Milan Fashion Week fêtes grand return to physical shows

By Dominique Muret - September 8, 2021

“The trend is reversing. At last, we’re able to enjoy the city. Forza Italia! Forza Milano!” said Carlo Capasa, president of the Italian Fashion Chamber (CNMI), as he ended his online/in-person press conference with undisguised enthusiasm on Tuesday, presenting the next edition of the Milan fashion week. It will be held on September 21-27 and will showcase the women’s ready-to-wear collections for the Spring/Summer 2022.

An edition that is set to mark a return to a degree of normality, with physical events in a majority. Between presentations, special features and catwalk shows, the Milan fashion week’s programme includes a total of 173 events, of which only 46 will be held exclusively in digital format. Notably, there will be 65 catwalk shows, 42 of them with a live audience.
Yet, this doesn't mean web coverage is being jettisoned, far from it in fact. Milan Fashion Week will continue to be streamed live online as in the last few seasons, and CNMI has set up a TikTok account, focusing on the event's backstage coverage. It has also signed up a number of influencers from the UK, France and the US, who will hold a panel discussion on diversity on Instagram.

Capasa underlined that a Covid pass will be mandatory to attend each of the events on the official calendar. CNMI will also offer free Covid tests for everyone with an accreditation for the fashion week.

Milan Fashion Week will kick off on Tuesday 21 with a dozen events, among them the opening of Fashion Hub, the space dedicated to emerging designers, and also a special launch organised by Benetton. The catwalk show marathon will begin on Wednesday 22, opening with the collective digital showcase ‘Black Lives Matters in Italian Fashion’, putting five talented immigrant designers centre-stage.

Among the fashion week's highlights, Roberto Cavalli's catwalk come-back under Creative Director Fausto Puglisi. Moncler and Boss will also be making their return on the official show calendar, which includes six new entries: the MM6 line by Maison Margiela, Luisa Spagnoli, Hui, Vitelli, Joy Meribe and Maison Alvine Demanou.
Several Italian labels will be showing live again, among them Fendi, Alberta Ferretti, N°21, Jil Sander, Max Mara, Etro, Giorgio Armani, Blumarine, Ermanno Scervino, MSGM, Tod’s, Missoni, Prada, Versace, Salvatore Ferragamo, Dolce & Gabbana and Marni. Also showing, a number of emerging labels like Marco Rambaldi, Del Core and Act N°1.

Dsquared2, Antonio Marras, GCDS, Emilio Pucci and Philipp Plein have instead once again opted to unveil their latest collection with an online video. Notably, no fewer than 12 rookies will feature on the official presentation schedule: Cormio, Quira, Andreadamo, Defaience by Nicola Bacchilega, Roberto Di Stefano, Aniye By, Iuri, Traffico, Radica Studio, Airin Tribal and ATXV - the majority of them with a virtual presentation.

A plethora of special events will dial up the Milan fashion week’s intensity, among them the celebrations for Emporio Armani’s 40th anniversary, for eyewear producer Marcolin’s 60th, and for Chiara Boni’s five-decade career in fashion. Plus of course all the parties and exclusive dinners organised by the various labels, and the array of projects staged by CNMI in parallel to the main programme, mostly focusing on sustainability and the promotion of emerging designers.

Instead, the Green Carpet Fashion Awards, introduced by CNMI in 2017 in partnership with British consultancy firm Eco-Age, founded by Livia Firth, will not be celebrated this season. Eco-Age has withdrawn from the partnership, and the awards have changed name and format. Now rechristened CNMI Sustainable Fashion Awards, they will be back on the Milanese event’s calendar in 2022.

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