



NYFW

fashion face-off

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A WAVE OF A-list celebrities, fashion bloggers, photographers and editors fled to New York City Feb. 7-14 for the biggest bi-annual American event in fashion. An almost religious assembly, the Fall 2013 Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week was the center for a selection of the world's most talked about fashion designers to present their latest collections. Of course, The Chronicle's two trendsetters had to put on their spiked shoes and battle in the paper's first ever fashion face-off.

Managing Editor Sophia Coleman and Assistant Arts & Culture Editor Justin Moran argued their personal picks for the week's best and worst shows. As both have an undying lust for fashion and a critical eye, the selections are shamelessly heated and honest.

The two could easily fill the entire paper with caty quips of why their picks were the hottest, so help was enlisted. With the prestigious perspective of top local fashion stylist Eric Himel, only one could be crowned The Chronicle's ultimate face-off winner.



Justin's picks

THE GOOD

AFTER ENDURING NINE days of lack-luster collections, it has become clear that New York is suffering from a grave kick of creative deprivation.

While it had its definite climactic moments with Alexander Wang's army of "Rocky" inspired models in mohair and Proenza Schouler's minimalist, grayscale exploration, NYFW unfortunately presented itself in a safe and marketable light. Thankfully, Rodarte combated the week's monotonous timbre with a collection that challenged fashion enthusiasts, just as art should.

Designers Kate and Laura Mulleavy drew inspiration from Santa Cruz imagery, which sparked an unusually innovative balance between the city's lively seaside and subversive cultures. What do its oceanfront amusement park and community of Hell's Angels bikers have in common? Nothing.

Rodarte bravely connected the dots, creating a visually refreshing collection for Fall/

THE BAD

THOUGH A MEETING with the Federal Witness Protection Program may be in order after negatively reviewing who is perhaps a Columbia favorite, Jeremy Scott's graphic Fall/Winter 2013 collection was more than deserving of a ruthless critique.

Scott has been credited as the voice of our generation, attracting a dissident cult-like following with his references to pop culture and bold depictions of the underground. In 2012, Scott defined the year's biggest trends with a collection stemming from the rise of cyber subcultures.

It's safe to say that Chicago is now brimming with Scott-inspired club kids who would die to wear his Technicolor keyboard-print trousers for a night. But fast-forward a year, and the king of punk's active rebirth seems to have exhausted his own niche. The collection was reflective of a suburban pre-teen who religiously wreaked havoc on the local Hot Topic with her mom's credit card. Models,

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Sophia's picks

THE GOOD

SLEEK, SEXY MINI dresses and the element of espionage are just a few of my favorite components of KAUFMANFRANCO's ready-to-wear 2013 collection. Being one of the few shows that highlighted the sensuality of a women's body, Los Angeles-based designers Ken Kaufman and Isaac Franco won me over with their dark and dangerous clothing.

Kaufman and Franco, who launched their label in 2004, experienced their very first runway show at NYFW on Feb. 11 and kept it sharp and edgy with body-con mini dresses and luxurious fur coats. The cut and tailoring of each outfit was exquisite, and the variety of pieces—ranging from calf-length trenches to plenty of leather separates—were perfect for the varying degrees of fall weather.

One of my favorite pieces was a beautiful "martini olive" fish-scale dress that slinked down the runway like a flashy mermaid. The tough-girl look continued with glazed-wool

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THE BAD

ONE OF MY biggest fashion pet peeves is when people spend large sums of money—think \$1,000 for a cardigan or \$395 for a knit beanie—to look poor and disheveled. I achieve that look everyday with ripped nylons (it's accidental every time, I promise) and holes in my baggy, cheaply made sweaters. But Canadian designer Raif Adelberg went for the "Derelict" look backed by what I assume was a large budget.

Even though it's his first time at NYFW, there's no excuse. Adelberg has been designing for almost 25 years, so it's time for him to come out of the wilderness and step into civilization.

His first mistake was starting the show with an almost 2-minute long film composed of grainy, black and white mirrored images of wolves. It was loosely related to Adelberg's inspiration of what he said was "an eclectic mix of Russian, Jewish, Tibetan nomads, a group of indigenous survivalists who have



Rodarte (left) innovatively explored the diversity of Santa Cruz, while Jeremy Scott (right) simply recycled an exhausted image.

KAUFMANFRANCO (left) was inspired by sexy spies, and Raif Adelberg's designs were too expensive and horrid to be pictured.