# Emilia Wickstead draws inspiration from Hitchcock at London Fashion Week



At London Fashion Week, designer Emilia Wickstead showcased her latest autumn/winter collection, drawing significant inspiration from Alfred Hitchcock’s iconic film, *The Birds* (1963). The designer, originally from New Zealand, presented her collection at the Saatchi Gallery, which set a dramatic backdrop for the runway adorned with the film's staccato string soundtrack. Wickstead's aesthetic merged elements from the film—including its visionary costume designer Edith Head and actress Tippi Hedren, who starred in the film—resulting in a striking showcase of colour-blocking and refined craftsmanship.

Hitchcock, a prominent figure in British cinema, is known for his psychological thrillers and innovative filmmaking techniques. *The Birds*, inspired by Daphne du Maurier’s story, captures a small Californian town being besieged by wild birds, escalating into harrowing attacks on the residents. Wickstead reflected on Head's mastery of character-driven costume design, stating, “You can have anything you want in life if you dress for it,” a quote attributed to Head herself. In speaking to British Vogue about her creative process, Wickstead emphasised her deep dive into inspiration: “I always dive really deep into the inspiration… when you become obsessed that’s when you get the best out of the details.”

The designs paraded down the runway showcased a plethora of shapes and textures, including utilitarian cuts, Sixties shift dresses, and mod-style skirts. Pillbox hats combined with cargo boots presented a juxtaposition of traditional and contemporary fashion trends. The palette was a soft array of neutrals like taupe, pale pinks, and mint, alongside striking elements of old-Hollywood glamour in the evening wear pieces, which featured floor-length shawls and scooped necklines.

Meanwhile, at Roksanda's show, the late artist Phyllida Barlow was highlighted as a source of inspiration, resulting in bold ballgowns constructed from bright felt. Barlow, recognised for her avant-garde artistry, influenced Roksanda Ilinčić’s designs, which demonstrated a topsy-turvy drama where fabrics were utilised in unexpected ways, such as raffia placed upside down. “I love the way she created worlds out of discarded material,” said Ilinčić, who designed the collection using remnants from previous works.

Both shows exemplified the vibrancy of artistic expression, but each designer acknowledged the challenges facing London Fashion Week. Wickstead noted, "The consensus is that designers are leaving London, and that fewer from the international industry are coming,” while Ilinčić added, “It’s tough out there… but we have to keep going,” highlighting the necessity of community support in such a competitive environment.

Despite the difficulties perceived in the industry, there was a sense of resilience among the designers, pointing to London's longstanding reputation as a hub of creative energy in fashion.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://graziamagazine.com/articles/emilia-wickstead-spring-summer-22/> - This article discusses Emilia Wickstead's previous collections and her inspiration from cinematic references, though it does not specifically mention *The Birds*. It highlights her ability to blend old-world and modern elements in her designs.
2. <https://whitewall.art/fashion/best-of-london-fashion-week-tender-confessions/> - This article provides an overview of London Fashion Week, mentioning Emilia Wickstead's autumn/winter collection, though it does not detail her inspiration from *The Birds*. It highlights the vibrancy of her designs and the challenges faced by designers in London.
3. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Birds> - This Wikipedia page provides detailed information about Alfred Hitchcock's film *The Birds*, including its plot and the involvement of Edith Head and Tippi Hedren. It supports the claim about the film's influence on Wickstead's collection.
4. <https://www.britishvogue.co.uk/fashion/designers/emilia-wickstead> - This British Vogue page features articles about Emilia Wickstead, including her design process and inspirations. While it does not specifically mention *The Birds*, it supports Wickstead's approach to deep diving into inspirations for her collections.
5. <https://www.phyllidabarlow.com/> - This website is dedicated to the late artist Phyllida Barlow, highlighting her avant-garde artistry and use of discarded materials. It supports the claim about her influence on Roksanda's designs.
6. <https://www.roksanda.com/> - Roksanda's official website showcases her designs and inspirations, including her use of bold and unconventional materials. It supports the claim about her collection being influenced by Phyllida Barlow's artistic style.
7. <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/fashion/emilia-wickstead-hollywood-sixties-new-zealand-daphne-du-maurier-b2703231.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
8. <https://www.theguardian.com/fashion/2025/feb/23/roksanda-channels-sculptor-phyllida-barlow-at-london-fashion-week-show> - Please view link - unable to able to access data