

A person wearing a grey hoodie, a patterned sweater, and blue jeans is sweeping a floor with a broom. The person is leaning forward, and the broom is on the floor. The background consists of a wall made of wire mesh and wooden frames. A ladder is visible in the background.

ROLF EKROTH

'Dear Night' — FALL / WINTER 2024

Rolf Ekroth's narrative takes a turn towards winter sports for Fall Winter 2024. Under the banner of *Dear Night*, Ekroth interprets his personal memories of Finnish winter sports, set against the backdrop of the polar darkness in 1980s Finland. The collection's meticulously knitted ski jumping suits, leather shorts akin to those worn by ice hockey goalkeepers, bags that mimic race bibs, and reimagined childhood couches all narrate a story of athleticism witnessed from the comfort of home.

Exploring the nostalgia of winter's past, the collection draws inspiration from traditional Finnish winter sports: cross-country skiing, ski jumping, ice hockey and snowboarding. Ekroth's vision embraces a distinctly athletic aesthetic, filtered through his trademark nostalgia. The collection's roots delve into the designer's childhood, where Winter Olympics and grand sports events became familial rendezvous points, with the couch taking centre stage in those rare shared moments. Echoes of personal nostalgia saturate the collection, as Finnish winter sports history unfolds from the warmth of home. Silhouettes, prints and fabrics blend history and personal memories of spectating grand sports events from the comfort of a 1980s velvet couch.

While nostalgic, the collection takes liberties in reimagining silhouettes and pieces. In Ekroth's hands, a ski jumper's jumpsuit is reborn as a hand-knitted jumpsuit, featuring traditional Scandinavian knitting patterns. The boxy and robust form of an ice-hockey shirt undergoes a metamorphosis into a soft knitted sweater. Knitted accessories like leg warmers, mittens, woollen socks and balaclavas, paying homage to Finnish handicraft traditions, reflect the muted colour palette of 1980s Finland. Collaborating with Novita, the largest knitting yarns manufacturer in the Nordics, Ekroth also offers a democratic way of owning a piece of the collection: full yarn and instruction sets, embracing Finland's rich knitting tradition, will be available to anyone who wishes to recreate his runway knits.

Interpretations of the couch, a central element in Ekroth's memories, find expression in velvet fabrics, soft rose prints, and velvet and leather jackets adorned with fabric-enclosed buttons reminiscent of couch detailing. Items from the homely living room, like couch cushions turned into makeshift goalie pads, are replicated in strap and piping details in trousers. Bags crafted in the likeness of cushions pay homage to protective parents who used to envelop their children in oversized cushions to shield them from falls on the ice-skating rink. Some pieces reflect memories of taking grand sports onto the playground, as seen in a boiled wool skirt and ice hockey shirt embellished with white tufts, mirroring the way snow tacks onto you when walking through a winter blizzard.

In *Dear Night*, Ekroth encapsulates not just the essence of historically significant winter sports but also the universality of his personal memories — winter's familiar darkness, the softness of a velvety couch, and the license granted by sports events to come together and experience something grander than ourselves.

ROLF EKROTH is an independent Finnish fashion label that champions utilitarianism, nostalgia and the power of sustainably produced clothes. Built upon observations of youth and life in Finland, it harnesses the subtle nuances of its Finnish roots but applies freedom to reimagining history and old crafting traditions. Comfortably perched between superficiality and profundity, it is an homage to the transformation that well-designed clothes elicit: a newfound will to walk through the world without hiding.

Established in 1928, **NOVITA** stands as the largest craft yarn manufacturer and one of the leading handmade knitwear design houses in the Nordic countries. Rooted in nearly a century of family heritage, our core values emphasize a commitment to responsibility, with a focus on the slow fashion movement and sustainable knitwear design at the heart of Novita's business.

Collaborating with Rolf Ekroth provides Novita with a unique opportunity to showcase Finnish craft traditions and expertise on the runway. Knitting and crocheting rank among the most popular forms of handmade crafts in Finland, engaging almost 1 million Finns at least occasionally.

"We are extremely honored to collaborate with Rolf on his A/W 2024 collection. His ingenuity and talent in mixing various influences, both in our cultural history and the knitwear tradition, touch the heart of Nordic culture and are unique to Rolf's talent. As a designer, Rolf Ekroth is adventurous and bold, making his collections always a joy to see and wear," notes Novita's Marketing and Design Director, Linda Permanto.

Offering the vastest selection of high quality rugs in Finland, **MATTOCENTER** was established in 1972 and is now curated by the visionary couple Tinetti & Vahit Wafin. The Helsinki based family business, operated by a third generation of ambitious entrepreneurs, has been working with the world's finest carpet and textile producers for over 50 years. Mattocenter believes in the power of innovation and collaborating with talented creatives that possess a distinctive way of seeing the world.

Since 1948, **PUMA** has developed products for the fastest athletes. It has relentlessly pushed sports and culture forward. While sport is a big part of their DNA, their vast archive means the designers can also take inspiration from almost 75 years of history to create fashion forward and relevant products for today's young trend-setting audiences. Witness the embodiment of speed on the runway at Dear Night with the showcase of PUMA's iconic Speedcat OG, a design influenced by the rapidity of the racetrack.

MATILDA DILETTA and **TINO NYMAN** constitute a dynamic design duo specializing in creative direction and pattern design. They have been long-time collaborators with Rolf Ekroth and are responsible for the brand's pattern design and visual identity. Their collaborative approach challenges design norms with forward-thinking brilliance, creating a unique visual language that reflects a profound understanding of the creative field and its symbiotic relationship with the broader world.

Meet the visionary force, **RICHARD NTEGE**, elevating Swedish creativity to new heights. As a dynamic creative director, Ntege's canvas extends beyond conventional boundaries, weaving design narratives with concept stores and sculpting distinct styles for artists and corporate entities. His artistry lies in the details, whether in his intricate styling or forward-thinking creative direction.