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Fashion Treasures in Antiquities

As the echoes from the September Fashion Month continue to reverberate into October. It is clear that from runways around the world, fashion has taken a grand step forward with the past strongly in tow. A resurgence of interest in medieval-inspired craftsmanship has captivated the fashion industry, allowing designers to draw from the rich tapestry of history and create stunning collections that bridge the gap between the past and present. The fusion of modern fashion with antiquities and the medieval era has produced artful masterclasses on how independent designers can embrace history to craft collections that resonate with the present, paving the way for the future and still pay homage to the past.

The runway has become a time machine, transporting audiences to different epochs with every collection. The art of the past is something that wields so much admirability that it continues to influence the present art. This past month, in the course of the vibrant spring and summer collections featured across Paris and Milan, Olivier Rousteing channelled the structural finesse of Pierre Balmain and some of Monsieur Balmain's signature motifs and techniques that arc back to an older time; Alberta Ferretti's collection featured Grecian-like draping and light-as-air dresses; Pier Paolo Piccioli led his Valentino presentation with cut out embroidery dresses reminiscent of the finishing found around the necking of ancient Roman marble columns. Simon Porte Jacquemus presented his collection at the Palace of Versailles, where guests were escorted to the runway on quaint little off-white boats as per the olden days.

This trend of channelling the medieval past is not new. One striking example is Alessandro Michele's Gucci, which, in its 2020 Cruise Collection, took inspiration from the magnificent necropolis of Alyscamps in Arles, France.

This collection showcased the mingling of Gothic and Romanesque influences, blending ornate embroidery with flowing silhouettes, evoking the spirit of the medieval period while infusing a modern twist.

As well in the past, designers such as Sarah Burton for Alexander McQueen, (who triumphantly featured her last collection for the brand this September after 13 years of brilliantly keeping the McQueen legacy alive) have also drawn from medieval artistry. Her 2020 collection celebrated the grandeur of the Gothic cathedrals. The intricate lacework and cathedral-like silhouettes were a testament to the timeless beauty of the era.

And the list goes on, Valentino's Fall/Winter 2020 collection evoked the spirit of the Italian Renaissance. The use of sumptuous fabrics, rich colours, and intricate embroidery evoked the opulence of this historical period, creating a sensation on the runway. And just before COVID hit, Dolce & Gabbana's 2019 Alta Moda Collection was a testament to the Baroque era. Opulent brocades, intricate lacework, and lavish embellishments adorned garments inspired by the art and architecture of the 17th century.

How do modern designers borrow a leaf from the trend of this past few years to produce ingenious antiquity-inspired lines that achieve and artistic commercial success?



The answer to that question almost certainly commences with the realization that creating fashion collections inspired by antiquities and medieval art requires a meticulous and clever mindset.

Whether the designer is based in Delhi or Dakar, that region has a rich curious history that is begging for In-depth historical research. Thorough research into the chosen historical period; visits to museums and historical sites to immerse one's self in the era's aesthetic as well as the study of art, architecture, clothing, and cultural nuances from the days of yore will birth a world of design possibilities and potential production routes.

That research and curiosity will require visualization. Visual inspiration boards filled with images, sketches, and historical references will serve as a visual roadmap for a collection, helping the aspiring chaperone of ancient design to maintain a cohesive theme throughout their presentations.



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Interesting materials will give these visualisations their tangible expression. Of course, fabrics and materials must reflect the textures and colours of the chosen era and modern adaptations of historical textiles must be considered to ensure comfort and wearability.

Consequently, the genius of material manipulation shines through in the excellent application of tailoring and silhouettes. The silhouette and tailoring must blend historical shapes with modern cuts to create garments that are both striking and functional. That cut together with intricate embroidery, hand-painted motifs, and era-inspired embellishments add depth and authenticity to collections and spur the mix of commercial and creative success associated with standout collections.

In the end, for aspiring designers and established fashion houses alike, connecting with the past offers a unique opportunity to create collections that resonate with consumers on a profound level. By drawing inspiration from the past, designers promote a sense of timelessness, encouraging consumers to invest in High-quality materials and craftsmanship that weave a tapestry of elegance and transcends seasons

