

Melis Bridal Wins Best Bridal Collection in New York at Inaugural Awards Ceremony

Omani couture designer Sahar Al Aufi receives 2026 bridal honor three years after presenting Melis with Runway 7 during New York Fashion Week at Sony Hall.

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, October 6, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Melis Bridal](#) by Omani couture designer [Sahar Al Aufi](#) has been named Best Bridal Collection at the inaugural [Runway 7 Fashion Awards](#), held Sept. 14 at Sony Hall in New York City.

The recognition marks a return to a familiar New York fashion platform for Al Aufi. In September 2023, Melis presented its Spring/Summer 2024 collection with Runway 7 during New York Fashion Week at Sony Hall, with the presentation documented by Getty Images and fashion media. Three years later, Al Aufi returned to the venue to accept the bridal honor, recognized for her work in bridal couture.

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Sahar Al Aufi



Sahar Al Aufi accepts the Best Bridal Collection award for Melis Bridal at the inaugural Runway 7 Fashion Awards at Sony Hall in New York City on Sept. 14, 2026. Photo by Taylor Fenner.

The inaugural Runway 7 Fashion Awards followed Runway 7's 11th season of shows during New York Fashion Week, held Sept. 8–13. The awards recognized fashion designers and industry professionals across more than 30 categories, including bridal, haute couture, eveningwear, sustainable fashion and global heritage. International couturier Michael Cinco was named Designer of the Year, while Malan Breton received the Excellence in Design Award. The Sept. 14 program also incorporated live performance into the evening.

“Receiving this recognition in New York is deeply meaningful to me, especially because Runway 7 has already been part of the Melis story,” said Sahar Al Auﬁ, founder and creative director of Melis. “Bridal couture is very personal. I believe a gown should express the woman wearing it—her individuality, her story and the way she wants to feel on one of the most important days of her life. At Melis, we create for the individual rather than asking the individual to fit the collection. As we introduce our work to more brides and bridal professionals in the United States, I want them to experience that level of personal design and craftsmanship for themselves.”

Based in Muscat, Oman, Al Auﬁ established her fashion house in 1998 and today works through ateliers in Oman and Italy. Her design practice brings Omani craftsmanship together with Italian tailoring, incorporating handcrafted details, made-to-measure construction and custom-developed fabrics. Al Auﬁ is also known for personally developing hand-embroidered fabrics for her collections and private clients.



Sahar Al Auﬁ at the inaugural Runway 7 Fashion Awards at Sony Hall in New York City on Sept. 14, 2026. Photo by Dillon Wright.

Melis Bridal is now developing its U.S. presence through relationships with bridal boutiques, buyers and other fashion-industry professionals, creating opportunities for partners to experience the work firsthand, meet Al Auﬁ and explore ways to introduce her couture to their clientele. The approach reflects the house's emphasis on personal relationships and bespoke design rather than treating U.S. expansion solely as conventional collection distribution.

Al Auﬁ's next New York appearance will take place Oct. 13–15 at M lange de Blanc during New York Bridal Fashion Week. The trade event brings bridal designers together with boutique buyers and industry professionals, providing Melis Bridal an opportunity to present its work directly to the U.S. bridal market.

Al Auﬁ will be available to meet with bridal retailers, buyers, stylists and members of the media at Floor 3, Showroom 21 throughout the market. Industry professionals interested in viewing the collection or discussing opportunities with the designer, as well as media seeking interviews or imagery, may book an appointment on Al Auﬁ's website here: <https://saharalaufiatelier.com/>

About Melis Bridal

Melis Bridal is the bridal couture division of Melis by Sahar Al Auﬁ, the fashion house established

in Muscat, Oman, in 1998. Under the creative direction of Omani designer Sahar Al Aufi, Melis Bridal creates made-to-order and bespoke wedding gowns distinguished by handcrafted details, custom-developed fabrics and a design approach that combines Omani craftsmanship with Italian tailoring.

With ateliers in Oman and Italy, the house operates through a couture-level process centered on individuality, craftsmanship and the relationship between designer and client. Melis extends beyond the bridal gown to offer a coordinated couture vision for the wedding party, with Sahar Al Aufi designing for the bride, groom, bridesmaids and ceremonial occasions under one creative direction.

Melis Bridal is expanding its relationships with U.S. bridal boutiques, fashion professionals and private clients while maintaining the made-to-order and bespoke approach at the center of the house.

Instagram: @melisbridal

Website: saharalaufiatelier.com

About Sahar Al Aufi

Sahar Al Aufi is an award-winning Omani fashion designer, entrepreneur and creative director whose career in couture began in 1998. Based in Muscat, Oman, she leads ateliers in Oman and Italy, combining the artisanal traditions of her Omani heritage with Italian tailoring and contemporary couture construction.

Her work encompasses bespoke bridal, evening and red-carpet couture, ceremonial fashion and custom menswear. Al Aufi is known for personally developing custom-made, hand-embroidered fabrics for her collections and private clients, giving her control over both the textile and the finished garment as part of the design process.

Al Aufi's work has been presented internationally, including with Runway 7 during New York Fashion Week, where Melis presented its Spring/Summer 2024 collection at Sony Hall in September 2023. In September 2026, Melis Bridal was named Best Bridal Collection at the inaugural Runway 7 Fashion Awards in New York. She continues to develop the house's international presence while introducing its bespoke approach to a growing U.S. bridal



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Sahar Al Aufi at the inaugural Runway 7 Fashion Awards at Sony Hall in New York City on Sept. 14, 2026. Photo by Dillon Wright.



The 2026 Runway 7 Fashion Awards Best Bridal Collection trophy and finalist recognition presented to Melis Bridal. Courtesy of Melis by Sahar Al Auji.

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