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THE GLOBE AND MAIL
style
ADVISOR



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guide to autumn fashion

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ENTERTAINING
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PROFILE

Shape shifter

Designer Stephanie Moscall-Varey's breakout collection finds its unique forms in nature

When you think about the kind of fashion design that challenges your sensibilities through novel silhouettes and

fabrics à la Alexander McQueen or Rei Kawakubo, you likely assume its references come from contemporary art or obscure muses found on the fringes of popular culture. But that is not entirely the case for emerging avant-garde Canadian designer Stephanie Moscall-Varey. Her collection, Moskal, which debuted at Toronto Women's Fashion Week in March, sources its sense of grace from nature – more specifically, farmland and the geometry of crop segmentation.

"I'm trying to create beautiful shapes that are inspired by naturally occurring phenomenon or even the human impact on nature," Moscall-Varey says. "A lot of the shapes in my last collection were from the contours on the land left after you till a field." Those pieces, sumptuously made with raw edges and outsized bows, started with the influence of Dust Bowl-era photographers such as Dorothea Lange and more contemporary Midwestern American image makers.

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Moscall-Varey says she's interested in exploring "how women are represented in farm life and getting into the whole psychology of that."



Moscall-Varey grew up in Port Dover, Ont., a fishing and farming community two hours southwest of Toronto. Her parents saw her initial interest in fashion as a hobby, and Moscall-Varey almost decided to study science. But her yearning to express her creative side was too great, and she enrolled in and graduated from Ryerson University's fashion design program in 2015. Keeping her studio based in Port Dover allowed her to retain the rural influence that runs so deep in her work. "I'm just trying to emulate the beauty of things that are very simple – that we often don't think about."

Her humble ambitions have already paid off and Moscall-Varey has enjoyed boosts from some of Canada's fashion elite, including designer Jeremy Laing, who she interned for, and broadcaster and columnist Jeanne Beker, who chose her work to close Ryerson's runway show the year she graduated. Moscall-Varey was also selected as one of the first three fellows of the school's Suzanne Rogers Fashion Institute, which was set up to cultivate the country's top design talent.

These early endorsements have led to Moscall-Varey's next chapter: studying at the London College of Fashion this fall. "It will give me the opportunity to work with manufacturers that I'm closer to, to continue my brand and elevate it," Moscall-Varey says. "If I want to be the designer that I aspire to be, how am I going to get from A to B?"

– ODESSA PALOMA PARKER



For more information and to shop the collection, visit stephaniemoscallvarey.com.

BEAUTY

Sleep aide

As Provence-born artist Paul Cézanne once said, "Genius is the ability to renew one's emotions in daily experience." This emphasis on spiritual renewal is shared by

L'Occitane en Provence, which takes a similar, albeit more nocturnal, approach to skincare. Its latest launch, Immortelle Overnight Reset Oil-in-Serum, primes your complexion to renew and reset while you get your beauty sleep.

In the lightweight formula, which is made of golden, oil-filled bubbles suspended in a clear serum, a trio of botanical ingredients work to impart a restored appearance by morning. Extracts of acmella oleocera (a flowering herb with tension-reducing properties) and calming marjoram smooth skin, while the brand's Immortelle Essential Oil, made with its staple Corsican blooms, delivers luminosity. According to Benedicte Le Bris, L'Occitane's head of research and development, it's a product that benefits all skin types and ages. "People don't spend enough time sleeping properly," Le Bris says, blaming excess screen time for slumber deficiencies. "It's difficult to fall into a deep, proper sleep."

Sleeping well in the countryside of Provence, however, is a dream scented with the lingering perfume of lavender fields. To aide in nighttime relaxation no matter where you bed down, L'Occitane recommends an application ritual with its new product, which begins by applying it to hands and taking three deep inhalations with your eyes closed before starting a simple, relaxing facial massage. Sweet dreams. – CAITLIN AGNEW



Immortelle Overnight Reset Oil-in-Serum, \$69 at L'Occitane (ca.loccitane.com).

FASHION

Ski lift

In the bottomless well of Chanel history that designer Karl Lagerfeld has to draw on for inspiration, there is a story about the winters that Coco Chanel spent on the slopes of St.

Moritz in the 1930s. Not surprisingly, the maverick fashion-house founder avoided any appearance of practicality in her wardrobe choices when she tackled the Swiss Alps. Instead, she zipped down the mountain in the jersey tops and wool trousers that continue to be some of the brand's signature items.

It's in this spirit of fashionable winter gear – supplemented with some sporty functionality – that the brand is launching its first Coco Neige Collection of ski apparel, fronted by Academy Award-nominated actor Margot Robbie. Some elements are an athletic extension of the Chanel aesthetic (the quilting usually found on handbags is reinterpreted in svelte puffers and tweedy textures are translated into slouchy knits), while other details such as camellia flowers and braid trim are decidedly more après-ski.

The collection will be available at the snow season shop that Chanel has opened for the past nine years in the French resort town, Courchevel. Or for those hitting the Canadian slopes, at Chanel boutiques in Vancouver, Calgary, Montreal and Toronto. – ANDREW SARDONE



For more information, visit chanel.com.