

MEHTAP ELAIDI

For their Fall 2021 collection Creative Director Mehtap Elaidi and her team are examining the polarizing parts in one's character and their lifestyles and are bringing this idea of duality into their clothes, styling and short fashion film. The collection, named #inandoutofthecocoon, is an exploration of the renewed meaning of one's physical and metaphoric homes and the importance of feeling safe in (and out of) their cocoon after a force majeure changed everyone's lives in 2020. An excerpt from the brand's FW21 lookbook reads like a manifesto of the collection and perfectly explains this theme further:

“We crave safety, yet we can't help but tame our wild side looking to escape into the unknown where we can get away from the banality and reality of our everyday lives. We love living the slow life, but we miss traveling, we miss partying, and sometimes even the chaos. Looking inward and slowing down has ironically brought us closer to the wolves in us all. We seek the wild now, but we cannot shed the cocoon. This collection is our way of materializing this dichotomy and providing both a cozy feeling of safety and a chance to take on one's wild side on a ride when the need arises.”

The FW21 collection is hence a combination of comfy classics and unapologetic standouts. To address people's cravings both to dress up and to also stay comfortable (after a year in sweats) the design team put extra effort into making clothes that feel stylish yet are comfortable by using elastic bands and stretchy fabrics, opting for boxy silhouettes, and eliminating zippers and button closures. Experimental cuts and expert tailoring are seen through-out the collection with details like embroidered abstract cut outs, draping and rushing, hand-knits, and printed quilts. The brand also introduces for the first-time knitwear made out of recycled cashmere blend and a ME monogram leather belt.

The design team uses bold and colorful abstract prints that are now synonymous with the brand on certified organic cottons, Tencels, and dead-stock fabrics. The prints' inspirations include the metal engravings on the doors of an old building in Istanbul that holds the Mehtap Elaidi headquarters and some acorns that the Creative Director encountered on her daily forest walks during quarantine. The brand's classics white and black cotton are also used along with khaki and beiges to create the perfect harmony with the lively prints.

Mehtap Elaidi once again teamed up with ÇATOM, an organization that provides women in southeast Turkey with work opportunities so they can earn their own wages and can

become financially independent to produce their three-dimensional hand-knit acorns that bring an element of nature and the outside to the collection.

The idea of duality is carried onto the styling of the collection and into the fashion film where one can see two different models with two different looks and aesthetics. The styling is a combination of very simple looks with layered or more statement looks to represent the dichotomy Mehtap Elaidi bases their story on; one's wild side vs one's tame side, cocoon (home) vs. the outside (city and the nature). This is further strengthened by the use of blurry photos: a representation of how a person can inhabit two different characters in themselves and how the outlines of one's character is a blurry one.