

FI ARE

A woman with dark hair tied in a bun is standing in a parking garage. She is wearing a black long-sleeved crop top with a small 'V' logo on the chest and a grey skirt. Her right arm is raised, touching a light-colored wall. The background shows the interior of a parking garage with blue parking lines and a car in the distance.

**How AI has Taken
Over Fashion**

**Cancel Culture's
Mark on the World**

**What's Next in
Sustainability**

THE FUTURE OF FASHION

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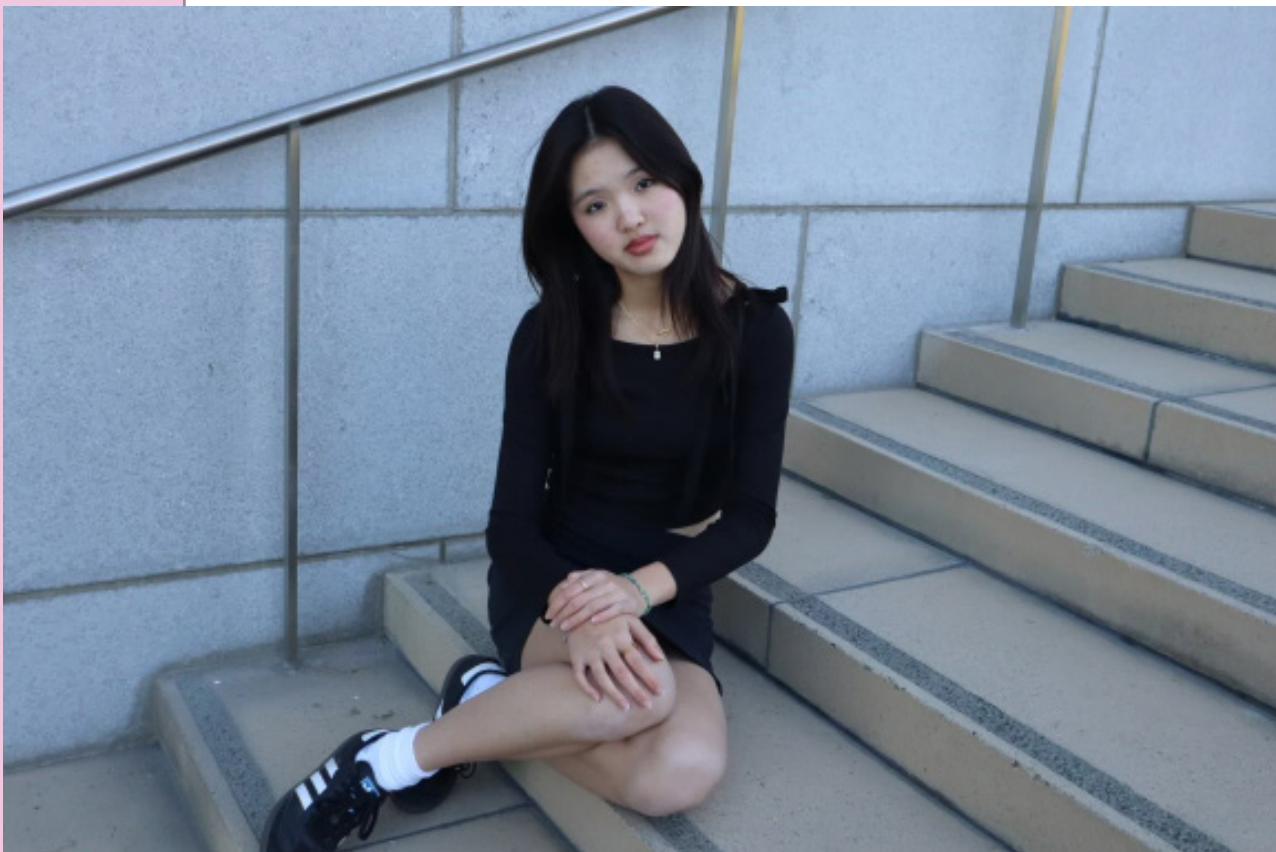


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ABOUT FLARE

Flare inspires students in the Sage Hill community to take on the world beyond high school with confidence by helping them discover their individual style, introducing passionate female role models, and advocating for women's empowerment in the context of global culture.

Our core values include: Body Positivity, collaboration, creativity, diversity, empowerment, fostering confidence, inclusivity and sustainability.





LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the long-awaited 2023-2024 issue, FLARE: The Future of Fashion.

This has been such a fun and productive year with our new leadership team, including a talented group of writers and creative directors as well as some really bright underclassmen. After brainstorming ideas for the focus of this year's double-issue magazine, we decided to tackle the future of fashion. After imagining what might lie ahead and scouring fashion magazines, countless Instagram pages, and blogs all over the internet, we landed on three major categories to emphasize: technology, inclusivity, and sustainability.

Throughout our research into the intersection between fashion and technology, the writing team identified many new and exciting ways that AI, computers, and machines are contributing to productivity and sustainability in the fashion industry. Of course, our look into technology includes some of the really cool artistic uses of new tech, including a recap of

Bella Hadid's iconic spray-on dress runway moment. Each invention in this space, both creatively and practically, contributes to progress in the fashion industry and is the foundation for major shifts in the future – we can't wait to share our findings with you!

As the fashion world continues to develop and change, it is vital that we keep in mind the voices of every consumer and participant. By embracing diversity in all its forms, including race, ethnicity, gender, body type, and cultural background, we not only reflect the reality of our society but also ensure that fashion remains relevant and accessible to everyone. Inclusivity fosters a sense of belonging and empowers individuals to express themselves authentically through their personal style. It also challenges outdated beauty standards and promotes a more inclusive and accepting fashion landscape. Louisa Li investigates diversity and inclusivity in fashion by reviewing Victoria Secret's efforts to create products for "the everyday woman."

Following our previous issue, FLARE: Fashion for Change, we continue our exploration of sustainability in fashion. Our heads of writing, Mirabelle Jiang and Caroline Lu, provide a fascinating look at how standout brands (like Patagonia) are addressing textile waste and the prevention of clothing pollution. I feel passionately that sustainability is the most urgent and pressing issue facing the fashion today, and I hope that the work of brands like Patagonia represents a better future for the industry overall.

At FLARE, we are committed to encouraging the voicing of opinions, fostering creativity, and promoting collaboration. Over my past four years working on FLARE, I've had the pleasure of watching it become an amazing platform for self-expression, leadership, and partnership, and I can't wait to see what's next for the publication. Special thanks to Jennifer Huang for her continued effort and her amazing creative skills in piecing together the magazine and for guiding the creative director team. Looking forward, I am so grateful to leave this magazine in the hands of my amazing co-editor, Anna Yang.

I hope you love this edition as much as I do!

Alex Gomez

TECHNOLOGY on the RUNWAY

Saffiya Sarwono

Vogue, Pierre Su/Getty Images, 2023

An instant viral fashion moment occurred at the Coperni Paris Fashion Week Show 2022, as the audience waited for the closing look: the pièce de résistance. Strutting onto the platform of Paris's Musée des Arts et Métiers runway, supermodel Bella Hadid, dressed in simple undergarments, was introduced to the audience. Then, a team of Coperni workers sprayed Hadid's body with Fabrican, a gel-like substance composed of fibers, biopolymers, and additives, that was innovated in a lab in London nearly two decades ago. To the audience's surprise, the gel solidified into a rubbery fabric on the model's body within minutes. What resulted was a bold statement of technology in the fashion industry, as the styling assistants moved to reveal a white, lustrous skin tight dress, tailor-made on the spot to fit Hadid. The dress, due to its composition of polymer, reflected light on the runway and gave a bright glossy appearance. Once the dress had taken shape, a tailor arrived to alter the dress, shortening, slitting, adjusting, and modifying it as she saw fit, thus completing the dress, the Coperni show, and this iconic moment.

Fabrican, a Spanish technology company specializing in spray-on fabrics, designed the material used to create the dress. Starting as a liquid suspension, the substance is composed of both natural and synthetic fibers. Included in the formula are wool, mohair, cotton, nylon, cellulose, and carbon nanofibers. Once the liquid made contact with Hadid's body, it evaporated, leaving in its place a suede-like textured fabric. Although this viral performance was innovative, it is not the first time technology has shown up on the runway.

The 2023 Coperni show drew minds to Alexander McQueen's shows, as the designer was among the first to use technology to enhance his shows. McQueen is widely regarded as a pioneer and leader in technological advancements on the runway, with the most iconic use of technology in his shows in the closing of his Spring/Summer 1999 show. It was a true piece of performance art and went down in fashion history: supermodel Shalom Harlow appeared in a multilayered, white paper dress, resembling a skirt shape, with only a belt holding it up. In a statuesque, ballerina-like manner, she stood on a wooden platform that spun her in circles. In contrast to that elegance, two robot arms sprayed her, using her body and dress as a canvas to paint on. She flailed her arms in the air as the black and yellow paint hit her. "So much of what this did had a juxtaposition of a dichotomy of conflict and beauty. Pathos and joy," said Harlow. Many described it as a raw, emotional experience, which is precisely what McQueen intended to invoke.

The true value of technology on the runway lies in its ability to not only push the limits and boundaries of design and open up new possibilities but also in the experiences and emotions it invokes in people. Whether through creating a new type of fabric or stunning performance art, technology has the power to captivate and inspire, shaping the way we see the future of fashion. By harnessing the power of technology, fashion can reach new heights in the future.



Top to Bottom: Fashionista, Imax-tree, 2023. Victor Virgile / Gamma-Rapho via Getty Images, 1999



comment allez-vous?









Han Sunghoon, Creative
Studio Unravel, 2018



THE ROTATION OF FASHION TRENDS THREE TRENDS AND THEIR HISTORY

Catherine Zhang

PER HARPER S BAZAAR, TRENDS ARE THE AXIS ON WHICH THE FASHION WORLD ROTATES

Trends never really go away; they rotate in cycles throughout fashion history. Current trends often have origin stories that date back decades or even centuries. In the Spring/Summer 2024 season, some of the main trends are sheer clothes, polo shirts, and roses — each one with its own history behind it.

Sheer and see-through fabrics are key trends in the SS/2024 season, as featured on the runway by brands such as Prada, Dior, Valentino, and Stella McCartney. Sheer fabric conveys feelings of lightness, making it especially popular in the spring and summer. Designer Miuccia Prada, for example, uses these fabrics to convey a sense of freedom of the body through sheer fabric. The sheer look was considered controversial when it became initially popular in the early 20th century, and was often dubbed as “X-Ray skirts”.

Many women of the time embraced the controversial look, wearing the fabric to show confidence in their bodies, which went hand-in-hand with the seductive and skin-bearing look made popular by flappers at that time. Clara Bow, a sex symbol of the twenties, made a splash on the silver screen when she wore a see-through dress in the film *My Lady of Whims*. This trend was adapted by Marilyn Monroe, who wore a nude dress that gave the illusion of being sheer when she sang her iconic “Happy Birthday, Mr. President” to President Kennedy in 1962. The sheer trend reached the peak of its popularity in the ‘90s, appearing in the shows of Jean Paul Gaultier, John Galiano, and more. Celebrities including Kate Moss, Jennifer Lopez, Rihanna, and Beyoncé from then on started wearing the sheer fabric at appearances. And, of course, Kim Kardashian contributed to the revival of this pop-

ular look by wearing Monroe's dress to the Met Gala in 2022. In the past few years, this trend has and will likely continue to be seen on and off runways.



Vogue France, Gotham, 2022



Daily Mail, Bettman Archive and AP, 1962

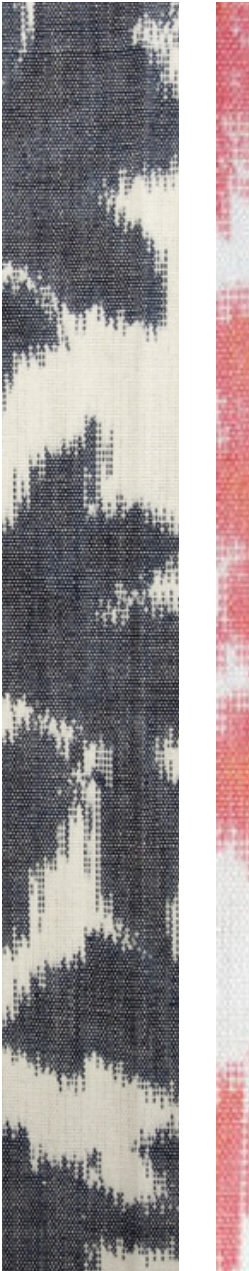
Additionally, 'The Polo Shirt,' one of the most representative pieces of menswear, has made a comeback in the fashion industry. The collared closet staple has recently been seen in high fashion brands such as Miu Miu, Gucci, Vivienne Westwood, Givenchy, and more. The polo shirt dates back to the late 19th century when it was introduced as a sportswear uniform for the game of polo. However, the modern polo shirt was not designed until the 1920s by French tennis player Jean René Lacoste. Lacoste intentionally designed a short-sleeved tennis uniform instead of a traditional long-sleeved uniform to give tennis players more freedom of movement. A stylish and comfortable alternative to other sportswear of the time, Lacoste's polo shirt quickly became popular among athletes. However, in 1972, Ralph Lauren made polo shirts not only an athletic piece but also a fashion sensation with his alteration of the polo shirt. In the following decades, the polo shirt was a popular choice for casual streetwear as well as sports attire. In the recent season, many looks on the runway include a polo shirt matched with different bottoms, creating an innovative look by adding a chicness to the traditionally preppy polo shirt.

Left to Right: Indigital.tv, Marni Spring 2018. Dsquared 2, Spring Summer 2024. Rene Lacoste, Heddels.





Balmain Spring 2024, Launchmetrics Spotlight



Ikat Floral Fabric, No Chintz



@emrata on Instagram, 2023

Finally, flowers, especially roses, have made a comeback on the runway in 2023 and 2024. Although displayed in many mediums—printing, embroidery, and even 3D appliques—floral designs are a current staple for nearly every brand on every article of clothing. Floral designs were first used in ancient Egypt, with prints of the sacred lotus flower leading the way for the floral patterns that would make their way onto Asian silk and ikat fabrics that would be traded in the east. In the 19th century, there was an increase in the popularity of floral print fabrics due to the Industrial Revolution as companies began to mass produce their garments. Just as they did in ancient Egypt, flowers generally hold different meanings. For example, lilies symbolize purity and red roses symbolize passion. The rose specifically appeals to designers this season because roses not only represent beauty, but also resilience. The thorns symbolize adversities, and the rose is a flower blooming in adversities. This reflects the spirit of feminism and women who are constantly facing oppression from a patriarchal society, yet persevering and standing up for themselves.



Trends in fashion are a reflection of a society's social and cultural ideas. Society shapes fashion, but fashion also has the power to shape society by conveying a powerful message through what people wear and intend to communicate. Trends represent an attitude or message common among society, and clothes are a sometimes subtle (and sometimes not!) way to deliver that attitude and message.

M a x i m



A Z i S m

playful. inventive. vivid.





FLARE

ERA OF CHANGE:

Fashion Redefined by Technology

Louisa Li

When brands constantly release new patterns and designs in their clothing, consumers don't often think about how they are made or the increasing role of technology in the process. Fashion evolves with technology as it fundamentally transforms the design and presentation of fashion. In 2022, brands spent \$2.5B on augmented reality, virtual reality (VR), and similar technologies, with 75% of top fashion brands worldwide having created VR content. Additionally, 85% of Gen-Z consumers reflect that digital fashion has become more important in the 2023 according to Vogue Business. Technology plays an imperative role in the ever-evolving fashion industry, and designers are now incorporating it to execute their creative visions through innovative software, 3D printing, and flexible displays.

Clo 3D is a software program that allows users to create patterns and designs, which are then projected onto lifelike simulations of models with various body types. It provides detailed customizations of patterns and textures of each panel of fabric to

create virtual garments tapered to the designer's goals. The program takes an efficient approach to streamlining the process from the initial design to producing ready-for-sale clothing items by bridging the gap between sampling and reviewing the products. The software has a mission rooted in driving sustainability by reducing the unnecessary production of physical samples and shipments. Additionally, the company strives to make software simple and intuitive for users, which can make fashion design more accessible. By reducing the cost of physical sampling, Clo 3D contributes to the strengthening of small fashion companies led by independent designers with innovative ideas.



Another area of transformation in fashion design is 3D printing, through which designers use digital models to plan and produce clothing. 3D printing transcends existing boundaries of the practicality of fashion design by producing intricate designs with revolutionary materials. For example, rising fashion company Variant 3D specializes in print-

ing clothing with sustainable fibers. Founder Garrett Gerson even claims that 3D-printed clothing will be in the homes of ordinary consumers in ten years. The sizing of each piece will be customizable to the individual's measurements, which makes fashion more size-inclusive. It is also more time- and cost-efficient than traditional methods of manufacturing, allowing designers to easily turn their imagination into reality.


Designers can now display their work through new mediums, such as Adobe's Project Primrose, which uses electroactive material that's low-power and




non-emissive to diffuse light in order to present designs on the fabric. In their initial display of this technology in October of 2023, the model's dress changed its pattern with

the click of a button. While the products are currently experimental, they mark a pivotal transition in the trajectory of fashion from stagnant to versatile pieces.

Similarly, fashion design is also present in the Metaverse, a virtual reality



space that houses human interactions via digital tools and headsets. Consumers can design and create virtual characters of themselves and switch their outfits with ease. Existing fashion brands such as Adidas and Dolce & Gabbana are already expanding into the Metaverse through their participation in the March 2023 Metaverse fashion week. Brands are also able to reach new consumers through this platform, increasing engagement and making high fashion more accessible. Users are able to buy, sell, and trade pieces within the Metaverse, allowing for an interactive experience among customers. This technology transforms fashion design by transitioning fashion from physical to virtual, exploring conceptual clothing and amplifying their creative





Fashion









Gucci X Addida autumn/winter 2022
British Vogue

THE SIMULTANEOUS RISE IN ONLINE SHOPPING AND ATHLEISURE

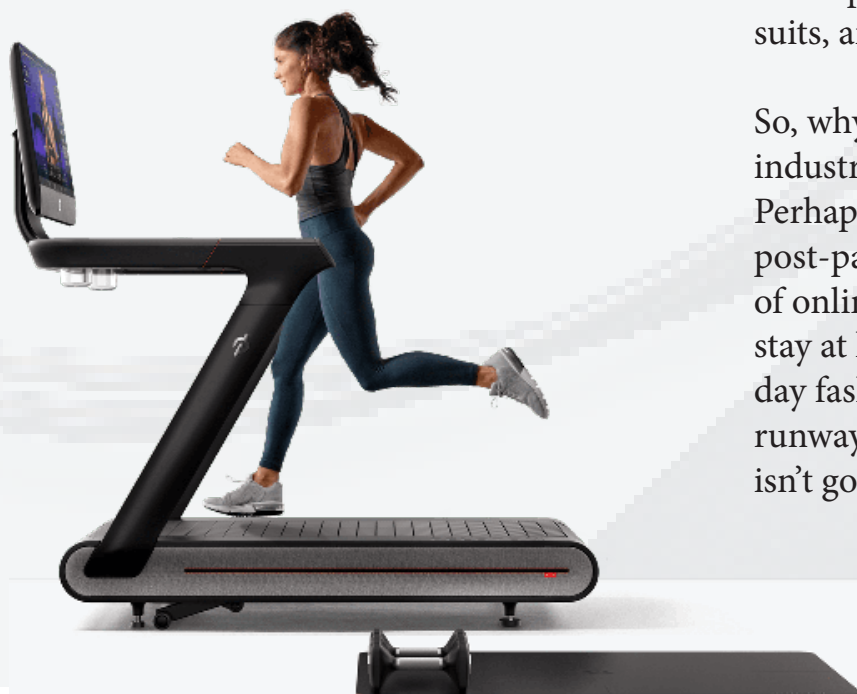
Liz Chen

As the COVID-19 pandemic confined people to their homes, consumers changed their shopping habits, looking to e-commerce to substitute for the thrill of an in-store purchase. However, even after COVID-19 restrictions were lifted, eager shoppers still find themselves enjoying browsing for goods from the comfort of their own homes. Online shopping is taking over consumer habits, and it's here to stay. Although our society has seemingly returned to normal, the pandemic's effects on consumer habits remain apparent. While stuck at home during lockdown, we only left our homes when absolutely necessary, which, unfortunately, did not include going to the gym. The restriction of gym capacities limited our ability to get physical exercise, and caused us to look for at-home workout programs, equipment, and YouTube channels to stay in shape. As our homes became our makeshift gyms, they also became our primary offices and classrooms; many

employees moved away from wearing business attire and opted for comfort over style. Traditional workwear, including suits and jackets, were exchanged for the everyday, casual look of athleisure.

From the high fashion runways to the streets, athleisure has made its mark this year. In the Fall-Winter 2022-23 collection, Gucci presented their collaboration with Adidas Originals. Alessandro Michele re-invented the idea of athleisure, pairing the iconic Adidas sporty 3-stripe on tailored suits, corsets, and structured silhouettes. Miu Miu's Fall 2023 Ready-to-Wear collection featured a similarly familiar relaxed look of hooded sweatshirts and leggings. Last year, Hermès even launched a line of athletic apparel with HermèsFit, their spin on high fashion and fitness. The line featured an array of breathable yoga wear that featured yoga leggings, tanks, sweatshirts, shorts, and jumpsuits.

Today, we continue to observe the athleisure takeover in all of our wardrobes. In styles ranging from the popularity of the



Alo Yoga rompers to matching workout sets from Lululemon, there is no shortage of creativity when it comes to new colors or styles of athletic wear. Additionally, a majority of the brands that have built success with their athleisure capitalize on creating a specific brand image for themselves, with the fan-favorite brand Sporty & Rich nodding to country-club culture in their high-end sportswear designs. Loungewear- and shapewear-focused brands like Kim Kardashian's Skims have especially captivated the market. Celebrities like Hailey Bieber, Bella Hadid, and Lori Harvey have been spotted on the streets of Los Angeles in their sporty tennis skirts, matching sweat-suits, and old-school trackpants.

So, why has athleisure taken the fashion industry and our personal style by storm? Perhaps we've been unsure of our next steps post-pandemic. Perhaps the comfortability of online shopping during our prolonged stay at home has extended into our everyday fashion. Either way, as we've seen on the runways and in our own style, athleisure isn't going anywhere anytime soon.

FUTURE.



ATHLETES





Catherine Zhang

CANCEL CULTURE

WITHIN FASHION BRANDS



Cancel culture, a term that rose to popularity in the last few years on social media, is the boycotting of brands to punish them for something that is perceived as being offensive by a group of people. Many think that cancel culture is an effective way of holding people, brands, and companies accountable for their offensive actions, while others argue that cancel culture is sometimes misused and places an emphasis on punishments rather than addressing problems. What are the consequences that a brand faces after being canceled? Is cancel culture an effective way of advocating for justice? To take two prominent examples, brands Dolce & Gabbana and Balenciaga are back in the game after high-profile controversies.

Top to Bottom: The New York Times, Getty Images, 2018. Stills from Dolce & Gabbana's "Eating with Chopsticks" ad campaign, Instagram, 2018.

Back in 2018, Dolce & Gabbana launched a campaign in which an Asian model tried to eat Italian food with chopsticks clumsily. The campaign was accused of racism, and Dolce & Gabbana apologized in a video. However, matters worsened when Gabbana used derogatory terms towards Chinese people in his Instagram DMs. The Chinese market boycotted Dolce & Gabbana, and Chinese ambassadors of the fashion house stopped collaborating with the brand. However, this controversy didn't gain as much attention in the West, and many people are still unaware of it. Today, Dolce & Gabbana continues to be one of the top luxury brands with rising sales despite the fact that their history of racism has not been addressed. In this example, cancel culture held D&G accountable for consequences regionally.

In 2022, Balenciaga launched a campaign featuring children holding teddy bears in bondage costumes, including a handbag that had a child pornography court document in the background. Slowly, people began to find more details in the campaign that were a reference to disturbing violence or sexual content, and the controversy quickly went viral on social media. Balenciaga

deleted the campaign and apologized, claiming it was wrong to include children in the photo. Balenciaga's creative director Demna also has a history of being explicitly sexual in his designs (e.g., his 2014 collection "Vetements"). However, unlike the situation of Dolce & Gabbana, celebrities continue to collaborate with Balenciaga. Even though Demna was unable to run for Designer of the Year, he is still the creative director of Balenciaga, and celebrities continue to support his 2024 shows. The decrease in the sales at Balenciaga shows the power of the customers, but the brand's status as a luxury fashion house persists.

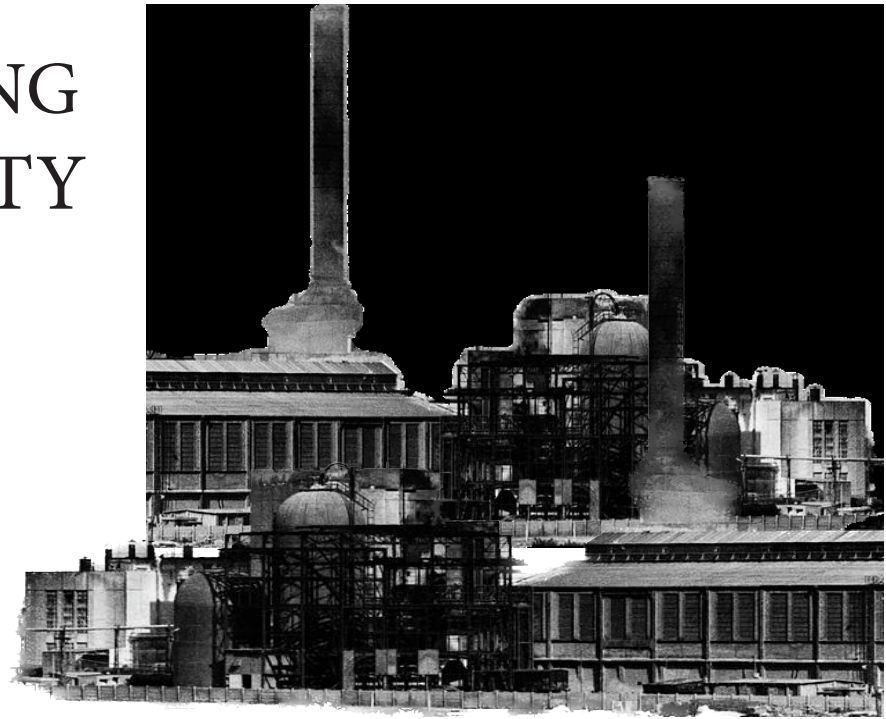
Cancel culture brings consequences to people for their wrongdoings, yet it often fails to address the underlying issues of a situation. Inappropriate behaviors should be punished to ensure ignorant, harmful issues are not repeated. However, the focus of cancel culture can easily turn into hating a brand rather than understanding why their actions were offensive. While the fashion industry celebrates innovation, there is a boundary between experimentation and ignorance in fashion design.



British Vogue, 2022.

INCORPORATING SUSTAINABILITY IN THE FUTURE OF FASHION

Mirabelle Jiang



Smoke Rising From Factory Smokestacks, Bettman 1953

In an era marked by environmental and social consciousness, the fashion industry is under constant scrutiny for its unsustainable practices and exploitation of garment workers. According to the Natural Resources Defense Council, clothing contributes a fifth of the world's 300 million tons of plastic pollution every year and is responsible for more than 10% of the world's carbon emissions. Still more problematic is the widespread exploitation of workers in the fashion industry, with only 2% of workers paid a living salary and many more working in dangerous, unventilated sweatshops in both first and third-world countries alike.

In light of these issues, many brands have taken a stance against worker exploitation and committed to using regenerative methods to lessen their impact on the environment and global carbon emissions. Three brands stand out in their commitment to environmental social and governance within the fashion industry.

Patagonia

Patagonia, the renowned outdoor apparel company, stands out for its holistic approach to sustainability and its transparency in manufacturing. Not only does the brand focus on using sustainable materials in its outerwear, but it also engages in various social and environmental responsibility programs.

Patagonia's environmental responsibility program focuses on using organically grown cotton and recyclable materials to reduce waste. Since 1996, the brand has committed to using 100% virgin-grown cotton that eliminates the use of synthetic pesticides. Initiatives within the program, such as Cotton in Conversion, offer financial and technical support to farmers in their transition to Regenerative Cotton, which was used in more than 37% of cotton fabrics in Patagonia's Spring 2024 Collection. Similarly, recyclable materials such as spandex and polyester are also used in garments, with 95% recycled polyester fabric in the Fall 2023 season, reducing the brand's carbon emissions by 20.5 million pounds.

Through partnerships with Fair Trade USA, Patagonia also engages in social responsibility initiatives to ensure that their apparel employees receive fair wages and work in safe



Patagonia

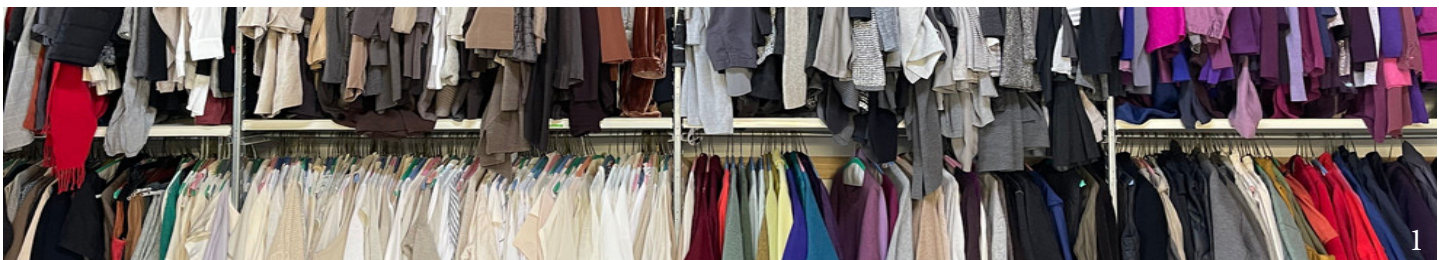
conditions. For each garment that is crafted, Patagonia pays a premium to its employees that they can then choose to spend on charities or personal items. Since the beginning of the partnership in 2014, Patagonia's Fair Trade program has impacted more than 75,000 employees worldwide.

Eileen Fisher

Since debuting her eco-friendly initiative "Renew" in 2009, Eileen Fisher has committed to promoting sustainability and environmentally-conscious practices in the fashion industry. Fisher's Renew take-back program incentivizes customers to return any old Eileen Fisher garments in any condition for a \$5 gift card. The program has recycled two million garments since 2009, fostering a closed-loop system that minimizes waste. While a third of these pieces are resold, the rest are either donated to charity, repurposed for other textile projects, or downcycled into fibers that can be reused for insulation.

Following the success of Renew, Fisher launched her second sustainability campaign entitled "Vision 2020", which committed to using sustainable materials in 100% of products by 2020. Though the company met significant challenges with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was able to ensure that 76% of all products featured "eco-preferred materials," with more than 97% organically grown or recycled cotton and linen.

Since 2020, Fisher has continued to vouch for the implementation of sustainability practices in both her own company and the fashion industry. In her new plan entitled "Horizon 2030," Fisher plans to broaden her company's impact on sustainability through circular design and regenerative agriculture practices.



Eileen Fisher Renew.



Stella McCartney

Luxury designer Stella McCartney has taken bold steps to transform the fashion industry's impact on the environment. Through partnering with startups and small businesses, the brand promotes sustainable practices in the fashion industry. In 2023, McCartney launched her first-ever regenerative cotton t-shirt with Söktaş, a Turkish fabric supplier that focuses on using regenerative methods of cotton production (which help to rebuild degraded soils and enhance biodiversity) in the production of fabrics. The designer has also worked with Keel Labs to create fabric made from recycled seaweed and Chargeurs Luxury Materials to promote the use of regenerative and sustainable wool.

In 2019, McCartney collaborated with Adidas and textile innovations company Evrnu to create the world's first fully recyclable hoodie, the Infinite Hoodie. Made with Evrnu's NuCycl technology, which recycles old garments into new fibers then fabrics, materials for the Infinite Hoodie are 100% recycled from old textiles and organic cotton diverted from landfills. This initiative ensures that old garments are repurposed into new ones, contributing to a closed-loop system.

Apart from employing sustainable techniques in her brand, McCartney has also advocated for eco-consciousness on a global scale. At the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference, McCartney presented a traveling fashion exhibit entitled "Future of Fashion", partnering with the then Prince Charles' Sustainable Markets Initiative that aims to guide small businesses towards sustainability by 2030. The exhibit showcased sustainable techniques for fashion with curated items made from regenerative cotton, Bolt Threads' Mylo™ mycelium leather, and regenerative materials made from recycled waste.

In her blog, Stella's World, McCartney writes, "The future of fashion necessitates creating materials using methods that do not just take from Mother Earth, but give back to her as well."

Future of Fashion: An innovation conversation with Stella McCartney, 2021



adidas by Stella McCartney, 2019

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a grey strapless dress and black boots, is leaning her right hand on the hood of a silver car. The car is parked on a concrete surface, and a building with a dark door is visible in the background. The text "THE YEAR 200" is overlaid in large blue letters with black outlines.

THE

YEAR

200





THE DECLINING QUALITY OF SLOW FASHION: A CASE STUDY OF REFORMATION

Caroline Lu



The fashion industry, a dynamic realm driven by ever-changing trends and individual expressions, has undergone a transformative journey in recent years. Large corporations pervert the attractive universal accessibility of the fashion industry through exploitative labor practices under the guise of trendiness. The appeal of cheap, though unethical, clothing creates an inherent consumer preference for fast fashion brands in lieu of more expensive, sustainable, and ethical brands. With the increasing interest in personal style among younger audiences and the accessibility of cheap garments, overconsumption in the

fashion industry directly impacts the environment, creating 10% of the world's carbon emissions. Fast fashion brands compound this environmental crisis by using cheap synthetic textiles which create carbon emissions, in turn ultimately making high quality cotton fibers exponentially more difficult to procure.

Increasing extremities in global temperatures like colder winters and extended droughts have created both lower quality and quantity yields of cotton. Within slow fashion companies that use natural textiles, lower-quality cotton creates garments that degrade



exponentially more quickly than historically. It takes much more manpower to create the same caliber and quantity of fibers than in, for example, 1960, before the advent of fast fashion companies like Zara. Thus, to the detriment of the environment, fast fashion companies are advantaged in production in that their synthetic fibers are unaffected by climate change, saving business expenses on proper working conditions and manufacturing.

Fashion companies face an unsustainable business model in which a company must choose whether to maintain their typical natural fibers, raise their prices, and therefore risk business, or simply resort to cheap synthetic fabrics at the expense of the environment. The health of the planet seems to be caught between consumer desires and company quotas. With the global dominance of capitalism, this delicate equilibrium is more often than not tipped in the favor of large corporations.

The fashion industry is rife with overconsumption, and though consumers may feel generally helpless to influence the decisions of the large corporations that reinforce unethical practices alone, it is still possible to enact change. The first step to a more sustainable

market is to reject consumerism. By methodically upcycling, thrifting, and buying quality garments infrequently, one can denounce the exploitative fast fashion market. As consumers demand more ethical and sustainable manufacturing through collective action, companies will be compelled to respond to consumer desires.

Though it is extremely difficult to create a universally stylish, sustainable, and accessible brand, Reformation comes close. Online, Reformation has garnered a cult following of teenagers on social media platforms like TikTok, though the brand has existed for much longer. Created in 2009, Reformation began as a small apparel store in Los Angeles. Their business growth came as the company committed itself to sustainability, like their recent commitment to becoming climate positive by 2025.

Reformation stands out from other fashion brands in that it takes a sustainable approach to modern fashion through their textile manufacturing. Unlike competitors, Reformation uses an experimental fabric: tencel. Synthesized from raw material wood that is broken down into

pulp, the hightech material combines these new fibers with recycled fibers, ranging from silk to cotton, to create a sustainable textile. While using this fabric is much more expensive than the usual exploitative manufacturing practices of other mid-tier brands (e.g., J. Crew, Everlane, and the like), Reformation is an overwhelming sustainable outlier among cheap, but trendy brands. By taking a unique and innovative approach to garment production, Reformation can simultaneously offset the effects of climate change on the textile industry and create lasting quality goods.

Reformation's commitment to sustainability extends beyond their choice of tencel fabric. Their cotton factories source from sustainable China-based forests and groves, displaying a dedication to environmental responsibility despite the challenges posed by climate change. Their business continues to grow despite the apparent decline of textiles as a result of climate



Reformation founder and CEO Yael Aflalo

Refinery 29

Through dressing high-profile celebrities like Rihanna, Kendall Jenner, and Taylor Swift, Reformation's cultural impact continues to grow. Especially in the case of Taylor Swift, who is considered one of the most prolific and influential contemporary pop stars (as evident by her successful recent tour and awards acclaim), Reformation is increasingly entering the sphere of mainstream fashion. The explosive growth of Reformation is a positive signal to the consumer market that increasingly prioritizes sustainability. Considering their status as a relatively new brand formed in 2009, Reformation has experienced massive success, as signaled by future plans to become a publicly traded company.

While the futuristic tencel fabric is not accessible to everyone, Reformation showcases the potential market success of sustainable clothing chains. It is imperative that consumers refuse to turn a blind eye to the exploitative and environmentally damaging nature of fast fashion, and buy responsibly. Ultimately, as Reformation Chief Executive Officer Hali Borenstein posits, it is possible to run a profitable business, make investors money, and have a conscience while doing so.

change, with one factory even claiming to set a plan to reduce carbon emissions by 40% in 2035 and become carbon neutral in 2055. They seem relatively unaffected by the cotton crisis due to their usage of alternative materials. By incorporating alternative materials and embracing sustainable practices, Reformation has positioned itself as a brand that deftly navigates the turbulent waters of the fashion industry.

It is important to note that even though Reformation is making strides in the fashion industry with its sustainable business practices, it is not a perfect brand. In order to continue making a profit with the rising prices of manufacturing and inflation, Reformation has raised their prices out of necessity which contributes to exclusivity within their customer base. As a result, it perpetuates class divisions and contributes to limiting sustainable consumption to those that can afford their garments, which often run \$100-200. The brand is considered fast-fashion-adjacent, with a production cycles of merely six weeks. While this falls short of many consumer expectations of a brand that refuses to yield to consumer culture, it is a vast improvement from the one-four week production cycle of brands like Zara and Shein. Yet, in even attempting sustainability (and doing so quite successfully), Reformation serves as a positive role model to other brands. Reformation takes on the challenge of confronting the difficulties of a sustainable business model rather than obscuring it behind glamorous kitschy clothing, thus taking a step forward to creating a more sustainable fashion market.



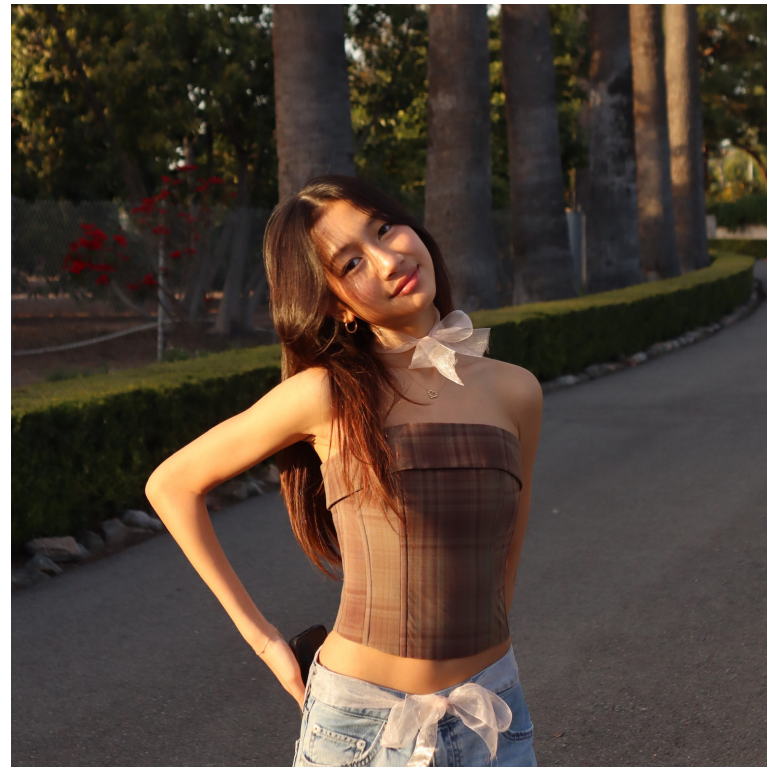
Empowering Every Body: Victoria's Secret's Stride Towards Inclusivity

Louisa Li



Victoria's Secret has stood as a symbol of beauty and glamor for generations of girls. Founded in 1977, the lingerie company Victoria's Secret gained major popularity after its first fashion show in 1995, which turned into an iconic annual tradition. Over the past few decades, the iconic show has casted and created names for international supermodels, including Adriana Lima, Heidi Klum, and Bella Hadid. Although the company has done much to inspire creativity and has changed the landscape of runway modeling, it has encountered numerous controversies which question whether the company has done more harm than good. With the recent movement towards body positivity led by lingerie/activewear brands such as Aerie and Girlfriend Collective, consumers are quick to point out the problematic marketing tactics of Victoria's Secret. In 2018, the brand's CEO, Ed Razek, faced backlash after claiming that "transsexual" models should not be included in the cast "because the show is a fantasy." In addition to this blatant and reoccurring transphobia, Victoria's Secret has also run into trouble for promoting unrealistic and unhealthy standards of beauty in order to achieve the 'fantasy' look. However, in light of recent backlash and realizing their previous marketing model is failing, Victoria's Secret is starting to make strides towards inclusivity. In February 2022, Victoria's Secret launched the collection "Love Cloud", which prioritizes comfort while embracing functionality and maintaining the company's trademark sex appeal. The collection claims to be for "the everyday woman" with a campaign focusing on eighteen women with diverse body types and racial backgrounds. Additionally, in October of 2023, Victoria's Secret launched adaptive versions of their existing product lines Body by Victoria's Secret and Wear Everywhere with features such as additional clasps for those with physical disabilities. They have also extended these changes to in-store displays, with their mannequins now representing more diverse, realistic body types.

In 2023, however, Victoria's Secret took their biggest leap: rebranding their iconic runway show. Victoria's Secret rebranded their fashion show to be called The Tour, a streamed event featuring creative voices filmed in cities around the world, including Barcelona, Lagos, Bogotá, London, and Tokyo. The company's Head Creative Director, Raúl Martínez, defines the show as one that "celebrates the individuality of women's stories and perspectives." The show highlights diverse bodies by including models such as Michaela Stark, Paloma Elsesser, Tess McMillan, and Megan Rapinoe. Stark, a designer herself, is known for accentuating natural bodies instead of resisting them. She is on the prestigious Forbes 30 under 30 list and has collaborated with designers such as Jean Paul Gaultier to develop custom pieces for celebrities such as Beyoncé. Elsesser is the first plus-size model to be named "Model of the Year," while McMillan breaks boundaries in the fashion industry by refusing to be defined by labels such as "plus size." Rapinoe was a professional soccer player for the National Women's Soccer League and is an advocate for the LGBTQ+ community. Victoria's Secret highlights women with diverse identities and those making an impact beyond the fashion industry. Additionally, after becoming a mom to five children, Adriana Lima still says that she feels



"celebrated" by the redefined fashion show.

On the other hand, sources such as The Cut stated that the show "could have been an email," indicating their lack of support for the new approach. Many viewers express that the show was not a reflection of the brand they know and love as the format proved itself to be nothing like the original runway of the 2010s. In addition to the lack of engagement, viewers have pointed out that many pieces don't seem to fit the plus-sized model well at all, despite the brand's effort towards body inclusivity. On a deeper level, the show can be seen as an overly transparent, simplified, and inauthentic way to stay relevant within the rise of inclusivity. The apparent lack of genuine interest in change makes the rebranding effort seem like simply a corporate strategy meant to make the company morally untouchable through its "efforts" marketing inclusivity towards the public. By not preserving elements of the original show, many perceive the show to imply that plus-size bodies can't be "cute, sexy, and fun" like the conventional models of the previous decades, ultimately disapproving of body positivity.

Victoria's Secret has come a long way since their rise to popularity in the 2000s, to their prosperity in the 2010s and now their rebrand. While their new era of inclusivity isn't completely well-received, the company has made concrete strides in the right direction. We are excited to see what the company presents in the future as they continue to improve their brand and rededicate themselves to changing with the times

AI in Fashion and Virtual Dressing Rooms

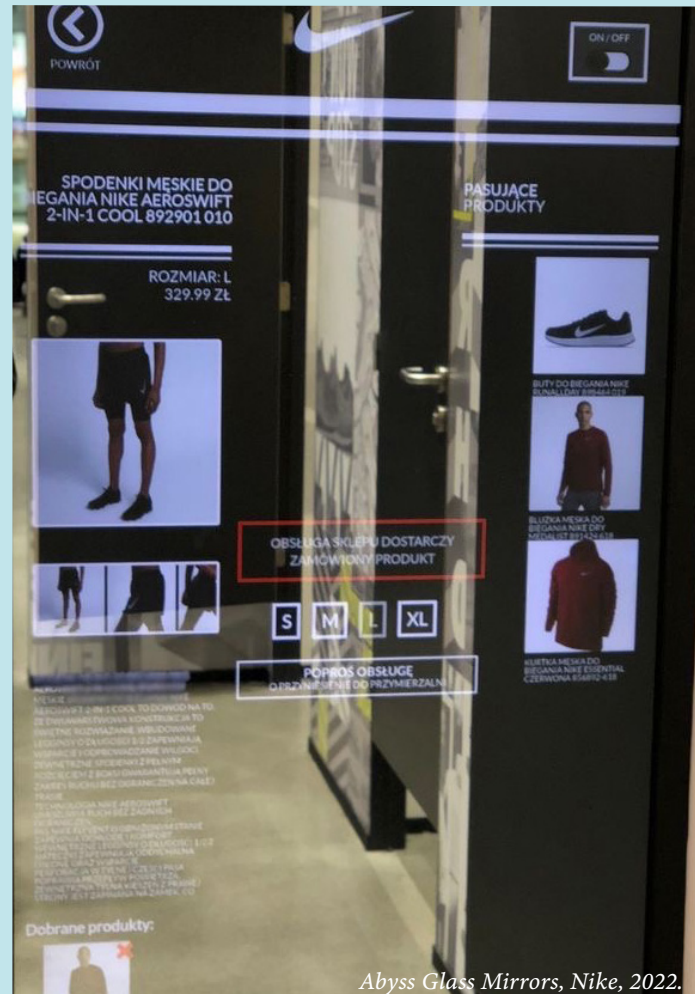
Aashna Sharma

We all know about the use of AI for platforms such as Chat GPT and Grammarly, but one use that comes as a surprise is the role of AI in fashion. AI has revolutionized this industry in various ways, such as marketing, design, and retail, and one of the most remarkable inventions changing the trajectory of the fashion industry is virtual dressing rooms.

Compared to online shopping, going to the store to shop has been a hassle. The process is time-consuming and inconvenient, often involving busy lines and waiting all day for dressing rooms. These limitations led to the rise of online shopping and as technology advanced, the appearance of AI-powered fitting rooms. On the other hand, shopping in person can be a bonding and leisure activity. Incorporating AI into fashion has led to less human interaction. This change leads to the alienation of people.



Hypebeast.com, "Ralph Lauren Unveils Interactive Fitting Rooms," 2015.

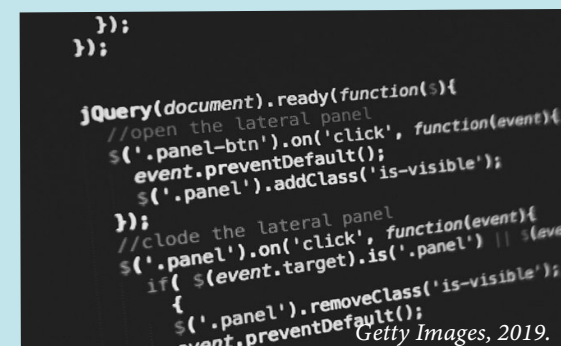


Abyss Glass Mirrors, Nike, 2022.



Signageinfo.com, 2012.

Virtual fitting rooms allow consumers to try on clothes at home through a website or a "smart" mirror to visualize how a garment will fit without having to try it on in the store. Most digital fitting rooms use computer vision technology, which analyzes a user's feed to make a template for visualizing the clothing.



Getty Images, 2019.



Coach, 2023.

AI and virtual fitting rooms have helped the fashion industry in other ways. This invention has helped businesses by allowing them to track fashion trends along with customer trends and sales. Virtual fitting rooms also have the advantage of helping to conserve the environment, allowing customers to easily try on the items before purchasing them. Consequently, consumers have access to information and resources that enable them to make more informed purchasing decisions, thereby reducing the number of returns, which often end up in landfills.

Overall, virtual dressing rooms have been beneficial in conserving the environment and advancing fashion businesses, all while making shopping a more enjoyable experience for consumers. As technology advances, AI's role in fashion will continue to influence the future of fashion.







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Special thanks to all of our models
for continued time and effort, and
for always looking fabulous!

THANK YOU

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The Flare team hopes you enjoyed our special edition, FLARE: The Future of Fashion, and learned something new and exciting about the role we think technology, sustainability, and inclusivity will play in the fashion industry in the coming years.

To read more content from Flare, please visit our website flaresagehill.com, or check out our previous editions from 2018-2023. For updates on upcoming events or magazines, visit our instagram account [@flaremag.sagehill](https://www.instagram.com/flaremag.sagehill). To become a part of the Flare team, DM us on instagram, or email 24gomeza@sagehillschool.org or 25yangh@sagehillschool.org.

Thank you so much for reading!

