

WBDM (Wallonie -Brussels Design Mode)  
in collaboration with No Season presents

# SHOWROOM [LES BELGES] PARIS FASHION WEEK S/S 2016

a.Knackfuss  
Emmanuelle Lebas  
Gioia Seghers  
Léo

29.09

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LES BELGES  
[ l e b e l g e s ]

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# SHOWROOM [Les Belges] An initiative of WBDM (Wallonie-Brussels Design Mode)



Offering its support and expertise to young, innovative creative spirits in the areas of fashion and design, Wallonie -Brussels Design Mode brings a planned approach, and a set of unique tools, to help promote talented people looking to break through abroad. This season were selected: a.Knackfuss, Gioia seghers, Léo and Emmanuelle Lebas.

What do they have in common?

A strong and distinct identity, the will to succeed and a deep-rooted eagerness to eschew compromise. They are designers who are not only looking to set up plans for their own label on a professional footing, but also to implement a development strategy to place them on the map of the international market.

The aim of the project Showroom [Les Belges] is to reach and convince opinion leaders and buyers with a selection of cutting edge designers who represent the very best of contemporary Belgian fashion. In order to give the designers a leg up and to enable them to grow, a support cell was put in place last year in partnership with various reputed fashion industry players.

The **No Season** showroom in Paris — which specializes in the sale of young and upcoming designer brands — is acting as a commercial agent for these young designers, whilst Paris-based press agency **Outlevel** is working to raise their profile, in collaboration with the agency **IPR** in London. On the strength of his experience in individual consultancy, brand strategy, and sales development, **Philippe Pourhashemi** have been coaching the designers to improve what they have to offer and the way they are positioning themselves.

# Wallonie - Brusse's Design Mode

Wallonie-Brussels Design Mode (WBDM) is a governmental agency for the promotion of design and fashion, which aims to increase the international reputation of designers from Wallonia and Brussels. Through a constant participation in major tradeshows, exhibitions and conferences, WBDM's mission is to increase networking and

business opportunities for Belgian design and fashion talent in the international market. The agency concurrently emanates from Wallonia-Brussels International, the Wallonia Foreign Trade and Investment Agency (AWEX) and the Wallonia - Brussels Federation (Visual Arts Department).

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draping and unfussy layering, one of her many signatures. Contrasting graphic embroidery on ethereal mesh seems to refer to ethnic rituals, while sheer fabrics are important within the line, indicating a newly-found sense of lightness. White dominates within the line, balanced with solid black and the designer's use of exclusive prints, which are always playful and upbeat. The ongoing tension between masculine and feminine is still a key part of Knackfuss' language, apparent in her reinterpretation of utility and sportswear styles, such as a roomy bomber with cutout detail, a pleated skirt worn over straight pants or sleek-looking tailored overalls. While the designer continues to employ man-made materials, her interest in noble fibers becomes more prominent, turning this collection into a more sophisticated proposal.

Inspired by the concept of human colonies throughout history and time, Alice Knackfuss' new collection is ambitious and forward-thinking, embracing cultural difference in an unexpected and joyful way. This season, the Brussels-based designer juxtaposes tribalism with futurism, reconciling the instinctive and the rational, the natural and the organized. Both impulsive and structured within her creative approach, Knackfuss excels in generating unexpected combinations and encounters, which are filtered through her unique eye and clever use of tailoring. With this summer collection, she embraces a refreshing softness through

**a.Knackfuss**  
[www.acknackfuss.com](http://www.acknackfuss.com)



**Emmanuelle  
Lebas**  
[www.emmanuellelebas.com](http://www.emmanuellelebas.com)

Pursuing her research on unusual shapes and searching for unexpected contrasts between materials, Emmanuelle Lebas perfects her signature styles within this third collection, looking at Antiquity and its stunning architecture. Finding interesting ways to twist minimalism is one of the Belgian designer's strong points, as well as her ability to create seductive lines. Using intricate cutouts on several shoes — which echo Greek and Roman buildings — Lebas adds energy to daily staples, such as loafers, sandals, brogues and boots. Even her platform soles have a graphic feel this time, underlining the sculptural quality of her footwear. Mixing black and white to striking effect, she also plays with traditional menswear shapes, adding a sense of fun that makes them feminine. Textures are important as well, from luxurious, crocodile effect leather to Japanese grosgrain elastic, illustrating the designer's interest in sportswear

and its functionality. She introduces a sensual pump this season, trimmed with elastic grosgrain at the ankle, fusing glamor and athleticism. Sandals — a central style within her collections — are either flat or perched on lightweight platforms, which use contrasting leathers. With a color palette that includes white, black, pink and blue, Emmanuelle Lebas emphasizes the purity of her shapes, which can also be found in her stylish caps, reinterpreted in seasonal tones.



## Gioia Seghers

[www.gioia-seghers.tumblr.com](http://www.gioia-seghers.tumblr.com)

Focusing on tightly edited clothes — and a restrained color palette of white, beige and black — Gioia Seghers develops her own take on simplicity, looking for a precise balance between embellishment and wearability. Inspired by choreographer Lucinda Childs' *Dance*, a 1979 performance made in collaboration with artists Philip Glass and Sol LeWitt, Seghers explores the appeal of fluidity within structured frameworks, creating graceful movements around the female form. Despite working on highly tailored shapes, her clothes seem to evolve around the body freely, creating a sense of nonchalance. Willing to emphasize ease, as well as

lightness, the Belgian designer conceives garments that can be transformed and worn in two different ways, using asymmetrical hems to dynamize the silhouette. A pair of tailored pants features a panel detail, which gives the illusion of a long skirt when worn across the waist. A roomy, unstructured trench becomes an instant classic, easy to layer over Seghers' soft separates. Revisiting the featherweight fishnet she introduced last summer, she places it on key items to obtain playful transparencies, revealing skin while concealing it. Envisaging fringing in unusual ways, she adds more surface interest to everyday clothes. Her choice of fabrics is selective as well, underlining a crisp and refined hand. From cool wool and organza to linen and viscose, Seghers evokes the tactile pleasures of a fleeting summer. A few pieces are unlined this season, caressing the wearer like a second skin.



**Léo**  
www.leo-paris.com

Inspired by retro Sci-Fi films — and their aesthetics bordering on kitsch — Léo imagines a youthful and versatile wardrobe, focusing on comfortable garments with unusual details. Named “Altaira”, the collection explores the idea of alluring space travel, discovering prized treasures of the Milky Way while planning an enchanting journey to a secret planet. Their muse moves seamlessly from one galaxy to the next, chasing UFOs and charming robots. Reinterpreting the upbeat feel and dynamic silhouette of the 1960s, their pieces have a geometrical edge, from carefully placed cutouts on skirts and dresses to curvy outlines for jackets and coats,

expressing a longing for engineered garments. The 1960s meet the 1990s with monochrome graphic patterns, psychedelic animal prints and galactic shades. A striking silver parka is lightweight and directional, while an elegant grid motif trench can be belted in numerous ways, enhancing the transformable appeal of Léo’s clothing. A fitted cropped bolero looks sleek over a matching dress, reformulating the traditional concept of the two-piece suit. Fluid and smart, a tailored jumpsuit takes women from day to evening, adding plenty of flair to a practical piece. The bubbly and contagiously fun personality of the Léo girl comes across in her choice of colors, from Shooting Star pink and Supernova orange to Cyborg silver and Planetary blue. Pursuing their research on innovative fabrics, the Léo team picks exciting textiles this season, ranging from flower jacquard to technical crepe and color changing silk twill.