

2012 SS Issey Miyake



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This was the first collection for Yoshiyuki Miyamae, the designer who has taken creative control at [Issey Miyake](#) after ten years working in the design studio, but the through line with his predecessors was **utterly seamless**, all the way back to Issey himself. That's some testament to the durable ethos of this label, where Japan's artisan traditions and futuristic technology meet to make clothes like no others. Here, for instance, there was the **body-mapping of extraordinary tribal-patterned leggings** that looked like paint but were actually achieved by a process that... well, suffice it to say, it worked.

For all that, the latest Issey collection didn't quite attain the heights of those earlier efforts. That might have had something to do with the theme: **Bloom Skin detailed the life of a flower—bud, stem, petal, blossom, bloom—as a metaphor for a woman**. The complexity of the concept was underlined by show notes that itemized details such as "**the fagoting on seams, representing the veins on a leaf**." The slits on clothes suggested a bud bursting. So did the jabots. The energy involved in the process of blooming was conveyed by **aerodynamic body-consciousness**—racerbacks, bike shorts—and an electric color scheme of hot pink and citron. And the visual accompaniment by Tokyo's genius WOW Inc. was a perfectly complementary *Tron*-like ballet of zap and zing.

So why didn't the show lift spirits with its energy? Maybe it was just too techno. The loveliest piece in the presentation was a plain navy shift with a draped back. It came somewhere toward the end, when the flower was in bloom. It might have been its plain old humanism that charmed. And that definitely felt well within the Issey spirit.