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Fully Form-ed

By Anja Brinich

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Young design house Form arrived on the forefront of new New York fashion with their show at the Angel Orensanz Foundation this Thursday evening.

The venue is one like none other, a gothic-revival 1800s synagogue with vaulted ceilings, flaking paint and a magnificently shabby, immense carved wooden altarpiece. Wrought iron chandeliers filled with flickering candles twisted lazily, and spiraling, otherworldly music filled the air.

A crowd of downtown's beautiful and bright young things filled the standing section and straddled the rails of the galleries above, while Japanese investors in the first row fairly smothered the stage in diamonds and designers duds.

Into this scene floated the models, advised by Kelly Cutrone of People's Revolution to walk "like gang-banged Alice in Wonderland's" down the catwalk.

The clothes were stunning. Confined to a sophisticated palette of black, gray, and bone, they exuded an edgy but mature vision. Amongst the best pieces were the "spat pants," long, slim-cut pants in shimmering black or cream colored leather with tiny buttons down the side of the ankle and an quietly exaggerated swoop of a hemline that perfectly emulated the spats worn over one's shoes at the turn of the last century.

Lamé leggings paired with a cocoon-like handknit sweater were also stunning, as was a grey wool bubble skirt paired with a shiny twill suit jacket. Various pieces cut from a petal-like fabric that appeared to be soft wool were so delicate as to seem fit to float on air.

The cut of pants and skirts was consistently inspired, taking classic tailoring and adding a sharp, referential twist of the equestrian or the Victorian. Beautiful leather bags, hand cuffs and gloves enriched the show, and harnesses and earrings laced with black Swarovski crystals (a sponsor of the show) completed the looks.

Not a single outfit was ill-conceived, and all of the clothing had a timeless quality. For all the historical references in the clothing, the pieces were, ultimately, timeless, and there was plenty there to be worn and loved by the Japanese investors as well as the kids who were hanging from the rafters.

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