

DESIGNER DECODED: PREEN BY THORNTON BREGAZZI

20 years since Preen stormed onto the fashion radar we still can't get enough of their dynamic collections. We unpick what makes the label tick.



PREEN BY THORNTON BREGAZZI
Pink Sequin Carlin Dress
[COMING SOON>](#)



PREEN BY THORNTON BREGAZZI
Burgundy Velvet Rebecca Dress
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WHAT?

We'll avoid the urge to get too Freudian here, but that man/woman dynamic at the core of Preen translates into clothes that are an on-point balance of masculine and feminine. The duo excels at conjuring up an off-kilter, womanly-not-girly romance that makes the point loud and clear: you can be feminine and powerful. '90s grunge is always a big influence and, having started out recycling vintage fabrics and embellishments, there's an eclectic quality to the Preen look. Flattering cuts (a dropped waist is a favourite), spliced knits, tactile textures (hello, devoré velvet) and rich floral prints are all brand signatures, and translate into pieces that are a pitch-perfect mix of the wearable and the special. The designs resonate with a discerning and diverse fan base including Michelle Obama and Diane Kruger, Leandra Medine and Olivia Palermo. Perhaps the best poster girl, however, is (go figure) Bregazzi herself, whose nous for toughening up a diaphanous, printed dress with knee-high boots is completely on-brand.

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Backstage at the A/W16 show. Image source: www.preenbythorntonbregazzi.com



PREEN BY THORNTON BREGAZZI
Navy Gingham & Carnation Jana Dress
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WHY?

That magpie spirit of Preen is slickly executed in the brand's AW16 outing, which riffs on everything from Edith Sitwell to The Runaways, all bound up with a darkly romantic, verging on the gothic sensibility. This season's evening offering is standout, starring rock chick worthy cocktail dresses, a devoré gingham and floral dress which nods to that fondness for grunge and sumptuous, ruched, jewel toned dresses (our very own Roberta Benteler has already rocked the burgundy velvet dress at a recent wedding). The real coup however is that they've managed to do the impossible and get even the most monochrome dependent women clamouring for a bit of pink in their wardrobes, courtesy of the sequin bedecked dress and second-skin velvet number in a particularly sweet bubble-gum hue.

Off-kilter, womanly-not-girly romance that makes the point loud and clear: you can be feminine *and* powerful.



Preen by Thornton Bregazzi A/W 16 catwalk looks backstage at the show.
Image source: [@Avenue 32](#)



Justin Thornton and Thea Bregazzi

WHERE NEXT?

After 20 years, with business booming, we can only hope for more of the same to come: pieces you can turn to time and time again for instant, effortless cool. And in the immediate? You can expect to see those perfect AW16 dresses on the most stylish girls at the most stylish parties. Looks like we might all have to get over that 'turned up in the same outfit' faux pas and embrace it this season.