

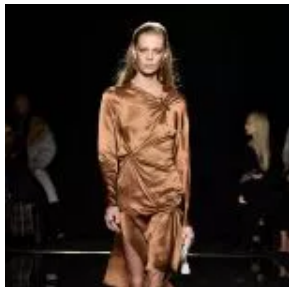



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Versace Pre-Fall 2019

Donatella Versace dug into the house archives for Versace's first show in New York.

By [Jessica Iredale](#) on December 3, 2018



 GALLERIES
Celebrity
Collection

Donatella Versace loves New York. She'll tell you herself, but now there's a [Versace](#) T-shirt that spells it out, too, combining the Medusa logo and Milton Glaser's iconic "I Love NY" state logo on a see-now-buy-now souvenir from the house's inaugural pre-fall show, staged where else but

Manhattan.

Years ago, Versace held a [Versus show in New York](#), and in 2011, the [Versace x H&M show](#) at which Prince performed was also held in town. But she pointed out that Sunday night's show was the first time there was a real deal Versace show in New York. She said there was symbolism to the date — Dec. 2, Gianni Versace's birthday — but not the venue — the American Stock Exchange. "It's not a reference to Capri Holdings," Versace said during a preview at the company's Columbus Circle offices a few days before the show, alluding to [September's \\$2.1 billion acquisition of Versace by Michael Kors Holdings](#), which resulted in a new name for the parent company — Capri Holdings Ltd.

The show and collection had nothing to do with the deal, but they did have a lot to do with their host city. Versace likes the energy. "There's freedom here. There's a clash of cultures. There's creativity," she said. There are also a lot of fond memories of time spent with her late brother Gianni in the town house at 5 East 64th Street he bought and lavishly renovated in 1995. "We had the house so New York was connected to me," Versace said. "I never sleep here. I'm never tired. I remember going to the clubs at five in the morning and walking in the snow in my high heels. I'm extreme. I like extremes."

VERSACE PRE-FALL 2019

 54 PHOTOS

That's how Versace approached the show, a collision of the many different walks of life — women and men; the show included a small men's capsule — one encounters in New York. They walked around a slick black set at the center of which was a gigantic gold replica of the Statue of Liberty's raised hand and torch. Working in archetypes — the glam girl, the party girl, the British girl, widows with passports — allowed Versace to touch on a range of ideas, reworking heritage pieces while broaching new territory for younger generations. Tying it all together was Versace's commitment to high gloss, high glamour extremes.

Kaia Gerber, in a shiny brown workwear jacket over a tawny knit crop top and liquid silk draped skirt, opened a series of slick, sensual yet polished neutrals. They were followed by black, yellow and gold iconic house prints refreshed with star patterns on scarf dresses, skirts, tops and leggings layered to cover the models in head-to-toe

bodycon pattern. There were reduxes of the famous spring 1994 safety-pin dress collection, and the candy-colored PVC Mod dresses of fall 1994, here, shown with clunky sneakers. A few ultra-glam girls came out under a mountain of cartoonish Barbarella hair. The widows, in their headscarves and sunglasses, draped in body-skimming jersey dresses slit to the hip, were ready to catch a flight with their logo luggage. More street-inspired looks mixed a bit of everything and accessorized it with T-shirts, logo fanny packs and sneakers. To close the show, there was Amber Valletta in the dress she originally wore in the spring 2000 show, and that Jennifer Lopez made extremely famous the next year at the Grammys. Instead of the original famous green tropical print, Versace redid the plunging scarf silhouette in hearts inspired by the Jim Dine art [Gianni Versace](#) commissioned for his town house. He used prints based on the paintings in his spring 1996 collection.

Nearly 20 years later, Valletta looked as goddess-like as she did the first time around. The dress, too, hasn't aged. For whatever reason, Versace's generous helping of archival looks — 1994, 1996, 2000 — while familiar, didn't feel dated. Maybe it's because the high-polish, did-not-wake-up-like-this look stands in refreshing contrast to the mass casualization and exaltation of streetwear we're all used to. Maybe it's because the time is right for Nineties designer nostalgia. Maybe it's just because Versace knows what she's doing. It worked.

A bit late to the itinerant mega-show party, this was Versace's first destination pre-season show. It won't be the last. She's thinking of doing resort in China, and maybe New York again next [pre-fall](#). Asked why she thinks staging a big show abroad is important for the pre-collections, Versace said, "Everything is an image today. You learn from an image. You buy from an image on your phone. You need to make the image." As for her thoughts on social media — Versace has 3.7 million Instagram followers on her personal account — she said, "It's the present and the future whether I like it or not. I still like to read books. You can do both. You can't forget that part of the culture. I think to succeed in the future, you have to know very well the past."

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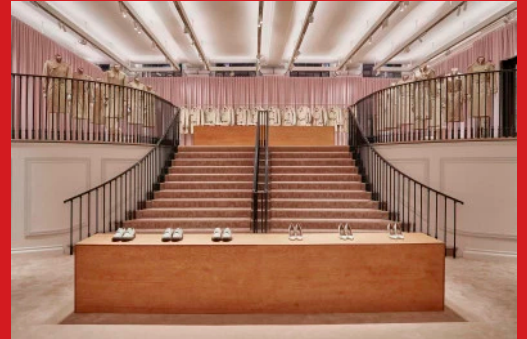
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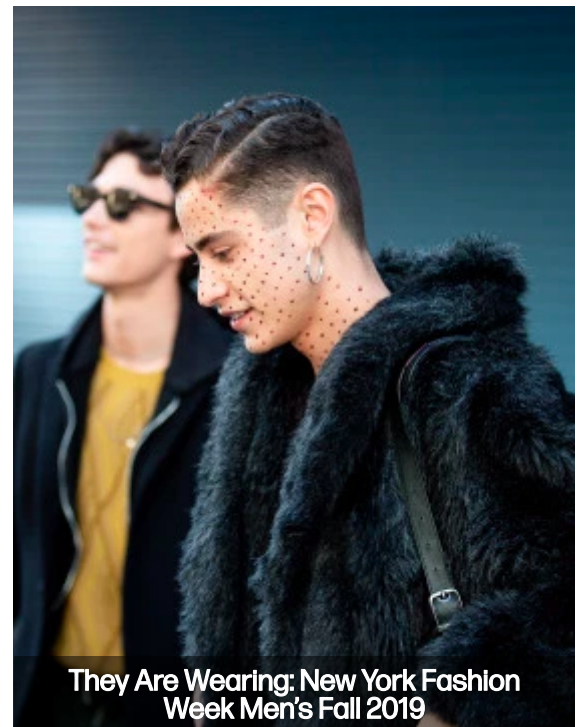
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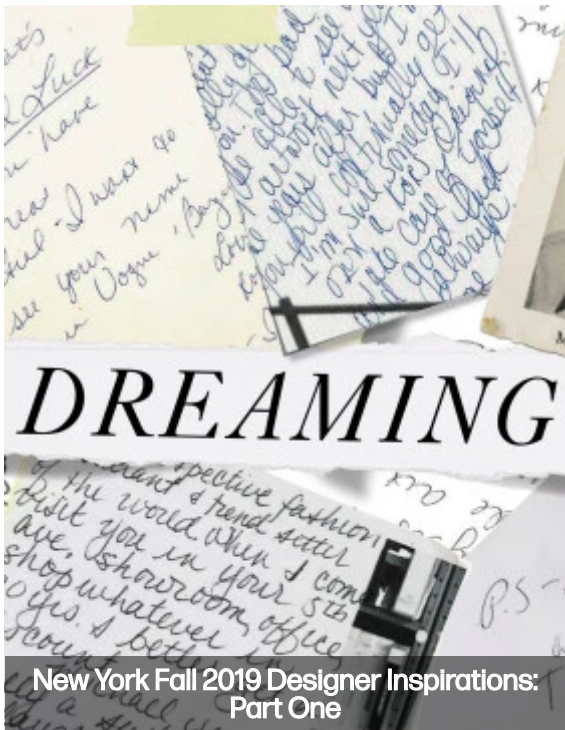
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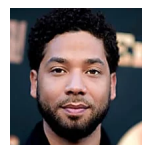
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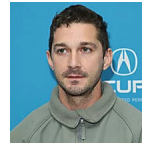
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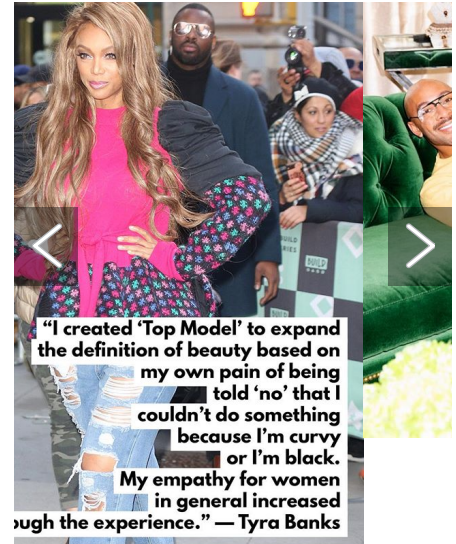


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