

MANOLO BLAHNIK

Spring/summer 2008

Trust Manolo Blahnik to come up with influences as diverse as the architecture of Constantinople and Finnish Marimekko patterns and translate them into one of his favourite themes from his s/s 2008 collection. "I had just come back from Turkey, where I was exposed to all this wonderful architecture," says Blahnik – who used the curves on windows of the Hagia Sophia as a starting point for the collection. "Then, I was in Bath, and came across some really fantastic Marimekko prints in this little shop. The two just happened to fall perfectly into place – bizarre as that combination may sound."

Blahnik has always had a fondness for picking up mundane objects and turning them into key elements of his designs. This season, for example, a teaspoon became the basis of a new sole, a nail – one of many considered by the designer – was transformed into a heel of the most elegant proportions – finished off with a metal disc to make it that much more modern.

The collection is designed to highlight several strategic parts of the foot. "I had ankles in mind," says Blahnik, "so there are a lot of shoes that focus on them ... and backs," he adds. "I wanted the shoes to look as good from the back as they do from the front." The result is a collection based on miniscule details that could easily go unnoticed – until one realizes that in fact, it is them that make ankles slimmer, legs longer, and backs a lot sexier.

For the second time, Manolo Blahnik has collaborated with young, British designer Christopher Kane on shoes for his catwalk show. "Working with young designers is always a great experience," says Blahnik of his collaborations with designers, which over the years have included designers as varied as Calvin Klein and John Galliano. "They keep you updated on what's going on, and make you look at things with a fresh eye."

With Kane, Blahnik designed a boot and a shoe - both with a hard-looking, metallic toe-cap – that are already being touted as one of the key shoes of the season.

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