

The Gazette



Gazette fashion editor **Eva Friede** is out there, shopping till she drops, for love and money. It's her job, right? Look for bargains and beefs, hot finds and cool threads in this space – and in the Gazette's fashion pages every Tuesday.



Hold the shine: Montreal Fashion Week, Day 2

There is precious little of excitement on the runway, and far too much patchwork, too much glitter, too much red (how can that be? – you had to be there) and too many shiny fabrics for my taste.

Helmer rules



(Photo: Vincenzo D'Alto / The Gazette)

Helmer is the highlight of the day, with his couture work in ruffles, lace, beading and patchwork – some of which is actually cute, particularly one strapless dress with pouchy pockets on the skirt. He also worked white shirts in dramatic variations with lattice crossing or bold loops, paired with tailored pencil skirts cut high on the waist, a flirty A-line or pants, slim and wide.

The best, however, was his opening of coats with frilled skirts shown to the beat of bachata, the music of the Dominican Republic, which shares Hispaniola island with Helmer Joseph's native Haiti. In fact, if all fashion shows were as musically inspired as Helmer's – nuevo tango, rumba and French chansons were also on the sound program – I would be a happier camper.

Off the runway

Le Showroom is pretty interesting, with Nadya Toto, Second, Ça Va de Soi and Marie Saint Pierre setting up racks in Bonsecours Market. Toto, who showed in Toronto, is back with her signature ruffy black evening wear, plus a statement coat with popcorn and a green ball skirt of the heaviest, most luxurious silk I have ever encountered.

There is the French contingent, too, including streetwear from Naco Paris, which features a pink T with the question: "Do you really need a Marc Jacob's bag?" Never mind that Jacobs is misspelled: the question is poignant.