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## **White Show Shines Spotlight on Streetwear**

**The White trade show offered more women's lines, gender-neutral fashion and eco-friendly merchandise at its January edition.**

By [Sofia Celeste](#) on January 23, 2017

Contemporary men's, women's and accessories [trade show](#) White Man and Woman expanded the number of its women's collections to attract buyers to its fairgrounds during men's fashion week.

The fair, held in Milan's Via Tortona design district between Jan. 14 and 16, hosted 270 companies total, up from 230 small and medium-size brands a year earlier. Of the 270 brands on show, 197 were women's brands. In terms of buyers, the international presence rose 18 percent compared to the year before.

"It has been strategic for us to focus on women's wear, in my opinion, because the men's wear sector continues to grow weaker and weaker," said White founder and president Massimiliano Bizzi.

White gives buyers a chance to access all of the women's pre-fall collections in mid-January and place orders well before the women's wear frenzy starts in February, which allows brands to ensure timely shipments and deliveries.

"This is our fourth season in which we have experimented with this model," said Bizzi, noting the program's success.

White has been showing collections for both genders since 2012. The fair now dedicates an "Only Woman" section — a space for designers who solely produce women's lines. French ballerina shoe brand Repetto and Finnish fashion brand Aalto were among the special exhibitors at Only Woman.

Overall, the fair focused on streetwear trends.

"Trends are going toward street fashions and easy fashions for men, and I think that this is smart — and will help drive men's wear," Bizzi said, adding that the fair is very "close" to the style of Northern Europe, which is why they chose the Copenhagen-based brand Wood Wood to unfurl its fall collection for the first time here, at the Base venue of the Tortona Fashion District, as the White guest designer.

Wood Wood is known for its knack for mixing fine tailoring with its Danish take on streetwear. At the show, pinstripes were paired with easy Wood Wood sneakers that were made in collaboration

with Asics, while lazy teddy fleece beanies were matched with anoraks and hoodies, reminding the audience of street style's origins. There were clear Nineties references like A-line silhouettes, high waists and quirky cat-eye glasses for women.

"I was focused on core streetwear, with formalwear hints. I wanted this to reflect the society we live in that is a mix of sportswear and formalwear," said cofounder Karl-Oskar Olsen, who started the brand with Brian SS Jensen.

It was the first Milan show for Wood Wood, which has been active since 2002.

"Milan is key for men's wear and for us to be noticed by international buyers," Olsen said.

Back at the fairgrounds, White saw the return of WOW, the White on Web multimedia project. Highsnobiety and Florence-based online e-tailer Luisa Via Roma helped produce editorial and live shooting on social networks and sold brands' see-now-buy-now capsule collections on its online store. WOW brands included Dubai-based House of Nomad, Kai Dunkel, contemporary label Curtis Li Studio, women's wear brand ZDDZ, Tonsure, The AM Crew and U.K.-based sportswear brand Mazinyi.

Elsewhere the focus turned to unisex fashions and eco-friendly fashion.

Bananatime is an Amsterdam-based label that is geared toward a girl who is prone to borrow her boyfriend's clothes.

The name of the brand was inspired from the paper titled "Banana Time" that was written in 1959 by Donald Francis Roy. The paper describes how industrial workers made work and their work places more tolerable by having some "Banana Time" — playing games and taking short breaks with their colleagues throughout the day.

The result is a fashion-forward collection of roomy, silky chic pajama shirts and pants that retail for about 300 to 600 euros, or about \$325 to \$645.

"We are a unisex brand," said cofounder Julia Mah. "The stores that we sell to determine who is their consumer, whether it's a man or woman. It takes time for some consumers to grasp the idea of no-gender clothing, but as our collection offers very versatile, everyday luxury products, the classification of gender becomes less important."

The concept of sustainability and slow fashion also stood out at the fair.

Handmade shoes by Veneto-based Peter Non, who experiments with vegetable leathers and has collaborated with upscale designers like Lucio Zanotti for his fall collection, made an impact in the White Show basement.

Totally designed and made in Italy, Non produces a handmade “non-shoe” that is functional, often slip-on and unisex.

Biella-based Lanificio Botto Giuseppe showcased its cashmere fabrics at the Italian DNA Exhibition, with looks that were curated by Maurizio Miri. The designs were crafted with Botto Giuseppe’s Naturalis Fibra fabric collection, made with “slowool yarns,” which are made from the wool of sheep reared by the Australian Congi company. One of the key aspects of this exclusive

partnership is that the sheep are not subjected to mulesing, a stripping technique that has been criticized for the cruel practice of ripping the wool off animals at the buttocks.

Newcomer SQUARe027 is a vegan and eco-friendly, cruelty-free brand that showcased its spirited athletic shoes made with wood and vegan leather at White for the first time.

“Foreigners seemed very enthusiastic about our brand,” said founder Marco Zanuccoli.

“White is an important reference point for us to view trends,” said Milan-based retailer Claudio Antonioli, who noted his business still dedicates 50 percent of its budget to men’s wear.