

TRENDS AUTUMN-WINTER 2026/2027

At the business conference of the 37th International Fashion Exhibition Central Asia Fashion Spring-2026, Stanislav Zimin delivered a lecture for the first time at the conference on «Trends Autumn-Winter 2026/2027». Stanislav Zimin is a trend analyst, PhD in Philology, international speaker, author of the trend forecasting course at Lomonosov Moscow State University (MSU), macro-trend specialist at the Trendsite agency, and invited lecturer at universities in Russia, Hong Kong, India, and Japan. He presented exclusive information specially prepared for CAF visitors.

In a world that risks losing its instincts and intuition, fashion becomes a refuge for primal wisdom. Autumn–Winter 2026/2027 is a season in which design transforms into a form of ritual protection and conscious self-expression. It reinterprets familiar codes through cultural and social shifts, opening up new ways to speak about oneself through image and appearance.



Trend analyst, international speaker, and lecturer — Stanislav Zimin

Stanislav Zimin opened his presentation by emphasizing that the presented trends and directions should rarely be adopted in their pure form: *«Rather, they serve as a source of inspiration that can be adapted to your own work or personal preferences. This is especially important right now because the world is changing rapidly, and any trend must be tailored to a specific region, individual, brand, and audience. Blindly following global trends — such as the «color of the season» — is something many people still do. In 2026, we're talking about shades like «Mocha Mousse» or «Dancing White», but in certain regions, the same «Dancing White» can very quickly turn into «Dirty Vagabond» due to climate and real living conditions. So, the key is not to copy, but to adapt thoughtfully. I prefer an approach where we're given not a ready-made solution, but a direction for thought — sometimes in a very unexpected form. For example, the source of inspiration could be... something as unexpected as a cucumber! And that's where the most interesting part begins — interpretation. For a leather manufacturer, it might mean a texture reminiscent of a cucumber's surface; for a fabric producer, it could be the color; a design studio might create a print where tiny cucumbers replace polka dots. Everyone adapts the trend in their own way».* The core theme of the described season is mimicry — adapting to current realities — along with primal instincts. Design will largely reflect the idea of protection: ritual protection, emotional protection, protection from climate change, geopolitical instability, and the world in general. Swedish designer Johnny Johansson of Acne Studios put it perfectly: *«Creativity is the only way to survive in difficult times».* Stanislav Zimin reminded the

audience of the important task facing creative individuals: «You must give people a sense of celebration, freedom, and creativity. And this tendency will continue because the period we call the time of transformation and instability will last for a long time. We are only at the beginning of this journey. It is only after 2040 that the clearer contours of the 21st century will start to emerge: what fashion will look like, what family relationship models will be, what transportation and lifestyle will become in general. Right now, we are in the phase of shaping the future».



Trend: «Tone-on-Tone Grey»

«This is particularly relevant this season. Grey in itself is neutral — elegant, noble, yet it doesn't provoke any strong emotional reaction. That is exactly where its power lies. However, looking ahead — especially closer to 2027 — perceptions will begin to shift. We are already seeing how grey shades are being explored in various combinations: suits with trousers and jackets, dresses, layered outfits. The nuances matter: the play of buttons, zippers, double edges, and structural details. And moving into the 2027–2028 season, this emphasis will only grow stronger».





Trend: «Animalism»

«This theme touches on our primal instincts, drawing inspiration from the vibrant colors of nature and exploring the rich palette of the animal world. First and foremost, reptilian leather naturally stands out. At specialized exhibitions, there are dedicated sections for leather materials, and the level of innovation is truly impressive. Today, we are seeing «leather» that is actually not leather at all: it is made from cactus, reed, and other plant-based materials, yet it perfectly imitates natural animalistic textures».



This is exactly what mimicry is about — imitating natural prints and structures. Crocodile, snake, leopard, and various variations on these themes will be presented very widely. At the same time, inspiration can be drawn from the most diverse segments — from haute couture collections to mass-market. I would like to note that in our region, animalistic prints have traditionally been very popular.

Trend: Animalism (continued) Any interpretations of fur and feathers are trending. The animal world is not limited to large-scale forms — for example, insects can also serve as inspiration: dragonfly wings could become an excellent source for prints. We will see not always straightforward animal prints, but

abstractions that merely imitate them. Feathers, especially from nocturnal birds, will be actively used in decor and trimmings, creating expressive and unconventional solutions.



Animalistic motifs are strongly present in accessories as well. Another direction is illustrations: in the mass-market segment, we will see a lot of appliqués featuring animals, hand-drawn-style graphic images, and elements in knitwear. These could be cat eyes, a tiger's head, birds, and so on. However, it's important to remember appropriateness: if you need, for example, a business look, it doesn't mean you should literally place a bright animalistic element on a blazer and consider yourself «on trend».





Trend: «The Image of a Strong Woman»

«This is also a macro-trend: the 21st century is increasingly referred to as the era of «yin» energy and feminine power. Women are feeling more confident in this world, navigating its



changes with greater ease; they are gaining strength and moving through it fluidly, like a fish in water. If previously the dominant model was masculine — business, finance, structure — now the system is transforming, and men will also have to adapt to these changes».

Trend: «Rebellion»

«In this season, office wear takes on a rebellious edge. Bold accessories, cut-outs, and unbuttoned or undone elements introduce an element of surprise, emphasizing a more provocative approach to business attire. As Generation Z challenges traditional work structures and the monotonous 9-to-5 routine, they bring unexpected details into their style: daring combinations of classic office clothing with grunge elements, blazers paired with oversized hoodies, classic trousers worn with cropped tops — self-expression in the workplace influenced by sportswear aesthetics. This generation fundamentally sees the world differently. They rethink established norms and refuse to accept them as given. I know young professionals who work in government institutions and organizations with strict dress codes, yet those codes feel alien to them. Still, they find ways to transform them: adding personal details, changing the presentation, injecting something of their own — so that familiar, rather conservative office clothing gains a new character. All of this is shaping a new perspective on business style: freer, more flexible, and deeply individual».



Trend: «(Life)Joy»

«This theme seeks to reject a spirit of decline and approach the numerous challenges we will face in the future with optimism», - states the CAF expert. British-Nigerian designer Yinka Ilori has created a vibrant clothing collection for the American brand The North Face. «The playful prints in this collection invite us to embrace any weather: to smile in the face of the storm, hug the cold, and celebrate the rain», - say representatives of The North Face. This is a precise characterization of what the upcoming season will embody.



Malhia Kent (France)

Trend: «Burnt Edges»

«Motifs or prints that look as if they've been scorched by ash, blurred contours — that's exactly what will be highly relevant. Denim fabric infused with the spirit of punk rock showcases deliberately distorted surfaces with effects of stains, scorching, and abrasions.»

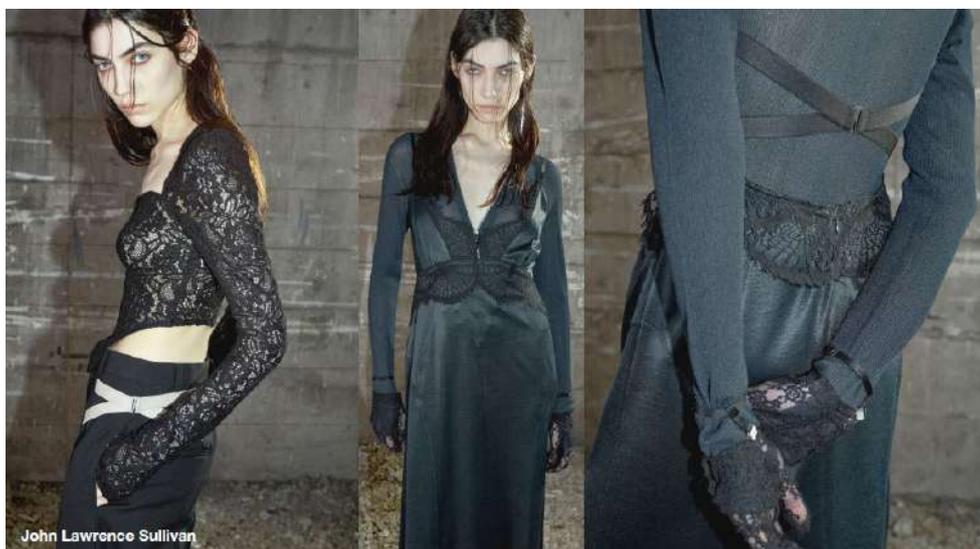


Trend: «Burnt Edges» (continued) Here, fire appears in a much more literal sense, with surfaces looking as though they have directly come into contact with flames. Blue denim fabric is covered in brown and black stains that imitate burn marks, right down to perforations. The finish cracks and peels away, revealing the underlying material. Even the accessories are executed in a vintage style, emphasizing the punk aesthetic down to the smallest details. In textiles, patterns seem to emerge from ash — motifs drawn as if with charcoal, abstract forms blending stains and smoky swirls, or designs with blurred outlines edged in charcoal. Flame and smoke effects create gradient patterns that dance between shadow and light.



Trend: «Gothic Fantasies»

«This is a 2026 trend — it will emerge in the summer and continue through to the winter season of 2027, after which it will gradually fade away. However, we still have time to work with it».



*It is important to understand that this trend largely comes to us from the West. Therefore, when listening to European or American trend analysts, it's worth keeping in mind that they operate within their own context and do not take into account the specifics of other regions. Their agenda, mood, and visual language are directly shaped by what is happening in their politics, society, and culture. If dark, tense imagery dominates their visuals, it reflects their current environment. That is why such information should always be filtered and assessed in terms of how organically it fits our audience. At the same time, you may have noticed how many films in recent years have embraced a gothic aesthetic, such as *Frankenstein*, directed by Guillermo del Toro, *Dracula* by Luc Besson, and *Nosferatu* by Robert Eggers. All of this shapes a visual background that eventually translates into fashion. Beauty trends include the following: Black nail — women wearing black nail polish convey a bold, mesmerizing energy; Siren eyes — a striking eye makeup look created using dark eyeliner and smoky black and brown eyeshadows; BDK Rouge Smoking — a fragrance with notes of cherry, pink pepper, and amber with a woody undertone, associated with a darker feminine energy.*



«Central Asia» Trend

«We are located in Central Asia, and it is especially interesting that this season Central Asian — and more broadly Asian — motifs are becoming a key source of inspiration. Designers return to them



regularly, but now this interest is growing stronger.

Central Asia will play an important role in the 21st century: the region is gradually opening up, and more and more talented designers from different countries are making their mark on the international stage», - said Stanislav Zimin.

The expert cited a statement by renowned Kazakh designer Aika Alemi:

«It would not be an exaggeration to call Central Asia — the region of the five «stans»: Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan — a «blind spot» in fashion. Yet this region holds enormous potential for the industry».

For example, the eponymous project by artist Asem Sapargali is a vivid illustration of how traditions can be reinterpreted through a contemporary visual language — one of the successful examples of neo-ethnic fashion gaining momentum in Kazakhstan. The designer's debut runway collection was inspired by the painting *The Parable of the Blind* by Pieter Bruegel the Elder.

«Also noteworthy is the brand from Uzbekistan by designer Nigora Hashimova, whose collection subtly incorporates traditional motifs — like a delicate ribbon outlining the edges of jackets and cropped vests, reminiscent of painted robes known as chapan. The brand also focuses on ikat jackets created using traditional handcraft techniques».



«Azukar Moreno, a brand by Uzbek designer Kamola Rustamova, combines authentic craftsmanship with elements of Spanish costume. For example, ikat fabrics are reinterpreted into flamenco-style dresses, or jackets feature embroidery and statement sleeves».

«Vintage Carpet» Trend

«I see that we are moving toward extremes: a combination of basic, calming, familiar pieces and things that can truly spark the imagination», - said Judd Crane, Executive Buying Director at Selfridges. Stanislav Zimin cited this quote as an example and noted that, as a result of natural fatigue with minimalism, maximalism is suddenly gaining a sense of freshness and novelty: *«A new perspective on patterned carpets is a step in this direction. These are not the carpets of regional hotel chains — they are elegant and refined, evoking a clear sense of nostalgia and referencing the archives of applied design. They draw inspiration from tapestries, thorn motifs in the Art Nouveau style, or Victorian-era furniture».*



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