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This season was an opportunity for Robyn Lynch to look within and explore what it means – and looks – to be Irish. So in place of a journey to somewhere far away, the designer is taking you to the rainy fields of the Emerald Isle. As a finalist of the 2023 International Woolmark Prize, Robyn was tasked with exploring the topic of 'dialogue'. Her own interpretation hones in on stereotypes as forms of communication and the numerous associations her identity garners with others – without as much as uttering a word. "I Googled 'Irish T-shirt' and what came out were a bunch of green, leprechauns, shamrocks, pints of Guinness and harps," says Robyn. But instead of trying to prove the stereotypes wrong, she leaned into the iconography by turning those Irish-isms on their head and presenting them as symbols of pride.

This season started with a singular colour palette, consisting of four different shades. Pale pistachio, lizard green, deep sage and phthalo green come together in a symphony of hues, executed in Robyn's most ambitious textile portfolio yet. For AW23, the focus is almost exclusively on Merino wool, a fabric that has become part of her vernacular over the years. "It's much more complex than all synthetic and most natural fibres, which provides Merino wool with a unique set of benefits that's unmatched. The fabric absorbs UV radiation and is both 100% biodegradable and renewable, as well as naturally resistant to fire due to its high moisture and nitrogen content. It's thermoregulatory and its fibres can transfer large quantities of moisture vapour from the body. This means that the microclimate next to the skin stays dry, which really came into play when designing the pieces," says Lynch.

Excited by these learnings, she dug into the origin story of the textile to push its capabilities and maximise its potential across a complete wardrobe – from top to toe. Though innovation is key, some of the major design decisions materialised via revisiting signature ideas from her past collections, going all the way back to her AW19 debut as part of Fashion East, and executing them in lush Merino treatments. A hero piece emerges in the form of a hybrid knit; a showcase of engineering thanks to its seamless blend of traditional weaving techniques reminiscent of a vintage Aran jumper. Extending the key narrative of knitwear as outerwear, Robyn reimagines a set of active classics in variations of Merino, including an oversized hoodie, a box-fit fleece and an elegant hiking cargo trouser. Her now-signature party print gets a Hibernian makeover on a ribless Merino jacquard jumper, with references to Céilí, a Gaelic folk dance dating back to the 19th century. The season rounds off with a more focused selection of other core fabrications, including denims, jerseys, deadstock wool and ocean waste-recycled Seaqual® nylons, all custom-dyed to match the Pantone shades of green.

The looks are completed with a selection of knitted accessories in balaclavas and beanies that match some of the knitting techniques seen in the clothes. Footwear comes courtesy of GEOX, an Italian brand known for their breathable and waterproof technologies. Their 'Snake Man' model is a sleek contemporary slip-on silhouette that embodies the notion of stylised activewear. Incidentally, they also happen to be the favourite shoe of Robyn's dad who has one in every colourway imaginable.

The soundtrack of the show is developed in collaboration with another strong Irish woman who is redefining tradition through her own mode of creative self-expression. Emerging musician Róisín Berkeley created a custom track for the occasion, and is performing it on the catwalk on her harp as the Robyn Lynch boys parade a line-up of looks resembling the inventory of the most elevated souvenir shop you'll never stumble upon at Dublin Airport.

ABOUT ROBYN LYNCH

Dublin-born menswear designer Robyn Lynch founded her eponymous brand upon graduating from the Menswear MA at the University of Westminster in June 2018. Having previously studied Printed Textiles at the National College of Art and Design in Dublin, Lynch brings together memories of her Irish upbringing and culture with a youthful design approach that reforms traditional ideas of menswear. She has shown twice with Fashion East, before making her solo presentation debut at London Fashion Week Men in January 2020. Since then, the designer has worked with cycle brand Rapha and outerwear specialists at Columbia on the 'Robyn Lynch supported by...' series which sees the designer reconstructing specialist brands' deadstock garments.



STYLING:
BEN SCHOFIELD

MUSIC:
RÓISÍN BERKELEY

PRODUCTION:
BLONSTEIN

SPECIAL THANK YOU TO:
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CASTING:
JONATHAN JOHNSON

SHOW NOTES:
DINO BONAČIĆ

PRESS:
VILLAGE

HAIR:
SOPHIE JANE ANDERSON
AT FUTURE REP

GRAPHIC DESIGN:
OTHER OFFICE

STYLING ASSISTANTS:
KIT SWANN
DOMINIK RADOMSKI

MAKE UP:
GRACE SINNOT AT FUTURE REP

STUDIO TEAM:
HOLLY FRANCIS
SHINYA INOUE
REBECCA HALPENNY
NOA MARAS

SHOES:
GEOX

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