

## AKJP shows 'Florence' collection

Keith Henning and Jody Paulsen, aka AKJP, have shown an expanded, finessed version of the autumn/winter collection they took to Florence's Pitti Uomo on the SA Menswear Week AW16 runway in Cape Town. The design duo continued the references to artist Georgina Gratrix's art and impasto brushwork in the additional looks.

"We translated her art into fashion with textures such as jacquard and warm colours. What's more, Georgina's personal style is very spirited and idiosyncratic. She combines prints with all sorts of textures and bold accessories, and she really inspired us in all aspects. She is a dear friend and the collection is a celebration of our friendship," said Paulsen.



The 12 designs shown at Pitti Uomo formed the basis of the 36-piece collection they put together for SA Menswear Week 2016. Among the menswear was their new parka/raincoat designed with the Cape winter in mind. This speaks to the label's new focus on outer wear made from fabrics such as jacquard, cashmere, silk, wool, cotton, mohair, linen, twill and impala leather, which were manipulated and combined to create a wealth of textures and visual interest.

"A lot of work went into finding the right fabrics," said Paulsen. AKJP surprised by including 12 women's looks in the show. "We want to expand our range of outer wear for women and, as most of our clothes are unisex, we thought why not?," said the duo. "Call it our tomboy look."

### Catchy soundtrack

The joyful, fun designs were amplified by a catchy soundtrack that originated with Herbie Hancock's Watermelon Man and grew into a fun, funky mash-up with The Slits' version of I Heard It Through The Grapevine and Chameleon, another punchy jazz piece by Herbie Hancock. The result is an unpredictable backtrack that had the audience tapping their toes and which enhanced the hazy, lazy feel of the collection.

"The rhythms reminded us of the Amazon, the Congo and KwaZulu-Natal," said Henning and Paulsen. The designs are true to AKJP's signature artful take on classic and utilitarian menswear and make use of layering, asymmetric detailing and impactful styling. Reworked prints inspired by a jungle landscape in muted pistachio and shades of blue and red dominated the range, which includes a number of overcoats, culottes and overalls.



The duo describe the collection as "comfortable ready-to-wear pieces with a lush and tropical finish, a nod to Durban beach culture". To put together the looks, they worked with Vans footwear and Gisele Human of Waif Design. "We've been wearing Vans since we were students and are in love with their black-and-white skater-style sneakers - we wear them to work every day," said Paulsen.

Although the Waif jewellery was not designed specifically for the show, they did brief Human to make bigger versions of existing pieces to complement and amplify their designs. The oversized bags and clutches seen on the catwalk are AKJP designs too and will be available at their Kloof Street store along with once-off appliquéd versions. The accessories and the full autumn/winter range will be in store in April.

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