

PRESS KIT



RENAISSANCE

The word 'RENAISSANCE' is centered in a gold, serif font. A gold needle and thread graphic is superimposed over the word, with the needle passing through the letter 'A'. A horizontal dashed line is positioned above the needle's thread, and a solid line is positioned below it. The background features faint, light blue, swirling decorative lines.

NOTES :

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I - PRESENTATION OF THE ASSOCIATION

Renaissance is a non-profit organisation that was established in September 2019 and aims to offer sustainable development solutions to the textile industry, using the resources of human capital.

Renaissance is therefore undertaking two major challenges :
Social and Environmental

UPCLYCLING METHOD

Couture
or Haute Couture
garments provided
by our ambassadors



Complete
disassembly
of the garment



Research and study
on the basis of
the material



Reconstruction
and rebirth
of the garment



SOCIAL

Renaissance provides a 12-month training course in Upcycling Couture for people who are out of touch with the labour market. We are mobilising local residents who would like to be included in society but who, for a wide array of reasons, are unable to access the traditional labour market: because they have few or no qualifications, because they have suffered accidents in their lives, or because they have recently arrived in France... This project contributes to restoring these people's self-esteem and confidence in their abilities, as well as enabling them to express their talents and use them successfully to express and develop their talents.



FORMATION

We teach haute couture craftsmanship and methods during a 12-month training course. Individuals from different backgrounds work together in the real conditions of a sewing atelier. The vocabulary used is precise and the working methods are thoroughly professional. These requirements are necessary in order to pass on the best possible craftsmanship applied to haute couture.

The training culminates in the presentation of a collection created by the trainee employees during a fashion show.

CONTACT

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RER A ou E - Station Val de Fontenay, sortie
N°2
contact@renaissance-project.org
+33(0)1 45 15 62 74



ENVIRONMENTAL

Renaissance illustrates how Couture or Haute Couture garment that are no longer worn, belonging to the wardrobes of exceptional people, can be reborn. The fashion industry, the second most polluting sector in the world, needs to be reshaped.

By deconstructing and then replenishing the fashion industry's stocks of luxury clothing, Renaissance proves that the ultimate solution is within reach.



DONATION

Our work finds its limit in the financing of our projects. Thanks to your commitment, Renaissance will be able to provide its trainees with the best possible working conditions. To help us, simply scan the QR code.

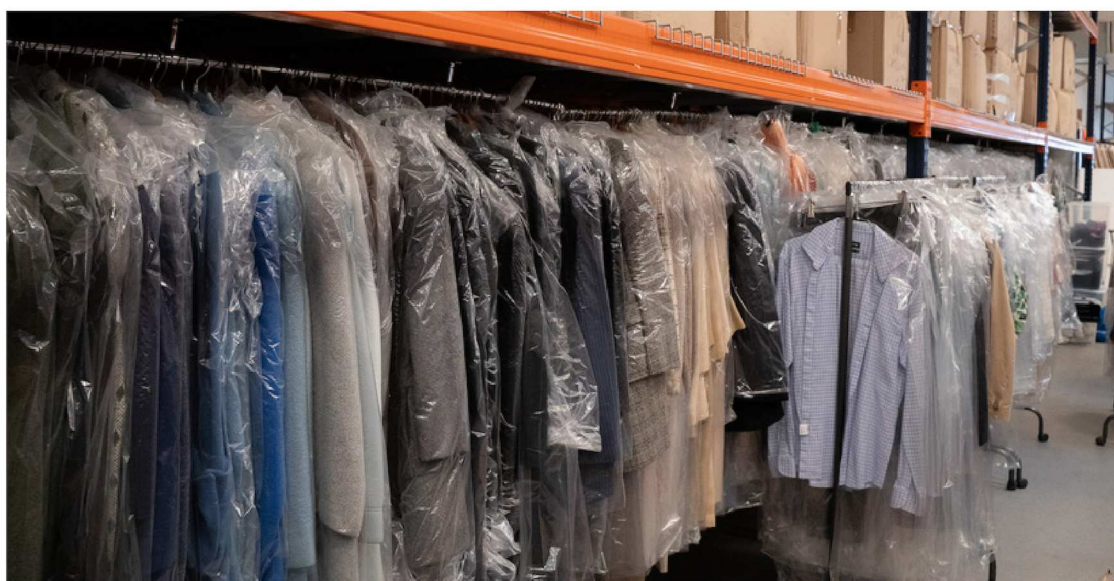
Thank you for your support, on behalf of the entire Renaissance team.



<https://renaissance-project.org/>



Renaissance Project Paris



In March 2024, the Association Renaissance takes place in its new atelier, located in Fontenay-sous-Bois in the Val de Marne.

II - THE UPCYCLING COUTURE SOLUTION

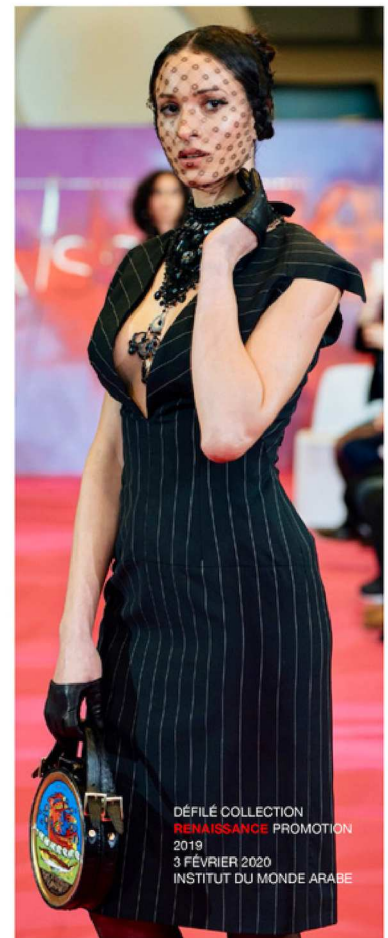
Renaissance is a project led by a non-profit association orchestrated by Philippe Guilet. It is based on three axes, sustainable development in the luxury sector, social and fashion know-how. Therefore he campaigns for the reuse of clothing in the luxury sector. In a perspective of sustainable development and reintegration of people away from work, it contributes to training by focusing on the intelligence of the hand.

By entrusting them with the deconstruction and reconstruction of luxury garments that are no longer worn, we are giving them a second chance.

Our ambition is to reuse these clothes intended for abandonment or destruction, to «upcycle» them, to revive them, to give them a new vitality and a new meaning, while making sure to offer to those who work on this project, to them too, a new chance for a new life. Our ambition is also to make this idea a striking and inspiring example by bringing to this adventure an impactful ecological and social commitment.



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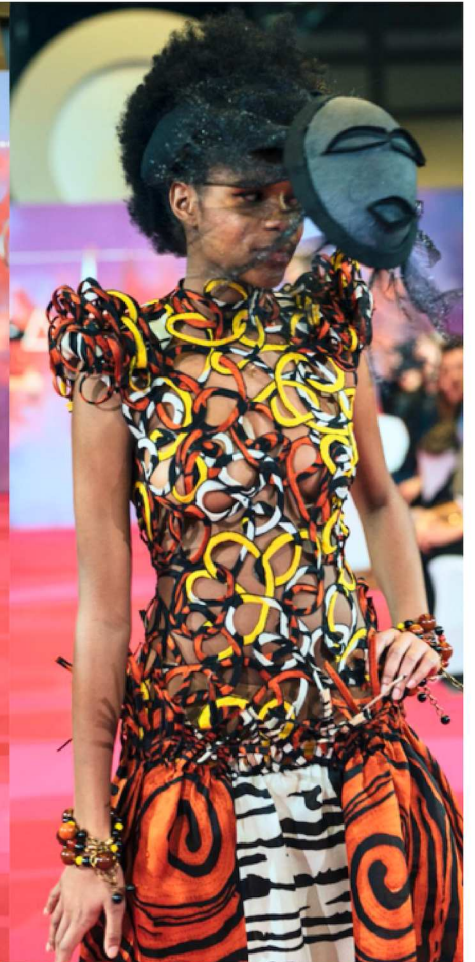
JUPE
CHRISTIAN LACROIX
HAUTE COUTURE
DÉCONSTRUCTION



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DÉFILÉ COLLECTION
RENAISSANCE
PROMOTION 2019
3 FÉVRIER 2020
INSTITUT DU MONDE ARABE

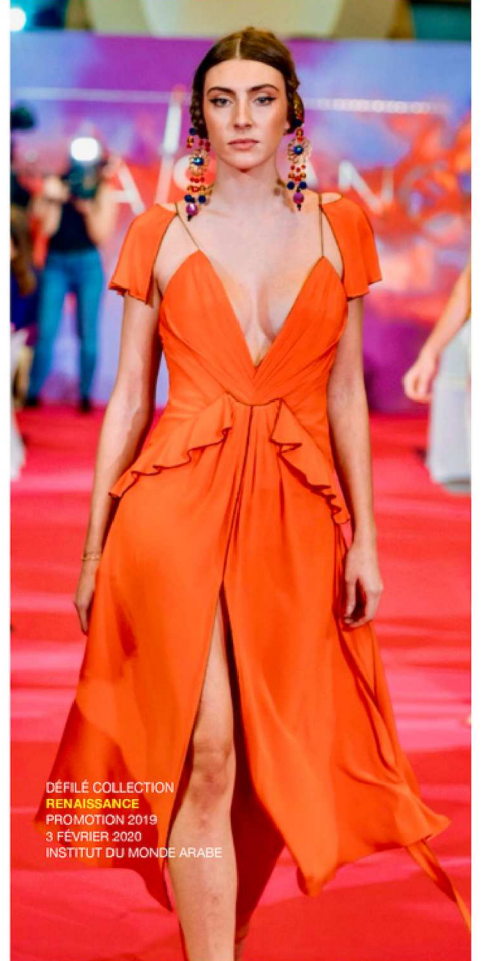


ROBE SONIA RYKIEL
DÉCONSTRUCTION

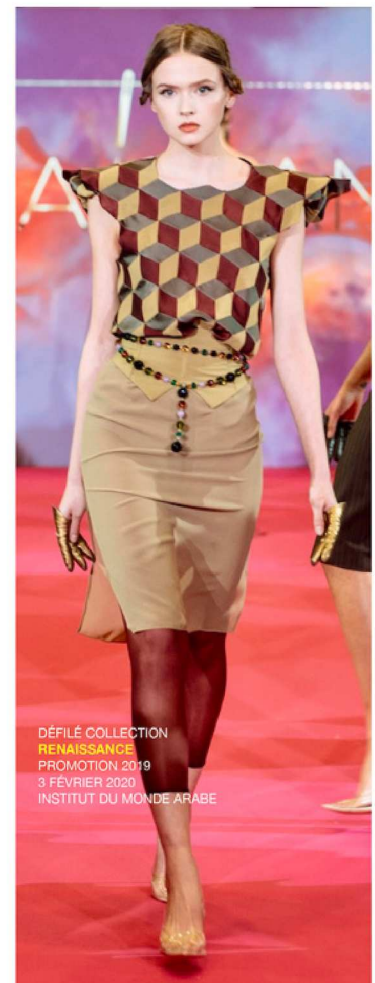
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ROBE
RENAISSANCE
RECONSTRUCTION



DÉFILÉ COLLECTION
RENAISSANCE
PROMOTION 2019
3 FÉVRIER 2020
INSTITUT DU MONDE ARABE



III - THE COUTURE SALON



Since 2018, the Renaissance association has been working thanks to its unique method, recognized by the Fédération de la Haute Couture et de la Mode as the Upcycling reference in the luxury sector.

Thanks to its rigorous standards and know-how, the Renaissance atelier has attracted fashion and design houses willing to collaborate to manufacture capsules of couture models made by our back-to-work workers from unsold stock garments. They attracted a clientele of couture women who bought these unique models.

Encouraged by the enthusiasm of its couture customers for these unique pieces upcycled from no longer-worn garments, Renaissance decided to expand its range of activities with the opening of its first couture upcycling salon.

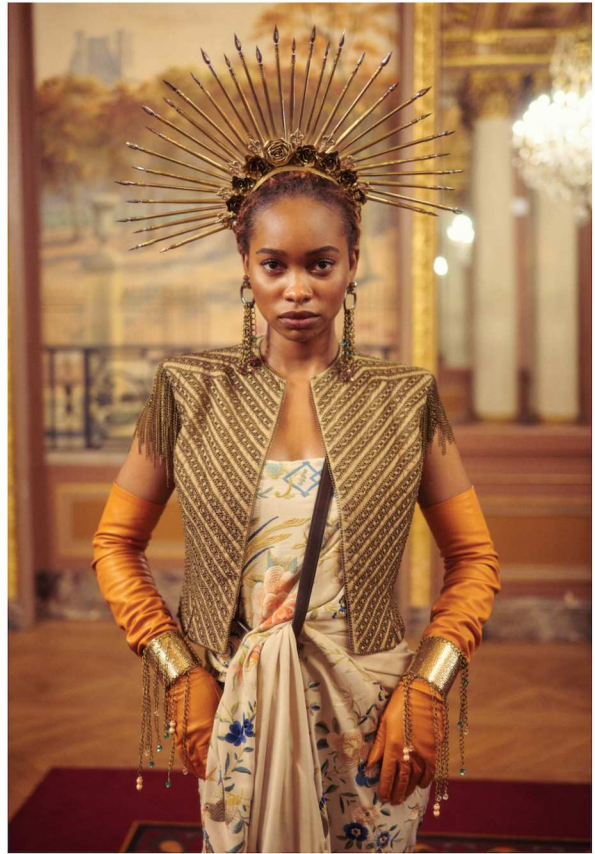
This made-to-measure atelier gives customers the chance to give new life to pieces they've loved, kept and no longer wear. The workers trained by Renaissance are the artisans of these new lives, and put all their care into them.

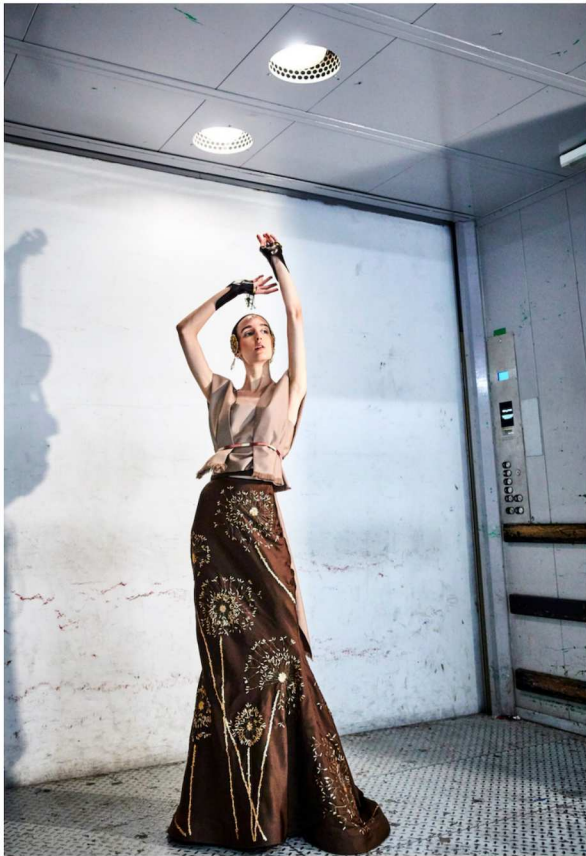
This unprecedented approach also demonstrates the impact of the Renaissance project on the luxury sector, in terms of sustainable development in the luxury sector, and social integration.

Gerlinde Hobel and Kathryn Raphael represent the image of the Salon Couture, and are responsible for welcoming couture customers by appointment during the Paris Haute Couture Fashion Week and throughout the year, and ensuring the smooth running of the projects to give new life to these couture pieces, which are just waiting to be transformed and worn again.



IV - A LOOK AT THE COLLECTION







V - RENAISSANCE EVENTS

METROPOLITAN COLLECTION

"This collection, "METROPOLITAN ", is a breath of fresh air of what could represent, for me, the contemporary and actual woman in her true and sincere eloquence...

The vibrant life of Paris and its suburbs on the Métro or RER is a land that cannot satisfy all inspirations, so much so that it brings together a mixture of cultures and ethnicities, whether they are visiting as tourists or living here on a daily basis. As for me, I'm inevitably drawn to the white paper and pencil I need to depict this unique atmosphere.

A new metro line is born...

The idea for this collection came to me during a visit to the RATP backstage area, where the essential elements used as raw material for this collection are stored...
UNIFORMS ... I TAKE IT ALL!

Two tons eight of RATP uniforms - that's what the Renaissance association decided to use to create this collection, but also to turn it into a collector's sales site that will enable fans of the RENAISSANCE association and women concerned by eco-responsible fashion to order, buy and wear this brand-new collection.

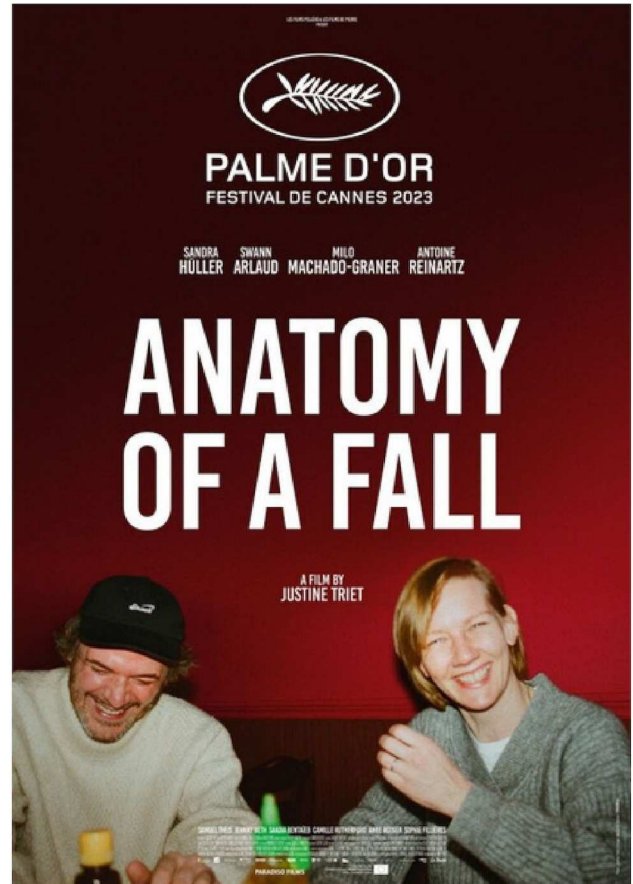
Each sale contributes to the effort our association is making to create a better world, for people in need of recognition, and to give a second life to clothes previously destined to be thrown away, burned or destroyed..

"We're all entitled to a second chance, so be Renaissance and wear it with pride".
Every woman has her own Parisian neighborhood, her own subway station, her own baker, her own habits. Whether she's glamorous, sophisticated, in love, a party girl till the end of the night, she lives, and that's the essence of the collection I wanted to create for these modern women with my atelier.

Two Afghans, a Mexican, a Spanish-Algerian, a Syrian, a Ukrainian, a Tunisian, a Franco-Cambodian, a Reunionnese, a Polish, a German, a Lebanese, an Israeli, an American, a Lyonnais, a Breton, a Cape Verdean, a Bissau Guinean, a Malian, an Italian, a Norman, a Chinese, a Romanian... These are the families who make up the RENAISSANCE Association and who have put together this collection, which I am honored to present to you shortly."

Philippe Guilet

96TH ACADEMY AWARDS CEREMONY



Dress worn by Fionnuala Jamison, Director/Head of International Sales at MK2 and Oscar-winner as the Best Original Screenplay for Anatomy of a Fall directed by Justine Triet.

SISLEY FOUNDATION

In 2023, Atelier Renaissance and Maison Sisley initiated an exceptional collaboration, merging creativity, sustainability and social responsibility. Together, we gave birth to a unique collection of butterfly brooches, uniting the art of fashion with a deep commitment to the environment and professional reintegration. Atelier Renaissance artisans are engaged in a process of professional reintegration. Our program aims to offer them an opportunity for personal and professional development, thereby helping to strengthen the social fabric of our community.

In partnership with Maison Sisley, we have rethought the use of materials destined for destruction, transforming these neglected elements into elegant butterfly brooches. Each piece in this collection is the fruit of a harmonious collaboration, uniting Atelier Renaissance's expertise in contemporary creation with the prestige of Maison Sisley.

Each butterfly brooch in this collection tells a unique story, symbolizing the fusion of creativity, sustainability and social inclusion. By supporting this initiative, our partner is actively contributing to the realization of our collective mission.



The presentation of this project concluded with a speech by Philippe Guilet at The Westin - Paris Vendôme, presenting the pieces created from these brooches, along with a fashion show of nine silhouettes from Renaissance's couture collections.



EMILY IN PARIS

Exclusive announcement: Renaissance in the internationally acclaimed series Emily in Paris.

After a visit from Philippine Leroy-Beaulieu, actress in the series Emily in Paris, who became a patron of the association, and Marilyn Fitoussi, costume designer for the series Emily in Paris, at the atelier in February 2021 we made clothes from the class of 2019 collection available for season 2 of the series.

Marilyn Fitoussi then commissioned us to custom-craft a dress for Sylvie (Philippine Leroy-Beaulieu's character in the series). Renaissance made a made-to-measure dress from vintage judo kimonos. The Netflix series also shot a behind-the-scenes documentary. Several members of the association took part in the shoot. Indeed, Philippe Guilet was able to present the Renaissance project, as well as the kimono dress made by salaried trainees for the series.

This experience will enable Renaissance to expand internationally.



Garment worn by Philippine Leroy-Beaulieu

HÔTEL DES VENTES DROUOT



The exhibition and auction took place at Hôtel des Ventes Drouot on July 6 and 7, 2022.

ALAÏA

Renaissance worked for several weeks on a very special collection. The House of Alaïa, whose Couture heritage remains unrivalled, entrusted Renaissance with pieces from old collections, made when Azzedine Alaïa was head of the House, to build new models from their deconstruction.

Philippe Guilet, President and Founder of the association, explains that, unlike the other pieces upcycled at the Renaissance workshop, he retains Azzedine Alaïa's DNA on the upcycled pieces. For the rest, carte blanche. Thus, 15 looks were presented at the end of October 2021 at a dinner in Paris and on November 3, 2021 at a dinner in London.

Thanks to the collaboration with Alaïa, 2 salaried trainees from the first promotion were able to find employment following their training at Renaissance.

This collection is a first step towards the creation of the Détox ton Stock part of Renaissance, as it will show Haute Couture houses what can be done with their unsold stock.



ACADÉMIE DES BEAUX-ARTS

Muriel Mayette-Holtz was elected to the Académie des beaux-arts on May 17, 2017, to succeed Maurice Béjart. Since 2019, she has directed the Fondation Dufraine, an Académie property located in the Val d'Oise, which hosts a dozen artists in residence.



To honour Thierry Malandain, director of the Centre chorégraphique national de Biarritz, as he enters the Académie des Beaux-Arts, we created an upcycled costume using the old embroidery from an Académie des Beaux-Arts uniform, to be presented in November 2021. Thierry Malandain entered the Académie des Beaux-Arts on April 6, 2022.



CHLOÉ SKILLS SPONSORSHIP

Chloé would like to offer its employees the opportunity to contribute their expertise in support of Renaissance.

Here are a few examples and ideas that Chloé proposes to support Renaissance

- running a training course on how to run a workshop in a company like Chloé, the codes, habits, etc.
- running training courses on specific know-how topics
- mentoring: someone from the Chloé atelier mentors someone from the Renaissance class
- preparation for interviews to join a luxury house workshop
- HR: helping to sort applications for the next intake
- helping to organise the Renaissance fashion shows

In addition, thanks to Chloé, we had the chance to take part in a discussion about the possibilities of upcycling at the Printemps Haussmann store on the 7th floor, which is now dedicated to eco-responsible fashion. Philippe Guilet was able to share the history of the association and explain his vision of upcycling. The event gave the association greater visibility on social media.



VI – CERTIFICATION OF THE RENAISSANCE METHOD



FÉDÉRATION
DE LA HAUTE COUTURE
ET DE LA MODE

The Fédération de la Haute Couture et de la Mode stated in a letter dated 12 July 2021 that its training policy considered it essential for current and future employees to be aware of and master the techniques of upcycling, both in its responsible dimension and in its aesthetic and product transformation aspects.

As part of this drive to increase skills and awareness of these new challenges, the Fédération is supporting the action taken by the Renaissance Association to open an accredited training centre to provide training in the specialisation of Upcycling luxury garments, which meets a clear requirement on the part of companies for the development of the sewing professions.

Encouraged by the Fédération, Renaissance formalised its method over a period of two years. In a decision dated 9 February 2024, the General Manager of France Compétences registered the "Transforming a couture garment using the upcycling method" training offered by Renaissance on the Répertoire national des compétences professionnelles for three years, with the Chambre syndicale de la couture parisienne as the certifying body. Renaissance is implementing this training, based on five skill modules.

VII – COLLABORATIONS

FLORENT LEROUX

Photographe/Vidéaste

Carte blanche promotion 2023-2024



Born in Versailles, Florent Le Roux gravitated towards art and cinema since his childhood. After his graduation in a cinema school in Paris. He started to make his own productions as director and photographer.

Florent's love of art, cinema, photography, design and architecture is inherent across his body of work. Florent sets out to create films that are evocative and unrestrained by contemporary cinema. Beauty and style are expressed with wonder and inventiveness.

His debut short film "Wildest Dreams" with Taylor LaShae led to collaborations with several magazines, which quickly established Florent as a serious creative force. Since then, Florent has continued to work for several magazines like Vogue, Harper's Bazaar, Vanity Fair, Numéro, L'Officiel and Grazia.

Florent's work showcases his instinctual ability to shoot both fashion and portraiture to consistently modern and elegant effect. His minimalist aesthetic and sophisticated use of lighting bring into sharp relief the beauty of his subjects.

Florent loves to combine photography with fashion videos, and scenography with music.

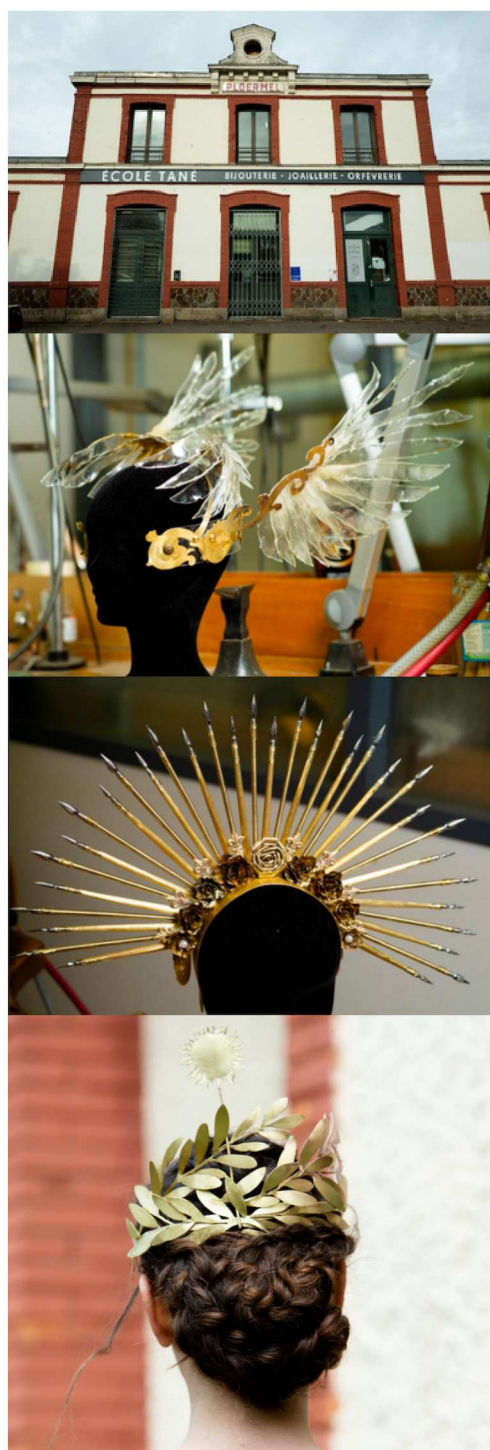
This is his way of living Art.

Website :

www.florentleroux.com

Instagram :

[@le.roux.florent](https://www.instagram.com/le.roux.florent)



Website :
www.ecoletane-bijorf.com

Instagram :
[@ecole_tane](https://www.instagram.com/ecole_tane)

TANÉ SCHOOL

School of jewellery and goldsmithing

"Our jewellery and goldsmithing school is located in Ploërmel, at the entrance to the Brocéliande forest in Brittany, and was founded in 2002. Our school has two key aims: to rehabilitate ancient crafts that are in danger of disappearing; and to pass on to young people authentic skills and a real mastery of working with silver and precious metals.

The genesis of the project with Renaissance: a wonderful meeting with Philippe Guilet and his team at the end of February 2021 at Renaissance's premises in Villejuif. We were able to discuss the specific expectations of this world of haute couture that we were discovering. We were captivated by the precious hands that were creating exceptional pieces from existing haute couture pieces. Convinced that somewhere along the line we were alike, and that we could make our own contribution to these creations, we accepted this challenge: to make 12 pieces of head jewellery (one per student) for 12 of the 40 mannequins on the catwalk for the 2nd class of Renaissance.

For our trainees, it was a question of highlighting their creativity, skills and mastery of the material to be recycled, bearing in mind that this was a 'couture' order. The trainees worked with determination while respecting the requirements of the specifications. The upcycling materials, mainly metal, were listed, the sketches came thick and fast, and the exchanges between the trainees and their project leader consolidated the projects: a station in effervescence, a real team spirit".



LAURENCE LABORIE

Photographe

Carte blanche promotion 2021-2022

"Deep in me I have the soul of a child who doesn't want to grow up and follow the dictates of fashion and beauty world. For me, the emotional world is much more interesting to explore, it instills desire, and desire is as pure and instinctive as our reason is troubled and conditioned.

My passion for images began when I was a shy teenager, I found in photography a way of distracting myself by focusing my attention on beauty that surrounded me, animals, landscapes in magical lights, my family and friends.

Later after studying engineering I realized that photography was more than a passion, it was my vocation.

I began my career as a beauty and fashion photographer in the 20ies and had many collaborations with luxury magazines and brands.

Now I dedicate most of my time to portrait, boudoir and nude photography in Nature, wild world is for me the best location to explore women body language, my project is to plane exhibitions to support children and Nature as much as I can in the coming years."

Website :

www.laurencelaborie.com

Instagram :

[@laurence_laborie](https://www.instagram.com/laurence_laborie)



JULIO BITTENCOURT

Photographe

Carte blanche promotion 2019-2020

Julio Bittencourt was born in 1980 in Brazil and grew up between Sao Paulo and New York. His projects have been exhibited in galleries and museums in more than twenty countries and his work published in magazines such as Foam Magazine, GEO, TIME, The Wall Street Journal, Courier International, C Photo, The Guardian, The New Yorker, Esquire, Financial Times, Los Angeles Times, and Leica World Magazine, among several others.

Bittencourt is the author of three books: "In a window of Prestes Maia 911 Building", "Ramos" and "Dead Sea". He currently lives and works in Paris and is represented by Galerie Luxe, in São Paulo, Brazil.

Website :

www.juliobittencourt.com

Instagram :

[@bittencourt_julio](https://www.instagram.com/bittencourt_julio)



KALHATH INSTITUTE Embroidery craft school

The Kalhath Institute, co-founded in 2016 in Lucknow (India) by Maximiliano MODESTI and Amine DADDA, supports the heritage of India's centuries-old art of embroidery that captures the cultural essence of the country in its materials, technique and designs. Backed by an educational team the founders implement creative collaborations through engagement, education and exchange with traditional knowledge and the global market for artisans. All the work is centred on the human being, who becomes the key to every initiative. Thanks to his strong empathy with the craftspeople and his 30 years' experience in India, Maximiliano is able to see the craft from their point of view, enabling them to understand their lives and their work and to strengthen their confidence in the continuity of their know-how. Education, training, preservation, innovation and excellence are the key pillars of the Institute.

Website :
www.kalhath.com

Instagram :
[@kalhathinstitute](https://www.instagram.com/kalhathinstitute)

"Whatever our origin or culture, education is essential to support and preserve all forms of know-how, in France, Europe, India or elsewhere". - Maximiliano Modesti

The partnership consists of an exchange of know-how and a donation from the Institute to Renaissance "because we are defending the same values 8,000 km away".

TIMENDOTES



TIMENDOTES ASSOCIATION

Association supporting Moroccan craftsmen

The TIMENDOTES association has a deep commitment to preserving and promoting sfifa, a traditional form of Moroccan trimmings used to decorate the caftan, takchita and keswa el Kbir. Traditionally, sfifa characterised the diversity of Moroccan regional garments through a variety of decorative bibs and geometric shapes. Today, it continues to be used as a ubiquitous trim that discreetly signals the intrinsic character and identity of the Moroccan caftan. This ancient weaving technique, using small cards threaded onto a loom, bears witness to the rich history of cultural exchange between North Africa and the Mediterranean basin.

Unfortunately, the rise of industrial mass production and mechanical copying has had a detrimental impact on the craftsmen who weave sfifa by hand. Today, fewer than a hundred artisans in Morocco know how to weave the most complex sfifa designs. Intermediaries exploit the weavers, discouraging them from passing on their skills.

By promoting the excellence of Moroccan craftsmanship, and supporting craftspeople in their creativity and access to markets, TIMENDOTES is ensuring the continued existence of this important traditional art form. The sfifa is much more than a simple decorative ornament, it is an intangible and material expression intrinsically linked to Moroccan cultural identity.

Website :

www.timendotes.com

Instagram :

[@timendotes](https://www.instagram.com/timendotes)

SHUCK ONE Graffiti artist

"He carries on relentlessly with his transhumance on various supports in different places in France and Europe..."

These mixed, opposing colours, combined with calligraphy, signs and symbols, form a profusion that covers these huge canvases.

His paintings are exhibited in galleries and foundations all over the world, making him a fully-fledged member of the first generation of French graffiti artists. The "American and French Artists" exhibition in 1991 at the Palais de Chaillot - Musée de l'Homme paid tribute to them, as did the tag at the Grand Palais in 2009, and the CAPITALES exhibition at Paris City Hall in 2023.

Shuck One experiments without taboos, questioning the origins of his art in various thematic projects for private and public spaces.

As well as collaborating with these institutions, he exhibits and presents work inspired by and nourished by the ills of contemporary society.

He has also designed and developed various sensory projects and awareness-raising workshops with young people from disadvantaged and marginalised neighbourhoods since 2000.

He invented Graffice Artism by developing work with a graphic resonance that expresses the soul of graffiti and the echo of the street."

Anne-Marie de Melster.

Website :
www.shuckone.com

Instagram :
[@shuck_one](https://www.instagram.com/shuck_one)

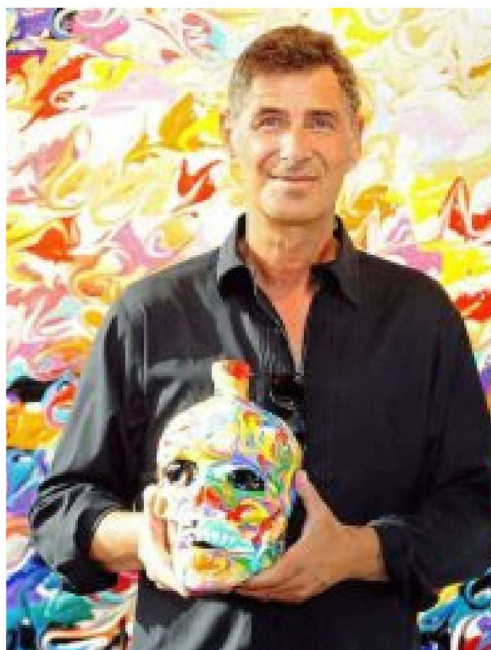
EDUARDO GUELFENBEIN

Painter

Eduardo grew up and experienced a succession of cultures and influences, in Chile, England, Australia, Italy and France. These multiple uprootings and new beginnings have enriched his imagination, his creative process and his palette of colours.

His art is energetic, lively and joyful. It expresses deep sensations and feelings that resonate with each and every one of us. When Philippe Guilet and Eduardo met, an exchange between the two artists was born. This naturally led to this collaboration as part of the Renaissance 2020 promotion. Eduardo Guelfenbein has customised several pieces and three bags, which will be presented in July on the arms of a model at the Renaissance fashion show in July 2021.

It should be noted that this is not his first foray into fashion as a painter. Eduardo has already designed and created fabrics for Missoni. This long collaboration with the prestigious fashion house, renowned for its mastery of patterns and colours, won an award in 1986. It's a colourful, optimistic collaboration in the image of the artist, who is also a Renaissance ambassador. Eduardo has donated clothes to the association so that they can be upcycled. Pieces that the designer imagines to be "funky, cool and sparkling with colour".



Instagram :
@edguelfenbein

HYACINTHA FAUSTINO

Hair artist

Hyacintha is proud to have made a career out of hairdressing, and has always loved working with hair, fibres and materials.

For her, hair is the ultimate means of expressing herself and creating beauty. Being part of the creative process behind the scenes with some of the greatest names in fashion: Guido Palau, Esther Langham, Stéphane Lancien... is a source of fulfilment and wonder. The collaborative processes of fashion shows, editorial shoots and beauty campaigns are a constant source of inspiration.

Hyacintha's background is atypical: a business school graduate with a decade of professional experience in Asia in university research and entrepreneurship provides her with the foundations of the work ethic required in the industry.

Her mission is to express beauty through her models and mentors.

For Hyacintha, the only thing that counts is the creative spirit!



Instagram :
[@hairbyhyacintha](https://www.instagram.com/hairbyhyacintha)

VIII – THEY TALK ABOUT RENAISSANCE

The New York Times

RESPONSIBLE FASHION

Can Couture Be More Socially Responsible?

Renaissance, a French nonprofit, focuses on producing upcycled pieces made in the couture style while providing job training opportunities.

By Dana Thomas

Published July 3, 2023 Updated July 4, 2023

On a cold evening in March, a cement-floored warehouse in the gritty Paris suburb of Fontenay-sous-Bois played host to a different kind of couture fashion show. A model in a short-sleeved jacket with a bronze chevron bodice, navy silk chiffon kilt and swinging bronze chain fringe marched out to a D.J.'s club beat.

Another model wore a tangerine corset dress made of swirling strips of fabric that cascaded like a waterfall toward the floor. A third was dressed in a white silk strapless gown, gathered on the hip, that was embroidered with blue and pink posies.

Unlike traditional couture, as presented on runways in Paris this week, these clothes weren't sewn by seasoned artisans or made from precious new materials. The bronze jacket was fashioned from a secondhand pair of Etro men's pants and embroidered with thin chains from a company that had gone bankrupt.

The chiffon was dead stock from a retired couturière's atelier. The tangerine dress was made from neckties of decommissioned uniforms of the Aéroports de Paris. The white floral gown had been a 19th-century shawl.

And all were sewn by a team of studio hands who, not long ago, would have had a difficult time finding jobs in the luxury fashion industry.



Renaissance teaches apprentices sophisticated design techniques. Laurence Laborie



Much of the design work is done by hand like traditional couture. Laurence Laborie

The event showcased the work of Renaissance, a French nonprofit that produces upcycled pieces made in the couture style and offers job training opportunities to low-income individuals and immigrants. It was founded in 2018 by Philippe Guilet, a former design assistant to Karl Lagerfeld, Thierry Mugler and Jean Paul Gaultier, who wanted to prove that couture could be more responsible.

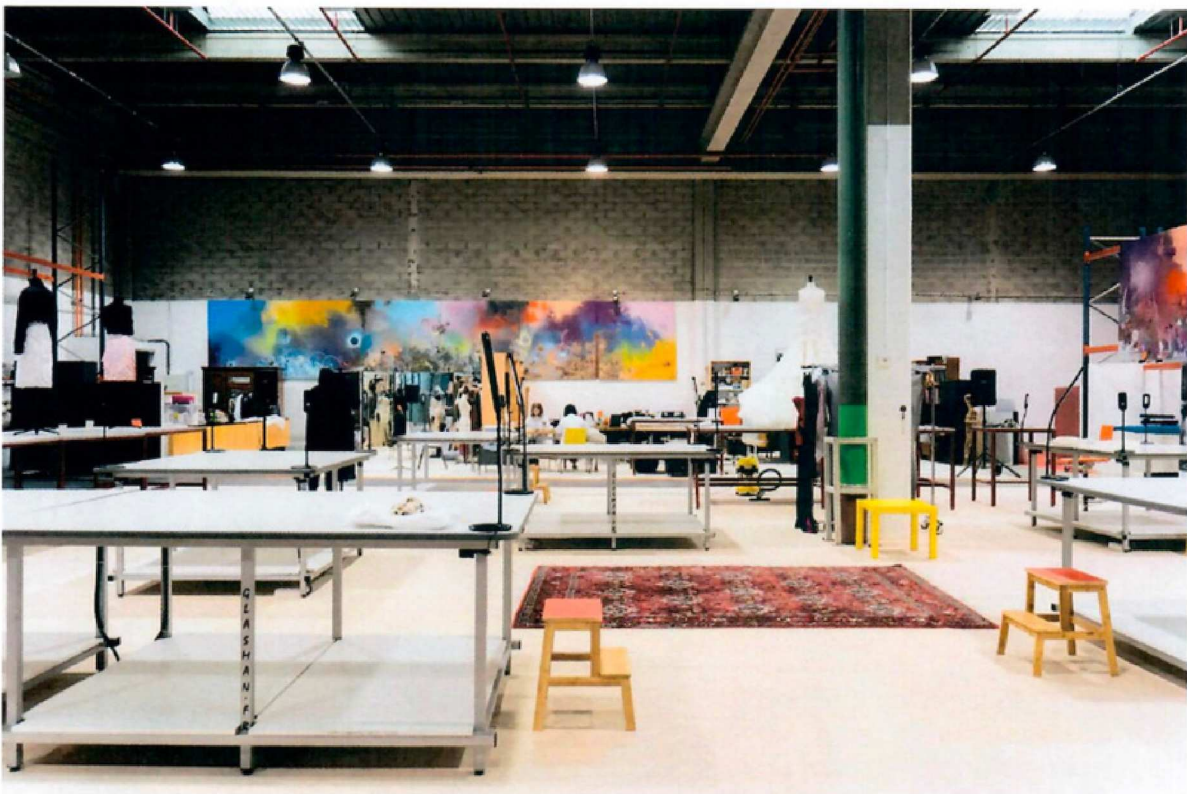
The organization teaches some of the most sophisticated techniques in fashion design and builds on a movement by nonprofits to train workers and help place them in fashion jobs. Like much of traditional couture, many of Renaissance's pieces are one-offs that are carefully handcrafted.

"There are other designers who work in upcycling, which is a solution for fashion waste," said Pascal Morand, the executive president of Fédération de la Haute Couture et de la Mode, the governing body for the French fashion industry, and a member of the Renaissance board. There are organizations, he noted, that teach the craft of sewing. "But Renaissance combines these two aspects on a very high level," he said.

Mr. Guilet, who had also worked for Chloé, J. Mendel and Donna Karan, had long been interested in upcycling. (For Mr. Gaultier's spring 2002 couture collection, he made a cocktail dress out of men's neckties.) He turned a pair of men's pants into a waistcoat and showed it to Mr. Morand, a longtime friend. Mr. Morand thought the piece was beautiful and asked Mr. Guilet how he could spin it into something more.

Mr. Guilet decided he wanted "to do something that was eco-responsible that also passes on this beautiful savoir-faire," he said, meaning an accomplished knowledge of craft.

He raised funding from the Kering luxury group and received grants from the French government. In September 2019, he opened an atelier in the Cité du Vercors, a public housing complex in Villejuif, a low-income suburb south of Paris. The space had been offered by Action Logement, an urban development association that helps fund and run social housing. There, Mr. Guilet set up sewing machines, work tables and Stockman dummies, and interviewed candidates sent by a government job placement agency.



During the course, apprentices produce two or three looks that are available for rent or purchase. Florent le Roux

He selected 15 people, including immigrants from Ghana, Morocco and Tunisia, and refugees from Ukraine and Afghanistan. Like all Renaissance students and teachers, they received wages and French employment benefits. For seven months, Mr. Guilet taught the class couture techniques, like the “Méthode Grès,” a fluid style of draping invented by the couturière Madame Grès.

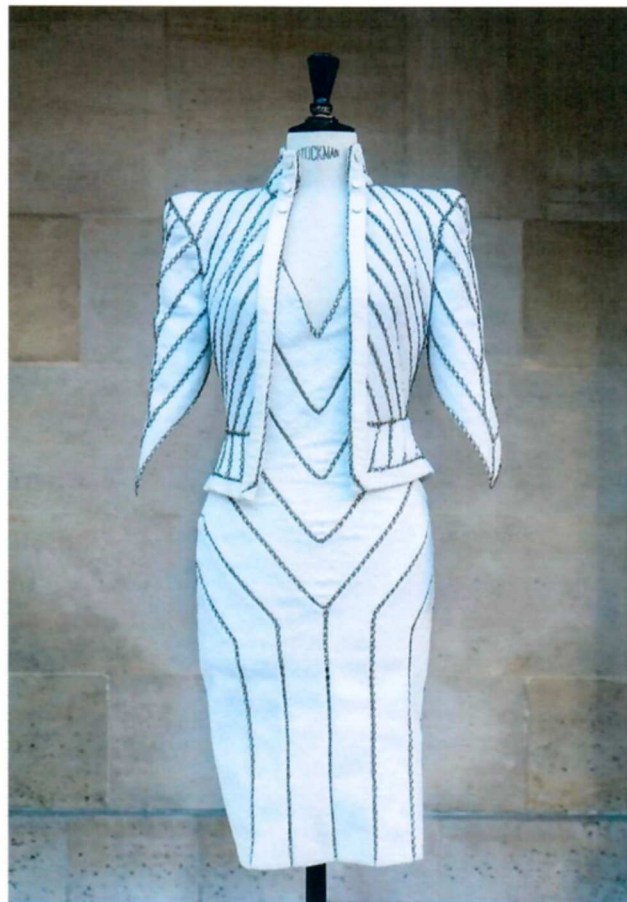
“Couture is about the intelligence of the hand,” Mr. Guilet said. “If you understand couture, you can do anything. You are a master.”

Through word of mouth, Renaissance received donations of well-made vintage clothes, which the studio turned into modern silhouettes rooted in the French classics. Mr. Guilet staged the first Renaissance fashion show in March 2020, at the Institut du Monde Arabe.

The second collection, produced by the second class of 20 students, was presented at the Drouot auction house in Paris in July 2021. Afterward, some of the outfits from the first two shows were auctioned; several gowns sold for more than \$7,000 apiece. Some of those pieces were displayed during couture week last January.

Though there are sewing machines in the Renaissance studio, much of the work is done by hand, as it is in couture. “This is not about cutting up old dresses and sewing them into something new, but about learning the couture technique,” Mr. Guilet said. “Students unpick the seams, and once it’s undone, they understand what they have, and figure out how best to use it with the aim of zero waste.”

During the course, each student produces two or three looks that are available for rent or purchase. Three looks ended up on the Netflix series “Emily in Paris,” including a sharply tailored suit made from a judo kimono given by the former champion of France; a dress refashioned from a Sonia Rykiel dress; and another dress cut from Yamamoto men’s pants and a Rykiel dress.



Several of Renaissance's designs appeared on the Netflix series, “Emily in Paris.” Florent le Roux



The actress Philippine Leroy-Beaulieu, wearing a Renaissance design, with Lily Collins in an episode of "Emily in Paris." Florent le Roux

The organization's job training program is also flourishing. Nearly half of Renaissance's 35 graduates have landed jobs at luxury fashion houses, including Saint Laurent, Chloé, Alaïa and Dior, and several have opened their own studios, to produce wedding dresses, or do alterations and repairs.

Robby and Ted Kipre, 25-year-old twin brothers who grew up in the Cité du Vercors and were in the first class of apprentices, started a streetwear brand called Kipre Couture. They staged a show during Paris men's fashion week in January, and they have held four pop-up shops in Paris.

During the post-show reception in the Fontenay warehouse in March, Ted Kipre said that fashion had "always been our passion — we always wanted to do it, but we didn't know where to start."

He was dressed in one of the brand's looks: black crepe pants, a leather jacket and a Kipre Couture baseball cap — 100 percent upcycled, he said.

Renaissance is now developing a capsule collection produced by the current class of 40, selected from more than 1,300 applicants. The collection is made from uniforms donated by the RATP, the transportation agency in Paris that operates the Métro and buses. The clothes will be sold on Renaissance's e-commerce website, which is scheduled to go live in September.

"Eventually, we'd like to have a boutique," Mr. Guilet said. "Then anyone can bring in their beautiful old clothes and refashion them into something new."

French Fashion Nonprofit Creates Couture Outfits From Castoffs

The Renaissance workshop will present a capsule collection for Maison Alaïa this fall, and has dressed a character on "Emily in Paris."

By **JOELLE DIDERICH**  JULY 20, 2021, 3:42PM



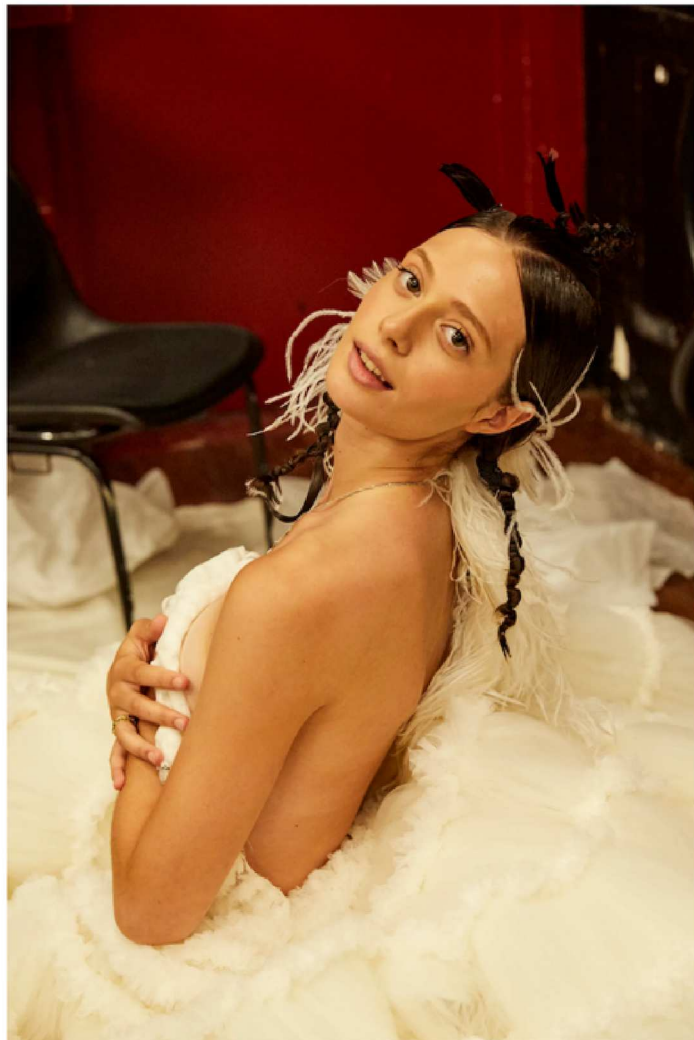
A male model at the Renaissance fashion show in Paris. LAURENCE LABORIE/COURTESY OF RENAISSANCE

- f** **PARIS** – The Renaissance project is all about second chances.
- t** The French nonprofit organization provides training for job seekers through a workshop that repurposes designer clothes to give them a second life – an approach that is garnering attention from major industry players including Maison Alaïa, which is partnering with Renaissance on a capsule collection of upcycled clothes.
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On Monday night, the association held its second annual runway show to spotlight the work of this year's participants, who hope to find employment with fashion houses after a first edition in 2020 that took place just before the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, hampering prospects for its graduates.

Men's clothes were deconstructed and remade into women's outfits, ranging from variations on tailored jackets to a massive white tulle wedding dress, while women's staples, including corsets, were fashioned into men's garments – think embroidered track pants, lace-embellished tops and gender-fluid evening looks with obi belts.

The approach has won over Marylin Fitoussi, who designs the costumes for the **Netflix** series “Emily in Paris” alongside consultant Patricia Field. For season two, which filmed in Paris this summer, she dressed Philippine Leroy-Beaulieu, aka marketing executive Sylvie Grateau, in a chain-embroidered cream dress and jacket from the workshop.



Backstage at the Renaissance fashion show in Paris. LAURENCE LABORIE/COURTESY OF RENAISSANCE

It's testimony to the high standards of the project, which is the brainchild of Philippe Guilet, who spent almost a decade working as director of research alongside **Jean Paul Gaultier**, in addition to stints at Thierry Mugler, Karl Lagerfeld and Joseph.

After several years in the cultural sector, including as artistic director of the French Embassy in Romania, he founded Renaissance in 2019.

Based in a low-income housing estate in the south of Paris, the workshop welcomed 17 trainees this year for a six-month program aimed at familiarizing them with the techniques and jargon of haute couture, the top end of the fashion pyramid that relies on highly qualified workers to produce made-to-measure clothes.

Participants, who all earn a salary during their training period, come from as far afield as Chechnya, Algeria, Morocco, Ukraine, Turkey, Guinea, Russia, Moldova, France, Ivory Coast, Afghanistan and Brazil, and include experienced tailors and absolute beginners.

"The aim is to help them return to the job market by giving them confidence through training and allowing their talent to shine through, so that they can apply to couture workshops," Guilet said on a sweltering afternoon, as his students quietly toiled around work tables with a radio playing in the background.

"Many of them arrived in France with sewing techniques, but no method. Obviously, it's quite bewildering, so here we teach them the way things are done," he added. "We speak the vocabulary of the houses, so that if they join a brand, they immediately understand the language and the hierarchy of the atelier."



A work in progress at the Renaissance workshop in Paris. LAURENCE LABORIE/COURTESY OF RENAISSANCE

He said the initiative has been welcomed by residents in the Cité du Vercors housing project in Villejuif, which has struggled with crime — though on a recent summer afternoon, children were playing outdoors with their mothers.

“There have been reports of drug and arms dealing in this housing project, and we’ve been put here specifically to change mentalities,” Guilet said, noting that there has never been a theft at the workshop. “Obviously they can see we make beautiful things in here, and it makes a change from the ambient gloom.”

Likewise, cultural barriers appear to drop inside the workshop, with people of all religious backgrounds collaborating on the gender-fluid collection, which nodded to Gaultier’s influence with men in heels and sheer women’s dresses. “Everyone leaves their cultural baggage at the door. It hasn’t been an issue,” Guilet said.

Wearing a white work coat, he sets the tone for the place with a mixture of stern admonishments and warm encouragement. In one corner, a seamstress assembled tubes of fabrics made from flight attendants' ties into a bustier dress. In another, a dressmaker's dummy displayed a coat assembled from embroidery samples.

Guilet has capitalized on **a growing trend for sustainable fashion**, which has been reinforced by the introduction last year of a French law banning companies from destroying unsold products. His "Detox ton Stock" program aims to help fashion brands find new uses for their inventory.

"Maison Alaïa has ordered a collection of 15 pieces that is made entirely from their stocks of unsold garments, and will be presented in September," he said, noting that Monday's runway collection was designed as a showcase to attract additional partners.

"The collection with Alaïa is making a lot of noise, because people are wondering how a small organization that provides vocational training to jobless people has managed to work with Alaïa on pieces that are actually destined for sale," he said.



The class of 2020 at the Renaissance workshop in Paris. LAURENCE LABORIE/COURTESY OF RENAISSANCE

To demonstrate its skills, his team created runway outfits incorporating items including vintage kimonos; a Yohji Yamamoto suit; a Fendi dress; a Gaultier men's jacket, embellished with lace donated by bridal designer Celestina Agostino, and paint-spattered clothes provided by Chilean painter Eduardo Guelfenbein.

Some are embroidered on-site, while others are embellished in India via a partnership with the Kalhath Institute, an embroidery center in India cofounded by Maximiliano Modesti and Amine Dadda, which has donated 2,500 hours of embroidery by its students toward the project.

Guilet has managed to attract a number of other high-profile backers, with donors ranging from leading socialites like Jacqueline de Ribes, who gave one of her couture gowns, to companies including construction firm Vinci and airport operator Groupe ADP, which have donated uniforms for upcycling.

Pascal Morand, executive president of the **Fédération de la Haute Couture et de la Mode**, has endorsed the initiative on a personal basis and attended Monday's show.



Philippe Guilet COURTESY OF RENAISSANCE

With **business picking up after 18 months of coronavirus restrictions**, Guilet predicts a rise in demand for qualified labor from leading haute couture houses.

“Since we’re getting a lot of interest from the sector, I’m asking our partners to take on the best in class for internships of at least three months. If all goes well, it will lead to more permanent employment,” he said. “If it wasn’t for COVID-19, a lot of them would already have started.”

The pieces presented this week will be auctioned at Drouot in September. A lot of donors have expressed interest in reacquiring the outfits made from their old clothes. Guilet, meanwhile, is already thinking about the next intake of trainees, due to start in October.

“It’s a lot of work, but it’s all worthwhile when you see the end result,” he said. “Sincerely, every morning when I come here, I’m happy. It’s very gratifying for me, and I think for them, too. There’s such a strong and positive energy around this project that I don’t think that any other job could bring me the same satisfaction.”



Le Projet Renaissance : l'association qui veut réinventer la mode via l'upcycling

La crise sanitaire que nous traversons pousse l'industrie de la mode à se remettre en question. Le Projet Renaissance, association à but non lucratif, propose une façon de la réinventer en reprenant les principes de la haute couture auxquels elle ajoute une dimension sociale et environnementale.

Par **Reuben Attia**
5 juin 2020



Julio Bittencourt

“Plus de spectaculaire, plus de gaspillage”, s’insurge **Giorgio Armani** dans une lettre ouverte à WWD début avril 2020. “Cela n’a pas de sens qu’une de mes vestes ou combinaisons reste dans le magasin pendant trois semaines”, déplore-t-il, révolté contre une industrie qui rend les pièces “obsolètes” dès leur sortie. Armani n’est pas le seul à s’indigner face à un tel constat. **Philippe Guilet**, directeur artistique de l’association Renaissance, témoigne du même tableau chaotique. Cet ancien collaborateur de **Karl Lagerfeld**, **Thierry Mugler** et **Jean-Paul Gaultier** observe et participe à l’évolution de cette industrie depuis quarante ans. Formé dès ses 16 ans dans l’atelier du maître tailleur du cadre noir de Saumur, M. Guilet a “banni à vie l’à-peu-près”, ce qui lui a permis de se révéler auprès des grands créateurs. Il y a un an, il a pris une nouvelle direction qu’il souhaite faire fructifier avec le **Projet Renaissance**, une association à but non lucratif au pari osé : réinventer la haute couture en y mêlant combat écologique et insertion professionnelle. Il met ainsi à profit son expérience et son talent pour repenser la haute couture et la placer au service de la société tout en conservant le rêve qui en émane. « La mode doit être repensée », affirme Philippe Guilet, convaincu que l’upcycling est une solution de choix pour faire changer les choses.

“Les vêtements méritent une seconde vie”

Le Projet Renaissance part au combat - écologique - avec l'upcycling comme arme de prédilection. Plus qu'un recyclage (en français, on traduit souvent ce mot anglais par “surcyclage”), il s'agit d'un anoblissement. L'upcycling consiste à redonner vie à un vêtement déjà existant en le transformant. “Ce qui pertient dans l'upcycling, c'est qu'il est très compatible avec l'idée de mode, c'est une renaissance, un renouvellement.”, explique Pascal Morand, président exécutif de la Fédération de la haute couture et de la mode. Un sacré défi car cette méthode impose “une nouvelle combinatoire des éléments qui font le vêtement”.



© Laurence Laborie

“L’objectif, c’est de transmettre l’intelligence de la main”

En 2019, Philippe Guilet concrétise le projet et décide d’ouvrir un atelier de couture à Villejuif pour “apporter un vent de fraîcheur et relancer l’attractivité” du quartier du Vercors. M. Guilet recrute alors douze individus, tous âges et origines confondues. “Le seul critère, c’est de savoir coudre à la main et à la machine”, explique-t-il. Des hommes et des femmes “de 23 à 63 ans, aux origines et cultures multiples”, se retrouvent dans les conditions d’un atelier de couture. Le matériel est fourni par le groupe de luxe français Kering. “Je tiens à l’emploi du vocabulaire adapté et des gestes précis”, raconte M. Guilet qui explique que “cela facilitera leur insertion”. Si M. Guilet y porte la casquette de directeur artistique, il n’y a “ni frontières, ni hiérarchie” dans l’atelier. “Je suis un personnage et mon personnage, c’est une équipe. Je ne travaille pas en cavalier seul” confie M. Guilet avec humilité. Ces individus recrutés, alors tous sans emploi, à l’écart du monde professionnel, mettent à profit leurs aptitudes. “Je voulais qu’ils se lâchent, qu’ils s’expriment” raconte M. Guilet avec enthousiasme. “Et je préfère dire ‘valorisation’ plutôt qu’insertion”. Renaissance a ainsi noué des partenariats avec les associations le Cercle la Ressourcerie, Coup de Pouce, ACR et Mode Estime. Ces structures accompagnent les personnes dans leur projet personnel et permettent à Renaissance de réussir au mieux cette valorisation. Enfin, Renaissance “remet un certificat d’aptitude en cinq mois”, ce qui permet “d’attester qu’ils maîtrisent les premières bases et facilitera leur insertion professionnelle”. D’autant que l’insertion professionnelle va de paire avec une insertion sociale : “C’est devenu une famille”, raconte M. Guilet qui évoque “une solidarité incroyable”.

Renaissance transforme des vêtements donnés par des particuliers, qui deviennent alors “ambassadeurs et ambassadrices de l’association”, explique M. Guilet. Renaissance demande aux particuliers de ne faire don que de pièces de créateurs. “Les matières sont plus belles et les vêtements sont aussi beaux et nets à l’intérieur qu’à l’extérieur”, souligne M. Guilet qui précise que “cela est nécessaire lorsqu’on transforme entièrement un vêtement”. “On défait entièrement chaque pièce pour la repenser dans son ensemble”, explique-t-il. Les belles matières sont ainsi conservées et repensées pour leur accorder une seconde vie. Chaque pièce créée est alors unique et adaptée à chaque mannequin via un travail du flou ou une structuration technique, tout dépend de l’inspiration provoquée par chaque pièce. Un travail digne de la haute couture qui ne produit que des pièces uniques au sein de l’atelier.



Atelier Renaissance © Laurence Laborie @LAURENCELABORIE

Egalement partenaire du groupe ADP, Renaissance s'est lancé le défi de transformer les anciens uniformes. Les Aéroports de Paris changent leurs uniformes tous les 10 ans et contactent Renaissance : "Je reçois un appel et j'apprends qu'on met à disposition de l'association ces uniformes, 17 tonnes au total." Dix-sept tonnes à l'abandon, que M. Guilet demande à inspecter. "J'ai vu des montagnes de matière et j'ai fait livrer 2,7 tonnes à retravailler". L'équipe de Renaissance se lance dans un travail de titan et cumule cinq mois de travail acharné. Et la magie opère : "Je fais une robe avec les foulards oranges, je reprends les gilets fluorescents pour les transformer...". L'équipe travaille et se soutient : "C'était incroyable. Tout le monde applaudissait dès qu'on finissait une pièce", raconte Philippe Guilet, sourire aux lèvres.

Parka Uniforme Aéroport de Paris



De l'atelier aux défilés

Le 3 février 2020, quinze jours après la fashion week haute couture printemps-été, Renaissance et son équipe présentait sa toute première collection avec pour thème "Les Chaînes". Philippe Guilet voulait symboliser "le dés-enchaînement, la libération", à l'image de son projet. Le défilé a pris place à l'Institut du monde arabe à Paris. "Ce magnifique événement est bien plus qu'un simple défilé, il révolutionne la création, l'art et le vêtement." déclarait alors Jack Lang, président de l'institut culturel. A chaque passage des mannequins, un écran géant diffusait au même moment la photo originelle du vêtement en mentionnant son créateur ainsi que le nom de son ancienne propriétaire. Un effet d'avant après qui concrétisait l'ampleur du travail réalisé. "C'était un défilé très émouvant", confie Pascal Morand, membre du conseil d'administration de l'association, qui y voit "un projet unique qui ouvre la voie". Le prochain défilé, initialement prévu à la rentrée 2020, a été décalé au vu du confinement et le travail de l'association devrait reprendre dans les prochaines semaines. Comme l'an dernier, un casting sera lancé pour recruter une nouvelle équipe et permettre l'insertion de nouveaux individus. Et cette seconde collection aura pour thème la parité. Un choix "délibérément sociétal" selon Pascal Morand, "qui correspond à l'essence de l'association". Il précise que la parité "n'est pas un sujet nouveau pour la mode... Il y a des choses nouvelles et des cycles", raconte Mr Morand qui évoque "la mode de la garçonne de l'après-guerre, le no gender que nous traversons, et là nous allons encore plus loin". Pour Philippe Guilet, c'est également un moyen "d'interroger la censure et de repenser nos préjugés".



Backstage défilé © Laurence Laborie

“Il faut repenser notre rapport à la consommation”

L'industrie, deuxième secteur le plus polluant au monde, est au pied du mur. La production de vêtements a des conséquences dramatiques sur l'environnement et se doit de réinventer ses codes. Selon l'ONU, l'industrie de la mode est aujourd'hui responsable de 20 % des eaux usées mondiales et de 10 % des émissions mondiales de carbone. “Il ne s'agit pas d'annuler les collections et bloquer le système, car il y a des emplois en jeu et tout un savoir-faire”, souligne M. Guilet, qui précise que “ce qu'il faut repenser, c'est notre rapport aux vêtements et à notre consommation”. L'équivalent de 442 millions d'euros de vêtements seraient jetés chaque année selon un compte-rendu publié en mars 2018 par le cabinet d'audit McKinsey, en collaboration avec Business Of Fashion. Ces vêtements sont souvent jetés au profit de pièces neuves à durée de vie toujours plus limitées. Le problème, c'est que “l'upcycling n'est pas possible en fast fashion parce que les matières sont de mauvaise qualité”, explique Pascal Morand. Ne faudrait-il se vêtir que dans des maisons de couture ? Philippe Guilet rappelle que “les 10 t-shirts que l'on achète en fast fashion en un an valent le prix d'un t-shirt de luxe”. La différence ? “Ce t-shirt sera de bonne qualité et durera dans le temps”, explique-t-il avant de conclure : “il faut repenser notre rapport aux vêtements, à notre façon de les acheter et de les considérer”. D'un point de vue écologique, le véritable enjeu du vêtement devient désormais sa durabilité. Depuis quelques temps, la mode a tendance à aller dans ce sens.



Backstage © Laurence Laborie

Ce projet n'est pas un cas isolé mais qu'il s'agit bel et bien d'une tendance de fond. Martin Margiela est considéré comme le pionnier en la matière dès le début des années 90 où les pièces de récupération sont magnifiées selon un processus proche de la haute couture que le créateur belge qualifiera plutôt d'"Artisanal". Depuis quelques années, "la seconde main s'est dédramatisée", affirme Pascal Morand. L'essor sans précédent de friperies et des sites de revente semble aller de pair avec un tournant pris par certaines marques de luxe. Le duo Viktor&Rolf s'est lancé dans l'upcycling dès l'hiver 2016 et les matériaux des collections passées devenaient les prémices des collections suivantes. Plus récemment, Alexander McQueen, sous l'égide de Sarah Burton, présentait un défilé printemps-été 2020 dont certaines silhouettes arboraient des matières recyclées. De son côté, Stella McCartney, a toujours placé le respect environnemental au coeur de son travail. Sa collection automne hiver 2019-2020 était par ailleurs uniquement composée de pièces upcyclées, à l'instar de t-shirts transformés en pièces plus sophistiquées.

Le 23 août 2019, les géants de l'industrie ont même signé un Fashion Pact, se promettant d'atteindre le record de zéro émission nette de CO2 en 2050 et de passer à 100 % d'énergies renouvelables sur toute la chaîne d'approvisionnement d'ici à 2030. Pour que cela soit ne serait-ce qu'envisageable, c'est toute une industrie qu'il est temps de re considérer et "le Projet Renaissance ouvre la voie", confie Pascal Morand. Comme le résume parfaitement Jack Lang : « Leur luxe est vert, leurs oeuvres généreuses et rayonnantes. Ils et elles cousent un avenir inspirant et coloré, un véritable arc-en-ciel dans notre société ».



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