

TRENDS ON THE STREET

The high street is at the heart of any urban centre – obviously, mega-cities have more while smaller centres may have only a few – but these are places where we can meet, look at what others are wearing, show off our own style, be inspired and coexist together.

Q: Is the street the place where fashion trends start? If so, why did the street become so important?

The street has always been an important arena for fashion, as well as other trends. New generations bring new disruptive ideas and trends into this scene, inspired by cultural or social drivers, challenging the traditional and established. Today we have a situation where the new hipster authentics – often influenced by the art world – have more in common with worldwide cultural phenomena than local or regional preferences.



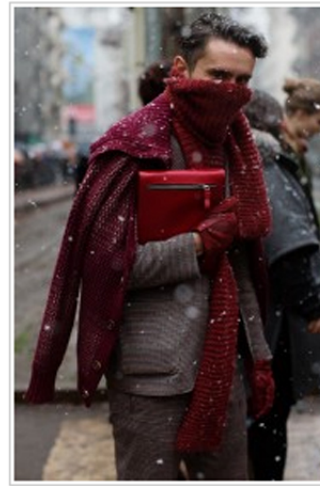
The ease of media and information flow over the Internet has added exciting, new dimensions to fashion trends and their dissemination, but in terms of the distribution and occurrence of fashion trends it is still images from urban streets that dominate and grab our attention. Possibly the best example is the [NY Times](#) photographer [Bill Cunningham](#) who says: “*The best fashion show is definitely on the street. Always has been always will be.*” At the age of 84 years he still shoots the coolest things and people in New York City – perhaps he even contributes to setting the trends.

Bill Cunningham New York Trailer



Q: Are current fashion trends validated on the street? For example: The case of the Kenzo pullover.

The French designer Coco Chanel said: *“Fashion passes – style remains”*. I suppose a fashion trend can be validated in a number of ways, most often the criterion is of perceived economic value. In a strange way, validation works on different levels, simply because on the high street we often see the copycat version of the original. This is where working with trends gets exciting, as the understanding of today’s complexity concerning matter and reason requires a deeper understanding of what validation really is. A significant value driver in our world of social media and new smart technologies is that people want the real thing – not just another cheap copy. I still like Ted Schulman’s [Sartorialist](#), which explores the emotion and individuality behind fashion and people’s unique sense of style.

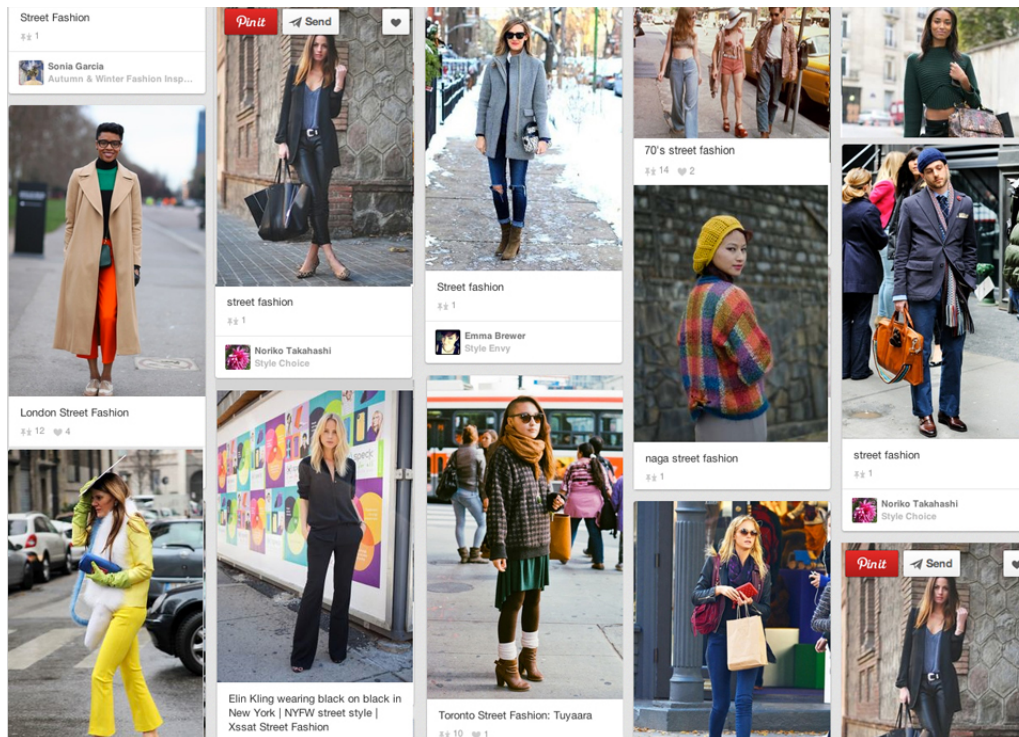


His work is a clear evidence that fashion trends don't just happen among younger people but increasingly among a diverse group, including seniors, who are cool and inspiring simply because they have their own style rather than following short-lived fashion fads. I guess that it is very much about seeing things for yourself rather than just copying others. But the question is: 'what is great style' and who is able to create a look that survives 'impulse fashion'. One of my favourites is [Sergei Sviatchenko](#), an artist who creates great looks, photographing these on his teenage kids. His website [Close up and Private](#) is very inspiring.



Q: Which phases are essential to the cycle of trends – is it catwalk or street first?

Nothing beats new fashion trends spotted firsthand on the street. However, as the digital space and Internet shopping grow, less attention is given to urban space in our city. Nonetheless, I foresee a bright future for street fashion with a local flavour and community realm in our cities; as traffic is reduced due to changing shopping patterns, people will hack these spaces – using inner city buildings to provide liveable spaces within walking or biking distance of their work/social centres, and lively, diversified arenas for showing off and communicating what to wear will be spotted here. I believe that we will see the return of the Local Village as counter reaction to the Global Village.



Q: Style-Eyes app recently launched in the UK. How can these kinds of technology help the street style phenomenon?

We see how a third generation of smart phones and apps are changing our lives in many ways, by simplifying complicated or boring tasks. I think that this particular app is a great way to take notes of ideas and must-have items and it works well with Pinterest, where you can pin your favourite items and then just look at them a second time before you buy or use the ideas for your own creations.



Personally, I love an app called Moves, that monitors my daily walks and counts my steps, it helps me reflect on how important it is to use my body, for quality of life and staying alert. Maybe we will see apps that combine walking and cycling routes, your favourite hang-outs, art, music and street fashion – intuitive ‘mini me’ devices that know your own personal style and lifestyle and become a second you to help navigate complexity.

INTERVIEW

Revista Mujer, Chile – Anne Lise Kjaer, January 2013

IMAGES

- 1. Bill Cunningham NYT >>**
- 2. The Best of Sartorialist 2013 >>**
- 3. Bill Cunningham Video >>**
- 4. The Sartorialist screenshot >>**
- 5. Close up and Private magazine >>**
- 6. Street Fashion Pinterest screenshot**
- 7. Smokey Cafe Morocco >>**

