



## ARTS & CULTURE

# Paris Fashion Week Opens on Internet

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Fashion Week has opened in Paris with clothing designers presenting their latest creations for autumn and winter. But this time, all the shows across the French capital are internet-only performances. The worldwide COVID-19 health crisis forced organizers to cancel in-person events.

Some shows will be shown online “live,” as they take place. Others will be recordings.

The French Fashion Federation operates Paris Fashion Week. Federation officials decided last spring that because of social distancing guidelines, Paris Fashion Week would cancel in-person shows for one season. The trade group plans to return to normal in September, barring a second wave of COVID-19.

French **fashion** designer Chanel presented a “live” show online Tuesday. The company has used this method once before. Last month, it showed part of a new fashion collection on the web live.

The Italian company Valentino, however, is doing things differently. It is to offer an online **preview** Wednesday of what the company says will be a live performance this month in Rome. It says that the later event will “bring together the human and the **digital** touch, creating a **dialogue** where neither of them will take the lead.”

Valentino did not provide more details.

The change in presentation saves time and will give lesser-known companies a chance to take part in Paris Fashion Week.

“This season will definitely have changed the fashion industry moving forward, especially for smaller **brands**, said Jessica Michault, Editor-at-Large for fashion magazine *ODDA*.

Many fashion critics say online presentations might work in some cases but not for top quality products. Reporter Long Nguyen is among them.

“Paris is where designers show ideas, and ideas can’t come through unless the shows are presented to breathing witnesses,” he said, adding, “It’s like physically going to Tibet or viewing it online — it’s not the same experience.”

Paris Fashion Week organizers have said that next season, in September's women's ready-to-wear clothing, there will be a return to “normal,” in-person shows. But there are expected to be changes to permit social distancing. Fashion companies may have to seek bigger spaces or reduce attendance numbers.

“Nothing beats being at a fashion show, sitting on the front **row** and seeing the clothes up close, but something’s going to have to give,” *ODDA*’s Michault said.

Menswear shows are set to begin on July 14 in Milan, Italy. Organizers there also plan a mostly internet event. However, two big design companies, Dolce&Gabbana and Etro, plan to delay their presentations for a month and hold live shows.

The coronavirus **epidemic** was confirmed in Italy during Milan's shows in February. Designer Giorgio Armani decided to hold his show online February 23. Many critics protested at the time that the online show is not good enough.

However, the virus looks like it might lead to even more changes in the field of high-fashion.

Saint Laurent and Gucci are rethinking the seasonal production of the fashion industry. They have announced they will stop following the four-shows-a-year business model.

Last week, Parisian design group Mugler seemed to agree with that idea. It said it would present two shows a year instead of four to show all its new creations.

I’m Caty Weaver.

*Thomas Adamson reported this story for the Associated Press. Cathy Weaver adapted it for VOA Learning English. was the editor.*

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## Words in This Story

**fashion** *-n.* the business of creating and selling clothes in new styles

**preview** *-n.* to see, hear, or show something (such as a movie) before it is available to the public

**digital** *-adj.* using or characterized by computer technology

**dialogue** *-n.* a conversation between two or more people

**brand** *-n.* a category of products that are all made by a particular company and all have a particular name

**row** *-n.* a series of persons or things set up in a line

**epidemic** *-n.* an occurrence in which a disease spreads very quickly and affects a large number of people

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