



London Fashion Week



Models present creations from London based Turkish designer Bora Aksu during their 2019 Autumn / Winter catwalk show at London Fashion Week in London.



COLORFUL START TO LONDON FASHION WEEK AS BREXIT WORRIES PERVADE



London-based Turkish designer Bora Aksu waves at the end of his 2019 Autumn/ Winter catwalk show at London Fashion Week in London. — AFP photos

London Fashion Week kicked off five days of catwalk shows on Friday with a splash of color, as fears of Brexit—now looming large on the horizon—look set to dominate. The fashion world descends on the British capital just weeks before Britain is due to leave the European Union, with anxiety over the diplomatic upheaval prompting some showcasers to strive for an upbeat tone.

Turkish designer Bora Aksu, who unveiled his latest collection Friday, said he had deliberately deployed pastel shades and an “optimistic color palette” to lighten the heavy mood currently pervading London. “I try to bring some hope into the winter collection,” the London-based designer said, noting the long shadow cast by Brexit which he had tried to swamp with plenty of white, beige, lilac, mint green and peach pink on show. “I think we need... more colors in life generally and more hope.”

The first two days of more than 80 catwalk shows will feature a raft of young talents including Matty Bovan, Ashley Williams, Molly Goddard, Simone Rocha and from the model, designer and TV presenter Alexa Chung. Meanwhile four of Britain’s leading designers—Roksanda, JW Anderson, Christopher Kane and David Koma—are to reveal their new collections today.

Public access

London Fashion Week will get also get a first glimpse of Victoria Beckham’s new collection today. Beckham’s chic and sober designs are more used to gracing the New York catwalks, but she celebrated her brand’s tenth anniversary last year by presenting in London for the first time. The former Spice Girl, now a respected designer, is still sailing in troubled financial waters however, having recorded losses of up to £10.3 million for the year 2017.

Today will also feature Vivienne Westwood and Pam Hogg, two icons of British punk-rock culture, as well as Frenchman Roland Mouret, known for his mastery of

sensual designs, and Fashion East, Lulu Kennedy’s talent-incubator label. This year will be the first time that members of the public will be able to attend the event, which is usually reserved for buyers, journalists and VIPs. The “London Fashion Week: Insiders” project will release a limited number of tickets, ranging in price from £135 to £245.

Brexit ‘dreaded’

The increasing importance of the week reflects Britain’s booming fashion industry, with revenues for women’s ready-to-wear rising by 5.5 percent to £30.9 billion in 2018, according to market analyst group Mintel. However, uncertainty surrounding the country’s departure from the EU is worrying those in the industry, who do not appear to share Brexiteers’ predictions of a so-called “Brexit dividend” in global trade.

According to a survey conducted by consulting firm Fashion Roundtable, 96 percent of industry professionals in Britain say they voted to stay in the European Union in 2016. “Since that referendum the British fashion industry has asked for continued access to talent, tariff-free trade, frictionless borders,” said Caroline Rush, chief executive of the British Fashion Council, noting it had been frustrated by the response.

She added Brexit remains “dreaded” by the industry, especially as the March 29 exit date nears with no-deal looking increasingly likely. “We will further develop our international outreach and reinforce the reputation of the UK as one that is open, global, innovative and welcoming,” Rush said.—AFP



Canadian born designer Mark Fast acknowledges the applause after presenting his 2019 Autumn / Winter collection.



Polish designer Marta Jakubowski acknowledges the crowd during her 2019 Autumn/ Winter London collection.



Models present creations from Polish designer Marta Jakubowski during their 2019 Autumn / Winter London Fashion Week in London.

