



LOVE IT

Bling it on

Balmain alumna Roberta Einer is reinventing eveningwear



From top: Cotton dress, £1,000, and silk-mix dress, £2,200, both Roberta Einer



Estonia-born, London-based designer Roberta Einer (pictured, left), 23, starts her creative process by watching US teen films: *Bring It On*, *Clueless* or *Mean Girls*. 'They were the basis for when I was working on the graphics for SS16. I'd take these almost trashy starting points and pull out imagery to recreate something that looks and feels expensive and beautiful.'

Einer's designs are more pro-woman sartorial love letters than the stuff of 'burn books'; her mermaid dress spells out the motto, *Wild Girls Never Cry*, in sequins. 'There should be more of a positive vibe in fashion,' she says. 'Beautiful clothes should make you feel happy.'

Einer's words may suggest she's raided Cher Horowitz's closet of teen dream dresses and dipped them in glittery trinkets. But in truth, her work is more considered with some serious fashion chops powering it; her silk dresses are produced in the same factories as Christopher Kane and her former employer, Balmain. Einer started her career there as an Embroidery Assistant before gaining a degree in Fashion Design from Westminster University last summer.

The experience turned her until-then minimal aesthetic on its head: 'Olivier [Rousteing] said, "It is clothes - just have fun." He inspired me to experiment with embellishment.'

Direction worked: the graduate was included in the AW16 British Fashion Council NEWGEN troupe (a scheme that supports new designers during London Fashion Week). If you want bright, young and seriously fun, look no further. Available at robertaeiner.com

Words Gillian Brett



ECKHAUS LATTA

The deconstructionists

At February's New York Fashion Week, editors, buyers and those in the know willingly battled through an ice storm to reach the packed-out MoMA PS1 gallery that played host to Eckhaus Latta's AW16 show. Inside, models and 'hodels' (non-traditional models) navigated a spiralling catwalk in off-kilter knits, spliced, and re-stitched denim, acid velvet and dresses in folded and tucked jersey. 'I think there's a very important role of craftsmanship,' explains Mike Eckhaus, 29, who co-founded the brand with fellow Rhode Island School of Design graduate Zoe Latta, 29, in 2012. 'We both naturally like garments and objects that have a bit of humanness about them; that feel like they've been touched, not executed by a machine.' Latta adds: 'We hope you are attracted to our brand because it makes you feel like you.' This philosophy, combined with a refusal to pander to marketable trends, has seen the brand credited with reawakening fashion's underground scene alongside labels such as Hood By Air and Off-White. It's a sensibility that's perfectly aligned with today's celebration of individualism and Eckhaus Latta is inviting us all to join. Available from shop.eckhauslatta.com and farfetch.com. Prices from £265. Words Bibby Sowray



Eckhaus Latta cuts to both female and male fit models. 'Clothes are only gendered because society decided they're gendered objects,' says co-founder, Mike Eckhaus

