

End of century unveils a new renaissance

The Turn of the Century."

How many times have you heard that phrase and perhaps imagined 15th-century medieval monks de-

voutly chanting in a musty cloistered abbey, or had blurry visions of waltzing high-collared, velvet-frocked characters out of 18th-century works of Lord Byron.

Maybe you fantasized about 17th-century Renaissance grandeur and the Baroque opulence during the reign King Louis XV. Whatever your musings, it's hard to believe we're now approaching

the turn to the 21st century.

This season's runway collections of the world's most-celebrated American and European fashion designers evoke the lives of our favorite heroes and

heroines found in centuries past.

Fashion protagonists have taken us back through the centuries when romance was found in Sherwood Forest, Renaissance castles and Lord

Tennyson poetry.

"At Neilman Marcus, we're looking at contrasting options," reports Marilyn Connor from the Troy store at The Somerset Collection.

She points to a very dramatic, very modern, minimalist look as shown this season by Giorgio Armani contrasting with the romantic-embellished "favorite heroine" costume dressing approach.

Let's take a look ahead at fall's runway collections.

Medieval

The Gothic silhouettes of monks, priests, Robin Hood and King Arthur inspired Geoffrey Beene's black taffeta monk's robes, the velvet hooded cloaks of Isaac Mizrahi and the serious oversized pure-white tunic by Bill Blass. Ac-

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Russian rendezvous: Designer Bill Blass creates the drama of the Russian revolution with an ankle-sweeping, paisley-print great coat. Complete with tall Cossack hat, fur muffler and over-the-knee leather military boot. At Saks Fifth Avenue, The Somerset Collection, Troy.

Cardigan, \$235
Pullover, \$150
Skirt, \$125

RODIER

The Somerset Collection
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