

RENÉ SCHEIBENBAUER

Spring Summer 2024

Press Release

René Scheibenbauer has been focusing on who wears his clothes: how they feel, how they move, how they feel when they move in his clothes through the world.

For Scheibenbauer, 'feeling' has always been the centrifugal force that propels the brand forward, where sensual and complex pattern cutting choreographs specific interactions with the garment, culminating in an embodied experience that Scheibenbauer calls 'Emotional Dressing'. Scheibenbauer, and his clients, are evidently moved by clothes, but they also move in them. To move and be moved, that's what the brand sets out to do.

Over the last year, Scheibenbauer took some time to reconnect with his customer base. (Re)turning his attention to the individual he focused on what kinds of bodies wear these clothes, in what environments, and performing what tasks.

Drawing from that intensive research, the SS24 collection 'Motion' was built out from close readings of the body in motion: the bend of an elbow, the thrust of the hip, the propulsion of the trunk, the roll of a shoulder, the swing of an arm. Then followed a consideration of how and what material could accommodate such anatomical articulations: Italian 4-way stretch wool tailoring, Japanese cotton jersey, Fine sheer Japanese jersey rib, recycled cotton stretch denim, stretch cotton shirting. In the deft hands of Scheibenbauer these motions and materials have been tailored into utilitarian constructions, or as he defines them 'service devices': clothes that assist you through your everyday, facilitating an ease of movement with an aesthetic of elegant economy.

There are certain motifs in this collection that echo past seasons. The looping ballet necklines, twisted waistbands, sloping pouches, pockets, hoods, take after a signature möbius loopw – a one-sided surface with no boundaries – explored in The Empathy Jacket, designed for Scheibenbauer's graduate CSM collection in 2018. The recurring loop structure offers Scheibenbauer infinite possibilities for interrogating interaction. The twisted waistband, for example, encourages wearers to experiment with wearing it tight around the hip or letting it hang loosely like a sling.

If the principal form in this collection is the loop, then its movement partner is the spin. Scheibenbauer's reference board is populated by choreographic exercises in spinning: the cooley disciplined pirouettes of American choreographers Andrew deGroat and Lucinda Childs, as well as the hypnotic spirals and turns of Belgian Anne Terese de Keersmaeker. The performance imagery selected by Scheibenbauer hones in on the unisex clothing worn by the dancers: sneakers, cotton jersey vests and tees, denim and cotton loose leg trousers. These are not costumes – the word itself suggests a contrived artifice, something to change out of – no, there is nothing extraneous to these clothes, with a confidence and lightness, they take the performer across the stage and into life.

Lucinda Child's choreographic practice was described by dance historian Lou Forster as a 'mixture of airy fluency and surgical precision.' Such a reconciliation of opposites proves an equally apt description for this collection where Scheibenbauer's soft drapes meet technical tailoring and colours are 'gently fluorescent'. Here, whispering lime and deep black, stonewashed grey and ice blue all effortlessly coexist to create a contemporary look as relaxed as it is refined.

Text: Isabelle Bucklow

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Stylist: Hannah Ryan
Photographer: Max Glatzhofer
Talents: Lydia Walker, Zain Gibson, Iman Bournier
Casting: Carmen Young / Imprint Casting
Hair: Kachi Katsuya
Photography Assistant: Yemaya Tara
Shoes: Marsèll
Denim provided by: ISKO Denim

Studio Team: Alvaro Azkue, Erika Kaija,
Franca Apothéloz

www.renescheibenbauer.net

info@renescheibenbauer.net

[@renescheibenbauer](https://www.instagram.com/renescheibenbauer)