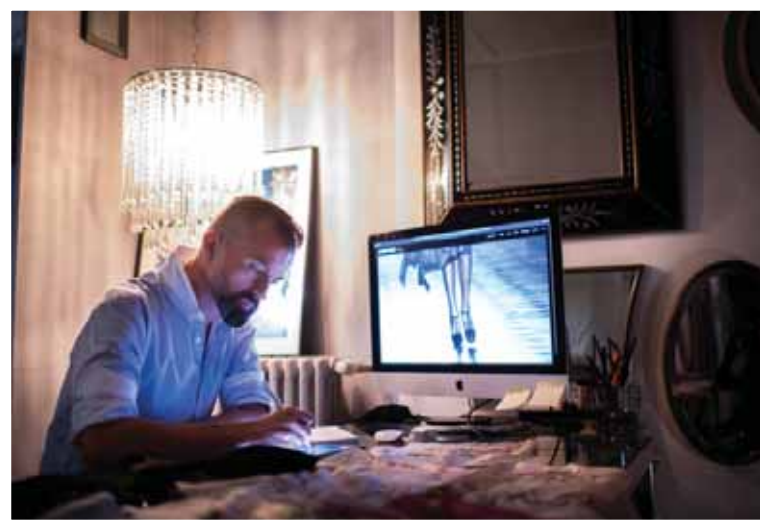




French fashion designer Julien Fournie poses with his Czech model Michaela Tomanova.



French fashion designer Julien Fournie draws on his Apple Ipad Pro tablet in his workshop in Paris.



French high fashion designer Julien Fournie looks at himself in a mirror in his workshop in Paris.

#### Royal clientele

The difference between couture creations and those you buy off the rail is between night and day, he insisted. "While you have to get into ready-to-wear clothes"—adapting your body to the norm—"in haute couture, the clothes are made to wrap you," the designer said. And Fournie only makes one-off pieces to ensure the exclusivity that his very well-heeled clients crave. "Once a client from a royal family cancelled an order after seeing a similar creation worn by Lady Gaga," said the house's director, Jean-Paul Cauvin. "For them, exclusivity is everything, and they don't want that tainted by fame or vulgarity."

For that reason, Fournie tends to avoid lending his dresses out to stars for red carpet events, except when the singer or actress has a style that really chimes with the "DNA of the house". Fournie's film for his virtual Paris show on Tuesday is more of a teaser than a classic run through the collection.

#### Cut for 'real women'

"We are not showing too much," Cauvin said, to avoid any unseemly competition that might sometimes arise after shows when "clients really set their heart on a particular look and want to put an option on it" before anyone else does. This time, without a formal show, it will be more about pampering the client, Cauvin added. "The couturier will have dresses in mind just for them."

Fournie is known for designing for "real women" with "breasts and hips and not for gamines" or the androgynous clothes-hanger models that often dominate the catwalks. "We don't create fashion, we create personalities," he told AFP as he put the finishing touches to his "Storm dress", a silk gown entirely embroidered with goose feathers. "Whoever wears this after the coronavirus will be like an angel returning to Earth," Fournie declared. "I want to help my clients fulfil their destiny, support them, and help them take flight," he added with a flourish.—AFP



French fashion designer Julien Fournie (behind) poses with his Czech model Michaela Tomanova wearing a lace dress embroidered with 1940 sequins during the shooting of a film designed in place of the fashion show.



French fashion designer Julien Fournie adjusts a dress with his employee in his workshop in Paris.