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This file photo show models presenting creation by Christian Dior during the women's Fall-Winter 2017-2018 ready-to-wear collection fashion show in Paris.



DARK ATMOSPHERICS AT SAINT LAURENT

In a strong-shouldered red military jacket, actress Charlotte Gainsbourg posed for cameras ahead of Saint Laurent's warehouse-style show in front of the Eiffel Tower. An eerie feeling pervaded the collection of clothes that recalled the 1980s and were done in black or doused in glitter. The dim beam light in the show decor evoked a hybrid of a disco and a prison courtyard. A smoke machine chugged out wisps of mist. Some guests bumped into each other trying to find their seats, and the first of the black styles were so faintly lit the detail of the clothes was lost.



The effect was intentional. Anthony Vaccarello has consistently created dark atmospherics in his presentations since becoming Saint Laurent designer in 2016. Huge fringed boots, black mini dresses and voluminous sleeves in black gave way to loose metallic disco dresses with strong shoulders and plunging necklines. They shimmered in the dappled light. There was a brooding sensuality in many of the details, such as shiny black leather gloves or a black fur band wrapping the bust that was set against naked shoulders.

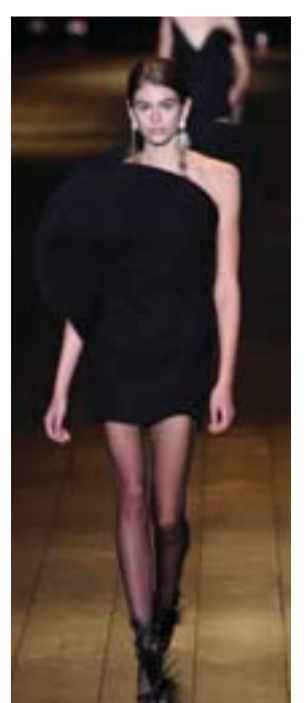
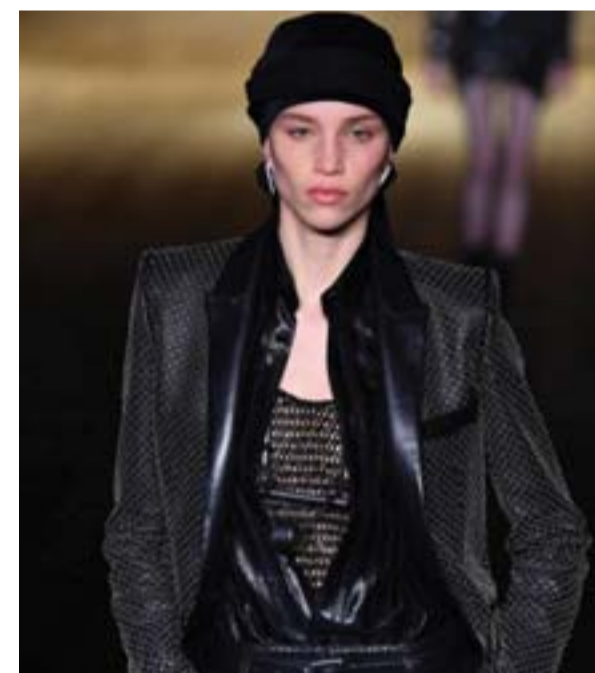
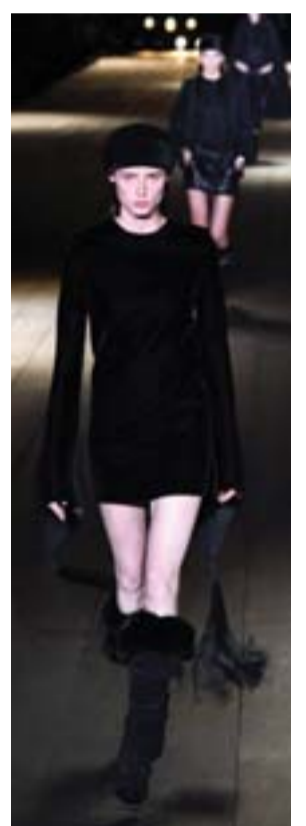
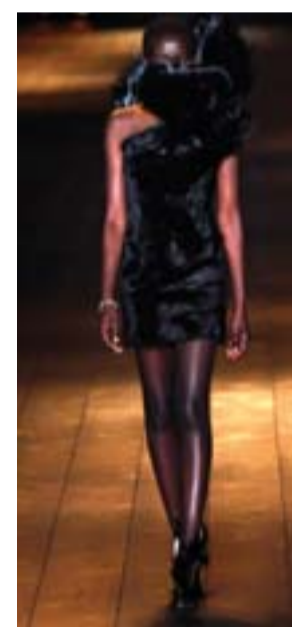
The piece de resistance? A black column dress that evoked a tuxedo and had a front section artfully cut out. Instead of a white shirt, the opening revealed a bare chest.

Jacquemus kicks off Paris Fashion Week
French fashionistas flocked to the front row beneath the lofty ceilings of the Petit Palais - from model Farida Khelfa to legendary couturiere Christian Lacroix - in a

testament to the growing star power of designer Simon Porte Jacquemus, whose collection now opens the Paris Fashion Week calendar. Capitalizing on the current buzz, the 28-year-old this month announced he's expanding into menswear.

His fall-winter display went on a journey to Morocco, a country that Jacquemus has said he often retreats to after Fashion Week. Exaggerated proportions of fabric defined the exotic silhouettes- in split skirts, gargantuan wrap-hats, pleated culottes or coats with a round. "This winter, I got lost in the souks again," Jacquemus quipped.

A silken kaftan in light French beige flowed with an Eastern feel thanks to loose proportions - and trompe l'oeil pants that billowed by like a skirt. The well-executed 58-piece collection featured pigment colors and had several standout moments. The front of one frayed skirt in dark vanilla was imagined as a hoop of fabric. And the stilettos, with heels made of giant colored beads, had many in the audience whipping out their cameras. — AP



Models present creations for Saint Laurent during the 2018/2019 fall/winter collection fashion show.—AP photos

Vatican, Versace and Vogue team up for Met's spring exhibit

The Vatican, Versace and Vogue are joining forces to show off the Catholic influences in fashion. The Vatican's culture minister joined Donatella Versace and Vogue's Anna Wintour on Monday to offer sneak peek of gorgeous Vatican liturgical vestments, jeweled miters and historic papal tiaras that will star in a spring exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

"Heavenly Bodies: Fashion and the Catholic Imagination" opens May 10 and represents the most extensive exhibit of the museum's Costume Institute, officials said. It also represents the first time some of the Vatican's most precious treasures from the Sistine Chapel sacristy are being exhibited outside the Vatican. Along with the papal treasures, the Met show includes garments for more ordinary mortals by designers spanning Azzedine Alaïa to Vivienne Westwood, all set against the backdrop of the Met's collection of medieval and religious artwork.

"Some might consider fashion to be an unfitting or unseemly medium by which to engage with ideas about the sacred or the divine," curator Andrew Bolton told a crowd of Roman fashionistas and journalists. "But dress is central to any discussion about religion. It affirms religious allegiances and, by extension, it asserts religious differences." The exhibit, featuring some 40 Vatican vestments and accessories spanning 15 papacies, will be spread among various Met galleries as well as the Cloisters branch in upper Manhattan in what organizers called a planned "pilgrimage" blending fashion, faith and art.

With Ennio Morricone's soundtrack for "The Mission" playing in the background, visitors on Monday were able to glimpse a small sampling of the soon-to-be-shipped Vatican bling: The white silk cape embroidered with gold thread that once belonged to Pope Benedict XV, and the emerald, sapphire and diamond-studded miter, or pointed



(From left) Italian designer Donatella Versace poses on February 26, 2018, with editor-in-chief of Vogue Anna Wintour and cardinal Gianfranco Ravasi, President of the Vatican Pontifical Council for Culture, at Rome's Palazzo Colonna at the end of the press conference to present the exhibition "Fashion and the Catholic Imagination" that will run at the New York MET on May 10, 2018.



Italian designer Donatella Versace (left) and Valentino's creative director Pierpaolo Piccioli arrive at Rome's Palazzo Colonna for a press conference to present the exhibition "Fashion and the Catholic Imagination" that will run at the New York MET. — AFP photos

bishops' hat, of Pope Leo XIII. They were put on display at the Palazzo Colonna, a former papal residence in downtown Rome that is a jewel of the Roman Baroque period.

Wearing a cardinal-appropriate red and black velvet tunic dress, Wintour, for whom Costume Institute's space

was renamed, said the exhibit shows the influence of the papacy over millennia. "Part of the power of the church has been how they look, and how they dress," Wintour told The Associated Press. "They have this extraordinary presence." — AP