

From Emilia-Romagna to the Karoo: Fashion Bridges unites Italian and SA creativity

Some of the fruits of the [Fashion Bridges](#) programme, a cross-functional collaborative initiative between Italy and South Africa, were showcased in Cape Town recently at a fashion show held at the Italian Ambassador's Residency.



SA fashion designer Lezanne Viviers. Source: Supplied

Lezanne Viviers from South Africa and Federico Cina from Italy were the two designers chosen for this year's iteration of Fashion Bridges. Both designers showed at SA Fashion Week before travelling to Cape Town for a more intimate salon-style show at the Residency.

Founded by Oriana Cuculi, the wife of the Italian Ambassador to South Africa, "Fashion Bridges - I Ponti della Moda" was created in collaboration with Polimoda of Florence, Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana - Milan (CNMI) and South African Fashion Week (SAFW), and with the support of the Centro di Firenze per la Moda Italiana.



Fashion Bridges: Fostering cooperation between Italian and SA fashion industries

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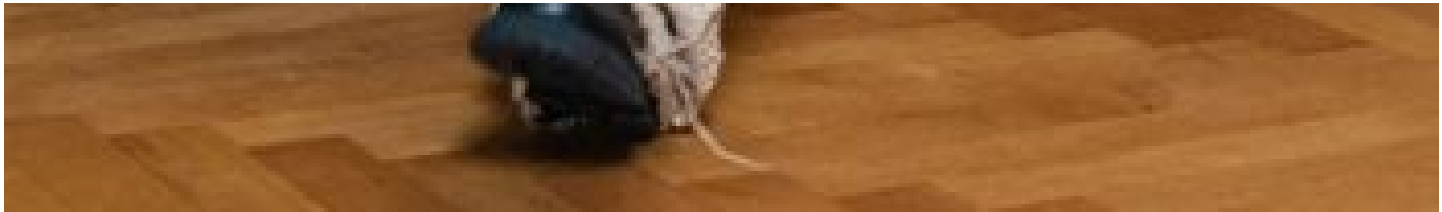


Forging new fashion partnerships

The project aims to develop new partnerships between the Italian and South African fashion industries, with particular emphasis on textile machinery, wool, mohair, cotton and leather sectors, and intends to promote young talents through training, internationalisation and exposure to the trends and creativity of the two countries.

Federico Cina presented his autumn-winter collection 'Appartamento', inspired by his roots from the Emilia-Romagna region and the Italian artisan tradition.





'Appartamento' by Federico Cina. Source: Supplied





“This collection was an opportunity to reflect on myself and open up even more to my audience. Telling about what home means to me and the importance it played in my childhood, recalled old memories: the grandparents' bedroom, the pillows from the living room, the rickety chairs from the kitchen, the overlapping blankets, and the colour palette, reflecting the warmth of those spaces that envelops you and makes you feel safe,” Cina said.

Lezanne Viviers of Viviers Studio presented the 'Karoo Land of Thirst' collection, inspired by the various landscapes of the Karoo, a semi-desert region of South Africa, made with natural fabrics and local artisanal productions and curated with the mentoring of director Massimiliano Giornetti and Professor Filippo Fanini of Polimoda.



'Karoo Land of Thirst' by Viviers Studio. Source: Supplied



Speaking at the Cape Town show, Viviers said: "I have learnt so much from this experience. Through the mentoring of the

team from Polimoda and the opportunity presented by the Italian Embassy in South Africa, there has definitely been a growth in my design approach and in the delivery of this most recent collection. I am extremely grateful to the Madam Ambassador for championing this initiative.”

Cuculi commented, “Through the Fashion Bridges programme, the Embassy of Italy has enabled the exchange of culture and ideas and the cooperation between the young Italian fashion brands and the emerging creative South African fashion designers. My hope is that this programme continues to add value and growth to all the designers who have participated from the first edition of the project in 2021 until today.”

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