

L'Oreal Fashion Week: Karamea

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[L'Oreal Fashion Week](#)



Another Studio show: [Karamea](#). The label takes its name from a town in New Zealand, where costumer turned fashion designer Michelle Turpin is originally from. Turpin was inspired by American artist Judith K. McMillan's x-ray photographic art, to the point where this morning she held a meet-and-greet at a downtown gallery with the artist, and her work, in attendance.

For spring Turpin sees dusty, washed-out rose cottons, cotton voile and silk and crisp whites and blacks, with high-impact contrast provided by digitally printed images of magnolias and bellflowers from McMillan's art on the skirts. Cutaway jackets have seams radiating from the middle of the back like semicircles. The jersey dresses, in black and washed-out lavender, have ingenious bandeaus across the back to cover brassieres and crisp A-line picnic dresses have shaped necklines. The overall effect is soft and serene, but because in previous collections Turpin has shown such a beautiful colour and pattern sense and is a deft hand with bias cuts, I'm a little disappointed that she reserved the splashes of colour (like magenta chiffon worked into shibori and accordion pleats, or ombré lavender and purple silk charmeuse ballerina skirts) for only the last few dresses.

Update: A reader wrote in asking who created the wire and mesh masks for the Karamea show. Answer: it's Toronto jewellery artist [Ashley Winnington-Ball](#), who experiments with found objects and oxidized metal and is also the manager of [Shopgirls](#) in Toronto, a boutique I [profiled not long ago](#) (you can buy her work there). Turpin says Winnington-Ball worked for months on the pieces, and also made cuffs and necklaces for the show, though the latter were not used on the runway. Photo: A model wears clothing from the Karamea collection. (Brett Gundlock/National Post photo)