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## These Two Independent American Fashion Brands Deserve Your Attention



BY MANIC METALLIC TEAM · FEBRUARY 16, 2022



Dur Doux FW22; photo © Manic Metallic 2022

For Manic Metallic's recent attendance at the New York Fashion Week Fall/Winter 2022 collections, we wanted to take care to cover design talent that isn't already cloaked inside of an aura of hype. We made an effort to see a few selected shows where the design talent was clearly visible – and where the designers know how to do the work without all of the noise that comes with celebrity endorsements and overexposure. After all, we were founded as an outlet aiming to bring the emphasis in fashion back to the fashion industry's players and to direct that emphasis away from entertainment sector notoriety.

We're going to zero in on two talents, specifically, that we spotted in person at NYFW.



Dur Doux FW22 collection

## Dur Doux

Mother-and-daughter combo Cynthia and Najla Burt sent out a collection, titled “La Nouvelle Mosaïque” (the New Mosaic) that offered an exciting array of colors for FW22.

Some of the more casual looks in the collection gave off an Anna Sui vibe – not that this is a bad thing. Dur Doux’s FW22 pieces – and their corresponding accessories – were bold, fun, and ready to make a statement. In turning out a collection that makes eye-catching use of color combinations, prints, and accessories, perhaps they could make inroads with Sui’s crowd.

The more formal pieces still had a pep about them. These dresses were surely not for wallflowers. They are for spirited, exuberant women ready to optimistically engage with the world again.

Dur Doux also debuted their menswear collection, Dur Doux Homme – a collaboration with D.C. menswear designer Andrew Nowell. Those pieces carried the same levels of boldness and color as the womenswear but – unlike some contemporary menswear – one never got the sense that the Dur Doux Homme-dressed man was trying too hard. Nowell’s work blended well with the rest of the collection.

Something else to appreciate about the work that Dur Doux is doing is the fact that they insist on lifting up their fellow hometown creators along with them. Dur Doux has shown as a part of the NYFW calendar for three years now, yet they are still based in Washington D.C. In addition to the menswear collaboration, the brand collaborated with D.C. brands TruFacebyGrace for accessories and Nila Bags for the handbags that were shown.

Also of note were the diverse body shapes on display on the runway. Body diversity has been picking up at various fashion weeks over the past couple of seasons, but the industry still has a long way to go in this regard. Kudos to the brand for angling itself in the right direction with its model talent.

Indeed, the future is bright here.



Negris LeBrum FW22 collection

## Negris Lebrum

After starting about 10-15 minutes later than expected, the Negris LeBrum show proceeded beautifully.

If there is one word that consistently comes to mind when it comes to describing the work of Creative Director Travis Hamilton, it is “elegance”. The brand represents a level of head-to-toe elegance that is hard to spot anywhere in this day and age of head-to-toe casual clothing. Their FW22 collection was so well-polished that it can make one yearn for the days when women dressed up more often. The elegance here, however, is simple. It’s pared-back. After all, elegance is restraint.

That’s not to say that Negris LeBrum’s work can’t be worn comfortably; it, in fact, can be. The looks on display at the show were created to be both well-tailored and comfortable. The camel-toned garments and the black dresses with teal color-blocking come to mind – as do the well-crafted blazers and the sweaters with metallic pinstripes. Special mention should be made of the shades, which will certainly be successful.

Overall, the output here was true to form for Negris LeBrum: sleek, ladylike, and well-put-together.

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When we at Manic Metallic attend Fashion Week and peruse collections, we come to see fashion – not a spectacle, and certainly not to see what celebrities are sitting in the brand’s front row. Fashion needs to get back to a place where it can simply appreciate creative talent without all of the bells and whistles. By elevating brands like Dur Doux and Negrís LeBrum, perhaps it can do so.

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