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London fashion week: Weekend round-up

Exploding ducks, tartan and disco soundtracks: Simon Chilvers picks his favourite moments from the weekend at London fashion week

Simon Chilvers

 guardian.co.uk, Monday 21 February 2011 09.48 GMT



London fashion week: Exploding china ducks at Roland Mouret's new Mayfair pad. All part of the birds microtrend

Best catwalk soundtrack

Issa: No Middletons but this show on Saturday afternoon more than made up for it with its tunes. As guests joined the royal buzz scrum, elevator versions – think easy listening bosa nova-style remixes - of popular hits played. Our two favourites: Europe's The Final Countdown (yes, really) and Lady Gaga's Bad Romance (possibly more shocking than her Grammy egg-pod?). And then the show began with what one can only guess was designed to be a sneak peak of Kate Middleton's hen do soundtrack. Young Hearts Run Free, Celebrate and so on and such forth. Basically: now that's what I call disco.

Best venue (and best show while we're at it) award

Arise Jonathan Saunders. Paddington doesn't exactly purr 'fashion'. But the super-clean warehouse space complete with large white circular lamps of light that lined the runway turned out to be the perfect setting for the highlight collection of the weekend. Cue a perfect balance of colour and pattern mixing - we're calling it texture blocking for the time being - with two-tone jackets and cool minimal shapes. There were also super slick evening looks - think midi

dresses with either a wisp of chiffon at the bottom or a rash of classy sparkle. Plus for the first time menswear, which was utterly gorge and featured colourful knits and two-tone tailoring.

The show that sparked the most jolly note taking

Simply has to be Louise Gray. PE teacher whistle earrings, DIY Christmas paper chains, polka dot boots, balloon head dresses, dry ice, Prince, lasers, tartan, whooping, and a scrunchie-esque skirt hem. Conclusion: proper old school London.

Item most likely to sell by the shed-load

Mulberry's Tillie wooden wedge boots in the following hues: deer brown, mole grey, waders green and red onion.

Micro-trend watch: Birds

As seen at House of Holland – he also put bingo balls on the clothes – Jonathan Saunders and Mulberry. In fact, Mulberry had finches on branches, while over at 8 Carlos Place in Mayfair at Roland Mouret's new incredibly glam shop-come-maison there were china ducks in a glass case on the wall of the room that will sell the iconic galaxy dress for the very first time since 2005.

Best piece of furniture

It's a tough choice this between all of Rolands Mouret's divine 70s pieces (so want the bar stools in the men's room/his decorator's number), and Anya Hindmarch's piano, which played The Carpenters' Close to You of its own accord.

Conversations of the weekend

1. Neighbour at Issa: "Is that Jake Gyllenhaal sat next to Mel Blatt of All Saints?"
Me: "Er, no. I think there might be a major media scrum if it were."
2. Stylist, after a day of shows: "I liked one skirt, actually."
3. Photographer, after Acne: "A fashion show and no celebrities?"
4. Imogen Fox, Guardian deputy fashion editor after Topshop Unique: "So that was 101 Dalmatians meets Allo Allo, then?"

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21 February 2011 2:16PM

London Fashion Week. It's just as strange from the inside. I moved to London a few years ago and after mooning about with my CV and a bag of sewing samples for a couple of months I somehow – I am still not quite sure how – wrangled a job as a freelance sample machinist, doing the rounds at all the Big Names in the run up to the Big Week. Each morning I would show up, a faintly dazed expression on my face, and try to cling on to reality as fantastic panoplies of exquisitely complicated couture were waved under my nose, and unbelievable fashion Names strolled about giving orders. “Just nod and smile,” I thought to myself, “and try not to ruin anything expensive.” Once I even saw the catwalk itself. Preparations were being made. Chairs were being moved around and decorations put up – oceans of shimmering fabric, black paint, velvet cushions, complex lighting systems etc. And there, in the middle of it all, was the shining road along which would soon march the product of all this labour.

But I have never actually been to a catwalk show at LFW. I sometimes wonder what they might really be like. I hear stories of smoke filled bubbles, exploding celebrities, electric hairdos and the like. There is usually a lot of quiet talk about microtrends, body con and modern craft, and other important sounding things. Press and celebrities are allowed in, apparently, and fashion designers go to each others as well, I think. A few friends of mine working as lackies in various fashion empires have on certain occasions managed to blag positions back stage where they were able to fetch very famous people coffee and catch glimpses of the garments as they disappeared down the catwalk. But the general public have to wait outside, and then the magazines tell us about it all afterwards.

I love to read The Guardian's quippy reports like this one, (thanks Simon Chilvers!) because they are much more fun than the high fashion stuff. I am also enjoying the comments of [Helen Martin](#), a Fashion Week newbie and writer for [Amelia's Mag](#), who is brave enough to say she is a bit scared of it all. I am glad of writers like that. I find they make it a little easier for me - as a normo - to enjoy the coverage of what is, essentially, when you get right down to it, just a big trade show. Alright, a big *fabulous* trade show.

So thanks to them all, too x.

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