



Fashion Forward

By Esther Nash

Fall 2008: Highlights From the Tents

From Silky, Slinky to '70s Inspired, Rich Colors and Embellished Looks

The Mercedes Benz Shows drew fashionistas from all over. By private jet and helicopter, chauffeured limo and armored sedans (true!), they arrived at the tents at Bryant Park to make an appearance. Glamorous socialites celebrities, strictly selected buyers and of course the media, such as moi, who were there to record it all.

Security was tighter than ever. It's an unfortunate necessity, especially when jeweler **Juditha Ripka**

dressed me in half a million dollars of diamonds for each show. The dazzle really made me dizzy and I now know diamonds are a girl's best friend. It was so sad for me when the week was over and I had to say adios to the fall 2008 bling of gold and pastel semi-precious jewels.

As a veteran front row fashion show attendee, here is the inside report on Fall 2008 styles:

The Scoop

Fall 2008 is all about waist-on-waist and plenty of luxury fabrics, embellishments and Hollywood Red Carpet Glam. It reflects money but does not broadcast it; just subtle hints. There were lots of bright colors, boleros, capes and thigh-high stockings, socks and boots.

Red Dress Collection: **Barbara Bush** and **Lauren Bush** hosted Breast Cancer Awareness along with **Liza Minnelli**, who serenaded the crowd with "New York, New York!" Ladies time to start exercising and eating well on a regular basis.

Sponsors: **La Colombe** and **Lycra**, served cappuccinos, espresso and Americano café. In fact Lycra served its hot beverages in the "Bra-sserie Cafe," where sippers while munching on delectable croissants served by three ladies wearing berets and see the latest in lingerie with Lycra support to enhance and defy gravity.

The Shows

Monique Lhuillier showed adorned gowns, metallic fabrics, oversized coats with fur collars and sleek, sharp detail. There were feathers and old Hollywood glam on the runway. Colors were yellow, charcoal, grey, olive green and rust. Highlights included super exaggerated ruffles, blue velvet jackets and pleated skirts.

Venexiana: Sophisticated, classic, timeless, **Swarovski** detail, assorted furs and snake skin. Bows were a must in this collection. The crowd gave designer **Kati Stern** a standing ovation.

Temperly London: Was very military influenced with mock police hats, military jackets, with thigh high leather boots that looked combat sexy.



Temperley London



Bill Blass: A graduate of F.I.T. , his line was detailed and flawless. Of course having dressed Cher, he is one of the best.

Herve Leger By Max Azria: Silky, slinky; form fitted mini dresses in purples and grays that do not leave much to the imagination.

Betsey Johnson: Inspired by the '70s and '80s, here looks were so young and fun that the models looked younger, although they were really young. It was Betsey's 30th anniversary in fashion, so the show was extra special. It felt like a circus or New Year's Eve party. Lost of colorful Candyland fringed jackets, embossed catsuits, colorful blouses with loud patterns, pleats, animal prints and geometric patterns.

Carlos Miele: Very shapely patterns and curves to each garment. Cocktail dresses and glamorous gowns had attitude. The look was cropped oversized turtle necks and bulky cape/sweater combos. Colors were red,



Bill Blass Design

olive green and brown. Boleros and suits.

Tibi: Chic and timeless refinement; tailored, form-fitting, high-powered suits. Cowl neck blouses are a must. Tweed suites, cropped capes, plaid fitted coats were very bold and colorful.

Malan Breton: Known for his soft tailored separates and intricate fabric techniques, he designs in a very feminine feel. Please be sure to watch Full Frontal Fashion next season because he asked and I accepted. Yes, I will be walking the runway in Malan Breton Spring 2009.

Akiko Ogawa: Chunky scarves that you could lose yourself in. Oversized caps and berets in heavy knitted wool accessorized. Ribbed peasant dresses, super minis in rich textured fabrics with peacock feathers and Swarovski crystals gave his designs a very Scottish feel.

Lacoste: The Runway was transformed into a ski resort paradise, including snow flurries and faux snow lined catwalk. Overall, it was very young, fresh and sporty. Super striped over-sized scarves in black, green, red, gold complimented leg warmers over thigh high socks, over opaque stockings in complimentary shades of pastel. Complete with matching ear muffs and mittens.

BCBG Max Azria: Modern femininity with super confidence and shades of neutral warm tones. Cocktail dresses and skirts with cinched in waists. Strapless, youthful, thigh hemline dresses with belts tied at the waist were signatures. No jewelry necessary. Luxurious boleros and capes.

Reem Acra: The collection represents a global sense of belonging. The red carpets of Hollywood will line up for this designer. The collection was extreme extravagance. Designs were like sculptures come to life on the runway.

Ports 1961: European fabrics and signature prints. Storybook romantic Scottish village inspired. Indigo blues, Kelly green, rust, orange and vibrant reds dominated. Cinched waist assed a feminine allure with tailored jackets. Fantasy mixed into reality.

Project Runway: A very exciting show. All the designers were winners in my book. I wish them the best of luck. The attendees were all celebs, TV personalities as well as past project runway contestants.

Zang Toi: With Peta demonstrating outside against the use of fur; it was a madhouse inside the tents. The collection was grand and truthfully for the jet set. Peacock feathers, sable trimmed lapels and formal gowns were shown.

Rubin Singer: Very romantic, very femine, suede, lether, bright oranges and metallic colors.

Vivienne Tam: The ultimate in luxe lifestyle with a feel of carelessness which is a statement in itself. Tousled upsweep hair styles and bucket hats. It was all about uptown girls in downtown



Carlos Miele

clothes.

Twinkle: Very cute and down to earth sporty looks, long flowing skirts filled with unusual patterns and geometric shapes. Brooches and fitted jackets as well as coats. The feel was eccentric and worldly.

Pamela Roland: Very diva, very glam. Baroque sequined satin boleros, tailored ivory gold brocades, taffeta and crystal rhinestone rainbow beads. Suits with fur collars and cuffs and strapless jeweled gowns.

Look forward to reporting to you on Spring 2009. In the meantime keep posted, same place, same fashion challenge just a different season. *Bisou, Bisou*