

GOING

SPRING'S NEW SILHOUETTE IS LEAN AND LENGTHENING, WITH A DARING, BLADE-SLIM PROFILE—AND A DISTINCTLY MODERN ATTITUDE. PHOTOGRAPHED BY CRAIG McDEAN.

LONG

In a recent afternoon in the depths of winter, a fashion epiphany stopped me in my tracks as I stood gazing into a store window. There it was: a zigzaggy striped knitted Céline skirt—a skirt that clung to the body, down, down, down, and then flared with a whoosh. It didn't read "retro" at all, but it reminded me of things I've loved in the past. It looked sort of athletic but also very female—an obvious joy to wear. Next thing I knew, Sienna Miller was photographed out and about in a version of the same thing—looking totally, annoyingly good—and I realized a movement was out of the gate and running.

Since then, the momentum of the longer skirt—anything between a fluted flutter and a buoyant explosion of volume in the hem—has been sweeping all kinds of adherents along with it. "Slouchy and lean feels cool," says Lazaro Hernandez at Proenza Schouler. "Especially the fluidity of pleats at the bottom to give the silhouette some freedom." The Olsen twins silently add to the gathering consensus with their ankle-lapping skirts serenely passing our line of vision at The Row.

What gives me pause is that this idea is being put into practice on the street rather than reserved for evening. Marc Jacobs says that disregarding length "laws" is the new normal. "Long hems for daytime, short for evening—it doesn't matter any more," he says, and Victoria Beckham nonchalantly agrees. "A longer-length skirt is just a more modern silhouette at the moment," she says. "I'm loving wearing it myself."

I think you can sense the swinging of a pendulum right there. Mrs. Beckham, after all, is a leader of the generation that has spent most of its life wearing nothing but short: dresses, minuscule skirts, and ever shorter shorts. For the first

time this century, fashion is turning its back on the tedium of overexposed, overtanned, over-oiled thighs and focusing on (you heard it here first!) . . . shins.

Erdem Moralioglu is a prime proponent of the newly discovered pleasures of the mid-calf swish. "There's something casual, easy about it," he says. The way he sets it up is the crucial thing, contrasting mid-length silk skirts, or his magical dresses with deep flounces in the hem, with boyish flat brogues. The result: prettiness plus practicality.

The movement behind the movement is what always interests me. We've had the "midi"—a seventies term I still cringe to hear—before, but this is not that. Back then, the inspiration was the glamour of thirties movies and a fictionalized resonance with Depression-era fashion—and cork-soled wedges were involved in absolutely everything. The reason I was rooted to the sidewalk in front of that Céline look, though, was that this new mid-calf length had an elegant relevance that cut across generations. A woman of any age can wear it: Just never, ever do it with wedges, or you really will look old. Some sort of low, chunky heel is required to bring the shin—that gap between shoe and hem—into focus.

"It's the idea of replacing the trouser," Jonathan Anderson reasons. "If you cut a skirt just above the ankle, it has the same proportions as a cropped pant, but it's got this femininity, too. I like the fact that what people once thought dowdy can now seem a bit weird!" Anderson is experimenting with longer skirts both in his J.W.Anderson collection and at Loewe. There will be short, too, of course—it's the nature of fashion—but isn't it hilarious that it's the swishy lengths that make up the daring and modern way to go? — SARAH MOWER



STATE OF THE ART

With her willowy frame, model Tami Williams is a Twiggy for 2015. She's also a natural to show off the look of the moment, apt for an equally chic new venue: Manhattan's soon-to-reopen **Whitney Museum**, in a building designed by Renzo Piano ("Fine Line," View, page 192). Victoria Beckham lace-up sweater (\$1,390) and striped trumpet skirt (\$2,295); sweater at Barneys New York, NYC, and skirt at Bergdorf Goodman, NYC. Saint Laurent by Hedi Slimane platforms. Details, see In This Issue.

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SOCIETY COLUMN

The season's lankiest look befits a night out to catch the newest version of **An American in Paris**—with a book by Craig Lucas and choreography by Christopher Wheeldon—premiering on Broadway this month. Lanvin two-tone sequined column dress, olive-green hat, and chain belt; Lanvin, NYC. Céline block-heel ballet slippers.



ALL NIGHT LONG

The transparency trend offers a trick for dipping into the new lengths: Wear a shorter dress underneath and have it both ways—while you turn heads at the opening of New York's **Edition Hotel**. Dior sequined turtleneck sheath and white knitted silk-and-cashmere T-shirt dress (\$4,500); Dior boutiques. Lanvin crystal ring. Details, see In This Issue.

BEAUTY NOTE

Great skin steals the show. Lancôme Absolué Precious Oil imparts a satiny glow with a blend of revitalizing rose and botanical oils.



COMFORT ZONE

We see shades of the on-trend 1990s in this combination of cozy-chunky knit, heavy shoes, and silky long skirt. Morning will have never looked so effortlessly stylish at this year's **Food Book Fair** in Brooklyn, which will be filled to the brim with artisanal vendors and culinary workshops. Erdem wool cable-knit sweater and blossom-chain pencil skirt (\$1,195); skirt at select Saks Fifth Avenue stores. Céline earrings. Grenson patent-leather creepers.



THE LOWDOWN

There's a blurring of waistline here as the whole silhouette shifts downward. Demo this, perhaps, over drinks at **Sadelle's**, the new Manhattan restaurant from Melissa Weller.

Proenza Schouler cable-knit sweater dress (\$2,225), pleated skirt (\$1,650), and mules; Proenza Schouler, NYC. Céline chain necklace.



TIME TO SPARE

White rib-knits produce the subtlest possible effect—though asymmetry at the edging of both top and skirt keeps things interesting. Such a sleek, eccentric mix nicely complements a film like the highly anticipated *Ex Machina* (Movies, page 214), starring Domhnall Gleeson, due out this month. Stella McCartney ribbed turtleneck (\$1,040) and asymmetrical skirt (\$1,220); Stella McCartney, NYC. Grenson tasseled loafers.





VERTICAL INTEGRATION

The pleated skirt's up-down visuals generate a chic daytime look. Line up your colors for taking in the "Photography in Mexico" opening at the **Haggin Museum**, outside San Francisco. Fendi striped cashmere sweater (\$1,290), pleated silk skirt (\$2,850), and mink stole; Fendi, NYC. Prada patent Mary Janes. In this story; hair, James Pecis; makeup, Aaron de Mey. Production design, Mary Howard. Details, see In This Issue.