

October 24, 2012.

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The Which and The Wardrobe

It was a full room for the finals of the Mercedes Benz Start Up fashion show at World MasterCard Fashion Week last night in Toronto. Energizing music pulsed throughout the room as everyone in attendance was greeted to a video of the designers that played before the show began.

The show kicked off with "I Am The Walrus" performed by The Beatles for finalist Lauren Bagliore. Being a Wild Card contestant she presented a collection of mixed fabrics and clean lines in neutrals paired with straight silhouettes and styles that cascade down the feminine figure.

Vancouver's Patty Nayel of Pure Magnolia was the second contestant whose work walked the runway, also being a Wild Card contestant. Adored were the evening dresses that had lace bodices and tulle bottoms with gold accessories. Some were adorned with a gem on a satin sash, while some dresses were satin and mesh for the more modern girl. A favourite dress from this collection was a white strapless with a black sheer overlay that cinched at the shoulder and had two strands of diamonds swooping across the back.

Fashion lovers were given a taste of Canada's East Coast with P.E.I.'s sibling design duo Hilary and Louanna Murphy from Dreamboat Lucy. The collection was very feminine with calm pastels and natural, flowing fabrics. They favoured jackets over eveningwear and metallics. Pastel kimonos and light maxi's donned the runway along with dress pants that slit mid-thigh. The soft lines paid homage to the sandy beaches of our shores.

Nicole Campre from Edmonton took to the runway next, bringing back the silhouette. Being Spring, pastels were popular along with sheer fabrics. Pleated silk pants and skirts were paired with casual knits creating a fresh, clean look. Straight lines favoured the figure and can go from night-to-day.

The crowd went wild for Toronto-based menswear designer Christopher Bates who seemed to be a crowd favourite. Gold zippers were embellishing pants and jackets. The lines were impeccable; his handiwork is to be admired. The final model gave a rose to a woman in the front row, which caused the audience to erupt into cheers. It was definitely well received.

Malorie Urbanovitch, also from Edmonton, brought high necklines and high waistlines through to another season with vengeance. Pastels and knits were widespread. The cool colours flattered the soft linen and silk fabrics used. The show was topped off with sheer rainwear for the more boundary-pushing of us.

Calgary-born, Toronto-based womenswear designer Caitlin Powers had her mom there cheering her on as her designs took the runway. Peplum skirts and shirts were paired with gold accents; armbands and headpieces were a popular choice. The reserved patterns and basic colours worked well in contrast to leather with metallics.

Lastly, but not least, came DUY. Duy Nguyen's tailored look was given a true Montrealer twist with high slits and playful dresses. Bright red was a popular choice

along with the tuxedo jacket and denim. Flowing skirts and fitted jackets with cutout pieces paraded the runway. His collection was very well received.

The judges came to a decision, but before the winner was announced JoAnne Caza (Director of Communications and PR at Mercedes Benz) delivered a speech. She stated that there are other cities that they are involving in the competition next: Calgary, Kitchener, LaValle, and Winnipeg. "Talent exists, and this is truly inspiring," said JoAnne Caza.

To present the winner judge Bernadette Morra, Editor-In-Chief at Flare Magazine, said it was not an easy decision by any means but that they had chosen Montreal's Duy Nguen's DUY.

Nguyen will make a return to the Fashion Week stage next year. As winner of the contest, he'll receive a fully produced solo runway show for fall 2013 collections next March in addition to editorial coverage in Fashion Magazine and mentorship support from fashion industry experts and insiders.