



The Michael Kors Spring 2016 collection is modeled during Fashion Week in New York. — AP/AFP photos

NEW YORK FASHION WEEK: EARTHY ELEGANCE AT KORS, WEST RETURNS



Earthy elegance at Michael Kors

Elegance, the Michael Kors way for spring, doesn't mean kid gloves, boning and tight dresses. The designer had a more "earthy elegance" on his mind for the feminine Michael Kors Collection - a more creative, artistic energy like Georgia O'Keeffe and Elsa Peretti, the Italian model turned jewelry designer. He sewed fluttery petaled flowers on dresses and offered sheer kicky pleats on dresses in classic red, blue, black and white. Wide black leather belts and grommets along skirts and hems provided strength.

"I wanted to have that balance of the two things, think about things that were in fact very soft and romantic and feminine, but take them down-to-earth and make them work in a modern way," Kors said in an interview. "It's all about things that move with the wind, and juxtapose all of that with sort of borrowed from the boys kind of tailoring that feels easy." Hence his ruffles, slits and slashes to catch the breeze. It hasn't been an easy year for the lovable Kors. His competition is amped up, discounting is deep and his stock was down. How is he holding up? "I'm an optimistic guy, you know? I think that's how I approach fashion. I still believe that when people put the right thing on it changes them," Kors said. "It changes your spirit, it changes your step. I've seen a woman try on a dress and suddenly stand up straight." He acknowledges fashion is fast and furious now and customers are shopping lots of different ways. "I think we're all adjusting to the fact that it is a new world," Kors said. Among his front row guests were Naomi Watts and Olivia Wilde. And Kendall Jenner was among his walkers.



"I always love the drama in the front row in the shows and seeing how they're presenting their new ideas. It's fun," Watts said. Wilde grabbed one of the looks bound for the runway to wear herself, a loose red dress that sparkled and was outfitted with a white Peter Pan collar. It's just the thing for a working mom, she said. She gave birth to her first child, Otis, in April. "I find that I like to look put together but I need to be able to move around and function and I can't be kind of squeezing into something that's not going to work, you know, running on cobblestones and jumping into the subway," she said. "So I feel like his looks are always keeping women in mind - working women in mind, professional women who are powerful and sexy," Wilde added. Sitting in the front row, Wilde said, is always fun, but a little stressful. "I just focus the whole time on not tripping the models," she said. "Don't trip them! Don't trip them! You know, it's a lot like sitting courtside at a basketball game, you just can't believe how tall they are."