

Artisanship walks to the front of the fashion stage wearing Sabah— hand in hand with durability

For this handcrafted shoe brand, the devil is in the details.

Multiculturalism gushes through the veins of New York city, and a fashion trade show is a microcosmos of that very effect. A cluster of niches under one roof in the West Village wove an elaborate tapestry of many wearables to style and stun in—but this trade show at Ideal Glass Studios in particular hailed an unsung hero: shoes.

Sabah, a footwear label founded by Mickey Ashmore and managed alongside his partner Griffin Olenksy, glistens as an oasis of longevity and craftsmanship in a desert of ‘use and throw away’ culture. However, its distinction from the rest of the shoe landscape doesn’t end there.

The inception of the footwear line was Mickey’s personal experience wearing a pair of traditional Turkish shoes—a look that garnered attention along with appreciation. Owing to the novelty of the shoe style especially in the context of the United States where walking is a popular mode of transport, Mickey had the shoe remade with personalised fabric and components. The end result was a sui generis, sturdy shoe design radiating the rich history of Turkish shoemaking with a whisper of modernism.

The collection now showing at the WOMAN exhibit is a testament to that journey. Sabah presented rows of shoes in a prismatic, yet understated splendour. Made from top notch materials

like full grain, water buffalo and hair on leather as well as suede, every shoe is hand stitched and drum dyed— seeing as quality trumps all else for both Mickey and Griffin. In addition to being sustainably produced, the shoes are also engineered to be durable owing to its replaceable outsoles and a one-thread stitching along the welt.

Apart from the nuances of refined artistry treading along every pair of shoes made by Sabah, a feature heavily contributing to its charm and authenticity is the brand's old school appeal. In an age characterised by a relentless race to buy and produce newer things, a brand opting for a narrative that tells you 'old is good' truly makes it stand apart from the crowd. To accept and admire wearables with a history, to appreciate the feeling of breaking in a pair of shoes instead of fearing the obsolete— is what makes this collection by Sabah a fulfilling one.