



**AW 15-16  
STELLA JEAN**

***FEMME, story of a leader | Metro - Himalayan style***

The A/W 15-16 femme chooses the Indian Himalayas, a place where cultural references often give way to impositions and subordination.

Stylistic disobedience. This irreverence is the starting point of looks where the woman seizes, interprets and usurps moments of masculine routine, such as the off-limits territory of a barbershop, and rises in this opulent setting with the dignity of a gentleman's club. This ignites an invasive encounter between genders, with extremely feminine shapes espousing and overlapping with potent masculine forms, disregarding any act of courtesy that would adjust overlooking the courtesy of adapting to create a gentle silhouette. The encounter is direct, even violent - any attempt to achieve compromise and find middle ground is annihilated as the extreme SHE opposes the extreme HE. This isn't an identity game, but the awareness of the changeable nature of things.

The Himalayan yak, polyvalent cornerstone and vital resource for the whole community, transforms into a pop symbol, with its gaudy and lively decorum adorning the collection, from overcoats to socks to ribbed wool. Inspired from the high altitude landscapes is the heterogeneous layering of fabrics and shapes: a functional process rooted in nomadic culture, which initially deceives with its sense of randomness and is immediately unmasked by its high aesthetic quotient. Stylistic anarchy is evidenced in the sudden accumulation of volume and knotted belts. Originally worn over festive dresses, belts are now seen as *passe partout*, in various fabrics and colors, to wear on sweaters or overcoats. Wool garments are worn across shoulders.

Hand-painted metal bracelets move from the woman's wrist to instead be worn on the arm and over the coat sleeve. The final touch is brought to Stella Jean's woman, as she is crowned Maharaja with a wool turban, embellished with excellent embroidery, and adorned with jewelry depicting the elements of Moghul tradition.

Garments and elements characterized by an individual genesis acquire meaning only through their combination. Styling is the key narrative element of the story. Styling organises the narrative thread: with each item being a word that is carefully placed in a sentence to tell the collection's story.

In an effort to highlight the beauty, skill and craftsmanship of cultural and artisanal productions by populations from around the globe, the collaboration with the Ethical Fashion Initiative of the International Trade Centre (agency of the UN and the WTO) moves forward. Indeed, it has enabled the introduction of handloom fabrics made by women artisans in Burkina Faso and Mali and jewelry realised by Haitians artisans.

An exemplary aesthetic, ethical and social encounter in which India, England, Italy, Burkina Faso and Haiti dialogue at a fast pace.



### **About Stella Jean**

Stella Jean is a talented Italo-Haitian designer who began her career in fashion by working as a model for Egon Von Fürstenberg, but soon discovered her real creative calling. Her clothes must tell something about her, but at the same time their function is to make their wearer beautiful. Since July 2011, when she was one of the winners of the prestigious Who Is On Next? contest, her collections keep being cherished by the international press and the buyer world. In June 2013 she presented her first collection for men with a show in Florence, part of the project Pitti Italics, at Pitti Uomo. In September 2013 Stella Jean was chosen by Giorgio Armani to show her collection in the spaces of the Armani Theater during Milan Fashion Week, thus consolidating her role as representative of the "new wave" of Italian creativity. In addition, 12 June 2014, Stella took part in the Fiftieth Anniversary of the International Trade Centre (ITC) in Geneva, where she was invited to participate in the Panel Discussion "The Power Of Empowered Women" at the Palais Des Nations. The same day, Stella Jean presented a collection made by garments created in collaboration with the ITC Ethical Fashion Initiative at the World Trade Organisation. In January 2015, on the occasion of Milano Moda Uomo, Stella Jean presented her menswear line, for the first time on the Milan's catwalks.

### **About ITC Ethical Fashion Initiative**

The Ethical Fashion Initiative is a flagship programme of the International Trade Centre, a joint agency of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization. The Ethical Fashion Initiative enables artisans living in urban and rural poverty to connect with the global fashion chain. The Initiative also works with the rising generation of fashion talent from Africa, encouraging the forging of sustainable and fulfilling creative collaborations with artisans on the continent.

The Ethical Fashion Initiative produces high-end luxury pieces in partnership with major fashion houses including Stella McCartney, Vivienne Westwood, Chan Luu, Sass & Bide, Osklen, United Arrows and Karen Walker to name a few. Stella Jean decided to be part in the initiative and has visited Burkina Faso and Haiti to meet directly with artisans and source fabric and jewellery items for her collections. For the Ethical Fashion Initiative, Stella Jean is a key partner that shares the same ethical philosophy.