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Gucci to merge men's and women's wear runway shows

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Gucci pre-fall 2016

By STAFF REPORTS

Italian fashion label Gucci is the latest house to alter its runway show format.

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Gucci president and CEO Marco Bizzarri announced during his keynote at the International New York Times Luxury Conference on April 5 that the brand will begin showing its men's and women's wear together in a single show per season starting in 2017. Fashion is trying to find a winning format for the runway show, which causes creatives at large houses to stage numerous spectacles a year.

New tradition

Gucci's first unified collection presentation will take place at its headquarters at Via Mecenate in Milan.

Compared to other brands that have altered their runway strategy to react to a changing retail climate, Gucci is focused on streamlining its operations.

"Alessandro Michele has in fact always presented his men's and women's collections together, so this is a very natural progression," said Mr. Bizzarri in a brand statement. "Moving to one show each season will significantly help to simplify many aspects of our business. Maintaining two separate, disconnected calendars has been a result of tradition rather than practicality."

One element of tradition that will not be lost is the concept of "see now, buy later." As a luxury fashion house, Gucci says this enables it time for production of its garments.

"In the spirit of full collaboration with the Camera Nazionale della Moda and with the aim of further reinforcing the Italian fashion system, we will work closely with the Camera Nazionale in aligning on a calendar that allows us to maintain the 'see now, buy later' schedule for our fashion shows, as it is fundamental to the full exploitation of Gucci's creative and production capabilities, for which the lead times are essential," Mr. Bizzarri continued.



Gucci fall/winter 2016 menswear show

Since Mr. Michele took over at Gucci, he has frequently included models of both genders during runway shows at men's and women's fashion weeks, breaking down the separations in how the lines are presented.

"It seems only natural to me to present my men's and women's collections together," Mr. Michele said. "It's the way I see the world today. It will not necessarily be an easy path and will certainly present some challenges, but I believe it will give me the chance to move towards a different kind of approach to my storytelling."

The debate surrounding the role of the fashion show today is escalating, as more designers opt to shake up the runway format ([see story](#)).

Gucci's position on buy now, wear now aligns with the French fashion industry's opinion.

The Fédération Française de la Couture du Prêt-à-Porter des Couturiers et des Créateurs de Mode disagrees that the fashion calendar standard needs to be updated for the modern consumer.

Today's consumer is looking for instant gratification and increasingly wants to purchase runway fashions immediately after they have been presented. As a number of U.S. and British brands have announced departures from tradition, the French fashion's governing body has expressed that its board members denounce the see-now, buy-now model ([see story](#)).

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