

The Fashion Maven Is In

'Style servant' Phillip Bloch shares his insights on shopping 'smart,' fashion trends and football.



Bringing style to the NFL.

By [Lisa Chau](#) | Oct. 7, 2014 | 1:15 p.m. EDT



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Phillip Bloch broke into the fashion industry as a successful model. While living in Europe, he worked for iconic designers such as Jean Paul Gaultier, Yves Saint Laurent and Rei Kawakubo. Educated at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City, Bloch later became a favored stylist to the stars and is credited with bringing glamour back to Hollywood, where he has dressed a stable of celebrities from Johnny Depp to Halle Berry.

Bloch has also served as the National Football League's 2013 and 2014 creative style director for its women's apparel division and is a regular guest correspondent for E!, CNN, "Entertainment Tonight," "Access Hollywood," HLN and ABC. Bloomingdale's, Maybelline, Vogue, Hanes and Hush Puppies are among the many major brands he has worked with.

I spoke with Bloch last month during Fashion Week after his keynote speech at a [Brand Innovators event](#). I interviewed him by email.

How did growing up in New York influence your career?

A born and bred New Yorker, Manhattan was a huge influence on my career. I grew up in Long Island but visited the city often since both my parents worked there. My mom was dog groomer to stars such as Carly Simon, Roberta Flack, Betty Buckley and Mia Farrow. When I wasn't home alone causing havoc, I was going to stores like Bloomingdale's.

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Why do some fashion trends succeed while others fail?

Fashion is a funny business. I've always loved clothes, but fashion is more about trends which often come from a designer's trip to a far-off land or some bizarre fetish they had as a child – beautiful clothes I love, but not trends conducive to regular people's everyday lives. However, the softness of a cashmere sweater, the pop of a brilliant color or how a chiffon skirt flows, is something everyone can appreciate.

Thanks to oversaturation by media, television and morning shows, fashion has become conspicuous consumption for everyone, with fast fashion spilling off runways and pouring into retail outlets almost immediately. Everyone is now informed on the latest trends. Unfortunately, every trend is not for everybody or every body. I've never been one to go to trends or suggest trends to celebrity clients unless it's a trend that makes their body look not just good, but better.

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Since trends dictate the fashion world, if you're not looking for a motto jacket this season you are in big trouble because that's all there is just in colors and fabrication.

How has the fashion industry changed over the years?

The fashion industry has changed over the years because there are far too many people involved in it now. It's always been this way but now more so. Some people are in it for money, some for prestige and validation to look cool. Rare few of us are in it because we love beautiful clothes and textiles – it's a gift and a talent we are born with.

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Another huge change is celebrity culture and people wanting to live vicariously through celebs – everyone, regardless of net worth, feels as if they should be wearing what every Hollywood star is wearing.

What kind of impact has technology had on design?

Consumers are much more aware of products and styles around the world now, thanks to technology. You don't have to live in Milan to wear Prada, you can buy it online from your penthouse in the city or little house on the prairie. Also, the use and fusion of high-tech fabrics has become more apparent in design.

Is your work inspired by underground influences?

Strong urban style has always affected me. Things that used to be underground and hidden are now on MTV or E! for fashion addicts and kids everywhere. We are also seeing a big fusion of the music and entertainment worlds colliding in fashion, which is causing a huge explosion of the cool factor. People want to look like Pharrell [Williams], Kanye West, Kim Kardashian or Rihanna. Many broke people unrealistically think they should be able to shop like Beyoncé.

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What is your career advice for students?

When I first joined the fashion world, most people were paid. Few interned or had to work for someone else to establish themselves. Now, it's best to do a year or two of school and a year of internship to decide which end of the business one's talents and personality are best suited for.

It's ridiculous that companies make money off a project or a product and ask anyone to work for free. That's why it's called a job and you get paid – not fun, which is something you do for pleasure.

Are Americans too aspirational?

The last two generations of Americans have all grown up thinking we can and should have it all. Unfortunately, we can't afford it all. Five years ago, I wrote a book called "The Shopping Diet." The book discussed the economic and emotional consequences of shopping above and beyond one's means. Learning to shop smart will save you from economical disasters.

It's important for people to realize that we work hard, and we can treat ourselves to the finer things in life, but so many of us must get over the sense of entitlement that pervades society. We aren't all George Clooney nor Brad and Angelina. You don't need the newest Gucci shoes or Chanel glasses if you can't pay your rent. George, Brad and Angelina can pay their mortgage, so they can have all of that and more.

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What are you doing for the NFL?

The most unpredictable position in my career was becoming the creative style director for the apparel division of the NFL. Many think it is an unlikely position for a fashion person, but I was so deeply moved by the moment I first saw the level of dedication and excitement of sports fans on any given Sunday at any stadium across America – it's a more

powerful phenomenon than anything I've ever seen on a Hollywood red carpet. Maybe 1,000 people show up to see a celebrity at a premier, but 50,000 show up to cheer on their favorite team.

I recently styled the ad campaign for the NFL style lounge that ran in Glamour, Latina, Cosmo, Marie Claire and Vogue. I coordinated shows and style lounges across the country from Atlanta to Boston, meaning I showed everyday people how to merge their #NFLfanstyle and team spirit with their everyday wardrobe for the office, the bars or ballgames.

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What are your upcoming projects?

Although it's on hiatus at moment, I'm gearing up to start working on my top passion project again: "Cause Celeb with Phillip Bloch," where I interview my favorite celebrities, clients and friends about their charitable and philanthropic work. This month, I will begin shooting a new movie called "Stealing Chanel" with one of my model friends, Carol Alt. I am looking forward to creating the next issue of untitled magazine, which is an edgy independent, fashion and entertainment-based magazine – we shot Brooke Shields for the cover of the summer issue. As usual, I continue my adventures as a renaissance man, style servant and social media superhero. I love my Instagram, Twitter and Facebook followers [@PhillipBloch](#).