

STAR SEARCH

Stefano Pilati takes on legendary Italian brand Ermenegildo Zegna.

Expectations were high when Stefano Pilati presented his sophomore menswear collection for Ermenegildo Zegna Couture at January's Milan Fashion Week. There is no denying that the designer—who has worked at Giorgio Armani, Prada, and, most recently, for eight years as creative director at Yves Saint Laurent—has a perfect pedigree. So how did Pilati, 48, approach the challenge of reinventing one of fashion's most revered, commercially successful men's labels? By looking to the heavens.

Pilati obsessed over details, taking advantage of the luxurious fabrics and old-world techniques Zegna offers him. Its fall/winter 2014 collection conveyed a certain wistfulness in its voluminous double-faced layers, its asymmetrical cuts, and its long, poetic lines. Pilati played with proportions, contrasting lean silhouettes with shapes that were more flowing and undone. The textiles were rich in surprising mixes—like buttery vicuña and outdoorsy Japanese nylon in inky midnight blues, dramatic oxblood, or camel. Many were flecked with a glittering celestial sheen and had a languorous swing to them. He tinkered with tradition with his “broken suit” concept, a jacket and trousers in subtly contrasting weaves and patterns, a notion that feels modern and elegant. Most importantly, though, the designer was able to impart a sense of emotion into his work.

The collection may have been inspired by the sprawling wonders of the cosmos, but Pilati has transformed that inspiration into some rather earthly delights. —**MAX BERLINGER**

Photography by BJARNE JONASSON
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All clothing by **Ermenegildo Zegna Couture**









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