

Music

From bondage to flowers

A fashion bonanza at 'Coachella fest'

INDIO, United States, April 16, (AFP): Coachella became one of the world's premier music festivals not only for the A-list performers. The two-weekend party in the California desert has become a major event in its own right for the fashion.

While designers have heavily marketed their brands to Coachella, the fans who draw the most notice often do so by embracing their own sartorial flair, driven by a sense of innovation and, among revelers in the searing heat, of inhibition.

Fun with bondage
They dress in green from head to toe, or at least when they dress at all.

Tiana Tuttle and T.J. Sonnier covered their bodies with green nets over matching swimsuits, with caps to top it off.

The pair from Los Angeles have been coordinating their festival outfits for several years. Tuttle, 23, said that this year, they wanted to explore the fashion possibilities of bondage.

"We wanted to be that sexy thing in the corner that you can look at when you're bored at the show," said Sonnier, 22.

A passion for flowers
Hillary Osgood, 31, has been heading to festivals, especially Coachella, for 12 years. One thing she never forgets and has never lost — her light purple umbrella that both shields her from the sun and highlights her signature style.

This year, she decked herself out in matching flowers draped like a turban on her head.

While the flowers are artificial, Osgood said she found inspiration as she lives in the flower district of Los Angeles and works at a bar.

"It's a way to exemplify the Coachella lifestyle. It's not every day that you find a safe place to project some of your style," she said.

'Graduation' in a vintage dress
Aquiel Hayden has been on the festival circuit for the past two weeks and threw her clothes into a suitcase, choosing the day's wardrobe at the last minute.

The purple-haired 21-year-old sported a floor-length, sparkling red dress that she found in a vintage store in her home of Santa Barbara, California, paired with thick maroon sunglasses and a golden belt.

Hayden however said she was disappointed in the changing musical direction of ever-expanding Coachella and may not come back.

"I thought I should go all out for my last one. It's sort of like my graduation," she said.

Recycled fashion
Chanel Twyman and Auzunay Watkins were looking for something different for Coachella and found it — short, and largely revealing, dresses made entirely from the tops of soft drink cans.

The pair from Philadelphia bought the unique outfits from the New York designer Gypsy Sport and matched them with equally shiny half-masks with rabbit ears.

Twyman, 23, said that she and Watkins, 25, considered themselves "very fashion-forward" — and found the cans to be comfortable.

All about the sunglasses
For Genevieve Paish of Christchurch, New Zealand, who is attending Coachella for the first time, the initial accessory was a pair of orange-red, heart-shaped sunglasses.

Paish, 21, said she picked the rest of her outfit to match, including her impromptu dress of drooping red strings.

She dyed her hair a similar color and used a key chain to make puffy red scrunchies with which to hold up her hair.

Also:

LONDON, United Kingdom: After a childhood building tree houses and robots, British designer **Christopher Raeburn** has made a career out of transforming unusual materials — including parachutes — into clothes ready for the catwalk.

More than a decade since graduating from London's prestigious Royal College of Art, Raeburn has made a name for himself with streetwear fit for the style-conscious, environmentally-aware buyers.

"We only do three things. We either remake, we recycle or we reduce," the 35-year-old told AFP.

Raeburn has picked the former premises of veteran fashion house Burberry for his own label, in a former industrial zone of east London.

The open-plan airy office is filled with sewing machines, ironing boards and rolls of fabric. When AFP visited, a group of seamstresses were busy creating animals made out of fabric — a quirky speciality of the designer.

Pieces from past collections are stored in large white wardrobes, including a military jacket.

"With (the collection) Remade, it's about deconstructing and reworking," said Raeburn of the piece, which in its original form was a guard's uniform from Buckingham Palace.

"Ultimately I think as humans we cannot continue consuming in the way that we are, and not just clothing — everything from product design to food, are incredibly wasteful," he added.

Such an attitude has been at the heart of Raeburn's work throughout his career, including his first show at London Fashion Week.

"I bought one parachute on eBay, I think it cost me £30 (\$42, 34 euros), and from that one parachute I made eight garments... And things have just grown step by step from there," he said.

Raeburn has numerous sources for his materials, including foreign imports, hunting through military surplus, as well as other channels which are kept as closely-guarded secrets.

"I get asked a lot, you're not worried that things are going to run out?" he said, commenting it is "scary" just how much excess material is available.

His most recent collection, presented at London Fashion Week in January, used protective immersion suits to create men's and women's coats.

"(There are) hundred of thousands of these items that have never been used," said the designer, explaining the suits are often thrown away after a certain period of time to abide by health and safety rules.

Raeburn also bought a raft, cutting it up to make coats, jackets and bags.

"You pull on the rope and then the whole thing expands and inside it had everything you would need to survive on the open ocean for one month for 25 people," he explained.

The designer's ability to rework such an array of materials is attributed to his childhood "in the middle of nowhere" in south-east England, close to the wood which inspired the "Winnie-the-Pooh" books.



Cardi B performs at Coachella Music and Arts Festival in Indio, California, on April 15. (AFP)



Had Ghaleb, 25, of Dubai, United Arab Emirates, poses at the Coachella Music and Arts Festival in Indio, California. (AFP)



Wurst



Prince

Variety

VIENNA: Austrian bearded drag queen and Eurovision winner **Conchita Wurst** has announced in an Instagram post that she is HIV positive, saying she is being blackmailed by a former boyfriend.

Wurst, the creation of Austrian singer and artist **Tom Neuwirth**, 29, said in the post late on Sunday that the ex-boyfriend was "threatening to go public with this private information".

"I won't give anyone the right to scare me and to influence my life in this way," said Wurst, describing the decision to go public as removing a "sword of Damocles".

The post has already received more than 26,000 "likes" on Monday morning.

"Coming out is better than being outed by someone else. I hope to give others courage and to take another step against the stigmatisation of those who... have contracted HIV," Wurst added.

Wurst said that she had been receiving medical treatment since her diagnosis and that it had been suppressed to undetectable levels, so it could not be transmitted.

"I'm stronger, more motivated and freer than ever," Wurst said.

She praised the "unconditional support" she had received from her family and added that sparing them the publicity was one reason she had not chosen to share the information before now. (AFP)

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MINNEAPOLIS: As the second anniversary of **Prince's** death approaches, his heirs have yet to collect a dollar of his estimated \$200 million estate. But bankers, lawyers and consultants have earned millions from it.

The long saga to settle the estate provides a cautionary tale about dying without a will, as Prince did when he died of an accidental opioid overdose at his suburban Minneapolis studio on April 21, 2016, and the heirs can't quit squabbling. Here's a look at where things stand:

Even though it's been nearly two years since Prince died, the executor of the estate, Comerica Bank and Trust, can't split the money among Prince's six surviving siblings until the Internal Revenue Service and executor agree on the estate's value when Prince died.

It's not clear when that might happen. The IRS and state of **Minnesota** are entitled to collect about half, though the estate can stretch out the payments over time.

Court filings several months after Prince's death suggested that it was worth around \$200 million before taxes. The actual value remains one of the biggest secrets in the case, hidden in sealed and redacted documents. The actual valuation could have gone up or down since then. (AP)

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Music

Destiny's Child reunites at Coachella

Beyonce marches to different drumline

LOS ANGELES, April 16, (Agencies): At Coachella, Beyonce gave the performance she should have given at the Super Bowl. Granted, she had an hour and 45 minutes to work with at the desert festival Saturday night, versus only 13 minutes to work with at that gig five years ago. But if the network, NFL, Ravens, 49ers and their fans had seen what we saw at the Empire Polo Grounds, surely they would have agreed by acclimation to, you know, just put the third quarter off by an hour and a half.

Part of the brilliance of Saturday's set was that it was more of a half-time show than her half-time show, in that she took the marching band that has been persona non grata at the Bowl for years and built a 105-minute performance around overpacked horn charts, glorified drum majorettes and nonstop drumline insanity. Who would've guessed the missing ingredients needed to ratchet her catalog a step up into greatness were exceptionally arranged tubas and timbales? It was an over-the-top Busby Berkeley Hollywood musical brought to the modern day by way of the great HBCU marching units of the South, and it was fairly glorious.

The show served as testament not only to Beyonce as the premier musical performer of our time, but a tribute to the power of the non-disclosure agreement. Only recently did reports emerge that the singer had hired about a hundred backup performers — the actual number was probably a little less, though the cast never stood still long enough for anyone to count — and even then, as rehearsals involved locking down a stage in L.A. for at least three months, virtually nothing about the nature of the performance leaked out, except for rumors about another Destiny's Child reunion... which ended up being true, even if that part was a nearly superfluous cherry atop the blitz. (Probably any backup performer considering violating the NDA thought of how much worse they'd get it than Jay-Z did on "Lemonade.")

While a YouTube audience waited at home for the feed to go live, the Coachella audience (comprised of the better part of the 125,000 in attendance for the day) saw nothing but 11 staggered rows of spotlights. Come the appointed minute, the platform holding those lights rose and revealed her cast of dozens, including not only a marching-in-place band but violin

players, plus contortionists, "Bug A Boo" Greek-pledge male dancers, and a baton twirler to beat all baton twirlers. Coming down the walkway, mid-audience, Beyonce initially appeared in your basic modest Egyptian queen ensemble, then quickly switched to cutoff jeans. That was the first of, surprisingly, only a couple of true costume changes: Part of the cleverness of this show was that it was staged as a series of variations on one epic production, not the series of separate vignettes you get on a typical super-diva tour.

Nearly two dozen tracks got at least a partial hearing, from the opening "Crazy in Love," the hit whose sampled horn charts surely provoked the supersized version here, to her greatest recent single, "Freedom" — which gave way to an extended coda of "Lift Every Voice and Sing," the black national anthem — to opportunities for Jay-Z, Solange and the two-thirds of Destiny's Child to say their name. The Jack White-assisted stab at Jay, "Don't Hurt Yourself," occasioned an additional costume change from friendly yellow to a steeper acrylic black. Some snippets were so short they didn't even appear on the backstage setlist, like a few lines of "Irreplaceable." For a while it seemed like the only flaw of the show might be not taking a moment to breathe amid all the medley-ing... and then she stopped to sing the tender, unhurried "Love on Top," and even that slight objection melted away.

Designed

It's hard for anyone in the room, as it were, to know how it came off to the home viewers it was just as much designed for — although one suspects we'll soon get a reprise with some sort of home video release. But on the premises, this sustained gambit of a rocking R&B show felt historic. Could Michael Jackson, who was best in micro-moments, not at long-form conceptual shows, have pulled off something like this? Does mentioning her in the same breath of a Gene Kelly do justice to her dancing and conceptual abilities, but not her voice, which would be superstar-making enough? Comparisons were already hard enough to come by before this show, fairly unique in the annals of massively scaled pop one-offs, upped the ante even more. The precision of the choreography and sheer work ethic could've made the production seem more intimidating than in-

gratiating ... but there was real joy in Beyonce's performance, too, not just genius and sweat.

"I was supposed to perform at Coachella before," she told the crowd — unnecessarily for the live part of the audience, probably, many of whom saw Lady Gaga as her fill-in last year — "but I ended up getting pregnant. So I had time to dream and dream and dream with two beautiful souls in my belly, and I dreamed up this performance." If the hormones really did help with that, a lot of creatives would love to have what she was having.

Beyonce returned spectacularly to the stage Saturday with a joyous, homecoming-themed party at the Coachella festival where she delighted fans with a rare reunion of her former trio Destiny's Child.

Beyonce showed no sign of slowing down after her maternity leave, singing and strutting her stuff with little break for two hours as she led around 100 backup dancers and musicians.

Her husband, rap mogul Jay-Z, popped up on stage toward the end of her set to join in their song "Deja Vu." But he turned out to be only a preview of a less routine guest appearance.

With an audio recording of novelist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's essay "We Should All Be Feminists" allowing Beyonce a moment to prepare, she re-emerged being elevated to the stage in an unmistakable silhouette of three figures.

Fellow Destiny's Child members Kelly Rowland and Michelle Williams joined Beyonce for three of the trio's songs, including "Say My Name."

It was their first reunion since Beyonce's Super Bowl halftime show in 2013. The group propelled Beyonce to stardom but was also beset by internal friction.

On Saturday, Beyonce referred to her bandmates as her "sisters" — and was also joined on stage by her real sister, Solange Knowles.

Beyonce made clear from the start that Coachella was about reuniting, with an announcer starting the show by welcoming guests to her "homecoming."

A school's worth of brass and string players played on Sunday to stadium-style stands as Beyonce entered to a New Orleans-style march. She sported an all-American outfit of tight jean shorts and a collegiate sweatshirt — the Greek letters, of course, starting with "B."

BERLIN: Big business on Sunday joined a growing chorus of criticism in **Germany** over the awarding of an annual music prize to a pair of rappers accused of anti-Semitic

lyrics, with Airbus CEO **Tom Enders** adding his condemnation of the decision.

German executive Enders told the Bild am Sonntag newspaper he was shocked by what

he considered widespread ambivalence about the Echo award given to rappers **Kollegah** and **Farid Bang**, which coincided with Holocaust Remembrance Day.

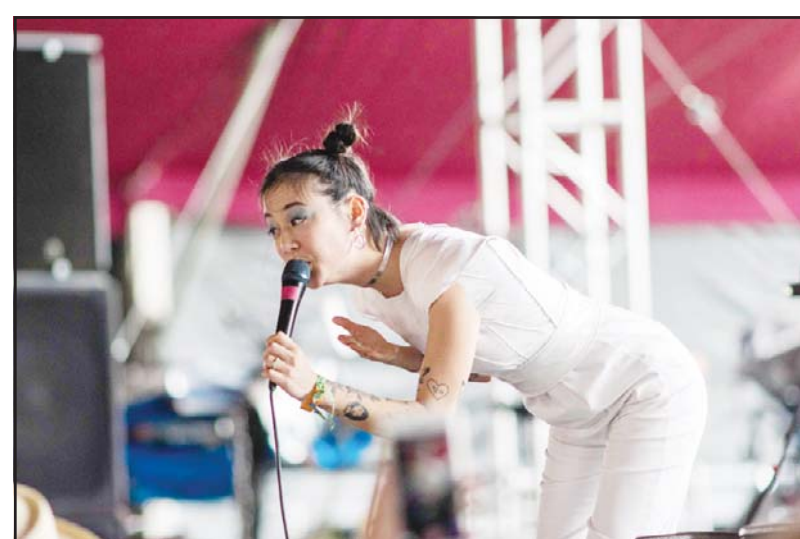
"That hurts Germany's international reputation. Is anti-Semitism becoming acceptable in Germany?" Enders told the newspaper, adding that it was his belief that an anti-Muslim text would have generated far more outrage.

The BVMI German music industry association had drawn increasing criticism in recent days for honoring the rappers' album, which sold more than 200,000 copies despite lyrics considered offensive by many Jewish groups and others because of lyrics that refer to the Auschwitz Nazi death camp. (RTRS)

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DUBAI: Caesars Entertainment Corp announced plans on Sunday to merge two luxury hotels and a beach club in Dubai, the casino operator's first non-gaming resorts.

The operator of Caesars Palace in **Las Vegas** said it signed a non-binding letter of intent with Dubai's state-linked Meraas Holding to manage the hotels, located on the Bluewaters Island development. The Caesars-branded resorts would feature 479 hotel rooms and 12 restaurants and bars. (RTRS)



Japanese Breakfast perform at the Coachella Music and Arts Festival in Indio, California on April 15. (AFP)