



RAKAÑ

Press Kit



Brand statement.

RAKAN is a modern luxury fashion line that is made in USA. We design RTW collections and custom made dresses with unique details and volumes using high quality materials that makes every woman feel unique and powerful. (more details, fabrics, colors, and garments sportswear, eveningwear...)

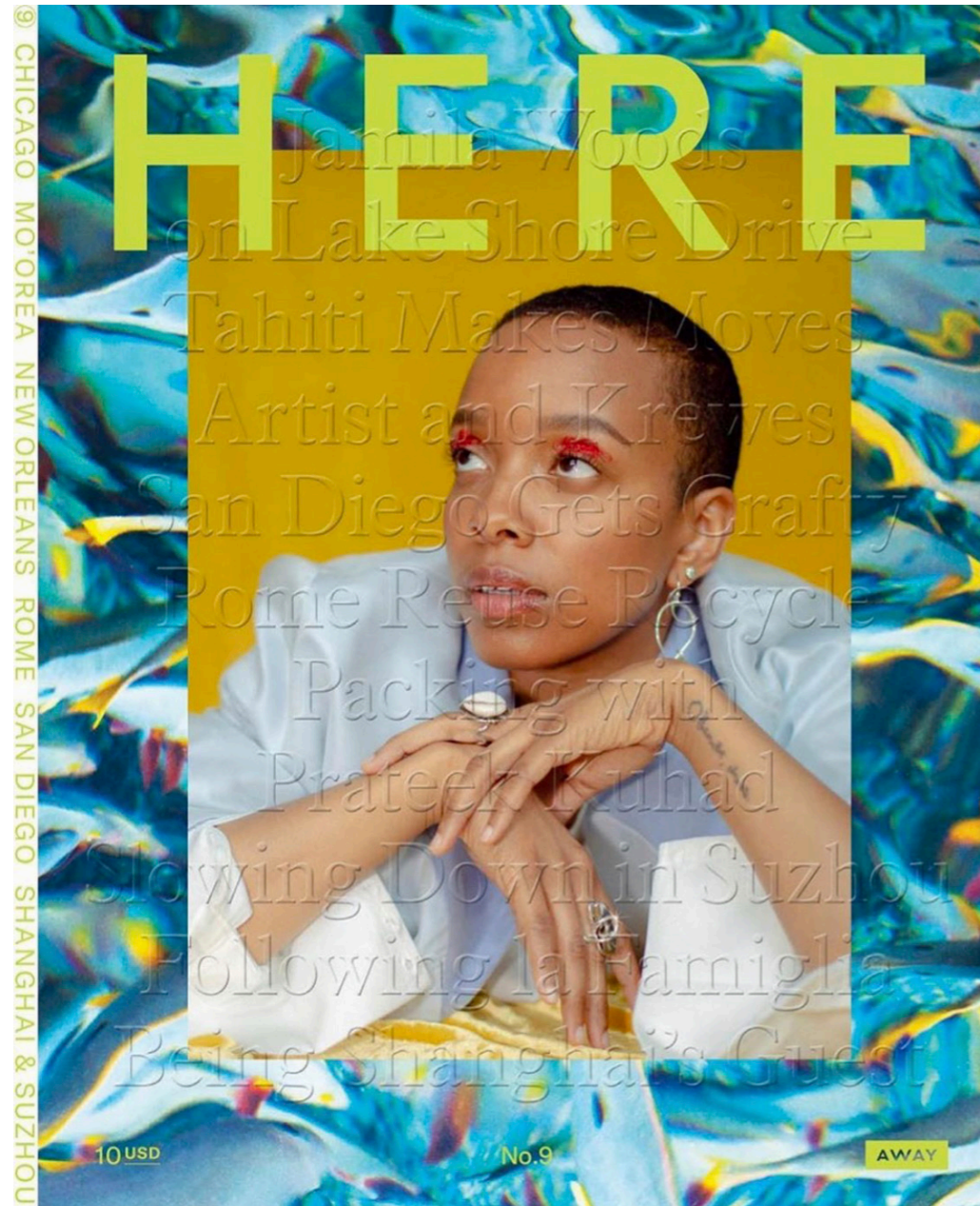
Mission statement.

Our aim at RAKAN is to always be creative and think outside of the box by continually researching new volumes and ideas that make our pieces very unique. Our luxurious garments make our customers feel special and visually stunning. All garments are made the USA to ensure high quality and fitting.



Capsule 2020

Print Press



Jamila Woods on HERE Magazine Cover No.9
July 2019

Print Press

CHICAGO WOMAN

CHICAGO.WOMAN.COM

THIRD ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

VOL. 20 SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2018



Chicago Woman Magazine Cover
Sept-Oct 2018



Chicago Woman Magazine
Sept-Oct 2017

Rakan Shams Eldeen

rakanshamsaldeem.com

THIS COLLECTION'S INSPIRATION. I get inspired by everything surrounding me! Architecture, art, personal experiences, everything moves me from inside.

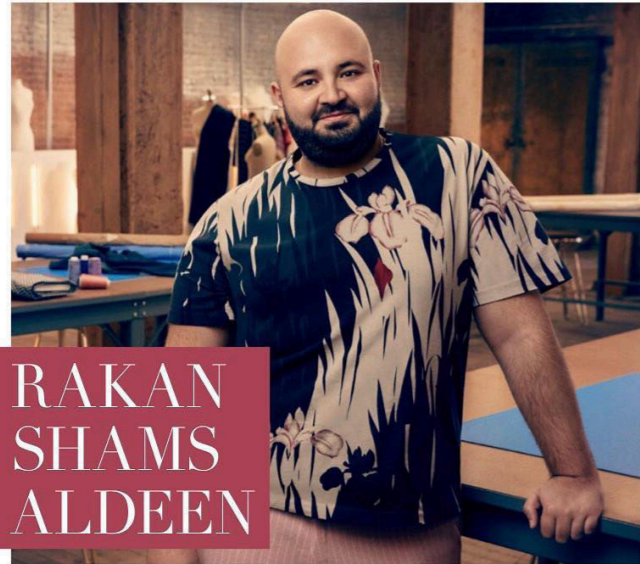
ON BEING A FASHION DESIGNER IN CHICAGO.

I'm new to the city but from my small experience I can say that the city has great potential, however it is missing some small elements that could help it grow; like more trade shows, suppliers and of course, more support for talented designers to help give the city more attention from the fashion industry.

FELLOW LOCAL DESIGNER YOU ADMIRE.
Mira Couture

FALL FASHION INVESTMENT.
A big, well-designed coat, it's cold out there!

Print Press



RAKAN SHAMS ALDEEN

His fashion-design star is rising — especially on “Project Runway”

BY TARA GARDNER

With his couture-worthy flair and impeccable eye for detail, Rakan Shams Aldeen is the name to know in Chicago fashion right now. Crossing oceans to realize his dreams, Aldeen originally hails from Homs, Syria. In Chicago since 2017, he’s launched a celebrated line, landed a spot in the Macy’s Fashion Incubator, and designed a John Singer Sargent-inspired dress for an Art Institute exhibition. But the story doesn’t end there. With his biggest spotlight to date, the designer starred in Bravo’s “Project Runway,” judged and mentored by some of the most glittering names in the industry. Sharing a snapshot of his fashion ascent along with a “Project Runway” debrief (he left the show on April 18), the designer tells us all.

What was it like growing up in Syria and having grand fashion aspirations? Back when I was a kid I didn’t have an understanding of what fashion was really about or even what it takes to be a creative person, I just knew it was something I had to do. You could say it chose me. Living in Syria, it was a place filled with this vibrant history and energy. We had one of the biggest textiles industries in the world including Aghabbani and Silk Brocade — and the vibrancy of being surrounded

by this was just so inspiring to me. It fueled my passion, growing up appreciating fashion even more. But, unfortunately as the society isn’t used to men as fashion designers, it made it difficult to pursue my dream there.

I studied architecture instead at the University of Kalamoon and had just finished when the civil war in Syria broke out. I had to leave the country for my safety. I went to Beirut, Lebanon, to study design and pattern-cutting in and then to Istanbul where I graduated.

I’ll always love Syria and I believe its attitudes to fashion are changing as the society is opening up and evolving more these days.

Flash-forward to now and you’re a “Project Runway” star. With so much competition for a coveted spot on the show, how did you handle it all? It actually felt incredibly personal for me as I grew up watching the show and would try to create designs for the challenges like I was one of the designers on it but from my home in Syria. Landing a spot felt almost like a homecoming in a way. Although I had confidence in my talent and vision, deep down I just kind of had this feeling I’d get accepted. The fact that there are thousands of super talented designers who apply — it’s just an incredible feeling to get that recognition.

Q & A WITH ...

In the head-to-toe print challenge, show mentor Christian Siriano was worried your design read “too old lady.” How did you deal with the pressures and the critique of your work? It’s vastly different to how I usually work in my studio, so it’s been a real learning curve. Time is everything and the limits on this can be really stressful. Organization and keeping a clear head are key, as you really can’t waste a minute. The hardest part for me was to keep the balance between designing, creating the patterns and sewing in one or two days, alongside maintaining the quality and finishings I wanted. But once I got into my zone, all of my focus was on how I could be more creative and what I needed to add or remove from my piece. I took the critique on board, but I had to weigh it up with what also felt natural and intuitive for me.

The judging was when I’d get most nervous as you’re never sure how it’ll go or what other contestants have created. Ultimately, I focused on the fact that it’s a great chance to hear industry masters giving you critiques. I tried to put all their feedback into ways to improve on my next design.

What are your takeaways from the experience? It’s taught me a lot about myself and helped me get a much greater insight into my own design process. I can see even more now that my designs carry a lot of complexities within them. And, as my passion really lies in the details, it’s become more about how I work those into the process — even a design that seems simple, in execution has complicated elements.

My fellow contestants were also so inspiring to me. They’re amazingly talented and there was a strong sense that this is the next generation of designers, ready to move fashion forward, making it exciting again with fresh perspective and points of view.

Back to Chicago, how do you feel the scene here compares with what’s coming out of the major fashion capitals, and what would it take to put Chicago more on the map? I’ll always believe that Chicago has a lot to offer. We have big art schools with incredible fashion programs and super talented designers. Unfortunately working out of this city can be really challenging. For a designer like me who does a lot of custom-made garments and focuses on collections using really luxe, high quality materials; sourcing fabrics and resources is hard. Generally, the fashion scene here isn’t as big or diverse as the other cities but hopefully this will change with more support from the city and Chicagoans.

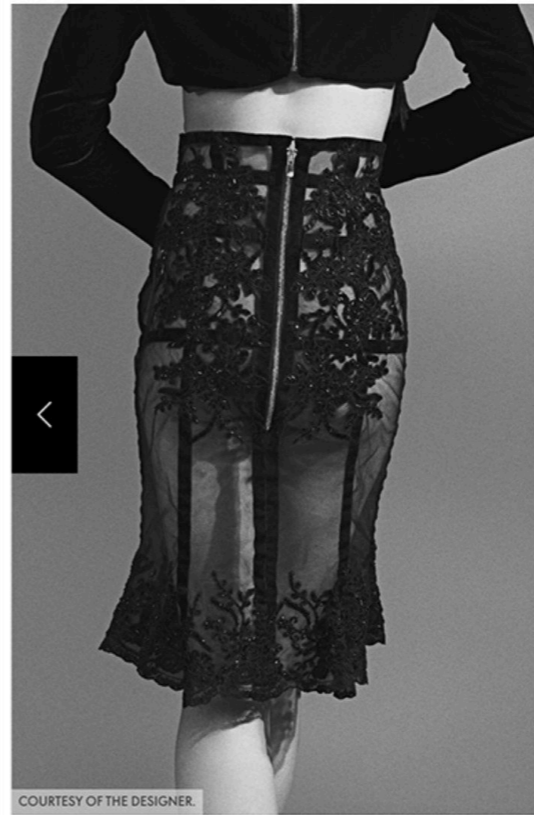
Who tops your dream dress list? I’m so incredibly inspired by many of the strong, powerful, and unique women who are changing the face of the fashion industry in the Middle East, bringing it forward and challenging how the world perceives Arab women. There’s Jessica Kahwati, the Lebanese Australian lawyer, model and TV presenter; Afef Jnifen, the Tunisian model-actress; and Princess Deena Al-Juhani Abdulaziz, the Saudi Arabian editor. They’re all smashing it in terms of style and are total muses to me.

Shop the designer’s spring/summer collection at rakan-shamsaldeen.com

MAY 2019 | CHICAGOPLASH.COM 19

Splash Magazine Chicago
May 2019

ELLE USA Printed & Online
March 2019



18 OF 32

A look from Rakan Shams Aldeen

My biggest strength as a designer: Creativity and imagination. Few people have it now in the industry.

Biggest weakness: Being stubborn.

Style icon: Afef Jnifen. She is one of the most iconic fashion stars. She is a muse to me!

I’d love to dress: Jessica Kahwati.

COURTESY OF THE DESIGNER.



© BRAVO MEDIA/MILLER MOBLEY

17 OF 32

Rakan Shams Aldeen

Hometown: Homs, Syria

Currently: Chicago

Instagram: @rakanshamsaldeen

VÉRONIQUE HYLAND

Véronique Hyland is ELLE’s fashion features director.

Collaborations + Celebrities



Phobezapollo music
video
Sept 2018



Phobezapollo music album cover
Sept 2018



A dress inspired by the work of the artist John Sirgent for
his exhibit at the Art Institute of Chicago at Macy's
window on State St.
June 2018

Online Press

Fashion Incubator Designer: Rakan Shams Aldeen



I sat down and chatted with one of the six housed fashion designers involved in the CFI, [Rakan Shams Aldeen](#). Rakan studied fashion and architecture in Istanbul and then moved to the United States. His work is couture. It takes Rakan weeks, even months, to create his one of a kind pieces. His pieces are cut by hand, stitched by hand, and beaded by hand. I wanted to know what sparks Rakan's inspiration "I would say architecture inspires me most. I studied it in the Middle East for six years, it's all in my mind" says Shams Aldeen. "Art in general and of course like every great artist feelings. It depends on my mood, what am I feeling and how can transfer those feelings to my work."

adornaccordingly.com

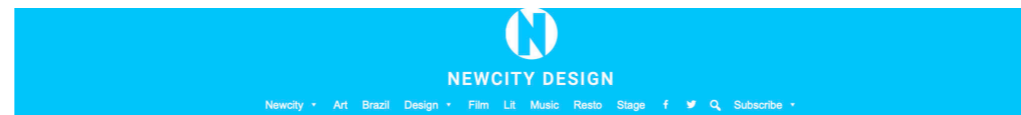
2017



Chicago Fashion Incubator March
2018

Rakan Shams Aldeen is a Syrian fashion designer. At the age of five he developed an interest in fashion and began sketching every dress that his imagination could conceive. Rakan studied architecture at University of Kalamoon, Syria and afterwards he moved to Lebanon to follow his dreams and study fashion design and pattern making at l'Ecole Superieure des Arts et techniques de la Mode in Beirut (EsMode-Beirut). Rakan then moved to Istanbul and graduated from Vakko-EsMode Istanbul in 2015. He was awarded the jury prize for design during every year of his education. He and his business partner established their own couture line LamRak Atelier, where Rakan worked as the head designer from 2014 through 2016 and participated in the Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week Istanbul. In 2017, he moved to Chicago to establish his own brand RAKAN, a luxurious modern line dedicated to strong confident women who desire to be unique.

rakan@rakanshamsaldeen.com



Heshima in Action: How RefuSHE Empowers African Girls and Young Women One Hand-Dyed Scarf at a Time

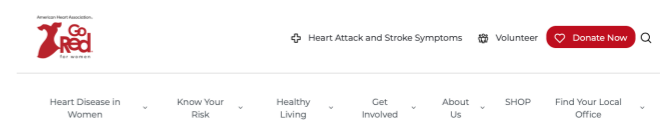
MAY 30, 2018 AT 10:00 AM BY VASIA RIGOU



Fashion Challenge X – Rakan Shams Aldeen Design /Photo: Kasia Jarosz and Bartosz Kasha

Drawing inspiration from traditional styles of clothing and creating new collections of attire that feature vibrant colors and elaborate patterns, the RefuSHE girls hand-dye scarves, each named after their designer. In the process, they build leadership and business skills. But artisanship has a dual purpose. "Emotional healing continues in our artisan collective, which enables young women to earn an income while benefiting from the therapeutic effects of artisan work," says Roadcup. "Studies have shown that repetitive acts like knitting or sewing significantly reduce effects of trauma. These experiences can be difficult to express in words, so the act of tasseling scarves, and hand-dying fabrics instills pride and builds self-esteem. Earning an income allows our artisans to advocate for the best interests of themselves and their children..

New City
May 2018



Home / Get Involved / Attend / Red Dress Collection / Emerging designers to unveil couture gowns at Fashion Week kickoff

Search ex: blood pressure

Emerging designers to unveil couture gowns at Fashion Week kickoff

Rakan started as a designer at age 5 in his homeland of Syria. He sketched every design that would come to his mind and he has never deviated from working toward his goal. He moved to Lebanon to follow his dream and, after the war there, moved on to Istanbul to continue his education. In 2014, he and a partner opened a design studio there – LamRak Atelier – where he worked as head designer until 2016. In 2017, he moved to Chicago to again begin a brand, this time on his own. RAKAN, is a conceptual and modern line that highlights how Rakan plays with different volumes and materials in his design. For the Red Dress Collection, he's completely reworked his original submission and will be showcasing something entirely different on the runway.

"I submitted my vision of the red dress and then when I got paired with my celebrity, I knew my design was too rough," he said. He changed the tone of the gown to make it "sweeter" to fit his celebrity model. "She's my client. She's my muse. I want to make her happy," he said of his couture creation, which will have a bustier and skirt of pleated silk and layered tulle. An ensemble gown, it will be topped by a "puffy" shell-styled throw. "It's like a cloud around her," he said.

As of yet, the models who are paired with Rakan and Madelange have not been announced. They will walk the runway at 8 p.m. EST Feb. 7 at The Hammerstein Ballroom for invited guests and on Facebook live at www.facebook.com/GoRedforWomen.



American Heart Association
Feb 2019

Collaborations + Celebrities



Influncer/ Fashion Blogger Tamara Farra
April 2019



Elizabeth Rohm in custom made dress for the
American Heart Assosiation Gala
Feb 2019

Online Press

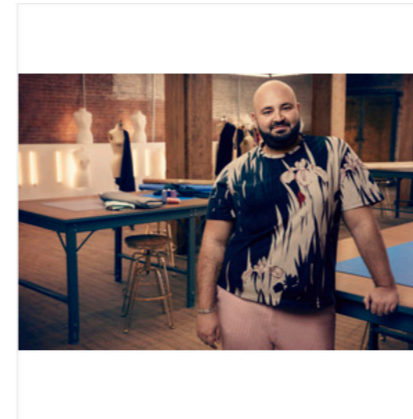


people

talent bios

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Rakan Shams Aldeen

Designer Contestant, "Project Runway"

Age: 29 (@rakanshamsaldeen)
Homs, Syria

Rakan Shams Aldeen is a Syrian fashion designer. At the age of five, he developed an interest in fashion and began sketching every dress that his imagination could conceive. Rakan studied architecture at the University of Kalamoon, Syria, and after the civil war in Syria broke out, he moved to Lebanon to follow his dreams and study fashion design and pattern making at l'Ecole Superieure des Arts et Techniques de la Mode in Beirut (EsMod-Beirut). Rakan then moved to Istanbul and graduated from Vakko-EsMod Istanbul in 2015. In 2017, he moved to Chicago to establish his own brand, Rakan, a luxurious modern line dedicated to strong confident women who desire to be unique. Rakan is a conceptual designer who is inspired by everything around him, especially architecture and history. Everything in his designs has a meaning and a reason, and he always loves to play with different volumes and materials to create unique designs.

NBC Feb 2019

FANSIDED FANDOM 250 TV STREAMING MOVIES GAMING COMICS CARS TWD GOT

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PROJECT RUNWAY

Rakan Shams Aldeen: Project Runway designer never wavered on his vision

by Cristine Struble 1 week ago Follow @CristineStruble

TWEET SHARE COMMENT

Rakan Shams Aldeen made quite an impression during his time on Project Runway. Even in his limited appearance, the talented designer stayed true to his vision.

Fansided
June 2019

bravo Project Runway

Watch News Episodes Schedule

Rakan Shams Aldeen

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SHOWS Project Runway

Homs, Syria

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Bravo TV
Jan 2019

'Project Runway' Chicago Contestant Rakan Shams Aldeen

Watch later Share

Project RUNWAY LOCAL CONTESTANT ON PROJECT RUNWAY
RAKAN SHAMS ALDEEN TALKS REALITY TV & NEW COLLECTION

Hometown guy Rakan Shams Aldeen is on 'Project Runway' this season, and he joined us today to dish on the drama and to give us a preview of his new collection. The new episode of 'Project Runway' airs tonight at 8pm on Bravo. Plus, show Rakan's new collection on rakanshamsaldeen.com.

WCIU Tv, The Jam Morning
Show May 2019

FOX 32 CHICAGO DESIGNER RAKAN SHAMS ALDEEN FEATURED ON SEASON 17 OF "PROJECT RUNWAY" ON BRAVO

53° 9:39

SOUTHWEST SUBURBS | 10AM 54° | 2PM 52° | 6PM 50°

Fox 32 Morning Show
May 2019

STYLE CARTEL

Designer To Watch Featured Fashion

Middle Eastern Fashion Designer Rakan Shams Aldeen Joins Project Runway

18th April 2019

Style Cartel UK
June 2019

About Rakan

Rakan Shams Aldeen is a Syrian Fashion Designer. Since the age of five he developed an interest in fashion and began sketching every dress that his imagination could conceive.

Rakan studied architecture at University of Kalamoon, Syria and after the Civil war in Syria broke down, he moved to Lebanon to follow his dreams and study fashion design and pattern making at l'Ecole Superieure des Arts et techniques de la Mode in Beirut (EsMod-Beirut). Rakan then moved to Istanbul and graduated from Vakko-EsMod Istanbul in 2015. He was awarded the jury prize for design during every year of his education.

In 2017, he moved to Chicago to establish his own brand RAKAN, a luxurious modern line dedicated to strong confident women who desire to be unique. Now he is a resident of New York city.

Rakan is a conceptual designer, who gets inspired by everything around him especially architecture and history. Everything in his designs has a meaning and a reason and he always loves to play with different volumes and materials to create unique designs.





www.rakanshamsaldeen.com
Info@rakanshamsaldeen.com
IG: @rakanshamsaldeen