



Stolen Girlfriends Club



Maggie Marilyn



Benjamin Alexander

## NZFW WRAP

*The most exciting week of the year for the New Zealand fashion industry celebrated familiar favourites and emerging new talent. The fashion-filled week saw us running from venue to venue to soak up the talent and creativity of our clever community.*

*Words Vanessa Ortynsky*

New Zealand Fashion Week kicked off on Monday night (26 August) with Kate Sylvester's truly romantic A/W 2020 collection. As love letters inspired by her parents during the 1950s flooded the runway, a squad of models in fiercely feminine silk and lace dresses as well as polished suiting took over the catwalk. Our favourite look was the feminine-yet-powerful lilac skirt suit, which was paired with Barbour wellingtons, a nod to Kate's outdoorsy side.

Just days before her show, Kate Sylvester announced her new online marketplace for pre-loved pieces, aligning herself with the growing focus on sustainability. Reloved is a forum for

customers to re-sell their used KS pieces and shop for the best vintage gems, preventing them from becoming landfill.

On day two, Maggie Marilyn's debut NZFW show took place offsite at Morningside's Glasshouse with citrus trees and floral installations galore. Instead of goodie bags, guests were invited to take home fresh fruit and flowers. Maggie's collection featured a range of ethereal silks and pastels, which she's become known for over the years, but also a few black pieces that will seamlessly fit into our Kiwi wardrobes.

Next up, we cheered through Jockey's lively Tokyo show at Q Theatre, where All Blacks and Silver Ferns modelled



Kate Sylvester

the latest range. As is customary at Jockey shows, it was lighthearted and fun, getting everyone excited for the upcoming Rugby World Cup in Japan (from 20 September).

A definite highlight of the week was Paris Georgia's first ever NZFW show. Their sophisticated collection was everything we'd hope for, with immaculate tailoring and timeless staples. It featured plenty of sculpted silhouettes made with firm, luxurious fabrics and body-hugging skirts, sleeveless dresses and voluminous sleeves. Standout pieces included a glossy sage coat, worn with a pleated skirt; a dramatic red dress with a low back and the massively oversized (and sunsmart) beach hat with white shirt and sheer biker shorts. We also fell in love with their yellow silk dress.

Day three started bright and early with the immensely talented Benjamin Alexander's intimate morning presentation just above Amano at The Quay Project. The impossibly chic collection was consistent with the aesthetic we've come to expect from the designer, who won season one of Project Runway New Zealand. We couldn't get enough of the dramatic gowns and billowing silhouettes, which were paired with shoes from his new collaboration with Mi Piaci. The collection (named after the important women in his life) is already available to shop via his website.

Later on, we ventured to Morningside for a peaceful presentation where Juliette Hogan's workroom was transformed into a natural oasis. Pianist Gabrielle Peake created and performed an original piece to reflect the collection and we immediately felt a sense of calm wash over us. Ten models walked around as we sipped on refreshing elderflower, cucumber and rosemary drinks, allowing us to admire their elegant, streamlined looks in a muted, pastel palette. It's easy to imagine a capsule wardrobe consisting only of silk separates and floor-length dresses.

The highlight of every fashion week is the Stolen Girlfriends Club show, which took place outdoors at the Avondale Racecourse this year. Transformed into a Berlin nightclub with a techno soundtrack, an army of brooding models and fire barrels being lit one-by-one in front of our seats, it proved to be a gamechanger yet again. The outdoor show began in a blaze of glory, with studded leather pieces and a full-on red leather ensemble.

All in all, it was a fabulous and exhausting week, meeting new faces and examining the ever-changing industry. Our fashion choices need to be more considered and it's reassuring to see Kiwi designers taking a step back to create collections that include recycled and sustainable materials.