

ELENI KYRIACOU

Pele: The Volcano Goddess

London-based women's wear fashion and textiles designer Eleni Kyriacou has launched her new explosive autumn/winter 2012/2013 collection

Despite the gloomy days and temptation to hibernate throughout this month, there's always the possibility to leave the house for a night out with the girls or a special occasion, be it for fresh air and long walks of window shopping or restaurant and bar outings.

Even though wardrobe-wise comfort is high on your list of priorities, as is staying indoors as much as possible, when you do decide to go out, going for something stylish and comfortable at the same time isn't a bad idea.

It's a concept that underpins designer Eleni Kyriacou's new autumn/winter collection proving that winter wear can be both cosy and flattering.

Browse through her evening collection of knits, richly coloured dresses with metallic details (metallic is a chic

trend now and was seen all over the spring/summer catwalks), for a spot of fashion-forward winter dressing inspiration.

For a toned-down look, if you're not comfortable with experimenting with colours and styles beyond your usual palette, you can go for the black dress with the metallic shoulder detail, my personal fave from her collection. Metallics add a sophisticated touch to your ensemble.

"I always wanted to incorporate use of metal in fashion; I was inspired by metallic 'scale' vintage belts. But I think the challenge with metal is to incorporate it in a way that's wearable.

"The concept of lava seemed fitting, as lava has a liquid metallic quality about it that I could use to inspire use of metal in the collection. I also love the colours and

the way lava could inspire drapes.

"I also like relating this collection to a goddess as I feel the volcano could be seen as female if it had to be given a gender, I've referenced this throughout the collection, such as in the pocket detail of the jacket," designer Eleni Kyriacou told me when we recently spoke about her collection.

Having studied textile design at Central Saint Martin's after finishing her BSc in Architecture at The Bartlett, UCL, she apprenticed for the late Alexander McQueen and for Emilio de la Morena participating in Paris and Milan Fashion weeks for their collections.

Her work is characterised by strong design concepts developed through innovative use of textiles and form aiming to create inventive garments that are also wearable.

DESIGN CONCEPT

Pele: The Volcano Goddess for autumn/winter 2012/13 draws inspiration from lava.

By applying the concept of lava to womenswear, the collection has been named after the Goddess Pele, the Goddess of the volcano and of fire. In Hawaiian legend Pele is believed to have the power to activate a volcanic eruption and to calm it.

This collection addresses the slightly more empowered contemporary woman who can share Pele's fiery core.

Eleni has always been fascinated by

the quality of lava, inspired by its fiery, metallic colours and textures and by its ember-like state as it cools from molten liquid lava to a solid state.

She is also fascinated by the contrast between these two states from the glowing orange, red and gold material it starts as, to the dark, silver/grey, black tar like material it becomes. In this transitional process lava can be seen seeping through cracks, folding over like waves that solidify, spreading itself thinly, falling like waterfalls of fire, glowing in drips and bulges or running in pools.

The colour palette, use of textiles and form in this collection is directly inspired by images of lava. The molten state of lava is translated through the use of metallic scale like elements that are embroidered in repeat to create a metallic flowing quality similar to lava.

Two-tone orange silk chiffon and velvet are used to represent this too. The solid state of lava is translated into the use of black and dark grey velvet, knits, faux-fur and tasselled fabric, which are of contrasting, more matt textures to the metal and silk.

