

Fashion forward



By Jackie Burger

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Neo-Trans, wearables and curated self-expression seem to be the stylish buzzwords of 2016. Jackie Burger, style icon and editor-at-large, gives her thoughts on this year's ever-shifting fashion landscape.

■ **Pantone has picked rose quartz and serenity as the colours of 2016. How do you think these colours will be reflected in fashion in 2016?**

Designers such as Miuccia Prada, Dolce & Gabbana and Armani showcased signature designs in powdery pastel hues during 2015 Fall/Winter Runway collections, which included blush pink and baby blue, ushering in a strong statement about gender fluidity and meta-modern femininity.



■ ***What would you say are the top-five trends/catchwords or phrases that will define fashion in 2016?***

- Neo-Trans (transgender style and the blurring of lines between male/female dressing)
- Modernist
- Eccentric
- Glamcore (replacing Normcore)
- Purposeful
- Wearables

■ ***The must-have items for 2016?***

I don't propagate the notion of the must-have item; instead I pay attention to the shift in the spirit of the times. On my radar:

- Luxe loungewear, including silk slips and pyjamas
- Pleats

- Romantic maxi dresses
- The blouse
- Vintage inspirations
- Brooches
- Flat mules

▣ ***How do you see emerging digital trends, such as wearables, reflecting in fashion styles?***

Wearable tech is very much part of the times we live in, but still in its early stages of development. For now, the areas of exploration include accessories such as the Apple Watch and DvF Google Glasses, and high-tech fabrics in fitness and health areas.



Image sourced from www.chipchick.com

▣ ***The influencers: How do you see the growth of consumers getting their style inspiration and information from social media, such as bloggers and Instagrammers, playing out in 2016?***

A large portion of consumers will still be influenced by pop culture and social media going forward. There is a counter movement though; sceptical of pre-packaged looks, aspiring to free-thinking aesthetics and curated self-expression.

▣ ***The man bun, beauty and make-up products for men - would you say men's fashion will continue to lean towards the metrosexual style?***

The Neo-Trans movement (also core to the choice of the two Pantone colours blue and pink for 2016) embraces the notion of gender equality and an acceptance of style without gender boundaries, and creating a new Trans-gender style fluidity. More designers are showing men's and women's collections in tandem, honing this 'identity'. The [Adriaan Kuiters + Jody Paulsen SS16 Collection](#) is a perfect example of this innovative and trailblazing approach to style.



Adriaan Kuiters+ Jody Paulsen's SS16

■ ***As the world shifts to more ethical and sustainable practices, do you think big fashion corporations will get more flak for possible unethical business practices when it comes to labour, pricing and environmental damage?***

Last year an article in BOF reported that second to oil, fashion and textiles is the most polluting industry. With fast fashion and mass consumption and production driving the profit margins of big fashion corporations, I remain sceptical about the implementation of a much-needed conscious fashion consumption philosophy without the implementation of international regulations.

■ ***How do you think the dynamic between mega fashion retail corporations vs independent designers will shift in 2016?***

Not much. We still have a long way to go to educate consumers about the attributes of custom design vs the slavish following of commercial trends.



Salon 58's Magic soirée - Image by Niquita Bento

■ ***How much do you feel the local fashion market is influenced by international trends?***

I believe we now operate in a global trend village that is highly accessible to the local fashion consumer via online shopping and international retailers and brands now trading in South Africa. It does have an impact on the resourcefulness and pride of developing our home-grown style aesthetic and narrative.

■ ***Do you think we will see more and more big international retailers, such as H&M, hitting our shores?***

The possibility is strong but our economic climate perhaps gives a reality check?

■ ***Your thoughts on e-commerce? How do you see our shopping habits evolving?***

Online retail is on the rise and a very functional shopping option, but devoid of a curated experience that most discerning shoppers prefer. A key differential and benefit is the access to a 'clothes for all seasons' approach that stimulates real-time shopping vs seasonal shopping.

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ABOUT JACKIE BURGER

South African style icon Jackie Burger has been involved in the fashion industry for over 25 years, having worked in retail marketing, publishing and television.

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