

# TALLULAH STORM



Blink, or don't, you'll probably miss it anyway

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words: Matthew Linde  
images: Nina Saulwick and Margaux Jones

THE ill-defined 19th century condition of neurasthenia was established to diagnose a range of symptoms such as fatigue, migraines and anxiety. A sinister residue of the modern experience which is often characterised by the ideals of novelty and speed, neurasthenia suggested its eventual breakdown: apathy and neurotic exhaustion. The title of Melbourne-based designer Tallulah Storm's debut collection *Blink, or don't, you'll probably miss it anyway* could be read as an aphorism for the ambivalence of this modern experience.

The slightness, irritation and mundanity of "getting dressed" is repeated throughout the collection. The deflated neck of a shirt appears repeatedly worn, as if the once resilient elastane has exhausted itself, unable to retract to its original position. Elusive internal stays twist a wool jersey turtleneck so the correct fit is never quite possible. A pair of jeans hauntingly capture the collapse of undressing through a constructed web of dart manipulation and rivets. This backwards fragmentation continues in a sleeveless dress, comprised of a base layer made from luscious gold velvet which is bitterly masked by the glum layering of a beige nylon exterior and the brown silk which lies in between.

When strands of fine chain are left to their own accord at the bottom of bags and boxes they erratically clump and knot together. These nervous entanglements were left as readymade necklaces constructed from stolen chains to adorn the collection. The most spectral moments appeared in the found children's duvet pieces, drafted into dreary garments to appear precariously wedged in; the vestiges of a prior life reclaimed for a second chance.

Unlike the more obvious subversions of spectacle from the current ilk of ironic fashion designers, Storm's collection does not attempt to expose the "false consciousness" of archetypal pieces of clothing but upheaves the value of their marginalised idiosyncrasies. Her approach, which could either be the figure of bricoleur or saboteur, sought out the irrational traces hidden in everyday dressing.