

65 BENETTON STREET

The new kids' collection by Jean-Charles de Castelbajac for United Colors of Benetton makes its debut at Pitti Bimbo, the world's biggest junior fashion fair

65 Benetton Street. In the world created by Jean-Charles de Castelbajac, this is where the kids of Benetton's first runway show for Pitti Bimbo 'live'. It could be a street in a modern city, because the street serves as the biggest museum of contemporary art. The young citizens of Benetton have adopted Benetton's historic colour and sportswear iconography, but with the extra touch of a strong identity comprising irony, tenderness and urban culture. They live every day as it comes, travel fast – on scooters and skateboards – are nimble, creative and curious. They care deeply about their planet and wear clothes dyed with natural, non-toxic colours, puffer jackets made from recycled materials and noble fibres. They love street style and street art – which explains their preference for camouflage as well as star and stripe patterns. It also explains their predilection towards clothes embellished with Keith Haring's street art.*

The Benetton house at Pitti Bimbo will be a modern place, with a colourfully powerful identity, where flags bright with the company's primary colours will fly. A way to underscore the spirit of a brand that is most definitely future-facing - because children are our hope and our pioneers – but which focuses on the core elements of its philosophy: unique authenticity, lateral thinking, being in tune with the times and inclusivity.

The way JCC sees it, children are vocal about their desire for independence and freedom. As the designer himself says: "We are living in a very particular historic moment. The age of parents dictating to boys how to dress is coming to an end. Boys want to choose what to wear because they experience and see the world through new technologies."

Looks for girls are also influenced by this "revolution". JCC explains: "We have designed our collections with today's society in mind. For girls, I worked on the idea of a new kind of romanticism, one that is less fragile and is imbued with a more Benetton-style sporty appeal. It's a look that becomes a code, perfect for today's girls, who are tomorrow's women. Anyone designing a collection for girls in these times has a great responsibility, as the educational function of fashion codes is extremely important. This is the way forward, and we designers cannot ignore it: we have to make way for a kind of femininity that no longer feeds on the clichés of the past."

Fashion design at the service of kids' tastes; colour as a philosophy for life; up to date, never nostalgic style; and ethical responsibility: this is the air you will breathe at 65 Benetton Street.

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