



Models present creations by Fumito Ganryu during the men's Fashion Week for the Fall/Winter 2019/2020 collection in Paris. — AFP photos



REVOLUTION AT GATES OF PROTEST-HIT PARIS MEN'S FASHION



Paris men's fashion week started Tuesday with a tsunami of new talent but with shows also threatened by the "yellow vests" protest movement that has been rocking France. Dior moved its show from Saturday to Friday to avoid the weekly Paris demonstrations which often turn violent after its flagship shop on the Champs Elysees was looted after a march in November. Several other luxury brands have been targeted by "yellow vests" activists, with boarded-up boutiques regularly scrawled with graffiti denouncing the rich.

Japanese label Sacai, streetwear brand Andrea Crews, Namacheko and the American Thom Browne have also rescheduled their Saturday shows to avoid trouble from the populist street movement. But it is the boiling anger of fashion critics that reclusive superstar designer Hedi Slimane will be dreading, after they gave his first outing for Celine a kicking in October. Slimane was accused of thrashing the feminist legacy of his predecessor Phoebe Philo—a charge he is unlikely to face for the first men's collection in Celine's history. Another, quieter revolution is also taking place on the men's catwalks, with an ultra-hip gang of street wear and cult Japanese designers being welcomed into the elite Paris fold for the first time.

Street cleaner chic

DJ-turned-designer Heron Preston, the son of a San Francisco cop, who has previously taken inspiration from New York binmen and street cleaners' uniforms, opened the packed six-day schedule. An old pal of both the rapper Kanye West and Off-White tyro Virgil Abloh, whose first collection of menswear designs for Louis Vuitton have been a huge hit, he is one of a wave of young designers taking streetwear upmarket.

He set his first Paris show in a fake airport terminal replete with metal detectors, with looks drawn from security guards, transport workers' uniforms and others who frequent "24-hour places". He also purloined the Securitas three-dot logo which he adapted to fit his own "style" tag written in Cyrillic. Preston, 35, first came to notice alongside Abloh at the streetwear brand Been Trill. Like his friend, he has made no secret of his dream to one day lead a big brand, in his case Prada.

Japanese genius

Two Japanese fashion idols also brought a huge shot of extra fizz to the traditionally sedate opening day. Former Comme des Garçons stalwart Fumito Ganryu made a high-

ly intelligent first Paris bow with rethought oversized duffle coats and hoodies you could imagine particularly stylish Shinto priests wearing. His genuinely unisex black suits, some with trousers and other with skirts, were equally thoughtful, with pom-pom socks that hung over the heel adding a touch of playful fantasy.

Another hero of the Tokyo scene, Takahiro Miyashita, rounded the day off with a show of "survival clothing to get through today's reality" for his The Soloist label. Gone are the psychedelic colors of his late lamented Number (N)ine brand. Instead Miyashita's masked urban warriors wore black and blue and could pass for heavily-styled members of the "Black bloc" anarchist and "yellow vests" demonstrators that regularly clash with French riot police. A similar dystopian air hung over the Shanghai designer Shanguan Zhe's dark Sankuanz line, with a few badass models wearing metallic claws and Robocop vinyl combos that made them look like super-heroes gone to the bad.—AFP



Models present creations by Sankuanz, at the end of the men's Fall/Winter 2019/2020 collection fashion show in Paris.