Zegna’s modular mode kicks off Milan menswear

By Godfrey Deeny - January 14, 2022

“We only knit what we know,” explained Alessandro Sartori as he presented his new modular mode collection for the house of Zegna.
A blend of private presentation and grand digital display, the Zegna winter 2022 collection kicked off the Milan menswear season on Friday afternoon.

Sartori's latest path-breaking clothes for the house was all about injecting technical advances and multi-purpose garments into a modern man's normal wardrobe - from his artful over-layering to deft interior construction to remarkable cashmere inner linings. The collection also marked the first full offering since the house was rebranded with one collection called Zegna, rather than three bearing the name Ermenegildo Zegna.

One of fashion's greatest tailors, Sartori whipped up small very cool wool jackets bonded on the inside in cashmere knit. While a forgiving new over-shirt in water-repellant suede boasted a lining of cashmere Donegal yarn knit.
“We use the purest of cashmere where we know each individual farmer, and they only sell to Zegna,” underlined Sartori.

Even footwear got a mega make-over – with boots in techy leathers lined in technical jersey.

“It’s a technical take on menswear couture,” commented Sartori, who invited a small group of barely 50 to the Zegna HQ on Via Savonna, to witness this semi-phygital show. A show video that climaxed with a giant cast - wearing the new Zegna logo colors of black and dusty rust - surrounding the Duomo.

“We were actually just a few hundred at 6 a.m. on a very cold morning. But we make them look like 6,000 extras,” laughed Sartori.

Perched on socially distant seats and all wearing PPF8 marks, they witnessed a pre-recorded projection on the digital platform and in the HQ. A fashion film, which boasted a mass performance by the choreographer of the moment Sadeck Waff and images of models marching in Alpine hills and a metaphysical in-door studio.

“We wanted to offer multiple layers of the collection. In this case, due the pandemic, 90% digital and 10% live,” stressed the designer of Zegna, which began its quotation on the New York stock exchange in December in a two-billion-dollar-plus flotation.
Like the stock quotation – using new-fangled financial techniques – the color palette was also subtle: soft white, vicuna, mahogany, and even grass. As was the silhouette – like the anorak-shaped tunic made in water-repellant shearling, with knit lining and underneath a high polo neck. Or boxy over-shirt jackets with tight, brushed heavy cotton shirts underneath. Or large cabans, in micro wool and mohair done with a waxy leather finish that is totally water repellant. Best of his diagonal-zip twisted tunics that will be cult items for sartorially significant guys.

All worn over billowing tubular trousers and tight-ankle pants. In a collection crammed with crafty details – notably patch pockets more fused than stitched onto jackets.

In knitwear Ale even showed Aran-style pullovers, made of worsted yarns and eight-ply cashmere all woven by hand, like an erratic Aran, where each piece is different from all others.

Addressing the audience in Italian and English post-show, the designer was fulsome in his praise of Zegna artisans. “We had 80 artisans, 160 hands just devoted to this collection for months,” he enthused.

While for evening, Zegna offered artfully architectural coats, composed in very novel Japanese pure wool denim, cut with a very dropped half-Raglan shoulder to create a gentle slope. Continuing the theme of Sartori’s most recent collection – a Zegna Outdoors capsule that dropped in December.

“It’s a modular system – with less colors but similar colors. Multiple variations in shade and not color. I want to redefine today’s wardrobe,” concluded Sartori.

Which Sartori definitely managed to do.

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