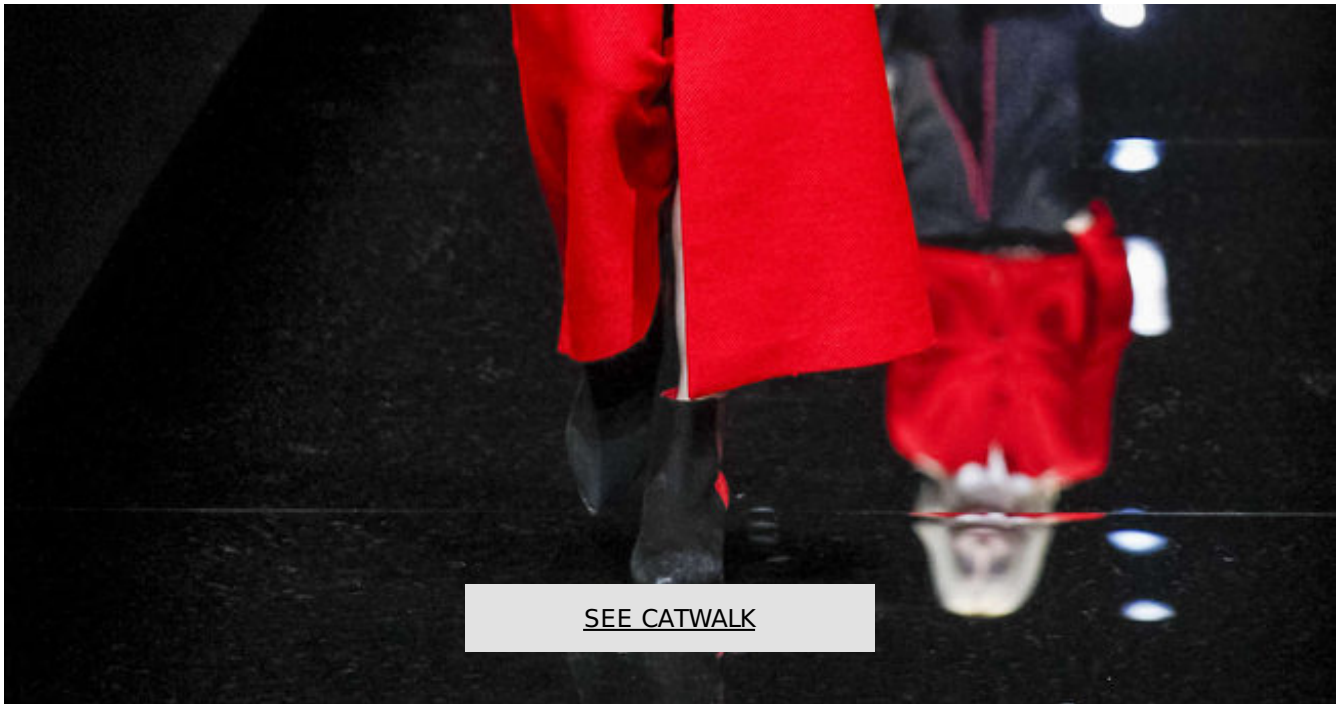


LFW's fine transfer window

By [Godfrey Deeny](#) - September 13, 2017

It is instructive to consider the outlook for London Fashion Week this week with the opening day of Champions' League group matches. Because, as every football aficionado knows, some major teams have enjoyed great summer transfer windows and some terrible ones. Fashion capitals do too.





Emporio Armani - AW17 - Milan - © PixelFormula

That's very much the case this month with Big Four runway seasons; especially after such a modest series of catwalk collections in New York – a season denuded of four major young brands – all of who fled to show in Paris. Even if the charms of Manhattan did manage to lure back Tom Ford and Rihanna. Think of New York as the Arsenal and Chelsea of current runway seasons – losing key players and barely recruiting a star name to soothe the many stinging departures.

London, on the other hand, looks set to have a bumper season. Its transfer is much more like that of Manchester United, or even Paris St Germain, with a gang of powerful players arriving to boost an already creative team.

The first big signing is, of course, Giorgio Armani, who will present Emporio Armani at what is expected to be a star-packed runway soiree. Even if Giorgio will only be in London for one season, the mere fact that the largest fashion house in the world still owned by a founding designer is coming to Blighty is highly significant.

The other big hire is Tommy Hilfiger. He will unveil his latest Tommy x Gigi collection – made in tandem with uber-supe Gigi Hadid - in one of the UK's most storied rock temples, the Roundhouse. London follows on from New York and Los Angeles for this collaboration. These will not be the only parties. Cos, H&M's minimalist and arty collection, will fete their 10th anniversary with a late night bash inside the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square.

British couturiers Ralph & Russo will debut their ready-to-wear collection – after several successful years showing haute couture in Paris. They even got in a clever teaser on Monday night, when Angelina Jolie wore their black bat-winger, one-sleeved cocktail dress to the Toronto International Film Festival.



Xiao Li, AW17 - London

Adding to the sense of a major fashion crop, retailers remain highly enthusiastic

about London.

“I love coming to London. And I’ll give you three good reasons: Simone Rocha, whom I adore; Jonathan Anderson, who is so talent. And, frankly, all the great creative, young talent, which is not lost amid hundreds of shows, unlike here in New York!” said Ken Downing, Senior Vice President and Fashion Director of US department store chain Neiman Marcus – and thus one of the biggest buyers – or in industry parlance pencils – on the planet.

New names like Xiao Li, a Chinese designer, trained at London College of Fashion, who blends knitwear with silicone. Or, the duo of Fyodor Podgorny & Golan Frydman, who are now garnering attention for their expressionist approach to fashion. And another Chinese born creative, Haizhen Wang, the very eclecticism of whose approach – mingling British military uniforms with native African and Asian costumes – guarantees a novel approach.

Matter of fact, the Chinese generally are making their biggest push into any runway season in London. Xia Ding, President of JD Fashion, the giant Chinese e-commerce platform for fashion, and Farfetch’s new strategic partner, will also be celebrating with the British Fashion Council’s hard-charging CEO Caroline Rush. Cocktails on Monday night as JD Fashion fetes becoming the new partner to the BFC/Vogue Designer Fashion Fund.

Though, naturally, the most eagerly awaited show will be Burberry – Britain’s one true mega luxury label. Doubly so, as this is the first show Chief Creative Christopher Bailey will stage since the arrival of new CEO Marco Gobbetti – ex boss at Celine.

By Godfrey Deeny

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