

NEW YORK
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RUNWAY
REPORT

Hervé Léger by Max Azria



Catherine Malandrino



Chris Benz



Bibhu Mohapatra



Barbara Tfank



Carolina Herrera

Fur is showing up again and again in the fall 2012 collections, and each incarnation is more innovative and unexpected than the next. Whether used to create playful, luxe accessories, add drama and sophistication to ready-to-wear looks, or construct bold, romantic outerwear, one thing is clear: fur is the luxury fabric of choice among designers.

HERVÉ LÉGER BY MAX AZRIA

With the highly praised presentation of the BCBG collection behind him, Mr. Azria enjoyed another great success with Hervé Léger by Max Azria. What both have in common is a fixed desire for reinvention—the essential evolution of fashion. This particular collection is taking a bold step away from the signature stretch-bandeau construction so dear to the original namesake. The line-up delivered a myriad of slinky and flouncy dresses encased in leather corsets or harnesses. The Pagan influences, enhanced with key fur touches, fit with the soft-hard duality of the collection. The *trompe l'œil* geometric prints are a nice foil to the hard edge of his accessories.

CATHERINE MALANDRINO

The Catherine Malandrino Fall 2012 collection was inspired by the dueling forces of virtue and vice: at once, hard and edgy, yet gorgeously feminine. It is a significant departure from her past collections. Citing the stars of 1940s French cinema as a reference point, Malandrino created looks that will take her followers into another realm of daytime sophistication. The sleek styles, enhanced with high-tech textiles, stretch vinyl and leather, or silks and woolens, define the classy and seductive femme fatale. Rich, colorful fur accessories and trims and key fur accent pieces add softness and drama to tighten the collection's story with a bite and a smile.

CHRIS BENZ

Chris Benz camped it up with his celluloid-inspired collection for fall 2012. Each model was styled to represent a silver screen icon, dressed to impress in looks that defied time. Mr. Benz is known to love the

vintage doll aesthetic, and this season he carried the theme to new heights with remarkable creativity. Giving a nod to the glam girls of yesteryear, his collection had a hip, retro feel. Once deconstructed, the pieces offered a more civilian appeal, one much more accessible to the “pretty young things” of today. Slim pants topped with white astrakhan pullovers trimmed in contrasting bright mink were playful, sexy and modern. A favorite piece was a white lamb coat with an ivy green mink collar—quirky and fabulous.

BIBHU MOHAPATRA

Bibhu Mohapatra's runway presentation for fall 2012 marked a turning point in his career. By successfully introducing more daywear and eveningwear to the mix, Mohapatra firmly established himself within the universe of luxury ready-to-wear designers. This man is extraordinarily talented: He knows how to work a garment, proving that a fur master is first and foremost a masterful tailor. He understands luxury and how to bring drama to his creations. For Mohapatra, it is all in the details, from sculpted constructions to exquisite hardware to eye-popping color. As expected, his furs were showstoppers—including a fitted ranch mink and leather bomber jacket that was among the best we've seen this season. Mr. Mohapatra's clients were ready for more, and this season he delivered.

BARBARA TFANK

“Sultry” is the word used to describe Barbara Tfank's Fall 2012 collection, which channels the best stylings of the polished Joans and Peggys of the 1960s. The textile selection is impeccable as usual, and so are the cuts. To complement her seemingly simple silhouettes, Tfank is

keen on vintage and current brocades as well as other luscious fabric types. It is a study in remarkable balance. This season, she introduced an even stronger fur line-up, with stunning pieces like her snow top shadow fox jacket—a piece that not only complemented the vintage glamour, but also showed a strong hand at design.

CAROLINA HERRERA

As expected, Carolina Herrera presented another ode to feminine beauty this season. The textiles, colors, and embroideries resonated with chic elegance—and her effective use of feather and fur detail gave the clothes the requisite notes of luxury. There was a darker, edgier feel to the mix with introductory looks in navy and black, lightened up by the inclusion of beautiful abstract prints and tones of lilac and pink. Cropped jackets adorning the delicate frames of the models were a keynote this season, worn with pencil skirts or ball gowns to create a longer silhouette. Her broadtail and knit sweatshirt will certainly be a signature piece for the season, equally effective as a sporty day look or an elegant evening addition.

MORE FROM THE RUNWAYS

Other notable fur looks included **St. John's** knitted mink sweater, falling effortlessly off one shoulder over a wide pant, defining the line's new “easy chic” direction. **Irina Shabayeva** combined luxe fox and rich wool cable knit for an entirely new take on the concept of a stole. **Chadwick Bell's** silver fox coat was sexy and sophisticated, showing that this young designer understands how to create statement looks. **Carlos Miele's** oversized fox poncho was cozy, comfy, and indulgent. These designers show how fur can shape a signature style.

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