me. I believe it's one of the most international cities of the world, it's constantly growing, and I believe that this spirit conditions also the fashion week, making it unique for what regards creativity and spark. In January, the Bfc-British Fashion Council's new leader has become Nathalie Massenet: a visionary and smart woman who is not afraid of trying to do great things for the city. And along with Net à porter she is one of my best clients, and of other brands too, which does not hurt at all. London is conquering a top rank position even in the menswear sector, with London collections: men. Will we find Antonio Berardi's menswear on the runways, soon? I do one day wish to design a men's collection, but as of today I feel I still have a lot to say through womenswear.

VICTORIA BECKHAM INTERVIEW

“I WANTED TO CREATE A CLEVERLY FASHION BRAND WITH TIMELESS BEAUTY STANDARDS” EXPLAINED THE STAR-DESIGNER. “THE STAR I ADMIRE MOST? DEFINITELY MIUCCIA PRADA”. BY FABIO MARIA DAMATO.

Personal beauty and a designer career started as a challenge to the most established fashion system. Victoria Beckham, since her New York debut with the spring/summer 2009 ready-to-wear collection, has come a long way. Proving she's a talented creative and an acute business woman. The result? A brand with a 70 million euro turnover in 2011 desirous for growth, that looks at the future through an online multitasking platform and the Icon collection. How hard was it designing your first collection?

For the s/s 2009 I chose to present only 10 dresses inside a New York hotel room. It was an intense experience, it was a big strain. The collection was presented to a buyer and press during one-to-one meetings or in small groups. I wanted a true encounter where I they could get a close look at the clothes, open the fastener, show the inside structure of the clothes. The reaction was incredible. The experts had put aside every prejudice they had about me, and judged the clothes for what they were, and luckily for me, they were enthusiastic. The idea of launching in New York made sense because at the time I used to live in New York and that city can really convey energy to me.

When did you understand you had become a fashion star?

When I received the British Fashion Awards by the Bfc- British Fashion Council as Designer Brand of the year. It was a great honor for me, especially for the support I got from the press, from buyers and from other fashion designer, since the beginning.

What approach did you use during the creation of the brand?

A brand must live between two souls. It has to be chic, modern and stylish, with a great emphasis on quality and luxury. The collection, apart from being cleverly fashion oriented, needs to have recognizable and somehow timeless connotations, like fabrics or silhouettes can be, capable of possessing seasonless qualities. When I carefully inspect every single item, besides the quality of the style, I'm very attentive at the price point in regards to the product, at its durability and quality. And then I always picture the clothes I myself would, and could, wish to wear every day.

Is this why you launched the Icon Collection?

The Victoria Beckham Icon Collection it's a capsule of catalogue iconic dresses, that have somehow been bestsellers and reference point of my brand's young history. The concept is simple: offer key wardrobe revised brand items, proposed with different variations and regularly enriched with designs, for a collection without seasons. The collection has been launched on the occasion of the inauguration of my online platform. Victoriabeckham.com is a place where you can discover my evocative world and buy all of our products, available only in UK, USA and Europe for now. A real virtual room where you can find exclusive videos and day by day updated contents.

What's the secret behind your bestseller bags?

A woman who designs bags for women has some priorities. The quality of the production, or the proportions that have to be studied in a certain way, along with that modern style. Each characteristic is orchestrated to make a more desirable and easy-to-wear all day long bag.

Is there a fashion designer or icon that you admire in particular?

My dream would be to see the world through Miuccia Prada's eyes. This woman is a genius. Her vision of fashion is incredibly smart. She knows how to amaze everyone at every season's new collection. I've never met her, but I'd love to have the chance to meet her in person on day. I also have an infinite respect for Karl Lagerfeld, who is not only a good friend of mine but he is also source of inspiration. Tilda Swinton could be my icon-woman, for her unique and personal style, but even Clemence Poesy and Kate Bosworth, for the chic essence.

AN INCREASINGLY LUXURIOUS CHINA

AFTER CLOSING 2012 WITH 15 BILLION EUROS, A +17% INCREASE, THE FORMER CELESTIAL KINGDOM CONTINUES ITS RACE. THANKS TO AN EVOLVED AND MADE-IN-ITALY ATTENTIVE CONSUMER. AND GREATER IMPROVEMENT IN THE LUXURY GOODS SECTOR IS EXPECTED FOR THIS YEAR TOO, A RISE BETWEEN 18 AND 20%. BY FABIO GIBELLINO.

The big fear is over: China is back on track. After 2012 has closed with a +17% (meaning 15 billion euros) – which it's considered a great result everywhere except there, Beijing has decided to push on the gas pedal once again. But let's recap, and explain that the worries were due to the past commercial year's speed: 2011 travelled at different paces. Armando Branchini, Altagamma's secretary-general, confirmed it: "After seven and half positive months came uncertainty, brought by the dilemma of what would have happened with the country's new governance. But after November, when everything was clear again, the Chinese market went quickly back in function." The coast is clear. China can continue its climb of the luxury goods Olympus. But, at least for 2013, it won't be as fast as expected. "We do believe that there will be a double-digit growth, but not up to 25%... probably around 18-20%", has explained Branchini. Big fashion brand's top managers and investors could be bit disappointed by this, but it would also mean two things: maintaining a growth rate equal to that obtained between 2011 and 2012, and having a turnover of 500 million euros more than back then. In conclusion, positive news still come from the Great Wall. And it will be like this even in the future. Because if good news doesn't come from the former Celestial Kingdom, it will come from the Chinese people.

According to the Luxury Goods Market by Consumer Nationality developed by Altagamma, if China is worth 7% of the overall worldwide spin-off, its population is worth 25% (around 52.8 billion euros) because, as Branchini explained, "over 50% of them buy outside their borders, in fact - as of today - they have surpassed Europeans and Americans, becoming the best client-travelers of the world. This is due to the rise in domestic consumption which triggers an informative mechanism that increases the desire of buying outside, where the price is more advantageous." And obviously the perspectives remain promising also inside the borders, because we have to remember that top metropolises like Beijing or Shanghai are stable markets – even though they keep on growing, there are tons of realities developing at striking pace. With the result generating a growing number of residents belonging to the leisure class with the economic means to enter a boutique or a luxury mall. After all, the Chinese economy rose by 7.9% in 2011 – not much according to their usual standards, yet a lot compared to the rest of world. Next year's gross internal product is estimated at +8%. Plus, we have to consider that "for the evolution of taste, China took half of Russia's time, even if it applied to a greater number of consumers, let's just look at Bottega Veneta's no-logo performance", stated Branchini, which means that we can sleep tight.

Because wardrobes will be constantly revised, season after season. Maybe winking at the made-in-Italy, like the data on the import-export variation, recorded by Smi-Sistema moda Italia, shows. Important numbers which refer to every segment of the Italian fashion sector, from high to low gamma, that tell how more and more garments cross the Alps to travel on the silk road, while the opposite journey is less travelled by. We must, though, also remember that China has a budget balance much more in favor than Italy's, but it is also true that "in the luxury sector export is not always done directly from Italy to China, because there are Switzerland-based companies like Ermenegildo Zegna or Gucci whose export results Swiss or other companies whose production is also made in Switzerland, like Bulgari's clock industry" added Branchini. It goes without saying that made in Italy is more appreciated because "there are more Italian brands than French brands, at least twice, they represent a more articulated offer and they are often a niche brand. Considering the market stylistic evolution, we can be anything but pessimistic about the future.

It's no coincidence if during the last Mercedes-Benz China fashion week in Beijing, in late-March, has participated also the Italian Gabriele Colangelo by presenting his collection at the artistic district 751D-Park, made possible thanks to an agreement with the Cnmi-Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana. But not only, because the Italian-Chinese bond has found a new bay at the 21th edition of Chic-China International Clothing & Accessories Fair. The event takes place once a year and it's sponsored by the China National Garment Association and the Sub-Council of Textile Industry. Over one thousand exhibitors from 23 countries have participated - including Italy, at its 9th participation. But that's not all, because the stylistic exchange is bidirectional. In Milano the first Chinese boutique has opened in Via Montenapoleone: it's Giada's, a brand founded in the 90s by the designer Rosanna Daolio but bought in 2005 by the Chinese RedStone Group. The story begins now.

OVERVIEW

Scanning the shows this season, it felt as though we were witnessing a peculiar kind of style standoff. On the one side were the pacifists, idealists and escapists and, on the other, stood those ready to protest and protect and a few who looked hell-bent for mortal combat. With all the recent natural disasters, mass global street demonstrations, whistle blowers involved in high-stakes espionage and governments eavesdropping on the public, it comes as no surprise that there were two opposing themes this season: military discipline and the romance of movements like flower power. Instead of exposing the behaviour of political power people, in this current climate of fear, designers are offering us a complex message of anxious escapism, severity and the feel-good factor. Granted, sometimes felt like ominous delight but one that let us dream nonetheless.

Wickedly appealing clothes had models lined up against a gold backdrop at Dries Van Noten with flowers blooming and sprouting against dark surfaces that had been digitally scanned and printed while Ann Demeulemeester dripped delicate black wisteria vines as embroidery on her signature frock coats. Prada called her collection "Menacing Paradise" because her tropical heaven transformed into a war zone that evoked cinematic references like 'From Here to Eternity'. War and love in a steamy landscape pretty much summed it up.

At Comme des Garçons, Rei Kawakubo shook things up with her 'hatching' concept that had fabrics appear to be peeling away like a layer of sunburnt skin only to reveal a few layers of something fresh underneath. In one case, a sleeve cap peeled away to reveal yet another layer of fabric. Her flowers came in the merging of prints and plaids. The dark rimmed eyes and glossy slicked hair looked uniform regardless of whether models were wearing ruched pants, skirts, shorts or the season's "torn" effects. Meanwhile, Haider Ackermann debuted his second menswear collection with his casually chic men in tailored jackets cut in duchesse satins and shimmering renaissance jacquards. Haider made clothes to suit himself and although I doubt that he sports any tattoos, the models were inked with them. Raf Simons had us travelling to the outskirts of Paris to Le Bourget Gagosian Gallery where one imagines art collectors flying in their private planes, landing, buying art and getting out in a flash. Those of us without bulging pockets would never have had the opportunity to visit this appointment-only gallery. With a setting of a Jean Prouvé installation and Alexander Calder kinetic sculptures, Raf showed us a collection focused on branding and consumption. There were oversized t-shirts and bags with slogans like "CLUSTERS Artificially Flavored SUPER NYLON, The Flavor Lasts ..."

The new shape of comfort. Silhouettes were cropped with oversized t-shirts worn as dresses, pinafores and skirts.

"Vicious" was the theme at the Rick Owens show which opened with an Estonian death metal band called Winny Puhh who were strapped into harnesses and strung up to the ceiling while his lunar aliens paraded down the catwalks. In a mood of cheerful aggression, they wore oversized, minimal, semitransparent tunics or silky jumpsuits with zip fronts that made for a hot and sexy caveman look and they were sporting the best trainers of the season. Kim Jones, the ultimate world traveller, took his men on a road trip through America with bandana print shirts, varsity jackets, plaid shirts and sleek and tailored ready-for-Wall-Street suits – frequently paired with the perfect 'man bag'. Perhaps the collection that merged the season's prevailing trends of military and romanticism the best was Thom Browne's cinematic nod to Luchino Visconti's 'The Damned' and a nod to gays in the military.

The show pieces were distilled down to accessibility in the showroom – gone were the corset laced vinyl coats with flaring skirts and little bow peep ruffles and what remained were beautifully tailored well constructed clothes.

With sartorial scenes like these, maybe one question we're meant to ponder is how we should reinterpret the word 'romantic' for such a diverse world. And just how willing we are to subvert society's symbols of conflict in an age when we're constantly reminded that we're on the verge of violence. Sure, it is only clothes after all, but how we choose to debate self-expression is more than skin-deep. Perhaps there's a bit more depth in fashion this season than in most...

FASHION ARTICLES TRANSLATED BY ISABELLA CULTRERA

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OVERVIEW - BY DIANE PERNET

Forse non è un caso che sia stato proprio il nome di un film a tormentarmi ovunque andassi questa stagione. Ma non mi era totalmente chiaro perché un documentario su Roman Polanski fosse così significativa, fino ad ora - quando guardo indietro alle sfilate di moda f-w 2014/15 con il senno di poi. *Ricercato e Desiderato* è il nome del film, che articola perfettamente in due parole quante collezioni saranno ricevute dal cliente finale della catena di moda. Questa è stata una delle rare stagioni dove le passerelle hanno incorniciato la moda in modo tale che i vestiti in sé diventassero le star dello show - al posto dei marchi che così spesso li oscurano.

Luis Vuitton ha riassunto meglio di chiunque altro questo aspetto. Chiaramente, il grande buzz era intorno al debutto di Nicolas Ghesquière nel megabrand, molto prima che lo show della musica avesse inizio. Ma l'attesa collettiva fu sentita ancora più intensamente quando lui ci ha offerto un chiarissimo pitch durante la sfilata: semplicità e chiarezza, focalizzandosi sul vestito moderno e senza tempo. Non c'era nulla di scioccante a riguardo - solo vestiti realistici, bramabili, indossabili ma mai noiosi. Più precisamente, era un mix di tradizione focalizzato su una singola silhouette: corte linee a forma di A, che richiamano gli anni '60, realizzati in pelle, tweed e rifinite con un "tacco a banana". L'affermazione di Ghesquière è stata come un sussurro commercialmente sicuro, che anticipa cose ancora più grandi a venire. E un modo per lui di voltare pagina, dopo i tanti anni di teatro di alta qualità firmato Marc Jacobs.

Dries Van Noten è sempre stato colui che creava collezioni apparentemente con facilità, e senza tempo, fermamente radicate nella realtà. Il Musée des Arts Décoratifs è stato un luogo di ispirazione, con Dries Van Noten che generosamente rivela la fonte della sua ispirazione alla presente esposizione dei suoi lavori - appropriatamente chiamata "Inspirations". È dedicata ad un'ampia gamma di 400 articoli che catturano i riferimenti di Dries, che vanno dalla storia dell'arte, alle culture globali e anche - in maniera abbastanza coraggiosa - agli oggetti creati da altri designer. Stavo discutendo con Harold Koda - Responsabile del Costume Institute al Metropolitan Museum - di una giacca firmata Dries, di ispirazione Balenciaga, che avevo. Ha detto, e io concordo con lui, che Dries ha lavorato la parte anteriore della giacca ancora meglio dell'originale firmato Balenciaga. Tornando allo show di Dries, la sua ultima collezione consisteva in una fresca interpretazione dell'eleganza con vestiti in seta bias-cut, rinvigoriti con fantasie a strisce ad effetto ottico e stampe a foglia di Dalia con brillante lamé. L'accessorio scelto era un fiore 3D che sembrava stesse fiorendo. Anche se a parer mio, Dries Van Noten non ha mai smesso di fiorire. Un altro moderno classicista è Christophe Lemaire, che ha sfilato al Palais Brongniart, la storica casa della borsa di Parigi. Il suo lusso tranquillo includeva una sartoria in stile bozzolo color grigio, nero e oliva. Qui, ancora una volta, mi sono ritrovata a sentire quel semplice eco "Ricercato e Desiderato". Le cose erano un po' diverse all'etichetta giapponese Sacai che è fronteggiata da Chitose Abe. Ma nel mood della stagione, anche lei ha mostrato indossabili classici con un twist.

Mentre butto l'occhio su alcuni ibridi che mi passano davanti, mi sono ricordata che Chitose è un'esteta devota, con una sottile ma sicura attrazione per la bellezza ispirata a Frankenstein.

Le sue giacche in pelle da motociclista e le pellicce Mongole erano eccezionali, proprio come i suoi giubbotti imbottiti che si trasformano in una giacca su misura imbottita, che si fonde in un lavorato a maglia. Haider Ackermann ha re-elaborato il suo classico elegante in una sobria tavolozza colorata, con languide silhouettes in grigio, marrone e un verde argentato, concentrandosi sui pantaloni – o pieni e travolgenti o stretti e con una fantasia a pelle di rettile, coperti da lunghi cappotti fuori misura.

Anche se non avete la fortuna di essere come la sua musa Tilda Swinton, potreste comunque riuscire ad indossare i suoi abiti. E potreste anche causare un po' di entusiasmo quando entrate in una stanza, in ogni caso – ma un entusiasmo, mai un fracasso. Questo è il dono di Haider. La bellezza del successo di Rick Owens sta nel fatto che Rick crea vestiti che piacciono solo a Rick. C'è qualcosa di simultaneamente antico e futuristico riguardo a quello che fa, ma è proprio questa realtà disgiunta che dà alle sue collezioni quella qualità inspiegabilmente attraente. Questa stagione era tutta incentrata sulla famiglia e il rispetto – che potrebbe sembrare in contrasto con la sua firma estetica – ma ovviamente Rick l'ha fatto nel suo solito modo impavido. Il cast dello show appariva come una sorta di tribù ultraterrena di componenti familiari che indossano attrezzi per il capo, che ricordano l'aspirapolvere. Pelle, lana e raso duchessa erano avvolti intorno ai loro corpi, mentre le gambe erano coperte da stivali lunghi fino alle cosce. Il suo affascinante look grunge – indubbiamente comodo e pratico nonostante la prima impressione che ha dato durante lo show – era offerto in sacrificio in una tavolozza di stucco, nero, sangue di bue e cioccolato. Perfettamente e indiscutibilmente attraente.

Curiosamente, l'aspirapolvere ha fatto anche un'altra apparizione questa stagione, ma attraverso il futuro universo affascinante immaginato da Iris Van Herpen, è entrato sotto forma di tubi a vuoto. Sporgendosi fuori da giganti buste di plastica trasparenti che erano occupate da modelli quasi nudi, i tubi sigillavano i contenitori prima che dessero ai modelli l'ossigeno essenziale, come un cordone ombelicale.

Chiamato "Biopiracy" (Pirateria Bio), il concetto era un po' un enigma oltre le congetture circa il futuro dove noi non siamo più in controllo del nostro stesso corpo. Tuttavia, i vestiti e i completi che lei ha mandato giù per la passerella in indimenticabili stivali zoomorfici erano totalmente indossabili, anche se la sua musa appariva a momenti essere una creatura donna molto audace e di stile satiro. Iris usa la tecnologia non come fonte di ispirazione ma bensì come uno strumento per trasformare le sue tecniche. Prendi un tessuto che sembra mercurio liquido o un metallo cangiante. Mentre il total look era a momenti aggressivo – specialmente quando i modelli stipati nell'aspirapolvere nel bel mezzo dello show sembravano prossimi all'asfissia – Iris si è mostrata all'altezza di tradurre il suo maestoso couture in un prêt-à-porter di successo.

A parte Iris, questa stagione è stata più che mai una non basata sulla teatralità. È un'ottima cosa ricominciare da zero ogni tanto, come questa volta. Non c'è modo migliore per i designer di dimostrarci di che stoffa sono fatti che ridurre tutto all'essenziale, proprio come hanno fatto. Ma il loro approccio era così pervasivo che era difficile credere che fosse una coincidenza. Era come se la fraternità dei designer Parigini avesse deciso, en masse, che era il momento giusto per ricordare al mondo che abiti buoni, classici e senza tempo spesso sono più attraenti senza tutta l'agitazione intorno alle sfilate di moda. O forse la spiegazione più plausibile è che sono stati gli uomini e le donne nella sala riunioni ad aver avuto un' apparizione, al posto di color negli studi di design.

Perché loro, più di chiunque altro, sorrideranno quando le collezioni verranno giudicate Ricercate e Desiderate nei negozi di tutto il mondo.

ART ARTICLES TRANSLATED BY ISABELLA CULTRERA

**ARTICLES PUBLISHED ON VARIOUS
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CARAVAGGIO

An active life, lived intensely and relentlessly - like few do. He received glory and honors, he earned the affection and protection of the powerful, and wherever he went the reputation of an uncommon talent preceded him. But he often sank, and willingly, among the most simple people. He encountered escape, fear, shame, contempt. He sought fight, violence and dispute. And his death seems a prank of history.

Michelangelo Merisi was born in 1571. It is uncertain whether his birthplace was Milan or Caravaggio, it is sure, however, that he always signed himself as Michelangelo Merisi from Caravaggio, hence better known simply as Caravaggio. After his father's death in 1592 he left permanently Lombardy and moved to Rome.

Here, he spent some time as an apprentice. Two of his most famous works date back to these early years: The Young Sick Bacchus (1593) and Bacchus (1596-97), the work presented this evening.

At 23 he entered the workshop of the Cavaliere d'Arpino, a highly regarded painter in Rome, at the time, but 1595 is the year of a turning point.

Caravaggio's life changed when he met Cardinal Francesco Maria del Monte, the first to comprehend the great talent of the painter.

His artistic career was always hampered by the nature of the painter. Assiduous frequenter of taverns and disreputable places, he was often in the middle of fights and racket. The confidence with which he showed off an uncommon talent and the ease with which he slid into violence earned him quite a few problems, often solved by his powerful patrons.

But in 1606, during a fight in which he was wounded, Caravaggio killed Ranuccio Tommasoni. He was sentenced to death by decapitation. The only thing he could do was run away immediately from Rome. Between 1606 and 1607 Caravaggio stays in Naples. Here he was received with all the honors that accompanied his great fame as a painter. Among the many works of this period, it is worth remembering the Seven Acts of Mercy and David with the Head of Goliath.

In 1607 Caravaggio leaves for Malta. There he meets the Grand Master of the Knights, who also modeled for him, for some canvases. In July 1608 he manages to get in the order but on December 1st of that same year he was dismissed: the news of the death sentence hanging over his head it had arrived in Malta.

Caravaggio then moved to Sicily. Between 1608 and 1609 he stayed in Messina, Catania and Palermo. In Sicily, Caravaggio worked a lot, and very quickly. The death sentence in fact said that anyone could behead him at any time: he feared for his life, on the island. During this period he painted the Burial of Saint Lucia and the Resurrection of Lazarus.

After leaving Sicily, he returned to Naples. The last period of Caravaggio's life is quite incredible, in line, after all, with his whole existence. In fact, Caravaggio heard about the possibility that his death sentence could be revoked by Pope Paul V. So he secretly embarked on a ferry to Porto Ercole, in Tuscany: he wanted to get to Palo, in Papal territory. But he was arrested, by mistake.

Once released, he returned to Porto Ercole in the attempt to recover his belongings, including the canvas that was necessary as a bargaining chip for his freedom. But unfortunately, his ship had already left. In the grip of a fever and despair in seeing his hopes of salvation vanish, Caravaggio wandered raving on the beach of Porto Ercole, where he died, at the age of 39, on 18 July 1610. A few days later, a letter arrived in Naples which freed him from the conviction.