

THE MOST WIDELY READ FASHION DAILY IN JAPAN

THE SENKEN

INDEX

NEWS

Is There a Future
for the Tokyo
Collections?



NEWS

"Let them
be Light!"

206g



SPECIAL INTERVIEW

"I Can't Really
Remember
the Past.
I am Only
Thinking of Now."
—YUKI TORII



SPECIAL REPORTS

Japanese
Manufacturers'
Comforting
Designs Capture
Markets and Hearts



CULTURE

There is
no stopping
"Akiba"



Everyone is a stylist in Japan



Loïc Bizel

Born in Lyon, France. Arrived in Japan in 1996 and founded a fashion consultancy in Japan in 2001. Manages the Tokyo street fashion snap site Fashion in JAPAN.com (<http://www.fashion-in-japan.com/>) as well as the Tokyo trend spot guide service, Tokyo Fashion Tour.com. (<http://www.tokyofashiontour.com/>) 1,000 photos are uploaded to the site every month and the site enjoys 3 million page views per month. Approximately 40 companies participate in fashion tours in a year (as of 2010).

One key element that makes Japanese fashion exciting is the coordinated styling. Japanese combine items or items and accessories in ways that a western person would not dream of doing. The "yama girl" or "mountain girl" who has become popular the last two years is a good example. Trekking shoes and backpacks, Canadian knitwear and other outdoor items are put together in colorful combinations and have been converted into cute urban garments.

Japanese are very good at handling traditional brands. MONCLER back home in France is a skiing garment, but in Japan, it took off as a fashion brand, surprising even department store buyers back home with the way the garments were transformed. And MONCLER is not an exception, but rather, there are numerous examples of brands with long histories being revived in Japan.

This is because Japanese people have an abundance of knowledge in fashion and the consumers are confident enough to come up with their own styles. Japan has approximately 150 fashion publications and the select shops have many good items. However, though I say there is an abundance of knowledge in fashion, it refers to consumers knowing a lot of brand

names, and stops there. There is only a handful of people who have a real in-depth understanding of fashion. Japanese are good at reinterpreting overseas trends into their unique versions.

In this environment, Japanese hone their sense of fashion and create unique styles. I think it can be said that every Japanese person is a stylist for themselves.

But Japanese people do not show off that they are fashionable. Even when Europeans and Americans tell them that they are blown away by how fashionable they are, everyone says, "No, I am not fashionable, just normal." In addition to the uniquely Japanese humility, I think they say that because fashion has become such an integral part of the Japanese daily life that people do not even consider it something special.

And another thing is that Japan is a country of uniforms. Until age 18, everyone wears uniforms and even after graduating from school, people are forced to wear a different kind of uniform, the suit, and as such, at first glance, Japan looks to be removed from fashion. However, I think that this uniform culture is what is creating the casual fashion on their days off. I think the very revealing individuality is an antidote to the uniform culture.

by Junpei Sugie