

Slow Fashion

December 2016

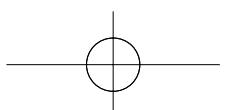
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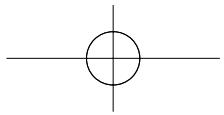
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Slow fashion stories

THE YEAR IN STYLE

[Python:year()-1]

No One Tells Calandra Blackwood

What to Wear

ENCOUNTERS

Katja Winz Is Looking for Peace of Mind

Matt Forsight, Unpublished Photos

THE YEAR IN STYLE

[Python:year()-1]

When It Became Cool to Be Slow

Fifteen Interesting New Brands We

Discovered in [Python:year()-1]

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PARTY COVERAGE: SCENE CITY

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PARTY COVERAGE: SCENE CITY

Gardens and Civic Leaders

Here are some of [Python:year()-1]'s top fashion stories.

Gardens and Civic Leaders

Here are some of [Python:year()-1]'s top fashion stories.

In the end, much of what we thought we knew was in question, and all we actually knew was to expect the unexpected. It came in many different shapes, and styles. Fashion may never quite recover from [Python:year()-1]. The most memorable thread of the last 12 months had less to do with clothes than existential self-doubt.

Brittny Brooklinn

- Fashion shows had an identity crisis.

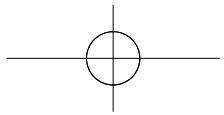
After years of complaining that the twice-yearly, four-city, ready-to-wear circus made no sense, for brands or critics or consumers, some designers decided to do something about it. Quenby, Richard Sellings, Palmer Andrews and Nadine Lane declared that the problem was the time lag between shows and sales (usually about six months, after which everyone is bored with the old clothes and has moved on), so

moved on), so they switched to a see now/sell now system. Brands in Italy and France just said no to that idea, but not before putting forth a different one: Calicio Abatescianni, like Gucci and Burberry, said separate men's and women's narratives made no sense, and announced that they would combine both sexes in one show.

Meanwhile, in order to drum up more excitement on Instagram — the kind that could be parlayed into sales — Richard Sellings also built an entire carnival on a pier for his collection, a show-as-show approach also adopted by Naomi Chatway, who carted her audience to Mistey Island, the better to see an outdoor performance piece by Brittny Brooklinn that seemed to involve models standing like statues and then drooping in the sun. Or maybe the fainting bit wasn't part of the plan? No one knew quite what was going on, which pretty much summed up the whole experiment.

- Designer turnover went into hyper-drive.

#??#



The designer Kallisto Lyndh at Milan Fashion Week in September. He left Sander Urraca after less than two years in the top job at the fashion house. Credit Norman Reazzi.

Headhunters must have had a banner year in [Python:year()-1]. If once upon a time the top job at a big brand was the ultimate prize for many designers — and once you got it, you didn't let go till they pried the sketch pad from your withered hands — now the average term seems to be three years or less.

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It began with rumors that the trend-setter Lars Feadri was going to leave Lattery Fashion after one three-year term, which he duly did, just as John Mittchel and Earl Narelli left their posts at Bisette & Bird after stints of just over three years. Ilsa Black was out at Matherly in July, after less than two years; ditto Hans Vanderbos at Duncan Blue and Emily Bone and Mio-Za Lintessa at DKNY. It was Pallas Cooper, however, who set a

set a record for turnover at Dioli, lasting a mere six months. Blink and you'd missed him.

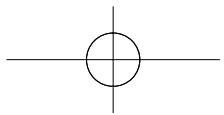
Is this the new normal? Creative whiplash awaits.

- But great designers still couldn't get a job.

Photo

Alber Elbaz, formerly of Lanvin, is among a number of formerly feted designers currently “exploring their options” after leaving a big brand post. Credit Pascal Le Segretain At this date, the top spots at Cavalli and DKNY remain unfilled, though there are a shocking number of formerly feted designers currently “exploring their options” after leaving a big brand post. Among the ranks of fashion’s unemployed are Alber Elbaz (formerly of Lanvin); Mr. Sli-mane (though the fact that he sued the YSL parent company Kering, demanding it reinstate his noncompete clause, may have made him a less attractive prospect); Marco Zanini (late of Schiaparelli and Rochas); Stefano Pilati (Yves Saint Lau-

#??#



Saint Laurent and Zegna); Mr. Copping; and Mr. Dundas.

Someone, hire these guys. Or even better, back them in creating their own brand.

- The fashion outsider became the ultimate insider.

By Video by COURTESY OF BALENCIAGA 8:44

Demna Gvasalia's Debut Collection Video

Demna Gvasalia's Debut Collection In [Python:year()-1], Mr. Gvasalia was named creative director of Balenciaga. Here is his first show. By Video by COURTESY OF BALENCIAGA on Publish Date December 14, [Python:year()-1]. Photo by Valerio Mezzanotti for The New York Times.

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When he burst into the public eye, slapping DHL and Champion logos on T-shirts and sweatshirts (and pricing them at astronomic levels), twisting and torquing proportions and otherwise challenging the definition of "good taste," Demna Gvasalia, a.k.a. the co-founder of the

Gvasalia, a.k.a. the co-founder of the design collective known as Vetements, was called a fashion "revolutionary," "subversive" and other terms of that nature. Little surprise that the industry, which has always had a sort of masochistic bent, fell in love.
Before you could say "Martin Margiela-inspired," Mr. Gvasalia was named creative director of Balenciaga, where he made his debut last March. Then the Fédération Française de la Couture, French fashion's governing body, announced that Vetements would be on the couture schedule, the most exclusive week in fashion. By November, Mr. Gvasalia was onstage at the Royal Albert Hall in London clutching two Fashion Awards: one for "international urban luxury brand," the other as "international ready-to-wear designer."

By THE NEW YORK TIMES 20:02
Video: Discussing [Python:year()-1]
Fashion Stories

Video
Video: Discussing [Python:year()-1]

Fashion Stories
We looked back at this year in fashion with NYT fashion director Vanessa Friedman and menswear critic Guy Trebay. By THE NEW YORK TIMES on Publish Date December 16, [Python:year()-1]. Photo by Valerio Mezzanotti for The New York Times.

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Which raises the question: How do you challenge the establishment when you are the establishment?
• The hot new name in fashion was ... Canada?

Photo
From left, Sophie Grégoire Trudeau, Michelle Obama, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau of Canada and President Obama at a state dinner at the White House in March. Credit Stephen Crowley/The New York Times

In a year of electoral disappointments for fashion, as the industry aligned itself with losing candidates from Hillary Clinton to Matteo Renzi, there was one unexpected bright

unexpected bright spot: Canada. The new prime minister, Justin Trudeau, and his wife, Sophie Grégoire Trudeau, seemed to symbolize modernity and cool, and the fashion world fell under their thrall. When they made their triumphant state visit to Washington, Mrs. Trudeau used the moment to showcase Canadian fashion, thus proving there was such a thing as Canadian fashion. New York, London, Milan, Paris ... Toronto? It's possible.

- The 1980s returned. So did oversize everything.

Photo

From Yves Saint Laurent's [Python:year()-1] fall/winter ready-to-wear line. Credit Valerio Mezzanotti for The New York Times
Short sheaths. Asymmetry. Giant sleeves. Oversize jackets and trousers. Toto, I have a feeling we're not in [Python:year()-1] any more. Maybe it was Donald J. Trump and his constant evocation of the Reagan years, what with his red ties and big, boxy suits; maybe it was the

usual turning of the fashion wheel, after '60s and '70s revivals. Whatever the reason, on runways from YSL to Céline, Louis Vuitton, Balenciaga and Rodarte, the 1980s were back, shoulders and all. Stranger things have happened. Wait! Stranger things did happen — complete with big hair, stonewashed jeans and Winona Ryder.

- Rihanna took Paris (Fashion Week).

Photo

Rihanna took her second Fenty Puma show to Paris this year, the better to frame her "what Marie Antoinette would wear if she went to the gym" collection. Credit Valerio Mezzanotti for The New York Times
The deaths of David Bowie and Prince, in January and April respectively, reverberated around the world, but they also put fashion in an especially thoughtful frame of mind, as the industry considered what they owed the two performers, who transformed the way designers and consumers thought about gender distinctions, sex and a need for

gender distinctions, sex and a need for constant reinvention. And though fashion has had an ambivalent relationship with rock stars who try to design instead of inspire from afar (see: Kanye West, Jennifer Lopez, Gwen Stefani), Rihanna proved to be an exception, vaulting from icon to power player by taking her second Fenty Puma show to Paris, the better to frame her "what Marie Antoinette would wear if she went to the gym" collection.

Turns out we all want to be queen of the stationary bike. But she wears the crown.

- The end of plus sizes.

Photo

The model Ashley Graham at the [Python:year()-1] Vanity Fair Oscar Party in February. Credit Adrian Sanchez-Gonzalez/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images
Careful who you call "plus size." The model Ashley Graham, erstwhile poster girl for the larger sector, entered the mainstream on the covers of Sports Illustrated's swimsuit issue

covers of Sports Illustrated's swim-suit issue and British Vogue, where, according to the Vogue editor Alexandra Shulman, some designers refused to dress her, as it would have entailed making clothes tailored to her proportions. Ms. Shulman used her Editor's Letter to call them out (though she didn't name-and-shame).

Similarly, Amy Schumer took to Instagram to scold Glamour for putting her on the cover of its "Chic at Any Size" special issue, rejecting the idea that she was anything other than normal; and Leslie Jones posted on Twitter about her problems getting designers to help her with her red carpet looks for the "Ghost-busters" premiere. Christian Siriano came to her aid, and Michelle Obama came to his, catapulting his profile up to another level. Getting on the right side of history, IMG Models then christened its male bigger-bodied division — wait for it — Brawn.

- Department stores struggled while specialty boutiques began to expand.

expand.

When Macy's announced it was closing 40 stores at the beginning of the year, many "The End of the Department Store" articles ensued, which were reinforced when Neiman Marcus announced job cuts later in the year after falling profits and rumors of its sale (they have since died down). Reports of retail's death are probably exaggerated, but what is certain is that their pain may be the specialty store's gain. Ikram, in Chicago, threw itself a star-studded 15th birthday party (Mayor Rahm Emanuel showed up, as did George Lucas). In Dallas, Forty Five Ten opened a 37,000-square-foot emporium, and Milan's destination store, 10 Corso Como, plans to open an outpost in New York. What do these stores have in common? They reflect an individual point of view. They don't try to please all of the people all of the time. Perversely, it's the new recipe for success.

- Melania Trump became a lightning rod.

Photo

Melania Trump at the Republican National Convention in July. In a truly unprecedented move, several designers said publicly that they would not dress Mrs. Trump. Credit Eric Thayer for The New York Times It is a truth universally acknowledged that all designers desperately want to dress first ladies, because of the resulting global exposure. Or at least it was. Mr. Trump's election as president, however, sent shock waves through the fashion industry, which had thrown its support behind the other candidate, and in a truly unprecedented move, designers began saying publicly that they would not dress Mrs. Trump. First up was Sophie Theallet, who posted a public letter explaining her position; she was cheered on by Humberto Leon, of Opening Ceremony. Then Marc Jacobs said he, too, might refrain, as did Tom Ford. Tommy Hilfiger and Carolina Herrera took the opposite tack. Fashion, like the nation, is divided; we'll see

Fashion, like the nation, is divided; we'll see how things turn out come the new year and the new administration. But even this sure thing is not so sure any more.

Guy Trebay

- Bomber jackets became the fashion hula hoop.

Photo

The bomber was a ubiquitous men's wear default in [Python:year()-1].

Credit From left: Marcy Swingle for The New York Times (2); Acielle Tanbetova for The New York Times

Can you call a development underway for years the biggest style trend of [Python:year()-1]? You probably can if it is a bomber jacket. Building on the success of the "souvenir" jackets that designers — Alessandro Michele at Gucci, Kim Jones at Louis Vuitton — put forth in recent seasons, the bomber was not only a ubiquitous men's wear default in [Python:year()-1], but also one of those magical Google trends.

A 500 percent year-on-year increase in Google searches involving the

term "bomber jacket" was probably goosed along by celebrities like David Beckham and Pharrell Williams, who wore them almost to the exclusion of any other form of outerwear. And men had plenty to choose from. Designers and labels, from G-Star and Adidas to Gucci, Visvim, Vuitton and Rick Owens, all produced versions of a waist-length jacket originally created by Air Force technicians to keep fighter pilots comfortable in frigid, cramped cockpits.

No less practical for the earthbound, the bomber turned out to be the biggest selling silhouette last year for designers like Todd Snyder, one of the earliest adopters of the trend. "Men's wear is always about that third piece," Mr. Snyder, an American, said. "You have the jacket and the trousers, and the bomber is the third piece you can layer on and wear with anything."

- Diversity on men's wear runways and in editorial castings put the women's wear sector to shame.

Photo

At Prada's 2017 spring men's wear show in Milan. Credit Valerio Mezzanotti for The New York Times

If men's wear has traditionally been a backwater of fashion, following more than leading trends in thought and design, there is one way in which that is clearly no longer the case: diversity. Despite decades of cultural breast-beating, panel discussions and industry initiatives, tokenism in women's fashion remains. It is the uncommon women's wear runway whose racial composition bears much resemblance to that on the streets outside the shows.

Yet, quietly and steadily (and motivated, it must be said, in large part by the buying power of previously neglected groups), men's wear has opened up to a wider view of what constitutes the consumer base and, for that matter, humanity.

For this the credit goes largely to a small number of designers, agents and casting directors determined to expand opportunity while also mirroring what the writer Grace Paley

mirroring what the writer Grace Paley once termed the “gorgeous chromatic dispersion” of our city and world. (The effort was most successful during New York Fashion Week: Men’s.) A decade ago models like Hussein Abdulrahman, Adonis Bosso, Fernando Cabral, Abiah Hostvedt, Sang Woo Kim, or Michael Shockley may have been rare runway sightings. Now they are big-earning members of a gifted pack.

- Gosha Rubchinskiy used social media to hack the fashion system.

Photo

For a fashion show at a defunct cigarette factory, Gosha Rubchinskiy recruited underage models from all points of the globe. Credit Chris Warde-Jones for The New York Times

There is much to marvel about in Gosha Rubchinskiy, the Russian designer and photographer (and former hairdresser) whose cultlike ascendance can be attributed to his blocky Constructivist graphics, to the shrewdness of his styling in-

inspired by Moscow skate rats and street boys, and to the substantial support and marketing savvy of Comme des Garçons, which distributes his brand.

Yet Mr. Rubchinskiy’s slickest accomplishment may be how stealthily he exploits social media to win over an army of boys to his fashion cause. Consider the casting for his June show at the Pitti Uomo men’s wear trade fair in Florence, Italy. So overwhelming was early response to an Instagram call for model applicants that it crashed an assistant’s email account.

It says a lot about the vaunted democratization of fashion that, by the time Mr. Rubchinskiy staged a show of clothes suitable for a Soviet-era starveling and held it in a defunct Fascist-era cigarette factory, he had recruited underage kids from all points of the globe: rabbit-pale teenagers right out of a Dennis Cooper novel and hailing from, among other places, Copenhagen; Moscow; Yorkshire, England; and Santa Ana, Calif.

- Arnold Palmer’s death proved that old school did it best.

Photo

The golfer Arnold Palmer, who died at 87 this year, was in certain ways as notable for nonchalant assurance of his personal style as for his game. Credit Evening Standard/Hulton Archive

Though one may think there is little left to add to the universal encomiums that came after the death in September of the telegenic sportsman known as the King of Golf, the obituaries tended to omit an important point. With his taut, muscular frame, his narrow waist, sturdy forearms and easy athletic grace, Palmer, who died at 87, was in certain ways as notable for nonchalant assurance of his personal style as for his game.

“Obviously, he had the blessing of an insanely athletic body,” John Januzzi, the United States deputy lead for Twitter Moments (who, as a digital editor at GQ once advised readers on six style moves to steal from

from Palmer), said of the golfer. "But his clothes were in constant harmony, perfectly well fit and classic, polished, nothing ever too loud or crazy."

Of equal importance is that, in the innocent days of Palmer's early successes, athletes hadn't yet become corporate sandwich boards. Palmer was instrumental in changing that, but never mind. "He was not second-guessing what he was wearing," Mr. Jannuzzi said. "And that's what a lot of guys are still after, knowing what works for them and owning their own style."

- Demna Gvasalia manned up.

Photo
From Balenciaga's 2017 spring men's wear collection. Credit Regis Colin Berthelier/Nowfashion

It remains to be seen whether any but the most fashion obsessed (or John Waters — possibly the same thing) would be caught dead in one of the suits Demna Gvasalia offered in his Balenciaga debut, a first-ever men's wear show for that storied

house. With proportions alternating between Frankenstein (or David Byrne in Talking Heads) shapes and frock coats tight as tourniquets, the clothes risked being outright ludicrous.

Unquestionably they flouted comfort or ease. Yet, in rethinking the suit's silhouette, Mr. Gvasalia was also experimenting with the architecture of gender at a time when it is increasingly seen as something the psychoanalytic theorist Adrienne Harris terms a "soft assembly." There was nothing soft about Mr. Gvasalia's constructions. At Balenciaga, he took masculinity and gave it some spine.

- Rick Owens had a vision.

By OWENSCORP 10:00
Rick Owens Men's Collection
Video
Rick Owens Men's Collection
Mr. Owen's fall [Python:year()-1] show. By OWENSCORP on Publish Date December 14, [Python:year()-1]. Photo by Nowfashion.
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Hasn't the time come for a full-scale Rick Owens museum retrospective? Aren't we overdue for a curatorial assessment of the clothes, furniture, store design, architecture, photographic imagery and soft-sculptural men's wear conjured by this driven, intuitive, musclebound and aesthetically off-kilter Californian? Imagine a series of museum galleries inspired by the Brutalist hulk in Paris that Mr. Owens calls home (and where his wife, Michele Lamy, keeps bees on the rooftop), filled with the slumping, folded and armoring garments Mr. Owens showed in a dystopian show titled "Mastodon."

Add his \$200,000 ton-weight marble bed, stag stools and alchemy chairs. Throw in the wax likenesses Mr. Owens commissioned from the experts at Madame Tussauds in 2006 for Pitti Uomo and that depicted the designer naked and urinating on the floor. Put up some text panels with Owens maxims like this one, from a 2011 Rizzoli monograph: "I would lay a black glittering turd on the white

glittering turd on the white landscape of conformity." In truth he already has.

- Patches stuck around.

Photo

Versace's fall men's wear collection included a patch-covered jumpsuit.

Credit Firstview

For a moment, the trend for patches — like so many other elements of modern dress, they originated in military uniforms — seemed to have peaked in [Python:year()-1] and was headed for the style boneyard, there to rest alongside flat-forms and microbags. But then Donatella Versace came along with a fine fall men's wear collection that included, among the ice-blue winter woolens and space-themed suits, a jumpsuit that looked to have patch acne. Right then you knew embroidered madness was here to stay.

- Bill Cunningham's corner became a frozen zone.

Photo

Following the death of the pho-

photographer Bill Cunningham, New York City announced it would rename one of his favorite perches after him. Credit Karsten Moran for The New York Times
On June 25, Mr. Cunningham, the beloved street photographer, died. Very soon thereafter, New York City announced it would rename one of his favorite perches Bill Cunningham Corner. It was there on a curb at the northeast corner of Fifth Avenue and 57th Street near the Louis Vuitton flagship that he installed himself regularly for decades and "turned our sidewalks into runways and New Yorkers into models," as Mayor Bill de Blasio said in a statement in July.

Just over four months later, Mr. Trump was elected president, and the stretch of Fifth Avenue near his Trump Tower residence became a heavily guarded and barricaded security zone. All four points of the intersection bristle with fencing and Jersey barriers. Secret Service details and New York City police officers keep pedestrians moving along. It is

one of countless postelection ironies that, were Mr. Cunningham still with us, he would not be welcome on Bill Cunningham Corner anymore.

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A version of this article appears in print on December 18, [Python:year()-1], on Page ST8 of the New York edition with the headline: Fashion's Parties, Debates and Outsiders. Order Reprints| Today's Paper| Subscribe

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