

Band of Outsiders

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by LUKE LEITCH

Reading Vogue Runway's cache of Band of Outsiders reviews is to follow a rise and fall in stop-motion: When this brand was at its height, it was clearly hugely esteemed in the American fashion community. Those who loved the old Band of Outsiders will naturally be preinclined to lament, and even resent, the new one.

Here at Pitti, that history is not especially resonant. And, anyway, when it comes to rises and falls, a city that was defined by the Medicis, in a nation whose culture was shaped by the Romans . . . well, what better place to put BOO's tale into perspective?

Design director Angelo Van Mol, I reckon, thought so, too. Given the chance to show here, he sprinkled a grassy square in the

Fortezza da Basso with styrofoam columns, busts, and sculptures, then had his models roll up in a yellow U.S. school bus: These were college kids on an Italian tour.

They looked like they'd been in the gift store before they hit this garden, as a few of the Cuban-collar shirts plus shorts that ran through this show featured outline drawings of the same busts. Elsewhere, they came in narrow, multicolor stripes, all straight but for a delicately kinked scarlet; it was a cool little detail. Fanny packs, sigh, were worn old-school on the fanny and intersected loose suiting in with-a-twist dad-checks whose notch-collar jackets were sometimes lengthened into outerwear hybrids and worn over zip-up cagoules. Another on-tour acquisition was an appreciation of heritage Italian sportswear. The brand's director, Daniel Hettmann, arranged a collaboration with Sergio Tacchini (whose own corporate story isn't a million miles from BOO's) and the fruits were some appealing tracksuits and sneakers in candy store pastels. It was all a bit Beastie Boys video, ironic West Coast dad apparel—which is a fantastic seam to mine right now—and it was well done.