

INTERVIEW. TXELL MIRAS. FASHION DESIGNER

'It's important to be curious'

AN INTIMATE
CHAT WITH TXELL
MIRAS, WINNER
OF THE RECENT
CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE PRIZE
'BARCELONA IS
FASHION', TALKS
ABOUT THE
SEARCH FOR
INNOVATION
THROUGH ART
AND INGMAR
BERGMAN

MARTA S WENDLINGER

● Txell Miras, a local *Catalana* from the Vallès Occidental area, studied Bellas Artes in Barcelona, then fashion at La Llotja. In 1999, she participated in ModaFAD and in 2001 won the "Insidouting" competition by the Domus Academy de Milan and in 2002 was a finalist in the "Grand Prix" of Tokyo. In 2003, she won the "Young Promise" award from the Chamber of Italian Fashion and debuted at Passarella Gaudí with her first collection, inspired by the Ingmar

Bergmar film "Persona" while working in Milan for Neil Barrett (ex-creative director of Prada Men). Since then, she hasn't let up.

We met the day after her successful Passarella Barcelona catwalk at the Bread & Butter stand within Studio.04, a collective space designed to help young designers present their work to the global market in challenging and interesting ways. Taking a break from all the frantic activity of the last few days, she was able to answer some questions.

As a winner of the Chamber of Commerce's 'Barcelona is Fashion' prize last October, I was keen to know whether she was under additional pressure at work.

Surprisingly, she didn't even know that she had been in the competition since it was Ivan Caparros, her boyfriend and PR manager, who had signed her up. She only found out that she had won a few days before the awards event. Although quite pleased to have won the prize which recognises her seriousness and professionalism from such a well-respected organisation, she claims that it hasn't added any extra pressure.

"The first time you win a prize and people start talking about you, well, it gives you 'respect' but after you win a few more, it just helps maintain your loyalty to your own work and encourages you to fight and not stop being yourself and doing what you believe in," she says.

Yet no designer is free of outside influences, and Miras looks far and wide for the right idea.

"I'm influenced by the Belgian School like 'Comme des



One of the Txell Miras models at the Passarel·la Barcelona / GABRIEL MASSANA

Garçons' and the Japanese, because they see fashion as creation and concept, not simply in a commercial light. But I'm also highly influenced by literature, conceptual artists and writers, even Bergman. I feel that it's important to always be curious about other artistic disciplines when creating," she said.

Txell Miras' latest collection is called Balances. She explains that the collection was originally designed as the wardrobe for the

Teatre Nacional de Catalunya's production of *Tranuites Circus* but due to agenda problems, she couldn't finish the job. However, she has used the designs as the basis of her recent collection by adapting it for "street-wear" rather than "circus-wear." Throughout the collection, she has tried to communicate the circus of life; the path of self-discovery, from infancy to death, as she puts it.

Txell's Bread and Butter catwalk was a refreshing break from more traditional shows. The models, sporting a minimalist yet elegant look so as not to detract from the clothes, started out balancing on an invisible tightrope, dressed in cottons and wools, mostly blacks on blacks, greys, and some browns, and featured a constant play of volumes, pleats, gathers, and super-impositions on pants, dresses, and skirts with lots of

body, capes and jackets with accents of ribbons, buttons, and pockets.

Txell explains that the beginning of the catwalk is meant to illustrate an individual's way of balancing one's life. Later, the models walk through the audience and, at one point, rush in all directions among themselves demonstrating how individuals must relate to others in society. Finally one model, with a white mask on the back of her head, immerses herself into an empty bathtub symbolising personal reflection and/or suicide.

I ask about her plans for the future: "You never know what you'll be doing in the future, but

"You start with a concept but it's only through the work that you find your way"

for the moment I'm fortunate that I earn a living doing what I love. Although I'm in fashion, I always need to complement my work with other artistic disciplines. That's why I decided to do a short film to accompany the collection. I still paint and illustrate in my spare time. Maybe one day I'll end up doing other things."

One thing she says she knows for sure, however, and she says it like a true Catalan, is that she wants to stay in Barcelona. "It's a good life here," she says. Her work means that she travels at least one week a month to Paris, New York, or Milan, but she always loves coming back to what has become her city.

Claiming to be fulfilled by her decision to get involved in fashion, she describes it as a way of experimenting and communicating a story to others; something she loves to do, she says, although only a few designers share her viewpoint.

There is now expectation as to what Miras' next collection will bring. She promises that it will be "challenging and complicated," exactly what she says she likes. "You start with a concept but it's only through "the work" that you find your way... and the end result may be something all together different."

For more information:
www.txellmiras.eu



Txell Miras was born in Sabadell in 1976 / EL PUNT

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