



photo: Nikita

WOMEN'S STREETWEAR AW15/16

Just as the speed of daily life is increasing through new technologies and technical innovations, so are the trends, developing faster than ever and spreading through social media like wildfire. Hence there is no longer one trend influencing everything but rather a myriad of micro-trends influencing one another. Especially with fashion-savvy girls...

Report by Anna Langer.

Collections are no longer inspired or based on a certain activity, era or look, but rather a combination of inspiring stories and the person wearing the clothes. "We were inspired by our girls' sense of adventure and discovery, collecting textures and items from all the places she went to, creating a unique mix that is all her own, a collection of cultures but not specifically identifiable to one," explains Roxy's Head of Global Design, Marie Lauga. Nikita agree that their customer is not "defined as being just a snowboarder or a skater—she is multi-active, participating in a variety of fitness activities, trend-savvy and above all else adventurous, creative and inspired." And while Burton took their inspiration from "women that explore, seek adventure and want to be comfortable throughout the day", they also want to make sure that their "BurtonGirl is covered everyday, regardless of the environments and situations she may be faced with, in all aspects of her life and invited to personalize her look," as VP of Apparel Creative Matt Ross points out.

SILHOUETTES

The sporty vibe is definitely still strong in women's streetwear in the Autumn/Winter season of 2015/16, with a slight lean towards the peak times of our sports in the 90s, "merging with 70s vibes" (Volcom) and "minimal silhouettes and grunge styling" (Vans). Expect lots of athletic silhouettes sporting interesting twists from Volcom, Vans, Roxy, Zimtstern, Bench, Bleed, Burton, Protest and O'Neill, mixed up with "unexpected fabrication or prints" (Vans).

More feminine styles keep the balance, like the "fashionable" cuts from O'Neill, "fashionable, oversized puffy jackets" from Burton, and knitwear from Bleed. Neff, who are just entering the streetwear market for women, are addressing this with "a variety of scallop-hemmed long sleeves", as well as "drop-tail tanks", Director of Merchandising, Kevin Dell, explains. "Slim, figure hugging shapes are still relevant too, especially in insulator or mid-layer product with ninja hoods or grown on turtlenecks" according to Bench, who add "fashion detailing" to

their active inspired line. Volcom offer "skinny fit polo necks in a fine gauge knit and jersey" to be worn under dresses and Zimtstern also emphasize "perfect fit" for their sweats and single jerseys.

Nikita introduce a "sophisticated and edgy yet casual denim capsule collection", including "two jeans, a shirt, a dress, a coat and a wrap coat. The collection features striking patchwork, quilting and stitching and is quite different from everything else out there", Brand Manager Vicki Vasil states. They also continue their "trademark cowl necks, tunic-inspired dresses, flannel shirts and hoodies", Roxy mix up "soft crochets and Ikat-prints with sporty stripes and athletic silhouettes" and Vans highlight their "easy muscle midi silhouette with high slits and baby snap details".

For "unique statements" Head Designer for RVCA Europe Camille JeanJean created "artfully designed stand out pieces", but the major part of the line consists of "easy to wear casual styles that are wardrobe staples", like most other collections. Neff concentrate on "basic and universal" silhouettes, while Bench put extra focus on how their styles feel worn: "The new season's silhouettes promote ease of wear, reflecting a casual, relaxed aesthetic."

When it comes to jackets, we'll be seeing a "mix of modern must haves" (Volcom), with everything "from short and boxy to long and narrow" (Colour Wear). Bomber jackets are especially popular with Vans, Zimtstern, Burton, and O'Neill. The latter also offer a new silhouette with a cape, Roxy add an "all over print anorak" while Burton, Protest and Volcom update the parka style "in a throw-on fit with oversized faux fur hoods, moving classic parka styling into longer puff jackets with quilting detailing," says Volcom Women's Designer (Europe) Kelly Summer.

The boyfriend look is still prevalent in all lines from all brands interviewed too, with oversized shirts and sweaters from Zimtstern, Vans, Neff, Bleed, Burton, Nikita, O'Neill, Protest and "oversized longer lines and cocoon silhouettes with scooped, curved back or round hems as well as blouson hems and cape volumes" from Bench.

FABRICS

Fabrics stay soft and light as well, allowing collections "to flow seamlessly between the seasons", as Burton's Matt puts it. Including everything from "soft novelty texture and washes" from Vans, "soft, silky, draped" from Nikita, "soft sweats and yarns in winter colours" from Zimtstern, "soft, tactile and cosy fabrics next to brushed, sueded finishes" from Bench, to "silicone washes" from Neff and "washed optics" from Protest. Volcom upgrade this with "plush and cosy sherpa textures" on crew necks and jackets, adding "interest and comfort to classic shapes."

For Burton, reversibility is one of their key stories: "The blending of tech with lifestyle has been key. Innovative technical faces with cosy interiors or lifestyle faces with technical attributes." Instead of differentiating between outerwear and streetwear, brands embrace their sports' heritage and infuse it in their street styles: "We are an action sports brand at our core, so we try to stay away from designs that look overly technical. Even styles that provide more technical properties are still designed into the 'street' aesthetic that you'll find satisfies our consumer," Vans Head Designer of Women's Apparel and Accessories Nadia Barienbrock explains. To do so, they give "fabrications with technical properties more of a cotton hand feel and appearance", Bench introduce "streetwear styling, heavy twill fabric or traditional canvas and workwear detailing into the performance range, whilst using technical waterproof fabrics or adding functional finishes to streetwear garments". O'Neill's Adventure Series, where "style meets tech", was created to address exactly this need, implementing

their innovative Hyperdry fabric. The new Nikita NIKIwik fabric "features an advanced wicking property" too, but has a "cotton-like feel and texture, which makes pieces like the Desolate Dance Tee easy to transition from the gym to the street", states Brand Manager Vicki Vasil. Working with the theme "everyday outdoor", Colour Wear co-founder, designer and product manager Johan Nilo makes sure even their street clothing has "a technical touch somewhere," while Bench introduce "Polygiene, an antimicrobial, antibacterial treatment" against odours and a "3M Featherless, super light weight, high loft insulation as an alternative to natural down that still performs when wet," that can also be found in Protest's line.

Last but not least, textured fabrics "like slubs, jacquards and yarn dyes" deserve a mention as well, as seen in collections from Roxy, Vans, Volcom, Nikita, and Bench. And Protest have a lot of new "combinations in materials in our products. For example colour block designs with different fabrics and a fake leather jacket with sweat sleeves," says Design Manager Joffrey Delfgaauw.

PRINTS & COLOURS

Warm, earthy colour pallets match the vibes of autumn and winter. Neff go for "teal, maroon, purple, and black", Vans experiment with a "grungy play on primaries", RVCA use "black, khaki and navy midnight", Nikita the "rich tones found in nature", O'Neill like "warm red tones, lava grey and arctic green" and Protest and Colour Wear keep it "classic, basic and toned down" as well. Volcom's "deep reds and inky blues" were inspired by the "rich vegetable dyes of hand woven blankets and ethnic textiles" and "sit harmoniously next to warm sunset hues and sweet neutrals." Roxy follow a similar pattern, grounding "emerald greens, vibrant royal blue, and a range of true oranges with navy, olive green and heather grey."

Burton's heritage-based Mountain collection features "natural washes, military tones, shades of indigo, leather and maroon" too, while their more technical Process line took inspiration from the icy side of this season, with "pacific and water blues, high-rise grey, shades of fuchsia, sunny lime, true black and sea spray whites." Bench use the icy winter breezes as well, with "frozen tones like lilac, pastel blue and green", similar to RVCA's "candy colours like rosewater and aquatic". Zimtstern go for a clean and fresh look with "carmine, nutria, and classic grey heather" and Nikita complement purple, pink, teal and green with black, white and grey.

Floral patterns in different variations are no longer limited to summer either and grow in collections by Volcom, Neff, Zimtstern and Roxy, but we'll also get some winter-typical plaid from Roxy and Vans, Fair Isle patterns from Protest, classic stripes from Volcom and Roxy and geometric prints from Vans, Nikita and Volcom.

OUTLOOK

Embracing the fusion of an active lifestyle seems to be a great tactic for boardsport driven brands, with "consumers buying into both categories and using them interchangeably. We have so much innovation in our technical categories and are excited about the places where outerwear and streetwear crossover. We feel like this is the future of our brand," Roxy's Marie Lauga sums it up.

AT A GLANCE

SILHOUETTES: LONG & NARROW, SHORT & BOXY

FABRICS: SOFT & PLUSHY

COLOURS: WARM EARTH TONES & FROZEN ICE PASTELS

PATTERNS: GEOS & FLORALS