



PHOTOS BY CUI MENG / CHINA DAILY

Top and below: The Slovak Fashion Days held in Beijing are highlighted by seasonal lines from such brands as Donna Rosi (below left), Dana Kleinert (above and below center) and Katie's Bags (below right).

# EASTERN EXPOSURE

Confidence carries the day as Slovak fashion debuts on a catwalk in Beijing, **Mike Peters** reports from the front row.

The first models strutting their stuff are visions of command, in smartly tailored black and white that would suit any boardroom. But while the carefully detailed office wear is elegantly European, the young women who wear the outfits are distinctively Chinese, a duality that couture house Donna Rosi sees as a winning combination.

"Self-confident women feel beautiful," says Alexandra Madrova, who was in China to represent Donna Rosi line at Slovak Fashion Days Beijing, a style showcase with ambitions to be an annual event.

While Donna Rosi revels in the stark contrast of black and white, lively details keep the look from ever feeling severe. One suit sports a ribbon of black silk loosely tied around the neck like a simple gift bow, dangling over a white blouse with an abstract zebra print so minimalist it looks like a cascade of chopsticks.

A square-shouldered white coat sports big onyx buttons and black-trimmed pockets, while a lighter black jacket with white-stitch ribbing allows an exuberant cravat to catch the eye. And just as the feline parade of models cements a pattern of black and white, the designer shows the beauty of surprise with a suit of bright sea-foam green and another in cobalt blue.

Next on the runway are Dana Kleinert's original knitwear and accessories, with multipurpose and reversible skirts, tops and dresses. "Every piece has many color variations," Kleinert told buyers at the Beijing show. "Turn it inside out, upside down, make it your own." In her 2012-13 line, pure merino wools are paired with waterproof or cotton wovens, and "old patterns are turned into new ways of design."



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If Kleinert represents smart daily wear, the next sight in the Slovak fashion show border on the operatic.

Silk, feathers and glitter appear in turn to highlight the one-of-a-kind handbags of Katarina Feix, produced under the label Katie's Bags. Feix creates bags that become one with a favorite gown or pair of shoes, which may require gray-green silk and Swarovski gems or crown motifs in gold and dusty rose.

Her current 20 bags on show are the stuff of dreams, and Feix isn't afraid to dream big. Last year she presented a line of 16 bags she called Queen's Own, each tailored to her perception of monarchs ranging from Marie Antoinette to Queen Elizabeth II.

In addition to the three lines on the runway, buyers and media got to see a handful of other design houses' wares: ornate necklaces and bracelets by Petra Toth, intriguing metal-and-textile jewelry from jewelry artist Lubi Hany, fashions from Maya May and Petra Poorova, and streetwear from Puojd.

The fashions on show aren't brand-new to China: Donna Rosi won the honor of outfitting the Slovak Olympic team for the Beijing 2008 Games' opening ceremony, and both Donna Rosi and Dana Kleinert had shows at Shanghai Expo 2010.

But Radek Kantor, the Slovakian scouting director for the international modeling agency Esee who has been in China for nearly a decade, clearly enjoyed watching his China-based models present fashions from his homeland.

He simply said: "It's time."

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## LIZ'S COLLECTIONS

By XU JUNQIAN in Shanghai  
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"The only word Elizabeth knows in Italian is Bulgari," Richard Burton once said of his wife of two times, Elizabeth Taylor. And if there is anything that outshines Liz's collection of husbands, it must be her collection of trinkets from Bulgari.

Now her personal collection of Bulgari jewelry is on display in Shanghai as part of the Italian jeweler's celebration of its 125th anniversary. The collected pieces join hundreds of other diamond and gold baubles from the century-old Italian brand.

This is the first time Taylor's collection is being exhibited in the Chinese mainland since Bulgari, the actress's favorite jeweler, bought them for a cool \$20 million at an auction in December.

"Not only were they significant gifts to Ms Taylor," says

Amanda Triossi, director of the Bulgari historical archives and the show's curator in Paris, the second stop of the Bulgari parade. "They are significant Bulgari designs."

Shanghai is the fourth city in the show's global tour, after Beijing.

The exhibition is spread over two floors of the brand-new jewelry-box-like Aurora Museum by the Huangpu River, and the monthlong exhibition has eight galleries for a retrospective ranging from the brand's 19th century to postwar periods, with a total of 600 exquisite watches, clocks and decorative objects and jewelry pieces.

One of the highlights is a whopping 23.44-carat octagonal step-cut emerald diamond brooch in the center of the gallery featuring the Taylor collection. The brooch was an engagement gift from Burton to Taylor in 1962, and the only jewelry Taylor wore at their first wedding. Bulgari bought it back for \$6.1 million, with the matching necklace (pictured left).

