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RUNWAY  
REPORT

BCBG Max Azria



Peter Som



Yigal Azrouël



Brandon Sun



Helen Yarmak



Rebecca Minkoff

The first days of New York Fashion Week are always exciting: a buzz of anticipation precedes the week's shows, and the excitement builds for the new collections that are about to be unveiled. Outside of the tents, the fashion crowd arrives in a veritable parade of the exquisite, eccentric, and everything in between. A fashionable frenzy begins before our eyes. This year, despite the unseasonably warm weather, the chic crowds running to and fro at Lincoln Center look stylishly sleek in full fur and fur trims, making a clear fashion statement. On the runways, the designers echo the fur theme, confirming, once again, that fur is a key component of any luxury collection.

## BCBG MAX AZRIA

The phrase, "surprise, surprise" best describes BCBG Max Azria's latest collection: the line-up redefines the BCBG identity and places more focus on its current transformation. Color blocking is spot-on in this collection, and makes its mark as a trend in the making. Elongated columnar silhouettes in soft textile applications translate beautifully, and the unbelted wool coats move with a lightened bounce.

The unexpected twist comes from the fur pieces that create a collection of boleros, jackets, coats, and even clutches. Who would expect modernist color blocking in fur? The looks are not only modern in allure, but the patchwork applications in natural or dyed fox bring this technique and its American heritage into the forefront of fashion.

## BRANDON SUN

Newcomer Brandon Sun opted for a small and intimate presentation to introduce his namesake collection to the world. This J. Mendel and Oscar de la Renta veteran is playing his cards well; the presentation was a wise introductory note.

The collection has a slightly minimalist vibe and raw quality to it, but it is well measured and rather elegant in its apparent laissez-faire approach. The hues, as if rinsed by the moonlight, give this twilight color scheme a reserved and understated politeness. Who knew that grey shades could look so noble? Layering his signature fur accessories with a new palette of textures creates looks that are ageless, strong, and versatile. Notable looks include a black monochrome shearling vest, a luxe dusk-rose SAGA fox pullover, and an undulating fox bolero.

## PETER SOM

Peter Som traded his traditional demure muse for one with a stronger, sexier alter ego. He exercised his creative muscle with a line-up of sleek looks (including a few ethereal ones) that are redefining his style. The looks are feminine, as expected, but noticeably stronger in design and overall attitude. His streamlined and sculpted silhouettes' elongated shapes are armed and accentuated with rounded shoulders tapering down to the cuffs, and cinched waists that create peplums. Statement fur pieces complement the new direction with a white lamb coatdress, long "chubby" coat hybrids in dyed fox, and an innovative use of multicolored fox creating a colorful patchwork treatment. As they say, change is good... go for it, Peter.

## HELEN YARMAK

The iconoclast, Helen Yarmak, did what she does best season after season: she once again redefines what a fur coat can be. "Russian Fairy Tales" is one of her best collections to date: a capsule collection edited to its purest form for a line-up that appears otherworldly and speaks volumes.

Who else can show the rarest furs on the market today, draped so impeccably and infused with unparalleled luxury, detailing, and craftsmanship? From Russian sables in a multitude of nuanced hues to Russian imperial ermine and minks in Tahitian pearl hues, she presents innovative new silhouettes for a selection worthy of a king's crowning. Adding to the magic are her luxe, trademark reversible pieces—gorgeous silks and leathers that offer a second look to many of her furs. Yarmak knows her jet-set clientele well, and she always finds a way to surprise.

## YIGAL AZROUËL

Casual chic can mean so many things for so many people, as does the concept of fall-winter dressing. For Yigal Azrouël it means a flirty wardrobe embracing strong professional women who are not afraid to be themselves. In this collection, Azrouël draws inspiration from iconic late-1960's style infused with gamine modernity. Like most foreign-born designers working in the U.S., Azrouël loves American sportswear—and this collection could be observed as a reverence of sorts, with looks that are as colorful as they are varied. The wonderful combinations and juxtapositions of leather, silk, and wool, in various colors, make for a line-up that is fresh and fun. Once combined with some key fur pieces, like full coats, the looks take on a whole new sophistication.

## REBECCA MINKOFF

From jewel tones to gilded brocades, Rebecca Minkoff's collection is a colorful idyll that emits boldness and pizzazz. Is it the boldness of character (lots of "boy-friend" cuts)? Is it the boldness in the styling attitude (lots of colorful layered juxtapositions)? The line-up is a case study in fun, easy-to-wear sportswear reflective of her clients' lifestyles. The textiles are as far-ranging in texture as they are in hues and reflective properties.

Again, the concept of winter dressing gets a new twist, as many items might simply work yearlong. Then there is the fur: Minkoff loves biker jackets, and her broadtail version may well become a signature item. Sheared mink and a fun rock 'n' roll vibe are also on the menu, but the one piece that almost goes incognito is a show-stopping sheared mink top—the ultimate in luxe ready-to-wear.

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