



Models present creations by Maison Dior during the Women's Spring-Summer 2020 Ready-to-Wear collection fashion show at the Hippodrome de Longchamps in Paris. — AFP photos



DIOR SAYS IT WITH WILDFLOWERS AND GRETA THUNBERG PLAITS

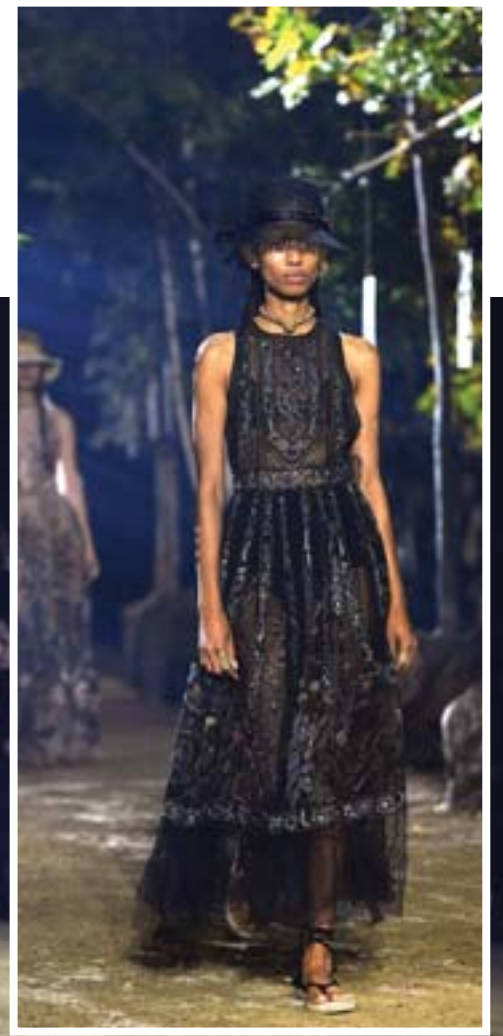


Dior went back to nature in its Paris fashion week show Tuesday with Greta Thunberg plaits and a garden-inspired collection that seemed to spring straight from the earth. With climate change biting at the heels of the fashion industry, and the London shows hit by environmental protests, designer Maria Grazia Chiuri said she wanted to create clothes that "were not just about image but action".

To do that, she embraced the wild, with hemp gardening jackets and a series of stunning diaphanous dresses embroidered with wildflowers. These were not the dainty pink roses of Dior yore but sinuous survivors, thistles and other prickly customers flowering on stony ground. Most of her models also wore their hair in plaits not dissimilar to those of the teenage Swedish environmental activist Thunberg.

Three of the most striking looks bore the ghostly prints of real wildflowers, gathered and applied by an artist who has mastered the natural technique. The Italian designer also pushed the couture boundaries by using hemp and raffia in eye-catchingly unusual ways, with a layered raffia ball gown and flower-embroidered raffia waistcoats.

All was set in what Chiuri called an "inclusive garden" of 160 trees, their roots wrapped in hemp, which will all be replanted in urban gardens being designed around the French capital by environmental architects. Coloco, Chiuri told AFP that her inspiration had come from Christian Dior's sister Catherine, a French Resistance hero who



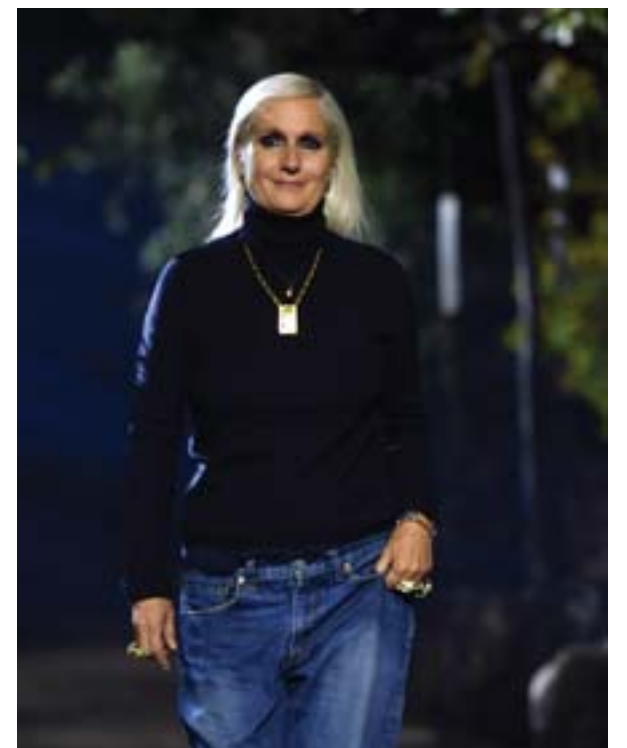
became the first female flower wholesaler in Paris—and who farmed her own roses in the Luberon in the south of France.

Resistance hero

The couturier's first perfume, Miss Dior, was named after her, and Chiuri felt her legacy had been a little forgotten. Catherine ran a Resistance intelligence gathering network from Dior's Paris apartment during the German Nazi Occupation of France. When she was arrested, she refused to betray her comrades despite being tortured by the Gestapo and sent to a concentration camp.

Chiuri said she was struck by a phrase of Christian Dior's after the war, "Fortunately there are the flowers"—which she took as a sign of hope after the dark days of World War II. "Flowers and humans need to live together if humanity is to survive," she told AFP. "The important issue for everybody, not just in fashion, is to be more responsible about what we do," she said.

"It is not just about image but action... the important issue for everybody, not just fashion, is to be more responsible about what we do," she added. Fashion being fashion, however, the biggest headlines at the show may be Italian actress Monica Bellucci's new short haircut, or the appearance of Hollywood star Kristen Stewart on the front row with French singer Chris (former Christine and the Queens) and the Italian super-influencer Chiara Ferragni.—AFP



Italian designer Maria Grazia Chiuri for Maison Dior acknowledges the audience following the Women's Spring-Summer 2020 Ready-to-Wear collection fashion show at the Hippodrome de Longchamps in Paris.

