

STYLE



THE RULE-BREAKER: UMIT BENAN

ARRIVALS

New releases from around the globe.

After moving to Milan from New York last year, Umit Benan endured months of suspicious looks from his Italian neighbors. It seems the well-heeled Milanese didn't know what to make of Benan's downtown scruff, tats, ratty T-shirts, and stovepipe jeans. But rather than give in to the city's clean-shaven suit-and-tie code, the Turkish-born menswear designer stuck to his aesthetic guns and turned the chilly reception into inspiration. At first glance, his debut collection of suits, shirts, knits, and outerwear seems defiantly rough and rugged, much like Benan himself. But a closer look reveals a discreet new play on luxury: He crafts garments using the reverse side of top-tier fabrics like cashmere and Sea Island cotton. "What you see," Benan says, "is not what you get." Available at Saks Fifth Avenue, New York.



the undesigner: mark mcnairy

Mark McNairy, creative director of J. Press and owner of an eponymous line of English-made shoes, calls himself "the undesigner," but it might be more accurate to say he doesn't overdesign. Rather than junk up a classic saddle shoe with metallic skins or other silliness, McNairy keeps it simple but modern, mixing tan leather with navy suede. And for his new co-labeled collection of Bass Weejuns, McNairy stays true to the brand's Maine roots while also tossing in some crocodile and tassels. "I'm not trying to redesign the wheel," he says. "I'm just trying to make a nice shoe."

THE ORIGINALS: APRIL77

The brainchild of French designer Brice Partouche, April77 is a mash-up unisex collection of psychedelic prints, selvaie denim, and Navajo-print knit ponchos. That's right, ponchos. If you're not quite ready to storm the Aiamo yet, we understand. Still, Partouche's take on Japanese denim, checked shirts, and chunky cardigans trimmed in the Native American pattern will have many young men considering going west this fall. Available at Barneys New York and Bloomingdale's.



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