

# Fashion

fashion.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Editor || Cécile Borkhataria

## Chanel haute couture spring/summer 2015: the luxe rebirth of the beanie

Cecile Borkhataria looks at the floral themed show held in Paris

On Tuesday, Karl Lagerfeld pushed the boundaries of haute couture fashion yet again at the Chanel haute couture fashion show. The exclusive catwalk event was held at the Grand Palais in Paris, with attendees ranging from the likes of Hollywood starlets like Kristen Stewart, to French femme fatales Vanessa Paradis and Charlotte Gainsbourg.

The event saw the Grand Palais transformed into a giant tropical forest of white paper trees, with bursts of colours from origami flowers and banana leaves. The show opened with 4 male models dressed in summery beige shorts and waistcoats, carrying water cans and proceeding to “water” the flowers. As the show began, more flowers opened up from the paper trees above, conveying a sense of birth and a new beginning.

The show saw colourful tulle and chiffon flower details incorporated in many of the outfits, reflecting a cohesive underlying floral theme throughout the collection. The collection saw a re-vamped version of the classic Chanel tweed suit, with long midi length pencil or A-line tulle skirts, complete with matching cropped jackets.

Lagerfeld also opted for explosions of pastel coloured sequins, with one of the finale looks incorporating black and pink rosettes on a sequin embellished midi skirt, with a matching pink sequin cropped bustier.

The accessory of choice featured throughout the show was the hat - either large brimmed straw styles enveloped in rich dark coloured tulle, or beanies embroidered with sequins and chiffon flowers, some of them with retro black net veils. Indeed, Lagerfeld has managed to re-define the beanie and showcase it as a luxe couture item. No doubt the likes of Zara and H&M will be rushing to re-create the look soon, which is set to be a staple new look in the fashion world. Lagerfeld's creative direction under the hefty Chanel name make his designs desirable and oft imitated, with fashion lovers and retailers alike displaying a strong urge to channel his looks. For example, last year's haute couture fashion show saw the emergence of the couture trainers trend. All of the models wore pastel coloured trainers with jewelled accents, sequin embellishments or lace details. The trend soon became a

**"Lagerfeld has managed to re-define the beanie"**

huge success, with labels such as Nike and Uggs attempting to re-create the luxury sporty look.

In addition to introducing the luxe beanie, cropped tops and cropped bolero jackets featured heavily throughout the show. Lagerfeld even claimed, “The new cleavage is the stomach.” It looks like the mid-riff trend is here to stay for a while.

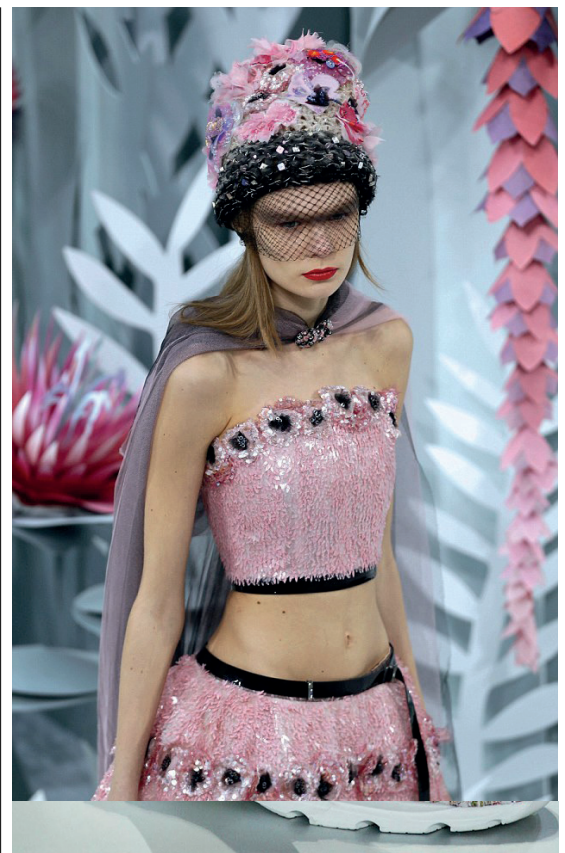
The overarching floral theme even saw huge 3-D floral embroideries at the bottom of coats or across shoulders on jackets. Lagerfeld called the show “the flower women of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.” Although the theme of the show was jovial and colourful, it was conceived with the intention of appeasing the sombre mood in Paris as of late. Lagerfeld felt that the theme was important in light of the recent terror attacks targeting writers of the Charlie Hebdo magazine in Paris. Lagerfeld told interviewers “especially after this dark, awful beginning to the year there was something like this needed...there's something about flowers.” Lagerfeld also remarked that he is lucky to be sheltered by the fashion world, adding, “I'm lucky... I live in a very protected world [in fashion]. I can keep something like a dream reality but it's not a reality of daily life.”

The show truly pushed boundaries in terms of new trends in the couture world, including too-long black patent belts draped all the way the lengths of the long skirts.

As usual, the finale look of the show saw a model paraded down the catwalk in a wedding gown, and this time she was not heavily pregnant, as the bridal model was for last year's show. The dress' long trailing skirt was swathed in white and subtly pale pink tulle rosettes, giving it a stiff quality. In contrast, the top of the dress was a simple white peplum shape with cap sleeves. The bridal model was followed by the male models featured at the beginning of the show, carrying large bouquets of colourful roses behind her, a quirky alternative to traditional flower girls.

The shows of Paris haute couture week had a decidedly fearless undercurrent to them. Raf Simons, the creative director of Dior, made a link between the spirit of the couture workers in the ateliers and the proud protestors on the streets after the Paris attacks. The underlying message of the week was simple: vive the Paris fashion houses and vive la France!

**"The new cleavage is the stomach."**



Above: model showcases one of the finale looks of the Chanel spring/summer 2015 haute couture show. Below: Trainers worn at the Chanel spring/summer 2014 haute couture show Photo: AFP/Getty Images