

voguefocus

“Eastern European textiles and tapestries were my main inspiration for the fabrics”
Frida Giannini

Tapestry: Gucci

Taking seventeenth-century tapestries to the runway, Frida Giannini's new statement coat has an ancient heritage. Spun in pure silk, Gucci's opulent Russian-style patterns add an artful quality.

Hand-knits: Simone Shailes

Central St Martins MA graduate Shailes pored over images of knotted and plaited hair before buying 20 kilos of Italian yarn for her hand-knitted collection. With a simple rib stitch, she created panels of reversible cloth that were then stitched back on to the main piece as quirky details.

“The collection was inspired by traditional English folk art and witchcraft”
Luella Bartley

Smocking: Luella

Ruskin would be proud of Luella's arts-and-crafts hand-stitched motifs. The line-up of chic peasant girls, in their curiously luxe taffeta and washed muslin embellished with old-fashioned smocking and zigzag needlework, was resplendent.

Lace: Erdem

Erdem Moralioglu took a week to turn six metres of chocolate-brown lace into delicate sunray pleats on this funnel-neck dress. The lace itself is from the looms of Sophie Hallette – lace-makers for 120 years – where the *tullistes* receive seven years' training in the craft.

Stitch up

Designers have raided the sewing box in an homage to the haberdasher's age-old craft. Grace Timothy reports

Beading: Asprey

Masterminded by creative director Hakan Rosenius, Asprey's collection focused on embellishment, with ruffles, sequins and gems adorning structured bodices. For the beaded cap-sleeved top alone, more than 1,200 black enamel discs had to be sewn on individually with a loophole stitch through the pin-sized hole in each disc.

Embroidery: Louise Gray

Louise Gray turned conventional crewel embroidery into a Navajo-inspired optical illusion, using strips of neon chiffon as thread on layers of sheer fabric. The effect is less rural folk art, more LED light show.

Hand-fraying: Tao

Designers often go to great lengths to stop textiles fraying but, this season, Tao Kurihara chose to unravel her fabric for a distressed look. The wool used for the candy-floss surface of this bolero was loosely woven and the edges left rough, so that when milled, the fray remained.

“I studied the Ojibwa Indians' eagle sun dance in Canada; the severity of the stitches reflects the intensity of the dance”
Mark Fast

Crochet: Mark Fast

Crochet ditched its doily associations for a more sensual style statement at Mark Fast's Central St Martins MA show. Fast used the hosiery's technique for creating fishnets and altered the tension of the elastomeric yarn to make it cling to the body.