



Pitti Uomo Show Report 14-17 June 2016

This edition of Pitti Uomo was especially interesting as it followed a record-breaking winter edition in January 2016, itself boosted by the fact that key Japanese and US buyers had no intention to travel to Paris following the terrorist attacks in 2015. The summer is always a third lighter in attendance at Pitti Uomo.

Pitti Uomo remains the undisputed international menswear show in Florence covering all of the major trends for the season and attracting over 20,000 buyers from around the world in summer (30,000 in winter). This was the 90th edition of Pitti Uomo and, as in the past few years, competition to get space at the show in all areas has never been higher. The theme of this year's show was Numbers.

Now following on immediately after London Collection Men's, Pitti Uomo remains the main international meeting place for the menswear industry. It is a place to see the trends and to try to answer the questions which abound about the state of the international menswear industry: Will the buyers travel? Will the buyers buy? What are the major trends to look out for?

The June 2016 Pitti Uomo saw in excess of 2,000 brands and a record number of 97 of these were British, 17 of which were supported with grants from UK Trade & Investment. The group was promoted by UKFT under its Brits In Florence (#BritsInFlorence) campaign and was located across most of the sections of the show.

In the central pavilion, in Salone M (classic menswear and footwear) were Albert Thurston, Fox Umbrellas, Chrysalis, Edward Green, Grenfell, Corgi, Barker and Pringle. In the newly restyled Make area (quality manufacture and craft) were Mark Giusti, Casablanca 1942, Otis Batterbee and St Piece. The main part of the central pavilion included Begg of Scotland, Pantherella, Richard James Mayfair, Pringle, Derek Rose and Alan Paine who were joined by Tateossian. Also in the central pavilion was an impressive number of UK companies in the increasingly popular Pop Up shop spaces, including Marcus De, Jack Moran, Tom Smarte, James Lock, Nosa, London Sock Company, Alice Made This and many others.

Whilst the UK exhibitor numbers were high, 10 companies from the UK were unable to get space. This is a recurring nightmare for UKFT and the companies concerned and those new companies which were successful in securing space often found out at the very last minute, less than two weeks before the show. The pressure on space has also led the organisers to be much more selective on new collections, with a far higher bar applied to companies looking to join the show for the first time, or missing a season. Pitti regards itself as a trend show, therefore it aims to represent all the key trends but not necessarily all the brands. Where it has a similar product already in the show, more often than not, the

new applicant's chances are extremely limited! UKFT helps companies with this difficult process. The organisers worked especially hard to accept and find space for new designer collections.

After a slow start on Tuesday, the show was busy throughout the second two days before becoming quiet again on the last day. From the organisers' figures and the experience of UK exhibitors, the Japanese were very present and active. The US was less so, as had been anticipated in the run up to the Presidential elections. With the exception of one or two companies, the UK exhibitors reported good buyer traffic.

Foreign attendance was boosted by very positive performances from United Kingdom (+18%), China (+14%), Germany (+5%) and Belgium (+7%); Japan (+3.5%) and the United States (+3%) also performed very well; Russia (+8%) made a comforting recovery after a few difficult seasons, there was a "resounding" increase for Eastern Europe as a whole and the Baltic States, as well as excellent results for Portugal, Denmark, Mexico, Australia, South Africa, Singapore, Malaysia and Taiwan. There was, however, a significant dip in the figures for France, probably due to the current wave of strikes, the cancellation of numerous flights to Florence and the UEFA Euro 2016.

Whilst the official figures show that there was an increase in Italian visitors, the perception from exhibitors was that there were fewer Italians and they spent less time at the show. Germany once again led the top 20 foreign markets with 997 buyers followed by Japan (847), Spain (660), United Kingdom (632), China (505), Holland (450), France (388), Turkey (374), Switzerland (296), Belgium (293), United States (285), South Korea (230), Russia (199), Austria (179), Portugal (164), Denmark (134), Sweden (130), Greece (121), Romania (76) and Norway (76).

There was much talk about the risks to business as a result of a potential Brexit but most of the exhibitors and buyers said they hoped and believed that the UK would remain in the single market. Buyers were looking for answers but there was no sign of any reluctance to work with the UK.

"Pitti Uomo celebrated its 90th edition in the best possible way" says Raffaello Napoleone, Pitti Immagine's CEO, "it was a sizzling event with lots of new ideas bubbling among the stands and many new menswear projects were launched onto the international scene from the Fortezza da Basso".

Paul Alger, Director of International Business Development at UKFT commented: *"This has been a surprisingly positive Pitti Uomo. We have seen most of our major internationals here, including Japan which is a major market for so many and many have said they will also be returning to Paris's men's fashion week. The feedback from our exhibitors has been generally positive with the majority reporting a positive summer show. The Italian market is slow but this is more than compensated for by the interest we are getting from Asia".*

Companies wishing to show in January 2017 are advised to apply early by emailing ct.uomo@pittiimmagine.com copying in (cc) to paul.alger@ukft.org. Those considering applying for January are strongly advised to apply for the June edition for which there is very slightly less pressure on space.