

A Tell-Tale Heart

BALANCING BRANDS AND
DESIGN DISCIPLINES,
FELIPE OLIVEIRA BAPTISTA
WEAVES STORIES INTO HIS
LIFE'S WORK.

PHOTOS KEVIN SINCLAIR
STYLING GREGORY WEIN

Though it's been less than a year since Felipe Oliveira Baptista was named creative director of Lacoste, the talent has quickly learned how to juggle dual jobs with grace. "The fact that they are two distinctive projects is good," he says. "Luckily, both studios and my flat are five minutes away from each other on my bike!" Born in Portugal in 1975, the luminary got hooked on image as a teen through music videos and enrolled in London's Kingston University to study fashion and design. After stints at Max Mara and Cerruti, he launched an accessories line in 2003, following this with haute couture in 2005, and since 2009 four ready-to-wear lines. Along the way he's collaborated with Nike and Uniqlo, and he'll delve into furniture design with the opening of a Paris atelier later this year. His signature experimentation with texture, layers, and weight is exemplified in his fall 2011 offering—a collection that commanded the Palais de Tokyo runway and which demonstrated his knack for wearable elegance and ergonomic tailoring. Informed by a post-apocalyptic narrative derived from J.G. Ballard and Cormac McCarthy, Baptista interpreted global warming, survival, and rebirth by way of felted wool, silk mousseline and satin, laser-cut georgette, crystal embroidery, and mink. "I like the idea of turning a story or concept into a real, desirable piece of clothing," he says. "Simultaneously, I always push myself forward in terms of cut, silhouette, use of color and technology, still keeping it relevant for today."



THIS PAGE: *Viscose/wool Proust top with tail hem and viscose/wool Playboy trousers with leather cuff, both FELIPE OLIVEIRA BAPTISTA. Enamel half moon necklace,*

LIZZIE FORTUNATO JEWELS.
OPPOSITE: *Fox fur-wool Pikatchou belted trench and viscose/wool and Playboy trousers with leather cuff, both FELIPE OLIVEIRA BAPTISTA.*

Python/satin/suede and stingray Paloma booties, CHRISSE MORRIS. Nylon sheer pantyhose, AMERICAN APPAREL.



THIS PAGE (FROM LEFT): *Silk organza top and wool skirt, both EMILIO DE LA MORENA. Silver plated brass Saturday hand-knit necklace, LANGOLIERS. Swamp Thing nail*

lacquer, OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE COSMETICS.

OPPOSITE: *Pyrite/silk taffeta coat dress with detachable front panels and front zipper, BROOD. Pig suede*

and gold Swarovski Black Panther heels, NORITAKA TATEHANA.

Metal capsule bangles, both RACHEL LEIGH. Brass archer bangle, GILES & BROTHER.



EMILIO DE LA MORENA WEARS HIS EMOTIONS ON HIS MODEL'S SLEEVES.

The troubled life of Francis Bacon led Spanish designer Emilio de la Morena to integrate the emotions artists often encounter during their rises to fame, a theme that permeates his fall 2011 collection—his second ever shown to the public. (Morena's first showed last spring.) The London-based star wove his narrative through sheer, hourglass-shaped garments of layered hard and soft fabrics, like cashmere, suede, and leather. "Most pieces had a way of joining all the seams, which we called the 'broken technique' in the studio," Morena says. "I cut all the garments in many pieces then joined them back together with the lining. The effect was beautiful." Morena's love of shape and hue speak volumes in his monotone frocks, despite their rather somber palette. The result is a grown-up offering that the designer feels reflects his label's growing maturity. The designer honed his fashion sense at Central Saint Martins and the London College of Fashion. Today, Morena's vision is realized via ruffled-necked, form-fitting ensembles adorned with geometric accents.

SERKAN SARIER EXPLORES COUTURE'S SPORTY SIDE.

New York-based Serkan Sarier's label Brood seeks modernity in couture. Reflected in cinched-silk taffeta frocks, his fall 2011 collection was presented at Chelsea's Nicholas Robinson Gallery amidst a set of trees shipped in from an eco-friendly birch farm. Using a stitching process gleaned while assisting Emanuel Ungaro, Sarier's deconstructed mini-dresses boast a silhouette that gives couture an athletic spirit. "It was important for me to look into the relevance of how volume is used today in comparison to classic haute couture," says Sarier. Trained at the Royal Academy in Antwerp, he made his debut with a spring 2011 collection—a line that caught the eye of Vera Wang and Barneys, both of whom picked it up. Having worked under Giambattista Valli, Haider Ackermann, and Olivier Theyskens, Sarier has an undying passion for couture. "That kind of love for a garment can't be found in any other section of fashion except couture," he says. "There we find the industry's most extraordinary examples." —TIFFANY JOW

HAIR: LACY REDWAY for Redken at See Management. MAKE-UP: FUMIAKI NAKAGAWA for Dior Beauty. MODEL: VALERIA D. at Women Management NYC.

FASHION ASSISTANTS: KELL CHOLKO and JAMIE MCCARTY. HAIR ASSISTANT: SAMANTHA LANDIS.

