

# THE CRAFT

## CRAFTSMANSHIP TAKES CENTER STAGE AT BARCELONA FASHION WEEK

Barcelona pulled out all the stops for its latest Fashion Week. The 16th edition of “080 Barcelona Fashion Week” packed the Lluís Companys Olympic Stadium to capacity and honored a very special guest: designer and decorator Iris Apfel! Of course, the stakes were a bit higher this year: the event set out to revive the local textile industry and provide an international showcase for its creative talent. With flagship shows by Mango, Desigual, and Custo concluding each day, the event aimed to celebrate and promote the artisanal know-how of Spanish fashion. Off to a strong start: the first edition of Fashion Investor Day organized in connection with the SeedandClick investor network awarded its top prize to Made in Me, a startup specializing in custom shoes. Receiving over €150,000 in backing, the startup plans to spread the wealth: its production lines will soon employ Spanish artisans.

Among the designers involved in local production, we discovered collections by Txell Miras, Miriam Ponsa, and Josep Abril, while other designers have pooled their resources to purchase textiles and produce their goods in the region. Is this a new model for collaboration between fashion designers? In Paris, they have already banded together to open a boutique: *Projetxe #01*. The solidarity subtracts nothing from each designer’s unique vision: Txell Miras subtly decontextualized the codes of military attire, while Miriam Ponsa questioned the customs of our consumer society through her *Arte Povera* collection, inspired by a deep attachment to her native town of Marensa, where her great-grandmother opened an atelier to produce espadrille straps in 1886. As for menswear designer Josep Abril, he is part of the Group of Consultants behind the new Catalan textile expo, *Fira BSTIM* (Best Solutions in Textile Manufacturing). The *080FashionMarket* retail space also featured the excellent production quality of young brand *n.u.s.k*: its style combines simplicity and comfort with eco-certified and recycled textiles. After a yearlong break from the fashion industry, *Sònia Tebé* returned to put her sustainable values into practice. Though in the end, she admits, what counts most is style.

We also saw several collections from companies once specialized in a single technique, like knitting: *Yerse*, *Naulover*, *Lebor Gabala*, *AldoMartins*, and *Escorpion* – which uses knitwear in 80% of every collection – have all morphed into total look fashion brands with international reach. We also saw the first show by *Wom & Now*, a company respected by major European brands for its pattern and cutting expertise. Adding to its subcontracting role, the team is now relishing its “freedom to create” – an instructive triumph in an era worried about the future of craftsmanship in the luxury and fashion industries, especially in France. Last but not least: the hotly anticipated show by *Sita Murt*, the iconic Barcelona brand that dressed Penelope Cruz in *Vicky Cristina Barcelona*. This was the brand’s first collection since the passing of its charismatic and locally beloved leader. After losing her husband, *Sita Murt* kept the family business alive by transforming *Esteve Aguilera SA* into her eponymous brand in 1984. Daughter of a tanner, she cultivated a passion for textiles from a very young age – much like *Iris Apfel*. Is it an early exposure to fine textiles that sparks an enthusiasm for quality and neutralizes the siren call of low production costs? *Iris Apfel* credits her grandmother with inspiring her love of fabrics before launching into an ode to woven beauty. Truer words were never spoken: “I love fabrics, I listen to each yarn,” she waxes poetically. “I hear music when I admire the yarn of beautiful fabric.” A famous weaver – none other than *Maité Tanguy* – put it similarly when talking about haute couture: “Still today, whenever I inspect clothing, I pay close attention to the fabric. Even if it’s the most beautiful piece ever created, if I don’t like the fabric, I won’t touch it.” Who could have a bigger influence in our world than a venerable icon of style? So let’s take her advice and take time to sharpen our eye to this small but infinitely important bit of material: yarn. *STÉPHANIE BUI*

[WWW.080BARCELONAFASHION.CAT/EN](http://WWW.080BARCELONAFASHION.CAT/EN)



1.



2.



3.

1. WOM&NOW 2. & 3. MIRIAM PONSA



4.



5.



7.



8.

CRASH 55.

4. & 5. JOSEP ABRIL 6.&7. ESCORPION 8. SITA MURT