

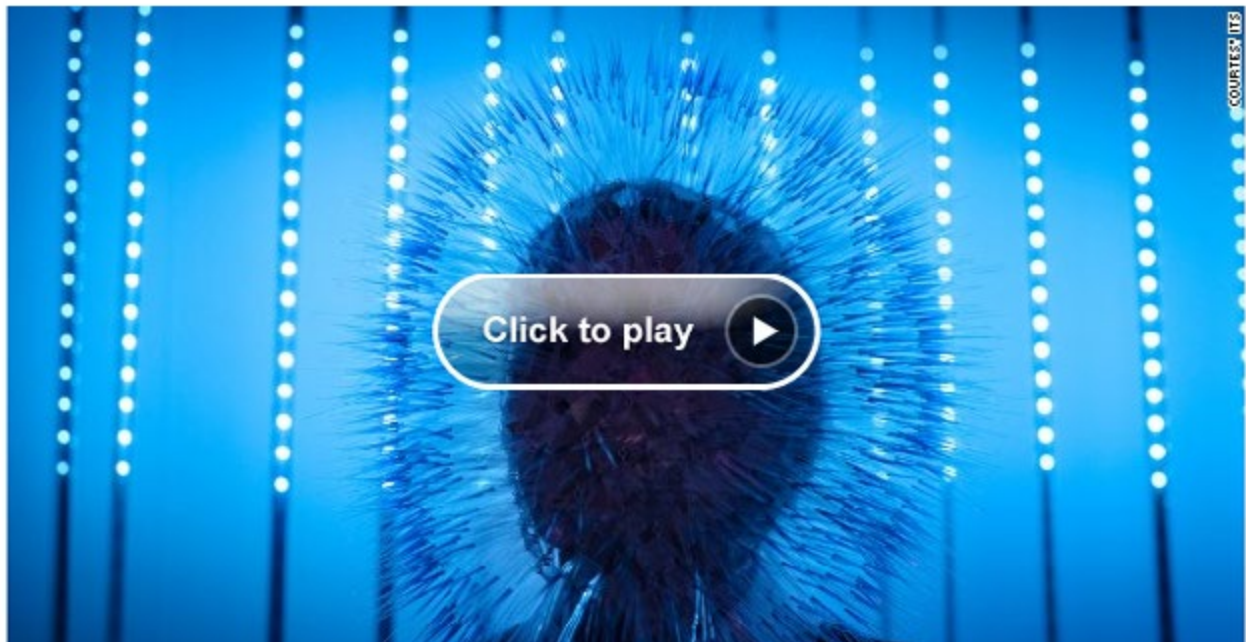
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CNN Style

STYLE

Welcome to Trieste, the tiny Italian city that shapes the world's wardrobe

By **George Webster**, CNN

July 24, 2014 -- Updated 0210 GMT (1010 HKT)



COURTESY ITS

Who will be the next Prada, Versace or McQueen?

STORY HIGHLIGHTS

- Trieste plays host to the International Talent Support contest
- The awards celebrate the most promising new talent in fashion design
- So, which of these young pretenders will be the next big thing?

Trieste, Italy (CNN) -- Nudging the border with Slovenia in Italy's far north-east, the mysteriously underrated city of Trieste is largely known for its stately, Habsburg-era architecture, exquisite coffee, and traditional regattas.

But for a few days every year in July, it's also one of the most important places on the planet to discover the next best thing in the world of fashion design.

Since launching in 2002, the International Talent Support (ITS) contest has invited students from 70 countries -- spanning a network of nearly 1000 schools and universities -- to compete for a breadth of awards, celebrating not just clothes, but jewelry, accessories and, for the first time this year, art.

In doing so, it's become a ganglion for industry honchos who, if they're not otherwise adjudicating the awards, can be found trawling the vast exhibition hall for indications of the next Prada, Versace or McQueen.

"This is all about young creativity," says ITS director Barbara Franchin. "They're the future, so of course we must offer them friendship and support."

Being a fashion event, no one is ever more than a few feet away from a poised camera-phone, and so the highlights are a dish best served on social media...

 View as slideshow

 Storify

This year's theme was "Lucid Dreams" -- the coveted state of being both in a dream and knowing that you're in one. For those that weren't entirely sure, there were some helpful signs dotted around the exhibition space.



Haven't you ever had a dream about a pink, cat-like creature with a transparent butterfly disco belly? You haven't lived! One of the great things about this year's ITS was its whimsical humor and flights of fancy. As Renzo Rosso, founder of Diesel and CEO of OTB International told me, "The best creativity comes from crazy dreams."



If the psychedelic artworks weren't enough to lull you into a dream-like state, then technology could assist. A machine resembling the [Oculus Rift](#) took visitors on a fully immersive customized virtual reality tour, starting from the exhibition hall and ending up free-falling into a lake suspended in mid-air. I was tripping out, but not as much as multi-platinum selling musician Mika, pictured below, who couldn't even tell if his own shoes were real by the end of it.



(Trieste, 12.07.2014) #Mika #Yasmine #ITScontest #Trieste #Italy #mikafans #swatch

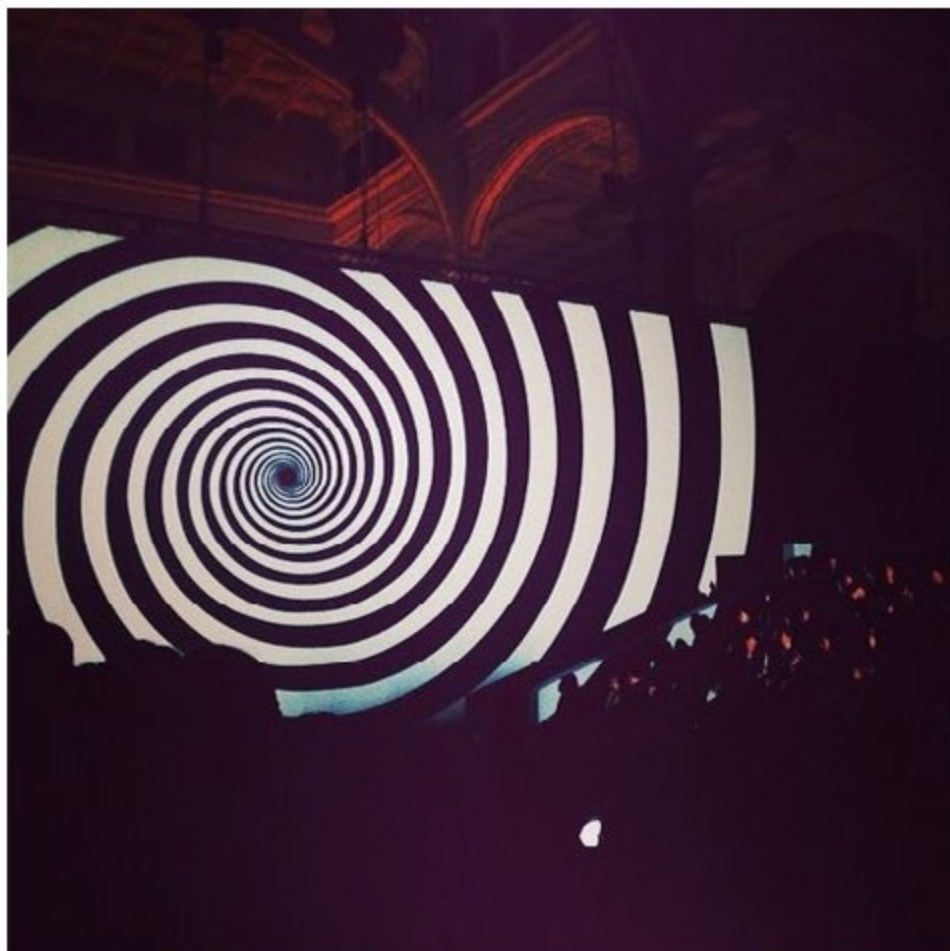
 MY_MAGNETIC_HEART · IL Y A 3 JOURS

Medical fashion is sooo hawt right now. This stethoscope-themed ensemble by Chinese designer

Rui Bao is, she says, an exploration of synesthesia -- a condition where stimulation from one sense, such as smell, can cause a reaction in another, such as sight. All I can say is that doctors are definitely in right now.



With the fashion show about to start, the entire audience was collectively hypnotized. After that, everything's a bit of a blur. Thankfully, enough of us were clutching camera phones at the time to capture the experience.



Let's start. ITS 2014 [#itscontest](#) [#luciddreams](#) [#fashionshow](#) [#triestesocial](#)

 [ALICEPAVIOTTI](#) · IL Y A 3 JOURS

If Anita Hirelekaar's collection seems a little warm for this time of year, keep in mind that she is from Iceland. Winner of the €5,000 Fashion Special Prize -- allocated to the most creative designs -- Hirelekaar's collection is indeed a very creative blend of traditional embroidery techniques applied in an expressive, painterly style.



Beatrice Fiorentino

@beaflorentino

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#ilpiccolofamoda #itscontest ANITA HIRLEKAAR Fashion Special Prize @il_piccolo @boria_a

11:12 PM - 12 Jul 2014

3 RETWEETS 1 FAVORITE



"This is a collection for those who have a sense of humour as well as for those who respect their hard-working fathers," explains Japanese designer Yasuto Kimura. The 27-year-old says that his aim was to make the traditional businessman suit look cool and, well, you can't really go wrong with ninja masks can you?



Yasuto Kimura fashion show [#ITScontest](#) [#itsfashion](#) [#itsplatform](#) [#trieste](#)

 [CATERINADIIRGI](#) · IL Y A 3 JOURS

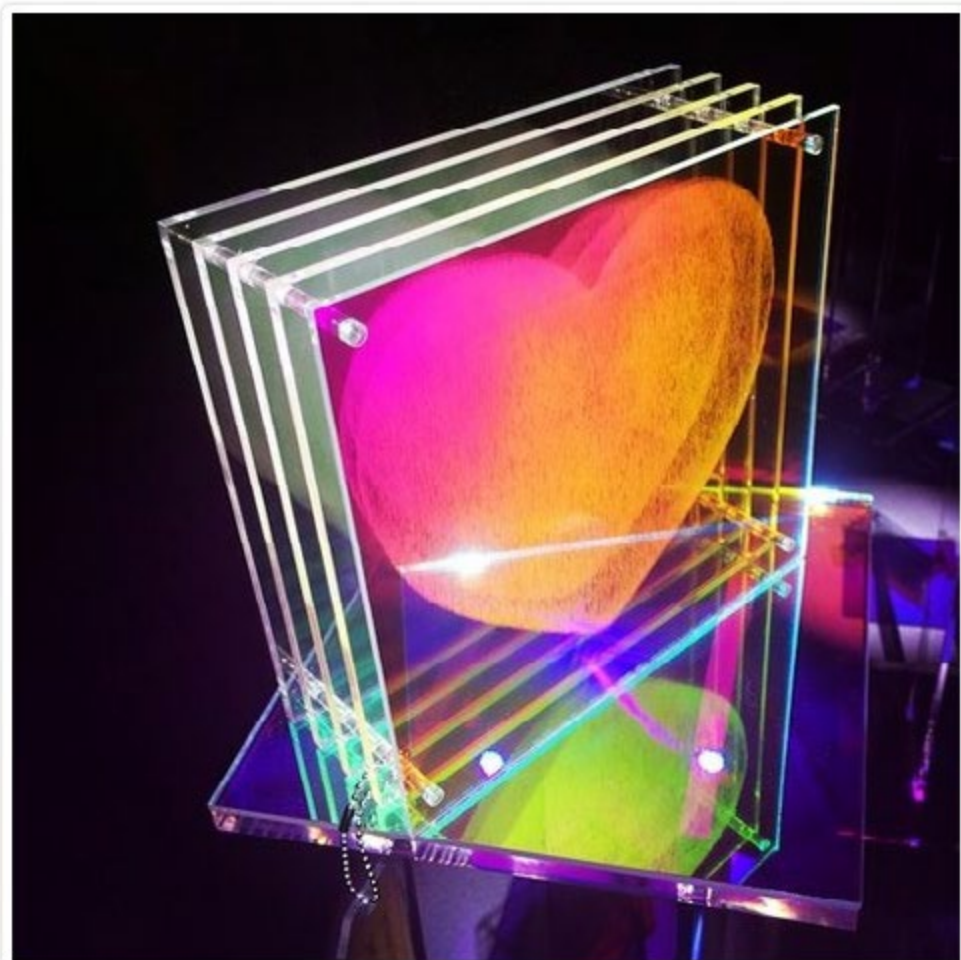
That there is Zoe Waters on the right, just after she'd been handed a heart-shaped trophy and a cheque for €25,000 -- the biggest cash prize of the night. She's taking it in her stride, but then again her collection is based around the leather biker jacket, so she has a duty to play it cool.



Congrats [#zoewaters](#) on winning the major [@diesel](#) award [@itsplatform](#)
[#itscontest](#) [#itsplatform](#) [#diesel](#)

 [LAPETITEANGLAISE](#) · IL Y A 21 HEURES

And this is what the award looks like close-up. Just FYI.



#itscontest #itsplatform prize

 PETERJEVNIKAR · IL Y A 3 JOURS

Colombian-born Daniel Ramos Obregón didn't win any prizes for his selection of bleached-white sculpted body-parts, for consideration in the accessories category. But, for what it's worth, I think he should have done. As far as I'm aware it was the only project at ITS inspired by the work of a living Australian philosopher ([Roman Krznaric](#)) - specifically the concept of [outrospection](#). Also, look at those gold zips!



YKK Project for @itsplatform #itscontest

 DANIELRAMOSO · IL Y A 3 JOURS

Maiko Takeda asked himself the question: "What would it feel like to wear a cloud?" This was his answer, and the judges thought it was a good one, awarding him the Vogue Talents prize.



Yolanda Lezana

@mylezana

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Maiko Takeda wins Vogue Talents Award for accessories offered by Vogue Talents [@ITSplatform](#) [#ITSContest](#) [#fashion](#)

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1 RETWEET



2014 is the first year that artworks have been taken into consideration. Homegrown Italian artist Virginia Burlina took the crown with this medley of color and shadow.



Beatrice Fiorentino
@bea-fiorentino

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[#ilpiccolofamoda](#) [#artworks](#) La goriziana Virginia Burlina domani su [@il_piccolo](#) intervistata da [@boria_a](#) [@abollis](#)

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4 RETWEETS 2 FAVORITES



Just outside the exhibition hall, sailboats rocked ever so gently in the clear night air. Until it started pouring down a few hours later.