

## Blogs and blahs from the front lines of fashion

by Sharon\_Mosley

NEW YORK - When New York fashion week rolls around twice a year, you never know what's going to come down the runway - but you do know that you can count on the whole scene being so very glamorous, right?

Wrong. Betty, it can get ugly.

Even though the fashion business is portrayed as "tres chic" on reality shows and movies, covering New York's semiannual event is becoming tougher and tougher as thousands of media from around the world vie to see more than 200 shows that include designers from China, Turkey, Russia and Australia in only nine days.

FASHION WEEK - February is fashion week in the Big Apple, the time to 'run' from runway to runway, freeze to death and get a glimpse of what's in store for the season. CNS Photo courtesy of Carmen Marc Valvo."Help, We're Drowning in a Sea of Shows" was the headline in one article in The New York Times as thousands scrambled from the tents at Bryant Park, where most of the shows were held, to other venues scattered around the city from Feb. 2 to 9.

Yet, as hectic as fashion week is in February, it's always the perfect chance to run around New York, freeze to death and get a firsthand glimpse of what's in store for the season ahead. And since "everyone" was into "blogging" this year, I thought I'd do a little blah, blah, blahing myself now that my fingers have thawed out and I can actually do some typing again.

I do like to people-watch - sometimes it's better than a runway show - when I'm in New York. As celebrities parade into the tents and photographers line up to snap away, it's a sign of the times - who are we all here to see? The latest fall fashions, or the latest way Paris is wearing her hair? (In a ponytail, of course!)

"Some of these people take themselves way too seriously," said a friend new to the business as she reviewed the jostling crowds queuing up to see the Betsey Johnson show.

Every season, there's one look that seems to turn up on a majority of fashion insiders. It seems that this winter, the skinny jean is alive and well, tucked into tall boots - lots were trimmed with fur - and teamed with layers of knee-length coats. A few depraved souls bared their arms in '50s-style sheath dresses and trotted out their stiletto heels.

With all the talk of the superskinny runway models becoming a thing of the past and healthier girls taking their place on the catwalks - let's keep our fingers crossed - fashion's mood seems to be taking more of a "restrained" direction, and hopefully next fall there will be plenty of wearable clothes in stores for buyers no matter their size.

Expect to see plenty of tailored, "ladylike" suits with both short, boxy jackets, cocoon wraps and long princess-style coats, chunky sweater dresses, short flippy skirts, slouchy trousers, knee-length shorts and lots and lots of metallics - all worn with dark tights, maybe even a white tigh or two. It's all very "Twiggy meets Jackie O." - a little bit of '60s and a little bit of '50s.

Meanwhile, the store windows were full of the current spring collections, mostly in graphic black-and-white - a classic fashion statement - that easily transitions from the all-black garb of winter. Throw in a pop of graphic pattern or a glint of silver and you've got a twist on an old favorite. And don't forget to accessorize with black patent-leather platform sandals or icy Lucite baubles.

Speaking of icy, there's no fun in blogging or slogging through subzero wind chilling weather to see even the most beautiful clothes in the world. Maybe next year, I'll attend the fashion week in sunny, warm Los Angeles.

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