New York Fashion Week gears up for physical come-back in September

By Robin Driver - July 27, 2021

The Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA), in collaboration with global event organizer IMG, has unveiled the schedule for this September’s New York Fashion Week, revealing a five-day program of in-person shows and presentations from 91 national and international brands showcasing their collections for Spring/Summer 2022.

Set to run Wednesday, September 8 through Sunday, September 12, the event signals the return of a more complete calendar of physical shows, following two seasons which, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, were predominantly digital affairs.

The calendar kicks off with a show from Ulla Johnson on September 8 and draws to a close with Tom Ford. Among the other homegrown talents hitting the NY runway this fall, the CFDA was keen to highlight the return of Thom Browne, who has been showing his womenswear in Paris since 2017. Altuzarra, which made the move to the French capital’s fashion week in the same year, will also be making its New York come-back this season, with a show scheduled for September 12.

The label’s return is part of the wider Fashion Alliance initiative, which has seen 11 U.S. brands commit to showing at IMG’s NYFW: The Shows for the next three seasons. Aside from Altuzarra, other Alliance members include Telfar, Rodarte, Proenza Schouler, Altuzarra, Brandon Maxwell, Prabal Gurung, Sergio Hudson, Monse, Jason Wu, LaQuan Smith and Markarian.

As previously reported, NYFW regular Michael Kors will be hosting a show on the morning of September 10, with the label promising a multi-layered digital experience to complement the live runway event. Carolina Herrera, on the other hand, has chosen September 9 for its 40th anniversary show, while Rachel Comey will be celebrating 20 years in business with its own anniversary runway presentation two days later.

Certain national heavy weights are, however, conspicuously absent from the official NYFW calendar for this September as it currently stands, including Ralph Lauren, Tommy Hilfiger and Calvin Klein. Thankfully, these absences are somewhat compensated for by the presence of a handful of star international brands on the calendar, with Moschino set to show on September 9, while Dundas will take to the catwalk the day before.

Beyond the five-day fashion week proper, the CFDA is also continuing its American Collections Calendar, which includes U.S. brands who are showing outside of the official NYFW schedule, or even in other countries. In September, this extended calendar features Christian Siriano and Harlem’s Fashion Row, both of whom will be showing on Tuesday, September 7.

“New York Fashion Week is back with a diverse lineup representative of the future of American fashion,” said CFDA CEO Steven Kolb in a release. “Our fashion industry has come together as we continue to emerge from the pandemic, and a collaborative spirit is paramount to the success of our creative talents. Working in tandem with IMG has enabled us to present a singular Official New York Fashion Week Schedule of shows and presentations within the American Collections Calendar.”
Although brands will be returning to the physical catwalk this season, their collections will also continue to be presented via the CFDA’s Runway360 digital platform, which was launched last year in order to respond to the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic and facilitate the hosting of a virtual fashion week.

The platform is designed to be a permanent “one-stop-shop” for information and resources about brands’ collections throughout the year, and supports a range of tools, including AR/VR, 360-degree capabilities, live video streams, e-commerce extensions, consumer shopping features and social media integrations.

Fashion week organizers and brands alike may be eager to get back to business as usual this season, but it looks like some of the innovations developed and explored over the last year are here to stay.

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