

Global South Talent Takes Center Stage at BRICS+ Fashion Summit and Moscow Fashion Week

Moscow Fashion Week and BRICS+ Summit highlighted Global South talent, sustainability and new creative hubs shaping fashion's future.

NEW YORK CITY, MN, UNITED STATES, October 3, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The runways of Moscow were not just about clothes this season. They became a meeting ground where heritage, sustainability and identity converged — and where the Global South stepped forward with confidence. The [BRICS+ Fashion Summit](#), held alongside [Moscow Fashion Week](#), offered something rare: a platform where designers from Africa, Asia and Latin America were not asked to explain themselves, but to lead.

A Different Kind of Summit - Unlike its geopolitical namesake, the BRICS+ Fashion Summit is not about trade negotiations or policy declarations. Instead, it positions itself as a cultural and business forum designed to “decentralize” fashion. Exhibitions, panel discussions and runway shows were structured to elevate designers who have long been positioned at the margins of the industry’s most powerful capitals.

The focus was on storytelling and innovation. Designers explored circular practices, textile experiments and the future of craftsmanship in a digital age. It was, in many ways, an alternative to the conveyor belt of trend-driven weeks in Paris, Milan, London and New York.

A Roster of Voices - The strength of the summit lay in its diversity. South Africa’s David Tlale, long celebrated for his theatrical silhouettes, sent sculptural gowns down the runway with a confidence that echoed his country’s fashion independence. Nigerian-American label Bibire International delivered tailored looks that merged African heritage with metropolitan polish.



South African Brand David Tlale

From Brazil, Artimisi translated local craft traditions into bold, contemporary collections, while LOOM Weaving explored the possibilities of textile innovation rooted in heritage practices. Armenian designers reimagined the country's centuries-old wool traditions, proving that the most familiar materials can be recast as luxury.

India's Shantnu & Nikhil staged their international debut with Armouré, a collection that fused historical references with sharp, almost architectural tailoring. Moscow's own ODOR by Nikita Kalmykov impressed with upcycled lace, salvaged buttons and gender-fluid silhouettes, suggesting that romance and sustainability need not be opposites. From China, Ma Guai led Subai, presenting clean, architectural looks that emphasized material purity and restraint.



Panelists speak during the Africa Regional Session at the BRICS+ Fashion Summit in Moscow, focusing on production trends and the rise of Global South designers.

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The BRICS+ Fashion Summit and Moscow Fashion Week is about giving designers from every region a real stage. Moscow became a platform where their stories were not only heard, but celebrated.”

*Alexander Shumsky - CEO
Russian Fashion Council*

Together, these collections formed a statement: fashion's future will not be authored by one capital or one culture.

Beyond the Runway - The event was not only about clothing. Nichole Bess, founder of Noir Fashion Week, used her platform to speak about structural inclusion for Black designers. “Representation can't be occasional,” she said. “It has to be built into the system.”

New York-based designer Pia Lindsay echoed that call, arguing that BRICS+ could serve as a blueprint for cross-border collaboration. “This is about networks,” she said.

“We need spaces where equity isn't a buzzword, but the framework.”

Moscow as Host - That this was happening in Moscow is notable. At a time when the city is recalibrating its cultural image, Fashion Week became a stage for narratives that are often overlooked in Western capitals. The shows leaned into handcraft, narrative depth and material integrity, suggesting that luxury can be defined by context, not just by established houses.

Patrick Duffy, founder at Global Fashion Exchange, said the moment was bigger than fashion.

“For once, the Global South wasn’t just included,” he said. “They were setting the pace, telling their own stories, and the whole room was listening.”

Fashion’s global map is shifting. Cities like Lagos, São Paulo, Mumbai and Moscow are emerging as creative hubs, while new ecosystems in weaving, upcycling and digital platforms strengthen local industries. Designers are reclaiming their narratives and putting sustainability at the center, from Nikita Kalmykov’s upcycled lace to LOOM’s experimental textiles.



Opening Look from Pia Lindsay Studio with Noir Collective at Moscow Fashion Week

The Challenges Ahead - Of course, obstacles remain. Many of these designers face limited manufacturing capacity, fragile supply chains and the difficulty of breaking into global retail channels. Bias also persists — non-Western aesthetics are often interpreted through Eurocentric lenses, limiting how collections are received.

Some critics also warn that fashion summits risk turning into branding exercises without long-term results. The true test will be whether visibility translates into consistent opportunities and sustained markets.

A Turning Point - Yet, even with these contradictions, Moscow marked a turning point. Designers from the Global South are no longer positioned as guests at the table but as key authors of fashion’s narrative. Their collections did not seek validation; they asserted presence.

Fashion, at its best, is not about trends but about identity, belonging and influence. The BRICS+ Fashion Summit and Moscow Fashion Week proved that these conversations are no longer happening only in Paris ateliers or on Milanese catwalks. They are unfolding in São Paulo, Lagos, Yerevan, New Delhi, Beijing — and yes, in Moscow.

The message was clear: the Global South is not entering fashion’s future. It is defining it.

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