

A black and white photograph featuring two women lying down. The woman in the foreground is wearing a dark hoodie and has her hair pulled back. The woman behind her is also lying down, looking towards the camera. The word "DUNCAN" is overlaid in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters on the left side of the image.

DUNCAN

DUNCAN

Launched in the spring of 2019 in New York City, DUNCAN is a women's ready to wear brand that reimagines traditional tailoring while infusing unexpected adornments and details. Designed to be timeless, DUNCAN builds armor for women with edge who have gone corporate but also for those who prefer their tailoring with a hint of after dark glamour.

Complex and fearless women are the inspiration . Her idiosyncrasies and experiences are the obsession that inspire a juxtaposition in brand codes and designs:

Feminine & Masculine
Minimalism & Maximalism
Respect for Tradition & Love for Modernity

DUNCAN



Michelle Duncan is an American creative director and founder of her eponymous line DUNCAN.

She launched the brand while concurrently serving as the Global Collaborations & Creative Brand Strategy Lead at The Estee Lauder Companies.

As an executive in the prestige beauty industry, Michelle witnessed the modern woman at work, at home and at play: the boss, mother, wife, partner, friend, and confidante. Michelle designs for them.

DUNCAN represents Michelle's infatuation with the timeless, the provocative, the dark and the powerful.



DUNCAN



DUNCAN

Designed for the Multifaceted, Dynamic & Complex Woman.

She who exudes confidence and charisma – and fearlessly drives impact with poise, intellect, and creativity. She who unapologetically pushes boundaries of self-expression and success. She who seeks dark glamour and a hint of mystery.



DUNCAN

DUNCAN is designed in New York City with the most luxurious fabrics imported from Italy and Japan. The brand specializes in various weights of woven wool and precision cotton.

Each collection is inspired from elements of the past. Designed with a nod to traditional men's tailoring on Savile Row, garments are crafted with the same requirements and details from 20th & 19th century men's overcoats, morning jackets, royal uniforms and trousers. We infuse those core principles into the fits of modern DUNCAN dresses, jackets, trousers, tops and skirts.

Sharp tailoring is at the core of the DUNCAN ethos to enhance feminine features.

DUNCAN bends the traditional narrative by adorning many pieces with added details of crystals, beads, metal grommets and eyelets.



SPRING/SUMMER 2021 COLLECTION
RIGID. REPETITION. RELEASE.



SPRING/SUMMER 2021 COLLECTION
RIGID. REPETITION. RELEASE.



FALL/WINTER 2020 COLLECTION
WITH ELLEN VON UNWERTH



FALL/WINTER 2020 COLLECTION

WITH ELLEN VON UNWERTH



VOGUE



NEW YORK FASHION WEEK

Wondering How To Work As A Beauty Executive And Have A Fashionable Side Hustle? Just Ask Michelle Duncan

BY ALICE CARY
16 SEPTEMBER 2020



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Multitasking is Michelle Duncan's forté. Working as the Global Partnerships, Collaborations and Creative Brand Strategy Lead at Estée Lauder is her nine-to-five, and running her own fashion label, Duncan, is a side hustle. As she puts it: "Some people go home and watch Netflix, but I go home and work on my brand."

Launching your own label hardly compares to chilling out on the sofa with a binge-worthy series in the background and dinner on the go, but for Michelle, being busy is what makes her tick. "People who train for triathlons don't press pause on their day jobs," she laughs. Weekends and evenings (work commences in the early hours) are reserved for time with her husband. "Everyone needs to switch off," she says.



A look from the Duncan
spring/summer 2021
collection.

Like many, Michelle found herself with ample downtime when lockdown was imposed in New York, where she is based. But instead of embracing trending hobbies such as baking banana bread, perfecting sourdough and perambulating around parks, she spent the quieter months working remotely on her spring/summer 2021 collection. Naturally, the whole experience inspired her creative process. "It was an extraordinarily personal journey that I took. What I find most interesting is that I feel like every other person on this planet also felt this experience too," she tells British *Vogue*.

Designers have faced numerous difficulties as a result of the pandemic – be it production, manufacturing, sourcing, social-distancing, or simply the fact that a team cannot unite and work together. Despite the complexities of this season, Michelle believes spring/summer 2021 is her "most special".



A look from the Duncan
spring/summer 2021
collection.

DOCUMENT

Above The Fold

The devil wears Duncan: Office-approved styles to relive your goth days



Text by
Biz Sherbert

Posted
September 15, 2020

Full of sublime contradictions, Michelle Duncan's latest collection is the post-quarantine power uniform

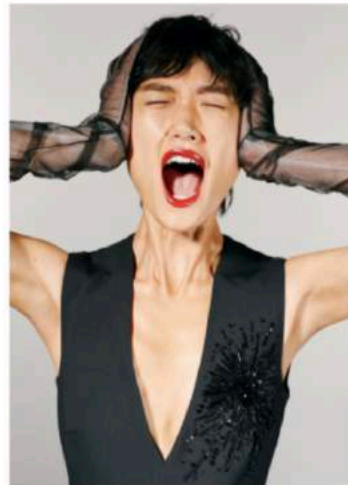
We all miss the 90s, maybe a little bit more now than ever, and Michelle Duncan makes it possible to relive our goth days—and not just on the weekend or nights out. DUNCAN's Spring/Summer 2021 collection is just as well-suited for a typical Tuesday in the office as it is for a party under a silvery full moon.

As is characteristic of the New York based brand, DUNCAN's latest collection offers simple and well-tailored silhouettes juxtaposed with unexpected moody details. Think a pair of smart black trousers finished with a double row of dancing silver eyelets. Metal hardware is essential to DUNCAN's "goth girl gone corporate" look—fixed to the pleats of mid-length skirts and strewn across the shoulders of a sleek jacket.



This collection is also deeply personal to Duncan, who founded the luxury womenswear brand in 2019. Its theme is informed by Duncan's own experience with the intense monotony of quarantine. Rather than succumbing to the drain of endless repetition, she found a spark of creative inspiration in the darkest of those days. That pivotal shift motivated Duncan to build her Spring/Summer 2021 collection, centered around the mantra "Rigid. Repetition. Release."

Duncan possesses an uncanny talent for reimagining the minutiae of everyday wardrobe essentials. The result is a collection of sublime contradictions—refined watercooler frocks worn with opera-length mesh gloves and Dr. Martens, crisp pleated skirts that end with the perfect amount of spider-webby fray, and a two-piece tartan ensemble that features an ultra-flared kilt. A favorite is a pair of toeless sheer socks, worn with walkable block heels.



WWD

RUNWAY / 2021 SPRING READY-TO-WEAR / NEW YORK / DUNCAN

Duncan RTW Spring 2021

Michelle Duncan's spring collection successfully juxtaposed the ideas of conservative, uniform dress with a darker, edgier spirit.

By **Emily Mercer** on September 14, 2020



VIEW GALLERY - 13 PHOTOS

GALLERIES

Collection

Michelle Duncan, the New York designer and founder of emerging women's ready-to-wear label, Duncan, debuted her spring collection via a short film titled "Rigid. Repetition.

Release." Set to the music of Ladytron, Duncan once again successfully presented a tightly edited selection of garments that juxtapose the ideas of conservative, uniform dress with a darker, edgier spirit — or "goth girl gone corporate."

Incorporating the ideas of repetition, the designer doubled down on former silhouettes and reinterpreted them into a "pared back version of dressing up," in cotton twills, poplin and light wool. In a palette of mostly stark black and white, pleating, strong tailoring and the signature Duncan plaid — inspired by the designer's Scottish heritage — were all key to the collection. The season's best looks included classic, structured silhouettes with grittier details, like a crisp men's tuxedo shirt with metal grommets back decoration, a modest black pleated skirt with metal hardware details or prim, mid-length dresses with pleated collars and cuffs.

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NEW YORK SPECIAL EDITION


 Spring
2021

Duncan

Michelle Duncan, the New York designer and founder of emerging women's ready-to-wear label, Duncan, debuted her spring collection via a short film titled "Rigid. Repetition. Release." Set to the music of Ladytron, Duncan once again successfully presented a tightly edited selection of garments that juxtapose the ideas of conservative, uniform dress with a darker, edgier spirit — or "girl-gone corporate."

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Private Policy

"What we really want to talk about this season is redefining beauty standards, for self-confidence, how we perceive ourselves and also how we build a more diverse community," Siying Qu said.

The video she and Hiran Li debuted, filtered through a Nineties minimalistic gloss, focused on inclusivity through diverse casting with Marsha Elle and Yvesmark Chery, who Qu noted as muses who "helped us embrace our own uniqueness," as well as a softened, less tough approach for the brand known for streetwear and utility.

"After this heavy year of the pandemic, in spring we would love to have this healing feeling, more calmness, refreshness," she added. Soft harnesses and harness vests topped off gender-ambiguous hoodies and button-downs, while newly introduced drapes and a soft palette of lilac and seafoam green indicated a more lighthearted attitude.

They played with genderless styling by dressing different models in the same looks, highlighting how edgy vegan leather pants with zip-off legs, relaxed suiting or different trenchcoats had broad appeal. As another way to redefine standards of beauty, the designers abstracted Aphelie's typically singular image into a sketch-like embroidery on a button-down and bomber jacket, or onto a playful silk organza slipdress that brought together all the colors of the collection. — *Andrew Shang*

Tadashi Shoji

"There are flowers in the snowmelt; there is sunshine after the storm," designer Tadashi Shoji's spring 2020 show notes read, ahead of his digital collection debut. Emulating the "rebirth of spring," the designer presented a positive, vibrant collection of his quintessential eveningwear.

Spring blooms were abundant and came embroidered, printed and in burnout velvet. The designer also played up textures through lace insets and dramatic flair with voluminous sleeves. For instance, a standout black floral jacquard v-neck midlength with rose-draped sleeves or a petal pink burnout velvet frock with tropical, leafy motif and pouched shoulders. Overall, the collection flaunted the lushness of spring with a playful spirit. — *E.M.*



Duncan



Tadashi Shoji



Private Policy



BAZAAR

New York Fashion Week's Best Looks

Tracking all the standouts from this season's top collections.

BY KERRY PIERI, BARRY SAMAHA, CARRIE GOLDBERG, ALISON S. COHN, AND LEAH MELBY CLINTON / SEP 14 2020, 1:30 PM EDT

NYC is the city of dreams, and the first one out of the gate for Fashion Month. See what the city's designers have to offer for Spring 2021 with the five best looks from each standout collection.



Duncan

Michelle Duncan is an Estée Lauder exec who balances her day job with her side hustle designing Duncan, a buzzy line for "the goth girl gone corporate" carried exclusively on Matchesfashion. For Spring 2021 it seems Duncan is banking on a return to office, with a collection that focuses on her brand's core silhouettes, figure-flattering and precisely tailored dresses and separates with unexpected details like grommets and beadwork to liven up the boardroom. And for those of us still working from home, one of her origami-pleated dresses with a sunburst embellishment at the V-neckline would also look pretty great from the waist up on Zoom. —Alison S. Cohn



THE ZOE REPORT

How New Designers At New York Fashion Week Are Navigating Their Debut In 2020

By [Gina Marinelli](#) | Sep. 11, 2020

Like an invitation to a questionably distanced end-of-summer barbecue, the beginning of New York Fashion Week, following months of upheaval and uncertainty across the city, can feel a little unsettling. This season, editors and buyers will be scrutinizing the Spring/Summer 2021 collections through a screen as flashy celeb-filled front rows are nonexistent. However, a dose of something beautiful, imaginative, and exciting is far from unwelcome right now. And for the [new designers at New York Fashion Week](#), it's still important to participate for this exact reason.

While New York's shows have historically included under-the-radar, fresh-out-of-design-school talents, it's also known for big star power like Marc Jacobs, Michael Kors, and Ralph Lauren. Last month, when CFDA released its official Fashion Week calendar, these names were absent but a slew of new ones could be found. Among them, a sustainable denim label based in Harlem, a colorful collection out of Brooklyn inspired by the designer's Jamaican roots, and a fresh, contemporary line of beautifully draped silhouettes from an industry vet.

"We are excited to see 15 new American brands on the schedule — many for the first time — who might not have had the opportunity to share their collections to a global audience without access to RUNWAY360," says Steven Kolb, Chief Executive Officer of the CFDA, in a press release, referencing the digital platform where NYFW will take place.

For some designers, seeing their name on the calendar is a dream realized. So, despite the extra procedures and precautions to produce a lookbook or stream a runway show, these emerging labels are showing up in 2020, even if the audience is staying home. And that's not the only reason they're worth paying attention to. Ahead, meet some of the most exciting additions to NYFW this year, and hopefully, for many seasons to come.

NYFW's New Designers: Duncan



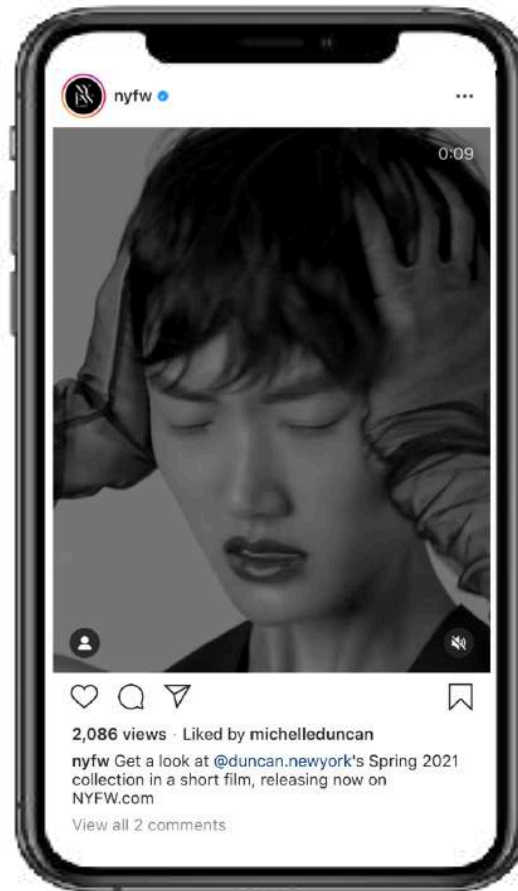
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FASHION

Ok, Fashion. What Happens Now In The Coronavirus Pandemic?

Our world is in free fall. How is the industry navigating these troubled waters?

MARCH 30, 2020



Investing in Tomorrow

The economic and manufacturing realities of COVID-19 start now. But what about its aesthetic and visual impact in the years to come? "It's going to be a creative mindf*ck," says **Michelle Duncan**, the **Estée Lauder** executive turned fashion designer whose first collection of goth-tinged classics sold out of **Matches Fashion** in less than a week—and whose first-ever prefall collection was just scrapped due to the pandemic. "If you look back at the Surrealists, the Cubists, the pop artists even—those people had seen war. The creativity was an output of the chaos in the world. I'm not saying this is the same experience; we're thankfully not in the World War 1 trenches. But you can't deny this period is its own strange trauma, even if you're lucky enough to be healthy. How will we manifest our creativity? What kind of exceptions will be made to every creative rule? We're all feeling strong emotions and we're probably not ready to create things just yet. But I believe we will be, and it will be our responsibility to create the most amazing things possible. This is who I am; this is who we are. I see no other way."

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There's one common thread: community.
There's one common thread: community.
By **Andrew Shang** and **Emily Mercer** on March 27, 2020

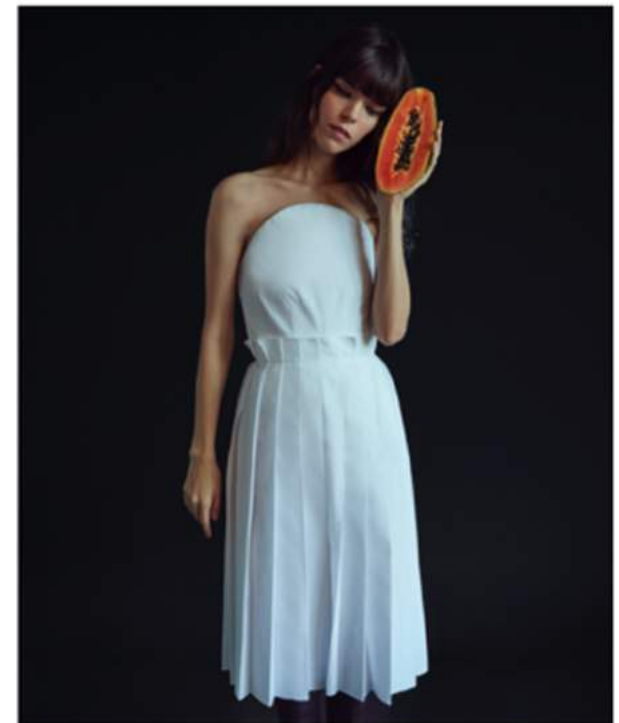
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Courtesy Images

We remain extremely optimistic and vigilant on the future. In this time, the Duncan brand ethos is more relevant than ever before and we will continue to create armor for the multifaceted female. I pride myself on being a businesswoman *and* a designer/creative director; we are prudently redirecting investment rather than slowing investment. We also see this as an opportunity to fearlessly adapt and accelerate into the turn. Most importantly, we look forward to continuing to serve Duncan females around the world.

Michelle Duncan, founder, Duncan



A look from Duncan. Courtesy

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MARGARET ZHANG

1.1 M followers



NOOR TAGOURI

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LOUISE ROE

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CHARLOTTE GROENEVELD

528K followers





DOCUMENT



Text by
Julia Cumming
Photography by
All Verhaeghe
Produced
February 16, 2020

Savile Row tailoring for a New York nightclub: why downtown's coolest girls all love DUNCAN

Julia Cumming takes designer Michelle Duncan to her favorite East Village record store, where the pair discuss Karen O, Ladytron, and why a timeless suit is as rock n' roll as it gets.

Which came first, the dress that inspired the song, or the song that inspired the dress? Fashion and music have been in a constant dance with each other seemingly forever, and I feel that there is less judgement about this connection than ever before. Kids are unafraid to plaster both photos from their record sleeves and the pages of *Vogue* on their walls. So when my friend Michelle (founder and designer of DUNCAN New York) told me her Fall/Winter 2020 collection was inspired by artists like Ladytron and Karen O, I knew the perfect place to discuss it was my favorite record shop, Academy Records on Avenue A.


When we meet up, it's a few days before Michelle's second NYFW presentation—a candlelit dinner at Waverly Inn—and one year since the brand's debut at Mission Chinese. "I launched with the intention that this is what I have always wanted to do—this is my passion and my dream, and this is finally the time I'm doing it, and let's see what happens!" Michelle says as we grab coffees around the corner from Academy. "I made all of the samples in my size in case everyone was like, 'Oh, this is complete shit! Get this out of my face.' [At least] I could be like, 'Well, I have some clothes that I like and I can wear!'" She now makes clothes in sample size, but DUNCAN's DNA is still the same—very sexy, very mysterious, very intense, and definitely not to be fucked with.



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Ones to watch: the 12 NYFW designers you need to know - in pictures


From a brand inspired by Lisa Minnelli to another that draws inspiration from the pharmaceutical industry for its latest collection, New York's new guard is full of exciting names to put on your radar

By Amy
Read 12 Feb 2020 11:40 EST

Who: Private Policy

What: Known for putting the spotlight on Black models, who have a cult youth following, as having a rebellious spirit. Last collection featured all Black models in a range of styles, with the latest showing the inspiration from the past style of the pharmaceutical industry. The brand incorporated elements from medical industry uniforms, including lab coats, lab coats, lab coats and more. (source: www.privatepolicy.com)


The brand's previous collections, which inspired the new guard, were a real combination of a number of styles through the brand's portfolio. All are



Who: Duncan

What: Designer Michelle Duncan has two jobs, one as Estée Lauder's global partnership and creative strategy leader and the other as a fashion designer. Her designs are classic tailoring with a twist, thanks to unexpected accents. Past collections were inspired by her father's Scottish heritage and saw exquisitely cut tailoring in autumnal tartan with a punk edge. For AW20, Duncan hosted a dinner and dressed her guests in her latest collection, entitled The Witching Hour. **Who wears it:** Noor Tagouri, Ellen Von Unwerth. **Where can I buy it:** [matchesfashion.com](https://www.matchesfashion.com)

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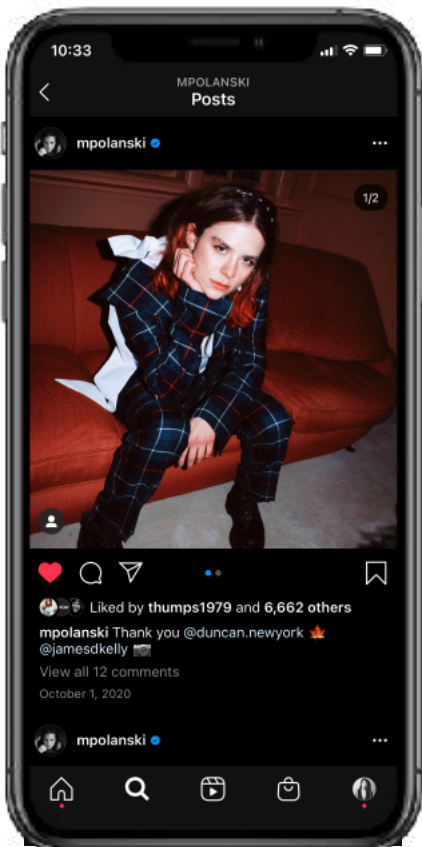


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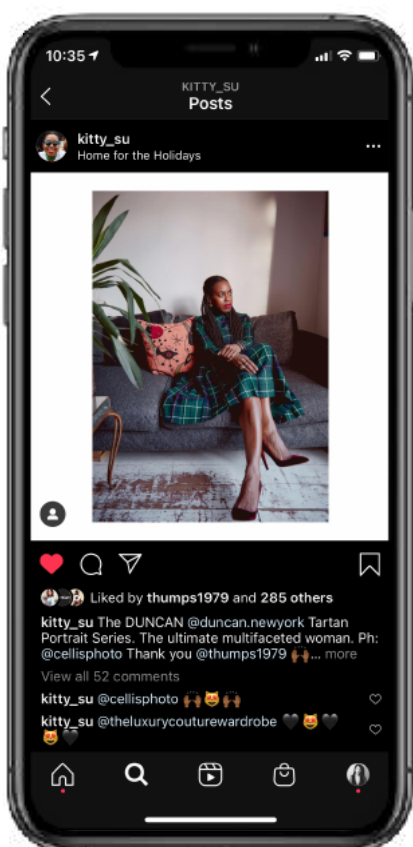
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VOGUE

FASHION BEAUTY CULTURE LIVING RUNWAY SHOPPING VIDEO

Duncan Celebrated Its Goth-y New Collection With a Candlelit Dinner at the Waverly Inn



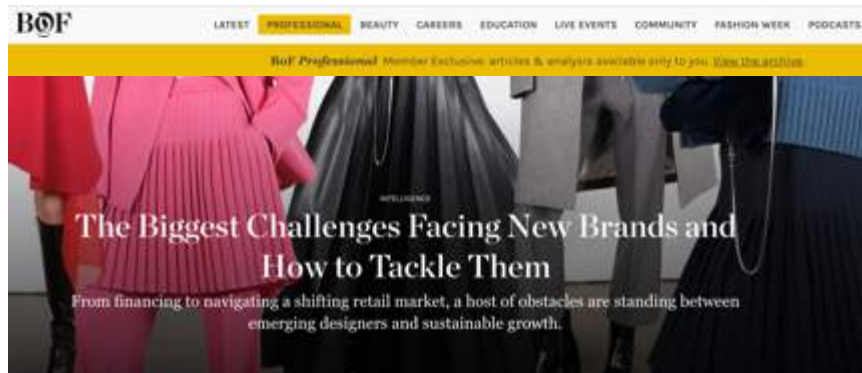
BY DANIELLE HAER
February 10, 2020

"Be careful, it's a full moon tonight!" joked Ellen von Unwerth, the German-born fashion photographer and retired model. She was playing cohost with Michelle Duncan, the New York-based designer (and, by day, an Estée Lauder exec) who launched her eponymous label just last year. On Sunday evening, there were two items on the agenda: celebrate the brand's first birthday and toast its enchanting fall 2020 collection, titled *The Witching Hour*. And this was done so in the most fitting of ways—with a full-moon dinner at the Waverly Inn, in the presence of friends and fans.

In the midst of New York Fashion Week, Duncan and Von Unwerth called guests to the 175-year-old bordello-turned-eatery, where the ivy-stretched patio would serve as the backdrop for the dinner. It's located a stone's throw from the shows taking place in Tribeca, and Duncan opted for a much less formulaic version of Fashion Week (and



Photo: Raul Tovar



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COMMENT

BoF Professional Exclusive

BY ZOE SUEN
FEBRUARY 13, 2020 09:20

549

NEW YORK, United States — When Rachel Comey started her namesake ready-to-wear brand in 2001, fashion design wasn't a popular career path. "The scene felt much smaller. There were fewer fashion week shows, fewer brands, no such thing as direct-to-consumer and no social media," the New York-based designer said.

Nineteen years on, launching and running a brand has become a different ballgame. The emergence of digital platforms and support from industry prizes, incubation programmes and major retailers have made room for young creatives like [Craig Green](#) and [Jonathan Anderson](#) to grow their businesses on a global scale. But a smoother entry into the market for fledgling brands also makes standing out much trickier, and even the most gifted designers aren't guaranteed a successful business. In a climate incessantly hungry for the "next big thing," pressures placed on newcomers can be invigorating at best, paralysing at worst.

"There might be a lot of opportunities for brands starting out right now," Comey added. "People crave newness, but the memory span is very short."

Below, BoF steps through the stumbling blocks most likely to derail fashion graduates and aspiring creative directors from launching a successful fashion business.

Focus on Building a Business Plan

Kuryshchuk suggests teaming up with a partner who will be just as committed to the company; Michelle Duncan, founder of one-year-old ready-to-wear label Duncan, recommends designers seek out mentors in the industry.

Ultimately, there's comfort in the fact that a degree of naivety can work in a designer's favour. "When you know too much, you become scared of the potential downfall," Do said. "If you don't know enough, you just go out and do it."



1. Duncan

EveningStandard.

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Fashion

The cool new fashion brands to know

Brand new

KAREN GACRE, Tuesday 14 January 2020 19:04 · 6 comments



Dress, £687, [matchesfashion.com](https://www.matchesfashion.com)

This punky New York label combines Manhattan sass with a rock 'n' roll attitude and a dash of Scottish flare. It is the brain child of Estée Lauder boss Michelle Duncan —who heads up the beauty giant's global partnerships strand alongside designing her fledgling fashion label — and combines everything from figure-hugging silhouettes to tartan trousers, with epic results. A self-confessed Caledoniaphile — inspired by her father's heritage — Duncan works with British fabrics that sit beautifully among next season's muted palette. The label, brought to the UK by [matchesfashion.com](https://www.matchesfashion.com), will appeal to those who like a feminine silhouette with a rebellious edge

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JULIA CUMMING
58.7 K followers



RICHIE SHAZAM
47.9 K followers



COCO GORDON MOORE
32.8 K followers



SARAH HOOVER
20.9 K followers





It's a truism that, in fashion, everything old is new again. But how, exactly, are we supposed to incorporate elements of bygone styles without accidentally lurching into a kind of clumsy costume? This was the concern of the wildly popular women's magazine *The Lady's Book* in 1830, which advised readers that when "attempting to engraft any part of the attire of olden times upon modern styles...much discretion and judgment are required." The writer went on to caution, "We should not snatch, but select." This voice—reasoned, sophisticated—warns against the excesses of unbridled enthusiasm, and it seems to have been heeded recently as designers have turned for inspiration to goth, a youth-associated subculture not exactly famous for its restraint.

For the recent 2020 season, designers never snatched, but selected, from a range of gothic tropes in a way that felt less Lydia Deetz and more adulating-appropriation. At Louis Vuitton, there was Nicolas Ghesquière's interpretation of the subculture's mid-'80s heights—black pinstripes narrowly skimming a waif waist, with power shoulders writing to expose the mortal frame beneath—and at Gucci, an austere, ankle-covering black dress with luxurious ebony fur fur trim. The latter look could easily have met with the approval of Sarah Josepha Hale, who became editor of the renamed *Godey's Lady's Book* in 1837—and who, after the death of her husband, wore only black dresses offset with a white collar, in part to display her lifelong grief, and in part because she knew it was a combination in which she looked stunning.

Perhaps we could say that, in 2019, goth likes to play with lightness in the dark. That's certainly the case for up-and-coming designer Michelle Duncan, who juggles designing her goth-imbued line, Duncan, with her full-time job at Estée Lauder. Duncan says the best-selling item from her debut collection was the Exploding Heart dress, a pointed-collar piece with a blaze of "bleeding" red beads and sequins spreading across the wearer's heart and right sleeve—for the Siouxsie and the Banshees fan hiding in the C-suite. Her definition of goth includes touches of whimsy. "If you don't have a sense of humor," she says, "if we all take ourselves so seriously, then what's the point?"

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Can a Grown Woman Wear Goth Fashion?

This season, luxury labels including Prada and Valentino are proposing dark, gothic looks. Though it's long been a style reserved for angsty teens, now adults—with jobs—are getting in on the goth action



By Nancy MacDonell

Sept. 26, 2019 2:09 pm ET

SAVE PRINT TEXT

WHEN MICHELLE DUNCAN showed her first collection at New York fashion week in February, she didn't anticipate being in the vanguard of one of the season's dark-horse trends. A beauty-industry executive by day, she drew on her own personal style for the line, creating an aesthetic she christened "goth girl gone corporate." The collection featured fitted, heavy wool dresses in sober colors, a half-pleated tartan skirt and a sooty, high-collared coat with an ankle-skimming hemline trimmed in peacock feathers that would befit an Edward Gorey heroine. Like Ms. Duncan herself on most days, the model featured on the brand's site was made up with black-rimmed eyes and red lipstick.

This season, the same sophisticated, dark romanticism Ms. Duncan referenced held sway in Milan and Paris, where goth signifiers like Victorian-style tailoring, black lace, rose prints, plaids, studs, chunky lace-up boots and black leather galore infused collections by Prada, Valentino, Alexander McQueen and Bottega Veneta. Some brands—say, the Vampire's Wife and Simone Rocha—regularly weave these signifiers into their collections. But when the big houses march in lockstep, something is afoot.





Forbes

Meet Michelle Duncan, A Beauty Exec By Day And Fashion Designer By Night



Rebecca Suhrawardi Contributor @
Style & Beauty

If you want to see an exemplary example of a multitasker, look no further than Michelle Duncan. She's the founder of the fashion line DUNCAN, a womenswear collection that's contributing its own vocabulary on how the modern woman should dress.

While her brand is young—it's only in its second season—it already has a legion of influential supporters including creative and art world cool girls Jen Brill and Sarah Hoover, fashion world staples Leigh Lezark, Vanessa Traina, and Michael Avedon, VOGUE editors like Sally Singer as well as significant fashion influencers like Diet Prada.

The most enviable thing about her accomplishment is that she's managed to do this in addition to her high-powered day job as the Global Partnership, Collaborations and Creative Brand Strategy Lead at the Estée Lauder Companies (ELC).

"Some people in their personal life train for triathlons, some binge watch Netflix. I choose to design clothes," says the designer-cum-executive.



DUNCAN is known for its edge, melding femininity and softness with dark glamour.



A look from DUNCAN's latest collection, DUNCAN

Women have far more responsibility than any other time in history, going from work to after work meetings, to looking after the family or pursuing high-demand hobbies in their spare time. This means many newly-launched fashion brands are by women, like Ms. Duncan, who want to address the demands of the modern female. They have a vision, see a white space, and dive in.

"DUNCAN is for all women but in particular for the ones with edge, or who aspire to have a bit of edge," she says. "It's for the female who has a demanding day schedule but who is also for the night and can wear these pieces in both settings."

The collection's silhouettes are highly-tailored and structured, in dark tones with elements and details like feathers, buttons and studs. This aesthetic has earned the line the title-in-jest of the brand for goth girls gone corporate because it's the epitome of dark glamour in the world of American fashion known for the beautiful, ethereal and/or minimal.

Although DUNCAN is hardly the Morticia Addams or Robert Smith sort of goth, instead, it embodies the aesthetic through its darker tones coupled with a contemporary take on silhouettes that feel as though they hail from another era. Think tailored silhouettes with nipped waists, pleated midi-length hems, long-sleeves and flat collars melded with softness, sultriness, and femininity. It's for the sort of women who are looking for an alternative, yet appropriate, way to dress day-to-day—a little naughty with the nice.



Greetings from New York Fashion Week, where the heels are high, the ambitions are higher, and the models vaping backstage? Well... let's leave that one alone. Every day, we'll share an unfiltered take on our favorite runway moments, likely written on the Notes App in an Uber at 2 am. How's that for authenticity?

Is it possible to be jealous of a coat? Not jealous of a woman in a coat, but like, “Gosh, that coat’s really got its shit together. Super cool, still polished. It’s like the fashion version of the grown woman I’ve never quite become.” No? Just me? Anyway, at Duncan the coats were insane, along with some dance-worthy dresses that skimmed nicely between “the girl who’s always invited” and “the woman who’s never cared less.” Courtney Love—who’s basically both—wore the label today in Tribeca, a nice coda for the brand-new brand.

Duncan



Duncan's Fall / Winter 2020 coat of dreams

SARAH KIENZOL

INTELLIGENCE | THE CUT | CULTURE | CROSS STREET | *New York* | THE STRATEGIST | THE MAGAZINE

THE CUT

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Courtney Love Is Thinking About the Amazon Rain Forest at Fashion Week

By Brock Colyar



Courtney Love in a DUNCAN coat. Photo: James Devaney/Getty Images

Last night at the Plaza Hotel, the worldwide editors of *Harper's Bazaar* celebrated their annual "ICONS by Carine Roitfeld" party to kick off New York Fashion Week in a blur of sequins, celebrity appearances, and Moët.

The fête celebrated the magazine's ICONS issue, which featured Celine Dion, Christy Turlington, Regina King, Kate Moss, Alek Wek, Shailene Woodley, Awkwafina, Lakeith Stanfield, and Devon Aoki this year: a diverse(ish) lineup of stars for a party consisting mostly of white people in evening attire. For the most part, the evening was full of lighthearted revelry (with no shoes thrown at anyone else this year), with

Woodley, asked about her best and worst fashion-week moments, declaring, "I just *really* love life."

But Courtney Love, '90s icon and Hole singer, was thinking about the environment.



Courtney Love in a DUNCAN coat. Photo: James Devaney/Getty Images

222 Designers on Their Spring/Summer Inspirations

By Andrew Nguyen

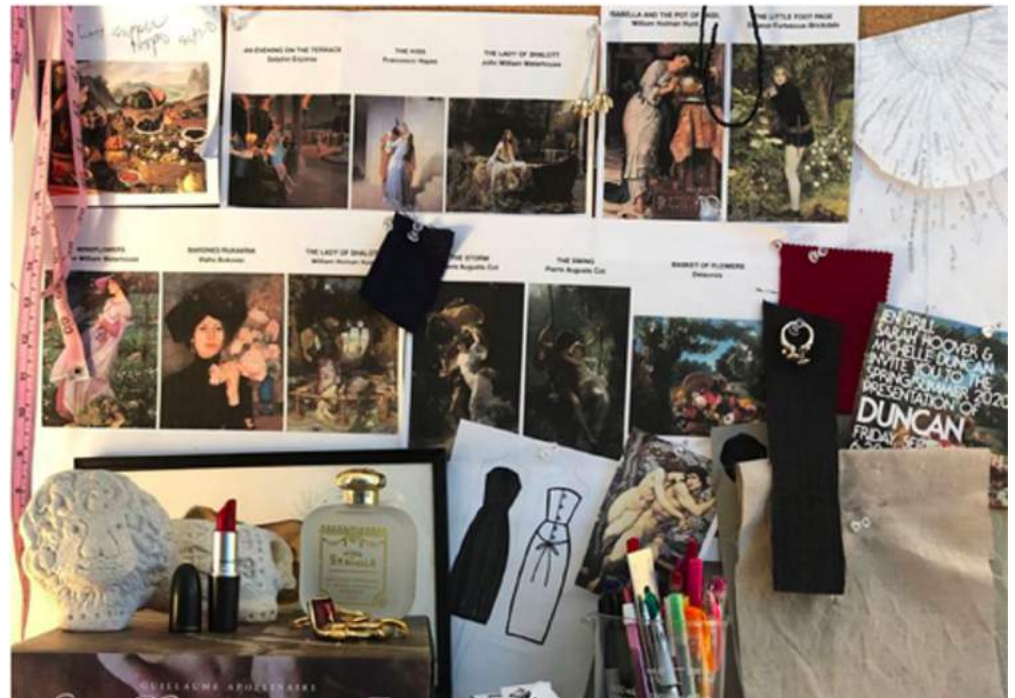
SEPTEMBER 6, 2019



Photo: The Cut

It's that time! To kick off New York Fashion Week, the Cut asked 174 designers to choose just one word and one image to describe their new collections, giving us a mood-board preview of what we'll see on the runways. This season, identity and self-empowerment are being celebrated by designers like Kate Spade, Sally LaPointe, and No Sesso, who chose "self-expression," "power," and "resilience."

Duncan Darkly
romantic. Photo:
Courtesy of Duncan



DUNCAN FEMALES

Ellen Von Unwerth
ELLEN VON UNWERTH.
PHOTOGRAPHER



PAMELA LOVE
JEWELRY DESIGNER





By definition, Hot Girl Summer shouldn't have involved cashmere. Then came Khaite.

The emerging label nabbed a win last week, when Katie Holmes wore its dust-colored wool bralette and cardigan while out shopping in Manhattan. Thin, rich, and bronze-shouldered, Holmes vibrated with the power of '70s Jackie O. and '90s Liv Tyler. Designer Cate Holstein gained more power of her own, propelling her into New York Fashion Week with increased [Instagram](#) followers, style editor [fawnings](#), and an energy ripe for Haute Girl Fall.

Said quality can also be found at Duncan, the 6-month-old line from Estée Lauder executive Michelle Duncan. "We get our tartans from actual Scottish mills because we want it to be sustainable, and to support a local economy, and to last forever," the designer says. "It's not supposed to be trendy. It's supposed to fit you like armor. You wear it because it makes you strong, and strength isn't a one-season thing. It's forever."

The mission of longevity threads through other female-led brands at Fashion Week, including in the designs of Carly Cushnie, Mansur Gavriel, Rosie Assoulin, and Zero Maria Cornejo, all of whom eschew trend cycles in favor of artisan-made materials, timeless silhouettes, and color stories so dynamic that they transcend seasons. As Tracy Reese said of her own [newly relaunched collection](#), "I don't want you to buy something from me and then get tired of it. I want you to buy something from me and have it become a part of *you*."

FLVRS

Michelle Duncan Is Balancing Her Day Job at Estée Lauder With a New Project: Her Own Line of Dresses



BY EMILY WEISS
February 14, 2020

Even on the chilliest days of New York Fashion Week, it wasn't unusual to see a girl in a flowery silk dress, a bohemian maxi skirt, or something else breezy and diaphanous (styled with boots and tights, hopefully). That wanderlust-y look has transcended runway trends and become the cornerstone of many women's wardrobes—but it's really not Michelle Duncan's vibe. In fact, [her new collection](#) of dresses is the complete inverse. She describes them as "heavy," with thick, substantial fabrics that "make you feel like you're going out in the world with armor." They're curve-hugging and precisely tailored, with long sleeves, nipped waists, and box pleats. There's something a little punk about the tartan schoolgirl skirt, while a strict coat trimmed with beads and feathers could easily go black tie.

It all mirrors Duncan's own style, which is happily disconnected from whatever's happening on the runways. She wears exclusively black and white (with occasional pops of red, usually in the form of lipstick), collects Alaïa, and is rarely without a flick of liquid eyeliner. She's the first to tell you she has zero fashion experience: As the global partnerships and creative strategy lead at Estée Lauder (overseeing both Estée Lauder and brands under its umbrella, such as MAC, Bobbi Brown, Clinique, and La Mer), she says it's her experience in makeup that informed her new line. "Beauty and fashion have the same philosophy—you're empowering women," she explained at Estée Lauder's Fifth Avenue HQ (which might have the best views in all of Manhattan). "In the past few years, I've been building and building what I wanted to do and trying to gain the knowledge and experience.



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Photo: Courtesy of Duncan



VOGUE

FASHION BEAUTY CULTURE LIVING RUNWAY SHOPPING VIDEO

A Flock of Cool Girls Celebrated the Launch of Womenswear Label Duncan



BY USAR RAMO
February 11, 2019

Michelle Duncan is a very busy woman. Her LinkedIn will tell you she oversees global partnerships, brand creative strategy, and talent at The Estée Lauder Companies Inc. But Saturday night, a select few were privy to another one of her ventures: the launch of Duncan, a line of women's ready-to-wear.

To celebrate Duncan's debut, cool girls Jen Brill and Sarah Hoover gathered a discerning crowd (Colby Mugrabi, Leigh Lezark, Mark Guiducci, Vanessa Traina, Cate Holstein, and Michael Avedon, to name a few) at Mission Chinese for cocktails. If the restaurant, beloved for its Chinatown quirk and live shrooms, was lacking in well-dressed attendees (it wasn't), the Duncan-wearing mannequins that lined the room added a little something extra. A row of "ladies" wore neatly pleated woolen dresses, prim coats embellished with peacock-feather trim, and plaid Catholic-schoolgirl skirts reworked with added lengths. "It's for goth girls who grew up and are taking over the boardrooms," joked Duncan. Of entering the fashion realm, the beauty executive noted it wasn't such a departure: "The worlds of fashion and beauty are one in the same."

The cohosts were singing Duncan's praises. Hoover sported a T-shirt printed with the brand's name in bold lettering, while Brill lauded Duncan for having the



Photo: Paul Tovar

The playful crowd



Whether it's high school or haute couture, the new kids always spark buzz. It's partly because it's fun to be first—I knew that band before anyone cared; I wore that label before anyone knew—and partly because we've all been there, just starting out, wondering where we belong and whether our dreams are worth it.

For these 12 newbies at New York Fashion Week, the stakes are higher than heels. Will they become a breakout brand? Will they inspire new ways to see style? Will they at least get a few tags on Instagram?

Read on to see who we're watching this season, and follow our live coverage during New York Fashion Week to see their visions in action. After all, it's fun to be first.

Created by Michelle Duncan, this fledgling line of Blondie-Meets-Babe-Paley clothes debuts with a bash at Mission Chinese hosted by gallerist Sarah Hoover and fashion campaign director Jen Brill. Downtown dream girls, take note.

The Scene Stylers: DUNCAN



DUNCAN FEMALES

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ACTOR



NOOR TAGOURI
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