

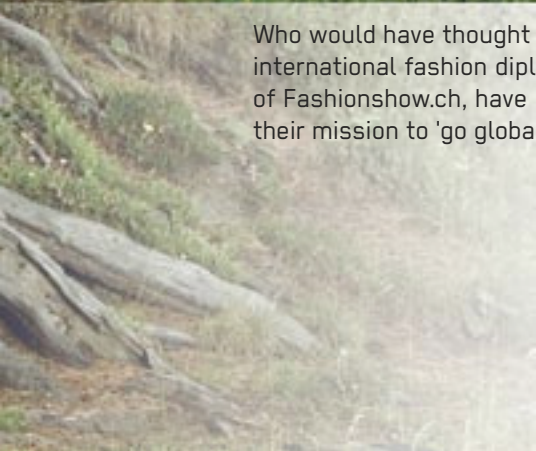


Ruffled top and skirt: +41 || Price available on request



SWISS FASHION

IN MOTION



Who would have thought a chance encounter in a corner of the Swiss Romande would be the springboard for international fashion diplomacy? Yet ever since they met, Charles Hieronymi and Pascal Greco, the founders of Fashionshow.ch, have been enhancing the image of Swiss fashion abroad. Ursula Anastasia Dinnis traces their mission to 'go global'.

It's the late 1990s: Charles, a rugged surfer with a passion for Hawaii, is filming a friend's fashion show in Geneva. Backstage he bumps into Pascal, laid back and casually chic, who's also filming the event. They discover that, not only do they have the same camera, but, they share a common vision – to represent Swiss fashion in video and new media.

In 2000, the two established Fashionshow.ch, a network of fashion stylists, designers and photographers, as well as DJs and multi-media artists, who've committed their time, energy and creativity to the promotion of the country's most talented young designers. Projects started to roll in and within four years the group had pooled its expertise, producing a DVD featuring the shows of up-and-coming Swiss talent in New York.

"Our aim was to produce a catalogue of catwalks," says Charles, "the New York project was the first of its kind in the world. It gave the designers a platform to show their work and it also promoted cultural and lifestyle awareness."

Fashionshow.ch was so successful with the NYC project that its main sponsor, Presence Switzerland (a government body promoting Swiss culture abroad), invited them to repeat the performance at the Japan Fashion Week in Tokyo in 2006.

Sensing an opportunity to develop new ideas and design concepts, the Fashionshow.ch team organised a workshop in Switzerland for Japanese fashion students. Led by the established Swiss star of the international design scene, Laurent Mercier (formerly with the French couture house Balmain), the exchange successfully enabled Japanese and Swiss students to understand more about each other's cultures, leading to a wealth of new ideas and influences.

Today, despite their cross-continental achievements, it's business as usual for Charles and Pascal in Geneva. But are they confident they can continue to carve a niche for Switzerland in the international fashion scene? "We believe in our goal," says Charles, "and that's to be recognised for our way of looking at fashion."



Black satin dress and coat: Heinrich Brambilla || Price available on request



Tops and skirts: Espinach || Price available on request



« Top: Tran Hin Phu, pants: Pierre Millasson || Price available on request



Trouser suit: Pierre Millasson || Price available on request



Top and skirt: Laurent Mercier || Price available on request



Shrug and flannel dress: Pierre Millasson || Price available on request

Photos taken at Jungfrau by Davolo, a Geneva-based fashion photographer and partner of the Fashionshow.ch network. Assistant photographer: Ludovic Tallandier; stylist: Cédric Riffaud; Make-up and hair: Yvann Yaggi; Models: Eloise (Kai Zen Model Management), Daniela, Fabienne and Isabelle (Time Models); production: Michel Huerter (Presence Switzerland), Pascal Greco and Charles Hieronymi (Fashionshow.ch).