

In vogue

Burberry may have changed the way we consume fashion, but there is nothing quite like the thrill of watching it strut past in person. **Sarah Assenti** unveils the Fashion Week shows to see, and be seen at this spring

When Burberry opted to live stream their A/W16 collection, the decision was lauded as democratising fashion. No longer were press credentials or an Oscar nomination crucial to obtaining a seat in fashion's theatre of dreams; now you could do it from the luxury of your own home in gladrags of choice.

The 2017 fashion circus begins in New York City. Last season's most coveted invite was undoubtedly the presentation of Kanye West's Yeezy line — though for all the celebrity-turned-designer shows, the Big Apple offers both icons of the American fashion industry and an abundance of fresh faces.

For style connoisseurs looking for designers on the tipping point of becoming the 'next big thing', head to Chelsea's Milk Studios, where graduates from New York's Parsons School of Design debut their MFA collections. Former Parsons alumni include Derek Lam, Prabal Gurung and

Right: The Anteprima ready-to-wear show during Milan Fashion Week S/S17

Marc Jacobs, so don't miss the opportunity to witness fashion's future game-changers at work.

Hop across the pond to London and the innovation and individuality of ready-to-wear (RTW) collections continues. Entering his 11th year in the industry is Christopher Kane, the Scottish designer who has managed to make lamé and Crocs desirable, and whose pieces have attracted 'it girls' Alexa Chung, Daisy Lowe, Immy Waterhouse and Veronica Heilbrunner to the front row. Head to Somerset House for LFW's International Fashion Showcase, where talented emerging designers from around the globe present their work and discover innovative designs from Egypt, Argentina, Saudi Arabia, Nigeria and beyond.

If you're spending spring in Paris, a seat at one of Karl Lagerfeld's stylish spectacles ➤



for Chanel is a must. Plans for this season remain tightly under wraps, but previous shows have seen the city's exquisite Grand Palais transformed into a Parisian brasserie, a chic supermarché and a decadent casino, complete with Julianne Moore, Lara Stone and Kristen Stewart propping up the roulette table. If they're not already taking centre stage in Lagerfeld's couture tableau, expect to see muses Cara Delevingne, Willow Smith and Alice Dellal sitting across the catwalk. Stewart has also been spotted front row at Lebanese designer Zuhair Murad's shows. Conjuring an ethereal glamour in both his couture and

RTW collections, a seat at a Murad event is a Paris essential.

Closing the season with a short jaunt across the Alps to Milan, the brand to see is Gucci. Since relative unknown Alessandro Michele took the helm back in 2015, the luxury Italian fashion house has shrugged off the sleek silhouettes of former Creative Directors Tom Ford and Frida Giannini, and instead embraced rich colours, androgynous styling and

Above: The Byblos Milano fashion show in Milan Below: New York and Milan Bottom: Keep an eye out for front row celebrities such as Jennifer Lopez and Lenny Kravitz

a cacophony of textures. The outcome is a collection of 70s inspired embellishment-heavy looks with an emphasis on the individual. Expect to see a mix of fashion press heavyweights such as Anna Wintour and Gucci

ambassadors Tom Hiddleston, Petra Collins and Florence Welch alongside you lining the catwalk front row. ■

GETTING IN THE HOT SEAT

How to secure a front row seat at this season's hottest shows:

Flex the plastic: credit card companies such as American Express offer ticket packages to loyal customers. Ditto for hotel chains and show sponsors, who are often given a set number of tickets to distribute. *Press for credentials:* commission your own fashion blog or online magazine and you can apply for press credentials. Get content out there in the lead up to press accreditation and you could find yourself sitting behind Ms Wintour herself.

Invest in the house: if you regularly purchase from a particular fashion house, be sure to say 'yes' to trunk show opportunities. Trunk shows are exclusive intimate shopping experiences, often with the designer present, that can help nurture a relationship and lead to an invite come fashion season.

