

Maison Margiela

PARIS

'Artisanal' Co-ed Collection

Spring – Summer 2019

Decadence is a cyclical circumstance moving with the turns of the centuries. Following a four-season study of glamour in the millennial age, the Spring/Summer 2019 Artisanal collection marks a new investigation for Maison Margiela. Observing the excess and artifice engendered by the digital world, creative director John Galliano ventures into a new era of decadence. The overstimulation of computer-generated imagery alters reality and degenerates the truth. Chaotic and unsettling, it is a confusion of the senses rooted in an over-satiation that inevitably overflows. For the generations born around the millennium, it breeds a spirit of *le malaise de la fin du siècle*. Revolution: a desire for change. Maison Margiela renders the decadence of our time and examines if inverted excess could lead to a new appetite for restraint.

A mirrored runway reflects an image adorning the ceilings at 163 rue Saint-Maur, echoed in the jacquard pattern and duchesse satin print of the collection. The sequence motif, which features a Klein blue, clipped poodle – a classic representation of altered reality – is constructed from computerised textures and forms that are entirely fabricated. The sea of imagery creates a smokescreen veiling the lines between real and unreal. Applying the existing Artisanal language established by John Galliano, the collection further introduces *decadent cutting*. Here, the Maison Margiela signature technique of decortiqué is expanded to alter the reality of garments. Employing the idea of *reverse dressing*, a gentleman's coat is cut into a skirt that becomes a cape, changing the properties of structures. In the modification of the natural, decadence sets in.

Combinaisons – truly genderless top-and-bottom garments in one – introduce a new abstruse volume. One appears in inside-out poodle jacquard, its strands left long the way they came off the loom, then cut shorter for added abstraction. A trouser, its inside seam undone, migrates up the body and becomes a top, offering a new truth. The sleeve of a jacket is cut flat in one piece of black duchesse satin, raised and then back-panelled in bright red satin, as only to be visible when seen in three-dimensional motion. Through the idea of *shadow play*, the contours of lapels are cut out of a black felt *combinaison* and flipped three-dimensionally to its top creating the illusion of a jacket, the void of the cut-out filled with a duchesse silk poodle print underlayer like *filtrage*. As the show progresses, the details of garments fade away until only the *memory* of the garment is left; pared-down, their colours bled out, in search for a new purity.

Materials

A main motif in the collection, the sequence pattern features a Klein blue, clipped 3-D poodle amongst textures of stone, animal prints, shiny structures and chiselled forms. All computer-generated textures, they are juxtaposed with the authentic tactility of jacquard, nodding at the opulence of decadent eras in history. The jacquard appears in three renditions: the main version, a decayed dégradé rendering, and inside-out with its strands left long as it came off the loom, cut shorter for an abstract effect. The sequence poodle pattern further appears in a print realised in duchesse satin. Elsewhere, materials draw on the honest cloths of menswear, in wools, herringbones, trench fabrics, and felt. Leather appears alongside faux leather, retaining the tension between real and unreal; an idea echoed in the use of printed foam, faux fur and plume. Amplifying a contemporary understanding of decadence, glamorous materials such as guipure, Chantilly lace, organza, velvet, and devoré underline the sentiment. Using the technique of smocking, velvet is treated with a decadent ruching effect. Wools and canvas are artisanally hand-painted. Large-scale nets structured in leopard-motif faux fur and yarns are hand-knitted without the use of needles. Continuing Maison Margiela's collaboration with Mackintosh, the collection features a beige coat with black felt satin greatcoat sleeves. A collaboration with Charvet Place Vendôme, a paisley necktie jacquard and a geometrically-patterned peignoir jacquard appear in two pairs of shorts, respectively.

I ❤️ NY the classic emblem of New York City familiar to all promoting tourism in the state of New York, appears in a white t-shirt overlaid with transparent organza - fused with the front panel of a jacket - as a tribute to the city.

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Technique

Introducing *decadent cutting*, the collection is epitomised in the deconstruction of classic garments and the migration of their various components on the body. Through cuts, gentleman's coats are transformed into dresses, bottoms of trench coats become shorts or capes, and skirts and trousers turn into tops. In other manifestations of *decadent cutting* – likewise drawing on the Maison Margiela idea of *shadow play* – one garment is evoked within another. Here, the shapes of a coat's lapels can be cut out of single pieces of fabric and raised into three-dimensional forms, their voids filled in with contrasting fabrics for a *filtrage* effect. Garments, their sleeves cut out of a single flat piece of fabric sewn to a contrasting colour fabric, are only detectable when in motion. Lenticular floral embroidery echoes the three-dimensionality of the sequence poodle motif. Whilst the collection departs the theme of glamour explored in recent seasons, the artisanal vocabulary established by John Galiano remains: techniques such as *decortiqué*, *unconscious glamour*, *reverse dressing*, *dressing in haste*, *anonymity of the lining*, *nomadic cutting* and *the memory of* garments are intrinsic parts of the collection's genetics. Keeping in line with the gender-nonconformist philosophy of the house, every Artisanal look was fitted without regard to gender.

Palette

Colours picked up from the collection's multi-coloured sequence poodle pattern include greys, Klein blue, aqua, dark and apple green, bright yellow, bright red, fuchsia and lilac. As the show progresses, colours fade to black.

Accessories

Hand-moulded by sculptors and crafted by industrial packaging specialists, felt hats are reimagined in resin and appear in the sequence poodle motif, each of its components cut and applied by hand. Evoking the decadence of another era, headpieces and headbands in grosgrain-covered foam with scratch closures – which originated as the inner structure for the fitting process of the hard hats - conjure images of judges' wigs. Similarly, corset ribbon ties used on garments bring to mind an air of a regal decadence. Drawing on the sentiment of real versus unreal, magnified doll shoes in saccharine baby colours appear in patent or rubberised leather as if dipped.

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