



Princess Julia & Sheryn Akiki

At the Central Saint Martins 2019 MA show, Sheryn Akiki's models were a mess. In not-quite-zipped-up ensembles that had seemingly shed the majority of their sequins, they tripped and stumbled down the catwalk – dishevelled chignons skewered with Biro's, toes half-in, half-out of deliciously awkward, Sellotaped-on kitten heels, mascara streaked down their cheeks. "I had this vision of a lady gone wrong, who's oddly and improperly going about her daily doings," explains the Beirut-born designer, who brought home the L'Oréal Professionnel Creative Award for her collection. "She has the power to perplex and seduce you at the same time, and raise a few eyebrows along the way."

Also raising eyebrows ever since she established herself as London's 'first lady of fashion' in the early 1980s is DJ and writer Princess Julia, who was there to watch the show unfold. "She's like an ambassador for the universal sensual feminine," Julia enthuses of Akiki's work. Both agree it's only a matter of time until they cross paths again – likely in the bathroom of some smoky club when they are each reapplying their make-up. "I feel best in red lipstick, and I love that Julia is always wearing red lipstick," says Akiki. "I once read an interview where (she) said she admired Joan Collins for always being 'dressed', even if she's not meeting anyone. I'm obsessed with that!"

From left: Princess Julia wears all clothes and shoes Sheryn Akiki, tights stylist's own. Sheryn wears Damascus knitted dress Sheryn Akiki