



## TRADE SHOWS

### First Look: Fashion Expo Arabia

GEMMA HARE, WGSN 05.11.09

Spring/summer 2010, October 26-28 2009, Abu Dhabi, UAE

#### Overview

**Smooth organisation and a jam-packed roster of catwalk shows proved that Fashion Expo Arabia meant business in bringing style and trade to Abu Dhabi.**

#### QUICK SHOW FACTS

- ▶ **Show dates:** October 26-28 2009
- ▶ **Product categories:** womenswear, menswear, footwear, accessories, leather
- ▶ **Location:** ADNEC (Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre), Abu Dhabi, UAE
- ▶ **Brands:** over 550 companies from the UAE, India, Indonesia, the UK, Italy, Germany and the Ukraine including Gaspard Yurkievich (Paris), Sakina M'Sa (Paris), Carta E Costura (Milan), Hassan Sheheryar Yasin (Dubai) and Kyri (London)



Fashion Expo Arabia

Abu Dhabi's first fashion trade show Fashion Expo Arabia was held last week, running head to head against the established Dubai Fashion Week. These two events are now competing for the title of the fashion capital of the Middle East, but with very different approaches.

Fashion Expo Arabia's aim is to focus on facilitating the business side of things, by **bringing designers, manufacturers and buyers to Abu Dhabi to not only make transactions, but also according to managing director Chris Hudson, "to turn the capital into a regional hub for the fashion industry."**



Rabia Z

On the final day of the show Hudson said: "We are delighted with the attendance to the inaugural Fashion Expo Arabia. We believe we have begun the journey to creating a truly international event for the UAE, providing a future platform for style and expression in the region."

Hatem Al Akeel from Saudi Arabia, who showed his latest collection at the show said: "This is my very first time in Abu Dhabi and **I am very excited about the response from Fashion Expo Arabia to my collections.** From what I see so far, this exhibition is on an extremely different scale and I am very glad to be here."

**The show was commended for its smooth organisation and impressive catwalk production,** however questions were still being asked as to the show's future direction, predominantly due to the naissance of the Middle Eastern market.



Carta E Costura

Fashion Expo Arabia's industry presence clearly benefited from **the patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Shamma Bint Zayed Al Nahyan**, a measure of how significant the first fashion trade show for the region is viewed.

Her Highness Sheikha Shamma Bint Zayed Al Nahyan said: **"I am very proud to be a patron of this important event. Fashion is a growing industry in this part of the world; it has huge potential that is recognised and supported by Abu Dhabi.** I also believe in nurturing the young designers that we have in the UAE, and giving them the opportunity to work alongside international designers in a professional environment such as Fashion Expo Arabia."

ADACH (Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage) sponsored the "Emerging Emirati Talent" at Fashion Expo Arabia and put on two catwalks over the course of the week to showcase the young Emirati designers from Sheikh Zayed Private Academy, Preston University and Kanzi Boutique Al Nahyan.



Sheikh Zayed Private Academy catwalk show

Zayan Ghadour, co-owner, head buyer and creative director at S\*uce boutique, told WGSN she thought the show was a success. **"I am very impressed with the organisation and I am happy with the selection of brands. I have already picked up an Indonesian designer, Dian Pelangi, who makes beautiful hand-made silk kaftans that are perfect for the local market here in Abu Dhabi."** Pelangi's designs feature balloon sleeves with cuff detailing, gold embellishments and original tie-dyed prints, all hand-made in Indonesia.



Dian Pelangi



S\*uce boutique, Abu Dhabi



Gaspard Yurkievich



Gaspard Yurkievich



Gaspard Yurkievich

**Contact**

Julia Finn  
Tel: +971 4 335 6533  
[julia@mecom.ae](mailto:julia@mecom.ae)  
[www.fashionexpoarabia.com](http://www.fashionexpoarabia.com)

© WGSN 2009